 Stage 6 Italian Extension – support materials

[Introduction to the Italian Extension course support materials 5](#_Toc16847644)

[Structure of the Italian Extension course 5](#_Toc16847645)

[Prescribed issues 6](#_Toc16847646)

[Objectives and outcomes 6](#_Toc16847647)

[Familiarising students with the prescribed issues through related texts 7](#_Toc16847648)

[Preparing students to present opinions and argue a case 8](#_Toc16847649)

[Soapbox activity 8](#_Toc16847650)

[Brainstorming and mind-mapping 9](#_Toc16847651)

[Class discussions 13](#_Toc16847652)

[Presenting a point of view 13](#_Toc16847653)

[Developing skills for monologues and short essays 14](#_Toc16847654)

[Developing knowledge of specialist vocabulary 15](#_Toc16847655)

[Recording responses 15](#_Toc16847656)

[Sample dot points from similar prescribed issues in other languages 16](#_Toc16847657)

[HSC Standards Packages 16](#_Toc16847658)

[Proformas for planning monologues and essay writing 17](#_Toc16847659)

[Sample planning proforma 1 18](#_Toc16847660)

[Sample planning proforma 2 19](#_Toc16847661)

[Writing and speaking 20](#_Toc16847662)

[Producing authentic texts 20](#_Toc16847663)

[Glossary of key words for the HSC 24](#_Toc16847664)

[Overview of syllabus text types 25](#_Toc16847665)

[Suggestions for teaching a novel 29](#_Toc16847666)

[The elements of a novel 29](#_Toc16847667)

[Activities to develop global understanding of the novel 30](#_Toc16847668)

[Prescribed text 33](#_Toc16847669)

[Background to the novel 35](#_Toc16847670)

[Extract 1 – pages 9-11 38](#_Toc16847671)

[Extract 2 – pages 62-68 40](#_Toc16847672)

[Extract 3 – pages 71-75 42](#_Toc16847673)

[Extract 4 – pages 120-125 44](#_Toc16847674)

[Extract 5 – pages 143-150 46](#_Toc16847675)

[Extract 6 – pages 156-157 48](#_Toc16847676)

[Extract 7 – pages 159-162 49](#_Toc16847677)

[Extract 8 – pages 179-182 51](#_Toc16847678)

[Extract 9 – pages 193-200 53](#_Toc16847679)

[Extract 10 – pages 212-217 55](#_Toc16847680)

[Extract 11 – pages 235-241 57](#_Toc16847681)

[Additional activities 59](#_Toc16847682)

[Prescribed issues 59](#_Toc16847683)

[Scaffold for an evaluative response 61](#_Toc16847684)

[Sample analysis of text questions 62](#_Toc16847685)

[Sample speaking and writing task 62](#_Toc16847686)

[Sample response (monologue) 63](#_Toc16847687)

[Related texts 65](#_Toc16847688)

[The role of education 65](#_Toc16847689)

[The evolving nature of relationships 65](#_Toc16847690)

[The quest for identity 65](#_Toc16847691)

© State of New South Wales (Department of Education) 2019

These support materials were produced by the NSW Department of Education (the department). This publication is copyright to the department, however it may contain material from other sources that is not owned by the department.

Outcomes and other syllabus material referenced in this document are from the [Italian Extension Stage 6 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/4d1cfd77-5644-408b-883e-b04ff19e85de/italian-extension-st6-syl-from2010.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2009.

Disclaimer

The interpretation presented in these materials should not be regarded as definitive. Although the notes provide support to the Italian Extension prescribed text, they are not to be considered authoritative.

Please note that this resource is intended only as an introduction to the study of the prescribed text and issues, and does not attempt to cover all aspects of the Italian Extension course. It is envisaged that teachers will draw from these materials according to the needs of their students rather than using every item, and that they will supplement these notes with additional material.

Controversial issues in schools

In exploring the issues prescribed for the Italian Extension course, teachers are to adhere to the department’s policy: Controversial Issues in Schools. The policy provides direction for management of controversial issues in schools, whether by the use of teaching and learning materials or views expressed by teachers or visiting speakers. The policy can be accessed on the department’s [policy library](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/controversial-issues-in-schools).

Third party sites

This resource contains links to third party websites and resources. The department is not responsible for the condition or content of these sites or resources, as they are not under the control of the department.

Introduction to the Italian Extension course support materials

These materials were prepared for teachers of the Italian Extension course. They aim to support the teaching of the prescribed text and the prescribed issues, helping students achieve the outcomes of the [Italian Extension Stage 6 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/4d1cfd77-5644-408b-883e-b04ff19e85de/italian-extension-st6-syl-from2010.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=). They have been designed to be used as introductory material to be further developed by the teacher as part of their lesson planning. In order to deliver lessons that are specifically tailored to the needs and interests of their own students, teachers may wish to use excerpts from these materials, in conjunction with their related activities and texts.

The Italian Extension course requires 60 indicative hours to complete, and the Italian Continuers HSC course is a co-requisite.

Study of the text prescribed for any Year 12 course may not begin before the completion of the Year 11 course. This exclusion applies to study in the Year 11 Italian Continuers course and to Year 11 courses in other subjects. It also applies to the study of a prescribed text in another medium, such as the film of a novel.

Structure of the Italian Extension course

The organisational focus of the Italian Extension course is the theme – the individual and contemporary society.

A number of issues that exemplify aspects of the theme are prescribed for study. Students engage with the issues through the study of a prescribed text and related texts.

Students need to be familiar with the whole prescribed text.

Students may benefit from reading the [HSC examinations in Extension languages – advice to students](https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/languages/stage-6/ext-advice-students.docx), as they prepare for the HSC.

Exploring the prescribed issues through the prescribed text

The study of the prescribed issues through the prescribed text will involve:

* exploring the relationship between the issues and the prescribed text
* creating original text in response to aspects of the prescribed text
* identifying meaning and how it is conveyed in the prescribed text
* evaluating linguistic and cultural features of the prescribed text
* analysing the sociocultural context of the prescribed text.

The study of the prescribed issues through related texts

Study of the theme and issues through other related texts will allow students to:

* read, view and/or listen to a range of texts
* further develop knowledge of Italian-speaking communities
* evaluate how the issues are presented in these texts.

You can view the [syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/4d1cfd77-5644-408b-883e-b04ff19e85de/italian-extension-st6-syl-from2010.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=) and the [2020-2024 course prescriptions](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/extension/italian-extension-syllabus/course-prescriptions-2020-2024) on the NESA website.

Prescribed issues

| The role of education | The evolving nature of relationships | The quest for identity |
| --- | --- | --- |
| For example:* pressures, expectations and motivation
* ethical and responsible behaviour
* teaching and learning in the 21st century
 | For example:* family, friendships/teacher/student
* valuing others
* conflict/belonging/dependency
 | For example:* growth, self-discovery and acceptance
* finding one’s purpose
* coping with loss
 |

The prescribed issues are mandatory, the dot points are not. They are suggestions only and are included to give a sense of the scope of the prescribed issues.

Objectives and outcomes

| Objectives | Outcomes |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Present and discuss opinions, ideas and points of view in Italian
 | 1.1 discusses attitudes, opinions and ideas in Italian1.2 formulates and justifies a written or spoken argument in Italian |
| 1. Evaluate, analyse and respond to the text that is in Italian and that reflects the culture of Italian-speaking communities
 | 2.1 evaluates and responds to text personally, creatively and critically 2.2 analyses how meaning is conveyed2.3 analyses the social, political, cultural and/or literary contexts of text that is in Italian |

Familiarising students with the prescribed issues through related texts

Before you start the study of the prescribed text, spend some time familiarising students with the prescribed issues through related texts. You will continue to use related texts throughout the course, however it is important that students have a broader understanding of the issues before studying the prescribed text.

Students should engage with a variety of texts on the prescribed issues, discussing their ideas and opinions in class. This will give them an in-depth understanding from a number of perspectives and provide them with the vocabulary and range of ideas to assist in the oral and written sections of the Extension examination.

Reading and listening texts should be chosen which are appropriate to Extension level, but which also provide students with a range of vocabulary and linguistic structures to support them in expressing their own ideas in spoken and written form.

It is important to remember that the 3 prescribed issues can be studied from a number of perspectives, and that the sub-topics provided are suggestions only. There may be other sub-topics that can be explored through related texts and the prescribed text.

The benefit of using a wide range of texts is that students will gain an in-depth background from which to draw ideas, and will develop the tools (including a more sophisticated approach to the issues) to enable them to answer any question in the HSC examination.

The following steps may assist teachers in teaching the issues. Not all steps would need to be included, depending on the length and complexity of the text.

* Find a suitable text (written, aural or visual), which is interesting, accessible and contains relevant vocabulary.
* Brainstorm the topic beforehand, creating a mind-map in Italian of the students’ thoughts, relevant vocabulary.
* Read, view or listen to the text. Ask questions in Italian where appropriate, paraphrasing the text where necessary.
* Explore key vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures.
* Discuss the main points of the text, creating a bullet-point summary together.
* Analyse the purpose, context and audience of the text.
* Brainstorm possible side issues, identifying useful expressions.
* Allow students to formulate their own opinions about the issues raised in the text and express their ideas through speaking or writing.
* Compare and contrast between the way the issue(s) is explored in the related text and in the prescribed text.
* Create a task in which students are required to use new vocabulary and expressions in new contexts – for example, class debate, role-play or monologue.
* Ask students to research their own text and present it to the class, focusing on the issues discussed and the perspectives from which these issues are presented.

Preparing students to present opinions and argue a case

To achieve the outcomes of the Extension syllabus, students must be able to use Italian to discuss attitudes, opinions and ideas and to formulate and justify an argument.

To prepare students to respond capably to a broad range of questions, beyond just the sub-topics of the prescribed issues, teachers need to use strategies that encourage students to think in terms of opinions and arguments.

Emphasis needs to be placed on developing skills that can be applied to any content. Students should not attempt to fit a prepared response to a question, but rather use general structures and prepare a range of phrases that could be used to present any opinion and justify any argument. Students need to be exposed to a variety of topics and trained to quickly develop a logical argument with their own point of view embedded in the response.

Activities and resources that could be used to develop this include:

* soapbox activity
* brainstorming and mind-mapping
* class discussions
* presenting a point of view
* developing skills for monologues and short essays
* developing knowledge of specialist vocabulary
* recording responses
* sample dot points from similar prescribed issues in other languages
* HSC Standards Packages (2002).

Soapbox activity

A soapbox is an impromptu speech on a set topic. To familiarise students with current affairs and to encourage speaking, ask students to discuss something that has occurred in world current affairs that week that is of interest to them.

