

Developing a multimodal pedagogical approach for English literature teaching.

Rhiannon Julia O'Grady

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Directors de la tesi

Dr. Daniel Cassany

Dra. Janine Knight

(Department of Applied Linguistics, The International University of Catalonia)

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSLATION AND LANGUAGE SCIENCES



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When I first embarked upon this endeavour in 2018, I could not have imagined that I would find myself researching and writing during a global pandemic.

Our foundations were challenged as barriers to socialisation were imposed and much of our communication had to shift to take place online.

Now though, as we begin to settle into some semblance of normality again, we can appreciate how healing and invigorating our human connections and community can be.

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Abstract

In the field of teaching English literature to Spanish adolescents, a multimodal approach offers diverse modes of representation and brings potential for meaning making. However, teaching with digital technology or using creative tactile and visual methods may conflict with external pressures, such as exam preparation or institutional culture. In this context, the main goal of this thesis is to develop an empirical study that looks at the affordances and limitations of each mode and forms an approach to teaching literature through a multimodal lens. We adopt an Action Research approach incorporating several studies: a pilot study into students' video production, three cycles integrating multimodality (reading for pleasure, literary novel, and dramatic text), and a complementary study about teaching poetry and drama with images and podcasts. The studies took place in one teacher's English literature lessons with five groups of predominantly Catalan and Spanish speaking learners, aged 12-16, over two years at a private, non-profit school in Catalunya. The data collected includes observations, students' multimodal products, and surveys. We first analysed the data using a multimodal transcriptional approach. Secondly, we used a social-semiotic account to describe the: narrative aspect; students' interaction with the viewer; juxtaposition between the modes. Thirdly, we analysed the juxtaposition of modes to convey meaning. We also describe the affordances and limitations of each mode. The findings of the pilot study show how learners' video production draws on their cultural awareness and contributes to a student-centred classroom environment. Cycle one reveals how multimodal composition offers a way for learners to synthesise their reading and produce new texts considering different genres and audiences. It highlights how this usage leads to an extension of learners' agency, more varied assessment, and the effective integration of technology use. Cycle two shows how integrating multimodal composition tasks into *Romeo and Juliet* lessons creates enjoyment for learners and supports their comprehension of the literature, as well as preparing them for formal writing assignments. Cycle three shows how multimodal composition (especially podcasts and digital presentations) empowers learners to connect their cultural references to the novel *Of Mice and Men*, enabling them to use images to show their interpretations of the literature and practise important communication skills. The final phase is a complementary study in two parts. The first part shows how integrating a six-part approach to studying a poem encourages participation from learners and supports their writing of effective formal essays in response to literature. The second part shows how the students produce podcasts for *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, reaching interpretations of literature through peer communication and using their experiences as media consumers to

produce new texts. Together, these findings contribute to our knowledge of how using a multimodal lens can encourage students' agency and increase their enjoyment of classic literature. Considerations for educators interested in implementing multimodal strategies are presented, and the need to give priority to planning for effective integration of composition tasks in the curriculum is highlighted.

Resumen

En el campo de la enseñanza de la literatura inglesa a adolescentes españoles, un enfoque multimodal ofrece diversos modos de representación y aporta potencial para la creación de significado. Sin embargo, la enseñanza con tecnología digital o el uso de métodos visuales y táctiles creativos pueden entrar en conflicto con presiones externas, como la preparación de exámenes o la tradición educativa. En este contexto, el objetivo principal de esta tesis es crear un enfoque basado en datos empíricos, para la enseñanza de la literatura a través de una lente multimodal, mediante la identificación de las posibilidades y las limitaciones de cada modo). La tesis adopta un enfoque de Investigación Acción que incorpora una serie de trabajos: un estudio piloto sobre la producción de vídeos de estudiantes, tres ciclos que integran la multimodalidad (lectura por placer, novela literaria y texto dramático) y un estudio complementario sobre teatro y poesía con imágenes y podcasts. Llevamos a cabo estos estudios en las lecciones de literatura inglesa de un docente durante dos años en una escuela privada sin fines de lucro en Catalunya. Los participantes son cinco grupos de estudiantes predominantemente de habla catalana y castellana (12-16 años), en el sistema español de educación secundaria. Los datos recopilados incluyen observaciones, producciones multimodales de los estudiantes y encuestas. Primero analizamos los datos utilizando un enfoque transcripcional multimodal, luego usamos la semiótica social para describir: el aspecto narrativo, la interacción de los estudiantes con el espectador y la yuxtaposición entre modos. A esto le sigue un análisis de la yuxtaposición de modos para transmitir significado. También presentamos una descripción de las posibilidades y las limitaciones de cada modo. Los hallazgos del estudio piloto muestran cómo la producción de vídeos del alumnado se basa en su conciencia cultural y favorece un entorno de clase centrado en el aprendiz. El ciclo uno revela cómo la composición multimodal facilita que el alumnado sintetice su lectura y produzca textos nuevos considerando diferentes géneros y audiencias. Destaca cómo este uso mejora e incrementa la agencia del aprendiz, una evaluación más variada y la integración efectiva de la tecnología. El ciclo dos muestra cómo la integración de tareas de composición multimodal en las lecciones de *Romeo y Julieta* divierte al alumnado y favorece su comprensión de la literatura, además de prepararlo para tareas formales de escritura. El tercer ciclo muestra cómo la composición multimodal (especialmente los podcasts y las presentaciones digitales) empodera al alumno para conectar sus referencias culturales con la novela *Of Mice and Men*, lo que permite usar imágenes para mostrar sus interpretaciones de la literatura y practicar importantes habilidades de comunicación. La fase final muestra cómo la integración de

imágenes, trabajo en parejas y el programa Google Suite fomenta la participación del alumnado y facilita la escritura de ensayos formales a partir de un poema. También muestra cómo la producción de podcasts a partir de *The Crucible* de Arthur Miller desarrolla la interpretación literaria a través de la comunicación entre pares y el uso de la experiencia previa como consumidores de medios. En conjunto, estos hallazgos incrementan nuestro conocimiento sobre cómo el uso de una lente multimodal puede fomentar la agencia de los estudiantes y aumentar su disfrute de la literatura clásica. Presentamos consideraciones para educadores interesados en implementar estrategias multimodales, destacando la necesidad de dar prioridad a la planificación para integrar de manera efectiva estas tareas en el currículo.

Resum

En el camp de l'ensenyament de la literatura anglesa a adolescents espanyols, un enfocament multimodal ofereix diverses modes de representació i aporta potencial per a la creació de significat. Tot i això, l'ensenyament amb tecnologia digital o l'ús de mètodes visuals i tàctils creatius poden entrar en conflicte amb pressions externes, com ara la preparació d'exàmens o la tradició educativa. En aquest context, l'objectiu principal d'aquesta tesi és crear un enfocament basat en dades empíriques, per a l'ensenyament de la literatura mitjançant una lent multimodal, mitjançant la identificació de les possibilitats i les limitacions de cada mode (visual, auditiu i cinestèsic). La tesi adopta un enfocament de Recerca Acció que incorpora una sèrie de treballs: un estudi pilot sobre la producció de vídeos d'estudiants, tres cicles consecutius que integren la multimodalitat (lectura per plaer, novel·la literària i text dramàtic) i un estudi complementari sobre teatre i poesia amb imatges i podcasts. Aquests estudis es van dur a terme a les lliçons de literatura anglesa d'un docnet durant dos anys a una escola privada sense ànim de lucre a Catalunya. Els participants són cinc grups d'estudiants predominantment de parla catalana i castellana (12-16 anys), del sistema espanyol d'educació secundària. Les dades recopilades inclouen observacions, produccions multimodals dels aprenents i enquestes. Primer analitzem les dades utilitzant un enfocament transcripcional multimodal; després fem la semiòtica social per descriure: l'aspecte narratiu, la interacció dels estudiants amb l'espectador i la juxtaposició entre els modes. A això segueix una anàlisi de la juxtaposició de modes per transmetre significat. També es presenta una descripció de les possibilitats i les limitacions de cada mode. Els resultats de l'estudi pilot mostren com la producció de vídeos de l'alumnat es basa en la seva consciència cultural i afavoreix un entorn de classe centrat en l'aprenent. El primer cicle revela com la composició multimodal facilita que l'alumnat sintetitzi la lectura i produeixi textos nous considerant diferents gèneres i audiències. Destaca com aquest ús millora i incrementa l'agència de l'aprenent, una avaluació més variada i la integració efectiva de la tecnologia. El segon cicle mostra com la integració de tasques de composició multimodal a les lliçons de *Romeo i Julieta* diverteix l'alumnat i afavoreix la seva comprensió de la literatura, a més de preparar-lo per a tasques formals d'escriptura. El tercer cicle mostra com la composició multimodal (especialment els podcasts i les presentacions digitals) empodera l'alumne per connectar les seves referències culturals amb la novel·la *Of Mice and Men*, fet que permet fer servir imatges per mostrar les seves interpretacions de la literatura i practicar importants habilitats de comunicació. La fase final mostra com la integració d'imatges, el treball en parelles i el programari Google Suite fomenta la participació de

