Considering the Advanced and Standard Courses in the New Stage 6 English for NSW

Deb McPherson and Jane Sherlock

“…Come, my friends, "Tis not too late to seek a newer world... To sail beyond the sunset, …”

Ulysses, by Tennyson

PART I: Year 12

DEB MCPHERSON and JANE SHERLOCK suggest some approaches to beginning planning for implementing the new Standard and Advanced Stage 6 English courses …

This report, based on the 2017 Centre for Professional Learning English Conference presented by Associate Professor Jackie Manual, Jane Sherlock and Deb McPherson, provides an orientation to the new Standard and Advanced Stage 6 courses. It discusses the planning required for implementing the new Year 12 courses, including unpacking the Modules for Standard and Advanced, commentary on new texts and suggestions for Year 12 pathways. Part II, focusing on Year 11, will be published in a future edition.

Key points about the new syllabus

This is a new syllabus, not just a new prescriptions list or new electives. This syllabus contains major changes to the structure of both Year 11 and Year 12. A new prescribed text list has been developed with the number of texts reducing from 149 to 101 texts, a loss of over 40 texts. In addition, there are for the first time prescribed short texts in Year 12 whose examination status at the time of writing is unclear. A new way of thinking and programming will be required for Year 12 with the introduction of the flexible Module C component.

The Year 11 course has new elements as well, with set electives and assumptions behind the first Common Module, Reading to Write. Teachers will need to consider the strengthening of a wide and independent reading/viewing culture to create a community of readers and viewers. Of crucial importance will be the planning for text choices, Cross Curriculum Priorities (C.C.Ps), past and contemporary texts, integration choices, wide reading and backward mapping.

One major difference can be easily seen in the actual syllabus documents. From one syllabus document that contained all of the courses available in senior English we move to six documents with
considerable content being duplicated. No longer will teachers have the convenience of the *Stage 6 English Syllabus* in a single printed document.

### Commonalities and differences between the English K-10 Syllabus and the new Stage 6 English Syllabus

The new Stage 6 English Syllabus builds upon the current 7-10 *English Syllabus* (2012). Both syllabuses have nine Outcomes, a common Aim and Rationale and both contain Cross Curriculum Priorities and Learning Across the Curriculum content, including General Capabilities. Teachers need to be aware that the Stage 6 descriptions have some distinctions from Stage 5, for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures:

> ...recognise the histories, cultures, traditions and languages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for their foundational and central presence among contemporary Australian societies and cultures ...read the Principles and Protocols relating to teaching and learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and the involvement of local Aboriginal communities (p. 22).

The General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities were never intended to be seen as additional curriculum content. Rather, as Professor Robin Ewing pointed out, they were to be seen as “lenses” which teachers could use to plan to ensure that content was linked meaningfully to the real world across the learning areas. The Glossary and Stage statements are useful sections in both syllabuses and both incorporate Australian Curriculum elements.
Commonalities and differences between the new and current Stage 6 English syllabuses

At Year 12 level, a common mandatory first module, *Texts and Human Experiences* replaced the Area of Study. Teachers must commence teaching with this Common module. Two new modules have been designed at Standard, with Module A, *Language, Identity and Culture*, and Module C, *The Craft of Writing*.

At Advanced, Module A, *Textual Conversations*, replaces the two previous electives, *Intertextual Connections* and *Intertextual Perspectives* and Module C, *The Craft of Writing*, replaces *Representation and Text* with its two electives, *Representing People and Politics* and *Representing People and Landscapes*.

*The Craft of Writing* can be taught concurrently with the Common Module and with Modules A and B. Module C has textual requirements as well, with two (or more) short texts to be studied. There are 18 texts listed for Standard and 20 listed for Advanced. The texts can be divided as either being reflections on the craft of writing or demonstrations of that craft.


Differences are also apparent in Year 11. There is a change in nomenclature and content from broad Electives to specific Modules. There are now three prescribed modules, with the Area of Study removed and replaced by a Common Module called *Reading to Write*. It is mandatory to program *Reading to Write* as the first module taught in Year 11, to develop students’ skills to respond to texts and to refine their writing. There is a stronger focus on individual reading to inform, inspire and encourage writing.