Consider doing soapbox initially in English, until students are familiar with the format. Once the students are ready to practise the activity in Italian, limit the scope to the prescribed issues, discussing any relevant current news items, songs or TV programs that raise similar issues. To engage the whole class, have students complete a table, like the one below, while listening to their classmates speak. Review unfamiliar vocabulary before moving on to the next student.

| Language structures used | Unfamiliar vocabulary |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

Brainstorming and mind-mapping

Have students brainstorm the prescribed issues and complete a mind-map to organise their thoughts. Students should think broadly about subjects that would relate to specific issues. Graphic organisers are useful tools to assist students in organising each prescribed issue into topics and sub-topics.

Useful graphic organisers include:

* placemat protocols
* plus/minus/interesting (PMI) charts
* affinity diagrams
* lotus diagrams.

Placemat protocols

These are useful for achieving breadth and depth in monologues and short essays on a topic. They can be used to:

* critically assess texts
* develop a comprehensive range of strategies and skills appropriate to the text being read
* justify a point of view.

Procedure



* Use a marker pen to divide an A3 sheet of paper into the format shown above.
* Divide the class into groups of 4 and give each group 1 ‘placemat’ (A3 sheet).
* Nominate a group leader. The group leader cuts sections of the placemat and gives each student in the group one of the outside sections.
* Give students (including the group leader) a selected text to read individually.
* The group leader writes the topic of the text in the centre section of the placemat.
* After a predetermined period (the length of time will depend on the length and complexity of the text), ask students to summarise the most important points they have read in the text in dot point form on their section of the placemat.
* Reassemble the placemat.
* In the centre of the placemat, the group leader lists common points identified by all four students.
* When this is complete, give each student a specific period of uninterrupted time (for example 3 minutes) to justify orally the inclusion of individual points not listed by others (those that are not listed in the centre of the placemat).
* The group leader presents a summary of findings to the whole class.

Plus/minus/interesting (PMI) charts

These graphic organisers are useful for looking at both sides of an argument, or seeing things from a different perspective. The PMI chart is a creative thinking strategy used in Edward De Bono’s CoRT Thinking Program.

PMI charts help students to:

* see both sides of an argument
* view things from a different point of view
* think broadly about an issue
* suspend judgement
* make informed decisions
* work as individuals, in pairs or as members of a group.

Procedure

The strategy can be used in a range of classroom activities, including analysing texts and exploring issues. Give students a format for recording their ideas such as the table below.

| Plus | Minus | Interesting |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

Individually, in pairs or in small groups, students apply 3 questions to a statement or task provided by the teacher:

* What are the positive ideas about this?
* What are the negative ideas about this?
* What is interesting about this?

Within a specified time limit, students brainstorm their responses, having appointed a recorder and a reporter. At the end of the designated time, the reporter reports back on the group’s most original or creative ideas from each of the categories.

It is useful to model the activity first, using as a topic a statement such as: The lifestyle of all countries is enriched by immigrant cultures or a recently shared text or experience.

PMI-based activities can support the development of a range of skills including:

* understanding and interpreting the topic, question or statement
* using strategies to assist or facilitate brainstorming
* contributing to discussion
* comprehending and explaining opinions and information
* evaluating a range of viewpoints and distinguishing them from their own
* applying the process of PMI to a range of situations.

Affinity diagrams

These are useful for brainstorming issue-related ideas and organising them into topics. The affinity diagram is an interactive data collection method that allows groups of people to identify and sort large quantities of ideas within a short time frame.

Procedure

* Clearly define and write the question or topic for the session at the top of a flip chart.
* All class members individually and without discussion, write their ideas on a separate sticky note and place these in front of them.
* Class members randomly place ideas on the topic flip chart.
* Class members, working as a group, silently place ideas into like categories.
* Label the idea for each category by writing it on the flip chart.

Lotus diagrams

This graphic organiser is useful for issues and sub-topics. The lotus diagram takes its name from the lotus flower, whose petals open in an overlapping way.

You can photocopy the diagram on to A3 paper, use colour-coded sticky notes on a display wall or use an online graphic organiser, for example [Miro](https://miro.com/templates/lotus-diagram/).

Procedure

* The diagram comprises 9 boxes, each made up of 9 squares. The main topic goes into the centre square of the centre box.
* Around the centre square of the centre box are 8 numbered squares. Students write up to 8 ideas about the central topic in each of the numbered squares.
* Each of the 8 squares then has a box of its own, with the corresponding number in the centre square. Students place the information from the square labelled 1 in the centre box into the centre square of box 1, and so on.
* In the outer squares of each box, students add more ideas to expand on each numbered idea.



Class discussions

Use class discussions, in English or Italian (depending on context), to gather ideas and debate pros and cons related to a particular topic or question. The results of the discussions can then be organised and used to formulate responses to particular topics and questions in Italian.

Use material already published on the topic as a discussion starter – see the list below. Discussion could involve expanding ideas or identifying vocabulary, phrases and structures in Italian that will be useful in any response.

Useful resources include:

* articles in textbooks
* past HSC papers/questions
* a brainstormed list of possible prescribed issue-related topic questions
* news items and internet articles related to the prescribed issues.

Presenting a point of view

Encourage students to think about both sides of the argument for a given stimulus statement or question before deciding which stance they will take – for or against, or a more balanced approach.

Students should take the point of view they feel they are best equipped to argue.

Exercise 1

In order to practise presenting a point of view through classroom discussion, as described above, students formulate a response to a question in Italian and then present a different point of view on the same topic.

Exercise 2

Students brainstorm HSC-style questions in pairs, based on sub-topics from their mind-maps.

* Give each pair a different topic.
* Ask one student to speak for the affirmative and one for the negative.
* Each pair prepares a 1.5-2 minute speech, initially in English. This is conducted as a debate, where the other students act as adjudicators after hearing each of the arguments. The other students must justify their decision based on the logic of the argument. This exercise can be done in Italian when students become more confident.

Developing skills for monologues and short essays

Students should develop the skills necessary to prepare monologues and write short essays, as well as the ability to present and support a point of view or develop an argument in Italian. These skills are necessary for the speaking and writing sections of the HSC examination. However, note that short essay writing is not the only text type specified for productive use in the Extension course.

Exercise

Give students a question/stimulus statement. For example: Self-acceptance is harder than accepting others. What is your opinion? Give reasons for your answer.

* As a class, brainstorm ideas and record them on the board.
* Organise points/ideas into ‘for’ and ‘against’ the argument.
* As a class, decide which side of the argument is easier to present.
* Using the ideas gathered, ask individual students to write their own response.
* Share the sample responses as a class.
* Deconstruct the sample responses and come up with a skeleton structure common to all good responses – introduction, main body and conclusion.
* Go through the sample response structure below.
* Joint construction – students create a group response in Italian to the same question by fleshing out their argument using the sample structure. Working in pairs or groups of 3, students take an aspect of the structure and write a paragraph on it.
* When all students in the group have finished, put the paragraphs together to make a whole response. The opening statement, brief outline and concluding statements can be written at the same time. There may be some repetition through the argument, but students should gain confidence and the ability to put together a response before writing individual responses.
* Individual construction – students write their own response to the same question using ideas and skills gathered in this exercise.

Sample response structure

* Make an opening statement contextualising the question.
* State your argument/opinion on the question/stimulus – this may be for, or against, or a more balanced view.
* Provide point 1 related to your argument with 2 detailed examples.
* Provide point 2 related to your argument with 2 detailed examples.
* Draw your conclusion. Do not just reiterate the point that you made in your introduction. Provide some future advice/direction/suggestion related to your conclusion.

Developing knowledge of specialist vocabulary

Learning some commonly-used vocabulary and expressions related to the prescribed issues will help students respond to speaking and writing tasks.

Exercise 1

Cut up a mixture of specialist vocabulary or expressions – some in English and some in Italian – and put them into a hat. Students then take turns drawing one out and translating it into the other language.

Exercise 2

Have students make a domino game where they have to match the Italian vocabulary or expressions with the English equivalent. You can set up this activity as a group or individual activity (you will need several sets) and make it into a competition by timing students. This is useful as a revision activity.

Exercise 3

In order to develop students’ ability to express complex ideas in simple language rather than relying on a dictionary, put a list of difficult and hard to translate English words into a hat. Have students draw words one at a time and express them in Italian they are already familiar with. You may need to rephrase some words in English before the students express them in Italian.

This exercise is particularly relevant practice for the speaking exam where dictionaries are not permitted. However, even in writing tasks, students should try to avoid using unknown words from the dictionary as much as possible. Finding an alternative way of expressing an idea is an excellent skill to develop.

Recording responses

For the oral examination, students respond with a monologue on 1 question from a choice of 2. They are given 7 minutes to prepare their response and may make notes and refer to them during the examination. Students are expected to speak for approximately 3 minutes.

The monologues are recorded, therefore students need to become accustomed to having their speaking responses recorded. They also need to learn how to make effective use of the preparation time and be well-practised in planning and writing dot points for their monologues.

Exercise 1

Students take a question or stimulus statement out of a hat and give themselves 7 minutes preparation time. At the end of the 7 minutes they record their response. They should not stop the recording until they have completed their response. When finished, they play back the recording. This is an excellent exercise to help students become accustomed to forming ideas and developing a response within the time limit of the HSC oral examination.

Exercise 2

Have students record a monologue and bring it to school for peer assessment. This will help them to develop confidence in recording their voice and to become used to speaking clearly and at an even pace. Peer assessment is recommended for this exercise, as other students learn from their peers’ strengths and weaknesses.

The exercise should be used as a stimulus for a constructive discussion aimed at improving the performance of the whole class as well as that of the student whose performance is being assessed.

An explanation of the marking guidelines is necessary at this point so that students are made aware of the criteria examiners will apply.

Sample dot points from similar prescribed issues in other languages

Review the prescribed issues and suggested sub-topics for other languages from the [NESA website](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-languages/extension). If they are similar to those set for Italian Extension, use them as a source of ideas for practice speaking and writing questions.

Be aware that the sub-topics listed for any one prescribed issue are many and varied. They are not limited to the dot points in the syllabus nor to those that have been examined in previous HSC examinations.

HSC Standards Packages

It is important that students are familiar with the marking rubric and guidelines for each section of the HSC examination. HSC Standards Packages (2002) contain the marking guidelines as well as a sample examination paper, syllabus, answers and sample student responses at band cut-off points. The Standards Packages are a useful teaching and learning tool and are available on each language-specific page of the [NESA website](https://arc.nesa.nsw.edu.au/go/hsc/std-packs/).

Exercise 1

Select a number of sample answers from the Standards Package speaking and writing sections and have students award marks to them by applying the marking guidelines. Students can discuss the marking criteria and justify their marks from an examiner’s perspective.

Exercise 2

Students listen to and read a number of speaking and writing samples from across the range of bands. They can use the exemplar samples as a model for their own monologues and writing.

Proformas for planning monologues and essay writing

In both the oral examination and the written examination, students are required to present and support a point of view in Italian. Teachers will need to support their students in developing these skills. The following proformas have been designed to help students develop a structured approach to responding to monologue and short essay questions.

Depending on context, you may wish to introduce the proformas using English, moving to Italian as students develop more confidence in planning monologues and essay writing. You can also adapt the proformas to meet the needs of your students.

