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EDITORIAL

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With the blink of an eye, here we are at the end of yet another year. There have been significant shifts in the education policy landscape, with federal government reviews of teacher education, school funding, and the Australian Curriculum. At the state level, we've seen the QSA morph into QCAA and the Review of Senior Assessment and Tertiary Entrance. What this means for English teachers is anybody's guess at this stage; but one thing we can say for sure is that 2015 is looking like another very interesting year!

This third and final issue of *Words'Worth* for 2014 takes up some of the ideas and provocations from our state conference. The theme of the conference and this issue, **Great Expectations: stability and change in English teaching**, gives some idea of the complexities and challenges faced by English teachers who are trying to balance curriculum change, external accountabilities and policy mandates, with a commitment to excellent teaching and learning. I think that the contributions to this issue take up the call quite admirably.

Directly related to the conference are an edited text version of Anita Jetnikoff's wide-ranging and inspiring keynote address, as well as reflections and reviews of the day by Danielle Grove, Camilla Meyers, Grace Loyden, John Thomas, and Rhiannon French. We have the citations for Paul Sherman's life membership and Katie Lipka's Botsman award, as well as Katie's response. For those readers who were unable to join us on the day, these give a really solid account of what was a fabulous day.

Julie Arnold and Ray McGuire share their work on engaging with assessment standards and the Australian Curriculum, while Hannah Eldridge and Holly Stiles provide an engaging Senior English unit on adolescent identity. Natalie Fong also regales us with some highlights from the 2014 AATE-ALEA National Conference in Darwin.

Taking on a more poetic turn, Garry Collins provides some suggestions for teaching W.H. Auden's poem, *Musee des Beaux Arts*. Part B of Garry's article will be published in a later edition. Paul Sherman shares one of his poems, a moving and sobering piece. Rounding off the poetry, Peta Egan reviews the Australian Love Poems collection.

I think that you'll agree with me that this issue caps a really productive and engaging year of *Words'Worth*, which reflects the important work that English teachers do. We should make sure that we continue to take time to celebrate our profession, engage meaningfully in the broader policy discourse, and share our collective expertise and wisdom.

For our first issue in 2015, we are doing a special issue in tribute to Nea Stewart-Dore. The issue theme will be **Writing and Reading to Learn**, which was the title of Nea's influential 1986 book. For the issue we are looking for practical strategies (lessons, units, resources) that teachers are using in the English classroom. Please send contributions to me (stewart.riddle@usq.edu.au) by 13 March 2015.

Have a fabulous Summer!

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS: STABILITY AND CHANGE IN ENGLISH TEACHING: THE TEACHER AS CHAMELEON

Dr Anita Jetnikoff (QUT)

Keynote presentation for Annual State Conference, 2014 for pared back printing in *Wordsworth*.

The theme of this year's conference is stability and change: what has stayed the same and what is new?

Curriculum is always in a state of flux and so often the moves to 'reform' it are political rather than pedagogical. And I like Shane Koyczan's view of politics in his slam poem, 'This is my voice". He says "politics you know – "poli" meaning many and "tics", meaning blood sucking butt lumps" (Koyczan, 2011). So often in these days of accountability we focus on the learner, data and outcomes. I want to focus on the teacher and how we survive a constantly changing curriculum. I suggest we have to find effective aspects of pedagogical models of English teaching within the current framework and see what still works in practice. At the chalkface or "screenface" there are still teaching, learning and assessment practices in English surviving from the last few decades of pedagogical change; and there is also room for accommodating new practices; including the challenges of technology, its platforms and interfaces. Embracing and adapting the old and the new and working with each other productively may be the key to staying creative and passionately engaged with our subject area.

I want to focus on the teacher in this presentation, because we are working not in mechanistic systems but in communities of people. And as the erudite educator Sir Ken Robinson says in one of his TED talks:

There is no system in the world or any school in the country that is better than its teachers. Teachers are the lifeblood of the success of schools. But teaching is a creative profession. Teaching, properly conceived, is not a delivery system. You know, you're not there just to pass on received information. Great teachers do that, but what great teachers also do is mentor, stimulate, provoke, engage. (Creative Commons, 2009)

In spite of this affirmation of teachers' importance in education, English educators think we have to 'fit' whatever new policy model comes our way. The Australian curriculum seems to have tried to please every stakeholder in its process and as such has been formed without a single, unifying coherent theoretical basis. If we examine the plethora of changes in the pedagogical models in our repertoire, those of us who have been teaching across decades can see these mapped out. Here are some of the recent shifts in junior secondary in English (Qld) in the last decade and please forgive my use of acronyms: even understanding these makes us into chameleons. I assume all Queenslanders here will know most of these:

Qld syllabus 1994 (sociocultural or text-context)

2005 Open trial syllabus (sociocultural/ critical) (QSCC)

2008 ELs (sociocultural/ critical) (QSA)

2008 NAPLAN

2009 NCB – 'Shape of English' drafts and consultation processes

2011 ACARA planning in all states (QSA & EQ)

2012 AC:E implementation (QSA)

C2C in many Qld state schools

2014 QSA changes its name to QCAA

Now year 7 enters secondary sector

Future senior OP to external exams?

Senior AC:E

This is merely a linear map of some of the changes affecting us. The Australian Curriculum English (AC:E) is an online document, (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014) which means that even our framework is constantly changing. As each new state or subject area joins the National agenda, changes are made. Sometimes I feel like the coyote constantly chasing the roadrunner: knowing I'll never get to fully digest this fast moving feast. The net effect of some of the changes listed above is an increasing deprofessionalisation of teachers. Schools don't work without good teachers. The best work comes from passionate teachers who have the autonomy to interpret the curriculum. Certainly some of these imposed measures have been antithetical to that reality.

I know there is excellent work going on in schools, but much of it is in spite of standardised testing, rather than in response to it. Testing is useful if it is diagnostic and if measures to follow up on the results are taken. Research from the University of Melbourne shows that kids most likely to benefit from testing diagnostics are least likely to take the tests (Wyn, 2014). The pervasive culture of standardised testing makes education impersonal because the focus is on achieving performance statistics and retaining funding, rather than an interest in the individual's ability.

So here's an interesting idea; perhaps these things go together, not as a conspiracy theory but a combined strategy with the effect of eroding the higher order thinking skills we might wish to encourage in our students. We were told to expunge 'critical literacy' which if taught well allowed kids to think and read beyond a text's face value to its culturally constructed underlying ideas and then we introduced NAPLAN which allows for very little critical thinking as much of it caters to one right answer, a tick or a miss, or a formulaic text type. Literacy is defined broadly in the AC:E as "expanding the repertoire of English usage". Literacies, as we understand them are to do with the manner in which we receive and produce texts across the modes which can lead to our students attaining global citizenship skills. Such skills are certainly not tested by NAPLAN, which

ostensibly is our literacy measuring tool. When I go to my professional association presentations my ears burn with teachers complaining about how much time they are forced to spend on practicing nonsense NAPLAN tests that many of them do not believe in. These tests do little more than rank order, creating shame or pride. They construct a false competition over whose school is better; using empty metrics gathered from a single slice of time, which do not and cannot reflect the subtle and various nuanced learnings that occur in English classrooms across the country.

In the junior secondary context obviously the megalith of the ever changing online versions of the AC:E is new. With its elaborate architecture and its myriad of sub-strand elaborations, we might ask: if there is a unifying theoretical model of English in the AC:E? Are the pedagogical models still there in this new framework? The AC:E is as complex as the outcomes-based 2005 Queensland 1-10 English Syllabus (QSA, 2005), but without the explicit, unified coherent text-context language model that underpinned it. My solution to this is to superimpose the socio-cultural critical model or Green's 3D model, which makes sense, onto the architectural strands of the AC:E and the Senior Syllabus. It fits although it has to be teased out and explained to new teachers who may have no background in the theoretical models. I teach them about the history and the strengths and weaknesses of skills and drills of traditional grammar, and the cultural heritage model of the 60s and before; the personal growth model from which emerged the personal response journal; the Systemic Functional influence on genres and text types and register and the critical literacy model. These all espoused different pedagogical approaches to language and text. These are among our central concerns in English and were acknowledged in previous syllabus frameworks, which took the best of each approach into pedagogical practice.

With my Pre-service teachers I spend considerable time unpacking the vocabulary of the sociocultural-critical language, literacy and literature models onto the new curriculum frameworks of the Australian curriculum and the Senior Syllabus. I start with the aims.

Aim 1. learn to <u>listen</u> to, <u>read</u>, <u>view</u>, <u>speak</u>, <u>write</u>, <u>create</u> and reflect on increasingly complex and sophisticated spoken, written and <u>multimodal texts</u> across a growing range of <u>contexts</u> with accuracy, fluency and purpose. This description reflects a sociocultural model of English combined with multiliteracies if we note the AC:E's organisation of texts to be produced in schools revolves around "purposes and contexts" across all modes.

Aim 2: appreciate, enjoy and use the English language in all its variations and develop a sense of its richness and power to evoke feelings, convey information, form ideas, facilitate interaction with others, entertain, persuade and argue. This aim pertains to purposes of language and encompasses the personal growth model as well as the sociocultural approach to texts.

Aim 3: understand how <u>Standard Australian English</u> works in its spoken and written forms and in combination with non-linguistic forms of communication to <u>create</u> meaning. This is more of a conundrum, with the reference to Standard Australian English, however the focus on meaning making takes us back to the idea of the sociocultural model derived from Systemic Functional Linguistics, which always has meaning making at its heart. The Language strand is broadly defined as students: "knowing about the English language", which begs the question how can this best be taught?

Aim 4: develop interest and skills in inquiring into the <u>aesthetic</u> aspects of <u>texts</u>, and develop an informed <u>appreciation</u> of literature. This word *appreciation* seems to refer back to the Cultural Heritage model of literature which originally had the aim of civilising the populace through literature. The Literature strand is broadly defined as students: understanding, appreciating, responding to, analysing and <u>creating</u> literature.   The word *appreciation*, however, is qualified by "informed" which suggests a critical reading of literary texts.

The emphasis on aesthetics seems to be new, but it is not. In the senior syllabus, the writing team of the 2010 syllabus spent much time discussing this aspect of English. Is the reemphasising of this feature a result of pining for the Keats'

beauty and truth maxim, or a knee jerk reaction against critical literacy's perceived erosion of time spent on deconstructing rather than "appreciating literature"? Some teachers argued that exclusive focus on the critical eroded a focus on aesthetics and the language model which many understood as making good sense, was suddenly hard to find. Critical literacy at its best was always about transformation involving aesthetics (<u>Misson & Morgan, 2006</u>). In the AC:E critical and creative thinking go together as one of the general capabilities across the curriculum. Imagination and creativity have always been central to the concerns of English teachers, as we are the purveyors of narrative and the keepers and tellers of stories. Fiction is legitimate in our learning area and for this we can be eternally grateful. When I consider NAPLAN data I often think, "I wish this was fiction" and then I realise it almost is. I think English teachers are good at teaching aesthetics.

And where in the AC:E was the unified coherent theory around language which came from the theoretical underpinnings of SFL combined with the critical literacy concept of reading position? There is talk that we have gone beyond genre. But I am not sure we have. Our contextualized tasks are still framed in terms of "audience, purpose and context", all of which occur in the content elaborations of the AC:E and these are recognizable as belonging to the text-context model. I also think this is kind of framing of assessment tasks is absolutely necessary, as long as people keep in sight that students are producing particular text types for literate citizenship. As long as the formula doesn't preclude experimentation with form and application of imaginative playing with those forms to create something new, we are on the right track. That is what literature has always done. We need to keep sight of what we value as English teachers, one of which is surely the role of the imagination in our work.

What do we value as English teachers?

I asked this question at this point in the speech and was delighted to hear the responses. Beginning teachers will often respond by saying, "I want to make a difference" or "I love fiction

and literature". How do you respond when you've been out there for some time and feel a bit tired? For me, I think I value the role I can play in equipping our students to become 21st Century literate citizens, and part of that is to foster the role of the imagination. We need to keep sight of what we value so that the outside agenda does not squeeze the joy out of our profession. A culture of compliance is rarely creative.

What else is stable? Modelling and scaffolding is still important in allowing students to master certain texts. We hopefully don't abandon it because the context-text language model seems to be implicit rather than explicitly described. It is still there inherently in how we teach and how we design summative assessment tasks. I do not mean our students must mimetically reproduce a model but to provide a possible textual structure upon which they can then invent and embellish for a particular audience, purpose and context. The text-context model has a lot going for it. It allows a coat hanger upon which a nice tailored coat can be hung, or even a new, wild coat of many colours which plays and experiments with form and language, transforming a stimulus text. It allows the structure of a literary intervention to be recreated, so that the focus can be on the role of the imagination in playing with the language of the task or developing or transforming the form of it.

I was discussing recently with a Masters student, who has conducted an excellent study on explicit teaching across subject areas including English. It was interesting to see that although we think we are doing explicit teaching, we are sometimes hijacking the central purpose for which we do things. When this teacher had taught poetry, using the language of appraisal the year 8 students remembered the appraisal terms, but did not realise they were dealing with poetry and claimed not to have covered it in the curriculum. There is a danger here in overlaying the same linguistic system on everything and forgetting the aesthetic and imaginative purpose of the texts under study. This happened with critical literacy too and it became tedious for some to approach it in this way.

We seemed to purge the explicit underlying theory of the previous Syllabus and replace it with a diluted version with some vestiges of critical literacy concepts such as identities and representations and the long list: values, attitudes and beliefs instead of a perfectly good single word term like "Discourse." Just because the language of the Syllabus changes, it does not mean valid linguistic concepts have to suddenly be abandoned. We can use these systems judiciously in a balanced program across literature, language and literacy as defined by the AC:E.

In fact we are still adhering to the idea that certain texts have certain forms and generic patterns and conventions. This exists in the first two of the exit criteria of the Queensland Senior Syllabus and it is there in the content elaborations of the AC:E. Texts do not exist outside of a social context, so we can't abandon that model until someone comes up with something that says different things are happening with language. We are seeing new hybrid forms emerging in literature and in online spaces and hypertext allows for non-linear progressions of story lines and narrative conventions. Yet, when we ask students to write an extended short story we are still looking for certain language features, grammatical structures and narrative conventions. We are still evaluating whether the student has mastered, or at least has a certain handle on the manipulation of aesthetic features.

So while we are asking for patterns and conventions in mandated text-types in the syllabus, we are asking for genres, even if the categorisation of the range of texts no longer conforms to the original view of genres in Systemic Functional Linguistics. We don't want students to merely be writing mimetically and yet we have to give them the frame - or the coat hanger on which to hang the textual coat to extend my previous metaphor. We are delighted if the coat is either tailored well or has many creative colours and reflects 'flair'. This word is often mentioned informally to describe students' control or mastery of aesthetics. In the Standards Elaborations in both junior and senior secondary English in Queensland, we tend to

refer to "discernment". Certain students have it and show it in their writing although some never attain it. This control over language brings me to grammar, since there is a renewed focus on this aspect of textual features across current English frameworks.

So where do we stand on grammar?

We still cannot agree on how to teach this important aspect of linguistic mastery, even though many of us agree that it is important. Policy deems that we need to be teaching it, but there is no clarity or agreement on how best this should be done (Jones, Myhill, & Bailey, 2013). I am an advocate of teaching grammar and I teach it largely to a generation of students; many of whom didn't learn it because their teachers couldn't teach it, because they had not learnt it. This is a kind of negative "cultural reproduction" in pedagogical terms. Yet somehow miraculously, these people can read and write well enough to get though their degrees and function as literate citizens.

There is an awful lot of fear around grammar. It is a buzz word and it is an old one. Many of the rules of grammar harken back to the rules governing Latin, which is not English in its specificities of syntax, conjugational rules, its patterns or its use. I support the teaching of grammar in the context of the students own reading, speaking, writing and design. This is where the language resources of appraisal, the interpersonal aspects of functional grammar are very powerful, as they have been substantively shown to improve student's writing and their confidence in transferring reading to writing especially dealing with students' ability to effectively intensify descriptions, and use language effectively to appeal to emotions, delineate character and manipulate a reading. The interpersonal aspect of Functional grammar known as appraisal, for instance, has been shown to improve kid's writing in high stakes tests such as QCS (Ferguson, 2002). Knowledge of appraisal takes training and there are many teachers who function in classrooms with a rudimentary knowledge of grammar. Instead, these teachers are perhaps using an intuitive

understanding of what it is to write well thanks to a legacy of wide reading; that connection at least is well proven. Again I urge balance. Appraisal is a powerful set of linguistic tools for analysis and composition, but it does not have to be front and centre of everything in English.

Multimodal texts have altered what used to be familiar territory with the modes students are asked to access and create. With this in mind, writing has become "designing" (Kress, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) which was reflected in the Queensland Essential Learnings framework, but is given the more generic term "creating" in the AC:E. The implications for teachers here are that knowledge of visual grammars as well as mastery of and access to new technologies is becoming mandatory (Maun & Myhill, 2005). Schools are still catching up with this. In terms of storage and retrieval, we could perhaps be using secure forms of cloud technology. Interesting work being done in schools is often still submitted to panel on paper, which doesn't capture the magic of the original multimodal text. I asked in this speech if anyone out there was doing innovative multimodal things with texts and to my delight many people raised their hands.

Speaking with my state review panellist's hat on, however, there's a sameness to the senior folios because of the mandated text types, but there are so many more interpretations of those text types described in the syllabus than those presented in folios. Even the stimulus literary texts seem to be the same few novels and plays. I know there is much beautiful, effective multimodal work going on, but I wonder what else there could be? I wonder if we could push the boundaries more in terms of the interpretations of the mandated tasks so that as Kress suggested some years ago, we are "doing new things with texts" (2006). I don't accept the idea that there is no time to look at these in multimodal form on panel. Film, TV and New Media panellists evaluate digital texts on laptops all the time.

Constraints on word lengths account for certain kinds of print based text types. A complex hypertext or other multimodal text may not be best described by a word length. Do we

really have enough understandings of these new literacy and mulitmodal text types to be able to assess them beyond calling on a list of complementary features as just one aspect of the whole text? Pre-service teachers ask these kinds of questions and they are valid ones to ask. Also, we often ask students to create multimodal and mediated texts, when many of the professional complex models out there such as the digital novel, "Inanimate Alice", (Pullinger, 2006) are "transmedia" products of team work. A published novelist, Kate Pullinger and her collaboration with a skilled professional design team of more than a dozen people created "Inanimate Alice". If we ask students to create multimodal texts in response to such texts, the forms will most likely be much less professional? Is this English? I'm suggesting that Yes it is because it is about text and it is about language and we are doing literacy as we engage with such texts as readers. Just as we do not ask students to create novels, even though they read them. We can think about appropriate forms of response to such media using media.

