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# How to use this book

## Pearson English

Whether through short stories from centuries ago or new graphic novels and digital texts, the **Pearson English** series aims to expose students to the richness of the English language. This student book is written and presented in a student-friendly manner to further encourage engagement with the content and the topics.

Significant care has been given to the wide selection of resources and

accompanying tasks to ensure that the demands of the strands and sub-strands of the Australian Curriculum: English are met. All chapters have been audited against year-level descriptions, general capabilities and cross-curricular dimensions to make sure that they comply in a pedagogically appropriate way.

The student book chapters contain the following features:

### Chapter opener



Each chapter opens with a striking image accompanied by an engaging quote that aims to generate discussion before students engage with the content inside.

### Modules



Each chapter comprises clearly defined modules to allow teachers and students to move freely between topics as they see fit, thus providing flexibility of teaching and learning.

### Breakaway tasks



Throughout each module there are *Breakaway tasks* which offer a wide range of individual and collaborative tasks.

These tasks are structured around Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Processes. The questions move from straightforward, lower order questions (**remembering**,

**understanding** and **applying**) through to more complex, higher order questions (**analysing**, **evaluating** and **creating**).

The pedagogy of these questions is based upon:

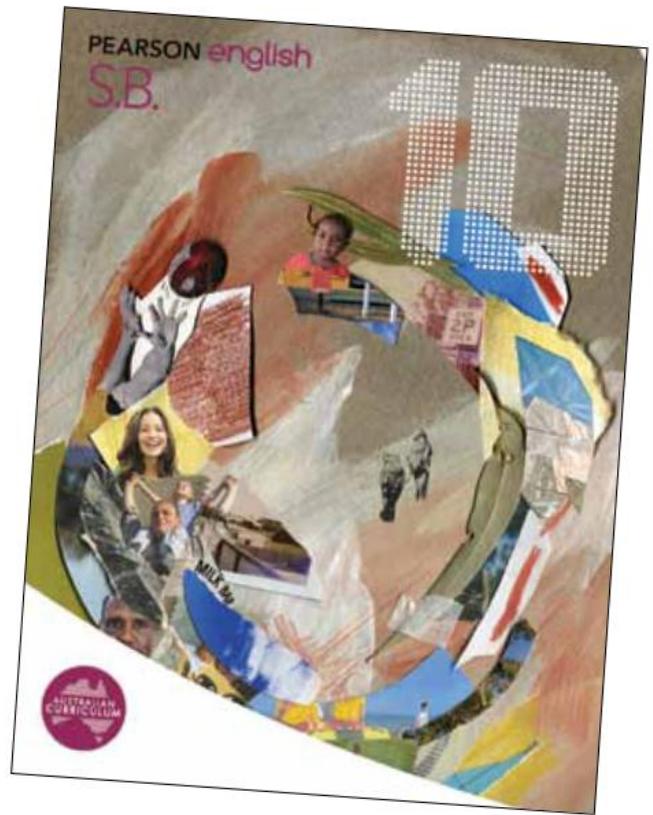
- keeping topic momentum within the classroom to allow the teacher to facilitate individual and/or collaborative work after a block of 'teacher centred' learning
- reinforcing learning within the context of the chapter
- providing activities that are engaging and can be answered from the module they appear in, while also encouraging students to think beyond the text
- ensuring all tasks engage with both the strands and sub-strands found within the Australian Curriculum documentation.

## Strands in action

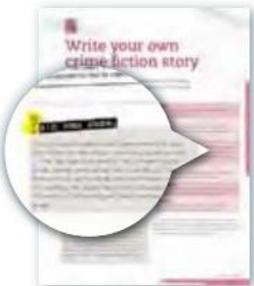


At the end of each module students are provided with a wealth of rich tasks called *Strands in action*. The term *Strands in action* is taken from the three interrelated 'strands' that are the centre of the Australian Curriculum for English. This means that each

rich task requires students to engage in some way with language, literature and literacy. *Strands in action*, by their nature, require more class time than the *Breakaway tasks*. Many of the activities require detailed research and for students to work collaboratively. *Strands in action* tasks engage with all four modes of assessment, namely reading, writing, speaking and listening.



## Other features or icons



The *Did you know?* feature contains useful information related to the topic that students will find interesting.



One of the central components of any English curriculum is the building of the student's skill base. *Writer's toolbox* is where students can read about the tips and tricks of the English language. While grammar, spelling and punctuation hints are the mainstay of the *Writer's toolbox*, useful definitions and tailored guidance on key language issues and concepts are also included.



## Annotated texts



Through judicious placement within chapters, the annotated texts are intended to help students to connect with key terms and ideas within reading activities by providing examples and explanations in context. Further, annotations improve comprehension and expand students' skill base by scaffolding learning.

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# Media

## Chapter overview

The media have the power to make or break a political career, they promote products, they expose flaws, they create celebrity and establish notoriety.

As new media emerge and traditional forms adapt to the electronic age, we need to understand

the messages of the media, how the messages are constructed and what the media want us to do, think, feel or believe. Everyone wants to be right, everyone wants to influence us and everyone has something to gain from influencing us.

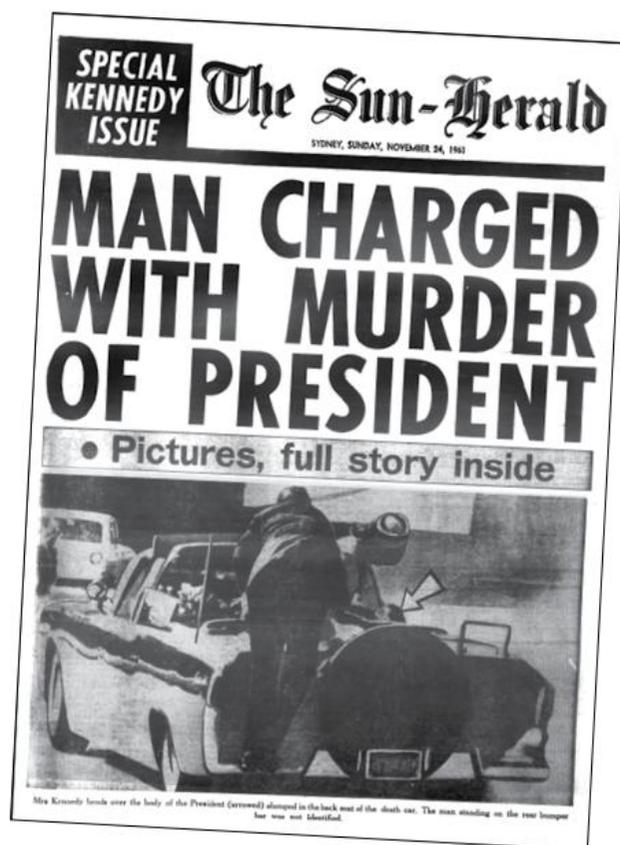
The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power because they control the minds of the masses.

Malcolm X (1925–1965), human rights activist



# Breaking news and making views

**W**e live in a world in which we have instant access to information. We can tune into the radio, watch twenty-four-hour cable news, log onto websites or download news onto our phones—news is happening all the time and, since the development of media, newspapers and the organisations behind them have been dedicated to sharing the facts of the world's events and their consequences.



## Why examine the media?

The simplest answer to the question 'Why should I examine or analyse the media' is 'because they examine or analyse you'. If you accept that the media have an agenda—to influence what you think, do, feel or believe—then it is important for you to be aware of how this is done and why. The media walk a fine line between appealing to your interests and opinions and challenging them. Do they also try to control what you think? The media need to know as much about you as they possibly can so that they can do this effectively.

There are many reasons to study the media.

- Politicians speak to us through the media so we need to be aware of how they use the media and how the media 'filter' their message.
- They present to us ideas and values that they think are important in our world.
- They use their own language and techniques, which we need to understand so that we can understand the underlying meaning.

- Companies that control the media are among the most powerful in the world.
- Our understanding of the rest of the world comes mostly through what the media present to us.
- We need to be able to recognise what stories are not being covered by the media, and why.
- They are the main vehicle for creating celebrity in our world.



**'Media'** refers to all the channels through which news and opinions are relayed, such as radio, television, internet sites and newspapers.

'Media' is the plural form of the word 'medium'. The word 'media' is increasingly used as a singular noun; for example 'the most effective media is television' rather than 'the most effective medium is television'. However, in your formal writing you should use the traditional singular form ('medium') when referring to one medium, such as the press or television.

# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 Make a list of all the different kinds of media that you can think of in Australia today. Compare your list with those of your classmates and generate a class list.

## Analysing

- 2 Write a list of the five most important people and the five most important events that have featured in the media in the last twelve months. Compare your list with that of a partner; then with the class as a whole. Make a class list and add to it during the year.
- 3 Ask three or four adults in your life who they think are the five most powerful people and the five most important events that have featured in the media in the last twelve months. Is their list different to your list or the class list? Why do you think this is the case?

History shows us that newspapers drew attention to the work of Gandhi (1869–1948), the end of the Vietnam War (1964–75) and the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and newspapers help affect the course of events. The media have influenced social change (the peace movement of the 1960s and the environmental movement in the last thirty years) and brought down governments (the Watergate scandal during the 1970s). They have also, however, been exploitative and critical of movements for change and people who threatened the status quo. It is important to know who has control over the media as it is these people who decide *what* is to be written about or shown and *how* it is to be written about or shown.



**Status quo:** the existing state, from Latin.

# Breaking news!

The media have recorded important historical events and, through their influence, have helped shape history. Since the media are designed to reach a large number of people quickly and cheaply, newspapers and television are in a unique position to influence people's *perception* of events.

When they are used well, these media can be very effective in drawing attention to oppression, corruption and exploitation, and they can provoke change.

During the twentieth century, politicians such as Adolf Hitler and Bill Clinton understood the importance of the media and were able to use it to their own advantage to gain power and to influence people through the messages that they sent out.

In the twentieth century, the media became the domain of professional journalists, editors, public relations managers and advertising gurus. Now, in the electronic age, the internet enables and encourages community debate regardless of who they are. Whether this is empowering the ignorant or allowing open and honest discussion is one of many issues associated with the development of the internet.



Newspapers are important records of human achievement—and human failure.

# Read all about it: a brief history of newspapers

In 1440, Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press. Suddenly it was possible to print texts quickly, relatively cheaply and in the common language of the people. One of the first books that Gutenberg printed was the Bible which, prior to this, was handwritten and illustrated by monks. This technology eventually enabled the mass printing of newspapers. The first newspaper in England, the *Oxford Gazette*, was published in 1557, while the first American newspaper, *Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick*, was published in 1690.

From the 1800s, newspapers increased in popularity and became the main vehicle for distributing information to the masses. This was due to:

- an increase in literacy levels
- the movement of people from the country to the cities as the Industrial Revolution took hold
- the increase in global trade that resulted in an upsurge in interest about world affairs.

## Australia

The first newspaper published in Australia was the *Sydney Gazette* in 1803. It was published by ex-convict George Howe. In its first year, the *Sydney Gazette* had 300 subscribers. Most of the articles were official government orders, but gradually more articles began to appear, including crime reports, shipping news and religious advice. News from the other side of the world arrived on ships. By the time some of this material made it to print in the *Sydney Gazette* it was fourteen weeks old.

By 1861, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide had been connected to the telegraph, which allowed messages to be transmitted through electrical wires, mostly using Morse code. By 1872, a cable from Britain to Darwin was in operation, which meant that news could be sent and received quickly over vast distances.

The invention of the telephone and the railway, as well as the development of photography, led to improvements in the ways in which newspapers were created and changes in their content.

Eventually, radio and television became popular and newspapers were no longer the only news medium.

Families gathered around the 6 p.m. bulletin to see pictures of the news and to be told in short, sharp statements what was going on in the world. The Vietnam War was known as the first 'television war' because it was broadcast into living rooms every night. This influenced the social movement against the war, as people were able to see, for the first time, the reality of fighting and became aware that the war was a long and bloody one.

Now, in the electronic age, the internet has influenced the amount of news that we are exposed to, the way in which we receive it and the speed with which we view it. The idea of the physical 'newspaper' has been challenged and traditional newspaper publishers have developed electronic versions of their newspapers that are published online. Through the internet and twenty-four-hour cable television news we see world events almost immediately.



### ! DID YOU KNOW...

By 1886, there were forty-eight daily newspapers in Australia for a population of around three million people.

## Breakaway tasks

### Analysing

- 1 Outline in a flow chart the ways in which inventions over time had an impact on the rise of the newspaper.
- 2 Look at the copy of the front page of the *Sydney Gazette* (1803) above and compare it with the copy of the front page of *The Age* (2010) in Module 2. In particular, you should look at the differences in:
  - content
  - use of language
  - layout
  - emphasis.

What general comments can you make about the changes in newspapers?

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Examine and compare the use of media across two different generations.
  - a Conduct a class survey of other students about their use of media and determine which they use most regularly. Your purpose is to discover:
    - which forms of media are most used by the class
    - how often they access these sources.
  - b Present the results of your student survey on an electronic spreadsheet. You might like to produce graphic representations such as pie charts or comparative bar graphs.
  - c Conduct the same survey with at least two adults. Present the results of your adult media usage survey on an electronic spreadsheet or as a graph.
  - d Write a short report analysing your findings. Include information regarding the most and least popular media sources in the two age groups, any similarities and differences discovered, and your findings on how often each group accessed the media. What do the results tell you about media usage across the generations?
- 2 Monitor one of the following for one week:
  - a daily newspaper
  - a daily current affairs program
  - the nightly news
  - the website of a newspaper or national television station.
  - a Make a daily list of each of the front-page stories that appear and the order in which they appear. For a newspaper or website, take note of the space allocated to each story.
  - b Make a note of what advertisements are linked to, or appear near or during each story.
  - c At the end of the week look carefully at the data and see if you can determine the following.
    - Is there a particular audience that is being targeted?
    - Is there a particular issue that is highlighted or given greater importance than any other?
    - Which advertisers feature heavily?
    - Are the advertisers linked in any way to the content?
  - d Write a brief summary (400 words) of your findings. Include any trends or patterns that you found and decide what audience you think the medium is targeting. What do you think this might tell us about how the media operate?

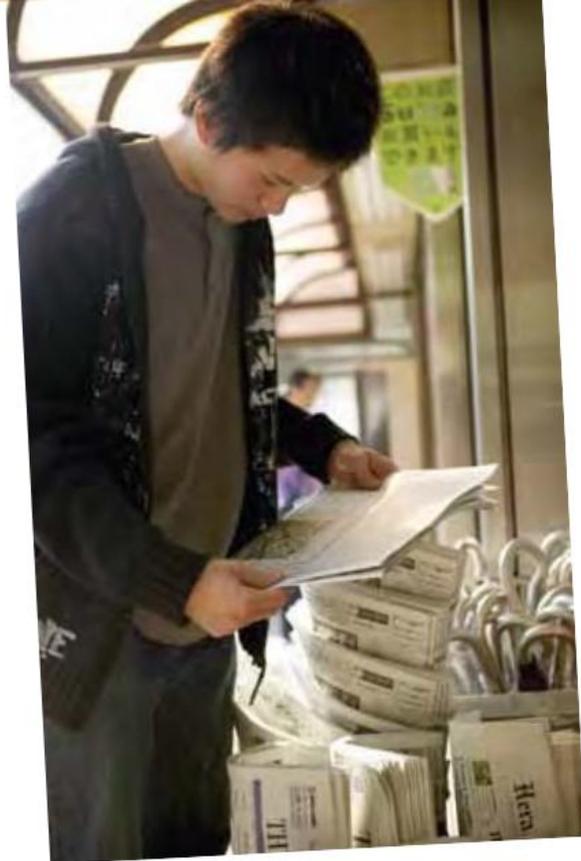
## Extra tasks

- 1 A cricket commentator asks viewers to visit the newspaper's website and respond to an online poll to determine who is the most popular cricketer. Why do you think the media organisation they work for would find this information important? Who might use this information? How might it be used?
- 2 Compare the first five pages of a national daily newspaper (such as *The Australian*) with the local daily newspaper in your state (such as *The Herald Sun* or *The Brisbane Courier Mail*). Write a brief comparative report, responding to the following questions.
  - a What different values are placed on individual stories?
  - b What differences are there between coverage of stories?
  - c What items are not present in the national coverage?
- 3 Use the internet to visit the website of a newspaper. Find five interesting facts to share with the class (such as the paper's circulation figures, its history, online articles and how to advertise in the paper) and write them down.
- 4 During their 2006 and 2007 election campaigns Barack Obama and Kevin Rudd used the media to keep their supporters up to date with their activities and policies. Research each of the media strategies used in these campaigns and present them to the class.
- 5 If you were to run a political campaign, how would you use the media? What are the best ways for you to get your message across in the media?

# Extra! Extra! Read all about it

**N**ewspapers contain a great deal of information—it takes a very long time to read a newspaper from cover to cover. Readers use skills to find the information that they want. Journalists and editors also know how to arrange the information in an effective way to ensure that they are providing you with the information that you are seeking.

Items that might be found inside a newspaper include:



## Skimming and scanning

In order to read a newspaper effectively, readers skim and scan the articles quickly. They may look quickly at the headlines and pictures to decide what they want to read, then read the articles that interest them. If the paper has supplements and sections they enjoy reading, they may turn to these first.

## Newspaper terms

The first part of a newspaper is generally split into news sections that cover global, national, state, regional and local news. Articles tend to be 'above the fold' or 'below the fold'. Those above the fold are the most important because they are on display to the public. In the example here, we are just looking at the front page, but the same principle applies: the main article is about the devastating earthquake in Haiti. The article below the fold is about the United States Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, cancelling her trip to Australia so that she can respond to the crisis in Haiti.

**Masthead:** the name of the newspaper. It is often accompanied by a logo.

**Subheadings:** provide a summary of the main points covered in the article. In this case, the subheading highlights some of the key issues of the earthquake in Haiti. Only the top half of a newspaper on sale at a newspaper stand is on display. Sometimes, on a 'slow news day', editors provide information about articles that appear inside the paper. The intended effect is the same: to attract the attention of the reader.

**Day and date:** publication date of the newspaper.

**Headline:** grabs the reader's attention. It is brief and provides an introduction to the content of the article. Generally, the larger the headline, the more important the article. In this case, the headline extends across the entire width of the paper to show how important the issue is. This is called a banner.

**Strapline:** introductory headline that appears below the main headline.

**Byline:** this tells us who the journalist is. Sometimes articles are written by guest writers or specialists in their field.

**Who, What, Why, When, Where, How:** the opening paragraphs of a news article generally answer these questions.

**Box out:** this section of the paper is generally shaded in a different colour. It is usually linked to the article that it accompanies but is separate from it. In this case, agencies that can offer help to the Haitians are highlighted.

**Advertisement:** companies pay a lot of money to promote their products. Part of the revenue of a newspaper is obtained from selling advertising space.

**Weather:** forecast for the day and often the week ahead. More detailed information (such as tides or the rising of the moon) is found further on in the paper.



**Photographs:** these striking images appeal to the reader's desire to help. The injured child evokes sympathy and the image of the survivor reaching out likewise appeals to our sense of compassion. Note the way in which the visual images work with the headlines to provide a snapshot of the article.

**Caption:** text that explains the image above it.

**Index:** a list of the contents in the paper.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Using the front page of your local daily newspaper, identify each of the elements above.

### Analysing

- 2 Access the website of a leading daily newspaper and identify the elements above on their home page. What changes (if any) are made for the electronic medium?

# Tabloid versus broadsheet

Newspapers come in two sizes, tabloid and broadsheet; the broadsheet is twice the size of the tabloid format. While they essentially cover the same things—news, sport, politics—tabloid and broadsheet newspapers deal with these elements in different ways.

Tabloids have a reputation for sensationalism over accuracy.

Broadsheets, on the other hand, provide well-researched articles with analysis.

## Breakaway tasks

### Applying

- 1 Collect as many different newspapers as you can. Decide which of the newspapers are tabloids and which are broadsheets. Are there any other elements of each style that you can identify?

### Analysing

- 2 Compare the tabloid and broadsheet coverage of one particular issue. You could make a chart of the differences or put the articles on poster paper and highlight the differences.

# Think my way

The newspaper is divided into sections, each with its own purpose and function. One of the most important sections contains articles of opinion, commentaries and views. Traditionally, this is the second section of the newspaper. In a democratic society, this section provides an arena for public debate. Anyone can be a participant in this great democratic process as people try to persuade others of their point of view ... and likewise, in this section you have the opportunity to tell people why your opinion on an issue is right!

# Events versus issues

An event and an issue are not the same. Just because an article appears in the newspaper doesn't mean that it is necessarily designed to persuade you to a point of view. Some articles are simply news articles; that is, their purpose is purely to inform.

It is when people begin to talk about these events and to think carefully about their implications that issues begin to emerge. In order for something to be an issue, it must have at least two sides to it. A reasonable person should be able to debate fairly about the issue that is being discussed.

Elements	Tabloids	Broadsheets
Audience	Lower level of education	Higher level of education
Size	Approximately A3 paper size. Can be read easily on public transport	Approximately A2 paper size. Ideally read at a table or desk
Use of visuals	Photographs and cartoons feature heavily throughout the paper	Photographs are used more sparingly. Cartoons are often political and make reference to philosophical ideas
Language	Can be informal and colloquial. Changes to suit story being told	Usually formal, often analytical
Headlines	Often dominate pages, puns feature heavily	More conservative in approach
Stories	Short and written to entertain as well as to inform	Can be quite lengthy. Often intended to analyse and give several perspectives on an issue or event
Focus	Cover local issues in some depth. Cover celebrities and sports in depth. May sensationalise events and push populist messages	Cover local issues in some depth. May look at national and international politics or issues in some depth. Pride themselves on taking independent and sometimes unpopular stands on issues

Imagine for a moment that a terrible car accident occurs involving underage teenage drivers. Two of the passengers are killed but the unlicensed driver survives. This event might get reported in the paper by a journalist in a news article.

However, this event might spark debate in the community about the circumstances surrounding it. These discussions might be considered issues in the community. For instance, the media and the public may raise the following questions.

- What punishment should the driver receive?
- Do we need tougher laws for unlicensed drivers?
- Should schools have better driver awareness programs?
- Are our roads safe?
- Should the parents be held responsible for their underage children who drive?
- Are teenagers becoming more reckless?
- Should the police have more rights to stop illegal drivers through car chases?

All these questions and the issues behind them may be discussed in the media over the weeks that

follow. The issues may be aired on talk-back radio, callers voicing their opinions and debating with the host. There may be blogs and online forums on the issue, or television programs in which experts, affected families and the legal community give their perspectives.

People present their views in the newspapers as either opinion pieces or letters to the editor.

## Opinion pieces

Opinion pieces are sometimes called 'columns'. Journalists or other writers are often employed to present their individual opinions in the newspaper. They may be members of the newspaper staff or experts in their field. Sometimes celebrities or high-profile people such as politicians or athletes are invited to write a column about an issue.

Since these columns are not intended to be explicitly factual, but rather the writer's personal view, they are persuasive in their approach. It is important that you read these articles critically so that you don't get tricked into accepting someone else's point of view.

### IT'S A GREAT STATE OF PLAY

By Ron Reed

Once dismissed as a gimmick, T20 cricket is introducing a whole new generation to the game and they are flocking to see it in great numbers.

Friday night footy it isn't—not quite.

But the Melbourne Cricket Club is expecting 30 000 sports fans at the MCG on Friday to watch the Victorian Bushrangers play the Tasmanian Devils in a must-win game of Twenty20 cricket—and that constitutes serious box-office business.

It would break the record for the KFC Big Bash, as the domestic short-form game is known. That benchmark is less than 48 hours old, with 29 743 turning up at Sydney's ANZ Stadium on Wednesday night to watch Queensland thrash New South Wales in a match shortened by rain to just nine overs a side.

That brings the total attendances for the twelve matches played over the past fortnight to 191 886, a 60 per cent increase on the same stage last season, Cricket Australia reported.

The sarcasm adds a note of humour.

The statistics give the impression that the author is well informed and add credibility.

The identification of this senior journalist adds weight to his opinion.

The opening paragraph provides a summary of the article.

It has also exceeded the 176 693 that saw the entire competition, including two finals, last year. And about 30 per cent more are watching it on Fox Sports.

From any marketing perspective, these are numbers to die for—and they prove conclusively that the new boy on the cricket block has morphed into one of Australian sport's biggest success stories of the twenty-first century.

As the *Herald Sun* reported in a recent review of world cricket in the decade just gone, the arrival of T20 was the most important single development—well ahead of anything that happened in traditional Test cricket.

Indeed, it has prompted speculation that its popularity will steamroll the now 40-year-old and increasingly weary 50-over format into the grave and—much more importantly for the purists—whittle away the relevance of Test cricket, which is where the soul of the sport resides.

Yes, the one-day internationals—this summer's batch of ten start in Brisbane next Friday—are facing a struggle to hold people's interest, but Test cricket in this country has nothing to fear at this stage.

Next summer's Ashes series will be a blockbuster and in any case the success of T20 is introducing cricket to a new generation of young fans and families who might not have shown any interest in the longer games. Hopefully that will produce a flow-on effect.

Also, Cricket Australia is keen to limit the presence of T20 at international level, believing the domestic game is where the value really is.

That's why only three T20 internationals have been scheduled this summer, the first against Pakistan at the MCG on Friday, February 5.

The astounding speed with which the turnstiles are clicking for the state games has created an expectation that the Big Bash may soon be able to pay the bills for the Sheffield Shield and the 50-over Ford Ranger Cup.

These competitions have always run at a significant loss, which Cricket Australia has been happy to absorb because they are so crucial to player development and the overall structure. Not surprisingly, then, CA is searching eagerly for a way to expand the Big Bash, the most likely outcome being an eight-team competition involving cities rather than states.

Geelong, the Gold Coast and Western Sydney are candidates, with a calendar window created so that the Australian international players can participate alongside heavy-hitter guests from other countries.

CA believes T20 has the potential to increase the pool of elite players, especially as huge money is now available—

The colloquialism almost makes readers unconsciously agree with the writer.

Emotive language emphasises importance of event

Balanced argument appeals to tradition (Test cricket)

Positive language

Appealing to the hip pocket

Colloquial language

both for individuals who can procure contracts in the Indian Premier League and state teams that make it to the Champions League by reaching the Big Bash final.

Cause and effect argument

Cricket has long been frustrated by its inability to hang on to talented young athletes who see more rewarding opportunities in other sports, especially the AFL.

But officials have been extremely pleased to see the recent emergence of former Australian vice-captain Geoff Marsh's teenage son Mitchell, who has opted to play for Western Australia instead of accepting offers to play footy.

He is already a T20 star—as is his brother Shaun—after just a handful of appearances, and the hope is that he will start a trend.

Reinforcing the argument

From the perspective of players and spectators alike, there is no doubt the new game has achieved much more respect than it had in its first years.

It was initially dismissed as nothing more than a gimmicky slogfest that could probably be played just as effectively by club cricketers with a good eye and bulging biceps.

Emphasising skill required to play the game

But when England sent a team of experienced T20 players at county level to a tournament a few years ago, they were flogged by international players who had hardly played it. The best cricketers prevailed, in other words.

That shouldn't have come as any surprise—hitting Test-class fast bowlers for six on a regular basis is obviously going to require an exceptional level of skill.

Arguing that T20 cricket is 'respectable'

That realisation has validated T20 as a genuine sport in its own right, even if it does remain heavily influenced by showbiz.

Australia has been one of the forces behind a push to try to get it into the Olympics, and hasn't given up on it, despite other countries putting the campaign onto the backburner.

Meanwhile, the MCG will be buzzing tonight in a way that state cricketers could once only have dreamed of.

Normally the Bushrangers train in complete anonymity but yesterday they turned it into a public function, with West Indies guest player Dwayne Bravo signing autographs and fans being offered prizes.

Generating excitement

If the Victorians beat the Apple Islanders they will make the preliminary final and be in line to pursue an enormous payday in India.

Restating contention

There is plenty at stake and it's going to be a lot of fun to watch, which is why they'll be turning up in their tens of thousands—again.

Source: *The Herald Sun*, 15 January 2010

# Editorial

The editorial is the editor's or the editorial board's opinion on an issue. It can be considered the official statement from the paper about the issue. Generally, formal language is used to show that the editor or board has considered all the viewpoints and, after weighing up these views, has taken a clear and firm stand on the issue.



The role of a **newspaper editor** depends on the size of the newspaper. A large newspaper often has editors assigned to different sections, such as sport, the arts and business, each with their own team of reporters, writers and editors. A large newspaper also has an editor-in-chief who leads the whole team. The editor-in-chief makes important decisions about what the newspaper will investigate and print, and makes sure that what is published is newsworthy.



## THE MELBOURNE ATTACKS REQUIRE AN URGENT RESPONSE

The use of the newspaper's name indicates that the editor is speaking directly to his readers.

The tone is strong and authoritative.  
Identifies issues and events clearly and logically.

**T**he *Weekend Australian* has been reluctant to join those claiming that racism lies behind the violence against Indians in Melbourne. But the fire at a Sikh temple this week has added to the urgent questions of how to respond to a situation where—as Victorian Deputy Police Commissioner Ken Jones says—Indians are bearing the brunt of attacks. Whether racist or random, these attacks demand a strong response from police and politicians, both in rhetoric and in action. There can be no tolerance for such behaviour, and no resiling from the need to assure the safety and security of all citizens.

Our politicians and law-enforcement officers alike must be unequivocal in their rejection of racism and their commitment to protecting the Indian students who come here to study and work. These young people must feel safe to catch a train, walk across a park and go to work

The formal language shows that this is a considered piece.

The solution is suggested and authority figures are strongly urged to take up the newspaper's ideas as the most sensible way of dealing with the problem.

Emotive language

at Hungry Jacks—as Nitin Garg attempted to do before he was so brutally knifed in Yarraville a fortnight ago. To tolerate anything less is to threaten not just the personal safety of individuals but to place in jeopardy the excellent relationship Australia enjoys with India. This robust and open society must remain central to Australia's thinking on foreign policy and trade.

Appeal to public safety

Appeal to Australian values

More rational tone

India's press has been relentless in criticising Australia's response to the attacks: the Delhi-based *Mail Today's* cartoon of a Victorian police officer dressed as a member of the Ku Klux Klan pulled no punches. But however offensive, the press freedom to publish such material is one of the reasons why Australia must continue to nurture close ties with India. There can be few better friends for us in Asia than this democratic nation. For this reason, it is heartening to see Sir Ken addressing the issue of racism more directly than has his boss, Chief Commissioner Simon Overland, in recent days. At times the police chief's rhetoric has lacked urgency and has sent confusing signals to Australians appalled by the attacks and concerned that their real context—however unpalatable—should be openly discussed. Australians are proud of a society built on immigration from many countries. But they are not naive about the pockets of ignorance and enmity that exist, nor of the disaffected and dysfunctional people who at times engage in antisocial or criminal behaviour against others, based on nothing more than their ethnicity. To underplay these realities is as potentially harmful as summarily applying the racist tag. A sense of perspective is important, but so too is a clear rejection of racism and an unequivocal statement that it will not be tolerated. Australia has shaken off the institutionalised racism of the White Australia policy which dogged its past. But there should be no room for complacency or for political correctness that inhibits us from calling a spade a spade. The history of the twentieth century shows the dangers of racially based attitudes and the need to be eternally vigilant in shining a light into such dark corners. Politicians and police leaders alike must make it clear racism is deplored by all Australians and that any allegations of race-based crime will be vigorously pursued. Clearly, police must take care in ascribing racial motivations to individual crimes, but they must be unequivocal in applying a zero-tolerance approach to violence.

Appeal to sense of multiculturalism and unity

Strong negative language

Metaphor for impact

Call for action

Source: Editorial, *The Weekend Australian*, 16–17 January 2010

# Letters to the editor

Readers also contribute to the newspapers, usually as a letter to the editor. Often letters to the editor are a response to articles that have appeared in the paper. Sometimes they are generated by broader ongoing debate on a particular issue. Occasionally, a reader may choose to write to the paper in order to highlight their concerns about an issue that they feel deserves more media attention.

Anyone can write a letter to the editor. Some letters to the editor may be published in full; others may be shortened to the essential comments only.

Generally, letters to the editor tend to be emotive. This is because people who make the effort to write them usually do so because they feel strongly about an issue.

## PERFECT PARKING A MYTH

**W**here were the parking inspectors last Thursday? ('Parks, parking and performance', 12 January)?

I can tell you where they were. They were nabbing locals down at the beach.

Many parents of young children were unaware of the recent changes to parking laws. Rather than give a first warning the parking inspectors saw fit to fine and clamp many family drivers.

Is there no compassion left in our society for families who just want a cheap day out at the beach?

So yes, these revenue raising ratbags were around. Just not in the city booking those who can afford to flout the laws.

Michelle Dunn, Warren's Ridge

Reference to newspaper article.

Gets directly to the point because words are limited.

Rhetorical question for impact.

Evidence given sharply and clearly.

Language informal and colloquial.

Identifies consequences of behaviours clearly.

## Understanding tone

Letters to the editor vary in their tone and approach. It is important, therefore, that we are able to critically evaluate the wide array of opinions that readers express in letters to the editor.

### LET THE GAMES BEGIN

**R**emember the glory days of 1956 when Melbourne was the centre of the sporting world?

Remember the thrill of Sydney and the way we were united on the night Cathy Freeman won the 400 metres?

The benefits that an Olympic Games brings to the host country far outweigh the financial cost of hosting. The immeasurable benefits cannot be bought with money.

Isn't it time that a new generation of Australians had the opportunity to show our great nation to the world? Isn't it time that this great sporting country stood up once more? We can be the best. We have run the best games. We have produced the best athletes. And we will provide a world class event. We must support our new bid to bring the Olympics to Australia.

Elizabeth May, Williamstown

## IT'S NOT A RACE

Our hospitals are overcrowded. Our schools are falling down on our kids' heads. The public transport system grinds to a halt every time the temperature gets too hot or too cold. In any civilised, thinking society these infrastructure problems would be a priority. Surely these essential things we use daily should be fixed first?

But no! Our leaders have decided that we can be distracted from these real problems by holding an Olympic Games. Just like the emperors of Rome they will amuse the people rather than face reality.

The money that is being spent on the bid, let alone the actual games themselves, would solve at least one of these critical problems.

Wake up Australia. Don't fall for the trick. We need action in the streets not on the track.

Carl Sims, Arrowood

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What are the main differences between an opinion piece, an editorial and a letter to the editor?

### Understanding

- 2 In pairs, examine the annotated opinion piece, the annotated editorial and the annotated letter to the editor and explain for each:
  - a the issue involved
  - b the event that sparked the media response.

### Analysing

- 3 How do you think that the editor of a newspaper determines what gets printed and on what page it appears?
- 4 Analyse the use of persuasive language in the letters to the editor about an Olympic Games bid. Explain the use of persuasive language and compare the two letters.

### Evaluating

- 5 Write your own letter to the editor on the issue of another bid for Australia to host the Olympic Games. Plan your letter carefully and make sure you have a clear argument and logical evidence to support your contention.
- 6 Identify the phrases that assume that the reader shares the author's point of view, thereby encouraging the reader to share these views.

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 **a** Compare the online versions of a broadsheet and a tabloid newspaper.
  - Do they reflect the differences in the physical versions of the newspapers?
  - Are the advertisements similar or different from those in the newspapers?**b** Write a review of each of the websites, highlighting the successful and unsuccessful elements of each site. How well do they meet the needs of their intended audience? Brainstorm your ideas in a small group.
- 2 Choose an issue about which you have a strong point of view. Write a letter to the editor, an editorial and an opinion piece on this issue. Note that each of these formats requires you to adjust the length of your writing and the development of your argument.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Imagine you are an expert in the music industry. You have been asked by a leading newspaper to write an opinion piece on the issue of illegally downloading music. Write the piece, considering your involvement in the music industry and how this may be reflected in your writing.
- 2 Choose a current editorial from a leading newspaper and research the issue. Prepare a two-minute speech for the class on the issue, the events surrounding it, the editor's opinion as stated and your own point of view. Make sure you plan and rehearse it.
- 3 Choose a current issue and follow it as it develops on news sites. Keep a record of the key arguments that are made. What values or principles are involved in the issue? What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the arguments presented?

# Reading between the lines

**A**rticles in the opinion section of a newspaper attempt to persuade readers. The purpose of writing a point of view and having it published in a newspaper is that other people will be convinced by the arguments and agree with the writer. The writer targets their argument and the persuasive technique they use to their audience.

## Key questions when reading a persuasive article

When you are reading a persuasive article, you should ask the following questions:

- Who wrote the article?
- Where does it appear?
- What is the author's contention?
- Why did the author write the article? What is their agenda?
- What are the author's key arguments and how does the language used help make them seem valid?
- By the end of the article what does the author want you to think? Do? Believe? Feel?

The answers to these questions provide you with a framework for your analysis of the language of the article.



A **writer's contention** is a statement of their main idea, the key argument they are putting forward in their written piece. A writer's main contention is usually found in the first paragraph. 'Music can influence our actions' and 'Fame is more important than privacy' are examples of contentions.

## Tone

You will need to identify the tone the author is using in the article. Tone may be defined as the way that a piece would sound if it was read aloud. It is the inflection that the author places into a piece of writing. Some words to describe tone include:

- passionate
- reasonable
- enthusiastic
- humorous
- bewildered
- severe
- patronising
- calm
- disillusioned
- angry
- sarcastic
- condescending
- amused
- disappointed
- antagonistic
- dogmatic
- outraged
- serious.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is meant by the word 'tone' in writing?
- 2 What does the term 'contention' mean, and where might it usually be located in a persuasive article?

### Understanding

- 3 Find antonyms for the words listed above. They can be used to build your word bank for describing tone.
- 4 Find synonyms for the words listed above. They can also be used to build your word bank for describing tone.

## Applying

- Write contentions for the following issues: obesity in children, recycling, drug use in sport.
- With a partner, choose a broadsheet which has a section of opinion pieces and letters to the editor. One student reads aloud an opinion piece and letter to the editor. Together, decide what tone the author has used. Swap roles and repeat, choosing a different opinion piece and letter.

## Persuasive techniques

In the table below are listed the most common persuasive techniques, what their intended effect is on their audience and one or more examples of their use. Knowing how some of these devices are used will enable you to identify their use in a variety of articles. A writer will rely on these techniques to make the readers think, act or feel a certain way.

Name of technique	Definition of technique	Intended effect on the audience	Example of usage
Alliteration	Repetition of a consonant sound.	Most commonly used in headlines to grab attention. Often have a rhythm that helps to make them catchy.	'Geelong's Gary Grabs Game'
Analogy	Comparison between two things.	An extended comparison might run through a persuasive piece to remind the reader about the similarities between the two things. This places a visual connection in the reader's mind.	'Sweeping changes are required to Australia's laws on music downloads and copyright. A new broom needs to clean up the industry, mopping up the dregs left by years of neglect.'
Anecdote	Story that illustrates a particular point. Often these are personal stories.	Personalises, even humanises, the issue. Can draw the reader in, when anecdotes are emotional and illustrate how the author has been affected by the issue.	'I recently took my young child to his first football match. I was looking forward to sharing in the joy of his excitement. The crowd behaviour, however, ruined that experience for us.'
Appeal	Designed to play on either positive or negative emotional feelings in the reader.	Taps into the emotions or intellect of the reader. Appeals are specifically designed to provoke the audience by targeting their vulnerabilities or prejudices. Appeals can be made to people's fears, beliefs, hopes, dreams, ambitions, affiliations, insecurities and so on.	Appeal to fear: 'Your child could be next.' Appeal to values: 'They are trying to destroy our way of life.' Appeal to hopes: 'By doing this you will secure your financial future.' Appeal to insecurities: 'Hackers will access your bank accounts.'
Colloquial language	Common and informal language. Often reflects how people speak.	Friendly, familiar language disarms the reader. Puts the writer on the same level as the reader.	'It's time for a fair go for all of us Aussie Battlers.'
Cliché	Expression that has been used so often it has lost effective meaning.	Makes the argument simple for the reader because the expression is so well known that they don't have to analyse the meaning.	'We're taking the season one week at a time.'
Denigration	Attack on the reputation of a person or idea.	Draws attention away from the issue and associates the opposition with harmful or irrational ideas.	'How can we listen to a man whose idea of culture is watching reality television while nursing a warm beer?'

Name of technique	Definition of technique	Intended effect on the audience	Example of usage
Denotation and connotation	Denotation is the literal dictionary meaning of a word. Connotation is the emotional implications and associations of a word.	The emotional associations of words paint a particular picture in the reader's mind.	'Big' is denoted by the word 'large'. Words such as 'huge', 'gigantic', 'mammoth', 'gargantuan' are used to replace 'big' in a sentence because of their connotations.
Evidence	Factual, quantifiable or statistical proof of the truth of an assertion	Adds weight to an argument and makes it hard to disprove.	'That smoking causes cancer is now an indisputable scientific fact.'
Exaggeration	Idea that is taken to an extreme	By taking an image or idea to an extreme, the emotion associated is also reinforced.	'The network heads will die of embarrassment if this ever comes out.'
Expert opinion	Recognised authority, such as an individual or groups, who adds credibility to an argument	Suggests that specialist knowledge or 'inside information' supports the view presented.	'Dr Howard P. Jones, Director of the Anti-Cancer Council, said today that unless we use factor 30 skincare products from birth we are certain to get skin cancer in our lifetime.'
Inclusive language	Language that identifies the author with the reader, such as 'we', 'our', 'us', 'all of us'	Makes the author seem as if they are on the side of the reader.	'We want what is best for our children.'
Repetition	Continued use of a word or phrase throughout an article	Reinforces a particular point for the reader. Links the word or phrase with the idea.	'When they increased our bank charges, we did nothing. When they raised the interest rates, we did nothing. When they closed branches, we did nothing. It's time to do something.'
Rhetorical questions	Questions that do not demand an answer because the answer is implicit and obvious.	Links the readers to the argument by leading them to agree with the writer's assertion.	'Who could possibly say no to that offer?'
Statistics	Facts and data	Adds weight to an argument by showing that there are facts rather than just opinions to back up the argument.	'Perth's water usage has decreased by 35 per cent.'

## Annotating your articles

The best way to learn how to identify the techniques above and recognise them in a piece of writing is to practise annotating as many examples of persuasive writing as you can. The example on the next page

shows you how to annotate. As you can see, you should try to learn as much from of the article as possible. This gives you plenty of source material to work with when you write up your analysis. Only the first part of the article has been annotated.

Inclusive language encourages all readers to get involved.

Lets us know that the idea is going to be revolutionary.

Shocking notion, a direct challenge. Uses colloquial language for added effect, suggesting that everyone has the same idea, but the writer is brave enough to say it.

Implies that this is what the day should be about.

Colloquial—Australian slang—implies the writer is 'one of us'. Whole paragraph backs this up by stressing how much he enjoys 'barbecues and beer'.

Repeats contention—that a day that is important enough for a holiday deserves more respect and thought.

First key argument—that Australians are unable to think deeply about their national day. Other features ensure that this doesn't change.

## LET'S REASSESS OUR NATIONAL DAY

By David Penberthy

IT'S the kind of thing that would get you pelted with stones in the town square in less civilised countries. So, as a celebration of our freedoms, I'll say it—Australia Day is a load of rubbish.

And it is increasingly celebrating the worst aspects of our national character where, rather than being a day for thoughtful reflection on our history and our values, it's starting to look more [like] a half-witted contest to see how much meat you can eat and how much grog you can sink.

This isn't a wower's warning against barbecues and beer. Far from it. I'm a keen supporter of binge-drinking, I've never met a meat product I didn't adore, and I think the likes of NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione and federal Health Minister Nicola Roxon should quit their day jobs and seek formal employment as nannies, such is their enthusiasm for treating adults like babies and criminalising fun.

But, as the basis for a national holiday, getting plastered while standing around a four-burner groaning under the weight of calcified chump chops seems to place us well down the order of intelligence.

For many this is what Australia Day has become—and all it will ever be.

A p\*\*\*-up, where the closest we get to a consideration of what makes us who we are is to slur that this is God's own country, an absolute bottler of a joint, you wouldn't be dead for quids and, yeah, while you're near the Esky, can you get me another one.

Even the federal Australia Day campaign is framed around the banal idea of cooking meat, with ads featuring Soviet-style imagery of buffed young Aussies proudly holding meat trays, urging us to 'barbecue like you have never barbecued before'.

The campaign creators would argue that it's a self-deprecating comic device to make people curious about Australia Day, to find out about Australia Day events in their neighbourhoods and towns, and to think about what the day means to us all.

But my concern is that many Australians are stuck at the first hurdle and can't get their minds past the chops and the VB.

Twelve months ago Bob Carr wrote a terrific piece passionately supporting January 26 as our national day.

He argued that Anzac Day should belong to those who had fought and died in wars, that Federation on January 1 was at the wrong time of year (and he could have added that

Appeal to pride in our country that we can even consider this notion.

Intelligent Australia is not participating.

A day of gluttony and drunkenness.

Establishes his anti-authority stance.

Humorous jibe at authority figures.

Exaggeration—there is no fact here to back up this opinion.

Colloquial language. Humour and sarcasm

Use of expert opinion

it brought us a chronic over-government, not to mention the lemma/Rees/Keneally administrations), and that whatever hardship was visited upon Aboriginal Australia in 1788 should be weighed against the creation of a modern civilisation built around a written language and the rule of law.

Carr argued Australia Day should not become a day of apology to Indigenous Australians, but include an honest recognition of the errors of the past. 'Well used, it will tell future generations what really happened: the brutality, the heroism, the tenderness, the patience. It will teach the humility as well as the pride,' he wrote.

The key part of that sentence for me is 'well used' and frankly I don't think Australia Day is being well used at all.

The two things that should be the focus of this national day—reflection on our history and values, and the importance of holding citizenship—are being shoved aside as we treat Australia Day like one big barbie.

And for every group of kids who use it as a chance to proudly and peacefully drape themselves in the flag and parade along the esplanade—indifferent to that fact that they're demonstrating national pride with an emblem that's sullied by another country's ensign—there are a few ratbags who imbue the practice with pushiness and hostility.

For them it's as if failure to fly the flag or join the moronic Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi chant is tantamount to treason.

Even its name—Australia Day—implies that it's an uncritical celebration.

It suggests nothing other than our sheer luck at being here.

To underscore its true purpose, I reckon we should think about changing its name to Citizenship Day.

This would help to put some distance between its dreadful symbolism for Aboriginal Australians, who will never feel inclined to celebrate anything on the day that their country was invaded. It would bring more focus for those of us who were born here and those who came from elsewhere and have taken out citizenship.

And, most importantly, for the thousands of permanent residents who have not yet demonstrated their commitment to the country, it would signify that being a citizen and signing on to our democratic values is the cornerstone of life in Australia.

After which you can have as many snags and as much beer as you want.

Source: *The Sunday Telegraph*, 17 January 2010

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 Identify the tone that is being used in each of the extracts below.
  - a Today my son walked up the stairs and received his diploma. There were tears in my eyes and an uncontrollable lump in my throat as he shook hands with the Vice-Chancellor. He'd made it. We'd made it.
  - b Hard-working, gritty, determined. This is a woman who does not accept the concept of defeat. The Australian of the Year is a worthy winner; one that other young women around the country should look to and emulate.
  - c Why do we accept this? Why do the voters of this country not rise up in anger and say 'No! You can't keep denying our wishes. We demand that you take our opinions into account.'
  - d The once proud statue now stands, desolate and forgotten, in an unused part of town. Did I mention it now resides on a river bank? What a great spot to commemorate a man who died of thirst.

### Applying

- 2 Photocopy the article 'Let's reassess our national day' on the previous page. Finish the annotation. Refer back to the table at the start of the module to identify the persuasive techniques used.

### Analysing

- 3 Answer the following key questions about the article.
  - What is the issue being discussed?
  - What is the author's contention?
  - Describe the tone used in the article.
  - Identify the three most commonly used persuasive techniques, explain their effect on the reader using examples from the article.
  - What is the author's point of view and how effective are the arguments?
- 4 Identify the author's contention and main arguments for each of these points.

### Evaluating

- 5 Make a list of the distinctly Australian words and phrases found in the article. How does this use of informal (usually spoken) language affect the tone and the message of the piece?

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 Write a persuasive speech on one of the following topics.
  - Teenagers should be given more freedom.
  - Sport is more important to Australians than religion.
  - Chocolate is better than ice cream.Research your topic on the internet, or by surveying people for their views. When writing your speech, incorporate a particular tone and use at least three persuasive techniques. Perform your speech for the class.
- 2 Cut out at least three articles from the opinion and letters pages of your local newspaper. Stick them into your notebook and annotate them. Remember, the more you practise this vital skill, the better and quicker you will be at it.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Write an editorial on Australia Day for a newspaper of your choice.
- 2 Write three letters to the editor under separate names and offer different opinions or comments on the issue. Adopt a varied tone for each and use at least one different persuasive technique in each letter.

# Vibrantly visual

It's not just words that convey meaning, often an image can be as effective and persuasive. Capturing the moment in a photograph can often tell a reader more than any number of inches of newsprint. Cartoons, graphs—even the colours chosen by the newspaper—can be used to persuade us to a point of view.

## Political cartoons

Cartoonists use a range of tools and strategies to persuade us. Understanding how these tools work is important when it comes to analysing cartoons. Political cartoons are designed to make comment on

issues, people or events. Although they can sometimes be comic in nature, they are essentially sharp, pointed observations that the cartoonist is making about a person or situation.

Symbols	The cartoonist may use objects, images or words to represent something else. A cross, for instance, may represent Christianity or a hospital. A heart may be a symbol for love.
Exaggeration and distortion	The cartoonist can make statements about the importance of issues or power relationships by exaggerating or minimising the size of something. Facial expressions, objects of clothing—in fact, just about anything—can be either inflated or understated.
Stereotyping	Stereotypes work by reducing individuality and making assumptions about an entire group of people. They can be dangerous, as they can reinforce prejudices. The cartoonist can use stereotypes to parody particular groups such as sports stars or politicians.
Caricatures	A caricature is a distortion of a person's distinctive features. Cartoonists use caricature to enable readers to identify the person who is being portrayed in the cartoon.
Humour	Humorous political cartoons can defuse some of the emotion surrounding an issue. Sometimes satire and irony are used.
Captions	Any words or phrases that appear in the cartoon are also important to analyse. The words inside the frame of the cartoon are called 'body text'. Those that appear outside the frame of the text are called 'captions'.
Colour and shading	The image or idea can be given a particular emphasis through the use of colour or shading.
Composition	The layout of the various objects in the cartoon can be important for conveying meaning. The cartoon may be sparse with lots of white space left in the frame, or it may be very detailed. The reader's attention is often directed to a 'hotspot' in the picture.



**Satire:** deliberate exaggeration of a person, an idea or a concept as a way of mocking it.

**Irony:** one thing is stated but its opposite meaning is intended.

Political cartoons have been a feature of Australian newspapers since the 1830s. Even though they are visual, they have the same capacity to divide opinion in the community as written articles. You may find yourself laughing out loud in approval, or angered and frustrated by the message.

Successful political cartoons have a number of features in common.

- The context of the cartoon is clear; the issue is easily understood by the readers.
- The cartoonist has something quite specific to say, and illustrates this clearly. This is not to say that the cartoon is simplistic; rather it is visually powerful. Sometimes the effect is immediate because the image or the message is stark and confronting. Sometimes the message is multi-layered and the immediate reading of the text gives way to a more sophisticated understanding as the cartoon is explored.
- The use of images, words, the strand of humour, the actual layout and design all contribute to the way in which the message of the cartoon is conveyed.

Australia Day is a national holiday that commemorates the arrival of the First Fleet on 26 January 1788 at Sydney Cove. Led by Arthur Phillip, the Fleet had initially landed at Botany Bay about twelve kilometres south of Sydney. Captain James Cook had landed there some eighteen years earlier; however, Phillip did not find the terrain suitable and decided to sail further north, arriving at Sydney Cove.

When he hoisted the British flag and claimed the land in the name of King George III, it marked the first European settlement in Australia.

For some people, the date is controversial as it symbolises the destruction of traditional ways of life for many Aboriginal communities. It is sometimes known as 'Invasion Day' or 'Survival Day'.

Many Australians mark the holiday with family picnics and barbecues or other fun activities.

The Australian flag on the towel is an instant indicator to the audience that this is an Australian family at the beach.

The father's furious stance and grimace indicates his displeasure.

The mother appears shocked and concerned.

The child is dwarfed by the sign suggesting that this news will have a significant impact on him.



Source: Harry Bruce, 'Australia Day Picnic', 2004

The word 'UNAUSTRIANIAN' suggests that this action goes against the principles of what it means to be an Australian citizen—in this case, the family's inability to visit the beach because of the jellyfish.

The eyes of the family are drawn to the beach sign.

The language on the sign 'BEACHES CLOSED AUSTRALIA DAY' helps to explain the reason for the family's reaction.

The leaping jellyfish and the jellyfish in the water indicate the reason behind the closure of the beach.

## Breakaway tasks

### Analysing

- 1 Make a detailed list of the ways in which the cartoon above is trying to persuade you. How has the cartoonist used symbols and humour to influence your reading?

### Evaluating

- 2 Do you think political cartoons still have a place in modern newspapers? Write a short letter to your school principal arguing that they should be included in your next school newsletter.

# Photographs

Newspapers and their editors quickly embraced the technology that allowed them to use photographs. Often the photograph is the most striking element of a story, as images catch the eye and inspire us to read the story.

In many ways photographs are like cartoons—they are used to illustrate or symbolise a much larger issue.

News editors have to consider the real-life images that they want to use very carefully. Just because a photograph is available doesn't mean they use it. Sometimes the photographs are too confronting or inappropriate to publish. Editors choose the most striking images that will not shock or alienate their readers.

When analysing the use of a photograph in a newspaper you should be ask yourself the following questions.

- Where is the camera positioned? A photograph taken from below the subject will make the subject look strong and powerful. A photograph taken from above will reduce the size and strength of the subject.
- What else is in the photograph? Sometimes what is in the background or foreground of a shot is as important as the subject. It can also give you clues as to what the photographer is intending you to believe about the circumstances of the shot.
- Is there any evidence the shot was cropped or adjusted in any way?

The clouds are ominous and warn us that danger is approaching.

The camera is positioned slightly above eye level so the size of the flames and clouds is overpowering.

The cars are small and overwhelmed by the power of the natural disaster.



There is a strong contrast between the orange in the fire and the clear blue sky.

The road leading away from the flames is the only available path to safety.

Source: Fairfax/Jason South, 2009

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What difference does the position of the camera make to the way the viewer sees the finished photograph?
- 2 What is the purpose of using photographs alongside a news story?
- 3 Look up the term 'photojournalism' and write the definition in your notebooks.

### Applying

- 4 Look at the front page of your daily newspaper. Write a short paragraph describing what you can see in the photograph.
- 5 Look at all of the photographs that are used in this chapter. Choose one and write a paragraph explaining to your class why you chose this photograph. What elements of the photograph made it particularly appealing to you?

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- a** Look at the cartoon below. Set up a chart that lists the tools or techniques the cartoonist has used to persuade, for example captions. Refer to the table at the start of this module. Then, in a second column, describe how each technique makes you respond as a viewer.  
**b** How does the cartoon make you feel? Has it persuaded you?



Source: Peter Brookes, 2010



After the earthquake, Haiti, 2010

- Examine the photograph above and then write a piece analysing the elements of the photograph, using the model given on the previous page as an example. Include in your analysis:
  - a brief explanation of the event being depicted
  - a description of what the photograph tells you about the earthquake in Haiti
  - your evaluation of the success of the photograph.

## Extra tasks

- In pairs, collect four front-page photographs from recent newspapers. Use poster paper to display the photographs and provide an analysis of each. Present your posters to the class.
- Imagine that your school has announced that all its students are required to attend classes over the summer holidays. Design a political cartoon using the elements you have learnt to represent your point of view on the issue.
- Look at some recent newspapers or search the internet to find a cartoon and a photograph on the same event or issue. Write a description of the issue, an analysis for each depiction, and a brief comparison of the two.

# Putting it all together: writing up your analysis

**T**o write a media analysis essay, you need to put together all the information you have collected from an article you have analysed and write it up as a piece that logically examines the way in which the author has used language to persuade you.

It is important that you remain objective about the issue being discussed. Remember not to get caught up in the issue when writing an analysis essay. What you think about the issue is not relevant. You need to explain how the author makes their argument and uses language to persuade readers.

## Putting it all together

Once you have finished analysing your article it might be helpful to put all your information into a table like the one below. Remember also to analyse visual information such as photographs or illustrations which are part of the article.

Title of article		
Where published		
Author's name		
Date		
Tone used		
Contention		
Arguments used by the author	1	
	2	
	3	
Persuasive technique	Effect on reader	Quote



Remember to use **quotation marks** in your work when you are quoting from another source.

Once you have sorted out all the information you have gathered from the article, start writing. The easiest structure to follow is the one in the table on the next page.

## Structure of your answer

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give a brief outline of the issue under discussion and what both sides of the debate are saying about it.</li> <li>• Give the name, author, date and place of publication of the article under discussion.</li> <li>• Briefly outline the author's contention and their reason for writing.</li> <li>• Describe the tone that the author uses.</li> </ul>
Paragraph 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise the author's first argument. What is it? How does the language used support this argument?</li> <li>• Which techniques does the author use and why?</li> </ul>
Paragraph 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise the author's second argument. What is it? How does the language used support this argument?</li> <li>• Which techniques does the author use and why?</li> </ul>
Paragraph 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise the author's third argument. What is it? How does the language that used support this argument?</li> <li>• Which techniques does the author use and why? (You should write more paragraphs like this if you need to.)</li> </ul>
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise the issue very briefly, outline the author's position and review how well they make their argument.</li> </ul>

Let's look at a sample analysis and a model answer.

**MISTAKE AFTER MISTAKE**

**T**he Vietnam War was a mistake. It was fought because the public was told blatant lies by the Government about the domino theory and how our whole civilisation would be ended if we didn't get involved in that war.

The Iraqi War is a mistake. It is being fought because the public was told blatant lies by the Government about how the Iraqis had weapons of mass destruction.

What is the point of expecting the Government to learn from the past?

What is the point of expecting the Government to be honest with the people?

What is the point of sending young men to die for their lies? Perhaps our leaders are criminally stupid and believe the lies being fed to them over and again throughout history.

Or perhaps our politicians are happy for our youth to continue to die long after the theories have been proved wrong so that the Government doesn't look stupid.

Perhaps honesty and decency are what we should expect in a politician. Not gullibility and pride.

When will they admit that they are wrong? How many young men, like my nephew Tom Hurley, have to die so that our politicians can save face?

Brian Hurley, Ashwood, *Mornington Herald*, 12 October 2009

Repetition

Short, sharp sentences make an impact.

Repetition of phrase links the two wars.

Repetition of phrase links the two ideas and brands them lies, creating feeling of betrayal by government.

Rhetorical questions reinforce sense of betrayal by government.

Appeal to our sense of disbelief that the government could have fallen for such an idea.

Blames the politicians and their pride. Appeals to our sense of fair play.

Appeal to history.

Denigrates the politicians.

Uses inclusive language to appeal to our sense of entitlement—we should be getting this type of representative.

Short, sharp sentence reinforces our betrayal by these politicians. These politicians are not worthy of us. We deserve better.

We are being let down because politicians don't want to appear stupid.

Personalises the issue. Writer lets us know he is speaking from experience.

## Breakaway tasks

### Sample essay

Brian Hurley, in his despairing letter to the editor of the *Mornington Herald* (12 October 2009) 'Mistake after Mistake', berates the government for its continued involvement in the Iraq War. In a frustrated tone, Hurley expresses his anger about the lies fed to the public and the deceit of politicians who refuse to acknowledge that the war should have ended.

The headline for Hurley's despairing letter 'Mistake after Mistake' uses repetition to emphasise the message that lessons are not being learnt from past actions—or if they are, they are being ignored. This is fortified by the appeal to historical fact in the short opening sentence, 'The Vietnam War was a mistake', which states baldly a commonly held belief about that war.

The message is reinforced by linking to it the 'lies' told to the public about the 'domino theory', which reminds us that we were led into a bloody and unwinnable war on the strength of this unproven theory. Cleverly, Hurley links the Iraq War with the Vietnam War by repeating the same sentence structure. Thus 'Vietnam' becomes 'Iraqi' and 'domino theory' is matched by 'weapons of mass destruction'. The effect is to remind the reader, clearly and forcibly, that governments will always lie to us and we do not learn from the lessons of the past.

Hurley's emotional piece then uses a series of rhetorical questions to impress on the reader the futility of expecting the authorities to learn from the past. He goes further, intimating that the lies are not mistakes but indicative of a greater problem that 'honesty and decency' are lacking in our politicians. There is an implicit call to arms in Hurley's letter when he claims that we should be seeking politicians who exhibit 'honesty and decency' rather than accepting anyone who seeks office.

With a rhetorical flourish—'When will they admit they are wrong?'—Hurley indicates that the problem is not the refusal of politicians to back down, and therefore lose face. He then shocks the reader with the information that he is personally involved in this situation and that his nephew Tom is yet another victim of a senseless war—a war that could and should have ended long before Tom died, and would have if our leaders were capable of learning from their mistakes.

### Applying

Using the sample essay as a model, write the analysis essay for the article 'It's a great state of play' in Module 2.

## Exploring an issue: whaling

Often an issue inspires many different views and perspectives and this is reflected in the many reports, articles, essays and letters in the media. A controversial issue, such as international sanctions on whaling, can be hotly debated in many media forums. It is important to be able to read and analyse all the different perspectives presented and then make your own decision about what you believe. One helpful way to do this is to analyse individual articles and arguments and their persuasive methods so that you can clearly assess what the writers want you to believe.

Carefully read the background information below and each of the articles that follow. Consider the issue being addressed and the persuasive techniques used in each article.

### Whaling: background information

Whaling is the harvesting of whales, primarily for food and oil. It is a practice that dates back in some communities to more than 3000 years BCE. Whaling became firmly established throughout the world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when organised whaling companies began harvesting the animals.

In Australia, the whaling industry was established soon after settlement in 1788. The effect on whaling numbers was drastic. Some species were hunted almost to the point of extinction. Due to increased awareness about the declining number of whales worldwide, Australia became one of the leading protestors in calling for a worldwide ban on commercial whaling. The last whale to be hunted in Australia, a sperm whale, was harpooned by an Australian company off the coast of Western Australia in 1978.



In 1986, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) placed a moratorium on commercial whaling.

Many groups and organisations have lobbied to have this ban extended indefinitely to ensure that whale numbers continue to improve. However, other parties have argued that whaling should be resumed, with pre-determined quotas in place.

Some communities around the globe have continued to practise whaling. Many of these communities, such as the Inuit in Canada, hunt whales as part of their traditional way of life, while the people of the Faroe Islands argue that whaling forms

part of their cultural identity and contributes to their economic well-being.

Japan and Norway remain the largest hunters of whales. Both countries claim to have a long tradition of eating whale meat. Japanese whalers have also argued that their whaling is necessary for important scientific research.



**Writer's TOOLBOX** moratorium: temporary halt or delay.

## FULL HORROR OF JAPANESE WHALING EXPOSED

By Malcolm Holland

**A** third of the whales harpooned by Japan in the Antarctic last summer were pregnant, it was claimed yesterday.

Conservation group Humane Society International (HSI) said Japan's own figures, revealed in secret documents discovered at the International Whaling Commission meeting being held this week, showed the 'true, disgusting nature' of the country's whale hunting.

Japan's annual hunt, which it claims is a scientific study, took a horrific toll on female whales, the HSI said.

The HSI said data from Japan's 2008–2009 hunt showed of 679 whales it reported killing, 304 were female. The data showed 192 of the whales were pregnant. Four were lactating.

'The four lactating females would each have had a calf that would have starved to death,' HSI Australia's director Michael Kennedy said.

Mr Kennedy said the Japanese data also contained 'gruesome' details of how whale fetuses were treated after being torn from their mothers on board the whaling fleet's factory ship.

'They report the measure the length and weight of the foetus, they measure their eyes and take skin

samples from the foetus for what they call genetic studies,' Mr Kennedy said.

'It is gruesome, useless information which, if it was even needed, could be found without dismembering a foetus.'

The details of Japan's impact on female whales was contained in what is known as a 'Cruise Report', secretly sent to the IWC's scientific committee before the IWC meeting in Portugal.

During the 2007–2008 hunt Australia was shocked when *The Daily Telegraph* published photos of a minke whale and her calf being hauled aboard a Japanese factory ship to be dismembered.

HSI vice president Kitty Block said Japan's whale hunt should be condemned and was conducted in a whale sanctuary under the guise of science.

'The fact is this hunt is commercial and killing pregnant females makes it all the more egregious,' Ms Block said.

Australian Environment Minister Peter Garrett, who is at the IWC meeting, said Japan had killed more than 13,000 whales in the name of research since a moratorium on commercial whaling was imposed in 1986.

One of Mr Garrett's tactics to try to end Japanese whaling is to bring it under the direct control of the IWC, something Japan has been vigorously opposing.

Japan is also pushing hard for a 'coastal whaling quota'—which would allow it to kill whales in its own waters without the pretence of scientific study—which conservation groups said was a return to commercial whaling.

This week the Australian Government announced what it called the largest study of Antarctic whales.

The joint Australian–New Zealand scientific expedition will steam to Antarctica this summer. No whales will be killed during the research.

Source: *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 June 2009



Slaughtered whales on the deck of the Japanese factory ship, *Nisshin Maru*

## STOPPING WHALING IS CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

By John Passant

There is nothing about whales that means humanity shouldn't eat them.

Indeed the International Whaling Commission recognises this by allowing aboriginal subsistence whaling.

On the other hand Paul Watson from the *Sea Shepherd* does not accept the right of indigenous peoples to continue their traditional whale killing practices. He has physically prevented indigenous groups from undertaking kills.

His anti-whaling colonialism is an extension of the white man's 'civilising' burden—handing down from on high to the lower castes their new enlightenment, often through force. This is nothing but cultural imperialism.

It is not a position the left can support. It would be like supporting the Northern Territory invasion.

The Antarctic minke whale is not under threat of extinction from Japanese whaling. The International Whaling Commission reports that in 1989 there were 781 000 Antarctic Minke whales. They are conducting further research for current figures.

The Japanese this year will take 935. This will have no impact on the survival of the species.

What then drives opposition to whaling?

Much of it is humanitarian. Killing another intelligent being in conditions that inflict pain is repugnant to many people. Pigs, cattle and sheep are sentient beings as well, and their deaths are painful, but they too end up on the dinner plates of many around the world.

At the moment the continued existence of humanity depends on the ongoing exploitation of animals. Under capitalism that exploitation can be cruel.

It is possible that a democratic and planned society could decide to move away from all animal products. But socialism is for the future.

Today people eat animals to live. As long as the minke whale is not in danger of becoming extinct, then there appears to me no reason not to harvest some of its stock for human consumption.

From the Australian Government's point of view, its opposition to whaling appears to be linked to our imperialist claims to the Australian Antarctic Territory rather than any concern for the sustainability of the minke.

And of course the Government thinks it is popular to oppose whaling (which it is), but this too presents a problem for them. Once again Prime Minister Kevin Rudd promises the world and delivers the toilet door key.

Only four countries recognise our Antarctic claims. Unsurprisingly each also claims part of Antarctica.



Minke whale

According to the Australian Antarctic Division website the 'Australian Antarctic Territory covers nearly 5.9 million square kilometres, about 42 per cent of Antarctica and nearly 80 per cent of the total area of Australia itself'.

In addition Australia claims that 'the Australian Antarctic territorial waters extend 200 nautical miles out to sea from the Australian Antarctic territory'.

Japanese whalers operate in these waters. The Australian Government uses diplomatic means to try to stop this because it is not yet prepared to physically enforce its imperialist claims to Antarctica and its waters. Diplomacy is imperialism without guns.

The Rudd Government's anti-whaling stance is but a pawn in Australia's claims to Antarctica. No one on the left should support this imperialist adventure under the guise of defending whales.

For Australian imperialism whales are the WMDs of the water.

Then there is the politics of the shepherds of the sea and warriors of the water.

Apart from physically preventing indigenous people from traditional killings (in cahoots with the far right in one case) and supporting Australian imperialism, their politics are essentially elitist and dogmatic. There is

one truth and that is that killing even one whale is evil and the *Sea Shepherd* will do anything to prevent that.

Well, not quite anything. Their activity does not extend to agitating among Japanese or Australian workers, in particular those in the ports and on the boats. They have contempt for workers.

Their approach involves substituting themselves for the mass of people. This is reformism on a grand scale. Leave it to us; we know better than you; we'll solve the situation by harassing, attacking and even sinking boats.

Obviously they have support—you can't buy \$2 million boats like the *Ady Gil* without lots of support, and some of it comes from ordinary working people.

But this elitism and substitutionism is an example of the broader thinking of an educated petit bourgeoisie, which has coalesced around animal rights issues, groups whose views (while perhaps appealing to a middle-class

retiree like me) take no account of the real lives under capitalism of their working class supporters.

Indeed rather than seeing the problem as the way production is organised they see it ultimately as one of consumption. If humans didn't eat whales, eat meat, wear fur (put in the appropriate concern *du jour*) the world would be set right.

Socialists reject this elitist world view. The real issue is human wage slavery. The way animals are treated flows from that basic foundation of society.

Without the liberation of humanity through the action of the working class there can be no 'liberation' in any form for animals, including whales.

The left opposes colonialism, imperialism and reformism. We cannot support the anti-working class opponents of whaling.

Source: *The Age*, 12 January 2010

## RUDD MAY SOON HAVE TO SUE JAPAN OVER WHALES

Australia and Japan have long had differing views on whaling. In 1946, Australia became one of 15 nations to sign the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling; Japan did not, even though conservation was not the main aim back then. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) was set up that year with the aim of preventing over-fishing so that whaling, an industry in which Australia had a share, would be sustainable. Today, whales are worth much more to this country alive than dead, with whale-watching tourism bringing Australia \$300 million a year. And, as more has been learned about these magnificent creatures, a kind of public affection has developed for them. Not so in Japan, where their meat is a traditional food, and their captors are seen as the endangered species in need of protection from a hostile environment.

This week, however, it was environmental protesters who found themselves endangered when their small craft—admittedly, a mischief-making craft—was sheared in half by a whaling security ship. That the six-man crew of the *Ady Gil* was rescued largely uninjured can be attributed more to good luck than good manners, particularly given the way the Japanese vessel sailed on, ignoring the trimaran's mayday calls. Acting Prime Minister Julia Gillard has ordered a maritime investigation into the collision. Both whalers and the protesters have been behaving badly as hostilities have intensified in the waters of what Australia 10 years ago declared to be a

whale sanctuary off Antarctica. The environmentalists on the *Ady Gil* launched stink bombs and tried to use ropes to foul the whalers' propellers; the Japanese have employed water cannon and sonic blasts. This dangerous tit-for-tat continues because the Federal Government has failed to follow through on the promise Kevin Rudd made before the 2007 election to 'take Japan to international courts ... to end the slaughter of whales'. After that election, the Government dispatched a ship to monitor the whalers and to collect evidence that could be used in court. Since then, however, the Government has insisted it should pursue diplomatic avenues before launching legal action. A legal case would take years to be resolved but experts have suggested that filing suit in the International Court of Justice or the Tribunal for the Law of the Sea could result in Japanese whalers being restrained by an injunction within weeks. Whether the whalers would respect the injunction would, of course, be the next question.

Japan appears to have abandoned the smokescreen that its hunting is for 'scientific research', a claim that gave it a technical loophole with which to escape the international ban on commercial whale-catching. Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada said this month, 'We should try to discuss this issue in a calm, not emotional way. Because our ancestors—we have a tradition in Japan where we have been eating whalemeat. It would be a different story if it were an endangered species ... on the verge of extinction. But if not, I think

the average Japanese would like to consume whalemeat into the future.' He also appeared to be digging in on the issue when he said, 'We do not think there is a need for a policy review.'

The Federal Government might be privy to diplomatic progress that it is not yet sharing with the rest of the nation. Australia has a close and complex relationship with Japan, and there are many issues currently on the joint agenda, including nuclear disarmament and emission reductions. It may be that various cards will be played off against each other in what is shaping up as a significant year in the relationship. Cards have also to be played in Japan. The Prime Minister, Yukio Hatoyama, has been examining government accounts with a view to eliminating the kind of government subsidies and perks for retired bureaucrats involved in sustaining whaling. He has also said publicly he does not like whale meat, which undermines the romantic view of it as central to Japanese cultural identity. It is possible he is looking to wind down whaling, citing domestic budget reasons, a strategy that would allow him the dignity of choice rather than the appearance of capitulation to foreign pressure.

If substantial progress is not made by mid-year, however—the next IWC meeting is in June—diplomacy has failed and the issue must be pursued in the courts. Mr Rudd made the promise before the last election; he should keep to it before the next one.

Source: Editorial, *The Age*, 9 January 2010

## Breakaway tasks

### Applying

- 1 Make a copy of each of the articles on whaling and then use the annotated example to help you annotate each of the articles. Your aim is to identify *which* persuasive devices are being used and *how* they persuade you to a particular point of view.
- 2 For each of the articles identify the following:
  - a contention
  - b main arguments
  - c tone or tones used
  - d audience.

### Analysing

- 3 Using all the information you have identified above, write an essay that analyses the use of persuasive language in *one* of the articles on whaling.

## Strands in action

### Core task

One of the best ways to develop an awareness of how the media are using their skills to persuade you is to follow a particular issue throughout its development. Your task is to track one issue as it develops over a period of time, perhaps a term or a semester. At the end of the task you will have a scrapbook tracking the coverage of an issue across the media.

- a Decide what kind of scrapbook you intend keeping. You could use a traditional paper scrapbook, or you could keep an electronic scrapbook.
- b Decide on your issue. Gather a range of images that you think reflect aspects of your issue and use them as a front page.
- c Scan the available sources of information (newspapers, magazines, blogs, etc.) for mentions of your issue. Even small items will be of interest as they might provide the seeds for larger debates as the issue progresses. If you are using an electronic scrapbook, you will be able to include video and audio clips.
- d Each week, choose one article and analyse it. Over the term try to ensure that you select articles that present varying opinions about the issue.
- e Prepare a table comparing how the various persuasive techniques have been used in at least four of the articles. Remember you are looking for the different effects they have on the reader.
- f Before you present your scrapbook, write a background brief to the issue that details the various people or institutions involved, ideas raised, points of view expressed and a resolution if there has been one.
- g Present your scrapbook to the class.

### Extra task

Using the information that you have collected and analysed for the Core task, write a piece that compares how particular arguments and persuasive techniques are used in two or more of the articles.



One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.

Henry Miller (1891–1980), writer

## 'AWAY' WITH WORDS

### Chapter overview

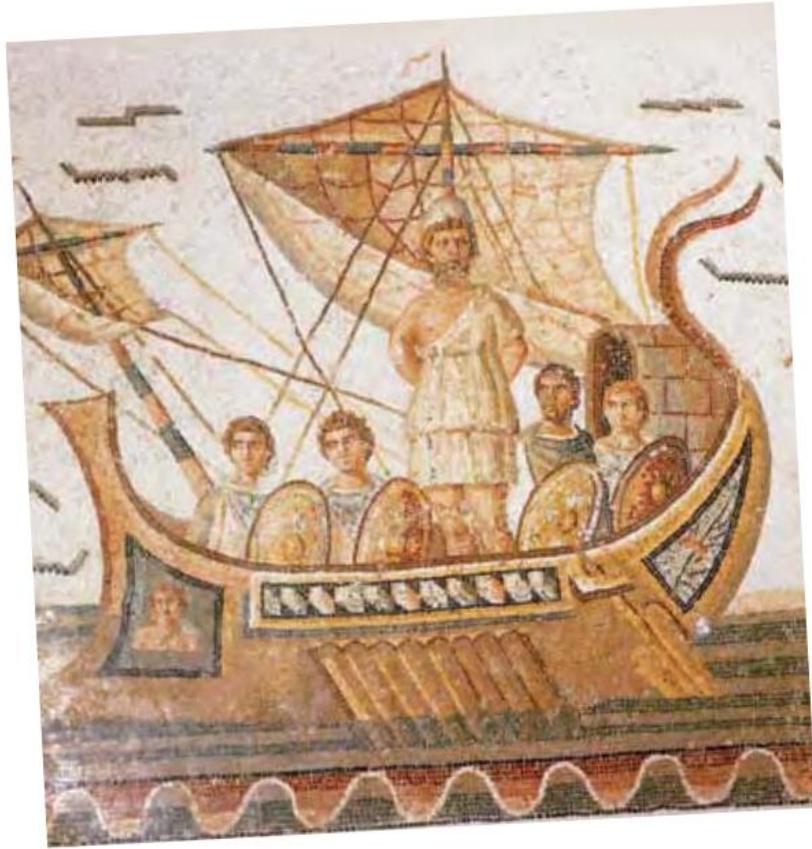
There can be few things more exciting than setting out to explore the world. From the days of ancient empires, explorers have set off on bold adventures to learn more about their world. Today, many of us treasure memories of holidays with family and new experiences in unfamiliar places.

Each experience of travel changes us, adding to our picture of the world we inhabit and often teaching us much about ourselves at the same time. Many people feel compelled to write about their travels and to share the adventures that have had such a profound impact on them.

Travel writing can whet the appetite of any would-be traveller. Travel writing includes travel memoirs, essays, guide books, reviews, articles and even cookbooks. Through these different forms of travel writing, we can journey all over the world from the comfort of our armchairs!

# 1 Travel in bygone eras

**T**ravel writing is not new. Stories of great adventures in exploration have been recorded since ancient times. It seems that humankind has always had an insatiable curiosity to discover more about the world. Perhaps restlessness is inherent within all of us, echoes of our nomadic instincts. Whatever the reason, travellers throughout the ages have felt compelled to set off on journeys that have now become legendary.



## The original odyssey

In Greek mythology, the Trojan War was an awe-inspiring battle between the citizens of Troy and the invading Greeks. The ten-year war ended only after the wily Greeks left a giant wooden horse as a 'gift' for the noble Trojans and pretended to leave the area, only to burst out of the belly of the horse, where they had been hiding, and capture the city. This tale was recounted in *The Iliad*, an epic poem attributed to the Greek poet Homer, probably written in about the eighth century BCE, supposedly about 450 years after the events of which it told. *The Iliad* is considered the earliest known work of Western literature. Historians today are divided, however, about whether there is any historical truth behind the Trojan War.

Homer's tale doesn't end with the Trojans. The Greek warrior Odysseus takes to his ship to return to his beloved wife Penelope and their son Telemachus. The gods, however, have other ideas, and curse Odysseus to wander the seas for a further ten years. The travels of Odysseus and his crew form the basis of *The Odyssey*, a second epic poem by Homer. The twenty-four 'books' that make up this poem chronicle the many strange and wondrous places Odysseus visits in his journey home.



### DID YOU KNOW...

The word 'odyssey', meaning an epic journey, comes from Homer's poem. This word has existed historically in several different languages because of the fame of Homer's story of Odysseus's journey.

Ancient and modern scholars have studied *The Odyssey* carefully and believe that Homer's descriptions of landscapes and cultures correlate with many actual places around the Mediterranean, although some remain a mystery. Homer uses many narrative devices to ensure that Odysseus has the opportunity to describe his journey in great detail, providing us with not only an important work of literature, but the earliest record of travel writing in the Western world!



### DID YOU KNOW...

Both *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* were meant to be performed orally, rather than read. Even with several speakers in relay, it would take around three whole days to recount the 12 100 lines that make up *The Odyssey*!

# First glimpse of the Phaeacians

When Odysseus is wrecked on the island home of the Phaeacians, he is lucky enough to be entertained by their king. Homer provides us with much information about the culture of the Phaeacians, as Odysseus observes their architecture, their ways of entertaining guests, their sporting competitions and their skills at navigation and ship-building. Here is an excerpt describing Odysseus's arrival at the palace of King Alcinoo.

