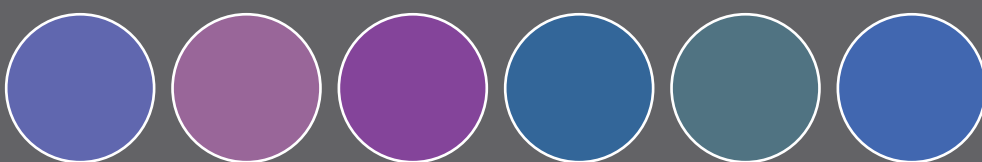




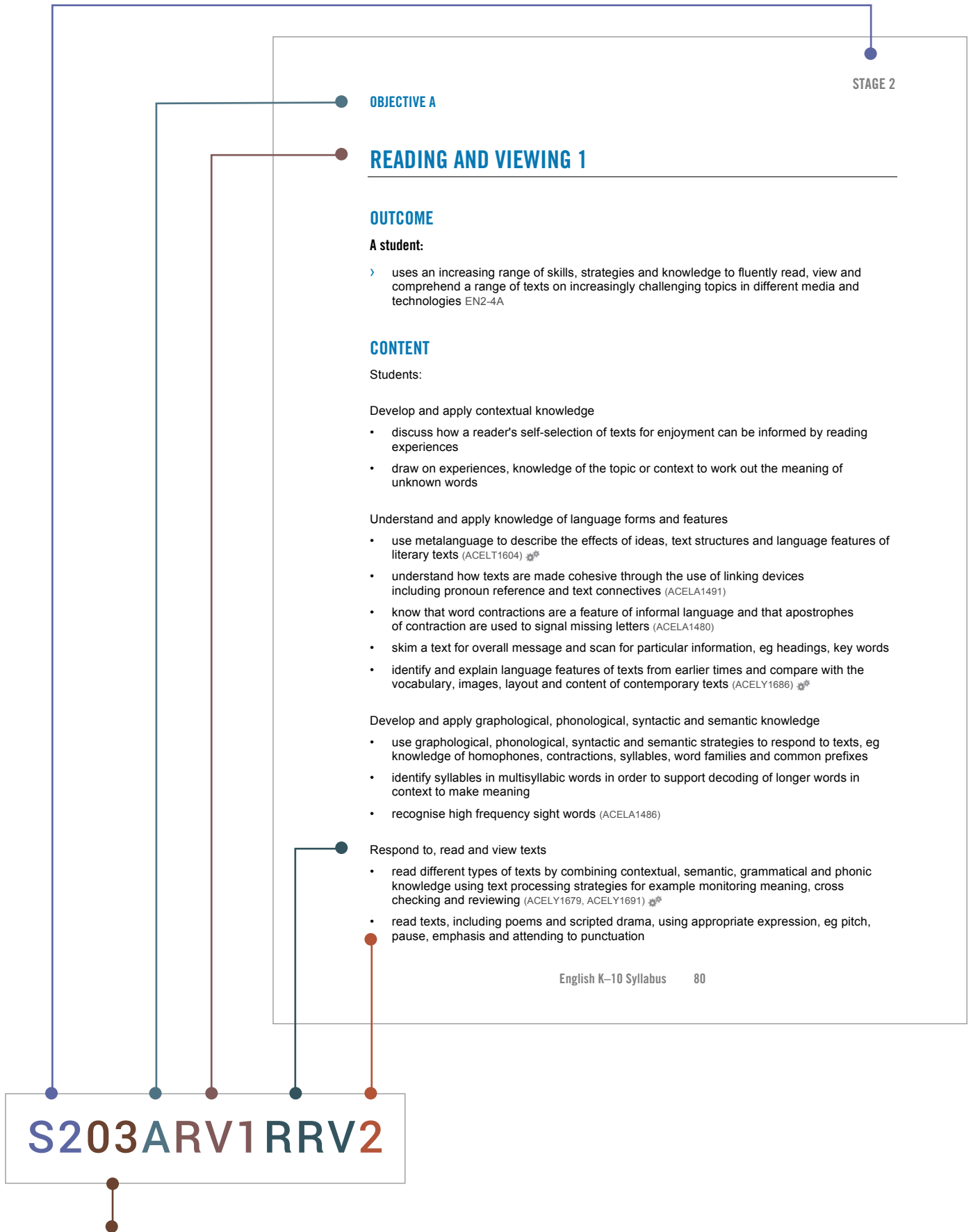
ENGLISH
Textual Concepts

Textual concepts and processes descriptions



Education
Public Schools

Syllabus Code Key



STAGE 2

OBJECTIVE A

READING AND VIEWING 1

OUTCOME

A student:

- > uses an increasing range of skills, strategies and knowledge to fluently read, view and comprehend a range of texts on increasingly challenging topics in different media and technologies EN2-4A

CONTENT

Students:

Develop and apply contextual knowledge

- discuss how a reader's self-selection of texts for enjoyment can be informed by reading experiences
- draw on experiences, knowledge of the topic or context to work out the meaning of unknown words

Understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features

- use metalanguage to describe the effects of ideas, text structures and language features of literary texts (ACELT1604) ✨
- understand how texts are made cohesive through the use of linking devices including pronoun reference and text connectives (ACELA1491)
- know that word contractions are a feature of informal language and that apostrophes of contraction are used to signal missing letters (ACELA1480)
- skim a text for overall message and scan for particular information, eg headings, key words
- identify and explain language features of texts from earlier times and compare with the vocabulary, images, layout and content of contemporary texts (ACELY1686) ✨

Develop and apply graphological, phonological, syntactic and semantic knowledge

- use graphological, phonological, syntactic and semantic strategies to respond to texts, eg knowledge of homophones, contractions, syllables, word families and common prefixes
- identify syllables in multisyllabic words in order to support decoding of longer words in context to make meaning
- recognise high frequency sight words (ACELA1486)

Respond to, read and view texts

- read different types of texts by combining contextual, semantic, grammatical and phonic knowledge using text processing strategies for example monitoring meaning, cross checking and reviewing (ACELY1679, ACELY1691) ✨
- read texts, including poems and scripted drama, using appropriate expression, eg pitch, pause, emphasis and attending to punctuation

English K–10 Syllabus 80

S203ARV1RRV2

Outcome 3

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 is it 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.

Engaging personally may include:

- personal identification with the characters, situations or ideas in a text
- 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 a 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 world from texts. We connect the text to our own worlds and to the world of other texts in order to create 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:

- through identifiable links to our own personal worlds
- through exploring common experiences
- through sharing the same context
- through sharing the same generic 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 their approach to the text which brings with it assumptions about the nature of texts and ways of reading them. For example, if texts are seen as reflecting reality, evaluations about it will address issues of its truth in doing so and the way the text helps us understand human nature and our world. If texts are seen as products of power relationships, analysis of a text may be in terms of what lies at its centre and what is marginalised, evaluating the text in terms of how it suppresses certain interests and promotes others. Critical engagement involves making judgements and recognising the critical framework through which these judgements are made.

Why it is important

Students' critical skills will help them evaluate the multiplicity of texts that they encounter in their lives. This will allow them to understand what is valued in society and their culture, so providing certain kinds of access and rewards, to themselves and to society as a whole. To steer through the sometimes diverse values they encounter and the speed of change of today's world they also need to understand how we make value judgements and how values change over time.

Experimenting

What it is

Experimenting is the process of applying knowledge and skills creatively and critically in order to develop deep understanding. Students manipulate language, form, mode and medium to express ideas, values and opinions in innovative and meaningful ways.

Students need to experiment imaginatively with language in playful ways. Through the exploration of language and ideas they 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.

Why it is important

Imagination is used to predict, speculate and hypothesise to create new understandings about the wider world that is complex and changing. A sense of personal style and the confidence to create new texts will develop through the processes of experimenting. Students become the creators of meaning, not just the recipients of information.

Reflecting

What it is

In reflecting, students think about what they have learned, how they have learned, what they feel about the learning. They draw conclusions about their own learning processes and the value of their learning.

Reflecting can involve understanding the demands of a task and its learning context, strategies for completing that task in its context and the way one's own personal capacities are best used for a successful outcome. In English, there is the added dimension of articulating one's own processes of responding to and composing texts.

Why it is important

Reflecting on one's own learning process develops a student's capacity of learning how to learn, a foundation for living and working. Knowing how one responds to verbal and visual texts and why one does so in particular ways is an important skill for an engaged and critical citizenry.

Through reflecting a student can develop knowledge of their own learning style and the development of a range of learning skills such as collaborative skills, independent investigation, monitoring one's own progress or evaluating one's own learning.