English Stage 5 (Year 9) – sample assessment notification

Exploring the speculative – feature article – Term 4

This document contains a sample assessment notification and a student work sample. This accompanies the teaching and learning program ‘Exploring the speculative’.

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**Updating the table of contents**

Want to update the table? Have you added content to the document and noticed the page numbers have changed? As you add content to this report, you can update the table of contents to accurately reflect the page numbers within the resource. To update the table:

* Right click on the table and select ‘Update table of contents’ (in the browser version)
* ‘Update field’ (in the desktop app). In the browser version, it will automatically update the entire table. In the desktop app, you will then need to select ‘Update entire table’. Your table numbers should then update to reflect your changes.

# About this resource

This sample assessment notification has been developed to assist teachers in NSW Department of Education schools to create and deliver assessment practices that are contextualised to their classroom. It is designed as an example of how the [English K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview)(NESA 2022) could be implemented.

The content has been prepared by the English curriculum team, unless otherwise credited.

## Purpose of resource

This document is not a standalone resource. It has been designed for use by teachers in connection to the program ‘Exploring the speculative’ and the accompanying resources, including the teaching and learning program and resource booklet. The sample notification and student work sample are intended to support teachers to develop a consistent approach to formal assessment notifications, guide interpretation of the syllabus and provide a model of syllabus-aligned assessment practice.

It is acknowledged that many schools have their own assessment templates. The content from the heading ‘Exploring the speculative feature to the heading ‘Student support material’ is student facing and could be copied and pasted into the school’s assessment template.

**Teacher note**: the text in the blue feature boxes are instructions for the classroom teacher engaging with the resource. This should be deleted by the teacher before issuing the assessment to students.

## Target audience

A combination of teacher and student information is contained in this resource. The purpose of the content intended for teachers is educative. This is intended to support the teacher and their practice as they design formal assessment task notifications. Teachers must ensure they omit or delete information that is not relevant to students prior to distribution. Instructions have been provided throughout this template to indicate where this may be necessary.

## When and how to use

This assessment notification has been designed for Term 4 of Year 9. It provides opportunities for students to engage critically and creatively with one or more texts. Students are provided with the opportunity to explore how composers of speculative fiction use their texts to comment on real world concerns. The task and sample provide an opportunity for modelled and guided co-construction of discursive writing.

In the program ‘Exploring the speculative’, students will deepen their understanding of the way in which the speculative fiction genre evolves in response to contextual real-world concerns. Students will explore how elements of genre can shape the way ideals and values are represented and perceived. This assessment task supports students in their exploration of the varied impacts that texts within the speculative fiction genre can have on responders.

## Opportunities for collaboration

The following is an outline of some of the ways this sample assessment notification can be used with colleagues:

* The task and student sample provide an opportunity for modelled and guided co-construction of faculty assessment documents.
* Use the student response as an example and model of how to achieve success. Make modifications to the model to reflect contextual needs. This can take place prior to students beginning their own compositional process and as a feedback opportunity, to refine compositions as they engage with the task.
* Examine the sample assessment and student sample (in this document) during faculty meetings or planning days and collaboratively refine them based on faculty or school goals.
* Examine the materials during faculty meetings or planning days and collaboratively plan opportunities for team teaching, collaborative resource development, mentoring, lesson observation and the sharing of student samples.
* Use the example as inspiration for designing student-specific tasks.
* Use the assessment practices or syllabus planning as an opportunity to backward map years 10–7 to guide programming, assessment design or the scope and sequence.

# Exploring the speculative – feature article

In this program, you will engage with a range of texts which use the conventions of speculative fiction to comment on real world concerns. You will explore the ways in which complex ideas and multiple meanings are shaped in and through these texts, and the potential impacts on readers.

## Task overview

**Teacher note**: the annotations column has been provided to assist assessment design. This column is for the teacher only and should be deleted prior to distributing the assessment notification to students.

**S**tudents will have studied a range of speculative fiction texts and had the opportunity to compose discursive, analytical, creative and persuasive responses prior to this task. They will have also engaged with supplementary materials, including feature articles, which will help them structure their own feature article.

The task overview provides a concise description of key information about the assessment.

Table 1 **–** overview of the assessment task

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year 9 – English | Task details | Annotations |
| Task number | 4 | [Task number – ensure this reflects the chronological order outlined within the scope and sequence and the assessment schedule.] |
| Issue date | Term 4, Week 1, 2023 (last lesson of the week – indicative only) | [Issue and date – state the day and date the assessment is issued.] |
| Due date | Term 4, Week 6, 2023 (final lesson of the week – indicative only) | [Due date – state the day and date the assessment is due. The [timing, frequency and nature of assessment processes should be time efficient and manageable for teachers and students](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0290#:~:text=the%20timing%2C%20frequency%20and%20nature%20of%20the%20assessment%20processes%20are%20time%20efficient%20and%20manageable%20for%20teachers%20and%20students.). Issue the task early in the program so students can make connections and seek clarification as they progress through their learning. The NESA [Developing formal school-based assessment programs in Stage 6](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/Understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/assessment-in-practice/school-based-assessment-programs) information provides useful guidance for schools implementing formal assessment procedures in Stage 4 and Stage 5.] |
| Outcomes being assessed | **EN5-RVL-01**: reading, viewing and listening for meaning  **EN5-URC-01: genre**  **EN5-ECA-01**: writing; text features; sentence-level grammar and punctuation; word-level language | [Ensure details align with the scope and sequence, assessment schedule and any details that have been provided to students in the school’s assessment handbook.] |
| Weighting | 25% (indicative only) | [Where applicable, ensure details align with the scope and sequence, assessment schedule and any details that have been provided to students in the school’s assessment handbook.] |
| Submission details | Feature article (600–800 words) | [Be specific about the process for submission and parameters for the task. This includes:   * where the task will be submitted * word and time limits * any additional information in accordance with school assessment policy.] |

# Task description

**Teacher note**: provide a short description of the task. This description should be written in plain English. It should include a clear outline of the audience, purpose and context of the task. This helps students understand appropriate style, form, and the necessary language, forms and features required. This advice can be customised at a school level.