Another concern is whether or not we have the skills as educators to teach these new forms or the time to learn them or the knowledge to create the conditions under which these sorts of texts can flourish. I'm hoping we can be more flexible about the way we construct and assess multimodal tasks. One solution is to use mentoring and talent within existing staff to deploy the skills that some teachers have to teach others. This can ensure that in-service is a shared enterprise rather than having an outside PD session that does not really get imbibed unless it pertains exactly to what teachers are currently doing in their classrooms. We know from research that the one-off model of PD does not really work (Jetnikoff & Smeed, 2012).

What has not changed is that there are no more hours in the day for all the extra things that we are expected to do now as English educators. Teachers who are constrained by the constantly changing curriculum and shifting educational context, are often too overwhelmed to be learning anything new with technology (Dezuanni & Jetnikoff, 2011). On a daily basis we deal with heavy teaching loads, large class sizes,

increased administration across technological platforms and preparation for centralised National and localised high stakes testing at all levels of the curriculum. All of this erodes time that could be devoted to creativity in the classroom (Dezuanni & Jetnikoff, 2011). We are increasingly held responsible for high stakes testing literacy outcomes and yet much of this has nothing to do with real literacy. This I think is the ability to move heterglossically through different contexts involving writing, reading, speaking, listening and processing all of those in the course of any given day through work, home and leisure pursuits many of which include technologies. As teachers in the midst of all this, do we even have time to read literature for leisure and pleasure?

Recently I was asked at another keynote at a school do we really need to be doing this multimodal or media work in English? Do we have time to do more than 'just-in-time' learning? English teachers, responsible for the school literacy programs are now becoming visual art teachers, design teachers, old basics such as spelling and punctuation and varied types of grammar knowledge, and new basics are required alongside each other. Teaching multiliteracies means we do need to teach students the multimodal texts that dominate our lives. Through learning to read critically and create with visual grammar, students can learn how media texts work on us, how they work the world and how all texts word the world.

We are doing new things with texts. This is what Literature has always been about. Stylistic invention and transgressing the forms that preceded them is par for the course in the history of the literary tradition. I wonder though if we have become somewhat reductionist in our thinking about the forms of text that are valued by our culture. We are we still assessing largely through writing. In junior secondary I know that the GC of ICTs across the curriculum means there is an impetus to include these kinds of texts in classrooms.

In practice English teachers know literacy is also about self-confident speakers and writers who understand the notion of voice and talking back

to a text – our democratic privilege in a country where freedom of speech is allowed. And what does the future hold for senior assessment, if to bring us in line with other states we are to move to more external assessment, possibly more like the junior secondary QCTs used to be, where schools design the tasks? Will this mean more teaching to tests at senior level? I have always been opposed to exams and in particular to those dedicated to standardised testing. I know we already spend time preparing for QCS, but there are implications for us as teachers if this is the case.

Do we still think that print alone is necessary but not sufficient as espoused at the turn of the millennium in the Literate Futures document? AC:E wants us to be embracing technology to teach literacy and yet the infrastructure isn't there to support effective use of the one to one ratio of computers to students. We have tools available but we are time poor in learning new technologies and we may lack the skills around the teaching of self-representation in online environments. Fear around exposing kids to "demons" accessing open interactive web 2.0 online platforms means many schools filter these and leave students to access them only on phones – which means no one is watching.

Technology demands for teachers across the curriculum are new, both in terms of policy and in the architecture of the AC:E. One-to-one laptops at least in the junior school are now prevalent, although I wonder if this changed our pedagogy in classrooms. We may be using repositories like the learning place as a storage and retrieval site. No doubt the state-run data management system needs new infrastructure. Ironically we use more paper than ever now, even though we are composing more and more on PCs and tablets. I think of the commercial TV morning show where Shaun Micallef was asked to comment on the generational uses of technology. David Campbell asked Micallef to comment on the "paperless society" to which he replied without missing a beat, "the paperless society, do you mean one without a pope?" In fact there are many discussions on all kinds of media suggesting it's a misguided notion

to assume that digital media is categorically greener. Now there is an issue for a unit on sustainability.

We do have to change our pedagogy to accommodate students' attention being centred on their phones, PCs or tablets rather than listening to a teacher. We have long given over our "authority" as the centre of knowledge in the classroom in assuming a pedagogy of group work and student centred learning, but the infrastructure of school still depends on a hierarchy of power focussed on people, not machines. There are all kinds of interesting digital experiments and creative applications to be deployed in the classroom, many of which were addressed in the last ETAQ PD which focussed on the visual and digital in classrooms. I have also written about many of these approaches over the last decade and am still excited about the possibilities for these platforms in classrooms.

Computers and tablets obviously offer more than just word processing tools. Interactive digital platforms, applications of gaming technology, accessibility to all kinds of information and stimulus material, leave the world and beyond open for exploration. The problem now becomes what to include and what to access and what to leave out. The obvious concerns around predatory behaviour online leaving our students open to exploitation constitute a kind of moral panic, but it has a real basis and it feeds other kinds of fears. One of these fears could be that young people know more about technology than many of us who've been in the game for a long time can know. And they can do more with it too. They are higher risk takers. Having been a champion of technology over the years, I have some personal 'rules of thumb.'

I am an advocate of using technology creatively to create and design, rather than as a fast, expensive typewriter with spell and grammar checks built in. I am sure many teachers agree with this position. Technology for its own sake can be counterproductive if it means students being chained to their PC or even doing activities using interactive online tools

in real time at the expense of talking with one another and processing ideas in class using their imaginations and real voices. Something gets lost in this I think. It may be the social aspect of classroom life that gets lost in the desire to bring the wider "interconnected" world in to the fragmented time offered by the digital now. Do we lose more than we gain, if young people lose the ability to actually communicate with one another and with elders and turn take in live interactions? Actually talking face-to-face and learning to listen to other's ideas and challenging those intellectually, imaginatively and with humour, can sometimes be lost when the interactive platform becomes the centre of the communication.

In a recent joint PD school project on using technology, one young teacher remarked, "mobile phones and tablets make things so easy", but the school was using neither in the curriculum. There is some sense of frustration that school policy militates against the use of this technology, blocks the chance to use it creatively and pedagogically. Students and teachers alike need to master technology to become competent, global citizens. Students have this in their personal literacy repertoires. They can do almost everything with their phones. I have heard 'tales' of students engaging in every other platform available to them on their phones, whilst the teacher reading the classic novel as they "followed". Indeed asking them to put them away for a two hour tutorial at university is like asking them to cut off an arm. In my "Literature in Secondary Teaching class" I modelled an Alan Ginsberg poem which is a modern adaptation of the 17 syllable haiku form, but about everyday subjects. I wrote and read to them: "Asking students to put their phones away is like severing a limb"; which was greeted with wry smiles and nervous twitters as hands wanting to reach for the ubiquitous phones began to jitter.

There's a shift occurring. The Facebook demographic for this social media site is much older than teens. When students' mothers are on Facebook, it may seem less cool than it once was. Many of my tertiary students use it to organise their study groups, although the more serious ones are using the 'Dropbox' application to transfer documents without the banter time that occupies some devotees of Facebook.

The share price of Twitter has fallen because they want to sell but no one wants to buy. Yet Facebook is supplanting Twitter in terms of its marketing value. Young people like the immediate gratification of the "Kik" and "Snapchat" apps on their phones because they can be transgressive with these. Personally I enjoy Instagram because, even before I became a film maker, I have always enjoyed the pleasure of playing with words and images together. I am also highly aware of data mining and I am careful not to "like" pics with brands in them and I refuse to "follow" anyone who is obviously advertising. My resistance to advertising sentiments is coming to the fore. Having said that I do not check my IG status in class!

I think we also need to ask about these platforms in terms of our English preserve, what kind of writing and shaping and what kind of reading and viewing is being done here? Blogs are touted as the new way to journal, however, the language deployed on many blogs is very informal and certainly does not model the standard Australian written English we are supposed to be modelling and assessing in the Australian curriculum. What our students don't always have is access to the powerful genres that will see them through tertiary education, and/or through working life. Here I mean more than the basic skills of literacy to write with some command of the language, to speak cogently, to be able to argue a case and the power to read and view critically, including questioning the reliability of the plethora of online platforms and social media sites on which many depend to stay informed about the world - that is if they do. We can teach them these things: we have the skills, knowledge and creative ability to allow them to master these text types as well as more imaginative ones. Like the fictional bionic man, "we have the technology".

Some years ago I attended a session called the "Future of the Book" at the State Library of Queensland. A collective gasp was raised when

the gentleman giving the talk suggested that very soon print-based texts would be outmoded and everyone would be reading on tablets. The majority of the attendees were librarians and this seemed anathema to them. Now much of what I read is on a tablet, although I still love to browse the shelves of the library and read books in print. There are distinct advantages to e-books, not the least of which is convenience and price of purchase. A late night hankering for a particular text will often see me searching online book stores and purchasing immediately - none of this slow ordering through bookstores and waiting while the print version is ordered or indeed is no longer available due its print run being terminated. Teachers can change the texts they use without the cumbersome "class set" copies managed through the library. E-books make literature affordable and accessible, provided we have the expensive tablets to view these on. ITunes cards make purchases easy for the students if the school is using tablet technology. I am a writer in margins and I love the fact that I can highlight sections of text, or make notes and then come back to them later if I want to think more about a particular idea. There is a lot to be said for e-books.

At this point in the keynote I played a digital story, the text of which I will insert:

The turtle and the book

No one medium alone can master the past:

So here's an equation I wish to impart

Information is not equal to knowledge.

Data is only smart or useful when

something good or truthful is done with it.

Tell the turtle that speed is what's important

and she'll look up with ancient eyes

and shake her wrinkled head at you before

closing her eyes and retreating

into her portable shelter.

She shuts herself up like an old finished book

to recall her first run to the ocean.

Just so, taking time to sit and read

may be a lost art left to elders, but I still

love the smell and feel of paper.

I still feel joy when I retreat into the world of words.

I am most at home when writing

cryptic insights on the crisp edges of tomes.

Just so my poems are always scribbled first by hand.

When the polemics die down over book or e-print

in the end it's just a portal for the story,

just a vessel for the words

 and what they might mean in the mystery

of one's own reading

So what are our solutions?

I seem to have spent considerable time outlining the challenges we face as teachers. Don't think for a minute that I am not at the chalkface or the screenface. I take very seriously my brief to prepare pre-service teachers to teach in schools and so I have to keep on top of every change before or as it happens so that they are prepared for when it happens out there, struggling as beginning teachers with the exhausting regime of schools as new work places. I absolutely applaud ETAQ and its beginning teachers' day. Every time this is run my students report back excitedly about what else they have learnt to prepare them to teach. So please let's continue that.

The solution to the hidden theory is that it has to be made explicit. I always tell my pre-service teachers, you can effectively modify your pedagogical practice if understand the theory that underpins it. If we don't know what drives change, and if we don't question it, we may as well return to the idea that all texts have one true way of meaning as Leavisites would have us believe. If that is the case, we may as well deliver our lessons with sets of isolated little exercises that keep people entertained or busy, but which don't particularly empower students to be better thinkers, or better writers or speakers or

purposeful, creative users of English.

The solution to fear of technology use is to experiment and to share. I am not a "digital native" but a digital traveller. I love to play with technology and everything I have learnt I have done by experimenting with it. One of the best aspects of working with young people is what they teach me about technology. Experienced teachers can tap into young teachers' technological familiarity to get things moving. Real mentoring, like learning, works best if there is a genuine exchange between mentor and mentee.

What is a functioning, literate 21st Century citizen able to do? We are living in a time of immense and rapid change within and outside of formal educational contexts. Everyone has an opinion on what literacy is and policy documents are driven by political rather than educational agendas. There are immense challenges still in front of us when we are under so much pressure to perform to these imposed agendas. Many of us are reeling from the multifarious demands, and the public (mis) perception of literacy. English teachers have taken a media and public perception bashing in recent years. Can we do it all? Many educators feel we can't, but it's partly because we also live in a culture of compliance whose professionalism is under scrutiny. At what point do we say "Enough! Trained educators are the ones who know best how to educate, we are a body of professionals. Back off and let us teach".

To survive in this time of constant change, I think we need not just to equip our students to become 21st Century literate citizens, but also to foster our own and our students' imaginations. We need to find the balance in our teaching between structure and play; and in our lives between work, relationships and self-care. These are some of the things I personally and professionally value about being a teacher. It is important to keep sight of the value of human experience and what we bring to the table as teachers of English. As the great physicist Einstein said, "Creativity is intelligence having fun". So let's stay creative and continue to share what we value. This is an approach that can keep us motivated and fulfilled as teachers of English.

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KATIE LIPKA
St Laurence's College, South Brisbane

CITATION
for
Peter Botsman Memorial Award 2014

Katie Lipka is an outstanding teacher of English whose innovative curriculum design and delivery encourage students to fully engage in a range of traditional and contemporary literacies.

As a classroom teacher at St Laurence's College, Katie has shown exemplary dedication to her students, to the school, to her colleagues and to the teaching of English. She is a teacher whose love of English is seen every day in her classroom. She is a passionate, engaging and enthusiastic teacher, who models inclusive education in her classroom practice and has been both very generous in sharing her practice with other teachers and very active in curriculum development.

Katie highly values professional development and has shared her classroom practice at both State and National Conferences, showcasing the work she has done on including Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the English Curriculum, allowing students to develop a stronger appreciation of Indigenous Australian culture, past and present, their nation's history and the value of hearing the stories of Australia's "first families". Katie has made invaluable connections between local elders and our school community in an endeavour to enhance student understanding of the Turrbal and Jagera peoples. Katie also has a keen interest In Native American and Environmental Literature.

Katie is, indeed, a most worthy recipient of a Botsman Award in the school level division.

RESPONSE TO PRESENTATION OF PETER BOTSMAN AWARD

Katie Lipka at 2014 ETAQ Annual State Conference

Thank you to Fiona Laing for that very kind introduction, to ETAQ for this award, and to Peter Botsman, its namesake, who inspired this award through teaching.

I'm going to begin in a very clichéd way and say that I'm extremely humbled to be standing up here; in part, because the statistic for teachers entering the profession – on average now I believe – is that they 'last' three to three and a half years. I've made it twice past that threshold to seven years, which is quite exciting, but it's really nothing in contrast to, for example, my Head of Senior English at St Laurence's College, Mary Maroske, who surpassed that threshold a long time ago. I do not say this to poke fun at the woman who nominated me without my knowing; I say it out of incredible admiration and respect for the teachers who inspire and mentor us, because they carry with them such a wealth of experience and knowledge about curriculum, but also about how students work best; and without Mary as my mentor, I really wouldn't have done what I have with the Indigenous Literature Project at St Laurence's. So, Mary, thank you for everything that you have done for me and your staff, and, no doubt, will do for us in the future.

To the St Laurence's staff, some of whom are also here today – thank you Webby and Varna: we all know that you cannot teach in isolation; it is not a profession in which you can succeed without your team; and we manage to get through, term by term, week by week, day by day, *together*. So, this belongs to you as well. Thank you very much.

To a couple of other teachers, who surpassed that seven year threshold some time ago: one I nearly ran over the other day (at Indooroopilly Shopping Centre) – my 'most favourite English teacher in all the world', Mrs Gina Brosnan of Brigidine College Indooroopilly, who is not here today, but who also reminded me – as we struck up a conversation, and got in the way of every other car – of Mrs Redhead and Mrs Elsworthy, and the wonderful Mrs Vann; whose hair fell down past her hips; who put Oodgeroo Noonuccal and Jack Davis in front of me for the first time in Year 12, and completely displaced my understanding of what it means to be an Australian. Thank you.

Thank you to a few others, if you'll indulge me: to my husband, who is not here today (who is, wisely, avoiding more 'teacher talk' by enjoying eggs, bacon and coffee with his brother). He keeps me teaching, whether he likes it or not, and has done so for the past seven years. Thank you also to my parents, who are here today and have always supported me in my education, and also in educating others.

Recently, I was sitting at the dinner table with them and my husband, having a conversation about Lauries and teaching (and probably boring them all to death). I asked my father whether or not I could borrow his accordion. It's this old, Italian piano accordion, with this amazing green shell; and these ivory keys that "clack", so attractively, when you hit them. As all Polish people know, all *good* Polish boys know how to play the accordion, which is why my Dad has one. I asked, "Can I please take it to school, because I really want to show my Year 12s this instrument?" They are studying *The Book Thief* at the moment.

If you're one of the eight million plus people across the world who have also read this novel, you'll know that the accordion is a symbol of hope and artistic expression in the text, at a time when Hitler and the Nazi regime were trying to cull it as best they could; which is why Liesel Meminger, the protagonist, has to steal words back. Kindly, Dad agreed,

and I put his piano accordion at the back of our classroom. The Year 12 boys – it's hard teaching boys literature; many of you know this I'm sure – were so excited, they couldn't wait until the end of the lesson to get the case open. I indulged them a little early and they didn't want to touch it, because it was too precious. They asked, "Can you just put it on and show us how it works?" Well, I can't play it, but I awkwardly pulled it apart, freaking out at the thought that I might break it.

It made some sounds as I pressed the clacking keys, and they said, "Well, we get it now." I said "What are you talking about?" to which they replied (rather smugly), "Aw, if you'll allow us to *personify* for a moment, Miss: it breathes." I was chuffed. "Very good," I said, "that's wonderful!", but they weren't satisfied: "No, no, no – you don't get it, do you?" I said, "Come

on then; explain it to me." Their reply: "Hans Hubermann has an instrument that breathes for [Sorry – I get quite emotional when I talk about their saying these things!]…Hans Hubermann has an instrument that breathes for those people in the basement, when they are sitting there holding their breath, being bombed out of their own country. It makes so much sense that Zusak would choose this instrument."

And so, to *our* students, who kept us going through those seven years and past them, and who aren't here today, thank you very much too.

I really hope you all have a fantastic day at the conference, and that we learn more from each other, so that we can assist our students as best we can in their use and love of English.

Thank you.

CITATION

Paul Sherman

Life Membership Award 2014

One of ETAQ's foundation members, Paul Sherman was already well established as a highly successful classroom English teacher when the (almost) oldest member of the current ETAQ Management Committee did practice teaching at Banyo State High School (now Earnshaw College) in 1968. After a stint as a cadet journalist and study at the University of Queensland, Paul began work as a high school teacher of English and drama in the late 1950s. During his career with the Queensland Department of Education he taught in state high schools at Murgon, Banyo, Kedron and Pine Rivers and also served as a lecturer at what was then Kedron Park Teachers College.

Paul was an inspiring classroom teacher and his students benefited from his passion for, and deep knowledge of literature. In addition, he was able to bring to bear the special perspectives of being both an accomplished and experienced actor and a published poet and playwright. Students who had Paul Sherman as an English teacher were very fortunate indeed.

Paul is now long retired from full-time teaching but he continues to generously donate his time to present one-man shows that bring literature to life in classrooms for today's students. Many schools have had their English programs significantly enriched by Paul's lively performances of Australian poetry and scenes from Shakespeare. His enthusiasm, talent and deep knowledge coupled with friendliness and an engaging sense of humour ensure the active participation of students and bring the words of classic texts off the page and into action.