The Standard course has become more prescriptive, with a requirement (for Standard only) that, in Module A, one complex multi-modal or digital text must be studied and, in Module B, one substantial literary print text must be studied. Teachers should consider a complex multi-modal text for students in the Advanced course as well, as opportunities in the Year 12 course for such a study are limited to films and documentaries.

Changes in text requirements

With the new Stage 6 Syllabus, students in Year 12 study an altered pattern of texts, with a reduction in the number of prescribed texts. Teachers and students will have less to do and more time to do it. In Standard there are only three prescribed texts, reduced from four and in Advanced there are four prescribed texts, reduced from five. See the structure and requirements in the two figures below.
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Poetry is no longer mandatory in Year 12, which is disheartening. When the syllabus was released, novel was no longer mandatory either; however, it was reinstated as mandatory following a concerted campaign by academics and teachers.

In a text requirement similar to that for K-10 English, the selection of texts across Stage 6 must give students experience of:

- Quality literature;
- Intercultural experiences and cultures of Asia;
- Australian texts, including texts by Aboriginal authors;
- Cultural, social and gender perspectives and texts which integrate the modes;
- Support study of texts with own wide reading.

And “…students must explore a range of types of texts drawn from prose fiction, drama, poetry, nonfiction, film, media and digital texts” (Stage 6 2017 Standard and Advanced Syllabus p.15).

Planning Stage 6: the need for backward mapping

The new syllabus requires a level of backward mapping to prepare students thoughtfully and thoroughly. Year 12 teachers need to collect and then read and view the prescribed texts, which is a
significant task. The new prescribed texts for Module C will take some time and effort to collect and the school librarian may be helpful in sourcing these texts. Students are required to examine and analyse at least two prescribed texts as well as texts from their own wide reading. These texts are seen as a “springboard” for student composition. At the time of printing, the examination of Module C was unspecified.

The new module descriptions need to be analysed and decisions made on Year 12 pathways and texts that meet the needs and interest of students. It is a good idea to seek a common thread among the texts selected if the arrangements of texts allow this to happen by linking the Year 12 selections to the texts being considered for Year 11 and the concepts that might be explored there.

Year 11 teachers need to analyse the module descriptions and put in place the pathways and texts that will build to and support the HSC study. Other considerations include: placing the planning for the two years side by side and review the connections; conduct an audit of the faculty bookroom to see what texts have relevance for the new courses and approach your Principal and P&C for additional funds to effectively implement the new syllabus; refer to the Drama HSC prescribed texts list at http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc/pdf_doc/drama-st6-course-prescriptions-2015-18.pdf when deciding on drama texts to avoid double dipping for students.

**Programming and teaching Module C in Year 12**

Programming the new Module C requires careful consideration. Two models are suggested in the figures below:

1. *The Craft of Writing* is integrated and taught concurrently with all three modules;
2. *The Craft of Writing* is taught as a separate module.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model #1 Module C: <em>The Craft of Writing</em> for Stage 6 is integrated</th>
<th>Year 11 2018</th>
<th>Year 12 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2018</strong></td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>Common Module for Standard and Advanced Reading to Write</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Module A: Contemporary Possibilities: One complex multimodal or digital text</td>
<td>Module A: Narratives that Shape our World</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One or more print, digital and/or multimodal</td>
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<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Module B: Close Study of Literature</td>
<td>Module B: Critical Study of Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12 Common Module for Standard and Advanced Texts and Human Experience</td>
<td>1 prescribed text</td>
<td>1 related text</td>
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</table>
The concurrent (Model 1) appears the best model to use as it can demonstrate, promote and encourage a range of writing styles and investigations of different types of texts from the beginning of the course. It is obviously too late to leave the craft of writing until Term 3. It is important to use Module C texts to enrich and enhance the study of the prescribed texts in the Common Module and in Modules A and B.

Some Module C texts are reflections about the craft of writing while others demonstrate it.
Module C texts are prescribed but the types of texts are not limited and there is more choice here than in the other modules. A link to texts in the other modules will give Module C writing a more authentic purpose. Students can be involved in investigating which Module C texts work best with the other modules. They can use the prescribed text(s) in a Module as their anchor/lens and then look to the Module C texts as a contrast or an affirmation of the style or the ideas of the texts in the other modules.