l'alumnat i dona suport a la seva escriptura d'assajos formals a partir d'un poema. També mostra com la producció de podcasts a partir de *The Crucible* d'Arthur Miller desenvolupa la interpretació literària a través de la comunicació entre parells i l'ús de l'experiència prèvia com a consumidors de mitjans. Tot plegat, aquestes troballes contribueixen al nostre coneixement sobre l'aprofitament d'una lent multimodal per fomentar l'agència dels estudiants i augmentar el gaudi de la literatura clàssica. També presentem consideracions per a educadors interessats a implementar estratègies multimodals, destacant la necessitat de donar prioritat a la planificació per integrar de manera efectiva aquestes tasques al currículum.

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1. INTRODUCTION

a) The origins of the study

The initial ideas behind this thesis were the culmination of my experiences teaching English literature and language in the UK, South Korea, Italy, and Spain. During this time, I observed how the emergence of “new literacies” was creating a new dynamic that involved a shift away from printed texts towards an extended variety of communication means.

In my role at a growing international school in Italy, I enjoyed relative freedom in curriculum design and used creative methods to help my students improve their English and literary analysis skills. Pupils did not have access to individual computers, instead the school had a shared computer room. As a department, we designed projects that would provide learning experiences for the students (one example is the island project, which incorporated different styles of text production, such as creative descriptions and persuasive advertising). Students enjoyed the work, showing their engagement by voluntarily bringing in craft materials from home, and showcasing their work to their peers.

Reading for a master’s degree in Applied and Theoretical Linguistics, I studied contemporary learning methodologies and considered the effect of certain tools (such as digital technology) on student motivation. Motivational design can be understood as a way of arranging educational resources and systems to affect motivation (Keller, 2016). I began to perceive how, through adapting the curriculum to align more with the kind of multimedia that children encounter in their everyday lives, class activities had the potential to be more appealing.

Completing the literature review for my master’s study, I investigated key arguments in educational planning, researched strategies for classroom instruction, and devised an assessment to test whether teaching strategies were complimenting key learning theories. These reflections formed my ideas for a whole-school English policy for international schools, and a proposal for integrated English language learning. The project aligned with an Action Research stance, designed to be participative and collaborative, and be undertaken by individuals with a common purpose of improving educational practice. Designing this project provided a basis for further research into educational guidelines and was an inspiration for this thesis.

Later, when working as an associate lecturer at Pompeu Fabra University’s Department of Translation and Language Sciences, I became more interested in identifying teaching techniques to improve learners’ motivation. Observing how students corrected their own tests

to identify their learning needs, I began to think more about methods for encouraging intrinsic motivation. Learner autonomy has been recognised to occur when individuals are active participants in their own learning (Dörnyei, 2005). It has been shown to relate to a learner's capacity to take control, which is correlative with their preferences, ability, and freedom of choice (Benson, 2001). In a learner autonomy continuum, learners move from dependence to autonomy. My curiosity was ignited concerning how to apply these theories of learner autonomy for secondary school learners. Linking learner preferences to learner autonomy raises interesting opportunities to investigate how the desirability of tasks can affect the effectiveness of students' participation. I address this question in more detail in the theoretical framework section: *Adolescence, Motivation and in English Literature Lessons*.

Teaching on the English literature component of the same course, I observed how students' engagement with the selected novel took place at home as part of a wider reading initiative. This caused me to consider how we can build on students' reading practices outside of school and connect this with curriculum design. The seminar activities made connections with the themes of the novel, which were made relevant to the social context by linking to current affairs and cultural topics relating to students' knowledge and experience. I will return to this concept in the account of cycle 1, which addresses the integration of multimodal production to promote pupils' independent reading practices

b) Why consider a multimodal pedagogical approach?

Modern conceptions of literacy are evolving, supported by rapid changes in technology and communication. For many of us, communication resources have expanded to include multiple modes combining film, music, images, sound, graphics, photographs, and complex graphic design (Bezemer, Jewitt, Kress, Diamantopoulou, & Mavers, 2012; Kress, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). This has led to opportunities for education practices, which may previously have involved written forms, to become multimodal, using different resources to express meaning (Adami, 2016).

It has been suggested that semiotic resources are “the actions, materials and artefacts we use for communicative purposes” (Van Leeuwen, 2004, p. 285). The resources that we use may be produced physiologically, as in the case of speech and gesture, or technologically, and have distinct “affordances”, which can be defined as the potentialities and constraints of different modes depending on their social context (Kress, 2010). So, in the light of these changes in the literacy landscape, where and how are educators responding, and how are these resources being integrated in schools?

One way of addressing the issue is through the adoption of multimodality. This offers an inclusive view of literacy that encompasses the communicative resources learners experience and use in their everyday lives. The objective is to support the recognition of a diversity of resources and engage learners in meaningful practices that consider the intricacies of global communication methods (Cazden et al, 1996). For teachers, adopting a multimodal pedagogy offers the opportunity to realise and configure the semiotic resources available in the classroom (Stein, 2008, p. 122).

In this thesis, I account for how participants at a private, not-for-profit school in Barcelona experience English literature classes when they are taught through a multimodal lens. I make the students’ experiences the basis for recommendations for education professionals interested in integrating a multimodal pedagogy into the curriculum.

c) Arguments for a holistic approach to learning

Communication based instruction takes an acquisition-learning hypothesis. It suggests that, like first language acquisition, language is acquired subconsciously rather than explicitly (Krashen, 1981). This approach requires substantial interactive and meaningful interaction in the target language and opportunities for considerable input from native speakers. In this framework, it is enough for students to be exposed to native speakers as they deliver and explore a subject. It is also essential that the native teacher understands how to create a stimulating environment for this acquisition.

Krashen's argument for comprehensible input can be perceived as a pedagogical principle for content-based instruction. Here, a context is provided for meaningful communication by putting the emphasis on relevant, meaningful content rather than on the language itself (Curtain, 1994; Met, 1991). This framework suggests that optimal conditions for learning a language occur when language points are combined with meaningful topics, rather than taught in isolation. This implies a holistic approach to syllabus design that includes project work and task-based learning. It has been defined as "the integration of particular content with language teaching aims [...] the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills" (Brinton et al., 1989, p. 2).

A content-based approach encourages the use of clearly demarcated goals: content goals (conceptual learning of knowledge and skills required by the subject matter); language goals (the precise vocabulary words and sentence patterns needed to communicate content) and general skills goals (knowledge and skills required by the subject matter, attaining study skills that promote both language and content learning). Theories about English learners and cognitive development tracing back to Piaget (1959), suggest how young children construct understanding in the context of their own activity, and learn more easily when they can manipulate objects rather than use abstract thought.

Using this framework, English language and literature classes should conceivably follow an instructional approach that employs rich learning experiences to develop cognitive thinking, extending beyond the textbook, and offering new ways to access and actively construct knowledge about a subject or theme. The implication for teachers is to create an exploratory and discovery-type learning environment where students can learn by doing.

Learning does not end when the student leaves the classroom. For this reason, Hernandez (2003) argues the importance of general study skills that enhance learning across the

curriculum and are vital to a student's success. Parents are encouraged to provide motivational support and establish a routine for their child's home studies. This is part of a holistic approach that considers students both within the four walls of the classroom, and in terms of wider learning and engagement after lessons have finished.