Paul has been a long time member and supporter of The English Teachers Association of Queensland and has been a regular contributor to its journal *Words'Worth*. Just as many individual students over many years have gained from Paul's work, the profession of English teaching in Queensland as a whole has been richer for the high quality contribution of this outstanding English teacher. He richly deserves the award of ETAQ Life Membership.

ETAQ STATE CONFERENCE

Camilla Meyers
Riverside Christian College, Maryborough

"Teachers are chameleons," rang in my ears for hours after hearing the wise words of Dr Anita Jetnikoff on Saturday, 16th August at ETAQ's Annual State Conference.

Jetnikoff was the first speaker for the crowd of exuberant English educators that covered the floor of Lourdes Hill College. Not only did the crowd hear about Jetnikoff's crush on Sir Ken Robinson and laugh at her Roadrunner and Coyote metaphor – we sat poised in deep discussion when she asked, "What do we value as teachers of English?" The audience was abuzz of conversation; it was agreed that "texts shape student's opinions and beliefs", "teacher passion is noticed by students" and the "imaginations of children must be fostered." This conversation left an aroma of enthusiasm, which filled the participants with excitement for the rest of the day's offerings.

After being encouraged by Jetnikoff, we strode across the college to our first lecture. This is where I saw my colours change; poetry in my classroom was a drab shade of corduroy brown but Adam Davy and Simon Kindt had some very exciting perspectives that refreshed my dated pallet. *Over their Voices we Stretch: Breathing Life into Student Poetry* shared a liberating message - each student needs to have his or her perception of poetry challenged. As teachers, we should be encouraging students to engage with poetry's transformative and communicative potential and give each student a voice. To change the perception of poetry in their classroom, Davy and Kindt embedded slam poetry into their units at Kelvin Grove State College and were blown away at the creativity possessed by students. Both men shared some of the poems written by members of the college, which empowered teachers in the audience to breathe life into their own work programs.

Fiona Laing's *Creating Media Animals who 'Consume' with Care* set us 'chameleons' two

goals: to understand what a modern (post-modern) English media unit should investigate and to appreciate the challenges, rewards and responsibilities of analysing news in the online environment. This segment gave educators an outline of how to structure an analytical media unit; resources that could be used to scaffold learning and an idea for a multi-modal assessment task. Again, the creativity of the students was astounding when it came to the multi-modal presentation quality. A resource that was mentioned in the presentation that I have since investigated was Russel Brand's *The Trews*, which has been outlined as "give[ing] you the true news so you don't have to invest any money in buying newspapers that charge you for the privilege of keeping your consciousness imprisoned in a tiny box of ignorance and lies." This quote by Brand, I think, really embodies what Fiona Laing was trying to share with her students within the unit and with the audience of educators.

Over the course of the day, my English teaching colours changed from a calming blue after listening to Anita Jetnikoff; a bright and invigorating orange following the poetry slam and then to a shade of grey after hearing about the black and white of the news media.

The next Monday, I set off writing a list of to dos and how tos with the information that was shared from the Annual State Conference. I can't wait to implement these great ideas across my college (I also just want to add slam poetry to everything I do).

Thankyou to ETAQ for a fantastic seminar – as a first year member I found the experience to be engaging, encouraging and filled with excitement. Needless to say, I can't wait to participate in the 2015 event.

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD: SWEATING ON THE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS OF THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: ENGLISH

Julie Arnold with Ray McGuire

Introduction

The initial implementation of the Australian Curriculum:English (AC:E) in 8-10 was hectic hard work. Digesting the new syllabus document, negotiating with Education Queensland's Curriculum-to-Classroom resources, and then delivering a quality curriculum in our school demanded an enormous professional exertion. Afterwards, having caught our collective breaths, we turned our attention more closely to the refinement of assessment instruments and the consistent application of standards across our suite of tasks. Honestly, this was our starting point: a hodgepodge of criteria sheets borrowed or cobbled together from the C2C documents and the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) Standards Elaborations (previously LASDs, but neither version was available in time for our curriculum implementation). Anecdotal information suggests that in other schools, practices have also included retaining criteria sheets from pre-AC:E tasks, applying Senior English standards to Year 10, or wholly adopting either the C2C rubrics or the QSA standards elaborations. All of these run the risk of circumventing the necessity for teachers to engage closely with their syllabus document to really grasp the learning expectations at each level and communicate those to students. Our challenge at Corinda State High School has been to:

- develop a suite of task-specific A-E criteria sheets that reflect the Achievement Standards of the AC:E and the learning goals of each unit; and

- engage teachers (and ultimately students) in authentic and productive dialogue about these standards as they appear in actual student work.

To date, this has not been a straightforward assignment. We want to be faithful to the Achievement Standards described in the AC:E, but these are qualitatively different from those of our previous syllabus documents and require close attention if we are to really understand and apply them. Moreover, the assumption that our various authorities in Education Queensland (EQ) and the QSA would provide us with a formula for designing quality task-specific criteria sheets on a five point scale was incorrect.

The solution offered here is based on nearly two years of exploring and experimenting - writing, implementing, reflecting and rewriting. We're not done yet, and we won't be until the end of next year, but we're cautiously optimistic we have a process that works.

Reading this paper

Appreciating what we've attempted to do here requires some knowledge of two important background references:

1. Australian Curriculum – especially Years 7-10 Achievement levels and Annotations of Year 8 Portfolios http:// www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/english/ Curriculum/F-10#level8; and

2. Queensland Studies Authority Standard elaborations, especially Year 8 http://www. qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/ac_eng_ yr8_se.pdf.

Part A establishes a rationale for distancing ourselves from a generic application of criteria and standards in favour of a more authentically task-specific, albeit strenuous, approach. It

attempts to resolve some issues related to the translation of AC:E Year 8 achievement standards into useful, task-specific criteria sheets. This rationale has informed the teaching of a Year 8 poetry task, our prototypical unit, and its accompanying criteria sheet described in Part B. The approach has been trialled in the classroom by English HOD Julie Arnold and Corinda SHS English teachers. Some advice on the kind of classroom activities needed to capitalise on the approach is also included in Part C.

Part A — Rationale, AKA The Problem

Accommodating the AC:E achievement standards

Across Years 7–10, Achievement Standards indicate the quality of learning students should typically demonstrate by a particular point in their schooling. They describe the extent of knowledge, the depth of understanding and the sophistication of skills that would indicate the student is well placed to commence the learning required at the next level of achievement. (Refer to Appendix 1.)

Secondary school teachers are faced with quite a challenge in working with AC:E achievement standards to adapt, identify and maintain a meaningful continuity across Years 7–10. In some respects, a more consistent pattern underpinning the AC:E Years 7–10 achievement level sequence would make it easier to do justice to it. For example, while at Year 7 we have the statement:

Students <u>create</u> *structured and* **coherent** <u>texts</u> *for a range of purposes and* <u>audiences,</u>

There isn't any mention of the term 'coherence' at levels Year 8 and 9. One might have expected key concepts like 'grammatical' and 'lexical cohesion' (as defined in the ACARA English Glossary) to be in evidence at all year levels.

Awareness of the context-text framework familiar to Queensland teachers helps address the coherence issue because context-text relationships are firmly embedded throughout the Content Descriptors (Language, Literature, and Literacy) of the AC:E. In processing ideas

and information students are involved in making, evaluating, and reconstructing meaning and learning how to operate language systems in cultural and social contexts.

Historically in Queensland, the accepted practice in assessing student texts has been to order specific task criteria sheets clearly according to a context-text framework, that is, in terms of: contextual (cultural and social); textual (structure); and language features. There is strong evidence of this pattern in the Language content strand in the AC:E. (Refer Appendix 2.) As shown later in Part B, these patterns and terms proved important in structuring our prototype - the poetry task criteria assessment sheet. A strong, logical framework for ordering criteria is vital for the effective production of marking schema, and also in supporting teachers to use them in the classroom. Without such a framework, a workable pattern would be elusive and criteria sheets beyond the prototype would quite literally fall apart.

AC:E and its notion of a Student Portfolio

AC:E achievement standards define a 'satisfactory' standard of achievement at different year levels. The AC:E has made available annotated portfolios of student tasks with accompanying texts that demonstrate above and below a satisfactory standard. The following extract summarises its approach in annotating student portfolio tasks:

> Each portfolio comprises a collection of students' work illustrating evidence of student learning in relation to the achievement standard. At every year level there are three portfolios illustrating satisfactory, above satisfactory and below satisfactory achievement in relation to the standard. Together as a portfolio, the samples provide evidence that cover all aspects of the achievement standard unless otherwise specified.

Queensland teachers are experienced with the use of student portfolios as a tool both for learning and assessment. They serve a practical purpose, in that they are a home for student

work. However, they are also important sites for discussions about standards – between and amongst students, teachers, parents, and authorities beyond the school. We are well accustomed to compiling, discussing and even annotating student portfolios.

Table 1 below compares annotations from the ACARA site's Year 8 Portfolio Task 2 ("Response to Literature – The Angry Kettle") to 'satisfactory' and 'above satisfactory' achievement.

Table 1: annotations on a selected year 8 Response to Literature text, 'The Angry Kettle'.

'Satisfactory' comments	'Above satisfactory' comments
Chooses a simile to orientate readers to the difficult situation which is the basis of the plot. *Illustrates the point being made with specific examples, using* **evaluative language** *for emphasis to describe specific attributes which make the hobbies disturbing, for example '10 strong collection of teddies', 'giant deodorant can' and 'nine hundred dollar vintage piñata'.* *Sets up the quest at the heart of the complication phase of the story with the adjective 'normal', as opposed to 'creepy'.* *Uses similes to humorous effect, for example 'like the grammar police', 'like a human dishwasher', in a story which has a serious point to make.* *Creates an interpretation of 'The Angry Kettle' which reflects its theme and includes a satisfying resolution.* *Understands the use of punctuation conventions, including quotation marks in dialogue.*	*Piques readers' interest with the introduction of the kettle as a character.* *Chooses third person narration to tell the story from the point of view of a particular character.* *Uses punctuation to contribute to meaning, for example the semicolon shows relationship between clauses and ideas within the same sentence.* *Uses a simile to demonstrate the power emanating from this supposedly inanimate object.* *Builds character through detail, for example 'showing, not telling'.* *Uses dialogue effectively, including upper-case font, to convey character's increasing frustration.* *Uses evaluative adjectives and adverbs to express delight in the kettle's appearance, for example 'the most phenomenal, amazingly shiny kettle', 'the brand new, shiny kettle'.* *Uses humour, for example simile, choice of vocabulary, hyperbole, which contributes to characterisation and tone.* *Controls the structure of the narrative, including the resolution, suggesting that more is to come.*

Receptive modes (listening, reading and viewing)

By the end of Year 8, students <u>understand</u> how the selection of text structures is influenced by the selection of language mode and how this varies for different purposes and audiences. Students <u>explain</u> how language features, images and vocabulary are used to <u>represent</u> different ideas and issues in texts.

Students <u>interpret</u> texts, questioning the reliability of sources of ideas and information. They <u>select</u> evidence from the text to show how events, situations and people can be represented from different viewpoints. They listen for and <u>identify</u> different emphases in texts, using that understanding to elaborate upon discussions.

Productive modes (speaking, writing and creating)

Students <u>understand</u> how the selection of language features can be used for particular purposes and effects. They <u>explain</u> the effectiveness of language choices they use to influence the audience. Through combining ideas, images and language features from other texts, students show how ideas can be expressed in new ways.

Students create texts for different purposes, selecting language to influence audience response. They make presentations and contribute actively to class and group discussions, using language patterns for effect. When creating and editing texts to create specific effects, they take into account intended purposes and the needs and interests of audiences. They <u>demonstrate</u> understanding of grammar, <u>select</u> vocabulary for effect and use accurate spelling and punctuation.

The annotations certainly provide worthwhile insights into the qualities of the two student texts, especially so in the case of the 'above satisfactory' text where there is a good deal more text to talk about. However, it is difficult to tell specifically from these annotations to what degree the texts do justice to the Year 8 AC:E 'satisfactory' achievement standard. One might have expected the wording of this standard to be much more explicit in the text annotations, even though the standard is, by design, to be illustrated across a number of texts.

Further, while the 'above satisfactory' comments describe aspects of the text, and perhaps implicitly contain an 'above' standard, they don't really define a standard as such. As the annotations are, they certainly won't provide much help to Queensland teachers in delineating and elaborating a distinction between A and B standards. The same can be said for levels 'below' satisfactory.

The QSA has translated the AC:E achievement standards into A-E standards matrices

Queensland teachers are obliged to report on student work at different year levels in terms of five levels of achievement (A-E). To help them do this, the QSA has developed a system of Standard Elaborations (SEs) at different year levels to assist in:

- making judgments on a five-point scale based on evidence of learning in a folio of student work

- planning an assessment program and individual assessments

- developing task-specific standards

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QSA January 2013 revised draft
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It needs to be acknowledged that A-E Standard Elaborations are a challenge to design. At C level they must obviously be briefer than but encapsulate the essence of the AC:E standard. Simultaneously, they must be capable of spawning task-specific year level criteria and standards sheets. The following discussion outlines how and why the Corinda Year 8 task criteria sheet in Part B has been developed differently. It takes as its direct starting point an AC:E Year 8 Achievement Standard and has more detail in it than one might expect if it were derived from a QSA SE. It acknowledges and adapts, rather than rejects QSA SE thinking.

Defining Criteria-Based Assessment

The belief underlying the development of the Part B A-E criteria and standards sheet is that it must be an essential part of teaching and learning as well as assessment. To be of optimum use it needs to incorporate appropriate content from the AC:E and be capable of setting up an ongoing, responsive, responsible, and productive dialogue (in language that teachers are familiar with) about the quality of student work. This dialogue needs to begin at the start of a unit and continue throughout.

Queensland experience has demonstrated that it is a very difficult challenge to find criteria and descriptors that adequately describe

achievement standards across five (A-E) levels of achievement in a task. However, having teachers work with and assess student texts over forty or so years under a system of school based assessment has produced an extensive language base for talking about text features and their quality. It has created the basis for an ongoing and meaningful dialogue, which must involve teacher sharing, discussing, critiquing and annotating texts.

Consider the following distinction between standards and criteria below by Royce Sadler in his paper (1987) on criteria based assessment:

- criteria – those properties, dimensions or characteristics by which student performance is appraised

- standards – those fixed points along a continuum representing qualitative differences in performance that succinctly convey the required quality of, or features in student work.

First, the criteria have to be identified, then standards on the various criteria specified.

Problematising the SEs

At face value, the QSA SEs do meet the requirements of a five-point standards-based system. Indeed, the most expedient approach for time-poor English faculties is certainly to conduct a (hurried? perfunctory?) contextualisation of the SEs for the purposes of producing a suite of criteria sheets. Such an approach will easily satisfy our institutional accountability requirements, but it is limited in its capacity to:

- reflect the Achievement Standards of the AC:E and the learning goals of each of our units;

- inspire authentic and productive dialogue about learning and the standard of student work.

The SEs ultimately do provide additional clarity about using the Australian Curriculum achievement standard to make judgments on a five-point scale, but that clarity comes at the cost of accuracy, of authenticity. The SEs

seem insufficiently married with the AC:E Achievement Standards, or, if a case can be made that they are, then relying on them certainly runs the risk of distancing teachers from the parent standard.

Furthermore, the descriptors themselves are not sufficiently precise. The most obvious example is the term 'discerning' which is defined in the SE glossary as 'showing good judgment to make thoughtful choices'. This doesn't fully capture the word's subtlety and depth of meaning as an A level standard descriptor. Other Oxford dictionary definitions of 'discerning' as 'distinguish/see the difference between/ keenness of perception/penetrating insight' provide a first clue that there may be value in using synonyms as alternatives. As English teachers, we are lovers of language and its potential. Such richness will always be important to us.

Nonetheless, a standards descriptor like 'discerning' is still useful as an overarching term to describe what an A student can do and we need to assume that as a standards descriptor it can be applied to Year 8 as well as Years 9 and 10 because it is the degree of difficulty of AC:E Content that increases from one year level to the next. However, it may not really be good practice to apply it to all A level criteria at every year level. Aside from the precision argument above, the sheer repetitiveness of the term doesn't inspire focused and rich discussion of what students have done and are yet capable of doing. It may be more fruitful to tease out synonyms and tailor them to suit different criteria, and to use synonyms selectively depending on the task. The QSA catch-all use of 'effective' (i.e. capably meets the described requirement) in its Year 8 SE B column runs the risk of being limiting in the same way as the use of 'discerning'.

To use 'satisfactory' as the basis for a C standard on a continuum would be unsatisfactory because it is values laden and doesn't fit well with formal assessment. The QSA sidesteps this by omitting a descriptor, e.g. "analysis of relevant ideas, information and evidence…" It is, however, possible to find terms synonymous

with 'satisfactory' which can be used to elaborate the standard, for example, 'basic, straightforward, essential, fundamental, elementary'**.** This practice has been adopted in the criteria sheet Part B.

Some more precise descriptors

The components of the matrix, Table 2 below, help to inform the construction of the Year 8 poetry task criteria sheet in Part B. Our contention is that they allow teachers to make judgments about student texts more systematically and in a more transparent way for students.

In accord with Smith, Sadler, Davies (2009, p3), the rows used in Table 2 set out the dimensions of the performance upon which teacher judgments will be focused. Performance *standards* are set out across column heads of the matrix and each row corresponds to one characteristic or *criterion* which conveys an appropriate standard.

As indicated below, the practice adopted in the Part B criteria sheet has been to define an overarching continuum around degrees of the word 'effective'. In this respect it departs from the QSA SE matrix.

Table 2: Criteria and standards

	Standards continuum				
Criteria	*Level 1* *Very effective*	*Level 2* *Effective*	*Level 3* *Reasonably effective*	*Level 4* *With some effectiveness*	*Level 5* *With a little effectiveness*
Ideas and information	Select, organise and synthesise **very detailed relevant information about** the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples...	Select, organise and synthesise **detailed relevant information about** the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples...	Select, organise and **combine basic** relevant information about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples...	Select, organise and **combine limited** relevant information about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples...	Select, organise and combine **very limited, often irrelevant** information about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples...
Text structure	**Make discriminating use of an analytical text structure…**	**Make proficient use of an analytical text structure…**	**Straight-forward use of an analytical text structure…**	**Limited use of an analytical text structure…**	**Very limited use of an analytical text structure.**
Language features	*Make* **discriminating** *use of an extensive r**ange** of relevant vocabulary*	*Make* **proficient** *use of a wide-**range** of relevant vocabulary*	*Make use of a-**range** of relevant vocabulary*	*Make use of a **restricted range** of relevant vocabulary*	*Make use of a **very restricted** range of relevant vocabulary*

Providing synonyms (*e.g. substantiate, very detailed, etc., as below*) is also helpful in creating a criteria sheet that is highly task-specific.