The Craft of Writing module calls on students to write for a range of purposes and audiences and to explore a greater range of audiences than “teacher as assessor”. Teachers can assist students by establishing the habit and disposition for writing, by setting aside class time each lesson and every week for incidental or short or sustained writing linked to the current module and texts that students are studying. Establishing writing as a routine for your class normalises the writing experience.

Unpacking the module’s rubrics

In seeking to reveal the key concerns of each rubric it was helpful to pose questions to guide teachers and students in their examination and exploration of the lens into the study of the selected texts.

Module C Standard: The Craft of Writing

The key questions

- How can I build student skills and confidence as writers?
- What are the types of authentic audiences for student compositions?
- Which two (or more) challenging short prescribed texts will act as models and stimulus for writing?
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• What texts from students’ own wide reading can be used as models?
• What will students need to look for in an analysis of these texts?
• How does a writer take us into their world? Evoke emotion? Shape our perspective? Share a vision?
• What can students learn from other writers about writing?
• What past and contemporary texts have influenced my students?
• How could students experiment with a range of language forms and features like imagery, rhetoric, voice, characterisation, point of view, dialogue and tone when drafting and rewriting?
• What can we discuss with others and do before writing that will help students to plan their work?
• How can students effectively edit their work for publication?
• How can working with other students strengthen skills?
• What opportunities will students have to reflect on these experiences?

Module C Advanced: The Craft of Writing

The key questions

• What makes an accomplished writer?
• How can writers convey ideas and emotions with power and precision?
• What two short prescribed texts will enrich/enhance/affirm/contrast with the module texts?
• What tools do students need to evaluate texts and to consider their aesthetic vision?
• What makes a text from the past continue to resonate with different generations?
• What past and contemporary works will be considered? What texts from students’ wide reading experience in Year 11 can be called on?
• What concepts could be explored?
• What skills can develop self-expression?
• What figurative, rhetorical and linguistic devices are used in the texts and in students’ own writing?
• What influence does context have on responses to texts?

Some distinctions present in Module C in Advanced and not used at Standard level include “accomplished writers”, “complex ideas”, “aesthetic vision” and “versatility and aesthetic of language” and “self-expression.” Advanced students “evaluate” while Standard students “assess.” Advanced
students deal with “concepts” while Standard students deal with “ideas”. Advanced students consider “figurative, rhetorical and linguistic devices” and “allusion” and “context” while Standard students consider “language forms and features”.

Some of these distinctions seem arbitrary and teachers would be aware that “aesthetic” is often a word used to elevate an argument.

**Year 12 Common Module: Texts and Human Experience**

The Common Module is broadly (very broadly) based and literature reflects both individual and collective human experiences in one way or another. Within this module students can seek the connections between those experiences in literature and the wider world with its diverse cultures and lives.

**The key questions**

- Which prescribed text, short texts from Module C and related text will be explored?
- What are the human experiences in the various texts? Which are individual and which are collective?
- What connections can be made between the human experiences of the texts and the wider world?
- How are human qualities and emotions represented in these texts?
- How do these texts capture the anomalies, paradoxes and inconsistencies in human behaviour and motivation?
- How do some stories reflect particular lives and cultures?
- Which Module C texts work best here?

When selecting texts for the Common Module the first lens is students’ interests and needs. When exploring individual and collective human experiences many teachers start with the best novel to suit their students. For Advanced, they select the best Shakespearean choice. There are opportunities for students to explore a range of short texts from Module C on the Human Experience and opportunities to find their own related text.
The new texts

Texts set for study in the Common Modules that have not been previously prescribed in the HSC year are *Waste Land, Past the Shallows, All the Light We Cannot See, The Boy Behind the Curtain* and *I am Malala*. Each text is briefly discussed below to assist teachers in their decision-making.

