ENGLISH
Textual Concepts

Argument

What it is
Argument is the statement of a position supported by evidence. It can have a range of purposes including persuasion, clarification of ideas, resolving disputes, defending a point of view or simply for entertainment. Argument is conveyed through visual, spoken, written and performative modes.

Argument may recognise other perspectives which may be implied rather than stated, and will draw a conclusion. Argument may vary in formality, need not be combative and may be built collaboratively in order to solve complex problems.

Why it is important
Argument is the evidence of the development of logical thinking. Over the years, students move from the statement of personal likes and dislikes to the expression of a supported opinion and a reasoned consideration of other positions and finally to the formulation of a thesis in a sustained argument.

Argument is the basis for a great deal of writing done in English and is the form most highly valued in academic writing. It is used in many forms of communication and types of texts. These texts may include: reviews, poems, satire, essays, documentaries, posters, speeches, gestures, stand-up comedy, photojournalism and social media. Students practise and analyse argument in all modes and media as a way of developing their cognitive capacities.

Authority

What it is
Authority is used and implied in the English syllabus in two different senses: authority over a text ('author intent') and the authority of the text.

The first sense, authority over a text, refers to who controls meaning in its composition and responses to it. However, authority is different from traditional notions of authorship or 'the author'. It needs to take into account that many texts are collaborative efforts with contributions of teams of people who influence the final product – the writers, editors, illustrators, researchers, musicians, producers, curators, technicians and publishers - whose ideas and technical needs shape the work. A further level of authority resides with the institution that commissions and accredits the text, often shaping the message to its institutional requirements. The digital world allows for distributed authority through the joint construction of knowledge and opinion, for example Wikipedia, trending on Twitter, Likes in Facebook and the number of views on Youtube.

Authority also needs to acknowledge the role of the responder who brings his or her own ideas and experiences to bear on its meaning and who may accept or reject premises of the text. In this way, authority is always in a state of negotiation between composer(s) and responders.

In its second sense, authority of a text, it refers to how trustworthy the text appears to be, to what extent it can be taken as an authority on its subject matter. The authority of a text is often determined by its appropriate style, its reference to accepted experts and its context of publication.

Why it is important
Understanding how authority operates leads students to become constructive and critical thinkers in the ways they make meaning in and through texts.

Authority begins with the authority of the classroom where texts are explored and negotiated according to a set of expectations, conventions and processes. Accepting that authority does not wholly reside with an author figure invites students to investigate the many personal, cultural, institutional and technical influences that shape meaning, so providing avenues through which meaning may be questioned and made with some accuracy. Knowing how to test the authority of a text and the reliability of its content enables students to make judgements about its validity and truth.

Character

What it is
Character is traditionally viewed as a description of a fictional person. As a construct, it is made up of verbal or visual statements about what that fictional person does, says and thinks and what other fictional characters and the author of the text say about him or her. The reader, listener or viewer fleshes out these statements to imagine a person-like character, sufficiently individualised and coherent to establish the sense of an identity. In this way, representation of a 'real' person invites personal identification and judgements about the character's morality and value to their society. This kind of analysis can contribute to shaping one's own sense of a moral and ethical self and so becoming a way of enculturation.

Characters may also be created and/ or read as representations of ideas, of groups of people or of types that serve a function in a narrative genre. Questions of characterisation then focus on the ways a character is constructed both by the responder and the composer and its function in the text.

Why it is important
Character is an important concept in narrative as a driver of the action, a function in the plot, a way of engaging or positioning a reader or as a way of representing its thematic concerns. The way character is read is an indication of particular approaches to texts, be it through personal engagement or critical response.