A very effective	B effective	C reasonably effective	D with some effectiveness	E with little effectiveness
(e.g. discerning/ discriminating) + substantiate, very detailed; extensive range, very well developed…)	(e.g. capable/ proficient) + detailed; wide range, well developed	(e.g. basic/ adequate/ fundamental/ straightforward)	(e.g. limited, restricted)	(e.g. very limited, very restricted)

In her paper (1986: p32) Findlay makes a point relevant to Table 2:

> The terms used to denote different standards associated with different exit levels are also general in nature. 'Detailed' and 'high degree', for example, have no intrinsic meaning. They need to be defined. Enormously diverse interpretation by schools is possible with such general terms. For the purposes of comparability, more precision is necessary.

Picking up on her point, the distinction between 'very detailed' and 'detailed' in Table 2 might seem fraught. The problem has been raised by teachers in discussing student texts. While it would be possible to make the meaning of a term like 'very detailed' more specific at A level by, for example, quantifying selected features of poetry texts as a requirement, it would hardly be desirable. It would increase the size of a task criteria sheet dramatically. It is, however, important for teachers to be aware of the problem and communicate standards very clearly to students.

Part B — A process for translating an achievement standard into a specific task criteria sheet as part of a student portfolio, AKA The Solution

Step 1 – Examine the task and the learning goals for the unit:

Compile an anthology from a range of literary texts (primarily poetry and/or song, but you may include short excerpts of other texts) by and about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures.

To do this, you should:

• Decide what aspect/s of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander history or culture you wish to represent in your selection, e.g.: understandings about Country; Land, Sea and Sky; dispossession.

• Select a minimum of 4 texts to include in your anthology.

• Write an introduction (persuasive exposition) for your collection that justifies your selection and invites an audience to read it. The introduction should demonstrate an understanding of the values in the literature and the way language choices in one or more of the texts construct representations of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

• Compile and present your anthology, including an original title, to an audience of your peers in another class.

NB: You will participate in a peer evaluation of the anthology of a student in another class and later present a dramatic performance of a selected poem, either individually or with your peers.

The task requires such key understandings as: What is poetry and how is it structured? How does poetry represent issues, cultures and identity? How does poetry express passion and feeling? Why is poetry essential to society, English, and the individual? Examples of poems include "Proud Murri" by Dan Davis, "Commonplace" and "Time is Running Out" by Oodgeroo Noonuccal, "An Elder's Passing" by Johnathon Hill, "Aboriginal Injustice" by Paul Buttegieg, "The Parable" by Ali Cobby Eckermann, "My Sitting Down Place" by Gail Kay, "From little things big things grow" by Paul Kelly, and "Song of the Torres Strait Islands".

The task is broadly tailored into particular phases that fit within the stages of an exposition genre – **Thesis** (hook, attention raiser), **Arguments** (theme, emotional impact, evaluation), **Reiteration** (review, recommendation). The most challenging part is to write an introduction that: justifies the selection; demonstrates student understanding of evaluative language choices; and persuades the reader to read the poems.

Step 2 – Adapt the AC:E Year 8 achievement standard

The procedure adopted in developing the poetry task criteria sheet is to contextualise the Achievement Standard for the task at hand, including selected 'receptive' criteria relevant to the productive (written) task. This follows the practice adopted in the AC:E portfolio task annotations. Added bits show how original AC:E wording might be altered to fit this task. This looks tricky, but it's actually the easy bit.

> **Relevant Receptive** modes (listening, reading and viewing)

> By the end of Year 8, students **understand how the selection of** ~~text structures~~ (an expository text structure) **is influenced by the selection of language** mode **and how this varies for** (an audience of their peers) ~~different purposes and~~ audiences. **Students** explain* **how** language features, **images and vocabulary** (in poetry) **are used to represent different ideas and issues** (related to the histories and cultures

of Australian Indigenous peoples) ~~in texts~~. ***in written as well as spoken modes**

Students interpret texts, questioning the reliability of sources of ideas and information. **They select evidence from** ~~the text~~ (selected poems by Indigenous poets) **to** show how **events, situations and people can be represented from different** viewpoints. They listen for and identify different emphases in texts, using that understanding to elaborate upon discussions.

Relevant Productive mode - writing

Students understand how **the selection of (expository) language features can be used for** particular (informative and persuasive) **purposes and effects.** They explain the effectiveness of language choices they use to influence the audience. **Through combining ideas, images and language features from other texts, students show how ideas can be expressed in** new ways (i.e. through an informative-persuasive exposition).

Students create texts for different purposes, **selecting language to influence audience (their peers')** response. They make presentations and contribute actively to class and group discussions, using language patterns for effect. **When creating and editing texts to** create specific (print and visual) **effects, they take into account intended purposes and the** needs and interests of (peer) **audiences**. They **demonstrate** understanding of grammar (above and below the sentence)**, select** (evaluative) **vocabulary for** effect **and** use accurate **spelling and punctuation** (to support meaning).

Added sections in *italics* show how the achievement standard can be adapted to suit the sample task, while key statements are **bolded** and words that help delineate the standard are underlined. The bolded statements in the Year 8 AC:E achievement statement above would be termed 'criteria'. The underlined words, to some extent, describe standards:

understand how; explain how; select evidence; show how; different viewpoints; understand how particular purposes and effects; combine in new ways; create for different purposes; influence audience response; create specific effects; demonstrate understanding of grammar; select vocabulary for effect; use accurate spelling and punctuation

Step 3 – Disaggregate the rewritten achievement standard to create a C standard

Of course, this bit was hard. The table below is the hindsight version. It shows to what degree 'C' level criteria above align with AC:E satisfactory achievement. In fact, it wasn't until the third or fourth criteria sheet that a strong enough pattern emerged for us to be confident this was working well.

Table 3: ACARA Achievement Standard vs. Corinda's C level criteria

THE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARD	C LEVEL CRITERIA FOR THIS TASK DRAWN FROM THE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARD
RECEPTIVE	
Text structure	
Students **understand how the selection of** text structures **is influenced by the selection of language** mode **and how this varies for different purposes and** audiences	*Make **straightforward** use of an analytical text structure in an anthology introduction that meets the needs of an audience of peers*
Ideas and information	
Students **select evidence** from the text **to show how events, situations and people can be represented from different viewpoints.**	*Select, organise and synthesise **basic** relevant information about the ways poets represent indigenous people, issues, events and situations from particular viewpoints especially their use of evaluative language for **particular** poetic effects e.g. to evoke emotion; judge people, appreciate people's appearance, places and objects; intensify meaning through figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, imagery* ***state opinions** about people, events and issues raised in chosen poems/songs with **some evidence** from the text*
PRODUCTIVE	
Text features and language	
1. Students understand how the **selection of language features can be used for particular purposes and effects (**i.e by poets)	*Show an understanding of a **range** of vocabulary related to the subject matter of Indigenous poetry, including the poet's use of emotion, judgements of behaviour, and appreciations of the worth and value of people, places and things*
2. Through **combining ideas, images and language features from other texts, students show how ideas can be expressed in new ways**.	*Show an understanding of how an exposition functions to introduce an anthology of Indigenous poems /songs. (**Ideas are expressed in a 'new way'.**)*
3. Students **create texts for different purposes, selecting language to influence audience response**	*Make use of a **range** of relevant vocabulary (e.g. use of emotive words; intensifying words; modal words; repetition) to influence a peer audience's response*

4. When creating and editing texts to **create specific effects**, they **take into account intended purposes** and the **needs and interests of audiences**	*Demonstrate **straightforward** selection and linking of specific features such as layout, print, and visuals, and digital elements as appropriate to an anthology introduction for an audience of peers*
5. (a) they **demonstrate understanding of grammar**	*Demonstrate **fundamental** understanding of the cohesive use of expository grammatical structures to support meaning*
5 (b) they **select vocabulary for effect**	Make use of a **broad range** of relevant vocabulary (e.g. emotive words; intensifying words; modal words; repetition) to influence audience response
5 (c) they use **accurate** punctuation and **spelling**	*Use **basic** punctuation **accurately** to support meaning in sentences* *Use, **in the main**, accurate spelling in editing text*

Step 4 – Gather samples of student work and work outwards from the C

This is the fun bit. In some ways, this is the most important bit too, because here's where the conversations happen. We gather samples of student work at various levels for which the group is confident the achievement standard has been met. This judgment may be based on the Achievement Standard, ACARA's annotated responses, QSA Standard Elaborations, C2C exemplars and – vitally – teacher experience.

Working out from the C, we discuss the qualitative differences between the responses, writing and rewriting up to an A to describe as precisely as possible how the students have 'exceeded the achievement standard' and down from the C to describe what needs to be done to achieve a C. At first this was challenging, but now that we have a strong pattern, some solid exemplars and good synonym sets, it's much quicker. In any case, a useful way to conduct this work is to read aloud various sentences and paragraphs in an effort to really distinguish between the qualities evident in the work. Beyond the design of the criteria sheet, this part of the process will continue to be a valuable pre-moderation exercise and frankly a joy for English teachers.

Step 5 – Ta Naaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!

The Year 8 poetry criteria sheet was our first go, although this is not our first draft (and perhaps not even our final one). As explained previously, it has taken some time to get the pattern right and adjustments have been made along the way.

Student work has the following characteristics:

NB: Some teachers might be of the opinion that there is too much detail here for making meaning to students. It would certainly be possible to rework it by, e.g. paraphrasing for student use or removing criteria that aren't a central focus for the current unit.

	A – write, create very effectively (i.e. with discernment)	**B**– write, create effectively (i.e. capably – with proficiency)	**C** - write, create (with reasonable effectiveness) – basic, straightforward	**D** – write, create (with some effectiveness) showing inadequacies	**E** – write, create (with a little effectiveness) showing many inadequacies

Text structure	Make discriminating use of an analytical text structure (thesis, arguments, recommendations) that meets the needs and interests of an audience of peers	Make proficient use of an analytical text structure (thesis, arguments, recommendations) that meets the needs and interests of an audience of peers	Make straightforward use of the phases of an analytical text structure in an anthology introduction that meets the needs and interests of an audience of peers	Make uneven use of an analytical text structure that meets the needs and interests of an audience of peers	Make disconnected use of analytical text structure to meet the needs and interests of an audience of peers
Language features – Ideas *and information*	Select, organise and synthesise very detailed relevant information (a) about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples, issues, events, and situations and from particular viewpoints including (b) use of language to evoke emotion; judge people's actions, appreciate their appearance, places and objects; intensify meaning through figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, imagery	Select, organise and synthesise detailed relevant information (a) about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples, issues, events, and situations from particular viewpoints (b) use of language to evoke emotion; judge people's actions, appreciate their appearance, places and objects; intensify meaning through figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, imagery	Select, organise and synthesise basic relevant information (a) about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples, issues, events and situations from particular viewpoints, including (b) use of language to evoke emotion; judge people's actions, appreciate their appearance, places and objects; intensify meaning through figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, imagery	Select, organise and combine llimited relevant information (a) about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples, issues, events and situations from particular viewpoints including (b) use of language to evoke emotion; judge people's actions, appreciate their appearance, places and objects; intensify meaning through figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, imagery	Select, organise and combine very limited, often irrelevant information (a) about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples, issues, events, and situations and people from particular view-points including (b) use of language to evoke emotion; judge people's actions, appreciate their appearance, places and objects; intensify meaning through figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, imagery
	Substantiate opinions about people, events and issues raised in chosen poem with very detailed evidence from the text	Develop opinions about people, events and issues raised in chosen poem with detailed evidence from the text	State opinions about people, events and issues raised in chosen poem with some evidence from the text	State some opinions about people, events and issues in chosen poem, but with limited evidence from the text	State a few opinions about people, events and issues with little evidence from the text
	Demonstrate insightful and imaginative selection and blending of specific features such as layout, print, and visuals, and digital elements, as appropriate to an anthology introduction	Demonstrate imaginative selection and blending of specific features such as layout, print, and visuals, and digital elements, as appropriate to an anthology introduction	Demonstrate straightforward selection and linking of specific features such as layout, print, and visuals, and digital elements appropriate to an anthology introduction	Demonstrate limited selection and linking of specific features such as layout, print, and visuals, and digital elements appropriate to an anthology introduction	Demonstrate very limited selection and linking of specific features such as layout, print, and visuals, and digital elements appropriate to an anthology introduction

Language features – Ideas *and information*	Demonstrate discriminating and sustained use of a wide range of cohesive grammatical structures	Demonstrate proficient and sustained use of a range of cohesive grammatical structures to enhance meaning	Demonstrate a fundamental understanding and cohesive use of grammatical structures to support meaning	Demonstrate use of a narrow range of grammatical structures (which interfere with cohesion and meaning)	Demonstrate use of a very narrow range of grammatical structures (which impede cohesion and meaning)
	Make discriminating use of an extensive range of relevant vocabulary (e.g. emotive words, intensifying words, modal words, repetition) designed to position audience response	Make proficient use of a wide range of relevant vocabulary (e.g. emotive words, intensifying words, modal words, repetition) designed to position audience response	Make use of a range of relevant vocabulary (e.g. emotive words, intensifying words, modal words, repetition) to influence audience response	Make use of a restricted range of relevant vocabulary (e.g. emotive words, intensifying words, modal words, repetition) to affect audience response	Make use of a very restricted range of relevant vocabulary to affect audience response
	Use a wide range of punctuation accurately to enhance meaning in a wide range of sentences	Use a range of punctuation accurately to support meaning in a range of sentences	Use basic punctuation accurately to support meaning in sentences	Show inaccuracies in the use of punctuation which interfere with communication	Show inaccuracies in the use of punctuation which impede communication
	Show very well developed control in the use of conventional spelling in editing text	Show well developed control in the use of conventional spelling in editing text	Use, in the main, accurate conventional spelling in editing text…	In editing text, show inaccuracies in conventional spelling which interfere with communication	In editing text, show frequent inaccuracies in spelling which impede communication

Part C — pedagogy for a criteria based approach, AKA The Possibilities

Assessment starts at the beginning of a unit, not at the end. Harnessing relevant detail and using it appropriately and effectively in a task criteria sheet that students can access represents a significant challenge. A criteria sheet shouldn't straitjacket their thinking but act as a springboard to deeper more sustained thought and discussion about the features and possibilities of the texts they are working with as they make, evaluate and reconstruct meaning. Classroom activities are necessary to help them come to terms with criteria and standards, for example using task criteria sheets to critique and assess sample texts.

It is important that discussions of relevant standards descriptors (*discerning, very detailed, discriminating proficient, basic, etc.*) be held throughout the unit in acceptable language and in ways that fit smoothly into classroom discussion. Consider, for example, the following criteria from A level standard in the Corinda year 8 poetry criteria sheet:

Select, organise and synthesise very detailed relevant information (a) about the ways poets represent Indigenous Peoples, issues, events, and situations and from particular viewpoints including (b) use of language to evoke emotion; judge people's actions, appreciate their appearance, places and objects; intensify meaning through figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, imagery.

Substantiate opinions about people, events and issues raised in chosen poem.

Selecting, organising, synthesising and substantiating call upon students to do some high level research and inferring. For example, judgment-making by poets about the treatment of Australian Indigenous People by early white settlers is an important part of the content of the unit. Responding to questions such as the following help scaffold the higher level thinking required.

> As reader of a poem, you may be invited to a position of empathy - of emotional solidarity – with people/characters or, at least, an understanding of their motives. Were you easily able to accept the poem's invitation to adopt a position of empathy? Why?/Why not?

> Judging by what people do and say in the poems, what words might be used to describe them: capable, competent, honest, moral, law-abiding, genuine....? What other words might be appropriate?

> Ideally how might the writer want readers to judge people's behaviour in the poem? What words in the poem evoke negative feelings? What effects are these likely to have on the way a reader feels? Do you agree that the evaluative language used by writers can have either negative or positive connotations and that it can potentially help or hurt people?

Smith, Sadler, Davies (2009, pp 5–6) offer the following very useful guide to working effectively with task criteria sheets. It is offered here in summary form and it is envisaged that Corinda students will come to terms with the suggested procedures and become more autonomous in using them progressively throughout Years 7–10.

- **Don't** assume that because a criteria sheet makes sense to you it will make sense to your students.

- **Don't** think that even after you "talk it through" they will properly understand.

- **Do** use the criteria sheet as a learning device by getting students to engage with using it to judge performances (including their own work) against achievement standards.

- **Do** create opportunities in class for students to look at examples of work of varying

standards from an assessment task similar to the one they are going to be assessed on.

- **Do** talk through the differences between their ideas for criteria and the standards, and yours. You are the expert judge and the task is to help them come to some convergence between their understanding and yours.

Conclusions – reflections on a mission not yet accomplished

Teachers are, by nature, critical learners. We don't rest easily when we can see that there may be better solutions that will benefit our students, no matter what the situation or how busy we might be. It's a good thing too. The Australian Curriculum has been a real learning opportunity for us, and a chance to deliver and expect higher standards in our classrooms. ACARA, the QSA and Education Queensland all provide valuable advice and support in this process, and we acknowledge that without them the task of implementation would have been impossible. However, the most skilled and well-intentioned authority will never replace (nor do we believe they have intended to) the individual, collective and even historical expertise of skilled practitioners who have a deep knowledge and understanding of their subject and their syllabus documents.

Our project at Corinda has been to develop our suite of task-specific criteria sheets over three years. 2013 was our pilot year. This year, we're rewriting the criteria for all our non-C2C tasks. In 2015, we'll deal with the rest. The big question is: Is it worth the effort? For us, the answer is 'yes'. Yes because the criteria sheets are better. Yes because it provides us with a clear framework for really worthwhile teaching and assessment of units in the classroom. Yes because the process connects us as learners directly with our curriculum document. Yes because such a framework is also capable of supporting authentic and productive dialogue inside and outside the classroom. We may not even get it all done next year. Year 7s are arriving after all. No need to rush. This is a marathon, not a sprint.

Appendix 1 Table 1: AC:E Achievement Standards Years 7—9

(Table 1 is derived from a school resource which juxtaposes Year 7-10 AC:E standards. Year 8 standards have been selected for their relevance to the Year 8 poetry task criteria sheet.)