A further part of a perceived holistic curriculum integrates teaching about thinking skills. Pérez and Torres-Gúzman (1996) describe a "thinking curriculum" that shows students how to collect, integrate, and process information, set a purpose for reading, and commit to developing critical reading skills by reading daily. Within this framework, metacognitive processes are developed as students reflect upon what they know and how they learn, considering study methods and skills. This perspective aligns with the argument put forward by Schmeck (1988), that students who consider themselves in control of their own destiny and responsible for their learning are more motivated to continue learning new skills. This theoretical standpoint indicates the perceived benefits of adopting of a teaching and learning approach that supports autonomous learning and self-motivated students.

d) Considering new media technologies

It is perhaps plausible that, as human nature adapts around new media technologies, these advancements may provide scope for enhancing student motivation. It is perceivable that some teachers may recognise a growing body of technological resources available to them, using them to varying degrees depending on the availability and their own aptitude and disposition. In South Korea, for example, where many technological devices are manufactured, computers are readily available, and the internet is high-speed and reliable. They are leaders in the field.

In the UK school where I taught, it was not permitted to set students homework requiring a computer or the internet as not every pupil had the equipment. This perceived gap was addressed by setting up computer rooms within schools to give all students access, at least within the school premises. However, while it may be considered beneficial to capitalise upon the opportunities offered by technology and to give students digital capability and skills, it has been suggested that a disparity remains concerning this perceived need to integrate digital technology, and an understanding of how this technology can support positive change through evidence-based practice and an iterative review process (Department for Education, 2019).

One example of a benefit of integrating digital technology that has been identified is the advantage that it can offer to students with additional learning needs. An example is how learners experiencing difficulties with literacy can use word-processing software to facilitate writing and spelling. I have found this argument to be true for students that have difficulties and so claim to “dislike” writing. In the literature classroom, word processing can enable students to focus on their content and ideas and not lose confidence because of the legibility of their handwriting or uncertainties pertaining to spelling.

Additionally, a considerable impact of reliable internet in many educational establishments has been to enable cloud storage to be used in school departments, giving teachers and students the opportunity to store files remotely and share them easily at any time and under any circumstances. It is hard to imagine remote teaching in European schools during the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, without the use of cloud facilities such as Google Drive.

2) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

a) Adolescence and attitudes to English literature lessons

Considering teaching approaches for adolescent learners, educators may find it beneficial to review theories of motivation. Doing so can help address factors which encourage learners to participate and engage with lesson content. In the context of the digital age, it has been suggested that teachers move towards a goal of empowering students with the ability to “understand the power of images and sounds, to recognize and use that power, to manipulate and transform digital media, to distribute them pervasively and to easily adapt them to new forms” (New Media Consortium, 2005, p. 2). In a review of the research into the implementation of multimodal writing in secondary English courses, Nash (2018) found that learners engage more in multimodal lessons and that, in this age of digital literacies, ways of integrating multimodality into writing lessons are numerous and varied.

Motivational theories attempt to provide insight into the factors that propel individuals toward certain activities. While the concept is complex, it is often recognised that *intrinsic motivation* promotes students’ willingness to learn. Considered in the light of the ARCS model of motivation put forward by Keller (1987), to achieve student motivation we need to capture their attention, make tasks relevant, and set an appropriate level of challenge, making their participation in tasks enjoyable, worthwhile, and positive. Applying this model to the digital age, the implications are that activities should represent a real context to appeal to students’ own diverse experiences and identities. As much of the moulding of identities now occurs in a technology-saturated environment, it is perhaps logical to discern that those digital experiences should form a part of classroom instruction.

As self-motivation (or intrinsic motivation) refers to the process of engaging in an activity for its own sake, the reward is inherent (Deci and Flaste, 1995). This motivation comes from the enjoyment and satisfaction gained from an activity and can frequently be seen in the behaviour of young children, who are having experiences for the first time. Young children are born with an innate curiosity about their world and take pleasure in activities without expecting anything in return. An example of intrinsic motivation may be reading for pleasure, which is initiated by internal factors and the feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction gained through its completion. By the time a learner reaches secondary school, they have been rewarded previously. What often happens is that the learner’s motivation turns to the reward rather than

the inner motivating factors. *Extrinsic motivation* factors such as deadlines, reports, and assessments become the new objectives.

One solution for educators could be to combat this by including students in the decision-making, leading to intrinsic satisfaction by offering more autonomy. This supports the proposition put forward by Jonassen (1990) of a constructivist approach, in which guided instruction puts students at the centre of the learning process, with the help of the teacher's experience to support them with relevant contents. This approach may encourage teachers to provide multiple and diverse tasks within the learning environment to represent the complexity of the real world. The emphasis is on knowledge construction, not reproduction, and tasks that are authentic and put in context, rather than abstract. This environment has the power to encourage thoughtful reflection and collaboration through social negotiation, rather than competition for recognition. Providing choices that can conceivably support a student's autonomy will be part of the multimodal pedagogy suggested in this thesis.

Also central to intrinsic motivation is the argument put forward by Lepper & Henderlong (2000), that effective engagement relies upon adequate challenge and the student's feeling of competency. This argument suggests that it is the teacher's role to equip students with the skills and knowledge for a task and ensure that differentiation is achievable by outcome. It can be helpful to engage a learner's natural curiosity to act as a motivator and to link content to the student's interests outside school. This is suggested as an effective way of contextualising class materials. In the task design described in this study, we aim to identify and utilise positive motivators that present choice and challenge, whilst being achievable and relatable to students' lives. Through doing so, we aim to support students' intrinsic motivation and build their confidence in the effectiveness of the tasks.

Showalter (2003) defines student-centred learning as having a high-level of student choice, where the student is active and powerful. In contrast, teacher-led learning holds the student as passive and the power is held mostly by the teacher. This theory is useful when considering how to apply different approaches to influence the classroom environment and, in turn, adolescents' attitudes to their literature studies. The subject-centred (or transmission) theories emphasise content and information, often presented as the "correct" answer. With literature study this can be detrimental and off-putting: if learners believe that there is one "correct answer" then they will conceivably be less likely to engage in active thinking than if they are encouraged to believe in multiple interpretations that can be enriched through collective thought.

The teacher-centred theories focus on the teacher's actions, speech and intellect or the process that they go through to impart the learning content education. Both subject-centred and teacher-centred classroom approaches situate the teacher as dominant, positioning learners in a passive role. On the contrary, a student-centred approach puts emphasis on the student rather than the teacher. In this way, rather than the teacher giving information and analysis, the students are set to work on the text directly and can actively collaborate to develop their own understanding. By adopting these theories of motivation, we may devise an approach which supports students to be curious, by presenting material that is relevant and sufficiently challenging, and creating a classroom environment that is suitable for collaboration and active learning.

b) Multimodality and English literature

Approaches to using English literature in the classroom can be organised into three main functions, which are often seen to merge when observed in practice (Lazar, 1993).

The first function is a language-based approach, which integrates literature to help improve students' knowledge of English, providing examples of language structures that can be transferred to the learner. Later, when the learner's command of English has improved, the literature gives examples of stylistic varieties. Following on from this, the characters and events in the literary texts tell authentic stories of people's lives. Ultimately, the learner can look at the themes and place the text in its historical and literary context.

The second approach has the literature as content of the course, the focus being on historical context, literary movements, and the biographical context of authors and the connection this has with the genre and the meaning. The amount of information given will depend on the learner's proficiency, their level of interest and the relevance to the course. This approach is difficult because of the level of proficiency and interest that is demanded from the learner, as well as the challenge of meeting the interests of individual students with the choice of text. The author implies a level of dependence on the teacher's explanations to help the learners develop their own personal response. As texts are mostly selected for their appropriateness for the students, this approach could conceivably work for a smaller group or an independent reading project but could pose a considerable challenge in meeting the tastes of all members of a larger class.

The third approach sees literature as a form of personal enrichment. Students are supposed to participate in the class as they respond emotionally to texts according to their personal experiences. As with the second approach, this requires that students be engaged with the text and interested in the content. A level of inequality could also be predicted from the differing levels of English held by the learners.