	Argument	Authority	Character
S5	Students understand that the thrust and shape of argument is influenced by the contexts of composition and reception. They learn that • argument is the logical development of a supported thesis with the purpose of bringing audiences to a new intellectual or emotional understanding. • rhetorical devices are chosen for their effect for particular audiences and purposes • arguments, despite claims to objectivity, come from a particular perspective.	Students understand how authority may be constructed, confirmed or challenged. They learn that • a sense of authority may be constructed by language use • authority is strengthened through citation and references to established sources • groups of responders may be included or excluded by language use • texts may contradict or subvert cultural assumptions.	Students understand that characters can represent types of people, ideas and values. Students learn that • characters may be a medium through which ideas and societal attitudes and values are conveyed • representation and interpretation of character depends on personal and cultural values.
S4	Students understand that argument is the deliberate staging of ideas and feelings, through spoken, visual and written language, in the development of a thesis to influence a response. They learn that • argument can be a projection of the individual voice in an individual style • judicious choice of evidence and language develop the strength of an argument • a thesis and supporting evidence of an argument provide the framework on which its conclusions are based.	Students understand that a sense of authority may be constructed and that it resides, in varying degrees, with composers and responders. They learn that • particular language structures add a sense of authority to a text • authority of a text may be questioned through comparison with other texts offering different perspectives • authority may not reside with only one person but certain types of texts are the result of collaboration.	Students understand that characters are constructs that function differently in different types of texts and media. They learn that these character constructs • combine with constructs of events and settings to create narrative • use resources such as description, dialogue, monologue • may draw on such devices as stereotype and generic convention to reflect values.
S3	Students understand that an argument takes into account audience, form and purpose. They learn that • arguments can be objectively or subjectively presented • language choices (visual, spoken and written) can strengthen arguments • an argument may provide an informed assessment of a range of opinions.	Students understand that in different contexts, authority is conferred in different ways. They learn that • texts have more authority with the use of appropriate language, spelling and punctuation • authority is invested in a text by clearly expressed and substantiated argument and acknowledgement of accepted authorities • popularity can become a form of authority • authority is valued and questioned.	Students understand that characters trigger an imaginative response through identification. They learn that characters may • be complex having a range of characteristics or simple with one salient feature • change as a result of events or remain unchanging • have individual characteristics or be based on a stereotype.
S2	Students understand that opinions should be supported by information and ideas presented in a structured way. They learn that • opinions can be refined through negotiation with others. • paragraphs contain a single idea • paragraphs are made up of topic sentences and evidence • certain language (eg. description, modality, aspects of images) carries a persuasive force.	Students understand authority and authorship are different aspects of texts. They learn that • responses to and interpretations of a text may vary and may have more or less validity • authors may shape interpretation of a text but may not be able to control it.	Students understand that characters are represented in such a way as to have motives for actions. They learn that characters • may be judged by the reader, the other character constructs in the text, the narrator or the 'author' • are constructed in a such a way as to invite an emotional reaction such as identification, empathy or antipathy.
S1	Students understand that ideas, information and images need to be expressed in a clear and organised way. They learn that • certain phrases (eg I think that...I know that...) project opinion • images can reinforce ideas • arguments are expressed through different types of texts, modes and media.	Students understand that authority operates within frameworks. They learn that • authority is expressed differently according to context • authors may approach subjects and composition in different ways • responders have a role in making meaning in and through texts.	Students understand that characters are composed of imagined thoughts, words and actions. They learn that characters • are constructed through different modes and media • reflect lived experience • invite positive or negative responses.
ES1	Students have opinions about texts and issues.	Students understand that texts have authors who compose the contents.	Students understand that characters in imaginative texts are visual, verbal and aural representations of people who participate in the narrative.

ENGLISH
Textual Concepts

Code and Convention

What it is
The basic elements of speech, writing and visual language convey meaning when they combine in commonly understood arrangements or patterns. These patterns are formed by the interplay of

- codes (eg sounds, spelling and grammar)
- agreed systems for communicating (eg names of things and of actions, logos, camera angles, tone of voice etc),
- conventions, shared and habitual ways of using these systems (eg. paragraph structure, genre, framing of images, dramatic gestures etc).

In such processes individual letters and morphemes come together in spelling patterns to form words. Verbal, visual, spoken, social and digital signs are arranged for more extended units of meaning such as sentences or pictures and these are in turn structured into paragraphs, conversations, films, web pages and many other types of texts.

A type of text is often identifiable from its arrangement of codes and conventions and this connects one text to a wider set of texts. These sets can be connected by form (sometimes identified through layout), purpose, medium, authorship and context. Furthermore, we may find a recurrence or echo of an idea, a symbol or a word or phrase which may be unique to the individual text and make it stand out. Innovation occurs when the composer uses the understanding of written, spoken and visual patterns to generate original texts by experimenting with language and form.

The terms code and convention suggest rigidity and yet they are flexible and adapt to different audiences, purposes and new technologies. Codes are signs which have the potential for different meanings and conventions are arrangements that become habitual and accepted. For example, codes or signs such as table, a particular colour, a ringing bell, change according to context and conventions used in letter writing have adapted to contemporary forms of communication such as email, texting and social media.

Why it is important
Understanding codes and conventions facilitates reading and writing. At the most basic level this involves knowing the patterns in spelling and connecting these patterns to sounds as well as more advanced reading approaches such as skimming (for example understanding the use of subheadings and topic sentences as guides to passages) and finding reading pathways through digital and extended texts. At a more critical level, knowledge of codes and conventions invites prediction, sets up expectations and allows ways of navigating complex texts.

