UNDERSTANDING

What it is

Understanding occurs when new information and ideas are incorporated into a student's existing knowledge framework. Students link new ideas and information to prior knowledge and apply these in specific circumstances, appreciating underlying principles. Understanding is developed within particular contexts and allows students to elaborate on, make connections and ask questions about their new knowledge. Students are gradually able to generalise upon this knowledge and transfer it to new contexts.

Why it is important

Understanding is prerequisite for learning. Its flexibility allows students to engage critically and creatively with knowledge by making connections, explaining, inferring, predicting, speculating and problem solving. When a student understands, information is retained longer and can be built upon to acquire further understanding. Understanding also includes the realisation of what needs to be learned and allows students to be active in constructing their own course of learning.

ENGAGING PERSONALLY

What it is

Students engage personally when they experience interest, pleasure and personal significance in texts and the ways they are constructed. However, personal engagement goes beyond simple pleasure and affirmation of the familiar;
it comes from an emotional and intellectual engagement which can lead to reconsideration of an initial impression.

Engaging personally may include:

- personal identification with the characters, situations or ideas in a text
- intellectual engagement with ideas individually and collaboratively
- the expression of personal voice
- pleasure in the text
- enjoyment of aesthetic qualities
- valuing texts
- recognition and appreciation of the power of language to express human experiences and communicate ideas.

Why it is important

Engaging personally with a text can facilitate and be influenced by deeper critical and imaginative response to its representation of their wider world. Personal engagement with texts encourages students to express with discernment, confidence and with an authentic voice, ideas, opinions and values in their own compositions.

CONNECTING

What it is

Connecting is recognising relationships between texts and between texts and our own lives. Every text we encounter is considered against our previous textual experiences as we build up a breadth of knowledge and understanding about the ways composers and responders construct meaning. As our encounters with texts extend we have more texts with which to read our world.

Texts can be connected in many different ways including through:

- identifiable links to our own personal worlds
- exploring common experiences, stories and ideas
- sharing the same context
- sharing the same style, genre and codes and conventions.

Why it is important

Making connections between texts forms a basis for comparing them and provides a different context in which to make judgements about each. Making connections also enriches students' understanding of each text, the worlds it inhabits and the way it is composed and responded to. Seeing connections is a source of delight and understanding how texts may connect forms the basis for students' own composing as they perceive possibilities through experimenting.

ENGAGING CRITICALLY

What it is

Students engage critically with a text when they make judgements about a text based on systematic analysis. The kinds of judgements they make will depend on the context and the approach to the text which brings with it assumptions about the nature of texts and ways of reading them. For example, one approach could be to see the texts as reflecting reality and address issues of truth in that depiction. Another approach would be to see a text as a product of power relationships in terms of what lies at the centre and what is marginalised, evaluating the text in terms of how it suppresses certain interests and intervening to promote others. Critical engagement involves making judgements and recognising the critical framework through which these judgements are made.

Why it is important

With the diverse values they encounter and the speed of change in today's world, students need to understand how we make meaning and how values change over time. Through engaging critically students discern the ways in which power is exerted through language, so appreciating that all meaning is negotiable. By examining and questioning the ways values are represented in a text, students are empowered to present a new perspective.

EXPERIMENTING

What it is

Experimenting is the process of applying knowledge and skills creatively and critically in order to develop deep understanding. Imagination is used to predict, speculate and hypothesise about texts to create new understandings about the wider world that is complex and changing. Students manipulate language, form, mode and medium to express ideas, values and opinions in playful, innovative and meaningful ways. Experimenting is as much a demonstration of critical as imaginative faculties and, through the interdependence of these, students engage in thoughtful recreation and innovation.

Why it is important

Through experimenting with language and ideas students develop an appreciation for aesthetic qualities of texts and understand the power of language to transform and re-interpret experiences. Experimenting enables students to stimulate and express their imagination and natural curiosity to make connections in their world. In the processes of experimenting, a sense of personal style and the confidence to create new texts will develop. Students become the agents of meaning, not just passive recipients of information and ideas.

REFLECTING

What it is

Reflecting is a metacognitive process which raises students' consciousness of their own processes of responding, composing and thinking in collaborative and independent learning situations. In reflecting, students think about how they have learned, what they feel about the learning, the effectiveness of their learning processes and draw conclusions about their value for them.

Reflecting involves understanding one's own personal capacities and processes and fosters a problem exploring disposition; this encourages student curiosity leading to a recursive process of experimentation in the belief that there can be more than one possible solution.

Why it is important

Reflecting on one's own learning process develops a student's capacity of learning how to learn and how to transfer knowledge from one context to another, a foundation for living and working in the 21st century. Knowing one's personal context, how one responds to texts and why one does so in particular ways is an important skill for an engaged and critical citizenry.

