

Year 7 Unit:

Whodunnit? Looking for Clues.

Course Description / Rationale:

The Year 7 'Whodunnit' course, taught throughout Semester One, will incorporate all Content Descriptors as per the Victorian Curriculum: Reading and Viewing, Writing, Speaking and Listening. By the end of this Unit, students will be able to (SWBAT) communicate effectively with peers and teachers in a range of environments, using different mediums. They will be exposed to and engage with a range of texts in the detective genre and evaluate the merit of texts and their intended purpose to either inform, entertain, or persuade. The choice of texts will support students in their development as independent readers and thinkers; extension will be provided in course content – challenging and unpredictable plot sequences and characterisation not typical of the detective conventions – as well as through a list of wider reading and viewing materials, across various media including but not limited to; literary extracts, novels, film, and series. The course will allow students to gain further understanding of narrative structure, glossaries, persuasive structures, as well as affording them the opportunity to expand their creativity through a variety of ongoing formative and summative assessment. Students will also be engaging with and utilising new vocabulary specific to the genre and task and engage with and analyse both written and visual language. The Unit will specifically focus on building skills of comprehension and inference.



Formative Assessment:

The formative assessment will be conducted throughout the Unit, with classroom activities (listed below) and discussion supporting and developing understanding of genre, narrative shape, and language conventions. Teachers may like to be more formal in their approach to formative assessment and frequently provide text-specific comprehension questions at various points throughout the text, 'Rapid Writing' sessions for the first or last 10 minutes of a lesson and/or provide short extracts from other pieces of detective fiction for 'Drop Everything and Read' (D.E.A.R.)

Options for Formative Assessment and other classroom activities:

1. **Comprehension Questions.** These would be text specific and could be corrected as a class or serve as a catalyst for class discussion.
2. **Journaling.** Students keep an account of each lesson: a summary of the lesson, something they learnt and something they would like to learn more about. Students could do this in a small exercise book and submit for teacher perusal throughout the term.
3. **Rapid Writing.** Students are given a very short amount of time and must write in response to stimulus material. This could be a prompt, an image, a quotation, a problem, a case study, a statistic etc. Students could do this in a small exercise book and submit for teacher perusal throughout the term.



8. **Conduct a class debate.** They can divide themselves into two clear groups either for or against a divisive topic set by the teacher, specific to the text.
9. **Logic Grid Puzzles** are readily available online and do not need to be text specific. They vary from extremely simplistic to very difficult and so it is easy to differentiate the task for students with varying abilities. It allows students to practice their detective skills (logical reasoning and comprehension).

10. **Play Guess Who? as a class.** This should be run in the format of Celebrity Heads and can either be text specific or the traditional game. In this activity, students are gathering information and clues to arrive at an informed and reasonable conclusion.



17. **Create 'Cluedo' cards** (character, weapon, location / setting). Randomly choose three of the cards – one from each category – and create story. This would also work as a 'Rapid Writing' activity.

18. **Wink Murder** – a fun game to end a lesson!

Summative Assessment:

There will be three pieces of summative assessment throughout the Unit, with the creative writing piece being a major piece of assessment at the end of the semester. As such, there will be two parts to the creative writing assessment – the piece of writing and an Explanation of Decisions (EOD) which can be submitted alongside the final assessment in either written or oral form.

The three pieces of summative assessment will be in the following categories:

1. Persuasive Writing
2. Analytical Response
3. Creative Writing with supplementary Explanation of Decisions (EOD).

<p>Persuasive Writing:</p> <p>Term One in response to <i>Friday Barnes, Girl Detective</i>.</p>	<p>Options for Assessment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Persuasive essay in response to a topic or stimulus material.2. Letter This needs to be either one letter or, at a maximum, one letter and a letter of response. This allows for a more sustained
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Transcript of an interview either with one of the characters from the text or with the detective about who he believes the villain to be. <p>**Note: If giving students the choice of form, teachers must ensure that all form options have been taught in class and so must allow adequate time to do so.</p>

Analytical Response

Options for Assessment:

1. **Text Response / Analytical Essay** in response to a specific topic/s.
2. **Report Writing** This could be a police

****Note:** If giving students the choice of form, teachers must ensure that all form options have been taught in class and so must allow adequate time to do so.

Creative Writing

Options for Assessment:

1. Write part of the story from a different character's perspective.
2. Fill a gap or silence in the narrative.
3. Add a new chapter to the text (either during the story, or a prologue / epilogue).

9. An inner monologue of a character during an important part of the text.
10. A diary entry of a character revealing their secret thoughts. This must be a structured piece and be a single entry, not a series of entries, as this will allow for a more comprehensive of writing.



restrictive in providing options for creative writing. This may mean that teachers provide students with limited options of character perspective, scene, and form.