The author acknowledges the merging of approaches that will likely be observed in most classrooms. In a typical high school class, the choice of text will be limited to those listed in the curriculum. The teacher will generally incorporate language into literature teaching as they focus on the vocabulary and idioms, as well as sentence structures and literary grammar (including assonance, metaphor, rhyme, and so on). It is common that some biographical information about the author, context and genre will be shared with the students. Literary criticism may be shared with older learners higher up the school, but this would conceivably be more difficult for younger learners, and potentially detrimental if the aim is to foster their enjoyment of literature.

The study of canonical print-based texts has dominated high school English literature classrooms for decades. When we read the curriculum, we see objectives including instilling enjoyment of reading, understanding different periods and cultures, developing a personal response, and building an appreciation of how writers achieve their effects. In addition, literary study might aim to let students experience literature's contribution to aesthetic, imaginative and intellectual growth and explore the contribution of literature to an understanding of areas of human concern¹.

It has been argued that, in many cases, literary study aims to create an "elite" through exposing students to a classical tradition or a tradition of literary criticism. Some academics describe the problem of an "abundance of competing mandates" that leads high school English to being a "grab bag" of approaches, topics, texts, and experiences (Brauer and Clark, 2008, p. 5). This may, at best, lead to curricular variety and flexibility, but also an absence of consistency and lack of socio-political neutrality.

In the context of the digital age, English classrooms have also become a place to introduce learners to different modes that enhance the meaning making process. Here, the inclusion of visual and film texts makes the diversity of the subject yet more apparent. Where English

¹ Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English Syllabus 0475, 2021.

literature classrooms once focused on print, now in some cases the range has expanded to include the “reading” and composition of print-based and visual products.

Papageorgiou and Lameris (2017) suggest that many teachers are resourceful in responding to this new diversity and use multimodal techniques for their lessons. They observe how teachers use multimodality techniques to promote collaborative learning and for setting the foundations for the exploration of concepts. They suggest that, given the relative newness of social semiotic multimodality, there is still vast scope for educational research in the field. This aligns with the findings of Ajayi (2015), which show how multimodal approaches to *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*, enhance students’ critical thinking, and widen their cultural perspectives and social competence.

These recent reflections of literature teaching in the age of new literacies indicate that, when given sufficient reflection and planning time, the multiple demands put on the teaching of literature in schools can be met effectively. Through re-thinking our approaches and devising enriching curricula that embrace the different modes, English literature studies can become more relevant, dynamic, and inclusive.

c) Sociocultural theory

The sociocultural theory of language learning (Block, 2003) defines learning as the:

- 1) development of the capacity of effective participation in specific sociocultural practices;
- 2) appropriation of knowledge, resources, and tools present in the sociocultural contexts where the individual develops his activity.

The following steps were devised to operationalise a description of the learning outcomes from a sociocultural perspective:

- *Describe the practices*: describe the practices involved; the specific activities they undertake; the instruments and resources used; the responses of third parties.
- *Analyse the attitudes*: analyse the attitudes of learners to the practices and describe learner awareness about their own learning in terms of engagement, progress, and usefulness.
- *Compile data*: compile detailed data describing the learning that takes place during multimedia composition practices, the associated conditions, and how learners can take advantage of them.

- *Identify the multimodal resources*: identify the multimodal resources and knowledge that learners incorporate to achieve outcomes, including both the cultural knowledge and the linguistic knowledge that learners integrate when producing tasks.

d) Previous research

This section includes a summary of some concepts and works that are relevant to the design of the tasks for the literature classroom, and that were helpful in guiding the analysis and interpretation of the data. This information includes a discussion of children's agency, aural mode tasks (podcast and video), and kinaesthetic activities (or "making"). While the use of the Internet for learning purposes will feature in some of the subsequent sections of the thesis, as the focus is on learning that happens inside the classroom, it will not be investigated in detail. Its main function in the context of this study is to serve as a tool for retrieving and sharing information, giving teachers the ability to collect and classify topics that can guide learners towards relevant data, enabling teachers and students to share data easily by using online platforms, and allowing learners to access course materials and lessons both synchronously and asynchronously on the web.

i. Children's agency

Agency has several definitions. In this study the concept is used to mean an 'effortful engagement buoyed by interests and intentionality' (Malle, Moses, & Baldwin, 2001). The kinds of participation individuals are afforded and elect to engage in is said to have cognitive consequences (Billett, 2011, p. 58) and it has been demonstrated that greater agency leads to higher learning outcomes (Alheit, 2005, p. 209). This conceivably means that widening the scope of activities and use of modes will expand the opportunities for interests and intentionality to emerge.

It has been argued that the capacity for agency is something 'ecological' that can be developed through particular 'contexts for action' that encourage learners to engage more effectively with experiences or events (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 136). A consideration of agency for pedagogy should identify that individuals engage differently with new experiences depending on their

personal backgrounds, that the reading of experiences will most likely be somehow particular to individuals, and the process of knowledge construction and the remaking of cultural practices will be in some ways personally unique..., 'shaped by their conceptions and subjectivities' (Billett, 2003, p. 54). Following this framework, democratic instructional design can become dynamic and enriched when we recognise that content will be subject to the distinct interpretation and reactions of individuals in the class.

Zavala (2008) suggests that literacy programs have a limited view of social change and fail to consider people's multiple identities. The author argues for a more 'holistic' view of literacy that acknowledges people's literacy practices and identities, highlighting how non-schooled literacy practices happen in diverse learning environments. Focusing on a discussion of a program aimed at improving literacy in Peru, the author describes developing literacy as a tool for empowering social groups. The suggestion is that we develop practices for asserting people's identity and self-esteem through democratic and intercultural processes that are inclusive of different knowledge and cultural diversity: "Literacy learning has to be implemented from what participants do in their families, in their productive activities, in their community life, as a way of continuing with their life, improving it and assuming new challenges" (p. 884).

Similarly, Billet (2003) suggests the importance of allowing for children's agency by recognising their cultural interests and knowledge. This can add to learners' potential to engage with learning materials: "in the face of constant changes in the requirement for work the contributions from the past will only be partially helpful. It will be individuals' agency that will adapt that knowledge in new ways and to novel circumstances in workplaces, thereby remaking and transforming those practices, as they learn themselves" (2003, p. 55). This conceivably means that children who use agency to interpret and respond to literary texts may enjoy a more meaningful and authentic experience, made relevant through a connection to their knowledge and cultural spheres, acknowledging the modern literacy practices that continue to evolve in parallel with digital technologies, and the practices that children participate in outside of school.

ii. Modalities and tools

Aural mode

The focus of this subsection is on podcasts or the aural mode without images (with mp3, flac, wav, dsd, aiff), leaving the video format to be discussed in the following subsection.

Podcasts are being used increasingly in educational contexts and have attracted some attention for their contribution to mobile language learning outside of the classroom context (Cross, 2014; Donnelly & Berge, 2006; Golonka et al., 2014). They are shown to have positive connections with student motivation (Bolliger et al., 2010), and to offer an alternative approach to teaching and learning (Lazzari, 2009). The perceived benefits extend beyond listening activities designed to promote speech fluency, towards self-production of the genre to deepen subject knowledge (Alm, 2013; Abdous et al., 2012; Blake, 2016).

Nelson and William (2016) suggest a framework for formal evaluation of podcasts which includes the following factors: 1) expertise and credentials, 2) accuracy of the information, 3) quality of the information provided, 4) understanding the production quality, and 5) the currency of the information presented. Each factor consists of several indicators used to judge a podcast's digital credibility (Nelson and William, 2016, p. 50). This could be incorporated into a more in-depth or weightier podcast composition unit or one designed for older students, perhaps with a view to their podcasts being shared with a wider audience online.

Significantly, the use of podcasts is not always deemed to be optimally effective by students and careful consideration is required to successfully integrate their usage (Boulos et al., 2006; Supanakorn-Davila & Bolliger, 2014). It is perceivable that podcasts can provide an entertaining and effective tool for learning, but more so when sufficient preparation is carried out. This planning can help class teachers to develop an environment rich with opportunities for written and spoken expression in a variety of registers.

Visual mode

Whether they are images in books, on websites, on social media, or in class materials presented by teachers, the images that children encounter can make significant contributions to their perception of the world.

