 Glossary of key terms: Module C

Source: [NESA definitions pertinent to ‘The Craft of Writing’](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-standard-2017/glossary):

| Term | Definition |
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| Discursive Texts | Texts whose primary focus is to explore an idea or variety of topics. These texts involve the discussion of an idea(s) or opinion(s) without the direct intention of persuading the reader, listener or viewer to adopt any single point of view. Discursive texts can be humorous or serious in tone and can have a formal or informal register. |
| Imagination | The ability to use the mind for a wide array of purposes. These purposes include, but are not limited to, creating and forming images, ideas and thoughts, developing new insights, reflecting on one's own self and others, and solving problems. |
| Imaginative Texts | Imaginative texts – texts that represent ideas, feelings and mental images in words or visual images. An imaginative text might use metaphor to translate ideas and feelings into a form that can be communicated effectively to an audience. Imaginative texts also make new connections between established ideas or widely recognised experiences in order to create new ideas and images. Imaginative texts are characterised by originality, freshness and insight. These texts include novels, traditional tales, poetry, stories, plays, fiction for young adults and children, including picture books and multimodal texts, for example film. |
| Types of Texts | Classifications according to the particular purposes texts are designed to achieve. These purposes influence the characteristic features the texts employ. In general, texts can be classified as belonging to one of three types (imaginative, informative or persuasive), although it is acknowledged that these distinctions are neither static nor watertight and particular texts can belong to more than one category. |
| Informative Texts | Texts whose primary purpose is to provide information through explanation, description, argument, analysis, ordering and presentation of evidence and procedures. These texts include reports, explanations and descriptions of natural phenomena, recounts of events, instructions and directions, rules and laws, news bulletins and articles, websites and text analyses. They include texts which are valued for their informative content, as a store of knowledge and for their value as part of everyday life. |
| Persuasive Texts | Texts whose primary purpose is to put forward a point of view and persuade a reader, viewer or listener. They form a significant part of modern communication in both print and digital environments. Persuasive texts seek to convince the responder of the strength of an argument or point of view through information, judicious use of evidence, construction of argument, critical analysis and the use of rhetorical, figurative and emotive language. They include student essays, debates, arguments, discussions, polemics, advertising, propaganda, influential essays and articles. Persuasive texts may be written, spoken, visual or multimodal. |
| Imagery | The use of figurative language or illustrations to represent objects, actions or ideas. |
| Rhetorical Devices | Strategies used by writers and speakers to achieve particular effects, for example to stimulate the audience's imagination or thought processes, to draw attention to a particular idea, or simply to display wit and ingenuity in composition. Examples of rhetorical devices are irony, paradox, rhetorical question, contrast and appropriation. |
| Voice | In reference to a text, voice means the composer's voice – the idea of a speaking consciousness, the controlling presence or 'authorial voice' behind the characters, narrators and personas in a text. It is also described as the implied composer. The particular qualities of the composer's voice are manifested by such things as her or his method of expression (for example an ironic narrator) and specific language.  Grammatically, voice refers to the way of indicating who is doing the action. Active voice is where the 'doer' of the action comes before the verb, for example 'Ann broke the vase'. Passive voice is where the 'receiver' of the action is placed before the verb, for example 'The vase was broken by Ann' (see theme). Stylistically, active voice is usually preferred in writing, as it places the agent of the verb at the start of the sentence and has a sense of immediacy, whereas passive voice creates a sense of detachment between subject and verb and is not so easily read and understood. |
| Characterisation | Characterisation is the way the characters in the text are presented so the audience is guided to make certain judgments that reinforce the themes of the text. Characterisation is shown by the words, actions, and reactions of a character, how other characters speak about them, how they deal with conflict, their thoughts and feelings, costume, and body language. It is through the characters that the reader understands different emotional and personal experiences and the themes of the text. When looking at how a character changes or develops think about relationships, conflict of ideas or personalities.  More on [characterisation](http://www.studyit.org.nz/subjects/english/english2/2/subjectcontent/characterisation.html) |
| Symbolism | Use of a symbol that represents something else, particularly in relation to a quality or concept developed and strengthened through repetition. For example, freedom can be symbolised by a bird in flight in both verbal and visual texts. |
| Tone | The voice adopted by a particular speaker to indicate emotion, feeling or attitude to subject matter.  The author's attitude towards the subject and audience, for example playful, serious, ironic, formal. |
| Metaphor | A resemblance between one thing and another is declared by suggesting that one thing is another, for example 'My fingers are ice'. Metaphors are common in spoken and written language and visual metaphors are common in still images and moving images. |
| Theme | Refers to the central or one of the main underlying ideas or messages of a text.  Grammatical theme – in a sentence the theme is the clause that comes in first position and indicates what the sentence is about. Theme is important at different levels of text organisation. The topic sentence serves as the theme for the points raised in a paragraph. A pattern of themes contributes to the method of development for the text as a whole. |
| Dialogue | A dialogue is a literary technique in which writers employ two or more characters to be engaged in conversation with one another. In literature, it is a conversational passage, or a spoken or written exchange of conversation in a group, or between two persons directed towards a particular subject. |
| Purpose | The purpose of a text, in very broad terms, is to entertain, to inform or to persuade different audiences in different contexts. Composers use a number of ways to achieve these purposes: persuading through emotive language, analysis or factual recount; entertaining through description, imaginative writing or humour, and so on. |
| Point of View | The particular perspective brought by a composer, responder or character within a text to the text or to matters within the text.  Narrative point of view refers to the ways a narrator may be related to the story. The narrator, for example, might take the role of first or third person, omniscient or restricted in knowledge of events, reliable or unreliable in interpretation of what happens. |
| Context | The range of personal, social, historical, cultural and workplace conditions in which a text is responded to and composed. |
| Perspective | A way of regarding situations, facts and texts. |