## ODYSSEUS'S ARRIVAL AT THE PALACE OF KING ALCINOOS

By Homer

POEM

... Odysseus  
Went to the famous house of Alcinoo. His heart  
Pondered much as he stood there before reaching the  
bronze threshold.  
There was a gleam like that of the sun or of the moon  
Beneath the high-roofed hall of the great-hearted  
Alcinoo.  
Bronze walls were run around it on every side to the  
corner  
From the threshold, and there was a frieze of dark blue  
about it.  
Golden portals shut up the stout home within,  
And silver doorposts were set upon the bronze  
threshold,  
And a silver lintel above, and a golden handle.  
And on either side there were gold and silver dogs  
That Hephaistos with his skilful faculties had formed  
To watch over the house of the great-hearted Alcinoo;  
They were immortal and ageless all their days.  
Inside, armchairs had been propped around the wall  
here and there  
To the corner of the threshold in an unbroken line. And  
cloths  
Were strewn there, fine and well-woven, the work of  
women.  
And there the leaders of the Phaeacians were seated  
When they ate and drank. They possessed unailing  
abundance.  
And there were golden youths on well-built pedestals  
That stood there holding in their hands flaming torches  
Illuminating the nights for the diners through the halls.  
And there were fifty serving maids throughout the hall,  
women  
Who grind up in a mill grain of an apple hue,  
And who do weaving on looms and turn the distaff

Seated, the way the leaves of the tall poplar turn  
And from the close-woven linen the moist oil drops off.  
As the Phaeacians are knowing beyond all other men  
To drive a swift ship in the ocean, so their women  
Are skilled in weaving. Athene has endowed them  
highly  
With skill in beautiful tasks and with noble minds.

Source: Homer, *The Odyssey*, 800 BCE



Writers make use of descriptive language to bring their words to life. We make sense of the world around us through our five senses. Descriptive language appeals to these senses, with references to sights, sounds, tactile sensations, smells and taste.

Using adjectives and adverbs is one way of creating precise descriptions, but carefully selecting nouns and verbs is also an effective way to create a particular image.

**Adjectives**, such as 'fine', 'well-woven' and 'moist', describe nouns.

**Adverbs**, such as 'skilfully' and 'loudly', describe verbs.

**Nouns** name objects, places, beings or abstract concepts; selecting precise nouns such as 'threshold' instead of 'doorstep' and 'portal' instead of doors helps create a sense of grandeur.

**Verbs** are action words, such as 'inhabit' or 'flourish' instead of 'live', which, when selected carefully, make writing more interesting.

## Odysseus and the Cyclopes

During his stay with the Phaeacians, Odysseus recounts the tale of his travels, including his encounter with the one-eyed giant Cyclops, Polyphemus. Many scholars believe the island of the Cyclopes is the island of Sicily.

# ODYSSEUS AND THE CYCLOPES

By Homer

POEM

Then we sailed on ...

To the land of the Cyclopes, an overweening  
And lawless people, who, trusting in the immortal gods,  
Do not sow plants with their hands and do not plow  
But everything grows for them unplowed and unsown.  
Wheat and barley and vines that produce a wine grape  
Of large clusters, and a rain from Zeus makes them  
grow.

They have neither assemblies for holding council nor  
laws,

But they inhabit the crests of lofty mountains,  
In hollow caves, and each one dispenses with the laws  
For his children and his wives and is not concerned for  
others.

A fertile island stretches there from the harbour  
Of the land of the Cyclopes, not near and not far away.  
A wooded one. And on it numberless wild goats  
flourish,

For there is no beaten path of men to keep them away

...

There are no vermilion-prowed ships for the Cyclopes,  
As there are no shipwrights among them who might  
work

At good-timbered ships to accomplish it all for them  
So that they might visit cities among men, as frequently  
Men do cross the sea in ships towards one another ...

Source: Homer; *The Odyssey*, 800 BCE

## Understanding

- 3 What features of the palace of King Alcinoo appear to most amaze Odysseus?
- 4 What skills are attributed to the Phaeacians?

## Applying

- 5 Describe the geography of the Cyclopes' island.
- 6 Use the internet or a geography textbook to find pictures of Sicily and compare them with Homer's description. Outline their similarities and differences in a Venn diagram. How similar are they?

## Analysing

- 7 Examine what Homer praises in the Phaeacians and criticises in the Cyclopes. What does this suggest about the values of the Greeks at this time?
- 8 Identify the positive descriptive language used by Homer to represent the Phaeacians. Draw up a four-column table with the headings 'Nouns', 'Verbs', 'Adjectives' and 'Adverbs' in your notebook. Write the words in the appropriate column.
- 9 Texts that are meant to be seen and heard are usually written differently to texts that are meant to be read. As a class, discuss the differences. It might be helpful to find some examples of both ancient and modern oral texts, such as the evening news, a Shakespeare play and the *The Odyssey*. Which do you prefer, to read or to listen?
- 10 Create a modern version of 'Odysseus's arrival at the Palace of King Alcinoo's' or 'Odysseys and the Cyclopes'. Make sure you include all the information in the piece. Remember that this is a spoken text, so include all the features you explored in Question 9 in your own work. Swap your pieces with a partner. Rehearse speaking their piece, then read it to the class.
- 11 English owes a great deal to its language roots—German, Latin, Greek and later French. Draw up a table with four columns, each column with a root language as a heading. Conduct an internet search to find ten examples of words that have their roots in these languages. Choose words that you would use, or make sure you know what they mean before you add them to your table. Compare your tables with a partner's.

## Evaluating

- 12 Compare the activities undertaken by men and women in these extracts. How would you characterise this society in terms of gender roles?
- 13 Discuss with a partner whether the gender roles in *The Odyssey* are evident in modern Australia.

## DID YOU KNOW...

The myth of the Cyclopes may have started with the ancients finding fossilised skulls of prehistoric elephants. With its enormous nasal cavity, it may appear that the skull has one large eye socket in the middle. Some of these skulls can still be found in Crete, an island off the coast of Greece, today.



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What are the two epic poems attributed to Homer?
- 2 Where is the island of the Cyclopes believed to be?

# An eastern odyssey

In the thirteenth century, a wealthy merchant from the Venetian Republic was responsible for introducing the mysterious Orient to the Europeans. Although his father and uncle travelled to China first, it was Marco Polo's great account of his travels that captured the curiosity of the Europeans and sparked a frenzy of trade and exploration. It even inspired other great explorers such as Columbus, who carried Marco Polo's book with him when he travelled to the Americas.



*The Travels of Marco Polo* outlines Polo's journey through the Middle East and China to the Empire of the great Mongol Emperor, Kublai Khan, in 1271 CE. Kublai begged Marco to become his ambassador and for the next two decades he travelled the Asian continent in the service of the Khan, visiting places such as India, Sri Lanka, South-East Asia, southern Russia and even the east coast of Africa. When he returned home to Venice, Marco Polo dictated his stories to a writer, Rustichello de Pisa, reportedly while in jail. Upon its publication, his travelogue became an instant success and Marco Polo went on to become a wealthy merchant.

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Did you know that there are over 150 variants of *The Travels of Marco Polo*? As it was written long before the invention of the printing press, each copy was hand-written and often edited according to haste or the tastes of the copier. A Latin version discovered in 1932 is almost 50 per cent longer than others.

## Lifestyles of the rich and famous

Like people today who are interested in the lives of celebrities, Marco Polo was fascinated with the lives of the royals. Here he describes a feast in the Khan's palace.

### THE TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO

Whenever the Great Khan sits at the table on any great court occasion, his table is elevated a good deal above the others, and he sits at the north end of the hall, looking towards the south, with his chief wife beside him on the left. On his right but lower sit his sons and his nephews, and other kinsmen of the Blood Imperial, with their heads on a level with the emperor's feet. The other barons sit at other tables lower still. The women—all the wives of the Lord's sons, and of his nephews and other kinsmen—sit at the lower table to his right; and below them again are the ladies of the other barons and knights, each in the place assigned by



the Lord's orders. The tables are so disposed that the emperor can see all of them from end to end. Most of the soldiers and their officers sit at their meal in the hall on the carpets. Outside the hall are more than 40 000 people; for there is always a great crowd of folk bringing presents to the Lord, or coming from foreign countries with curiosities.

In a part of the hall near where the Great Khan holds his table, there is set a large and very beautiful piece of workmanship in the form of a square buffet, about three paces each way, exquisitely wrought with figures of animals, finely carved and gilt. The middle is hollow, and in it stands a great dish of pure gold. At each corner is one of smaller size and from the former the wine or beverage flavoured with fine and costly spices is poured into the latter. On the buffet are placed all the Lord's drinking vessels, among which are certain pitchers of the finest gold, which are big enough to hold drink for eight or ten persons. And one of these is put between every two persons, besides a couple of golden cups with handles, so that every man helps himself from the pitcher that stands between him and his neighbour. Ladies are supplied in the same way. The value of these pitchers and cups is something immense. In fact, the Great Khan has such a quantity of this kind of plate, and of gold and silver in other shapes, as no one ever before saw or heard tell of, or could believe ...

Those who wait upon the Great Khan with his dishes and his drink are some of the great barons. They have the mouth and nose muffled with fine napkins of silk and gold, so that no breath nor odour from their persons should taint the dish or the goblet presented to the Lord. And when the emperor is going to drink, all the musical instruments, of which he has vast stores of every kind, begin to play. When he takes the cup, all the barons and the rest of the company drop on their knees and make the deepest bow before him. Then the emperor drinks. Each time he does so the whole ceremony is repeated.

Source: *The Travels of Marco Polo (Il milione)*, 1298–99, originally published during Polo's lifetime

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 When did Marco Polo journey to China?
- 2 Where do the Khan's sons sit during a feast?
- 3 What do the courtiers do when Kublai Khan takes a drink?

### Understanding

- 4 Why are Polo's writings so significant?

### Applying

- 5 Historically, the Venetians were great travellers. Using the internet, find out the extent of the Venetian empire.
- 6 In what ways are Homer's accounts of the Phaeacians and Marco Polo's descriptions of the Khan's court similar? What does this suggest about what early travellers found interesting?

### Analysing

- 7 Polo uses extensive descriptive language. Highlight three significant examples and explain how they create a vivid picture for the reader.
- 8 What do the actions of the Khan's courtiers reveal about his status?

### Evaluating

- 9 How would you characterise Polo's reaction to the Khan's court?

## The great explorers of Australia

### Captain James Cook

Captain James Cook is credited with having been the first European to come in contact with the east coast of Australia in 1770, and the first to record the presence of Indigenous Australians. He was not the first European to discover Australia however, but his diary is an important historical document in our history, as his observations led to the establishment of the first permanent European colony in Australia.

Cook's entries are less colourful than either Homer's or Polo's writing. His writings are governed by facts such as time, navigation and geographical

features; they did not seek to explore any relationship with the new and unfamiliar territory he was exploring. His journal entry for 10 June 1770 outlining his discovery and naming of Cape Tribulation in Queensland follows.

### DID YOU KNOW...

Australia was 'discovered' by the Dutch over 150 years before Cook arrived on the continent. William Jansz discovered the east coast of the Cape York Peninsula in 1606 CE, while Dirk Hartog discovered the west coast of Australia ten years later in 1616. Archaeological evidence indicates human habitation around Perth, Western Australia and Lake Mungo, New South Wales some 40000 to 60000 years earlier—making Indigenous people's ancestors the true discoverers of Australia.

## CAPTAIN COOK'S JOURNAL

### Sunday 10th

After hauling round Cape Grafton we found the land trend away NWBW. Three miles to the Westward of the Cape is a Bay wherein we anchor about 2 miles from the shore in 4 fathom water an owsey bottom. The East point of the bay bore S 74° East, the west point S 83° West and a low green woody Island laying in the offing bore N 35° East.

This Island lies NBE½E distant 3 or 4 Legs from Cape Grafton, and is known in the Chart by the name of Green Island. As soon as the Ship was brought to an Anchor I went ashore accompanied by Mr Banks and Dr Solander, the first thing I did was to look for fresh water and with that View rowed out towards the Cape because in the bottom of the Bay was low mangrove land and little probability of meeting with any there, but the way I went I found two small streames which were difficult to get at on account of the surff and rocks upon the shore. As we came round the Cape we saw in a Sandy Cove a small stream of water ran over the beach, but here I did not go in the boat because I found that it would not be easy to land. We hardly advance any thing into the Country, it being here hilly which were steep and rocky and we had not time to viset the low lands and therefore met with nothing remarkable. My intention was to have stay'd here at least one day to have looked into the Country had we met with fresh water convenient or any other refreshment, but as we did not I thought it would be only spending time and looseing so much of a light moon to little purpose and therefore at 12 oClock at night we weigh'd and stood away to the NW having at this time but little wind attended with showers of rain. At 4 oClock the breeze freshend at SBE with fair weather. We continued steering to NNW½W as the land lay having 10, 12





Setting is a very important narrative element in any travel writing. Setting incorporates two elements: the physical and the temporal.

- **Physical setting** is the construction of a sense of place, whether that be a landscape or interior setting, or a sense of the culture in which the text is placed.
- **Temporal setting** is the construction of a sense of time—the era in which the text is placed, as well as details such as date, time, season and so on.

and 14 fathom at the distance of 3 Leagues from the land. At 10 o'clock we hauld off north in order to get without a small low Island which lay about 2 Leagues from the Main it being about high water at the time we pass'd it great part of it lay under water about 3 Leagues to the north-westward of this Island close under the Main land is another Island tolerable high which bore from us at Noon N 55° west distant 7 or 8 Miles, we being at this time in the latitude of 16°20' S Cape Grafton bore S 29° East distant 40 Miles and the northermost point of land in sight N 20° w and in this situation had 15 fathom water. The shore between Cape Grafton and the above northern point forms a large but not very deep Bay which I named Trinity Bay after the day on which it was discovered, the north point Cape Tribulation because here begun all our troubles. Latitude 16°6' S, Long de 214°29' W.

Source: James Cook, *Journal of Remarkable Occurrences Aboard His Majesty's Bark Endeavour, 1768–1771*, Journal entry 10 June 1770

Thirteen days later, Cook records his first sighting of a now-familiar Australian animal.

### Saturday 23rd

I saw myself this morning, a little way from the Ship, one of the Animals before spoke off; it was of a light mouse Colour and the full size of a Grey Hound, and shaped in every respect like one, with a long tail, which it carried like a Grey hound; in short, I should have taken it for a wild dog but for its walking or running, in which it jump'd like a Hare or Deer. Another of them was seen to-day by some of our people, who saw the first; they described them as having very small Legs, and the print of the Feet like that of a Goat; but this I could not see myself because the ground the one I saw was upon was too hard, and the length of the Grass hindered my seeing its legs.

Source: James Cook, *Journal of Remarkable Occurrences Aboard His Majesty's Bark Endeavour, 1768–1771*, Journal entry 23 June 1770

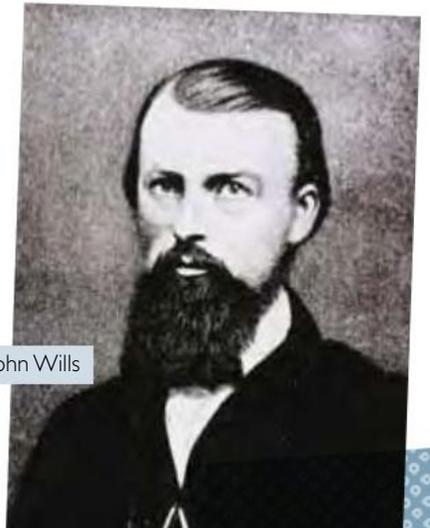
## The diary of William John Wills

Burke and Wills were two famous explorers of interior Australia. In 1860, they set out from Adelaide to cross Australia from south to north. The tragedy of their expedition has become an important part of our modern history. Their expedition party reached the Gulf of Carpentaria, but they were unable to penetrate the thick mangrove jungles to reach the ocean and so turned back. After months of travelling, sickness and the death of their colleagues, Burke and Wills, as well as a third man, King, returned to their base camp—only to find it deserted. Their colleagues, having waited there for them for months, had departed only nine hours earlier, assuming that the explorers were dead. Starved, ill, exhausted, both Burke and Wills succumbed to death, although King survived after he was taken in by the local Indigenous people.

Ironically, one of the expedition party had hidden food supplies, but Burke, Wills and King did not find them.



Robert O'Hara Burke



William John Wills



Wills's diary provides an amazing insight into the hardships of the journey, Australia's arid interior and the hospitality of Indigenous people who encountered—probably for the first time—these strange white men and their camels.

## WILLIAM JOHN WILLS'S DIARY

Wednesday May 8th 1861

Left the Blacks Camp at h7 m30 Mr Burke returning to the Junction whilst I proceeded to trace down the Creek. This I found a shorter task than I had expected for it soon showed signs of running out and at the same time kept considerably to the north of West. There were several fine waterholes within about four miles of the Camp I had left but not a drop all the way beyond that, a distance of seven miles. Finding that the creek turned greatly towards the North I returned to the Blacks' encampment and as I was about to pass they invited me to stay so I did so, and was even more hospitably entertained than before being on this occasion offered a share of a gunnya and supplied with plenty of fish and Nardu, as well as a couple of nice fat rats, the latter found most delicious, they were baked in the skins. Last Night was Clear & calm but unusually warm we slept by a fire just in front of the Blacks Camp. They were very attentive in bringing us fire wood and keeping the fire up during the night.

Source: William John Wills, *The Diary of William John Wills; 23 April–28 June 1861*, Journal entry 8 May 1861

Both Captain Cook's and Wills's diaries have been digitised by the Australian National Library and can be viewed and read online at **Pearson Reader**.



### DID YOU KNOW...

There were over 250 separate Indigenous Australian languages at the time of European settlement. Today, only 145 are still spoken, and 110 of these are considered at risk of disappearing.



Wills's diary also includes some of his attempts to record an Indigenous language.

<b>myarree</b>	billy (tin pot for making tea)
<b>pairu</b>	fire
<b>murwaddu</b>	grass
<b>jerry</b>	stick
<b>pulla kawilka</b>	crow
<b>mungalu</b>	wood
<b>puya</b>	moon
<b>naingaire</b>	clouds

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Why did Cook name the point Cape Tribulation?
- 2 What did Burke and Wills eat with the Indigenous people?

### Understanding

- 3 How do the descriptive details in Wills's diary differ to those in Marco Polo's account of his travels?
- 4 Make a list of the hardships and tribulations faced by Cook.
- 5 What features do both Wills's and Cook's diaries have in common?

### Applying

- 6 Rewrite Wills's diary entry, correcting the spelling and grammar according to modern Australian standards.

### Analysing

- 7 What kind of country does Australia seem to be, according to the settings in these diaries?
- 8 Describe the relationship Wills establishes with the Indigenous Australians.

### Evaluating

- 9 Which of the travel accounts that you have read is most interesting? What made it so?
- 10 List reasons why documents such as Cook's and Wills's diaries are important to Australians.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Create your own diary entry as if you were Wills, but exploring Cape Tribulation. Use the information from Cook's diary as a basis and include appropriate descriptive detail. You can use some of the Indigenous words Wills recorded.
- 2 These early explorers opened up worlds that most people could never experience. Create a new world of your own. Draw a map of an undiscovered land and include geographical features such as mountains, rivers, beaches, vegetation and so on. Include a scale to indicate distance. Write a journal from the perspective of an explorer who reaches your new land. In your writing, ensure that you use descriptive language to establish a clear sense of both physical and temporal settings. You should aim to create several entries as your explorer makes their way through your land, experiencing its different regions.

In your planning, consider:

- the explorer's purpose in exploring your land (such as discovery, trade, riches, glory)
- the geographic features that might hinder or aid exploration
- the time of year at which the explorer arrives and the climate they might experience
- the indigenous people who might inhabit your land and the type of relationship your explorer may form with them
- the challenges and rewards your explorer faces
- the variety of descriptive language tools available (such as nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, comparisons)
- the origins of your explorer and how they might describe the unfamiliar.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Descriptive language is an important tool in any writer's toolbox. Keep a travel diary of your trips to and from school each day for a week. Use effective descriptive language to turn each entry into an enthralling journey.
- 2 Like Homer, Cook described the unfamiliar by comparing it to the familiar.
  - a How did he try to explain the kangaroo to his English audience?
  - b Create a fantastical creature. Draw a sketch of it and without revealing it, describe it for a partner by comparing its features to those of familiar animals, like Captain Cook did. See if your partner can re-create your drawing based on your description.
- 3 Many early travelogues show a fascination with how other people live. Interview a friend or neighbour who has visited a different culture. Formulate a set of questions that will encourage your interviewee to elaborate on that culture and their responses to it. Prepare this as an oral memoir and record it. If your interviewee has digital photos of their trip, ask if you can borrow some of these. Using picture-editing software, create a visual narrative of images to accompany the oral recording and share with the class.
- 4 Explain how you might reproduce one of the texts you have studied in this module for a modern, 'online' audience. You might like to consider the following forms of online texts: webpage, blog, hypertext document, vlog, podcast or a combination. As part of your explanation, comment on the changes you could make to transform the text and how you would cater for a modern audience.

# Contemporary wayfarers

**M**any travellers are so profoundly changed by their travel experiences that they publish their memoirs. Many travel memoirs chart journeys of personal growth as much as physical journeys. Others provide amazing insights into the culture of the destination. Just as travel itself can help shape our view of ourselves and our world, reading travel memoirs can be just as revealing.

Travel writing that develops a sustained narrative is often referred to as travel literature in order to separate it from travel journalism, guide books and other forms of travel writing. As with all narratives, developing character and plot is essential. What characterises travel literature is the importance of setting. A sense of place is a major focus for the travel writer; it often provides the catalyst for character development and significantly informs the plotline.



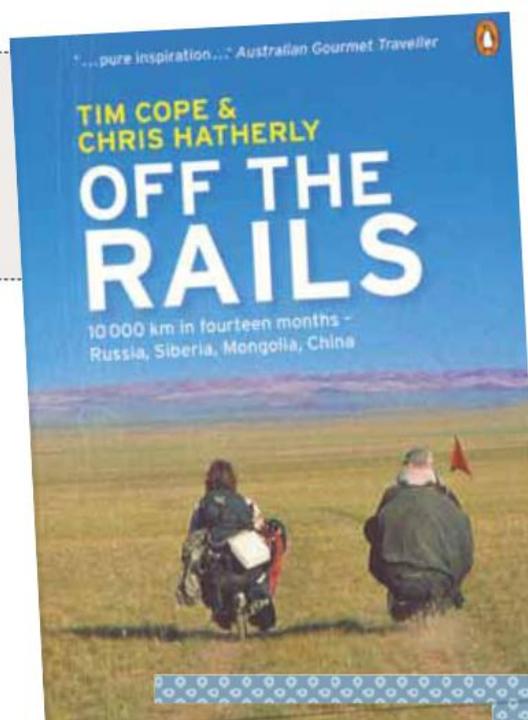
Travel writers represent cultures in different ways. Their descriptions of place and people often reveal much about the values of the writer and the culture from which they come.



## Daring to dream

In 1999, Tim Cope and Chris Hatherly, two twenty-year-olds from Australia, set off on a 10000-kilometre journey, cycling across Russia and Mongolia and down through China. It was a test of endurance, a journey of self-discovery and an attempt to gain insight into the culture of a vast country that still, in many rural parts, has little contact with the Western world.

Tim and Chris wrote a book together to inspire young people. Tim's introduction to the book, *Off the Rails*, outlines his hopes and fears for their journey. The extract that follows is from the introduction to the book.



The extract that follows is from the introduction to the book.

## OFF THE RAILS

By Tim Cope & Chris Hatherly

The Finnish border guard looked bewildered.

'Are you crazy? You sure you want to do this?' He shook his head.

'Yep,' I replied, feigning confidence.

'Well, just be very careful. You know what those Russians are like. Russia is dangerous! Even we Finns don't go to Russia alone, especially for such a long time. But an Australian, by bike?'

With a look of sincere pity he stamped my passport and handed it back. I offered him a nervous smile and strode out of the swish customs building. My Russian chauffeur, Alexsei, was waiting outside.

'C'mon, c'mon, Tim, faster. We are running late!' he nagged in Russian from behind the wheel of his clapped-out old van. As usual he was wearing a worn-out leather jacket and a lopsided baseball cap over his thinning hair.

After several attempts at starting the engine, it sputtered spectacularly into life. I leapt in to the front passenger seat and before I had even closed the door, we lurched forward under the rising boom gate.

Then Finland was behind us.

It was only a kilometre or so across no-man's-land to Russian customs but it dragged out in a long dreamlike sequence. I held the ill-functioning door shut, and felt my head bobbing up and down with the convulsive rattle of the van. For many months I had been working towards this day but in all that time, I had not clearly thought out the reality of what I had decided to do. My plans were as vague as they had been in the beginning: I am going to ride a bike with my friend Chris, 10 000 kilometres across Russia, Siberia, Mongolia and China to Beijing.

Between stretched a realm of mythical places, far-off wonderlands. I had a vague understanding that between us and the end lay snow, cold weather and even the Gobi desert in Mongolia. It was a prospect that tempted my imagination and left me feeling frighteningly exposed, naive and young. The size of the land alone was dumbfounding: Russia and Siberia cover more than twice the land mass of Australia. In all that vast landscape, what kind of people would we meet? Would we come through it alive? Was it possible

to ride in Siberia? If we did make it, what would I be like at the end? We hadn't looked at any maps beyond the world atlas, didn't know how long it would take and I had barely been on a bike in the last two years, and then never for great distances.

10 000 kilometres? It might as well have been a million. All I knew was that it was a ... long way.

Source: Tim Cope & Chris Hatherly, *Off the Rails*, Penguin, 2003



There are strict rules for **punctuating dialogue**. If you are including the direct utterances of others in your own writing:

- enclose their words in quotation marks
- separate dialogue from its tag (the speaker) with a comma (unless the dialogue ends with a question mark or an exclamation mark)
- write each new person's speech on a new line
- begin dialogue with a capital letter and end it with a full stop, exclamation mark or question mark, or with a comma if the tag directly follows.

'Are you crazy? You sure you want to do this?' He shook his head.

'Yep,' I replied, feigning confidence.

The tag can come before or after the dialogue, or break the dialogue up. Notice how a comma is still used to separate the tag from the dialogue.

Feigning confidence, I replied, 'Yep, I am sure.'

'Yep, I am sure,' I replied, feigning confidence.

'Yep,' I replied, feigning confidence, 'I am sure.'

If the tag separates two separate sentences, a full stop would replace the comma before the second part of dialogue.

'Are you crazy?' he said. 'You sure you want to do this?'

After Tim and Chris develop frostbite, they are taken in by a Russian babushka (grandmother) and her daughter, who take it upon themselves to care for these strange Australians who have decided to cycle through Siberia—one of the coldest places on earth. In the following extract, Tim tells of the warmth and generosity of the rural Russian villagers they meet, who, despite their poverty, lavish attention and hospitality on the two young men.

## OFF THE RAILS

By Tim Cope & Chris Hatherly

Breakfast was no less extravagant than dinner, with delicious pancakes, cottage cheese and soup. It came with a healthy serve of Baba Galya's favourite food, *sala*, which is salted, often smoked, pig fat. It is eaten in great quantities during the winter in Russia and the Ukraine.

'Baba Galya loves *sala*!' she said, while nibbling on the white pieces of fat. I had also grown to love it and had consumed countless slices along with bread and whole cloves of garlic. Chris, on the other hand, had reservations about eating pure chunks of fat.

Once again we ate to bursting point and were left feeling like immovable blobs. We had only stopped riding for a day, but if we kept this up for ten days we would most certainly be overweight by the time we departed...

Our day was mapped out by Tatyana. After breakfast, Chris helped carry water from the well. The water had frozen overnight and they had to break the ice with a long pole before lowering the bucket.

Then there was the firewood collecting, and the gathering of potatoes in the cellar. It struck me that Galya was one of the most energetic and lively seventy-five-year-olds that I had ever known. Just the mere fact that she had to keep the fire going at all times would have been hard enough.

After lunch we had guests from across the street. Baba Sveta, as we came to know her, had the same humour and zest for life as Galya. Together they were unstoppable. Baba Sveta, her daughter, and her granddaughter were all keen to see my photo album from Australia and talk about the adventure. I was glad 'frozen toes' wasn't the main subject...

My wounds continued to dry out without sign of infection. As my worries lessened, I spent more time taking note of life in Babushkina.

The strong community spirit was something that I had only ever read about in children's books. Everyone seemed to help out and we were treated as part of the community. Hardship and lack of money meant that survival depended very much on rallying together.

Everything pointed to a greater sense of trust and togetherness than I had experienced in

the western world. It might have been a hostile climate and an isolated part of the world, but it felt nothing like it.

Source: Tim Cope & Chris Hatherly, *Off the Rails*, Penguin, 2003

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What were Cope's fears as he began his journey?
- 2 List the chores the boys undertook to help Galya.

### Understanding

- 3 In what ways does Galya and Tatyana's hospitality represent 'trust and togetherness'?
- 4 What has Cope come to recognise about his own culture after experiencing Russian village life?
- 5 Look at a map that includes Russia and China to get a sense of the vast distance the young men travelled. What personal qualities would they need to attempt such a journey?

### Applying

- 6 Imagine taking in a couple of strangers who arrived in your town. Discuss with a partner your reasons for or against doing so.

### Analysing

- 7 In the first extract, Cope includes dialogue between himself and the Finnish border guard. How accurate do you think this exchange would be? Why is it included? Do you remember word for word conversations you've had in the past?
- 8 Compare the representations of the Russian people created in the two extracts. What details are included to create two such different views?
- 9 In the first extract Cope includes a lot of rhetorical questions. What effect does this have in conveying his state of mind?

### Evaluating

- 10 How prepared does Cope seem for the trip? In a small group, debate whether he is brave or foolhardy.

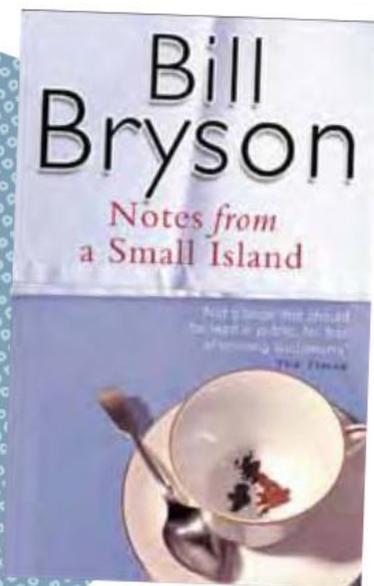
### Creating

- 11 Imagine you are Tim Cope. Write two brief emails home to your parents, which might have been sent after each of these extracts. Try to convey his feelings accurately.

# Bill Bryson

Not all travel writing is serious. Bill Bryson, a famous American travel writer and essayist, is known for his humorous reflections on places he has visited. In *Notes from a Small Island*, Bryson describes his 'grand tour' of Britain, his final journey before returning to his native United States of America. Between descriptions of the places on his itinerary, Bryson offers his anecdotal perceptions of British culture.

Bryson's text reveals a very important consideration for any reader of travel writing: an understanding of the relationship between the writer and the culture they are commenting on. Some writers take the position of an outside observer, some immerse themselves within a culture completely, some hold themselves above the culture they comment on and some 'use' the culture as a medium for their own entertainment or diversion.



An **anecdote** is a brief, personalised story used to illustrate a point. Anecdotes are a powerful tool to use in your writing as they can be used to make your argument seem more credible or relevant. A famous user of anecdotes, in his early career as a lawyer and later as a politician, was Abraham Lincoln. He was renowned for imparting them with a dry humour that put people at ease.

## NOTES FROM A SMALL ISLAND

By Bill Bryson

Let's talk about John Fallows. One day in 1987 Fallows was standing at a window in a London bank waiting to be served when a would-be robber named Douglas Bath stepped in front of him, brandished a handgun and demanded money from the cashier. Outraged, Fallows told Bath to 'bugger off' to the back of the line and wait his turn, to the presumed approving nods of others in the queue. Unprepared for this turn of events, Bath meekly departed from the bank empty-handed and was arrested a short distance away.

I bring this up to make the point that if there is one golden quality that characterises the British it is an innate sense of good manners and you defy it at your peril. Deference and a quiet consideration of others are such a fundamental part of British life, in fact, that few conversations could start without them. Almost any encounter with a stranger begins with the words 'I'm terribly sorry but' followed by a request of some sort—'could you tell me the way to Brighton,' 'help me find a shirt my size,' 'get your steamer trunk off my foot.' And when you've fulfilled their request, they invariably offer a hesitant, apologetic smile and say sorry again, begging forgiveness for taking up your time or carelessly leaving their foot where your steamer trunk clearly needed to go.

Source: Bill Bryson, *Notes from a Small Island*, Black Swan, 1995

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 What type of observers are Tim Cope and Bill Bryson?

### Analysing

- 2 Why do you think Bryson includes the anecdote about Fallows to comment on British manners?
- 3 Bryson writes in an informal, colloquial tone and style. How does he achieve this? Identify at least three examples of this informality.

### Evaluating

- 4 Given that Bryson finds British courtesy remarkable, what does this imply about social etiquette in his native United States of America?

## Creating

- 5 Write a short, informal account of a trip you have been on. Include an amusing anecdote to illustrate a point that you wish to make about your experiences on your journey.

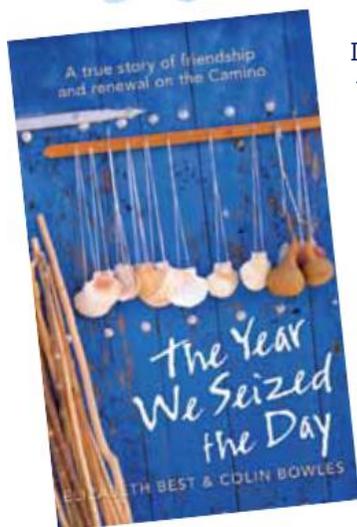
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# Journeying inwards

Sometimes, travellers find that their most significant journeys are not always just physical ones. This was the case for two Australian writers, Elizabeth Best and Colin Bowles. After a chance meeting, the two decided to retrace the steps of an ancient pilgrimage route through north-west Spain. Throughout the nearly 1000-kilometre journey, they come to battle not just the elements, but also their personal demons. The Camino de Santiago de Compostela wends its way through some of the harshest countryside in Spain, and challenges the physical and mental limits of those who attempt it. Ultimately, Best and Bowles found the trek a spiritual journey towards a greater sense of self-awareness.

## THE YEAR WE SEIZED THE DAY

By Elizabeth Best



I fall in love with my place here today.

Walking alone, I suddenly find myself realising that I am the happiest I have been since setting out along the Camino. I approach the peak of a loping knoll. Suddenly, I am stepping out of my own movie scene.

With the burnt yellow fields behind me, I reach the summit to find a valley sweeping down in a sea of green. On the horizon are a handful of distant hills with churches

perched on top—possibly tomorrow's destination. It is stunning. A gentle breeze sweeps through the valley and brushes against my skin, bringing with it a sense of freedom, and even belonging, that I've not experienced here before. It is one of those rare and precious moments when you realise that

everything is perfect, all the pieces fall in to place and everything fits. Such moments never last, they are not yours to keep.

A fellow Australian on the Camino told me a few days ago how the airline lost his baggage on the way to Spain. He arrived with nothing but the clothes on his back, a water bottle, a Visa card and some change in his pocket. He started his walk anyway. When the airline contacted him via email to say his bag had arrived, he told them to return it to Sydney.

'I didn't want it anymore. There's a certain freedom in poverty, you know?'

Out here material things don't mean as much as they did at home. Letting go of them is like cutting a second umbilical cord. Expecting nothing, accepting everything, surrendering to each moment as it arrives, having the courage and faith to trust that you have everything you need to be okay. I have less in my pack now than when I came. Tomorrow I will have less than I have today.

Every day so far, I have asked myself what the hell I'm doing here. But instead, before stepping off the hill this afternoon, I take a moment to say thank you.

Source: Elizabeth Best & Colin Bowles, *The Year We Seized the Day*, Allen & Unwin, 2007

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 What does the writer mean by, 'There's a certain freedom in poverty'?
- 2 Why do you think reaching the top of the hill brings Best to her moment of realisation?
- 3 What is meant by a 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage'?

### Analysing

- 4 In the extract, Best uses the metaphor 'stepping out of her own movie scene' and the simile 'cutting a second umbilical cord'. Explain how they help the reader understand her personal journey.
- 5 What emotions does Best feel in this passage?

### Creating

- 6 Write a brief reflection on a journey of your own that led you to learn something about yourself.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Travel has often been used as a metaphor for self-discovery in young adult fiction. Teenagers experience a very significant journey of growth and personal development throughout the period of adolescence. Create the outline for a new young adult novel that uses travel in this way. Alternatively, sketch the storyboard for a film version.
- 2 Write three short texts commenting on the same culture—a culture you have visited, or your own. In each text, take the position of writing from:
  - outside the culture, observing
  - immersed within the culture
  - above the culture.

Select your language carefully to create a different tone within each piece. Swap your writing with a partner and, with reference to their text, answer the following questions:

- a What tone has been created in each extract?
- b Which words and phrases have been used to create such a tone?
- c What relationship has been created between the writer and the culture?

## Extra tasks

- 1 Read another example of a travel memoir. Pretend you are the author and prepare a talk to give to your class. Create an electronic slideshow presentation to accompany your talk with maps and photographs. Have a 'travel expo' day where your class presents their talks.
- 2 With a partner, create a dialogue between two travellers who have been to the same destination. You may have to undertake some research to learn a little more about the culture you are writing about. Imagine that your two travellers are on the plane together returning home. In your dialogue, develop two characters who have gained very different impressions of that culture.
- 3 As a class, create a 'Tone continuum'. Brainstorm as many different words as you can that represent different tones, or attitudes. Write each on a separate piece of card and sort into 'positive', 'negative' or 'neutral' words. Arrange these in a continuum, with neutral in the centre and positive and negative on either side. It may require some discussion and compromise to come to an agreement. Use these words to describe the tone of various texts more precisely.

To help you get started, reread the three extracts included in this module as a group and identify the predominant tone of the piece. Of course, tones can shift even within short pieces, which contributes to the shape of the piece. Does the tone change in any of the extracts?



**Tone** is a technique in writing that reveals the writer's attitudes towards their subject and/or audience. Tone can be formal, informal, humorous, critical, condescending, angry and so on.

**Mood** is the emotional state created by a text that is experienced by the audience.

Both tone and mood are constructed by the writer through their language choices.

# Travel in the media

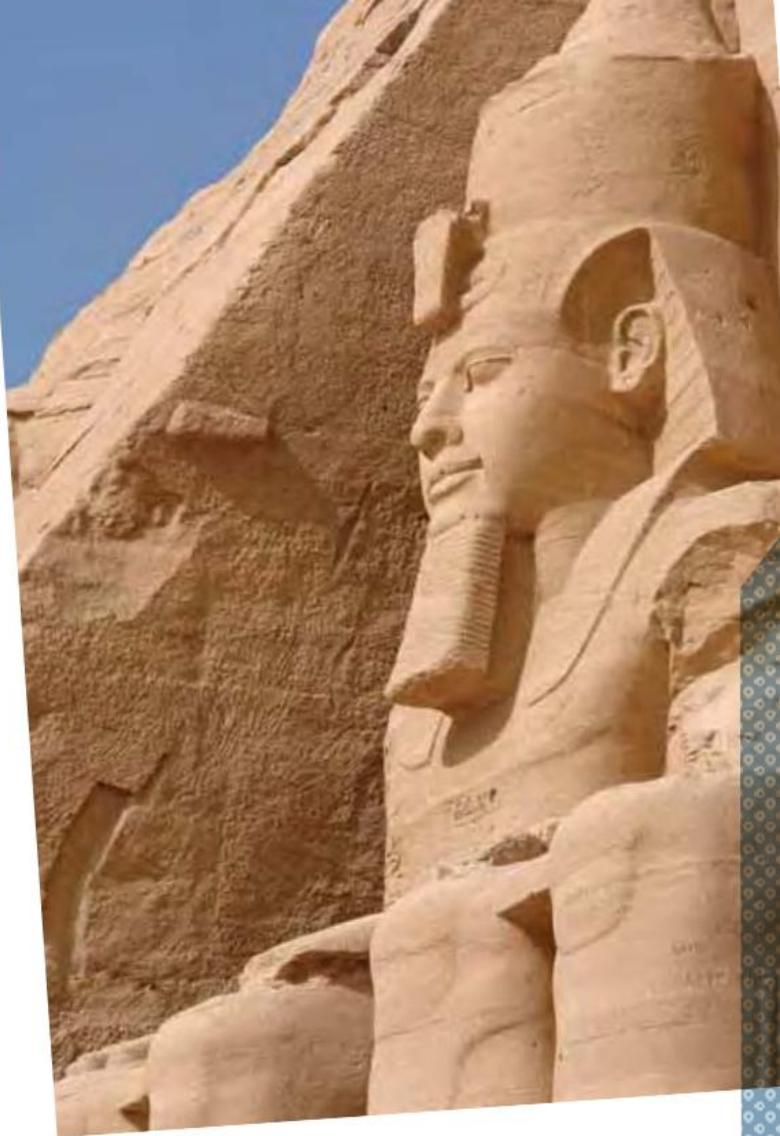
Imagine travelling all over the world and getting paid for it! That's the job of a travel journalist. Most of their experiences are written up as articles for travel sections in newspapers, magazines or online news services. Most travel articles are fairly brief, around 500–700 words, though occasionally a feature might run to a couple of thousand words. Unlike news articles, travel articles include lots of photographs to illustrate the destination.

Travel journalism is a significant industry in Australia. Almost every newspaper has its own travel section. In addition, there's a huge number of guide books for every conceivable destination and a veritable explosion of travel blogs on the internet.

## What is travel journalism?

Travel journalism tends to differ from other travel writing in its style. Instead of focusing on capturing a sense of place or recording memoirs of personal experiences, travel journalism is more overtly informative. It tends to be more review-like in style, offering insights on travel experiences in order to inform a would-be traveller.

Much travel journalism involves the 'selling' of a culture, as it has a commercial purpose: to encourage others to go where the writer has gone. Travel journalists frequently write at the behest of

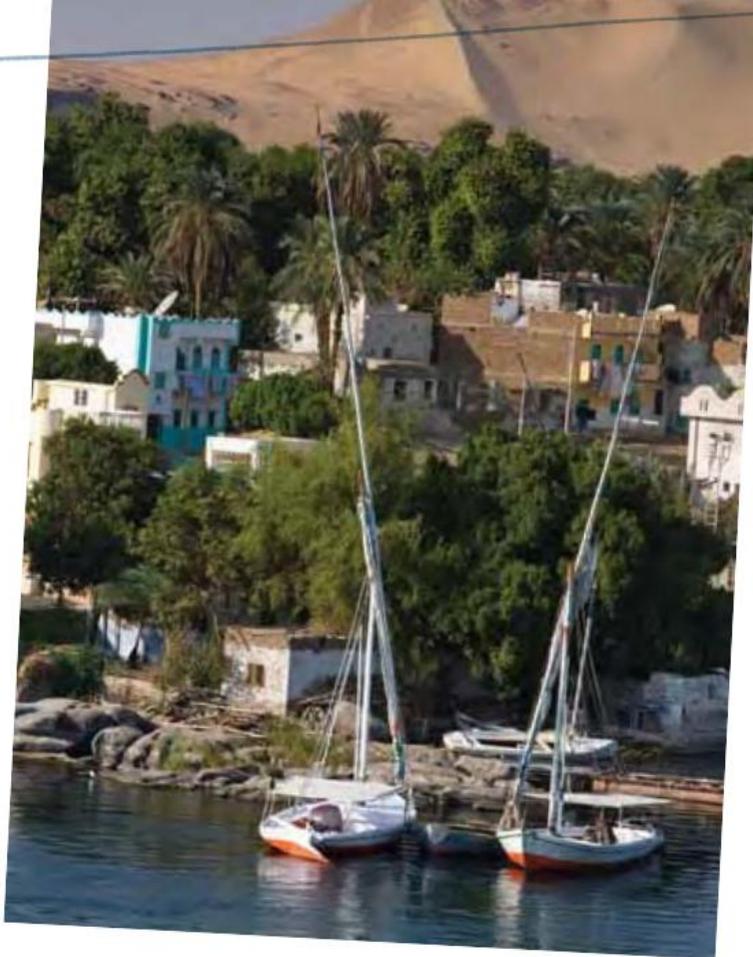


tourism boards, who treat journalists to all expenses paid trips in the hope of a favourable commentary. The commercialised nature of this sort of writing can heavily influence the content of these articles.

Like other travel writers, travel journalists recount their experiences, but they also need to include details to inform potential travellers, such as costs, transport routes, options for travellers and words of caution. The content of the article is more tailored to its audience, too, rather than being personal to the writer. In mainstream publications you will generally see quite 'touristy' articles highlighting the typical sights and experiences of the featured destinations.

Publications with more specific target audiences might focus on destinations and experiences that are off the beaten track, family-friendly, or for backpackers. These publications shape the content of their articles to suit the needs, interests and budgets of their target audience.

There is still an emphasis on providing evocative descriptions, though. Journalists need to bring the destination to life in order to inform the audience.



The following is an extract from a travel article on a Nile cruise in Egypt. Notice that there is a balance of descriptive detail—especially at the beginning to capture the reader’s attention—and more informative details about practicalities. As you read, try to consider how this experience is being ‘sold’ to readers.

## LIFE ON THE NILE

By Veronica Matheson

**T**he Kahn el-Khalili bazaar in Cairo is a maze of winding streets and dark alleys with defining names such as Carpet Street, Brass Street, Gold Street and Cotton Street so there is no mistaking what is sold in each, if only one could read Arabic.

This centuries-old bazaar is a noisy, exuberant place where merchants yell at one another animatedly, then charm customers in persuasive English.

‘Come, honey. Buy one of my flying carpets,’ enthuses a friendly salesman who deftly guides me into his small emporium. Instantly a glass of steaming apple tea is handed to me by one assistant while others start a fast-moving carpet performance. Colours, patterns, sizes all change as rugs fly through the air from one assistant to the next, and then to another who lays each one strategically on the floor. In an instant the rugs are transformed and appear lighter, or shinier, or they take on an entirely different pattern when viewed at close quarters.

It is a captivating display and I find myself admitting: ‘I love that one, and that one, and that one too.’

But soon I come to my senses and love flies out the window. I have no room for a carpet in my luggage. Besides, I am in Egypt for a Nile cruise and there is still plenty of time to be tempted by other ‘flying carpets’...

We sail to Aswan in five-star comfort through a timeless land while watching hard-working farmers till fertile land on the river’s banks, and lively children dive into the Nile or ride bareback on skinny donkeys.

En route we pass villages also caught in a time warp, see camels appear as if in a mirage in a palm-fringed oasis, watch rolling sand-dunes drift, and visit ancient temples and tombs that stand proudly erect on the river’s banks.

It is evident the sweet-tempered Nile, the world’s longest river at 6650 kilometres, remains the lifeblood of Egypt...

It is a schedule that works well—passengers mix sightseeing with generous buffets on board, then take siestas in cabins, cool off on the sundeck or find solitude in the wood-panelled library...

Insight Vacations 10-day ‘Elegance of the Pharaohs’ tour from Cairo includes a four-night cruise on the Nile aboard the *River Tosca*, from \$3759 per person, twin-share for departures until March 27, including hotel accommodation in Egypt, many meals and guided sightseeing. Airfares from Australia not included.

Source: *The West Australian*, 9 January 2010



**Dashes** are used to indicate a break in syntax. They are used when the separated part of the sentence provides additional clarification to the original sentence. For example:

It is a schedule that works well—passengers mix sightseeing with generous buffets on board.

They can also be used in place of parentheses. For example:

Many people love Ho Chi Minh City for its delicious food—a fusion of French and Vietnamese—and its vibrant culture.

**Hyphens** are used to connect two or more words, especially when their omission would cause confusion. For example:

Insight Vacations 10-day tour from Cairo includes a four-night cruise.

Up-to-date information was difficult to find.

# Representing cultures

There are many ways of approaching or reading texts. One such reading practice is to critically examine texts to see how they represent cultures.

In the days of the British Empire, many colonised nations had their own literary traditions and culture regarded as 'quaint', 'uncivilised' or 'primitive' or as having mere curiosity value. The culture of those in power was seen as superior, and colonised people were forced to learn the language and literature of their colonisers. This often meant that local cultures were grossly misrepresented, or reduced to stereotypes, and their writings not considered worthy of publication, which perpetuated these negative cultural representations.

Today, many travel writers try to represent the cultures they visit fairly, to see their cultural practices and traditions as equal in value to their own, rather than inferior or merely having curiosity value. Not all travel writers succeed, however, and their language choices in describing other cultures may be seen as patronising, insensitive or even derogatory. It is important to try to write about other cultures with respect for their values, rather than imposing your own onto them.

## DID YOU KNOW...

The earliest recorded tourist to Egypt was Herodotus, an ancient Greek historian, in the fifth century BCE. His accounts of his travels in Egypt, in which he commented on how the Egyptians did everything 'backwards' compared to the Greeks, have been translated and can be found in **Pearson Reader**.



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What drink was provided for potential carpet-purchasers in Cairo?
- 2 What do the passengers do on board a Nile cruise?

### Understanding

- 3 Describe the lifestyle of the passengers as compared to those of the Egyptian people they see.

- 4 Is the reader being sold an experience as a participant in Egyptian culture or a mere observer of it?

### Applying

- 5 Use the internet to find out a few facts about the real 'life on the Nile'. Write a brief script of a possible conversation between two of the 'hard-working farmers' who see the luxury cruise ship sail by.
- 6 It is important to try to write about other cultures with respect, but how easy do you think it is to do this? Have you ever travelled overseas on a holiday? Did you look at the culture you were visiting as though it was a curiosity or did you feel a deep respect for their values and culture? Was this intentional or part of the whole tourist experience? What strategies could you employ to avoid writing in a patronising or insensitive way?

### Analysing

- 7 Rather than launching into the details of the cruise, the writer begins with an anecdote about carpet shopping. What effect on the reader do you think this was intended to achieve?
- 8 The first sentence ends with 'if only one could speak Arabic'. What tone do you think is conveyed here? Explain your reasoning. You may wish to consider the way the writer refers to herself in the third person.
- 9 Reread the section describing what the writer sees while on the cruise. Identify the uses of descriptive detail, such as adjectives and adverbs. How is the culture of Egypt being represented?
- 10 Do you think it is important to avoid creating stereotypes of people, cultures, places and events when you are writing about another culture from the position of an outsider? Can you think of any strategies that could help you do so? Brainstorm suggestions as a class or small group.

### Evaluating

- 11 How do you think the writer sees herself in relation to the Egyptian people? Justify your answer.

### Creating

- 12 Create a poster advertising this cruise, representing Egypt in the same way that the writer has. Include relevant details and images from the article.



# Travel closer to home

Not all travel writing focuses on exotic overseas destinations. There are many wonderful sights to see within our own country. Here, award-winning travel journalist Stephen Scourfield describes an overnight trip to the Pinnacles, an eerie rock formation in Western Australia.

## A MYSTERY TRIP

By Stephen Scourfield

‘Lancelin’ my wife guesses. We had a free night in a busy world, and I’d told her that I had arranged something and we’d just head off for the night. Get out of town. A night away at a mystery location. It was fun to keep her guessing... ‘The Pinnacles.’

The Pinnacles in Nambung National Park [near Cervantes] 250 km north of the centre of Perth, is the sort of place that tourists desperately want to see, but some of us locals might undervalue. That’s just the result of living in a place.

But the thousands of limestone pillars of the Pinnacles, thought by many to represent the remains of a forest covered by moving sand dunes and petrified, and nearby Lake Thetis, with its stromatolites and thrombolites related to those that were the first organisms on Earth to produce oxygen, are remarkable things.

But before looking around, we check into the nearby Pinnacles Edge Resort. This brand-new luxury resort is a treat. We walk into a sizeable kitchen, dining and sitting area, with sliding glass doors onto a private balcony, also with a big table and chairs. It overlooks the swimming pool.

The kitchen has quality appliances, including a dishwasher, and the sitting area has lounge suite, flat-screen TV and nice decor and fittings.

The bedroom, with its king-size bed and plenty of cupboards and hanging space, is separate and once again, stylishly fitted. The bathroom is huge, with a spa.

There is also a function centre on site, and a gym next door to the swimming pool.

We dine in the resort’s restaurant, enjoying a good menu and wines, and the drifting accents of European guests who are discovering this corner of WA.

Cervantes is a classic, undiluted WA coastal town, fed by a history of crayfishing. There are fibro shacks and modern mansions, unpainted aluminium boats on trailers and seemingly all the old speedboats in the world gathered in backyards, along with red tractors to pull them down to the beach. It’s bleached out and sunburnt. It’s unpretentious, blue-singlet-and-thongs, cold beers, family, kids-on-bikes, oceanic, everything imbued with the elements...

It was just one night away, but time stretches sometimes into a personal shared oasis in the helter-skelter of the weeks.

Source: *The West Australian*, 6 March 2010



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 List the features included in the rooms at Pinnacles Edge Resort.

### Understanding

- 2 Why might West Australians not be inclined to visit the Pinnacles?

### Applying

- 3 Discuss with a partner how many tourist attractions you have visited. Create a two-column table in your notebook. In one column, list the tourist attractions you have visited in your local area; in the other, list the tourist attractions you have visited outside your local area. Which list is longer? Why do you think this is the case?

### Analysing

- 4 Identify the descriptive words that have been used to construct a positive review of the resort.
- 5 What does the writer mean when he says Cervantes is 'blue-singlet-and-thongs, cold beer, family, kids-on-bikes'?
- 6 Who do you think the target audience of this article is?
- 7 What details have been included to make an overnight trip to the Pinnacles sound appealing to this audience?

### Evaluating

- 8 What representation of Australian culture is offered by Scourfield in his description of Cervantes?

### Creating

- 9 Rewrite the description of the resort using negative instead of positive language.

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## Balinese blessings

Bali is a very popular tourist destination for Australians. Many go there to relax in luxurious resorts, party in the bars and nightclubs or engage in adventurous activities such as white-water rafting and bungee jumping. A number of tourists, however, seek a holiday that offers more of an insight into the culture of the Balinese people. The following extract is from an article that caters for this kind of audience, detailing experiences of staying with a Balinese family. Here the writer describes the blessing of a house.

## APPEASING THE SPIRITS IN SANUR

By Owen Carmichael

The blessing is important in Bali, to cleanse the house and land of any evil spirits and bring it under the protection of good spirits. The Balinese believe the blessing will keep their house and land free of natural disasters...

On the morning of the blessing, women from the neighbouring houses started arriving in their best clothes. As well as their offerings, they carried freshly cooked cakes and sweets.

While we were sipping coffee a dignified Brahmin woman appeared. Throughout the blessing ceremony she quietly made sure everyone was in the right place at the right time.

At 11 am the musicians started to warm up. A choir of ten women sat in a separate group and rehearsed their chanting in Kawi, the holy language.

The priest arrived, his hair in a topknot. He wore a white safari jacket, a yellow brocade sarong and a massive gold ring on every finger. He was followed by his assistant and a procession of women, bearing more offerings on their heads.

The priest climbed the steps to the platform and blessed the offerings by sprinkling holy water on them. After this, he took off his sarong and jacket and put on a white sarong, which reached to the armpits, fastened with a white sash—white is a sacred colour.

Next the priest purified himself with water by washing out his mouth three times and washing his hands, face and feet. After that he tied a sacred cord around his forehead and sat in a meditation position, with his legs crossed.

The choir began chanting. The priest chanted too, sometimes with the choir, sometimes alone, and he rang a brass bell in a rhythmic pattern.

His assistant lit sandalwood incense, which gave off a thin trail of smoke. The priest passed the palms of his hand across the smoke to purify himself with fire.

Over at the pit for earth spirits, the Brahmin woman, acting as a lesser priest, sprinkled the offerings with holy water. After about an hour of chanting, the offerings were given back to the women, who carried them on their heads to the main shrine. On the way the offerings were sheltered from the noon sun with ceremonial umbrellas.

At the shrine, Arini's father and brother placed coins, wrapped in a white cloth, on to the stone chairs built there for the gods. After the ceremony the coins were cemented into the shrine to ensure continuing prosperity.

Next, Arini herself placed offerings on the four shrines on every corner of her property. When she had finished the music stopped with an abrupt crash.

To show the house blessing was over, the priest untied the sacred cord from his forehead ...

That night the losmen was quiet and peaceful again. As I sat in the garden pavilion I watched the moon's path of beaten silver over the sea and smelt the fragrance of the frangipani trees.

In that quiet moment I could sense why the Balinese believed that Arini's house and land had been cleansed of evil spirits.

As part of this article, Carmichael included the following 'Fact file':



### Fact file

The best time to visit Bali is in the dry season, from April to October.

The Festival of Bali runs at Denpasar Art Centre from about mid-June to mid-July each year. It features the best Balinese dancers and musicians and there are also a few shows from other parts of Indonesia and Asia. There are spectacular dance dramas on the vast arena stage at night (which cost from about \$5 per seat) and smaller, free shows during the day. The Bali Arts Festival has an attached showground of the island's best handicrafts at fair prices. Ceramics, wood-carving, jewellery, leather goods and batik are available to buy.

Source: *The West Australian*, 23 January 2010



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 When is the best time to visit Bali?
- 2 What is the blessing of the house believed to achieve?

### Understanding

- 3 Why does the writer say that he 'could sense why the Balinese believed that Arini's house and land had been cleansed of evil spirits'?
- 4 Justify the writer's choice of details in the 'Fact file'. What kind of experience has been marketed here?

### Analysing

- 5 Good writers choose their language carefully. Identify six words that convey the solemnity of the ceremony.

### Evaluating

- 6 Discuss with a partner whether the writer has been sensitive to the Balinese people's beliefs.
- 7 What other details could have been included by the writer to make this article more informative?

### Creating

- 8 This is an extract from a longer article. One section that is missing describes the feast that Arini hosts after the blessing. Use the internet to discover what foods Balinese people might serve at such a feast and write an additional paragraph to describe Arini's feast.



# Guide books

Guide books are another form of travel journalism. If you've ever seen the travel section in a good bookstore you will know that there are guides to every imaginable country, region and city. In addition, there are guide books for different types of travellers; from budget backpackers to urban sophisticates.

They differ from other examples of travel journalism in that they tend to be much less descriptive, focusing on providing information to help the traveller plan their trip. They assume that the reader is already interested in their destination, and so are less likely to try to 'sell' it.

## A not-so-lonely planet

The Lonely Planet brand of travel guides is perhaps the best known of all travel guides. These guides include a wealth of information for any would-be traveller and cater for any destination, whether a whole continent or a single city. There are over 500 different Lonely Planet guides, with more published regularly.

Lonely Planet guides provide destination-specific information including:

- best times to travel
- a guide to costs
- suggested itineraries
- history
- culture
- lifestyle
- population
- environment
- food and drink
- maps
- a basic glossary.

They also include reviews, for:

- tourist attractions
- accommodation
- restaurants.

They are written in a report-style format, with information organised under clear headings and subheadings. Travel guides are more impersonal than travel articles, which are often a record of the writer's personal experiences of destinations and services.



Tony and Maureen Wheeler, founders of Lonely Planet

### ! DID YOU KNOW...

Tony and Maureen Wheeler started Lonely Planet when they wrote their first book *Across Asia on the Cheap* because people kept questioning them about their travels. The Wheelers left England in 1972 and travelled across Asia, ending up broke but happy in Australia. After selling 1500 copies of *Across Asia on the Cheap* in the first week, Lonely Planet was born.

## LONELY PLANET: THE CINQUE TERRE

A film director aiming to shoot an authentic period drama set in 17th-century Italy need look no further than Cinque Terre. Bar an overabundance of ogling tourists and a busy 19th-century railway line that burrows through a series of coastal tunnels, barely anything about these five crazily constructed Ligurian villages has changed in over three centuries. Even cars—those most ubiquitous of modern interferences—are missing, thanks to a 1997 Unesco ban. Rooted in antiquity, Cinque Terre's five towns date from the early medieval period. Monterosso, the oldest, was founded in AD 643 when beleaguered hill dwellers moved down to the coast to escape from invading barbarians. Riomaggiore, the next oldest, was purportedly established in the 8th century by Greek settlers fleeing persecution in Byzantium.

... Hugging the coast, the 12km Sentiero Azzurro (Blue Trail) consists of a one-time mule path that linked all five oceanside villages by foot. Today's protected trail dates back to the early days of the Republic of Genoa in the 12th and 13th centuries and, until the opening of the railway line in 1874, it was the most practical

means of getting from village to village. For thousands of visitors, it still is.

## Information

Online information is available at [www.cinqueterre.it](http://www.cinqueterre.it) and [www.cinque.terre.com](http://www.cinque.terre.com). **Parco Nazionale offices** ([www.parconazionale5terre.it](http://www.parconazionale5terre.it)), in Italian; Corniglia ☎0187 81 25 23, ☎7am–8pm; ... Manarola ☎0187 76 05 11, ☎7am–8pm; Monterosso ☎0187 81 70 59, ☎7am–8pm; Riomaggiore ☎0187 92 06 33, ... ☎6.30am–8pm Oct–May, to 10pm Jun–Sep; Vernazza ☎0187 81 25 33, ☎7am–8pm. The Riomaggiore office is the main office for the park, located outside Riomaggiore train station.

## Vernazza pop 1100

Guarding the only secure landing point on the Cinque Terre coast, Vernazza is the quaintest of the five villages. Its tiny harbour is framed by the 1318-built Chiesa di Santa Margherita, while the ruins of an 11th-century castle look out to sea. Lined with little cafes, Vernazza's main cobbled street, Via Roma, links seaside Piazza Marconi with the train station. To spend a romantic night here try L'Eremo sul Mare (☎339 268 56 17; Via Gerai; d €90; ☎mid-Mar–mid-Oct; ♿), a charming cliffside villa with just three rooms and a lovely sun terrace, a 10-minute hike up the hillside. Traditional Cinque Terre seafood is served up at Trattoria Gianni Franzi (☎0187 82 10 03; Piazza Matteotti 5; meals €22–30; ☎mid-Mar–early Jan); and in the cosy stone-and-wood dining rooms of Trattoria da Sandro (☎0187 81 22 23; Via Roma 69; meals €20), whose specialities include baked stuffed mussels, and swordfish with tomatoes, capers, olives and pine nuts.

The picturesque village of Vernazza



## Getting there and around

...

### Car and motorcycle

Private vehicles are not allowed beyond village entrances. If you're arriving by car or motorcycle, you'll need to pay to park in designated car parks (€2.30 per hour or €19 per 24 hours). Getting from the car parks to the villages involves a steep hike of 1km or more, although in some villages, minibus shuttles depart from the car parks (one-way/return €1.50/2.50)—park offices have seasonal schedules.

### Train

Between 6.30am and 10pm, one to three trains an hour trundle along the coast between Genoa and La Spezia, stopping at each of the Cinque Terre's villages. Unlimited 2nd-class rail travel between Levanto and La Spezia is covered by the Cinque Terre Treno Card (see the boxed text, p209).

Source: *Lonely Planet: Italy* (edn 9), 2010

Compare the extract from the Lonely Planet guide with the extract below taken from a travel article on the same region.

## CLIFFSIDE HAVEN A PIECE OF HEAVEN

By Athenae Lucev

‘Welcome to my office,’ Oliver said. ‘Have a look around at the view.’ I turned around and in front of us the rocky cliff dropped to meet an expanse of glassy Ligurian Sea stretching as far west as we could see.

To the north, the ramshackle village of Manarola with its higgledy-piggledy heap of sunshine-yellow apartments on a stretch of craggy cliff looked like it had been plonked there by accident and could slip away into the ocean at any moment.

Wedged between the natural end point of the French Alps, Italian Apennines and the sea, the five ancient villages of the Cinque Terre lie clustered on the north-west coast of Italy from Riomaggiore in the south past Manarola, Corniglia and Vernazza to northernmost Monterosso.

This is harsh country.

Oliver, an ebullient Croatian artist and my housemate for the week, exuded a permanent sense of joie de vivre, probably engendered by his spending four months a year painting and selling the scenes of the villages from his ‘office’ on the Via Dell’Amore. This 1km path between the Riomaggiore and Manarola is both the easiest and

most famous stretch of the Sentiero Azzurro, the 12km walk that meanders along the coast and through the stone-walled vineyards and olive groves.

Judging by the number of walkers brandishing poles and sporting hiking boots, the warning sign showing a single stiletto with a cross through it seems redundant. Common sense dictates flat shoes, and plenty of water. From Riomaggiore to Carniglia, the third village, the terrain is relatively flat and easy to negotiate, except for a calf-cramping climb of 382 stairs up to Corniglia's centre...

Despite the jumbled, chaotic construction of each village and the masses of visitors which leave the towns heaving during summer, there is a calmness to the area, perhaps a result of the natural preservation of a centuries-old lifestyle. The geographical isolation of the area meant the cluster of villages was unreachable except by sea until just over a century ago. It's not difficult to find a quiet terrace or street and at stages on any hike you are likely to be able to savour some sweeping views on your own...

It's hard to conceive of the back-breaking work that went into eking out the villages, with their buildings perched precariously on the cliff faces, and the vineyards that give a sense of structure and shape to the mountain faces.

Families still tend that difficult and infertile land today. So unsullied is the terrain and pure the produce, that the locals have their own co-operative and products such as sciaccheta, a dessert wine, limoncello, fruit, vegetables and organic cosmetics are available in each of the towns.

Because of the great quality of the raw ingredients, it's difficult to go wrong in choosing a place to eat anywhere in the area. But the gelato at Corniglia's Gelateria Artigianale deserves special mention for its generous servings and out-of-the-ordinary flavours such as fig and cinnamon. And for excellent and reasonably priced food, a decent wine list and the best sunset views, A Pie De Ma in cosy and quiet Riomaggiore is perfect.

Tickets for the national park allow access to all walking trails and cost €5 (\$8) per day. Tickets for two, three and seven days can also be bought from information desks in each village.

The Cinque Terre is not easy to get to by car—even if you decide to drive, car parks are mostly located at the top of each town, so after a day of negotiating stairs and hills finding your way back to the car is not always the best option.

The easiest way to move between the villages is by using the trains, which are cheap and run about every hour. A ferry and buses also connect the villages, and



the buses run up into the mountains to towns such as Volastra and La Cigoletta, providing direct access to the inland track.

Accommodation is readily available, most commonly apartments for rent, though Manarola and Riomaggiore both have hostels and hotels are available in the more developed Monterosso. Apart from Monterosso, where there is a stone beach, swimming is limited to those agile enough to clamber down the rock faces.

The Cinque Terre's combination of wildly beautiful coastline and charming villages make it a perfect spot to escape from the big cities.

Source: *The West Australian*, 22 December 2009

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Name the five villages of the Cinque Terre.
- 2 How long is the cliff-side walking trail that links the villages?

### Understanding

- 3 Why is the Cinque Terre so attractive to visitors?

### Applying

- 4 Using the information in the two extracts as a basis, write a diary entry about your day spent exploring one of the villages in the Cinque Terre.

### Analysing

- 5 Compare the two texts and identify the differences in the kinds of information provided and the style of writing.
- 6 Explain the purpose of each of these texts and how the purpose has influenced their content and style.

### Evaluating

- 7 Which of these texts would you find most useful if you were deciding on a holiday destination?

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Create a Lonely Planet-style guide to your suburb or town. Consider the advice you would give to a traveller to your town.
  - What are the highlights?
  - What are the low points?
  - Where could they eat out?
  - Where could they stay the night?
  - What makes the area unique or attractive?
- 2 Form small groups, making sure that each group member has written a guide on the same suburb or town. Compare the representations offered by each guide. Use the following dot points as a guide to your discussion.
  - Who had the most positive representation? Who had the most negative?
  - What commonalities were apparent in the guides? What differences were apparent?
  - Who made your locale sound the most appealing? Who made it sound the least appealing?
  - Why were the representations different? What influenced each writer's perception?

You may have to undertake a little bit of exploration to discover exactly what is on offer in your local area.

When drafting your piece, remember that the writing in guide books tends to be more succinct and less descriptive than other forms of travel writing. There is extensive use of subheadings, and lots of factual detail is included. You may choose to include a photograph or two to illustrate your guide. As you write, choose your language carefully to represent your locale in a way that reflects your view of it. Your choice of photographs should suit the tone of your language also.

## Extra tasks

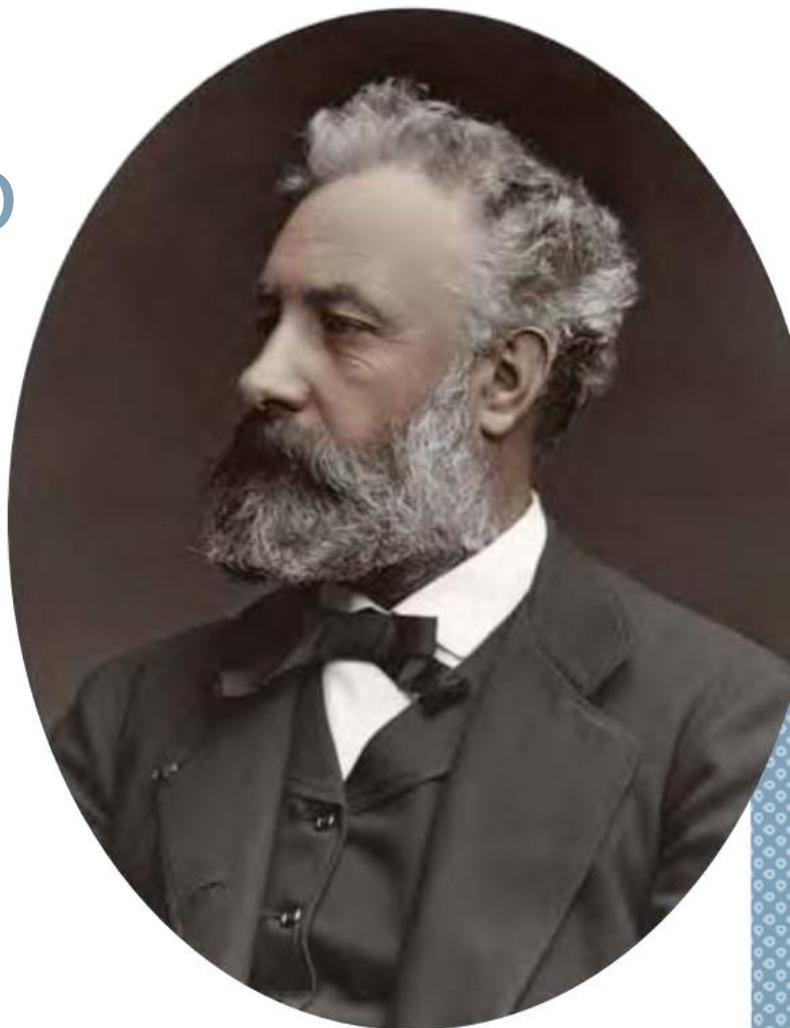
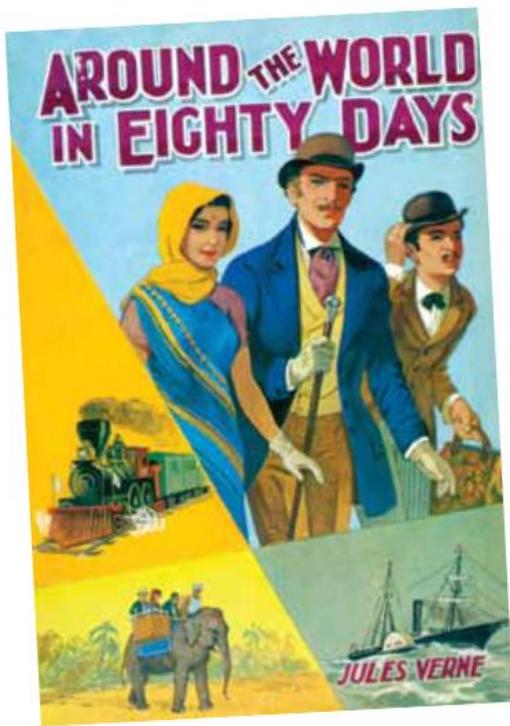
- 1 Create a scrapbook of inspiring travel writing. Collect at least ten articles from newspapers, travel magazines and online travel blogs. Paste them into a scrapbook or scan them and create a digital portfolio. Create a travel profile of yourself based on the type of travel to which you feel most attracted.
- 2 With a partner, role-play a meeting with a travel agent in which you discuss your preferred style of travel.
- 3 As a class, discuss the extracts you have read in this chapter, considering which seem to be respectful of the cultures they represent, and which might be seen as insensitive. Remember that to be insensitive, a writer doesn't have to be critical; they may just represent that culture as being unsophisticated, or they may treat cultural practices as something merely for the entertainment of the traveller.
- 4 Produce a pitch for a television travel show aimed at a particular audience. Consider your audience's cultural context and the experiences that they might seek. What experiences might you promote to such an audience and how would you represent your travel destinations? What sort of host would you use? Present your pitch in the form of a report, with the following subheadings:
  - title
  - host
  - target audience (including their context and interests)
  - destinations and experiences to be promoted.
- 5 Create a table or a mind map that identifies the 'voice' in each text and the attitude towards the culture that is being represented. Compare these different voices and write an evaluation of which you prefer and why.

# Travels into fiction

**M**any writers use the conventions of travel writing to create works of fiction. In some cases, such as Thomas More's *Utopia* or Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, a fictional place is used to make a comment on the real world. Other fiction writers recognise that travel provides a fine catalyst for conflict and character development, and so create rollicking adventure stories by placing characters in unfamiliar surroundings.

## Jules Verne

Jules Verne was a writer who recognised the potential drama in travel, and many of his adventure tales are based on exciting journeys. *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, *20000 Leagues Under the Sea* and *Around the World in Eighty Days* are three of his novels that have become classics. Each is based on a fantastical journey.



In *Around the World in Eighty Days* Phileas Fogg, a wealthy Englishman, makes a bet with some gentlemen at his club that he could travel around the world in eighty days. Given that this novel was written—and set—before aeroplanes improved the speed of travel, eighty days to circumnavigate the globe was a seemingly impossible task. Jules Verne and his active imagination were able to come up with a strategy for doing just that, and so in the novel, Fogg and his faithful manservant, Passepartout, set out on a journey that includes steam trains, ships, elephant rides and a hot-air balloon in a race around the world. In a nail-biting finish, Fogg arrives back in London on what he thinks is day eighty-one, only to discover that, in fact, he has gained a day by travelling eastwards and actually completed his journey within eighty days, thus winning his wager.

Jules Verne was writing in the 1860s and 1870s, when Europeans considered Western Europe to be the pinnacle of civilisation. As a result, a modern criticism of Verne's work is the way in which he represents the culture of the places Fogg visits, such as India, which was colonised by the British. He represents the country as primitive and inferior.

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

At twelve Jules Verne was caught sneaking onto a ship bound for India. Upon discovery, he was whipped by his father and Verne famously stated that 'I shall, from now on, only travel in my imagination'.

## AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS

By Jules Verne

Passepartout, on waking and looking out, could not realise that he was actually crossing India in a railway train. The locomotive, guided by an English engineer and fed with English coal, threw out its smoke upon cotton, coffee, nutmeg, clove, and pepper plantations, while the steam curled in spirals around groups of palm-trees, in the midst of which were seen picturesque bungalows, viharis (sort of abandoned monasteries), and marvellous temples enriched by the exhaustless ornamentation of Indian architecture. Then they came upon vast tracts extending to the horizon, with jungles inhabited by snakes and tigers, which fled at the noise of the train; succeeded by forests penetrated by the railway, and still haunted by elephants which, with pensive eyes, gazed at the train as it passed. The travellers crossed, beyond Milligam, the fatal country so often stained with blood by the sectaries of the goddess Kali. Not far off rose Ellora, with its graceful pagodas, and the famous Aurungabad, capital of the ferocious Aureng-Zeb, now the chief town of one of the detached provinces of the kingdom of the Nizam. It was thereabouts that Feringhea, the Thuggee chief, king of the stranglers, held his sway. These ruffians, united by a secret bond, strangled victims of every age in honour of the goddess Death, without ever shedding blood; there was a period when this part of the country could scarcely be travelled over without corpses being found in every direction. The English Government has succeeded in greatly diminishing these murders, though the Thuggees still exist, and pursue the exercise of their horrible rites.

Source: Jules Verne, *Around the World in Eighty Days* (Le tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours), first published 1873, Pierre-Jules Hetzel

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Who was the goddess of Death in India?
- 2 What are viharis?

### Understanding

- 3 What details have been included to construct the setting of India?

### Analysing

- 4 Why do you think it has been emphasised that the train is guided by an English engineer and fuelled by English coal? What does the train symbolise?
- 5 Comment on what is implied through the way the setting of India 'responds' to the train.
- 6 What attitudes are conveyed regarding the religions of India? Consider Verne's descriptions of the temples as well as his characterisation of the Thuggees.
- 7 What features of travel writing from previous modules can you identify in this extract?

### Evaluating

- 8 Do you agree with criticism that Jules Verne might be seen as demonstrating colonialist attitudes?

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Jules Verne may have been one of the nineteenth century's greatest visionaries. The lost manuscript to his novel, *Paris in the Twentieth Century*, discovered only in 1989, contained remarkably accurate predictions of inventions such as air-conditioning, gas-powered vehicles and even the internet—decades before these were invented!

# Jonathan Swift

Jonathan Swift wrote his most famous work, *Gulliver's Travels*, in 1726. Although it describes the journeys of the protagonist, Gulliver, to many strange and fantastical places, it is widely regarded as a veiled commentary on society at the time. Many of the cultural practices of the strange civilisations Gulliver visits are shown to be outlandish, yet were reflections of actual events in Europe at the time. Through his satirical novel, Swift was mocking those who were engaging in these practices in the real world.

Gulliver's first adventures find him in Lilliput, a land populated by miniature beings. To them, Gulliver is a giant, and despite the fact that he could squash the Lilliputians like bugs, their king insists on making a show of asserting his authority over him.



A **parody** is an exaggeration of the features of something for humorous or critical effect. For example, the *Scary Movie* franchise of films parodies the conventions of serious horror films by exaggerating them to the point that they become funny rather than scary.

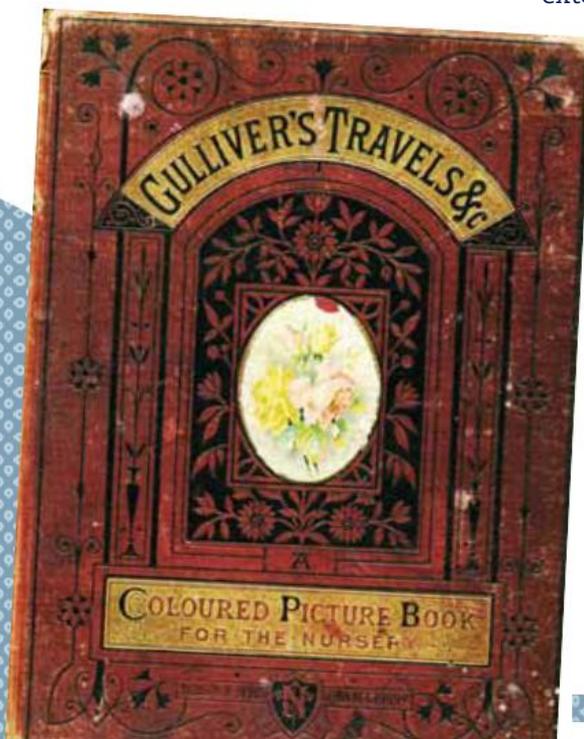
The purpose of **satire** is to hold a mirror up to society to reveal its flaws. It frequently involves the use of parody to exaggerate the flaws the writer seeks to criticise in order to make them obvious to the reader. Political cartoons in the newspaper are frequently satirical.

## GULLIVER ARRIVES IN LILLIPUT

By Jonathan Swift

I had sent so many memorials and petitions for my liberty, that his majesty at length mentioned the matter, first in the cabinet, and then in a full council; where it was opposed by none, except Skyresh Bolgolam, who was pleased, without any provocation, to be my mortal enemy ... However, he was at length persuaded to comply; but prevailed that the articles and conditions upon which I should be set free, and to which I must swear, should be drawn up by himself. These articles were brought to me by Skyresh Bolgolam in person attended by two under-secretaries, and several persons of distinction. After they were read, I was demanded to swear to the performance of them; first in the manner of my own country, and afterwards in the method prescribed by their laws; which was, to hold my right foot in my left hand, and to place the middle finger of my right hand on the crown of my head, and my thumb on the tip of my right ear. But because the reader may be curious to have some idea of the style and manner of expression peculiar to that people, as well as to know the article upon which I recovered my liberty, I have made a translation of the whole instrument, word for word, as near as I was able, which I here offer to the public.