Importantly, the presence (or absence) of images of characters can shape the way that children regard themselves and their possibilities (Blau & Khan, 2017; O’Flaherty, 2015; Quillian, 2017, referenced in Adukia, 2021). Examples of this can be seen in the underrepresentation of people of colour in mainstream children’s literature, in the proliferation of adults that appear in texts aimed at children, and in female characters that are represented visually rather than textually, meaning they are ‘seen’ not ‘heard’ (Adukia, 2021, p. 3).

Moving and static images can provide a powerful tool for instigating learning situations. They can be introduced when students look for drawings and photos online, watch videos or animations, or read texts with images. Recent research indicates that more can be done with videos in classroom context. It has been suggested that video is often underused in classrooms, used basically as a support for discourse, or as a reward or control measure, rather than as a communicative artefact (Cassany & Shafirova, 2021; Hobbs, 2006). This is perhaps due to perceived time limitations, a lack of knowledge or training, and a paucity of previous information supporting its proper integration into the classroom.

Since the arrival of video libraries such as YouTube, more possibilities have become available for teachers and learners to access short videos on a multitude of topics relevant to the curriculum. Recent findings suggest positive learner attitudes towards the use of this tool (Kabooha & Elyas, 2015; Snellson & Perkins, 2009). In a 2021 survey by Pew, YouTube was found to be the most popular social media site in the US. More than a video hub, it offers multiple functions, including a sophisticated search engine (generating responses based on term relevance, previous requests and viewer watch time). Users can compile and personalise their own channels, liking and subscribing to content, and making connections with others in their field of interest. YouTube pages include multiple communicative modes (images, sounds, written text, clickable objects) and have multiple authors including the uploader, advertisers, YouTube incorporating boilerplate text, audience commentators (Benson, 2015). In this sense,

the platform can be viewed as representative of the kind of interactional behaviour that young people participate in as internet users.

Significantly, successful Youtubers have become micro celebrities with the potential to make a considerable impact on young viewers. Findings suggest that videos by adolescents are watched twice as much as those produced by adults, and that those made by YouTubers have the greatest impact (Montes Vozmediano et al, 2018, p. 68). Their popularity connects to the familiarity created when viewers regularly watch a channel, and through the shared interest in topics (typically gaming content, cultural and lifestyle commentary, music, and comedy) that make up the video contents. This intimacy is heightened by the viewer's ability to comment and interact with the video presenters (Aran-Ramspott et al, 2018). In addition, many popular presenters are young people, and content is frequently aimed at the child and teen market. Channels aimed at young children regularly include videos with challenges, games, tutorials, commentaries (typically of toys) and real or fictitious narratives, told like stories. The market for very young viewers includes videos where packets are opened, and the presenter narrates their content. The medium has gained economic significance, with some companies investing in child YouTubers for business. The influence and effect on children (for example on their cognitive development and their emerging identities) is positive or negative, often depending on the vulnerability of the child and the content of the video (Ramos & Herrero, 2016).

The popularity of YouTubers has been the subject of some educational studies. Findings have indicated the attractiveness of the phenomenon for learning English and exploring cultural knowledge (Wang & Chen, 2020), encouraging participation through video production (Magasic, 2016), and indicating the potential for providing insights and generating important critical conversations on aspects of class, ethnicity and gender (Watt et al, 2019). A 2020 study of Italian adolescents found that its participants used YouTube channels for informal learning connected to STEM subjects. While the participants were reported to positively value face-to-face contact with teachers, they valued the YouTube channels more, indicating the platform's considerable academic appeal for young people (Gil-Quintana et al, 2020). The authors suggest that the asynchronous aspect is beneficial for students. They can repeat the videos as many times as they want, something that they would not be able to do in a classroom with a teacher and peers (Gil-Quintana et al, 2020, p. 15). Interestingly, a correlation was found between students' academic performance and their preference for YouTubers over teachers, particularly in terms of those students who, "for reasons of shyness or embarrassment, limit their participation in the classroom" (Gil-Quintana et al, 2020, p. 16).

As part of a study investigating combining multimodal perspectives with performance assessment theory, Fjørtoft (2020) describes students' experiences using video production for solving mathematical equations and learning foreign languages. Students were found to appreciate the opportunity to verbalise problems as a pedagogical tool. They were shown to benefit from the combination of voice and gesture present in video production projects and found the role that acting an identity can offer for learning to be impactful. Recording samples over a longitudinal time span allowed the teacher and the students the opportunity to view the progress as it developed, and the digital aspect made the files easy to access. In the third task studied as part of the investigation, the students posed as authors interviewing literary figures. The assessment criteria were created to include a combination of disciplinary objectives and authentic examples from mass media, requiring students to navigate sophisticated use of digital video production, interview skills, and concepts from literary theory. The reflection process afforded insight into student metacognition and acted as a stimulus for dialogue and feedback. The results showed how students mimicked the style of television shows to conduct their interviews. They were found to enjoy the task, viewing it as different from regular written and oral assignments, appreciating the potential for reviewing and editing that was afforded by the video making process (p. 7-8).

Moving on to the production of digital presentations, this macro mode allows students to combine text and images (as well as hyperlinks, videos and sound clips), using visuals to convey distinct meanings (Smith, 2013). Producing these artefacts gives students practise summarising and organising digital texts, interpreting information, and developing sociocultural awareness as they learn to communicate in different contexts (Fedorenko, 2019). Recent advances in cloud computing technologies have brought new opportunities, as sites such as Prezi and Google slides allow users to create and share online presentations and edit collaboratively with other users.

These presentations can be accessed on multiple devices and the changes will save automatically. Teachers can suggest or create presentation templates for learners to edit, and share class slides simply and quickly using their shared drive (Maheshwary & Bhandari, 2019). The collaborative element afforded may be viewed as particularly important in the current context, as many teachers and learners are having to work online to a greater extent than before: “when we are learning how to leverage technology, to create a supportive learning space for collaborating, connecting, and co-learning with our peers, our students, and experts both locally

and globally. Our role as educators means that we are in a constant pursuit of lifelong learning, and we must be reflective in our practice” (Poth, 2019, p.124 –125).

Kinaesthetic mode

Making and creating are practices embraced by humans since ancient times, but the resurgence of the maker movement in the last decade has brought renewed attention in educational as well as informal contexts. This movement is distinguished from its predecessors because of the use of digital tools, online collaboration culture, and digital sharing (Anderson, 2012). Relating to education, the methodology connects with a view of constructivism and “learning by constructing knowledge through the act of making something shareable” (Martinez & Stager, 2013, p. 21). According to Halverson & Sheridan (2014), research on making in education embraces the constructionist frame of progressive education, while expanding our comprehension of how making things that matter can be an effective tool in formal environments, especially when it includes artistic practice. The learning that happens is described by the authors as being separate from ‘schooling’ and crossing the divide between formal and informal learning (Halverson & Sheridan, 2014, p. 498). Marshall & Harron (2018) suggest that the adoption of making practices by the formal education community brings an unexamined shift in goals from empowering people to make, of their own volition, to incorporating making as part of a required curriculum to meet externally mandated learning standards. This suggests the necessity for further examination into the relationship between making and academic practices (Marshall & Harron, 2018).

It is conceivable that there is a compatibility between maker culture endeavours and oft-cited curriculum objectives of encouraging children to be ‘makers’ rather than ‘consumers’ of products, and that there is still some way to go in documenting how to create a harmonious implementation of making activities within formal school contexts. Marshall & Harron (2018) develop a framework and rubric for incorporating making for STEM subjects, identifying ownership and empowerment as the first characteristic of making, and involving children’s agency in making choices. They describe the optimistic habits of makers, for example viewing setbacks as opportunities to learn. Additionally, the production of an artefact is something meaningful, made through an expansion of thinking and inquiry skills, giving the opportunity for collaboration, both physically and in online situations.

e) Action research

Action Research seeks to improve practice, the understanding of practice by its practitioners, and the situations in which practice is located (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 165). Elliott (2015) suggests that action research is a quest for virtue in teaching. Through its implementation, participants can share perceived insights, contributing to enriched teaching and learning. In this method of professional development, teachers are situated as researchers, improving their own practice (Watts, 1985, p. 118 –127). Stenhouse reasons that “curriculum research and development ought to belong to the teacher” (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 142). Some schools recognise this and encourage teacher-research as part of their professional development systems. The capacity of teachers to be innovative problem-solvers, adapting curricula to create effective professional environments is perceivably the “single most powerful influence on achievement” (Hattie, 2003, p. 4). When educators reflect upon the results of their own research, a new understanding of tasks, materials, experiences, and the integration of technologies, may be reached. This empowers teachers to try new techniques and critically test their reception in the classroom. However, due to the dynamic nature of the role, adjustments that teachers make are often more akin to tweaking or fine-tuning, rather than sustained, explicit enquiry (Hall, 2009, p. 2).