Supplementary information can be provided later in the document. This reduces the cognitive load experienced while using the notification. The assessment should align with NESA’s [Assessment Principles](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/assessment-principles) and provide clear opportunities for teachers to gather evidence about student achievement in relation to syllabus outcomes.

## The context of the task

**Teacher note**: the word limit of 600 to 800 words should be adjusted depending on the context of the class. Similarly, the number of texts to be referenced in the feature article may be adjusted depending on the context of the class.

‘The Speculator’ is an online publication targeted at young adult readers. ‘The Speculator’ website aims to generate discussion about all things speculative fiction. Articles published on this website explore the multiple layers of speculative fiction texts. In addition, they consider the place and purpose of speculative fiction in relation to the real world.

**Your task – feature article**

You have been invited to contribute a feature article for publication on ‘The Speculator’ website, focused on your study of speculative fiction this term. The article should provide readers with deeper insights into the impact of speculative fiction on audiences. The article should be between 600 to 800 words.

In your feature article, you should use examples from **at least one text** that you have studied this term to support your discussion of speculative fiction. You may also draw on examples from your own wide reading to support your discussion of the text(s) you have studied in class.

**Texts studied during Exploring the speculative**

**Teacher note: update the table below to reflect the texts that you have studied with your class.**

The texts you have studied this term are outlined in the table below.

Table 2 – core texts for Term 4

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Composer(s) | Text |
| Trent Jamieson and Rovina Cai | *The Giant and the Sea* |
| Lois Lowry | *The Giver* |
| Nicholas Verso and Sarah Hickey | *Crazy Fun Park* |

It is up to you to determine how you approach the prompt for the article, which is to provide readers with deeper insights into the impact of speculative fiction on audiences. However, in your contribution, you could discuss one or more of the following ideas:

* why speculative fiction is a popular genre
* how speculative fiction can be both comforting and confronting
* how speculative fiction allows audiences to reflect on or reconsider their real world
* how speculative fiction can impact or challenge personal values and beliefs
* what can be learned from reading speculative fiction
* how speculative fiction texts may have different impacts on different audiences
* another aspect of speculative fiction that has impacted on you as an audience.

In your feature article you should:

* use the structural conventions of a digital feature article, including a headline and byline, feature quotes, images and hyperlinks to other articles or sources
* use a discursive voice to explore your chosen issue(s) or idea(s)
* demonstrate an informed understanding of your chosen issue(s) or idea(s)
* use at least one text you have studied to support your discussion.

You should refer to the annotated sample response and the ‘Steps to success’ within this notification to support your approach to the task.

## What is the teacher looking for in this assessment task?

**Teacher note**: this outline uses the criteria points from the marking guidelines to articulate the skills and knowledge required to meet the requirements of this task. It highlights to students what is expected of the response.

The teacher is looking to see how well you:

* demonstrate an understanding of genre – how have you demonstrated insight into the impact of speculative fiction on audiences? (**EN5-URC-01**: Genre)
* use examples from text(s) to support discussion – how have the chosen text(s) developed understanding of the impact of the speculative fiction genre? (**EN5-RVL-01: Reading, viewing and listening for meaning**)
* craft an informed voice – how have you used language and stylistic features to engage your audience? (**EN5-ECA-01**: Writing; Text features)
* use language and structure appropriate to audience, purpose and form – how have you used the structural conventions of a feature article to communicate your ideas? (**EN5-ECA-01**: Writing; Sentence-level grammar and punctuation; Word-level language)

## Steps to success

**Teacher note:** this schedule is designed to support students to successfully complete the task and to support teachers in their monitoring of student progress. This schedule is not for the purposes of compliance and students should not be penalised for not meeting interim times. The second column could be:

* determined and refined by the teacher based on school context
* used to feed forward
* co-constructed with students.

Implementing the steps to success will support you to demonstrate your knowledge, skills and understanding and prompt you to seek support as it is needed. These steps also provide you with opportunities to receive feedback throughout the drafting and refining process.