By the end of Year 7	By the end of Year 8	By the end of Year 9
Receptive modes (listening, reading and viewing	*Receptive modes (listening, reading and viewing)* Students **understand how** the **selection** of text structures is influenced by the selection of **language mode** and how this **varies** for different purposes and **audiences. Students explain how** language features, images and vocabulary are used to represent different ideas and issues in texts. Students **select** evidence from the text to **show how** events, situations and people can be represented **from different viewpoints**.	*Receptive modes (listening, reading and viewing)*
Productive modes (speaking, writing and creating) Students (1) **understand how the selection of a** variety **of** language features **can influence** an **audience**. They (2) **create texts showing how** language features **and images from other** texts **can be combined for effect**. Students (3) **create** structured and coherent texts for a **range of purposes and audiences**. When (4) **creating** and editing **texts** they demonstrate understanding of **grammar**, use a **variety** of more **specialised** vocabulary, **accurate** spelling and **punctuation.**	*Productive modes (speaking, writing and creating)* Students (1) **understand how the selection of language features can be used for particular purposes and effects. Through** (2) **combining ideas, images and language features from other texts, students show how ideas can be expressed in new ways.** Students (3) **create texts for different purposes, selecting language to influence audience response.** When **(4) creating and editing texts to create specific effects, they take into account intended purposes and the needs and interests of audiences.** They **demonstrate understanding of grammar, select vocabulary for effect** and **use accurate spelling and punctuation**.	*Productive modes (speaking, writing and creating)* Students (1) **understand how to use a** variety of language features to create different levels of meaning. In (2) creating texts, **students demonstrate how manipulating language features and images can create innovative texts**. Students (3) create **texts that respond** to issues, interpreting and integrating ideas from other texts. They (4) **edit for effect**, selecting vocabulary and grammar that contribute to the precision and persuasiveness of texts and using accurate spelling and punctuation.

Appendix 2: Context-text framework (embedded in the Language strand)

Fig 1: AC:E Content strands

Language variation and change relevant to the three AC:E strands Students develop knowledge, understanding, skills and capabilities relating to language (especially Standard Australian English) and how texts (imaginative, informative and persuasive) function and **constantly evolve in cultural and social contexts due to historical, social and cultural changes, demographic movements and technological innovations.** **Across the three strands**		
LANGUAGE: learning about language symbols and structures that work together to construct meaning, including learning about historical and contemporary linguistic concepts relating to Australian English, and so develop consistent ways of understanding and talking about language, language-in-use and language-as-system in changing cultural and social contexts:	**LITERATURE**: engaging with literary (imaginative) texts that reflect the personal, cultural, social and aesthetic values of the contexts in which they are created; learning to understand, appreciate, respond to, analyse and create literary texts; enjoying and evaluating the qualities that enrich lives and create aesthetic experiences	**LITERACY:** expanding capabilities in fluent, effective and sustainable uses of traditional and digital media to interpret and create informative and persuasive texts for personal, specialised and abstract purposes in diverse socio-cultural contexts characteristic of Australian life
1**. Language variation and change** learn and work with language variation and change according to **changing cultural and social contexts**	1. Literature in context learn and work with literary (imaginative) texts of personal, cultural, social and <u>aesthetic</u> value that reflect the context of culture and (social) situation in which they are created.	1. Texts in context learn and work with (e.g. informative and persuasive texts) in contexts
2**. Language for interaction (roles and relationships)** • social interactions • evaluative language	2. Responding to literature • personal responses to the ideas, characters and viewpoints in literary texts • expressing preferences and evaluating texts	2. Interacting with others • listening and speaking interactions • oral presentations
3. **Text structure and organisation (textual features)** • purpose, audience, text types • text cohesion • conventions (punctuation)	3. Examining literature features of literary texts language devices in literary texts including figurative language	3. Interpreting, analysing and evaluating texts • purpose and audience • reading processes • comprehension strategies • analysing and evaluating texts
4**. Expressing and developing ideas (language features)** • sentence and clause level grammar • word level grammar • vocabulary • visual language • spelling	4. Creating literature • creating literary texts • experimentation and adaptation	4. Creating texts • creating texts • editing • handwriting • software

Appendices

1. Table 1: AC:E Achievement Standards Years 7-9

2. Finding a context-text model in the AC:E

References

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3. Smith C., Sadler R., Davies L. (2009). Assessment Rubrics. GIHE: Griffith University.

4. Australian Curriculum - especially Years 7-10 Achievement levels and Annotations of Year 8 Portfolios http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/english/Curriculum/F-10#level8;

5. Australian Curriculum English Glossary

6. Queensland Studies Authority Standard elaborations, especially Year 8 http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/ac_eng_yr8_se.pdf.

Resources

UNSW Australia: Assessment Toolkit http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/standards-basedassessment

EXPECTATIONS MET:
ETAQ 2014 STATE CONFERENCE

Danielle Grove

The great expectations we have of ourselves, as teachers and lifelong learners, and of our students, is constantly influenced and shaped by change in educational policy and pedagogy.

As a teacher at a regional, independent technical college, TecNQ, sometimes attempting to comprehend and apply these changes add to a feeling of isolation. Being a member of ETAQ and a recipient of the **Jim Buckley Memorial Scholarship certainly showed me that I'm a part of an innovative and inclusive group of English teachers.** Through participation in the workshops and the address by key note speaker, Dr Anita Jetnikoff, at the 2014 Annual State Conference of The English Teachers Association of Queensland, I was able to reflect on the years of change I have witnessed and catch a glimpse of what is to come.

The need for change is recognised by ETAQ and I'm exceptionally grateful to be the recipient of an initiative such as the inaugural Jim Buckley Memorial Scholarship. Jim Buckley was an integral member of ETAQ who met the great expectations of many through his passion for words and English. He understood rural issues and the needs of ETAQ members and as treasurer, ensured that funds were made available to regional members to assist them in attending conferences. Sadly Jim Buckley passed away in February, but this scholarship is another way that his memory and contributions continue to be recognised in the ETAQ community.

In the key note speech, Dr Anita Jetnikoff likened teachers to the chameleon and made the candid comment that, if we can't change, we have no place in teaching. She shared her insights that teachers are the lifeblood of the success of schools and that English teachers are creative and generally right brainers who are stimulated and excited by change in pedagogy that assists students in their pursuits. She also communicated some of the negatives of the

current educational situation where the changes tend to be political rather than pedagogical. The great expectations we place on ourselves as teachers, are often impeded by educational policy reforms.

Dr Anita Jetnikoff spoke of political reforms adding to the de-professionalization of teaching and moving towards a 'one-size-fits-all' approach that does not consider the sensitivity of designing for a cohort, such as is seen in C2C ideology. She reminded us that teachers need to alter their focus from the *Changes* to the *Stability of our Values* which are more sustainable. Continuing the animal metaphors, Dr Anita Jetnikoff used the image of Wiley Coyote endlessly and unproductively chasing the road runner, to represent the teachers' endless pursuit of understanding and applying the national curriculum framework. Dr Jetnikoff ended her presentation by reminding us of the importance of interacting appropriately with ICT and the reminder that learning is a process of exchange.

Shifting from the high expectations of teachers to the high expectations of students, I attended Sam Lobascher's workshop on Positive Psychology. At The Southport School, the teaching staff has adopted a pedagogical change that focuses on helping students meet high expectations. The students are being asked to consider what is RIGHT with them, shifting from the psychological question of what is WRONG with them. Sam Lobascher's action research project has signified the positive results from incorporating this positive psychology into the English classroom. It is refreshing to see that the entire school is adopting this approach with the embedding of REMAP standards

based on the key pillars of social psychology. These pedagogical changes are improving the educational experiences of many young men. Sam Lobascher certainly opened my eyes to the power of positive psychology and his ideas are certainly insightful and meaningful.

As a teacher of English Communication, assessed with 70% spoken tasks, I understand the importance of teaching persuasive speaking. Kevin Ryan and Adrian Pauley opened this workshop by drawing our attention to the societal focus on the importance of developed speaking skills. Students are inherently fearful of public speaking and these two presenters have developed insightful lessons to help students conquer these fears and be successful with their presentations. I enjoyed this workshop and found their lesson ideas immensely helpful and I look forward to introducing and implementing the lesson plans from 'Be Persuasive... Of Course You Can' within TecNQ.

The conference organisers were able to maximise value from change as they had to juggle their planning to accommodate some last minute interruptions to the planned schedule. This enabled a professional discussion to take place after the acceptance speech by Paul Sherman who was awarded Life Membership of ETAQ. He spoke eloquently about the changes he has witnessed and commented on the stability of teaching that then, as now, consisted of a variety of challenges, 'some rosy, some thorny'.

One thing that always remains stable is the quality of presenters and participants at ETAQs events; the 2014 Annual State Conference certainly met my great expectations. I know that all participants will agree with my sentiments regarding the success of the day. I returned to TecNQ, Townsville with ideas, resources and knowledge for positive pedagogical changes to be implemented and a greater understanding of political influences.

I ♥ ENGLISH: REMEMBERING WHAT IT IS THAT MAKES ENGLISH TEACHERS LOVE THEIR SUBJECT IN A TIME OF NATIONAL REFORM

Grace Loyden

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A nita Jetnikoff's (2014) keynote address at this year's ETAQ State Conference has challenged me to interrogate some assumptions I have made about both the political constructions of the subject of English and the role of the teacher in a period of significant educational reform.

Jetnikoff's opening argument was unapologetic: "If we're not used to change, we've got no business teaching" and these changes have been well-documented. The introduction of a national curriculum represents a neoliberal agenda that is motivated by economic priorities (Albright, Knezevic et al. 2013, Kostogriz and Doecke 2013). National policies emphasise macro-level analysis and reporting and aim to improve outcomes for all students (Klenowski 2011, O'Meara 2011, Fehring and Nyland 2012) and Jetnikoff asserts that these changes are often political rather than pedagogical.

It is the unintended outcomes that are associated with such large-scale initiatives that are worthy of discussion. Early studies in the implications of an English national curriculum reveal that the pedagogies being implemented within standards-based reform are continuing to be modified to suit local student capacities (Fenwick and Cooper 2012), which is a heartening practice. It seems that the official national curriculum is not having its intended effect as some teachers are finding engagement with these documents problematic (Albright, Knezevic et al. 2013). The quantitative research conducted by Albright and Knezevic et al. (2013) reveals that 81% of secondary English teachers surveyed will often use individual or team-developed materials for long-term planning as opposed to only 15% who refer to Australian Curriculum support material (p. 114). In my opinion, this information represents English teachers to be employing their own sense of ethics to make judgments about what and how to teach their students and it reveals that many teachers have a greater sense of responsibility to their students than to national reform. The work of Kostogriz and Doecke (2013) adds to this perception.

Recognition of the complex work of English teachers will have its benefits (Albright, Knezevic et al. 2013) and it will reinforce Jetnikoff's contention that there is no school better than its teachers. During her presentation, Jetnikoff asked members of the audience to share what they value the most as an English teacher and the responses were an encouraging and timely reminder. English teachers desire their students to:

- be confident users of Australian Standard English
- make connections with and between texts
- appreciate the beauty in textual experiences
- feel motivated and successful
- draw on their imaginations.

While all of the above are the reasons why we are teachers of English, they do not necessarily explain why we love the subject of English. When I returned to my school I asked my colleagues to share some thoughts about their passion towards English. Again, the responses have a buoyant effect during a period characterised by "analysis, evaluation, research, resource allocation, accountability and reporting" (Klenowski 2011, p. 79):

- *I love reading books and writing poetry. I think that reading about others' experiences helps young people to make sense of the world*

(their own and others'), and writing can be a very powerful way to express thoughts and feelings.

- *I always enjoy teaching units on the following pieces of literature: Macbeth, To Kill a Mockingbird, Of Mice and Men and Dead Poets Society. [I want my students to] read widely and interpret what they are reading whatever the form it takes.*

There were also some insights to which many teachers would relate: *"The reality is reading things like I read today in a student's work, e.g. "...that Friar Laurence was not very thrust worthy." Whilst these little gaffes from students can give me a chuckle (or hearty laugh), the reality is that it's really hard work to improve students' literacy skills so that they can express the ideas they are really trying to convey, such as trust."*

Teaching English is really hard work and especially so in an era that makes considerable demands on teachers generally. I found it extremely refreshing to discuss why we love what we teach and I thank ETAQ for the opportunity to engage in this opportunity.

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ABOUT SUFFERING: SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING W.H. AUDEN'S POEM *MUSEE DES BEAUX ARTS* — PART A

Garry Collins

In early October of 2012, ETANSW, ETAQ's sister association south of the border, hosted the AATE national conference of that year at Sydney Grammar School. AATE is of course the Australian Association for the Teaching of English, the national professional association for English teachers with which ETAQ is affiliated. ETAQ members are also members of AATE. The conference title was "Five bells", taken from the poem by Kenneth Slessor. My contribution to the conference program was a workshop session with the same title as this article. A version of the workshop was subsequently presented at an ETAQ half-day seminar run at Centenary State High School in Brisbane on Saturday 16 March 2013. The abstract used to outline the session on both occasions is shown in the next paragraph.

Workshop session abstract

Using several 16th Century paintings and a poem from 1938, this session will seek to demonstrate how the three strands of the F-10 component of the Australian Curriculum: English (Language, Literature and Literacy) can be readily and productively integrated in contemporary classrooms. Although discreetly camouflaged, concepts derived from functional grammar have had considerable influence on the national English curriculum. The session will aim to bring some of these elements to the attention of participants and show how content descriptions from the Language strand can be addressed in the consideration of a literary text. As to the Literacy strand, using a poem necessarily involves a reading component but the session will also involve "reading" a painting as well as suggestions for writing and speaking tasks that might be generated from the poem.

Session organisation

The workshop was structured into three sections:

- Some pre-reading activities
- Looking at the text
- Possible follow-up – some related texts & possible writing tasks

The plan for this article is similar but it will soon be noted that the sections are not of equal length.

The poem

The text of the poem is shown below with line numbers inserted for ease of reference.

Musee des Beaux Arts

1. About suffering they were never wrong,
2. The Old Masters; how well, they understood
3. Its human position; how it takes place
4. While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;
5. How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting
6. For the miraculous birth, there always must be
7. Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating
8. On a pond at the edge of the wood:
9. They never forgot
10. That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course
11. Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot
12. Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse

13. Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.

14. In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away

15. Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may

16. Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,

17. But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone

18. As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green

19. Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen

20. Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,

21. Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

1938

Pre-reading activities

As with pretty much any text, the meaning that readers will be able to construct with this poem will depend, to some extent, on the cultural knowledge that they bring to the task of reading. Some items in the poem with which it could be anticipated that many students would need some initial assistance are:

• "The Old Masters" in Line 2

• "Breughel" and "Icarus" in Line 14

If the poem were to be done at Year 11 or 12 level, at least some students doing art could probably explain for the rest of the class who/ what the "Old Masters" were. Alternatively, a preliminary internet research task could be set as homework requiring students to come to the next lesson armed with "Google-gleaned" information about the three items. Another option would be to present the following as a list of some prominent "Old Masters" and guide students to deduce what the term must mean. The one specifically relevant to the poem is boxed.

• Leonardo da Vinci (Italian, 1452–1519)

• Michelangelo (Italian, 1475–1564)

• Sandro Botticelli (Italian, 1445–1510)

• Raphael (Italian, 1483–1520)

• Hans Holbein (German, 1497–1543)

• Pieter Brueghel the Elder (Flemish, c. 1525–1569)

• El Greco (Greek-born Spanish, 1541–1614)

• Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577–1640)

• Diego Velázquez (Spanish, 1599–1660)

• Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606–1669)

• Johannes Vermeer (Dutch, 1632–1675)

• Caravaggio (Italian, 1573–1610)

Some of the names would probably be a mystery, but in most classes at least some students could be expected to be able to identify Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Rembrandt as painters. Discussion could move from there to conclude that the term "the Old Masters" refers to prominent European painters of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. In passing, the meaning of the adjective "Flemish" could be clarified as compared with Italian, German, Spanish or Dutch. In that company it must of course relate to a country or region but which one would not be immediately obvious to many students. In addition, a small spot of numeracy could be pursued here to ensure that all students understand why years in the 15th century begin with the number 14.

A nautical digression

When I lived in Gladstone in the 1970s, teaching at Gladstone State High School, I had a half share in a small yacht. One of the things that I learnt about boats through that experience was that, for reasons that I have never been able to fathom (pun intended), the rope used to secure a dinghy to a larger boat or to a jetty is called a painter. One of my sailing associates was fond of referring to this line as a Rembrandt – as in "tie the Rembrandt to that cleat".

Translating the title

Before the whole text is presented, students could be guided to construct an appropriate meaning with the title, "Musee des Beaux Arts". The following points could be discussed.

- Starting from the end, it could be noted that "arts" is indeed an English word, a plural noun, but it is clear from the first two words that the whole title is not in English.

- The word "beau" is part of the English lexicon but it is a word that has been borrowed from French. A little time could productively be spent here considering how words are appropriated from one language to another and how it is not unreasonable to expect that quite a few modern English words are French in origin. Some of this relates to the Norman invasion led by William the Conqueror in 1066 but other borrowings are of a later date. Students could be asked to deduce the English meaning of "beau" and "beaux" from their use in sentences like:

  – Jane was quite good looking but was so terribly shy that she had never had a **beau**.

  – Charlotte was a most attractive and self-confident young woman and had more **beaux** than she knew what to do with.

- Students could also be directed to note the appearance of the letter sequence "beau" in words like *beauty*, *beautiful* and *beauteous*.

- Students should be taught or reminded at this point that information on etymology (word origins) can be found in word entries in any decent sized dictionary. It is also worth a minute or two in to distinguish between etymology and entomology, an entirely different kettle of fish or, more appropriately, bugs.

- Given that "arts" is a noun, students could then be asked to suggest what word class the word immediately preceding it is likely to be. It would of course be convenient if previous work on the structure of noun groups could be referred to here. Suitably managed discussion could lead the class to the conclusion that, while the word "beaux" in the sentence example above is a noun, in the title it is probably an adjective.

- With "musee", an appropriate teacher question would be: "what English word does this look like?". Having established that it is rather similar to "museum", attention could then turn to "des".

- To this point, guided discussion should have suggested that the title consists of: **musee** (a noun) + **des** (word class yet to be determined) + **beaux** (an adjective) + **arts** (a plural noun). Students could then be asked to consider the following noun groups to deduce what the French word "des" probably means and what word class it is.

  – knights of the round table
  – incidents of brutal violence
  – a series of puzzling mysteries
  – evidence of significant fraud

A final question here could be: If the poem is in English, why might the title be in French?

The Icarus story

To be able to construct a fully satisfactory meaning with both the poem and the associated painting, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the Icarus story. A brief version such as the following could be used.

The Greek myth of Icarus

Daedalus, along with his son, **Icarus**, had been imprisoned in Crete by King Minos, for whom he had built the Labyrinth to imprison the Minotaur (half man, half bull). Daedalus had given Minos' daughter, Ariadne, a ball of string in order to help Theseus, the enemy of Minos, to survive the Labyrinth and defeat the Minotaur.

Daedalus fashioned two pairs of wings out of wax and feathers. Before they took off from the island, Daedalus warned his son not to fly too close to the sun, nor too close to the sea.

Overcome by the exhilaration of flight, Icarus soared too close to the sun, which melted the wax. As a result, his artificial wings disintegrated and Icarus fell into the sea and drowned.

Rather than just presenting this text complete it could be used for some "cloze" reading comprehension activities. One possibility would be:

The **Icarus** story: a cloze activity

Daedalus, along with his son, **Icarus**, had been imprisoned in Crete by King Minos, for whom he had _____the Labyrinth to imprison the Minotaur (half man, half bull). Daedalus had given Minos' daughter, Ariadne, a ball of string in order to _____ Theseus, the enemy of Minos, to survive the Labyrinth and _____ the Minotaur.