Action research (AR) enables a more robust body of professional research to be developed and shared. Fischer (2001) defines four main areas: developing teaching practices, students’ learning, curriculum design, and teaching philosophies and beliefs. In a review of the literature surrounding implementing AR in the EFL classroom, Ali (2020) gives the following examples of how it can be used in the field: developing context-based materials or creating frameworks for preparing new courses (Abdallah, 2016); examining the integration of technology and online learning (Cochrane, 2014; Singh and Hardaker, 2014); exploring teaching strategies to improve teaching skills (Ahmad, 2012); identifying learning problems (Kostandy, 2013).

AR is used across teaching institutions and levels, including secondary education and undergraduate and postgraduate teaching courses. It provides teachers with professional development as they identify learners’ needs to and in doing so, improve their own performance as classroom practitioners. Reviewing the use of AR in teacher training programs, Burnaford (2015) observes that AR is used to stimulate reflection, participation, and leadership. Through

engaging in teacher-research, professionals become more immersed in a certain focus related to their practice and can become experts that lead discussion and influence other educators.

The impetus for AR projects may come at an individual teacher level or a whole school issue. The tools available (observations, questionnaires, artefacts) should provide data which will answer the research question and improve the teaching and learning of the given context. Elliot (1991) suggests that AR projects should begin with the recognition of a problem and then continue with the collection of data before a cycle of planning, action, evaluation, and re-planning. This is then followed by further cycles informed by the evaluation process. Kemmis and McTaggart ed. (1988) describe four recursive phases:

1. **Planning:** researchers identify the problem and create an action plan to change a problematic area of the research context. It should be clear that the type of investigation is relevant to the teaching context and that expected outcomes are identified.
2. **Action:** planned interventions are undertaken within a particular time frame, and this is accompanied by other alternative ways that are trialled to achieve the intended results.
3. **Observation:** researchers systematically observe the results of the action phase, note the participants' reactions, and choose reliable tools to collect the required data.
4. **Reflection:** based on the results, researchers may either conclude the research if the problem is resolved or plan further cycles.

As with any research project, the standards used to judge the outcomes include the clarity of reporting, and the adequacy of the methodical and ethical considerations. The effectiveness of the “action” can be measured by a development of knowledge and understanding for the teacher (Baumfield, Hall & Wall, 2013).

AR projects have their own specific foci but also have a more general potential to “illuminate or be suggestive of practice elsewhere” (Pring and Thomas, 2004, p. 133); what works in one classroom may not work in another, but by selecting an AR approach we can contribute to the development of an area of interest within the profession.

To review some previous research into this field, I summarise two recent AR case studies related to our work.

i. AR case study one

In “Classroom-based action research with secondary school students of English literature: a teacher-researcher’s reflection” (Wood, 2017), the author describes their experience researching the responses of a year nine class of thirty students to teaching styles for Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. I will describe some of the main considerations raised by the author below, to suggest general considerations for AR projects:

- *Impetus*. The impetus arose from yearly complaints from students about studying Shakespeare, which prompted the author to decide to research the methods that students found to be most favourable.
- *Triangulation*. The author used triangulation as a way of getting a broad picture and an action research interpretive framework. This enabled connections to be drawn from the pieces of evidence so that descriptions of general relationships from the study could be given. Data was drawn by asking students about their previous experiences, using a quantitative survey, some open-ended questionnaires for collecting feedback on lessons, documentary analysis of student work, and semi-structured interviews. The data was interpreted using a three-tiered method of “data condensation”, “data display” and “conclusion drawing/verification” (Miles 1994, p. 14).
- *Data collection*. In the reflection section of the write-up, certain challenges are described. Regarding the questionnaires, the challenges include time-pressure; setting limited time for students to complete questionnaires and then receiving only partially completed response; students’ feedback contradicting their earlier classroom comments (the “messy complexity” of case study research carried out in the classroom: Elliott, 1991, p. 52). The semi-structured interviews were not possible in class time, so the researcher had to ask students to volunteer to talk to her at lunch time, which was not an offer taken up by many due to time-pressures or other priorities and/or interests. Additionally, the author had technical issues recording the interviews.
- *Ethical considerations*. There was an ethical consideration when students wanted to use the opportunity of being given an anonymous voice to criticise other teachers. To resolve this issue the researcher aligned with Elliot by choosing not to restrict or suppress these comments because this would communicate a “protectionist and conservatist message (Elliott, 1991, p. 59), and instead remained open to the spirit of open communication which was at the heart of the study.

- *Critical reflection.* Following the *responsive teaching* model put forward by Pike (2002), a crucial part of the study was to engage in critical thinking, planning, and acting. This was undertaken both immediately after lessons (to react instantaneously to classroom events and student responses) and in retrospect at the end of the day.
- *Enabling student creativity.* The participants were only willing to engage in creative projects once they understood the language of the play. Teacher-led instruction was first necessary. If they did not understand the language, they found subsequent activities lacking in value. This information acted as a breakthrough for the researcher as it set the foundations for subsequent activities that were more challenging and involved more creativity and imaginative learning. This contradicted the researcher's initial idea that the creative activities would act as a "way in" or a means of initial engagement; if the students did not understand the text well, they would perceive any additional activities as likely to fail and would for this reason be unwilling to participate.
- *The presence of a critical community.* Time restrictions and the failure of management to prioritise research in schools often leads to teacher-researchers feeling isolated in their work. For AR projects to have impact, the findings need to be shared. The author describes how the school developed an approach where teachers made descriptive posters to demonstrate their work. This was done at the end of the summer term, however, and there was some doubt as to whether the results would cause any developments or changes in the curriculum. It is highlighted as important that teachers are given time to meet and discuss findings that will inform future lesson planning.
- *Personal benefits.* Classroom-based research encourages the teacher to reflect upon their practice and respond according to student feedback. It can help teachers to avoid the trap of mundanity caused by routine and revive practice through providing insight and fresh understanding.

ii. AR case study two

A similar AR approach was used by teacher-researchers interested in the use of multimodality for building equitable literacy practices in an urban secondary school in the US. The study “Making space: complicating a canonical text through critical, multimodal work in a secondary language arts classroom” (Dallacqua & Sheahan, 2020) investigated the results of teaching of a graphic novel, *Yummy*, alongside a traditional text, *Hamlet*, to see if this would spark the students’ engagement, aiming to use this research to inform future curriculum planning. It is interesting to note that the authors did not position *Hamlet* set as the core text; instead, they chose the theme “privilege and power” and used the two literary texts to investigate this theme. In this way, both the graphic novel and the Shakespeare play were given equanimity in the eyes of the students.

- *Method.* The method included long-term fieldwork and participant observations over the course of a year. Data collection tools included field notes, teaching discussions, memo writing as critical friends, and a small group interview session with students. The researchers used the memo not to identify themes and select coding categories. These themes then influenced further data collection at the end of the year. They found that practices coded as collaboration contributed to the many perspectives that were being recognised by teachers and students, aligning with a critical literacies perspective that “values the multiplicity of voices in learning spaces” (Dallacqua & Sheahan, 2020, p. 71). This showed how codes could be complex and multifaceted. The researchers did not want to discount themes that did not fit neatly into certain codes, for example students connecting the study to their own lives.
- *Coding.* Ultimately, all the data was organised into ways that students were engaging with their learning: emotional learning, academic learning, and critical learning. They highlight that there is some overlap in the categories, showing how coding cannot always be neatly categorised, but instead used as the researchers see best for clearly communicating the findings of their study.
- *Emotional learning.* One example of emotional learning is in the quote from a student, that “Technically, it is for a grade... But when we relate to something more, it’s more interesting to us” (Dallacqua & Sheahan, 2020, p. 72)
- *Academic learning.* The researchers chose not to position the graphic novel as the less challenging text or a complementary bonus resource but studied for its own distinct merit

as a complex text. One student observed that: “Reading a comic... for me, I think it’s really hard... You have to comprehend the actual pictures... to get that deeper meaning. You have to really look at the pictures and be like, ‘Oh, this colour represents this’”. This challenged the preconception that comics are in some way easier to interpret and showed the skills of analysis of colour, shades and images required from the reader.