In order to gain confidence and competence in these skills, students should write as many monologues and short essays as possible. Monologues can be recorded for practice. Please note that short essays are not the only text type prescribed in the Stage 6 Extension syllabus. Students also need to be familiar with the text types for productive use listed in the Stage 6 Continuers syllabus.

Sample planning proforma 1

| Task | Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Question(Write in the question with the stimulus statement) |  |
| Opening statement(Make an opening statement contextualising the question; state your argument/opinion on the question/stimulus – this may be for, or against, or a more balanced view) |  |
| Introductory statement(State why you have this argument/opinion and introduce the points you are going to discuss to support your argument) |  |
| First point(Include 2 detailed examples) |  |
| Second point(Include 2 detailed examples) |  |
| Concluding statement(Draw your conclusion, but do not just reiterate the point that you made in your introduction – provide some future advice/direction/suggestion related to your conclusion) |  |

Sample planning proforma 2

| Task | Answer |
| --- | --- |
| Question(Write in the question with the stimulus statement) |  |
| Opening statement(Make an opening statement contextualising the question; state your argument/opinion on the question/stimulus – this may be for, or against, or a more balanced view) |  |
| Introductory statement(State why you have this argument/opinion and introduce the points you are going to discuss to support your argument) |  |
| First point(Include 1 detailed example) |  |
| Second point(Include 1 detailed example) |  |
| Third point(Include 1 detailed example) |  |
| Concluding statement(Draw your conclusion, but do not just reiterate the point that you made in your introduction – provide some future advice/direction/suggestion related to your conclusion) |  |

Writing and speaking

Producing authentic texts

Learning authentic phrases and expressions is a good way to build up vocabulary. However these phrases and expressions must be used in context. Students should be encouraged to keep a list of words and expressions they can use to build an argument or use in a discussion. They should write down one or more sentences in which these expressions could be used. Some phrases and expressions are set out below and require students and teachers to build meaningful sentences.

Starting a paragraph

* *Per prima cosa*
* *Per citare questo esempio*
* *Sull’argomento di*
* *Ci sono tante ragioni per*
* *Come esempio*
* *Comminciamo da*
* *Iniziamo da*

Presenting opinions

* *Innanzi tutto vorrei dire*
* *Innanzi tutto vorrei spiegare ciòche capisco*
* *Secondo me*
* *Si sa che*
* *Quasi ogni giorno*
* *Secondo alcuni… mentre altri*
* *Ci sono degli esempi*
* *Viene spesso detto che/si dice spesso che*
* *Alcuni sostengono che*
* *Sono convinto/a che*
* *A mio parere*
* *Mi sembra che*
* *Dal mio punto di vista*
* *Concordo*
* *Temo che*
* *Posso ben immaginare che*
* *Ho l’impressione che*
* *Dobbiamo spesso affrontare questo problema*

Developing an argument

* Bisogna chiarire
* Entrambi
* Da un lato…dall’altro lato
* Sia…sia/O…o
* La cosa più interessante è
* Si parla di
* È vero che
* Rimane una possibilità
* Non si può discutere
* Ciò nonostante è certo che
* Potrebbe essere
* Fino ad un certo punto
* Vedendo il lato positivo/negativo
* È difficile dire se
* Il fatto è che
* Resta il dubbio che
* È impossibile che

Expressions to use within a paragraph to add structure

* *Innanzitutto*
* *Fino a*
* *Anche*
* *A causa di*
* *Finalmente*
* *Per concludere*
* *Quindi/Conseguentemente*
* *Per consequenza*
* *Da un lato*
* *Dato che*
* *Nonostante*
* *Però*
* *Nonostante/Sebbene*
* *In breve*
* *Brevemente*
* *In una parola*
* *Inoltre*
* *In realtà*
* *Dall’altro*

Introducing an impersonal statement

* *È possible*
* *È fattibile*
* *È importante*
* *È necessario*
* *C’è poco tempo per*
* *Non c’è tempo*
* *Si tratta di*
* *È abbastanza*
* *È una questione di*
* *In alcune circostanze*

Numbers of people and things

* *La maggioranza di*
* *Tanti*
* *Pochi*
* *Alcune persone*

Expressing doubt

* *Forse*
* *Non sono sicuro/a*
* *Potrebbe essere*
* *Dipende da*

Indicating times and periods

* *Ai nostri tempi*
* *Al momento/In questo periodo*
* *Ancora*
* *In questi tempi*
* *Nel futuro*
* *In questo momento*
* *Nel future vicino*
* *Nei tempi di*
* *Nella prossima generazione*
* *Alla fine dell’anno/del secolo*
* *Nel settanta*
* *Per tanto tempo*
* *Verso la fine del secolo*

Giving examples or quoting an opinion

* *Portare qc/qn come esempio*
* *Utilizzando questo esempio*
* *Secondo alcune persone*
* *L’esempio più ovvio*
* *Secondo l’autore*

Comparing ideas

* *Alcune persone dicono*
* *Gli altri pesano*
* *In confronto al nostro modo di vivere*
* *Per un confronto tra*
* *Se confrontiamo le nostre attivita*
* *In contrasto*

Ending a discussion

* *Alla fine/Infine*
* *Per concludere/Insomma*
* *In conclusione si dice che*
* Tutto sommato, in generale
* In ogni caso/modo
* Non c’è dubbio che
* In fin dei conti
* È ovvio che
* Per finire vorrei dire che
* In conclusione vorrei dire che

Glossary of key words for the HSC

The table below contains key words and their meanings in the context of HSC language courses. The table may help teachers and students understand how to respond to questions and tasks which use these terms.

| Term | Description |
| --- | --- |
| Account | Account for, state reasons for, report on. Give an account of; narrate a series of events or transactions |
| Analyse | Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications |
| Compare | Show how things are similar or different |
| Construct | Make, build; put together items or arguments |
| Contrast | Show how things are different or opposite |
| Critically analyse or evaluate | Add a degree or level of accuracy, depth, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to analyse or evaluate |
| Define | State meaning and identify essential qualities |
| Demonstrate | Show by example |
| Describe | Provide characteristics and features |
| Discuss | Identify issues and provide points for and/or against |
| Evaluate | Make a judgement based on criteria; determine the value of |
| Explain | Relate cause and effect; make the relationships between things evident; say why and/or how |
| Explore | Examine or discuss (a subject, an option, an idea, a possibility) |
| Express | Put opinions, thoughts or views into words |
| Identify | Recognise and name |
| Interpret | Draw meaning from |
| Justify | Support an argument or conclusion |
| Outline | Sketch in general terms; indicate the main features of |
| Propose | Put forward (for example, a point of view, idea, argument, suggestion) for consideration or action |
| Recommend | Provide reasons in favour |
| Recount | Retell a series of events |
| Reflect | Think deeply or carefully about something |
| Summarise | Express, concisely, the relevant details |

Adapted from [A glossary of key words – NESA](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/hsc/hsc-student-guide/glossary-keywords)

Overview of syllabus text types

The text types listed in the Continuers Stage 6 syllabus are assumed knowledge for Extension students. Each Extension syllabus lists text types for production in the external examination. Below is an overview of some of the text types with which Extension students should be familiar. Refer to the Continuers and Extension syllabuses for complete lists.

| Syllabus text type | Purpose | Structure | Language features |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Article | * to sustain an argument
* to describe
* to inform, persuade, amuse or entertain
 | * titles or headings
* development of ideas or argument
* sequencing and linking of ideas
* statement of conclusion or advice
 | * range of tenses
* linking words
* language can be descriptive, factual, judgemental, emotive or persuasive, depending on context
 |
| Conversation | * to exchange information, opinions and experiences
* to maintain and sustain communication
 | * exchange of opening salutations
* question or statement followed by response
* 2-way interaction (sustained)
 | * question forms
* strategies to maintain conversation (fillers)
* interjections
* incomplete sentences
* language level depends on context and relationship between participants
 |
| Description | * to inform
* to entertain
* to describe
* to classify
 | * general statement or classification
* introduction and elaborated description of characteristic features
 | * specific details
* descriptive words
* range of tenses
* varied vocabulary
* comparative expressions
* literary devices (for example simile, imagery)
 |
| Diary or journal entry | * to record personal reflections or experiences
 | * chronological or stream of consciousness
 | * first person
* range of tenses
* sequencing (time) words
* abbreviated words or sentences
* subjective or informal language
 |
| Discussion | * to give different points of view
* to examine issues from more than one perspective
* to make recommendations based on evidence
* to sustain an argument
 | * presentation of main idea in introduction
* evidence or data to support main idea
* interaction between participants to clarify understandings
* conclusion or reiteration of main idea
* balanced
 | * linking words to sequence ideas logically
* qualifying words (for example, usually, probably)
* persuasive, descriptive, discursive or personal language, depending on context
* comparative expressions
 |
| Email or fax | * to use technology-based methods of communication
* to inform
* to seek a response
 | * conventions (for example subject line, email address)
* specific details without elaboration
* salutations and sign-offs
 | * abbreviated words and sentences
* simple language structures
 |
| Essay | * to discuss
* to analyse
* to assess
* to guide or teach
 | * orientation or introduction
* presentation of argument, judgement or evaluation
* conclusion or reiteration of main argument
* often has embedded description and/or explanation
 | * range of tenses
* formal, objective language
* linking words to sequence ideas and paragraphs
* qualifying words
* abstract nouns and concepts
* complex sentence structure
* evidence or examples included to support or enhance argument
 |
| Formal letter | * to communicate in writing in formal contexts
* to request information
* to lodge a complaint
* to express an opinion
 | * salutations and sign-offs
* letter conventions (for example layout, address, dates)
* logical and cohesive sequence of ideas
 | * use of full sentences and paragraphs
* more complex sentence structure
* objective language
* use of formulaic expressions
 |
| Informal letter | * to communicate in writing with acquaintances, friends, family
* to inform or amuse
 | * salutations and sign-offs
* letter conventions (for example layout, address, date)
 | * frequent colloquial language
* subjective language
* sentence structure often less complex than in formal letters
 |
| Interview | * to seek and convey information, views or opinions
 | * question and response format
 | * question words
* link words
* strategies to maintain communication
 |
| Invitation | * to invite in written form
 | * layout conventions
* statement of facts
* protocols
 | * abbreviated language
* formal or informal language
* expressions that tell when, where, with whom
 |
| Message or note | * to inform
* to request
* to instruct
* to remind
 | * general statement, description, procedure
* may be in point form
 | * succinct
* abbreviated words and sentences
* lack of descriptive detail
* use of colloquial language
 |
| Narrative account | * to entertain, amuse or instruct
 | * series of events presented in logical progression
* resolution or conclusion
* may contain a series of complications
 | * time words used to connect events
* use of action words
* descriptions of characters and settings
 |
| Personal profile | * to describe
* to outline personal details
 | * may be in point form (appropriate to situation)
* use of headings and subheadings
 | * factual
* descriptive language
* present tense
* simple phrases or sentences
 |
| Postcard | * to provide information
* to retell events
 | * salutations and sign-offs
* brief description or message
 | * descriptive language
* incomplete sentences
* abbreviated words
* colloquial expressions
* clichés
* personal impressions
 |
| Recount | * to retell what happened
* to tell a series of events
 | * introduction or orientation
* events sequenced in chronological order
 | * descriptive language
* past tense
* time words to connect events
* expressions that tell us when, where, with whom and how
 |
| Report | * to classify and/or describe
* to organise facts
* to draw conclusions
 | * general statement or classification
* description
* logical progression
 | * supporting evidence (for example statistics)
* factual
* usually present tense
* language specific to the topic
* objective language
 |
| Review | * to respond to a text or stimulus
* to summarise, analyse or interpret a text and to assess its value
 | * describe context of text or work
* describe the text or work
* judgement or evaluation of text or work
 | * descriptive language
* more complex structures with frequent abstract language
* words that express judgement
* possible comparisons
* expressions of aesthetic nature
 |
| Speech or talk (script) | * to communicate ideas, opinions and attitudes
* to entertain
* to persuade
* to welcome
* to thank
 | * introductory statement of purpose
* explanation or sequence of events or presentation of argument
* concluding remarks
 | * choice of expressions to engage the audience
* descriptive words
* a range of tenses
* subjective language
* consistent use of correct register depending on audience
* address audience throughout
 |

Suggestions for teaching a novel

The elements of a novel

There are 5 essential literary elements that make up a novel – plot, setting, character, point of view and theme.