	UNDERSTANDING	ENGAGING PERSONALLY	CONNECTING	ENGAGING CRITICALLY	EXPERIMENTING	REFLECTING
S6	Students have knowledge of and insight into the textual concepts that underpin the discipline of English, particularly the nature of textuality for their responding and composing. They analyse the relationship between composer, text, responder and context to identify how this affects meaning.	Students realise their own agency in responding and composing, understanding that initial reactions are part of a cycle of creation, interpretation and appreciation of texts.	Students make connections to foreground different perspectives, complex meanings and the interdependence and significance of individual texts, appreciating that each textual experience builds on others.	Students synthesise ideas and distinctive qualities in texts and apply different systems of analysis to develop perspectives on texts. They evaluate texts and perspectives against cultural and literary values to arrive at an informed personal understanding.	Students, through experimenting, come to value their own agency and to understand the interdependence of both response and composition, and the critical and creative.	Students evaluate their own and others' ways of responding to and composing texts and understand that meaning making results from particular world views and the adoption of different processes of response, composition and learning.
S5	Students use a range of strategies to discriminate nuanced meaning. They transfer their knowledge of texts to new contexts.	Students' responses to and composition of texts demonstrate a personal understanding of the world based on their own ideas, their experience of texts and their experience of life. They project an authentic voice through different types of texts.	Students use the connections between texts to come to new understandings about how ideas are reinterpreted in different contexts, modes and media, for specific audiences and purposes.	Students critically analyse and evaluate the ways in which texts represent different ideas and perspectives. They recognise the effect of context on meaning.	Students compose critical and imaginative responses to texts. They adopt, combine and adapt conventions of genre and style to experiment with ideas and come to deeper understandings.	Students broaden their understanding and use of metacognitive processes to choose and develop certain strategies appropriate for particular situations. They extend their range of reflective practices to consider how their own context influences the ways they respond, compose and learn.
S4	Students analyse texts to explain information and ideas for particular audiences and purposes. They use their knowledge of texts to make generalisations about how texts work.	Students respond to and compose texts reflecting their widening world. They identify ways in which their own experiences, perspectives and contexts influence their responses.	Students make connections between information, ideas and texts. They compare texts to understand the effects of different choices of language, form, mode and medium for various audiences and purposes.	Students explore the different ways texts can be interpreted. They identify ways in which composers position the audience to accept particular views and perspectives and make judgements about these.	Students use, adapt or subvert particular textual conventions across modes and media to experiment with a range of meanings.	Students begin to personalise their metacognitive processes, identifying their own pleasures, strengths and weaknesses, in responding, composing and learning. They are able to plan and monitor their own learning, articulate their own learning processes and begin to assess which learning processes may suit them and will suit particular tasks and why.
S3	Students draw from a range of strategies to interpret information and ideas in texts. They recognise and explain how language and structures communicate ideas.	Students explore more formal and informal ways to express their personal responses, showing an awareness of the impact of their own and others' language choices.	Students engage in close comparisons of aspects of language in and between texts to explore how texts may be connected.	Students recognise that texts can influence and position responders. They analyse and evaluate different ideas and values in texts.	Students experiment with text structures and language features to adapt texts and ideas for different purposes and in a range of modes and media.	Students identify, use and discuss text processing strategies and assess the development of their own skills against agreed criteria. They consider strategies for collaborating with their peers and reflect on their learning achievements.
S2	Students use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meanings to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas.	Students identify particular elements of texts that are engaging and use these in their own composing. In their interpretations of texts they explore literal and inferred meanings. They distinguish aspects of their own perspective that shape their responses to and composition of texts.	Students discuss similarities and differences in texts from a range of cultures, considering ideas, characters and events drawn from their world and the world of texts. They compare the language of written and spoken texts in different contexts.	Students interpret texts and justify opinions.	Students identify aspects of texts that engage an audience and use them to experiment with their own compositions using a range of devices in different modes.	Students are aware of processes of composition and can use this understanding to develop criteria for judgement of their own texts and those of their peers. They appraise their own work in order to refine its effectiveness and correct errors. They also consider their preferences in reading and learning.
S1	Students identify and interpret ideas and patterns in texts and make predictions about content and structure.	Students become aware that their choices and preferences for texts and authors are shaped by their own experience and interests. They share different views, infer meaning, express and justify their own opinions and extend their experiences of texts.	Students make responses to texts based on personal experiences. They start to compare the purposes of texts and explore how the relationship of the visual to the written affects meaning.	Students distinguish between fact and opinion.	Students create and recreate texts imaginatively in a range of modes and media.	Students become aware that their own experiences and preferences shape their compositions and their responses to text. They articulate some approaches to responding, composing and assessing texts and ways to learn.
ES1	Through their responding and composing students identify and interpret ideas and information in texts.	Students engage with texts for enjoyment and pleasure, expressing preferences and opinions. In their responding and composing they draw on their own feelings, experiences and culture.	Students make connections between a text and their own life. They identify the elements of a text and the relationship between words and images.		Students use their imagination to represent aspects of their experience, experimenting with different modes and media.	As students are learning to read, write and interact with adults and their peers, they are made aware of their learning processes. How to learn is made as important to them as what to learn as they develop strategies for reading, writing, speaking and listening individually and in groups.