Daedalus _____ two pairs of wings out of wax and feathers. Before they took off from the island, Daedalus _____ his son not to _____ too close to the sun, nor too close to the sea.

Overcome by the exhilaration of flight, Icarus _____too close to the sun, which _____ the wax. As a result, his artificial wings _____ and Icarus fell into the sea and _____.

In this version, some of the verbs have been removed but the task can easily be varied by removing other grammatical elements rather than just words chosen at random. Most of the gaps in the text above can be satisfactorily filled with more than just one word and the point is not necessarily to come up with the word that was deleted from the original text. The most productive learning derives from the discussion of possible alternatives and why some might constitute a better fit than others.

Once the whole text is absorbed, students could be asked what they consider to be the main point or moral of this story. Some possibilities are:

- Children should always follow their parents' advice.
- The wisdom that comes with experience is more valuable than the adventurousness of youth.
- The exuberance of youth can sometimes lead to disaster.
- Humans weren't meant to fly.

Roger McGough's short poem "Icarus Allsorts" could be considered at this juncture.

About suffering

Another pre-reading activity to focus student thinking would be to consider the phrase that begins the first line – "about suffering". A starting point might be to ask if any students have had an experience to which they think that the word "suffering" could reasonably be applied without hyperbole being involved. This would of course present an opportunity to discuss the concept of hyperbole and the gradations in strength or intensity of meaning that are available in the vocabulary of English. A collection of associated words like the following could be considered:

discomfort – ache – pain – suffering – agony

It will be noted that these words suggest physical sensation but, as would become evident from a discussion of the second question below, physical suffering is not the only kind there is.

Some further questions to pose for students to consider would be:

- Is suffering inevitable in life?
- What different forms of suffering are there?
- Do people really care about the suffering of others?
- If there is a benevolent God, why is there so much suffering in the world?
- Can good come of suffering?

Comments about suffering like the following could be presented for student consideration and comment.

- **Suffering** builds character. (I have to confess that this was a saying that I regularly used if ever students complained about conditions – e.g. un-air-conditioned classrooms on a hot summer's day – or the difficulty of some task that had been set.)
- Life is a vale of tears.
- Life wasn't meant to be easy.
- What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.
- The **suffering** of others is just a case of mind over matter; we don't mind, and they don't matter.

One of the books that I was reading at the time that I was preparing this workshop was a work entitled *The Bicycle Book* by Bella Bathurst. If that seems a strange choice for an English teacher, I would point out that I enjoy cycling for exercise but do not possess any lycra clothing or special shoes. The book had chapters on a range of topics connected with bicycles and cycling and, in the chapter on bike racing, the following sentence caught my eye:

- (Bike) Racing, according to its followers and practitioners, is mainly about **suffering**.

Also around the same time I noticed an advertising poster for a stand-up comedy tour of Australia by British actor and comedian Alan Davies. He starred in a TV series entitled "Jonathan Creek" and is a regular member of the panel in the TV show "QI". His touring show at that time (2011) was called "Life is pain".

Quotations about suffering from more prestigious sources, like the following, could also be considered in class:

- "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and **suffering** can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved." Helen Keller

- "Without health life is not life; it is only a state of langour and **suffering** - an image of death." Buddha

- "To live is to suffer, to survive is to find some meaning in the **suffering**." Friedrich Nietzsche

- "Out of **suffering** have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars." Kahlil Gibran

- "**Suffering** becomes beautiful when anyone bears great calamities with cheerfulness, not through insensibility but through greatness of mind." Aristotle

- "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so." Shakespeare – "Hamlet"

The grammar of the first two words

As well as the foregoing focus activities, some aspects of grammar could usefully be considered in relation to just the first two words of the poem – "about suffering". The following questions could be posed:

- Is this a complete message?

- Is it a sentence?

- What grammatical structure is it?

Of course these two words do not, on their own, constitute a complete message. They can not, therefore, function as a sentence which requires the presence of at least one independent clause and a clause of any sort must contain a verb group. This might seem so obvious as to not be worth talking about, but I contend that such brief classroom discussions are a good means of reinforcing student understanding of what is required for a word sequence to be a complete sentence.

At the same time, these two words are not separate, unrelated entities. Together they constitute a **prepositional phrase** consisting of a preposition + a noun group. In this case, the noun group is a single word but phrases will often contain more complex noun groups. This would lead naturally to a brief episode of teaching or revision about what is called the **grammar rank scale**. The key idea here is that language can be considered at a variety of levels progressively moving from larger to smaller.

- **Texts** – if written and in prose, usually consisting of one or more paragraphs (Of course, in long texts, other divisions like chapters could also be relevant.)

- **Paragraphs** – consisting of one or more sentences

- **Sentences** – consisting of one or more clauses

- **Clauses** – consisting of one or more groups or phrases (If there is only one, it must be a verb group.)

- **Groups and phrases** (A group can just be a single word but the term phrase is normally taken to mean a connected sequence of <u>words</u>.)

- **Words** – consisting of one or more <u>morphemes</u>

- **Morphemes** – This is the smallest linguistic unit having a sound-meaning connection and it cannot be further divided.)

Sentence and grammatical mood types could be briefly reviewed by considering the phrase in sentences like the following:

1. The priest often preached **about suffering**.

2. What do you know **about suffering**?

3. Write a poem **about suffering**.

A relevant teaching point would be that each example is a simple sentence containing only a single independent (or main) clause. The first is a statement, technically imperative mood; the second is a question, technically interrogative mood; and the third is a command or instruction, technically imperative mood. The Australian Curriculum: English uses the term "main clause" but it strikes me as not entirely appropriate to describe a clause as the <u>main</u> one when there is only one present.

The poem formatted as prose

Another productive activity before considering the published version of the poem is to present students with it formatted as prose and ask them to decide where they think the line breaks should go. This is a useful activity with many poems.

About suffering they were never wrong, the Old Masters; how well, they understood its human position; how it takes place while someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking *dully* along; how, when the aged are *reverently*, *passionately* waiting for the *miraculous* birth, there always must be children who did not *specially* want it to happen, skating on a pond at the edge of the wood: they never forgot that even the *dreadful* martyrdom must run its course anyhow in a corner, some

untidy spot where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse scratches its innocent behind on a tree. In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away quite *leisurely* from the disaster; the ploughman may have heard the splash, the forsaken cry, but for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone as it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky, had somewhere to get to and sailed *calmly* on.

Spelling, word class and word structure

It will be noted that eight words in the text are shown in bold and italics. These are ones that could be selected for a short teaching episode on spelling, word class and word structure. Whenever some handout is to be used in class there is an opportunity for some incidental teaching related to these aspects of language. My regular practice in such situations was to select some words from the text that either: (a) illustrate some of the regular patterns of English spelling, or (b) are relatively difficult words that are frequently misspelled. In this instance, six of the eight words are adverbs ending in the suffix LY and the other two are adjectives illustrating the suffixes FUL and OUS respectively. Students are sked to attempt to spell the selected words in a short quiz, the handout is then issued, and students are tasked to locate the subject words and do their own corrections. Subsequent discussion could then focus on the following:

- With many words, related forms of the four open word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) can be seen to constitute what might be called word "families" as illustrated in the table below.

- The term "word class" is now generally used in linguistics instead of the more traditional "part of speech".

- As mentioned earlier in this article, when word class or part of speech is discussed we are considering how words function as individual items and focusing just at the word level of the grammar rank scale.

- Open word classes are so called because new words can be readily coined in these categories whereas the closed word classes of pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and articles are essentially fixed and no new words can be coined to join these categories.

- Open word class items are used to represent aspects of the world while closed word class items are grammatical words whose function is to manage the relationships between open class words in groups, phrases, clauses and sentences.

- This word "family" relationship does not operate amongst the closed word classes.

- Some words can function as more than one word class (i.e. part of speech). For example, *dull* can be both a verb and an adjective.

- Some word "families" will have more than one form for a particular word class.

- The most common pattern for adverbs in English is that they consist of the adjective plus the suffix LY. However, as in most areas of the grammar, there are standard patterns and variations to those patterns. Thus, adding LY to the adjective *dull* does not produce three Ls in the adverb *dully*. In addition, there are other adverbs that do not contain the suffix LY at all, e.g. *quite*.

- Students should appreciate that, because the adverb is usually formed by adding the suffix LY to the adjective form, words like *specially* have a double L but those like *passionately* do not.

- A common adjective-forming suffix is FUL which has only a single letter L even though the word *full* has two.

- Some other adjectives displaying the FUL suffix are: *hateful, sorrowful, blissful, spiteful, joyful*.

- Some other adjectives displaying the OUS suffix are: *courageous, famous, glorious, furious*.

Open class word "families"			
Nouns	**Verbs**	**Adjectives**	**Adverbs**
dullness	dull	dull	***Dully***
reverence	revere	reverent	***Reverently***
passion	impassion	passionate	***Passionately***
speciality, specialisation, specialness	specialise	special	***specially***
leisure		leisurely	***Leisurely***
calm, calmness	calm, becalm	calm	***Calmly***
dread, dreadfulness	dread	***dreadful***	Dreadfully
miracle		***miraculous***	Miraculously

Homophones and spelling

Another aspect of spelling that could profitably be focused on while working with the poem text formatted as prose is the incidence of homophones.

About suffering they **were** (whir) never wrong, the Old Masters; how well, they understood **its** (it's) human position; how it takes **place** (plaice) **while** (wile) someone else is eating **or** (ore, awe) opening a window or just walking dully along; how, **when** (wen) the aged are reverently, passionately **waiting** (weighting) **for** (four, fore) the miraculous **birth** (berth) **there** (their, they're) always **must** (mussed) **be** (bee) children who did **not** (knot) specially want it **to** (too, two) happen, skating on a pond at the edge of the **wood** (would): they never forgot that even the dreadful

martyrdom must run its **course** (coarse) anyhow **in** (inn) a corner, **some** (sum) untidy spot **where** (wear, ware) the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse scratches its innocent behind on a tree. In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may have **heard** (herd) the splash, the forsaken cry, **but** (butt) for him it was not an important failure; the **sun** (son) shone as it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have **seen** (scene) something amazing, a **boy** (buoy) falling out of the sky, had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

English spelling is bedeviled by the plethora of homophones in the language, the same sound being represented by different spellings with different meanings. And it doesn't help that many of these are amongst the most commonly used words. The first instances of words with homophones have been shown in bold and underlined in the version of the text immediately above and the homophones shown in brackets. My view is that students can't be reminded of these too regularly and suggest that time spent on a brief "hunt the homophone" activity and subsequent discussion is time well spent with any new short text. Some specific teaching points here could be:

- IT'S is the contraction of IT + IS. Like *yours* and *ours*, the possessive pronoun ITS has no apostrophe.
- The word *there* has *here* (which has its own homophone *hear*) within it.
- An amusing cartoon circulating on the internet has it that the way to comfort a grammar nazi in distress is to put your arm around them and say: "There, their, they're."

Rhyme scheme

With many poems, a regular rhyme scheme will be a clear clue to the positioning of line breaks but this is not entirely the case with Auden's poem. At first glance it might appear that this poem does not employ rhyme at all but a closer consideration reveals the following rhyming pairs:

wrong (Line 1) and *along* (Line 4)

understood (Line 2) and *wood* (Line 8)

waiting (Line 5) and *skating* (Line 7)

be (Line 6) and *tree* (Line 18)

forgot (Line 9) and *spot* (Line 11)

course (Line 10) and *horse* (Line 12)

away (Line 14) and *may* (Line 15)

cry (Line 16) and *sky* (Line 20)

shone (Line 17) and *on* (Line 21)

green (Line 18) and *seen* (Line 19)

It is only "place" at the end of Line 3 that has no rhyming partner. Some pairs (away/may and green/seen) are in immediately adjacent lines (couplets) but more commonly the rhyming lines are some distance apart. In summary, it could be said that there is rhyme but the pattern is much more irregular than is usually the case in poems where rhyme is evident.

A useful general question to pose to students here is: Do poems have to rhyme?

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Part B of this article will appear in the next edition of Words'Worth,

STATE CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

Rhiannon French
University of Queensland pre-service teacher

My first (and certainly not my last) experience of an ETAQ conference was an exciting one, yet again opening my eyes to the many opportunities for connection and learning available to English teachers in Queensland. I was extremely grateful to be awarded a Jim Buckley Scholarship, which enabled me to attend.

One thing that was apparent throughout the conference was how much of themselves English teachers bring into the classroom and how making literature come alive for all students is a physically engaging art. This was demonstrated by Katie Lipka's anecdote from her own class studying Zusak's *The Book Thief*; her father's accordion inspired students to pinpoint why the instrument is such a symbol of hope– 'it breathes, Miss'. A teacher that can open doors for her students to come up with such profound observations is truly deserving of the 2014 Botsman Award. Contributions from 'real-world' teachers, like Katie, offer invaluable insights to those of us just entering the profession, and is a side of teaching that is not 'shown off' often enough in public.

From the keynote speaker to the award winners and workshop presenters, I gained new insight into what a wonderful experience teaching English is, as well as raising the bar in my journey as a beginning teacher. Though there was much mention of the curriculum and political change surrounding the profession – the tempestuous voyage awaiting me when I leave the safe harbour of university – what struck me most was the great transformation in professional approaches to English staples. So much of what I saw and heard is readily translatable into my own classroom practice and I feel the strategies I have already been able to employ have enhanced my students', and my own, enjoyment of the subject.

In Grin and Tonic's thoroughly enjoyable session, I experienced new ways to introduce Shakespeare to students. Coming from a background where Shakespeare was part of the furniture, both at home and in school, it has been a struggle to engage my Year 10 class with his (in my view, perfect) portrayal of expansive human experiences. The Grin and Tonic team gave simple, active ways for kids to tackle Shakespeare for the first time. This ranged from reading the last word on each line of a monologue (a surprisingly accurate summary) to swapping seats each time they encounter punctuation (quickly forgetting to worry about pronunciation). The team did a great job of stripping the reverence away from the classic and I look forward to making my classroom one where we can have fun as Shakespeare intended.

The other English staple, grammar, was given new meaning through Beryl Exley's excellent deconstruction of verb groups. When students move from thinking of verbs as simple 'doing words' to realising their full potential for describing processes (thinking, saying, sensing, relating), they are able to influence readers' emotions and develop more sophisticated creative texts and analysis. Again, this was achieved through active engagement with the subject as students place verbs symbolically around the body to understand the relationship between verb and actions more fully. This is far removed from my experiences of learning the parts of speech by rote!

So much of what is happening in English teaching is about bringing things off the page and immersing students in the possibilities of language. This conference certainly challenged me to rock the boat in my own classroom and move students out of their seats and into an active relationship with literature, literacy and language. Sometimes, change is no bad thing!

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

John Thomas

Great Expectations is a nice thought and a nice title for a conference. Better than, say, 'Hoping for the best in the face of bitter experience' or 'Plodding on in the face of implacable opposition', titles which could surely have captured something of the essence of the times. And the rest of the title, too, *stability and change in English teaching,* suggests a comforting continuity from a secure present to future positive innovations, a situation not always supported by the evidence.

Unfortunately, developments in education in contemporary Australia, and especially in the bitterly contested field of English and English teaching suggest that the organisers of this conference were doing some whistling in the dark when they came up with their optimistic theme. However, they are, nevertheless, to be congratulated on their passion, commitment and hard work in staging the annual ETAQ state conference and in attracting so many talented practitioners to conduct the range of valuable workshops.

Charles Dickens' prose masterpiece, **Great Expectations**, from which, presumably, the title of the conference was derived, is , as much as anything else, a study in disillusionment, the shattering of the illusion suffered by the protagonist, young Pip, that he is to be transformed into a gentleman by the already disillusioned (though wealthy) Miss Havisham. This theme of disillusionment will, of course, resonate with those English teachers who have been in the game for more than a few years. We thought, from the 1970s onwards, that we had been chosen to do the good work of framing the study of English within a socio-cultural model of language in use. We revelled in the power and possibilities of this model as we explored it more and more deeply. It's not that we were, like Stephen Hawking, looking for a theory of everything but rather that we understood that without an over-arching theory of language informing our teaching the alternative would be a grab-bag of approaches.

Then the scales dropped from our eyes. Our illusions were shattered. We were not universally loved after all. A powerful consortium of people in the media, the academy and State parliament tore the prize from our grasp. We were not who we thought we were, knowledgeable professionals, but rather, de-skilled functionaries who would do as we were told by head office. As keynote speaker Anita Jetnikoff pointed out at the ETAQ state conference, the result has been since 2008 a regression towards a theory-free situation in the teaching of English, a theme taken up by Mary Swayne on the expert panel in the after-lunch session. Into the vacuum has come the instrumental 1960s-style skills-based Napalm testing regime. (Oops, sorry, the Naplan tests. Blame Anita for that). Forget the education of the individual or the improvement of society. It's the economy, stupid! Students as economic units.

Of course, we should not have been surprised by the backlash. As Marxist critic Louis Althusser points out, the state is unlikely to endorse a model of language which allows the critiquing of the society and culture in which we live. Better to have an anodyne, un-theorised mish-mash of school grammar, de-contextualised language study and a 'lit crit' approach to literature driven by Spark Notes and Professor Google than students capable of making meanings for themselves and of 'reading the world' in a critical way. Pip, too, misreads the signs: the convict with the file in the alehouse, the appointment of the criminal lawyer Mr Jaggers as his guardian, the obvious contempt of Estella and Miss Havisham towards him, and he, too, pays the price.

And yet there is hope. The awful moment of revelation in the novel leads not to the collapse of the 'good' characters but rather to the renewal of their affective lives and their moral ascendency.

Pip, now free from his illusions, gradually comes to recognise the goodness in his convict benefactor and then to love him. Estella is humbled in marriage and learns to love; Miss Havisham repents her campaign of revenge against Pip and dies in a blaze of purifying flame. And the wonderful Joe is reinstated in Pip's heart. So, too, surely the efforts of the committed teachers at the state conference will bear fruit as the debate over English continues. Anita, in her keynote emphasised the power of love (love of fiction, of literature and of language) and of the importance of the imagination. This sort of love was evident in the enthusiasm and passion of Holly Stiles and Hannah Eldridge in their workshop on the use of collage to explore characters in the novel, *The Fault in our stars*, in Beryl Exley's reference to 'a love of language' in her session on how verbal groups are used to construct characters in fiction. Katie Lipka, the recipient of this year's Peter Botsman Award also demonstrates profound love for her students and her work.

Anita pointed out, too, that both the current QSA Senior English syllabus and the AC:E have the seeds of renewal within them, the former with a focus still on values, beliefs and attitudes (although the dread word Discourse must not be spoken) and the latter still foregrounding the importance of the relationship between a text and its context in all forms of communication, including literature. Within the curriculum this framework influences all others.

Great Expectations: stability and change in English teaching. The 'stability' in recent times has been too often the effort to hold the fort against those who would reduce the study of language and literature to an instrumental formalism and the 'change' has regrettably often been in the wrong direction. As the judge sentences Abel Magwitch they are both bathed in a flood of light streaming through the courtroom window. Dickens wants to show that the two characters, despite the difference in their social stature and political power, are alike in their humanity and in their sharing of the human condition. Let us hope that the importance of subject English for all is recognised and that its future is as bright as that ray of sunlight.
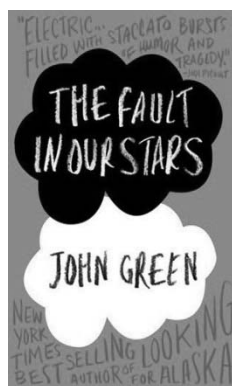
IDENTITY INTERRUPTED: REPRESENTATIONS OF ADOLESCENT IDENTITY

Senior English Unit
Hannah Eldridge and Holly Stiles, QUT

Rationale

Creativity is as important in education as literacy, and it should be treated with the same prestige (Robinson, 2006). This senior unit entitled *Identity Interrupted* is designed to foster independent and co-operative creativity. The notion of identity is important for Broadfield's diverse senior students who are in the process of transitioning into adulthood. The unit will focus on the theme of identity, by evaluating meaning and creating a range of visual, written and multimodal texts. The parent text *The Fault in our Stars,* written by John Green, speaks directly to young readers, assuming that they are intellectual, which many teenage novels fail to do. Adolescents are involved in building identities which have an impact on how they see themselves and others which can be articulated through powerful images and words (Rudd, 2012).

Exploring a variety of texts allows students to examine the concept of *coming of age* across a range of cultures and mediums. The unit is designed to complement and build upon many of the skills and knowledge learnt in all preceding senior units, bringing it all together. This student directed unit will be situated in Term 4 of Grade 12.It is a culmination of their English schooling experience which draws on the five Senior English QSA organising principles; continuity, increasing complexity, range, increasing independence and inclusion of cultural, social and individual differences (Queensland Studies Authority, 2010).

Throughout this unit students are given a range of choices and opportunities for developing an increasing sense of responsibility for their learning (Gannon, Howie, Sawyer, 2009, p.187). The learning experiences will take students' previous knowledge to a deeper understanding through utilising a variety of genres such as: graphics, visuals, music, art, poetry slams, monologues, interactive dialogue and physical theatre. Intertextual links will be made through the variety of texts, and text types examined. This will help students to understand social and cultural contexts, shaping them into active and informed citizens (MCEETYA, 2007). Experimentation will be undertaken throughout this unit to determine effective ways in which drama can be utilised. Providing an expressive and creative platform will enable students to develop their own sense of identity. Multimodal skills will be revised through modelling and developed further so students have are proficient at moving across the boundaries of performance arts and design, accessing and using the knowledge necessary to make meaning (Bull & Anstey, 2010, p. 23). As well as exploring the notion of adolescent identity, the unit will facilitate the exploration of *digital identities*. Social media is a daily part of students' lives, however there is no formal education on responsible digital discourse. Therefore this endeavours to develop students' awareness of the digital representations and process of portraying ourselves and other people (Dezuanni & Jetnikoff, 2008, p. 10). The texts used delve into a variety of cultures including Asian and Indigenous, making cross-curricular links (ACARA, 2014). This therefore allows students to creatively challenge dominant representations of the cultural constructions of adolescents.

Assessment

Spoken (multimodal)

General Objectives:
Applying requirements of 2010 Syllabus

Dimension 1 – Understanding and responding to contexts

Students examine how texts are culturally constructed and organised for particular purposes and then apply this knowledge to produce creative/multimodal texts:

- recognise key features and structures of a number of specific genres, including graphics, visuals, music, art, poetry slams, monologues, interactive dialogue and physical theatre

- select and sequence subject matter to support the construction of adolescent identity through a variety of texts

- recognise and utilise the roles and relationships between performer and audience to entertain and creatively inform viewers.

Dimension 2 – Understanding and controlling textual features

Students understand and control textual features in a variety of contexts:

- use grammar and language to examine emotional discourses within texts

- in context, use effective vocabulary within creative tasks and drama collage

- use mode-appropriate features such as physical, drama and multimodal techniques to entertain in an insightful way.

Dimension 3 – Creating and evaluating meaning

Students create and evaluate texts to demonstrate how adolescent identity is constructed through a variety of cultural discourses and texts.

- evaluate and manipulate ideas, attitudes and values that underpin texts to insightfully influence audiences

- create and evaluate perspectives and representation of adolescent identities in references to values, attitudes and beliefs

- use aesthetic features to meaningfully portray interpretations through intertextual links in spoken and multimodal formats.

Learning Experiences

ORIENTATING PHASE	Activities and strategies
The learning experiences provided throughout this phase will allow students to examine the concept of *coming of age* across a range of cultures and mediums. This phase will link back to skills previously learnt such as semiotic and visual analysis, readers and physical theatre. These skills will be built upon and developed further in relation to culture and identity.	Students will be introduced to the theme of *identity* through designing a *polyvore* that encapsulates their individual identity. Students will also have to construct an identity for a fictional adolescent e.g., Katniss from *The Hunger Games*. Through critical literacy and reader positioning students will examine the images they have created, evaluating their textual choices and features. Providing a KWL chart to gauge students' prior knowledge and understanding.
	Begin to explore the idea of *coming of age* through the documentary *I am a Girl.* Students will participate in a textual deconstruction, looking at how women across cultures experience teenage life. Students start concept map on identity which will be built upon throughout the unit.
	Students will participate in readers theatres, where they will take on a character from the book using an assortment of props e.g., packet of fake cigarettes, cancer head scarf. Activity will start as a whole class one and then move into smaller groups where they will be required to construct a script from the chapter of the book for whole class performance.
	Themes from *The Fault in our Stars* will be identified and discussed as a class. Students, in groups, create a storyboard for a proposed film trailer. Groups present proposal to class, explaining their visual/textual choices. Students then watch the film trailer, reflecting on the way in which it aligns with their current interpretation of the book.

ORIENTATING PHASE	Activities and strategies
They will be expected to build upon their prior knowledge and skills, creating a deeper cultural understanding of identity. Throughout this phase, students will start to recognise the discourse of adolescent identity through the parent text *The Fault in our Stars* written by John Green.	Digital identity will be examined through the use of social media, looking at the way adolescent identity is constructed. Students will be given social media stimulus that links to themes identified in the last lesson e.g., Charlotte Dawson's trolling comments. Students will participate in physical theatre activities to build empathy e.g., rejection, back-to-back. Class discussion about how an individual's digital identity can be separated from their everyday identity and the impacts of this.
	Deconstruction of a variety of children's picture books that discuss young adult themes e.g., death, growing up, divorce. In groups, students will deconstruct the visual and semiotic elements of the picture, evaluating how textual choices make meaning. Students will complete visual handout (Williams, 2009). The groups then join up with others to compare and contrast their picture book analysis. Final class discussion on powerful semiotic features identified throughout the texts.
RESOURCES	**Text resources:**
	Green, J (2012). *The Fault in Our Stars.* Canada. Dutton Books
	Agertoft, E., & Ingpen, R. (1997). *Jacob, the boy from Nuremberg.* Melbourne, VIC: Lothian Books.
	Carmody, I. (2010). *Night School.* Camberwell, VIC: Penguin Group Australia.
	Chambers, G.L., & Kubbos, A. (2010). *The day my father danced again.* Surry Hills, NSW: Box Press.
	Gleeson, L., & Greder, A. (2011). *I am Thomas.* Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
	Hashmi, K., & Marshall, F. (1998). *You and me, Murrawee.* Ringwood, VIC: Penguin Books Australia.
	Hathorn, L. & Rogers, G. (1994). *Way Home,* Milsons Point, NSW : Random House Australia
	Film resources:
	20th Century Fox(2014). *The Fault in Our Stars [Official Trailer].* Retrieved from *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ItBvH5J6ss*
	Online resources:
	Polyvore. (2014, April 29). *Create a Collage.* Retrieved from Polyvore: http://www.polyvore.com/cgi/app
	Herald Sun. (2012, September 3). Charlotte Dawson: How the Cyber Trolls beat me. Retrieved from : http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/charlotte-dawson-how-the-cyber-trolls-beat-me/story-fnbk7kwa-1226463900647?nk=687b2a4e7f686443f79d7271b1cd9801

ENHANCING PHASE	Activities and strategies – analysing and evaluating texts Activities and strategies – producing texts
In this phase of the unit, students will continue to contextualise the theme of *identity* through a variety of both written and multimodal texts. Students will explore a range of texts, accompanied by the parent text, to help develop intertextuality and deepen understanding. Students will critically deconstruct *The Fault in our Stars,* through a range of textual analysis and ICT skills. Students will re-visit ideas from previous senior units such as cultural contexts, representations and discourses. Students will participate in an assortment of learning experiences that will enable them to imaginatively/creatively develop essential skills required for their SAT. Throughout this phase, students will also be introduced to the summative assessment task options through teacher and past student modelling. Providing a variety of learning experiences that draw on different skills, will create an inclusive environment catering to the diverse students at Broadfield.	Segments of various films surrounding adolescent themes and representations will be explored. Through semiotic analysis students will deconstruct the various dominant representations of teens. Pedagogy will include modelling of the worksheet, followed by student completion
	Focusing on cultural constructions of adolescents, students will view segments of films that represent marginalised groups of teens. Students will be using intertextuality to produce a destabilising image (Miller & Colwill, 2009, p. 76). Students then take skills learnt from this activity and destabilise a common representation of teens by inserting a marginalised character into their chosen image.
	Class will read a short story *Maybe Tomorrow* by Boori Pryor. Class discussion to critically analyse the gaps and silences evident within the text. In groups, students will take a minor character from the short story and develop a plot outline, filling in the gaps. Then individually, students will take a gap from *The Fault in our Stars* and develop a creative short story. Shared in next lesson.
	Students will share short stories from previous lessons. As a class, students will discuss genres within various texts e.g., romance, sci-fi, fantasy, horror etc. Students will choose three genres to examine further, as well as young adult literature. Students will complete a Genre Grid (Miller & Colwill, 2009, p. 86) in pairs. Using two of the genres, students will use stimulus from *The Fault in our Stars* to create a blended text adapting the textual features from the genre young adult literature.
	At the beginning of the lesson the class will listen to a podcast of the story of *Icarus.* While listening students will take notes on the key elements of the story. Students will then be given time to individually draw their visual interpretations of the text. Whilst students are working, the podcast will be played again. Students will share their individual interpretations. Various historical interpretations of the *Icarus* story will be discussed, reflecting on the VAB of the cultures and eras. Students will then discuss how their cultural discourse shaped their interpretation.
	Introduction to types of genres students can utilise within their drama collage (SAT). Teacher will show models of poetry slam, monologues, interactive dialogue and silent film. Students will fill out a matrix listing features of each genre.
	Students use media genre to examine how groups of young adolescents are represented e.g., indigenous, young mothers, homeless people. Using Affect, students will looks at a newspaper article that positions the reader to adopt a particular reading of youth in Australia.
	Drawing from last lesson, students will critically analyse how young adolescents are represented in the media through images. Using Graduation, students will looks at an image/cartoon that positions the reader to adopt a particular reading of youth in Australia. Students will reflect on how accurate these representations are and if they identify with them
	Students lie on the floor of the classroom, teacher conducts Yogi Nidra. Students will listen to generic music (rainforest). Teacher will then guide them through a visualisation activity. Students move to their desks and start writing everything they remember in story form. Students share responses as a class. An image of Amsterdam is projected on the board. A series of different music tracks is played to examine associated emotions, stories and moods. Reflection on the links to the setting in *TFIOS* (Amsterdam).

ENHANCING PHASE	Activities and strategies – analysing and evaluating texts Activities and strategies – producing texts
CONTINUED...	A variety of resources will be looked at in relation to Narration. Deconstruction of how the *narrator* positions the reader. Students will look at different types of narrators e.g., Death (*Book Thief*) compared to Hazel (*TFIOS*). Students will watch a silent film then in pairs narrate the textual stimulus. They will then compare with other students' work. Class discussion on the play *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble
	Students will be given the opportunity to attend *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble at La Boite Theatre. Students will be encouraged to take notes to write a reflection on the way young adult identity was constructed within the play.
	Class reflection on stylistic methods used within the play *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble. Students deconstruct the use of reflective monologues, comparing between *The Effect and The Fault in our Stars.* Physical theatre monologue activity e.g., chair movement – representing Hazel's lung cancer.
	Students are introduced to Slam Poetry through models and a TED-ED video (*Become a slam poet in five steps).* In pairs students share ideas and create their own slam poem using Hazel & Augustus as stimulus (*shared in next lesson)*
	Poetry slams are shared in small focus groups. Exploration of types of poem, with a specific focus on Concrete poems and Black out poems. Models will be provided for students to create their own poems. Ripped out book pages will used to create Black out poems. Students will work individually with *The Fault in our Stars* text, to develop another Blackout poem or Concrete poem.
	In groups students will create a Pinterest board for *The Fault in our Stars.* Students will also Individually create another Pinterest board identifying a theme from the novel. Students will use these images to create a Polyvore including semiotic analysis explaining their visual choices.
	Students will complete *Remixing Me* activity from *Media Remix,* using images *(Dezuanni & Jetnikoff, 2008,p.10.)* from last lesson. Creative ICT skills are revised e.g., photo-story, Windows Movie Maker, PowerPoint, visual effects, narration, audio tracks, etc.
	Students watch three silent films. A worksheet will be filled out noting the *Mis-en-scene* techniques used to evoke a particular response. After watching the clips students can choose one and write a script for the clip. The script can either convey the mood created or challenge it.
	Students choose a theme identified in previous lessons as well as a mode of delivery (spoken, visual or multimodal). They are required to create a two minute presentation of their chosen theme in a creative manner (drama, art, visual, ICT). Students work individually.
	Students finalise their presentations through a formative checklist. Students will practise in pairs. Teacher conferences throughout the lesson, providing constructive feedback.
	Students will present individually and teacher provides feedback.
	Throughout this lesson the Teacher will show models of previous students' drama collages as well as YouTube examples.
	Teacher deconstructs drama collage, referencing formative presentations. Four students will volunteer to re-present their task as a group – modelling a drama collage. Teacher will deconstruct the non-linear sequence of the drama collage, underlining the common link of *adolescent identity,* pointing out the diversity of performance utilised in a singular collage. KWL chart to assess what students need to revise.
	This lesson will be devised according to the students' KWL charts. For example: going over multimodal skills, physical theatre, script writing, etc.

RESOURCES	**Text resources:**
	Green, J (2012). *The Fault in Our Stars.* Canada. Dutton Books
	Miller, M., & Colwill, R. (2009). *Queensland Senior English 1.* South Yarra: Macmillan.
	Pryor, B. (1998). *Maybe Tomorrow.* Ringwood, Victoria, Australia: Penguin Group.
	Performances Resource:
	Prebble, L. (2014). *The Effect.* (Queensland Theatre Company, Performer) QPAC Playhouse, Brisbane.
	Film resources: (selected scenes)
	Beattie, S. (Director). (2012). *Tomorrow When the War Began* [Motion Picture].
	Waters, M. (Director). (2004). *Mean Girls* [Motion Picture].
	Reitman, J. (Director). (2007). *Juno* [Motion Picture].
	Ross, G. (Director). (2012). *The Hunger Games* [Motion Picture].
	Noyce, P. (Director). (2002). *Rabbit Proof Fence* [Motion Picture].
	Perkins, R. (Director). (2010). *Bra Nue Dae* [Motion Picture].
	Gluck, W. (Director). (2010). *Easy A* [Motion Picture].
	Hughes, J. (Director). (1985). *The Breakfast Club* [Motion Picture].
	Marshall, R. (Director). (2005). *Memoirs of a Geisha* [Motion Picture].
	Burger, N. (Director). (2014). *Divergent* [Motion Picture].
	Online resources:
	Aus Poetry Slam. (2011, December). Australian Poetry Slam Champion 2011 – Luka Lesson - "The New Crusades". YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJOtPjuFMAk
	Aus Poetry Slam. (2011, December). Australian Poetry Slam Champion
	2011- Luka Lesson . Youtube. "The Confluence" Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2vh2lBcAdc
	Aus Poetry Slam. (2012). Australian Poetry Slam Champion 2012/13 – CJ Bowerbird. Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nU-_gzFbkWs
	Aus Poetry Slam. (2012). Australian Poetry Slam Champion 2012/13 – CJ Bowerbird – "Clicktivism". Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nU-_gzFbkWs
	Roundhouse London. (n.d.). Roundhouse Poetry Slam 2013 Winner: Antosh Wojcik. Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_zXjfBPfTk
	Vazquez, R. (2011). LA Mission Collage Drama Fall 2010. Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24irjPASFEI
	Foley. (2009). Sutton Collage drama team. YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_dcpyEuhw0
	Danley, G. (2013). *Become a slam poet in five steps.* Retrieved from TEDEd: Lessons Worth Sharing: http://ed.ted.com/lessons/become-a-slam-poet-in-five-steps-gayle-danley
	Sadri, P. (2014). Polyvore. Retrieved from Polyvore: http://www.polyvore.com/cgi/home
	Silbermann, B., Sciarra , P., & Sharp, E. (2010). Pintrest. Retrieved from Pintrest: http://www.pinterest.com/

SYNTHESISING PHASE	Activities and strategies
In the final stage of this unit, students will be drawing on intertextual skills to make links between the parent text and their SAT. Students will be focusing on constructing and rehearsing their assessment pieces, ensuring they have drawn on multiple text types to support their construction of adolescent identity. Students will be given the opportunity to reflect on the semester's work, looking at how their identity has been shaped within the school culture.	Students will be given a week of rehearsal time. These lessons will include: drafting and modelling, teacher conferencing, independent and group practice. These activities are summatively assessed with assessment and presentation undertaken during the Exam Block (one allocated day) Students will complete a reflection task about how their understanding of adolescent identity has developed.

References

ACARA. (2014). *Cross-curriculum priorities.* ACARA.

Bull, G., & Anstey, M. (2010). *Evolvoing Pedagogies: Reading and writing in a multimodal world.* Victoria: Education Services Australia Limited.

Dezuanni, M., & Jetnikoff, A. (2008). Remixing Me. In M. Dezuanni, & A. Jetnikoff, *Media remix: digital projects for students* (pp. 8-13). Milton : John

Gannon, S., Howie, M., & Sawyer, W. (2009). *Charged with Meaning: Re-viewing English.* Putney, NSW: Phoenix Education .

Miller, M., & Colwill, R. (2009). *Queensland Senoir English 1.* South Yara: Macmillan.

Queensland Studies Authority. (2010). *Senoir English Syllabus.*

Veidemanis, G. (1962). Drama in the English Classroom. *The English Journal*, 544-551.

Williams, L. (2009). *English Teachers Survial Manual.* Rochedale: Wordsmart Consulting.

UNIT 4: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER
INTERRUPTING IDENTITIES: DRAMA COLLAGE

Name: _____   Presentation Proposal due _____

Class: _____   Drama Collage due _____

Text type: Drama collage responding to the text *The Fault in our Stars by John Green* as well as supporting texts (see resource list)	**Field**: How adolescent identity is constructed through culture, texts and time through examining *coming of age* and what it means to be an adult.
Length: 5–7mins per student **Group or Individual**: Groups of 4 maximum **Conditions:** 5 weeks notice of task. In-class preparation and at home preparation. Teacher feedback (1 presentation proposal and formative checklist). Minimum reference to two texts (including parent text).	**Tenor:** Students produce/perform a drama collage for the Youth Arts Queensland, World Day for Theatre for Young People. **Genre:** You are able to draw on a variety of genres, text types and media such as graphics, visuals, music, art, poetry slams, monologues, interactive dialogue and physical theatre.
Your Purpose: To present an entertaining multi-modal performance demonstrating how adolescent identity is constructed through a variety of cultures.	**Mode:** Spoken (multimodal)

Context

As a Year 12 student you are transitioning from an adolescent to an adult. This journey is shaped by your cultural discourse and experiences. Throughout this unit you have explored a range of texts that focus on adolescents and coming of age, with a particular focus on John Green's, *The Fault in our Stars.* You have also explored a variety of cross-cultural texts that are focused on youth and identity throughout time. This unit has looked at intertextual links between corresponding themes of coming-of-age and adolescent identity.

Drama has, at its core, the experience of imagined existence that is made manifest through play text, body, time and space (Gannon, Howie & Sawyer, 2009, p. 210). Youth Arts Queensland (YAQ) has approached Broadfield State High requesting creative multimodal submissions for World Day of Theatre for Young People. The theme that you will focus on and create intertextual links across is the *cultural construction of adolescent identity*. Your presentation will be filmed and submitted to YAQ. A selection of presentations will also be chosen to be presented in Broadfields' Multicultural week.

Task

Your task is to design a **drama collage** *that addresses the theme of identity through drawing links to* The Fault in our Stars *as well as other supporting texts (see suggested text list below). These could include:*

– films
– documentaries
– poems/poetry slams
– drama performances
– fiction/non-fiction texts

Your drama collage can include: • dramatic or spoken enactments • flash videos • still photos set to music with text	Software choices: PowerPoint, Photostory 3, Movie Maker and iMovie

Through the multimodal and performance skills you have learnt over the semester, you are to design and create a drama collage that highlights the **key concepts and themes** of adolescent identity**.** This will be accompanied by a formative script/presentation plan. You may complete this as either an individual or as group (maximum 4). **Note:** each individual must have a presentation time of **5-7mins.**

A drama collage involves making a dramatic statement about an issue or a theme with a variety of short thematically-linked scenes in a non-linear structure. Your drama collage needs to be an innovative transformation of the texts. You need to decide how your collage is going to entertain your audience. Will it be poignant or exciting? How will you address adolescent identity? You are to create your drama collage using a range of texts, a soundtrack and a variety of visual elements

Remember – there are three dimensions by which you will be assessed:

(D1): *understanding and responding to contexts*

(D2): *understanding and controlling textual features*

(D3): *creating and evaluating meaning.*

Formative Checklist

RESEARCH	Yes	Need to improve	Not sure
You have read *The Fault in our Stars* John Green (D1)			
You have considered an underlying theme (D1)			
You have made intertextual links (D3)			
You have chosen a minimum of two corresponding texts (D1)			
You have linked to skills learnt in class (D1)			
You have used reliable resources (D1)			
You have developed a detailed reference list (D1)			
DRAFTING AND EDITING	Yes	Need to improve	Not sure
You have conducted thorough research on your underlying theme (D3)			
You have effectively used your proposal template (D1)			
You have linked adolescent identity into your presentation (D3)			
You have effectively used your time to plan and prepare (D1)			
You have utilized class time effectively (D1)			
You have organised a teacher consultation (D1)			
You have conducted co-operative group work (D1)			
You have equally shared the work load (D1)			
You have developed your work to the best of your group's alibility (D1)			
DRAMA COLLAGE	Yes	Need to improve	Not sure
You have created an insightful collage (D3)			
You have engaged the audience (D2)			
You have used appropriate language and multimodal features (D2)			
You have incorporated aesthetics effectively (D3)			
You have developed a complex performance by drawing on intertextual links (D2)			
You have built and added to the theme of adolescent identity (D2)			
You have used emotive language effectively (D2)			
You have used language and visuals to create emotional response (D2)			
You have included some complex ideas in your response that relate to some of the cultural and social issues discussed in class (D3)			
You have structured your response in the correct drama collage format (D2)			
You have created an imaginative and informative collage (D3)			
You have designed an insightful performance about adolescent identity/ coming-of-age (D3)			
DUE DATE	Yes	Need to improve	Not sure
You have completed and submitted a proposal plan			
You have rehearsed your drama collage with props and stimulus			
You have brought a hard copy of all required documents (proposal plan, visual elements, reference list)			
You have completed the formative checklist			

FROM A SKY IN JULY, 2014
Paul Sherman

(i) cry from the Ukraine
A child's voice tells me
"Toys can't cry."
I tell him – I would
He could hear me –
"Yours does, buster.
Yours cries to the sky,
the Ukrainian sky
from a field far from me
that's now horribly near me
– a field where Border Issues
some have sought to resolve
with murderous missiles."

(ii) dawn fire
How come dawn-sun flame-trees
blood my back window?
My flat's backyard is rootless, yet
this morning flame-trees bleed
below my Brisbane's Ukrained sky.
Flame-trees, dream-seeded.

(iii) empty desks
Across the road a classroom calls.
I taught there once. It's now
well before time for morning bell.
Besides, the school my inner eye reveals
is far from here. "Perth-bound,"
I think the paper said. Well, inter-State,
I see three empty desks.
News headlines sketch three kids
boarding a plane to make the start of term.

A TOP TIME IN THE TOP END: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2014 AATE/ALEA CONFERENCE

Natalie Fong
Citipointe Christian College

After having such fun at the National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE) conference in the UK last year, I realised with shame that I had never been to an AATE/ALEA Conference. Thankfully, ETAQ rectified this by kindly sponsoring me to attend the 2014 Conference, "aNTicipating New Territories", in Darwin.

It was a prime opportunity not just for PD and networking, but also to visit new territory (pun). I've never been to the NT, but am completing an MPhil researching the early Chinese pioneers in the NT in the late 1800s, including my ancestors. So it was a holiday/PD/research/self-discovery trip, from which I have returned with much enthusiasm for teaching English, fondness for the NT and an unexpected sense of belonging. As the old ad(age) goes, "You never, never know, if you never, never go." For those who didn't go, here's a taste of what you missed:

Pre-Conference Activities

I arrived in Darwin five days before the conference, to spend time walking in the footsteps of my ancestors and researching. My great-grandfather arrived in Darwin from Canton in 1882. He was a storekeeper in Darwin's Chinatown (one of his contemporaries, Kwong Sue Duk, was *Masterchef* judge Kylie Kwong's great-grandfather). His store was opposite the famous banyan tree, The Tree of Knowledge, which still stands outside the Civic Centre, but it was destroyed during the bombing in 1942. Together with Cyclone Tracey in 1974, these events have shaped Darwin's landscape and the resilience of its proud Territorians. I now appreciate my ancestors' persistence in a beautiful but challenging environment, and where they had to learn a new language, so that future generations could live in Australia.

Along the way, I met knowledgeable and enthusiastic historians, other descendants of pioneers and spent happy hours at the Library,

The gorgeous Katherine Gorge

Archives and Chinese Museum, where I had the thrill of seeing my name on family trees. My aunt and I also did a coach day tour to Katherine Gorge, and enjoyed a lovely afternoon cruise, guided by a Larrakia who explained the cultural significance of the rock paintings and native plants.

Of the official Pre-Conference Activities offered, naturally I chose to do a History Tour, run by local History teachers. We visited the NT Museum and Art Gallery, which has beautiful Albert Namatjira paintings, and an intriguing selection of ships, from Indonesian perahus to asylum seeker boats. At Fannie Bay Gaol, we got to see the gallows, last used relatively recently in 1952. Definitely the highlight was the Defence of Darwin Experience (http://www.defenceofdarwin.nt.gov.au/). Opened in 2012 as part of the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Darwin, it has a fantastic multimedia presentation on the bombing, combining technology with historical accounts to create an

immersive and emotional experience. They also have an expansive collection of WWII vehicles and a great new exhibition on Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, including lots of poems written by soldiers.

AATE/ALEA Conference, "aNTicipating New Territories"

The conference opened with a rousing "Waltzing Matilda" sung in Top End Kriol. Watch a version here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgLtzD6JxcA. This cross-cultural exchange encapsulated the whole conference. As I looked around the auditorium each morning at the sea of English educators, I couldn't help but think, "This is someone's worst nightmare". But for us, it was a dream opportunity to share our passion for teaching English. Though it may seem at times that we are teaching the (supposedly) same curriculum in different languages, it is the same story – shaping learners who are critical, creative, intentional, tech-savvy risk takers.

Keynote: Dr Jill Lewis-Spector, "Building Strong Futures"

Dr Jill Lewis-Spector, President-Elect of the International Reading Association, focused her address on how we can teach our students to be global citizens:

- Increasing knowledge:
  - giving students access to a range of resources and perspectives
  - encouraging students to evaluate information in terms of authenticity/reliability, intent, bias, relevance, recency, quality
- Increasing skills:
  - students creating knowledge, e.g. analysing and revising a Wikipedia entry
  - close reading of a range of texts and engaging in deep thinking, e.g. examining and assessing arguments, asking questions, communicating with other cultures

Someone's worst nightmare – Parliament House full of English teachers!

- Shaping students' attitudes:
  - recognising effectiveness of citizen action, e.g. letters to editor, community work
  - being committed to fact-finding and being open-minded
  - recognising others' rights to express opinions
  - digital citizenship, e.g. decision making before sharing something online (she recommended https://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/posters)
  - peer collaboration - understanding different cultures and learning to compromise
- Inculcating values
  - discussion and collaboration rather than relying on the teacher
  - meaning constructed together through turn-taking
  - importance of asking good questions and listening to questions
- Promoting intended behaviour/dispositions
  - structured group work - projects, campaigns
  - giving opportunities for leadership - team building, decision making, reflection, networking, project management

Workshops

There were lots of workshop sessions during the conference, and a wide variety to choose from. The conference app, always up-to-date, made it easy to select workshops and generate a schedule so you knew where to go and when. Here are some strategies from the workshops I attended that you could implement in the classroom:

Pre-Teaching Vocabulary for Effective Reading – Deb Lawrence, Education Queensland

First ask ourselves: "What do we want students to know about vocab?

- Students to guess the genre of a text and its target audience just from its vocabulary

- When introducing students to a word, get them to:
  – find a synonym
  – define the word
  – use it in a sentence
  – find an example of someone else using it in a sentence
  – sketch it
  – guess its part of speech and definition

Visible Thinking – Bev Steer, Carey Baptist Grammar School, Melbourne

Informed by Project Zero (http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org/) and Ron Ritchhart (http://www.rcsthinkfromthemiddle.com/uploads/2/3/4/1/23418034/thinking_routines_matrix.pdf). Bev Steer has been teaching colleagues in different departments about Visible Thinking – strategies for making students' thought processes visible, and thus fostering collaborative learning. The two links have details of strategies and how to use them. Some you might like to try:

- Generate – Sort – Connect – Elaborate
  – I've tried this with Year 12s already with *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. First, in groups, they generated a list of power and control techniques employed by the Part, then they sorted them into categories which

Making new friends

they came up with (social, psychological, etc.). They connected two, and elaborated on them in a PEEL paragraph.

- See – Think – What makes you say that – Wonder
  – great for analysing visual texts, especially if you give it to students without the title or caption.

- Colour – Symbol – Image
  – for example a novel study, have students summarise the book with a colour/symbol/image, then justify their choice using evidence from the book

- Word – Phrase – Sentence
  – help students identify key concepts/themes in a text by first locating a key sentence, then a phrase, then a powerful word

- Variation on KWL – Past (what I knew) - present (what I now know) - future (what I would like to know)

- Claim – Support – Question
  – make a claim about the topic
  – support it with evidence
  – what questions do you still need to answer in order to support your claim?

Improving Boys' Writing

Literacy Coach Frankie Roberts and EAL Network Teacher Kerry Hesketh, from Adelaide, shared their cross-curricular, cross-year levels explicit teaching of reading approach, Read 2 Learn, used in an F–12 all boys' school:

- Prepare students for learning
  - contextualise
  - connect to previous learning and knowledge
  - ensure students are familiar with the text type and its generic features
  - briefly outline the content of each paragraph
  - have students respond to the assessment task at the beginning of the unit, before teaching, then compare it to the finished product at the end of the unit. Reflect on why the first attempt was poor and the second attempt better

Reading in detail
  - have students note topic-specific vocabulary that they should use in their writing

Writing
  - have students deconstruct a paragraph from the reading, then reconstruct it in their own words

Helping Jackie French launch her new book, I Am Juliet

Writers on Writing

One wonderful aspect of the conference was having award-winning children's authors present to share their wisdom and experiences of writing with young people.

Jackie French was particularly memorable for her impassioned pleas to get our students reading daily. She made the great suggestion that if a student does not like the set text, ask them to suggest another and justify it; or do a deal that

Happy 50th Birthday, AATE! President Garry Collins makes the cut with NT Governor Sally Thomas

if they do a set text then they choose another text to study. Look out for her new book – *I Spy a Great Reader*. Writing-wise, a genre she proposed students should experiment with is 'historical non-fiction' – using creative writing to tell a true story, or a story about a real person, as in her *Hitler's Daughter*.

Nadia Wheatley was also gently insistent that we should consider the Aboriginal perspective. She recommended studying the Aboriginal history of our local area with students.

Tristan Bancks is not just fervent about writing; he's so keen to motivate young people to write that he's co-developed a free web-based story-brainstorming tool, Story Scrapbook (http://www.tristanbancks.com/p/story-scrapbook.html). Another tool Tristan recommended was Scrivener (http://www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener.php). This could be used to organise and compose any sort of extended writing.

Joss Whedon is God (or he would be if he wasn't an atheist) – Leith Daniel, Faculty Dean of English, Servite College, WA

In this very entertaining workshop, Leith Daniel, who loves using pop culture to teach English, gave lots of interesting reasons why we should be studying more of Joss Whedon's work. Whedon is a humanist and atheist, and thus his work features discussions of existentialism, as well as religious iconology and the power of the individual:

Leith Daniel

- Buffy the Vampire Slayer
  - archetypes – recognises stereotypes are gendered
  - allusions – cf. *Call of the Wild*, *Jekyll & Hyde*
  - allegories
  - film techniques & use of in TV
  - see collection of essays – *Buffy in the Classroom*
- Serenity
  - mixed genre - Western meets Sci-Fi
  - plot structure (*deux ex machina*) – absence of plot
  - see *Slayage* – journal of academic writing about Wheedon
  - values – anti-hero doesn't have typical heroic values
- Whedon's *Much Ado About Nothing* to teach the play
- 2013 Wesleyan Commencement Address by Whedon (http://newsletter.blogs.wesleyan.edu/2013/05/26/whedoncommencement/).

Understanding Digital Spaces in the Classroom – Dr Jen Scott Curwood & Patricia Thibaut, University of Sydney

Finally, some digital tools and tips:

- tweets as collaborative note taking and compiling them using Storify (https://storify.com/)

- sharing work online – students post excerpts for comment. I am trialling this with Year 9s posting their introduction and first body paragraph on a Blackboard Discussion Board.

- have students post a question online, and they must each answer at least one

- get students to write a summary of the lesson and post it online

- allowing students to submit work using whatever mode they choose, e.g. recording a video diary rather than writing

- Zondle – online game making tool (https://www.zondle.com/)

Final Thoughts

There were many more memorable moments of the Conference: the evening reception at Parliament House, the evening reception at Government House (where I got a quick peek in to see a photograph of my great-grandfather taken there in 1905), the conference dinner (worth going just to see Garry Collins grooving on the dance floor)…But most of all I will remember: the exciting energy in the workshops as we bounced teaching ideas off each other and, in the process, developed new strategies; the friendly locals who looked after me; seeing old friends and making new ones. Whether it was the weather, the people or the experiences, I felt at home.

Thank you to ETAQ for this wonderful opportunity. Now I know, because I did go.

"Feels like home": photograph of my great-grandfather at Government House, 1905

AUSTRALIAN LOVE POEMS 2013 — EDITED BY MARK TREDINNICK

A Review by Peta Egan
Senior Teacher, Ormiston College

I f I were to describe this text in a few words, I would suggest that it is *surprising, gentle at times, harsh and raw at others.* I guess that sums up the nature of love - to be honest - and given that this is a collection of Australian love poems, I suppose these descriptions are apt.

With over 1500 submissions from more than 650 poets, there was certainly a plethora of love to go around. In the end, 173 poets found their works among 200 poems included in this revealing and quite powerful book and I can genuinely say that I enjoyed making my way around each one.

I am not usually one for sitting in the hammock with an anthology of poems to keep me company; however, when I laid back to savour this particular collection, I quickly became engrossed. Love is certainly part of the world turning and this collection reflects that ever-present cycle. While money may make the world go round, love – and all its incarnations – makes it interesting. This collection shares many of these types of love – new love, wild love, love of promises and commitment, broken love, bored love and even love post-life. It can be a confronting read and many of the various approaches to describing love are recognisable to most of us old enough to have loved and been loved. It is certainly not a romantic, shallow read, but a collection worthy of deeper consideration.

Not only is the reader challenged to delve into the kaleidoscope of 'love types' but they are also taken on a reader's journey into the varying genres explored by the poets. They're all there: free verse, rhyming prose, the odd haiku and even a touch of the narrative ballad. They're all personal and many poignant. Cate Kennedy's *Ode to Lust* will make you blush, you'll sigh with Andrea McMahon's *Butterfly* and possibly, like I

Book cover sourced from http://cordite.org. au/reviews/keri-glastonbury-reviews-australian-love-poems-2013/

did, shed a tear with Mark Miller's *Haiku: Loss.* This collection has something for everyone simply because it delves into that very emotion that each and every one of us can recognise.

I wouldn't necessarily suggest this as a text as a whole for the classroom; yet it is a worthy addition to the library shelves or the resource list for a unit. It's also a valuable tool to use when considering *how* an editor may construct a collection; how they might construct a representation of a universal human emotion with words.

Personally, I found a sort of reverence to its pages; even the cover feels soft and welcoming to the touch. Perhaps this is a reflection of my current personal circumstance; nevertheless, I appreciate that I now have this book to hold and come back to in the times that I wish to explore the many faces – and experiences – of love.