English-Extension 1-
Mapping Literary Worlds p1 transcript

(Duration 23 minutes 24 seconds)

(soft music) Instructor:

Welcome to the HSC hub, student support sessions English Extension one. This is resource one of a suite of four resources that will cover important aspects of the course, including preparing for and writing about the Common Module in the exam. Our focus in this first resource is on exploring the central ideas from the module description for the Literary Worlds, the Common Module for the Extension one course. Through a study of key phrases from the module description, we will develop two key ideas that will act as a frame, for our approach through these resources. In this first resource, you will have the opportunity to apply those ideas to your own thinking and self chosen case study texts. In order to refine your understanding of the ways in which artists respond to the world by creating literary worlds.

This video is the first part of a resource one. Let's first take a moment to see where it fits into the suite of resources as a whole. As you can see, the aim of this first resource is to explore the module description, in order to tease out the key concepts which should be guiding your thinking about the literary worlds. It is divided into two parts. The first part, this video, unpacks the key module concepts, while the second part expands that analysis, to refine your thinking about the module. There is one student resource booklet, that fits with these two parts. In resource two, engaging with literary worlds, we will apply the thinking developed here to a sample unseen text, and then explore the types of questions you may be asked in this section of the exam. In resource three, examining literary worlds, an experienced teacher and marker will talk you through the structure of the examination and give you advice about how to prepare. In the final resource, responding to the literary worlds, we will look closely at the market's feedback from 2019, as well as sample student writing, to evaluate how you can respond effectively to this module, both in terms of developing a strong voice and a well structured extended response answer to the question. We highly recommend that you complete the two parts of this resource in order, before attempting any of the other resources. We also suggest following our overall order, to get the most benefit from this Extension one session as a whole.

Part one of this resource has been designed to run for approximately 25 minutes, excluding time for activities. For a teacher using this in a classroom setting we suggest you stop the recording at key points, and support students to complete the set activities. Please feel free to supplement the material presented with your own strategies.

As suggested, this first part has been designed to run for approximately 25 minutes excluding time for activities. We suggest you stop the recording when asked to and complete all the activities. This includes thinking routines, reflection activities and written responses in the student resource booklet. Make sure you have all the material you need, especially the student resource booklet. If using this resource at home independently you will need, access to some of your school classwork and assessment tasks, your past notes on key texts that you have used as case studies in this module, access to both this presentation and the student resource booklet, time to explore the activities suggested here. This resource works best if you follow all instructions and complete the thinking routines, reflection activities and written tasks. Make sure you take adequate breaks.

This resource is focused on the module description for the Common Module of the Extension one course. It is crucial to your success in this part of the exam, that your thinking and preparation are grounded in a deeply conceptual understanding of the module. This first part, unpacks the key terminology of the module description, to establish two key themes that will frame this resource. The deliberate construction of literary worlds, and the importance of an informed personal response to literary worlds.

[Slide reads: Mapping out literary worlds – Extension 1, part 1

Learning intentions. For students to:

* explore how key phrases from the module description structure an approach to the module
* clarify the conceptual direction behind the module content and description
* analyse the key motivations for writers and readers in creating and responding to literary worlds.

Success criteria. For students to be able to:

* prepare for the examination based on a clear understanding of the module's conceptual foundation
* analyse the chosen case study texts with a strong foundation in the key concepts of the module
* evaluate the ways in which both writers and readers respond to the world and texts around them.]

Here are the learning intentions and success criteria for part one of this resource.

Engaging with the module description will help you keep the module ideas and requirements at the centre of your thinking. If possible it is a great idea to work with the peer on the following activities, so you are able to share ideas. Hearing, reading and then discussing and even debating information can help you develop a deeper understanding of the content and key ideas. In the student resource booklet, you will find the module description for the Common Module, Literary Worlds under resource one. To begin our process in this resource, we suggest rereading the description, focusing on the balance between the content, ideas and concepts, it lays out, and the processes of composing and responding it describes. For activity one as you read, underline the content words, and circle words that refer to processes. Pause the recording whilst you complete this activity. (soft music)

[Slide reads: Content and processes in the module description
Unpacking paragraph 1 – resource 1 and activity 1 in the student resource booklet

In this module students explore, investigate, experiment with and evaluate the ways texts represent and illuminate the complexity of individual and collective lives in literary worlds. Students evaluate how ideas and ways of thinking are shaped by personal, social, historical and cultural contexts. They extend their understanding of the ways that texts contribute to their awareness of the diversity of ideas, attitudes and perspectives evident in texts.]

Let's explore this balance between the content and process in the first paragraph. For example, ‘explore’ and ‘investigate’ would be processes while the ‘complexity of individual and collective lives’ is content. Pause the recording now and use the table in activity two, to revise the whole module description in this way. If you have already done something like this but earlier in the course, it would still be very valuable to revisit the description in this way as you prepare for exams. Use the synonym explanation column to unpack the terms you've put into the table. What do ‘explore’ and ‘complexity’ mean to you? What synonyms can you think of? As we all know it is often the synonyms that find their way into the exam questions. Add as many extra rows to the table in the booklet as you need to fully cover the whole module description. (soft music)

[Slide reads: Texts as deliberate constructions. Paragraph 2

Students explore, analyse and critically evaluate textual representations of the experiences of others, including notions of identity, voice and points of view; and how values are presented and reflected in texts. They deepen their understanding of how texts construct private, public and imaginary worlds that can explore new horizons and offer new insights.  ]

Now, let's drill down into two particularly important moments in the module description. The theme we are about to set up by doing this is critical to your thinking and writing in this module, but it is not the only approach possible by engaging with the module description in this way. We hope to demonstrate a way of working from the module description as a foundation and hope that you will apply this to other aspects of the description after you're finished with this resource. Here is the second paragraph of the module description. Notice that the words we have highlighted focus on the deliberate work of composers to represent experiences through their textual constructions. While there are many potential concepts to focus on in the module description, this idea of deliberate construction will be our first key module idea that we will continue to return to through all four resources in this HSC hub session on Extension one. Notice that the concept of deliberate construction is immediately linked to the purpose of the text to ‘explore new horizons and offer new insights’. More specifically, how can the construction of a literary world allow a composer to go beyond their own world, explore new horizons and in this way, offer a new perspective, offer new insights. Let's apply this to a text you have read or studied in the past year. Using the table in activity three in the student resource booklet, unpack some of the key concepts in this paragraph in relation to a specific text familiar to you. Pause the recording and write a specific example into the table relating to just one key word in each row. (soft music)

[Slide reads: Deliberate shaping 1 – exploring the term 'literary'

* fictional – imaginary characters and events (not real)
* conventional – has to seem plausible, but not be real (follows its own set of rules)
* carefully ‘framed’ – some aspects included, some cut out (shaped by text constraints)
* plot driven – whereas real life can often seem random, pointless, complex (teleological)
* aesthetically arranged – there is a sense of order or beauty in alternative, fictional worlds (but also darkness and severity).]

Before we go too much further, let's explore the key phrase at the heart of this module, Literary Worlds. By exploring the definitions and implications of these two words, we may be able to develop our notion of deliberate construction. Take a moment to consider the components of the notion, literary, on the screen now. You will find this list in your student booklet under activity four. Pause the recording and see what you could add to this list. (soft music)

[Slide reads: Deliberate shaping 2 – exploring the term 'worlds'

* a whole, a totality – or a part perceived as a totality (for example Shakespeare’s world or the world of *Othello* or the world of *The Wizard of Oz)*
* a metaphor we respond to both as geographical metaphor (space) but also elements of time – not a real world but a made up one (even if it’s extremely realistic and uses real world people in it)
* a consistency – where the parts make up the whole (it makes sense in its own logic).]

Pause the recording again for this slide. What can you add to the definitions in your student booklet? When you finish that, consider activity three. There is actually no entry for ‘Literary Worlds’ in the glossary for Stage six English. Can you write one? Note that there is a link to the glossary in resource two below the space for this activity.

In your work on definitions over the last few minutes, you should be able to see how both terms, literary, and, worlds, imply a conscious effort to shape through the tools available to the writer. But why get involved in this pursuit? Across the course of human history, writers, actors, artists and musicians and more recently, filmmakers and web designers have been creating literary worlds, fictional places and experiences in their art, to establish ways for readers, audiences, viewers and listeners to experience imaginary places and times. That can be very like the world we know or completely different. Partly as we have seen they do this for pleasure, their own and those of their responders. But why else? Pause the recording and use the table in activity five in the student booklet to list other reasons why composers may create literary worlds. Add as many ideas as you can within a couple of minutes. You might even reflect on why you enjoy creating literary worlds. Remember that all tables and answer spaces in the student booklet can be expanded as you type, so you can write as much as you want. (soft music)

[Slide reads: Possible ideas – why do artists create fictional worlds? Some answers may include:

* to escape to other places and develop – as a writer and as a person (personal growth model)
* to broaden your experience and knowledge (cultural literacy)
* to immerse oneself in the beauty of language (cultural heritage model)
* to provide a profound experience of human meaning/the effectiveness of literature (cultural heritage model)
* to help us explore human values such as morality and ethics from a distance – writers can present ideas, values, views that can be tried on and decided upon (liberal humanist values)
* to critique social structures and constructs (critical literacy)
* to warn us about the potential impacts of our social, political, technological choices.]

How did you go? Here are some possible ideas about why artists create fictional worlds. Remember that this could apply to non-fictional worlds too. In the second table under activity five, add any ideas that may apply to the creation of non-fictional literary worlds. For example, the literary world of one's childhood can be created by a composer as part of their autobiography but it is no less deliberately shaped than a fictional world. Why is the shaping taking place though? Is it just for the pure joy of creation? Pause the recording for a moment and consider non fictional literary worlds. (soft music)

There is therefore a wonderfully fertile tension between reality and the literary worlds composers use to represent it, whatever ‘it’ is. That reality maybe more than 600 years distant from us, and be represented as a fictionalised literary world. The "Canterbury Tales," for example, is a reflection of a real time and real people. It allows us to relive that time, it gives us a window into that reality. But as we look through that window, we are reminded that it is not possible to actually relive that world. All we have is its representation through the literary world Chaucer has constructed. Speaking of representation, if you are not familiar with the English Textual Concepts resource, now's a good time to check the deep analytical and conceptual thinking that is encouraged in its consideration of a key concept such as representation. For instance, we know that Chaucer himself is not a character in his tales, but you would need to analyse how his values are embedded into the literary world created by his act of representation. We will look more closely at values soon, but for the moment, you will find thinking points about several key terms in the appendix at the end of this resource booklet. Check the entry for representation now and note that there is a link to the English Textual Concepts website in resource two in the booklet. (soft music)

Literary theory can help us think through the issues involved with that notion of representing reality. The theory around mimesis which refers to the process of imitation through which artists portray and interpret the world encourages us to consider imitation as an imaginary act of experience. Again, that tension between experience of the world and its representation in art. Literary theory provides us with a number of possible lenses through which to observe and critique this act of representation. First, to what extent do artists try to imitate the real world in the literary worlds they create? What are the philosophical and political problems with this attempt? It's important to consider the extent to which we can experience the lives of others through an imitation of the real world, particularly if that world is constructed for very specific purposes, by a composer living under the influence of a very specific context. If you are comfortable with literary theory that may be relevant to your study, move on, keeping in mind that all theory must be used advisedly to help you develop your personal response not in and out of itself. No marker will enjoy reading a long tract about theory disengaged from the two key module ideas we've been focusing on. If you would like to do more work in this area, check out optional resource three in the student booklet. Here we have listed the literary theories from the answer slide earlier about why artists create literary worlds, as well as a few others you will be familiar with, to some extent at least. Choose one to explore later in relation to one of your chosen texts. How does looking through that lens help you understand both the writer's intention for creating her world and your response to that world?

The notion of using literary theory as a lens brings us back to the second key idea from the module description that frames all of the Extension one sessions that will be available to you through the HSC hub. Students developing an informed personal response to Literary Worlds.

In this third paragraph from the module description, we have highlighted words that connect to you the student as a responder to the Literary Worlds. “Students consider how personal, social, historical and cultural context influence how texts are valued and how context influences their responses to these diverse literary worlds. They appraise their own values, assumptions and dispositions, as they develop further understanding of how texts make meaning.” The key point to consider here is using your strong conceptual understanding of why and how literary worlds are created, explored in paragraph two, to generate an informed personal response, which evaluates both the effectiveness of the literary worlds created in the texts you have explored, and your own personal understanding of how literary worlds have interacted with you as a responder. Note that the words in red highlight both the way you are approaching your exploration of challenging texts, as well as how you can think about your own composition process. Both of these ideas make you as the responder, a central player in the processes is implied by the deliberate creation of literary worlds.

To develop an informed response, we will need to consider why people read, reflect on and study literature in the first place. Thinking about mimesis suggests that we respond to literature because we have profoundly personal and individual engagements with a version of the world that is outside of ourselves, foreign, removed and distant. This could be an act of empathy or imagination or pure enjoyment of the difference to our own world. What do you think? Perhaps it is just an instinctual love of story. Pause the recording and go to activity six in the student booklet. We have started off with the two reasons mentioned here but how many more can you think of?

[Slide reads: Responding to literature 1 – some possible reasons why read, reflect on and study literature

* It is about the style and aesthetics – responders react to the style, the form, the ‘feel’, the beauty of words and story.
* There’s a safety and a power in it not being ‘real’ – a make-believe, fantastical, vicarious, empathic, exploratory feeling.
* It can explore what doesn’t exist as a way of learning about the world and hypothesising about it, for example science fiction, fantasy.
* It can reshape your thinking – you can be deeply touched or inspired by literature.
* It has a trans-historical message – has been called universality (makes the common links between humanity) and encourages our desire to 'speak' with the past.]