Table 3 – assessment preparation schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Steps | What I need to do |
| Revisit the structural conventions of a feature article | Use **Phase 6, resource 1 – elements of a feature article** to build your understanding of how to write this type of text. You may also want to consider exploring the following resources:   * **Phase 6, activity 1 – feature article headlines** * [Morris Journalism Academy – How to write a feature article](https://morrisjournalismacademy.com/how-to-write-a-feature-article) * [The Guardian Foundation – What is a feature article?](https://theguardianfoundation.org/programmes/behind-the-headlines/secondary-teaching-resources/feature-and-opinion-writing) * [BBC Bitesize – Writing features, reviews and press releases](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zqt7k7h/revision/1)   Revisit **Core formative task 3 – response to characterisation, writing discursively**. Feature articles are typically discursive. Revising your work, feedback and the goals you set for this task may support you to develop an effective style for your feature article. |
| Engage with student work samples and annotated responses | Read the student work sample in this notification and the samples provided in **Phase 6, resource 3 – sample responses** and compare them to the marking criteria. Identify the strengths of the response and how you could demonstrate similar strengths in your response. Identify areas for improvement and how you could avoid having similar concerns in your response. |
| Re-engage with your chosen text(s) | Re-engage with your notes and analysis of your chosen text(s).   * Step 1 – re-read your text(s) and review your knowledge and understanding of the texts. * For *The Giant and the Sea,* use **Phase 2, activity 5a – modelled deconstruction of *The Giant and the Sea*, Phase 2, activity 5b – guided deconstruction of *The Giant and the Sea*, Phase 2, activity 5c – independent deconstruction of *The Giant and the Sea*** * **For *Crazy Fun Park*, use Phase 3a, activity 10 – symbol and metaphor in the core text, Phase 3a, activity 8 – the aesthetic qualities of *Crazy Fun Park*, Phase 3a, activity 17 – characters and values, Phase 3a, activity 20 – character archetypes, Phase 3a, activity 22 – character arcs, Phase 4a, activity 3 – viewing questions for episode 9 – ‘Stay’, Phase 4a, activity 4 – Chester's grief** * **For *The Giver,* use Phase 3b, activity 7 – the aesthetic qualities of** The Giver, **Phase 3b, activity 8 – analysing symbols, Phase 3b, activity 11 – characters and values, Phase 3b, activity 14 – character archetypes, Phase 3b, activity 16 – character arcs, Phase 4b, activity 3 – reading questions for Chapters 15 and 17.** * Step 2 – revisit the conventions of speculative fiction. Use **Phase 1, activity 9 – reading about the speculative fiction genre**, **Phase 1, activity 10 – conventions of speculative fiction**, **Phase 2, activity 4 – identifying conventions of speculative fiction (*The Giant and the Sea*), Phase 3a, activity 1 – genre and the core text (*Crazy Fun Park*),** and **Phase 3b, activity 1 – genre and the core text (*The Giver)***. * Step 3 – carefully consider how composers use speculative fiction to comment on real world concerns. * For *The Giant and the* Sea, use **Phase 2, activity 3 – identifying the themes in the picture book and Phase 2, activity 6 – identifying the audience and purpose** * For *Crazy Fun* Park, use **Phase 4a, activity 5 – authorial intent in *Crazy Fun Park,* Phase 4a, activity 6 – identifying thematic messages, Phase 4a, activity 7 – considering the audience, Phase 4a, activity 8 – connecting genre and theme and Phase 4a, resource 4 – additional thematic representations** * **For *The Giver*, use Phase 4b, activity 5 – authorial intent in** The Giver, **Phase 4b, activity 6 – identifying thematic messages, Phase 4b, activity 7 – considering the audience, Phase 4b, activity 8 – connecting genre and theme and Phase 4b, resource 5 – additional thematic representations.** |
| Engage in research | A key component of online feature articles is the inclusion of hyperlinks and references to other online articles and websites to support your ideas. Once you know what angle you are going to take in your feature article, consider what other online sources you may want to provide links to support your discussion. Use **Core formative task 4 – research task** and **Phase 6, resource 2 – how to hyperlink** to support your research. **Phase 1, activity 2 – Cornell note-taking method** and **Phase 1, activity 11 – researching sub-genres should help you to develop effective research skills.** |
| Draft your response | Complete the first draft of your feature article using **Phase 6, resource 1 – elements of a feature article to guide your structure**. Before the next step, you should proofread your work and fix any mistakes in spelling, grammar, punctuation and expression that you can identify. Use **Phase 6, activity 4 – self-feedback** to support you with this. |
| Seek feedback from peers | Engage in one or more peer feedback protocols as directed by your teacher. Suggested processes are located in **Phase 6, activity 5 – peer feedback**. |
| Action feedback | Revise your draft response using peer feedback. Make note of your refinement plans using **Phase 6, activity 6 – actioning feedback.** |
| Use the student-facing rubric to assess your response. | Reconsider the marking guidelines and identify areas of your response that may benefit from refinement. Edit your article accordingly. |
| Teacher conference and feedforward | Seek verbal feedback on the refined response. Complete **Phase 6, activity 7 – student-teacher conference** to structure this feedback and make final plans for refining your feature article. |
| Edit your response and submit | Action any feedback that you receive. Complete one final check for anything that could be improved before submitting your work. **Phase 6, activity 4 – self-feedback.** |

# Marking guidelines

The structure of the marking criteria depends on the requirements of the assessment task. Two marking criteria templates have been provided. This demonstrates the various approaches to marking criteria.

The following table contains sample language that may be useful in the composition of criteria for each grade. Each criterion would need to be refined to reflect the requirements of the outcomes. The language is reflective of the K–10 [Common Grade Scale](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/awarding-grades/common-grade-scale), syllabus outcomes and the English Stage 5 – Year 10 Record of School Achievement [Course performance descriptors](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/assessment#course-performance-descriptors-english_k_10_2022).

The K–10 [Common Grade Scale](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/awarding-grades/common-grade-scale) can be used to report student achievement in both primary and junior secondary years in all NSW schools. Teachers may find the language helpful when composing their own marking criteria.