- *Critical learning.* The third category drawn by the authors bears discussion of how students engaged with critical commentary of both texts. Students used multimodal techniques such as arranging pictures around characters to represent events in their lives and their impact. The groups were able to compare the characters of Yummy and Hamlet and have discussions that led to the completion of this task (for example in the case of *Yummy*, describing his lack of power and his low financial status). This act was interpreted by the researchers as being a lens for (re)reading *Hamlet* and a tool for thinking more deeply about the themes of revenge: “As students read, cut apart, and aligned these texts, they spoke back to the power and privilege that Hamlet held, recognizing that he was able to go relatively unpunished for his crime. Being put on a ship and sent away felt very different from being gunned down in the streets, as Yummy was. Also, Hamlet holds enough power and privilege to return home and seek revenge... This does not mean that students did not enjoy reading and exploring *Hamlet*, but this work gave them permission to take Shakespeare off of a pedestal, deeply and critically reading and questioning this play” (Dallacqua & Sheahan, 2020, p. 75).
- *Significance of the study for other English literature teachers.* This study is interesting as it changed the focus of the literary study to be on a relatable theme rather than a particular canonical text (Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*). It shows how language arts teachers can be playful with coverage, even when bound to set texts due to curricula constraints. The study shows one way that projects can be used in literature classes to empower students through exposure to more diverse literary materials and the benefits that can be drawn from multimodal composing that challenges students to redesign texts. The researchers found that some students thrived, while others were overwhelmed and frustrated, but concluded that the benefit was that the project offered a different way for all students to engage. Importantly, the composition process had given students the chance to encounter multiple perspectives and engage in dialogue with their teachers and peers that helped them develop their own voice.

3) METHODOLOGY

a) Introduction

The impetus for the thesis came from my recognition that non-written texts are often marginalised within the English curriculum. They are typically treated as something extra which teachers might add on in the event of spare time being found, rather than being prioritised for their potential learning benefits. This aligns with the argument put forward by Goodwyn (2012), describing the frustrations of teachers' experiences regarding how they think the subject should be taught and the reality of classroom a practice dictated by assessment demands, minimising room for creative responses. I had studied film as part of my original bachelor's degree and already recognised that analysis of visual and video texts can be sophisticated. This is not always recognised in academic contexts, where the written canon is traditionally given priority. To help clarify and provide solutions for this issue, I sought a form of "creative resistance" (Elliott, 1991, p. 56), which would facilitate a critical assessment of the situation so that recommendations could be made based on relevant evidence.

As seen in the theoretical framework section, the literature review on adolescence and multimodal teaching and learning practices and motivation resulted in recommendations for using a multimodal pedagogy. Focus on learning in the digital age during my master's study in *Discourse and language learning* sparked my initial interest in using action research (AR) to investigate the potential effects of using different modes in English literature lessons. It offered a systematic process for examining educational practice, identifying problems, and considering ways of working more effectively. As a would-be researcher based in a school where I would be teaching, this method of research seemed aligned with my objectives. Once the adolescence, motivation, and multimodal teaching literature reviews were complete, and before beginning the field study, I read more deeply into AR and ethnography to inform the study's design. This chapter reflects the development of the methodology that was a result of the wider reading process.

The study followed the guidelines for qualitative research given in various introductory guides (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002, and Marshall and Rossman, 2011). These are some basic principles shared by all these references:

- i. Natural setting: up-close information gathered by talking directly to people.

- ii. Researcher as the key instrument.
- iii. Multiple sources of data: interviews, observations, documents, and audio-visual information collected and then reviewed, analysed and organised into categories or themes.
- iv. Inductive data analysis: working back and forth between the themes and the database to establish a comprehensive set of themes.
- v. Deductive data analysis: looking back at the data from the themes to determine if more evidence can support each theme or whether additional information is needed
- vi. Participants' meanings: focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the issue.
- vii. Emergent design: the initial plan for research cannot be tightly prescribed, and some or all phases of the process may change or shift after entering the field/ collecting data.
- viii. Reflexivity: the inquirer reflects about how their role in the study and their personal background, culture, and experiences hold potential for shaping their interpretations.
- ix. Holistic account: developing a complex picture of the issue under study, reporting multiple perspectives, and identifying the many factors involved in a situation.

b) Qualitative research: naturalistic, ethnographic techniques, interpretative

This study aims to contribute to the knowledge base on the use of multiple modes in English literature classes. Contrary to more outcomes-based models, the objective was to see the students build skills of independence and learning through understanding. The teacher research aimed to build knowledge of contemporary English Literature classroom teaching and contribute to developing practice in the field. It was intended to remain open to the unforeseen consequences and to observe and record situations, focusing on daily classroom experiences and considering the views of the pupils.

It could be said that schools still retain a certain dominance for their position in the centre of communities. Traditionally, schools are where most of the face-to-face communication for formal learning events ordinarily takes place. To understand practices occurring in school meant being “present in the ordinary life of a particular community to record the data, giving close attention to people’s own words and interpretations of social situations” (Cresswell, 2013;

Goetz y LeCompte, 1984). The intention was to observe sociocultural and educational factors in the specific cultural setting of a school classroom, whilst also acknowledging that important skills are often drawn from learners' own personal backgrounds and their informal, out of school experiences and encounters. It was perceived that this would add an interesting dynamic to the artefacts explored. The objective was to discover rich data to describe the outcomes of multimodal literature projects, guided by the information collected from the ethnographic fieldwork. This would provide critical potential based on a valuing of communicative actions and social relations, starting from the observation that not every form of communication is performed or performable in any situation (Blommaert & Dong, 2006, p. 11).

c) Research questions and objectives

1. What kind of 'affordances' or teaching and learning possibilities can be observed when we integrate a multimodal approach to English Literature classes?
2. What can each of the modes offer to the literature classes?
3. Which criteria can be considered to look for, plan, and produce multimodal activities for the literature classroom?

The term affordances will be used to relate to the opportunities offered for specific educational purposes.

To conduct this research, some objectives were established:

1. Implement changes to the English literature materials to incorporate multimodality.
2. Collect students' opinions regarding their interest and engagement when participating in multimodal compositions.
3. Document and analyse how students plan and prepare multimodal composition tasks.
4. Identify the tools students use to achieve outcomes, including the kinds of knowledge they bring in from outside school.
5. Compare how a multimodal approach relates to a more traditional medium.

The research questions had to remain central to the rationale for the field observation and be broad enough to allow for a holistic perspective yet narrow enough to be addressed during the

time frame available. It was intended that the stance would be holistic enough to include a description of learning processes and the teacher's and learners' interpretations. The intention was to give an emic view, or in other words an "insider's" perspective of the reality experienced in the classroom (Davies, 1999). This refers to the reality of the students and the teachers at the school, those directly involved in the learning process. The nature of the study was qualitative, interested in describing the opinions and observations of teachers and learners and drawing data from the multimodal artefacts produced during lessons. The teacher-researcher would be immersed in the classroom practice, regarding the project from an ethnographic standpoint.

It was intended that the research would be exploratory, gaining depth and detail from small samples. To meet the objective of recording students' experiences of engagement with activities relating to literary texts through different modes, it was important that observations were naturalistic, to understand the actions in the classroom setting in which it naturally occurs. However, due to the presence of the researcher in the classroom, there did exist the participatory element in gaining and interpreting the data (Price et. al, 2017). It was important to work in the context of reflexivity, to maintain the ability to "bend back", and eliminate pre-conditioned thought and presuppositions that I, as the researcher, might have regarding the nature of the topic and what we may expect to discover.

d) Data collection

In this section I explain some details of each of the techniques used for this research.