The patterns provided by codes and conventions in a text are cues for our understanding. Familiarity with patterns is essential for effective communication. The wider and deeper this familiarity, the more complex will be students' thought processes and interpretations and the more precise will be their communication. Students need to be acquainted with word families and grammatical and generic forms which are conventionally applied in written, spoken and visual modes. Understanding of and skill in using these codes and conventions lead to an appreciation of how they may be varied and played with for effect and originality.

Connotation, Imagery and Symbol

What it is
Words and images can signify more than what they denote, extending us beyond their literal everyday meanings to understand and experience one thing in terms of another. This extension of meaning may, through connotation, evoke associated feelings or, through imagery and symbol, lay down new traces of images, sounds, senses and ideas.

These additional layers of meaning can operate in various ways.

- Graphic representations such as logos and universal symbols stand for specific things, groups and ideas.
- Colour and colour imagery may symbolise feelings and mood, according to cultural convention.
- Words, sounds and images connote different meanings according to cultural and personal experience.
- New meanings are made by the placement of one image next to another, such as juxtaposition in film editing. For example, a woman looking upwards followed by a shot of a bird in flight suggests a longing for freedom.
- Metaphors create a new meanings by fusing two different – at times dissonant - things or ideas. This fusion may be explicit statement that one thing is another or expressed implicitly through the choice of language pertaining to the other, eg You are the sun in my life...your shining personality...'thy eternal summer shall not fade'.
- Conceptual metaphors are indicative of ways of thinking. Here, one aspect of our world is seen in terms of another such as life being a journey with smooth or difficult paths, point of arrival, new directions and a final destination.
- Sustained images run as a thread of meaning in a text, guiding interpretation, and indicate thematic elements.

Why it is important
Connotation, imagery and symbol enrich a text by making words and images mean more than one thing. They invite students to consider the habitual in terms of the new and so are important to creative and critical thought.

Figurative language has social consequences as it influences the ways we conceptualise people, information and ideas. Critical analysis brings to light these associations and strands of meaning. For example, in the slogan 'Stop the boats', the metonymy in 'boats' refers to refugees but removes humanity from the issue. Connotation, imagery and symbol are often culturally specific and may require explicit teaching to include all students.

Context

What it is
Context refers to factors acting upon composers and responders that impinge on meaning. To understand context we need to look beyond the text and consider the world in which it was produced and the worlds of its reception. This goes beyond historical and cultural background to a consideration of how the personal, situational, social, literary, cultural, and historical environments of the responder and composer as well as the mode of production pervade a text. Different contexts can have an effect on the meanings and values of similar content.

However, even when all of these factors are taken into consideration, complete understanding of the effect of context on a text is impossible as we cannot tell where context ends and text begins. Our own knowledge of the world is filtered through the lens of our own context, colouring all we see. This is a frame of reference that is almost impossible to escape; all we can do is recognise that it is there.

Why it is important
By considering the effects of context (their own, that of the composer and other contexts of response) on making meaning students recognise that

- there can be no single reading of a text,
- all meaning is contingent upon a range of factors not simply in the text but also outside it and
- values and attitudes may change over time and cultures.

These understandings open students to a range of readings and can make them receptive to different ways of thinking by making clear that not all ways of thinking are like their own.