The English Stage 5 – Year 10 Record of School Achievement [Course performance descriptors](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/assessment#course-performance-descriptors-english_k_10_2022) are used to ‘identify and report a student’s level of achievement in a Board Developed Course at the end of Stage 5’ (NESA 2022). Teachers may find the language and descriptions helpful interpretations of the holistic descriptions of the typical achievement at different grade levels in English.

## Marking criteria

Table 4 – marking criteria

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Marking guideline descriptors |
| A | * Discusses effectively the impact of speculative fiction on audiences * Uses well-selected evidence and examples from chosen text(s) to support perceptive discussion about speculative fiction * Crafts and sustains an informed voice that engages the reader through a wide range of language and stylistic choices * Demonstrates effective control of language and structure appropriate to audience, purpose and form |
| B | * Discusses competently the impact of speculative fiction on audiences * Uses appropriate evidence and examples from chosen text(s) to support thoughtful discussion about speculative fiction * Crafts an informed voice that engages the reader through a range of language and stylistic choices * Demonstrates consistent control of language and structural elements appropriate to audience, purpose and form |
| C | * Discusses the impact of speculative fiction on audiences * Uses evidence and examples from chosen text(s) to support discussion about speculative fiction * Creates a voice that uses some language and stylistic features * Demonstrates control of language and structural elements appropriate to audience, purpose and form |
| D | * Describes the impact of speculative fiction on audiences * Makes some connections to chosen text(s) * Attempts to create a voice that uses some language and/or stylistic features * Demonstrates varying control of language and structure |
| E | * Attempts to describe speculative fiction and/or texts * Elementary control of language and structure |

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## Student-facing rubric

The student-facing rubric is designed to provide context-specific explanations of the assessment marking criteria. This criteria uses student-friendly language and unpacks the specific knowledge, skill and understanding required when composing each component of the assessment. When teachers are providing feedback, they may make comments on the specific knowledge, skill or understanding that needs further development and methods for improvement.

Table 5 – student-facing rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | Extensive | Thorough | Sound | Basic | Elementary |
| Demonstrates an understanding of genre  You could do this by discussing:   * the role and purpose of the genre * the popularity of the genre * the impact of speculative fiction on audiences * ways that composers use the genre to communicate thematic messages about the real world. | You have identified and explored in detail specific impact(s) that speculative fiction can have on an audience. You make insightful connections between speculative fiction and real-world issues which demonstrate a perceptive awareness of the potential impacts of the genre. | You have identified and explored specific impact(s) that speculative fiction can have on an audience. You make thoughtful connections between speculative fiction and real-world issues which demonstrate an awareness of the potential impacts of the genre. | You have identified specific impact(s) that speculative fiction can have on an audience. You make connections between speculative fiction and real-world issues which demonstrate a developing awareness of the potential impacts of the genre. | You have attempted to identify specific impact(s) that speculative fiction can have on an audience and demonstrate some awareness of the role of genre. | You demonstrate some awareness of genre. |
| Use examples from the text(s) to support discussion  You could do this by:   * making references to the characters, setting or narrative * using direct examples from the text * making connections between the text and the real-world issues being represented. | You use well-chosen examples from your text(s) to support your discussion about speculative fiction. Your response consistently focuses on speculative fiction, and the textual examples further your exploration of the impact of the genre. | You use appropriate examples from your text(s) to support your discussion about speculative fiction. Your response focuses on speculative fiction, and the textual examples support your exploration of the impact of the genre. | You have used examples from your text(s) to support your ideas on speculative fiction. The textual examples are relevant to your exploration of the genre. | You have attempted to describe the impact of genre using examples to support your ideas. | Your response makes some reference to your text(s). |
| Craft an informed voice  You could do this by:   * using the stylistic features of discursive writing * drawing on research and evidence to support your discussion. | You have crafted language and stylistic features intentionally throughout your feature article to engage and entertain your readers. You sustain an informed personal voice which demonstrates evidence of effective research into speculative fiction and/or the real-world context that the text(s) represent. | You have crafted language and stylistic features consistently throughout your feature article to engage and entertain your readers. You maintain a clear personal voice which demonstrates evidence of competent research into speculative fiction and/or the real-world context that the text(s) represent. | You have used language and stylistic features throughout your feature article to orient and position your readers. You maintain a voice which demonstrates some evidence of research into speculative fiction and/or the real-world context that the text(s) represent. | You have attempted to use language and/or stylistic features in your feature article. You have demonstrated some evidence of research into speculative fiction and/or the real-world context that the text(s) represent. | You have attempted to create a response. |
| Use language and structure appropriate to audience, purpose and form  You could do this by:   * using the features of a feature article such as a headline, a subheading, images and feature quotes * using a range of paragraph and sentence structures * selecting technical and specific vocabulary. | Your response is sustained, and its structure allows your ideas to progress authentically. You have made purposeful vocabulary and sentence-level choices which communicate your ideas effectively to your reader. You demonstrate effective and consistent control of language throughout your response. | Your response is detailed and its structure allows your ideas to progress logically. You have made thoughtful vocabulary and sentence-level choices which communicate your ideas clearly to your reader. You demonstrate consistent control of language throughout your response. | Your response and its structure allow your ideas to progress clearly. You have applied vocabulary and sentence-level choices which communicate your ideas to your reader. You demonstrate control of language throughout your response. | Your response demonstrates an attempt to use structural features. You have made some vocabulary and sentence-level choices to communicate ideas to your reader. You demonstrate varying control of language throughout your response. | Your response demonstrates an attempt to use language and/or structural features with very limited control. |

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## Assessment policy

Assessment notifications should contain a reference to the school’s assessment policy and the relevant information or support. Schools may wish to include specific reminders on the assessment notification itself. Some relevant reminders are suggested below but this should be adjusted to reflect the context of your school. Schools may provide the administrative procedures associated with the following:

* late submission of tasks due to illness or misadventure
* malpractice
* invalid or unreliable tasks
* student appeals
* ‘N’ determinations (where appropriate).

