**Sample Unit – English Advanced – Year 11**

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| **Unit title** | ***Year 11 Common Module: Reading to Write* – *Transition to Senior English*** | **Duration** 40 hours |
| **Unit description** | This unit demonstrates one approach to the Year 11 Common Module for Advanced students. Teachers may need to differentiate activities and include extra lessons explicitly teaching higher orders skills in reading and writing, according to the particular learning needs of students.The focus text for this unit is F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel, *The Great Gatsby*. Students also have the opportunity to read and respond to a range of other texts, including essays, poems, films, plays, songs, short stories, speeches, a graphic novel and other novels. These other texts connect with the focus text through the study of genre, theme and point of view. There are also various opportunities for students to write critically and creatively for a range of purposes in various modes and forms. Students will also write to learn throughout the unit: writing notes, keeping a reading log, writing short and longer responses to questions and reflecting on their learning. |
| **Outcomes** | EA11-1, EA11-2, EA11-3, EA11-4, EA11-5, EA11-6, EA11-7, EA11-8, EA11-9 |
| **Focus****questions** | 1. What knowledge and skills about reading and writing will I need for the successful transition to Senior English, my studies in general and life after school?
2. How can reading make me a better writer? And how can writing make me a better reader?
3. How can reading and writing across a variety of connected texts deepen my understanding of key concepts and illuminate how meaning is made?
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| **Course requirements** | The Common Module must be completed as the first unit of work in Year11. |
| **Assessment overview** | Assessment *for* learning: * Essay – *The Great Gatsby*
* Personal critical response –*The Great Gatsby*
* Comparative essay
 | Assessment as learning: * Guided reflection on reading and writing
* Ongoing reading log
 | Assessment of learning: * Task 1: an imaginative text in a choice of mode and form, with personal reflection.
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| **Content** | **Teaching, learning and assessment** | **Resources** |
| **EA11-9** reflects on, evaluates and monitors own learning and adjusts individual and collaborative processes to develop as an independent learner* reflect on and discuss personal preferences and insights gained from engagement with an increasingly wide repertoire of complex texts
* identify and articulate how their own processes of response and composition are the same or different to others

**EA11-2** uses and evaluates processes, skills and knowledge required to effectively respond to and compose texts in different modes, media and technologiesStudents:* explain how the reliability of texts is shaped and influenced by choices of medium
* select and use appropriate processes and technologies for particular purposes, audiences and contexts

**EA11-1** responds to, composes and evaluates complex texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure* appreciate the aesthetic qualities of texts and the power of language to express personal ideas and experiences
* analyse the ways language features, text structures and stylistic choices shape ideas and perspectives and influence audiences (ACEEN024)
 | **Introduction to *Reading to Write***1. Students reflect on their reading
* Reflect on your best reading experience to date. What made this reading experience so valuable to you personally?
* Brainstorm different purposes for reading.
* Discuss the importance of reading for the study of English, the study of other subjects, for life beyond school.
* Read the introduction to the chapter ‘Texts and Readings’ in *Reading Fictions*:

*In the past, texts were often thought about as if they were a kind of container. Inside the containers were meanings. Readers looked, sometimes quite hard, to find the meanings in the containers. Reading was finding the ‘correct’ meaning in each container, or text.**Recent literary theory, however, argues that texts are not containers with meanings ‘inside’ them. Instead, texts are seen as polysemic or ‘multi-meaninged’. Reading, it is argued, produces the meanings of a text, which…are called readings.**Because texts are full of gaps, they can be read in different ways, and it is not possible to decide finally ‘what a text means’. A text can never be reduced to a single meaning, because there is no possibility of a neutral authority or judge to decide which reading is ‘correct’.* *This doesn’t imply that a text can mean anything a reader likes. In theory texts have the potential to be read in endlessly different ways, but in practice, groups of readers produce a limited range of meanings, by valuing certain responses and disqualifying others.*Does this extract accord with your experience of reading? Is this extract true of some texts more than others? Consider poetry and factual texts.* For more exploration of different readings of texts see the chapter ‘Texts and Readings’ in *Reading Fictions* which includes a close study of two short stories, ‘A Lot to Learn’ and ‘Listen to the End’.
1. Students reflect on their writing
* Reflect on your best writing experience to date. What made this writing experience so valuable to you personally?
* Brainstorm different purposes for writing.
* Discuss the importance of writing for the study of English, the study of other subjects and life beyond school.
* See resources for explicitly teaching writing skills or for independent student work that can be accessed through [The State Library](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/). <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/>
* Discuss notions of author, authorship and authority. Who owns the text? Who decides the meaning?
1. Students reflect on links between reading and writing
* How is reading *different* to writing? In one sense they are at opposite ends of the communication process – one composing texts and the other responding to texts.
* How is reading *similar* to writing? Note that both reading and writing involve active meaning-making.
* Discuss ways in which reading can lead to writing, eg we can respond to a text we have read through writing, reading a text can inspire us to write.
* Discuss how reading and writing support one another: we can learn to be better writers through our reading and we can learn to be better readers through our writing.
1. Students read the poem, ‘[Introduction to Poetry’](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/42870%29) by Billy Collins. The teacher asks students to record their initial reading of the poem. Students discuss the powerful ways in which Collins represents the experience of reading poetry. They are encouraged to come up with their own imagery to represent the reading and writing experience and reflect on what this poem and its discussion reveals to them about reading and writing.
2. Students view the TED talk, ‘[Where does creativity hide](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_tan_on_creativity)?’ What does Amy Tan say about what made her a writer: nature, nurture or something else? Some writers might start with an idea they would like to communicate then set about realising that idea in their writing; how does Amy Tan proceed differently in her writing? Explain what Tan means when she says: ‘It is no longer my book – it is in the hands of my readers’. Students reflect on how effective Amy Tan’s presentation is and why.
 | *Reading Fictions,* Bronwyn Mellor, Annette Patterson and Marnie O’Neill, Chalkface Press, 1991*The Little Green Grammar Book*, Mark Tredinnick, University of NSW Press, 2008*Steps in process writing: Writing from Start to Finish: a Six-Step Guide*, Kate Grenville, Allen and Unwin, 2002*The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Chris Baldick, Oxford, 2008‘Acknowledging Sources’, Module 2 in NESA, [All My Own Work](http://amow.bostes.nsw.edu.au/) Sydney University websiteCiting tool: [*Cite This for Me*](http://www.citethisforme.com/) <http://www.citethisforme.com/help>See ‘Authority’ at [English Textual Concepts](http://englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/) website: <http://englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/>‘Introduction to Poetry’, Billy Collins, published in *The Apple That Astonished Paris* (1996). Available on [Poetry Foundation.](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/)<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/>‘Where does creativity hide?’, TED talk by Amy Tan at [Where does creativity hide?](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_tan_on_creativity)<https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_tan_on_creativity> |
| **EA11-3** analyses and uses language forms, features and structures of texts considering appropriateness for specific purposes, audiences and contexts and evaluates their effects on meaning* engage with complex texts to understand and appreciate the power of language in shaping meaning
* use appropriate language for making connections, questioning, affirming, challenging and speculating about texts with increasing clarity

**EA11-1** responds to, composes and evaluates complex texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure* explain the personal, social, historical and cultural contexts of composing and responding, and evaluate how these contexts impact on meaning
* develop independent interpretations of texts supported by informed observation and close textual analysis (ACELR045)

**EA11-7** evaluates the diverse ways texts can represent personal and public worlds and recognises how they are valued* understand that texts offer vicarious experiences of the wider world for critical reflection and pleasure (ACELR015)
* analyse the diverse ways in which imaginative, informative and persuasive texts can explore human experience, universal themes and social, cultural and historical contexts

**EA11-1** responds to, composes and evaluates complex texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure* explain how various language features, for example figurative, grammatical and multimodal elements create particular effects in texts and use these for specific purposes
* develop independent interpretations of texts supported by informed observation and close textual analysis (ACELR045)