	Code and Convention	Connotation, Imagery and Symbol	Context
S5	Students recognise that codes and conventions reflect and shape power relationships and culture. Students learn that: • some codes and conventions are valued more than others and that this can depend on context • understanding and using these conventions is potentially a source of power.	Students understand that attention to imagery can give rise to subtle and complex meanings. Students learn that • the emphasis on imagery in a text varies according to its audience and purpose • understanding the effect of imagery and symbol varies according to personal experience, social and cultural context • attention to patterns of imagery invite readings that are more cohesive.	Students understand how the complexity of their own and of other contexts shape composition and response to texts. Students learn that • their perceptions of the world are filtered through their own context • context shapes language, forms and features of texts • language, forms and features of texts inscribe values and attitudes in their representations of people, information and ideas • texts may be responded to and composed differently in different contexts.
S4	Students recognise that codes and conventions are social practices and are adapted in response to different purposes, effects, audiences, contexts and media. Students learn that • social practices, technology and mode determine appropriate codes and conventions • groups use codes and conventions differently and this may become a marker of identity.	Students understand that imagery is aesthetically pleasing and persuasive. Students learn that • words invite associations (connotations) in responders which bring related ideas and feelings to a text • imagery and symbol communicate through associations which may be personal, social or cultural.	Students understand that meaning changes with culture, time and technology. Students learn that • they need to consider the context of composition as well as the context of response to a text • they exist in different cultures and subcultures • texts are composed in the context of other texts • culture is inscribed in texts through choice of language, forms, modes, media and other features of texts • different cultures and times may be associated with specific modes and media.
S3	Students understand that codes and conventions of each mode provide the foundation for innovation. They learn that • knowledge of codes and conventions helps to find meaning in and through texts • codes and conventions vary for different audiences and purposes • choices of language and design have subtle differences and effects • opportunities for innovation occur at all levels eg word, sentence, paragraph and whole text levels.	Students understand that richer meanings are produced when responders recognise and engage with imagery. They learn that • imagery prompts evocative comparisons which may add new meanings to a text.	Students begin to recognise how context may be expressed in texts. Students learn that • specific contexts require particular forms and language • their own context affects the way they respond to and compose texts • context includes clearly identifiable elements such as purpose, intended audience and medium as well as more complex and diffuse influences such as culture • culture, as a way of living, involves beliefs, customs, language and values and is reflected in texts • cultural context refers to the context of composition as well as to the context of response.
S2	Students appreciate that codes of communication are rules which provide access to information and ideas as well as opportunities for expression. Students learn that • there are choices of language and structure for expressing information and ideas • codes and conventions vary according to mode, medium and type of text. • all texts go through stages of refinement of language and structure for accuracy and effectiveness.	Students understand that imagery is one way of connecting with an audience. They learn that • figurative language has an effect on meaning • imagery may be expressed through comparisons • there are different types of figurative language in different types of texts and media and for different audiences and purposes	Students understand that texts can be responded to and composed differently in different personal, social and cultural contexts. Students learn that • contexts to be considered should include the context of composition and the context of response • the context of composition includes such elements as the purpose of the text, its intended audience, its mode and its medium • language and forms of texts vary according to the context of composition • responses are framed by the immediate context of the actual responder.
S1	Students understand that codes and conventions provide structures for making meaning. They learn that • words fall into categories that make communication easier • words are arranged in patterns which may make some meanings predictable • patterns of words and images that are effective for making meaning become conventions.	Students understand that language can appeal to the senses. Students learn to • use simple figurative language and word play • recognise some cultural symbols.	Students understand that the communication of information and ideas varies according to purpose and audience and the mode and medium through which it is delivered. Students learn that • the language and forms of text vary according to audience and purpose • the language and forms of text vary according to mode and medium • that different groups and cultures are represented in texts.
ES1	Students understand that communication works through agreed codes and conventions. They learn that • each of the modes: listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing communicates using its own codes • particular letters, forms and combinations of words are used to achieve particular meanings.	Students understand that language can represent more than the literal. Students learn that • words, signs and symbols can represent or suggest things • when used imaginatively can be enjoyable.	Students understand that language and action need to be appropriate to social situations. Students learn that • different situations require different language and behaviour • texts reflect aspects of their own world • texts are composed for specified audiences and purposes.

ENGLISH
Textual Concepts

Genre

What it is

Genre simply means 'type' or 'kind' and refers to groups of texts that have similarities in form and function.

Genres are not prescribed categories but have developed through trial and error as the most effective way to achieve a purpose. Some aspects of genres may remain stable and recognisable while others may grow and change over time to reflect new concerns and new values. Similarly, as new media emerge, genres adapt to new technologies.

So, to take the example of the 'adventure' genre, the pattern of the plot may remain the same but the character and the action will change according to the context: the medieval knight slaying a dragon transforms into the sheriff ridding a town of a malicious gun-slinger or into the spy outmanoeuvring a political foe or into the scientist averting a threat to the planet from outer space.

Most texts are not pure examples of a genre but contain elements of several:

- the 'adventure' stories above could also be classified respectively as mediaeval romance, western, thriller, or science fiction
- 'real life' documentaries are usually structured as narratives
- a medium such as a web page will combine various genres to achieve its purpose.

Why it is important

All kinds of texts, imaginative, persuasive and informative, follow recognisable genres. There is a sense of ease and pleasure in the familiarity of a genre and a way of categorising likes and dislikes.

The study of genre enables us to see relationships between texts, the ways they are similar and the ways they are different or even innovative. It allows us to support students in analysing texts and in writing particular kinds of texts as it provides guidelines for structure, identifiable features and ways to deviate from conventional approaches.

The more students read in a genre, the more they are aware of the expectations it sets up. These expectations may be realised or disappointed, so confirming or challenging the ways that generic conventions are used to represent the world.

Intertextuality

What it is

Intertextuality refers to those interrelationships among texts that shape a text's meaning. The recognisable echoes of other texts in a text intensify the experience of the text by adding layers of meaning.