Assessment notifications should contain a reference to the school’s assessment policy and the relevant information or support. Consult [ACE 4022](https://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au/ace-4022) for an overview of the Stage 5 assessment – tasks, programs and adjustments information.

# Student support material

This list should be adjusted by the teacher to reflect the resources and materials provided to the class. The list provided below reflects the resources, activities and core formative tasks provided within the resource booklet that would be useful for students as they refine their assessment submission.

You should refer to the following resources and activities to help you prepare for the assessment task:

* **activities and resources about understanding the assessment and marking criteria (Phase 2, activity 8 – engaging with the assessment task notification)**
* **activities that introduce and define speculative fiction (Phase 1, activity 9 – reading about the speculative fiction genre and Phase 1, activity 10 – conventions of speculative fiction)**
* **your own personal knowledge of texts from your own reading and viewing experiences**. Consider the text you shared as part of **Core formative task 2 – reflecting on self-selected texts** as a starting point
* information and activities about feature articles and discursive writing (**Phase 3a, resource 9 – What is discursive writing?**, **Phase 3a, activity 23 – comparing analytical and discursive writing**, **Phase 3b, resource 6 – What is discursive writing?**, **Phase 3b, activity 17 – comparing analytical and discursive writing,** **Core formative task 3 – response to characterisation, writing discursively**, **Phase 6, resource 1 – elements of a feature article**, **Phase 6, activity 1 – feature article headlines** and **Phase 6, resource 2 – how to hyperlink**)
* activities focused on the texts’ uses of characterisation, setting and narrative (useful resources and activities **include Phase 3a, activity 1 – genre and the core text**, **Phase 3a, resource 3 – narrative conventions in film**, **Phase 3a, activity 8 – the aesthetic qualities of *Crazy Fun Park***, **Phase 3a, activity 17 – characters and values**, **Phase 3b, activity 1 – genre and the core text**, **Phase 3b, resource 3 – narrative conventions in prose fiction**, **Phase 3b, activity 7 – the aesthetic qualities of *The Giver*** and **Phase 3b, activity 11 – characters and values**)
* activities focused on thematic messages and authorial intent (**Phase 2, activity 3 – identifying the themes in the picture book**, **Phase 2, activity 6 – identifying the audience and purpose**, **Phase 4a, activity 5 – authorial intent in *Crazy Fun Park***, **Phase 4a, activity 6 – identifying thematic messages**, **Phase 4a, activity 8 – connecting genre and theme**, **Phase 4b, activity 5 – authorial intent in *The Giver***, **Phase 4b, activity 6 – identifying thematic messages** and **Phase 4b, activity 8 – connecting genre and theme**)
* sample student responses (**Phase 6, resource 3 – sample responses, Phase 6, activity 2 – using the student-facing rubric, Phase 6, activity 3 – exploring the sample annotated assessment**)
* research tasks (**Phase 1, activity 11 – researching subgenres**, **Core formative task 4 – research task**)
* feedback strategies (**Phase 6, activity 4 – self-feedback**, **Phase 6, activity 5 – peer feedback**, **Phase 6, activity 6 – actioning feedback** and **Phase 6, activity 7 – student-teacher conference**).

## Student work sample

The following annotated work sample is designed to provide one example of a completed transcript that aligns with the assessment task requirements.

### Why we should all read speculative fiction

By Jessica Sonatos

Speculative fiction is defined by Wikipedia as ‘a broad umbrella category of fiction that encompasses all the genres that deliberately depart from realism or from strictly imitating ordinary reality, instead presenting supernatural, futuristic, and other highly imaginative realms’. I’ve read lots of speculative fiction this year and it’s a genre I really love because it lets me escape into a different world but at the same time it makes me think about my own world and all of the problems.

I really liked the book *The Giver* by Lois Lowry and the picture book *The Giant and the Sea*. Both of the texts are in made up worlds and they have a lot of similarities. They both teach us about the world.

*The Giver* is set in a fake world where everythings perfect. It’s like a utopia. The main character is Jonas and he is a 12 year old boy. He gets picked for a really prestigious role in his society called ‘The Receiver of Memories’ and it is when he start learning this role and getting memories from an old man called ’The Giver’ that he begins to see that his society isn’t really that perfect at all. For starters, he learns what colours are, and when this happens we realise that his world is all black and white and nobody else can see colours! I can’t imagine what a world without colour is like, but the thought of it makes me feel really sad for people who are colourblind and can’t see colours like red and yellow and my favourites blue and green.

Figure 1 – a world without colour

A world without colour.

A black and white image in which a young woman stands to the front left of a pile of abandoned shopping trolleys. A red heart and flower in the right of the image indicate the power of feelings.

"[Utopia - No Colour](https://www.flickr.com/photos/13884016@N08/4606920654)" by -[Delphine](https://www.flickr.com/photos/13884016@N08/4606920654) - is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/?ref=openverse).