Plot

The plot is the sequence of events in a novel that the author has planned in a logical order. It starts with an exposition or introduction to the story where the characters, setting and background unfold. Essential to a plot is the conflict where there is a change in the character or a situation in the story, which propels the plot. The plot eventually climaxes in the turning point of the story leading into a falling action where the events and complications start to fall into place. The plot ends with the final events in the story culminating into a resolution or conclusion.

Setting

The setting is the location and time where the story unfolds.

To brainstorm the ideas of a setting, you can ask the following questions:

* Place – where is the geographical location of the story?
* Time – when is the action of the story taking place? Consider the historical period, year and time of day.
* Social conditions – does the story unfold in a particular local or cultural setting? What is the daily life of the character?
* Atmosphere or mood – what feeling is created in the novel? What is the ambiance and surroundings like?

Characters

Characters are the people and/or animals in the story. The protagonist is the main central character around whom major events unfold. The antagonist is the ‘enemy’ and is an opposition to the main character.

Characterisation is how the author reveals the personality of each character, and may also include stereotypes.

Characterisation may include:

* speech and mannerisms
* thoughts and feelings
* qualities
* physical appearance
* actions
* how the character interacts with others
* what other characters say and feel about them and how they react to them.

Characters can be:

* rounded – highly developed and affected by the events in the story; these type of characters are life-like as they grow or deteriorate by the conclusion of the story
* dynamic – they undergo a change and evolve during the story
* flat – 1 dimensional characters
* static – they remain the same throughout the whole story.

Point of view

The narrative point of view is the angle from which the story is told. In the genre of film, the point of view is where the camera would be taking the shot.

There are different narrative points of view in a novel. They are:

* first person – the narrator uses ‘I’, ‘me’ or ‘we’. The story is told by the protagonist or a character close to the protagonist. The readers experience the story through this character’s eyes.
* second person – the narrator address the reader and uses ‘you’. This makes the reader more active in the storytelling process.
* third person – the narrator sees all the action, using ‘she’, ‘he’ and/or ‘they’. The story is told from an outsider’s point of view and describes the action the way the narrator sees it.

Theme

The theme is the central message or the fundamental meaning of the story. It is the universal lesson or message explored in the novel. Various language techniques such as symbolism, metaphor, allusion, irony and hyperbole can be used to convey the theme.

Activities to develop global understanding of the novel

The following are sample activities that may assist in providing a global understanding of the novel. They can be used for the development of written and/or oral skills. Many are suitable for group work.

* Stopping the reading at a particular point in class and asking students to predict what will happen next or how the story will end.
* Discussing how the novel engages the reader. Is there conflict, humour, suspense, romance? Does it consistently hold your interest?
* Rewriting the ending of a chapter or extract.
* Writing a newspaper headline to capture the essence of the story.
* Writing a review of the novel.
* Creating a cloze test on a prescribed extract to show the effect of images, words or a particular word.
* Writing a report on an event from the story, for example who was there, what were they doing, why they were doing it, and so on.
* Organising a role-play based on a key passage. This may include improvised dramatisation and a paraphrase of the passage.
* Taking key sentences from the story out of order and rearranging them in sequence.
* Summarising the plot in a number of sentences, mixing them up then arranging them in sequence.
* Drawing diagrams to show the structure behind what has happened. For example, timelines and graphic summaries. Students could consider whether the action is chronological or involves flashbacks, and could create diagrams of the relationships between the characters.
* Considering what the characters know about each other. Are the characters stereotypes or individuals?
* Holding a press conference for a character (interviewing a character, adopting the persona of the character and recording the interview).
* Writing a tag line for each of the key characters – one line to sum them up.
* Writing the history of a character. What is known about this person? Why is he/she now in this situation?
* Imagining yourself as a character and writing a letter explaining your actions.
* Writing the diary entry of a character for one day.
* Analysing significant character relationships in the story. Groups could consider specific passages and show how language illuminates the changes in these relationships.
* Writing a letter to the editor, on behalf of a character, explaining what happened.
* Discussing the issues raised in the novel – how do the issues unfold?
* Discussing whether the novel offers new perspectives on the issues raised. Can it change perceptions? What does the reader learn?
* Linking issues raised to students’ personal experiences or other texts studied.
* Discussing how reading the novel has widened the students’ experiences.
* Considering parallels and conflicts, for example rich and poor.
* Considering the setting. Is it important? Why? Is it integral to the whole story? Could it take place elsewhere?
* Reflecting on the images and symbols that occur in the story. Do they occur in other stories by the same author? Are they typical of the author’s work? What do they add to the story?
* Considering the possibility of different levels of meaning in the story. Is it just a narrative, or an allegory? Is there parallel symbolism?
* Considering the role of irony, humour or figurative speech in the story.
* Considering the values expressed by the author. Can the personal voice of the author be heard coming through?
* Questioning whether the author is saying something new. Is it universal to the human condition?
* Analysing the vocabulary. Is there repetition? Is regional dialect used? Are colloquialisms used? What is the impact of these vocabulary choices?
* Considering how the level of language reflects the relationship between the characters.
* Noting aspects of the language used. Ideas could be pooled on the board, sifted, sorted and classified. Conclusions about the author’s purpose should emerge. All ideas could be summarised and recorded.
* Identifying a social comment in the story and discussing the methods used to make the comment. How does the language convey the author’s attitude?

Prescribed text

Novel – *Bianca come il latte, rossa come il sangue* by Alessandro D’Avenia (2013)

(Note: The page numbers used in this resource are from *I edizione, Oscar Abosolute, maggio 2016*)

There are 11 extracts prescribed for study.

* **Extract 1** – pages 9-11

From: *Ogni cosa è un colore. Ogni emozione è un colore.*

To: *Un leone senza criniera non è un leone. Il mio nome è Leo mica per niente.*

* **Extract 2** – pages 62-68

From: *Il Sognatore si è inventato un’altra delle sue lezioni fuori programma: sono le migliori!*

To: *A proposito, devo parlare con papà prima che me ne dimentichi…*

* **Extract 3** – pages 71-75

From: *Entro con papà all’ospedale dove è ricoverata Beatrice.*

To: *Mi sento felice e stanco. Così è l’amore.*

* **Extract 4** – pages 120-125

From: *La mamma di Silvia è una signora che appare come è. Mi piace.*

To: *Niko però non mi ha neanche chiesto di che ragazza stavamo parlando…*

* **Extract 5** – pages 143-150

From: *Citofono. Suona il citifono. È per me.*

To: *Ma perché i genitori pensano che stiamo bene solo quando sembriamo normali?*

* **Extract 6** – pages 156-157

From: *Il Sognatore m’interroga.*

To: *Quel voto riguarda la mia storia, la mia vita.*

* **Extract 7** – pages 159-162

From: *Oggi rivedo Niko.*

To: *…prima che la mi faccia tradisca la bugia e Terminator dimostri, con i fatti, che nessuno ha portato a spasso la sua incontinente vescica…*

* **Extract 8** – pages 179-182

From: *Quando rientro a casa c’è mia madre seduta in soggiorno.*

To: *E la polvere della mia ombra è polvere di stelle.*

* **Extract 9** – pages 193-200

From: *Da Beatrice mi trasformo in personaggi sempre nuovi: prima il maestro di chitarra, adesso il professore di geografia.*

To: *“Ti voglio bene” dicono gli occhi di Silvia. “Anch’io” rispondono i miei.*

* **Extract 10** – pages 212-217

From*: Il brutto della vita è che non ci sono le istruzioni per l’uso.*

To: *Io non ne sarò mai capace.*

* **Extract 11** – pages 235-241

From: *L’estate è il motivo per cui si vive, ma questa è stata diversa.*

To: *E la vita è l’unica cosa che non s’inganna, se tu, cuore, hai il coraggio
di accettarla…*

The prescribed text is available at: Abbey’s Bookshop, 131 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000 or 02 9264 3111.

Background to the novel

The author

Alessandro D’Avenia was born on 2 May 1977 in Palermo, Italy. He teaches Latin, Ancient Greek and Italian literature at a high school in Milan. He is also a screenwriter and, in 2006, established a theatre in Milan. *Bianca come il latte, rossa come il sangue* has been translated into 22 languages and was adapted for a film of the same name, released in 2013. The book was inspired by the true story of a girl suffering from leukemia who was attending a high school in Rome where D’Avenia was teaching.

Discussion question

An author’s experiences, personal life and background often influence their writing. How do you think D’Avenia’s own life experiences influenced the writing of *Bianca come il latte, rossa come il sangue*?

Literary background to *Bianca come il latte, rossa come il sangue*

The plot

The novel is written in the first person from the point of view of the main character Leonardo (Leo). Leo is 16 and secretly in love with Beatrice, a girl with long red hair. Leo thinks school is a waste of time, apart from hanging out with his friends, including his best friend Silvia who is secretly in love with him. Leo’s friend Niko plays in the same soccer team at school, *i Pirati*, but is unable to see the changes in Leo as the story unfolds.

Other significant people in Leo’s life are Gandalf, the religion teacher, his parents, and *il Sognatore* (the dreamer), a young casual teacher of history and philosophy. Initially, Leo views *il Sognatore* as a *sfigato* (a loser), but in time, *il Sognatore* connects with Leo through his lessons and by getting him to understand the importance of dreaming and questioning life.

Leo is a happy go-lucky character who, once he finds out that Beatrice has leukaemia, undergoes a radical transformation. With his father, he goes to the hospital to donate blood for her. He then writes her a letter in which he confesses his feelings for her but fails to deliver it as he has a scooter accident.