Rob Pope distinguishes between three types of intertextuality

- Explicit intertextuality, alluding specifically to another text through quotation or reference
- Implied intertextuality, where the allusion is more indirect may occur through such commonalities as genre or style
- Inferred intertextuality referring to the texts drawn on by the actual responder and will likely include texts that had not even existed when the text was composed.

Why it is important

Recognising and understanding intertextuality leads to a much richer reading experience which invites new interpretations as it brings another context, idea, story into the text at hand.

As new layers of meaning are introduced, there is pleasure in the sense of connection and the continuity of texts and of cultures. These connections mean that a responder is engaging with a broader literary heritage than just a discrete text. Intertextuality also invites us to revisit the earlier text, often with new insights into its meaning for our time.

Intertextuality also raises questions about nature of authorship and originality as texts may be seen as 'composed' from pre-existing elements rather than 'created'. It also provides one way for students to compose their own texts drawn from their knowledge of others.

Literary value

What it is

Certain texts have been designated as 'highly valued' and have been accorded 'canonical' or 'classic' status because 'experts' declare them to have universal and timeless appeal. However questions such as 'Whose canon?' and 'How universal?' and 'What makes this popular?' are always being asked. In fact the value of any text is always under revision as the principles and processes for ascribing value vary across time and cultures and as popular culture texts emerge as classics.

Literary value does not include the values expressed or implied in a text but refers specifically to how one can attribute worth to a text in terms of its value to 'civilisation', a culture, a society, or a particular group of people. Each of these groups may attribute a different value to the text and use different criteria to do so.

Why it is important

Questions of value arise regularly among teachers who need to choose what is valuable for students to study. They also arise among students who want to know why they need to study a particular text and what it is that they value about texts. For these reasons, teachers need to make clear to their students on what basis we make these value judgements and how students can make these judgements themselves.

Students need to understand that texts may be valued for different reasons: their aesthetic value; the significance of their message; their historical value, the ways in which they innovate with technology or the way in which they exemplify important aspects of or movements in literature.

	Genre	Intertextuality	Literary value
S5	Students understand that particular values attach to certain genres. Students learn that • genres shape representation and perception • adaptations of genres across time and culture reflect changing values • subverting the genre can challenge the value system associated with the genre.	Students understand that intertextuality is intrinsic to composition and response. Students learn that • texts are recontextualised for different times, modes, media and cultures • texts are variations on, or borrow from, other texts • intertextuality involves references gained through experience of a wide range of texts from the canon to popular culture.	Students understand that texts are valued within personal and cultural value systems and that these may change in different historical and cultural contexts. They learn that • texts have been valued for expressing views about the human condition • textual patterning is aesthetically pleasing • understanding of literary value may vary across time and culture • texts that open up new ways of thinking about ideas and values are culturally significant.
S4	Students understand that the expectations of a genre shape composition of and response to texts. They learn that • knowledge of generic conventions can guide composition of and response to texts • genres can be adapted to and combined in different modes and media • genres are adapted to times and cultures • Generic conventions may be challenged.	Students understand that intertextuality enhances and layers meaning. They learn that • intertextual references require knowledge of culturally significant texts • recreating texts provides new insights • transformation provides ways of understanding and appreciating the earlier text.	Students appreciate that texts are valued for their aesthetic and social significance. Students learn that • texts draw on cultural knowledge and promote particular values • evocative imagery and elegant arrangement of ideas are pleasing • different types of texts are valued differently • texts may be more or less significant for different groups • texts that raise questions about or open new ways of thinking about life and living are significant.
S3	Students understand that texts may be categorised into genres. They learn that • texts in the same genre have similar functions and ideas, forms and conventions and give rise to particular expectations • genres are not fixed categories but may be adapted for interesting effects.	Students understand that intertextuality occurs across and within modes and media. They learn that • intertextuality may occur through adaptation of structure and style • whole texts may be appropriated for different audiences and purposes, modes and media • in transforming texts, there are opportunities for originality.	Students begin to understand that texts can be valued for the ways they convey experiences and ideas. Students learn that • texts that have several layers of meaning or that can be interpreted in various ways can be satisfying • texts that are thought-provoking and extend one's understanding of the world are valued.
S2	Students understand that types of texts arise from similarity of purpose and vary according to the mode and medium of their delivery.	Students understand that when one text draws on another composing and responding are enriched. They learn that • stories may be changed for different situations • some aspects of stories may be inserted into other stories • they can see their own story in terms of other stories.	Students understand that pleasure can be gained by sharing ideas and feelings about texts. Students learn that • texts are a way of encountering ideas • imaginative texts are expressions of real world ideas • texts can be a source of emotional satisfaction.
S1	Students recognise that particular types of texts can be identified through features and structures.	Students understand that some texts are connected with other texts. They learn that • some texts draw on other texts.	Students understand that there are specific aspects of texts that enhance enjoyment. They learn that • texts are a way into the world of the imagination • texts of literary value can be enjoyed many times.
ES1	Students recognise that imaginative and informative texts have different features.	Students recognise that stories may be told in different ways.	Students understand that engagement with texts may be a source of pleasure.