**Waste Land, directed by Lucy Walker (media)**

A short, accessible film about the work of Brazilian-born artist Vic Muniz is set at the World’s largest landfill on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. The artists and the *catadores* (garbage pickers) work together to create artworks from discarded materials. The focus is on the personal stories and human experiences of the *catadores*. *Waste Land* celebrates the dignity of the human spirit, finding beauty among the garbage. There is confirmation from the world outside the dump that the lives of the *catadores* matter. Muniz makes use of a variety of film techniques which will enable deeper class discussion.

**Past the Shallows, Favel Parrett (prose fiction)**

This novel by Australian author Favel Parrett is accessible by both Standard and Advanced students. Parrett’s tale of three brothers (Joe, 13-year-old Miles and young Harry) and a bitter father is set in the south coast abalone fishing areas of Tasmania. The boys’ bonds contrast with the often-malevolent figure of their father, who is twisted by a horrifying secret, as he drinks and hits his way to a terrible conclusion. Parrett’s “prose is as powerful as a rip”, deceptively simple, sometimes violent and yet life...
affirming. This is a fine Australian novel about place and families, full of simple pleasures and gestures and grief and love.

*All the Light We Cannot See*, Anthony Doerr (prose fiction)

A long, rich narrative better suited to Advanced students, that explores the human experiences of different people, in different places and times. A blind girl, Marie-Laure LeBlanc, who takes part in the French Resistance and Werner Pfennig, an engineering prodigy, with an ability to build and repair radios in the service of the German army are the pivotal characters. They meet in a climactic encounter during the Allied bombing of St-Malo, France, a couple of months after D-Day in 1944. Science, faith, luck and history are combined in a Pulitzer Prize winning novel by Anthony Doerr.

*The Boy Behind the Curtain*, Tim Winton (non-fiction)

Tim Winton’s collection of 22 accessible essays, of which seven are chosen for study. Winton thinks his life feels like a “topography of accidents” and he conveys a realisation of human frailty and human resilience in the face of adversity. He writes of the strength that comes through a connection with others, one’s self and one’s environment; the awakenings that occur in response to sudden and unexpected events.

Winton is concerned with the interconnection of the human ‘story’ and the story of the world we inhabit; and human spirituality. Pivotal influences on his life include the ocean and surfing, Stanley Kubrick, guns, church, his father, books, accidents and Albany. Winton says of himself,

> As a novelist I seem to have spent every working day of my adult life in a vain search for the right word, the perfect metaphor for the story or sentence at hand, while so often writing about characters for whom words are both elusive and treacherous.

*I am Malala*, Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb (non-fiction)

Malala Yousafzai’s detailed account of her response to extraordinary experiences is inspiring. In 2009, Malala, aged 13, began blogging about life and education for girls in the Swat Valley in Pakistan during the rise of the Taliban. In 2011, badly wounded by an attempted assassination by Taliban gunmen she was moved to Britain for life saving treatment. She was the joint winner of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for her “struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education” and she continues that work today. Malala’s life, family background and school experiences, the portrayal of the lives of Muslim women and girls in Pakistan, and her exposure to political life in the Swat Valley play an important part in her memoir.
Standard, Module A: Language, Identity and Culture

In this module students will investigate the links between language, culture and identity and the assumptions and beliefs about individuals and groups.

The key questions

- How can we define identity? Collective identity? Give some examples from your world.
- How can language reflect and shape an individual or group identity?
- How can texts impact on the way an individual or a community sees themselves?
- What is the prescribed text? What other texts could students use for identity?
- What do we understand by cultural perspectives?
- In what ways do the Module A texts affirm, ignore, reveal, challenge or disrupt prevailing assumptions and beliefs about individuals and groups?

The following texts for Standard Module A have not previously been set for the HSC: Selected poetry from Contemporary Asian Australian Poets, selected poetry from Inside My Mother and Reindeer in My Saami Heart.
A selection of poetry from *Contemporary Asian Australian Poets*, Adam Aitken, Kim Cheng Boey and Michelle Cahill (eds.)

The selected poems cover a range of familiar contexts and settings that relate to living in or between two cultures. Readers will find perspectives on family relationships and heritages, and on the struggle to achieve a secure sense of selfhood within changed circumstances. It is important to realise the diversity of Asian voices represented here and how they challenge stereotyping of a monolithic Asian voice. Students can discover the different background of the poets and the diversity and richness of Asian cultures and identity, not so much of Asia but of their specific country. The poems are like a tapestry and teachers may consider using other texts such as *Between the Flags* or *The Boat* to assist in the exploration of the content and to enhance and enrich understanding of the selected poems.