Weekly Planner:

TERM ONE

Text Focus: *Friday Barnes, Girl Detective* by R.A. Spratt

WEEK	TEACHING	ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT (Formative and/or Summative)	Victorian Curriculum
1	<p>Introducing genre and context information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is 'genre'? - What are the conventions of mystery / detective fiction? - Explain the shape of detective narratives. - Typical characters in detective narratives – eccentric detective, sidekick, villain, femme fatale. - What is a 'Red Herring' and why is it important in mystery stories? - What is 'The Twist'? - The importance of setting. 	<p>Students could:</p> <div style="background-color: #4f7942; height: 300px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p>Formative:</p>	<p>Reflect on ideas and opinions about</p>
2	<p>Genre context continued:</p> <p>How does the film conform to convention and codes?</p>	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watch 'Harriet the Spy' (available on Stan) as a class, taking focussed notes on a structured table 	<p>Formative:</p> <p><i>Students should enhance their understanding of genre by explaining the ways in which the</i></p>	<p>Understand how language is used to evaluate texts and how evaluations about a text can be substantiated by reference to the text</p>



3	<p>Begin <i>Friday Barnes</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By the end of this week, teachers should aim to have covered Chapters 1-5 in class (pages 1-51). <i>This chronicles Friday solving the bank robbery and starting at Highcrest Academy.</i> - Avoid reading entire text in class but instead focus on key information (plot, setting, character, narrative shape, genre) and use these pages 	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respond to text-specific comprehension questions. - Journal. - Begin character profiles (individually or in groups. Examine both major and minor characters). - Start a quotation bank (can be part of the character profile or a separate task). 	<p>Formative:</p> <p><i>Students should develop the skills of comprehension and consolidate their understanding of genre.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class discussions. - Note-taking and responding to comprehension questions. <p>Use prior knowledge and text processing strategies to interpret a range of types of texts (VCELY377)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to interpret, analyse and synthesise ideas and information, critiquing ideas and issues from a variety of textual sources (VCELY378)</p> <p>Recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are</p>



	<p>and/or extracts as the basis for discussion and activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be divided into small groups and create chapter Kahoots! to be played as a class. - Add to their glossary of terms. - Rapid Writing / Journaling (stimulus provided by teacher) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing visual stimulus materials. - Journaling / Rapid Writing. - Socratic Circles. 	<p>combined in narratives, and discuss the purposes and appeal of different approaches (VCELT374)</p>





teachers should aim to have

depth and explain how he is doing

skills of comprehension and

texts ([VCLLT377](#))





characterisation, events





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9	<p>Assessing Persuasive Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers should introduce the persuasive writing assessment task to the class. Ideas can be workshopped / drafted. - Teachers may prefer to provide students with a template / proforma that students can complete and bring in with them to the formal assessment. - If writing within the world of the text, students should be taught how to encapsulate authorial voice / character traits etc. - Even though the task is persuasive in nature, it should still be relevant to the novel and contain substantial textual knowledge. 	<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brainstorm in small groups. - Plan their persuasive piece and seek teacher advice / feedback. - Work through their notes for inspiration of ideas. - Reread sections of the text relevant to their idea to ensure textual accuracy. - Use their quotation sheets to ensure accuracy of authorial voice. 	<p><u>Summative:</u></p> <p>Persuasive Writing Planning and Assessment</p> <p><i>Students should now be able to write / present persuasively, incorporating persuasive language and techniques specific to form. They should demonstrate an adequate understanding of genre, text (plot and characters), as well as the ability to effectively communicate their knowledge in the written form.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See options for persuasive assessment task. 	<p>Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas to a specific audience (VCELY387)</p> <p>Edit for meaning by removing repetition, refining ideas, reordering sentences and adding or substituting words for impact (VCELY388)</p> <p>Consolidate a personal handwriting style that is legible, fluent and automatic and supports writing for extended periods (VCELY389)</p> <p>Use a range of software, including word processing programs, to create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts (VCELY390)</p> <p>Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view (VCELT394)</p>
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Weekly Planner:

TERM TWO

Text Focus: *A Murder Most Unladylike* by Robin S

WEEK	TEACHING	ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT (Formative and/or Summative)	Victorian Curriculum
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				



Wider Reading / Viewing:

Novels:

- *The London Eye Mystery*, by Siobhan Dowd (2007)

This novel, which now features an introduction from bestselling author Robin Stevens (who wrote *Murder Most Unladylike*), is a mystery novel first published in 2007. It is set in London and tells the story of how Ted, a young boy with Asperger Syndrome, and his sister Kat, solve the mystery of their missing cousin, Salim, who suddenly vanished from inside a sealed capsule on the London Eye. They have several theories about what happened to Salim, and even the police are baffled, so is up to Ted to follow a trail of clues across London to find Salim before time runs out.

- *Nate the Great and the Lost List*, by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat (1991)

This book is short and accessible for even those who normally find reading a challenge. Problem-solve alongside Nate and his dog, Sludge, using logical thinking to solve the mystery of Claude's grocery list, which Nate attempts to find before lunchtime. As the clock ticks and time passes, and he still cannot find the list, Nate worries that he will be ridiculed and will no longer be 'Nate the Great' – that is until he begins to suspect Rosamond's cat pancakes might just be at the heart of the mystery.

The Nancy Drew books are accessible for younger readers and there are 613 titles in the collection (and counting!) Carolyn Keene first published in 1930, and since then, The Nancy Drew Mystery Stories have sold over 70 million copies worldwide. For young adult readers, there are 124 titles in *The Nancy Drew Files* (1986–1997). These also include *Nancy Drew and The Hardy Boys Super Mystery* (1989–1998; 36 titles) and *River Heights* (1989–1992; 16 titles + 1 "Super Sizzler"). There is also *Nancy Drew on Campus* (1995–1998; 25 titles) for Young Adult readers. For younger readers, there are the *Nancy Drew Notebooks* (1994–2005; 69 titles), *Nancy Drew and the Clue Crew* (2006–2015; 40 titles) and *Nancy Drew Clue Book* (2015–present; 16 titles with 2 upcoming).

Films:

