 Intertextuality in Jasper Jones

[Intertextuality](http://www.englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/content/intertextuality)

Intertextuality refers to those interrelationships among texts that shape a text’s meaning. The recognisable echoes of other texts in a text intensify the experience of the text by adding layers of meaning.

Task

1. Look at the book covers and read the synopses below.
2. In your groups or pairs discuss the possible links between these ‘classic’ novels and the events, characters and ideas in Jasper Jones.
3. How might each link to another text contribute to the meaning and impact of the play?
4. What would be the effect on the play of omitting the intertextuality?
5. One group member can function as note maker or scribe. Their job is to consolidate the discussion into written notes.
6. Another group member can act as speaker and explain your findings and ideas to the class.

Page 3 The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Samuel Longhorn Clemens or Mark Twain (USA 1835-1910) published in 1884.

Teachers to source the book covers

Synopsis

* Huckleberry Finn is a young boy with an abusive father and two guardians who take care of him. Huck does not care about school or manners so he happily leaves town to get away from his father and to be on an adventure.
* He eventually decides to save Jim and help him to find his freedom because had to keep his word and escape his father because he does not know that his father is dead yet.
* On their journey to freedom Jim is caught by a couple of slave owners and Huck is forced to live with those families, making up lies until he can free Jim and get back on their way to Canton.
* Huck and Tom try to free Jim at the climax of the story and Tom ends up getting shot in the leg. Shortly after Tom tells Aunt Polly that Miss Watson freed Jim in her will.
* Huck had a chance to be civilized again and live with Tom but he finally decided to live free in the wild and travel west. Meanwhile Jim starts his family from scratch with all the money they got along the way.

Page 16 To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee (USA 1926-2017)

Teacher to source book covers

Page 50 “the mean reds” is a quote from Breakfast at Tiffany’s by Truman Capote (USA 1924-1984) published 1958

Teacher to source book covers

Page 47 In Cold Blood by Truman Capote “I have a new Truman Capote novel about a terrible murder in a small town… down my spine.”

On pages 47-48 Charlie is writing poetry and he begins to daydream: “my poems turn into daydreams set in a Manhattan ballroom where, for once, with Eliza, I have all the right words…” This scene is referenced in the final scene of the play. There follows an imaginary dialogue in which the names of famous Twentieth Century American writers are ‘dropped’.

Do a little research each of the following authors and suggest two or three reasons why:

1. the lives and/or work of each might be referenced in Jasper Jones
2. why characters like Charlie and Eliza might find them interesting and/or identify with them
   * Truman Capote
   * Harper Lee
   * Ernest Hemingway
   * Sylvia Plath
   * Roald Dahl