Eventually Leo meets Beatrice, now home from hospital, by skipping school and going to her house with Silvia. He finally tells her how he feels, but Beatrice tells him that it’s pointless as she is about to die. Nevertheless, Leo continues to see Beatrice.

Leo declares his love for Silvia on ‘their bench’ at the park, but when she confesses she deliberately gave him the wrong number for Beatrice, he rejects her and feels betrayed.

Beatrice dies before the summer holidays and Leo spends the holidays dealing with the loss.

After the summer holidays Leo finally reads a letter from Silvia. Leo realises that his true soul mate is Silvia.

Structure and style

The book is written in the first person narrative, from the point of view of the protagonist, Leo. Through Leo’s inner monologue, the story unfolds as he comes of age. The structure of the novel is unconventional as it has no chapter numbers or titles, encouraging the reader to continue reading. The book includes a range of language techniques, including symbolism, imagery, metaphors, figurative language and references to classical literature. Leo’s view of the world is explored through poetry and it is at times mocking, touching, poignant and brilliant as he experiences loss, fear, death, love and suffering for the first time.

The setting

The story is set in a typical Italian high school over the period of a school year. Leo’s milieu is that of a typical teenage boy who likes to play soccer and ride on his scooter. Although Leo complains of his monotonous school life, he is about to undergo something extraordinary which is in sharp contrast to the ordinary backdrop of the school. The author delivers a realistic and compelling story, drawing on his own experiences as a high school teacher.

The characters

Leo (Leonardo)

Free-spirited Leo is a 16-year old who is unconcerned about his future. Leo enjoys playing 5-a-side soccer with his friends, in particular Niko, music, riding his ‘*motorino*,’ spending time with Silvia and being the class clown. School for him is a drag, as are his teachers – he refers to them as ‘*una specie protetta che speri si estingua definitivamente*.’ He is in love (from afar) with Beatrice and often compares his love for her with that of the writer Dante Alighieri, who also loved his ‘Beatrice’ from afar. His world and his perception of life change with the arrival of a casual teacher, *il Sognatore*, in whom he sees something different. Leo sees himself as having the strength of a lion, hence his name. He is fixated with the colours white and red, the former symbolising a void, a loss, an absence. Red, on the other hand is the colour of love, of passion and of Beatrice’s hair. Leo dreams of being with Beatrice.

Silvia

Silvia is Leo’s best friend and confidant. She is a model student who helps Leo get through his turbulent year at school. Their friendship is very special, however their relationship is put to the test as Leo continues to profess his love for Beatrice, unaware that Silvia is secretly in love with him.

*Il Sognatore*

*Il Sognatore* is the new history and philosophy casual teacher who replaces *l’Argentieri.* At first, Leo treats him with the same cynicism as he treats all of his teachers but Leo quickly sees a spark behind *il Sognatore’s* eyes and a passion in his words when he teaches. His style is unlike that of the other teachers. *Il Sognatore* attempts to awaken the students, to push them to question life, find their dreams and live intensely. *Il Sognatore* is the catalyst who inspires Leo to grow.

Beatrice

Beatrice is considered the prettiest girl in the whole school and is represented by the colour red. She is Leo’s love interest and arouses passion in him. His world revolves around her, however she is unaware of his affections. When Beatrice is absent from school for a few days, the reader learns that she is battling leukaemia. When Leo musters the courage to visit Beatrice, the reader gains an insight into her personality – she is strong, spiritual and passionate. She does not fear death and will face it with courage and with God by her side. As Leo and Beatrice spend time together, their friendship develops and their bond is strengthened.

Activity

Silvia and Beatrice are the 2 important girls in Leo’s life. In the table below, write as many similarities and differences as you can between the two characters, Silvia and Beatrice.

| Silvia | Beatrice |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

Extract 1 – pages 9-11

Vocabulary and expressions

*andare in bianco* – to abstain from sex

*bat-cinquantino* – *motorino,* scooter

Key quotations

Page 9

* *Ogni cosa è un colore.*

Page 10

* *A volte anche Beatrice, e io, alla fermata sotto scuola, ci vado per lei.*
* *Ma se davanti a scuola c’è Beatrice è un’altra cosa.*
* *Occhi verdi che quando li spalanca prendono tutto il viso. Capelli rossi che quando li scioglie l’alba ti viene addosso. Poche parole ma giuste. Se fosse cinema: genere ancora da inventare. Se fosse profumo: la sabbia al mattino presto, quando la spiaggia è sola con il mare. Colore? Beatrice è rosso. Come l’amore è rosso.*

Page 11

* *Un leone senza criniera non è un leone. Il mio nome è Leo mica per niente.*

Examples of language techniques

* Narrative technique – written in first person, mostly as Leo’s monologue
* Symbolism – colours and music
* No direct speech in Extract 1

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | The first extract is set at the beginning of the school year. Leo dismisses school as a dull and valueless experience that all adolescents must go through. He describes his teachers as *i vampiri* as they suck the life out of their students. There is a lack of meaning in his educational experiences and he searches for the meaning of life elsewhere. |
| The evolving nature of relationships | When Leo feels ‘white’ he goes online and connects with his friends. He tries to build connections online, albeit superficial ones, to feel a sense of belonging and connectedness. He describes his love for Beatrice as ‘red’, full of passion and life and she is immediately established as Leo’s love interest in the book. |
| The quest for identity  | In the first extract, the quest for identity is firmly established through the protagonist’s self-questioning, inner monologue and personal judgements and assumptions. Leo questions the nature of school and relationships. He has an immense feeling of being lost in his own world and tries to find meaning through colours. The colour white symbolises his blank state and feelings of emptiness and nothingness. His love for Beatrice is what gives him a sense of purpose. He also identifies his emotions through different genres of music depending on his mood. |

Questions and activities

1. What insights does the reader gain about Leo in this extract?
2. How does Leo’s opinion of the colour white differ from traditional and historical views?
3. Read the articles [*Significato del colore bianco*](https://www.mitiemisteri.it/simbologia-significato-dei-colori/bianco)and [*Significato del colore rosso*](https://www.mitiemisteri.it/simbologia-significato-dei-colori/rosso). Discuss the meaning of colours, their connotations and symbolism.
4. Comment on the writing style of this extract.

Extract 2 – pages 62-68

Vocabulary and expressions

*assedi* – sieges

s*accheggi* – plunders

*gettando la spugna* – to throw in the towel

*angelo custode* – guardian angel

Key quotations

Page 63

* *Queste le parole del Sognatore, non so cosa significhino esattamente ma suonano bene, anche se non ho mai sentito parlare di quel tale Bradbury.*
* *Il Sognatore è un pazzo. Crede che siamo capaci di fare pensieri simili.*
* *Non so se farò questo compito. È veramente difficile, ma ha qualcosa di misterioso, perché per la prima volta la risposta non è da qualche parte dove puoi copiarla. La risposta la devi trovare. E forse c’è in gioco di più. Ci devo provare. Odio il Sognatore, perché mi frega sempre, mi fa venire la curiosità.*
* *L’ignoranza è la cosa più comoda che io conosca dopo il divano del soggiorno di casa mia.*

Page 64

* *A volte nella musica si trovano le risposte che cerchi, quasi senza cercarle. E anche se non le trovi, almeno trovi quegli stessi sentimenti che stai provando. Qualcun altro li ha provati. Non ti senti solo.*
* *Suonandole è come se affrontassi quei mostri…*

Page 66

* *Questa è la distruzione più crudele: rubare i sogni alla gente.*

Examples of language techniques

* Repetition of *sogni*
* Repetition of references to destruction – *fumo, saccheggi, assedi*
* Imagery – *andare in fumo; i colpi fiammeggenti; un gesto infuocato; bruciavano lo spirito; la carta dei libri bruciava; bruciavano il suo spirito e le sue ali* (which also foreshadows events to come)
* Irony – *L’ignoranza è la cosa più comoda che io conosca*
* Simile – *Suonandole è come se affrontassi quei mostri…*

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | Leo’s attitude towards his teachers starts to change when he meets a new teacher, *il Sognatore.* He motivates Leo to think deeply, inspires him to question and arouses curiosity in him.Leo’s sense of generosity and responsibility causes him to decide to donate blood to save Beatrice from leukaemia. Before doing so, he makes sure that he is donating alcohol-free blood to give her the best treatment possible. |
| The evolving nature of relationships | When Leo asks his mother for permission to donate blood, his mother deflects the responsibility by saying *parlane con tuo padre.* However, when Leo’s father comes home late, he decides to talk to him another time as his relationship with his father is distant. |
| The quest for identity  | Leo discovers that in the darkness of night is when he finds words to describe his thoughts and emotions. He also uses music to confront emotions such as solitude, sadness and anger that he would normally have difficulties dealing with alone. Music is an extension of his emotions and defines the person that he is. |

Questions and activities

1. To which ‘monsters’ is Leo referring to in ‘*Suonandole (le canzoni) è come se affrontarsi quei mostri*’ on p 64?
2. Explain the reference to dreams on p 66.
3. Comment on the imagery relating to destruction. For example *fumo, saccheggi, andati in fumo, i colpi fiammeggianti, gesto infuocato, bruciavano lo spirito, la carta dei libri bruciava.*
4. What meaning does Leo attribute to the colours ‘*bianco, nero, rosso’*?
5. What does Leo mean by‘*Non voglio dimenticarmi quello che ho scoperto*’ on p 67?