'Golbasto Momarem Evlame Gurdilo Shefin Mully Ully Gue, most mighty Emperor of Lilliput, delight and terror of the universe, whose dominions extend five thousand blustrugs (about twelve miles in circumference) to the extremities of the globe; monarch of all monarchs, taller than the sons of men; whose feet press down to the centre, and whose head strikes against the sun; at whose nod the princes of the earth shake their knees; pleasant as the spring, comfortable as the summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter: his most sublime majesty proposes to the man-mountain, lately arrived at our celestial dominions, the following articles, which, by a solemn oath, he shall be obliged to perform:—  
'1st, The man-mountain shall not depart from our dominions, without our licence under our great seal.



'2d, He shall not presume to come into our metropolis, without our express order; at which time, the inhabitants shall have two hours warning to keep within doors.

'3d, The said man-mountain shall confine his walks to our principal high roads, and not offer to walk, or lie down, in a meadow or field of corn.

'4th, As he walks the said roads, he shall take the utmost care not to trample upon the bodies of any of our loving subjects, their horses, or carriages, nor take any of our subjects into his hands without their own consent ...'

Source: Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 1726

Here, Swift comments on the pomposity and unnecessarily obtuse nature of bureaucracy. He creates satire through the characterisation of the Lilliputians, who represent those negative qualities in an exaggerated fashion, but have been reduced in stature to midgets, in order to highlight the folly of such arrogance. The titles attached to the diminutive ruler further parody the self-importance of bureaucratic agencies, which were newly emerging in Europe in the eighteenth century when Swift was writing.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Why is Gulliver called 'the man-mountain'?

### Understanding

- 2 Why has Gulliver 'made a translation' of the emperor's commands?
- 3 Why would this text be considered satirical?
- 4 Why would the Lilliputian emperor's commands over Gulliver be impossible to put into effect?

### Analysing

- 5 In what way is the emperor portrayed as ridiculous?

### Evaluating

- 6 With a partner, discuss the emperor's use of language and Gulliver's. What similarities and differences do you notice? Do you think Gulliver is any less pompous than the emperor?

### Creating

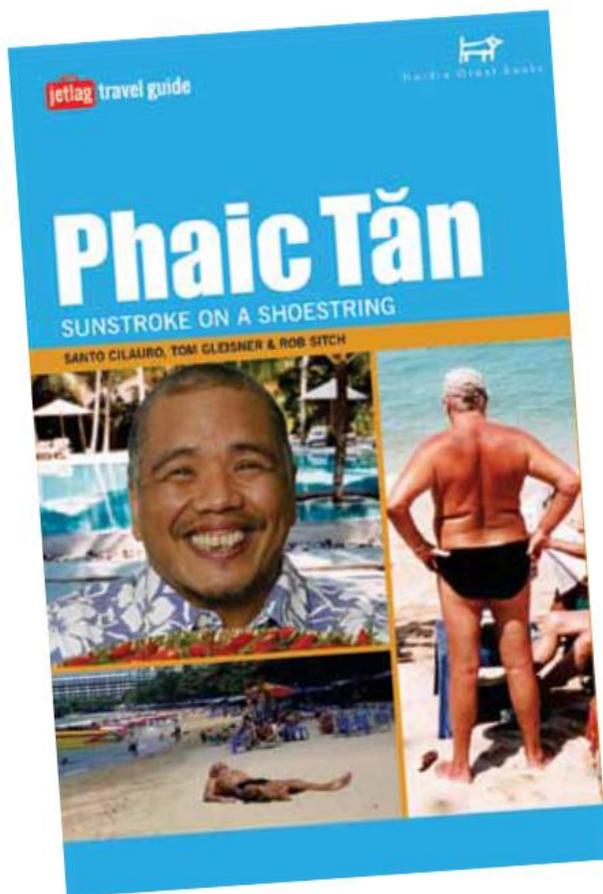
- 7 Compose two more commands that the emperor might try to enforce on Gulliver.
- 8 Consider how the emperor and his court are represented by Swift. Write a paragraph describing the court chambers that such people might use to convey their sense of authority.



# Phaic Tăn: Just for laughs?

Australian comedians Santo Cilauro, Tom Gleisner, and Rob Sitch wrote *Phaic Tăn*, a parody travel guide to an imaginary South-East Asian country. It follows the conventions of travel guides, but humorously parodies the stereotypical experiences that many Australians believe characterise travel in South-East Asian countries such as Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia.

It's not just this region that is being parodied, however; the writers also mock the Australians who holiday in this part of the world. The text is deliberately irreverent, and may be considered offensive by some who feel their cultural background is being ridiculed.



## A PORTRAIT OF PHAIC TĂN

By Cilauro, Gleisner & Sitch

For the first-time Western visitor, a trip to Phaic Tăn can be a genuine assault on the senses—an overwhelming explosion of sights, sounds, tastes, smells and strange colonic movements. But most agree that once you spend some time in this tropical paradise it has a strange way of getting into your blood.\*

### Peace at last

Sadly, for far too long, the very name Phaic Tăn has come to be associated with atrocities, poverty and bloodshed. This, combined with sub-standard duty-free **shopping opportunities**, has understandably limited the number of travellers visiting the country. But after years of bitter conflict, Phaic Tăn is finally a nation at peace, with armed hostilities now confined to just a few northern provinces and the Bumpattabumpah Casino. Throughout the land citizens—who for years served in **underground militia units**—have at last downed their weapons and are now welcoming overseas visitors with an open arm.

### Land of contrasts

Phaic Tăn is truly a beguiling land of contrasts, where traffic police wear face masks but surgeons rarely do, a country where littering is an indictable offence yet landlords may legally use torture to extract overdue rent, a nation that boasts the world's highest number of amputees per head of population yet, paradoxically, has never won a medal at the Para Olympic Games.

Visitors to Phaic Tăn also vary widely—from the ubiquitous backpacker drawn by the lure of untouched tropical beaches and 24-hour **foot massage facilities**—to the discerning luxury traveller keen to indulge in some of the world's most exclusive coastal resorts, **five-star retreats** so luxurious that staff are sacked daily just to maintain freshness.

Such is the magic of Phaic Tăn that many who come, intending to stay for a week, never manage to leave (see our section on Narcotics—Penalties for).

\* For more information, see our section on Typhoid.

Source: Santo Cilauro, Tom Gleisner & Rob Sitch, *Phaic Tăn*, Hardie Grant Publishing, 2004



A **pun** is a humorous or clever play on words. A double meaning is achieved through the ambiguous use of words that have similar sounds or spelling. For example: 'You can tune a guitar but you can't tuna fish' plays on the sound of 'tune a' and 'tuna'. The pun continues with: 'unless you can play bass', which plays on the fact that bass has two meanings, a type of guitar as well as a type of fish.

Much of the humour in *Phaic Tăn* comes from the use of puns based on South-East Asian-sounding names. For example 'Phaic Tăn' is a play on 'fake tan'.

Humour is also achieved through the **juxtaposition** (placement side by side) of ideas that seem to be unrelated. For example, visitors stayed away from Phaic Tăn because of bloodshed, violence and substandard duty-free shopping.

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 Define the words 'beguiling', 'indictable' and 'paradoxically'.

### Applying

- 2 Brainstorm other examples of parodies you have read or viewed to share with your class.

### Analysing

- 3 Find two puns in the extract.
- 4 Identify uses of humorous juxtaposition in the extract.
- 5 What does this extract imply about the nature of Australians who visit countries similar to Phaic Tăn, and their understanding of the culture of such countries?
- 6 Another element of parody is humorous exaggeration. Identify three examples in this extract.

### Evaluating

- 7 Survey the members of your class to identify the different responses to the text. You might consider who found the text amusing, offensive, revealing, truthful, in poor taste, clever and so on. What seems to be the dominant response?
- 8 There is a fine line between parody and satire. Which do you think Phaic Tăn is an example of? Evaluate the text based on the definitions in the Writer's toolbox in the Jonathan Swift section in this module.

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 While the purpose of *Phaic Tăn* is to amuse Australians, how do you think people who live in South-East Asian countries might respond to this representation of their region? In a small group, discuss your thoughts on this question.
- 2 Create your own humorous parody of travel writing, taking care not to descend into offensive stereotypes. You have a range of options here: you could parody a culture or parody the role of the traveller within it. Keep in mind the conventions of parody: exaggeration, puns, humorous juxtaposition and colourful descriptive language, as well as the fact that parody must maintain the conventions of the genre it parodies.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Using the answers to the discussion above, write an essay in response to the statement: 'Parodies such as *Phaic Tăn* are offensive and should not be published.' Discuss.
- 2 With a partner, research the life of Jules Verne or Jonathan Swift. Prepare a television interview with ten to twenty key questions and answers for your chosen author. Present your interview to your class.
- 3 Go to **Pearson Reader** to access a copy of *Around the World in Eighty Days*. In small groups, prepare a dramatic reading of a chapter and present it to your class.



Web Destination



Truth will come to sight;  
murder cannot be hid long.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616),  
*The Merchant of Venice* (Act II, Scene 2)

# CRIME FICTION

## Chapter overview

**C**rime is a source of constant fascination. We live by rules designed to protect us and our property. When individuals break these rules, we feel threatened. Police, judges, lawyers, medical examiners—all responsible for investigating wrongdoing and bringing justice to the community—are revered and respected for the jobs they do.

It is no surprise then that society revels in stories of these 'heroes' and that crime fiction is so celebrated. Crime novels appeal to our need to know that someone is looking out for our protection.



# Crime as a genre

**‘Y**ou sit up in bed with the covers pulled up to your chin, the book propped on your knees. The house is in darkness, the book light clipped to the back of your novel like a tiny beacon in the night. The only sound you can hear is scratching—you desperately hope it is a tree bending in the wind outside your window and not the sound of a serial killer trying to get into your room. Your palms sweat as you tuck your sheets in tighter and read on. The ending, when it finally comes, is so clever that you are stunned by the brilliance and the evil. You settle down to sleep, grateful that your effort has been worth it.’

## Crime fiction essentials

A good crime fiction novel can have the reader gripped by fear, determined to read to the very last page; it can keep them glued to the printed word. Of course it’s not always an expected ending.

Crime fiction has a long and vibrant history and it remains one of the most influential genres in twenty-first century publishing. From the earliest days of radio there were programs featuring a clever detective and a gruesome crime to be solved. On TV, the detective show or ‘police procedural’ has become a regular part of programming. We can now discuss how forensic investigations operate thanks to shows such as *CSI* (Crime Scene Investigation). We know about psychological profiling, medical detection, decomposition, face rebuilding, insect infestation, body temperature and other factors that can help solve a crime.

Even the Bible contains the story of Daniel who uses his superior wit to deduce the truth in the accusations of some older men against a young woman Susanna. Daniel even sets out the process for getting to the truth when he tells the judges, ‘Keep the men well apart from each other for I want to question them.’ This is a standard strategy today, but was quite revolutionary for its time. When he does interrogate the two men, their story—which is a lie they have



### QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

The television series *Bones* is based on the novels of author Kathy Reichs, whose main character is forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan. In *Bones*, Temperance Brennan (a forensic anthropologist) works with FBI Agent Seeley Booth and writes novels about a character named Kathy Reichs!

made up to protect themselves—falls apart. Susanna has been proved an innocent woman, her death sentence is revoked and justice has been achieved through brilliant detective work.

## ❓ DID YOU KNOW...

You can read the full story of Susanna and the Judgement of Daniel in the Old Testament book of Daniel Chapter 13, Lines 1–64.

So there, in the very earliest of writings, we have a crime story at its most basic. A crime is committed, a suspect is found, some supporting characters add to the plot, a fiendishly clever detective (who doesn't stick to the rules!) unravels the mystery but often not without a clever plot twist. The reader is kept on the edge of their seat to the end, the key questions of crime fiction at the forefront of their minds:

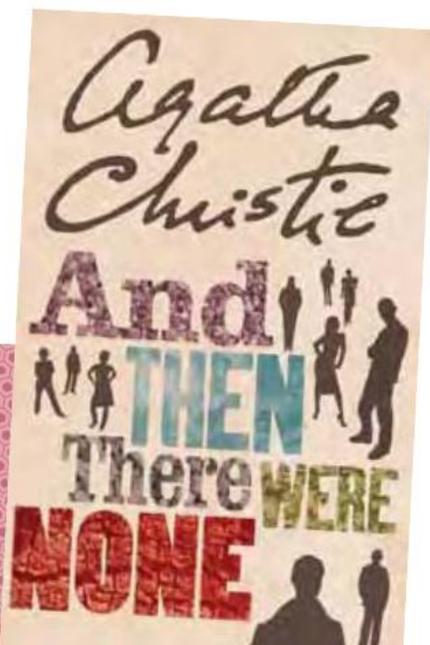
- Will justice be done?
- Will the innocent be protected?
- Will the offenders be punished for their actions?
- Will the truth be uncovered in the end?

## Types of crime fiction

Crime fiction in books and films all work on the central idea that the truth must be revealed. The different types of crime fiction include the following:

### Detective

Detective stories feature crimes that are too difficult for 'normal' investigators and detectives who, with their superior intellect and ability to solve puzzles, are able to unmask the criminals. The detective might be a professional such as P. D. James's famous Detective Adam Dalgliesh, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, or an amateur sleuth such as Agatha Christie's quiet but stubborn Miss Marple.

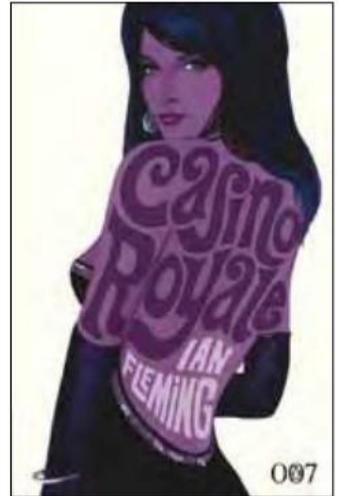


### Caper/heist

Capers or heists feature the planning and execution of a crime by a group of, usually, likeable criminals. These stories usually focus on money rather than murder. Examples are Jeffrey Archer's *Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less*, and the *Ocean's Eleven*, *Ocean's Twelve* and *Ocean's Thirteen* films.

### International espionage

In this type of crime fiction, a 'super-spy' fights for the powers of good against evil. The spy is usually charming but lethal. Examples include Jason Bourne in Robert Ludlum's *The Bourne Identity* series; James Bond in Ian Fleming's novels; Alex Rider in Anthony Horowitz's novels.



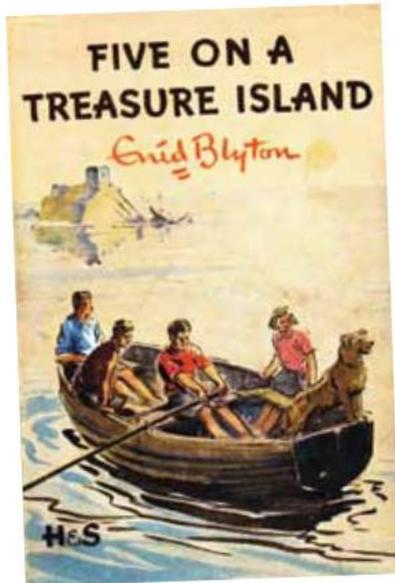
### Historical crime

Often rich in historical detail, this type of crime fiction usually features an amateur investigator who solves crimes through intellect alone as they have limited scientific resources. These stories can be set at any time in history from the Egyptian and Classical Greek periods onward, sometimes with a real-life historical figure as the detective, such as Benjamin Franklin or Queen Elizabeth I. Examples are Ellis Peters's *Brother Cadfael* mysteries (set in Norman England) and Kerry Greenwood's *Phyrene Fisher* novels.



## Children's crime

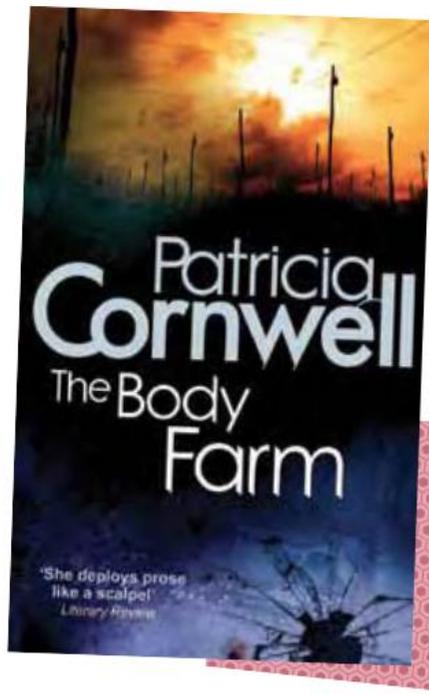
The group of 'pesky, annoying kids' who operate as an investigative unit—either deliberately or by chance—is a staple of young people's fiction. These are usually a book series, featuring familiar characters. Often several different authors contribute to the one series. Examples are Enid Blyton's Secret Seven and Famous Five stories, and the Trixie Belden, Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew series.



## Forensic science

Forensic science crime fiction focuses on the scientific aspects of a crime, which is usually, but not limited to, murder. These novels include psychological profiling,

as well as the autopsies of victims, with the characters trawling through crime scenes looking for clues. Examples are Patricia Cornwell's Kay Scarpetta novels and Kathy Reichs's, Temperance Brennan novels.



## Essential elements of crime fiction

The essential elements of crime fiction are:

- **a motive**—a clear reason for the criminal's actions
- **a criminal**—usually a murderer. The reader of crime fiction is trying to work out 'who done it' alongside the detective. The more charming, clever or psychopathic the criminal, the more compelling the search
- **suspects**—includes a range of crime fiction people who might have committed the crime; their possible motives are important plot points
- **settings**—a crime can take place anywhere at any time. A successful author clearly sets both the scene and timeline of events
- **clues and red herrings**—clues that point to the criminal's identity and 'red herrings' that direct the reader away from the right conclusion are common techniques used by crime fiction writers. The mystery needs to be a puzzle that can be solved through careful reading and logical thought, so the clues need to point in the right direction
- **detectives**—someone has to solve the crime! What all detectives have in common is the ability to engage the audience and to solve the puzzle through their superior abilities in logic, detection and reasoning.

Here are some useful words and their meaning for your discussion of crime fiction:

- an **alibi**—evidence that demonstrates the accused was not present at a crime
- **justice**—principle of fair treatment or conduct
- **motive**—something that causes a person to act in a particular way
- **obfuscate**—confuse, darken or obscure
- **red herring**—irrelevancy, introduced to distract attention
- **to suspect**—to think something likely or possible; to consider someone guilty without actual or adequate proof
- **suspense**—state of anxious uncertainty.

## DID YOU KNOW...

A red herring is a herring that has been preserved by drying, salting and smoking. It has a very strong smell. In times past, red herrings were used by huntsmen when training their hounds to follow a scent. However, if a red herring was dragged across the path of hounds on a fox's trail its powerful odour diverted the dogs and sent them off in the wrong direction. Hence the figurative use of the term to mean 'something that diverts attention from the main issue'.



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Visit the school or local library and go to the fiction section. In pairs select one shelf at random. Take note of how many of the books on that shelf fit into the broad crime fiction genre and then break them down into the crime fiction categories. Present your findings in a table or graph.

### Analysing

- 2 Crime fiction explores themes that go to the very core of human life and society. Do you think these are the only reasons people read the genre? Write a detailed paragraph explaining the appeal of crime novels.

### Evaluating

- 3 Have another look at the picture of Justice at the start of the module. What is she holding? Why do you think that Justice is depicted as blindfolded?

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 Write a short children's story in which the main premise is that of 'crime solving'. Avoid murder or other crimes inappropriate for child readers, and ensure that each of the essential elements of crime fiction is adapted specifically to suit a younger children's market. Plan the 'crime' itself, the type of characters, settings and the language to appeal to your child reader.
- 2 Design the front cover with an illustration to complement your story and attract the attention of a child (or parent). Finally, present both story and illustration in the form of a booklet. You could even test out your finished masterpiece on some appropriately aged children that you know.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Working with a partner, research one of the types of crime fiction listed earlier. Compile a definitive list of authors and novels for the genre. Design and create a poster and a bookmark for your school library that promotes crime fiction.
- 2 Working in pairs, choose a crime fiction novel or TV series and make a chart, clearly identifying each of the essential elements in your chosen title.
- 3 Visit the website of one of the authors listed in this module. Make a flyer advertising their work for your library information stand.

# The history of the mystery

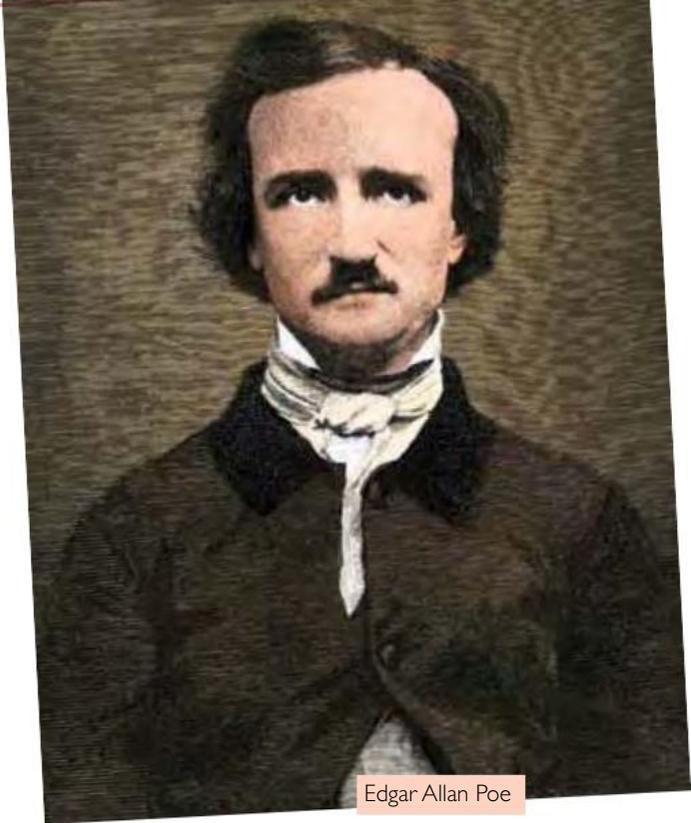
Crime fiction has a long and proud history. However, crime stories as we know them today are generally considered to have started with the work of Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849).

## Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1809. After his mother died when he was very young and his father abandoned the family, Poe was taken in by John and Frances Allan. His first taste of literary fame was with his poem 'The Raven', but it was his detective, Auguste C. Dupin, in his 1841 story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* that brought him success.

Poe wrote this story at a time before the word 'detective' had come into common English usage, and the idea of a police force was in many ways a new concept. The Industrial Revolution and the growing urbanisation meant that police forces—as we know them today—were a relatively new phenomenon. London, for instance, did not acquire a police force until 1829. One theory as to why detective fiction became so popular is that the rise in the number of city dwellers and the increase in crime led to a growing interest in detection and justice.

Set in a fictional street of Paris, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* tells the story of Dupin's investigation into the brutal murders of two women. The mother's throat has been cut, and her daughter has been strangled and her body stuffed inside a chimney. The body of the daughter is found in a locked room on the fourth floor and the body of the mother is in a yard at the rear of the building. As the story progresses, intriguing clues begin to emerge, including the evidence of several witnesses, who claim that they could hear the murderer speaking in an unknown and unusual language. Equally puzzling to the investigators is the finding of a hair that does not appear to be human.



Edgar Allan Poe

Poe's detective, Dupin, went on to star in more mysteries. The impact of Poe's story, however, was that it was instrumental in shaping crime fiction thereafter, and in introducing certain conventions of the genre, including:

- a detective with eccentric qualities
- a narrative told by a friend of the detective who often wonders at the genius of the detective
- a locked-room mystery—a crime is committed in highly unusual circumstances and it would appear that the criminal can neither enter nor exit the room
- a denouement—the mystery is solved and the detective explains how they were able to solve the mystery.



**denouement:** from the French word 'dénouer', meaning 'to untie' or 'to unravel'; the final unravelling of a plot or story.



The Mystery Writers of America host an annual awards ceremony to present the 'Edgar Awards' in honour of Poe.

Read the following extract from *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*.

## THE MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE

By Edgar Allan Poe

Not long after this, we were looking over an evening edition of the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, when the following paragraphs arrested our attention.

‘EXTRAORDINARY MURDERS.—This morning, about three o’clock, the inhabitants of the Quartier St. Roch were aroused from sleep by a succession of terrific shrieks, issuing, apparently, from the fourth story of a house in the Rue Morgue, known to be in the sole occupancy of one Madame L’Espanaye, and her daughter Mademoiselle Camille L’Espanaye. After some delay, occasioned by a fruitless attempt to procure admission in the usual manner, the gateway was broken in with a crowbar, and eight or ten of the neighbours entered accompanied by two gendarmes. By this time the cries had ceased; but, as the party rushed up the first flight of stairs, two or more rough voices in angry contention were distinguished and seemed to proceed from the upper part of the house. As the second landing was reached, these sounds, also, had ceased and everything remained perfectly quiet. The party spread themselves and hurried from room to room. Upon arriving at a large back chamber in the fourth story (the door of which, being found locked, with the key inside, was forced open), a spectacle presented itself which struck everyone present not less with horror than with astonishment.

‘The apartment was in the wildest disorder—the furniture broken and thrown about in all directions. There was only one bedstead; and from this the bed had been removed, and thrown into the middle of the floor. On a chair lay a razor, besmeared with blood. On the hearth were two or three long and thick tresses of grey human hair, also dabbled in blood, and seeming to have been pulled out by the roots. Upon the floor were found four Napoleons, an ear-ring of topaz, three large silver spoons, three smaller of *métal d’Alger*, and two bags, containing nearly four thousand francs in gold. The drawers of a bureau, which stood in one corner were open, and had been, apparently, rifled, although many articles still remained in them. A small iron safe was discovered under the bed (not under the bedstead). It was open, with the key still in the door. It had no contents beyond a few old letters, and other papers of little consequence.

‘Of Madame L’Espanaye no traces were here seen; but an unusual quantity of soot being observed in

the fire-place, a search was made in the chimney, and (horrible to relate!) the corpse of the daughter, head downward, was dragged there from; it having been thus forced up the narrow aperture for a considerable distance. The body was quite warm. Upon examining it, many excoriations were perceived, no doubt occasioned by the violence with which it had been thrust up and disengaged. Upon the face were many severe scratches, and, upon the throat, dark bruises, and deep indentations of finger nails, as if the deceased had been throttled to death.

‘After a thorough investigation of every portion of the house, without farther discovery, the party made its way into a small paved yard in the rear of the building, where lay the corpse of the old lady, with her throat so entirely cut that, upon an attempt to raise her, the head fell off. The body, as well as the head, was fearfully mutilated—the former so much so as scarcely to retain any semblance of humanity.

‘To this horrible mystery there is not as yet, we believe, the slightest clew.’

Source: Edgar Allan Poe, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, first published in *Graham’s Magazine*, 1841



**gendarmes:** armed police.

**excoriations:** skin removed from a person or an animal.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Summarise the events that lead to the discovery of the bodies as reported in the newspaper.

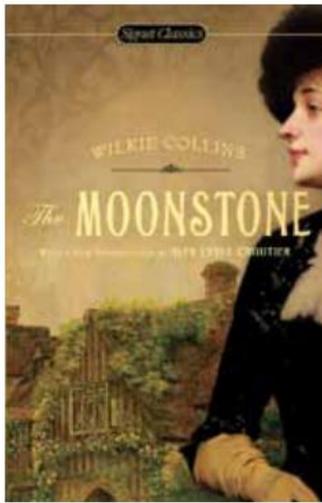
### Analysing

- 2 Look closely at the language used in the text and the attention to detail that is given to the descriptions of violence that have occurred. Given that this story was first published in 1841, does it surprise you how graphic these descriptions are? Justify your answer.
- 3 What changes do you think Poe would make if he were writing this story today?

## Wilkie Collins

Following Poe's success, other writers also began to write mystery novels. As more and more of the population became literate, reading became a popular form of entertainment and, in England, detective fiction became increasingly popular. Wilkie Collins's (1824–1889) *The Moonstone*, which tells the story of the theft of a large Indian diamond from Rachel Verinder at a party held to celebrate her eighteenth birthday, is widely considered to be the first English detective novel. It was full of suspense and contributed to the genre of mystery novels by containing the following elements:

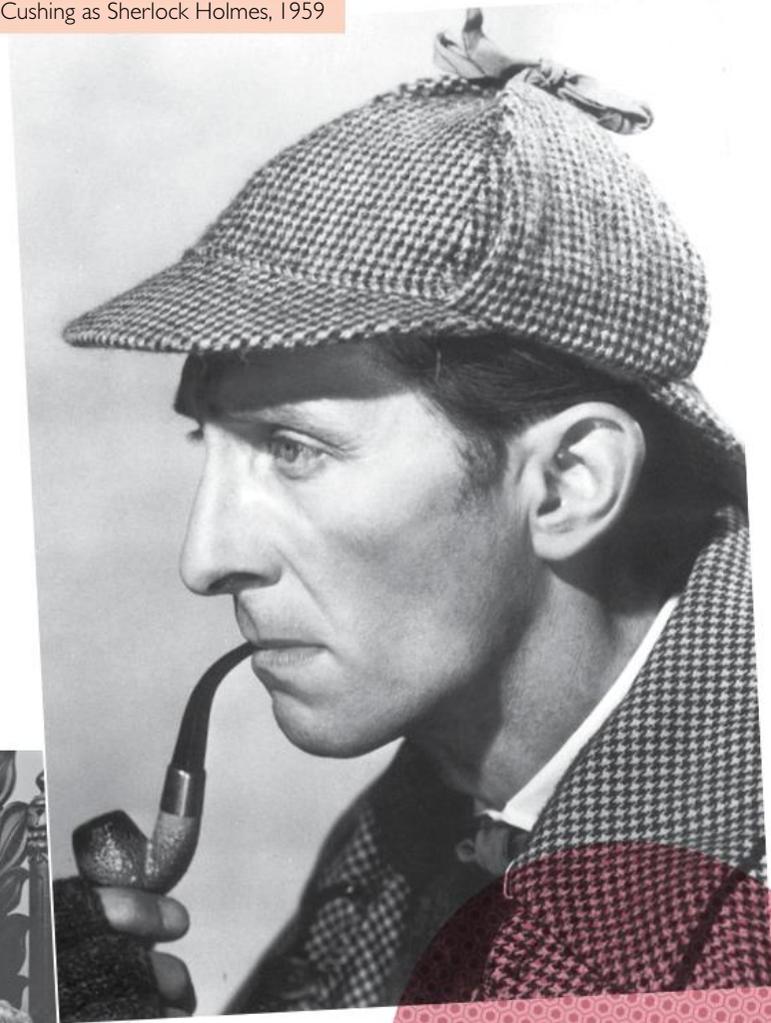
- a large number of suspects
- red herrings
- an English manor
- talented amateurs who investigate the mystery
- incompetent police officers
- a highly skilled Scotland Yard detective.



## Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes

Perhaps the most famous of all the literary detectives is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. In fact, so popular is Sherlock Holmes that his tales continue to be reprinted; film adaptations have been box office successes (including the 2009 adaptation with Robert Downey Junior) and a museum dedicated to Sherlock Holmes has been established at the address where he was presumed to live, 221B Baker Street, London.

Peter Cushing as Sherlock Holmes, 1959



## Anna Katherine Green

Anna Katherine Green (1846–1935) is widely regarded as the first female author of mystery novels. She published over forty books and is known for the legal and scientific expertise she brought to her stories. In addition to her famous detective Ebenezer Gryce, Green also introduced other famous sleuths such as Amelia Butterworth, a spinster with a nose for a mystery, and the girl detective, Violet Strange. Her most popular contributions to the mystery genre were the use of experts as witnesses and the continual unveiling of clues for the reader as the story progresses.



Anna Katherine Green



Robert Downey Junior (right) as Holmes and Jude Law (left) as Watson in *Sherlock Holmes*, directed by Guy Ritchie, 2009

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930) was a medical doctor who began writing his Sherlock Holmes stories while waiting for patients to attend his surgery. His first Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, was a popular success and Conan Doyle went on to write four novels and fifty-six short stories starring Holmes. At one stage, Conan Doyle decided to kill off his character in *The Adventure of the Final Problem*, by having him tumble over a waterfall with his nemesis (archenemy), Moriarty. Such was the outcry from the public that eight years later, Conan Doyle revived the character.

Holmes's stories are mostly told by his best friend, Doctor Watson, who is often used as a sounding board for ideas, Holmes's messenger and his accomplice. Holmes's logic, scientific and legal knowledge, attention to detail and clear and logical mind make him a most astute detective, and Watson is often left to marvel at his friend's genius. Additionally, Holmes is a master of disguise and a martial arts expert, good

at bare knuckle fighting and handy with a pistol. What sometimes surprises modern-day readers is that he is also a cocaine addict—the drug was legal in the time of Conan Doyle.

In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Holmes is asked to investigate a family curse afflicting the Baskerville family. The Baskerville descendants have mysteriously died under suspicious circumstances involving the appearance of a terrifying hound that haunts them on the moors.



**sounding board:** person used as a trial audience.

**moors:** open wet wasteland often overgrown with bush.



## THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Mr Sherlock Holmes, who was usually very late in the mornings, save upon those not infrequent occasions when he was up all night, was seated at the breakfast table. I stood upon the hearth-rug and picked up the stick which our visitor had left behind him the night before. It was a fine, thick piece of wood, bulbous-headed, of the sort which is known as a 'Penang lawyer'. Just under the head was a broad silver band nearly an inch across. 'To James Mortimer, MRCS, from his friends of the CCH,' was engraved upon it, with the date '1884'. It was just such a stick as the old-fashioned family practitioner used to carry—dignified, solid, and reassuring.

'Well, Watson, what do you make of it?'

Holmes was sitting with his back to me, and I had given him no sign of my occupation.

'How did you know what I was doing? I believe you have eyes in the back of your head.'

'I have, at least, a well-polished, silver-plated coffee-pot in front of me,' said he. 'But, tell me, Watson, what do you make of our visitor's stick? Since we have been so unfortunate as to miss him and have no notion of his errand, this accidental souvenir becomes of importance. Let me hear you reconstruct the man by an examination of it.'

'I think,' said I, following as far as I could the methods of my companion, 'that Dr Mortimer is a successful, elderly medical man, well-esteemed since those who know him give him this mark of their appreciation.'

'Good!' said Holmes. 'Excellent!'

'I think also that the probability is in favour of his being a country practitioner who does a great deal of his visiting on foot.'

'Why so?'

'Because this stick, though originally a very handsome one has been so knocked about that I can hardly imagine a town practitioner carrying it. The thick-iron ferrule is worn down, so it is evident that he has done a great amount of walking with it.'

'Perfectly sound!' said Holmes.

'And then again, there is the "friends of the CCH". I should guess that to be the Something Hunt, the local hunt to whose members he has

possibly given some surgical assistance, and which has made him a small presentation in return.'

'Really, Watson, you excel yourself,' said Holmes, pushing back his chair and lighting a cigarette. 'I am bound to say that in all the accounts which you have been so good as to give of my own small achievements you have habitually underrated your own abilities. *It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but you are a conductor of light. Some people without possessing genius have a remarkable power of stimulating it.* I confess, my dear fellow, that I am very much in your debt.'

He had never said as much before, and I must admit that his words gave me keen pleasure, for I had often been piqued by his indifference to my admiration and to the attempts which I had made to give publicity to his methods. I was proud, too, to think that I had so far mastered his system as to apply it in a way which earned his approval. He now took the stick from my hands and examined it for a few minutes with his naked eyes. Then with an expression of interest he laid down his cigarette, and carrying the cane to the window, he looked over it again with a convex lens.

'Interesting, though elementary,' said he as he returned to his favourite corner of the settee. 'There are certainly one or two indications upon the stick. It gives us the basis for several deductions.'

'Has anything escaped me?' I asked with some self-importance. 'I trust that there is nothing of consequence which I have overlooked?'

'I am afraid, my dear Watson, that most of your conclusions were erroneous. When I said that you stimulated me I meant, to be frank, that in noting your fallacies I was occasionally guided towards the truth. Not that you are entirely wrong in this instance. The man is certainly a country practitioner. And he walks a good deal.'

'Then I was right.'

'To that extent.'

'But that was all.'

'No, no, my dear Watson, not all—by no means all. I would suggest, for example, that a presentation to a doctor is more likely to come from a hospital than from a hunt, and that when

the initials “CC” are placed before that hospital the words “Charing Cross” very naturally suggest themselves.’

‘You may be right.’

‘The probability lies in that direction. And if we take this as a working hypothesis we have a fresh basis from which to start our construction of this unknown visitor.’

‘Well, then, supposing that “CCH” does stand for “Charing Cross Hospital”, what further inferences may we draw?’

‘Do none suggest themselves? You know my methods. Apply them!’

‘I can only think of the obvious conclusion that the man has practised in town before going to the country.’

‘I think that we might venture a little farther than this. Look at it in this light. On what occasion would it be most probable that such a presentation would be made? When would his friends unite to give him a pledge of their good will? Obviously at the moment when Dr Mortimer withdrew from the service of the hospital in order to start a practice for himself. We know there has been a presentation. We believe there has been a change from a town hospital to a country practice. Is it, then, stretching our inference too far to say that the presentation was on the occasion of the change?’

‘It certainly seems probable.’

‘Now, you will observe that he could not have been on the staff of the hospital, since only a man well-established in a London practice could hold such a position, and such a one would not drift into the country. What was he, then? If he was in the hospital and yet not on the staff he could only have been a house-surgeon or a house-physician—little more than a senior student. And he left five years ago—the date is on the stick. So your grave, middle-aged family practitioner vanishes into thin air, my dear Watson, and there emerges a young fellow under thirty, amiable, unambitious, absent-minded, and the possessor of a favourite dog, which I should describe roughly as being larger than a terrier and smaller than a mastiff.’

Source: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, George Newnes, 1902  
*The Hound of the Baskervilles*, this edition, Penguin Classics, 2001

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 In this extract from the opening chapter to the novel, Conan Doyle outlines some key differences between Holmes's and Watson's approaches to deduction. What are these?
- 2 Look closely at the sentences in italics. What conclusions can you draw about the relationship between Holmes and Watson from this exchange?
- 3 Can you find any evidence in this extract that Watson frequently draws the wrong conclusion about the evidence that he is looking at?

### Analysing

- 4 Conan Doyle has Watson and Holmes spend a lot of time discussing Dr Mortimer. What effect is achieved by this?
- 5 Despite the fact that Watson does most of the talking in this extract, the reader remains focused on Sherlock Holmes. How does Conan Doyle use Watson's speech to remind us that Holmes is the genius?

### Creating

- 6 See if you can apply your analytical skills like Holmes. Choose an everyday object that you are very familiar with, either from the classroom or something that you have brought in from home. In pairs, swap objects. Spend a few minutes writing a paragraph about the object you have been given, describing its likely origin, how it appears to have been used and what it says about the person or people who use it. Then read your deductions to your partner. Using Holmes's approach, your partner can describe the actual origin and use, and tell you about the people who use the object.

# An Australian legend: Fergus Hume's *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*

One of the little-known facts of crime fiction is that the best-selling novel of the nineteenth century was an Australian novel by Fergus Hume (1859–1932). Hume, a barrister living in Melbourne, was unable to get any of the plays he had written performed, so he began to write crime fiction. His first attempt, *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*, was a bestseller, selling over 750 000 copies during his lifetime. Set in Melbourne, Hume's hero Brian Fitzgerald and heroine Madge Frettlby investigate the discovery of a body in a hansom cab.

A hansom cab is a horse-drawn carriage with the driver mounted behind. Since the driver is behind the cabin, the murderer is able to conceal the murder from the driver.

## THE MYSTERY OF A HANSOM CAB

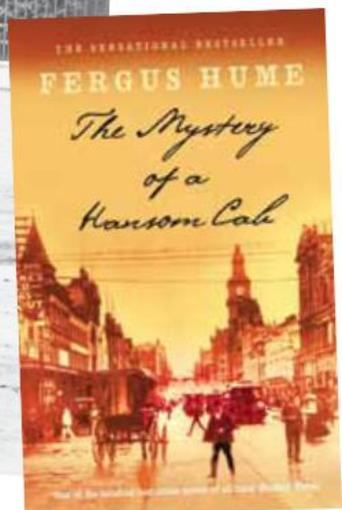
By Fergus Hume

At the inquest held on the body found in the hansom cab the following articles taken from the deceased were placed on the table:

- 1 Two pounds ten shillings in gold and silver.
- 2 The white silk handkerchief which was saturated with chloroform, and was found tied across the mouth of the deceased, marked with the letters OW in red silk.
- 3 A cigarette case of Russian leather, half filled with 'Old Judge' cigarettes.
- 4 A left-hand white glove of kid—rather soiled—with black seams down the back.



**chloroform:** initially used as an anaesthetic in surgery; it can be fatal.



Samuel Gorby, of the detective office, was present in order to see if anything might be said by the witnesses likely to point to the cause or to the author of the crime.

The first witness called was Malcolm Royston, in whose cab the crime had been committed. He told the same story as had already appeared in the *ARGUS*, and the following facts were elicited by the Coroner:—

- Q Can you give a description of the gentleman in the light coat, who was holding the deceased when you drove up?
- A I did not observe him very closely, as my attention was taken up by the deceased; and, besides, the gentleman in the light coat was in the shadow.
- Q Describe him from what you saw of him.
- A He was fair, I think, because I could see his moustache, rather tall, and in evening dress, with a light coat over it. I could not see his face very plainly, as he wore a soft felt hat, which was pulled down over his eyes.
- Q What kind of hat was it he wore—a wide-awake?
- A Yes. The brim was turned down, and I could see only his mouth and moustache.
- Q What did he say when you asked him if he knew the deceased?
- A He said he didn't; that he had just picked him up.
- Q And afterwards he seemed to recognise him?
- A Yes. When the deceased looked up he said 'You!' and let him fall on to the ground; then he walked away towards Bourke Street.
- Q Did he look back?
- A Not that I saw.
- Q How long were you looking after him?
- A About a minute.
- Q And when did you see him again?
- A After I put [the] deceased into the cab I turned round and found him at my elbow.
- Q And what did he say?
- A I said, 'Oh! you've come back,' and he said, 'Yes, I've changed my mind, and will see him home,' and then he got into the cab, and told me to drive to St Kilda.
- Q He spoke then as if he knew the deceased?
- A Yes; I thought that he recognised him only when he looked up, and perhaps having had a row with him walked away, but thought he'd come back.
- Q Did you see him coming back?
- A No; the first I saw of him was at my elbow when I turned.
- Q And when did he get out?
- A Just as I was turning down by the Grammar School on the St Kilda Road.
- Q Did you hear any sounds of fighting or struggling in the cab during the drive?
- A No; the road was rather rough, and the noise of the wheels going over the stones would have prevented my hearing anything.
- Q When the gentleman in the light coat got out did he appear disturbed?
- A No; he was perfectly calm.
- Q How could you tell that?
- A Because the moon had risen, and I could see plainly.
- Q Did you see his face then?
- A No; his hat was pulled down over it. I only saw as much as I did when he entered the cab in Collins Street.
- Q Were his clothes torn or disarranged in any way?
- A No; the only difference I remarked in him was that his coat was buttoned.
- Q And was it open when he got in?
- A No; but it was when he was holding up the deceased.
- Q Then he buttoned it before he came back and got into the cab?
- A Yes. I suppose so.
- Q What did he say when he got out of the cab on the St Kilda Road?
- A He said that the deceased would not let him take him home, and that he would walk back to Melbourne.
- Q And you asked him where you were to drive the deceased to?
- A Yes; and he said that the deceased lived either in Grey Street or Acland Street, St Kilda, but that the deceased would direct me at the Junction.

- Q Did you not think that the deceased was too drunk to direct you?
- A Yes, I did; but his friend said that the sleep and the shaking of the cab would sober him a bit by the time I got to the Junction.
- Q The gentleman in the light coat apparently did not know where the deceased lived?
- A No; he said it was either in Acland Street or Grey Street.
- Q Did you not think that curious?
- A No; I thought he might be a club friend of the deceased.
- Q For how long did the man in the light coat talk to you?
- A About five minutes.
- Q And during that time you heard no noise in the cab?
- A No; I thought the deceased had gone to sleep.
- Q And after the man in the light coat said 'good-night' to the deceased, what happened?
- A He lit a cigarette, gave me a half-sovereign, and walked off towards Melbourne.
- Q Did you observe if the gentleman in the light coat had his handkerchief with him?
- A Oh, yes; because he dusted his boots with it. The road was very dusty.
- Q Did you notice any striking peculiarity about him?
- A Well, no; except that he wore a diamond ring.
- Q What was there peculiar about that?
- A He wore it on the forefinger of the right hand, and I never saw it that way before.
- Q When did you notice this?
- A When he was lighting his cigarette.
- Q How often did you call to the deceased when you got to the Junction?
- A Three or four times. I then got down, and found he was quite dead.
- Q How was he lying?
- A He was doubled up in the far corner of the cab, very much in the same position as I left him when I put him in. His head was hanging on

one side, and there was a handkerchief across his mouth. When I touched him he fell into the other corner of the cab, and then I found out he was dead. I immediately drove to the St Kilda police station and told the police.

Source: Fergus Hume, *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab*, 1886

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 Why was the cab driver, Malcolm Royston, not suspicious that any foul play had occurred in his cab?
- 2 Is there any evidence in the extract that the deceased man was drunk or drugged before being picked up by Royston?
- 3 What is suspicious about the other passenger's behaviour?

### Analysing

- 4 Look closely at the language that is used. Would you expect language like this to be used in a court investigation today? Why or why not?
- 5 This extract is presented almost entirely as a series of questions and answers, similar to an interview. Why might the author have chosen to present the court scene in this way? Discuss other ways the author might have written this scene.
- 6 Read aloud the extracts from Hume and Conan Doyle. Why do Hume's characters sound so British? Find evidence to support your answer.

### Creating

- 7 In this extract, the author uses a number of details about a real place to make the scene more convincing. Imagine a key witness describing a similar crime set in a place you know well, which took place just two months ago. Write your own courtroom scene, including key details about the setting and the time that would help make the scene believable even to a reader from the future. As an alternative, you may choose to present this scene as a storyboard.
- 8 Convert the extract from *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* into a narrative. What are the differences between the spoken and descriptive versions?

# The golden age of detective fiction

The 1920s and 1930s are widely regarded as the golden era of detective fiction. In English-speaking countries, crime novels were consistently big sellers. The style of writing, however, tended to differ on each side of the Atlantic. In England, the most popular forms of detective fiction tended to be the 'whodunnit'.

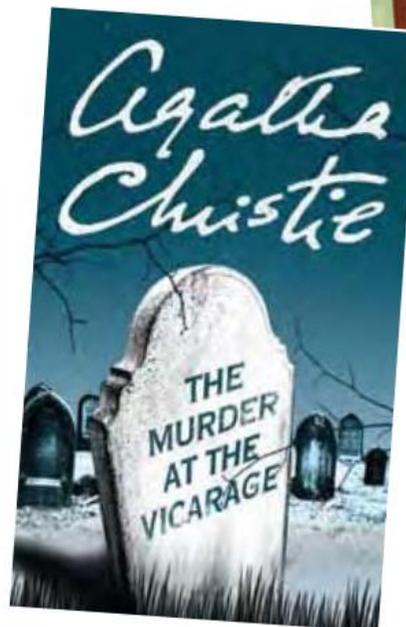
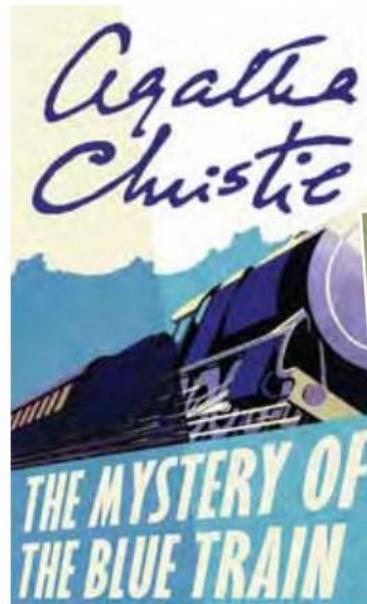
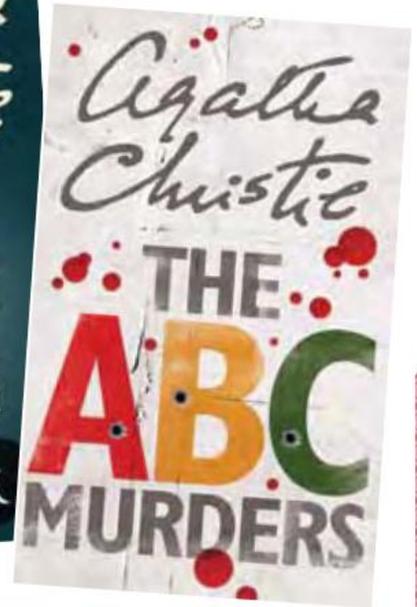
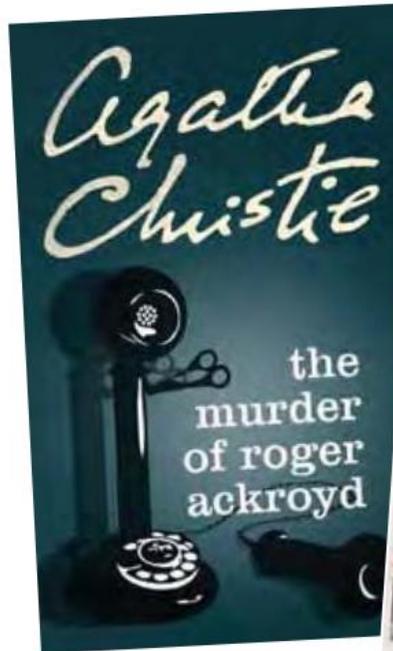
## The whodunnit?

A typical whodunnit follows a basic formula. A body is found and an investigation is conducted by a detective who may be an amateur or have eccentric qualities. The clues are revealed to the audience and many of the characters are suspects with motives and opportunities. The mystery is usually revealed in a denouement, when the detective surprises everyone with their cleverness and ability to distinguish the facts from the red herrings. The most popular authors are Agatha Christie, who introduced the Belgian detective Hercule Poirot and the amateur elderly spinster Miss Jane Marple; and Dorothy L. Sayers, who introduced aristocratic First World War veteran Lord Peter Wimsey.

The increase in popularity of mystery fiction at this time is often credited to the rising success of Penguin Books. Created by Allen Lane, Penguin Books were some of the first books to be published in paperback. They were designed to be printed cheaply and sold in bookshops as well as local shops and railway stations. Since they could be carried easily and were cheap to buy, sales of Penguin Books soared. In fact, more than a million books were sold in the first year alone of the company's existence.

### ? DID YOU KNOW...

The most popular fiction author after William Shakespeare is Agatha Christie. It is estimated over two billion copies of her books have been sold! Some of her most famous novels are *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Death on the Nile*, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, *And Then There Were None*, *The Body in the Library* and *Evil Under the Sun*. Her play *The Mousetrap* also holds the record for the longest running play in history—it has been performed more than 24,000 times since 1952, when it made its debut in London.



# Hard-boiled crime fiction

From the 1930s, American crime novelists were developing their own unique style of crime fiction. This style has become known as 'hard-boiled crime fiction'. Many of these stories were initially published in cheap magazines, such as *Black Mask* magazine, and came to be known as 'pulp fiction'. They were called this as they were printed on cheap wood-pulp paper, rather than on glossy paper.

Authors such as Dashiell Hammett gave us Sam Spade (in classics such as *The Maltese Falcon*), and Raymond Chandler created Private Investigator Philip Marlowe in classics such as *The Big Sleep*. These detectives tend to be self-assured and masculine and usually work alone. Heavy smokers, they live on a diet of coffee and fried eggs. They tend to be 'hard boiled'—tough guys who aren't afraid to use a gun, get involved in a fight or to fall for a 'dame', often a blonde femme fatale who leads them to trouble.

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Many of the 'hard-boiled novels' were turned into very popular films by Hollywood. In fact, Humphrey Bogart found fame playing both Philip Marlowe and Sam Spade.

Humphrey Bogart



# The femme fatale

There is one character in crime fiction that is guaranteed to fascinate readers and other characters. This is the 'femme fatale', literally 'deadly woman' if translated from the French. She is able to lure men into dangerous and lethal situations by using her 'feminine charms' to mesmerise them and thus keep them under her control.

This kind of character was particularly popular during the 1930s and 1940s in the 'case-hardened' writings of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler. She became particularly popular as the female protagonist in the 'film noir' movement of the period. Her most famous incarnation is played by Barbara Stanwyck in the classic film *Double Indemnity*.

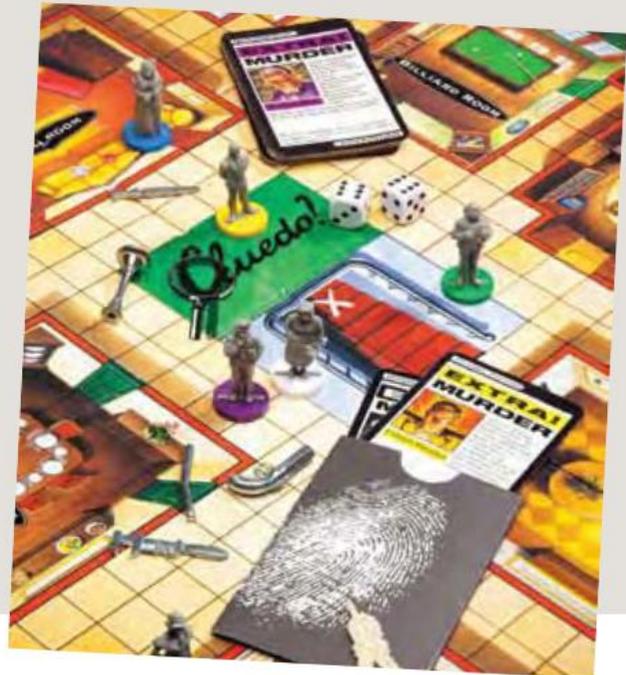
As she is usually revealed to be involved in some way with the crime (either by performing it or influencing someone else to do so), another key element of the femme fatale character is that if the detective falls under her spell he must leave her in the end—the femme fatale never lives happily ever after.

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

In the film *Mildred Pierce*, the femme fatale is defined as 'the kind of woman men want ... but shouldn't have!'

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Miss Scarlett, a femme fatale character; always rolls first in a game of Cluedo.



## THE BIG SLEEP

By Raymond Chandler

I was still staring at the hot black eyes when a door opened far back under the stairs. It wasn't the butler coming back. It was a girl.

She was twenty or so, small and delicately put together, but she looked durable. She wore pale blue slacks and they looked well on her. She walked as if she were floating. Her hair was a fine tawny wave cut much shorter than the current fashion of pageboy tresses curled in at the bottom. Her eyes were slate-grey, and had almost no expression when they looked at me. She came over near me and smiled with her mouth and she had little sharp predatory teeth, as white as fresh orange pith and as shiny as porcelain. They glistened between her thin too taut lips. Her face lacked colour and didn't look too healthy.

'Tall, aren't you?' she said.

'I didn't mean to be.'

Her eyes rounded. She was puzzled. She was thinking.

I could see, even on that short acquaintance, that thinking was always going to be a bother to her.

'Handsome too,' she said. 'And I bet you know it.' I grunted.

'What's your name?'

'Reilly,' I said. 'Doghouse Reilly.'

'That's a funny name.' She bit her lip and turned her head a little and looked at me along her eyes. Then she lowered her lashes until they almost cuddled her cheeks and slowly raised them again, like a theatre curtain. I was to get to know that trick. That was supposed to make me roll over on my back with all four paws in the air.

'Are you a prizefighter?' she asked, when I didn't. 'Not exactly. I'm a sleuth.'

'A-a-' She tossed her head angrily, and the rich colour of it glistened in the rather dim light of the big hall. 'You're making fun of me.'

'Uh-uh.'

'What?'

'Get on with you,' I said. 'You heard me.'

'You didn't say anything. You're just a big tease.' She put a thumb up and bit it. It was a curiously shaped thumb, thin and narrow like an extra finger, with no curve in the first joint. She bit it and sucked it slowly, turning it around in her mouth like a baby with a comforter.

'You're awfully tall,' she said. Then she giggled with secret merriment. Then she turned her body slowly and lithely, without lifting her feet. Her hands dropped limp at her sides. She tilted herself towards me on her toes. She fell straight back into my arms. I had to catch her or let her crack her head on the tessellated floor. I caught her under her arms and she went rubber-legged on me instantly. I had to hold her close to hold her up. When her head was against my chest she screwed it around and giggled at me.

'You're cute,' she giggled. 'I'm cute too.'

I didn't say anything. So the butler chose that convenient moment to come back through the French doors and see me holding her.

Source: Raymond Chandler, *The Big Sleep*, first published by Alfred A. Knopf, 1939, this edition, Penguin UK, 2009

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Who is narrating the story?

### Understanding

- 2 How does the tone of this extract differ from other passages you have read in this section?

### Analysing

- 3 In what ways is the young woman a femme fatale?
- 4 Do you think the girl is going to help or hinder Doghouse Reilly during the course of the book? What clues in the text tell you how these characters will either work with or against each other?

### Evaluating

- 5 What do you think was the role of both Penguin Books and pulp fiction in the sales of detective fiction? Why would the form of these books have been so popular?
- 6 Why would books such as *The Big Sleep* be so appealing to their readers? Name specific elements that you think would make them popular.

## DID YOU KNOW...

The Crime Writers Association of Australia gives out annual awards each year called the Ned Kelly Awards.

# Mysteries for children

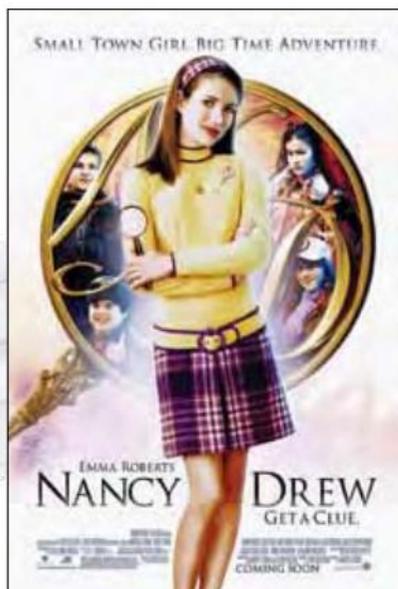
Some of the most enduring types of detective fiction have included books written for teenagers and young adults. Carolyn Keene's *Nancy Drew* series of books has sold more than 80 million copies since it first appeared in 1930 and Franklin W. Dixon's *The Hardy Boys* series still sell a million copies a year, despite first being introduced in 1927. Similarly, Enid Blyton's books have been translated into more than ninety languages and sold more than 600 million copies. Some of her most famous series include the *Famous Five* books about four children and their dog who solve mysteries and *The Secret Seven* series about a group of children who investigate adventures. More recently the *Goosebumps* series has also proved immensely popular, as has the *39 Clues* series, in which online games and card collecting add to the mystery-solving element and provide an interactive experience for the reader.

Board games such as *Cluedo* or the *How to Host a Murder* series have brought mystery and crime stories to social events. Computer games which involve deduction and the work of clues have proven to be immensely popular.

It seems that we just can't get enough of the crime genre!

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Carolyn Keene and Franklin W. Dixon, of *Nancy Drew* and *The Hardy Boys* fame respectively, are not real people. They are pseudonyms used by a number of ghost writers over the years to keep the series going.



## THE SECRET OF THE OLD CLOCK

By Carolyn Keene

'Spying on us, eh?' he snarled.

Nancy faced the man defiantly. 'I wasn't spying on anyone.'

'Then what were you doing in that closet?' the thief demanded, his eyes narrowing to slits.

'I came to see the caretaker.'

'Looking for him in a funny place, ain't you?' the man sneered.

Nancy realized that she was in a desperate situation. But she steeled herself not to show any of her inward fears.

'I must keep calm,' she told herself firmly. Aloud, she explained coolly, 'I heard someone coming and I just felt a bit nervous.'

'Well, you're going to be a lot more nervous,' the man said threateningly. 'This will be the last time you'll ever stick your nose in business that doesn't concern you!'

A fresh wave of fright swept over Nancy, but resolutely she held on to her courage. 'You have no right to be here, helping yourself to the Tophams' furniture!' she retorted. 'You should be turned over to the police!'

'Well, you'll never get the chance to do it.' The ringleader laughed loudly. 'You'll wish you'd never come snoopin' around here. I'll give you the same treatment the caretaker got!'

'The caretaker!' Nancy gasped in horror. 'What have you done to him?'

'You'll find out in good time.'

Nancy gave a sudden agile twist, darted past the man, and raced for the door. The thief gave a cry of rage, and in one long leap overtook her. He caught Nancy roughly by the arm.

'Think you're smart, eh?' he snarled. 'Well, I'm smarter!'

Nancy struggled to get away. She twisted and squirmed, kicked and clawed. But she was helpless in the viselike grip of the powerful man.

'Let me go!' Nancy cried, struggling harder. 'Let me go!'

Sid, ignoring her pleas, half dragged her across the room. Opening the closet door, he flung her inside.

Nancy heard a key turn.

Source: Carolyn Keene, *The Secret of the Old Clock*, Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, 1930, this edition Penguin USA, 2010

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How does Nancy react to being in a dangerous situation?
- 2 The author only once refers to Nancy's attacker by name. What is it? What other ways is he referred to?

### Understanding

- 3 This extract illustrates a number of Nancy's key personality traits. What are they and how useful would these characteristics be in investigating and solving mysteries?
- 4 How does the author use their speech to show us the contrast between heroine (Nancy) and the villain (Sid). Prepare a table of words or phrases to illustrate this contrast.
- 5 In the *Nancy Drew* series, her 'sleuthing' often puts Nancy in physical danger but she always manages to escape unharmed. Why do you think teenagers might find this theme appealing?

### Evaluate

- 6 The character of Nancy Drew was first developed in the 1930s in the United States of America. Discuss whether you think Nancy conformed to stereotypes about how females were expected to behave at this time.

### Creating

- 7 At the end of the extract, Nancy is locked in a closet. Continue the story, writing a short scene that shows how she escapes.
- 8 Prepare a graphic novel version of this extract. You can choose whether to set the scene in the 1930s (when the novel was originally written) or update it to today.

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## Visualising crime

Crime fiction continues to be a source of great entertainment and mystery novels frequently top the bestseller lists across the globe. The advent of television created a whole new audience for these types of stories.

### Television

TV crime usually focuses on the 'police procedural' and the forensic aspect of investigations. Each episode, usually forty-two to forty-five minutes long

to accommodate commercials, concentrates on the police or scientific investigation into the crime. In most instances there is little or no focus on the criminal. Examples are *CSI* (and its spin-off series *CSI: New York* and *CSI: Miami*), *Law and Order* (and *Law and Order SVU*), and *Bones*.

Many successful film and TV adaptations have mined these famous novels over the years for their gripping plots and great characters. How many of these series have you seen or heard of?

<i>Colombo</i>	<i>Murder She Wrote</i>	<i>Midsomer Murder Mysteries</i>	<i>Poirot</i>
<i>CSI: Crime Scene Investigations</i>	<i>Hawaii five-o</i>	<i>Hill Street Blues</i>	<i>The X Files</i>
<i>Law and Order</i>	<i>Bones</i>	<i>Blue Heelers</i>	<i>Charlie's Angels</i>
<i>City Homicide</i>	<i>Cold Case</i>	<i>Criminal Minds</i>	<i>East West 101</i>
<i>Inspector Morse</i>	<i>The Mentalist</i>	<i>Prime Suspect</i>	<i>Starky and Hutch</i>
<i>Without a Trace</i>	<i>Underbelly</i>	<i>The Ruth Rendell Mysteries</i>	<i>Homicide</i>

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Look at your local TV guide. How many of the programs for the week fall under the category of 'crime/mystery'?

### Understanding

- 2 Why do you think that these shows have been and continue to be so popular?

### Analysing

- 3 Individually, or as a class, conduct a survey of the elements of crime fiction on TV. You could conduct a study of one series or a number of series. What do they have in common? What visual elements are used to tell the story and how do the screenwriters adapt the conventions of crime novels to the visual medium?
- 4 Go to **Pearson Reader** to check how many of the Best Picture awards at the Academy Awards have been crime or mystery stories. You can also check the profiles of some of these films.



Web Destination

# Strands in action

## Core task

Research one of the following key writers or characters in the history of crime fiction, and prepare an oral report to be presented to the class, preferably accompanied by a slideshow presentation.

Perry Mason	Charlie Chan
Mickey Spillane	Ellery Queen
Josephine Tey	Daphne du Maurier
John le Carré	Patricia Highsmith
Kenneth Fearing	John Buchan
Dorothy Sayers	Agatha Christie
Patricia Cornwell	James Patterson

Your report should focus on the elements of crime fiction associated with the person and should include:

- profiles of the most popular character or series associated with the person
- a short excerpt, an appropriate still image or brief clip of the television show or film where possible
- relevant visual material or props to entertain and interest your audience.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Conduct an investigation into the role of the femme fatale. Present your findings to the class as a digital presentation. Options for investigation include:
  - a history of the role from earliest incarnation to present day
  - modern interpretations of the femme fatale in film or texts
  - an overview of the femme fatale in film noir.
- 2 As a class, view a classic film noir containing a femme fatale, such as *The Maltese Falcon* (1941, based on the Dashiell Hammett novel), *Double Indemnity* (1944), or *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946). While viewing, take detailed notes of the femme fatale character and write a report explaining:
  - the crucial role she played in the development of the storyline
  - the ploys used by the character to get her own way
  - how effectively, in your opinion, the actress fulfilled the elements required of a femme fatale.
- 3 The notion of the femme fatale has changed over the years. Write a modern adaptation describing the femme fatale of the twenty-first century.



# Creating detectives

**W**hile readers enjoy solving the mystery and meeting the vast selection of characters, it is the personality and intellect of the detective that keeps them coming back to the same author over and over again. Mystery readers love series novels—they enjoy each meeting with a familiar detective and their offsider. Sometimes it is the detective’s personal life and ideas (such as with P. D. James’s detective Commander Adam Dalgliesh); sometimes it is the development of a love story (Linda Fairstein’s ongoing denial of the love between heroine Alex Cooper and her detective offsider Mike Chapman); and sometimes it is the brilliance of the detective’s mind or the quirkiness of their personality that captures the readers.



Agatha Christie

## Hercule Poirot

Agatha Christie’s most famous character, is Belgian Hercule Poirot. He is elderly, short and often dismissed because he’s a foreigner, yet readers adore his ego and his intellect. He is a successful British detective mainly because he is not British and he is able to pretend he does not understand customary and polite standards of behaviour because of this.

### MURDER IN MESOPOTAMIA

By Agatha Christie

I don’t think I shall ever forget my first sight of Hercule Poirot. Of course, I got used to him later on, but to begin with it was a shock, and I think everyone else must have felt the same.

I don’t know what I’d imagined—something rather like Sherlock Holmes—long and lean with a keen, clever face. Of course, I knew he was a foreigner, but I hadn’t expected him to be quite as foreign as he was, if you know what I mean.

When you saw him you just wanted to laugh! He was like something on the stage or at the pictures. To begin with, he wasn’t above five foot

five, I should think—an odd, plump little man, quite old, with an enormous moustache, and a head like an egg. He looked like a hairdresser in a comic play.

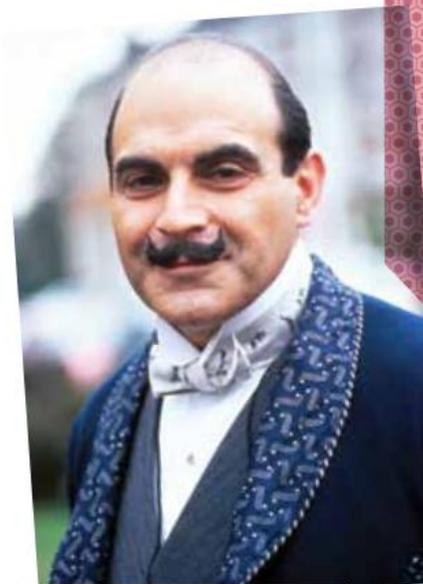
And this was the man who was going to find out who killed Mrs Leidner!

I suppose something of my disgust must have shown in my face, for almost straightaway he said to me with a queer kind of twinkle: ‘you disapprove of me, ma sœur? Remember, the pudding proves itself only when you eat it.’

The proof of the pudding’s in the eating, I suppose he meant.

Well, that’s a true enough saying, but I couldn’t say I felt much confidence myself!

Source: Agatha Christie, *Murder in Mesopotamia*, HarperCollins, 2001 [1936]



David Suchet as Hercule Poirot

# Miss Marple

Christie's other popular detective is the elderly Miss Marple. Jane Marple has lived her whole life in the same village and, as a result, her knowledge of her environment and her observations of human behaviour are acute. Reminiscent of the work of Jane Austen, Miss Marple's intimate knowledge of community life enable her to solve mysteries and murders that baffle the professionals half her age.



Angela Lansbury as Miss Marple

## THE BODY IN THE LIBRARY

By Agatha Christie

Miss Marple's telephone rang when she was dressing. The sound of it flurried her a little. It was an unusual hour for her telephone to ring. So well ordered was her prim spinster's life that unforeseen telephone calls were a source of vivid conjecture.

'Dear me,' said Miss Marple, surveying the ringing instrument with perplexity. 'I wonder who that can be?'

Nine o'clock to nine-thirty was the recognised time for the village to make friendly calls to neighbours. Plans for the day, invitations and so on were always issued then. The butcher had been known to ring up just before nine if some crisis in the meat trade had occurred. At intervals during the day, spasmodic calls might occur, though it was considered bad form to ring after nine-thirty at night. It was true that Miss Marple's nephew, a writer, and therefore erratic, had been known to ring up at the most peculiar times, once as late as ten minutes to midnight. But whatever Raymond West's eccentricities, early rising was not one of them. Neither he nor anyone of Miss Marple's acquaintance would be likely to ring up before eight in the morning. Actually, a quarter to eight.

Too early even for a telegram, since the post office did not open until eight.

'It must be,' Miss Marple decided, 'a wrong number.'

Having decided this, she advanced to the impatient instrument and quelled its clamour by picking up the receiver. 'Yes?' she said.

'Is that you, Jane?'

Miss Marple was much surprised.

'Yes, it's Jane. You're up very early, Dolly.'

Mrs Bantry's voice came breathless and agitated over the wires.

'The most awful thing has happened.'

'Oh my dear.'

'We've just found a body in the library.'

For a moment, Miss Marple thought her friend had gone mad.

'You've found a what?'

'I know. One doesn't believe it, does one? I mean, I thought they only happened in books. I had to argue for hours with Arthur this morning before he'd even go down and see.'

Miss Marple tried to collect herself. She demanded breathlessly: 'but whose body is it?'

'It's a blonde.'

'A what?'

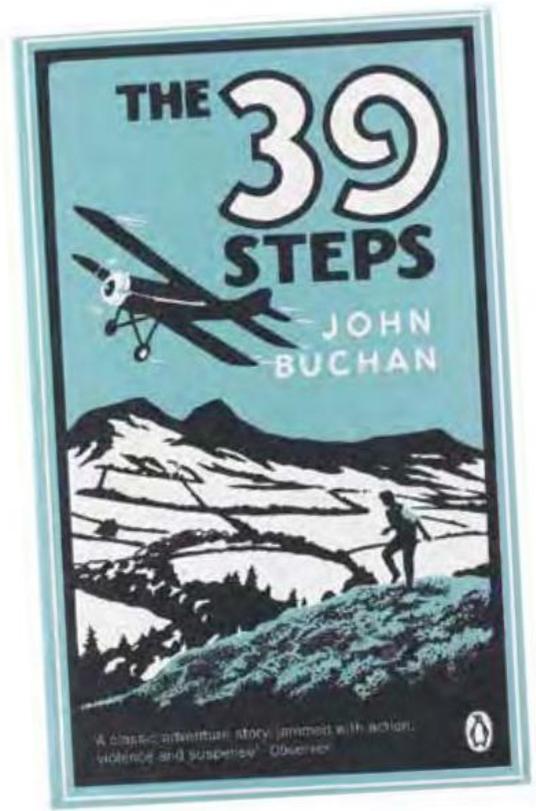
'A blonde. A beautiful blonde—like books again. None of us have ever seen her before. She's just lying there in the library, dead. That's why you've got to come up at once.'

Source: Agatha Christie, *The Body in the Library*, HarperCollins, London, 1994 [1942]

# Richard Hannay

John Buchan's 1915 classic *The 39 Steps* was one of the first novels to introduce the concept of the 'innocent man on the run'. It has been made into a number of films over the years, most notably the famous Alfred Hitchcock 1935 black-and-white thriller.

The hero of the text, Scotsman Richard Hannay, has returned from Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe) in Africa to live in London. He has been in the London for three months when he quickly makes friends with a mysterious American man, Scudder, who claims to know of plots to assassinate world leaders and throw Europe into turmoil. Hannay lets the man stay at his flat but when he comes back home one day he finds Scudder has been murdered. Believing he is the most likely suspect for the murder and fearful that spies are on his tail, Hannay flees to Scotland where he uses his detective prowess to try and clear his name.



## THE 39 STEPS

By John Buchan

I snapped the switch, but there was nobody there. Then I saw something in the far corner which made me drop my cigar and fall into a cold sweat.

My guest was lying sprawled on his back. There was a long knife through his heart which skewered him to the floor.

...

I sat down in an armchair and felt very sick. That lasted for maybe five minutes, and was succeeded by a fit of the horrors. The poor staring white face on the floor was more than I could bear, and I managed to get a table-cloth and cover it. Then I staggered to a cupboard, found the brandy and swallowed several mouthfuls. I had seen men die violently before, indeed I had killed a few myself in the Matabele War, but this cold-blooded indoor business was different. Still I managed to pull myself together. I looked at my watch, and saw that it was half-past ten.

An idea seized me, and I went over the flat with a small-tooth comb. There was nobody there, nor any trace of anybody, but I shuttered and bolted all the windows and put the chain on the door. By this time my wits were coming back to me, and I could think again. It took me about an hour to figure the thing out, and I did not hurry, for, unless the murderer came back, I had till about six o'clock in the morning for my cogitations.

I was in the soup—that was pretty clear. Any shadow of a doubt I might have had about the truth

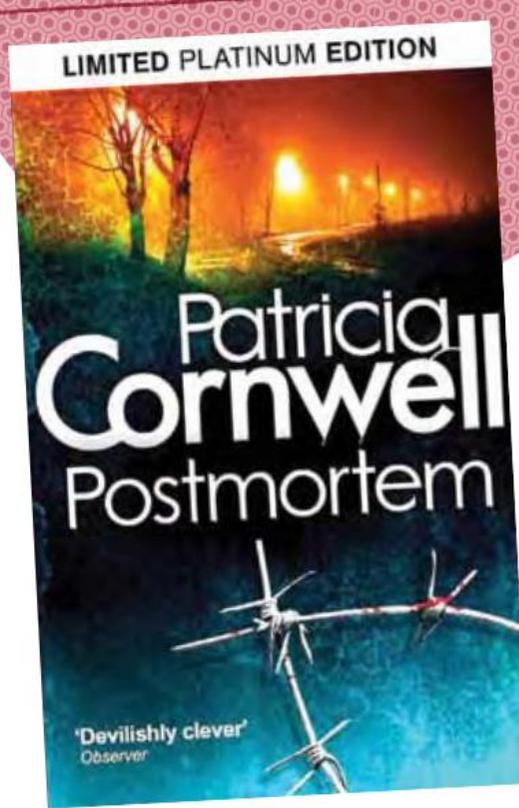
of Scudder's tale was now gone. The proof of it was lying under the table-cloth. The men who knew that he knew what he knew had found him, and had taken the best way to make certain of his silence. Yes, but he had been in my rooms four days, and his enemies must have reckoned that he had confided in me. So I would be the next to go. It might be that very night, or next day, or the day after, but my number was up all right.

Then suddenly I thought of another probability. Supposing I went out now and called in the police, or went to bed and let Paddock find the body and call them in the morning. What kind of a story was I to tell about Scudder? I had lied to Paddock about him, and the whole thing looked desperately fishy. If I made a clean breast of it and told the police everything he had told me, they would simply laugh at me. The odds were a thousand to one that I would be charged with the murder, and the circumstantial evidence was strong enough to hang me. Few people knew me in England, I had no real pal who could come forward and swear to my character. Perhaps that was what those secret enemies were playing for. They were clever enough for anything, and an English prison was as good a way of getting rid of me till after June 15th as a knife in my chest.

Source: John Buchan, *The 39 Steps*, Pocket Penguin Classics, 2007 [1915]

# Kay Scarpetta

Dr Kay Scarpetta is Patricia Cornwell's hard-working, driven, successful female professional. Scarpetta represents one of the first of a new breed of female detectives—she is divorced, obsessed with her work, childless and cooks gourmet Italian meals whenever she is under stress. Scarpetta is a medical examiner who solves cases through her scientific input and her legal knowledge. She rarely confines herself to the laboratory, working directly with the public with her colleague Pete Marino.



## POSTMORTEM

By Patricia Cornwell

'Dr Scarpetta?'

'Yes.' I reached for the lamp and switched it on. It was 2:33 A.M. My heart was drilling through my ribs.

'Pete Marino here. We got us one at 5602 Berkley Avenue. Think you better come.'

The victim's name, he went on to explain, was Lori Petersen, a white female, thirty years old. Her husband had found her body about half an hour earlier.

Details were unnecessary. The moment I picked up the receiver and recognized Sergeant Marino's voice, I knew. Maybe I knew the instant the telephone rang. People who believe in werewolves are afraid of a full moon. I'd begun to dread the hours between midnight and 3:00 A.M. when Friday becomes Saturday and the city is unconscious.

Ordinarily, the medical examiner on call is summoned to a death scene. But this wasn't ordinary. I had made it clear after the second case that no matter the hour, if there was another murder, I was to be called. Marino wasn't keen on the idea. Ever since I was appointed chief medical examiner for the commonwealth of Virginia less than two years ago he'd been difficult. I wasn't sure if he didn't like women, or if he just didn't like me.

'Berkley's in Berkley Downs, Southside,' he said condescendingly. 'You know the way?'

Confessing I didn't, I scribbled the directions on the notepad I always kept by the phone. I hung up and my feet were already on the floor as adrenaline hit my nerves like espresso. The house was quiet. I grabbed my black medical bag, scuffed and worn from years of use.

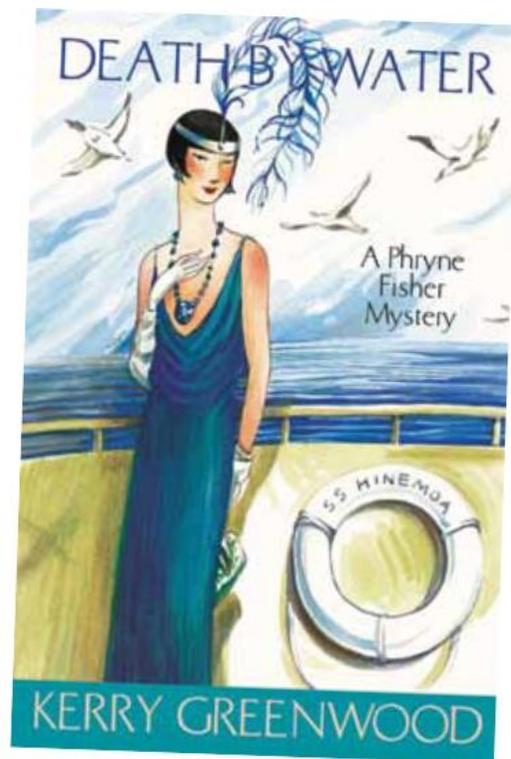
The night air was like a cool sauna, and there were no lights in the windows of my neighbours' houses. As I backed the navy station wagon out of the drive, I looked at the light burning over the porch, at the first-story window leading into the guest bedroom where my ten-year-old niece, Lucy was asleep. This would be one more day in the child's life I would miss. I had picked her up at the airport Wednesday night. Our meals together, so far, had been few.

There was no traffic until I hit the Parkway. Minutes later I was speeding across the James River. Taillights far ahead were rubies, the downtown skyline ghostly in the rearview mirror. Fanning out on either side were plains of darkness with tiny necklaces of smudged light at the edges. Out there, somewhere, is a man, I thought. He could be anybody, walks upright, sleeps with a roof over his head, and has the usual number of fingers and toes. He is probably white and much younger than my forty years.