Here's the first two slides with some suggestions. Pause the recording here. Read through the list and add anything you missed or like to your list in activity six in the student booklet. As you go through, think about which of these are specifically about studying literature in an academic setting, such as school. Highlight or underline these in your booklet as you go.

[Slide reads: Responding to literature 2 – some more possible reasons why read, reflect on and study literature – activity 6 continued, student booklet

* It is a powerful way to experience truths about the real world, expanding individual horizons and minds, especially about those who are different to ourselves. This is one reason why non-Indigenous Australians would study ATSI literature, for example.
* There is increased accessibility – often a more personal focus than the objective, or broad-scale focus of history – captures the texture of experience in a way that history often does not.
* It also us to tap into the collective unconscious.
* It taps into the duality of the human psyche, for example exploring characters in complex choices between good and evil. Literature is a window into the human condition
* It allows the excluded or marginalised to 'experience' worlds that they could not – for example women reading novels in 18th century.
* It allows for the transfer of heritage – for example the oral traditions utilised by Homer.]

Here's some more suggestions. Remember to pause the recording here, add ideas you'd like to list in the student booklet and highlight the ideas that are about studying literature in an academic setting, such as school.

Look back over your list of reasons from the previous activity. In a moment, we will get you to think further about each of them using the three questions on the screen. One, what does each reason you came up with or chose from our lists suggests about why and how the composer has worked on the piece of literature? Two which reasons imply the closest relationship between composer and responder? And three, which imply a distant relationship? For example, both of the sample reasons, especially the instinctual love one, imply in some ways that both composer and responder are acting beyond themselves as mere individuals. Freudian or psychoanalytic literary theory would have a lot to say about this. What kinds of literary worlds would touch the readers instinctual connection to story most powerfully, do you think? Pause the recording now and take a moment to consider at least one of your reasons from the list in activity six. Write a one paragraph extended response in the box provided in activity seven. (soft music)

[Slide reads: Informed personal response 2 – how and why do we respond to literary worlds?

"If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot... stamping on a human face – forever." George Orwell, 1984.]

Think back to our earlier problem about which reasons for reading literature are relevant in the school context. In a way the study of literature at school is about all of those reasons, which did you choose? To explore this a little further, let's look at an example. You may respond to this famous quote from George Orwell's 1984 in a variety of ways. For the purposes of this course, however, let's start by recognising that there is a particular insight wrapped up in that quote, and the term insight is the one preferred by the syllabus to convey the notion that through literary worlds created by a composer, we were responding to a set of ideas carefully crafted by the writer. Orwell's insight here relates to the relationship between the state and the individual, a warning that that relationship is doomed to be one of abusive of power, violence and loss of identity. But how you respond to that insight will depend on many factors, the impact of your context and the choices you have to respond in writing are the focus of resources two and four of this whole Extension one session. For the moment though, let's recognise that you may respond purely emotionally, anger or sadness, for example.You may also be inspired to action, revolution perhaps. Your response might be to create art, an appropriation of the story or a creative response through painting for yourself or commercial reasons. But what about critical analysis? It's what the syllabus is asking you to do after all. Notice that the development of your informed personal voice, something else we will explore further in resource four, is a form of response no less important than anger, action or art. All English courses are about building critical thinking skills. Many learn what critical thinking is in our English classes. When we read, we learn to look between the lines, we are taught to find symbols, make connections, find themes, learn about characters. This in itself is a very powerful kind of response and one that depends on a deep engagement with the texts to ensure that your response is not superficial or groundless. And like emotional responses, your critical ones require to be conscious of what impacts on or frames and guides them.

Let's end this part of the resource by applying some of the thinking implied by this second key idea from the module description. Reader response theory gives prominence to the audience reaction to the text, as opposed to for example, the context of the author, (New Historicism) or the objective meaning that might be present in a text before the reader responds to it, (New Criticism). Interestingly, the stimulus texts from the 2019 HSC exam contained this quote, "Behind every fiction though, is fact. Truth is not the opposite of fiction, it is the fire at its heart. Artists weave their past into their work." These thoughts seem to sit in conflict with a reader response theory, which aims to focus on our responses to the text. What do you think? Do we need to know about the facts or truth, especially the artist’s past that lie behind the literary world? Is our personal response to the world as valuable as the response of experts who analyse the text and tell us what the author really meant? Go to activity eight, part one ‘summary’ in the student booklet and write your thoughts into the table there. Choose a text you feel strongly about and develop your thoughts about how and why you have responded to it. Feel free to use the stimulus questions in the table or delete them and find your own way through. Then make sure you take a break before continuing with part two of this resource.

(soft music)

End of Transcript