We also learn that the people in Jonas’s world don’t feel pain which is good but they also don’t feel other emotions like love and real happiness. He also discovers that his society isn’t that perfect because they do this thing called ‘releasing’ which sounds really good but in reality its actually murder!

This is supposed to be like euthanasia and eugenics, which the Britannica Encyclopaedia defines as ‘the selection of desired heritable characteristics in order to improve future generations’. There’s a part of the book where Jonas’s father is responsible for ‘releasing’ or killing a baby because a woman give birth to twins and only one of them is allowed in the community. The baby that was killed was decided based on its size. “And you, little guy, you’re only five pounds ten ounces. A *shrimp*!” That’s what Jonases dad says before he puts a needle in the babies forehead to kill it. This shocking and upsetting scene is a turning point for Jonases character development as he begins to see the flaws in his world and this causes him later in the book to run away in order to save the baby Gabriel. At first I was glad that it only happened in the novel, but then when I found out that eugenics was a real science that people tried to use to make a better race of people I was shocked. Thankfully most of the world doesn’t seem to believe in that science any more but the Britannica article does say that some countries still do. Don’t you think that’s scary?

Lots of spec fic books use children dying or being experimented on to make a point. *The Hunger Games* and *Maze Runner* both include science and children being killed. It’s very sad to read but it helps us think about what we do in our own worlds that makes children suffer and die and that we should try to fix it and stop that from happening.

Another speculative fiction book I studied was called *The Giant and the Sea*. It’s a picture book by Trent Jamieson and Rovina Cai and lots of people die in it as well. Its about a giant who lives by the sea and it gives a warning to the townspeople that the sea is rising because of the pollution that a machine is putting into the atmosphere. A girl tries to get the mayor to turn off the machine but he refused and the sea kept rising until the whole town was destroyed and most of the people were killed. This picture book is for kids and it isn’t real, but it does connect a little bit to the real world. Did you know that sea levels are rising in Australia at 3.5 centimetres per decade? Because the ocean keeps getting hotter glaciers are melting and this is making the oceans rise. If the oceans keep rising then more and more land will go underwater and people and kids will die, just like in the picture book.

We should all read speculative fiction cause it makes us think about things in our real world. I wouldn’t have known about eugenics or rising sea levels if I didn’t read about them in the books we read in class. What might you learn if you read some spec fic? (821 words)

**References**

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## Annotated student work sample

**Teacher note:** the student work sample is not designed to be an exemplar and is reflective of a C grade student response. This can be used as a sample with students and as part of a modelled, guided and independent compositional process. Teachers may wish to remove the grade information and guide students through the process of marking the sample using the student-facing rubric. Students could discuss the grade they allocated the student and identify the distinguishing features from the sample that align with the grade.

The sample is provided as an example of a complete response to the assessment task. The annotations below can be used to support marking judgements of a student response or for offering feedback to a student at the drafting stage. This sample is student facing.