A selection of poetry from *Inside My Mother*, Ali Cobby Eckermann

Ali Cobby Eckermann is a South Australian Indigenous writer who was raised by adoptive parents. She reconnected with her birth mother and culture when in her thirties. The collection came about at the time her mother and several other mentors and healers passed away. The collection is about coming of age as much as it is about yearning. Underpinning the poems is a personal expression of loss and grieving that derives from circumstances of separation from maternal connection and protection occurring over several generations. *Inside My Mother* beats with anger and sadness, but also a deep calmness. It is imbued with respect for tradition and is an Indigenous response to the blemished narrative of ‘colonial Australia’.

*Reindeer in My Saami Heart*, directed by Janet Merewether, duration of 73 minutes (media)

This short documentary film is about Inghilda Tapio, and her family of nomadic Saami reindeer herders in northern Sweden post-World War II. The film has strong parallels with Australia’s Stolen Generations including the removal of children, language suppression, threats to culture and migration. Inghilda, a poet and performer, is passionate about preserving her language and culture for future generations. This worthy film uses interviews, archival footage and photographs, poetic performance and location filming, however, it may have limited appeal for students.
Module B Standard: Close Study of Literature

This module is very similar to the previous Module B, *Close Study of Text*, however teachers may need to refresh their knowledge of this rewritten rubric.

The key questions

- In what ways does this text meet your students’ needs and interests?
- How can students develop an informed understanding, knowledge and appreciation of the text?
- How can a personal response to the whole text be modelled to help students?
- How will the class explore and analyse the particular ideas and characteristics of this text?
- What are the ways in which these characteristics establish their distinctive qualities?
- In what ways does the composer of the text portray people, ideas, settings and situations?
- How do the ideas, forms and language interplay within the text?
- How does that interplay affect a response to the text?
Some pathways for the Standard course are suggested below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Module</th>
<th>Module A</th>
<th>Module B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waste Land</td>
<td>Inside My Mother</td>
<td>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time OR Feed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste Land</td>
<td>Henry Lawson short stories</td>
<td>Selected poetry of Oodgeroo Noonuccal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selected poetry of Kenneth Slessor</td>
<td>One Night The Moon</td>
<td>Feed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rainbow’s End</td>
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<tr>
<td>Go Back to Where You Came From</td>
<td>Henry Lawson short stories</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am Malala</td>
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<tr>
<td>Past the Shallows</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past the Shallows</td>
<td>One Night The Moon</td>
<td>Selected poetry of Robert Gray</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Module A Advanced: Textual Conversations

This module has undergone structural change with the removal of electives and the module *Comparative Study of Texts and Context* has been replaced with the more simplified *Textual Conversations*.

The key questions

- In what ways do the texts resonate with each other? In what ways are they different?
- In what ways does one text reimagine or reframe details of the other text?
- In what ways does the text mirror, align or collide with the other text?
- In what ways can common or disparate issues, values, assumptions or perspectives in the two texts be explored? How are these depicted?
- In what ways were the composers influenced by other texts, contexts and values, and how does this shape meaning?
- What textual features, conventions, contexts, values and purpose of the two prescribed texts will be identified, interpreted, analysed and evaluated?
- In what ways can an understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of both texts be enhanced through the comparative study?
- In what ways do the personal, social, cultural and historical contextual knowledge brought to the texts influence students’ perspectives and compositions?
- What are the individual and common textual features, concepts and values to be explored and evaluated?

Planning texts for *Textual Conversations* requires a clear understanding of students’ interests and needs to guide teachers in deciding which pair of texts will work best for their students. There are four new pairings selected for *Textual Conversations*:

- *The Tempest* AND *Hag-Seed*;
- Selected poetry of Plath AND Hughes;
- Selected poetry of John Keats AND Jane Campion’s film *Bright Star*; and,
- *The Stranger* AND *The Meursault Investigation*.