*Fa’ un’indagine sull’importanza dei sogni per i tuoi coetanei. Presenta i risultati di quest’indagine alla tua classe. Parla per circa 3 minuti.*

1. Discuss the importance of literature and history in understanding the past and human nature.
2. “*Vivere in un mondo senza musica sarebbe come vivere in un mondo senza colori.”*

*Prendi in considerazione quest’affermazione e prepara una lista di domande da porre a un tuo coetaneo/una tua coetanea sull’importanza della musica nella sua vita. Scrivi il testo dell’intervista in cui lei/lui riflette sulle varie domande.*

*Esempio:*

* + *Che genere di musica ti piace?*
	+ *Quando ascolti le canzoni del tuo artista preferito che emozioni suscitano in te?*

Extract 3 – pages 71-75

Vocabulary and expressions

*farsi una canna* – to smoke a joint

*una pacca sulla spalla* – a slap on the back

Key quotations

Page 71

* *È lo stesso di Beatrice. Ne ero sicuro, abbiamo lo stesso sangue, viviamo dello stesso sangue.*
* *La mia vita è legata a quella di Beatrice, nel sangue.*
* *Ti riduco nella polvere della tua ombra.*
* *Chiuso il capitolo canne. Se Beatrice dovesse averne ancora bisogno, il mio sangue deve essere perfetto, puro, immacolato. Rosso come l’amore che ho per lei.*
* *È rossoviola ed è denso, come il mio amore per Beatrice.*

Pages 71-72

* *Il sangue, come l’amore, fa perdere la testa, eppure ti dà anche la forza per superare i tuoi limiti… Mi sembra di aver dato la vita per Beatrice, sono quasi morto e pallido come un vampiro al contrario: invece di succhiare il sangue, io per vivere l’ho dato.*

Page 74

* *Io avrei dato qualsiasi cosa perché una donna così esistesse davvero nella mia vita, e non solo su una nave in crociera.*
* *Credo che oggi tu abbia cominciato a essere uomo: hai fatto una cosa che nessuno ti aveva suggerito o aveva deciso per te. L’hai scelta tu.*
* *Non passavo così tanto tempo con mio padre da un secolo. “Sono fiero di te” è il motto di oggi.*
* *Beatrice è una forte: troppo giovane e piena di bellezza per non farcela.*

Page 75

* *Mi sento felice e stanco. Così è l’amore.*

Examples of language techniques

* Imagery – stars, blood
* Allusion to the blood of Christ
* Symbolism – stars as a navigation tool through life
* Extended metaphor – blood
* Hyperbolic language – *Io avrei dato qualsiasi cosa perché una donna così esistesse davvero nella mia vita, e non solo su una nave in crociera.*

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The evolving nature of relationships | There is a shift in the dynamics of the relationship between Leo and his father. His father is proud of his decision to donate blood and even accompanies him to the hospital. Their father and son relationship develops further as Leo’s father now sees him as a man and not a child.Leo’s love for Beatrice becomes deeper. |
| The quest for identity  | Leo feels that he belongs with Beatrice because they happen to be the same blood type. The fact that he wants to donate blood shows that she is an extension of him and he wants to keep his blood pure and immaculate to give life to her. This is an act of love from his part.Leo feels validated by his father’s support. His father tells him that Leo is just like him and this shapes Leo’s self-identity as he finds similarities in his father’s experiences. |

Questions and activities

1. Comment on the shift in the relationship between Leo and his father.
2. How is the colour red used in this extract?
3. Discuss the internal and external struggles in this extract.
4. Rewrite the dialogue between Leo and his father from the perspective of the father.
5. To what extent do life circumstances shape our future life direction? Discuss your opinion.

Extract 4 – pages 120-125

Vocabulary and expressions

*strizzare l’occhio* – to wink

*una doccia ciclopica* – a long shower

Key quotations

Page 120

* *Fa le domande sui dettagli. Solo chi fa domande sui dettagli ha provato a sentire cosa sente il tuo cuore. I dettagli. I dettagli: un modo di amare davvero.*

Page 121

* *Ma non mi vengono. Non mi vengono le parole per Beatrice. Se mi finiscono le parole per Beatrice sono finito io.*

Page 122

* *Finora le uniche parole che ho scritto liberamente, dato che quelle della scuola non le considero parole vere, sono proprio le parole della lettera per Beatrice.*
* *…il mio sangue ti guarirà.*
* *Gandalf sostiene che il sangue donato guarisce. Lui dice che Cristo ha guarito le persone di tutti i tempi dal peccato dando il suo sangue.*
* *Se hai il mio sangue scoprirai una cosa importante. Quando ti passerà attraverso il cuore sentirai che lo accarezzerà e gli racconterà il mio sogno.*

Page 123

* *Silvia, io ho ancora paura del buio.*

Page 124

* *E il bianco è il tumore al sangue della vita.*

Page 125

* *Niko però non mi ha neanche chiesto di che ragazza stavamo parlando…*

Examples of language techniques

* Use of direct speech
* Imagery – blood, dreams
* Metaphor – darkness, fear of the dark, the unknown and ignorance
* Symbolism – the colours white and red
* Personification – *Le mie parole possano tenerti compagnia*

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | Gandalf, the religious teacher, reassures Leo that the blood he has donated will cure Beatrice, making a parallel comparison to Jesus Christ whose blood saved mankind. Leo finds comfort in his teacher’s affirmation. Leo is starting to make real life connections to what he learns at school and finds this valuable. |
| The evolving nature of relationships | Leo describes his soul as white and needs Silvia’s hand to pen his words on paper. By Silvia transcribing his emotions on paper, she gives his thoughts order, ‘elegance’ and ‘sweetness.’ They work well together as a team. His soul is transformed into something greater because Silvia is by his side. Although he sees Silvia as his friend, she plays a pivotal role in his life.Leo questions his friendship with Niko. Although Niko gives him advice in a time of crisis, he does not know the full story and isn’t interested in the details. In contrast, Silvia’s mum coaxes him for details because she cares about his thoughts and feelings. For Leo, asking for details shows a real concern. Niko, who is supposed to be his close friend, failed to do this.  |
| The quest for identity  | Leo starts to realise that Silvia completes him and is part of his life, even though he has doubts because his obsession for Beatrice blinds him to his real feelings about her.Leo continues to question himself and his purpose in life. He feels that he hasn’t shown Beatrice his complete self and feels a sense of dissatisfaction. Leo’s soul will remain white without Silvia, who gives it colour and meaning.White is also the colour of the cancer in Beatrice’s blood. |

Questions

1. What does the lack of dialogue from Silvia reveal about her personality?
2. “*Ho bisogno del tuo aiuto per scrivere, Silvia*.” Explain the context of this statement on p 121.

Extract 5 – pages 143-150

Vocabulary and expressions

*sei un poco di buono* – you’re no good

*non mollava la presa* – he won’t let go

*lo ripago con la stessa moneta* – here: I do the same

*mi squadra* – checks me out

Key quotations

Page 144

* *Lo sapevo che non mollava la presa. I prof sono come i boa, ti si arrotolano attorno quando sei distratto, poi aspettano che butti fuori l’aria e stringono, e a ogni espirazione stringono di più, finché ti è impossibile allargare di nuovo la gabbia toracica e muori per asfissia.*
* *Io rimango in silenzio. Con gli occhi bassi. Guardo l’asfalto come se ogni centimetro di bitume fosse diventato improvvisamente interessante. C’è qualcuno dentro di me che non aspetta altro, qualcuno che vuole uscire fuori, ma se ne sta là rintanato, si difende e ha paura di farsi vedere per quello che è, perché per uscire fuori coinvolgerebbe quell’altro con i capelli arruffati e lo sguardo da furbo e lo coinvolgerebbe con un bel po’ di acqua e sale sotto forma di lacrime. Così continuo a fissare per terra per paura che quel qualcuno esca fuori come il dentifricio, troppo e tutto in una volta.*
* *Cosa farebbe, prof, se la sua ragazza morisse?*

Page 145

* *Non è davvero la mia ragazza, ma è come se lo fosse. Vede, prof, quando io le parlavo del mio sogno parlavo di Beatrice. Io so che, qualunque sia la mia strada, lei sarà la mia compagna su quella strada e io, se lei non è su quella strada, non so più dove andare.*

Page 148

* *Tutti abbiamo qualcosa di cui vergognarci. Tutti siamo scappati, Leo. Ma questo ci rende uomini. Solo quando abbiamo tatuato sulla faccia qualcosa di cui ci vergogniamo cominciamo ad avere una faccia reale…*

Examples of language techniques

* Use of direct speech
* Simile – *per paura che quel qualcuno esca fuori come il dentifricio, troppo e tutto in una volta*
* Repetition – *Era piccola, era indifesa, era pallida...* and *Svanita, cancellata, finita.*
* Hyperbole – *La diga è rotta e per il momento un milione di metri cubi di dolore…*

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | Leo describes his teachers as boa constrictors who squeeze the air out of students killing them through suffocation. He views his teachers as non-feeling humans who do not understand his grief. However, when *il Sognatore* admits that he does not understand Leo’s grief because he has never had a girlfriend who has died, Leo sees him as human. *Il Sognatore* admits that, even though he’s a teacher, he does not necessarily have all the answers. Leo finds comfort in *il Sognatore* and pours out his grief, feeling relieved that his feelings are heard and validated. |
| The evolving nature of relationships | Although Beatrice was not really Leo’s girlfriend, he saw her as his girlfriend. He also feels a sense of guilt for not being able to save her from her impending death. He loved her from afar and felt that he didn’t have the courage to see her through her difficult last days, choosing instead to run away from the situation. This is evident in *Uno che scappa non ama davvero*.  |
| The quest for identity  | Leo is disappointed in himself because he realises he does not truly love Beatrice the way she should be loved. With Beatrice’s impending death, Leo feels a sense of loss and questions his identity, which he had partially defined through his love for her. His dreams and hopes for the future are shattered and he says *no so più dove andare*. With Beatrice dying, Leo has to now redefine his identity. |

Questions

1. What is the effect of the repetition of ‘*la mano*’ in these sentences:
	* *‘Forse avevi bisogno di una mano…’* on p 144
	* *‘Mi mette una mano sulla spalla…’* on p 145
	* *‘…accanto a me, con la sua mano forte sulla spalla’* on p146?
2. In this extract, how is the Italian education system portrayed?
3. Describe the student-teacher relationship in this extract.

Extract 6 – pages 156-157

Vocabulary and expressions

*interrogazioni* – oral testing

*la schermaglia* – tiff/skirmish

Key quotations

Page 156

* *Le risposte importanti sono scritte tra le righe dei libri e devi essere tu capace di leggerle!*

Page 157

* *Dentro di me succede qualcosa, sbuca fuori dalla caverna l’uomo in cui mi ero evoluto qualche sera fa.*

Examples of language techniques

* Narrative technique – switches from first person narrative in this extract, to third person narrative on p 158

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | *Il Sognatore* challenges Leo’s thinking during the exam as he urges him to read between the lines. He refuses to spoon-feed him and instead helps him to find the answers for himself. This method of teaching is non-traditional and inspires Leo to think on his feet even though he is frustrated. |
| The quest for identity  | Leo develops resilience in dealing with Beatrice’s condition and impending death. He resolves to not run away from it like a ‘little boy’ but he will face it as a man, *Gli respondo como fa un uomo.* His father’s support and influence bolster his confidence and maturity. |

Activity

Research a famous person whose life experiences have shaped them and who inspires you. Write an article for the local Italian newspaper.

Extract 7 – pages 159-162

Vocabulary and expressions

*bocconcini di pollo* – chicken nuggets

*lo sfidone dei goal* – big challenge of scoring as many goals as possible

*veleggiare* – to sail

*la classifica cannonieri* – top scorer

*ammutolisco* – to become silent

*annuire* – to nod

*ruota libera* – freely

*rannicchiata* – curled up

*risucchiata* – swallowed up by/absorbed

Key quotations

Page 160

* *…abbiamo capito che uno era per l’altro il gemello che stava aspettando.*

Page 161

* *Niko è troppo intento a pensare al suo passaggio per strada con questa sventola accanto e troppo preso dalla vittoria per rendersi conto che fingo di essere incuriosito e contento.*

Examples of language techniques

* Hyperbole – *veleno di un serpente*
* Use of anglicism – *craccarlo*
* Simile – *con le mie scarpe…come fosse la guancia di una ragazza*
* Simile – *come un ladro*
* Foreshadwing – *voglio una vita…dei film*
* Pun – *Fifa* – game and fear

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The evolving nature of relationships | Leo always thought of his friend Niko as his twin. In this extract, there is a shift in the nature of their relationship as Leo realises more and more that they are different. Niko fails to recognise the real Leo. Leo has never felt so alone and pretends to smile to please Niko. |

Question

Define the true nature of the relationship between Leo and Niko.