**EA11-5** thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically to respond to, evaluate and compose texts that synthesise complex information, ideas and arguments * investigate, reflect on and explain differences between initial personal responses and more studied and complex responses (ACELR003)
* synthesise complex ideas and information in a sustained, structured argument using relevant textual evidence (ACELR011)
 | **Engaging with and understanding *The Great Gatsby***Ongoing assessment for learning will determine the selection of activities and the time spent on this section of the unit.1. Students read the start of Chapter 3 in *The Great Gatsby*, from ‘There was music…’ (p 41 in the 2008 Penguin Books edition) to ‘The party had begun.’ (p 42) and answer these questions:
	* Why are the gardens described as ‘blue’? A colour is used in an unusual way at another point in the extract. Quote the relevant phrase and comment on its use. Why is there so much reference to colour in the passage?
	* The partygoers are ‘like moths’ (simile) and the station wagon used to transport them is described as ‘a brisk yellow bug’ (metaphor). Is there any significance in the use of such figurative language?
	* Notice the use of hyperbole (eg ‘motor-boats … drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam’. Find one other example of hyperbole. Why is hyperbole so appropriate here?
	* Comment on the unusual diction in the sentence which describes the food: ‘glistening’, ‘crowded’, ‘harlequin’ and ‘bewitched’.
	* Why is the brass rail described as ‘real’? Later when you read the novel you will come across other situations where the authenticity of Gatsby’s possessions is verified. What does this suggest about Gatsby? What does it suggest about his ‘guests’?
	* Explain the meaning of the phrase, ‘casual innuendo’.
	* Comment on the ironic implication of ‘enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other’s names’.
	* Comment on the imagery suggested in the sentence: ‘Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word’.
	* What is the meaning of the word ‘sea-change’? What is its origin? What is the effect of its use here?
	* Can you explain why our attention is brought to the fact that ‘the earth lurches away from the sun’? Notice also the reference to ‘stars’ in the first paragraph.
	* Comment on the final sentence of the extract: ‘The party has begun.’
	* What sort of sentence construction characterises the extract? Hint: note the number of ‘and’s. Why are such sentences appropriate?
	* How does tense change during the extract? This is normally a fault in writing. What is its effect here?
	* Do you notice any other changes or developments in the extract?
	* What does the close study of this extract reveal about F. Scott Fitzgerald’s style as a writer?
	* Can you predict what ideas and themes raised in this extract might be further developed in the novel? Justify your predictions.
	* How can the close study of an extract enrich the experience of the whole text?
2. Students read the novel from start to finish. Keep a reading log to reflect on:
* What they are learning about Gatsby as a character
* Examples of, and comments about, Fitzgerald’s style as a writer
* Their emerging reading of the novel, justified by close reference to the text.

Some of the activities below can also be undertaken while students are reading the novel.1. Invent two or more guests for one of Gatsby’s parties. Write a dialogue between these two people. Try to capture the authentic voices of the characters and develop ideas or themes raised in the novel. Intersperse the dialogue with appropriate narrative. Read and share these dialogues and discuss whether students have successfully imitated Fitzgerald’s style or whether they have brought their own style to the exercise.
2. Students develop their understanding of the context of the novel, the ‘Roaring Twenties’, or the ‘Jazz Age’. After reading the novel, discuss whether Fitzgerald reflects the thinking of his age in the novel or whether he positions himself against it.
3. The events in Chapter 7 occur at the ‘crossroads’ of the novel. Draw and label a diagram to represent the important events in this chapter.
4. Draw a graph showing the rise and fall of tension across the nine chapters. Label the graph with important events. Indicate the stages in the structure of the novel: exposition, rising tension, climax and resolution.
5. Identify the main settings of the novel:
	* The Buchanans’ house at East Egg (pp12–13)
	* The ‘valley of ashes’ (pp 26–7)
	* Gatsby’s place at West Egg (eg when Gatsby shows Daisy around, pp 87–9)

Discuss the ways in which each setting is presented.East Egg and West Egg are both wealthy areas, but how are they different? Why is the difference important in the novel?How is each setting important to the novel?1. Study of character:
* Identify the seven main characters in the novel.
* Draw a character web indicating the connections between these characters.
* Discuss these criteria of successful characterisation:
	+ convincingly ‘human’: neither all good nor all bad; not always predictable, but true to nature; three-dimensional, not stereotyped or flat
	+ unique and interesting aspects to character
	+ changes or develops in response to events and other characters
	+ revealed not only by description, but also dialogue and action.