ENGLISH
Textual Concepts

Narrative

What it is

Narrative is the communication of a sequence of related events into a story. It can refer to a story itself or to the conventions by which we communicate and understand it. These conventions include the selection and organisation of actions and events into a plot and the creation of a suite of individualised or stock characters to carry the plot forward. A narrative is usually structured in such a way as to invite responder involvement, through recounting challenges and characters' attitudes towards them, which are gratifying in their resolution.

Narrative is a part of everyday communication to convey any message, be it political (an annual budget), commercial (a fashion collection) or institutional (public health warnings). In these messages, the elements of narrative may not be obvious and are inferred through personal identification with the situation.

Why it is important

It is innately human to tell stories as this is the way we organise and shape life experience. We use narrative to connect people to information, values and ideas. Through narrative we explore human actions, interactions, motivations and reactions.

Teachers use narrative to engage students in learning and students use narrative to interpret their own lives. Through narrative they enter and create other worlds. Narrative is an enticing pathway for representing, understanding and engaging with human experience and with ideas.

Perspective

What it is

Perspective is a lens through which we learn to see the world; it shapes what we see and the way we see it. The lens can clarify, magnify, distort or blur what we see. By changing the position of the lens, different aspects of the text may be foregrounded. In this way, perspective provides a dynamic basis for the relationship between composer, text and responder.

Perspective includes the values that the responder and composer bring to a text. In a text these values are expressed and/or implied through the composer's language and structure which may position the responder to accept them. By adopting different perspectives, a responder can bring to light underlying values in the text and construct meanings which may challenge, confirm or modify the original reading of a text. Applying different perspectives may also challenge, confirm or modify the responder's own values.

Why it is important

To become critical thinkers and insightful readers, listeners and viewers, students need to understand that neither texts nor they themselves are neutral. We all operate through cultural and ideological frames that position us to accept certain views of the world. We need to recognise how these lenses are working so that we can choose to accept or dismiss the values that they entail.

Point of View

What it is

Point of view in a text is the position from which the subject matter of a text is designed to be perceived. In defining a point of view the writer, speaker or director of the text controls what we see and how we relate to the situation, characters or ideas in the text. Point of view may be expressed through a narrator or through a character (focaliser in a novel, persona in a poem) and because we are invited to adopt this point of view we often align ourselves with the character or narrator. The point of view constructed in a text cannot be assumed to be that of the composer.

Composers can privilege certain points of view by choosing a particular narrative stance including omniscient, limited, 1st, 2nd or 3rd person narrator. In visual, film and digital texts, point of view is indicated through such devices as foregrounding in visual images, types of camera shots or guiding a pathway of navigation through a web site. In spoken and audio texts the tone and accompanying sounds convey a point of view. Point of view therefore constructs an attitude towards the subject matter in a text which the reader, listener or viewer is invited to adopt.

Why is it important

Understanding point of view is a critical reading practice because point of view is often inferred rather than explicitly expressed and its exploration leads to an appreciation of the constructed nature of the text. It is a device which allows subject matter to be foregrounded or distanced and therefore it invites certain attitudes and feelings in response to the text. Experimenting with point of view allows students to explore other ways of seeing the text.