Table 6 – student work sample annotations

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student work sample | Annotations | Features of writing used to shape meaning |
| Why we should all read speculative fiction By Jessica Sonatos | The headline, while generic and lacking originality, clearly introduces the topic of the feature article. | The inclusion of an article title and byline help to establish the form of the feature article. |
| Speculative fiction is defined by Wikipedia as ‘a broad umbrella category of fiction that encompasses all the genres that deliberately depart from realism or from strictly imitating ordinary reality, instead presenting supernatural, futuristic, and other highly imaginative realms’. I’ve read lots of speculative fiction this year and it’s a genre I really love because it lets me escape into a different world but at the same time it makes me think about my own world and all of the problems. | The introduction attempts to engage with the topic and the question through the definition of speculative fiction. An attempt is made at creating authority on the topic by the student through the claim ‘I’ve read lots of speculative fiction’.  The definition demonstrates some evidence of research, although the choice of Wikipedia suggests that this research is limited.  The student could have chosen a more engaging way to begin their feature article than with a definition. A more engaging opening would help to introduce a strong personal voice. | The introduction begins with a definition used to orient the reader into the focus of the feature article.  First person is used to create a personal voice.  The response could have more effectively engaged with the feature article form by hyperlink references within the text, such as the Wikipedia reference here, rather than in a reference list at the bottom of the article. |
| I really liked the book *The Giver* by Lois Lowry and the picture book *The Giant and the Sea*. Both of the texts are in made up worlds and they have a lot of similarities. They both teach us about the world. | The introduction of the texts helps to position the reader early in the response regarding the focus of the article.  There is a sound attempt to engage with the conceptual demands of the question through the closing sentence. | Lower order vocabulary like ‘made up worlds’ is used. Specific metalanguage such as ‘fictional futuristic worlds’ would be more appropriate.  A simplistic personal voice is established through the ‘I really liked’ which echoes the ‘I really love’ in the previous paragraph. |
| *The Giver* is set in a fake world where everythings perfect. It’s like a utopia. The main character is Jonas and he is a 12 year old boy. He gets picked for a really prestigious role in his society called ‘The Receiver of Memories’ and it is when he start learning this role and getting memories from an old man called ’The Giver’ that he begins to see that his society isn’t really that perfect at all. For starters, he learns what colours are, and when this happens we realise that his world is all black and white and nobody else can see colours! I can’t imagine what a world without colour is like, but the thought of it makes me feel really sad for people who are colourblind and can’t see colours like red and yellow and my favourites blue and green. | This paragraph establishes sound knowledge of the text. However, too much time is spent on recounting the plot of the novel.  There are inconsistencies with punctuation, particularly apostrophe usage, which are present in this paragraph (for example ‘everythings’) and continue throughout the response. This paragraph also contains multiple run-on sentences (see for example the final sentence), and this is an issue that is consistent throughout the entirety of the response. Editing and proofreading may have helped to rectify this issue.  There are some connections drawn between the text and the real world through the reference to colour blindness. | Some specific word-level choices such as ‘utopia’ and ‘prestigious’ assist in shaping audience understanding.  Quotations and capitalisations of ‘The Receiver of Memories’ ad ‘The Giver’ are used to draw attention to direct references to the text. |
| Figure 2 – a world without colour - "[Utopia - No Colour](https://www.flickr.com/photos/13884016@N08/4606920654)" by -[Delphine](https://www.flickr.com/photos/13884016@N08/4606920654) - is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/?ref=openverse).  A world without colour  A black and white image in which a young woman stands to the front left of a pile of abandoned shopping trolleys. A red heart and flower in the right of the image indicate the power of feelings. | The image included has some connection to the topic being discussed as it demonstrates the black and white world. The small sections of red align with what Jonas begins to see in the book when he starts to discover colour.  The image, like much of this article, is very specific to the text. An image could have been selected that more effectively captured the science fiction genre. | A caption is provided to give some information about the image. Greater detail could have been provided about how the image is supportive of the discussion provided. |
| We also learn that the people in Jonas’s world don’t feel pain which is good but they also don’t feel other emotions like love and real happiness. He also discovers that his society isn’t that perfect because they do this thing called ‘releasing’ which sounds really good but in reality its actually murder! | The multiple exclamatory sentences demonstrate an attempt at capturing a personal and engaging voice. However, this sentence-level choice detracts from the mature voice expected of a feature article. | The inclusive language ‘we’ used to begin this paragraph helps to connect the reader with the writer and is an attempt to engage the audience. |
| This is supposed to be like euthanasia and eugenics, which the Britannica Encyclopaedia defines as ‘the selection of desired heritable characteristics in order to improve future generations’. There’s a part of the book where Jonas’s father is responsible for ‘releasing’ or killing a baby because a woman give birth to twins and only one of them is allowed in the community. The baby that was killed was decided based on its size. “And you, little guy, you’re only five pounds ten ounces. A *shrimp*!” That’s what Jonases dad says before he puts a needle in the babies forehead to kill it. This shocking and upsetting scene is a turning point for Jonases character development as he begins to see the flaws in his world and this causes him later in the book to run away in order to save the baby Gabriel. At first I was glad that it only happened in the novel, but then when I found out that eugenics was a real science that people tried to use to make a better race of people I was shocked. Thankfully most of the world doesn’t seem to believe in that science any more but the Britannica article does say that some countries still do. Don’t you think that’s scary? | This paragraph connects clearly with the question by outlining how the events in *The Giver* has resulted in the student undertaking research and learning something about their world, which demonstrates a potential impact. It explores how speculative fiction can be confronting and explains something that they have learned about their world as a result of reading this text.  There is some evidence of research into the real-world context that is being represented in the novel through the reference to Britannica Encyclopaedia.  This paragraph engages again in a recount of the text, but there is some elevation of this in comparison to the previous paragraph. This is done through the direct example and the attempts to connect the death to eugenics and euthanasia, and the learning that has occurred about these topics.  There continue to be issues with possessive apostrophe usage in ‘Jonases’ and ‘babies’. This demonstrates some varying control of language. | The connective ‘this’ used to start the sentence creates local cohesion between the ideas of this paragraph and the previous paragraph. Additional connectives are used throughout the paragraph, such as ‘this shocking and upsetting scene’, to create cohesion.  The response moves between third person discussion of the text and first-person reflection.  A rhetorical question is used at the end of the paragraph in an attempt to engage the reader to think and reflect upon the concerns raised by the novel. |
| Lots of spec fic books use children dying or being experimented on to make a point. *The Hunger Games* and *Maze Runner* both include science and children being killed. It’s very sad to read but it helps us think about what we do in our own worlds that makes children suffer and die and that we should try to fix it and stop that from happening. | This paragraph extends the discussion to other well-known texts that are connected in both genre and content.  The discussion about the impact of speculative fiction on audiences is lacking detail and specificity. The vagueness of ‘make a point’ and ‘what we do in our own worlds’ could be further expanded upon. A more perceptive discussion and elaboration could be possible within the word count limitation if the number of words spent recounting the texts in previous paragraphs was reduced. | Attempts have been made to use emotive language to connect with and position the audience in ‘it’s very sad’ and through verbs including ‘suffer’ and ‘die’. This reflects the impact of engagement with the text, but the simplicity of this language and these observations prevent this discussion from being competent.  The lower modality of ‘should’ is appropriate for audience, purpose and form. |
| Another speculative fiction book I studied was called *The Giant and the Sea*. It’s a picture book by Trent Jamieson and Rovina Cai and lots of people die in it as well. Its about a giant who lives by the sea and it gives a warning to the townspeople that the sea is rising because of the pollution that a machine is putting into the atmosphere. A girl tries to get the mayor to turn off the machine but he refused and the sea kept rising until the whole town was destroyed and most of the people were killed. This picture book is for kids and it isn’t real, but it does connect a little bit to the real world. Did you know that sea levels are rising in Australia at 3.5 centimetres per decade? Because the ocean keeps getting hotter glaciers are melting and this is making the oceans rise. If the oceans keep rising then more and more land will go underwater and people and kids will die, just like in the picture book. | This paragraph contains similar sentence-level errors in the run-on sentences and missed apostrophe.  Recount is again a feature of this paragraph, but it is much shorter than the recount of *The Giver*.  Connections are made between the picture book and the potential impacts of learning about the real world, and there is evidence of research, although this is uncited. However, this is presented as information, and the paragraph is too brief to engage in a more authentic discussion of the way that the representation of these real-world concerns can impact on audiences.  A reference is made to the audience of the picture book in ‘this picture book is for kids’. The response could have extended this idea by exploring how speculative fiction picture books help all audiences, including children, in developing an understanding of their world.  There is also a disconnect between the discussion in this text and that about *The Giver*. The response may have benefitted from exploring *The Hunger Games* or *Maze Runner* instead. This would allow for a more specific discussion focused on the representation of children and violence in speculative fiction. | The determiner ‘another’ is used to begin the paragraph and signal to the reader that a new text is being introduced.  Rhetorical questions are again used to position the audience to reflect upon the real-world concerns represented in the text. |
| We should all read speculative fiction cause it makes us think about things in our real world. I wouldn’t have known about eugenics or rising sea levels if I didn’t read about them in the books we read in class. What might you learn if you read some spec fic? | This conclusion is brief and unites the discussion of the different texts and real-world concerns discussed.  The response ends with a simple rhetorical question that connects back to the question, the article title and the main ideas of the response. | The collective ‘we’ is used to engage the audience in the closing ideas. |
| ****References****  [Speculative fiction - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speculative_fiction)  [Eugenics | Definition, History, & Facts | Britannica](https://www.britannica.com/science/eugenics-genetics)  [A Guide to Climate Change for Kids | NASA Climate Kids](https://climatekids.nasa.gov/kids-guide-to-climate-change/) | The reference list demonstrates the research that informed the response. | A subheading is used to separate the reference list from the rest of the response. However, the student should have made use of in-text hyperlinking to more closely align with the conventions of a feature article rather than providing references all at the end here. |