Reflect on this criteria in relation to characters encountered in other texts students have read.* Consider the characterisation of Gatsby against these criteria:
	+ an unusual but convincingly human character, consisting of extraordinary qualities (wealth, generosity, ‘gift for hope’, imagination) and ordinary human qualities (corruptibility, humble origins, friendliness, sincerity)
	+ revealed in stages by various means: eg Nick speaks in favour of Gatsby while reminiscing (p 8); description of Gatsby’s house (p 11); Gatsby is mentioned when Nick visits Daisy and Tom (p 16); Nick spies Gatsby in the ‘unquiet darkness’, staring at a green light across the harbour (p 25); rumour about Gatsby at Myrtle’s party (pp 34-5); Gatsby’s party described, Nick and Jordan look unsuccessfully for Gatsby, more rumours about Gatsby (p 41ff); Gatsby finally appears, almost a third of the way through the novel (p 51); we learn about Gatsby’s past by stories he tells Nick, the story told indirectly to Nick through Jordan, snippets thrown in by Wolfsheim, the argument at the New York hotel about whether he went to Oxford, Mr Gatz showing Nick notes Gatsby wrote as a boy in a copy of *Hopalong Cassidy*.
	+ changes or develops as novel progresses. Students could represent this diagrammatically, for example:
* complex figure: like Nick, most readers will probably both approve and disapprove of Gatsby; the appellation ‘great’ is both ironic and true.
* Teachers divide class into 6 groups. Allocate one of the other main characters to each of these groups. Use the criteria above to assess the success of the characterisation. What role does the character play in the novel? Each group reports back to the class. Students take notes and ask questions as appropriate.
1. How would you describe Fitzgerald’s style as a writer? Identify key markers of his style and find examples from the text to illustrate these markers.
2. Read carefully the passage commencing with ‘Gatsby’s house was still empty when I left…’ (p 170) to the end of the novel. Write an essay discussing the ideas in this extract and evaluating how Fitzgerald uses the resources of language to present those ideas. What is the significance of this passage for the novel as a whole? Refer back to the close study of the extract about Gatsby’s party in Chapter 3 to help you in your analysis of this passage.
 | *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Penguin Books, UK, 2008 (page references throughout this unit refer to this edition) |
| **EA11-1** responds to, composes and evaluates complex texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure* explain the relationship between responder, composer, text and context
* analyse the ways language features, text structures and stylistic choices shape ideas and perspectives and influence audiences (ACEEN024)
* develop independent interpretations of texts supported by informed observation and close textual analysis (ACELR045)

**EA11-8** explains and evaluates cultural assumptions and values in texts and their effects on meaning* explain and evaluate whether their own perspectives and values align with the perspectives and values expressed in texts (ACELR039)

**EA11-9** reflects on, evaluates and monitors own learning and adjusts individual and collaborative processes to develop as an independent learner* reflect on and discuss personal preferences and insights gained from engagement with an increasingly wide repertoire of complex texts