	Narrative	Perspective	Point of View
S5	Students understand that narrative provides structures for expressing ideas and values. Students learn that • stories represent broad aspects of humanity, society and culture, made particular and personal to interest the responder • stories often revolve around complication or conflict (internal, between characters or of a character with society), which may rise to a climax before falling to a resolution. • plot structures (chronological, flashback, 'in media res', circular etc) can control responses to the story • values are embedded in narratives through selection of details of events and characters and choice of language.	Students understand that perspective provides a frame through which we learn to see the world. They learn that • the world and texts may be seen through particular frames • views of the world may be exploited for particular purposes • readers and viewers may be positioned to accept particular views.	Students understand that point of view is the position from which the subject matter of a text is designed to be perceived. Students learn that • narrators may be omniscient, limited, deceptive, masking the ideology of the text • there may be multiple narrators offering different points of view • point of view may be through a focaliser • a narrator may adopt a satirical tone • the point of view can create an emotional response • point of view controls the meaning of a text and may be resisted.
S4	Students understand that narrative shapes and is shaped by one's view of the world. Students learn that • their own experience and culture influence their responses to stories • the conventions of narrative are combined to engage the responder emotionally and intellectually with events and characters depicted in the story and with ideas and values implied by the story • conventions of narrative are adapted to different modes and media to achieve these effects • close consideration and analysis of stories can bring to light subtleties in the text.	Students understand that views of the world are framed by language, experience and culture and convey values. Students learn that • language shapes our perspective of people, events, groups and ideas • perspectives convey values.	Students understand that choice of point of view shapes the meanings, the values and the effect of the text. Students learn that • a narrator can tell a story, comment on a story or break out from the story to address the responder, directly • point of view is a device for persuading • point of view directs the responder to the values in the text.
S3	Students understand that there are conventions of the narrative form that combine to involve responders in the story. They learn that narrative engages responders through • recognisable characters, events and places • skilful plot development • perceptible mood and atmosphere • evocative images and imagery that complement the story • narrative voice and voices of characters • they learn that these conventions are adapted to different modes and media.	Students understand that perspectives may differ and that these differences need to be considered. They learn that • perspective may be expressed in different ways including the values expressed and the form of expression.	Students understand that the narrator is different from the author and that point of view positions the reader to respond in a particular way. Students learn that • a narrator may be inside or outside the story, in fiction and non-fiction texts • point of view can create a more personal or distant relationship with the responder, evoking degrees of empathy or indifference • the author chooses the way a story is told and chooses language appropriate to that purpose in the different modes and media.
S2	Students understand that narratives may be interpreted in various ways. They learn that • characters and events may be drawn differently for different purposes audiences, modes and media • stories may be interpreted through action, character and setting • stories present a view of the world.	Students recognise that their understanding of the worlds in texts are shaped by their own personal experience and their own culture. They learn that views of the world in texts • may differ from each other • are based on selections • may be represented in various ways in different modes and media.	Students learn that point of view influences interpretation of texts. Students understand that • different points of view affect a story • different modes and media convey point of view in different ways. • meanings of stories may change when viewed through the eyes of different characters in the story or different responders to the story.
S1	Students understand that narrative is constructed for particular audiences and purposes. They learn that stories • are usually made up of a sequence of events • have patterns that set up expectations and allow prediction of actions and attitudes • can have messages and evoke feelings • can be varied in the telling • present a view of their world.	Students understand that personal experience and interest shape their opinions and choices. They learn that • opinions can be shared, developed and questioned.	Students know that stories may be narrated through a character's point of view.
ES1	Students understand that narrative is a way of sharing and learning about life experiences. They learn that stories • can be real or imagined • can be told through different modes and media • have a beginning, a middle and an end.	Students understand that opinions can be articulated in and through texts. They learn that • opinions, preferences for and ideas about texts and authors may differ.	Students recognise that different voices are represented in texts.

Representation

What it is

Representation is the depiction of a thing, person or idea in written, visual, performed or spoken language. In representing we make choices from the language offered by these modes. Representation may aim to reflect the natural world as realistically as possible or may aim to convey the essence of people, objects, experiences and ideas in a more abstract way.

There are many different ways of seeing the world as our view is framed by context and culture. This means that representation cannot mirror actual reality but each representation offers a different construction of the world and of experience in it.

Why it is important

Students need to understand that representations are not neutral. All representations carry personal and cultural meanings and have personal and social effects. Sometimes these meanings are produced through a composer's conscious choices of language and structure and at other times they may be unconscious reproductions of attitudes, beliefs and values in the world. This leads to the potential for different readings of texts as representations are questioned and reinterpreted.

Students need to be aware of the range of choices available to them in representing people, objects, experiences and ideas as well as how cultural convention may put limits on representation, so positioning them to respond to the world in particular ways.

Style

What it is

Style refers to the characteristic ways in which composers choose to express ideas in a variety of modes. Style is one of the ways of distinguishing the work of an individual composer, a genre or a context of composition. Style includes semantics, form, structure, design and point of view.

Composers working within a particular time or place are, in varying degrees, influenced by characteristic ways of thinking arising out of common social and cultural conditions and are also influenced by each other's styles.

Why it is important

Studying style is important because awareness of stylistic devices can support the development of strategies for reading, It can deepen students' understanding of why composers might choose to express ideas and feelings in particular ways and how purpose, audience and context influence composition. Through studying the style of a range of composers, students can reflect on and cultivate their own repertoire of styles.