Source: Patricia Cornwell, *Postmortem*, Little Brown Book Group, 1993

# Phryne Fisher

Written by Melbourne author Kerry Greenwood, the series of Phryne Fisher novels have been very successful. Set in the 1920s, they star Phryne Fisher who is a twenty-eight-year-old woman whose family inherited wealth and a title. Phryne grew up poor but was highly intelligent, and was sent to 'finishing school' when her family came into money. She served in the First World War in an ambulance unit and her life experience means that she is, therefore, somewhat at odds with the other young women of her age and social status.



## DEATH BY WATER

By Kerry Greenwood

### Wednesday

Phryne Fisher was trying to read Chaucer. She liked Middle English for a certain mood. It had a cryptic crossword difficulty which usually absorbed the attention. Today, however, late in the year 1928, the list of distractions and inconveniences were simply too exasperating.

- 1 Her adopted daughters, Jane and Ruth, were playing a loud game of snakes and ladders.
- 2 Her admirable cook, Mrs Butler, was expressing to the butcher's boy her opinion of last night's lamb, which had been tough even when later minced.
- 3 Her attentive houseman, Mr Butler, had just reminded her that he and Mrs Butler were embarking on the morrow on their yearly visit to Rosebud to stay with their married daughter for a fortnight.
- 4 Her sister Eliza, exiled from her own house by the discovery of an unexpected cesspit, had arrived to stay, bringing with her her partner in Good Works Lady Alice, seven trunks, a hatbox and madly barking Pekingese mop dog called Ching.
- 5 The dog Molly and the cat Ember, had still not recovered from their resentment of this interloper in their particular ways—Molly by giving the Pekingese a really good barking and Ember by fleeing up the curtains.

And even though the sun had not run its half-course in the Ram, the month was not April of the sweet showers and the local St Kilda birds always slept with opened eye anyway, Phryne Fisher thereupon decided to accept the free passage on the *SS Hinemoa* which the nice man from P&O had offered her the day before.

This being decided, she shut the book, made a telephone call to alert P&O of their good fortune and went upstairs to tell Dot, her maid and companion, to start packing.

'But you can't just go away and leave them all!' objected Dot, a plain young woman of stern moral principles.

'Why not? Eliza and Lady Alice will look after the girls and the house. My darling Lin is away in Castlemaine and won't be back for two weeks—a funeral, apparently, of a very old Chinese lady. The substitute staff will be here today to be briefed by Mr Butler. And if I have to listen to any more noise, I am going to commit a mortal sin of some kind. Probably murder.'

Dot looked at Phryne. She wasn't smiling. Promptly, Dot stepped onto a chair, brought down the suitcase and listened to her instructions.

Source: Kerry Greenwood, *Death by Water*, Allen & Unwin, 2005

# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 Characters are more than just physical descriptions. Successful authors tell us something about the way they behave and the ways in which they interact with the other characters. Draw a chart like the one below and use the extracts in this module to complete it.

	Hercule Poirot	Jane Marple	Richard Hannay	Kay Scarpetta	Phryne Fisher
Physical description					
Interactions with other characters					
Key words that describe their personality					
Approach to solving the crimes					

## Understanding

- 2 How does Christie show us that Poirot is an outsider who will have to work hard to gain respect? What indicators are there that he is up for the challenge?
- 3 How do we know that Miss Marple is a creature of habit?
- 4 What reasons does Hannay give for not going to the police?
- 5 What does Cornwell's extract tell us about Scarpetta's personality and how she feels about her work? How does it do this?
- 6 What evidence is there in the extract that Phryne is both highly intelligent and restless with her current domestic arrangements?

## Analysing

- 7 Compare the ways in which the different detectives are made to speak. How have their authors used dialogue to reveal their personalities?

## Creating

- 8 Imagine you are a crime writer. Prepare a summary of a new detective character for your publisher.
  - What age, sex and nationality is your detective?
  - Where does the detective live and work?
  - What are your detective's personality traits?

## Creating suspects

While the most important character in any crime fiction story is usually the detective, they have to be surrounded by a group of suspects for a 'whodunnit?' to work. Each of the suspects needs to have just enough motive and opportunity to commit the crime for the reader to 'suspect' them.

Suspects who may be involved in the crime vary in age, ethnicity and gender. The one thing they are not, however, is random. Characters in a crime fiction story are always written with a clear purpose. A crime story cannot have suspects floating in and out of the story who do not have a reason to be there. Each character will bring something to the puzzle, even if it is a minor detail that helps to flesh out the story.

Suspects, therefore, serve several purposes.

- They are 'sounding boards' to allow the detective (and therefore the reader) to consider new angles and ideas.
- They are possible perpetrators of the crime and are required to provide alibis and other details to justify their existence in the story.
- They provide distractions from the identity of the real murderer.
- They allow themes and issues to be elaborated by the author without having the detective make long and boring speeches on the matter.

Writers use a variety of language tricks to make the characters plausible and interesting. For example:

- Adjectives give their characters detail, adding to the way their suspect looks, speaks and moves.
- Words with positive or negative connotations subtly influence the reader's thoughts about the suspect and they ensure that each suspect's motive and opportunity are clearly established.

The way that the suspect presents themselves to the detective and to the other characters is also very important. Is their behaviour consistent? Do they say the same things to all people or do they change their story according to whom they are talking? Do they seem to have something to hide? What do the other characters have to say about this character?

Let's look at the way some crime authors have depicted their suspects. In *The Scold's Bridle* by Minette Walters, Mathilda Gillespie has been found dead in her bath by her servants Mr and Mrs Spede. Even before the death is discovered we have read an extract from Mathilda's diary that makes us suspicious about the Spedes.

## THE SCOLD'S BRIDLE

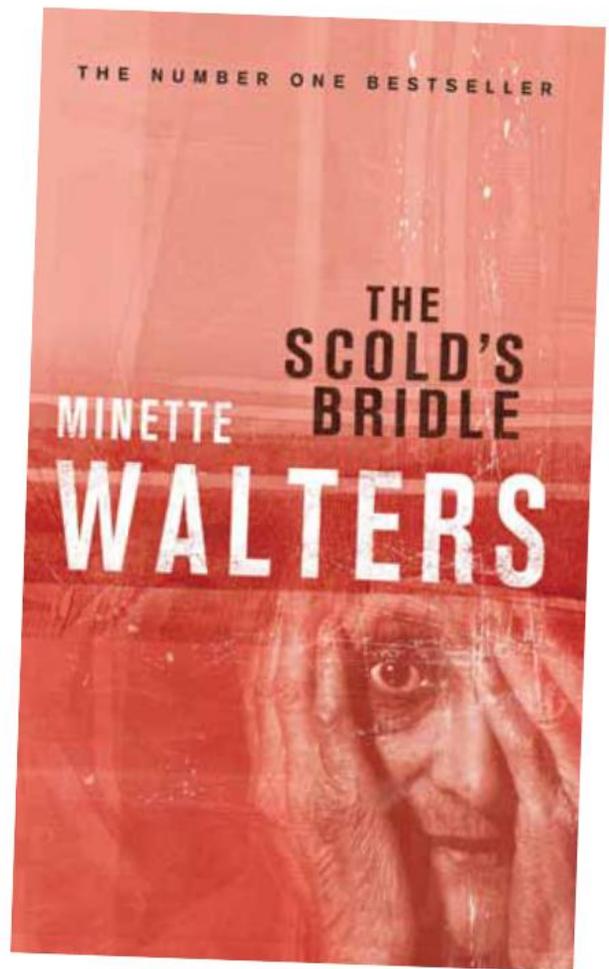
By Minette Walters

I wonder if I should keep these diaries under lock and key. Jenny Spede has disturbed them again and it's annoying me. She must have opened a volume inadvertently while dusting, and reads them now out of some sort of prurient curiosity.

But no, it can't be Jenny. She's too lazy to clean so thoroughly and too stupid to find anything I say or do either interesting or amusing.

The policeman assigned to the case, Sergeant Cooper, must perform the initial questioning of the Spedes, and we receive a first impression of them that corroborates Mathilda's description:

Mr and Mrs Spede hovered in the library like two squat spectres, so unprepossessing and shifty in their appearance that Cooper wondered if they were quite normal. Neither seemed able to meet his gaze and every question required unspoken consultation between them before one would offer an answer.



'Don't you know her daughter's name?'  
'Mrs Lascelles,' said the man after a moment. 'Joanna.' He tugged at his lower lip, which drooped oddly as if it had been tugged many times before. With a petulant frown his wife smacked him on the wrist and he tucked the offending hand into his pocket. They were very childlike, thought Cooper, and wondered if Mrs Gillespie had employed them out of compassion.

'And the granddaughter's name?'  
'Ruth.' She consulted with her husband behind lowered lids.

'They're not nice, either of them. The Mrs is rude to Mr Spede about his gardening and the Miss is rude to Jenny about her cleaning.'

'Jenny?' he queried. 'Who's Jenny?'  
'Jenny is Mrs Spede.'

'I see,' said Cooper kindly. 'It must have been a terrible shock for you, Jenny, to find Mrs Gillespie in her bath.'

'Oh, it was that,' she howled, grabbing her husband's arm. 'A terrible, terrible shock.' Her voice rose on a wail.

Source: Minette Walters, *The Scold's Bridle*, Allan & Urwin, 1995

# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 Highlight or underline all of the adjectives used to describe Mr and Mrs Spede in the extracts. What is the intended impression given of the Spedes through the use of these adjectives?
- 2 What clues are we given about the Spedes' education levels and class status?

## Analysing

- 3 Why do you think that it might be important for the story for us to know that Jenny Spede is both nosy enough to read the diaries and too ignorant to understand them?
- 4 Both Mr and Mrs Spede are given physical ticks or habits that assist in our understanding of their characters. What are they and how do they reinforce the impression Walters is trying to give us of these people?
- 5 Mr and Mrs Spede have a particular way of speaking that confuses Cooper at first. What is it and how does it contribute to their characters?

## Evaluating

- 6 In pairs, discuss and note the effect of depicting Mr and Mrs Spede as co-dependent. How does Minette Walters achieve this? What effect might it have on the development of the story?
- 7 Sometimes characters are given ironic names as a joke by the author. What is the joke involved in the naming of the Spedes?

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had his detective Sherlock Holmes describe a character, Charles Augustus Milverton, in such vicious detail that even Holmes's offside Watson is shocked.

## THE ADVENTURE OF CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON

By Arthur Conan Doyle

'Who is he?' I asked.

'The worst man in London,' Holmes answered, as he sat down and stretched his legs before the fire. 'Is anything on the back of the card?'

I turned it over.

'Will call at 6.30—CAM,' I read.

'Hum! He's about due. Do you feel a creeping, shrinking sensation, Watson, when you stand before the serpents in the Zoo and see the slithery, gliding, venomous creatures, with their deadly eyes and wicked, flattened faces? Well, that's how Milverton impresses me. I've had to do with fifty murderers in my career, but the worst of them never gave me the repulsion which I have for this fellow. And yet I can't get out of doing business with him—indeed, he is here at my invitation.'

'But who is he?'

'I'll tell you, Watson. He is the king of all the blackmailers. Heaven help the man, and still more the woman, whose secret and reputation come into the power of Milverton. With a smiling face and a heart of marble he will squeeze and squeeze until he has drained them dry. The fellow is a genius in his way, and would have made his mark in some more savoury trade. His method is as follows: He allows it to be known that he is prepared to pay very high sums for letters which compromise people of wealth or position. He receives these wares not only from treacherous valets or maids, but frequently from genteel ruffians who have gained the confidence and affection of trusting women ... I happen to know that he paid seven hundred pounds to a footman for a note two lines in length, and that the ruin of a noble family was the result. Everything which is in the market goes to Milverton, and there are hundreds in this great city who turn white at his name. No one knows where his grip may fall, for he is far too rich and far too cunning to work from hand to mouth. He will hold a card back for years in order to play it at the moment when the stake is best worth winning. I have said that he is the worst man in London, and I would ask you

how could one compare the ruffian who in hot blood bludgeons his mate with this man, who methodically and at his leisure tortures the soul and wrings the nerves in order to add to his already swollen money-bags?'

Source: Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton*, 1904



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930)

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 To what does Holmes compare Milverton? What impression does this immediately convey to the reader? Can you think of any other literary instances where the same comparison has been made about a character?
- 2 Highlight or underline all the adjectives used to describe Milverton. What do they have in common?

### Analysing

- 3 Of what crimes is Milverton guilty, according to Holmes?
- 4 Holmes compares Milverton to which other criminals? What does he say about their relative merits?
- 5 Not all of Holmes's accusations of Milverton are strictly crimes under the law. What does Holmes appear to object to on moral grounds about Milverton's actions?

### Creating

- 6 Even though we get a strong description of Milverton's moral character, Holmes does not give us any information about his physical size or shape. Write a description of how Milverton appeared to you as you were reading the extract.

## Multiple suspects, multiple villains

The best-selling mystery novel ever is Agatha Christie's famous novel *And Then There Were None*. In it ten guests are invited to spend time at a modern mansion on a tiny island by a reclusive millionaire. One by one the visitors are slowly killed off by a mysterious murderer. Clues are left at the scene of each murder and soon it becomes apparent that each of the murders mirrors the way in which one of the characters is killed in a famous children's rhyme 'Ten Little Soldier Boys', which was originally written by Frank Green in 1869.



### DID YOU KNOW...

Soldier Island is based on a place called Burgh Island which lies off the coast of Bigbury-on-Sea, South Devon, England. Christie also set another of her famous novels, *Evil under the Sun*, on the island.

## TEN LITTLE SOLDIER BOYS

By Frank Green

Ten little soldier boys went out to dine;  
One choked his little self and then there nine.  
Nine little soldier boys sat up very late;  
One overslept himself and then there were eight.  
Eight little soldier boys travelling in Devon;  
One said he'd stay there and then there were seven.  
Seven little soldier boys chopping up sticks;  
One chopped himself in half and then there were six.  
Six little soldier boys playing with a hive;  
A bumble bee stung one and then there were five.  
Five little soldier boys going in for law;  
One got into Chancery and then there were four.  
Four little soldier boys going out to sea;  
A red herring swallowed one and then there were three.  
Three little soldier boys walking in the zoo;  
A big bear hugged one and then there were two.  
Two little soldier boys sitting in the sun;  
One got frizzled up and then there was one.  
One little soldier boy left all alone;  
He went and hanged himself and then there were none.

First published in 1939, under the now offensive title *Ten Little Niggers*, Christie's novel has remained one of her most popular and intriguing. Christie later adapted her own novel into a very successful stage play; although she changed the ending of the story to a lesser known final couplet of the nursery rhyme: 'One little soldier boy left all alone, / He got married and then there were none.'

## Breakaway tasks

### Analysing

- 1 The title and content of the rhyme that inspired Christie have been changed. Why might these changes have been necessary? Can you think of other stories that have been changed because they reflect ideas from a bygone era?

### Creating

- 2 Using Frank Green's poem as a basis, develop character profiles for the ten suspects who are invited to the island. What crime have they been accused of?
- 3 Use another nursery rhyme as inspiration for a crime fiction story.

# Strands in action

## Core task

Now it's your turn to design a crime fiction character. Brainstorm ideas in your notebook about a character of your own creation to appear in the plot of a crime story. Decide first the role your character may play in the story (such as detective, suspect, femme fatale), as well as considering their personality traits and any identifying characteristics. Next, on a poster, draw the outline of a person. Personalise your character by drawing on hair, clothes, etc. that are specific to them. Then make notes around the character as follows:

- write your character's full name above their head
- next to the head, make notes about what your character is thinking
- on the torso, make notes about the qualities that your character displays—what is their personality really like?

- on the arms, make notes about what types of actions your character undertakes. What do they actually do in the story? Are they the murderer, for example?
- on the legs, make notes about what other characters believe about your character. Are they a suspect because they are too kind? Evil? Shifty? Acting suspiciously? In need of money? Looking for revenge?
- in speech bubbles, make notes of the kind of key phrases and words that your character would use and any ideas about the way they speak.

Discuss your poster with a partner and improve your character based on their feedback. Display the completed character posters around the classroom.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Create mock social network pages for three famous detectives featured in this chapter. Among other things, you might like to include a photo, a list of their 'friends', and a short series of exchanges on their wall.
- 2 In pairs, conduct a study of two different crime fiction TV series and identify and compare the main elements of crime fiction that they use. Produce a chart on which to note the identifying features of the genre in each series, and a report in which you discuss the following questions.
  - What do they have in common?
  - How do they differ?
  - What visual elements are used to tell the story?
  - How do the screenwriters adapt the conventions of crime novels to the visual medium?
- 3 In small groups, research, rehearse and present a key scene from any crime fiction story referred to in this chapter to the class. Use the internet or your local library to help you choose the scene which best demonstrates the personality traits associated with the main characters, and gives your audience an insight into the plot of the novel. You may choose to introduce and/or conclude your presentation with the help of a narrator, and embellish your performance with appropriate props and costumes.

# Write your own crime fiction story

To begin writing a crime story is no easy task. The following factors need to be taken into consideration in the planning stage of a manuscript:

## Crime

What sort of crime has been committed? A theft? A murder? A spate of graffiti?

## Location

Where is the story set? On a boat? In a school? In a mansion? On a hot air balloon? Let your imagination go wild!

## Suspects

Who has committed the crime and why? What motives do the others have for wanting to commit the crime? Hint: using fewer suspects helps authors to stay within their word limit!

## Detective

Who are they? Are they a professional or an amateur? How do they become involved with the case?

## Red herring

What piece of 'evidence' might draw suspicion away from the criminal and deflect it onto another suspect?

## Narrator

Who is telling the story? One of the suspects? The detective? Their sidekick? An all-knowing author?

Writers also need to consider how the crime or mystery is solved. Readers need to be satisfied with the ending, and often an unforeseen twist or surprise may be used to achieve this.

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Victorian novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton started his novel *Paul Clifford* with the words, 'It was a dark and stormy night ...'. The fifty-eight word sentence was considered purple prose—poorly written prose that is 'over the top'. The first words are used in the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest introduced by the English Department of San Jose State University in 1982 to 'recognise' similar examples of poor prose.

## Do You Have a Killer Idea for a Detective Story? Then we want to hear from you!

Our company requires stories that have:

- a well-structured plot and interesting setting
- a crime with suspects
- a believable detective with a quirky habit
- a red herring.

The reward for being able to do this will be a publishing contract with our reputable firm.

The competition is open to all secondary school age students. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.

# Strands in action

## Core task

Submit your own 'Killer Idea for a Detective Story'. Produce an original crime fiction story of up to 1500 words in length.

Plan your story carefully by referring to the table on the previous page, and include classic characters in your tale.

Consider the following:

- proper use of the genre's format and conventions
- appropriate, interesting language and tone
- grammar, punctuation and spelling
- originality, creativity, interest in the story
- understanding and portrayal of characters and motive
- general written expression.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Form small groups and write a crime fiction script, paying particular attention to the characteristics of the genre. Research tips for script writing on the internet and use the table on the previous page for planning purposes. Once written, rehearse and then stage your performance for the class, or record it on a video camera and allow your audience to view it as a film. You may like to include appropriate props and costumes to further enhance your performance.
- 2 In pairs, prepare a mystery hunt with clues leading to the discovery of the identity of a murderer. Clue cards can be used to outline to participants the crime itself and

possible suspects, before leading to props or pictures used as evidence as the truth is finally revealed. Try to be as theatrical as you can, you might even theme the clue cards around a famous detective or crime story referred to in the chapter.

Plan the details of the clues and their locations carefully before testing out the mystery hunt on another group.

- 3 Develop a 'How to' manual for reading crime fiction. Your guide should include hints and tips on how to spot a red herring, a clue checklist and hints on how to keep track of the plot and suspects.



O, she doth teach the  
torches to burn bright!

William Shakespeare (1564–1616),  
*Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, Scene v



EXPLORING ROMEO AND JULIET

# EXPLORING ROMEO AND JULIET

## Chapter overview

**R**omeo and Juliet, arguably the most popular of all Shakespeare's plays, is one of the greatest love stories ever told. It provides us with the compelling tale of two young star-crossed lovers. The action of the play includes street brawls, family conflict, teenage rebellion, tender love, a secret marriage, misguided adults and a painfully tragic outcome.

# Understanding *Romeo and Juliet*

Shakespeare's tale of two young lovers, their romance, their passion, and their tragic end has captivated audiences for hundreds of years. It is a play about love, the most precious and potent of emotions, and it is nearly impossible for an audience not to respond to these two characters in their fight against society, their families and, ultimately, their fate.

## A background to *Romeo and Juliet*

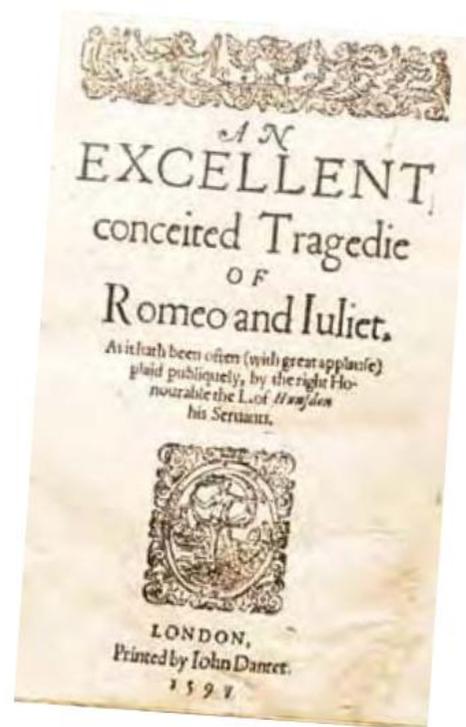
*Romeo and Juliet* was written in 1595 during the reign of Elizabeth I and only a year after a severe plague had closed all the theatres in London. Shakespeare was thirty-one years old and gaining a reputation as a successful playwright. *Romeo and Juliet* was probably first performed in the same year at a theatre in Shoreditch, in East London. The original title was *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.

Shakespeare based his play on a long poem by Arthur Brooke called *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, which itself was based on a story by the Italian writer, Matteo Bandello.

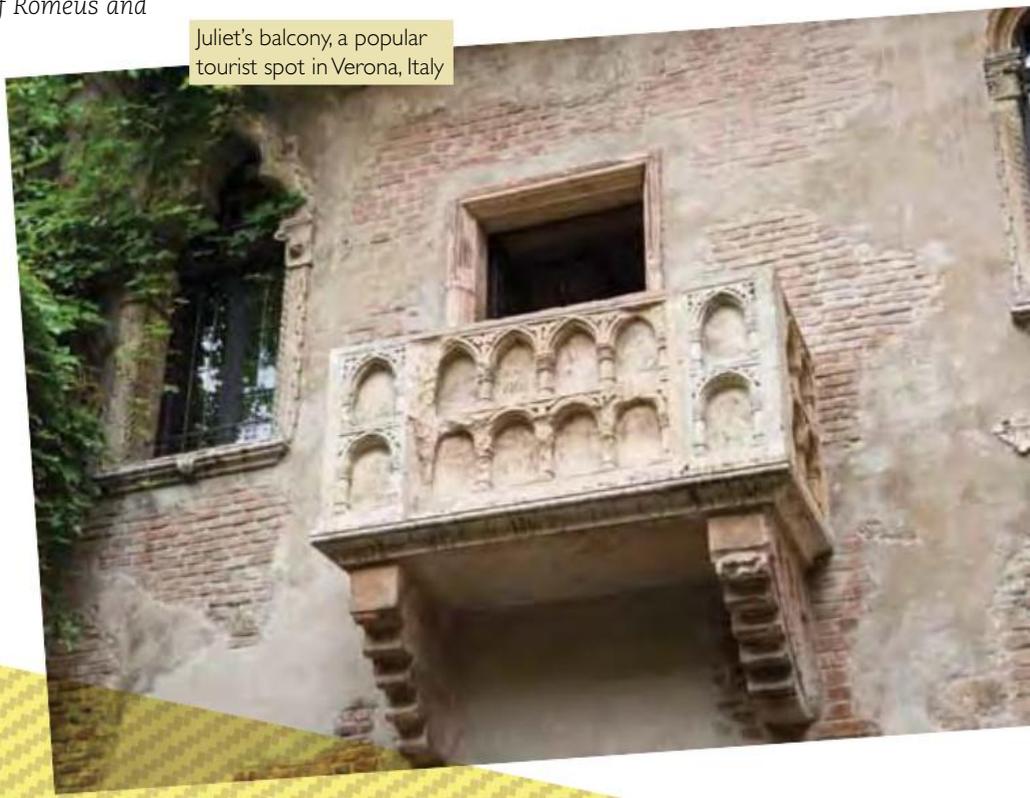
The main difference between Shakespeare's play and the poem upon which it was based is the timing of events. Shakespeare's play takes place over five days, whereas Brooke's version takes nine months. Juliet is younger in Shakespeare's play, only thirteen years old (compared to sixteen in the poem) and Mercutio is only mentioned briefly in the earlier version of the poem, but plays an important part in the play.

There is some historical truth to this story although there is no strong

evidence that Romeo and Juliet were actual people. There were two feuding Italian families around the year 1290. These families were the Montecchi and the Capelletti, who destroyed each other. The Montecchi lived in Verona and the Capelletti lived in Cremona, some distance away. If you travel to Verona in Italy, there are many tourist spots associated with the story of Romeo and Juliet, including the famous balcony.



Juliet's balcony, a popular tourist spot in Verona, Italy



# What makes this play a tragedy?

We generally think of a tragedy as a story with a sad ending, usually involving the death of the main character. In *Romeo and Juliet* we certainly have deaths, not only of the two lovers, but also of Tybalt (Juliet's cousin), Mercutio (Romeo's friend), and Paris (Juliet's suitor). However, we also have some comic scenes with some rather suggestive humour.

Traditionally, Shakespearean tragedy is the story of a hero (generally male) who is a person of noble or admirable character. It is a story of calamity and suffering, leading to his death. The hero contributes to his own death because of his own tragic flaw, that is, his own weakness of character, or a particular obsession such as ambition, greed or jealousy or, in the case of *Romeo and Juliet*, love.

Romeo and Juliet are young, innocent and powerless. Arguably, their deaths are caused by events beyond their control. This early tragedy differs from the later great tragedies, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *King Lear*, where the heroes bring about their own downfall. Nevertheless, Romeo and Juliet's powerlessness and their youth and innocence make it a very poignant tragedy.

*Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most famous love stories of all time. Its appeal extends across generations and cultures and it has been translated into many different artistic forms: paintings, films, ballet and opera.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 When was *Romeo and Juliet* written?
- 2 What significant event had occurred the year before its first performance?
- 3 Upon what sources did Shakespeare base his play?
- 4 Identify two important changes that Shakespeare made to the original story.

### Analysing

- 5 Why do you think the story of *Romeo and Juliet* has had such a wide appeal to so many people over such a long time?
- 6 Why do you think Shakespeare chose to make Romeo and Juliet so young?

## Sonnets

Shakespeare's play begins with a prologue which is written in sonnet form. In this sonnet (a fourteen-line poem), the 'entire' story of the play is foretold.

Two households, both alike in dignity,  
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.  
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;  
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows  
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love  
And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;  
The which if you with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

(Prologue)

A sonnet is also used at the start of Act II:

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,  
And young affection gapes to be his heir.  
That fair for which love groaned for and would die,  
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.  
Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,  
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks.  
But to his foe supposed he must complain,  
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.  
Being held a foe, he may not have access  
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear,  
And she as much in love, her means much less  
To meet her new beloved anywhere.  
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,  
Tempering extremities with extreme sweet.



Shakespeare wrote over 154 sonnets. A **sonnet** is a poem of fourteen lines, divided into three quatrains (four-line verses), and a concluding rhyming couplet (two-line verse). Similarly, each line contains ten syllables. In fact, there are five pairs ( $5 \times 2 = 10$ ) of stressed (ˈ) and unstressed (˘) syllables in each line. A stressed syllable simply means that the sound is given more emphasis than its unstressed counterpart. This gives a natural rhythm to the speech and would have helped the actors learn their lines.

## Iambic pentameter

Shakespeare wrote his play in blank verse using iambic pentameter with a number of scenes in prose, for example the fight scenes and the short scenes involving servants.



**Iambic pentameter** is simply a line of verse with five stresses or beats—'de dum, de dum, de dum, de dum, de dum'. An example of this is Romeo's first words on seeing Juliet, 'O she doth teach the torches to burn bright!' Blank verse uses ten syllables per line.

In order to fit the words exactly to the ten syllables allowed and to keep the iambic pentameter, Shakespeare often uses contractions or abbreviations. For example, Juliet speaks about Romeo's name, 'Tis thy name that is my enemy'. The contraction is 'tis' for 'it is'. Romeo speaks to her in this same scene, 'With love's light wings did I o'erperch these walls'. The contraction here is 'o'erperch' for 'overperch'.

## Breakaway tasks

### Applying

- 1 Find two examples of contractions, one from Romeo's soliloquy (I, v, 44–53) and one from Juliet's soliloquy (II, ii, 38–49). Write down the contracted phrases and explain the meanings.
- 2 In your notebook, write out the three quatrains of the opening sonnet and mark the rhyming pattern to show the stressed and unstressed syllables.
- 3 The last two lines are called a 'couplet'. They have a specific rhyming pattern. Can you identify it? Write out the couplet in your notebook and mark the pattern.
- 4 Can you find the ten syllables in each line? Can you work out which of the syllables is stressed and unstressed?

### Evaluating

- 5 Why do you think that Shakespeare would have chosen to give away the ending to his play?

### Creating

- 6 There are two sonnets spoken by the chorus, one at the very beginning of the play, and one at the beginning of Act II. The first predicts the outcome of the story; the second comments on the story. Choose one of these sonnets and rehearse your reading, noting the pauses for punctuation, the stresses on particular words and the expression of feeling. Recite your sonnet to the class.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

1 Go to **Pearson Reader** to view one of the Shakespeare or history websites and research one of the following topics. With a partner, develop your research as a report.



- Shakespeare growing up in Stratford: his family, his schooling, the house he lived in
- The plague in London from 1593–94
- Marriage in Elizabethan times
- Fate and fortune in Elizabethan times
- Theatres in London during the late sixteenth century.

Record your research in a set of detailed notes on your chosen topic.

2 With your partner, present your report to the class using a multimedia format, an interview format or, if working individually, as a speech. Avoid reading from the screen or from your notes. You might choose to role-play the interview, for example one student could take the part of a person who survived the plague in London, the other could be a reporter gathering facts for his broadsheet publication. If you deliver a speech, use cue cards rather than a sheet of paper and keep eye contact with your audience.

## Extra tasks

1 Create a tourist information brochure for Verona to encourage travellers to experience the history of *Romeo and Juliet*. You will need to conduct some research to find out information about Verona's tourist industry.

2 Write a three-paragraph response to the following question: 'Are the *Romeo and Juliet* tourist spots in Verona valid tourist destinations?' Give reasons for your answer.

3 *Romeo and Juliet* is considered to be among the great tragic love stories of all time. Other couples who can also make this claim include:

- Mark Antony and Cleopatra
- Tristan and Isolde
- Lancelot and Guinevere
- Napoleon and Josephine
- Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara.

In a small group, research another tragic love story and create a short play which retells their story. Perform your play for the class.



# Romeo and Juliet: the story and structure of the play

If this is your first taste of reading and viewing a Shakespearean play, do not be discouraged by the Shakespearean language. Follow the helpful hints provided and try to immerse yourself in the characters and their story.



You may need a few helpful hints before beginning your study of *Romeo and Juliet*.

- Remember that this is a play and is meant to be performed, rather than read like a book.
- Use the two-page glossary from the **Pearson Reader** website to find out the meanings of common words.
- Read the play aloud in class, each taking parts. Read according to the punctuation. Your teacher may use an audio CD or show some scenes from one of the many films of *Romeo and Juliet* to give you an idea of the style.
- Watch either the Zeffirelli film (1968) or the Baz Luhrmann film (1996). If you have time, watch both and make some comparisons between the two.
- Be aware that the play is divided into five acts, and each act is divided into scenes. The scenes and lines are also numbered, making it easy for you to find your place. References to quotes are expressed in this way: Act I, Scene i, lines 69–70 (or more simply I, i, 69–70). Roman numerals are usually used for acts and scenes.



## Prologue

The play opens with the chorus (or narrator) briefly outlining to the audience the story they are about to see on stage. It concerns two families of Verona, who are longstanding enemies. The narrator foretells that the fighting will break out again and the feud will only end with the deaths of the two doomed young lovers, the daughter of one family and the son of the opposing family.

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 The chorus speaks of 'star-crossed lovers'. What does 'star-crossed' mean?

### Analysing

- 2 Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of knowing the story before you begin reading or watching plays or other texts.



# Act I

On a Sunday morning in the streets of Verona, fighting breaks out between the servants of the Capulets and the servants of the Montagues. Benvolio, a Montague and Romeo's cousin, tries to break up the fight, but Tybalt, a Capulet and Juliet's cousin, aggressively attacks him. They join in the brawling until Prince Escalus orders them all to put down their weapons, threatening them with death if they fight in public again.

Montague and his wife question Benvolio about their son, Romeo, who seems to be in a melancholy state. When Romeo approaches, Benvolio talks to him and finds out that he is melancholy because he loves a girl (we later find out her name is Rosaline) who does not return his love.

Meanwhile, Paris is seeking to marry the daughter of Lord Capulet, the young Juliet. Lord Capulet considers her to be too young for marriage (she is not yet fourteen), but invites Paris to the feast to be held that night. A servant who cannot read is sent to deliver the invitations. He asks Romeo and Benvolio to read the list of names for him. When Romeo sees Rosaline's name on the list, Romeo and Benvolio decide to go to the party.

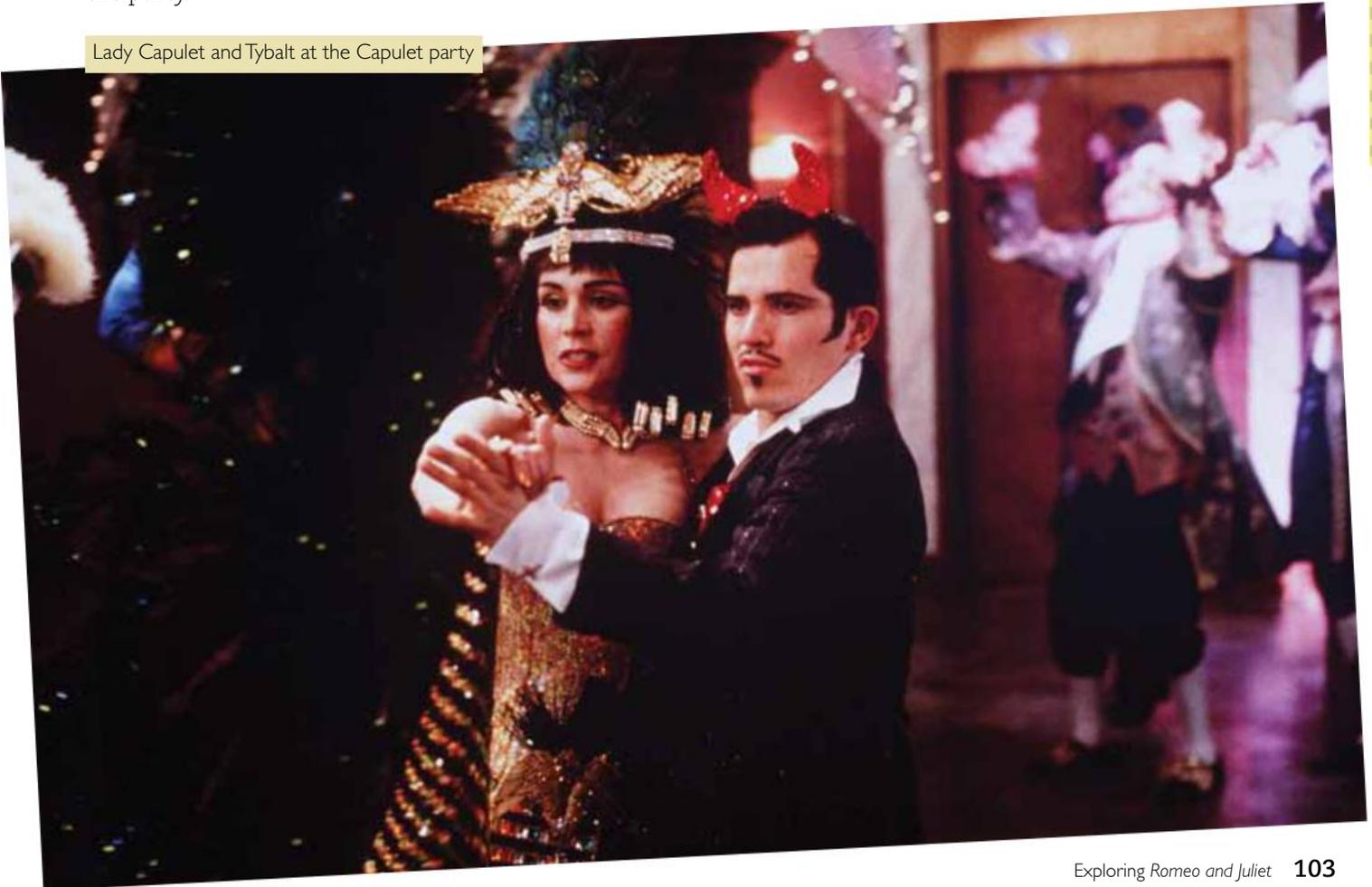
Lady Capulet (Juliet's mother) discusses with Juliet's wet nurse—her companion and confidante since Juliet's birth—Juliet's age, her feelings about marriage and Paris's proposal.

Romeo and his friends make their way to the Capulets' party, wearing masks to disguise their identities. Romeo's friend Mercutio teases Romeo for being love-sick. He tells his friends about his dream of Queen Mab, the Queen of the fairies, but even this fantastic tale does not cheer up Romeo. At the party Romeo sees Juliet and immediately falls for her beauty. Tybalt, recognises his voice and wants to confront him, but Lord Capulet does not want any trouble. Romeo meets Juliet and they exchange kisses. As Romeo leaves the party he finds out that the one he now loves is a Capulet. Juliet also finds out that the one she loves is 'the son of [her] great enemy', a Montague.

## DID YOU KNOW...

A wet nurse was a woman hired to breastfeed (nurse) another person's baby. Wet nurses were often used by aristocratic families, as breastfeeding was seen to delay the prospect of the mother falling pregnant again.

Lady Capulet and Tybalt at the Capulet party



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What three aspects of the story are told to us in the Prologue?
- 2 Who is Tybalt related to?
- 3 What punishment does the Prince announce for any further brawling in the streets?
- 4 Who is the man seeking Juliet's hand in marriage?

### Understanding

- 5 Describe Romeo's mood at the beginning of the play.
- 6 Explain his reason for deciding to go to the Capulet feast.

### Applying

- 7 Find two quotes, one from Lord Capulet and one from the Nurse, which tell us Juliet's age.

### Analysing

- 8 Who says the following lines? To whom are they speaking? Explain their meaning.
  - Out of her favour where I am in love. (I, i, 68)
  - Examine other beauties. (I, i, 228)
  - Earth has swallowed all my hopes but she. (I, ii, 14)
  - I'll look to like, if looking liking move. (I, iii, 98)
  - Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too? (I, v, 101)

### Evaluating

- 9 In pairs, discuss the following statements. Share your opinions with the class and be ready to explain your contention.
  - a The servants are to blame for starting the fight.
  - b Tybalt is a troublemaker.
  - c Juliet is more mature than Romeo.

### Creating

- 10 Draw two houses, one labelled Montague and one labelled Capulet. Use different colours to distinguish between the two enemy households. Add to your drawing the names of the characters who belong to each house.

## Act II

At the end of the party Romeo eludes his friends and hides in the Capulet orchard. He catches a glimpse of Juliet on her balcony. He overhears her admission of love for him although she does not realise he is there. He reveals himself and they declare their love for each other. They are aware that the situation is dangerous because Romeo is a Montague and will be killed if any of the Capulets catch him there. They agree to marry and Juliet arranges to send a messenger to him the next day in order to learn the time and place of the wedding. Then they part.

Early the next morning, Monday, Romeo seeks out Friar Lawrence to tell him that he and Juliet are in love and want to marry as soon as possible. The Friar is surprised at the swiftness with which Romeo has gone from one lover (Rosaline) to the next (Juliet), but agrees to marry them because he thinks it will put an end to the feud. Benvolio and Mercutio catch up with their friend Romeo that day, unaware that he has fallen in love with Juliet. The Nurse arrives to speak with Romeo and is teased mercilessly by Mercutio. Eventually, Romeo tells the Nurse to tell his beloved to go to Friar Lawrence's cell in the monastery that afternoon on the pretext of confessing her sins to him. There they will be married. The Nurse returns with this news for Juliet. She meets Romeo at the cell and they exchange marriage vows.

'So smile the heaven, upon this holy act' (Act II, Scene vi, 1)





Act II, Scene ii, 53–65

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Where is Romeo when his friends are looking for him after the ball?
- 2 Who declares their love first, Romeo or Juliet?
- 3 How much time elapses between the meeting of Romeo and Juliet and their wedding day?

### Understanding

- 4 What does Romeo compare Juliet to when he first sees her on her balcony?
- 5 What does Juliet mean when she exclaims, 'Romeo, doff thy name'?

### Applying

- 6 Draw a timeline of events from the Capulet ball where Romeo first meets Juliet (I, v) to their wedding day (II, vi). Try to include the exact time of day. (Your answer to Question 3 should help you.)

### Analysing

- 7 Explain what the Friar means when he advises Romeo, 'Wisely and slow. They stumble that walk fast.' (II, iii, 90)
- 8 Why does the Friar agree to marry Romeo and Juliet?

### Creating

- 9 Mercutio likes to tease and mock people and use rude and insulting language. For example, he calls Tybalt, the 'Prince of Cats' and a 'lamentable thing' and says that the Nurse uses her fan 'to hide her face'. Now create your own list of Shakespearean insults. You can do this by adapting some from this act, or you can go to the links on **Pearson Reader** and create your own.



Web Destination

## Act III

It is a hot day in Verona. Benvolio and Mercutio are on the streets, Mercutio in a fighting mood; Benvolio wishing to avoid conflict. Tybalt arrives in search of Romeo. When Romeo arrives, Tybalt challenges him to fight, calling him 'villain' and 'boy'. (In the context of Shakespearian times, these are both offensive insults.) Newly married to Juliet, Tybalt's cousin, Romeo refuses to fight. Mercutio cannot stand Romeo's 'vile

submission' so he challenges Tybalt himself. They draw swords. Romeo tries to break up the fight by stepping between the two men. This intervention proves to be tragic as Tybalt mortally wounds Mercutio by thrusting his sword under Romeo's arm. Mercutio dies soon afterwards. Romeo, grief-stricken and blaming himself, goes after Tybalt and kills him. Benvolio urges Romeo to flee because he is now under the sentence of death from the Prince. When the Prince arrives, Lord Capulet demands the death of Romeo for the death of Tybalt, but the Prince argues that Romeo has also lost his own relative, in his friend Mercutio, and so instead, banishes Romeo from Verona.

Meanwhile, Juliet is waiting impatiently for Romeo to come to her on their wedding night. The Nurse arrives, mourning the death of Tybalt. When Juliet finds out the truth, that her husband has killed her cousin, she is devastated but relieved that Romeo is alive. Romeo, similarly distraught, has fled to the Friar. The Nurse arrives and tells them of Juliet's emotional state. The Friar tries to comfort Romeo. He advises him to return to Juliet for the night and then in the early morning to flee to Mantua where the Friar will send him a message with his manservant.

Meanwhile, Lord Capulet agrees to the marriage of Paris to his daughter in three days' time. Romeo stays with Juliet till daybreak (Tuesday) and then they part. Lady Capulet breaks the news of the engagement to her daughter, and despite Juliet's protestations, refusal and begging, her father orders her to obey or he will disown her. The Nurse advises her young charge to agree to this marriage even though she knows Juliet is already wedded to Romeo.



**mortally wound:** to injure someone so badly that death promptly follows.

**banish:** to exile or send someone away from a particular place, either for a specific period of time, or permanently.



'A plague o' both your houses' (Act III, Scene i, 106)



**Tone** is the way the words sound when spoken. For example, the tone could be one of melancholy, wonder or fear. The tone is the emotion of the words. For example, the tone of Lord Capulet's words to Juliet, 'Hang thee young baggage! Disobedient wench!' is one of anger.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Who is killed in Act III and by whom?
- 2 What punishment does the Prince give Romeo?
- 3 What is the Friar's plan for Romeo?

### Applying

- 4 Draw a storyboard that clearly outlines the sequence of events from the moment Mercutio and Benvolio encounter Tybalt till the moment when Romeo kills Tybalt (III, i, 1–131).
- 5 Who says the following lines? To whom are they speaking? Explain the meaning of each line.
  - a 'A plague o' both your houses!' (III, i, 106)
  - b 'O, I am fortune's fool!' (III, i, 136)
  - c 'It was the nightingale, and not the lark / That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.' (III, v, 2–3)

### Analysing

- 6 Trace Juliet's emotions from the moment when the Nurse enters hysterically crying, 'He's dead, he's dead, he's dead' (III, ii, 39), to the end of this scene when she knows the facts. Create a timeline of the emotions Juliet goes through (for example, angry, upset). Give quotes for each emotion Juliet experiences.
- 7
  - a Describe the tone of Mercutio's words to Tybalt  
And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something; make it a word and a blow. (III, i, 33)
  - b Describe the tone of Romeo's words to Tybalt  
I do protest I never injur'd thee;  
But love thee better than thou canst devise  
(III, i, 58–9)

### Evaluating

- 8 In groups of four, discuss the actions of the adults in this Act: Lord and Lady Capulet, the Nurse and Friar Lawrence. How do they treat the two lovers? How do you judge the decisions they make? Share your views with the class.



Act III, Scene ii, 95–104

# Act IV

Paris tells the surprised Friar Lawrence of his fast approaching wedding to Juliet. Shortly afterwards, Juliet arrives to seek help from the Friar. She is utterly distressed and cannot see a way out of her predicament. She would rather die than marry Paris. The Friar outlines his plan:

- He advises Juliet to consent to marry the Count and to sleep alone that night without the Nurse's company.
- He gives her a potion to take which will put her into a death-like sleep from which she will wake in forty-two hours.
- Meanwhile the Friar will send word of the plan to Romeo in Mantua and he will come to rescue her.

Juliet pretends to be reconciled to her father's wishes and the Capulets prepare for the wedding. That night, Juliet takes the potion and falls into a deep sleep. The next morning, the Nurse tries unsuccessfully to wake the young bride. The Capulets, the Nurse and Paris all grieve for her 'death'. She is taken to the Capulet tomb.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is the Friar's plan to save Juliet from marriage with Paris and to reunite her with Romeo?
- 2 Who discovers the 'dead' Juliet?

### Analysing

- 3 Carefully read the soliloquy which Juliet speaks just before she takes the potion the Friar has given her (IV, iii, 14–59). List the different fears she expresses about the action she is about to take. Give quotes for each of these fears.

### Evaluating

- 4 What is wrong with the Friar's plan? What could he have done to improve his plan?

### Creating

- 5 'Meantime ... shall Romeo by my letters know our drift.' (IV, i, 114). Write the Friar's letter to Romeo, explaining his plan to prevent Juliet's marriage to Paris and to reunite them.

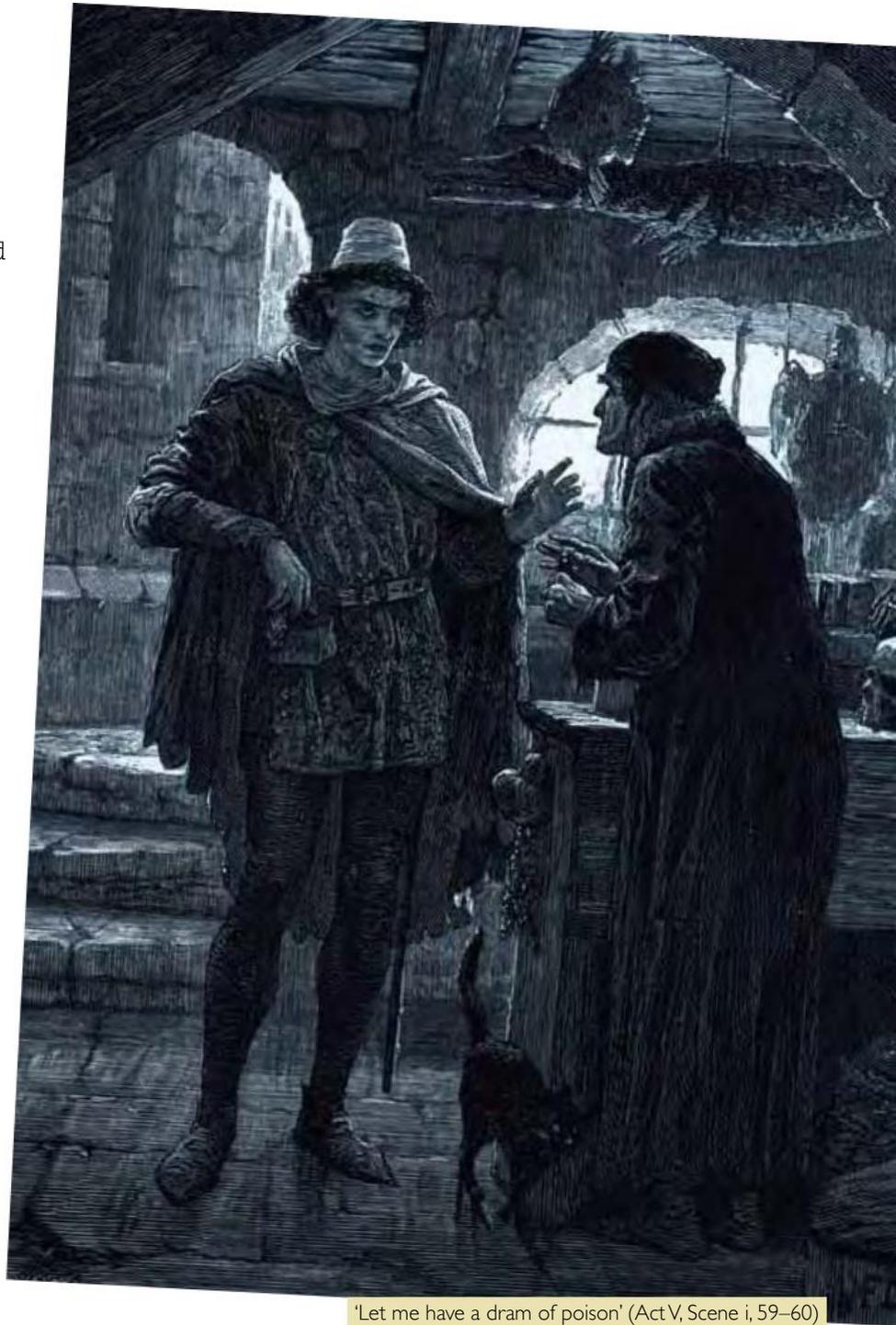
'Romeo, I come! ... This do I drink to thee!' (Act IV, Scene iii, 58)



## Act V

Balthasar (Romeo's manservant), immediately brings news to Romeo of Juliet's death. Romeo asks whether the Friar has a letter for him (as earlier promised), but there is none. In his despair, Romeo visits an apothecary and purchases some poison. Friar Lawrence has sent Friar John to Romeo with the letter (instead of Balthasar who was supposed to deliver it), but he returns to Verona, his letter undelivered, as he was prevented from travelling because of suspected contact with the plague. Friar Lawrence, in panic, makes his way quickly to the Capulet tomb. Romeo arrives with his servant Balthasar whom he dismisses with orders not to interfere. Paris has brought flowers to place on Juliet's tomb. Romeo begins to open the tomb when Paris accosts him. Romeo does not recognise him and orders him out of the way. Paris refuses, they fight and Romeo kills him. With his dying breath, Paris asks to be laid by Juliet's tomb.

Romeo enters the tomb and sees Juliet lying there. He sees that death 'hath had no power yet upon [her] beauty' (V, iii, 93). In total despair and believing that she is dead, he takes the poison and dies. Friar Lawrence arrives and rushes into the tomb. Just as he discovers the bodies of Paris and Romeo, Juliet stirs. She asks in vain for Romeo. After informing her of Romeo's death, the Friar tries to get her to flee but she refuses. Frightened, the Friar leaves her in the tomb. She tries to drink the last drops of the poison but there is nothing left. She kisses Romeo, quickly grabs his dagger and stabs herself. The watchmen arrive, see the carnage and send for the Prince. The Capulets and Montagues arrive. The Friar explains the events leading up to the tragedy and his part in it. The Capulets and Montagues are reconciled and the Prince acknowledges that 'never was a story of more woe / Than this of Juliet and her Romeo' (V, iii, 309–10).



'Let me have a dram of poison' (Act V, Scene i, 59–60)

### DID YOU KNOW...

'Apothecary' is a historical name for a pharmacist or chemist—someone who prepares and dispenses medicine. The word 'apothecary' was also used to name the shop or outlet where this was practised (like a pharmacy today).

# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 What news does Balthasar bring to Romeo?
- 2 What prevents Friar John from delivering Friar Lawrence's letter to Romeo?
- 3 In which order do Romeo, Juliet and Paris die? How does each character die?

## Understanding

- 4 Why does Paris come to the Capulet tomb?
- 5 Why does the Friar leave the distressed Juliet in the tomb?

## Analysing

- 6 Explain the dramatic irony of Romeo's words as he describes Juliet's beauty, just before he kills himself.  
*Beauty's ensign yet is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,  
And death's pale flag is not advanced there*  
(V, iii, 94–6)



**Dramatic irony** occurs when a character in a play says something, which has a different or opposite meaning for the audience/reader than the one the character expresses. This is a result of the audience/reader having greater knowledge and understanding of the story than the character.

A **simile** is a comparison in which the two things are said to be 'like' or 'as' one another. For example: 'The cloud glides across the sky like a swan on a lake.'

A **metaphor** is a comparison in which one thing is described in terms of being another thing. For example: 'The grey-eyed morning smiles on the frowning night'  
(The Friar, II, iii, 1)

A **soliloquy** is a speech in which the character expresses their inner thoughts aloud to the audience. Usually, the character is alone on stage. The word 'soliloquy' comes from the Latin words, *solus* meaning 'alone' and *loqui* meaning 'to speak'.

'Her beauty makes this vault a feasting presence full of light' (Act V, Scene iii, 85–6)



# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Choose one of the following scenes and in groups act it out for the class. Try to have each group do a different scene.
  - Act I, Scene v, lines 42–141—the Capulet ball: Romeo and Juliet meet (five characters)
  - Act II, Scene ii, lines 1–106—the balcony scene (two characters)
  - Act III, Scene i, lines 33–136—the fight scene including the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt (four characters)
  - Act III, Scene v, lines 102–204—Juliet's parents order her to marry Paris (four characters)
  - Act V, Scene iii, lines 113–70—the deaths of Romeo and Juliet (four characters)

First read through the scene and decide who will play which role. Agree on the movements and expression to be used. Create a mood with music and a visual background. You may wish to use sites at your school or be creative in the classroom. Use props and costumes. After the performance, you will be required to answer questions from the class on your interpretation of the scene.

- 2 Read the following soliloquies carefully. Choose one of the soliloquies and answer the following questions. Share your responses with the class.
  - a Identify the context (situation) and summarise what is being said.
  - b Describe the tone of the soliloquy and give one quote that illustrates this tone.
  - c Find one example of a metaphor or simile in the soliloquy. Explain the example.

**I**

**Romeo:**

O she doth teach the torches to burn bright!  
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night  
As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear—  
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!  
So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows  
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.  
The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand  
And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.  
Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!  
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.  
(I, v, 44–53)

**2**

**Juliet:**

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
What's Montague? It is nor hand nor foot  
Nor arm nor any other part  
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!  
What's in a name? That which we would call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet.  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;  
And for that name, which is no part of thee,  
Take all myself.  
(II, ii, 38–49)

## Extra tasks

- 1 Read carefully either Juliet's soliloquy from the beginning of Act II, Scene v, or Romeo's soliloquy from the beginning of Act V, Scene i. Translate your chosen soliloquy in modern English. Does this change the soliloquy in any way? Which version do you prefer? Explain your answer.
- 2 Write a different ending to Shakespeare's play, one in which the timing of events is favourable to the two lovers.
- 3 Write a monologue or soliloquy on the topic 'My secret desires'. You can choose to write in poetry or prose. If you choose poetry, write twenty lines; if you choose prose, write three paragraphs. Remember the character who is speaking is not necessarily you but an invented person.

# Examining the characters in *Romeo and Juliet*



**R**omeo and Juliet are the protagonists of the play. Their time together is very short and they appear together in only four scenes: the Capulet feast; the balcony scene; the wedding scene; and their wedding night and morning. While the tragedy revolves around them, it touches other secondary characters as well.

## Romeo

We first discover the character of Romeo when his father describes his melancholy behaviour, locking himself away in his room and refusing to communicate. We know from his mother that he has not participated in the street brawl, suggesting he is not a violent character. Romeo's first lines suggest he is a sensitive, romantic young man, in love and depressed because his love is not returned. He appears to be love-sick or infatuated, and perhaps in love with the idea of love.

His language in the earlier part of the play is the language of courtly love, elaborate and artificial, and seems less sincere than the language he uses later to describe his feelings for Juliet. For example, 'Love is a smoke made with the fume of sighs ... a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes.' (I, i, 190–1). Compare this to the language he uses when he first sees Juliet, 'Did my heart love till now?' (I, v, 52).

On the way to the Capulet party, we see the easy way Romeo relates to his male friends, Benvolio and especially Mercutio, joking readily with them. Romeo intuitively experiences a deep foreboding as he approaches the Capulet's house, 'my mind misgives / Some consequence hanging in the stars.' (I, iv, 106–7).

As soon as Romeo sees Juliet at the party he is much changed. He dismisses Rosaline from his

thoughts, 'I ne'er saw true beauty till this night' (I, v, 53). He singles Juliet out as 'a snowy dove trooping with crows' (I, v, 4). Switching so quickly from Rosaline to Juliet may suggest that Romeo is fickle, but this love is serious, deep and sudden. He is also made quickly aware that Juliet is a Capulet and thus his enemy. There is no doubt in his mind that in spite of the danger, he must see her again. The exchanges between them in the balcony scene, show Romeo's seriousness and his courage. The way this relationship develops suggests Romeo's lack of caution, as they are married within a day in secret.

Romeo's behaviour is impulsive, but the feud between the two families makes haste seem necessary. In the critical fight scene in Act III, Romeo (now married) is a peacemaker, not wanting to fight with Tybalt, but when Mercutio is killed, his pride and grief motivate him to pursue and kill Tybalt in revenge. This is a tragic turning point for Romeo. He shows that he is capable of impulsive violent action, but he also gallantly takes responsibility for the death of Mercutio.

Later, when Romeo weeps inconsolably and threatens in despair to stab himself, the Friar calls his tears 'womanish'. Romeo appears weak and childish; however, his situation is desperate and he has little option but to trust the Friar's judgement. He follows his instructions and spends a final night with Juliet before

banishment. Then, when Balthasar brings him news of Juliet's 'death' and he receives no expected message from the Friar, he acts independently, decisively and swiftly, although misguided. He illegally purchases the poison and rushes to the Capulet tomb. When confronted by Paris, Romeo urges him to be gone so that he can be by Juliet's side. He has no desire to 'put another sin upon [his] head'. However, his desperation and Paris's attempt to apprehend him lead Romeo to kill Paris. It is only later that Romeo realises who the 'gentle youth' is.

Our impressions of Romeo are of a young passionate man who is loyal to his friends and a person who, above all, loves Juliet and who dies for this love.



Engraving in *Romeo and Juliet*, edition 1890

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is the name of the woman with whom Romeo is in love at the beginning of the play?
- 2 Who are Romeo's friends?

### Understanding

- 3 Describe the relationship between Romeo and Benvolio.
- 4 Describe the relationship between Romeo and Mercutio.
- 5 Explain what the following lines said by Romeo mean and the context in which they are spoken. Who is he speaking to or about?
  - a Well, in that hit you miss: she'll not be hit With Cupid's arrow. (I, i, 200–1)
  - b Love goes towards love as schoolboys from their books; But love from love, toward school with heavy looks. (II, ii, 165–6)
  - c This day's black fate on more days doth depend; This but begins the woe others must end. (III, I, 107–8)

### Applying

- 6 Choose five of the following adjectives to describe Romeo's character at various times during the play. Find one quote for each adjective.

depressed	passionate	excited	happy
impulsive	foolish	peace-loving	fickle
loving	loyal	weak	brave
sensitive	desperate	trusting	respected

### Creating

- 7 The deaths of Romeo and Juliet bring about a reconciliation of the Capulets and Montagues. Lord Capulet agrees to compose a speech in honour of his son-in-law. Write this eulogy.



**eulogy:** speech given at a funeral.

# Juliet

The first discussion of Juliet is about her age. Her mother, Lady Capulet says to the Nurse, 'my daughter's of a pretty age', and in the discussion the Nurse mentions that she is not yet fourteen. Her age and sex are both important factors in assessing Juliet's character. She lives in a patriarchal society where women have little say in their future life choices.



A **patriarchal society** is one in which males are considered to be the authority figures or leaders, not only within the community, but also within the family unit.

When her mother raises the question of marriage, Juliet's response is remarkably mature. 'It is an honour that I dream not of' (I, iii, 67). When she meets Romeo and they touch palms and then lips, even though Romeo seems to be the initiator of the contact between them, she is not merely a willing, submissive female. She even gently rebukes Romeo for his forwardness in stealing another kiss, 'You kiss by the book' (I, v, 110). There is a quiet dignity in this young girl. In the balcony scene Juliet declares her love before she is aware that Romeo is listening to her. She is shocked at his presence, aware of the danger, and embarrassed. She is worried that he will judge her behaviour 'light' and that she is too easily won.

She is honest with him and urges him to be honest with her. Her passion and tenderness are apparent when she describes her love to Romeo, 'My bounty is as boundless as the sea / My love as deep' (II, ii, 133). She is clear and practical in arranging how Romeo will get a message to her about the marriage. She, like Romeo, acts with haste and urgency. Later, she is impatient and annoyed with the Nurse who is slow to deliver the message.

At the critical moment in Act III, when Juliet finds out about the death of her cousin Tybalt and the banishment of her husband Romeo, she experiences a test of her love and faith in Romeo. At first, she curses Romeo, 'O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face' (III, ii, 73). However, when the Nurse criticises him for the death of Tybalt she defends her husband and grieves for his banishment. Separation is like a death for her.

At their final meeting, the night of their wedding, Juliet is aware of how little time they have since Romeo is to be banished. She also experiences a great premonition at their parting, and even sees Romeo below her 'as one dead in the bottom of a tomb' (III, v, 56) an ominous vision of the way she will see him next.

Juliet's relationship with the Nurse is critical in her development as a character. Her bond with the Nurse is one that is extremely close, even closer than her relationship with her mother. As a wet nurse, the Nurse has been her nurturer from birth. The Nurse acts as a go-between for Juliet and Romeo. Juliet trusts the Nurse and confides in her, but when she asks her how the marriage to Paris can be prevented and the Nurse suggests bigamy, Juliet swiftly cuts all ties with her. 'Go counsellor! / Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain' (III, v, 240-1).

Juliet has three moments of great strength and courage. The first is when she fiercely stands up to her mother and then her father who demands that she marry Paris. The second is when, in desperation, she agrees to take the potion given to her by the Friar. The third is the moment of her death when the Friar abandons her in the tomb and she takes Romeo's dagger and kills herself.



# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 What is the topic of conversation between Juliet and her mother, Lady Capulet in Act I, Scene iii?
- 2 Which of these statements is true, and which is false?
  - a Juliet is an only child.
  - b Juliet is fourteen years old.
  - c Juliet has met Romeo's friends, Benvolio and Mercutio.
  - d Juliet kills herself with poison.
  - e Juliet goes to Friar Lawrence twice.

## Understanding

- 3 Explain what the following lines said by Juliet mean and the context in which they are spoken. Who is she speaking to or about?

My only love, sprung from my only hate. (I, v, 138)

Although I joy in thee,

I have no joy of this contract tonight.

It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden  
(II, ii, 126–8)

Is there no pity sitting in the clouds

That sees into the bottom of my grief? (III, v, 197–8)

## Applying

- 4 Choose five of the following adjectives describing Juliet's character at various times during the play. Find one quote for each adjective.

loyal	steadfast	loving	intelligent
mature	determined	despairing	joyful
passionate	courageous	honest	impatient
disobedient	vulnerable	impetuous	practical

## Evaluating

- 5 In pairs, debate the following statement, with one of you supporting the statement and the other arguing against it. Share your conclusions with the class. Be prepared to support your opinion with evidence from the play.

'Juliet makes foolish decisions which inevitably lead to her death.'

# Secondary characters

## Benvolio

Romeo's friend Benvolio is a peacemaker. He attempts to smooth over conflict, and protects and advises Romeo. When Tybalt joins in the fighting in the opening scene of the play, he urges, 'Put up thy sword' (I, i, 67). He accompanies Romeo to the Capulet party and tries to cheer him up by persuading him to 'examine other beauties' and forget Rosaline. Later, when Mercutio is spoiling for a fight in the hot streets of Verona, Benvolio urges him to retire indoors and keep out of trouble. When Mercutio is mortally wounded, he is the friend, not Romeo, to whom he turns for assistance, 'Help me into some house, Benvolio' (III, i, 105). Benvolio explains to the Prince how 'the bloody fray' began, and its tragic outcome. Although Benvolio is Romeo's cousin and one of his closest friends, he has no knowledge of Juliet or of her marriage to Romeo. After Act III, Benvolio's role is completed.



Act I, Scene ii, 45–50

## Mercutio

Mercutio appears in few scenes and disappears from the play after his death in Act III. He is, however, a brilliant creation of Shakespeare, one who almost steals the show from the hero Romeo, because of his mercurial and lively wit and his imaginative speeches. He is a relative of the Prince.

We first see him on the way to the party with Romeo and his other friends. While Benvolio plays the peacemaker, Mercutio plays the role of agitator. He prods and gently teases Romeo for his love-sick behaviour 'Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down' (I, iv, 28). In spite of his teasing, he is obviously Romeo's close friend and mentor. He mocks his own unattractive appearance, 'Give me a case to put my visage in' (I, iv, 29). His most famous speech is the Queen Mab speech (I, iv, 53–94) in which he describes the dream of the midwife fairy in fantastically inventive images. We are carried away with his clever talk of dreams. His language is often full of crude jokes. As a joker, he serves as a contrast to the more serious and gentle Romeo. He teases the Nurse mercilessly and jokes with Romeo when they meet the afternoon of Romeo and Juliet's wedding (of which he knows nothing). Romeo describes his friend thus, 'A gentleman ... that loves to hear himself talk and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month' (II, iv, 144–6).

His comic character has, however, a darker side and we see this in his final scene. In this scene he is the aggressor, provoking Tybalt. He is angry and draws his sword when Tybalt accuses him of 'consoing' with Romeo. Finally, when Romeo will not engage in fighting even though he has been insulted by Tybalt, Mercutio takes him on in disgust at Romeo's 'vile submission'. With his dying breath he cries repeatedly, 'A plague o' both your houses' (III, i, 106). He jokes about his fatal wound until the end, 'Ask for me tomorrow and you will find me a grave man' (98); and sadly asks Romeo, 'Why the devil came you between us?' (102).

After the tragedy of Mercutio's death, Romeo rightly predicts that more tragedy will follow. Mercutio's close bond with Romeo and his recognition that his own violent death is a direct consequence of the feud make him an important character.

## Tybalt

Tybalt is a Capulet and Juliet's cousin. He is described as 'fiery' and is the chief instigator of the brawl in the first scene. While Benvolio tries to get the servants to

put up their swords, Tybalt challenges Benvolio and exclaims, 'I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee' (I, i, 69–70). At the Capulet feast, he recognises Romeo by his voice and wants to kill him on the spot but is stopped by the host, Lord Capulet, who does not want any trouble. He is aggressive, angry and hot-headed. Later Tybalt sends a written challenge to Romeo (II, iv, 8–9). He further instigates this challenge when he calls Romeo a 'villain', and when Romeo will not fight, kills Mercutio in anger. In spite of his aggressive character he is well loved by the Nurse who calls him 'the best friend I ever had' and by Juliet who grieves for her 'dearest cousin'. Tybalt is, however, a one-dimensional character whose sole purpose is to contribute to the ultimate tragedy of Romeo and Juliet.

## Paris

Paris is Juliet's suitor who seeks her hand in marriage even before she meets and falls in love with Romeo. Lady Capulet describes him to her daughter as handsome. He is noble in position and gentle but persistent in his pursuit of Juliet. Once news of her 'death' reaches him, he grieves. It is this expression of grief and his arrival at the Capulet tomb to pay his respects which leads to his death. Romeo acknowledges Paris as a 'good gentle youth' and as 'one writ with [him] in sour misfortune's book' (V, iii, 82), meaning he was unfortunately in the wrong place at the wrong time.

## The Nurse

The Nurse has known Juliet since birth and nursed her when she was a baby. Her only child, Susan, born at the same time as Juliet, has died. She acts both as a mother and a mentor to Juliet who has no other friends in the play (unlike Romeo). Her language is crude and she is long-winded. In her first long speech, she jokes about the toddler Juliet who 'wilt fall backward when [she hath] more wit' (I, iii, 43). She longs for Juliet to be married and compliments Paris: 'he's a man of wax'. However, when Juliet confides in the Nurse of her love for Romeo she is prepared to act as go-between in the marriage arrangements: 'I am the drudge, and toil in your delight / But you shall bear the burden soon at night' (II, v, 75–6).

The Nurse is insensitive to the emotional needs of Juliet on a number of occasions. Firstly, when the Nurse returns from her meeting with Romeo, she takes a long time to give Juliet news of the wedding which Juliet finds irritating. Later, when Tybalt is killed by Romeo,

the Nurse is grief-stricken and condemns Romeo. She shows little sympathy for Juliet's anguish. Finally, she lets Juliet down at the most crucial time when Juliet is being pressured to marry Paris although she is already married to Romeo, by advising her 'I think it best you married with the County' (III, v, 218). Juliet condemns her companion and mentor for this betrayal.

## Friar Lawrence

Friar Lawrence serves as Romeo's confidant, as the Nurse does for Juliet. He is a religious figure, a kind and learned authority, and the confessor for both young lovers. They both trust him. When Romeo first seeks his assistance, the Friar is gathering herbs and plants for his studies. He is surprised to learn that Romeo is in love with 'the fair daughter of rich Capulet' when he has recently been weeping for Rosaline. From this, it is clear that Romeo has obviously sought counselling from the Friar for his previous relationship problems. The Friar calls him 'young waverer' and 'pupil mine', telling us that the relationship is one of wise counsellor and student.

The Friar means well and wants to help. He agrees to the wedding because he thinks it will mend the feud between the families. Later, after the tragic events of Act III and because he is already embroiled in the secret life of the young couple, the Friar feels compelled to continue to help. The advice he gives seems wise but it is fraught with difficulties. Romeo is to return to Juliet, then leave at dawn for Mantua where he will send a message via Romeo's manservant, Balthasar. The mistake the Friar makes is to send the message, not with Balthasar, but with Friar John.

The other flawed decision the Friar makes is his plan to help Juliet. The sleeping potion he gives her in order to avoid a bigamous marriage to Paris is a very risky step. When things go terribly wrong, the Friar rushes to the Capulet tomb in the hope of saving both Juliet and Romeo. Finding Romeo dead, however, he panics and leaves Juliet there to take her own life. This is his biggest mistake. He does remain to relate to the Prince his part in the tragedy and takes responsibility for his actions, 'let my old life be sacrificed', but his regret is too late.



Act V, Scene iii, 223–36

# The Montagues and Capulets

The parents of Romeo and Juliet, as the heads of the feuding families, are key players in the tragedy, although they have only small roles. They make some contribution to the street brawl and are rebuked by the Prince for breaking the peace. Both parents love their children, Lord Capulet expressing this most poignantly when he says that 'earth hath swallowed all [his] hopes but she' (I, ii, 14), when referring to Juliet. Lord Montague is worried about his son's melancholy mood but plays little part in the action after that. Lady Montague speaks very few lines and dies from grief at her son's banishment. Lord Capulet and his wife play a more significant role when they insist on their daughter marrying Paris against her will. Juliet's father threatens angrily to throw her onto the streets if she does not obey. Her mother is submissive and goes along with her husband's will. The deaths of their two children bring peace to the two feuding families.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What does Benvolio's name mean?
- 2 To whom is Mercutio related?

### Understanding

- 3 Give two quotes which illustrate the contrasting aspects of Mercutio's character, his joking, lighthearted nature and his more serious, dark side. Explain the quotes.

### Analysing

- 4 **a** Describe the circumstances surrounding the deaths of Mercutio, Tybalt and Paris.  
**b** In what ways are their deaths caused by the doomed relationship of the 'star-cross'd lovers'?

### Creating

- 5 After the funerals of the two young lovers, the Prince interviews the Nurse to find out her part in the secret marriage and the tragic events which followed. Write the interview. With a partner, act out this interview.

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 Which of the characters mentioned in this module have some responsibility for the deaths of Romeo and Juliet? On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 denoting least responsible and 10 denoting most responsible), rate these characters. Prepare a report that explains your choices and defends your contention.
- 2 Using your report as a basis for your arguments, hold a class debate on the topic 'The adults are more to blame for the tragedy than the young people'. Form a group consensus on those most to blame and those least to blame.
- 3 Design a poster depicting one of the characters in the play. This may be created using computer technology or you may use graphic representations, symbols, realistic drawings or a collage of pictures. You may use actual images from the Zeffirelli film (1968) or the Luhrmann film (1996) or photographs from any drama production. You must include descriptive adjectives and key quotes in your poster.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Create a mind map for either Romeo or Juliet. Include detailed links between your chosen character and the secondary characters in the play. Use quotes to illustrate.
- 2 Prepare a character profile for one of the characters (not Romeo or Juliet). Include in your profile:
  - a brief description of the character
  - an explanation of their relationship with Romeo and/ or Juliet
  - a discussion of the ways in which they seek to help or destroy the young love, and the ways in which they fail/succeed.

## 4

# Major themes in *Romeo and Juliet*

**W**hen reading any piece of literature, whatever the genre or type (for example, novel, play, poem or short story), we naturally try to understand the ideas or themes the author is presenting to us. We need to be wary, however, of hunting the text for themes and listing these as the total meaning of the text. Themes emerge from the story, the characters and the language. They are threads throughout the text.

## Fortune and fate

We know from the beginning that *Romeo and Juliet* is a tale of a 'pair of star-crossed lovers'. Thus we immediately perceive the characters' lives as being governed by the stars. An Elizabethan audience would have held a strong superstition in the power of the stars. A modern audience might also be led to believe that fate controls the young lovers' lives, rather than their free decisions. The story of Romeo and Juliet traces fortune's turning wheel as their lives decline from the joy of true love, through anguish at separation, to tragic death.

One of the most moving aspects of this tragedy for an audience, either modern or Elizabethan, is that we are led to feel a strong sense of inevitability, that is, we are helpless to stop the tragedy from occurring.

On a number of occasions the characters experience a sense of foreboding or doom, bringing a constant sense of tension for the audience. As Romeo goes towards the Capulet feast, he has an extraordinary premonition of 'some consequence hanging in the stars' and 'untimely death' (I, iv, 113–17). At the climax of the play when Mercutio is killed and subsequently Tybalt, Romeo exclaims 'O, I am fortune's fool' (III, i, 136). Later, when the lovers part the morning after their wedding, Juliet looks down at Romeo below her window and sees an ominous vision of him 'as



### QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

The Elizabethans believed strongly in the power of fate. Fortune was seen as a goddess with a wheel. The revolving wheel of fortune determined whether your luck was up or down.

one dead in the bottom of a tomb' (III, v, 56). Her 'ill-divining soul' (54) clearly predicts his fate.

Coincidence is closely connected to the idea of fate. The meeting of the two lovers is coincidental as it is based firstly on the servant not being able to read the invitation list, and then on Romeo deciding to attend the party of his enemy because Rosaline (his original love interest) will be there. This supports the idea of the importance of fate. Another unfortunate coincidence is the plague, which prevents Friar John from delivering the message to Romeo in Mantua. Of course these plot devices help to create twists and turns in the story and create tension in the drama and a sense of helplessness in the audience.

The question being raised by Shakespeare is whether or not the young protagonists have any control over their fate. When Romeo hears the news of Juliet's 'death' from Balthasar, he proclaims decisively, 'Then I defy you, stars!' (V, i, 24). He takes matters into his own hands instead of relying on the help of others, which results in tragedy for the two lovers.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Explain the Elizabethan belief in fortune.
- 2 What phrase in the Prologue tells us that fate will play a part in the young lovers' lives?

### Applying

- 3 The following events all occur in the play. Some are the result of pure coincidence or fate; some are the result of free decisions and actions of Romeo and/or Juliet. Identify each event according to whether it is a result of fate or free decisions. For all the events defined as free decisions, indicate what other action or decision Romeo or Juliet could have taken in order to avert the final result.
  - a Romeo meets Juliet.
  - b Romeo and Juliet marry in secret.
  - c Mercutio is killed.
  - d Tybalt is killed.
  - e Juliet takes the potion which the Friar gives her.
  - f Juliet wakes up after Romeo has killed himself.
  - g Friar Lawrence's letter is not delivered to Romeo in Mantua.
  - h Romeo buys poison from the apothecary.

### Analysing

- 4 Find four examples of references to fate or the stars in the play. Write down each quote and who says it. Explain each quote.
- 5 How does Shakespeare use the idea of fate to create tension and suspense for the audience? Give two examples.

Shakespeare has deliberately changed the leisurely pace of the original story, the poem by Brooke, who allowed a month or two to elapse after the marriage of Romeo and Juliet before Tybalt is killed. Time is of the essence with Shakespeare's two lovers. Even Juliet herself comments on how fast the relationship is developing, 'It is too unadvised, too sudden / Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be / Ere one can say 'It lightens' (II, ii, 118–20). When Romeo urges, 'I stand on sudden haste' the Friar warns Romeo not to rush into things. The lovers' impatience to be united in marriage is partly because of the intensity of their love, but also because of the difficult circumstances they are in as their families are opposed. Their extreme youth also makes them hasty and impatient. Waiting for Romeo to arrive on their wedding night, Juliet is impatient for the sun to set, 'Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds / Towards Phoebus' lodging' (III, ii, 1–2). Balthasar urges his master to have patience when he hears the dreadful news of Juliet's death but Romeo tragically rushes off to his death.

Timing is critical in the tragic course of events. Friar John is too late with the message for Romeo; Juliet wakes too late; Friar Lawrence arrives too late to save Romeo.



### DID YOU KNOW...

Phoebus Apollo is the Greek god of light and the sun god. Phoebus means 'light'. He is often depicted driving his fiery chariot across the sky.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Over how many days does the play's action take place?

### Understanding

- 2 Find four examples of references to time in the play. Write each quote and who says it. Explain the words.

### Evaluating

- 3 Debate one of the following statements with a partner. Share your conclusions with the class.
  - a The tragedy could have been prevented if the lovers had been more cautious and less impulsive.
  - b The adults are responsible for the tragedy because of their hasty decisions.

## Time and timing

The action of the play moves with incredible pace. It begins on Sunday morning and finishes on Thursday. In the space of five days, the lovers meet and are married; Mercutio is killed; Romeo exacts revenge on Tybalt; the lovers are separated after one night together; the marriage to Paris is arranged; Juliet gets the potion from the Friar and drinks it; Romeo returns from Mantua and kills himself just before Juliet awakes; Juliet kills herself shortly afterwards. No time elapses between scenes and the audience shares the sense of urgency, excitement and tension with the protagonists.