**EA11-5** thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically to respond to, evaluate and compose texts that synthesise complex information, ideas and arguments* evaluate the effectiveness of argument to persuade an audience in a range of complex critical and creative texts
 | **Critical perspectives on *The Great Gatsby***1. Students read and discuss the two personal response essays, ‘[Schulz: why I despise *The Great Gatsby’*](http://www.vulture.com/2013/05/schulz-on-the-great-gatsby.html) and ‘[Jay McInerney: Why Gatsby is so great’](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jun/10/great-gatsby-fitzgerald-jay-mcinerney).
	* Examine the reasons why Schulz dislikes the novel.
	* Does she have anything positive to say?
	* Examine the reasons why McInerney likes the novel.
	* Does he have anything negative to say?
	* How can you explain how two seemingly intelligent people could come to two such opposing views of the novel?
2. Students read the essay ‘Gatsby’s Glasses’ by Siri Hustveddt and discuss how they can use others’ critical responses to sharpen their own personal response to the text. Students answer the following questions to help them engage with the ideas in this more challenging critical response and to help develop their own thinking about the novel.
	* According to the writer, how has her context shaped her response to the novel?
	* Consider how your context might shape your response to the novel.
	* The writer tells us that Fitzgerald originally wrote the novel in the third person, but later added the layer of Nick’s first-person narration. What, according to the writer, is the effect of that first-person narration?
	* Do you think the novel is better/different for its first-person narration? How does this narrative technique affect your response to the novel?
	* The writer says: ‘Things and nothings. Bodies and nobodies. The ground and the air. The tangible and the intangible. The novel moves restlessly between these dichotomies.’ Later she adds the tension between illusion and reality. What does she mean? What is a dichotomy? Why do so many literary texts work with similar dichotomies of idea?
	* Do you agree with her view? Do you think this ambivalence, this tension between opposites, adds to or detracts from the power of the novel?
	* The writer refers at length to the motif of seeing: Nick as witness to the highly staged meeting between Gatsby and Daisy, the all-seeing eyes of TJ Eckleburg staring out from a billboard, the bespectacled ‘owl-eyed man’ who haunts Gatsby’s house and attends his funeral, Nick as narrator serving as our eyes on events and characters in the novel, including events he did not actually witness. What point is she making?
	* What do you think is the effect of this motif of seeing? Are there any other motifs important in the novel? Hint: consider the many references to cars and the crucial role they play in the novel.
3. Students independently identify and read one other essay or chapter from a book providing critical response to *The Great Gatsby* and complete the following tasks:
	* Write a summary of the main ideas in this response.
	* Identify three ideas that you found personally interesting and explain why you found each of interest. Note that these might be ideas with which you agreed or disagreed.
	* To what extent did this response affirm or challenge your own ideas? Justify your answer.
4. Students consider all four critical responses to *The Great Gatsby* that they have read. And explore how the composers have used language and the essay format to effectively express their thinking? Working in groups, students identify and annotate the successful features of particular essays. They then incorporate some of these features in the writing task below.
5. Students begin to develop their own essay:
	* What did you like about the novel? In your opinion, what aspects of the novel succeed?
	* What did you dislike about it? In your opinion, what aspects of the novel are unsuccessful?
	* What is your overall view?
	* Compile your ideas into a personal, critical response. In your essay, make passing comments about the views of other critics. Ensure that references to the work of others are footnoted and that a bibliography is added at the end of your essay.
 | ‘[Schulz: why I despise The Great Gatsby’,](http://www.vulture.com/2013/05/schulz-on-the-great-gatsby.html) essay by Kathryn Schulz, *Vulture*, 6 May 2013 <http://www.vulture.com/2013/05/schulz-on-the-great-gatsby.html>‘Jay McInerney: [Why *Gatsby* is so great’](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jun/10/great-gatsby-fitzgerald-jay-mcinerney), essay by Jay McInerney, *The Guardian*, 22 June 2010 <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jun/10/great-gatsby-fitzgerald-jay-mcinerney>‘Gatsby’s Glasses’, essay by Siri Hustvedt in *A Plea for Eros*, Picador, 2005 |
| **EA11-1** responds to, composes and evaluates complex texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasureStudents:* analyse and explain how and why texts influence and position readers and viewers (ACEEN040)
* analyse the ways language features, text structures and stylistic choices shape ideas and perspectives and influence audiences (ACEEN024)
* explain how various language features, for example figurative, grammatical and multimodal elements create particular effects in texts and use these for specific purposes
* develop independent interpretations of texts supported by informed observation and close textual analysis (ACELR045)

**EA11-2** uses and evaluates processes, skills and knowledge required to effectively respond to and compose texts in different modes, media and technologiesStudents:* examine the ways composers (authors, poets, playwrights, directors, designers and so on) apply textual conventions to shape meaning in different modes, media and technologies
* explore the ways different media and technologies influence the relationships between texts and responders (readers. listeners, viewers or audiences and so on), for example flexible reading pathways in digital texts

**EA11-5** thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically to respond to, evaluate and compose texts that synthesise complex information, ideas and argumentsStudents:* explain how text structures, language features and stylistic choices, for example metaphor, provide a framework for audience expectations, responses and interpretations of texts (ACELR023)
* synthesise complex ideas and information in a sustained, structured argument using relevant textual evidence (ACELR011)
 | **Exploring textual forms: adaptations of *The Great Gatsby***1. Teachers review the notion of adaptation, part of the larger concept of intertextuality.
2. Students view the film trailers for two film versions of *The Great Gatsby*: 1974 film directed by Jack Clayton and 2012 film directed by Baz Luhrmann. They discuss how film versions of novels can be considered as readings of the text by considering the following:
* Judging by the film trailer, what reading of *The Great Gatsby* does [Clayton’s 1974](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCgn5fDZSBk) film present?
* Do you think the text justifies Clayton’s reading? Or have aspects of the text been overlooked?
* How are camera shots and angles, composition, sharpness of focus, mise-en-scène, music, voice-over and captions used to suggest Clayton’s reading?
* Judging by the film trailer, what reading of *The Great Gatsby* does [Luhrmann’s 2012](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rARN6agiW7odirected) film present?
* Do you think the text justifies Luhrmann’s reading? Or have aspects of the text been overlooked?
* How are camera shots and angles, composition, sharpness of focus, mise-en-scène, music, voice-over and captions used to suggest Luhrmann’s reading?
* How can you explain such different readings of the film? Consider the contexts of the two films.
1. Students read the graphic novel adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, by Nicki Greenburg. Like any film adaptation, Greenburg’s work also presents a reading of the original text.
* Greenburg’s graphic novel necessarily streamlines, and makes minor changes to, the original text. Why has Greenburg tried to include as much as possible of the original text?
* Comment on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the cartoon representations of the characters from the novel.
* Comment on how Greenburg organises the frames to create particular moods and effects.
* What is the effect of using a sepia wash and old-fashioned photo frames?
* Do you think Greenburg presents a particular reading through her graphic novel?
1. Students choose a key scene from *The Great Gatsby*, eg:
* Gatsby shows Daisy his house – end of Chapter 5
* The scene at the Plaza Hotel – Chapter 7
* Myrtle Wilson killed in a hit and run – Chapter 7
* Gatsby’s murder – Chapter 9