Studying the style of a particular age or country shows the influence of context while at the same time inviting appreciation of the uniqueness of a particular composer's work.

Theme

What it is

A theme is a statement about life, arising from the interplay of key elements of the text such as plot, character, setting and language. These work together in a coherent way to achieve the purpose of the text.

Theme differs from the topic of a text (war, the sea) or an idea addressed by a text (prejudice, friendship) in that the theme conveys an attitude or value about an idea (By accepting difference we are enriched. True friendship survives adversity).

At its most basic level a theme may be regarded as the message or even the moral of a text. Themes may be used for a didactic purpose or may add a philosophical dimension, inviting us to think about our place in the world. A theme is a statement about human experience that is profound and which responders may accept or reject, depending on their own worldview.

Why it is important

Identifying themes is a higher order skill, moving students beyond the stated details of the text to consider the ideas implied by these details. By explaining how themes emerge students come to an understanding of how individual elements of a text cohere to serve a theme.

Understanding the themes of a text gives students insight into what is valued by a culture and the extent to which they may identify with, accept or challenge these values.

	Representation	Style	Theme
S5	Students understand that representation embeds attitudes, beliefs and values. Students learn that • representation may be intentionally or unintentionally biased • representation reinforces or challenges existing values and ways of thinking or may attempt to reshape them • representation favours or privileges a position by omitting or silencing the views or perspectives of particular groups.	Students understand that styles vary and are valued differently. They learn that style • can be a marker of a particular author, period or genre • changes over different historical periods • varies according to social and cultural contexts, mode and medium • may be distinguished through the details and nuances of expression.	Students understand that the elements of a text work together to support the theme. They learn that • themes draw together the elements of a text • themes can be indicated through patterns in texts such as a motif, parallel plots or characters • there may be major and minor themes • themes are traditionally thought to provide insight into the world view of the author • themes may be challenged by considering representation in the text from a different perspective.
S4	Students understand that representations are not natural reflections of the world. They learn that • representation is the result of conscious or unconscious selection and arrangement according to codes and conventions • representation positions a responder • representations may be intentionally objective or subjective • representations may be intentionally ambiguous • mode and medium require different codes and conventions of representation to produce similar meanings.	Students understand that style is a way of conveying individuality, specialised knowledge and values. They learn that • they need a range of styles for their personal, social and academic contexts • style can be imitated and adapted • particular styles have particular effects • style is an important element in the pleasure of the text.	Students understand that theme reflects or challenges values. They learn that • themes are statements about the ideas, explicit or implied, in a text • themes are reinforced by choice of language and imagery • themes can highlight social and cultural similarities and differences • thematic interpretations arise from personal experience and culture.
S3	Students understand that representations position audiences to adopt a particular response. They learn that • information and ideas may be represented symbolically • representation in each mode operates according to its own codes and conventions • representations may be adapted for different audiences • representations influence response.	Students understand that particular styles result from the use of identifiable language features appropriate to each mode and medium. Students learn that • style may be changed by manipulating certain elements • style creates connections between and among texts • literary devices such as sound, images and figurative language can enhance expression • personal style can be cultivated.	Students understand that thematic statements may be interrogated. They learn that themes • are different from subjects or topics • arise out of the actions, feelings and ideas of people or characters • may be explored in different ways by different texts • relate to social, moral and ethical questions in the real world
S2	Students understand that representations are varied and reflect individual experiences and contexts. They learn that representations • are deliberately constructed for particular audiences and purposes and vary according to the capabilities of mode or medium • may reflect stereotypic ideas rather than actuality • vary because of different composers or situations.	Students understand the impact of language choices and deliberately plan and refine their compositions accordingly. Students learn that • there are rules for the development of style • topics may invite particular words and images • words, sentences and images vary for particular purposes, audiences and effects.	Students understand that ideas in texts may be made into thematic statements that tell us about human experience. They learn that • the ideas of a text are suggested through particular details such as events, character behaviour and relationships • some ideas are so powerful that they reappear in many texts.
S1	Students understand that there may be different representations of the same objects, events, people, emotions and ideas. They learn that differences in representation can occur • through different contexts, modes and media or • through different choices within these.	Students understand that language and its patterns vary in the different modes and media. Students learn that • elements of language create effects in particular contexts, modes and media.	Students understand that the ideas in texts invite them to reflect on their own behaviour and values. Students learn that • the purpose of a text can be to convey a message • the main idea of a text can be a moral.
ES1	Students understand that aspects of the real world and of their imagination may be represented in different modes and media.	Students understand that arrangements of words and /or images convey information and express feelings and thoughts. They learn that • there are possibilities of choice of words.	Students understand that texts can convey a message.