Returnees from the current Advanced Module A are:

- *King Richard III* AND *Looking for Richard*;
- Selected poetry of John Donne AND *W*t; and,
- *Mrs Dalloway* AND *The Hours*.
The Tempest and Hag-Seed

Consider what links the two texts including, betrayal, revenge, human frailty, love and hope. Bring it to life through the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) summary and other compelling resources such as an audio version, The Tempest film starring Helen Mirren, the Shakespeare app and the RSC Barbican 2017 production which uses technology to create Ariel as a digital avatar. Awareness of the conventions of Shakespearean comedy vs tragedy, the use of masque and the role of magic will prove useful in classroom discussions as well as background on the Elizabethan context, Italian nobility and the symbolic use of islands and storms in literature.

Hag-Seed is part of the series of Shakespearean plays re-imagined by contemporary authors. Atwood brings great skill to her complex re-imagining of William Shakespeare’s The Tempest; a play of enchantment, vengeance and second chances. She takes the reader into the worlds of the play – a heartbroken father, a medium security prison, the imagination and ourselves – as The Tempest is performed for a new audience. The epilogues created by the inmates of Fletcher Correctional offer rich opportunities for students to examine how voice is created and to experiment with their own voice.

And do enjoy the Shakespearean insults.
Selected poetry of Plath and Hughes

There are many fascinating, and interesting stories around the reality and the myths of these two icons in the 20th century world of poetry. Their lives have been explored in many ways and forms. There is a strong autobiographical content in the two sets of poems, e.g. the focus on Plath’s father, Otto. The set of poems for each poet deal with some similar incidents and people in their lives and the different styles of each poet ensures a freshness to an exploration of these twined poets. This pairing certainly fulfills the module rubric. Of course, making a selection of two poets in this module has implications for the Shakespeare and novel choice in other electives. There are many resources available from previous Module C and Extension 1 studies but care should be taken in using these resources as the poems are not all the same and the rubric has changed. The film Sylvia could be a powerful introduction to the unit.

Selected poetry of John Keats and Jane Campion’s film Bright Star

In this pairing students can consider seven well-known poems that explore the search for unity, meaning and transcendence through sensual experience and feelings. The poems demonstrate an intense belief in the revelatory and enduring capacity of the imagination and of art. The content of Keats’s poetry and letters are interwoven throughout the film but they are not centre stage. The film is an imaginative recreation of the love story of Keats and Fanny Brawne during the last two and a half years of Keats’s life. The film transports us through a visually sumptuous, cinematic and linear narrative. The point-of-view is signalled in the title: Fanny’s perspective – she is the “Bright Star” (the last poem Keats wrote). There is an abundance of resources available to teachers including an ATOM Study Guide on the film.

The Stranger and The Meursault Investigation

French author, Albert Camus’s short, existential and iconic novel is set in the city of Algiers during the time of French colonial rule, just over twenty years before Algeria gained independence from France. The main character shoots dead an unnamed man on the beach. Meursault is a detached, non-conforming and radically honest man who will not embellish or elaborate on what he has done. He gives himself up to the “tender indifference of the world.” Daoud’s postcolonial appropriation of Camus’s novel tells the story from a different perspective. Through the narration of the murdered man’s younger brother, Daoud gives the unnamed man a name — Musa — and, along with it, a family, a home, a culture and a story. Studying Daoud’s The Meursault Investigation challenges interpretations of Camus’ novel; the two texts have a genuine connection as The Stranger has given birth to The Meursault Investigation.
Module B Advanced: Critical Study of Literature

There are changes in this rubric including the change from “text” to “literature” in the title which the following questions elucidate.
The key questions

- Why did you select this text? How does it meet your students’ needs and interests?
- How can students develop a detailed analytical and critical knowledge, understanding and appreciation of this text?
- How will an informed and personal response to the text in its entirety be modelled to support students?
- How can the distinctive qualities of the text be demonstrated?
- What is understood by a text’s textual integrity and significance?
- How will students analyse the text’s construction, content and language to develop a rich interpretation of the text?
- How can students be encouraged to base their judgements on detailed evidence drawn from their research and reading?
- In what ways does context shape the text’s composition and reception?
- How can students investigate and evaluate the perspectives of others to explore the ideas in the text?
- How could they use these perspectives to further strengthen their personal and intellectual connections with the text?
- How will students determine their considered perspective of the text’s value and meaning?