Students compare the ways in which the novel, the graphic novel and one film version present this scene. To what extent can the differences between the original text and adaptations be explained by the composers using different media and forms? To what extent can differences be explained by composers of adaptations representing different readings of the original text? | See ‘intertextuality’ at the English Textual Concepts <http://englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/>Film trailer for [*The Great Gatsby*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCgn5fDZSBk), directed by Jack Clayton, 1974:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCgn5fDZSBk>Film trailer for [*The Great Gatsby*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rARN6agiW7o), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rARN6agiW7odirected> by Baz Luhrmann, 2012 *The Great Gatsby: a graphic novel adaptation* by Nicki Greenburg, Allen and Unwin, Australia, 2007 |
| **EA11-1** responds to, composes and evaluates complex texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure* appreciate the aesthetic qualities of texts and the power of language to express personal ideas and experiences
* explain the personal, social, historical and cultural contexts of composing and responding, and evaluate how these contexts impact on meaning

**EA11-6** investigates and evaluates the relationships between texts* examine how texts in different literary forms, media or traditions are similar or different (ACELR055)
* investigate similarities and differences between and among texts that may be linked by form, perspective or genre

**EA11-5** thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically to respond to, evaluate and compose texts that synthesise complex information, ideas and arguments* compare the ways texts may be composed and responded to in different contexts and how this influences meaning

**EA11-7** evaluates the diverse ways texts can represent personal and public worlds and recognises how they are valued* appreciate the different ways in which a text can be valued, for example for its themes, aesthetic qualities or representation of cultures
* analyse the diverse ways in which imaginative, informative and persuasive texts can explore human experience, universal themes and social, cultural and historical contexts
* analyse how and why perspectives are represented differently in a range of complex texts
* compose creative and critical texts that reflect particular values and perspectives, including their own

**EA11-4** strategically uses knowledge, skills and understanding of language concepts and literary devices in new and different contexts* compare and evaluate specific uses of language in a range of textual forms

**EA11-5** thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically to respond to, evaluate and compose texts that synthesise complex information, ideas and argumentsStudents:* examine different points of view represented in texts, for example those of characters, narrators and the implied author, and the ways in which these points of view are created (ACELR006)
* select and use particular aspects of language, style and convention, for example narrative point of view, syntax, modality and nominalisation
 | **Exploring connections between and among texts: theme and representation**1. One theme commonly identified in *The Great Gatsby* is lofty dreams beset by harsh reality. Students use the page references to add detailed notes to the following outline of this thematic development in the novel:
	* The reality of a hard, ugly, sterile world:
* the ‘valley of the ashes’ (pp 26–7)
* the cool, impersonal, inconsequential world of the Buchanans (p 17).
* The individual aspires to rise above the reality to achieve some grand, romantic vision:
	+ - the story of Gatsby (pp 94–7, 106–7, 141–5, 159–60)
		- Daisy momentarily caught up in the power of his dream (p 86)
		- the mythical significance of Gatsby’s dream (pp171–2), instinctively realised by Nick (pp 92–3)
		- contrast with the nightmarish vision of Tom (p18)
		- ironic parallel with the dreams of Myrtle Wilson (p 38) and George Wilson (p 118).
	+ Ironically the individual’s dream for the future is often based on the past, which can never be successfully recreated, and is therefore doomed to failure from the start:
		- Nick earlier senses the intrinsic failure of Gatsby’s dream (p 56)
		- Gatsby’s death (p 156)
		- atmosphere of decay, defeat and depression (pp 170–1)
		- Nick retreats to the substantial ordinariness of the West (p 167)
		- journey towards death (pp 145–6).
	+ Although the individual may fail in the pursuit of the dream, there is nevertheless something magnificent, heroic and life-affirming in the attempt:
		- ‘extraordinary gift of hope’ (p 8)
		- ‘incorruptible dream’ (p 147)
		- inevitability and universality of the struggle against the march of time, reality, death (p 172).
1. The dichotomy of dreams and reality has preoccupied many composers. Students explore a range of these texts, noting the variety of ways in which composers represent these ideas, depending in part on the medium, mode and form of the text. Note also for each text the importance of context in shaping the particular perspective of dreams and reality presented in each text. Students develop a set of concise notes for each of the texts studied using a table with the following headings:
* Text
* What does text say about dreams and reality?
* How does composer represent ideas about dreams and reality in text?
* To what extent are choices about ways of representing ideas about dreams and reality influenced by medium, mode and form?
* To what extent has context shaped the particular perspective of dreams and reality presented in text?
1. Students write an essay evaluating and comparing the ways in which different composers represent ideas about dreams and reality. In your essay refer to *The Great Gatsby* and two other texts.
2. Some critics who have identified the dichotomy between dreams and reality in *The Great Gatsby* focus on ‘the American Dream’ in particular. The following questions can be used for class discussion and/or writing:
* What is the American Dream? Where did this notion originate?
* How is the American Dream expressed in *The Great Gatsby*? What is Fitzgerald saying about the American Dream in his novel?
* Compare Fitzgerald’s treatment of the American Dream with the way in which one other composer, such as Arthur Miller in his play *Death of a Salesman* or John Steinbeck in his novella *Of Mice and Men*, deals with the American Dream.
* Who famously declared in 2015, and again in 2016: ‘The American Dream is dead!’? Why, according to this person, is the American Dream dead? Why was this pronouncement significant? View Noam Chomsky’s documentary *Requiem for the American Dream*. Does Chomsky, a noted social analyst and intellectual, have a different explanation for the demise of the American Dream? If they were alive today, what might Fitzgerald, Miller and Steinbeck have to say about this development?
* As new and rising nations, burgeoning particularly in the twentieth century,the USA and Australia share a similar social history. Not surprisingly, we have our own version of the American Dream: the Australian Dream. Is the Australian Dream the same as the American Dream?
* The Australian Dream has been a preoccupation of many Australian writers, including Ray Lawler, whose play *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* is on the prescribed list for 2019–2022. Consider how one other Australian composer deals with the notion of the Australian Dream, eg Alex Buzo in *Rooted* or Katherine Thomson in *Diving for Pearls*. Compare the composer’s treatment of the Australian Dream with the way in which Fitzgerald deals with the American Dream in *The Great Gatsby*.
* Has the Australian Dream experienced a recent demise, like some claim has been the fate of the American Dream?
1. Other, possibly more resistant, readings of *The Great Gatsby* focus on issues of class or women. What does the novel have to say on these issues?
2. Look back over the notes in your reading log and your responses to the questions above. What is your reading of *The Great Gatsby*? Explain why you accept or reject the various readings of others you have encountered in this unit. Justify your reading with close reference to the text.
 | Examples of texts dealing with the dichotomy of dreams and reality and/or the American Dream:Mercutio’s Queen Mab speech from Act 1 Scene 4 of *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare*Death of a Salesman*, a play by Arthur Miller, Penguin, UK, 1987‘[I have a dream’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vDWWy4CMhE), a speech by Martin Luther King. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vDWWy4CMhE>‘[Amelia’,](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcTDoi9JQiY) a song by Joni Mitchell from *Hejira*, 1976, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcTDoi9JQiY>*Of Mice and Men*, a novel by John Steinbeck, Penguin Books, UK, 2006*Of Mice and Men*, a film directed by Gary Sinise, based on the novel by John Steinbeck*Death of a Salesman, a play* by Arthur Miller, Penguin Classics, UK, 2000R*equiem for the American Dream*, a documentary by Noam Chomsky, 2016*Rooted* a play by Alex Buzo, Currency Press, Australia, 1973*Diving for Pearls*, a play by Katherine Thomson, Currency Press, Australia, 1991 |
| **EA11-3** analyses and uses language forms, features and structures of texts considering appropriateness for specific purposes, audiences and contexts and evaluates their effects on meaning* use appropriate language for making connections, questioning, affirming, challenging and speculating about texts with increasing clarity

**EA11-4** strategically uses knowledge, skills and understanding of language concepts and literary devices in new and different contexts* understand that significant language concepts may operate across different textual forms, for example narrative and point of view in speeches, documentaries and poems