# Love and hate

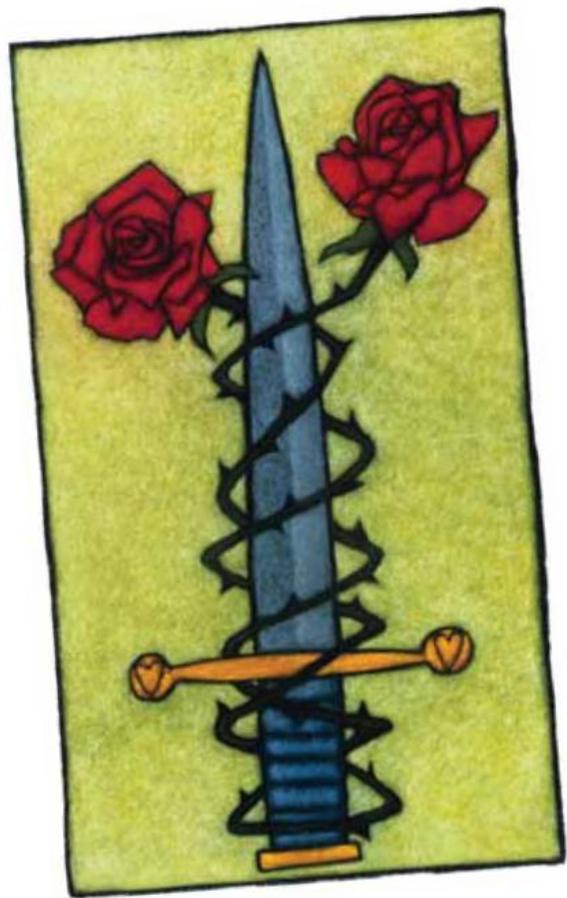
Arguably, the strongest themes in *Romeo and Juliet* are love and hate. Love dominates the story, but it is hate which brings about the tragedy. The love of the young couple is tender and caring but also passionate. The thirteen-year-old Juliet speaks passionately when she impatiently awaits her new husband to come to her bed. 'Come, civil night ... And learn me how to lose a winning match, / Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods' (III, ii, 10–13). Their love is loyal and they make the ultimate sacrifice for it. This love, central to the story, is contrasted to the many sexual connotations of love made by Mercutio and the Nurse. We also have the traditional courtly language of love, used by Romeo when talking about Rosaline, and Paris in his courting of Juliet.

In contrast, hate is the premise of the play's action as the 'ancient grudge' between the Capulets and Montagues proves. It forms the hostile background against which the light of the young couple's love flickers. Tybalt is the best representative of this hate; he expresses this in the opening scene. 'I hate the word [peace] / As I hate hell, all Montagues and thee' (I, i, 69–70). His hatred is impassioned, without clear motive and destructive. Ultimately, the young and innocent love cannot survive such a climate of hate. However, ironically, their deaths bring about peace and an end to the hatred between the families. The Prince acknowledges this when he says, 'Capulet, Montague / See what a scourge is laid upon your hate / That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love' (V, iii, 291–3).



## DID YOU KNOW...

Courtly love refers to the traditional conventions concerning the love relationships between noblemen and their ladies in Elizabethan times. Romantic love and courtship were idealised.



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Identify two relationships in the courtly love tradition.

### Understanding

- 2 How does Romeo express his love for Juliet? Provide two examples with quotes for each.
- 3 How does Juliet express her love for Romeo? Provide two examples, with quotes for each.

### Analysing

- 4 Explain what the following lines mean and the context in which they are spoken. Who is speaking? To whom are the words spoken? To whom do the words refer?
  - a Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;  
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes.  
(I, i, 179–80)
  - b If love be rough with you, be rough with love;  
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.  
(I, iv, 27–8)
  - c And, but thou love me, let them find me here:  
My life were better ended by their hate  
(II, ii, 80–1)
  - d O I have bought the mansion of a love,  
But not possess'd it. (III, ii, 26–7)

# Strands in action

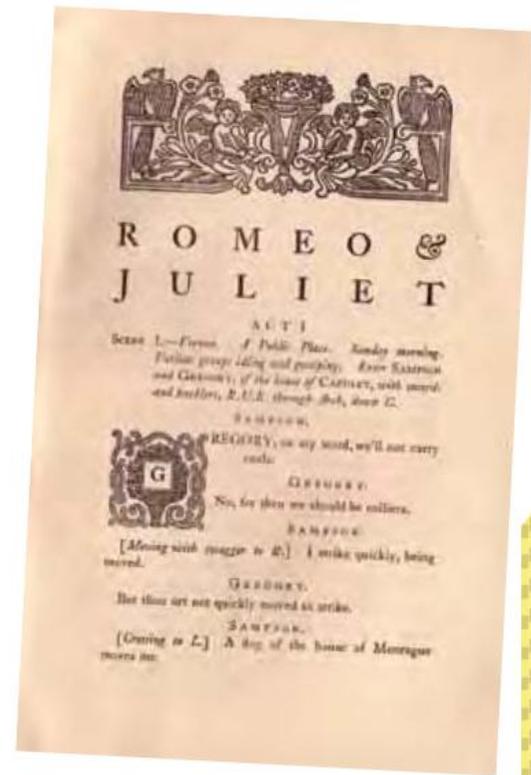
## Core tasks

- 1 The theme of love in *Romeo and Juliet* is fraught with contradictory emotions: joy, passion, confusion, pain, tenderness and sorrow.  
Present your arguments for and against one of the statements below in the form of an oral presentation. You must include quotes as evidence for your main arguments, and you may also decide to use presentation software to further enhance your oral report.
  - Love conquers all.
  - Young love cannot survive in a world of hatred.
- 2 Consider the role of fate in *Romeo and Juliet*. Write a short response of three paragraphs, discussing the ways in which fate influences the outcome of the story. Use quotes in your response.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Write your own love poem or rap song, based on a modern interpretation of the classic *Romeo and Juliet* story, such as the *Twilight* saga by Stephanie Meyer or Bernstein's film, *West Side Story*, or another story involving lovers from the 'wrong side of the tracks'. Your poem or song should be at least four verses long. You may like to begin with one of the following lines to inspire you.
  - she doth teach the torches to burn bright.  
(I, v, 44)
  - My only love, sprung from my only hate. (I, v, 138)
  - Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow.  
(II, ii, 184)
- 2 There are a number of peace-loving characters in the play: the Prince who tries to control the violent brawling in his town, Balthasar (Romeo's manservant), and Benvolio (Romeo's friend). As a journalist for the *Verona Chronicle*, interview one of these and write the script of the interview. In your questions, focus on the destructiveness of the long-lasting hatred between the two families. With a partner, act out the interview.
- 3 There are many additional themes alluded to in *Romeo and Juliet*, such as gender roles and the subservience of women in a patriarchal society. Consider the roles of women in the play. Research this theme using the internet and your school or local library for relevant material, and prepare an informative written report on the female characters and their roles in the play.

# Decoding and responding to *Romeo and Juliet*



**W**hile *Romeo and Juliet* is full of dramatic action, beginning with a fight and ending in moving tragedy, it is also a text created in words by Shakespeare. Therefore, in responding to this text, we have to decode the words and interpret Shakespeare's meaning. Shakespeare's language abounds with vivid imagery (metaphors, similes and personification), soliloquies, puns, irony and antithesis. This language supports the meaning of the action and the development of character, as well as presenting themes to the audience/reader.

## Imagery

Shakespeare's language abounds with vivid imagery. Imagery is the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings and thoughts. It is painting a picture in words. Imagery draws on the senses, and can be visual (seen), aural (heard) or tactile (felt/touched). When we read language expressed imaginatively, the meaning comes from what the images suggest to us, rather than their literal or exact meaning. For example, Romeo describes Juliet when she appears at her balcony in this way, 'It is the east and Juliet is the sun'. She is clearly not the sun, but that image expresses Romeo's delight in her shining beauty. This is an example of a metaphor. Metaphors and similes are the most common types of imagery in which one thing is compared to another.

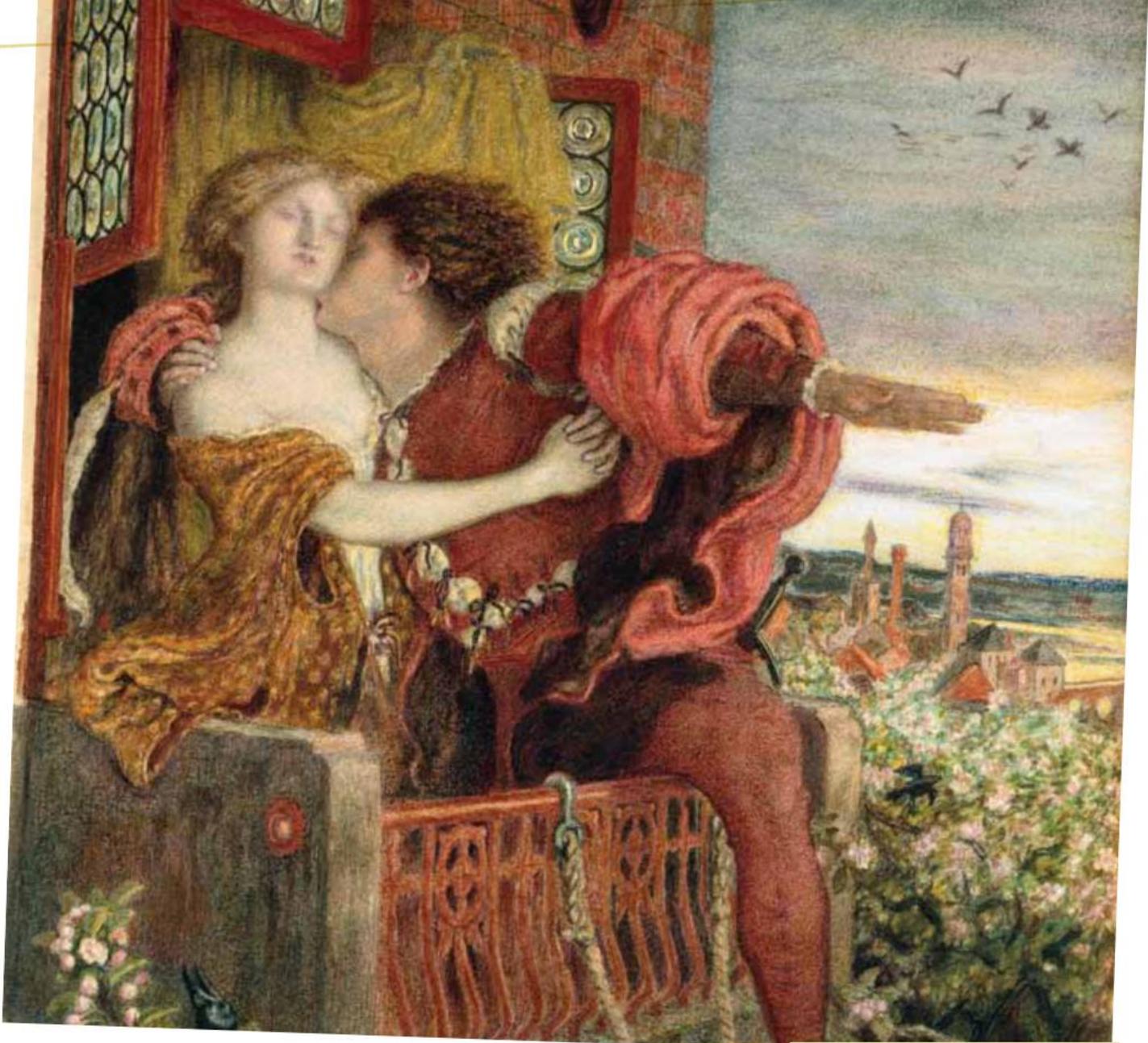
When Romeo sees Juliet on her balcony, he compares the brightness of her cheek to the stars in the heavens: 'The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars / As daylight does a lamp' (II, ii, 19–20). This image shows Shakespeare's wonderful imagination and skill with language. As daylight outshines a dull lamp, so Juliet's cheek is brighter than the stars.

An interesting extended metaphor is used by Lady Capulet when she describes the handsome Paris to her daughter. She asks her daughter to 'Read o'er the volume of Paris's face' as if he is a book, which 'only lacks a cover' (I, iii, 82, 89).

## Personification

Personification is used when human qualities are attributed to things that are not human. For example, 'The ocean rose and fell in rapid breaths' likens the ocean to a person by allowing it to breathe like a human.

There are a number of powerful examples of personification when death is presented as Juliet's husband. The first one expresses Juliet's despair when Romeo is banished and all looks lost. 'And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead' (III, ii, 137). The second expresses Romeo's anguish at seeing Juliet lying 'dead' in the tomb: 'Shall I believe / That unsubstantial death is amorous, / And that the lean abhorred monster keeps / Thee there in the dark to be his paramour?' (V, iii, 102–5).



Romeo and Juliet, by Ford Madox Brown, oil on canvas 1870

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is imagery?
- 2 Name three types of imagery.

### Understanding

- 3 Find one example of a simile in the play. Who is the speaker? What is being compared?
- 4 Find one example of a metaphor in the play. Who is the speaker? What is being compared?

### Creating

- 5 Choose two of the following images and design a visual representation of each image. You may use computer technology to create your image, or you may draw, paint or sketch your image.

Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops. (III, v, 9–10)

These violent delights have violent ends  
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,  
Which as they kiss, consume. (II, vi, 9–10)

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,  
My love as deep. (II, ii, 133–4)

Give me my Romeo. And when I die,  
Take him and cut him out in little stars. (III, ii, 21–2)

# Antithesis and oxymoron

Antithesis (or words with opposite meanings) occurs frequently throughout the play. These are used to highlight conflict. Love is opposed to hatred, youth opposed to age, life opposed to death, light opposed to dark and, of course, the Capulets and the Montagues are opposed to each other. When Romeo first appears in the play after the street brawl, he comments, 'Here's much to do with hate, but more with love' (I, i, 176). He continues his speech using a number of oxymorons, which sharply contrast opposing ideas. 'O brawling love, O loving hate' (I, i, 177).



**oxymoron:** an expression using two opposite words to make a sharp but seemingly contradictory phrase.

Later on, when Juliet first finds out her husband has killed her cousin, she uses oxymorons to reveal her contradictory feelings. She calls Romeo a 'Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical!' and 'A damned saint, an honourable villain' (I, iii, 75 and 78).

## Puns

Shakespeare also uses a different kind of word play with puns.



**pun:** a play on words similar in sound and spelling but suggesting a different meaning. Puns are often used to create humour.

When Mercutio is dying, he jokingly cries out, 'Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man' (III, i, 98). The pun is on the word 'grave' meaning 'serious' and 'a tomb'. Mercutio's comment is indeed no laughing matter. In the opening lines of the play, the

two Capulet servants use puns to great comic effect when they brag about their preparedness to fight. The words 'carry coals' (do menial tasks), 'collier' (term of insult), 'choler' (anger) and 'collar' (hangman's noose) are all puns designed to make the audience laugh.

## Soliloquies

The use of soliloquies in Shakespearean drama is effective in creating an inner life for the characters. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the two lovers have very little time together. We know their feelings for each other before they actually declare their love to each other. We know this through their thoughts expressed as soliloquy. Their love is a secret one and known only to the Friar and the Nurse. Once separated, when all hope is lost, they can share their thoughts with no one except the audience.

Romeo's first soliloquy is an expression of love, when he sees Juliet at her balcony. 'But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?' (II, ii, 2–32). Juliet's secret desire that her beloved had any other name than Romeo is expressed in a soliloquy, 'O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo' (II, ii, 33). However, she is unaware that Romeo, hiding in the orchard, overhears her words.

Juliet has a number of other soliloquies, one at the beginning of the second scene in Act III, when she is impatiently waiting for news of Romeo from the Nurse; one at the end of Act III when she realises the Nurse has betrayed her, and a very important one in the fourth scene in Act IV, when she is about to take the sleeping potion, 'Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again' (15). With each of these soliloquies, we can see the growing maturity and courage of this young girl who has been left more and more alone. Similarly, when Romeo is banished and alone in Mantua, he speaks in soliloquy, firstly when he reflects ironically on a dream in which his 'lady came and found [him] dead' (V, i, 6) and again, when he hears of Juliet's 'death' and plans to find the means to join her (V, i, 36).

The most tender and painful soliloquies are the ones just at the point of death. Romeo gazes on his beloved Juliet in disbelief that she can be dead, 'Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath / Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty' (V, iii, 92–3). Minutes later, Juliet awakes to see her dead husband and her urgent, brief soliloquy is just as compelling. 'What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand?' (V, iii, 161).

# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 What is the purpose of soliloquies in Shakespeare's plays?
- 2 What is the purpose of puns in Shakespeare's play?

## Analysing

- 3 Carefully read Romeo's soliloquy from Act V, Scene iii, lines 85–120. Identify the following elements.
  - a Find and quote the questions Romeo asks in the soliloquy.
  - b Quote two examples of personification.
  - c What senses does Romeo use in his soliloquy (such as sight or touch)? Quote a line for each of the senses referred to.
- 4 Demonstrate your understanding of the language used in Romeo's soliloquy.
  - a Explain the comparison Romeo makes between light and dark in the opening lines.
  - b Repetition is used towards the end of the speech. Give one example. What dramatic effect does this have on the audience? What do you imagine the actor to be doing as he repeats these phrases?
  - c Quote the lines of Romeo's soliloquy that suggest that Juliet is married to Death.
  - d Explain the metaphor of the 'bark' or boat and the 'desperate pilot' (118–19).

## Creating

- 5 Perform the soliloquy analysed in Question 3 above, using props, sounds and visual effects. Use appropriate music and digital images as a background to the speech.

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## Guide to writing a text response

Once you have read and understood the story, characters, themes and language of Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet*, you should be ready to respond, in writing, to this rich and rewarding text. A text response requires careful thought and planning, as well as detailed familiarity with the text. Use the following guide to present your ideas in a cohesive, structured piece of writing. Consider this topic.

**'Romeo and Juliet are innocent victims of the adult world in which they live.'** Discuss.

- 1 Highlight or underline the key words of the topic, and define them, for example 'innocent victims' and 'adult world'.
- 2 Reword the topic. For example, 'Romeo and Juliet are not to blame for their tragedy. The adults and their society are to blame for their deaths.'
- 3 Work through all the possible interpretations of the topic. For example, the word 'innocent' has connotations of no responsibility at all. Are there different degrees of innocence? Is the pair's innocence the sole reason for their fate, or is unfortunate coincidence involved?
- 4 Form your opinion. You do not have to wholly agree or disagree. 'Discuss' means consider all sides.
- 5 Brainstorm examples and quotes you may need.
- 6 Compose your introduction carefully. It should include Shakespeare's name, the title of the play, a clear statement of your opinion. Do not say, 'In this essay I will cover this and this and this.'
- 7 Write topic sentences for each of the subsequent paragraphs. There should be at least three to four body paragraphs (more if you like).
- 8 The conclusion should sum up your argument sharply and concisely. Do not just repeat everything you have written in the body of the essay.



Use formal language and present tense. Do not use the personal pronoun 'I'. Quote short phrases and incorporate them into your sentence, or quote no more than two lines at a time.

## Sample introduction

Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet*, tells the tragic story of a 'pair of star-crossed lovers' who meet by chance and defy their parents and their society in order to marry. Although they appear to be doomed from the start, there are a number of adults who hold responsibility for what happens to them. Firstly, the parents and the two families involved in the feud.

Secondly, the adult mentors of Romeo and Juliet, the Friar and the Nurse, although they attempt to assist, ultimately abandon them. Finally, the young lovers bear some responsibility for making rash and unwise decisions.

## Sample topic sentences

- The feud between the Capulets and the Montagues creates enormous difficulties for Romeo and Juliet.
- Although the Friar and the Nurse love their two charges, they make some foolish and selfish decisions which result in the lovers' tragic deaths.
- Nevertheless, the young and impulsive lovers bring some of their troubles on themselves.
- However, in some ways, Romeo and Juliet are doomed from the start.

## Sample conclusion

The tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* is caused by a number of factors. The Chorus tells us in the Prologue, they are 'star-cross'd'. We, therefore, sympathise with these innocent victims right from the beginning of the play. Their parents, who supposedly care for them, place great difficulties in their way. More significantly, the Nurse and the Friar in whom they trust, let them down at crucial times. There is no place in Verona for such 'true and faithful' lovers. The Prince recognises the enormity of their tragedy when he concludes,

For never was a story of more woe  
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

## Using quotes effectively

When you quote texts, you are taking words from the text to support the ideas you are presenting. The quote may be a single word, a phrase, a sentence, or a number of lines of verse. Good use of a quote can show that you understand the text and are able to respond to it in an intelligent manner. Your quote must be relevant to the topic you are responding to, and should not just be added to make your essay longer. It is more effective to use short phrases, or single line quotes, rather than a large chunk of text.

There are a number of ways you can introduce a quote:

- Use a quote as part of a sentence: 'The "star-crossed lovers", Romeo and Juliet, are doomed from the start of Shakespeare's play.' This brief quote is incorporated into your sentence. If you need to change the quoted word(s) in order to make your sentence grammatically correct, then acknowledge the changed section with square brackets. 'When Romeo sees his beloved Juliet in the tomb, he sees that "death ... hath had no power yet upon [her] beauty".'
- Use a quote as evidence for a statement you are making: 'Romeo feels that fate is against him when he says, "O, I am fortune's fool".'
- Add a quote at the end of your paragraph to illustrate the theme or character trait you are discussing: 'Juliet shows great courage in spite of her fear when she takes the sleeping potion given to her by the Friar. She is very aware of the dangerous situation she is putting herself in. Yet she is determined to take this desperate measure because she loves Romeo. These lines from her soliloquy show her strength, her fears and her love:  
"I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins  
That almost freezes up the heat of life.  
... Romeo, Romeo, Romeo.  
Here's drink. I drink to thee."
- Use a quote in the middle of a sentence to illustrate what you are saying. The quote can be in parenthesis (dashes). 'Although the Friar is initially surprised by Romeo's announcement that he would like to marry Juliet—"Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!" (II, iii, 66)—he very quickly agrees to marry them, since he believes that this will help put an end to the feud between the two warring families.'

Remember, it is you who are quoting, not the character who says the words. To quote is to use the words of a writer or speaker. Therefore, it is incorrect to say, 'As Romeo quotes ...' or 'As quoted by Romeo ...' or 'As quoted by Shakespeare ...'. In fact, there is no need to use the actual word 'quote' in your response, since the use of quotation marks clearly indicates that the words are being quoted by you.

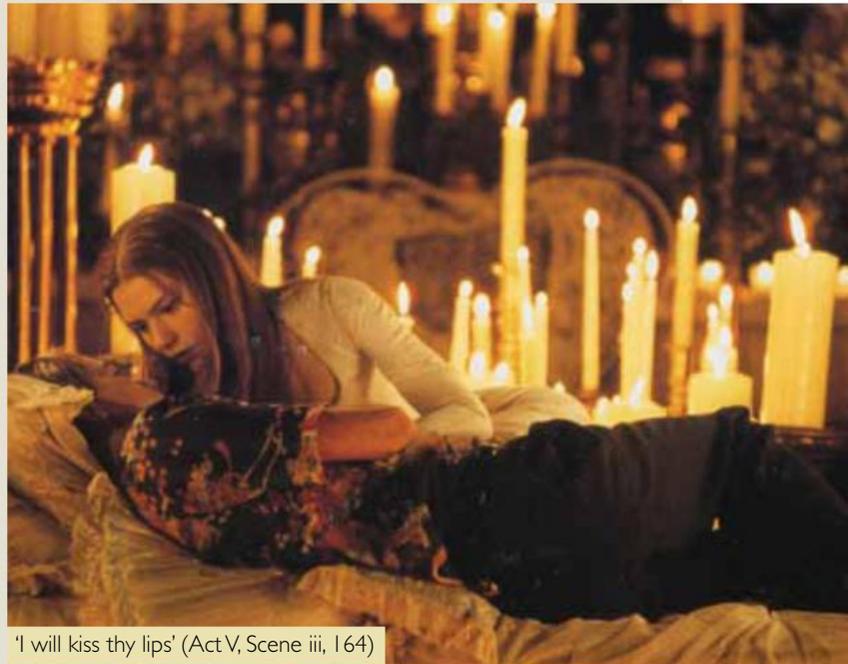
# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Write an essay on one of the topics below. Structure your essay in paragraphs, and use quotes and examples from the text to support your view.
  - 'Juliet is a much stronger character than Romeo.' Do you agree?
  - 'In the play, *Romeo and Juliet*, love and hatred are the two dominant emotions, but love triumphs in the end.' Discuss this statement, giving reasons for your opinion.
  - 'Romeo and Juliet die because of the society in which they live and the people who are closest to them.' To what extent do you agree?
  - 'Some shall be pardon'd and some punished,' concludes the Prince at the end of the play. Who deserves to be pardoned? Who deserves to be punished? Support your opinion with evidence from the play.
  - 'Romeo and Juliet are responsible for their tragic fates.' Do you agree?
  - 'O, I am fortune's fool!' declares Romeo. To what degree is his and Juliet's tragedy caused by fortune or fate?
- 2 Choose and complete one of the following creative writing tasks.
  - a Design and write the front page of the newspaper *Verona Chronicle*. This edition is the Friday immediately after the deaths of Romeo and Juliet. Include details in your lead story about the street brawls, the Prince's edict, the ball, the secret marriage, the intended marriage between Paris and Juliet, and the final tragic outcome. Think carefully about layout, pictures, headlines, and even weather details and other smaller articles about current local events. Consider the style of writing used in newspaper articles.
  - b Take a scene from the play and adapt it for a different medium, such as a musical or a graphic cartoon. Plan each step of your task carefully. If you are creating a cinematic adaptation, select your actors, decide on the setting and time, the costumes, the musical score and the types of film shots. Write your script. If you are composing a musical, find suitable songs and artists and decide on staging and choruses. If you are designing a cartoon, plan each frame, and select the appropriate speech bubbles and action.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Sketch a map of Verona marking in the two houses of the Capulets and Montagues, the town square, the Friar's cell, and the Capulet tomb. Include the direction of Mantua. Indicate all the events that take place at these venues.
- 2 View the final scenes of Baz Luhrmann's film (1996) and Franco Zeffirelli's film (1968) from Romeo's arrival at the Capulet tomb to the tragic end. Compare the two versions. Discuss characterisation of the two protagonists and choice of actors; the setting; the lighting; the musical score; filming techniques; costume. Which version do you prefer and why?



'I will kiss thy lips' (Act V, Scene iii, l 64)

The best way to sound like you know what you're talking about is to know what you're talking about.

Anonymous



# The art of oral communication

## Chapter overview

**F**or nearly every human being, the principal form of communication is by mouth. It is estimated that, on average, every adult speaks approximately 16000 words per day. In a year, that's six million words!

While it's easy and natural to communicate with people we meet informally, not everyone can confidently speak in front of a large group or audience. Often this is because of shyness, or fear of failure. However, public speaking is an important skill to learn and you'll use it more often in your life than you might realise.

# 1

# Public speaking

**P**ublic speaking is the practice of delivering, in front of an audience, a prepared, structured speech that is designed to inform, persuade or entertain. Speeches can be a single person speaking before an audience, a group of speakers participating in a debate, or an actor delivering a soliloquy or monologue. Regardless of its delivery, every speech is designed to communicate a message to the audience.

## Why is public speaking important?

If you learn to do it well, public speaking can:

- increase your confidence. Once you have learnt the skill of speaking in front of an audience, you'll be more confident when meeting new people or when dealing with new situations.
- make you more comfortable around other people, including strangers. If you can present a speech in front of a whole room, you can comfortably speak with people you have just met.
- improve your language skills, as you learn to select the right words
- improve your non-verbal communication skills, such as eye contact and intonation, as these are an important part of public speaking
- help you with thinking on your feet
- make you a better researcher, organiser and planner (skills that are really important when you leave school and get a job)
- help you broaden your communication channels, as you learn to speak with different audiences.



### DID YOU KNOW...

In 2008, Newspoll found that 23 per cent of people surveyed feared public speaking ahead of death.

## How to write an effective speech

Ensuring that you are well prepared is one of the best ways to overcome your nerves when speaking in public. The more organised you are, the better you will know your topic and the more confident you will be.

A speech should follow a structure that results in a comprehensive and effortless talk. All the components of your speech should build on each other in order to convey your message.

## Step 1: planning and preparation

Before you begin writing your speech, it is important to ask yourself some questions about your audience, purpose and constraints.

- **Audience**—who will your speech be delivered to? How old are the people you are addressing? What interest do they have in the topic? Are they familiar with it, or will you be teaching them about something new? Is there anything you should *not* say to this audience? What does the audience need or desire from your speech?
- **Purpose**—why are you giving this speech? Is it to inform? Persuade? Entertain?
- **Constraints**—how long does your speech need to be? Where will it be delivered? Are you able to use visual aids? Will there be a platform or podium for you to use?



Using a **library catalogue** to find reference material is nearly as easy as using Google to search on the internet. Library catalogues tell you what material is held by a particular library or libraries. This can include physical items such as books, magazines, journals, CDs and DVDs as well as any electronic resources.

You can search a catalogue by author, title, subject or keyword. A search of any of these will bring up a list of items. There will be details about each item such as title, author, publication information, subject headings, as well as its call number, where it is located in the library and whether it is available for loan.

## Step 2: researching your topic

Researching your topic is a key step. If it's up to you to choose your topic, make sure you choose one with which you are familiar. If you are not able to choose, then start your research early so that you become confident with the subject.

Before beginning your research, it's a great idea to start a KWL chart. A KWL chart will help you organise your thoughts so that your research can be more focused and effective. This chart documents:

- what you already know about the subject
- what you want to know about the subject
- what you have learnt.

Once you have completed the first two columns on your chart, it's time to start your research.

Begin your research in the library or on the internet. The internet has overtaken the library as the most popular medium of research; however, it's not always wise to believe everything you read on the internet.

If you choose to begin your research in the library, then a quick chat with the librarian is a great place to start. They will be able to suggest books you will need and some further topics that relate to yours. If you're not able to speak to the librarian, use the catalogue to locate a reference book on your topic.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### KWL chart

Before you begin your research, complete the first two columns with as much detail as you can. Complete the last column after you finish your research. Have you found out everything you want to know?

Topic		
What I know	What I want to know	What I have learnt

A KWL chart

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is public speaking?
- 2 What is a KWL chart?
- 3 How can a KWL chart help when researching a topic?

### Understanding

- 4 Create a poster that demonstrates how to use a KWL chart.
- 5 How can thorough and effective research at this stage assist you in the long term?

### Applying

- 6 Draw and complete a KWL chart on a topic of your choice.

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## What to include in your research

What you research depends on the purpose of your speech. At secondary school you will mostly be asked to inform or persuade your audience. When framing your research questions you should consider the who, what, when, where and how aspects of your subject. Here are some questions to consider to focus your research.

### For an informative speech ...

- What is the history of the topic?
- Who are the people involved?
- Where did the event take place?
- When did the event occur?
- What are the key events to do with the topic?
- Why is this topic important?
- What does it tell us about the world?

### For a persuasive speech ...

- What are the issues of the topic?
- Why is this topic an issue?
- What makes it controversial?
- What are the sides of the argument?
- What is my stance?
- What evidence can I find to support my stance?
- How will I persuade my audience to agree with my stance?

## Step 3: writing your speech

Many speech makers find it useful to write out their speech before they make their palm cards. This ensures familiarity with the content, which helps to avoid nerves and retain the audience's attention.

The structure of your speech depends on its purpose.

### Informative speeches

An informative speech includes the following:

#### Introduction

The introduction should include a catchy or witty line that will immediately spark your audience's interest. It needs to tell them what your speech is about and why you have chosen this topic, that is, why it is significant.

#### Body

Include the most important point you wish to make about the topic and any supporting evidence, followed by the next most important points, with supporting evidence, until all points are made. Make sure you have covered who, what, when, where, how and why.

#### Conclusion

Give a summary of the main points of your speech. Leave your audience with something to remember your speech by. It could be a famous quote, a question for the audience to consider, or an interesting story that relates to your topic. Always remember to thank your audience for listening.



A useful way to remember the structure of a speech is: 'Tell them what you're going to talk about (your introduction), tell them (the body of the speech), then tell them what you spoke about (the conclusion).'

### Persuasive speeches

A persuasive speech includes the following:

#### Introduction

Make sure you write an introduction that sparks the audience's interest and give them a reason to listen. Tell the audience what you will be speaking about and your contention.



A **contention** is the main point that you will discussing or arguing.

## Body

There are a number of steps to include here:

- 1 Need step**—Your job during this step is to either:
  - show your audience what is wrong with a proposed change, or
  - show your audience why a change needs to be made.You develop this step by:
  - a telling your audience why there is a need
  - b proving the need through quotes, facts, illustrations or stories/anecdotes
  - c showing the audience how this need relates to them.
- 2 Satisfaction step**—Next you provide a solution to the problem that you have highlighted. You can do this through one or more of the following steps.
  - a Tell the audience the attitude you wish them to adopt towards the change.
  - b Point out step by step how your solution fixes the problem.
  - c Give an example of your solution being effectively used.
- 3 Rebuttal step**—Here you try to persuade your audience that the alternatives to your argument are not acceptable. You can tie this in with the visualisation step (see below) by stating all the negatives that will arise if your solution is not used.
- 4 Visualisation step**—Encourage your audience to picture the problem once your solution has been applied. You can use one of the following methods to do this:
  - State all the positive outcomes of your solution.
  - State the negative outcomes if your solution is not used.
  - Combine the two. Begin by describing the negative outcomes and finish by showing how these could become positive.

## Conclusion

Conclude your speech (also the 'action step') by:

- 1** restating your main idea and summarising your most important points

- 2** expressing to the audience what you wish them to have learnt from your speech
- 3** concluding with a statement that they'll remember.

Now that you have your speech organised, the next task is to get ready for the delivery.

## Step 4: writing your palm cards

Palm cards are small cards that fit into the palm of your hand and are used to prompt your memory while delivering a speech. You should never write your speech word for word onto palm cards; just jot down a few key ideas, words and phrases that will help you to remember your main points and maintain the flow of your speech. This also allow you to interact with your audience through eye contact and gestures.

A well-researched and rehearsed speech flows naturally, so write your palm cards early and use them to practise, both in front of the mirror and an audience.



### DID YOU KNOW...

Palm cards are also known as 'cue cards'.

Each section of your speech (from the introduction to the conclusion) will need to be reduced to one key word or phrase that will trigger your memory. Go through your speech and highlight the main idea in each paragraph. Use a different colour highlighter for every paragraph.

Next, for each paragraph, highlight the supporting ideas and evidence for the main point you identified using the same colour highlighter you used for the main idea.

Finally, highlight quotes and important facts that you don't wish to forget. Maintain the same colour highlighter for each paragraph.

The next task is to transfer this information onto palm cards. Every main idea will have its own card supported by sub-points, evidence, quotes and important facts. This guarantees that you have all the information you require at your fingertips.

So, what do good palm cards look like? On the next page are suggested palm cards for an acceptance speech given by Oprah Winfrey in September 2002 when she was awarded the first ever Bob Hope Humanitarian Award at the 54th annual Emmy Awards for her services to television and film.

# OPRAH WINFREY RECEIVES THE FIRST BOB HOPE HUMANITARIAN AWARD

By Oprah Winfrey

SPEECH

There really is nothing more important to me than striving to be a good human being. So, to be here tonight and be acknowledged as the first to receive this honour is beyond expression in words for me. 'I am a human being; nothing human is alien to me.' Terence said that in 154 BC and when I first read it many years ago, I had no idea of the depth of that meaning.

I grew up in Nashville with a father who owned a barbershop, Winfrey's Barber Shop, he still does, I can't get him to retire. And every holiday, every holiday, all of the transients and the guys who I thought were just losers who hung out at the shop, and were always bumming haircuts from my father and borrowing money from my dad, all those guys always ended up at our dinner table. They were a cast of real characters—it was Fox and Shorty and Bootsy and Slim. And I would say, 'Bootsy, could you pass the peas, please?' And I would often say to my father afterwards, 'Dad, why can't we just have regular people at our Christmas dinner?'—because I was looking for the Currier & Ives version. And my father said to me, 'They are regular people. They're just like you. They want the same thing you want.' And I would say, 'What?' And he'd say, 'To be fed.' And at the time, I just thought he was talking about dinner. But I have since learned how profound he really was, because we all are just regular people seeking the same thing. The guy on the street, the woman in the classroom, the Israeli, the Afghani, the Zuni, the Apache, the Irish, the Protestant, the Catholic, the gay, the straight, you, me—we all just want to know that we matter. We want validation. We want the same things. We want safety and we want to live a long life. We want to find somebody to love. Stedman, thank you. We want to find somebody to laugh with and have the power and the place to cry with when necessary.

This is the introduction. Winfrey introduces the (main) idea of what it means to be human through the use of a quote from Terence (Roman playwright, Publius Terentius Afer); the quote captures the audience's attention.

Winfrey uses anecdotes from her childhood to show how far she has come in her observations and beliefs about humanity. This is an important idea as she is receiving an award for her service to humanity. She shows her understanding of humankind by explaining wants and needs that are common to everyone, and uses her anecdotes as evidence to support this.

## 1 Introduction

Honourable award

'I am a human being, nothing human is alien to me.' Terence 154 BC

'I had no idea what this meant.'

## 2 Body

Anecdote: discuss Christmas dinner as a child. Remember Fox, Shorty, Boots and Slim.

Dad: They want the same as you, to be fed. At the time, unsure what he meant.

Everybody wants the same thing:

Validation

Safety

Long life

Freedom of emotion to love, laugh, cry

Winfrey further shows her relationship to humanity by thanking those who have shared their stories with her. This is further evidence of her premise that all humans want the same things because what makes her so easy to relate to is her humanity.

Winfrey sums up her speech with another quote, from American poet Maya Angelou. By concluding with a quote, Winfrey is relating to her audience and leaving them with something to think about.

The greatest pain in life is to be invisible. What I've learned is that we all just want to be heard. **And I thank all the people who continue to let me hear your stories, and by sharing your stories, you let other people see themselves and for a moment, glimpse the power to change and the power to triumph.**

Maya Angelou said, 'When you learn, teach. When you get, give.' I want you to know that this award to me means that I will continue to strive to give back to the world what it has given to me, so that I might even be more worthy of tonight's honour.

Source: Oprah Winfrey, 22 September 2002

### 3 Body

The greatest pain in life is to be invisible.

All people want to be heard.

Thank everyone for sharing their stories.

### 4 Conclusion

'When you learn, teach. When you get, give.' Maya Angelou

Discuss what award means.

Thank everyone.

### ?

#### DID YOU KNOW...

The Bob Hope Humanitarian Award is one of the greatest honours that can be bestowed by the Board of Governors of the (American) Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and pays tribute to Bob Hope, the American comedian who spent more than fifty years of his life in the public eye, performing many acts of humanitarianism.



## Important tips for writing palm cards

- There should be only one main idea per card. Have this as the heading and colour code it so you can quickly see the point you have reached.
- Use large handwriting for your cards so you can read them easily.
- Write on one side of the card only.
- Number your cards in case you drop them.
- Use dot points to structure the supporting ideas and evidence.
- Highlight important quotes and facts so that you do not forget to use them.
- Make a note of where you plan to use props.
- Don't be tempted to write out your whole speech on the cards. This defeats the purpose of having them and interrupts the flow and interaction with the audience.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is an informative speech?
- 2 What is a persuasive speech?
- 3 Make a list of the steps to follow when organising a speech.
- 4 Decide whether the following statements are true or false.
  - a The only thing that matters with delivering a speech is the words that you say.
  - b Public speaking is important as you will use it your whole life.
  - c When researching an informative speech you should consider, who, what, when, where, how and why.

### Understanding

- 5 Explain why palm cards are used for public speaking.
- 6 Explain the difference between an informative and a persuasive speech.

### Evaluating

- 7 Explain in a paragraph each of your true/false answers from Question 4.

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 Choose one of the following issues:
  - racism in Australia
  - refugees
  - global warming
  - child adoption by celebrities
  - drugs and alcohol in sport.

Conduct some research in the library and on the internet. Find at least five sources on your topic (at least two must be printed text) and make a list of ten facts and two visual aids you could use in a presentation. Cite your resources for each one.

- 2 Prepare a short presentation based on your research.
- 3 Present it to a small group of your classmates. Ask them to review your performance.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Find a recent news article on a topic that interests you and conduct some further research of the topic at the library. Write a three-minute speech discussing the main arguments of the article and any other points of interest you found in your research. Make sure that you cite your sources.
- 2 Prepare palm cards for the speech you have written for Question 2 above.



'To cite your resources' means to create a list of the sources of information you have used. You must do this so you do not unknowingly claim the work of others as your own. You can learn more about citing and referencing in the Harvard style by visiting **Pearson Reader**.



Web Destination

# Delivering your speech

**G**iving a speech is not just about having the right words to say—it's also about how you deliver the message you are trying to communicate. Think about your teachers. What do they do that helps you to engage with what they are saying? Is it just the words they use or do they do something else that helps support their message?

## Methods of communicating

Methods of communicating include:

- use of language
- tone
- pace of the delivery
- volume of the voice
- body language and gestures
- visual aids.

## Language

The words you use should be easily understood by your audience. Try not to use technical terms or jargon that is unfamiliar to them. If you need to use a technical term, make sure you briefly explain what it means. Try to use language that comes naturally to you.



**Jargon** is the technical or specialised language of a trade, profession or group. For example, 'RAM' and 'MEG' are computer-related terms.

# iPhone

Apple reinvents the phone

## Tone

Your tone is the quality and expression of your voice. When you speak, your voice rarely maintains the same tone. When you're excited, your voice rises in pitch and when you're feeling sad, your voice tends to become flat and low.

Speaking in only one tone (known as a 'monotone') can become boring for your audience. It is important that you vary your tone and pitch to emphasise what you are trying to say.

## Pace

The speed at which you speak has an impact on your audience. If the pace of your speech is too fast, it is difficult to understand. If your speech is too slow, you run the risk of boring your audience and causing them to tune out. Pace your speech so that it is clear and every word you utter can be understood.

## Volume

There's no point in delivering a great speech if your audience cannot hear what you are saying. Try to speak loudly enough so that the people at the back of the room can hear you, but not too loudly, as you do not wish to shout at your audience.

## Body language

Body language is the silent communication that you engage in when you speak. It is just as important as what you are saying and helps to keep the audience's interest. Your body language includes:

- **posture**—if you are giving a speech in your classroom, make sure that you are standing up and do not sit on or behind a table. Keep a relaxed, upright posture with your feet shoulder-width apart and your hands neatly in front of you. You may find yourself giving a speech at a lectern or podium. If so, holding each side of the lectern will help calm your nerves and give you an air of authority.
- **hands**—when you get nervous you may tend to fidget, so it's important to keep your hands under control. Do not put them in your pockets, as you will look informal and uncaring. Try not to put them behind your back, either, as this will make you look a little ponderous. Keep them relaxed and at your side and raise them when you wish to make a gesture or look at your palm cards.

- **eye contact**—this is one of the most important non-verbal forms of communication and is an essential element of good public speaking. By capturing a person's eye at the beginning of your speech, you can help maintain their interest throughout. You also make them feel included in what you are saying, as if you are talking to them personally. Make sure you catch the eye of someone at the front, in the middle and at the back of the room, as well as on both sides so your audience does not lose concentration.
- **gestures**—these are the movements you make throughout your speech. Try to keep them natural, as forced hand movements look artificial. Hand movements can be a good way to emphasise an important point.
- **dress**—make sure you are neatly and comfortably dressed. This gives the impression that you are a responsible person who knows what they are talking about.

## Visual aids

If possible, provide support material in the form of pictures, charts, a slideshow presentation or a short video. Visual aids can be a great technique to help you convey your message more powerfully.

- Before you begin, make sure your aids can be clearly seen from every seat in the room. Make sure your aids are visually appealing, and keep them simple for greater impact.
- Remember to speak to your audience and not to your slides.
- Do not include so many slides that they become the focus of your speech.
- Remember, it is what you are saying that is important—your aids are there only as a supporting element.

## Audio support

If you are using audio support, such as a microphone or music, it is important to make sure that it is working and can be clearly heard by all. Try and get to your venue early and ensure that everything is set up and ready to go. It can look unprofessional if you have to adjust any of your settings in the middle of your speech. Check the volume on all equipment, setting it at a level that can be easily heard at the back of the room, but not so loud that it drowns you out.

# Being prepared

- Practise in front of a mirror, parent, sibling or friend until you are comfortable with what you are going to say and how you are going to say it. You could even record your speech and play it back so that you can hear how you will sound.
- Know your information and notes well so that you only have to refer to your palm cards if you get stuck on a point. Practise keeping to your time limit and know how you will use your visual aids on the day.
- Find out how many people you will be addressing. This will help calm your nerves, and allow you to prepare yourself.
- If you make a mistake don't worry. Chances are the audience will not notice. If it is obvious, just correct yourself and move on.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Decide whether the following statements are true or false.
  - a Maintaining eye contact with your audience is a way to keep them engaged in your speech.
  - b The main idea is to get through your speech as fast as you can, so you do not bore your audience.
  - c Visual aids are extremely important and should take precedence in your speech, especially over your content.
  - d Maintaining eye contact with your audience is the most important aspect of body language.
  - e What you unconsciously communicate via body language is just as important as what you say in your speech.

### Understanding

- 2 Using your own words, write a definition of each of the following: language, pace, volume, tone, body language, visual aids.
- 3 Write a 50–100-word instructional text for someone who is just about to deliver a speech for the first time.
- 4 Illustrate what you believe to be the most important components of public speaking. You may convey this via a cartoon, drawing or collage.
- 5 Explain in your own words the reasons why public speaking is important.

### Applying

- 6 When would you need to give a speech?

### Evaluating

- 7 What step do you find the most interesting when giving a speech? Why?

### Creating

- 8 Devise your own way to remember the steps you need to follow when writing a speech. You could write a poem, limerick or song. Share this with your class.



# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Think of a speech you have given, or a speech you have heard, that did not go well. Suggest reasons why the speech was unsuccessful. Using the steps you have learnt, suggest how you could improve the speech.
- 2 Create a concept map to show how a speech is developed from idea to delivery. Produce your map on an A3-size sheet and use colour to make it more visually appealing to your audience.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Create three visual aids for the following speech and indicate how they will be used. Present the speech to your class using the visual aids.

Recently we have experienced long periods of drought. Water levels are at an all-time low of just 12 per cent, which is a decrease of over 4.2 per cent per year over the past five years. Things are dire.

Having already introduced restrictions on watering lawns and washing cars, and run a heavy media campaign on taking four-minute showers, we must ask ourselves, what more can be done?

I am suggesting a new campaign to emphasise each individual's responsibility—a neighbourhood program of water savings. In this campaign we will praise those who save water, and ask people to report those who are socially irresponsible. A series of posters and billboards, as well as radio and TV advertising, will encourage us to stand up for ourselves and report water-wasters.

- 2 Select an audio support (a piece of music or sound effects) that might be suitable for a speech on each of these topics and explain how you would use it:
  - the importance of friendship
  - a report on your favourite band
  - a debate about logging native forests.

- 3
  - a Imagine that you are unable to communicate using your voice. With a partner choose one of the following messages each. Make sure one of you chooses from list A and one from list B.
  - b Each partner should deliver their message without speaking while the other partner guesses which message is being enacted.

### List A

- Fortune favours the brave. (Publius Terence)
- He who hesitates is lost. (anonymous)
- Let thy words be few. (Ecclesiastes 5:2)
- It is better to fall short of a high mark than to reach a low one. (H. C. Payne)
- Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is (Vince Lombardi)

### List B

- Victory belongs to the most persevering. (Napoleon Bonaparte)
- There are no gains without pains. (Adlai Stevenson)
- They can because they think they can. (Virgil)
- Never say die. (proverb)
- The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones. (Chinese proverb)

# Great speeches in history

Some of the best speeches, such as speeches delivered on the eve of war, can still inspire audiences centuries after they were delivered, even though they are no longer relevant. What is it about these speeches that moves audiences? Is it their language choice, their delivery, or their content? In this module you will examine some enduring speeches and see what makes them great.

## Elements of a speech

Mustafa Kemal, also known as Ataturk (meaning 'Father of the Turks'), was elected in 1924 as the first President of Turkey. Before that, Kemal, a military officer, commanded the 19th division of the Turkish army at Gallipoli in 1914 and it is his command that has been credited with holding off the allies from entering Turkey during this time.

Kemal's declaration that fallen enemy soldiers were in fact loved and respected by the Turkish people was a difficult idea to grasp for generations who had lived through a bitter and bloody war. Kemal's acknowledgement made it easier for families to believe that their loved ones were respected and cared for by the inhabitants of the country they were buried in.

So, what is it that makes this speech so enduring? Professional speechwriters Don Watson (speechwriter for former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating), Ted Widmer (speechwriter for former President of the United States Bill Clinton) and Michael Gurr (speechwriter for former Premier of Victoria Steve Bracks) discussed this topic on ABC Radio National's *The Book Show* and decided that there are three key elements to a speech:

- language
- delivery
- relevance.



Mustafa Kemal, also known as Ataturk

An analysis of Kemal's speech follows.

### TRIBUTE TO THE ANZACS KILLED AT GALLIPOLI

SPEECH

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ...  
 You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.  
 Therefore, rest in peace.  
 There is no difference between the Johnnies  
 And the Mehments to us where they lie side by side,  
 Here in this country of ours.  
 You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away  
 countries ...  
 Wipe away your tears.  
 Your sons are now lying in our bosom  
 And are in peace.  
 After having lost their lives on this land, they have  
 Become our sons as well.

Source: Mustafa Kemal, 1930

# Language

The language of a speech refers to how the speech is written. Great speeches:

- **use lots of verbs and active words** so that the audience can relate to what is being said. For example:

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ...

You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.

Therefore, rest in peace.

- **often use the second person.** For example:

You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away countries ...

Wipe away your tears.

Your sons are now lying in our bosom  
And are in peace.

Some great speeches have been written in the first person plural 'we' form to convey inclusivity. For example, Winston Churchill's speech to Parliament in 1940:

we shall fight on the beaches ... we shall fight in the fields and in the streets ...

- **pitch the speech at a level that people can relate to.** For example:

There is no difference between the Johnnies  
And the Mehmetts to us where they lie side by side,

- **use repetition**—this reinforces the message of the speech. For example, repetition of the words 'lost', 'lying', 'peace' evokes a feeling of consolation. The audience is offered comfort and sympathy in their grief.

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ...

You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.

Therefore, rest in peace.

Your sons are now lying in our bosom

And are in peace.

After having lost their lives on this land, they have  
Become our sons as well.

Use of the present tense (active voice) and second person singular (you) imparts a sense of urgency and purpose. Continued use of the present tense reinforces the message.

The use of the second person here makes the audience feel that they are being spoken to personally. If the speech was written in the third person, it would be too easy for the audience to dismiss it as relating to someone else.

These verbs help the audience to relate to the speech by evoking an emotion within them. Words such as 'lost' and 'shed' cause the reader to believe that lives were sacrificed and they are able to relate to this, particularly in a post-war environment, where nearly everyone was affected by the loss of a loved one at war.

Using the personal names of Australian and Turkish soldiers conveys to the audience an empathy with the shared suffering of the soldiers of both countries on the part of the speaker and asks the audience to remember that men, not soldiers, lost their lives in Gallipoli.



- **are simple**—this does not mean that complicated ideas cannot be dealt with in a speech; rather, audiences need to be led step by step to the conclusion you wish them to reach. For example:

After having lost their lives on this land, they have  
Become our sons as well.

A sentence in the **active voice** is a sentence in which the action is carried out by the subject. For example, in the sentence 'The soldier defends his station', the subject is 'the soldier', who is carrying out the action—'defends his station'.  
A sentence in **passive voice** is a sentence in which object becomes the subject which is acted upon. In this example, 'The station was defended by the soldier'. Passive sentences are less direct and less personal.

## Delivery

Great speech makers:

- are passionate about their subject matter
- know the topic inside out.

Let's have a look at these elements in practice by analysing the speech given by Queen Elizabeth I to her army encamped at Tilbury, England, in 1588 as the Spanish Armada, a fleet of 130 warships was preparing to launch an attack on England.



### SPEECH BY QUEEN ELIZABETH I

By Queen Elizabeth I

SPEECH

My loving people, we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety to take heed how we commit ourself to armed multitudes for fear of treachery; but I assure you, I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people.

Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safe guard in the loyal hearts and good will of my subjects, and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live or die amongst you all, to lay down my life for my God and for my kingdom and for my people, my honour, and my blood, even in the dust.

The verbs 'persuaded', 'careful', 'commit' and 'assure' introduce the speaker (the Queen) as an authoritative figure who only has her listeners' best interests at heart. The verbs all convey a sense of responsibility and duty not taken lightly. The use of the terms 'faithful' and 'loving' begins to establish the relationship between the Queen and her audience.

Here, the Queen shows her listeners just how important they are.

The Queen continues to establish her authority through the use of the first person pronoun 'I'; however, she is keen to show her audience that she admires and respects them by announcing 'I have come amongst you ...'. She again reinforces her role as sovereign through the pronoun 'my'—'my kingdom', 'my people', 'my honour'.

Pronouns are repeated throughout the speech to highlight the importance of everyone's role. 'I' and 'my' show the responsibility felt by the Queen, whereas 'you' and 'your' highlight the importance of the Army.

The inclusive use of 'we' here signals to the audience that their efforts are important in order to overcome their enemy.

The Queen leads her audience step by step through her speech. In the beginning she shows them that she believes in the cause; that even though she is unable to fight, she still has the strength of a warrior. She then pays them compliments and explains that with their efforts and with her (and her lieutenant-generals) leadership, they can conquer the Spanish.

I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm; the which, rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know, already for your forwardness, you have deserved rewards and crowns; and we do assure you, in the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you.

In the meantime my lieutenant-general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject, not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.

Source: Queen Elizabeth I, 1588

Strong language is used to convey the Queen's strength of character.

The strong imagery used here conveys the strength of the Queen, showing that she is willing to fight and die to protect her land and people. The Queen's passion for her role and her country are keenly felt, as well as her commitment to the cause.

The Queen uses the second person here to include her audience and make her speech more accessible. She discusses 'your virtues' and 'your forwardness' conveying to her audience the importance of their role.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is the purpose of repetition in speeches?
- 2 What is the purpose of using verbs and action words during a speech?

### Applying

- 3 How could you adapt a historic speech to modern times? What considerations would you have to give to audience, time and purpose? Where would you deliver the speech and how? Write your considerations in your notebook.
- 4 Research famous speeches that are known for their strength of language. Use the internet to help you compile a list of three or four speeches.

### Analysing

- 5 Use a graphic organiser of your choice to highlight the key similarities in language use of the speeches you found for Question 4.
- 6 Create a checklist of things to remember when looking at language in a speech.

## Passion

Being able to speak passionately comes from having commitment and belief. A lack of commitment can result in a uninspiring performance. This makes it hard for the speaker to convince their audience that they are knowledgeable on the subject.

Passionate performances also require a speaker to be focused on the moment. If your attention is divided, you can expect your audience's attention to wander. You must ensure that you are communicating directly with the audience at all times. This means maintaining eye contact, using gestures, staying on the topic and injecting your speech with enthusiasm. Your goal is to have your listeners wanting to hear more of what you have to say.

Don Watson, Ted Widmer and Michael Gurr agree that there needs to be an element of theatre to a speech, but point out that it is more important to 'shoot for honesty' rather than 'show biz'. Flamboyance may amuse your audience for a while, but a genuine, heartfelt speech will connect with them in a much more direct way.

## Knowledge

The most effective way to establish credibility with your audience is to ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the topic. A lack of knowledge (especially a lack of research) will result in an average performance. It's not enough to use quotes and statistics; you must engage with the content and present varied and interesting information in order to connect.

Understanding the issues and nuances of your topic will assist with the continuity of your speech. It will help to hold the attention of your audience and will enhance your credibility when answering questions from the audience.

Lastly, an in-depth knowledge means that you are able to 'ad lib' if necessary. If you sense that you are beginning to lose audience interest or if, in fact, your audience are keenly interested in the point being made, you can either change direction or lengthen your speech accordingly. It is extremely important that you learn to understand your audience and tailor your speech to them. This may mean having to come up with something different on the spot.



**'Ad lib'** is an abbreviation of *ad libitum*, from the Latin, meaning 'at pleasure'. It means to improvise, and is often used to refer to speech-givers who 'make up' their speech as they go.

## Relevance

All great speeches are relevant to their time. They cover topics that people have experienced or witnessed, such as joy, intolerance, sorrow and war, and discuss things that people know, can sense and can relate to. The audience's ability to relate comes not only from the content of the speech, but also from the language used.

A wonderful example of a speech relating to a broad audience is Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address. This speech was delivered in 1863 during the American Civil War, not long after the northern and southern states had met in a bloody battle at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Due to the large number of deaths during this battle, a section of the battleground was to be turned into a national cemetery to honour the dead. President Lincoln was asked to speak at the dedication and at one point he said the following:



But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we can not consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract.

Source: Abraham Lincoln, 1863

What is so significant about this section of Lincoln's speech is his choice of three active verbs, 'dedicate', 'hallow' and 'consecrate'. Each of these words means to 'make sacred'; however, the use of three different words allows each member of the audience to relate to the speech through the word that is familiar to them. Many of the listeners may not have known the meaning of 'hallow' or 'consecrate', yet they would have understood the intent behind Lincoln's speech as they were able to relate to the word 'dedicate' and could therefore associate the meaning of his speech with their lives.

### DID YOU KNOW...

Over 7500 men were killed at the battle of Gettysburg—that was over three times the population of the town itself! President Lincoln was actually invited to speak as an afterthought behind a famous orator and politician of the time, Edward Everett. Everett spoke for over two hours, whereas Lincoln's speech was only 272 words. It is now considered one of the most famous and poignant speeches in history.



Lincoln's speech highlights the importance of using verbs and an active voice to allow the audience to relate and remain interested.

Great historical speeches highlight to us that speech writing is not a static, step by step event. Each facet of speechwriting is tightly woven with the next so that they emphasise and complement one another, drawing together to form a memorable delivery.

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 Briefly describe how passion influences a speech.
- 2 Why is it important to have a good knowledge of the subject of a speech?
- 3 Explain how the delivery of a speech impacts on the audience.
- 4 What type of person would give this speech?

Sadly, youth has always been wasted on the young. Those glorious days when your most pressing responsibility is homework, a few minor chores and being home for meals, are wished away by the young, who see youth as a time of restriction and boundaries.

As we get older, we begin to yearn for those years. Despite the fact that young people see adults as being in control, answering to no one, adults are not free. We no longer have to obey our parents' orders, but instead answer to bosses, rules, laws, legislation and social expectations. Children are free to be unconcerned about big-picture issues but adults have to think about politics, taxes, finance, ecology and global harmony.

Finally, as we age, we become aware of our mortality. The young believe themselves to be invincible, but we adults know they are not. We hold our breath as we watch our children take incredible risks—and survive.

We are fearful for their safety and jealous of their assumption that all will be well. The old would be young, and the young, old.

### Applying

- 5 What tips would you give to the person who delivers the speech in Question 4?

### Analysing

- 6 Find examples of an effective speech and an ineffective speech. You may wish to use one of the speeches from this chapter as your effective speech. Also, go to **Pearson Reader** to view the ABC Radio National website which is useful as a source for other speeches.



Use a Venn diagram or other suitable graphic organiser to compare and contrast one effective and one ineffective speech.

- 7 Write a short paragraph outlining your conclusions based upon your answer to Question 2.

### Evaluating

- 8 Would it ever be acceptable to leave out one of the elements of speech writing? When? Why?
- 9 Which aspect of speech writing do you find the most appealing? Why?
- 10 In your opinion, how important is the use of language to a speech? Why is this?



Kevin Rudd, Australian Prime Minister 2007–10, delivering his historic 'Sorry' speech, 2008

# Great speeches in action

A speaker's passion, knowledge and relevance can be seen in the language they use, as well as the way they deliver their speech. On 13 February 2008, (then) Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered a speech in Parliament in which he formally apologised to

Indigenous Australians for their treatment under past governmental policies, namely the forcible removal of Aboriginal children from their families practised from 1869 until the 1970s. This speech was a momentous occasion due to the fact that the previous Prime Minister, John Howard, refused to apologise, believing that it would leave the government open to compensation claims. An excerpt from Kevin Rudd's speech is analysed below.

## APOLOGY TO AUSTRALIA'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

By Kevin Rudd

The use of inclusive language here leaves no doubt about who is responsible for the 'action' being described in the first four paragraphs.

[T]oday we honour the indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were stolen generations - this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that [have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these stolen generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

The use of the verbs 'reflect' and 'apologise' show the depth of thought surrounding the issue.

The repetition of synonyms 'apologise' and 'sorry' reinforce to the audience the message of sorrow.

The verbs here perform two roles: they pitch the speech at a level everyone can relate to (as we have all experienced these feelings at one time); and they show an understanding of what the victims endured. The audience can imagine the pain of a family being destroyed and therefore can relate to the speech.

This is evidence of Rudd's knowledge of the topic and shows he understands the results of past government policies.

Former Prime Minister Rudd's commitment can be seen here through a willingness to admit the injustices of the past.

Repetition

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, indigenous and non-indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

...

To the stolen generations, I say the following: as Prime Minister of Australia, I am sorry.

On behalf of the government of Australia, I am sorry.

On behalf of the parliament of Australia, I am sorry.

I offer you this apology without qualification.

...

We need a new beginning, a new beginning which contains real measures of policy success or policy failure; a new beginning, a new partnership, on closing the gap ...

Let us turn this page together: indigenous and non-indigenous Australians, government and opposition, Commonwealth and state, and write this new chapter in our nation's story together ...

Let's grasp this opportunity to craft a new future for this great land: Australia. I commend the motion to the House.

Source: Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia, 13 February 2008

The repetition of the word 'future' directs the audience's attention to moving forward.

The language used is dignified and sombre, reflecting the mood of the occasion.

Repetition of 'equal' reinforces to the audience that any racist policies are in the past.

Repetition of 'I am sorry' further reinforces Rudd's message of sorrow and regret.

Inclusive language 'we' indicates a future 'together'.

Further evidence of Rudd's commitment to the issue is seen through the offering of a personal 'I' apology.

Repetition

## DID YOU KNOW...

Go to **Pearson Reader** to read the full speech which is nearly 4000 words long and took nearly thirty minutes to deliver.





Actor John Howard

On 3 July 2000 the ABC TV program *The Games* used actor John Howard to deliver a sorry speech (something Prime Minister John Howard wouldn't do). In the fictional world of *The Games* the US Ambassador was increasingly worried about Australia hosting the (Sydney) Olympic Games because of Australia's human rights record with respect to Aboriginal Australians. In an effort to combat this, the characters hire Australian actor (and Aboriginal rights activist) John Howard to deliver the speech, hoping to dupe the rest of the world into believing that our human rights record had been redeemed.

Read the speech and answer the questions at its end.

## APOLOGY MADE BY JOHN HOWARD ON NATIONAL TV

Good evening. My name is John Howard and I'm speaking to you from Sydney, Australia, host city of the year 2000 Olympic Games.

At this important time, and in an atmosphere of international goodwill and national pride, we here in Australia—all of us—would like to make a statement before all nations. Australia, like many countries in the new world, is intensely proud of what it has achieved in the past 200 years.

We are a vibrant and resourceful people. We share a freedom born in the abundance of nature, the richness of the earth, the bounty of the sea. We are the world's biggest island. We have the world's longest coastline. We have more animal species than any other country. Two thirds of the world's birds are native to Australia. We are one of the few countries on earth with our own sky. We are a fabric woven of many colours and it is this that gives us our strength.

However, these achievements have come at great cost. We have been here for 200 years but before that, there was a people living here. For 40 000 years they lived in a perfect balance with the land. There were many Aboriginal nations, just as there were many Indian nations in North America and across Canada, as there were many Maori tribes in New Zealand and Incan and Mayan peoples in South America. These indigenous Australians lived in areas as different from one another as Scotland is from Ethiopia. They lived in an area the size of Western Europe. They did not even have a common language. Yet they had their own laws, their own beliefs, their own ways of understanding.

We destroyed this world. We often did not mean to do it. Our forebears, fighting to establish themselves in what they saw as a harsh environment, were creating a national economy. But the Aboriginal world was decimated. A pattern of disease and dispossession was established. Alcohol was introduced. Social and racial differences were allowed to become fault-lines. Aboriginal families were broken up. Sadly, Aboriginal health and education are responsibilities we have still yet to address successfully.

I speak for all Australians in expressing a profound sorrow to the Aboriginal people. I am sorry. We are sorry. Let the world know and understand, that it is with this sorrow, that we as a nation will grow and seek a better, a fairer and a wiser future. Thank you.

Source: *The Games*, July 3, 2000

## Breakaway tasks

### Applying

- 1 In your opinion, is this speech believable? Give reasons for your answer.
- 2 Is the language used fit for a Prime Minister? Why/Why not? Provide examples from the speech to support your answer.
- 3 Highlight the important elements of this speech and discuss the effect they have on it.
- 4 Which speech do you prefer—Kevin Rudd's Apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples or the speech delivered by actor John Howard? Provide reasons and evidence for your answer.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

Read the following speech by Winston Churchill to the British Parliament in the House of Commons on 4 June 1940. It is considered one of the defining speeches of the Second World War (1939–45).

### WE SHALL FIGHT ON THE BEACHES

By Winston Churchill

4 June 1940

SPEECH

... I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty, if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our Island home, to ride out the storm of war, and to outlive the menace of tyranny, if necessary for years, if necessary alone.

At any rate, that is what we are going to try to do. That is the resolve of His Majesty's Government—every man of them. That is the will of Parliament and the nation.

The British Empire and the French Republic, linked together in their cause and in their need, will defend to the death their native soil, aiding each other like good comrades to the utmost of their strength.

Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail.

We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we



shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this Island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old.

Source: Winston Churchill, 1940

**1** In your notebook, draw a chart with three columns labelled 'Language', 'Delivery' and 'Relevance'. Use the library and internet to conduct any research necessary to complete the following tasks.

- a** In the 'Language' column, copy out the relevant sections of the speech under the subheadings 'verbs', 'anecdotes', 'active voice', 'repetition' and 'simplicity'.
- b** Determine the impact these examples have on the overall speech.
- c** In the 'Delivery' column, copy out instances that demonstrate the orator's passion and knowledge.
- d** Research the Blitzkrieg (lightning war) and its effect on England. Then, in the final column, discuss the impact this speech would have had on the audience at the time. Highlight the passages that show its relevance, as well as aspects the audience could relate to.

**2** Select one of the following topics and one of the audiences and write a speech. Your speech should be two–four minutes long and contain language that your audience will relate to.

Subject	Audience
Graffiti	Kindergarten children
Fundraising	A mother's group
Attendance	A tennis team
Holidays	Your teenage children
Tolerance	Your peer group
Racial violence	The police

## Extra tasks

**1** If you had access to any resource you required, how would you deliver any of the four speeches presented in this module? Plan your speech, making sure you consider the following questions:

- a** What audience would you deliver this speech to?
- b** What time of day would you choose? Why?
- c** Would you include any audio or visuals? Why? If yes, what?
- d** Draw the setting in which you would deliver the speech, for example Parliament House. Show how you would use the space effectively.
- e** Annotate the speech to show where you would use gestures and which gestures you would use, along with any changes in intonation. Write a paragraph to justify these.

**2** Imagine you have been charged with the task of adapting one of the speeches in this unit for an online environment. What media would you choose to use? Why? How would you present the speech so that the audience would gain an understanding of its historical and cultural significance? Plan your ideas on an A3 sheet of paper before completing this task electronically.

**3** Create a guide for Year 7 students on how to deliver an effective speech.

# Communication

**C**ommunication is one of the most important skills for human beings to function within and as a society. An important way for us to communicate is through debate of important issues.

## The art of debating

The Ancient Greeks invented democracy and, with it, debate and public speaking.

In 1755 CE, a group called the Ancient Society of Cogers (thinkers) formed in London and started public debating sessions in taverns. This society still exists and continues to follow the debating traditions begun over 250 years ago.

## What is a debate?

A debate is an argument conducted according to particular rules. It has a structure and purpose and often the participants are required to make a case for a topic they do not necessarily believe in. Debates allow both sides of an issue so that the audience can come to a considered conclusion on the issue by the end of the debate.

A debate involves two teams of three participants. Both teams are given the same topic and one team is assigned the affirmative (in favour of the topic) position, the other team the negative (not in favour of the topic). It is the job of each team to present points in favour of their argument and to rebut the arguments of their opposition.





In debating, a **rebuttal** is a contradiction of the opposition's argument. **To rebut** means to refute using arguments.

All debate topics begin with the word 'that', to allow two sides to the argument, for example 'That the death penalty should be reintroduced'. Participants must argue their case within a set time limit. It is important that members work together as a team. One way of doing this is to present a team line of argument. For the affirmative, this is a statement about why the topic statement is true, and for the negative, why it is false. The first speaker from each team presents their position and the following speakers reinforce and build on their team's argument.

## How a debate is structured

A debate is made up of six parts, with each speaker having a clearly defined role. The first affirmative speaker always begins, and their role is to inform the audience of their definition of the topic.

**First affirmative** must:

- describe the topic
- introduce the affirmative team's line of argument
- briefly outline what each speaker in their team will talk about (known as the team split)
- present the first half of the affirmative case.

**First negative** must:

- accept or reject the definition. If the first negative does not do this, it is assumed that the negative team accepts the definition
- present the negative team line
- outline the team split
- rebut a few of the main points of the first affirmative speaker (this should take about one quarter of the speaker's time)
- present the first half of the negative team's case.

**Second affirmative** must:

- reiterate the affirmative's team line
- rebut the main points presented by the first negative (this should take about one-third of the speaker's time)
- put forward the second half of the affirmative's case.

**Second negative** must:

- reiterate the negative's team line
- rebut some of the main points of the affirmative's case (this should take about one-third of the speaker's time)
- present the second half of the negative's case.

**Third affirmative** must:

- not include any new points for their team
- repeat the affirmative's team line
- rebut all the remaining points of the negative's case (this should take about two-thirds to three-quarters of the speaker's time)
- summarise the affirmative's case
- conclude the debate for the affirmative.

**Third negative** must:

- not introduce any new points for their team
- reaffirm the negative's team line
- rebut all the remaining points of the affirmative's case (this should take about two-thirds to three-quarters of the speaker's time)
- summarise the negative's case
- conclude the debate for the negative.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is the name given to the side that agrees with the topic of the debate?
- 2 What is the name given to the side that disagrees with the topic of the debate?
- 3 What is the purpose of a debate?
- 4 How many people make up a debating team?

### Understanding

- 5 Write the role of each debater onto separate pieces of paper. Join with a partner and ask them to arrange each piece of paper in order of how the debate proceeds.
- 6 Write a clear sentence that explains the role of the affirmative team.

### Applying

- 7 Create a list of tasks that the third speaker from each team must perform and explain how they should structure their time.

# How a debate is judged

A debater and their team are judged on three key components:

- matter
- method
- manner.

These refer to what material is presented, how it is organised and the way in which it is debated.

## Matter

The matter is what you say. It is the core of your speech because it is the material you present to your audience. The judge will award your team a score out of 40 for matter. Matter includes:

- defining the debate (do you stick to the agreed-upon definition?)
- the case that you put forward (can you present a well-researched, logical argument?)
- the arguments you develop (do you provide evidence, facts or examples to support your argument? Does your evidence support your argument, or detract from it?)
- rebuttal of your opposition's argument (do you provide evidence to rebut the opposition? Have you focused on their argument, rather than the person?)
- your summary (have you clearly summarised your main points?).

You should divide your matter into argument and example. Your argument is your contention (what you are trying to prove) and your examples are facts and pieces of evidence that you use in order to prove your argument. For example:

- Argument: 'That wearing school uniforms should not be compulsory.'
- Example: 'Developing one's own identity is an important part of adolescence and wearing a school uniform stifles this development.'

## Method

The method refers to how you organise your speech and applies to both the team and the individual speaker. It is worth 20 points.



## Team

How well the team members work together and how organised they are is taken into consideration. To guarantee good marks in this area, every member of the team must know and stick with their line of argument, as well as be aware of what is said by the other members of their team. Changing or forgetting the line of argument mid-debate would cause the team to be marked down.

## Individual

It is up to each individual team member to have a well-structured and organised speech. You need to be clear about what arguments you will be using and the evidence to support them. A good debater signposts their debate. This means that clear signals are sent to the audience to show that they are moving from one argument to another. A good argument also shows clear links between the argument and the line of argument.

A rebuttal should be organised in a similar way. Attack each argument as the opposition has presented it, spending a little time proving why the argument is false and then moving on to the next one. Make sure that you have structured your speech so that it does not run over time and that you spend the same amount of time on each point. You do not want to spend too long delivering one idea only to have to rush to get through your remaining thoughts.

## Manner

Manner refers to how you deliver your speech. You need to develop a style that is comfortable for you, one that doesn't look unnatural or forced. Your debating manner is worth 40 points and takes into consideration:

- **eye contact**—maintaining eye contact with your audience is a way of keeping them involved in your argument

- **stance, demeanour and gestures**—use your body as a tool for getting your point across. If you are comfortable making hand gestures, then do so confidently. Weak hand gestures will make you look inadequate. Turn your head and body to maintain eye contact with your audience and if you are comfortable taking a few steps, then do so. One word of warning with moving your whole body—do not pace! It makes you look nervous and uncoordinated
- **language and vocabulary**—use words that are not too formal, and that will be familiar to your audience. Avoid using slang or informal speech
- **voice projection**—use volume, pitch and speed to maintain your audience's interest. Make sure you are able to be heard by everyone in the room
- **nervous habits**—try not to shuffle your palm cards, rock from side to side, play with your hair, jiggle up and down or flap your hands around unnecessarily, as this will detract from your presentation.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is a debate?
- 2 How many teams are involved?
- 3 How is a debate judged?

### Understanding

- 4 Define the following terms in your own words: matter, method, manner.
- 5 Complete the following sentences.
  - a Debating matter is worth \_\_\_\_\_ points.
  - b A good debater \_\_\_\_\_ their debate.
  - c Your debating \_\_\_\_\_ is worth 20 points.
  - d \_\_\_\_\_ refers to how you deliver your speech.
  - e A sound \_\_\_\_\_ is an indication of a well-structured and organised speech.
- 6 What nervous habits may a debater exhibit when giving a speech?

### Understanding

- 7 In groups of three, divide the three ways a debate is judged among yourselves and complete a poster for each.

### Evaluating

- 8 Name a circumstance in which the elements of debating manner would be useful to you and explain why.

## Persuasive techniques

Whenever you present an argument or try and convince someone to agree with your point of view, you are trying to persuade them to change their mind. 'To persuade' is 'to make willing to do or believe by arguing, urging, etc.' These techniques are used in a persuasive speech or debate.

Whatever we do to make people 'willing to do or believe' can be classified as a persuasive technique.

There are many different methods of persuasion, a number of which are outlined below. To make your argument interesting, use a variety of techniques.

### Emotive language

Emotive language is the use of words or phrases designed to bring out an emotional response in an audience. For example:

*It's sad that the dog died.*

becomes emotive when changed to

*How tragic that life was so brutally wrenched from man's best friend.*

There are many emotions that you can appeal to, including love, fear, pride, joy, anger and disgust.

Emotive language can be carefully selected to make an argument more appealing and the opposing side's unconvincing.

### Analogies

An analogy shows the similarities between things that are otherwise unlike. In a debate you could make an analogy, comparing your argument to something favourable and your opposition's argument to something not so favourable.

### Repetition

A word, phrase or sentence may be used more than once for emphasis. For example:

*Does the Government know what Australians want? Does the Government even care? Have they bothered to ask those that really matter what they think? Have they bothered to ask the Australian public?*

Here the repetition of questions drives home the point that the Australian Government must take into consideration the desires of the Australian people. This technique must be used carefully as too much repetition can bore the audience.

## Hyperbole

Hyperbole (pronounced 'high-perb-o-lee') is overstating a point for effect. For example:

The New Year is a million light years away.

The exaggeration of time (a million light years) leads the audience to the conclusion that there's a long wait until the New Year.

In a debate, exaggerating the good points of your argument and exaggerating the bad points of your opposition's argument can really enhance the effectiveness of your speech.

## Statistics

Statistics is the use of data to prove a point. The statistics used must be factual and their source (where they were found) should be supplied to establish the validity of the information. For example:

According to the TAC, road crashes are the biggest killer of young people aged 16 to 25. In their first year of driving, young people are about three times more likely to be killed or injured than older, more experienced drivers.

TAC research indicates that a young driver's risk of being involved in a fatal crash is over five times higher when carrying two or more passengers than when travelling alone and young passengers are most likely to be killed in a car when travelling with young drivers.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is an analogy?
- 2 What is hyperbole?

### Analysing

- 3 Design a questionnaire asking people about what they think are the most effective persuasive methods.

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 Does this article use or hint at any stereotypes? If so, what are they and how do they affect the audience?

Late one night on a recent visit to the top end, I went out with a local ambulance crew. When we arrived, the police were already in attendance and what could only be described as a battle scene.

The victim was a quiet, young woman whose proud, angular face was obscured by her own blood. She told police that she and her husband had been drinking when things took a turn for the worst. In a fit of jealous rage, her husband took to her with a nulla nulla (club), causing extensive damage to her face.

The officers attended to her wounds as best as they could and then drove her to the local hospital. Her husband, upon seeing the police, fled into the dark of the night, hidden by the shadows thrown by the full moon.

- 2 Research one of the following issues and write a speech that supports or rejects the claim.
  - a Issue: Poverty in developing countries  
Claim: That developed countries should pay an annual fee to help eradicate poverty in developing countries.
  - b Issue: Drunk drivers  
Claim: That the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) for all drivers should be 0.
  - c Issue: Violence in sport  
Claim: That all sports people should take part in education sessions aimed at reducing violence in sport.
  - d Issue: Smoking and health  
Claim: That smokers should pay a higher Medicare levy as they are a greater burden on the health care system.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Complete the satisfaction and rebuttal steps for one of the following statements.
  - School uniforms should not be compulsory.
  - As a developed country, it is our duty to help those living in developing countries.
- 2 Make a booklet about either speech writing or debating. Include in your booklet:
  - a definition of your topic
  - a short history of the topic
  - a structure or framework that your topic must follow
  - an original example of this framework being used
  - an analysis of how the example is a good model of the framework.
- 3 Create a web page to inform people about persuasive techniques. Include examples of the techniques and how to use them effectively. Find five techniques and examples not covered in this module that you have researched yourself.
- 4 Form groups of six. Divide into two teams of three then choose a topic for your debate from the list below:
  - That school attendance should be voluntary.
  - That violent video games should be banned.
  - That parents should be punished for their children's mistakes.
  - That learning a second language should be compulsory.
  - That children's television has more negative than positive effects.
  - That teenagers should be allowed to drive from the age of sixteen.
  - That students should be paid to attend school.
  - That Australia should abolish its states to become a unified nation without borders.
  - That people who wish to own pets should obtain a licence.
  - a Allocate to each team member the role of a speaker and decide which team will be negative or affirmative.
  - b Prepare a full debate and present it to the class. A rubric for scoring can be found on **Pearson Reader**.



Web Destination

### Debate scoring sheet

[for audience and instructor]

Debate Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Pro or Con (circle one)

Team Member Names:

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Rate 1-10	Comments
<b>Opening statement</b> was clear, well organised, factual, and relevant.		
<b>First argument</b> in support of its position was stated clearly, was relevant, and well informed.		
<b>Rebuttal</b> to opposing side's first argument was clear, relevant, well informed, and effective.		
<b>Second argument</b> in support of its position was stated clearly, was relevant, and well informed.		
<b>Rebuttal</b> to opposing side's second argument was clear, relevant, well informed, and effective.		
<b>Third argument</b> in support of its position was stated clearly, was relevant, and well informed.		
<b>Rebuttal</b> to opposing side's third argument was clear, relevant, well informed, and effective.		
<b>Closing statement</b> was stated clearly, was relevant, and effectively summarised the team's position.		
<b>Answers</b> to audience questions were clear, well informed, and relevant.		
<b>Overall</b> preparedness, effectiveness and professionalism in the debate.		

Total points earned: \_\_\_\_\_ divided by 10 = \_\_\_\_\_ (score for debate)

# 5 Communication: the recital

**A** recital is a recounting of a poem or story in a public performance. Recitals are popular forms of entertainment and have been recorded as occurring as far back as prehistoric societies.

## Delivering a recital

As with public speaking, when delivering a recital, knowledge of your purpose and audience is vital. Do not select a poem or passage that is too difficult for your audience to understand, or too simple. Also, because you have to speak from memory, do not choose a piece that is too long.