There is only one new text set for Advanced Module B and that is eight selected poems by David Malouf (‘Aquarius’, ‘Radiance’, ‘Ladybird’, ‘A Recollection of Starlings: Rome ’84’, ‘Eternal Moment at Poggia Madonna’, ‘Towards Midnight’, ‘Earth Hour’ and ‘Aquarius II’) from his poetry collection, Earth Hour. The poems explore loss, the passage of time and the relationship between people and their environment in a voice of wise calm. As Chris Wallace Crabb said, Malouf captures “an irrevocable sense that so much has utterly gone, from the world or from the self, and a sensuous apprehension of all the small things that remain”.

It should be noted that the following five Extension 1 texts from the current prescribed text list have been relocated to this Advanced module: An Artist of the Floating World (prose fiction), Speak, Memory (non-fiction), The Hare with Amber Eyes (non-fiction), Good Night and Good Luck (fiction) and Unfolding Florence (media). The first four are demanding texts and Unfolding Florence, while an admirable and intriguing documentary about Florence Broadhurst, an Australian socialite and successful wallpaper designer, by Gillian Armstrong, may prove to have little appeal for students.

Some Advanced pathways are suggested below.
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<td><em>King Henry IV</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Merchant of Venice</em></td>
<td><em>The Stranger</em> and <em>The Miserable Investigation</em></td>
<td>Selected poetry of David Malouf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected poetry of Dobson</td>
<td><em>Mrs Dalloway</em> and <em>The Hours</em></td>
<td><em>King Henry IV</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>All the Light We Cannot See</em></td>
<td>Selected poetry of Plath and Hughes</td>
<td><em>King Henry IV</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected poetry of Slessor</td>
<td><em>King Richard III</em> and <em>Looking for Richard</em></td>
<td><em>An Artist of the Floating World</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Crucible</em></td>
<td><em>The Tempest</em> and <em>Hag-Seed</em></td>
<td><em>Good Night and Good Luck</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>All the Light We Cannot See</em></td>
<td>Selected poetry of John Keats and <em>Bright Star</em></td>
<td><em>King Henry IV</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Boy Behind the Curtain</em></td>
<td><em>The Tempest</em> and <em>Hag-Seed</em></td>
<td>Selected Poems of T S Eliot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: This table has been updated to remove *Emma* from the Common Module.

Implementing this new syllabus in the given timeframe will be a challenge for teachers across NSW. Disappointments remain. Poetry should still be mandated in the HSC year, and teachers should have more time to implement such a significant departure from the previous syllabus and prescribed texts list. That aside, the passion, vision and commitment of English teachers to the subject and to their students will drive a collaborative effort on this implementation. Teachers can also seek out support and professional development through their union and its Centre for Professional Learning.

Deb McPherson taught English in NSW government secondary schools for 28 years as a classroom teacher, Head Teacher and Deputy Principal. She was a member of the committee selecting texts for the Higher School Certificate English courses for over 15 years. She worked as a Senior Curriculum Officer, English, at the Board of Studies and as the Manager of English for the NSW Department of Education and Training. She has been a lecturer and tutor at the University of Newcastle and at the University of Wollongong. She is an author of four...
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Deb McPherson and Jane Sherlock

anthologies for schools for OUP and co-authored Choices for English, a collection of recommended texts for the 7-12 English classroom with Helen Sykes and Ernie Tucker. Her review column, ‘Reading and Viewing with Deb McPherson’, appears in the AATE journal, English in Australia.

Jane Sherlock is an experienced, enthusiastic and passionate public education teacher of English for 40 years having retired from teaching as Head Teacher English at Kiama High. Currently, Jane is the NSW English Teachers’ Association project officer for HSC student days which are run throughout the year. Jane is also an author of a number of English textbooks, including the national award-winning Oxford HSC English. Jane is a presenter for the NSW Teachers Federation’s Centre for Professional Learning and with Deb McPherson has now presented at four English conferences for the CPL. In 2009, Jane received the Australian College of Educators award for her contribution to education.