**EA11-6** investigates and evaluates the relationships between texts* examine how texts in different literary forms, media or traditions are similar or different (ACELR055)

**EA11-5** thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically to respond to, evaluate and compose texts that synthesise complex information, ideas and arguments* synthesise complex ideas and information in a sustained, structured argument using relevant textual evidence (ACELR011)
 | **Exploring connections between texts: point of view**1. Teachers lead a discussion about the notion of ‘point of view’. Distinguish from ‘perspective’: perspective is a way of *thinking* that exists *outside* of the text; point of view is a way of *looking* created *in* a text by a composer. A point of view might, or might not be, a representation of a composer’s perspective. A text can include more than one point of view.
2. Fitzgerald originally wrote *The Great Gatsby* in third person, then later changed the narrative technique to first person. Students speculate on why he made this choice. Who is the ‘I’ in the novel?
* What do we learn about Nick through the course of the novel?
* What values are reflected in his thoughts, words and actions?
* To what extent is he a reliable narrator?
* Notice that Nick is a detached and ironic observer of people and events at the start of the novel, but becomes increasingly subjective and judgemental towards the end. What causes this change? Find examples of these different roles he plays as the narrator the novel.
* What judgements does Nick make by the end of the novel about Gatsby, on the one hand, and everyone else, including the Buchanans and Jordan Baker, on the other? Why does Fitzgerald want us to be convinced by these judgements?
* Some have argued that Nick is as much the main character of the novel as Gatsby. What do you think?
* What is the impact for readers of seeing characters and events from the point of view of Nick?
* Does Nick’s point of view enhance the experience of the novel?
1. Students choose a scene from the novel and rewrite in third person or from the point of view of another character. Discuss how changing narrative technique affects the meaning and impact of the scene.
2. Students explore the variety of ways in which composers present point of view in texts. Note that in some texts more than one point of view is presented. For each text assess how choices about point of view affect the meaning and impact of the text. Students compile concise notes in the form of a table using the following headings:
* Text
* What point of view is presented? Note there may be more than one.
* How does point of view affect the meaning of the text?
* How does point of view affect the impact of the text?
1. Students write an essay evaluating and comparing the ways in which composers use point of view to shape the meaning and impact of their texts. Refer to *The Great Gatsby* and two other texts.
 | See ‘Point of view’ at the [English textual concepts](http://www.englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/) website: <http://englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/>Examples of texts demonstrating variety in composer’s use of point of view:Soliloquies from *Macbeth*, eg Lady Macbeth’s soliloquy ‘The raven himself is hoarse…’ from Act 1 Scene 5 and Macbeth’s soliloquy ‘Is this a dagger I see before me…’ from Act 2 Scene 1 (available in many editions)Chapters 1–3 of *Wuthering Heights*, by Emily Bronte, Penguin Classics, UK, 2009Dramatic monologues in poetic form by Robert Browning, eg ‘Porphyria’s Lover’ and ‘My Last Duchess’, from *Robert Browning: Selected Poems*, Penguin Classics, UK, 2013‘Enter Without So Much as Knocking’, ‘And a Good Friday Was Had By All’ and ‘A Victorian Hangman Tells His Love’, poems by Bruce Dawe found in *Sometimes Gladness: Collected Poems 1954-1982*, Longman Cheshire, Australia,1983 *Witness*, film directed by Peter Weir, 1985‘Rumi’, poem by Ali Alizadeh\*‘Soft Riots / TV News’, poem by Richard Tipping\* |
| **EA11-9** reflects on, evaluates and monitors own learning and adjusts individual and collaborative processes to develop as an independent learnerStudents:* reflect on and discuss personal preferences and insights gained from engagement with an increasingly wide repertoire of complex texts
* articulate and discuss the pleasures and difficulties, successes and challenges experienced in independent and collaborative work, and establish improved practices
 | **Student reflection and evaluation**1. Students reflect on learning by answering the following questions:
* What reading experience have you enjoyed most in this unit of work? Why did you enjoy it?
* What writing experience have you enjoyed most in this unit of work? Why did you enjoy it?
* What did you learn about reading in this unit of work?
* What did you learn about writing in this unit of work?
1. Students evaluation their learning by answering the following questions:
* In what aspects of reading have you improved in this unit of work?
* In what aspects of writing have you improved in this unit of work?
* What will you do to further improve your reading?
* What will you do to further improve your writing?
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