Extract 8 – pages 179-182

Vocabulary and expressions

*la solita sparata* – the usual exaggeration

*marinare la scuola* – to truant

*Spider decappottabile* – an Alfa Spider convertible

*un fuso* – a ramrod

*Albus Silente* – Albus Dumbledore (Harry Potter)

*melenso* – dull, stupid

*mi fa schifo* – it disgusts me

*dire fesserie* – to talk nonsense

*Che punizione hai beccato?* – What punishment did you get?

Key quotations

Page 179

* *Hanno chiamato da scuola. Rischi l’anno. Da oggi fino alla fine delle lezioni non esci più di casa.*
* *…tutta la vita è una punizione.*
* *Non so se hai capito: io sto morendo.*

Page 180

* *Le sue parole come mille aghi mi perforano le vene. Non ho capito niente della vita, del dolore, della morte, dell’amore. Io che credevo che l’amore vincesse su tutto. Illuso. Come tutti: recitiamo lo stesso copione in questa commedia, per essere massacrati sul finale. Non è una commedia, è un horror.*
* *Sai, Leo, anche io ho marinato la scuola una volta.*
* *Se io quel giorno fossi andato a scuola, Leo, io oggi non sarei l’uomo che sono. E le risposte di cui avevo bisogno le ho ricevute in un giorno in cui non sono andato a scuola. Un giorno in cui, per la prima volta, ho cercato da solo quello che volevo, a costo di essere punito...*
* *Non so se mio padre…quasi non riesco a crederci.*

Page 181

* *Io non so perché oggi non sei andato a scuola, e per questo ti meriti la punizione, che fa parte del gioco del prendersi le proprie responsabilità. Io non lo so e non lo voglio sapere. Mi fido di te.*
* *E quel sorriso tra papà e me è il sorriso di un uomo a un altro uomo.*

Examples of language techniques

* Hyperbole and simile – *Le sue parole come mille aghi mi perforano la vene…*
* Hyperbole – *Non è una commedia. È un horror.*
* Imagery – *E poi il mare…attraversare*
* Allusion – *Albus Silente o il dottor House*
* Imagery – *Mi riduci nella polvere della mia ombra…*
* Use of anglicism – ‘horror’
* Juxtaposition – Leo truanting and father truanting
* Motif – colours

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | Leo truants school and is grounded. Amidst his grief in losing Beatrice, he feels the pressure of achieving and decides to escape even though it means repeating the year. |
| The evolving nature of relationships | Leo’s relationship with his father deepens as his father considers him more as a man each day. His father passes on the wisdom that the mistakes he has made in the past have shaped the man that he is now. Leo finds comfort in the fact that his father understands who he is and feels safe and secure. |
| The quest for identity  | Leo feels more and more secure in the person that he is becoming because of his father’s support. His father’s trust gives him confidence to keep going with his life. |

Questions and activities

1. At what stage is Leo (at this point) up to in his search for answers?
2. Comment on how grief and resilience are treated in this extract.
3. Ethical and responsible behaviour is learnt. Debate this statement with your peers.
4. Does education alone shape our identity? Discuss your opinion.

Extract 9 – pages 193-200

Vocabulary and expressions

*siderurgica* – metallic

*barbabietola* – beetroot

*scovare* – to unearth

*ammutolire* – to be speechless

Key quotations

Page 194

* *Preparo un PowerPoint e poi lo guardiamo sul computer mentre io fingo di portare Beatrice per quelle strade, come se fossi una guida turistica esperta.*
* *Abbiamo tutto il mondo da scoprire e da esplorare e la stanza di Beatrice si trasforma in tutti i luoghi grazie alle nostre passeggiate super-low-cost.*

Page 195

* *“Sprecato come?”
“Con cose inutili… Il tempo che non ho usato per gli altri: quanto di più avrei potuto fare per mia madre, per i miei amici…”
“Ma hai ancora tutta la vita davanti, Beatrice.”
“Non è vero, Leo, la mia vita ormai è indietro.”
“Non devi dirlo, non lo sai, tu puoi ancora guarire!”
“Leo, l’operazione è andata male.”
Ammutolisco.*

Page 199

* *La mia storia non è una storia. Non c’è nessuna storia, ma questo è ciò che una stella luminosa mi ha suggerito.*

Page 200

* *Il cielo è diventato un enorme schermo cinematografico buio, sul punto di proiettare tutti i film che desideriamo mentre, senza rumore, qualcosa di piccolo e luminoso si annida in un cantuccio del mio cuore, come il granello di sabbia che si nasconde nell’ostrica per diventare una perla.*

Examples of language techniques

* Simile – *…la luce di maggio mi gocciola…con Niko*
* Simile – *dal cui sangue…cavallo alato*
* Reference to the myth of Medusa
* Catharsis – Leo and Silvia
* Motif – colours
* Symbolism – stars
* Repetition – *storia/storie*

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | The value of learning a language is highlighted in this extract. When a person learns a language, they gain a deeper understanding of differing perspectives, culture and relationships. As a result, language learning enriches people’s lives.  |
| The evolving nature of relationships | In this extract, Leo’s relationship with Silvia deepens as he realises more and more how much he truly cares for her. Like a star, Silvia has loved Leo from afar and has her own story to tell, but it has taken time for Leo to see her light. Her eyes express love towards him and his eyes respond the same way. They communicate without words because their relationship runs deep. |
| The quest for identity  | There is growing awareness between Leo and Silvia that their lives are intertwined. Stars are used as symbols to depict the way their relationship is developing. It takes time for a star’s light to shine upon the earth and reach the human eye and Leo and Silvia’s love story has taken the same amount of figurative time to develop. Their affection and love for each other is gradually deepening. |

Questions and activities

1. How is the myth of Medusa relevant in this extract?
2. Languages and travel – how do they enrich your life? Prepare a 3 minute presentation in which you explore how travel and study of a language expand horizons.
3. How do we know that there is a growing realisation that Silvia and Leo have a strong connection?

Extract 10 – pages 212-217

Vocabulary and expressions

*un barbone* – a homeless person

*cieco* – blind

*cartapesta* – *papier-mâché*

*fare finta di* – to pretend

*irrigidirsi* – to freeze up

*tradimento* – betrayal

*annidarsi* – nestled

*inaridirsi* – to wither

*alimentare* – to stoke, to foment

*guaire* – to yelp

*in frantumi* – to shatter

Key quotations

Page 212

* *“Sono confuso, è come se avessi un puzzle di un milione di pezzi senza l’immagine completa da cui partire. Devo fare tutto da solo.”
“Leo, ma la vita è così. La via la costruisci tu strada facendo, con le tue scelte.”
“E qual è la verità sull’amore?”*

Page 213

* *“E tu cos’hai scoperto in questi anni, mamma?”
“Che l’amore non vuole avere, l’amore vuole soltanto amare.”*
* *Voglio parlarti! Questione di vita o di morte.*

Page 215

* *Sono stanco di essere tradito.*

Page 217

* *Mi ha sentito. Mio padre mi ha sentito. Ha sentito quello che stavo dicendo veramente.*

Examples of language techniques

* Repetition of past participles – *mescolato, sciolto, perso*
* Metaphor – *Rimango in un silenzio bianco*

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The evolving nature of relationships | In this extract, Leo is faced with disappointment and loss over his relationships in general. Leo is disillusioned with his relationship with Silvia as she confesses that she had deliberately given Leo the wrong number for Beatrice, for fear of losing Leo to her. He had earlier realised that he really loved Silvia, not Beatrice, and he now feels betrayed by her confession. He finds it difficult to forgive her because he has such a narrow view of what love is about. He also realises that his friendship with Niko was finally coming to an end when he forgoes a soccer match to be with Beatrice. Leo is faced with the truth about his relationships with Silvia, Niko and Beatrice, and has difficulties navigating the various situations. In his confusion and anger, he turns to his father who becomes a pillar of support for him and, to Leo’s surprise, their relationship deepens. His relationship with his father helps him to cope with adversities. |
| The quest for identity  | In his relationships with Beatrice and Silvia, Leo tries to find himself and the meaning of his existence. He has used ‘love’ as a tool to search for truth and the meaning of life. He discovers new things about himself and has conflicting emotions. He oscillates from being romantic, hurt, angry and sad. Amongst his teenage angst, he tries to understand how life works and endeavours to come of age.  |

Questions and activities

1. What is the effect of the author's use of colloquialisms, slang and swear words in this extract?
2. Silvia goes home and writes a series of SMS messages to Leo expressing her disappointment and sadness about the turn of events. Why does she not send them?
3. What is the effect of the simile in the context of this extract on p 215, “*Le parole d’amore che avevo preparato svaniscono come i ‘ti amo’ scritti sulla sabbia vicino al mare.*”
4. In this extract, how is the difference between romantic love and friendship portrayed?

Extract 11 – pages 235-241

Vocabulary and expressions

*spiraglio* – glimmer

*cassa di risonanza* *–* amplifier

*retoriche* – rhetorical

*inabissare* – to plunge into the abyss

*ingannare* – to trick

*scompigliare* – to upset

*pensieri cupi* – gloomy thoughts

*incastrati* – stuck

*girellare* – pottering

*rammaricarmi* – lament

*combaciare* – to match

*spigoli* – edges

Key quotations

Page 236

* *Anche io.*
* *E lui mi ha risposto che, grazie alle parole di Beatrice che io avevo letto al funerale, il suo amico aveva cominciato a guarire da quella ferita*.

Page 237

* *Mamma, come si fa ad amare quando non si ama più?*
* *Due sono le categorie di persone che ci feriscono, Leo, quelli che ci odiano e quelli che ci amano…*

Page 239

* *Ed eccola lì, la mia panchina: vuota, solitaria, rossa, in attesa dei miei sogni.*

Page 241

* *Quando sei tu a darmi le spalle, è la vita che mi dà le spalle.*
* *E la vita è l’unica cosa che non s’inganna, se tu, cuore, hai il coraggio di accetarla…*

Examples of language techniques

* Pun – *due cuori e una panchina* plays on *due cuori e una capanna*
* Repetition – ‘*Anche io*’
* Repeated references to the mystery of the universe – moon, stars and nature
* Use of many verbs to describe the process of love – *amare…si evolve, cresce, sale, scende, si inabissa, come i fiumi nascosti nel cuore della terra…lasciano la terra secca…poi risalgono e sgorgano, fecondando tutto*.