Some important elements to remember include:

- **pause**—pauses add meaning and emphasis to a recital and the punctuation of your piece gives you a guide as to where you should pause. You can also choose to include a dramatic pause in your presentation
- **climax**—this is the dramatic highlight of your piece. Try to create a feeling of suspense and anticipation through the use of your voice and by varying your pace and pitch
- **pace**—your pace needs to be varied in accordance with the feeling of your piece. Slow down when you have something important to convey and speed up when trying to create a feeling of excitement
- **pitch**—vary the ‘notes’ in your voice in order to maintain your audience’s interest
- **voice**—let the pitch of your voice rise and fall with the emotion of the piece
- **movement of your body, face and arms**—your gestures should be appropriate to what is being said. Unless you are using your hands, they should hang beside your body so that they are not too distracting. Your face should convey the emotion



### ? DID YOU KNOW...

Traditional poems are commonly known as ‘epic’ poems. The oldest record of epic poetry is from Mesopotamia (Iraq today), known as the epic of Gilgamesh. This epic dates back to 3000 BCE and was written on clay tablets.

of the piece you are reciting and should work in conjunction with your gestures. Your movements should be purposeful and planned so that they add to your recital and not detract.

You need to create a mood that suits your piece through your use of your voice, face and body as there is just you—no pictures or printed matter to help. For your recital to be effective and memorable, you must combine these elements in such a way that the message of your piece is conveyed to your audience.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Write a definition of the term 'recital'.
- 2 Make a list of all the important elements of a good recital.
- 3 Why is it important to select an appropriate length for a recital piece?

### Understanding

- 4 How do you make a recital piece 'live'?
- 5 In your own words, write how each of the listed elements affects a recital piece.

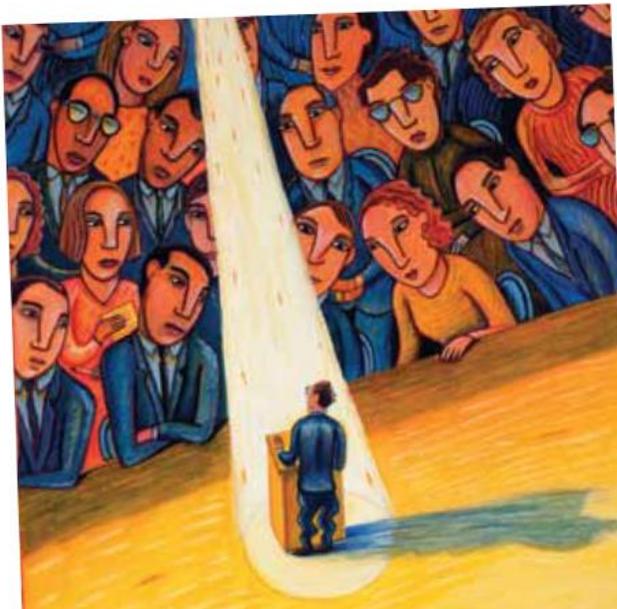
### Applying

- 6 With a partner, devise a series of poses that represent the following:
  - pleading
  - satisfied
  - grieving
  - joking
  - respectful
  - joyful
  - harmonious
  - vengeful

Agree who will enact the poses and who will take photographs. Team up with another pair from your class and swap photographs. The challenge is to see which pair can name all the poses in the shortest time.

### Analysing

- 7 Prioritise the six elements on the previous page in order of importance. Justify your position by writing a 150-word paragraph that explains your reasons for the order you chose.
- 8 Survey eight of your classmates, asking them how they ranked the elements in order of importance. Prepare a pie chart to illustrate your findings and display it in your classroom.



## FEELIN' GROOVY

By Jo Ryan

POEM

I spent an inordinate amount of  
Time  
Trying to look groovy.  
A lot of money to be seen at the  
Groovy places  
A lot of sweat trying to have a  
Groovy body but  
DAMN!  
I'm groovy because  
I've decided that  
All of that doesn't matter.  
I think  
Confidence  
Is groovy.

Source: Jo Ryan

## WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, BABY DEAR?

By George MacDonald

POEM

Where did you come from, baby dear?  
Out of the everywhere into here.  
Where did you get your eyes so blue?  
Out of the sky as I came through.  
What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?  
Some of the starry spikes left in.  
Where did you get that little tear?  
I found it waiting when I got here.  
What makes your forehead so smooth and high?  
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.  
What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?  
I saw something better than anyone knows.  
Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?  
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.  
Where did you get this pearly ear?  
God spoke, and it came out to hear.  
Where did you get those arms and hands?  
Love made itself into hooks and bands.  
Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?  
From the same box as the cherubs' wings.  
How did they all just come to be you?  
God thought about me, and so I grew.  
But how did you come to us, you dear?  
God thought about you, and so I am here.

Source: George MacDonald

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 In small groups examine one of the poems on the previous page.
  - a Discuss how you could recite the poem you've chosen, making it colourful and full of feeling. Mark the poems with notes about where you might change your pitch and pace, insert pauses, or let your voice rise and fall with the feeling of the poem. Then consider your body, face and movement; what's appropriate for the poem?
  - b Divide the poem into two or three parts (one for each of you). Rehearse until you are all reciting in the same way, then present your poem to the class.
- 2 While you are watching others perform, grade each piece out of five on the following questions:
  - Did the recital match the mood of the poem?
  - Were the recital styles of each presenter consistent with the style of the poem?
  - Did the presenters engage you as a listener?
  - Were their movements or lack of movements appropriate?
- 2 In a small group choose a song lyric which you all agree would make an interesting piece to recite (without music). Complete steps **a** to **c**.

## Extra tasks

- 1 In groups of five, write a very short story (no more than twenty sentences). As a group, decide on voices and a climax. Alternate the storyteller so that each person has three or four lines to speak. You may write your lines down. The emphasis here is on delivery (how you speak) because you are all telling the same story with the same characters and should present similarly. You must agree upon the presentation in advance and rehearse as a group. Finally, present your story to the class.
- 2 Use the internet to find a video clip of someone giving a recital. Note how they deliver their speech, song or poem, paying particular attention to how they get their meaning across. As you watch the video, copy out three to five lines of what is being said and make a note of how it is delivered. See if you can mimic the style of the presenter and then decide if you think the presenter has chosen the best approach. Justify your answer, giving reasons for why the technique is effective or not.



I am eye. I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine, am showing you a world, the likes of which only I can see.

Dziga Vertov (1896–1954),  
Russian documentary film maker

# DOCUMENTARY AND MOCKUMENTARY

## Chapter overview

Some of the very first moving pictures were documentaries. Film makers have long attempted to capture reality, but is it possible to really capture it? Which reality is the film maker capturing? Does the act of capturing a reality change it? Documentary has been a dominant genre in filmmaking from the invention of moving pictures. The documentary genre has developed over the years, ranging from observational pieces to reality television, and creating new genres, such as the mockumentary.

# Moving images

**F**or centuries, artists have tried to capture reality. For a very long time painting was concerned with attempting to be as 'realistic' as possible. Artists tried to capture the external world in a life-like way. The invention and popularisation of photography (or what was called the mechanical means of reproduction) in the middle of the nineteenth century had a huge impact on art, artists, newspapers, journalists and what became known as 'the media'.

'Reality' could now be captured by a mechanical device, a camera. This allowed visual artists the freedom to interpret the world in their own ways, rather than having to capture it realistically.

This development led to questions that are still being asked today: What is reality? Can you capture reality? And does trying to capture a reality change it? These questions are central to documentaries and have shaped the various forms of documentary.



## DID YOU KNOW...

Throughout his career, French director Jean-Luc Godard (1930–) has created films which cross all boundaries. Films such as *La Chinoise* (1967) combine drama, documentary, actual events, photographs, radio broadcasts and actors. Godard also uses techniques in which the actors/participants speak to or acknowledge the audience watching the film, thereby making the viewers a part of the film.

Still from *La Chinoise*, a political film directed by Jean-Luc Godard, 1967



# In the beginning

The earliest films were what we would call very simple documentaries; that is, they document or record an event. Often they were made by placing a camera in a single location and recording the action. These early documentaries were usually only seconds long.



There is some debate about what to call these early films. Some people consider them documentaries, while others see documentary as a more sophisticated kind of film. It is perhaps most accurate to call these early attempts 'actuality films'.

## ? DID YOU KNOW...

Thomas Edison (1847–1931) is generally credited with the invention of motion picture technology. Edison and his team developed the technology over years from the early 1890s. By 1894 they had opened a cinema in New York. The early films were very short and were shot at Edison's factory. The earliest film we know of is a film of one of Edison's assistants, Fred Ott, sneezing. Go to **Pearson Reader** to see the film.



Fred Ott sneezing

# Actuality films

The Lumière brothers made some of the earliest and most important actuality films. Auguste and Louis Lumière built on Edison's process and in 1895 they had the first public screening of their films. These films were a combination of actuality and primitive fiction. The titles of the films sum up their content, for example *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory* (1895) and *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat* (1896). Each of these films was fifty seconds long and screened together in a program of ten films.

The novelty of film meant that early films attracted a great deal of attention. But before too long, people lost interest in seeing trains arrive at stations or people leave factories.

Film theoreticians have questioned whether actuality films were really capturing reality. In early actuality films people were almost always smiling, seemed happy and were wearing what would appear

to be their best clothes, even when leaving work at the factory after a hard day's work. It is claimed, and we will examine this more closely later, that the presence of the camera and the film crew affected the 'reality' that was being filmed and that the very act of filming changes what is being filmed.

Although the Lumière brothers are considered the pioneers of actuality, or early documentary, it was another French company, Pathé, which took the actuality concept to the next stage—documentary film.



## DID YOU KNOW...

While film was invented in America and developed in France, an Australian production was the first to use it in a sequence to tell a story. *Soldiers of the Cross*, made in 1900, was shot in Melbourne and consisted of 200 slides and fifteen ninety-second film clips, which were combined to tell Bible stories.



Still from *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat* by the Lumière brothers, 1896

Pathé acquired the Lumière brothers' techniques and patents on the equipment and began to film around the world. They developed public interest by filming in a wide variety of locations including Europe, America, Japan and Australia. Pathé employed camera operators and producers to travel and film events of public interest, such as major sporting events, parliaments, coronations and other public events. Pathé would then gather these films together and screen them as newsreels in cinemas. By the 1920s virtually every cinema would screen a newsreel before the feature films. These, in fact became the forerunners of the television news.

### DID YOU KNOW...

The first films screened in Australia were shown at the Melbourne Opera House on 22 August 1896. Shortly after, Pathé filmed the Melbourne Cup, which was screened around the world. This film was over six minutes long and was one of the earliest film-length actuality films (for the time). It is also believed to be Australia's oldest surviving film.

1896 Melbourne Cup



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 When did Edison open his cinema in New York?
- 2 Who were the Lumière brothers and why were they important?
- 3 What two important film events happened in Melbourne?

### Understanding

- 4 Is there a difference between actuality films and documentary? If so, what is it?

### Analysing

- 5 Search the internet for the Lumière brothers' films *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory* and *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat*. Watch the films and answer the following questions.
  - a Describe the event that is being filmed.
  - b Do you think the people being filmed realise that they are being filmed? How do you know? What effect do you think this might have on the film?
  - c Does the camera move? Do you think the film has been edited at all?
  - d Why do you think these films were popular at the time?
- 6 Search the internet for the three clips of the Melbourne Cup 1896. Watch the clips.
  - a Does the camera move? Do you think the film has been edited at all? What is the effect on the audience of the camera work?
  - b Does this show the entire Cup? What has been left out and why do you think this was?
  - c How do you think the film has been arranged?
  - d The man in the long grey coat in clip 3 is the producer, Walter Barnett. He runs into shot and encourages the crowd to wave their hats, seemingly to add excitement. Do you think this is the right thing to do in a documentary?

### Evaluating

- 7 Do you think the Lumière brothers were capturing reality?

# Reality and documentary

Can a documentary capture reality? Is there a single objective reality out there? These are questions that have plagued film makers from the earliest days of documentary filmmaking. Some contemporary philosophers argue that there is no one single objective reality but that we each interpret reality in our own way. If this is the case then no film can capture an objective reality, because we all see things differently. In addition, the camera operator chooses what they will film, and what they will leave out; and films are edited to fit into an acceptable time length. So even if a film appears to be showing a 'reality', it has actually been edited and manipulated by the people making it.



In the case of documentaries, 'objective' usually means impartial, based on observed facts and unbiased. 'Subjective' means a personal interpretation of facts or events that is not impartial.



John Grierson

Other questions we can ask are: whose reality is being captured and does the act of filming an event actually change that event?

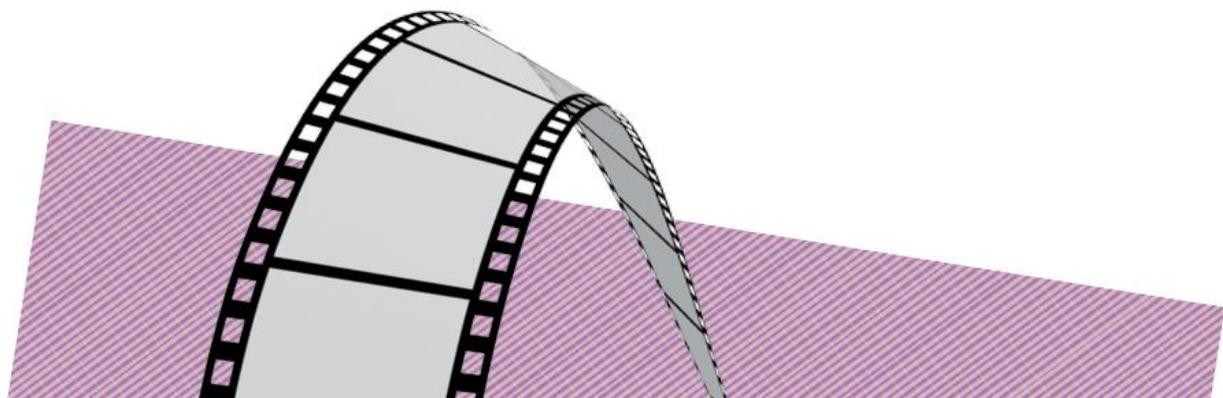
Many film theoreticians do not believe documentary film makers can show the world in an objective way. They argue that the very act of filming changes things, that when people see a camera they behave differently than they would if there were no camera.

So if a documentary doesn't capture reality how do we define a documentary? The word 'documentary' was coined by John Grierson (1898–1972), a Scot who made films in the 1930s. He defined a documentary as 'the artistic representation of actuality'. This definition

still holds today; other definitions include 'non-fiction film' and 'movie or television show about real life'.

The important point is that a documentary is *not* real life. When we watch a documentary, we are watching a representation of a real world, life or event—a representation that has been chosen, arranged and interpreted. It is not a presentation of real life but a 're-presentation', which, as Grierson points out, has been manipulated or interpreted.

The film maker's interpretation refers to the selection of what to film, the act of filming and its effect on the event. There is further interpretation in the editing: this is where the film is arranged and decisions are made on what to show and what to omit.



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What do the words 'objective' and 'subjective' mean in the context of documentary?
- 2 Give two definitions of documentary.

### Understanding

- 3 If documentary is about real life, is footage taken from a surveillance camera a documentary? Why or why not?
- 4 What did Grierson mean by his definition of documentary?

### Evaluating

- 5 Do you think the camera's presence changes things? Would your behaviour change if you knew your class was being filmed?
- 6 The concept of audience also has an effect on the filming.
  - a Do you think your behaviour or that of your classmates would change if you knew the film would be shown to the principal or your parents?
  - b Do you think that your behaviour would change if you knew the film was to be shown to a class at another school?
- 7 Do you think a camera can capture reality?

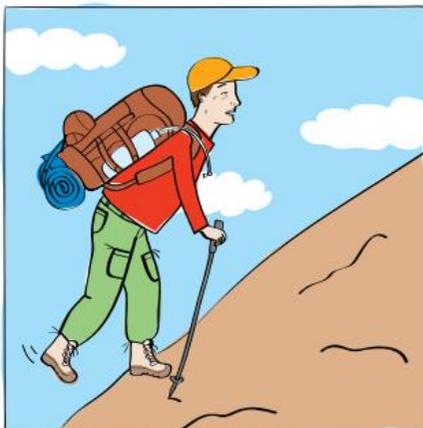
## Two streams of documentary

In contemporary film theory, documentary is increasingly identified as film, a story and, it can be argued, as a fiction like any other film. One of the major questions that has faced both documentary film makers and film theorists is: is it possible to make a documentary that is objective? Attempts to grapple with this issue have given rise to two main streams of documentary, the objective and subjective.

### Objective documentary

This is the dominant style of documentary and is the form we are most familiar with. The traditional documentary is in this category. The topics of objective documentaries can range across areas such as travel, historical, informational and nature. The common thread that runs through these documentaries is that they do not draw attention to the documentary process. That is, they try to make the film seem like an untouched reality. The documentary tries to make the viewer feel as though they are a fly on the wall.

The camera and equipment are never seen and the camera is generally placed in the position of an observer or third person. A good example of this is the travel or adventure documentary where we see the intrepid adventurer struggle to climb the mountain while the film crew who have recorded all this remain invisible.



*If I can make it up this  
I'll be the first person to make it.*



*Only a few more steps  
and I'll be there.*



Some critics argue that these objective documentaries are not objective at all. They argue that objective documentaries clearly deliver a single point of view, a point of view that is hidden by the techniques, which make it seem impartial.

It is interesting to see that point of view in these documentaries is not always fixed and can shift within a series. In a nature series one week we can see hunting a zebra from a lion's point of view—it is trying to feed its hungry family and another week we see from the point of views of the zebra—it is trying to escape the lion. In these cases the 'reality' changes according to the subject.

## Subjective documentary

In the late twentieth century an opposition to traditional documentary films began to develop. Some critics said that the objective method was a dishonest way of making a film. They claimed that the act of filmmaking changed the 'reality'. They believed that audiences should be aware that film is a construction and the work of a film maker. They referred to the voice-overs

of film makers such as David Attenborough as 'the voice of God' and claimed it stopped viewers from interpreting things for themselves.

The film makers of the new style of subjective documentaries did not try to conceal the camera or the equipment. Film equipment was allowed in shot, because it was part of the filmmaking process and should be seen. These film makers did not attempt to pretend that their work was showing an objective reality; rather, they continually pointed out to their audiences that the film was their personal interpretation. The film maker plays an important role in subjective documentaries and usually appears on camera. Film makers who have a subjective style include Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Pierre Gorin, Michael Moore, Morgan Spurlock and, in Australia, John Safran.

When Michael Moore makes his subjective style of documentary he acknowledges the existence of the film crew and the effect that they may have. He also approaches his subjects personally and on film, and acknowledges his own presence as a film maker and the influence that this may have on the film.



Michael Moore directing *Flint* (1989)

# Breakaway tasks

## Understanding

- 1 What characteristics can a documentary have in common with a fiction film?

## Evaluating

- 2 Read the following quotes regarding documentary.
  - Every cut [edit between shots] is a lie. It's never that way. Those two shots were never next to each other in time that way. But you're telling a lie in order to tell the truth. (Wolf Koenig)
  - Of course there's conscious manipulation! Everything about a movie is manipulation ... If you like it, it's an interpretation. If you don't like it, it's a lie—but everything about these movies is a distortion. (Frederick Wiseman)
  - In documentary we deal with the actual, and in one sense with the real. But the really real, if I may use that phrase, is something deeper than that. The only

reality which counts in the end is the interpretation which is profound. (John Grierson)

- a What is each film maker saying about documentaries? Write an interpretation of each quote in the light of what you have read.
- b Do you think each of these film makers would agree with each other? Why or why not?

In his 1922 documentary on Inuit life, *Nanook of the North*, Flaherty used his experience of living with the Inuit as the basis for his film. In his filming he asked the Inuit not to use any modern technology, but to only use their traditional ways despite the fact that they hunted with guns. Was Flaherty lying to tell a truth about the Inuit way of life?

Still from *Nanook of the North*, directed by Robert J. Flaherty



In 1936 the British GPO (General Post Office) Film Unit produced a twenty-five-minute documentary film called *Night Mail*, about the mail train that ran from London to Scotland, as a public relations exercise. English poet W. H. Auden was commissioned to write the poem below and English composer Benjamin Britten was commissioned to write the accompanying music.

## NIGHT MAIL

By W. H. Auden

POEM

I  
This is the night mail crossing the Border,  
Bringing the cheque and the postal order,  
Letters for the rich, letters for the poor,  
The shop at the corner, the girl next door.  
Pulling up Beattock, a steady climb:  
The gradient's against her, but she's on time.  
Past cotton-grass and moorland boulder  
Shovelling white steam over her shoulder,  
Snorting noisily as she passes  
Silent miles of wind-bent grasses.  
Birds turn their heads as she approaches,  
Stare from bushes at her blank-faced coaches.  
Sheep-dogs cannot turn her course;  
They slumber on with paws across.  
In the farm she passes no one wakes,  
But a jug in a bedroom gently shakes.

II  
Dawn freshens. Her climb is done.  
Down towards Glasgow she descends,  
Towards the steam tugs yelping down a glade of cranes  
Towards the fields of apparatus, the furnaces  
Set on the dark plain like gigantic chessmen.  
All Scotland waits for her:  
In dark glens, beside pale-green lochs  
Men long for news.

III  
Letters of thanks, letters from banks,  
Letters of joy from girl and boy,  
Receipted bills and invitations  
To inspect new stock or to visit relations,  
And applications for situations,  
And timid lovers' declarations,  
And gossip, gossip from all the nations,  
News circumstantial, news financial,  
Letters with holiday snaps to enlarge in,  
Letters with faces scrawled on the margin,  
Letters from uncles, cousins, and aunts,

Letters to Scotland from the South of France,  
Letters of condolence to Highlands and Lowlands  
Written on paper of every hue,  
The pink, the violet, the white and the blue,  
The chatty, the catty, the boring, the adoring,  
The cold and official and the heart's outpouring,  
Clever, stupid, short and long,  
The typed and the printed and the spelt all wrong.

IV  
Thousands are still asleep,  
Dreaming of terrifying monsters  
Or of friendly tea beside the band in Cranston's or  
Crawford's:  
Asleep in working Glasgow, asleep in well-set  
Edinburgh,  
Asleep in granite Aberdeen,  
They continue their dreams,  
But shall wake soon and hope for letters,  
And none will hear the postman's knock  
Without a quickening of the heart,  
For who can bear to feel himself forgotten?

Source: W. H. Auden

## Breakaway tasks

Read the poem by W. H. Auden. Go to **Pearson Reader** to view the documentary *Night Mail*, then answer the following questions.



### Analysing

- 1 How do the words and images match?
- 2 What rhythm does the film maker create with the words and soundtrack?
- 3 Who do you think the audience is for this documentary? What types of people are mentioned in the poem and what images of people do we see?
- 4 What is the style of documentary being used? How is the reality portrayed or manipulated?

### Evaluating

- 5 Do we learn anything from this documentary? Do you think a documentary needs to have an educational role?

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Prepare and present a proposal for two five-minute documentaries. They should be documentaries for either your school or your town or suburb. The audience for the first documentary is parents or adults; the audience for the second documentary is students your age. You will need to provide two written proposals and they will need to cover the following.
  - a Who is your target audience and what techniques will you use to engage them?
  - b What will the theme of your documentary be?
  - c What locations would you use and why? You will need at least five locations.
  - d Who will you interview and why have you chosen them? Write five questions for two of your interviewees.
- 2 Chose two minutes of footage from a documentary—it may be any documentary you like, although a nature documentary will work well. Write a voice-over for these two minutes that tells a completely different story to the original. Play the footage to the class and read out your new voice-over.
  - e What structure will your documentary take? What will be in the beginning and the middle, and how will it conclude?
  - f Write a voice-over for the first two minutes of your documentary.
  - g If you have the facilities, record the voice-over for one documentary and, using a still camera, take images that will match. You may now wish to put these into a video editing program and play it for the class.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Write a short poem about a journey you have taken and find images to match your words.
  - 2 With a partner, investigate the history of the documentary and prepare a report for the class. You can present your report in a format you have negotiated with your teacher. Your report will need to contain information and images from at least one of the following documentary film makers.
    - David Bradbury (Australia)
    - Errol Morris (United States of America)
    - Dennis O'Rourke (Australia)
    - Leni Riefenstahl (Germany)
    - Morgan Spurlock (United States of America)
- You will need to cover:
- a how they started
  - b where they worked and who they worked for
  - c their particular style and what was distinctive about them
  - d two of their most famous documentaries, what they are about and the impact of these films in their country or the world.

# Investigating the traditional documentary

**T**raditional 'objective' documentary is still the most common type of documentary film. There are a number of sub-genres of documentary within this form.

Some of the sub-genres of traditional documentary are:

- **biographical**—about a person, usually an important or significant figure, such as Napoleon
- **historical**—about a historical period or event, such as a major war
- **nature**—about an animal, a species or an ecosystem
- **music**—about a musician, a band or a significant event such as a concert
- **sociological or ethnographic**—about a specific group of people, culture or subculture, such as teenagers, or desert nomads



**'Genre'** is a French word meaning 'type', 'kind' or 'style'. Genre is used to classify or sort works according to type, such as thriller or horror.

- **informational or instructional**—usually quite short, providing information, such as how to survive a bushfire.

Still from *Standing in the Shadows of Motown*, a documentary about a group of Detroit musicians who backed up dozens of Motown artists, directed by Paul Justman, 2002



# Characteristics of traditional 'objective' documentary

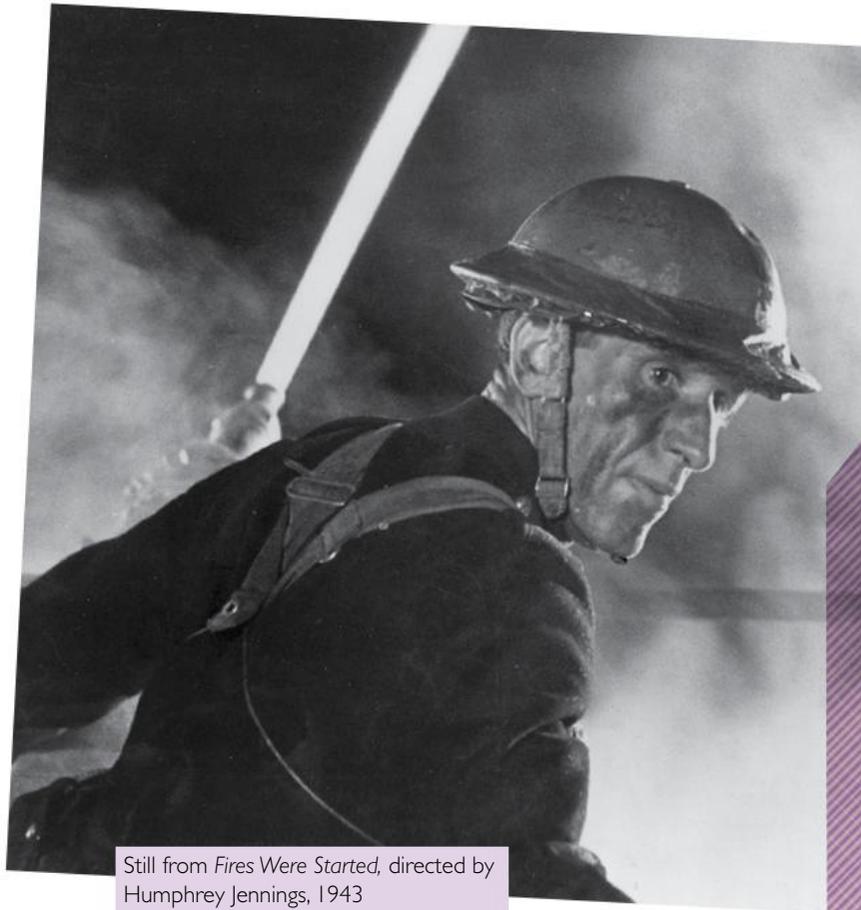
While we have a number of genres that fall under the heading of 'traditional documentary' there are a number of characteristics that we find in common across these genres.

There are certain conventions or characteristics that we expect of all documentaries. We expect them to be shot on location rather than in a studio; we expect them to look 'real'; that is, we do not expect elaborate lighting or effects; and we expect them to have 'real' people, not actors, in them. This last convention is often ignored, such as in a documentary that features historical re-enactments. This brings with it a host of problems and questions such as: 'how do we know this is what they said, wore or acted?' One of the most important expectations we have of traditional documentaries is that the main intention is to inform us, rather than to entertain or amuse us.

## Structure

The structure of most traditional documentaries follows the three-act structure that we are familiar with from fictional texts. That is, most documentaries have:

- **a beginning**—the topic or problem is introduced. For example:
  - Is climate change affecting polar bears?
  - The infamous serial killer the Yorkshire Ripper is introduced.
- **a middle**—the problem is explored. For example:
  - How is climate change affecting polar bears now and what is their future?
  - The man hunt for the Yorkshire Ripper is explained.
- **an end**—a conclusion is reached, a problem is solved or a solution is proposed. For example:
  - If we do not tackle climate change, then we will lose these magnificent creatures.
  - The mystery is solved: the Yorkshire Ripper is caught.



Still from *Fires Were Started*, directed by Humphrey Jennings, 1943

## Character

Just as a fictional text has characters, in traditional documentaries there is usually someone who is affected by events in some way. The character does not have to be human: in the case of nature documentaries, animals are the characters, and may be portrayed as distressed, angry or even in love.

## Setting

In traditional documentaries the setting is the external or 'real' world, not on a set but on location.

## Camera

It is so rare as to be almost unknown for viewers to see the camera, equipment or filmmaking process in a traditional documentary. This enables the illusion that we are watching reality. This illusion is often reinforced by 'realistic' camera work, with the camera at eye height as though we are watching, and any camera movement mimicking human movement. The camera may move, but it rarely zooms.

## Lighting

There is little use of the dramatic lighting effects often used in fictional film. The lighting, if there is any, is as realistic as possible.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What does the word 'genre' mean?
- 2 List three documentary genres.
- 3 What is the three-act structure?

### Understanding

- 4 Give an example of a documentary for each of the documentary sub-genres.

### Applying

- 5 Think of a documentary you have seen this year. Break it down into the three-act structure with an explanation of each act.

### Analysing

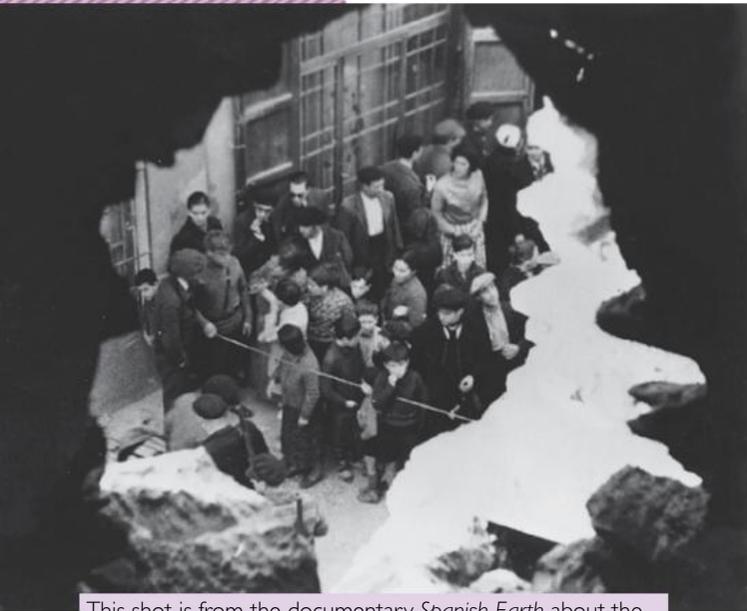
- 6 Find examples of the use of the following characteristics in the documentaries you have seen. What effect does this use of the characteristic have?
  - character
  - setting
  - camera
  - lighting
  - voice-over
  - authority
  - archival footage
  - music

### Creating

- 7 Create a short profile of the type of expert who might be interviewed for each of the following documentary topics. You will need to describe what they look like, their job or position, what they might typically wear, the location in which they might be filmed and the reason they would have been chosen. Write two lines of dialogue that you think would be typical of them.

The topics are:

- nature
- cooking
- climate change
- sporting legends
- graffiti
- teenage culture.



This shot is from the documentary *Spanish Earth* about the Spanish Civil War (1937). The shot places the audience in the position of an invisible observer peering through the ruins of an apartment at a crowd below. This illustrates the importance of the camera and its positioning both in the film and as an effect on the audience.

## Voice-over

There is often a voice-over, which explains the action on screen. The voice-over tells the viewer how to interpret the images and lends authority to the film. Most voice-overs are male.

## Authority

Authority figures, or experts, are often interviewed. These are seen to add weight to the film's message. In traditional documentaries it is unusual for authority figures to be questioned.

## Archival footage

Pre-existing footage is often used in traditional documentary. It is ironic that this pre-existing footage is used to give evidence of a 'truth' when many critics would argue that this footage is as manipulated and constructed as the documentary within which it is placed.

## Music

Music may be used, but it is used sparingly. Coupled with the voice-over, it serves to raise dramatic tension or to create an effect or induce an emotion from the audience.

# Text analysis: Spellbound

*Spellbound*, directed by Jeff Blitz in 2002, is a documentary about eight competitors in the American National Spelling Bee Championships. The Scripps National Spelling Bee is an American nationwide spelling contest. It was launched in Kentucky in 1925, but it was not the first spelling bee. America has a long tradition of spelling contests. These contests took place in local schools and local school districts and developed into fierce contests, with competitors vying for the title of county spelling champion.

The National Spelling Bee is open to students who are in Year 8 or below; students under fifteen and past winners are not eligible. It has developed into something like a sporting competition. Contestants have to make it through local, regional and state events before the remaining students, numbering over 290, assemble in June in Washington for the national final.

The final of the National Spelling Bee is broadcast on ESPN which is the major cable sports broadcaster and the winner earns not only great acclaim and prestige, but also over US\$40 000 in cash and prizes.

*Spellbound* had to be financed entirely on the director and producer's credit cards because no studio would back it. The film was nominated for the Academy Award for Documentary Feature in 2002 and won several other awards. In 2008, members of the International Documentary Association voted *Spellbound* one of the Top 5 documentaries ever made.

## ? DID YOU KNOW...

It is unclear how the word 'bee' came into being in this sense. It is not related to the insect; it refers to people gathering in one place.

Watch *Spellbound* and answer the following questions. Read over the questions before you start watching so that you can take relevant notes.



Still from *Spellbound*, 2002

# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 Describe the National Spelling Bee.
- 2 How many students participate in the Spelling Bee?
- 3 Describe the process the competitors go through.
- 4 Write a short synopsis of the documentary. You will need to cover what happens, who it happens to, the outcome and so on.

## Understanding

- 5 Why do you think the documentary is called *Spellbound*? Do you think it is an appropriate title?
- 6 Suggest three other titles for the film and explain why they would be suitable.

## Analysing

- 7 Examine the opening sequence. How has the film maker used sound and camera to engage us?
- 8 Examine each of the eight characters in the film. Copy the following table into your notebook and complete it, using nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs to describe the characters.



Sukanya Roy winning the 2011 Scripps National Spelling Bee

Character	Two nouns	Two verbs	Four adjectives	Two adverbs
Neil Kadakia				
Emily Stagg				
Ashley White				
April DeGideo				
Harry Altman				
Angela Arenivar				
Nupur Lala				
Ted Brigham				

Using the words you have put in the table, write three sentences describing each character.

- 9 Each competitor seems to be motivated to enter the Spelling Bee for a different reason. What are the motivations of each character?
- 10 While watching *Spellbound* did you have a favourite character? Did you favour some competitors over others? Who and why? Was there anything about the way the film was made that might have made you feel this way?

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

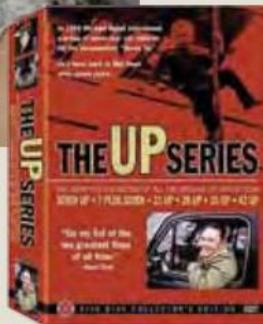
- 1 A new species has been found in your neighbourhood, school or town. Write the script with a voice-over for a two-minute traditional nature documentary. If you have the equipment, create a documentary using either still images or video.
- 2 You have been commissioned to develop scripts for two documentaries on the use of fur in fashion: one documentary is commissioned by the fashion industry and one is by an animal welfare organisation. With a partner, script an interview for each documentary and perform the interview for the class.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Michael Apted directed a series of documentaries (*Seven Up* was the first in 1964) following a group of fourteen English children as they grow up. Gillian Armstrong has directed a similar series in Australia (*Smokes and Lollies* was the first). Research either of these series and present a report to the class on the main themes and what criticisms there have been of the ethics of making such films.
- 2 With a partner or by yourself, take a ten-minute clip from an existing documentary, and write new dialogue for the voice-over, interviews and any other spoken words. Try to change the meaning as much as possible, play your clip to the class and provide the new soundtrack.
- 3 Is *Spellbound* just about the National Spelling Bee? Discuss. You may want to look at ideas of what it is to be American, the migrant experience, family life and other themes and issues.
- 4 Pick two of the contestants from *Spellbound* and write their diary entries for the next days as they return to their communities. Then flash-forward to when they are twenty and write a short biography for each, filling in the intervening years.



Still from *49 Up*, with Jackie Bassett, Sue Sullivan and Lynn Johnson, three of the original participants in the *Seven Up* series, directed by Michael Apted, 2005



# Points of view

**W**hile some film makers were attracted to the idea of capturing 'reality', others were interested in using camera technology to interpret and construct their own realities.

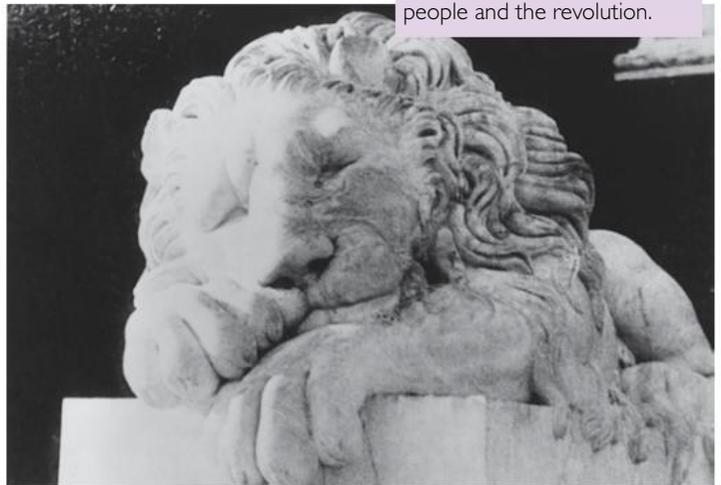
By the 1920s, film theoreticians and film makers were talking about film as a visual language. The individual shots were seen as words and by placing the shots together, visual sentences and phrases could be created. Audiences could construct meaning from visual sentences just as they did from written ones.



Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 film *Battleship Potemkin* was a re-creation of the 1905 uprising in Russia. Eisenstein was on the side of the revolutionaries. In this shot he portrays the Tsar's troops as a merciless machine, cutting down innocent civilians.

In some cases film makers started making what could be called early 'docu-dramas'. Just as the word implies, a docu-drama is a dramatisation of actual events. The great Russian film maker of the Soviet era, Sergei Eisenstein used this approach in a number of his films and he is said to be a pioneer of the docu-drama form.

Eisenstein followed with these three shots of statues of lions. If we see these shots as visual language, signifying asleep, awakening and awake, we see Eisenstein has created a metaphor for the Russian people and the revolution.



# Dziga Vertov

One of the leading practitioners and pioneers of this new approach to documentary was a Russian called Dziga Vertov (1896–1954).

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Dziga Vertov was born Denis Kaufmann but he changed his name when he became a film maker to reflect his philosophy. Dziga Vertov means 'spinning top'.

Vertov believed that it was the documentary film maker's role to reveal an event or issue by approaching it in a personal way. He thought that the act of making the film was a part of the film itself and that an honest documentary film maker revealed the construction of the film. His most famous film, *Man with a Movie Camera*, embodies this philosophy. In *Man with a Movie Camera*, we see an image, which is then manipulated by an editor. We see this image as part of a film, sometimes we even see the audience watching the edited image—a constant reminder that film is a construction.

The personal or participatory school of documentary making remained a small subculture in opposition to the dominant traditional documentary school. From this objective school of filmmaking came 'direct cinema' or 'cinema vérité', which claimed to portray an absolute reality.



**Cinema vérité**, a French film movement, means 'cinema truth'.

Dziga Vertov



# Cinema vérité

Cinema vérité film makers believed that by following their subjects continually, by inserting themselves into their subjects' lives and by constantly and unobtrusively filming, they would be able to capture the 'real' person or event. This approach to filmmaking, also known as 'New Documentary', is used in famous cinema vérité films such as *Don't Look Back* and *Salesman*. Many claim that this form of documentary was the forerunner to reality television.



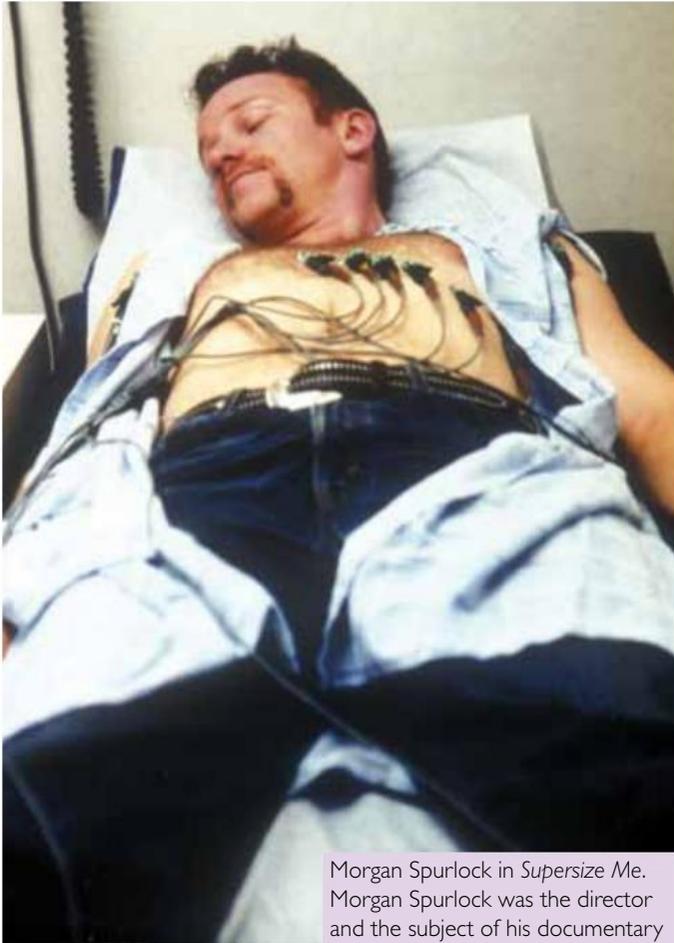
Bob Dylan in *Don't Look Back*, 1967

Cinema vérité had many critics. These critics did not believe that people would act naturally while the camera was on them. They also did not believe that the camera itself could reveal a 'truth'. Some film makers, taking their inspiration from Vertov, began making films that were a personal exploration, that emphasised the film as a construction and that acknowledged that the act of making the film had an effect on all the participants (an effect that did not necessarily end when the film did).

## Characteristics of cinema vérité, or New Documentary

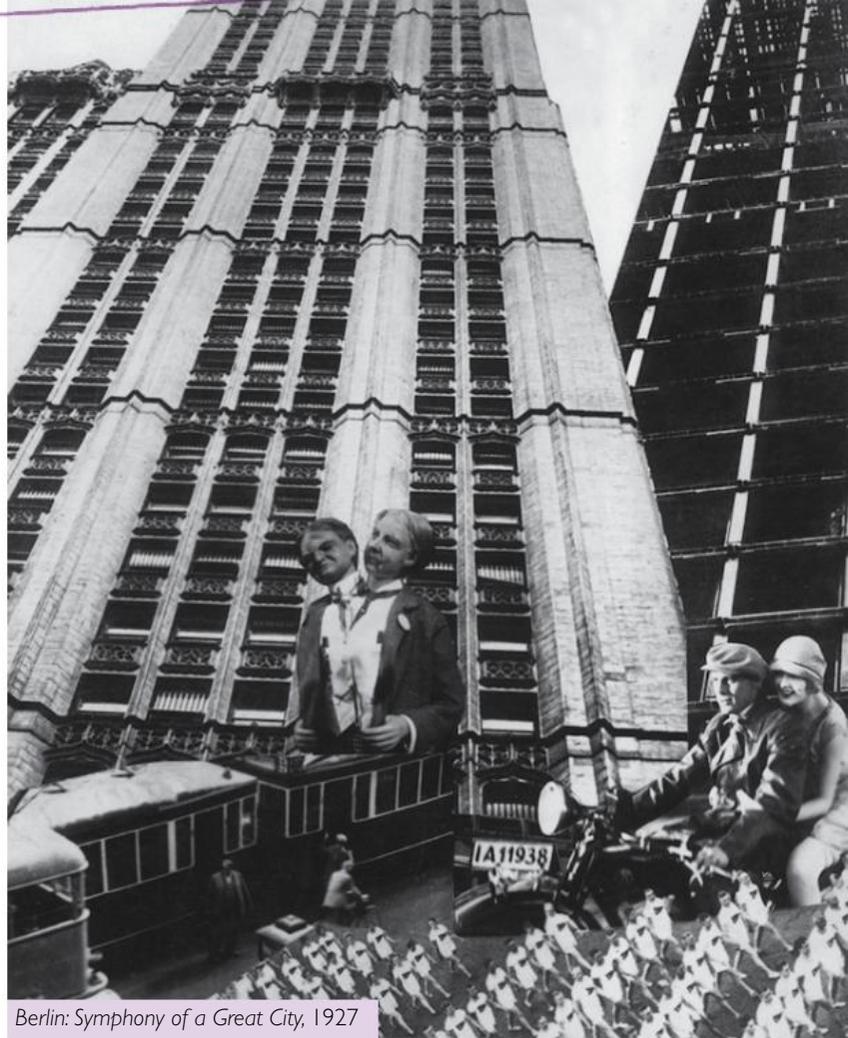
Cinema vérité differs from traditional documentaries in the following ways:

- There is no unseen narrator. The 'voice of God' has been replaced by the voice of the director. The viewer is not told what to look at but the process of the film is described.



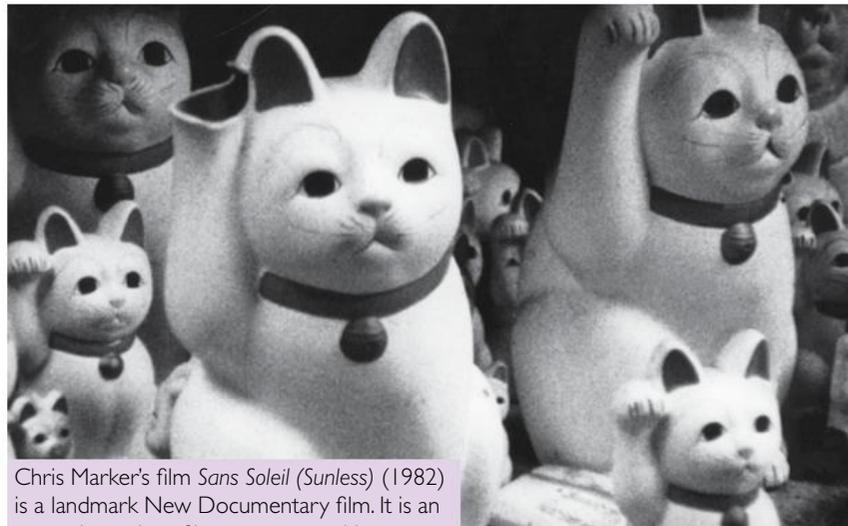
Morgan Spurlock in *Supersize Me*. Morgan Spurlock was the director and the subject of his documentary on junk food, *Supersize Me*, 2004

- The director is usually present and seen in the film. Rather than the film attempting to portray an objective reality, the director is an obvious participant in the creation of a filmic reality.
- The film often contains mixed media forms. There may be animation mixed with live film footage mixed with live video and web-based material.
- There is often deliberate distortion of reality, such as in Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City*.



*Berlin: Symphony of a Great City*, 1927

- The point of view of the film is clear; it is obvious that it is a personal position taken by the director. There is often direct comment on the process of making the film.



Chris Marker's film *Sans Soleil (Sunless)* (1982) is a landmark New Documentary film. It is an essay about time, film, memory and images.

- The documentary looks at the effect it has on the subject and the participants. In *Poto & Cabengo*, the director Jean-Pierre Gorin returns to the family he filmed six months earlier to see the effect the film has had on them.



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 In film language what takes the place of words?
- 2 How are sentences constructed in film language?
- 3 Name three characteristics of New Documentary.

### Understanding

- 4 Compare the characteristics of New Documentary with those of the traditional documentary.
- 5 Explain how each of the characteristics illustrates the philosophy behind New Documentary.

### Analysing

Go to the **Pearson Reader** to see *Man with a Movie Camera*. Note that Vertov's film was originally silent and that a number of soundtracks have been added later.



- 6 What message do you think Vertov is presenting in the opening titles?
- 7 What effect does the first image have on how we see the film?
- 8 What techniques does Vertov use to make us aware that we are watching a film and not reality?
- 9 In this segment, Vertov is showing early morning in Moscow. How does he portray morning and waking? What comments do you think Vertov is making about Russian society at the time? (Remember this is seven years after the revolution.)

### Creating

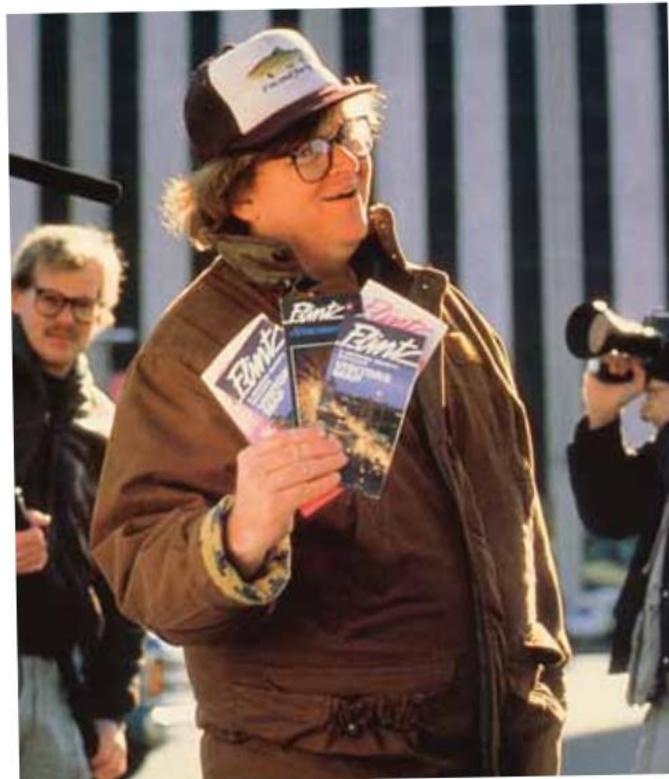
- 10 Look again at Eisenstein's lions. Draw or photograph three images that could be placed together to create a metaphor, as Eisenstein has done. For inspiration, you could choose a current event, your school or town, an emotion or political statement.



**soundtrack:** a strip on the side of cinema film which carries the sound recording.

## Text analysis: Bowling for Columbine

Michael Moore is a New Documentary film maker. His first film, *Roger and Me* (1989), was about Moore's attempts to interview the CEO of General Motors, Roger Smith, about the effect General Motors factory closures had on their local communities, including the town Moore grew up in, Flint, Michigan.



*Roger and Me* was the most commercially successful documentary of all time, until *Bowling for Columbine* surpassed it.

One of Moore's best known documentaries is *Bowling for Columbine*. Moore was as shocked as most people were when, in 1999, two students at a typical high school in Colorado in the United States of America opened fire with automatic weapons. They killed twelve students and one teacher, and injured twenty-one other students. Using this incident as his central theme, Moore in his typical filmmaking style created a film *Bowling from Columbine* (2002) that deals with issues such as gun control, violence, fear and other related topics.

## Breakaway tasks

Watch *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) and answer the following questions.

### Remembering

- 1 Write three paragraphs about the film and your reaction to it. Do not think too much here—just write your feelings about the film and its subject.
- 2 What is the National Rifle Association and what is its purpose?
- 3 Who or what does Moore blame for the Columbine killings?
- 4 Why was the dog armed? What was the result?
- 5 What is the Halloween candy rumour? Is it true?
- 6 How many people are killed by guns in America, Canada and Australia each year?
- 7 Why does Moore visit K-Mart headquarters and what is the result of his visit?

### Understanding

- 8 Look up the following words in your dictionary and write out the meanings in your own words. Use each of the words in a sentence about *Bowling for Columbine*.
  - militia
  - tragedy
  - allegation
  - influential
  - persecuted
  - misconception
  - patriotism
- 9 Why do you think the film is called *Bowling for Columbine*? Give three other names you think would be appropriate and why they would work.

### Applying

- 10 Write down the characteristics of New Documentary you can see in *Bowling for Columbine*.

### Analysing

- 11 Moore uses a variety of media including animation and archival footage. List the forms you can see in the film and discuss what effect they might have on the viewer. Why do you think Moore has used all these techniques?
- 12 Moore uses a variety of music in the film. What is the effect on the viewer of the music?
- 13 Discuss some of the issues that are explored in *Bowling for Columbine*.

## Film reviews

A film can live or die at the box office as a result of reviews. Film reviewers are some of the most powerful people in the entertainment industry because of this. Their words can change public perception of a film. So what is a review? A review is:

- a personal response to the subject matter
- written clearly and logically
- analytical and dissects its subject
- written using the specialist language of the subject as appropriate
- intended to influence others.

A film review should be the result of careful and critical thinking. Ideally, you should have seen the film a number of times, although sometimes the instant reaction to the first viewing is an accurate guide to the film.

As we have seen, a film is written and produced with a clear purpose and audience in mind; therefore, a film can be 'read' in the same ways as print texts. To do this, we must understand the techniques used in films (camera angles, story editing, music, special effects, etc.) to determine *what* the film is saying and *how* the film is saying it. By examining the use of these techniques, we are picking up the 'visual clues' about the meaning of the film. When we review a film, we give weight to how well the director and the production team has used these exclusively 'cinematic' elements to tell their story.

When you watch a film you are going to review you should ask yourself questions such as:

- To which genre does the film belong? Is it a good example of this genre? Why? Why not?
- How does the film gain the attention of the audience?
- Does the film contain any stereotyping?
- What does the film suggest about the society it depicts?
- What are the key scenes in the film? Why are they important?
- Does the film encourage us to feel sympathy for the characters? How?
- Does the film take an objective or subjective view of the world?
- How do special effects and music complement the storyline?

- How is suspense or interest maintained in the film?
- How do the camera angles add meaning to the shot?
- Does the film contain any recurring themes or symbols?

The answers to these, and any other questions you ask, will form the basis of your review.

## Elements of a film review

Once we have analysed a film and know what we want to say about it, the next step is to write the review. Before you write your film review, you must decide on your audience and purpose. When you start writing use the following structure:

- a headline to attract attention, and subheadings to reinforce points made
- a picture to illustrate the review
- a clear opinion about the film and its elements
- some background to the film, including the director and actors' names, where and when it was made
- a brief description of the characters and story (don't tell the story in detail—it's a review not a recount)
- reference to the key themes and features of the film
- reference to and assessment of elements such as the performances, script, dialogue, special effects, music, cinematography, direction, etc., providing evidence and examples from the film to back up your assessment
- a conclusion that reinforces your opinion on the piece, which can include some form of rating system like awarding stars or points.

Make sure your review is not boring! Remember that when writing a film review you must both entertain and inform your audience.

## Audience and purpose

Every time a reviewer writes, they decide who they are writing for and what they want to achieve. By being clear about their audience and purpose, the reviewer is able to inform and influence their readership.



A good rule to follow when writing reviews is: always be clear about your audience and your purpose before you start writing.

You would, for example, use slang and the language of young people to review a new *Transformers* film, because the target audience is young people, but you would use a different language if you were reviewing a film for a much older audience. More formal language would be suitable for this, especially if your purpose is to give a good review of the film.

## Language of reviews

The language of formal reviews is authoritative, forceful and decisive. A reviewer must know exactly what they thought about a film and then must use clear, logical writing to impart those thoughts. There is no point having an opinion if you can't express it so that others can understand and (hopefully) agree with it.

## Bias

Every time we write, we bring our own perceptions and ideas to the pen or keyboard. We can't help it; it's part of human nature. However, a reviewer must be aware of bias and try to keep the natural bias under control when they review other people's work. When writing a review, try to be as objective as possible and review the subject on its own merits.

## Tone

The tone of a piece of writing tells us the attitude or emotional reaction of the writer to the subject. A piece of writing that is sarcastic in tone is not likely to be a positive review of its subject. On the other hand, a review that has an excited or amused tone is probably very positive about the subject.



Some words that might describe tone include: cynical, approving, earnest, indignant, mocking, satirical, cheerful, humorous, concerned, angry, jovial, intimate, bored, etc.

Read the review of *Bowling for Columbine* by A.O. Scott to see how he has applied these kinds of questions and rules to his writing.

## SEEKING A SMOKING GUN IN US VIOLENCE

By A.O. Scott

**M**ichael Moore's new documentary, *Bowling for Columbine*, rapturously greeted at the Cannes Film Festival in May, opens today in New York City and Los Angeles in an atmosphere of intense political polarisation. Not that Mr Moore, a cheerful rabble-rouser and author of the best seller *Stupid White Men*, would have it any other way. But in times of political anxiety and global insecurity—most times, in other words—arguments have a tendency to turn into shouting matches.

The most disappointing—and the most likely—response to Mr Moore's disturbing, infuriating and often very funny film would be uncritical support from his ideological friends and summary dismissal from his foes. The slippery logic, tendentious grandstanding and outright demagoguery on display in *Bowling for Columbine* should be enough to give pause to its most ardent partisans, while its disquieting insights into the culture of violence in America should occasion sober reflection from those who would prefer to stop their ears.

I hope the movie is widely seen and debated with appropriate ferocity and thoughtfulness. Does that sound evasive? I'm sorry if it does, but at the moment, political certainty seems to me to be a cheap and abundant commodity, of much less value than honest ambivalence.

Mr Moore, in the good-natured, confrontational style familiar from *Roger and Me* and *TV Nation*, his sadly short-lived series on Fox, tracks his subject far and wide: a little too far and a little too wide perhaps. His starting point is the horrific massacre at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Like everyone else, he wonders how such a thing could have happened, and what it says about contemporary American society.

These questions quickly lead to larger ones: Why do Americans shoot one another so much more often than the citizens of other developed countries? Why do our lives seem to be governed by fear? The recent string of killings around Washington provides a grim reminder that these issues are always timely.

These are hardly simple questions, and Mr Moore vacillates between acknowledging their complexity and

giving in to his own urge to simplify. He dismisses a number of possible answers out of hand. Is violent popular culture to blame? No, because in a country like Japan, with a tiny fraction of our gun deaths, people consume super-brutal movies, video games and comic books with even more voracity than we do. Poverty? No, since Canada and many European nations have much higher unemployment rates and much lower homicide rates. Is it our history of warfare and brutality? Compared with imperial Britain and Nazi Germany, he suggests, we're downright pacific.

But each of these assertions rides roughshod over some obvious doubts and qualifications. Unemployment, in countries with more extensive welfare states than ours, is not necessarily the same as poverty, and the wholesale brutality of states and empires engaged in wars of conquest is not the same as the retail mayhem of armed individuals.

But though he seems to be hunting for a specific historical cause for events like Columbine, Mr Moore, when it serves his purposes, is happy to generalise in the absence of empirical evidence and to make much of connections that seem spurious on close examination. Several times he notes that the Columbine shootings occurred on the same day as the heaviest United States bombing of the Kosovo war. The more you think about this coincidence, the less it seems to mean.

He visits a Lockheed Martin plant near Columbine that manufactures missiles and pesters a company flack about the links between the factory's products and the shootings. 'I guess I don't see that connection,' the man says, standing in front of the company's wares. Mr Moore and the camera clearly take him for a fool: another stupid white man doing his job. But you don't have to be a big fan of nuclear weapons to think that he might have a point.

This exchange is followed by a montage, accompanied by Louis Armstrong singing 'What a Wonderful World', of American foreign policy misdeeds from the 1950s to the present. Their relevance is, again, arguable, but by now it should be clear that Mr Moore is less interested in argument than in provocation. The last image is of the airplanes smashing into the World Trade Center, accompanied by this text: 'Sept. 11, 2001: Osama bin Laden uses his expert CIA training to murder 3000 people.'

The idiocy of this statement is hardly worth engaging; it is exactly the kind of glib distortion of history that can be taken as a warrant to dismiss everything Mr Moore has to say. And this is a shame, since much of the movie is worth engaging, and manifests genuine curiosity

and a wicked satirical sense along with finger-pointing self-righteousness. While Mr Moore, as an interviewer, has a tendency to shame his subjects or make them look ridiculous, he can also be a sympathetic, attentive listener. And to his credit, he includes several moments in which he himself is clearly distressed or taken by surprise by what his interlocutors have to say.

The camera collects quite a few odd, touching and unsettling moments. A home-security consultant, full of matter-of-fact sales talk about deadbolts and fortified safe rooms, breaks down at the mention of *Columbine*. A visit to James Nichols, whose brother, Terry, helped Timothy McVeigh plan the Oklahoma City bombing, reveals a scared, angry man who lives surrounded by guns on a farm where he grows, of all things, organic soybeans to be made into tofu. And a prosecutor in Michigan, Mr Moore's home state, explains that guns are a much bigger problem in the white suburbs there than in mostly black urban areas.

'I didn't think that's what you were going to say,' Mr Moore says. 'I thought you were going to say it was black kids in the inner city.' When he goes against the grain of his own prejudices—and keeps in check his desire to be the centre of attention—*Bowling for Columbine* is riveting and scary, and its vision of a society racked by fear, riven by inequality and armed to the teeth is neither comforting nor easily wished away.

Mr Moore's less admirable traits cannot be ignored, even—and especially—if you find merit in some of his views. The film seems to reach a natural conclusion when Mr Moore, accompanied by two boys wounded at *Columbine*, visits Kmart's corporate headquarters to demand that the company stop selling ammunition. (The high school killers bought their bullets in one of its stores.) But Mr Moore, unable to forgo another chance to prove his moral superiority, ends the film with a visit to Charlton Heston's house.

You can be repelled by Mr Heston's actions as president of the National Rifle Association—he is shown addressing pro-gun rallies that took place in the wake of the school shootings in both Littleton and Flint, Michigan—and still find Mr Moore's tactics distasteful. His tendency to scapegoat may satisfy his need for drama, but it makes for lousy politics.

Source: *New York Times*, 11 October 2002

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What month is the Cannes Film Festival?
- 2 Who is the president of the National Rifle Association in the United States of America?

### Understanding

- 3 What is the Cannes Film Festival? Why is it important?
- 4 What other Michael Moore film is referred to in the review? Make a list of the things the reader finds out about this film.
- 5 Look up the following cinematic terms in the dictionary and compile a list of meanings in your notebook.

direction/director	casting	screenplay
special effects	frame	close-up
acting	CGI	dissolve
voice-over	cinematography	sound effects
camera angles	long shot	editing
continuity	lighting	fade
dialogue	wardrobe	setting

### Applying

- 6 Look up the following words in your dictionary. Write a meaning in your own words. For each word, discuss why you think Scott chose it.
  - rapturously
  - rabble-rouser
  - tendentious
  - partisan
  - assertions
  - polarisation
  - demagoguery
  - voracity
  - scapegoat
  - arguable
  - ideological
  - ambivalence
  - spurious
  - vacillates
  - empirical

### Analysing

- 7 Do you think Scott is familiar with the New Documentary genre? Why do you think that? What evidence can you find in the review?
- 8 Scott seems to be in two minds about *Bowling for Columbine*. What are his criticisms of the film? What does he see that is valuable?

## Analysing

- 9 a What is the tone of the review? Is it positive or negative?
  - b Who do you think is the intended audience? How does the language used give clues to the audience? Give your reasons using evidence from the review.
- 10 Do you agree with the review? Which aspects of the review do you agree and disagree with?

## Creating

- 11 Write your own review of *Bowling for Columbine* using the guidelines for review writing earlier in this module. Ensure that you have addressed the elements of film reviews adequately and have used an appropriate structure. Remember one paragraph, one main idea is still the best rule for writing.
- 12 Write your own review of a film that you have seen recently or have viewed as a class.

# Strands in action

## Core task

*Bowling for Columbine*, *Roger and Me*, *Supersize Me* and many other documentaries examine current issues. Think of an issue in your local area, school or town and write a proposal for a documentary about it. The proposal will need to cover the issue and why it's important. Think about who it affects, what your interest in it is, who the audience for the film will be, the effect you hope your film will have and what it might achieve.

Develop a plan of how you think the film will look and a detailed script including camera shots and sound, including any voice-over for the first two minutes and the last two minutes.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Write your own review of *Bowling for Columbine*. Include a brief synopsis, examples of scenes you liked or didn't like and why you felt that way, the themes or issues raised and the manner in which they are raised, which audiences you would think it was suitable for, who you would recommend it to and an overall assessment. Write between 300 and 500 words.
- 2 Write a short essay arguing for or against tougher gun laws in Australia.

# Truth and fiction: mockumentary

Over recent years, the mockumentary has become a popular genre in cinemas and on television. From *Borat* and *Kenny* to *The Office* and *Summer Heights High*, mockumentaries have become an easily recognisable comedy genre.

## Origins of mockumentary

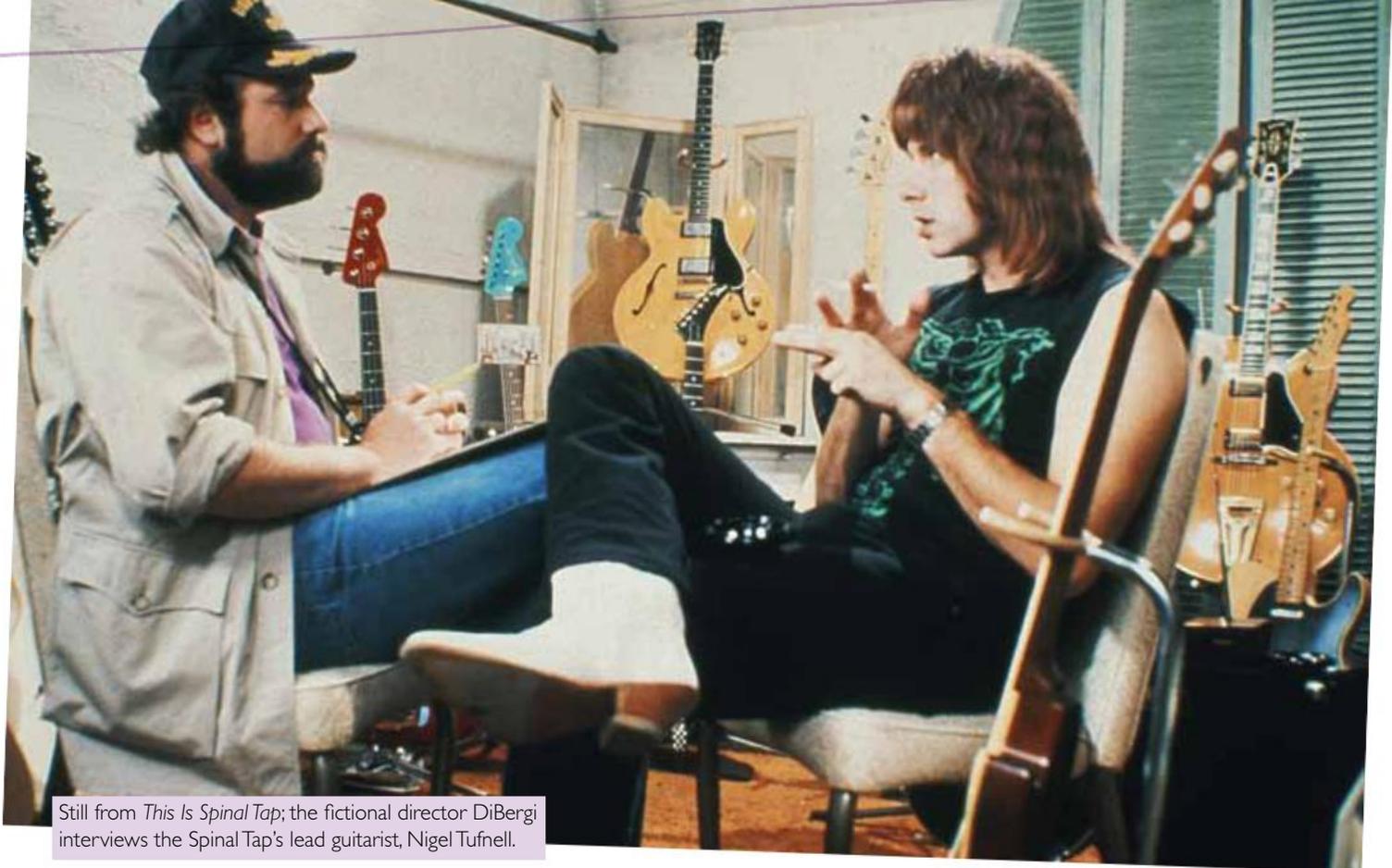
The word 'mockumentary' was coined by Rob Reiner, the director of what is considered to be one of the first mockumentaries, *This Is Spinal Tap* (1984). The film follows the American tour of the fictional English heavy metal band Spinal Tap, who are touring the United States of America in an attempt to recapture their past glory. The tour is filmed to create what the fictional director, Marty DiBergi, called a 'rockumentary'.

### QUESTION

The actual director of the mockumentary, *This Is Spinal Tap*, Rob Reiner, played the fictional director of the rockumentary. The name Marty DiBergi is poking fun at the director Martin Scorsese and his film of a concert, called *The Last Waltz*.

*Kenny* followed the life of an everyday plumber who supplied portable toilets to events such as the Melbourne Cup.





Still from *This Is Spinal Tap*; the fictional director DiBergi interviews the Spinal Tap's lead guitarist, Nigel Tufnell.

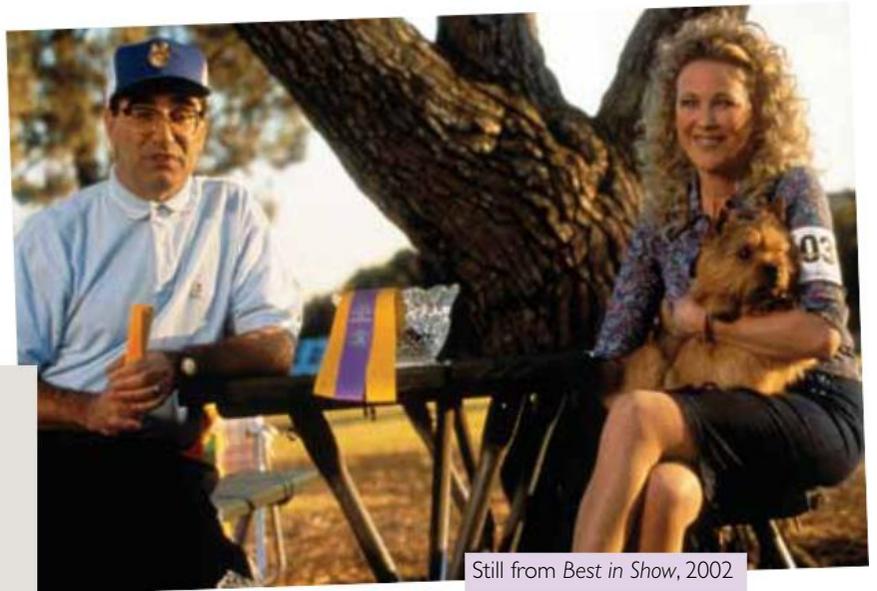
It was in an interview to promote his film that Reiner first used the word 'mockumentary'. Mockumentary is a very appropriate term and if Reiner had not coined it someone else would have, as it sums up the genre so succinctly. It is obvious where 'umentary' comes from but the word 'mock' has several different meanings: it can mean fake or imitation, but also to poke fun at or deride.

### ❓ DID YOU KNOW...

When *This Is Spinal Tap* was first released it did not do very well. Many people didn't get the joke, and thought it was a real documentary of a not-very-good band that no one had heard of. After its release on video, however, it became so popular that the cast actually formed as 'Spinal Tap' and toured America.

After *This Is Spinal Tap*, other film makers began to see the possibilities of using mockumentary to satirise the documentary.

Christopher Guest, who starred as Nigel Tufnell in *This Is Spinal Tap* has become a leading director of mockumentaries. In films such as *Best in Show* and *A Mighty Wind*, Guest parodies some of the groups and characters that make up American society. Guest and his actors largely improvise their dialogue, with Guest supplying detailed scenarios and character studies as a base.



Still from *Best in Show*, 2002

## WAL Writer's TOOLBOX

**Satire** is the use of humour to draw attention to or criticise a person, behaviour or an attitude. It is this critical aspect that separates satire from parody.

A **parody** uses the conventions of a form to poke fun at the form itself. In the case of mockumentary, both satire and parody are usually present.

# Characteristics of mockumentary

Just as there are certain characteristics that define genres such as traditional and participatory documentary, mockumentary has its own defining characteristics.

- Although it usually follows the classical narrative three-act structure (a beginning, in which a problem is posed or a situation revealed; a middle, in which the story is developed with complications and obstacles; and an ending, in which the story is resolved), a mockumentary parodies this structure. Often the obstacles are minor or imaginary and could be very easily overcome.
- It often uses traditional documentary techniques such as voice-over, a knowing presenter, or titles or disclaimers about the filming, which create the illusion that what we are watching is real. At other times, a mockumentary will use cinema vérité techniques of an invisible but ever-present camera.
- The camera is usually mobile, following characters around. The characters are usually aware of the camera and that they are being filmed and will often speak directly to the camera either in response to an unheard question or to explain one of their or another character's actions.
- It is rarely shot on a stage or set. Like a documentary, it is shot on location—and even though we know it is fictitious, we respond to it as if it were real.
- The lighting is 'realistic' and never staged or obvious unless the film maker is deliberately parodying the process of making the film.
- There is little or no music except what is called 'justified' sound, for example when a character in the film turns on a radio or similar.
- The dialogue is often improvised. Often the actors are given a character's motivations, actions, likes, dislikes, clothes, taste in music and films, and even their imagined past and present relationships. The scenes are written as detailed scenarios and the actors improvise their dialogue.
- It often uses archival footage. This can be footage of an actual event but it often takes the form of photos of the characters taken in their past, which serves to reinforce the illusion that the character and thus the film is real.

To sum up, a mockumentary uses many, if not all, the techniques, codes and conventions that documentary film uses to capture a reality to create a fiction. By following the form documentaries use to present us with 'reality', mockumentaries highlight how we take for granted that it is 'reality' we see in documentary. Mockumentaries make us question our faith in a documentary's portrayal of reality, truth or authenticity.

## Text analysis: Summer Heights High

*Summer Heights High* is a mockumentary created by Chris Lilley which screened on the ABC. Lilley had already created the critically acclaimed mockumentary *We Can Be Heroes*. *Summer Heights High* follows three characters (all of them played by Lilley) over a typical school term in an Australian government secondary school.

Watch the first episode of *Summer Heights High* and answer the following questions.



Still from *Summer Heights High*, with Chris Lilley as Ja'mie King, 2007.

# Breakaway tasks

## Remembering

- 1 Name the three characters played by Chris Lilley.
- 2 What does Doug Peterson do at Summer Heights High?
- 3 What is Jonah's excuse for bullying?



Chris Lilley

## Understanding

- 4 Why do you think the mockumentary is called *Summer Heights High*? Do you think it is an appropriate title? Why?
- 5 Think of three other titles for the series and why they would be suitable.

## Analysing

- 6 Examine the opening sequence. How has the film maker used dialogue and camera to engage us?
- 7 What are the motivations of each character?
- 8 What themes do you see coming out of the first episode?
- 9 Look at the list of typical characteristics of a mockumentary and compare them to the first episode of *Summer Heights High*. Give appropriate examples from the series.

## Evaluating

- 10 What do you think Lilley thinks are the issues in education today? Do you agree with him?

## Creating

- 11 With a partner, script a conversation between Doug Peterson and Ms Wheatley about Jonah's behaviour in English. Perform it for the class.
- 12 With a partner script a conversation between Ja'mie and her mother after Ja'mie returns home from her first day at Summer Heights High. Perform it for the class.

*Summer Heights High* received critical acclaim in Australia. It has been released in countries such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, where it has been generally well received. Read the reviews that follow.



## DID YOU KNOW...

The woman who played the principal in *Summer Heights High* was a recently retired school principal.

## THE NEW SEASON TV PREVIEW: SUMMER HEIGHTS HIGH: CLASS CLOWN MAKES GOOD

By Tom Shales

Despite what the opening credits say, this is not a documentary shot over a single school term at a large public high school in an apparently small Australian town. It only pretends to be. Chris Lilley, who created the concept, wrote the show and plays the three most prominent parts, proves a wickedly wily parodist. You hardly need to be Australian to recognise its abundance of insight into human foolishness, egomania and nincompooery.

The show, debuting tomorrow night on HBO, starts slowly—but builds. Eventually, even farcical characters inspire emotional investment. It's cringe comedy, with suspense growing out of how mortifyingly the three main characters—a drama teacher, a girl who's transferred from a private school and an incorrigible sociopath—will humiliate themselves.

Mercifully, HBO has imported the series—which aired in Australia last year—rather than contriving some sort of American adaptation of it. The accents might render some of the dialogue murky, but high school banalities Down Under have a lot in common with those up in the Northern Hemisphere. Girls chatter endlessly on cell phones, pausing occasionally to shoot phone photos, and boys invest disproportionate energy in trying to seem cool.

Different viewers will have different favourite characters, but this reviewer found himself most involved with the embarrassments and debasements of the drama teacher—whose name is Greg Gregson but who likes to be called 'Mr G', as if he were beloved and legendary ...

It's possessed of a sensibility that seems oddly peculiar to the age: uproarious subtlety.

Source: *Washington Post*, 8 November 2008

## REVIEW: SUMMER HEIGHTS HIGH

By Pat Sheil

This ... truly is one of the finest pieces of Australian comedy in recent years.

As the parent of a young woman completing high school ... for me it was so accurate, so cringeworthy, so surgically hilarious that it was almost unpleasant.

*Summer Heights High* is a grand example of the 'watching a car crash' school of satire. It's ugly but you can't take your eyes off it. Chris Lilley is a great comic talent, probably because he has a good ear to inform his merciless caricatures. Of all the characters he plays, none quite runs the fingernail down the blackboard so excruciatingly as the drama teacher, Mr G.

If you haven't seen it, it's compulsory viewing; if you have, it's still a blast watching the bloke work. His timing is extraordinary. Even when you know what's going to happen, it's still funny.

There is some compensation for the squeamish: it isn't quite as appalling as his previous effort, *We Can Be Heroes*, which many thought was a real documentary. But it comes awfully close.

Source: *The Age*, 15 October 2009

## Breakaway tasks

### Analysing

- 1 Do you agree with either of the reviews? Why? What do you agree or disagree with in each review?
- 2 *Summer Heights High* generated controversy about schools, students and the education system in general when it was first shown. Investigate the arguments of both sides of the debate and present a report of the key issues raised and your evaluation of them.

### Creating

- 3 Write your own review of the first episode of *Summer Heights High*.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Research the history of mockumentaries. Find information about the first mockumentaries, famous directors and creators, and key mockumentaries, and try to locate critical articles about the genre. Include a personal response to two mockumentaries and write reviews of them.
- 2 Script and produce (if possible) a two-minute mockumentary called 'The First Day on the Job'.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Watch a mockumentary of your choice and write two separate reviews, one for a magazine with a readership of under twenty years of age and one for a general newspaper which is read by all age groups.
- 2 Choose one of the following characters from *Summer Heights High* and write the story of the rest of their day after the final bell has sounded: Rodney, Mrs Murray, Meredith or Toby.
- 3 Examine the following characters in the first episode of *Summer Heights High*. Copy the following table into your notebook and complete it, adding nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs to describe the characters.

Using the words you have included in the table, write a paragraph describing each character. Under each paragraph write another describing your personal response to the character.

Character	Two nouns	Two verbs	Four adjectives	Two adverbs
Mr Gregson				
Ja'mie King				
Jonah Takalua				
Mrs Murray				
Doug Peterson				
Ms Wheatley				

Books can be dangerous. The best ones should be labelled 'This could change your life.'