**Feedback comment**

**This response sits clearly within the C range. The student has demonstrated a sound knowledge of the texts they have studied in class. There is evidence of personal reflection on the ways that reading speculative fiction have impacted on them as a reader. However, more specific elaboration beyond sentences such as ‘…**I really love because it lets me escape into a different world but at the same time it makes me think about my own world and all of the problems’ would assist in elevating this response out of a C range. **The response focuses predominantly on personal reflection and what the student learned. The student could elevate this response by thinking beyond the personal and exploring the impact of speculative fiction on a wider range of audiences.**

**There are sound connections that have been made between the texts and the real world. This helps to maintain a focus on the impact of speculative fiction on audiences. However, the response contains a significant amount of textual recount, and this means that the connections made to the real world are not done with the thoroughness required for the B range. The student demonstrates some evidence of research and has used some language features that reflect the discursive style and voice of the feature article. However, the inclusion of a reference list does not conform to form, and the student could have made use of hyperlinking throughout the article to provide these links.**

**Structurally, the response demonstrates some understanding of the conventions of a feature article. There is a clear, although somewhat unoriginal, title that orients the reader into the topic explored. This orienting continues in the opening paragraph. The decision to begin with a Wikipedia definition impacts on how effective the response is at initiating and maintaining reader engagement. Many paragraphs are quite lengthy, which demonstrates some variability in control of appropriate structure. The response ends soundly with a moment of personal reflection. There is an image used with some connection to the article, although the caption could have been more specific in connecting to the content of the feature article. Feature quotes could have also been included to more effectively conform to form.**

**There are some lapses in control of language, particularly regarding the use of apostrophes and run on sentences. However, the response when considered holistically demonstrates enough control of language to achieve the C-range criteria.**

# The English curriculum 7–12 team

The English curriculum 7–12 team provides support for the delivery of the English curriculum 7–12 in NSW Department of Education high schools.

## Share your experiences

If you use the sample assessment in your faculty and school context, reach out to the English curriculum team. We would love English teams form across NSW to share snapshots of their practice and how this resource has been used in their unique context as part of our ‘Voices from the Classroom’ section of the English 7–12 newsletter. Send submissions to [English.curriculum@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:English.curriculum@det.nsw.edu.au).

## Support and alignment

If you have any questions regarding the use of material available or would like additional support, please contact the English curriculum team by emailing [English.curriculum@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:English.curriculum@det.nsw.edu.au).

**Alignment to system priorities and/or needs**: [School Excellence Policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2016-0468)

**Alignment to the School Excellence Framework**: this resource supports the [School Excellence Framework](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2016-0468) element of assessment (formative assessment, summative assessment, student engagement).

**Alignment to Australian Professional Teaching Standards**: this resource supports teachers to address [Australian Professional Teaching Standards](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/teacher-accreditation/meeting-requirements/the-standards/proficient-teacher) 5.1.2, 5.2.2, 5.3.2.

**Consulted with**: school-based colleagues

**NSW Syllabus**: [English K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview)© NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2022.

**Syllabus outcomes**: EN5-RVL-01, EN5-URC-01, EN5-ECA-01

**Author**: English curriculum 7–12 team

**Resource**: assessment task notification

**Related resources**: further resources to support English Stage 5 can be found on the NSW Department of Education [English K–12 curriculum page](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/english) and the Stage 5 [Teaching and learning support](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/teaching-and-learning) section in the [English K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview) from the NSW Education Standards Authority.

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# References

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