Prescribed issues

| Issue | Description |
| --- | --- |
| The role of education | Roman and Greek classical literature is highly referenced in the novel. In this extract, the study of classical literature in the Italian school system is evident and D’Avenia’s fascination with the subject is showcased. Silvia’s letter to Leo makes references to Zeus and the dividing of 2 souls. To cover the void, one must love. She eloquently declares her love to Leo in her letter, showing a depth and maturity in her emotions. |
| The evolving nature of relationships | Leo’s parental relationship with his mother is strengthened as she imparts worldly wisdom about love to him.Leo also uses technology to chronicle his feelings and emotions. He writes text messages to Silvia but fails to send them. He does not dare delete Silvia’s text messages to him either, he keeps hundreds of them and re-reads them at random to feel connected to her.  |
| The quest for identity  | Leo has a better and more mature understanding of the meaning of love, through Silvia’s letter and through his mother’s point of view. His mother explains that love is a verb and not a noun, it is a process and takes time to grow. It also hurts and, with this, Leo has a growing realisation that Silvia and him are meant to be together and that his absence in Silvia’s life causes her to see the world bleakly.  |

Questions and activities

1. What is the role of studying classical literature and how is it used in this extract and in at least another extract of your own choosing?
2. Comment on how the story of Zeus relates to how Silvia perceives her relationship with Leo.
3. Why does Leo go up the mountain?
4. Describe the journey up the mountain.
5. How is technology used to bridge physical and emotional distance.
6. What are the differing definitions of love in this extract?
7. How can one person’s life experiences serve to help another?

Additional activities

Prescribed issues

The following questions below may be used to brainstorm and/or discuss the prescribed issues with your students.

The role of education

* Many people say that your school days are the best time of your life. Do you agree? Why/why not?
* Does peer group pressure exist?
* Who is your favourite teacher? Why is she or he your favourite?
* What is your favourite subject? Why? How does your favourite subject contribute to your understanding of life in general?
* How important is music in your life?
* Sometimes people complain about stereotypes made about them. Have you ever made a stereotypical comment about anyone? Be honest!
* What issues are most important to you and your friends?
* What are your ambitions for the future? Are these ambitions realistic? What do you need to do to fulfil them?

The evolving nature of relationships

* Who are the most important people in your life? Why? How do you feel when you are with them?
* What does family mean to you?
* How do you get along with the other members of your family?
* Do you agree with everything your parents or carers do or say?
* Who do you turn to when you have a problem? Why?
* Who are your friends? How did you meet? Why are you friends?
* What does friendship mean to you?
* Do you find it easy to make friends?
* Have you ever felt alone or excluded?
* What does love mean to you?
* Have you ever been in love or had a crush on someone? What did you do to get their attention?
* Was there a time in your life where your relationship with a close friend change? How did it change?

The quest for identity

* How would you describe yourself?
* What are some factors that have helped shape your personality?
* Consider people who have had an impact on your life. Choose one of these people and explain how they have influenced you.
* Are there any areas in your life that have undergone change recently? What are they? How did you feel when these changes happened?
* How has your opinion or perception of your life changed over time?
* Who makes the final decision about key aspects of your life? What decisions would you make by yourself? What factors do you consider when making a big decision? Do you ask for other people’s opinions when making your own decisions? How important is making decisions for yourself?
* Have you ever been on a trip without your parents or carers that changed the way you see things?

Scaffold for an evaluative response

To get a better understanding of the prescribed issues, you should write your thoughts and ideas as they form.

Before reading each extract, write down what you know about the prescribed issues. This might be keywords, concepts related to the themes or reflect a wider understanding of the text.

After reading the extract, compare what you initially thought before reading to what you know after reading the extract.

| Questions | Response |
| --- | --- |
| Before – what do I know about the prescribed issue? |  |
| Before – key words, concept related to themes |  |
| After – what I know about the prescribed issue after reading the extract |  |
| After – new ideas, vocabulary, further questions to investigate |  |

Sample analysis of text questions

Extract 2

Part A

* 1. Discuss the irony in the sentence: *Il Sognatore si è inventato un’altra delle sue lezioni fuori programma: sono le migliori!*
	2. What does the image *gli occhi che gli brillano* reveal about *il Sognatore*?

Part B

Read the extract and write an imaginary conversation between *il Sognatore* and a friend reflecting on the 2 recent lessons with Leo’s class. Begin your conversation with:

*Il Sognatore: Non ci crederai ma oggi ho fatto un’altra di quelle lezioni fuori programma: sono le migliori!*

*Amico: Non mi stupisco, tu fai sempre delle cose fuori dagli schemi. Sentiamo!*

Write approximately 200 words.

Sample speaking and writing task

*Avere passione e un obiettivo ci dà una direzione nella vita. Discutine.*

Having a goal and passion is what gives our lives direction. Discuss.

Sample response (monologue)

*Avere passione e un obiettivo ci dà una direzione nella vita. Discutine.*

Having a goal and passion is what gives our lives direction. Discuss.

Introduction

*Sono pienamente d’accordo con l’affermazione che sono i nostri obiettivi e le nostre passioni a darci una direzione nella vita. Infatti, fa parte della nostra natura umana avere uno scopo e scoprire ciò che ci appassiona, ciò che ci fa sentire realizzati, appagati e felici della nostra esistenza. Ovviamente tali ideali e tali percorsi non sono facili. Bisogna prima di tutto capire quali sono i nostri punti di forza, i nostri talenti e dopo di che, cercare di trovare un modo per incanalarli nella direzione giusta, nonostante gli ostacoli che potremmo incontrare lungo il nostro cammino. Gli obiettivi che ci prefiggiamo possono riguardare le varie sfere della nostra vita, ad esempio, la vita personale, la vita professionale o addirittura la vita pubblica che ci spinge a dedicarci al bene della società per renderla migliore, più equa e giusta per gli altri. Quindi dipende dai nostri desideri e ideali quali percorsi sceglieremo. In particolare, è nel periodo dell’adolescenza che si devono coltivare i sogni, fissarsi degli obiettivi e trovare la propria strada. Ovviamente anche la scuola, i genitori, gli insegnanti, gli adulti significativi e la società in cui viviamo ci aiuterannno a trovare la nostra direzione.*

Point 1

*Innanzitutto, la scuola ha un ruolo importantissimo nel farci scoprire il nostro potenziale. Questo perchè spesso, è tramite lo studio delle varie materie che scopriamo e sviluppiamo i nostri innati talenti. Poi questi ci possono guidare nella scelta di una futura carriera. Ad esempio, attraverso lo studio della musica a scuola ci si può appassionare a intraprendere una carriera nel campo della musica, come insegnanti di musica, musicisti o cantanti. Èd è ciò che è capitato ai ragazzi del famoso gruppo di cantanti lirici Il Volo. Infatti, persino dalle elementari questi ragazzi mostravano un grande talento, avevano una grande passione per il canto e grazie all’incoraggiamento dei loro insegnanti hanno incominciato da piccoli a partecipare a vari concorsi musicali...come quello di ‘Ti lascio una canzone’ dedicato a promettenti giovani cantanti. Dopo di che, hanno riscosso un grande successo. Quindi sono convinto/a che siano stati gli obiettivi che si erano prefissi, il loro talento e la loro passione a determinare la direzione delle loro vite*.

Point 2

*Ovviamente, non basta avere avere obiettivi e passione nella vita, ma servono a indirizzarci verso ciò che vorremmo far concretizzare nella nostra vita. A volte si devono superare grandi sfide e fare grandi sacrifici, ma ciò non potrà fermarci se siamo determinati. Ad esempio, Leo Messi è un altro personaggio che da piccolo aveva un sogno e adesso è diventato un grande calciatore. In ogni partita che gioca ce la mette tutta cercando sempre di fare del suo meglio e di far vincere la sua squadra, Barcellona. Messi dice di aver fatto molti sacrifici per realizzare il suo sogno. Ha cominciato a giocare da piccolo ma all’età di 11 anni quando gli è stato diagnosticato il* [*deficit dell'ormone della crescita*](https://context.reverso.net/translation/italian-english/deficit%2Bdell%27ormone%2Bdella%2Bcrescita) *sembrava che fosse un ostacolo insormontabile. Eppure, l’allenatore del Barcellona, gli ha offerto un contratto che includeva le cure mediche in Spagna, così Messi ha lasciato il suo paese e la sua famiglia per trasferirsi in Spagna. Tutto ciò dimostra che i nostri sogni e le nostre passioni devono essere nutriti e coltivati e che dobbiamo far di tutto per far sì che ci muoviamo nella direzione in cui saremo in grado di realizzarli.*

Conclusion

*In conclusione, ognuno di noi ha il desiderio di vivere una vita piena, fatta di desideri, speranze, sogni ed espressione della nostre capacità innate. Anche se dobbiamo affrontare molte sfide, come la concorrenza e tanti altri problemi e ostacoli come quelli della salute, saranno sempre le nostre scelte ed i nostri obiettivi a determinare la direzione ed il successo delle nostre vite.*

Related texts

The following related texts are suggestions only and can be used to supplement the study of the prescribed text.

The role of education

Article

* [*Educazione per il ventunesimo secolo*](https://www.educazioneglobale.com/2015/11/educazione-per-il-21-secolo/)

Film

* [*Rosso come il cielo*](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0450121/)

The evolving nature of relationships

Poems

* [Funeral blues](http://niksargent.com/blog/2009/3/19/poem-from-four-weddings-and-a-funeral-lyrics-recording.html?rq=four%20weddings%20and%20a%20funeral) by WH Auden
* [*L’infinito*](http://www.textetc.com/workshop/wt-leopardi-1.html)by Leopardi

Film

* [The fault in our stars](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2582846/)

Song

* [*Lo canto*](http://testicanzoni.mtv.it/testi-Laura-Pausini_7676/testo-Io-canto-989704)by Laura Pausini

Articles

* [*Rapporto tra genitori e figli*](https://www.skuola.net/temi-saggi-svolti/temi/rapporto-genitori-figli.html)(right-click and copy hyperlink into new tab)
* [*Vivere l’adolescenza con il cancro*](https://www.adolescentiecancro.org/le-vostre-storie.html)

The quest for identity

Book

* *Il piccolo principe* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Songs

* [*Com’è profondo il mare*](https://www.italyheritage.com/italian-songs/artists/dalla-lucio/com-e-profondo-il-mare.htm) by Lucio Dalla
* [*Voglio una vita spericolata*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGFQ16McVCo) by Vasco Rossi
* [*Strada facendo*](https://www.google.com/search?q=%E2%80%A2+Claudio+Baglioni+%E2%80%93+Strada+facendo&rlz=1C1GCEA_enAU846AU846&oq=%E2%80%A2+Claudio+Baglioni+%E2%80%93+Strada+facendo&aqs=chrome..69i57.1741j0j4&sourceid=chrome&%7bgoogle:instantExtendedEnabledParameter%7die=UTF-8) by Claudio Baglioni

Article

* [*5 lezioni di vita tratte da ‘Il piccolo principe*](https://libreriamo.it/libri/lezioni-vita-tratte-da-il-piccolo-principe/)’