Helen Exley, writer

# Literature: Classic novels

## Chapter overview

Literature is a product of its time. We can learn more about the society in which a text was written by studying the author's life and era, and the text's characters, language, settings and conflicts. We can compare the historical context of a text with our own contemporary context and gain a greater understanding of common human experience and cultural diversity.

Texts, including novels, can be interpreted in different ways by different readers, depending on the times in which they are written and also the times in which they are read. There are some novels, however, that seem to transcend time and place. They are known as 'classics', the cultural touchstones that reach across generations.

# Early novels

**W**hy do some novels remain timeless classics, read over and over again, debated and discussed by generations of readers, while others are read and enjoyed, then discarded, fading from the memory? What makes a *classic* novel? In this module we will look at how some of the early novels were shaped by their time and their intended audience. We will also explore why these novels have remained important to a contemporary audience.



Daniel Defoe

## Defining the classic novel

Classics are literary works that have stood the test of time. They have become entrenched in the fabric of our Western culture and remain as influential today as they were when they were first written. Although many texts and authors have gone in and out of favour with the reading public, a classic is able to transcend time and place and still have something of value to say to us. These texts are considered to be a part of the 'canon', that is a generally accepted list of important works that are valued for their literary, historical or social importance.

Over the years, there has been a growing movement towards rejecting the notion of a canon, with some literary theorists arguing that readers create their own important individualised relationship with texts. As the author Italo Calvino (1923–1985) said, 'A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say.'

Ultimately, whatever definition of a classic novel you adopt, one thing is certain: the text will have something to say to you and might even change your life!

## The first novels

Before the 1700s, most societies told the stories of their past and conveyed the values and ideas of their cultures in the form of poems and plays. The stories of the Greek heroes or the Norse gods told of valour and a code of honour that was expected to be followed in daily life and passed on to future generations. In Christian Europe the passion plays spread God's teachings to the general public and the twelfth-century Romance tales spoke of love and courage to their aristocratic audience.

By definition, a novel is 'fictitious prose', a long story (with perhaps one or more sub-plots) that concentrates on a particular character or group of characters. When we talk about novels, as they came to be called during their development, we discuss their technical merits—how the writer uses language, the settings, the plot, the development of theme and character for the purposes of telling the story.

The novel began to replace poetry as the most popular genre for fictional stories in the sixteenth century when longer, more 'realistic' stories were written. In 1719 Daniel Defoe (c. 1660–1731) wrote *Robinson Crusoe*. It is commonly regarded as the first English novel because, although fiction, it reflected

### DID YOU KNOW...

When in 1920 a teacher asked her class what they thought a classic work of literature was, one student replied 'Classics are books your father gives you and you keep them to give to your children.'

a more realistic view of the world—Defoe referred to current ideas, debates and people in the story of a man who struggles to survive after being shipwrecked for twenty-eight years.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How did most societies tell their stories prior to the development of the novel?
- 2 What is a canon?
- 3 What is the current thinking about the 'canon'?

### Applying

- 4 Write your own definition of 'classic literature'. Share your ideas with the class. You could come up with an agreed class definition to guide your further reading.
- 5 Make a list of what you consider to be the top ten 'classic' novels. Compile a class list.

## Daniel Defoe

Daniel Defoe (c. 1660–1731) was a journalist and author who wrote many books, pamphlets and journals on a variety of issues and ideas. Defoe was active in London politics and spent his time debating the great political and social topics of his day, both verbally and in the pages of his magazine *The Review*. He survived the Great Fire of London in 1666 and worked closely with the men who brought about the rebirth of the city after that event. Defoe (who added the 'De' to his original surname of 'Foe' to make himself seem more aristocratic) was well aware that his society was changing and used his writing to comment on those changes. Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe*, a fictional autobiography, with its own invented adventures rather than using stories from mythology, history or legend.

### ? DID YOU KNOW...

The story of *Robinson Crusoe* may have been inspired by a real-life event. Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish sailor, was marooned by himself on an island off the coast of Chile for four years. He was rescued in 1709 and was described as being 'almost incoherent with delight' when he saw other humans again.



In the extract that follows, the shipwreck is occurring and Robinson is being washed onto the beach of the island that will be his home for the next twenty-eight years.

## ROBINSON CRUSOE

By Daniel Defoe

The wave that came upon me again buried me at once twenty or thirty feet deep in its own body, and I could feel myself carried with a mighty force and swiftness towards the shore—a very great way; but I held my breath, and assisted myself to swim still forward with all my might. I was ready to burst with holding my breath, when, as I felt myself rising up, so, to my immediate relief, I found my head and hands shoot out above the surface of the water; and though it was not two seconds of time that I could keep myself so, yet it relieved me greatly, gave me breath, and new courage. I was covered again with water a good while, but not so long but I held it out; and finding the water had spent itself, and began to return, I struck forward against the return of the waves, and felt ground again with my feet. I stood still a few moments to recover breath, and till the waters went from me, and then took to my heels and ran with what strength I had further towards the shore. But neither would this deliver me from the fury of the sea, which came pouring in after me again; and twice more I was lifted up by the waves and carried forward as before, the shore being very flat.

The last time of these two had well-nigh been fatal to me, for the sea having hurried me along as before, landed me, or rather dashed me, against a piece of rock, and that with such force, that it left me senseless, and indeed helpless, as to my own deliverance; for the blow taking my side and breast, beat the breath as it were quite out of my body; and had it returned again immediately, I must have been strangled in the water; but I recovered a little before the return of the waves,

and seeing I should be covered again with the water, I resolved to hold fast by a piece of the rock, and so to hold my breath, if possible, till the wave went back. Now, as the waves were not so high as at first, being nearer land, I held my hold till the wave abated, and then fetched another run, which brought me so near the shore that the next wave, though it went over me, yet did not so swallow me up as to carry me away; and the next run I took, I got to the mainland, where, to my great comfort, I clambered up the cliffs of the shore and sat me down upon the grass, free from danger and quite out of the reach of the water.

I was now landed and safe on shore, and began to look up and thank God that my life was saved, in a case wherein there was some minutes before scarce any room to hope. I believe it is impossible to express, to the life, what the ecstasies and transports of the soul are, when it is so saved, as I may say, out of the very grave: and I do not wonder now at the custom, when a malefactor, who has the halter about his neck, is tied up, and just going to be turned off, and has a reprieve brought to him ...

Source: Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719

Following the success of *Robinson Crusoe*, many other writers began to use the novel style to write tales that addressed real-life issues in a fictional context. Samuel Richardson wrote the first real bestseller, *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded*, in 1740. *Pamela* was written in the form of letters and told the tale of a serving girl who showed kindness and virtue, and eventually married the gentleman she saved from wickedness.

There were many factors that lead to the rise of the novel as a popular form of entertainment. The invention of the printing press meant that books could be produced quickly and cheaply. At the same time, there was a significant increase in the number of people who could read and write, leading to a growing demand for entertainment. This had a positive effect on the sale of novels. In addition, 'the Enlightenment'—a period in history in which philosophers began to question the ways in which society functioned—prompted people to think about and question the world in which they lived. Voyages of discovery, advances in scientific and medical knowledge, the spirit of invention, the rise of machinery and political upheavals such as the French Revolution, meant that more and more people were beginning to reflect on the human experience and to read and write about it.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How does Robinson Crusoe finally get ashore?
- 2 What is the first thing he does when he gets ashore?

### Understanding

- 3 Look up and write a definition for the following words as they are used in the extract: deliverance, abated, clambered, malefactor, reprieve.

### Analysing

- 4 How does Defoe create the image of a sea that is violent and against Crusoe? Make a list of the words he chooses to do this.
- 5 What does Crusoe compare himself to in the final paragraph and why is this an appropriate image?

### Creating

- 6 Imagine that you are standing on the headland watching Robinson Crusoe's struggle with the waves. Write a paragraph from your point of view, explaining what you see and how he looks when he finally reaches safety.

## Context

Context is the circumstances that surround an event or issue. There are many contexts that you need to consider when analysing a text: the author's context, the text's context, your own personal context and your greater context.

- **Author's context**—the personal life and circumstances of the author, the society and culture in which they lived immediately before, during and after they wrote the text.
- **Text's context**—the context within the narrative itself; particular settings, characters, events and situations. Sometimes a text can be set in a particular time and place in history, or in an imaginative context in the future, or within a fantasy world or fictional place.
- **Your personal context**—your gender and race, how you were raised, your parents' religious or cultural beliefs, your home life and family rules, your individual personal experiences, your triumphs and tragedies, the influences of your friends and other significant people in your life, and your

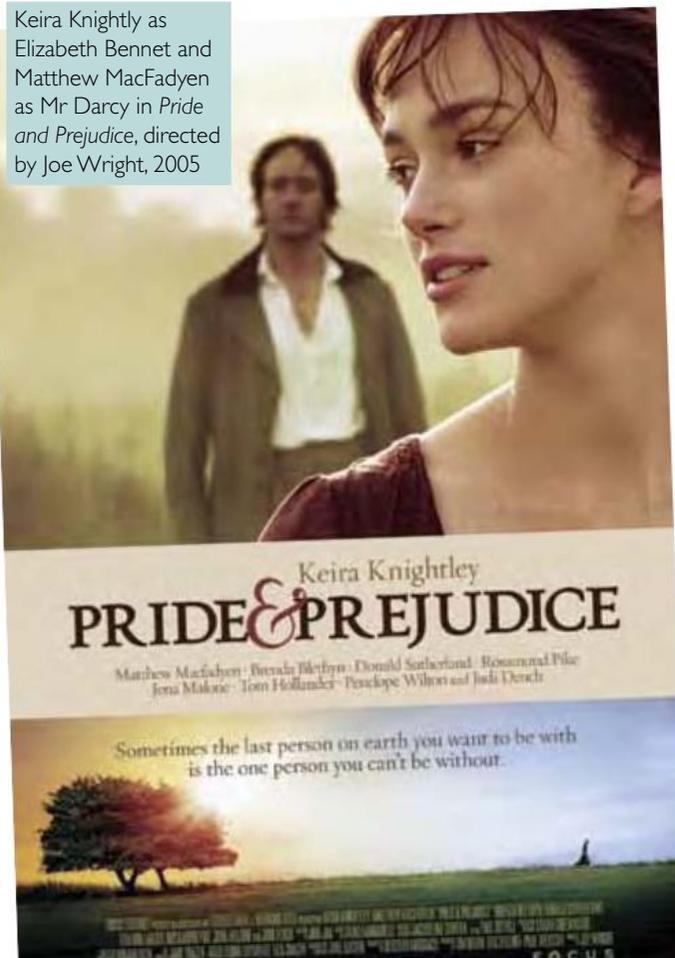
social and public practices, which include common rituals and celebrations, the television shows you watch, how you spend your holidays or how you generally respond to a death, a birth or a marriage.

- **Your greater context**—the place and country in which you were born and raised and where you live. This context includes the major cultural beliefs of your civilisation, its common laws and the political and economic circumstances of your current decade, era or generation.

Some novels talk about the human experience and give us an insight into what it means to be human. It is this quality which makes classic novels relevant across decades and generations. The influential literary critic F.R. Leavis (1895–1978) said that some novels continue to inspire readers because they are part of the ‘great tradition’ and they speak to us about the issues, concerns and values that remain relevant, whatever the time period in which they are being read.

A novel like Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, first published in 1813, for example, tells a classic tale of individuals blinded by pride. Love eventually overcomes that pride and the prejudices of the characters. The story appeals to many young people because of its theme—the search for love. Consequently, it has been regularly reprinted, and has been adapted into film and television series.

Keira Knightley as Elizabeth Bennet and Matthew MacFadyen as Mr Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*, directed by Joe Wright, 2005



Understanding more about the context in which it was written only adds to our appreciation of the novel and the timeless nature of its themes.

## The Romantic period

The Romantic period (1780–1830) influenced the development of the novel, celebrating passionate emotions and creative imagination. Much to the distaste of the elitist group of writers around them, the Romantics explored life’s truths, in both natural and supernatural environments. The Romantic period represented a literary revolution. The Romantics broke away from strict rules of writing poetry and experimented with new ways of expressing joy, terror and awe. They wanted to bridge the gap between the social classes and make the splendour of reading accessible to all. The Romantics presented human experience against backdrops of breathtakingly surreal landscapes, with plotlines that were adventurous, fantastical and mysterious.

The Romantics saw the Industrial Revolution as a threat to society and to people’s relationships with the natural world. Unlike the new business owners, who were optimistic about this age of invention, the Romantics felt the introduction of machinery and factories was alienating and inhumane, and caused further hardships for the working classes. Many Romantic writers were moved by and wrote about the dreadful living conditions of the poor.

### ? DID YOU KNOW...

The word ‘romantic’ (as applied to the Romantic period) does not refer to the romance genre, which deals with love stories. The nineteenth-century Romantics rarely wrote about love; instead they were known for their protests in favour of old traditions.

At this time, women of the upper classes began to write novels. Novels were considered a less skilful form of writing than poetry, but some became literary classics in their own right. Jane Austen (1775–1817) was one of these early writers. Her novels, which include *Pride and Prejudice*, are still widely read today. Austen’s novels are said to be the first to challenge the disempowerment of women in society.

## DID YOU KNOW...

It was during the Romantic period that the early writings of the feminist movement began. One of the first female philosophers, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), spoke out about the rights of women. She believed that the weaknesses of women came from their misrepresentation in society. She announced that women had the right to write about their own experiences more realistically. Jane Austen was greatly influenced by Mary Wollstonecraft's message. Austen advocated that women were not naturally inferior to men, but only appeared to be, due to lack of education and financial dependency.

## Jane Austen

Born in 1775, Jane Austen belonged to the gentry, the social class below the nobility. Although her formal education was limited to the lessons she received at home, Austen had access to the 500 books of her father's library. Much like Elizabeth Bennet, the protagonist in *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen lived comfortably with her family and resisted the pressure to marry a man she did not love. Unlike Elizabeth Bennet, however, Austen never married or left the family home.

Austen represented her female characters as polite, dignified and rebellious, but only within the existing social hierarchy. She believed that one of the ways a woman could become emancipated was by avoiding matrimonial disaster. She empowered her heroine Elizabeth by having her criticise some of the unfair expectations placed on women in her society.

Austen is openly cynical about women seeking to be accomplished only as a means of attracting a husband. Fortunately for Austen, remaining unmarried did not place her family's status or wealth at risk. This was not true for many women of her time who were far more dependent on marriage as a means of survival.

Jane Austen sets out the subject of her novel *Pride and Prejudice* in the opening line, when she famously declares that 'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.' The novel follows the pursuit of two prospective wives by two single men 'in possession of a good fortune'.

The extract that follows is a conversation between several characters about the 'proper' accomplishments of a woman of good breeding, which takes place in the drawing room at Netherfield Park, the Bingley's residence. Elizabeth Bennet is staying at Netherfield



Jane Austen

while her sister Jane recovers there from the flu. Her host Charles Bingley (Jane's suitor) is accompanied by his snobbish sisters Caroline Bingley and Mrs Hurst, and his best friend Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy. Caroline (who would like to marry Mr Darcy) is attempting to gain his favour by extravagantly praising his sister Miss Darcy. Elizabeth and Darcy have taken an instant dislike to each other based on their personal prejudices.

## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

By Jane Austen

'How I long to see her [Miss Darcy] again! I never met with anybody who delighted me so much. Such a countenance, such manners!— and so extremely accomplished for her age! Her performance on the piano-forte is exquisite.'

'It is amazing to me,' said Bingley, 'how young ladies can have patience to be so very accomplished, as they all are.'

'All young ladies accomplished! My dear Charles, what do you mean?'

‘Yes, all of them, I think. They all paint tables, cover screens and net purses. I scarcely know any one who cannot do all this, and I am sure I never heard a young lady spoken of for the first time, without being informed that she was very accomplished.’

‘Your list of the common extent of accomplishments,’ said Darcy, ‘has too much truth. The word is applied to many a woman who deserves it no otherwise than by netting a purse, or covering a screen. But I am very far from agreeing with you in your estimation of ladies in general. I cannot boast of knowing more than half a dozen, in the whole range of my acquaintance that are really accomplished.’

‘Nor I, I am sure,’ said Miss Bingley.

‘Then,’ observed Elizabeth, ‘you must comprehend a great deal in your idea of an accomplished woman.’

‘Yes; I do comprehend a great deal in it.’

‘Oh! Certainly,’ cried his faithful assistant, ‘no one can be really esteemed accomplished, who does not greatly surpass what is usually met with. A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing and the modern languages, to deserve the word; and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, or the word will be but half deserved.’

‘All this she must possess,’ added Darcy, ‘and to all this she must yet add something more substantial, in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading.’

‘I am no longer surprised at your knowing only six accomplished women. I rather wonder now at your knowing *any*.’

‘Are you so severe upon your own sex, as to doubt the possibility of all this?’

‘I never saw such a woman. I never saw such a capacity, and taste, and application, and elegance, as you describe, united.’

Mrs Hurst and Miss Bingley both cried out against the injustice of her implied doubt, and were both protesting that they knew many women who answered this description, when Mr Hurst called them to order, with bitter complaints of the inattention to what was going forward. As all conversation was thereby at an end, Elizabeth soon afterwards left the room.

Source: Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, 1813

## QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Women of the upper classes of the eighteenth and nineteenth century sought education through the attainment of accomplishments such as learning languages—particularly French and Italian—playing instruments, singing, dancing, decorating furniture and sewing embroideries for the home.



## Writer's TOOLBOX

Each reader has a unique response to and interpretation of a text according to their own context. However, we can predict how a group of people within a particular context might respond to a text.

A **dominant reading** is a response or an interpretation with which the wider community or culture would generally agree.

Just as authors can challenge ideas in society through their writing, we can challenge the author's ideas about society. With this in mind, let's explore Jane Austen's representations of men and women.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen resists the belief that women are inferior to men and introduces a new type of woman. Elizabeth demonstrates qualities believed to be typically masculine. She is rational, witty and intelligent and, because of this, Austen rewards

Elizabeth with further wealth and status. Many readers see the character of Elizabeth Bennet as an example of early feminism.

However, it can also be said that Austen's text still presents dominant ideas about class divisions in society. Austen seems to endorse a hierarchal class system in which men and women conform to particular social rules and ideas of what is socially acceptable, such as not socialising or marrying outside of their class. Unlike the Romantics or feminists of her time, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen almost ignores the situation of the lower classes. For example, Elizabeth challenges the pride and prejudice of the men and women around her. Yet at the end of the novel she succumbs to the 'way things are', falls in love and marries the proud aristocrat Darcy, who incidentally, remains prejudiced against the classes beneath his own and maintains his firm views about women's restricted roles in society. Therefore, we can also say that her text does not endorse revolutionary social changes.



'To **challenge**' means to fight against, or object to an issue, or demand a response to a stimulating circumstance.

'To **endorse**' means to get behind, promote, approve of, or support an issue or circumstance.

Stories are never neutral—they will always present a view or context of the times and society in which or about which they are written. An author will often make social commentary by challenging or endorsing an issue, a circumstance, a type of person or a group in society within their texts. For example, an author might create a character who fights against the system or an issue that they disagree with in society. Or they might favour or endorse a character who is different from a social stereotype

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What is Austen's view about women becoming accomplished?
- 2 Why is Elizabeth staying at Netherfield Park?
- 3 Who would Caroline like to marry?
- 4 How many 'accomplished' women does Mr Darcy know?

### Understanding

- 5 Look up and write a definition for the following words as they are used in the extract: countenance, accomplished, acquaintance, esteemed, address.

### Applying

- 6 Using a Venn diagram, compare how women at the time of Jane Austen and women today like to spend their spare time.

### Analysing

- 7 Use the internet to research men's pastimes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- 8 Using a Venn diagram, compare how men's leisure activities have changed over time.

### Evaluating

- 9 What is your reaction to the qualities of an 'accomplished' woman as described in the extract from *Pride and Prejudice*?
- 10 What is the dominant reading of this extract?
- 11 What individual accomplishments, skills and qualities do we strive for in today's society?
- 12 Have a class discussion or debate about whether women and men strive for similar or different accomplishments.

### Creating

- 13 Rewrite the extract from *Pride and Prejudice*, representing how the men and women would react in modern times. As in Austen's text, you need to have the same characters in a room:

- Charles Bingley
- Miss Caroline Bingley
- Mr and Mrs Hurst
- Elizabeth Bennet
- Fitzwilliam Darcy.

Your characters should discuss what makes a woman accomplished, or acceptable to a man.

- 14 Write a short paragraph comparing and contrasting the dominant reading of your rewritten extract with your answer to Question 10.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Prepare and display a timeline that shows the developments in the rise of the novel and the world events taking place at the same time.

You could do this task as a class, with each student responsible for one decade or event. Illustrate the timeline with facsimile book covers and illustrations of world events.

- 2 Here is a list of authors from the time period covered in this module. Select one author and prepare a written report on them that details their works, their life and the time period in which they lived.

- Jane Austen
- Aphra Behn
- Daniel Defoe
- Henry Fielding
- Samuel Richardson
- Mary Shelley

Your report should:

- be written in formal language
- be written as a formal research report, with headings, subheadings and a contents page
- be illustrated with pictures that have captions which are referred to in the text of the report
- have a complete bibliography
- make use of either in-text referencing or footnotes to attribute quotes.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Imagine you are a member of society during the Romantic period. Write a letter to a friend, colleague or family member. You can imagine you are a famous person from this period, for example, a novelist, inventor, revolutionary, explorer, or a religious or political leader. Or you can choose to be an ordinary member of society writing about your daily life or an incident that has happened to you.

- Write a two-page letter that demonstrates your understanding of this time in history.
- Remember to write your letter by hand. Computers weren't invented then!
- Indicate the date you wrote this letter and be sure to research the context for accuracy.

- 2 We know that authors present a view of life that is particular to their personal context. Because of this, their understanding of the world can be challenged. Jane Austen attempted to represent men and women, a specific class of English society and a specific culture in her novels.

- a Challenge Austen's representations of her world by compiling a list of questions to ask her.

- b Discuss how Jane Austen might have responded to some of your questions.

- 3 In groups of five, demonstrate to the rest of the class how people can experience things in different ways. Role-play a skit that presents a reality and then devise a way of showing how characters experience, view, hear, understand or have their own version of this reality that is different from the other characters in the group.
- 4 Read one of the novels written by one of the authors in the list in Core task 2. What themes and issues does it explore and why are they still relevant?

# The Victorian era of literature

**N**amed after the reign of the British monarch Queen Victoria (1837–1901), this era is characterised by rapid change and development in many areas of society. Advances in geographical exploration, medical and scientific discoveries, and technological and industrial inventions greatly influenced population growth and location.

The era began with great public optimism, an economic boom and a growing middle class. Industrial development gave rise to mass urbanisation but also greater oppression of the working classes. The cities could not cope with the rapid influx of workers and the poor lived in terrible conditions. The situation of the poor provoked political radicals who sought to expose a society which on the surface advocated strict morality, yet seemingly allowed the behaviour of the greedy and oppressive upper classes.

Queen Victoria promoted fundamental Protestant morality—a strong work ethic, family values and religious tradition. Many families were large and for those that could afford to work and play, leisure activities such as holidays and public entertainment were encouraged.

The public roles of men and women were vastly different. Representations of the ideal woman were widely publicised and agreed upon by a male-dominated society. Women and men conformed to public expectations that restricted personal conduct. How a person spoke, whom they associated with and how they acted in public were indicators of their ‘breeding’ and whether they were acceptable members of ‘decent’ society.

In the world of the novel, the robust political debate and the tales of ‘girls gone wrong’ of the eighteenth century gave way to a new form of fiction



Queen Victoria

that looked at the social and philosophical problems caused by the new economic conditions and the rise of technology. The responsibility of people with the money and the power to assist those who were suffering as a result of these changes became a preoccupation for novelists in the United Kingdom.

## Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) was born into a working-class family. His father was, at times, a butler, a housekeeper and a clerk. He was also sent to prison due to unpaid debts. At the age of twelve, Charles Dickens was sent to work ten to twelve hours a day in a blacking (boot polish) factory. He rose up from this beginning to live a prosperous middle-class life in London. He did this by finding a job as a clerk, then as a parliamentary reporter, and then as a successful journalist. He later gained wide public acclaim as a novelist.

Most of his books feature characters living in the city of London. Dickens was compassionate about the plight of the underprivileged people who flocked to



Charles Dickens

the cities in the hope of employment. He strongly disagreed with the idea that the minimum amount should be spent on extracting the maximum output from factory workers. The entangled plotlines of his novels brought people and places to life and stirred a public awareness about the cruelties of some aspects of Victorian life.

To the Victorians, the ideal woman was the 'angel of the house', caring for children and

tending to the domestic demands of the home. Dickens largely subscribed to this societal view; in his novels he usually depicted women unrealistically as either perfect angels or gross demons. He portrayed women as playing an important role in society, but only in the lives of men. He valued women's emotional power and their capacity to love men. In his writing, Dickens suggested that a woman's love is a personal strength and not a weakness.

One of Charles Dickens's most popular novels is *Oliver Twist*, in which a young orphan boy rises from crime and poverty to become a successful man. It was widely popular when it was released and has been popular since. *Oliver Twist* was adapted into a musical in 1968, winning five Academy Awards, including Best Picture. It has also been made into a film and a television series.

The workhouse, the system of baby farming and the general treatment of society's underprivileged aroused anger in Dickens. The novel was written at the same time as Dickens was protesting the new 'Poor Law' in his newspaper. This law decreased the amount of assistance given to the poor. Dickens felt this was inhumane.



### DID YOU KNOW...

'Baby farming' was a term used in the nineteenth century to describe the situation where young children were taken in by other families. Sadly, many of these children were often neglected, some were murdered and their bodies disposed of while the baby farmer continued to claim the money and benefits for their care.

## OLIVER TWIST

By Charles Dickens

For the next eight or ten months, Oliver was the victim of a systematic course of treachery and deception. He was brought up by hand. The hungry and destitute situation of the infant orphan was duly reported by the workhouse authorities to the parish authorities. The parish authorities inquired with dignity of the workhouse authorities, whether there was no female then domiciled in 'the house' who was in a situation to impart to Oliver Twist, the consolation and nourishment of which he stood in need. The workhouse authorities replied with humility, that there was not. Upon this, the parish authorities magnanimously and humanely resolved, that Oliver should be 'farmed', or, in other words, that he should be dispatched to a branch-workhouse some three miles off, where twenty or thirty other juvenile offenders against the poor-laws, rolled about the floor all day, without the inconvenience of too much food or too much clothing, under the parental superintendence of an elderly female, who received the culprits at and for the consideration of sevenpence-halfpenny per small head per week. Sevenpence-halfpenny's worth per week is a good round diet for a child; a great deal may be got for sevenpence-halfpenny, quite enough to overload its stomach, and make it uncomfortable. The elderly female was a woman of wisdom and experience; she knew what was good for children; and she had a very accurate perception of what was good for herself. So, she appropriated the greater part of the weekly stipend to her own use, and consigned the rising parochial generation to even a shorter allowance than was originally provided for them. Thereby finding in the lowest depth a deeper still; and proving herself a very great experimental philosopher.

Everybody knows the story of another experimental philosopher who had a great theory about a horse being able to live without eating, and who demonstrated it so well, that he had got his own horse down to a straw a day, and would unquestionably have rendered him a very spirited and rampacious animal on nothing at all, if he had not died, four-and-twenty hours before he was to have had his first comfortable bait of air. Unfortunately for, the experimental philosophy of the female to whose protecting care Oliver Twist was delivered over, a similar result usually attended the operation of her system; for at the

very moment when the child had contrived to exist upon the smallest possible portion of the weakest possible food, it did perversely happen in eight and a half cases out of ten, either that it sickened from want and cold, or fell into the fire from neglect, or got half-smothered by accident; in any one of which cases, the miserable little being was usually summoned into another world, and there gathered to the fathers it had never known in this.

Occasionally, when there was some more than usually interesting inquest upon a parish child who had been overlooked in turning up a bedstead, or inadvertently scalded to death when there happened to be a washing—though the latter accident was very scarce, anything approaching to a washing being of rare occurrence in the farm—the jury would take it into their heads to ask troublesome questions, or the parishioners would rebelliously affix their signatures to a remonstrance. But these impertinences were speedily checked by the evidence of the surgeon, and the testimony of the beadle; the former of whom had always opened the body and found nothing inside (which was very probable indeed), and the latter of whom invariably swore whatever the parish wanted; which was very self-devotional. Besides, the board made periodical pilgrimages to the farm, and always sent the beadle the day before, to say they were going. The children were neat and clean to behold, when they went; and what more would the people have!

It cannot be expected that this system of farming would produce any very extraordinary or luxuriant crop. Oliver Twist's ninth birthday found him a pale thin child, somewhat diminutive in stature, and decidedly small in circumference. But nature or inheritance had implanted a good sturdy spirit in Oliver's breast. It had had plenty of room to expand, thanks to the spare diet of the establishment; and perhaps to this circumstance may be attributed his having any ninth birthday at all. Be this as it may, however, it was his ninth birthday; and he was keeping it in the coal-cellar with a select party of two other young gentleman, who, after participating with him in a sound thrashing, had been locked up for atrociously presuming to be hungry, when Mrs Mann, the good lady of the house, was unexpectedly startled by the apparition of Mr Bumble, the beadle, striving to undo the wicket of the garden-gate.

Source: Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, 1838

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How many children are in the care of the solitary woman at the baby farm that Oliver Twist is sent to?
- 2 What birthday is Oliver celebrating?
- 3 With whom and how does he celebrate it?

### Understanding

- 4 Look up and write a definition for the following words as they are used in the extract: treachery, destitute, domiciled, magnanimously, parochial, rampacious, remonstrance.
- 5 Are the baby farms well policed by the parish? How does the extract show us this?
- 6 What evidence do we have from the extract that the children are neglected?
- 7 Why is Oliver so small?

### Analysing

- 8 Why does Dickens tell us the story of the 'experimental philosopher'?
- 9 How do we know that Dickens is sympathetic to the orphan children in his society?

## Elizabeth Gaskell

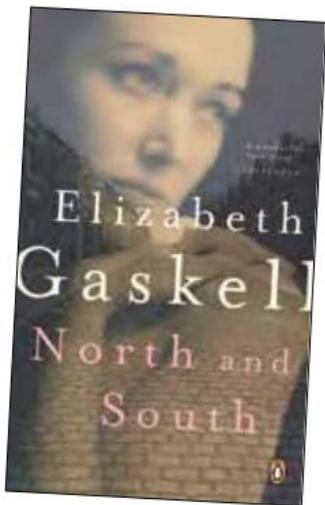
The writer commonly known as Mrs Gaskell was born in 1810 and died in 1865. Her life was nearly as interesting as one of her novels because her mother died three months after her birth and her father joined the army and he spent most of her life travelling in foreign countries. Elizabeth was raised in the homes of various relatives who looked after her as a matter of conscience. She eventually married a minister and they settled in Manchester, a growing industrial centre, where she was exposed to many of the problems of her society.

In *North and South* Gaskell presents the contrast in life in England between the industrial North and the agricultural South.

In this extract Margaret, Gaskell's heroine from the South is talking to Bessie, a young girl who is dying from an illness she contracted by working in the mills in northern England.

## NORTH AND SOUTH

By Elizabeth Gaskell



'I think I was well when mother died, but I have never been rightly strong sin' somewhere about that time. I began to work in a carding-room soon after, and the fluff got into my lungs and poisoned me.'

'Fluff?' said Margaret, inquiringly.

'Fluff,' repeated Bessy. 'Little bits, as fly off fro' the cotton, when they're carding it, and fill the air till it looks all fine white dust. They say it winds round the lungs, and tightens them up.

Anyhow, there's many a one as works in a carding-room, that falls into a waste, coughing and spitting blood, because they're just poisoned by the fluff.'

'But can't it be helped?' asked Margaret.

'I dunno. Some folk have a great wheel at one end o' their carding-rooms to make a draught, and carry off th' dust; but that wheel costs a deal o' money—five or six hundred pound, maybe, and brings in no profit; so it's but a few of th' masters as will put 'em up; and I've heard tell o' men who didn't like working places where there was a wheel, because they said as how it mad 'em hungry, at after they'd been long used to swallowing fluff, tone go without it, and that their wage ought to be raised if they were to work in such places. So between masters and men th' wheels fall through. I know I wish there'd been a wheel in our place, though.'

'Did not your father know about it?' asked Margaret.

'Yes! And he were sorry. But our factory were a good one on the whole; and a steady likely set o' people; and father was afeard of letting me go to a strange place, for though yo' would na think it now, many a one then used to call me a gradely lass enough. And I did na like to be reckoned nesh and soft, and Mary's schooling were to be kept up, mother said, and father he were always liking to buy books, and go to lectures o' one kind or another—all which took money—so I just worked on till I shall ne'er get the whirr out o' my ears, or the fluff out o' my throat i' this world. That's all.'

Source: Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South*, 1855

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 When did Bessie begin working at the mill?
- 2 What do the floating bits of cotton and dust do to the workers?
- 3 Why is Bessie working?

### Understanding

- 4 Look up and write definitions for the following words in the extract: carding, afeard, whirr.
- 5 Why do the mill owners not put wheels (fans) into their factories?
- 6 Why does Bessie's father not want her to go and work at another mill?
- 7 The words 'gradely' and 'nesh' are no longer commonly used. From their context in the extract, prepare a definition of these words.

### Analysing

- 8 Mrs Gaskell was well-known for her characters' use of vernacular language. Why do you think she did this and how does it work here in the character of Bessie?
- 9 How does Mrs Gaskell build reader empathy for Bessie during this scene?



There are subtle differences between the words 'sympathy' and 'empathy'.

**Sympathy** is a feeling of pity or concern you have for another person who is in distress or suffering. It is an expression of support and compassion for another person.

**Empathy** is a shared feeling of deep emotion and care towards another person. It is a person's ability to understand another person's point of view.

# Charlotte Brontë

Charlotte Brontë, perhaps the most famous of the celebrated Victorian-era writing sisters, found great popularity with her novel *Jane Eyre*. She followed it with similar successes, *Shirley* and *Villette*.

Charlotte, Anne and Emily Brontë were the surviving daughters of a Yorkshire minister who spent their formative years at Haworth Parsonage. The girls had to make their own entertainment and wrote stories to share with each other. They remained very much secluded in their father's home for most of their youth.

*Jane Eyre* is partly autobiographical, and is one of the first novels written by a woman to be narrated in the first person. It clearly depicts Lowood School where the two older Brontë sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, died as a result of the conditions there.

In this extract Charlotte Brontë describes conditions at the school.

## JANE EYRE

By Charlotte Brontë

That forest-dell, where Lowood lay, was the cradle of fog and fog-bred pestilence; which, quickening with the quickening spring, crept into the Orphan Asylum, breathed typhus through its crowded schoolroom and dormitory, and, ere May arrived, transformed the seminary into an hospital.

Semi-starvation and neglected colds had predisposed most of the pupils to receive infection: forty-five out of the eighty girls lay ill at one time. Classes were broken up, rules relaxed. The few who continued well were allowed almost unlimited license; because the medical attendant insisted on the necessity of frequent exercise to keep them in health: and had it been otherwise, no one had leisure to watch or restrain them. Miss Temple's whole attention was absorbed by the patients: she lived in the sick-room, never quitting it except to snatch a few hours' rest at night. The teachers were fully occupied with packing up and making other necessary preparations for the departure of those girls who were fortunate enough to have friends and relations able and willing to remove them from the seat of contagion. Many, already smitten, went home only to die: some died at the school, and were buried quietly and quickly, the nature of the malady forbidding delay.

While disease had thus become an inhabitant of Lowood, and death its frequent visitor; while there was gloom and fear within its walls; while its rooms and passages steamed with hospital smells, the drug and the pastille striving vainly to overcome the effluvia of mortality, that bright May shone unclouded over the bold hills and beautiful woodland out of doors. Its garden, too, glowed with flowers: hollyhocks had sprung up tall as trees, lilies had opened, tulips and roses were in bloom; the borders of the little beds were gay with pink thrift and crimson double daisies; the sweetbriars gave out, morning and evening, their scent of spice and apples; and these fragrant treasures were all useless for most of the inmates of Lowood, except to furnish now and then a handful of herbs and blossoms to put in a coffin.

Source: Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 1847

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How many girls were at school at Lowood?
- 2 What takes up all of Miss Temple's time in the spring?
- 3 What sort of environment is the school set in?

### Understanding

- 4 Look up and write a definition for the following words as they are used in the extract: pestilence, seminary, effluvia.
- 5 Why do the girls at Lowood have a degree of freedom that May?
- 6 What is typhus and why does it cause the students' haste to depart?

### Analysing

- 7 How does Brontë establish the contrast between the inside and outside of Lowood?
- 8 How do we know that Lowood is an unhealthy place? Give evidence from the text to support your answer.
- 9 Why do many of the girls have to remain at Lowood despite the contagion? How do we know this?

### Evaluating

- 10 Research the lives and times of Charlotte Brontë and her sisters Anne and Emily. What makes these sisters so extraordinary? What role did Currer, Acton and Ellis Bell play in their lives?

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- Using evidence from the three extracts in this module, write a paragraph describing some of the social conditions in Victorian England that concerned these authors.
- Many of the novels discussed in this module have been adapted into films or television mini-series. Select one scene from one of these novels and the corresponding scene from the film or television series. Compare the two scenes, highlighting what is similar and what is different and how this affects interpretation of the text. Prepare a two-minute speech for the class that explains your conclusions about this scene. You might like to use the following questions as a guide:
  - What has been included and what has been left out of the adaptation?
  - Why do you think these changes have been made to this text?
  - What difference does this make to the interpretation of the text?
- Has the director of the adaptation been able to convey the same concerns and issues that the author has? How has he used visual language to convey these?
- Are there any scenes that have been put into the adaptation that are not in the novel? Why do you think the director included this scene? What does it add to the text?
- Research the social opinions and literary merit of the authors mentioned in this module. Each of them has been the subject of intense assessment by literary critics. In particular, there is a vast body of work about the writing of Charles Dickens and Charlotte Brontë and a growing appreciation of the writing of Mrs Gaskell. Select one of these authors and prepare a short summary to present to your class.

## Extra tasks

- Investigate a novel written by one of the authors mentioned in this module. What kinds of concerns did the author have about the society in which they lived?
- Investigate the Poor Law and other Acts that were passed in the United Kingdom during this period. What other concerns and issues were raised about these laws? Why were these kinds of laws necessary?
- In the same period, the novel was also developing in the United States of America. Research one of the following authors and novels and draw conclusions about the development of the American novel during this time.
  - Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
  - Henry James, *Washington Square*, *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Europeans*, etc.
  - Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*
  - Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
  - Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*
- In the extract from *North and South* Bessie describes some of the conditions for workers in the factories in the 1800s. Research what life was like for the young factory workers in the northern mills. Investigate the conditions for child workers. Use this information as a source of inspiration for your own realistic story about this period of history.

# Colonial Australia

**D**uring the reign of Queen Victoria, Henry Lawson (1867–1922) described a new type of woman in his writings—the colonial woman of the new British outpost, Australia. The harsh Australian conditions required a new type of heroine—a heroine who was rational, resilient, physically capable and dedicated to her family and the land.

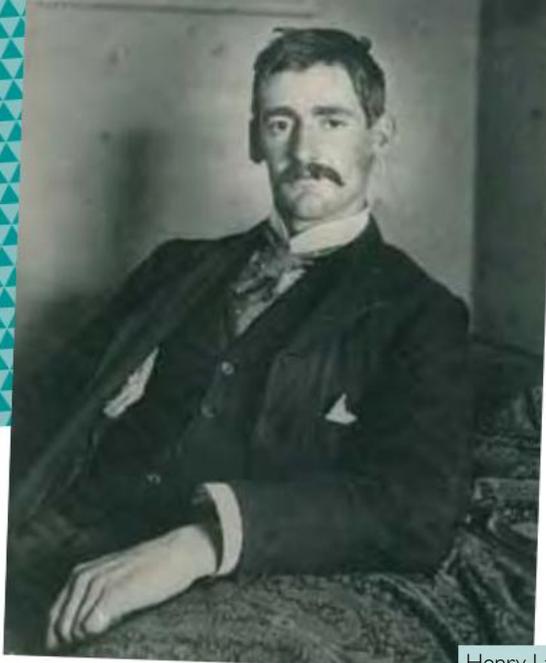
*Early Australian Homestead, by Duncan Cooper, c. 1845, watercolour*



Authors often use a range of techniques to 'position' their readers; that is, to encourage them to view and experience a text in a particular way. Sometimes they want readers to empathise or sympathise with the characters they have created or to develop particular beliefs and attitudes.

An author can use a range of narrative elements to position the reader. These include emotive and figurative language, a character's experience or point of view, evocative plotlines or realistic settings.





Henry Lawson

## Henry Lawson

Henry Lawson wrote about the harshness of the untamed bush and Australia's early settlers. He led a fairly unhappy life and, like Dickens, he wrote about the realities facing the poverty-stricken people of the Victorian era.

In Lawson's short story *The Drover's Wife* he presents a nameless heroine, identified only as 'the wife' (as such, belonging to her husband, the absent drover). She willingly sacrifices the feminine pursuits of her time out of loyalty to her household. She is isolated and at the mercy of the unforgiving environment, where she stays isolated for long periods of time, raising her children alone.

In this extract, the children have seen a snake go under the woodpile in their home. The drover's wife keeps the snake at bay until evening and then resolves to stay watch throughout the night in case it returns.

### THE DROVER'S WIFE

By Henry Lawson

Alligator [the dog] lies at full length on the floor, with his eyes turned towards the partition. She knows by this that the snake is there. There are large cracks in that wall opening under the floor of the dwelling-house.

She is not a coward, but recent events have shaken her nerves. A little son of her brother-in-law was lately bitten by a snake, and died. Besides, she has not heard from her husband for six months, and is anxious about him.

He was a drover, and started squatting here when they were married. The drought of 18—ruined him. He had to sacrifice the remnant of his

flock and go droving again. He intends to move his family into the nearest town when he comes back, and, in the meantime, his brother, who keeps a shanty on the main road, comes over about once a month with provisions. The wife has still a couple of cows, one horse, and a few sheep. The brother-in-law kills one of the latter occasionally, gives her what she needs of it, and takes the rest in return for other provisions.

She is used to being left alone. She once lived like this for eighteen months. As a girl she built the usual castles in the air; but all her girlish hopes and aspirations have long been dead. She finds all the excitement and recreation she needs in the *Young Ladies' Journal*, and Heaven help her! takes a pleasure in the fashion-plates.

Her husband is an Australian, and so is she. He is careless, but a good enough husband. If he had the means he would take her to the city and keep her there like a princess. They are used to being apart, or at least she is. 'No use fretting,' she says. He may forget sometimes that he is married; but if he has a good cheque when he comes back he will give most of it to her. When he had money he took her to the city several times—hired a railway sleeping compartment, and put up at the best hotels. He also bought her a buggy, but they had to sacrifice that along with the rest.

The last two children were born in the bush—one while her husband was bringing a drunken doctor, by force, to attend to her. She was alone on this occasion, and very weak. She had been ill with a fever. She prayed to God to send her assistance. God sent Black Mary—the 'whitest' gin in all the land. Or, at least, God sent King Jimmy first, and he sent Black Mary. He put his black face round the door post, took in the situation at a glance, and said cheerfully: 'All right, missus—I bring my old woman, she down alonga creek.'

One of the children died while she was here alone. She rode nineteen miles for assistance, carrying the dead child.

It must be near one or two o'clock. The fire is burning low. Alligator lies with his head resting on his paws, and watches the wall. He is not a very beautiful dog, and the light shows numerous old wounds where the hair will not grow. He is afraid of nothing on the face of the earth or under it. He will tackle a bullock as readily as he will tackle a flea. He hates all other dogs—except kangaroo-dogs—and has a marked dislike to friends or relations of the family. They seldom call, however.

He sometimes makes friends with strangers. He hates snakes and has killed many, but he will be bitten some day and die; most snake-dogs end that way.

Now and then the bushwoman lays down her work and watches, and listens, and thinks. She thinks of things in her own life, for there is little else to think about.

The rain will make the grass grow, and this reminds her how she fought a bush-fire once while her husband was away. The grass was long, and very dry, and the fire threatened to burn her out. She put on an old pair of her husband's trousers and beat out the flames with a green bough, till great drops of sooty perspiration stood out on her forehead and ran in streaks down her blackened arms. The sight of his mother in trousers greatly amused Tommy, who worked like a little hero by her side, but the terrified baby howled lustily for his 'mummy.' The fire would have mastered her but for four excited bushmen who arrived in the nick of time. It was a mixed-up affair all round; when she went to take up the baby he screamed and struggled convulsively, thinking it was a 'blackman,' and Alligator, trusting more to the child's sense than his own instinct, charged furiously, and (being old and slightly deaf) did not in his excitement at first recognise his mistress's voice, but continued to hang on to the moleskins until choked off by Tommy with a saddle-strap. The dog's sorrow for his blunder, and his anxiety to let it be known that it was all a mistake, was as evident as his ragged tail and a twelve-inch grin could make it. It was a glorious time for the boys; a day to look back to, and talk about, and laugh over for many years.

She thinks how she fought a flood during her husband's absence. She stood for hours in the drenching downpour, and dug an overflow gutter to save the dam across the creek. But she could not save it. There are things that a bushwoman cannot do. Next morning the dam was broken, and her heart was nearly broken too, for she thought how her husband would feel when he came home and saw the result of years of labour swept away. She cried then.

She also fought the pleuro-pneumonia—dosed and bled the few remaining cattle, and wept again when her two best cows died.

Again, she fought a mad bullock that besieged the house for a day. She made bullets and fired at him through cracks in the slabs with an old shot-

gun. He was dead in the morning. She skinned him and got seventeen-and-sixpence for the hide.

She also fights the crows and eagles that have designs on her chickens. Her plan of campaign is very original. The children cry 'Crows, mother!' and she rushes out and aims a broomstick at the birds as though it were a gun, and says 'Bung!' The crows leave in a hurry; they are cunning, but a woman's cunning is greater.

Occasionally a bushman in the horrors, or a villainous-looking sundowner, comes and nearly scares the life out of her. She generally tells the suspicious-looking stranger that her husband and two sons are at work below the dam, or over at the yard, for he always cunningly inquires for the boss.

Only last week a gallows-faced swagman—having satisfied himself that there were no men on the place—threw his swag down on the veranda, and demanded tucker. She gave him something to eat; then he expressed his intention of staying for the night. It was sundown then. She got a batten from the sofa, loosened the dog, and confronted the stranger, holding the batten in one hand and the dog's collar with the other. 'Now you go!' she said. He looked at her and at the dog, said 'All right, mum,' in a cringing tone, and left. She was a determined-looking woman, and Alligator's yellow eyes glared unpleasantly—besides, the dog's chewing-up apparatus greatly resembled that of the reptile he was named after.

She has few pleasures to think of as she sits here alone by the fire, on guard against a snake. All days are much the same to her; but on Sunday afternoon she dresses herself, tidies the children, smartens up baby, and goes for a lonely walk along the bush-track, pushing an old perambulator in front of her. She does this every Sunday. She takes as much care to make herself and the children look smart as she would if she were going to do the block in the city. There is nothing to see, however, and not a soul to meet. You might walk for twenty miles along this track without being able to fix a point in your mind, unless you are a bushman. This is because of the everlasting, maddening sameness of the stunted trees—that monotony which makes a man long to break away and travel as far as trains can go, and sail as far as ship can sail—and farther.

But this bushwoman is used to the loneliness of it. As a girl-wife she hated it, but now she would feel strange away from it.

She is glad when her husband returns, but she does not gush or make a fuss about it. She gets him something good to eat, and tidies up the children.

She seems contented with her lot. She loves her children, but has no time to show it. She seems harsh to them. Her surroundings are not favourable to the development of the 'womanly' or sentimental side of nature.

Source: Henry Lawson, *The Drover's Wife*, 1892

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What did Lawson often write about?

### Understanding

- 2 Can you identify three incidents in the extract that led you to respond favourably towards the drover's wife?
- 3 What language does the author use to indicate that a woman can survive in what is commonly assumed to be a man's world?

### Applying

- 4 List the characteristics of males and females presented in the extract.
- 5
  - a Do you believe Lawson has accurately represented both genders?
  - b How do you respond to Lawson's representation of Aboriginal men and women?
  - c Are Aboriginal men and women represented differently from their European counterparts?

### Analysing

- 6 Why was it so hard to settle in Australia?
- 7 Analyse what is meant by these quotations from the extract:
  - a 'As a girl she built the usual castles in the air; but all her girlish hopes and aspirations have long been dead.'
  - b 'Her surroundings are not favourable to the development of the "womanly" or sentimental side of nature.'
- 8 What do you think a person of the Victorian era would suggest is 'favourable' to a woman's natural development?

## Miles Franklin

Stella Maria Sarah Miles Franklin (1879–1954) is one of the foremost Australian writers of the twentieth century. Not only did she achieve fame with the publication of her first novel *My Brilliant Career* in 1901 when she was just twenty-two years old, but she continued to write throughout her life, with major success in different decades. Her work was rediscovered by new generations of Australians during the 1980s after an award-winning film was made of her first novel.

### ? DID YOU KNOW...

Miles Franklin sent the manuscript of *My Brilliant Career* to Henry Lawson who sponsored its publication and wrote the foreword to the novel.

Miles Franklin represented the new generation of Australian women. Franklin was a daughter of Australians, born and bred in the country and independent enough to face whatever life threw at her. Franklin's family were members of the 'squattocracy', that is landed farmers. She wrote about what she knew—the people, organisations and situations that confronted her and other Australian girls of her class.



Miles Franklin

Franklin allows her heroine, Sybylla, to refuse the advances of the man who loves her. Sybylla aims instead for a career as a writer rather than the traditional choices of marriage, a home and children. Franklin is one of the first female writers who was brave enough to allow her character to make this choice. Franklin herself never married, although, like Sybylla, there was no shortage of suitors!

## MY BRILLIANT CAREER

By Miles Franklin

When alone I confessed to aunt Helen that Harold had accompanied me to within a short distance of home. She did not smile as usual, but looked very grave, and, drawing me in front of her, said:

'Sybylla, do you know what you are doing? Do you love Harry Beecham? Do you mean to marry him?'

'Aunt Helen, what a question to ask! I never dreamt of such a thing. He has never spoken a word of love to me. Marriage! I am sure he does not for an instant think of me in that light. I'm not seventeen.'

'Yes, you are young, but some people's age cannot be reckoned by years. I am glad to see you have developed a certain amount of half-real and half-assumed youthfulness lately, but when the novelty of your present life wears away, your old mature nature will be there, so it is of no use feigning childishness. Harold Beecham is not given to speech—action with him is the same thing. Can you look at me straight, Sybylla, and say that Harold has not extended you something more than common politeness?'

Had aunt Helen put that question to me a day before, I would have blushed and felt guilty. But today not so. The words of the jackeroo the night before had struck home. 'A hideous barbarian', he had called me, and it seemed to me he had spoken the truth. My life had been so pleasant lately that I had overlooked this fact, but now it returned to sting with redoubled bitterness. I had no lovable qualities to win for me the love of my fellows, which I so much desired.

I returned aunt Helen a gaze as steady as her own, and said bitterly:

'Aunt Helen, I can truly say he has never, and will never extend to me more than common

politeness. Neither will any other man. Surely you know enough of masculine human nature to see there is no danger of a man losing his heart to a plain woman like me. Love in fancy and song is a pretty myth, embracing unity of souls, congeniality of tastes, and such like commodities. In workaday reality it is the lowest of passions, which is set alight by the most artistic nose and mouth, and it matters not if its object is vile, low, or brainless to idiocy, so long as it has these attributes.'

'Sybylla, Sybylla,' said auntie sadly, as if to herself. 'In the first flush of girlhood, and so bitter. Why is this?'

'Because I have been cursed with the power of seeing, thinking, and, worse than all, feeling, and branded with the stinging affliction of ugliness,' I replied.

'Now, Sybylla, you are going to think of yourself again. Something has put you out. Be sensible for once in a way. What you have said of men's love may be true in a sense, but it is not always so, and Harry is not that kind of man. I have known him all his life, and understand him, and feel sure he loves you truly. Tell me plainly, do you intend to accept him?'

'Intend to accept him!' I echoed. 'I haven't once thought of such a possibility. I never mean to marry anyone.'

'Don't you care for Harold? Just a little? Think.'

'How could I care for him?'

'For many, many reasons. He is young, and very kind and gentle. He is one of the biggest and finest-looking men you could find. He is a man whom no one could despise, for he has nothing despicable about him. But, best of all, he is true, and that, I think, is the bedrock of all virtues.'

'But he is so conceited,' I remarked.

'That does not make him any the less lovable. I know another young person very conceited, and it does not prevent me from loving her dearly,' here aunt Helen smiled affectionately at me. 'What you complain of in Harold will wear off presently—life has been very easy for him so far, you see.'

'But, auntie, I'm sure he thinks he could have any girl for the asking.'

'Well, he has a great number to choose from, for they all like him.'

'Yes, just for his money,' I said scornfully. 'But I'll surprise him if he thinks he can get me for the asking.'

‘Sybylla, never flirt. To play with a man’s heart, I think, is one of the most horribly unwomanly actions our sex can be guilty of.’

‘I would scorn to flirt with any man,’ I returned with vigour. ‘Play with a man’s heart! You’d really think they had such a thing, aunt Helen, to hear you talk. Hurt their vanity for a few days is the most a woman could do with any of them. I am sick of this preach, preach about playing with men’s hearts. It is an old fable which should have been abolished long ago. It does not matter how a woman is played with.’

‘Sybylla, you talk at random. The shortcomings of men are no excuse for you to be unwomanly,’ said aunt Helen.

Source: Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career*, 1901

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How old is Sybylla?
- 2 What does Aunt Helen think has happened between Sybylla and Harold?

### Understanding

- 3 What evidence is there that Aunt Helen believes that Sybylla is a serious young woman?
- 4 Why does Aunt Helen think that Sybylla should marry Harold?
- 5 How does Sybylla see herself and how does she imagine that men see her?
- 6 Aunt Helen seems to think that both Sybylla and Harold are very young. Give evidence from the text that supports this statement.

### Analysing

- 7 How does Franklin suggest that men and women see marriage differently?
- 8 Sybylla is rejecting her aunt’s traditional views on love and marriage. What reasons does she give her aunt for her vow not to marry?

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 Write and perform a monologue as the drover from *The Drover’s Wife*. You might like to address your:
  - relationship with your spouse
  - experiences with the environment
  - hopes and fears.
- 2 Develop a modern interpretation of *The Drover’s Wife*. You might like to change the time and place in which your story is set. For instance, it might be set in a modern city or a new housing development. Plan, draft and publish your work for the school newsletter or magazine.
- 3 Imagine that you are one of the children in the story. Years later, on the occasion of your mother’s sixtieth birthday, you have been asked to deliver a speech in which you talk about her life and what you have learnt from her. Deliver the speech.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Some of the earliest writers in Australia were women. Research and prepare a report on one of the following authors:
  - Catherine Helen Spence
  - Miles Franklin
  - Ethel Turner
  - Mary Grant Bruce
  - Mary Gilmore
  - May Gibbs
  - Anne Maria Bunn
  - Jeanne Gunn
  - Dorothy Wall.
- 2 Research how working-class men and women were employed during the Victorian era in Australia. Prepare an electronic slide presentation to deliver your findings to the class.
- 3 Write about your own experiences in the Australian bush. How do you respond to this environment?

# From modern to contemporary literature

From the late nineteenth century, literature developed to reflect the changing times. The modernist movement arose as a reaction to the changes in society and social relations, with life becoming increasingly urbanised and mechanised. In addition, the modernists began to reflect the thinking of Freud and other great social theorists. The movement is marked by technical experimentation and the rejection of the traditional (Victorian and Edwardian) framework of linear narrative, description and rational argument. Realism, one of the key elements of Victorian fiction, was rejected.

## Modern literature

In the period before the First World War (1914–18) early modernists tried to ‘modernise’ the rigid realism of the Victorian era and bring fresh new perspectives on life and living in the twentieth century. Modernist writers in the first few decades of the twentieth century attempted to deal with a world vastly changed by industrialisation, urbanisation and the shattering world war. Modernist post-war authors reflected the fragmentation of people’s perceptions of innocence, faith, trust and patriotism, as a disillusioned populace began questioning societal rules and expectations.

Modernists offered new representations of how to be individual, in which the meanings of love, honesty, commitment and fidelity were redefined.



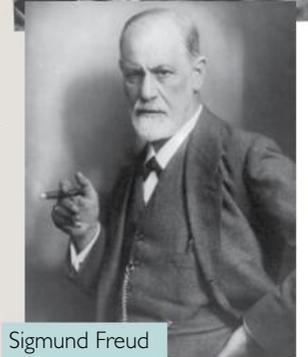
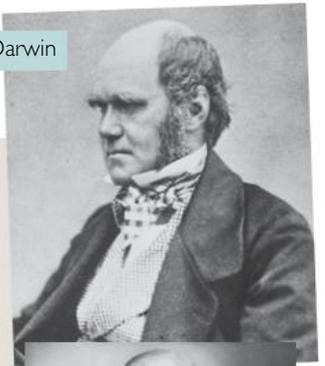
### QUESTION DID YOU KNOW...

Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Nietzsche all influenced the modern era.

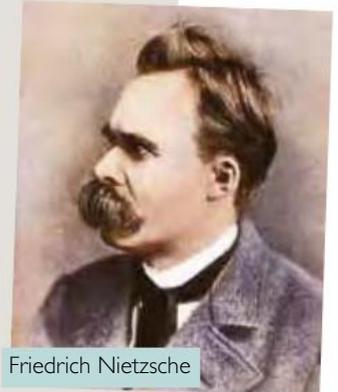
- Charles Darwin’s philosophies about the evolution of the human species and the survival of the fittest prompted new and progressive ideas about humanity.
- Karl Marx exposed the power relationships between class structures in society.
- The psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud provoked great interest and controversy with his revelations concerning the unconscious mind and human sexuality.
- Friedrich Nietzsche’s philosophy denied the existence of a god and advocated the development of ‘supermen’—a people emancipated from the oppression of Christian values.

These last three thinkers promoted equality of the weak and the strong, and sought to overturn traditional ideas about religion, social structure and cultural ethics. Not only did these men influence the society around them, they also influenced a new generation of writers.

Charles Darwin



Sigmund Freud



Friedrich Nietzsche

Radically individual points of view were offered to readers as a means of unsettling the status quo and breaking down stereotypes of class, culture, race and gender.

Modernists came up with new ways of reading and interpreting stories. They referred not only to traditional sources but also to contemporary and popular texts to support their ideas and to give depth to their stories. Techniques such as parallel plotlines with abstract visions and distorted experiences became widely used in literature.

Modernism was also a reaction against the rise in 'pulp' fiction, which came with the development of the automatic typesetter which could print reading matter quickly and cheaply. As the suburbs developed and the daily commute became a part of everyday life, railway stations became crowded with adults waiting for trains. Consequently, the paperback novel developed for quick, easy consumption. Publishers began producing cheap non-challenging books for this market, which were quick to read and easy to understand. Modernists consciously challenged this trend by writing books that were difficult to follow, with no single theme or streamlined story.

## Joseph Conrad

Joseph Conrad (1857–1924) was born Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski and, although he is acknowledged as one of the finest writers in English of the twentieth century, English was his third language. A sailor who became a writer, Conrad is renowned for exploring the meaning of the modern British Empire,

particularly the aspects that were inhumane and brutal. He aimed to present to the reader the truth as he saw it, and was extremely judgmental about his subjects.

In the next extract we see Conrad's ability to paint a picture with words. Perhaps the fact that English was not his first language allowed him to choose exactly the right word as he established atmosphere and emotion.



Joseph Conrad

## HEART OF DARKNESS

By Joseph Conrad

And at last, in its curved and imperceptible fall, the sun sank low, and from glowing white changed to a dull red without rays and without heat, as if about to go out suddenly, stricken to death by the touch of that gloom brooding over a crowd of men.

Forthwith a change came over the waters, and the serenity became less brilliant but more profound. The old river in its broad reach rested unruffled at the decline of day, after ages of good service done to the race that peopled its banks, spread out in the tranquil dignity of a waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth. We looked at the venerable stream not in the vivid flush of a short day that comes and departs for ever, but in the august light of abiding memories. And indeed nothing is easier for a man who has, as the phrase goes, 'followed the sea' with reverence and affection, than to evoke the great spirit of the past upon the lower reaches of the Thames. The tidal current runs to and fro in its unceasing service, crowded with memories of men and ships it had borne to the rest of home or to the battles of the sea. It had known and served all the men of whom the nation is proud, from Sir Francis Drake to Sir John Franklin, knights all, titled and untitled—the great knights-errant of the sea. It had borne all the ships whose names are like jewels flashing in the night of time, from the *Golden Hind* returning with her round flanks full of treasure, to be visited by the Queen's Highness and thus pass out of the gigantic tale, to the *Erebus* and *Terror*, bound on other conquests—and that never returned. It had known the ships and the men. They had sailed from Deptford, from Greenwich, from Erith—the adventurers and the settlers; kings' ships and the ships of men on 'Change; captains, admirals, the dark "interlopers" of the Eastern trade, and the commissioned "generals" of East India fleets'. Hunters for gold or pursuers of fame, they all had gone out on that stream, bearing the sword, and often the torch, messengers of the might within the land, bearers of a spark from the sacred fire. What greatness had not floated on the ebb of that river into the mystery of an unknown earth! ... The dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germs of empires.

The sun set; the dusk fell on the stream, and lights began to appear along the shore. The

Chapman lighthouse, a three-legged thing erect on a mud-flat, shone strongly. Lights of ships moved in the fairway—a great stir of lights going up and going down. And farther west on the upper reaches the place of the monstrous town was still marked ominously on the sky, a brooding gloom in sunshine, a lurid glare under the stars.

‘And this also,’ said Marlow suddenly, ‘has been one of the dark places of the earth.’

Source: Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 1902



## THE GREAT GATSBY

By F. Scott Fitzgerald

About half-way between West Egg and New York the motor road hastily joins the railroad and runs beside it for a quarter of a mile, so as to shrink away from a certain desolate area of land. This is a valley of ashes—a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens ...

But above the grey land and the spasms of bleak dust which drift endlessly over it, you perceive, after a moment, the eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg. The eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg are blue and gigantic—their retinas are one yard high. They look out of no face, but, instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a non-existent nose. Evidently some wild wag of an oculist set them there to fatten his practice in the borough of Queens, and then sank down himself into eternal blindness, or forgot them and moved away. But his eyes dimmed a little by many paintless days, under sun and rain, brood on over the solemn dumping ground.

Fitzgerald presents his narrator Nick Carraway as a man who is disillusioned with the society he encounters in the East. In the next section Nick, who is a man raised to uphold the old-fashioned manners of the mid-west of America, reflects on the people who attend Gatsby's famous parties and the desperate gaiety as they compel themselves to survive in and enjoy 'The Jazz Age'.

I believe that on the first night I went to Gatsby's house I was one of the few guest who had actually been invited. People were not invited—they went there ...

Dressed up in white flannels I went over to his lawn a little after seven, and wandered around rather ill at ease among swirls and eddies of people I didn't know—though here and there was a face I had noticed on the commuting train. I was immediately struck by the number of young Englishmen all dotted about; all well dressed, all looking a little hungry, and all talking in low, earnest voices to solid and prosperous Americans. I was sure that they were selling something: bonds or insurance or automobiles. They were at least agonizingly aware of the easy money in the vicinity and convinced that it was theirs for a few words in the right key.

Source: F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, 1925

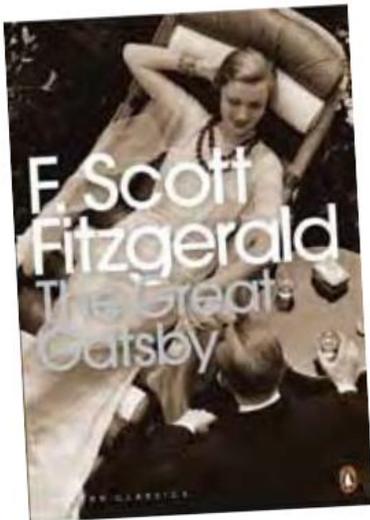
## F. Scott Fitzgerald

By the 1920s modern writers were reflecting on the post-war society that became known as 'The Jazz Age'. In America F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896–1940) came to be

regarded as the greatest author of this age when he published *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald crafted and controlled the novel, consciously using the techniques of modernism to tell his story which looks at the detrimental effects of modernity, morals and technologies on the American lifestyle. The narrator Nick Carraway uses irony and detachment whenever he speaks of the things he sees

and hears to ensure that the reader senses the hollow centre of the very modern life he is witnessing. Even the title is ironic as it encourages a vision of Gatsby that is belied by the novel's action and outcome.

West Egg, the enchanting location of Gatsby's dream house, is separated from the modern city of New York by the Valley of Ashes. It is easiest to travel between the two places by train. This extract presents one of these journeys and introduces one of the most famous symbols in modern literature—the eyes of Dr T. J. Eckleburg, a highway billboard. The eyes watch every event in the novel, reflecting the narrator himself and they stand watch over the wasteland of the Ashes which, to Fitzgerald, represents what American popular culture has become.



# John Steinbeck

Californian writer John Steinbeck (1902–1968) won both a Pulitzer Prize and a Nobel Prize for his writing. Steinbeck's rejection of capitalism, his horror at the effects of the First World War and the Depression, and his belief that the individual suffers in the face of the overwhelming social forces over which they have no control, clearly make his novels political texts.

One of his most famous novels, *Of Mice and Men*, chronicles the events in the lives of two itinerant workers during the Depression. The themes of loneliness, racism and segregation, loss of autonomy and the powerlessness of men in their workplace are shown through the lives of Lennie and George. Lennie's death, which is both pointless and unnecessary, forms the climax of the novel.

In this extract Crooks, an African-American ranch-worker speaks of the loneliness of his life. Crooks's isolation stems both from a disability and the colour of his skin. Steinbeck uses him as a way of showing the loneliness of all his characters.

## OF MICE AND MEN

By John Steinbeck

Crooks leaned forward over the edge of the bunk. 'I ain't a southern negro,' he said. 'I was born right here in California. My old man had a chicken ranch, 'bout ten acres. The white kids come to play at our place, an' sometimes I went to play with them, and some of them was pretty nice. My ol' man didn't like that. I never knew till long later why he didn't like that. But I know now.' He hesitated, and when he spoke again his voice was softer. 'There wasn't another colored family for miles around. And now there ain't a colored man on this ranch an' there's jus' one family in Soledad ...

'... I seen it over an' over—a guy talkin' to another guy and it don't make no difference if he don't hear or understand. The thing is, they're talkin', or they're settin' still not talkin'. It don't make no difference, no difference.'

The dream of a place of their own, where a man can be independent and thus a real man, sustains many of the characters throughout the novel. In the next extract the wife of the ranch owner, who is only ever known as Curley's wife, has wandered into the stables to find



Still from *Of Mice and Men*, 1992, directed by Gary Sinise

company. She is rejected by the men there, however, and attacks them verbally. One man, old Candy, finally stands up to her and stresses that she does not have the power to threaten them.

... But a change came over old Candy. He stood up suddenly and knocked his nail key over backward. 'I had enough,' he said angrily. 'You ain't wanted here. We told you you ain't. An' I tell ya, you got floozy idears about what us guys amounts to. You ain't got sense enough in that chicken head to even see that we ain't stiffs. S'pose you get us canned. S'pose you do. You think we'll hit the highway an' look for another lousy two-bit job like this. You don't know that we got our own ranch to go to, an' our own house. We ain't got to stay here. We gotta house and chickens an' fruit trees an' a place a hunderd time prettier than this. An' we got fren's, that's what we got. Maybe there was a time when we was scared of gettin' canned, but we ain't no more. We got our own lan', and it's ours, an' we c'n go to it.'

Source: John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*, 1937

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What are the changes to modern life that influenced the modernist writers?
- 2 What is another term for the 1920s?
- 3 What role did the growth of the suburbs and railway networks play?

### Understanding

- 4 What adjectives does Conrad use to set the scene in this extract?
- 5 Why might the Englishmen at Gatsby's party be desperate?
- 6 Why is it important for Crooks to establish that he is 'not a southern negro'?

### Analysing

- 7 Like many modernist writers Conrad deliberately uses words and references that require the reader to work out the meaning of what he is saying. Pick out several of these references in this extract and discern their meaning. Why might he have used them here?
- 8 There are some implicit judgements being made in the second extract from *The Great Gatsby*. What are they and who are they about? How does Nick establish his own superiority?
- 9 Crooks tells us that he is the son of a landowner. How does this help us understand the character? How might it contribute to Steinbeck's general theme of the dignity of man?

### Evaluating

- 10 Find out more about the work of Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Nietzsche. How did they influence the modernist writers?

### Creating

- 11 Think about the way in which Fitzgerald uses the eyes of T. J. Eckleburg as a symbol of time passing. If you were to write a short story about society today, what symbol would you use to reflect your ideas? Why?

## Common literary techniques in literature

### Marginalisation

'To marginalise' means to downgrade or confine a person or a group of people to a lower or outer limit of social standing. People may be excluded from the rights and privileges that are available to the majority or, more subtly, their right to be different may be ignored or devalued.

Novelists can use marginalisation in their texts. They can do this by giving limited space or emphasis to a character or characters in a text. They often exclude or silence a type of person, or a group, for example women or the mentally ill. It is also interesting to see which characters or groups in a text are privileged, or represented as more important—in other words, what type of person, group or issue is being valued or emphasised at the expense of another?

### Connotations

The connotation of a word is its implied additional meaning or its emotional association. 'To connote' is to imply, express or state something indirectly. We can connote meaning beyond the literal or primary meaning in a text. For example, the words 'hobo', 'swaggie' and 'tramp' are all words used to describe someone who is homeless. However, 'hobo' and 'tramp' have negative connotations, whereas in Australia the word 'swaggie' has a positive connotation because of the song 'Waltzing Matilda'.

The denotation of a word, on the other hand, is its direct meaning—its dictionary definition. 'To denote' is to make literal or clear the definition or meaning intended by the writer. The reader can understand quite easily the superficial meaning denoted in a text.

### Satire

Satire is the use of humour and exaggeration to highlight shortcomings in human nature. Authors employ it to provoke thought about people and society by causing readers and/or viewers to marvel at the ridiculous nature of the character or situation. Think of the satire of *The Simpsons*. We laugh at Homer's shortcomings, knowing that he exhibits some of the shortcomings common to our society—not to mention what his character suggests about the modern man and father.

## Sarcasm

Sarcasm is used to offend, provoke or prevent retaliation from something or someone by mocking or emphasising their feelings. A common usage of sarcasm is to say one thing jokingly, but mean the opposite; for example, saying 'That was fun' after a difficult exam.

## Collage

Modernists often used a number of different voices to tell their story and quite often the story went backwards and forwards between narrators, time periods and perspectives. This made the stories somewhat difficult to follow and ensured that readers had to concentrate on the content. The authors juxtaposed seemingly unrelated pieces of story to create their whole. In addition, by 1910 the telephone and the record or cylinder player had become part of many homes and for the first time people's voices could be heard without them being present. Many writers used 'voices' rather than fleshed out characters to tell their stories.

## Allusion

Writers often used 'borrowed words' or allusions to other writers or texts and quotes from other texts. This was to show that our influences speak through us and that in reality everything has been said before. This technique relies on the reader being as well-read as the author so that they can understand the references.

## Postmodern literature

Postmodern literature sprang from the modernist movement some time after the Second World War (1939–1945). While postmodern writers shared some of the ideas of modernist authors, they also began to question some ideas, and sought to explore them in other ways. For example, they wrote 'open' works of literature, which required readers to work out meanings for themselves, make their own connections between ideas and develop their own interpretation of the text. Of course, this is not to say that all contemporary literature falls into these two categories. Many twentieth and twenty-first century authors value and use more traditional techniques of narrative and characterisation to explore their ideas and comment on society.



Sylvia Plath

## Sylvia Plath

Sylvia Plath (1932–1963) was a well-known writer of the postmodern era. Born in Massachusetts during the Great Depression, Plath was raised as a Christian during a conservative period of American history. She attempted suicide in the early 1950s. She was hospitalised many times and underwent electroconvulsive therapy. Plath described her experiences in her semi-autobiographical novel *The Bell Jar*.

### ? DID YOU KNOW...

Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* was published a month before she died in 1963 under the pseudonym Victoria Lucas. Due to the semi-autobiographical nature of the novel, she was extremely anxious about its debut and took the mixed reviews it received very personally.

In *The Bell Jar*, Esther is a gifted woman who has gained a training position as a junior editor for a magazine house. It is the 1950s and she is working during the summer break in New York City.

Like Plath, her protagonist, Esther, experiences bipolar disorder, clinical depression, insomnia, family betrayal, social rejection and isolation. When *The Bell Jar* was first published it was highly controversial and

widely rejected in America. It can be argued that this public resistance arose because the novel exposed the detrimental effect society was having on those who did not follow its rules.

Plath's literary genius was lost when she committed suicide at the age of thirty. She died without knowing the influence that her novel and her poetry would have on society.

In this extract, Esther is descending into depression. She is living with her mother, who has just left for work. She feels isolated by her own experience and marginalised by a society that has limited awareness of and compassion for her mental illness. She fears going back outside into the harsh realities of life.

## THE BELL JAR

By Sylvia Plath

Then the front door opened and shut. Then the car door opened and shut, and the motor went broom-broom and, edging off with a crunch of gravel, faded into the distance.

My mother was teaching shorthand and typing to a lot of city college girls and wouldn't be home till the middle of the afternoon.

The carriage wheels screamed past again. Somebody seemed to be wheeling a baby back and forth under my window.

I slipped out of bed and on to the rug, and quietly, on my hands and knees, crawled over to see who it was.

Ours was a small, white clapboard house set in the middle of a small green lawn on the corner of two peaceful suburban streets, but in spite of the little maple trees planted at intervals around our property, anybody passing along the sidewalk could glance up at the second storey window and see just what was going on.

This was brought home to me by our next-door neighbour, a spiteful woman named Mrs Ockenden.

Mrs Ockenden was a retired nurse who had just married her third husband—the other two died in curious circumstances—and she spent an inordinate amount of time peering from behind the starched white curtains of her windows.

She had called my mother up twice about me—once to report that I had been sitting in front of the house for an hour under the streetlight and kissing

somebody in a blue Plymouth, and once to say that I had better pull the blinds down in my room, because she had seen me half-naked getting ready for bed one night when she happened to be out walking her Scotch terrier.

With great care, I raised my eyes to the level of the windowsill.

A woman not five feet tall, with a grotesque, protruding stomach, was wheeling an old black baby carriage down the street. Two or three small children of various sizes, all pale, with smudgy faces and bare smudgy knees, wobbled along in the shadow of her skirts.

A serene, almost religious smile lit up the woman's face. Her head tilted happily back, like a sparrow egg perched on a duck egg, she smiled into the sun.

I knew the woman well.

It was Dodo Conway.

Dodo Conway was a Catholic who had gone to Barnard and then married an architect who had gone to Columbia and was also a Catholic. They had a big, rambling house up the street from us, set behind a morbid façade of pine trees, and surrounded by scooters, tricycles, doll carriages, toy fire trucks, baseball bats, badminton nets, croquet wickets, hamster cages and cocker spaniel puppies—the whole sprawling paraphernalia of suburban childhood.

Dodo interested me in spite of myself.

Her house was unlike all the others in our neighbourhood in its size (it was much bigger) and its colour (the second storey was constructed of dark brown clapboard and the first of grey stucco, studded with grey and purple golf-ball-shaped stones). And the pine trees completely screened it from view, which was considered unsociable in our community of adjoining lawns and friendly, waist-high hedges.

Dodo raised her six children—and would no doubt raise her seventh—on rice crispies, peanut-butter-and-marshmallow sandwiches, vanilla ice-cream and gallon upon gallon of Hoods milk. She got a special discount from the local milkman.

Everybody loved Dodo, although the swelling size of her family was the talk of the neighbourhood. The older people around, like my mother, had two children, and the younger more prosperous ones had four, but nobody but Dodo was on the verge of a seventh. Even six was

considered excessive, but then, everybody said, of course Dodo was a Catholic.

I watched Dodo wheel the youngest Conway up and down. She seemed to be doing it for my benefit.

Children made me sick.

A floorboard creaked, and I ducked down again, just as Dodo Conway's face, by instinct, or some gift of supernatural hearing, turned on the little pivot of its neck.

I felt her gaze pierce through the white clapboard and the pink, wallpaper roses and uncover me, crouching there behind the silver pickets of the radiator.

I crawled back into bed and pulled the sheet over my head. But even that didn't shut out the light, so I buried my head under the darkness of the pillow and pretended it was night. I couldn't see the point of getting up.

I had nothing to look forward to.

Source: Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*, Faber & Faber, 1963

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What does 'to marginalise' mean?
- 2 In the Sylvia Plath extract, what are the connotations of Dodo Conway's name?
- 3 What is denoted in Esther's view of having children?
- 4 Is Plath using literary satire or sarcasm when she depicts Esther's neighbours? Identify one or two examples in the extract to justify your response.

### Understanding

- 5 Write a definition of a bell jar.
- 6 What does the image of a bell jar symbolise about:
  - a a woman's experience in the 1950s?
  - b a person's experience with mental illness?

### Applying

- 7 Ockenden and Conway display stereotypical gender behaviour in Esther's world. Identify these particular traits.

## Harper Lee

Another female writer of the 1960s was Harper Lee. Her only novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, was published in 1960 and won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction the following year.

Lee was born in Monroeville, Alabama in the United States of America, and was the daughter of a former newspaper owner and editor who also served a term as a state senator and practised law in Monroeville. Harper Lee studied law, although she gave up her studies six months before she was due to finish in order to move to New York to pursue a career in literature.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* is set in the 1930s in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, but the novel is semi-autobiographical. Maycomb represents Monroeville and many of the characters of the novel are based on people from her life. The hero of the novel, Atticus Finch, is based on her father and the character of Dill is based upon her childhood friend, Truman Capote, who also became a famous writer with works such as *In Cold Blood* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. The story is told from the point of view of six-year-old Scout Finch, a tomboyish and precocious child. She recounts the events of her childhood leading up to when her older brother Jem, breaks his arm when he is nearly thirteen.

The novel is primarily about race relations in the United States of America, as it tells the story of the trial of African American, Tom Robinson, who is falsely accused of sexually assaulting a white woman. Atticus Finch is the lawyer who is assigned to defend Robinson and Finch causes a stir in Maycomb when he actively defends his client rather than condemning him just because of his colour, which is what the townsfolk expected. However, the novel also explores many other important themes, such as childhood and what it means to be a good person and a good man.

The following extracts from the novel give us an insight into life in the 1930s in the southern states of America. In the first extract, Scout describes how she and Jem view their father and his abilities; they believe that 'Atticus can't do anything'.

## TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

By Harper Lee

Atticus was feeble: he was nearly fifty. When Jem and I asked him why he was so old, he said he got started late, which we felt reflected upon his abilities and manliness. He was much older than the parents of our school contemporaries, and there was nothing Jem or I could say about him when our classmates said, 'My father —'

Jem was football crazy. Atticus was never too tired to play keep-away, but when Jen wanted to tackle him Atticus would say: 'I'm too old for that son.'

Our father didn't do anything. He worked in an office not a drug-store [chemist]. Atticus did not drive a dump-truck for the county, he was not the sheriff, he did not farm, work in a garage, or do anything that could possibly arouse the admiration of anyone.

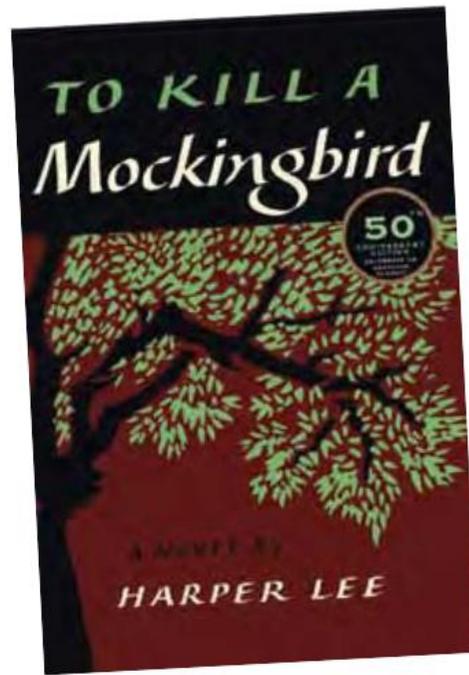
Besides that, he wore glasses. He was nearly blind in his left eye ... He did not do the things our schoolmates' fathers did: he never went hunting, he did not play poker or fish or drink or smoke. He sat in the living-room and read ...

... When he gave us our air rifles Atticus wouldn't teach us to shoot. Uncle Jack instructed us in the rudiments thereof; he said Atticus wasn't interested in guns. Atticus said to Jem one day, 'I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the back yard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can't hit 'em, but remember it is a sin to kill a mockingbird.'

That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was a sin to do something, and I asked Miss Maudie about it.

'Your father's right,' she said. 'Mockingbirds don't do any one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it is a sin to kill a mockingbird.'

In this second extract, Tim Johnson, a rabid (mad) dog has appeared on the street. It is a danger to everyone around. Atticus amazes Scout and Jem, who have long thought him old and feeble, when he proves himself to be 'One-shot Finch', the 'deadest shot in Maycomb County'.



Nothing is more deadly than a deserted, waiting street. The trees were still, the mockingbirds were silent, the carpenters at Miss Maudie's house had vanished. I heard Mr Tate sniff, then blow his nose. I saw him shift his gun to the crook of his arm ...

Tim Johnson came into sight, walking dazedly in the inner rim of the curve parallel to the Radley house ...

... Atticus said, 'He's within range, Heck. You better get him now before he goes down the side street ...'

'Take him, Mr Finch.' Mr Tate handed the rifle to Atticus; Jem and I nearly fainted.

'Don't waste time, Heck,' said Atticus. 'Go on.'

'Mr Finch, this is a one-shot job.'

Atticus shook his head vehemently: 'Don't just stand there, Heck! He won't wait all day for you—'

'For God's sake, Mr Finch, look where he is! Miss and you'll go straight into the Radley house! I can't shoot that well and you know it!'

'I haven't shot a gun in thirty years—'

Mr Tate almost threw the rifle at Atticus. 'I'd feel mighty comfortable if you did now,' he said ...

Atticus pushed his glasses to his forehead; they slipped down, and he dropped them in the street. In the silence, I heard them crack. Atticus rubbed his eyes and chin; we saw him blink hard.

In front of the Radley gate, Tim Johnson had made up what was left of his mind. He had finally turned himself around to pursue his original course up our street. He made two steps forward, then stopped and raised his head. We saw his body go rigid.

With movements so swift they seemed simultaneous, Atticus's hand yanked a ball-tipped lever as he brought the gun to his shoulder.

The rifle cracked. Tim Johnson leaped, flopped over and crumpled on the sidewalk in a brown-and-white heap. He didn't know what hit him.

Mr Tate jumped off the porch and ran to the Radley Place. He stopped in front of the dog, squatted, turned around and tapped his finger on his forehead above his left eye. 'You were a little to the right, Mr Finch,' he called ... 'You haven't forgotten much, Mr. Finch. They say it never leaves you.'

Atticus was silent.

'Atticus?' said Jem.

'Yes?'

'Nothin'.'

'I saw that, One-Shot Finch!'

Atticus wheeled around to face Miss Maudie.

They looked at one another without saying anything, and Atticus got into the sheriff's car. 'Come here,' he said to Jem. 'Don't you go near that dog, you understand? Don't go near him, he's just as dangerous dead as alive.'

'Yes, sir,' said Jem. 'Atticus—'

'What son?'

'Nothing.'

'What's the matter with you, boy, can't you talk?' said Mr Tate, grinning at Jem. 'Didn't you know your daddy's—'

'Hush, Heck,' said Atticus, 'let's go back to town.'

...

Jem became vaguely articulate: 'd you see him, Scout? 'd you see him just standin' there? ...'n' all of a sudden he just relaxed all over, an' it looked like that gun was a part of him ... an' he did it so quick, like ... I hafta aim for ten minutes 'fore I can hit somethin' ...'

Miss Maudie grinned wickedly. 'Well now, Miss Jean Louise [Scout's real name], she said, 'still think your father can't do anything? Still ashamed of him?'

'Nome,' I said meekly.

'Forgot to tell you the other day that besides playing the Jew's Harp, Atticus Finch was the dearest shot in Maycomb county in his time.'

'Dead shot ...' echoed Jem.

'That's what I said, Jem Finch. Guess you'll change your tune now. The very idea, didn't you know his nickname was Ol' One-Shot when he was a boy? ...'

'He never said anything about that,' Jem muttered ...

'Wonder why he never goes huntin' now,' I said.

'Maybe I can tell you,' said Miss Maudie. 'If your father's anything, he's civilised in his heart. Marksmanship's a gift of God, a talent—oh you have to practise to make it perfect, but shootin's different from playing the piano or the like. I think maybe that he put his gun down when he realised that God had given him an unfair advantage over most living things. I guess he decided he wouldn't shoot till he had to, and he had to today.'

Source: Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, copyright c.1960

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Describe how Jem and Scout see their father in this extract.
- 2 Whose job was it to kill the rabid dog?
- 3 Why did he ask Atticus to do it?
- 4 Why is it a sin to kill a mockingbird?

### Understanding

- 5 What are the qualities the children think are needed for a man to be considered 'manly'?
- 6 Describe the way in which Atticus makes his shot.
- 7 Describe the children's reactions to their father's actions.
- 8 Why are they so surprised?

### Analysing

- 9 What does Atticus's attitude to guns and the killing of mockingbirds tell us about his character?
- 10 Twice Jem begins to ask his father a question, but each time he stops. Why do you think he doesn't continue?
- 11 What do you think Jem wants to ask his father?

### Evaluating

- 12 Which qualities does Lee value in a man? Use quotes from the extracts to support your answer.

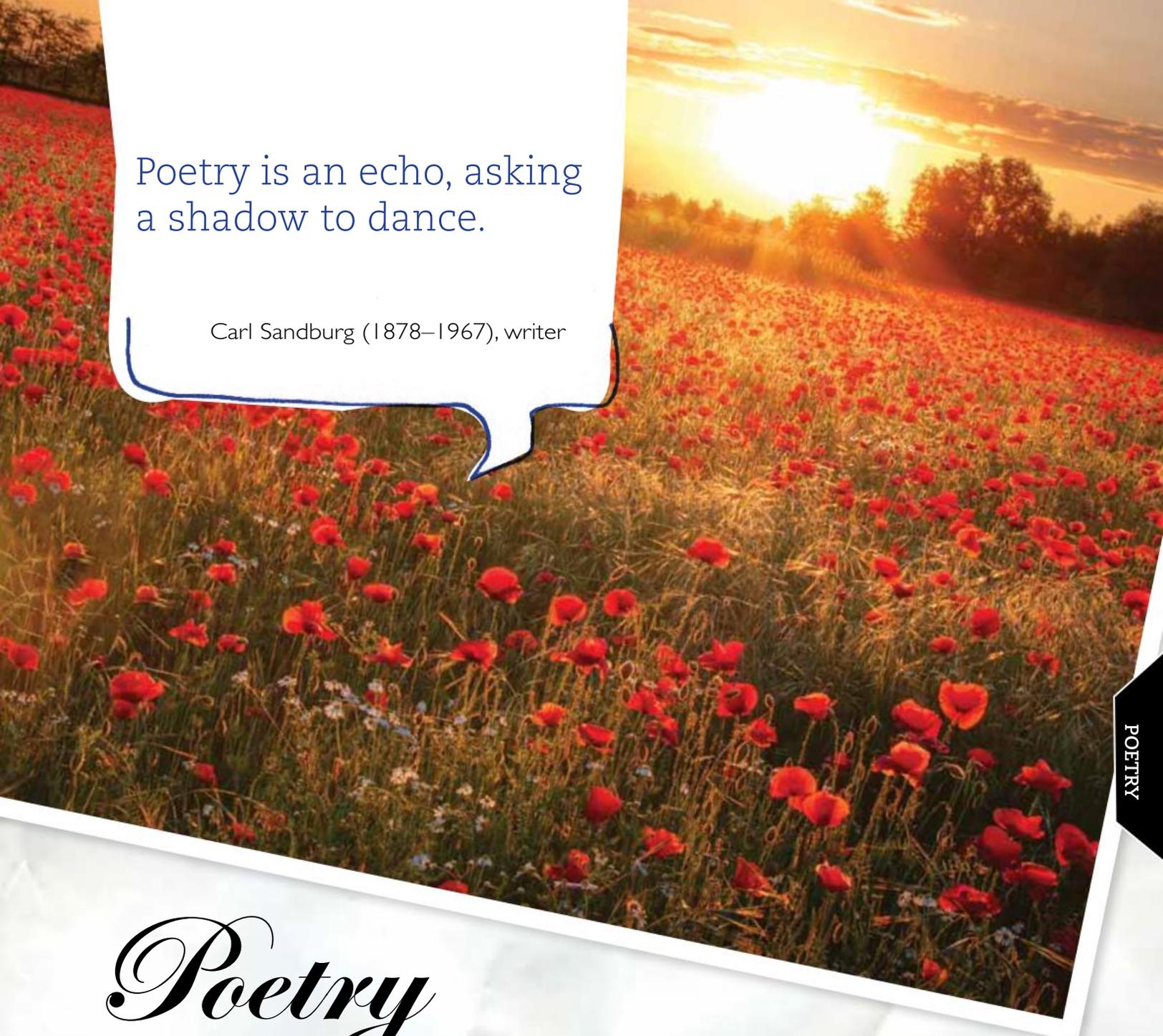
# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Using the information in this module and any other information you can find, create a list of criteria for identifying and judging the literary merit of a modernist novel.
  - Virginia Woolf
  - Marcel Proust
  - Ernest Hemingway
  - Katherine Anne Porter
  - E. M. Forster
  - Franz Kafka
  - Katherine Mansfield.
- 2 There are many other modernist novelists. Research the works and lives of one or more of the following:
  - James Joyce
  - Gertrude Stein

## Extra tasks

- 1 Hypertext stories can be created in any digital program that embeds hyperlinks. Unlike a hardcopy novel, the reader can click on hyperlinks and travel to alternative plotlines in the story. Using this medium, write a fiction hypertext entitled 'Then and now'.
  - a Story 1—now. Create a character who goes through a particular experience. Your character should behave in ways that males and females behave today.
  - b Story 2—then. Write an alternative story that is set in either the Romantic period or the Victorian era, in which males and females behave in ways customary for the period.
  - c Embed hyperlinks on significant words or phrases within your texts so your reader can experience 'life' in both texts almost simultaneously.
  - d Elaborate on the ideas in your two texts by selecting appropriate images to identify and explore the vastly different contexts. Embed and hyperlink your pictures to enhance the experience for the reader.
  - e Present your hypertext stories to the class. You could use an interactive whiteboard to facilitate your presentation to the group.
- 2 Choose one of the characters from any of the extracts that you have read in this chapter. Continue the story of this character beyond the extract. See if you can write in the style of the original author. You will need to be able to use language in the same way, with the same grammar and phrasing as the original author.
- 3 Choose one of the characters from any of the extracts that you have read in this chapter and update their story for the twenty-first century. What issues and concerns would you, as their creator, be dealing with if they lived today?
- 4 Make a collage or display wall of the kinds of art that was being produced during the modernist period. Can you see any links between the works and concerns of the artists and the kinds of novels that were being produced? Include quotes from modernist novels linked to some of these artworks.
- 5 Extend your display wall to link artworks from the Romantic, Colonial and Victorian periods to the novels we have examined in this chapter.



Poetry is an echo, asking  
a shadow to dance.

Carl Sandburg (1878–1967), writer

# Poetry

## Chapter overview

**P**oetry is one of the oldest and most respected forms of literary text. Some of the earliest stories we have were originally in poetic form. They were spoken or chanted for rapt audiences by storytellers who used the rhythm and rhyme of poetry to help them remember long and complicated narratives.

Over the centuries the poetic form developed, adapting to meet new and varied needs. Poetry became a favourite means of exploring ideas, both profound and simple. The timeless themes of religion, love, patriotism, heroism, pride and arrogance were explored through the many forms of poetry. It has also been used for humorous effect.

# The mechanics of poetry

**P**oetry is a form of literature in which language is used to make us think and feel. Often, literary devices and figurative language are used in a poem to transcend the literal meaning of the words and to evoke a response from the reader. Poets use a wide range of tools and specific patterns to create particular effects.

## Sound tools

Much of the effect of poetry comes from how a poem sounds. Naturally, this is particularly important when a poem is read aloud. Some common tools to create an auditory effect used by poets are rhyme, alliteration, assonance, enjambment, end-stopping and rhyme scheme.

## Rhyme

Rhyme—both ‘hard rhyme’ and ‘soft rhyme’—is a frequently used poetic tool. Hard rhymes have similar sounds at the end of lines. For example:

It was the man from Ironbark who struck the Sydney town,  
He wandered over street and park, he wandered up and down.

Source: Banjo Paterson, ‘The Man from Ironbark’, 1892

The ‘-own’ sound is repeated at the end of both lines. In addition, the ‘-ark’ sound is repeated in the middle of both lines.

If sounds are nearly the same, this is called a ‘soft rhyme’ or ‘near rhyme’.

One thing that I always hate  
Is when I just sit and shake.

‘Hate’ and ‘shake’ share a long ‘a’ sound, but because the ‘t’ and ‘k’ are different, this is a soft rhyme rather than hard or full rhyme.



**Stanza**—this is a sub-unit of a poem, much like a paragraph is a sub-unit of prose. It's often called a ‘verse’, but ‘stanza’ is the correct term. Each complete stanza in a poem is followed by a line break.

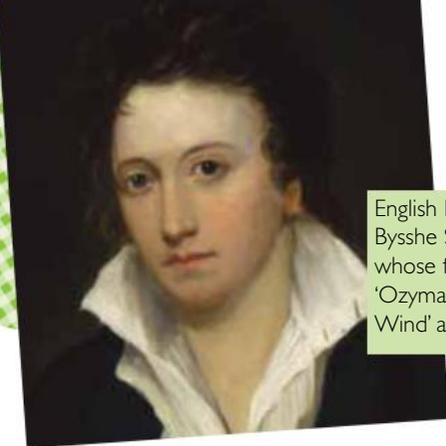
**Free verse**—this is poetry that doesn't have a rhyme scheme, or a regular rhythm pattern.

**Blank verse**—this is poetry that has a regular rhythm, but doesn't rhyme.

Some poems use a technique called ‘internal rhyme’—that is, the rhyme occurs within the same line rather than between two lines. For example, see the first and third lines in the following:

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,  
And the nursling of the Sky;  
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;  
I change, but I cannot die.

Source: Percy Bysshe Shelley, ‘The Cloud’, 1819



English Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) whose famous poems include 'Ozymandias', 'Ode to the West Wind' and 'Love's Philosophy'.

## Alliteration

Alliteration is the same, repeated consonant sound often at the beginning of a number of words. For example:

He was a **d**opey, **d**aggy **d**og  
His friend? A **h**appy, **h**earty **h**og.

Note also the alliteration within the words on both lines with the repeated 'p' and 'g' sounds.

## Assonance

Assonance is the echoing of vowel sounds in nearby words. It is very similar to rhyming and is often used alongside it. For example:

'Do you know how to steal a crown?'  
The long 'ow' sound in 'how' is repeated in 'crown'.

## Enjambment and end-stopping

When the sense of a line isn't complete at the end of a line of poetry, this is called 'enjambment'. To understand the meaning, the reader must continue to the next line—or must sometimes read on for several lines. For example:

How clear she shines! How quietly  
I lie beneath her guardian light;  
While heaven and earth are whispering me,  
Tomorrow, wake, but dream to-night.

Emily Brontë, 'How Clear She Shines', 1846

When the sense of a line is complete at the end of a line, the line is said to be 'end-stopped', as in this example:

Gold is for the mistress—silver for the maid—  
Copper for the craftsman cunning at his trade!  
'Good!' said the Baron, sitting in his hall,  
But Iron—Cold Iron—is master of them all.

Rudyard Kipling, 'Cold Iron', 1909

## Rhyme scheme

Many different rhyme schemes, or patterns, exist in poetry. To identify particular rhyme schemes, a system of notation is used to indicate which lines rhyme. For example:

There was movement at the station, for the word had  
passed around  
That the colt from old Regret had got away,  
And had joined the wild bush horses—he was worth  
a thousand pound,  
So all the cracks had gathered to the fray.

Source: Banjo Paterson, 'The Man from Snowy River', 1890



These first four lines from 'The Man from Snowy River' follow the ABAB rhyme scheme. This indicates that lines 1 and 3 (represented by the 'A' in the formula) have a similar rhyme pattern, and lines 2 and 4 (or 'B') have a similar rhyme pattern, although different from the pattern used in lines 1 and 3.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Source: Lewis Carroll, 'Jabberwocky', 1872

This is the opening stanza of Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem 'Jabberwocky'. We don't need to understand the words—Lewis Carroll made up most of them—but we recognise the ABAB rhyme scheme.

Rhyme schemes can be much more complicated than these examples. For instance, Shakespeare's sonnets follows this scheme: ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

# Rhythm tools

The word 'rhythm' means a regular pattern of sound, and in poetry this refers specifically to how syllables work in each line, and throughout the poem as a whole. As poetry has evolved, many ways of classifying different rhythm schemes have been established. The most important feature of poetic rhythm, however, is the fundamental unit—the syllable.

When identifying a rhythm scheme, you should ask two questions.

- How many syllables are in each line?
- Which syllables are stressed and which syllables are not?

'Stress' means emphasis. When we speak, we emphasise some words more than others, and some syllables more than others. For example:

*That was my armadillo.*

The meaning of the sentence can change depending on which word is stressed.

*That was my armadillo.* (The thing that just flashed past us was my armadillo.)

*That was my armadillo.* (The thing in front of us used to be my armadillo. Now it is something else.)

*That was my armadillo.* (The armadillo belonged to me—not anyone else.)

*That was my armadillo.* (Just in case you didn't know what it was, it was an armadillo.)



Stress can work in a similar way with syllables. When spoken aloud, particular sections of words receive more emphasis than others.

For example, in the word 'monster', the 'mon' syllable is more emphasised than the 'ster'. Try saying it the other way around, emphasising the 'ster', and you will see how stress works.



In traditional poetry, lines with the same rhyme have the same number of syllables. In an ABAB poem, lines 1 and 3 generally have the same number of syllables as each other. Lines 2 and 4 also have the same number of syllables as each other. The lines could all have the same number of syllables, but they don't have to.

# Image tools

Figurative language refers to words or phrases used in a non-literal way to explain abstract feelings, ideas or qualities. Poetry is the home of figurative language, whereby words and sentences aren't necessarily used in a literal, factual way. For example:

*He is a pig.*

If the speaker of this sentence was using figurative language, they could be describing someone with poor personal hygiene or sloppy table manners. If the speaker was using literal language, they would be talking about an animal with four trotters and a curly tail.

Figurative language is a powerful way of creating an image for the reader. The reader can imagine a sight, a sound, an experience, a feeling—or all of these at once, if the image is particularly vivid.

# Simile

The simile is the comparison of one object (or person) with another, so the reader can imagine the qualities associated with the comparative object and then connect them to the original object.

A simile uses the words 'like' or 'as'. For example:

*Hernando's smile is like a sunny day.*

*Trixie is as quick as a cheetah.*

*Bernice is like a machine.*

*Kwol's hair is as smooth as silk.*

# Metaphor

A metaphor is the equation of one object with another. It is not a comparison ('like'); it is another object—at least, in a figurative sense. Metaphors make an image more immediate, sometimes more startling and thus can have more impact than a simile. For example:

*All day, the batsman was a snail.*

*He was a volcano just waiting to erupt.*

*I just died with embarrassment.*

*My home is my castle.*

## Personification

Personification is attributing human qualities or features to something not human.

Because I could not stop for Death—  
He kindly stopped for me—  
The carriage held but just Ourselves—  
And Immortality.  
We slowly drove—He knew no haste  
And I had put away  
My labor, and my leisure too,  
For His Civility—

Emily Dickinson, 'Because I Could Not Stop for Death', 1924

## Allusion

Allusion is where a poet makes reference to something else outside the poem, usually something well known. Other literary works are often alluded to in poetry, as are mythology, history or famous people.

Mourn, mourn, ye Muses, all your loss deplore,  
The young, the noble Strephon is no more.  
Yes, yes, he fled quick as departing light,  
And ne'er shall rise from Death's eternal night,  
So rich a prize the Stygian gods ne'er bore,  
Such wit, such beauty, never graced their shore.

Aphra Behn, 'On the Death of the Late Earl of Rochester', 1915

Here, Aphra Behn refers to the Muses (figures from ancient Greek mythology, the guardians of art, music and poetry), Strephon (a lover and poet from Greek mythology) and the Stygian gods (the gods of the Greek underworld). All of these are used to heighten the sorrow at the death of one of her friends. Readers at the time (the late seventeenth century) would have picked up these references immediately.

## Speaker

The speaker of a poem is not necessarily the same person as the poet. A poet can create a character and put them in a situation to speak a poem to us, just like a playwright creates a character in a play. Even when a poem contains obvious autobiographical details (such as Wilfred Owen's war poetry, which draw on his experiences in the First World War), it can be dangerous to assume the speaker and the poet are the same. The speaker can be involved in the events described in the poem (see 'Dulce et Decorum Est') or can be an all-knowing observer (see 'Beach Burial'), or a combination of the two, or something else entirely.

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 Go to **Pearson Reader** for a copy of Banjo Paterson's famous poem 'The Man from Snowy River'. Choose any two stanzas from the poem, and use your imagination to adapt the language for a modern-day Australian tale, which:
  - features key 'characters' and 'events' that equate with your choice of Australian setting
  - uses well-chosen, vivid vocabulary
  - demonstrates your personal understanding of being an Australian today.



Web Destination

Replicate the rhyme scheme used by Paterson in your contemporary version of the poem. Keep in mind the sounds created through the use of the ABAB rhyme scheme, and read your poem aloud to ensure consistency of rhythm as well as rhyme.

- 2 When completed, briefly explain your choice of setting and characters to the class before reciting your poem. Be as creative and dramatic as you can.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Write three more stanzas for your modern version of 'The Man from Snowy River'. You don't have to follow the storyline of the original poem—use your imagination for your own version. To ensure consistency within the poem, you will need to continue using the ABAB rhyme scheme. Read your poem to a classmate and ask for their feedback.
- 2 Poetry often evokes images and feelings, and has the ability to transport us to a different place or time. Go to **Pearson Reader**. Working in pairs, read Oodgeroo Noonuccal's poem 'We Are Going'. Write a short report on your understanding of the poem, including:
  - details of the similes and metaphors used
  - a description of the feelings evoked by the poem
  - key words which evoke these feelings
  - an explanation of the issue involved.
- 3 Create a collage on poster paper using examples of alliteration found in the headlines of newspapers and magazines. Write your own four headlines using this sound tool and add these to the collage.



Web Destination

# War poetry

**W**ar has been one of the great subjects of poetry over thousands of years. The rights and wrongs of conflict, the role of duty and responsibility, the place of heroism and cowardice, and the impact and the dehumanising effects of war have absorbed some of our greatest poets and produced some of the most moving poetry.

War poetry has been written by people involved in war, as well as by people observing the effects of war from a distance, either reflecting on past wars, or writing from the home front well away from the battle lines. All these perspectives bring differing viewpoints to the experience of war, and help to shape the response.

## First World War

The First World War (1914–18) is also known as the Great War, which is an indication of the widespread effect it had. Mostly fought in Europe, it created bloodshed and destruction on a scale never before seen. More than fifteen million people died.

## Wilfred Owen

Wilfred Owen (1893–1918) enlisted in the British Army in 1915 and fought in France and Germany. He was killed on 4 November 1918, just a week before the war ended. Only four of his poems were published in his lifetime, but as the rest of his poems were made public his reputation grew. Now he is recognised as one of the greatest poets of the First World War—and one of the best of all war poets. Drawing on his personal experience in the trenches and in battle, he wrote about the horror of war in a way that few others could. Go to **Pearson Reader** for more information about Owen.



Web Destination



### DULCE ET DECORUM EST

By Wilfred Owen

POEM

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through  
sludge,

Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame, all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—  
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.  
In all my dreams before my helpless sight  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.

Source: Wilfred Owen



Wilfred Owen



### DID YOU KNOW...

*Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori* (Latin): It is noble and glorious to die for your country.

## EXPOSURE

By Wilfred Owen

POEM

Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that  
knive us ...

Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent ...  
Low drooping flares confuse our memory of the  
salient ...

Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,  
But nothing happens.

Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire.  
Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.  
Northward incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,  
Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.  
What are we doing here?

The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow ...  
We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag  
stormy.  
Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army  
Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey,  
But nothing happens.

Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.  
Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow,  
With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause, and  
renew,  
We watch them wandering up and down the wind's  
nonchalance,  
But nothing happens.

Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our  
faces—  
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and  
stare, snow-dazed,  
Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,  
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird  
fusses.  
Is it that we are dying?

Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires,  
glozed  
With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;  
For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;  
Shutters and doors all closed: on us the doors are  
closed—  
We turn back to our dying.

Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;  
Now ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.  
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;  
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were  
born,  
For love of God seems dying.

To-night, His frost will fasten on this mud and us,  
Shrivelling many hands and puckering foreheads crisp.  
The burying-party, picks and shovels in their shaking  
grasp,  
Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,  
But nothing happens.

Source: Wilfred Owen

## Breakaway tasks

### Understanding

- 1 In 'Dulce et Decorum Est', why were the soldiers fumbling with their helmets?
- 2 Explain why the floundering man in 'Dulce et Decorum Est' is described as 'drowning'?
- 3 In 'Exposure', why are the bullets less deadly than the snow?

## Applying

- 4 Find and list the three similes in these poems.
- 5 What is the rhyme scheme of 'Dulce et Decorum Est'?

## Analysing

- 6 Choose one of the Wilfred Owen poems and list the number of syllables in each line. Are there any lines that have a drastically different number of syllables from the average? Why do you think that is?
- 7 What is the effect of the repetition of the line 'But nothing happens' in 'Exposure'? Make particular reference in your response to the line's significance at the end of the poem.
- 8 Who is speaking in 'Exposure'? Is it Wilfred Owen, or is it someone else? What difference does it make to know that Wilfred Owen experienced the events described in this poem?

## Evaluating

- 9 From any of the Owen poems, write at least three lines that caught your attention and best described the reality of the war. Why did these lines stand out for you?
- 10 Describe the tone of voice of the last two lines of 'Dulce et Decorum Est'. What is the speaker of the poem feeling here?
- 11 How would a soldier on the other side in the battles described in these two poems describe the same events?

# Second World War

The Second World War (1939–45) was a global war with main fronts in Europe, Asia and the Pacific. It was the most deadly conflict in history, with over seventy million people killed.

## Kenneth Slessor

Kenneth Slessor (1901–1971) had his first poem published in *The Bulletin* magazine while he was still at school. Later he worked as a journalist for Melbourne and Sydney newspapers. During the Second World War he worked with Australian troops in England, Greece, the Middle East and New Guinea as an official war correspondent. After the war, he returned to Australia to continue working as a journalist.



Kenneth Slessor

'Beach Burial' looks at the after-effects of the Battle of El Alamein, which took place on Egypt's Mediterranean shore near the city of the same name. Australian and New Zealand troops suffered heavy casualties, but were instrumental in stopping the German advance.

## BEACH BURIAL

By Kenneth Slessor

POEM

Softly and humbly to the Gulf of Arabs  
The convoys of dead sailors come;  
At night they sway and wander in the waters far under,  
But morning rolls them in the foam.

Between the sob and clubbing of the gunfire  
Someone, it seems, has time for this,  
To pluck them from the shallows and bury them in  
burrows,  
And tread the sand upon their nakedness;

And each cross, the driven stake of tidewood,  
Bears the last signature of men,  
Written with such perplexity, with such bewildered pity,  
The words choke as they begin—

'Unknown seaman'—the ghostly pencil  
Wavers and fades, the purple drips,  
The breath of the wet season has washed their  
inscriptions  
As blue as drowned men's lips,  
Dead seamen, gone in search of the same landfall,  
Whether as enemies they fought,  
Or fought with us, or neither; the sand joins them  
together,  
Enlisted on the other front.

*El Alamein.*

Source: Kenneth Slessor

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Where did the battle take place and who is buried there?

### Understanding

- 2 While the battle was going on, what did someone have time to do?
- 3 Why was 'unknown seaman' written on the tidewood crosses instead of a name?

### Applying

- 4 'As blue as drowned men's lips' is a simile. Invent three new similes to describe how blue the smeared pencil writing looks.
- 5 What is the rhyme scheme of this poem?

### Analysing

- 6 In the last stanza, what is the 'other front' referring to?
- 7 'Sob and clubbing of the gunfire' is a metaphor. What image does it evoke of the gunfire?
- 8 Why do you think the last stanza is so much longer than the other stanzas?

### Evaluating

- 9 Complete this sentence: 'The underlying message of this poem is ...'
- 10 Compare 'Beach Burial' with the Owen poems. Describe the difference in the way the speaker of each of the poems feels about war.

### Creating

- 11 Give this poem a new title. Explain why you chose it.

## Humour in war?

People cope with their experiences of war in different ways. Australian soldiers have been renowned not just for their bravery and endurance, but also for a laconic sense of humour.



**laconic:** using few words, a crisp retort; laconic wit was often associated with Australian stockmen.

## TOBRUK TEST

By Hugh Paterson

POEM

You've heard of Bradman, Hammond,  
MacCartney, Woodfull, Hobbs,  
You've heard of how MacDougall topped the score  
Now I'd like to tell you  
How we play cricket in Tobruk  
In a way the game was never played before.

The players are a mixture,  
They come from every rank  
And their dress would not be quite the thing at Lord's;  
But you don't need caps and flannels  
And expensive batting gloves  
To get the fullest sport the game affords.

The wicket's rather tricky  
For it's mat on desert sand  
But for us it's really plenty good enough,  
And what with big bomb craters  
And holes from nine-inch shells,  
The outfield could be well described as rough.

The boundary's partly tank trap  
With the balance dannert wire  
And the grandstand's just a bit of sandy bank,  
While our single sightboard's furnished  
By a shot-down Jerry plane  
And the scorer's in a ruined ltie tank

One drawback is a minefield  
Which is at the desert end  
And critics might find fault with this and that,  
But to us all runs are good ones  
Even if a man should score  
Four leg byes off the top of his tin hat.



Australian soldiers playing cricket in the ruins of a street, 1941

The barracking is very choice,  
The Hill would learn a lot  
If they could listen in to all the cries  
As the Quartermaster Sergeant  
Bowls the Colonel neck and crop  
With a yorker while some dust was in his eyes

And the time the Signals runner  
Scored the winning hit  
When, as he sprinted round the wire to try and save  
the four,  
The Battery Sergeant Major  
Fell into a crater deep  
And the batsman ran another seven more.

If we drive one in the minefield  
We always run it out  
For that is what the local rules defines:  
It's always good for six at least,  
Some times as high as ten  
While the fieldsman picks his way in through the mines.

Though we never stop for shell-fire  
We're not too keen on planes,  
But when the Stukas start to hover round  
You can sometimes get a wicket,  
If you're game enough to stay  
By bowling as the batsman goes to ground

So when we're back in Sydney  
And others start to talk  
Of cricket, why we'll quell them with a look:  
'You blokes have never seen  
A game of cricket properly played  
The way we used to play it in Tobruk'.

Source: H. B. Paterson



**Tobruk:** another site of fierce battles on the North African front. Australian troops were besieged by Italian and German forces, and held out in appalling conditions for over 200 days.

**Bradman, Hammond, MacCartney, Woodfull, Hobbs:** Australian and English Test cricketers.

**MacDougall:** hero of the humorous cricket poem, 'How M'dougal Topped the Score' by Thomas E. Spencer (1845–1911).

**Lord's:** the 'home of cricket' cricket ground in London.

**dannert wire:** bundles of rolled up barbed wire for protection

**Jerry:** derogatory term for Germans.

**The Hill:** legendary standing room spectator area at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

**Quartermaster:** soldier in charge of supplies and provisions.

**yorker:** a ball bowled so that it pitches directly under the bat.

**Battery:** group of artillery.

**Stuka:** German dive-bombing aeroplane.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Describe the location of the cricket match.
- 2 What allowed the batsman to run 'another seven more'?

### Understanding

- 3 When is the best time to bowl?
- 4 Why do the batsmen keep running if they hit the ball into the minefield?

### Applying

- 5 From the information in the poem, draw a map of the Tobruk Cricket Ground, including:
  - the boundary (and what it is made of)
  - craters
  - the sightboard (and what it is made of)
  - the grandstand (and what it is made of)
  - the scorer's position (and what it is made of)
  - the minefield
  - the pitch.
- 6 What is the rhyme scheme for this poem?

### Analysing

- 7 Describe the Australian soldier as depicted in this poem. How does this image differ from the images of soldiers described in war poems earlier in the chapter?
- 8 Most war poetry has been written by men for the obvious reason that there were so many men involved and so few women in comparison. Although women did serve their country in many capacities, the front line was usually the place for men. Using what you have read of the war poetry, do you think a woman would write about war differently? Which of the poems would be more likely to have been written by a woman than a man? Why do you think so?

### Evaluating

- 9 Compare 'Beach Burial' and 'Tobruk Test'. Describe the different tones of voice used in each of the poems.

### Creating

- 10 Write a similar poem for another sport played in a wartime area.

# Strands in action

## Core task

Write a poem about a significant battle using sound, image and rhythm tools. Plan your poem carefully, considering your purpose, audience, prospective narrator and choice of vocabulary. Research one of the following battles to provide the material for your poem:

- Thermopylae
- Waterloo
- Pinjarra
- Little Big Horn
- Rorke's Drift
- Lone Pine
- The Coral Sea
- Long Tan
- Fallujah (second battle).

You may write your poem using any poetic form, but the following details must be included:

- when the battle occurred and how long it lasted
- where the battle occurred (details of the geography/landscape)
- who was involved in the battle and the type of forces used (infantry/cavalry/navy, etc.)
- the outcome of the battle.

Your poem should be a minimum of five stanzas in length.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Prepare a 300-word rationale for your poem, which includes a brief summary of the battle chosen and identifies and explains:
  - your purpose and audience
  - your use of sound, image and rhythm tools
  - your choice of speaker and poetic form.
- 2 Present your poem to the class as a recital. Begin with an introduction to the poem (see Extra task 1). You can use visual images of the battle and instrumental music in the background. Rehearse your poem with a partner, including visual and sound elements.

When choosing the images, make sure they complement the mood you are trying to capture in your poem. If, for example, you are trying to get across the scale of the war, you are more likely to use panoramic or wide shots of many men in a war zone. If you are trying to get across the ways in which individual men were affected by the war, your images will be close-ups and mid-shots—perhaps with the war in the background, showing the relationship between the subject and its setting. Also, with the music,

the tone of the music should reflect the mood of your poem. If your poem endorses the war as patriotic and good, your music should be enthusiastic and anthemic. However, if your position is negative, the music could be harsh and atonal to reflect the violence of the war, or sad and sombre if you are looking at the effect on soldiers.

- 3 Write another poem about the same battle from the perspective of one of the following:
  - an enemy soldier
  - a family member waiting for news
  - a medic/ambulance driver/person attending to the victims
  - a civilian accidentally involved in the battle
  - a survivor of the battle writing about it years later
  - an official war correspondent.

When writing from another perspective, choose a different audience too which should alter the voice and material you cover.

# The poetry of multicultural Australia

**A**ustralia is a nation of migrants. Throughout our history, people have left their lands of origin, crossing the seas to build new homes here. They have brought their dreams, their hopes and their ambitions to this country. Migrants have contributed to Australia's economy, culture and future.

## Migration—a history

Early humans came to the Australian continent at least 40 000 years ago and had called Australia home long before the European explorers first came here. European migration to Australia began in 1788, when the first convicts set foot here, and from the 1790s, free settlers began to arrive. After that, people came in large numbers, attracted to Australia for many reasons, but almost all of them looking for a better life.

The growth in the wool industry in the 1820s brought many workers from England. Famine in Ireland caused many to leave and a considerable number ended up in Australia. The great gold rushes of the 1850s and 1860s inspired dreams of riches in many people, creating an immigration boom.

In the twentieth century, after the Second World War, special programs were created by the government to encourage people to come to Australia. At first, because of historical ties to the United Kingdom, programs were targeted at British migrants, but they were soon extended to other European countries. The result was an influx of migrants from the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia all through the 1950s and 1960s. With the abolition of the White Australia policy in the 1970s, Asia became a rich source of migrants.

## Migration today

Today's migrants come from a wide range of countries and together with people born here they combine to make up multicultural Australia.

According to the 2006 Census:

- 44 per cent of Australians were born overseas or had at least one parent who was born overseas
- people from over 200 different countries now call Australia home
- of those people born overseas, the greatest number came from United Kingdom, followed (in order) by New Zealand, China, Italy, Vietnam, India, Philippines, Greece, Germany and South Africa.

Since the Census, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's Annual Report (2008–09) indicates that the proportion of migrants from the United Kingdom has continued to rise, as has the proportion of Indian immigrants.



Large group of Italian migrants on Station Pier, Port Melbourne. 1958

# The migrant experience

A vision of Australia through the eyes of a migrant can offer a rich and varied cultural perspective. And, as the language of poetry is the language of experience, the poetry of multicultural Australia can help those without a migrant experience to understand and appreciate a different experience from their own.

For more information about immigration and multicultural Australia, including film clips and personal stories, go to **Pearson Reader**.



## Antigone Kefala

Antigone Kefala was born in Romania of Greek parents, and has lived in both New Zealand and Australia. While fluent in four languages, Antigone Kefala chooses to write in English and Greek.

### THE WANDERER

By Antigone Kefala

POEM

The river  
moved further away  
in the heat of the road  
shimmers of water  
towards the horizon.

The salt  
which they gave him at home  
he would place on his tongue  
to taste his own roots  
and draw comfort.

The world  
made of a matter that never  
forgets, a symmetry so exact,  
fatality at the heart  
of each thing.

Source: Antigone Kefala

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Where did the salt come from?

### Understanding

- 2 Why was the man in the poem carrying salt?

### Applying

- 3 What would you take on a long journey to remind you of where you came from?

### Analysing

- 4 Why is the river moving further away in the heat?

### Evaluating

- 5 On a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'perfectly') how successfully do you think this poem captures the experience of a stranger in a strange land?

### Creating

- 6 Suggest another title for this poem.

## Jeltje

Jeltje is both a poet and a performance artist. Jeltje was born in Amsterdam, Holland and migrated to Australia in 1963 with her Indonesian–Dutch parents. She has published poetry both in Dutch and English.

### COLONIALISM MIX

By Jeltje

POEM

mama and papa  
were nursed  
by babus:  
young Indonesian women  
who spent their youth  
coddling the colonialists  
sickly children.

as a child  
i often asked  
what my parents did  
when they were  
little.

my mother said,  
that when the European Ladies  
came for afternoon tea,  
the children  
were summoned  
to greet them.  
Mrs Q. asked the eldest  
to say something 'nice' ...  
'Poop!' said my mother  
& ran out the door!

my father remembers  
playing with my mother  
on the lawns  
of the colonial estates  
(‘they were  
wild games!’  
my mother adds.)  
he also remembers  
sitting around  
with koki  
around the fire  
outside in the kampung  
watching him cook,

after koki’d served  
& washed up  
inside  
(my father  
still likes  
cooking sajurs  
& improvised  
sates!)

my father’s mother  
died when my father  
was still young  
she seems to have had  
more contact with her children  
than the other colonial mums.  
she talked soft  
with my dad,  
& taught him  
how to massage  
her aching head  
(it’s been hinted at,  
that my paternal grandmother  
was of Indonesian  
descent.)

i think  
both my parents  
have been homesick  
for Indonesia  
for a very long time!  
they were shipped  
‘back to the mother country’  
in their early teens.  
my mother says,  
they didn’t like  
what they saw.  
she blames it  
on the cold.

i blame it on  
the early years spent  
in Indonesia:  
they just couldn’t cope  
with Dutch Burghers  
& the money-pinching  
attitudes ...

i think  
my mother & father  
came to Australia  
with a dream  
of finding something  
they’d left behind  
in Indonesia.  
how their faces  
lit up! when  
the migrant-ship  
crossed the  
Equator!  
(my father  
greeted the  
Southern Cross  
like a long-lost  
friend!)

Source: Jeltje



**colonialists:** the Dutch who ruled Indonesia before Indonesian independence in 1949.

**koki:** ‘cook’ or ‘chef’.

**kampung:** village.

**sajur, sate:** Indonesian food.

**Dutch Burghers:** middle class or officials of Dutch background living in Indonesia.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 Where did Jeltje’s parents spend their childhood?

### Understanding

- 2 How much time did ‘colonial mums’ typically spend with their children in pre-independence Indonesia?

- 3 What was 'the mother country' for Jeltje's mother and father? Why?

### Applying

- 4 Imagine you were away from home for a year. What three things would you miss most?

### Analysing

- 5 Why did Jeltje's father's face light up when he saw the Southern Cross again?
- 6 Life in pre-independence Indonesia was very different for those of Dutch background and those of Indonesian background. Find three examples in the poem of these differences.
- 7 Why did Jeltje's parents come to Australia?

### Evaluating

- 8 Who missed their Indonesian childhood more, Jeltje's mother or Jeltje's father? Why?

## Asian Australian poetry

Australia's first major arrival of Asian migrants came in the great gold rushes of the 1850s, primarily to Ballarat and Bendigo. In fact, so many Chinese immigrants came to Victoria that by 1861 nearly 7 per cent of the Victorian population had been born in China. The White Australia policy greatly restricted migration from Asian countries, and when this policy was abolished in the 1970s, more people from Asia came to Australia. In the last half of the 1970s, Australia welcomed refugees from war-torn Indo-China (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia), and people with an Asian background became an important part of the multicultural mix.

### Zhang Yougong

Zhang Yougong migrated to Australia in 1996 from the province of Hebei, in north-east China, where he was born in 1969. Before he migrated, he published two collections of poetry in China, *The Beautiful Sadness* and *The Poet*. In Australia, he is an important voice in the Chinese–Australian literature movement.

## AUSTRALIA

By Zhang Yougong

POEM

as a matter of fact we are all on the same train  
although we arrive at different times and have different  
seats

we have a common goal  
of enjoying the richness of australia  
europeans broad shouldered and tall  
are walking with a smile and the pride of pioneers  
whose red faces are un-priced and un-dated monthly  
tickets

and among whom there is no lack of mixed post-war  
immigrants  
some are ticket-evaders who jumped the wall  
but as long as they do not open their mouths they are  
right

the yellow face creates a strange mentality  
for asians  
as if they were always holding a two-hour ticket  
they panic they worry  
they put up with it under other people's roof  
although you have a backbone of five thousand years

you can't do anything about it because you are small  
and sallow

I went riding the red tram around melbourne city  
for three days  
and saw white come up black go down  
yellow come up white go down  
and I saw blond-haired and blue-eyed young men  
proudly arm in arm with asian girls  
and I saw white girls taking black boys as guides  
and on my way to the railway station  
I saw many brand new faces  
which are products of intermarriage  
of a new era  
and you can't possibly check out on their ancestors

at the ticketing office of flinders station  
the thing I produced  
was still that yellow-coloured two-hour ticket

Source: Zhang Yougong, 'Australia', (trans. by Ouyang Yu),  
*Eat Tongue: A Bilingual Anthology*, Anna Lopata & Christine McKenzie  
(eds), Victorian Writer's Centre, 1997



# Strands in action

## Core task

Find another poem about Australia or the Australian identity written by a migrant author. Your task is to analyse the poem you have chosen and write a report of your findings. You should include in your report:

- a a copy of your chosen poem as well as a short biography of the poet
- b an explanation of your understanding of the poem, and how it relates to the theme of multiculturalism in Australia
- c a short account of the historical context (what was happening in Australia and around the world at the time the poem was written?)
- d notes to explain any unusual words, phrases or references used, and their effect within the meaning of the poem.

## Extra tasks

Once you have completed the tasks below, combine them into a class multimedia presentation.

- 1 Record a reading of your chosen poem, with a music soundtrack and appropriate visuals.
- 2 Create a multimedia biography of your poet, with text, visuals, sound and (if possible) video.
- 3 Research one group of migrants who have contributed to Australian society and make a brief multimedia snapshot of their story, with text, visuals, sound and (if possible) video.
- 4 Make a hypertext version of your chosen poem. Your hypertext version must explain any odd or unfamiliar words, but must also describe all the poetic methods used in the poem. Refer to 'The mechanics of poetry' at the beginning of this chapter.
- 5 Select the poem that you think will remain relevant for another hundred years and present a 500-word piece to support this view. Use specific examples from the poem to produce evidence about the speaker's experience, then argue why this will stand the test of time.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How are the European and Asian immigrants described in 'Australia'?
- 2 In Zhang Yougong's poem, who does he refer to as 'ticket-evaders'?

### Understanding

- 3 Who is 'all on the same train' in 'Australia', and why?

### Analysing

- 4 In 'Australia', the poet likens living in Australia to travelling on a train. Why, then, do Asians feel 'as if they were always holding a two-hour ticket'?
- 5 How do you think the speaker in 'Australia' feels at the end of the poem?
- 6 In 'Australia' the poet uses both 'we' and 'they'. What is the effect of these pronouns on you as a reader? Are you a 'we' or a 'they'?
- 7 What does the poem assume about the European Australians? What does it assume about the Asian Australians? Do you agree with these assumptions?
- 8 Is the speaker part of the 'we' or 'they' in 'Australia' by Zhang Yougong? How do you know?

### Evaluating

- 9 List three criteria for judging a poem. Give each poem a mark out of ten for each criterion.

The proper words in the proper places are the true definition of style.

Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), satirist, essayist and pamphleteer

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

*It is incumbent upon council of this shire to show leadership on the matter of the curfew and implement it immediately as a strategy for the*

*Clearly the citizens want the council to show leadership on the issue of the curfew and put it in place immediately for the benefit of all our pets.*

PROPER  
WORD  
STYLE

# Vocabulary builder

## Chapter overview

**H**ave you noticed that some people write in a way that is really authoritative and clever? This is often not something that comes naturally—people need to work on developing this ‘academic’ style of writing. Academic texts and other formal documents use this style, and you will probably need to be familiar this way of writing as you continue with your education.

# Language styles and how to use them

**W**e use different levels of formality when we write or speak, depending on our purpose.

Knowing the differences between them and when to use them is very important. For example, you should use a formal tone when writing a text analysis, while you might use a completely different tone when writing a creative story. The correct choice of words is very important, as formal language requires an authoritative voice, while colloquial and slang words suggest that the piece is of an informal nature.



**Colloquial language**—This is informal or conversational language.

**Slang**—This is language that includes newly made-up words such as 'chillax' ('chill out' and 'relax'), non-standard words and standard words used out of their context (for example, saying 'that's sick!' for something good). Slang is specific to groups—it rarely crosses generations or ethnic groups—and does not generally last very long.

**Making new words**—Think about all the technology words that are now part of our everyday language. How long will these words last? While slang doesn't last long, some newly invented words will stand the test of time. Shakespeare has been credited with inventing 1700 words!

The following table outlines the levels of formality in language and their features.

Language style	The author	The audience	Features
Formal	Spoken or written text has to clearly convey a message for a specific purpose and audience.  The speaker/writer is assumed to be well informed in about their subject.  Minimal personal involvement demonstrated.	Speaker/writer has no personal relationship with the audience.	No contractions ('can't', 'I'd'). Tight, compact language.  No colloquial or slang language.  Usually found in written form, seldom spoken.  Vocabulary used is specific to the field, but not exclusively so.
Informal	Spoken or written text that may explore an idea, present information or offer a point of view.  The writer is not assumed to be an expert—merely to have an interest (personal or intellectual) in the field.	Speaker/writer usually has some relationship with the audience, such as a teacher or business colleague.  The relationship is not close or intimate, so anything really personal is withheld.	May use contracted words and some colloquialism but no slang.  Language choices are often limited so repetition is common. No specific vocabulary.  Can be found in both spoken and written form.

Language style	The author	The audience	Features
Colloquial	Spoken or written text that may explore an idea, present information or offer a point of view.  The writer is not assumed to be an expert in the field, but has a personal interest in the matter.	Speaker/writer usually has a close relationship with the person to whom they are speaking or writing.	Use contractions, colloquial terms and slang.  Sentences often incomplete or poorly structured.  Language choices can be limited and highly repetitive. Technical jargon is not used.  The rules and conventions required of good or 'proper' writing are often ignored  Seldom found in written form other than text messages or emails between friends.

## Styles in action

The language styles outlined above are illustrated in the following table. The opinion being expressed is that the council of Lakeview should introduce a curfew for pets. Note that the style of the language varies according to the audience for which it is intended.

Language style	Example of use	Example of audience
Formal	It is incumbent upon the council of this shire to show leadership by introducing a curfew and implementing it immediately for the welfare of our native fauna.	Member of council, addressing other councillors at a town meeting
Informal	The council has to take a stand and bring in the curfew now for the sake of our local wildlife.	A letter from a local resident to the local newspaper
Colloquial	The council's got to get going and get this curfew in to save the birds and possums.	Cat owner, talking to next-door neighbour



## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What are the differences between formal and informal writing styles?
- 2 Which language are you most likely to find in spoken form?

### Understanding

- 3 What style of language is being used in the following address? List any features of the style that you recognise. Who do you think Bryce and Frank might be? In what sort of scenario would Bryce be addressing Frank in this way?

Hey Bryce! How the hell are you? You wouldn't believe the palaver over these new laws! Everyone's up in arms! Saw Frank the other day—he got fined, like, sixty bucks just 'cause his dog was out after 6—it's rubbish—total rubbish! I tell you what I think—the council's lost its mind—must be a bunch of animal-haters to bring in this damn curfew. As far as I'm concerned they can go jump. Anyway—I gotta get going. See ya.

### Applying

- 4 Create a table like the one on the previous page in your notebook. Write two versions of your opinion on the topic below, one using a very formal style and the other using a very informal style.

The 'Green Machine', a new hybrid car that runs on nothing but water and has no emissions except for steam, is being rolled off the assembly line. The major drawback is that only the really wealthy can afford the high price, and the government refuses to subsidise it so that it is accessible to the majority of Australians. You are either a wealthy Australian or someone who wants the car subsidised.

- 5 In pairs, list as many slang words or phrases as you can. Try to identify the groups who use the slang, such as teenagers, children or the elderly.
- 6 Rewrite the paragraph in Question 3 in formal language, using the same characters of Bryce and Frank but in a more formal scenario of your choice.

### Analysing

- 7 Which of the styles used in Question 3 and Question 6 do you think would be more effective in bringing about a change to the curfew? Why?
- 8 Which style of writing do you feel most comfortable using?

- 9 Why do you think many students find writing very formal language difficult?
- 10 In small groups, list as many colloquialisms as you can and write a formal translation for them.
- 11 How do you think the different language styles might include or exclude some groups?

## Mastering the formal language style

The 'official' sound of formal language is constructed consciously. It is something you need to practise in order to master. The further you progress in secondary school, the more important this will become for conveying your opinions, beliefs and understandings about texts, issues and ideas. It is not appropriate to write such responses in an informal style, which is more suited to casual conversation and electronic message writing. The use of formal language in your writing or speeches enables you to sound authoritative to your audience. You can achieve this effect by nominalising your writing.

You might recall being introduced to nominalisation in Year 9 as a useful technique for improving the conciseness of your writing. Now you will learn to use this technique as a self-editing tool.

To nominalise, the emphasis of a sentence is taken from the verbs and verb phrases (where the more informal writer will place it) and placed on the nouns (person/place/thing) and noun phrases. For example, this opening paragraph of a student's essay is grammatically accurate, but the emphasis is on the verbs, which makes it read informally, therefore it lacks authority:

In Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* Mayella Ewell lies about who raped her. Because of that lie, Tom Robinson is found guilty and sent to jail. However, he is found guilty because of his colour, not because he actually raped her.



## DID YOU KNOW...

Harper Lee's only novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is one of the world's most widely read novels. Set in the 1930s in Alabama, United States of America centres on the townsfolk of Maycomb County and their idiosyncracies and prejudices. The second half of the novel focuses on the trial of Tom Robinson.

How can these sentences be adapted and improved so that they are more formal in style?

Step 1: Take out all unnecessary words:

- 'because of that lie' (repetition)
- 'he is found guilty' and 'not because he actually raped her' (redundant).

Step 2: Change verbs to nouns where possible:

- 'Mayella Ewell lies' becomes 'Mayella Ewell's lie'
- 'who raped her' becomes 'rapist'
- 'is found guilty' becomes 'guilt'.

Step 3: Choose better words and edit where possible:

- 'lie' becomes 'perjury' because it is in a court of law
- 'is found guilty' becomes 'convicted'
- 'because of his colour' becomes 'racially based'.

The improved sentences are:

In Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* Mayella Ewell's perjury results in the racially based false conviction of Tom Robinson for rape.

With careful editing, an improved vocabulary and manipulation, the revised sentences are now more concise (almost half the number of words, but with the same content) and, as a result, sound authoritative and purposeful.

Follow these rules to achieve nominalised, concise and authoritative writing.

- 1 Change as many verbs and verb groups into nouns and noun groups as you can (there will always be one verb because a sentence by definition has to have one).
- 2 Remove any unnecessary words.
- 3 Find better words where possible (use your thesaurus).

## Further examples

- 1 Antigone refused to do what the King, Creon, commanded—not to bury her brother. After all, her brother, Polynices had gathered an army to march on Thebes—his own kingdom which, as you know, is called being a traitor. Some people say she went out and buried him out of love for her brother, but others say she did it just to annoy Creon and because she's stubborn. I think it is a bit of both. Either way, Creon's life is a mess because of his decision to have her executed by putting her in a cave. His son commits suicide because he was in love with Antigone and his wife commits suicide because her son is dead. But that's tragedy for you.

becomes:

Antigone's refusal to comply with Creon's demand that she leaves her brother, Polynices, the declared Theban traitor, unburied has complex reasoning. While some argue her love for her brother prompted her refusal, others believe it was an attempt to provoke Creon and an act of stubbornness. It is, most likely, both. Regardless, Creon's decision to have her executed leaves his life in ruins. Both his son and wife commit suicide, Heamon, because he loved Antigone and Eurydice because she loved her son. Such is the nature of tragedy.

- 2 Romeo said that he loved Rosaline in the beginning of the play and by the end of that night he is in love with Juliet. Even though he kills himself because he doesn't want to live without Juliet, the very fact that he felt like that about Rosaline tells us that he's not old enough to really understand what love is or how life works.

becomes:

While Romeo's suicide out of love for Juliet illustrates the depth of his devotion, his ability to transfer his affections from Rosaline to Juliet in the opening act of the play indicates that Romeo is immature in his understanding of life and love.

The more compact, nominalised sentences are shorter than the non-nominalised versions but contain the same information. This conciseness makes the writing more formal, which suggests authority.

## Theme position

Another way to formalise your language is to pay attention to what you put in the 'theme position' of your sentences. The theme position is the beginning of the sentence. When you use the same or similar phrases in the theme position in sequence, your writing will be repetitive. For example:

Griet's feelings for Vermeer were presented as the natural response of a young woman to an older, more sophisticated man. Griet's feelings grew from the intimacy they shared in their understanding of colours and artistic form. She never articulated her feelings to him and it was the tacit nature of their relationship that made it all the more exciting. Griet knew that Vermeer was married and had great financial responsibilities to his wife and family and she possibly even knew that the feelings she was having were inappropriate and certain to remain furtive, but that did not diminish their power, nor her desire for him and, too, the reader would think, his for her. Her feelings for Vermeer were not, however, reduced to just a tawdry romance set in sixteenth-century Delft. Griet's feelings are a metaphor for the power struggle and a gender imbalance that Chevalier explores in great depth in her novel *The Girl With a Pearl Earring*.

Every sentence has Griet in theme position. Changing what is in theme position gives your work greater fluency and readability.

Griet's feelings for Vermeer were presented as the natural response of a young woman to an older, more sophisticated man. Their shared understanding of colours and artistic form gave them an intimacy from which these feelings grew. He was married and had great financial responsibilities to his wife and family and Griet knew this; she possibly even knew that the feelings she was having were inappropriate and certain to remain furtive, but that did not diminish their power, nor her desire for him and, too, the reader would think, his for her. The reader is not left with a view of Griet's feelings as a tawdry romance set in sixteenth-century Delft. Through her novel *The Girl with a Pearl Earring*, Chevalier explores these feelings as a metaphor for power struggle and gender imbalance.



Tracy Chevalier's novel, *The Girl with a Pearl Earring*, is set in seventeenth-century Delft, a village in Holland. Griet is sent to work as a maid for the wife of a painter, Vermeer. He discovers how artistically sensitive she is and she starts to work for him. In the close quarters of his studio, their complex relationship develops.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 How do you nominalise a piece of writing?
- 2 What is theme position in a sentence?

### Understanding

- 3 Why is nominalising a useful technique?

### Applying

- 4 Write one paragraph describing the different styles of language you have learnt in this chapter. Swap your writing with that of a partner. Rewrite your partner's work using the best choice of vocabulary and applying the principles of nominalisation. Discuss the changes each of you has made, and list any new words used in a vocabulary chart in your notebook. You can refer to it and build on it when improving your writing in the future.

### Analysing

- 5 Nominalise the following sentences and explain the changes you make.
  - a There was mounting excitement in the children's kindergarten when Santa made a surprise visit and gave all the kids presents and they were really happy.
  - b In the novel *Looking for Alibrandi*, Josephine Alibrandi is a spoilt teenager girl, not because her mother is rich, but because she takes everything for granted. She doesn't appreciate the efforts her mother and her grandmother make for her and she complains and whines about everything and everyone.
  - c The book is a really exciting book about little kids who find out that their parents are all ill from a germ that turns them into mutants. They hunt the kids for food and the kids have to get out of London to avoid them.

## Evaluating

- 6 What do you see as the main advantages and disadvantages of nominalising your writing? What might you need to make this an easier task for you to manage?

## Creating

- 7 Make a bookmark that you can use to remind you of ways to improve your writing.

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## Avoid repetition

What is wrong with repetition? Repetition in words, phrases, sentences or ideas suggests to the reader that you have limits to your knowledge and the ways in which you can demonstrate this knowledge. As a writer, particularly in formal pieces of work, it is vital to have your audience believe that you have a broad knowledge of your subject matter and excellent control over the English language you are using. Repetition suggests that you haven't been able to exercise this linguistic control because your vocabulary is limited. To avoid repetition, develop a broad range of words that you can use; to do this you must become familiar with a new and improved word bank.

## Improving your word bank

- 1 When you are reading, avoid skipping words that you don't understand. Instead, see if you can work out (infer) their meaning from the context. For example:

Their relationship was clandestine from the start, with meetings in dark corners, at odd hours and where they were unlikely to be detected.

What does 'clandestine' mean?

The context tells us that the relationship being discussed has to be conducted in the dark, outside normal hours and where the people won't be discovered. If something is clandestine, therefore, it must require secrecy. Therefore, if something is clandestine, it is secretive.

Now take the next step—check if you're right. The *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* defines clandestine as: 'secret, concealed; usually in a bad sense, underhand, surreptitious'.

In reading the definition, new information might be added—here it is the phrase 'usually in a bad sense'. You need to take that information back to the text you are reading. The relationship that was secretive could have been secretive for lots of reasons, but we now have to assume it is likely to be 'in a bad sense'.

You then need to use that word. Words are like muscles—if you don't exercise them, you lose them.

- 2 Take time to reflect on your writing. Which words do you overuse? Which words can you find to replace them? Analytical tasks often require a systematic 'pick through' a text to find its language features, and reveal lack of vocabulary. For example:

Smith's letter to the editor portrays parents as being too 'soft' on their children. He firstly uses a rhetorical question, 'Who do these kids think they are anyway?' to make the children appear arrogant and difficult. He then uses a metaphor, 'kids are houses of cards', which leaves the reader viewing children as only appearing to be strong when they are not. He then uses ...

The repetition of 'he then ...' makes this piece sound simplistic. What could you use instead of 'he then ...' to improve this piece?

Smith's letter to the editor portrays parents as being too 'soft' on their children. He uses a rhetorical question, 'Who do these kids think they are anyway?' at the beginning to make the children appear arrogant and difficult. He enforces this with the metaphor, 'kids are houses of cards', which leaves the reader viewing children as appearing strong when they are not. Reiterating this point, the author ...

A thesaurus will assist you to overcome repetition, but only if you use those words often will they become part of your everyday vocabulary.



A clandestine meeting

- 3 Teachers often have a broad vocabulary. Ask your teacher for the meaning of words you don't understand. If you're uncomfortable doing this in front of the class, write them down and look them up—just as you are advised to do with words in texts that you are unfamiliar with.
- 4 Read widely and often. If you read the same kind of material written by the same kind of people, it is unlikely that you are going to come across many new words, so there is little potential to expand your vocabulary.
- 5 Do crosswords—these are great vocabulary builders.
- 6 Your editing and proofreading should detect repetition in words, sentences and ideas. Every new paragraph is a new but related idea, so it is vital that you check that you haven't repeated yourself.



### DID YOU KNOW...

There are few synonyms that, when taken out of context, have exactly the same meanings. It is the context of a word that gives it its full meaning. For example, the word 'power' means different things in different contexts. Power in science means energy, power in mathematics means a number multiplied by itself, power in politics means armies and votes, power in philosophy means a theological entity and power in the house means electricity. So, be careful when you look up words that you take them back to a context for their full meaning.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 What does 'clandestine' mean?

### Understanding

- 2 What do you understand by the words 'initially' and 'reiteration'?

### Applying

- 3 Of the suggestions for improving your word bank, which do you currently do?
- 4 Do you read widely? List the last five texts (other than school texts) that you have read. Would you describe your list as 'wide' or 'varied'? What can you do to broaden your text range?

### Analysing

- 5 For each of the words below, there are three synonyms provided in the box. Match the words to their synonyms. You may need to use a dictionary or thesaurus to complete this task.

- a indifference      d peaceful      g truthful  
 b agitation          e coarseness  
 c endure            f friend

perturbation	abrasiveness	abide	irenic	disregard	veracious	asperity
bear	turmoil	detachment	ruggedness	acquaintance	sustain	confidante
intimate	pacific	candid	turbulence	frank	serene	apathy

### Evaluating

- 6 If you and a friend each submit an essay with the same ideas and content, but one is fairly repetitious and relatively informal in its language, do you think that they should get equal marks? Why or why not?

### Creating

- 7 Work with a partner for this exercise. One of you must improvise a speech for thirty seconds on the topic of the latest fashion trends, current sporting news or great holiday destinations. The listener must attempt to take detailed notes while you talk, then swap roles. Use your notes to formalise the ideas put forth in your partner's speech into a two- to three-paragraph report. Avoid repetition, attempt to use the principles of nominalisation and use your thesaurus to improve your word bank preparing your report. Discuss your completed reports and the process with the class.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Practise your newly learnt writing skills by formalising your language and applying the principles of nominalisation in the following task. Rewrite the piece below, finding a new word from your thesaurus for each of the italicised words—but be sure to maintain the atmosphere of the narrative. You may want to change some of the sentences around for effect; however, it is important to retain all of the information.
- 2 Once you have improved the paragraph, continue the narrative by further developing the main character, the setting and the plot into a 500-word piece. Use particular care when selecting the best words to use in the story (use your thesaurus) and avoid repetition of words and phrases.
- 3 Once you have completed your first draft, swap it with a partner and review each other's work constructively. Be prepared to offer advice on how to improve the language and formalise the style of the narrative.
- 4 Edit your draft and improve your language. Submit your initial draft as well as your final manuscript as evidence of the improvements you have made.

To *stand* at the feet of those *huge* trees left me *without* *breath*. I *felt* my *smallness*, my *insignificance* in the *middle* of this ancient church. The *coolness*, from the *darkness* of these *wise old gods*, *chilled* my skin but *refreshed* my mind. The *smell* was *cool* in my nose and I *felt* it as it *moved* into my lungs: the same *air* my ancestors *breathed* as they *probably* stood here *awe-struck* by this *magnificent* forest. I thought it was *still and quiet*, but as I *quieted* my mind the forest became *alive*—and the *harder* I listened to what was *outside me*, the *more* I heard. Even the trees *spoke* and I *wished* I could *understand* them. *Instead*, my place in the *busy city world* had left me *without ears* for this language nor the *words* to describe what it was I *wished* I could say.

## Extra tasks

- 1
  - a Draft a short, persuasive speech of about 500 words on a topic of your choice.
  - b Swap your speech with a partner and review each other's work constructively, focusing on how to improve the language and formalise the style.
  - c Rewrite your draft based on your partner's constructive criticism. Submit your initial draft as well as your final manuscript as evidence of the improvements you have made.
  - d Rehearse your speech and share it with the class. Alternatively, ask someone to film you while you present your speech, and then present the film to your audience. Prepare a feedback sheet for your audience to complete. Include space for them to comment on your ability to write a formal story, your strengths, and areas upon which you could improve. Your questions should focus upon language style, evidence of nominalisation and vocabulary.
- 2 Use the information from the above critiques of your speech to write a 300–400-word review of your speech. Compile the information from the feedback sheets into a chart or graph, as well as summarising the most relevant comments from your audience in your review. Include practical ways for improving your writing, as well as your own evaluation of the speech.

# Different perspectives

A good writer manipulates the narrative point of view (perspective) according to what works best for the material with which they are working. There are three narrative perspectives: first person, second person and third person. They are outlined in the following table.

Features	When to use it	When not to use it
<b>First person</b>		
<p>We view the story from the narrator's perspective ('I').</p> <p>The narrator can only explore their own perspective and cannot tell us what anybody else is thinking—only what they see and hear others doing can be reported. It is an intimate perspective. For example:</p> <p><i>I thought he was going to swerve, but he didn't. My friends were screaming and my father, at the wheel, seemed momentarily frozen until, at the last minute, he turned the wheel hard.</i></p>	<p>It is most effective in narrative and creative writing, bringing the reader into a close relationship with the narrator. We learn about the narrator as they learn about themselves; it delivers information only as quickly as the narrator receives and processes it.</p> <p>It can be used in reporting if the report is informal. Diaries, letters, journals—any personal text uses this perspective.</p> <p>It can be used for persuasive texts, particularly letters to the editor and comment or opinion pieces.</p>	<p>There is no place for first person narrative in analytical writing, for example text responses or very formal reports.</p>
<b>Second person</b>		
<p>The narrative perspective is 'you'—the narrator has the position of 'other' or a position of knowing what you don't know.</p> <p>The reader learns little directly about the narrator because they are the 'other' and all we can learn is what we can deduce or infer from what they say. It often results in the reader feeling like a character in the story. For example:</p> <p><i>You know that feeling where the hairs on the back of your neck stand on end ...</i></p>	<p>Generally, the second person is used for instructional writing.</p> <p>It can be used in narrative as it is in the example, but it is difficult to sustain.</p> <p>It can also be useful in reviews and descriptive pieces.</p>	<p>Essays are not written in the second person narrative.</p>

Features	When to use it	When not to use it
<b>Third person</b>		
<p>The narrative perspective is 'she/he/they'—the narrator can have an omniscient (all-seeing, all-knowing) view of events, people and issues.</p> <p>It allows the reader to take a much broader perspective on the matter at hand and to develop multiple deep and insightful relationships with the characters.</p> <p>The narrator is not a character, merely an entity who is telling the story.</p> <p>We almost never learn anything about the third person narrator. For example:</p> <p><i>She slept peacefully that night, completely unaware that her life was about to change forever.</i></p>	<p>Narrative texts often use third person. It is used in essay writing, but the perspective is very aloof and distant—referring to 'the reader' or 'the audience' as though they were not a reader or audience of the text or material under examination.</p> <p>It can be used in persuasive pieces, particularly editorials and persuasive essays.</p>	<p>It cannot be used in any personal writing and is largely inappropriate for instructional writing.</p>



**Narrative perspective** or viewpoint can bring us into an intimate relationship with the narrator—especially first person point of view. This intimacy can shape our response. Remember, a narrator only has to tell you what they want you to know. Some first person texts withhold information from the reader; for example, in Suzanne LaFleur's *Love, Aubrey* the first person narrator, Aubrey, can only tell you what she knows consciously. Her memories, which come back to her in pieces because they traumatise her, are presented in italics and letters that the reader must piece together.

## Perspectives in action

Here is the same piece written from the three different narrative perspectives.

- 1 I looked deep into her eyes and saw what I had desperately hoped not to see—nothing. Nothing at all. I didn't see hatred or disgust. I didn't see disappointment or hurt. I didn't see love. I saw nothing. The nothing of someone who had given too many times to me and I didn't deserve it. The nothing of someone who has given up all hope that I, the person she once loved, once thought hung the moon, was really a spectre of a man—a remnant of a human being. A nothing.
- 2 You looked deep into her eyes and saw what you had desperately hoped not to see—nothing. Nothing at all. You didn't see hatred or disgust. You didn't see disappointment or hurt. You didn't see love. You saw nothing. The nothing of someone who had given too many times to you and you didn't deserve it. The nothing of someone who has given up all hope that you, the person she once loved, once thought hung the moon, was really a spectre of a man—a remnant of a human being. A nothing.
- 3 He looked deep into her eyes and saw what he had desperately hoped not to see—nothing.

Nothing at all. He didn't see hatred or disgust. He didn't see disappointment or hurt. He didn't see love. He saw nothing. The nothing of someone who had given too many times to him and he didn't deserve it. The nothing of someone who has given up all hope that he, the person she once loved, once thought hung the moon, was really a spectre of a man—a remnant of a human being. A nothing.



The **author** and the **narrator** are not necessarily the same person unless the piece is an autobiography. Do not assume that the opinions of the narrator are the opinions of the author. Sometimes you can write from a position that is the opposite of your own personal stance.

As an author you must choose the most appropriate narrative point of view for the text you are writing.

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 For what texts is the first person narrative inappropriate?
- 2 For what texts is the second person narrative most appropriate?
- 3 In what narrative perspective is an essay written?

### Understanding

- 4 Why do you think it is inappropriate to write from the first person narrative in an essay?

### Applying

- 5 Using the piece above as a guide, extend the first person narrative by a paragraph.

### Analysing

- 6 Do a PMI (Plus, Minus and Interesting) chart about narrative perspective.
- 7 Some authors write in the third person narrative perspective, but choose to focus only on one character's feelings, thoughts and actions. Why do you think an author would use the narrative perspective that allows them to move across all the characters but choose to focus as they would in a first person narrative?

### Evaluating

- 8 Read the examples of the same text written from the different narrative perspectives. In your opinion, which is the most effective? Why?
- 9 Share your view with the class—what is the general opinion of the class?

### Creating

- 10 Create a chart that shows the differences between the three narrative perspectives.

## Strands in action

### Core tasks

- 1 In groups of three, produce three 500-word texts on the topic of starting a part-time job. One student writes a third person narrative (story) based in some way on the chosen topic; one student writes a second person instructional piece on the same topic; and the last student writes a letter in the first person related to the same topic. You must work as a team to make sure that the ideas for all three texts are linked, and that all three texts are approximately of the same length.
- 2 Present your texts for an audience. Adapt and record your three texts. You could use a computer program to make your presentation interesting for an audience. Present your completed recording to the class.

### Extra tasks

- 1 Choose a section (at least one page) of a novel of your choice and rewrite it using a different narrative perspective. Select and adapt words carefully, as in some cases you may have to also change the form of the verbs within the passage in order to match the new perspective.
- 2 Explain the new perspective you have chosen to the class before sharing the original, and then your new version of the same text.
- 3 Rewrite the same text used in the above task into the perspective you have not yet used. Compile all three versions of the text and write a brief evaluation of the process of writing from a different narrative point of view, including any difficulties you may have faced and how you overcame them.

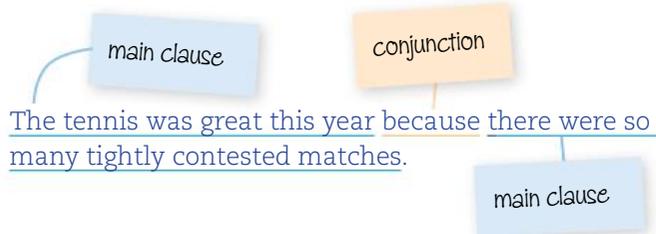
# Improving your sentence structure

**Y**ou can improve your writing by making your sentences concise. To nominalise your writing, you need to be able to deal with complex and compound sentences.

These sentence structures allow you to pack in meaning while retaining a firm control over the sentences. They also assist you to move away from simple sentences that lead you towards repetition.

## Compound sentences

A compound sentence is a sentence that contains two main clauses (a main clause can stand alone as a sentence) joined together by a conjunction (joining word) such as 'and', 'but', 'so' or 'because'. For example:



In some cases, punctuation can be used instead of a conjunction. For example, in the sentence above 'because' could be replaced by a semicolon. A semicolon is used to indicate the close relationship between two main clauses—here the relationship is that the reason the tennis was great was dependent on the closeness of the matches. Therefore, this compound sentence could be written:



You can see that to make the two simple sentences into one compound sentence deepens the understanding the reader has of what the author is trying to convey. Here is another example:

Simple sentences:

We have had a great deal of rain lately.

The lawns desperately need to be mown.

Compound sentence:

We have had a great deal of rain lately so the lawns desperately need to be mown.



## Complex sentences

Like compound sentences, complex sentences allow a lot of information to be packed in tightly. However, there is a significant difference. A complex sentence has only one main clause (a simple sentence that can stand on its own) and contains a subordinate clause (secondary clauses) that relates immediately to the

## Breakaway tasks

main clause. It offers more information, but cannot stand alone. A subordinate clause may be indicated by the inclusion of commas or brackets or dashes immediately before and after the subordinate clause. For example:

Complex sentence:

Shane, who will turn eleven next year, is the newest child prodigy in football.

Main clause:

Shane is the newest child prodigy in football

Subordinate clause:

who will turn eleven next year

Complex sentence:

Joseph should be ashamed of himself for being caught cheating.

Main clause:

Joseph should be ashamed of himself

Subordinate clause:

for being caught cheating

Complex sentence:

The car, which has an oil leak, is in the repair shop.

Main clause:

The car is in the repair shop

Subordinate clause:

which has an oil leak



Very few inexperienced authors can string multiple complex or compound sentences together—it is difficult to retain control over the sentences. To avoid making your writing difficult to read, you should use only one complex sentence at a time and no more than three main clauses in any compound sentence.

### Remembering

- 1 What is the main difference between a complex sentence and a compound sentence?

### Understanding

- 2 What is the danger of using too many complex or compound sentences?

### Applying

- 3 Find a piece of your own writing. Identify any complex or compound sentences. What percentage of your writing is simple?
- 4 With a partner, brainstorm strategies for using complex and compound sentences in your writing.

### Analysing

- 5 Rewrite the following sentences in your notebook and identify them as simple, complex or compound. Identify their constituent parts—that is, label the main clauses, subordinate clauses and conjunctions (remember, the semicolon can be replaced with a conjunction in some cases).
  - a Anne of Green Gables received a number of very sensible dresses from Marilla, her foster mother.
  - b Anne stood in the gable-room and looked solemnly at three new dresses spread out on the bed.
  - c She had made them up herself and they were all made alike.
  - d Those dresses are good, sensible, serviceable dresses, without any frills or furbelows about them.
  - e Well, hang those dresses carefully up in your closet then sit down and learn the Sunday-school lesson.
  - f I prayed for a white one with puffy sleeves but I didn't much expect it.
  - g Well, fortunately, I can imagine that one of them is of snow-white muslin with lovely lace frills and three-puffed sleeves.

### Evaluating

- 6 Do you think that using complex and compound sentences makes your writing sound more mature and sophisticated? Why or why not?

### Creating

- 7 Create a poster for junior secondary students to explain the differences between simple, complex and compound sentences, and how to use a semicolon and a conjunction.

# A hundred words worth knowing

Improving your sentences requires a knowledge of the right words to use and how to apply them. Experiment with new words when writing, and use them wherever possible in order to become more familiar with them.

aberrant	dissuade	imperious	rancour
acerbic	dogmatic	inane	reminiscent
acquiescence	duplicity	incumbent	resonates
acrimonious	ebullient	inertia	reticent
aesthetic	eclectic	insipid	sagacious
ambivalence	enigmatic	integral	sporadic
antipathy	epiphany	intractable	steadfast
assuage	equivocal	juxtapose	stoic
banal	erroneous	laconic	sycophantic
bereft	espouse	malevolent	synergy
brusque	euphemism	mercenary	tantamount
cathartic	exonerate	misogynist	tautology
censure	fallacious	mitigate	tentative
construe	faux pas	nuance	transient
contrived	fortuitous	obtuse	trite
cynicism	frugal	overt	ubiquitous
daunt	galvanise	oxymoron	vacillate
debunk	garrulous	paradigm	veracity
denounce	glib	placate	vernacular
depict	grandiose	platitude	vitriolic
diatribe	heinous	pragmatic	vociferous
diminution	hyperbole	preclude	whimsical
discerning	impervious	predilection	woeful
disparage	implicit	querulous	yearning
disparity	inane	quintessential	zealot

## Breakaway tasks

### Remembering

- 1 List the words in the table that are familiar to you.

### Understanding

- 2 Use a dictionary to find out the meanings of the words that are unfamiliar to you.

### Applying

- 3 Use ten of the unfamiliar words in sentences to show their meaning

### Analysing

- 4 Decide which form of text you might use for any ten of the words. A story? An essay? A report?

### Evaluating

- 5 What do you think is the value of learning words in a spelling list like this?
- 6 What is the most effective way to learn new words? Discuss as a class.

### Creating

- 7 Create a rhyme or song by which others could remember what ten of these words mean.



The more words you have in your vocabulary, the more able you are to say exactly what you mean, rather than sort of what you mean. As you move into the senior years of secondary school and face competition with thousands of other students, students with a good vocabulary are rewarded. These hundred words are worth not only knowing, but using. Try using some of these words in your own sentences; it's amazing what you can say when you have the words to say it.

# Strands in action

## Core tasks

- 1 Turn this simple, uninspiring piece of writing into a paragraph that uses nominalisation and varied theme position, and contains interesting and stimulating words and complex and compound sentences.

I think that Shakespeare meant us to see Macbeth as a really tragic guy. I think he starts as a good guy. He's really brave and strong and he's leading the Scottish army against the bad dudes from Norway. He's got lots of friends. His best friend, Banquo, is a really brave guy too, but it's Macbeth that cuts a path through the enemy. It's Macbeth who cuts Macdonwald from the stomach to the chin with his sword and kills him. Macbeth then sees the witches. They've been waiting for him to tell him stuff. He is told that he's going to be the Thane of Cawdor and the King. He's really amazed by what they say. He doesn't take very long to think about killing the king. He's scared of what he thinks too. He's so scared that his friend Banquo

says to the others, 'see how our friend's rapt withal'. And he is really stoked about the idea of being king. But he knows he shouldn't do it. He knows he should let 'chance' decide for him. Well, if he really thought that, why did he write to his wife and tell her? He kept thinking about it and that tells me that he really wanted to be king. It tells me that he was prepared to do anything to get the crown. He later doesn't put up much of a fight against his wife who is prepared to do anything to get the crown. He lets her convince him to kill King Duncan who is a really good guy. Everyone thinks so. He lets her convince him so he's to blame for what happens to him.

- 2 In pairs, compare your versions of the revised paragraph. Give constructive criticism, and use each other's help to further edit and enhance each of your transformations of the piece. Included in this final piece should be clear changes to sentence structure and vocabulary.

## Extra tasks

- 1 Improve your word bank by using your thesaurus to find two other ways to say the following words. Wherever possible, select words in the thesaurus that you previously might not have used.

angry	happy	sad	excited
late	basic	poor	doubtful
fat	calm	small	cruel
burn	scold	spin	toss
strong	beautiful	careless	tolerated
hide	together	usual	cool

- 2 Now use twenty of your new words in a sentence each, to demonstrate your understanding of each word.
- 3 Mix and match the main clauses in the table (column 1) with either their related subordinate clause or another main clause (column 2), and turn them into complex or compound sentences.

The frog is bright green in colour	They're disgusting
She was beautiful	And I'm no spring chicken
Don't try to explain your dreadful behaviour	I'd enjoy some cake with it
Do the dishes	Known for its capacity for camouflage in leaves
In all my years I have never seen anything like it	I know how busy you have been
I'd love a cup of coffee	Like this one
Don't worry about having forgotten	Let me make you comfortable
In a cold climate it is essential to keep warm	I will understand
Come over here	As you always do
Do what you have to do	I loved her

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