Observations

Qualitative observations involved taking field notes on the behaviour and the activities during classes. This process was semi-structured with a view to discover how students used different modes to interact with literary texts.

Topics of the observation:

- The students' reaction to the task.
- How difficult the students perceived the task to be.
- Difficulties observed by me as the researcher.
- Issues to do with timings of the task.

- How effective the task description was in allowing the students to get on with the task.
- How the students appeared when participating in the task (e.g., whether they appeared to be enjoying the task or bored; whether they appeared distracted or engaged).
- What kind of pair and group dynamics were happening during the task.
- What kind of questions the students asked during the task.
- How the students were using their literary analysis skills during the task.
- How the students were using the English language during the task.
- How the students used digital technology during the task.
- How the students brought in their own skills and knowledge during the task (e.g., knowledge of apps for making videos).

Research journal

Keeping a research journal was an opportunity to write informal notes about the research as it happened. Most entries were written briefly either directly after a lesson, or during non-teaching periods, break, or lunch times. The content and length of the entries varied; some entries took the form of a personal diary noting student behaviour and comments. Others combined critical readings and ideas about how to connect the theory to practice. I kept a Word document on the desktop of my laptop and added to it at irregular intervals. I also wrote brief notes in my teacher planner when I had an idea and time constraints made it difficult to access the digital document.

Repeating the process, I would encourage researchers to assign a regular time in the day for journal writing and aim for a more cohesive document that can chart the research progress. Having a more concrete strategy to note-taking can help to keep connected with the project and can be a way to overcome the extra challenges for teacher researchers (who are trying to combine these reflective practices with teaching and preparing for classes).

Unstructured interviews

As my intention was to study the way educational actors interpret an educational phenomenon based on their lived experience, gaining ideas about the students' views and experiences was meaningful for research purposes (Narváez, 2009). Spradley's (1980) taxonomy for descriptive

questions suggests that the researcher should first gain a rapport and then elicit information. Being the class teacher, I had the chance to build a rapport with students before starting the research. I had already been teaching the groups for some weeks before introducing the project to them. Spradley suggests beginning ethnographical study with *Grand Tour Questions* that elicit details on a more general level (for example pertaining to a participant's view of the structure of the school year), then follow up with *Mini Tour Questions* ("Could you describe your use of pictures and videos in a typical school day", for example) and then *Experience questions*, such as "you've probably had some interesting experiences using videos in school, could you describe two or three of the most memorable?"

I chose not to schedule formal interviews outside of class time because the students already have a full school day, and I did not wish to impose on their break or lunch time. Instead, I talked informally to the participants during classes when they were working in groups. In this way, I could ask for clarification spontaneously (McLeod, 2014). I chose moments when the students were busy with their composition projects, aiming not to interfere with their activity but encourage spontaneous feedback to find out their responses.

I did not have set questions but raised open-ended topics based on the research project. By asking questions such as "could you explain a little about what you are doing now?" or "how do you feel about the project of this piece?" I felt that participants could freely provide their views. While I did receive comments from some of the students at the time of production, a more formal approach would have enabled me to compliment this data by selecting three or four students from each group to interview in more detail. However, as mentioned before, the number of students who would volunteer to attend interviews in their free time is unclear.

In the case of the first cycle (the 1st ESO reading project), the students were vocal and it was easy to solicit opinions. The atmosphere of applied concentration was such that I could ascertain feedback while students were working on their independent projects, in a way that was not intrusive, giving me time to set up the task, assist the students, and then make notes during those moments when they were working independently. The atmosphere in the class was positive and when one student made a comment, invariably others would join in and enforce that idea, leading to natural collective responses.

For the *Romeo and Juliet* 2nd ESO project, having such a small and vocal group meant that feedback was easily accessible, especially as I saw the class every weekday. Learners were pleased to participate in the project and felt positive about contributing with their opinions. In

this scenario, the rapport was important as the students were clearly comfortable with one another. They had been in the same English group the previous year and formed positive relationships.

This cooperative atmosphere was also present in group four, a small class of twelve. It was only in the case of the larger class (of twenty-five) in the final year of the study, that there was less chance to move around the room to collect feedback from unstructured interviews. This was largely due to the size of the class and the restriction of movement and interaction in place because of the pandemic.

Note taking during the classes

During the *Romeo and Juliet* 2nd ESO project, I was able to move freely around the classroom, take comments and note them down. I had the opportunity to make notes about the students' reactions after introducing the task. The atmosphere was democratic and polite, and the students felt comfortable making direct and open contributions. Sometimes a student would make a pertinent comment that I could note. At other times, there was more of a consensus between students so a more general comment could be made about how the task was being received and approached overall.

The situation in the 4th ESO class of twelve students was quite similar; having a relatively small group of students that feel comfortable and confident expressing themselves openly can be favourable for commentary collection.

In summation, the clarity of the task instructions and the relative autonomy of the students when completing tasks meant that in many classes it was possible to make brief notes while the students were completing their activities. This was beneficial as it meant that the notes were immediate and gathered from experiences happening in "real-time".

This approach was not so feasible for the 2nd ESO study in 2020, completed during the pandemic. The students were all sitting alone at separate desks. It was a large, mixed ability group, meaning that more differentiation was needed to ensure that all the students comprehended the tasks. There were more students that appeared to require individual help. Conceivably, these students were missing the opportunity to be on a group table of peers, which can often give more confidence to children who easily become lost without sustained guidance. Some students would be given a task and begin immediately, whilst others had a slower approach and required more scaffolding from the teacher. This indicates that a different

approach would have been beneficial, either having two teachers present or, were more space available, by dividing the class into two groups and teaching them in two different classrooms.

Limitations of the interview method

As I was the teacher and the researcher, it may be questioned how honest the responses of the students were. However, because the contributions were solicited in a way that was natural and casual, I perceived that I could rely upon what the students were saying. To elaborate, I argue that the responses of students to their classroom teacher would be different if the headteacher was also there, making the situation seem more formal. In the setting, the students appeared to feel safe and natural and were not intimidated to speak their minds.

One additional method that could be interesting would be to include occasional focus group interviews. I could envision this working with the small classes and could have set it up by dividing the classes into two or three groups and setting up the activity as though it were a regular speaking activity. Speaking skills are always an important part of language arts curricula so introducing lessons where the subject of the discussion is to reflect on the learning activities could be incorporated quite effectively. Students at the school are generally confident speakers, so this method may have been fruitful for receiving feedback about students' experiences.

Student questionnaires

Student questionnaires formed a significant part of the data collected to gather students' opinions about the lessons and resources. The use of questionnaires has several advantages. First, it is efficient because it can be planned in advance and programmed into the calendar. Second, it can be anonymous, so responses are likely to be more open and direct. Third, there is the possibility of a high return-rate, especially if the questionnaire is carried out in designated class time when the teacher is present. Finally, the questions are standardised, so all respondents are presented with the same questions.

This final advantage could also be seen as a disadvantage if we are to consider how students interpret the question; usually with a questionnaire there is no opportunity for the researcher to clarify the question, so it may be open to misunderstandings (especially in the context of young

learners with very short and basic responses), so the clarity of the questions must be precisely thought out in the planning stages (Munn, 1990).

When designing the questionnaires, I wanted to include questions to elicit both quantitative and qualitative data, for example: “how much did you enjoy (activity)?” with a numerical response option from one to five. The quantitative data would provide a quick indication of themes regarding the popularity of tasks. With the qualitative questions, the intent was to be open-ended to encourage descriptive responses. One example is: “What did you enjoy about (activity)?” or “Explain anything that you would have done differently”.

Through including this kind of question, I wanted to observe what kind of comments were repeated to be able to observe trends. For example, analysing the responses from the 1st ESO reading project, I could isolate and collect positive comments from students to see what they had appreciated about the project. Repeated words included: “imagination”, “encourage”, “motivate” and “pleasure”. This gave an impression of what the benefits of the project had been for the students overall.

For the 1st and 2nd ESO projects it was possible to include questionnaires during the studies. With group one, I asked for students’ responses to the previous project to inform how I planned the subsequent unit of work. This was quite useful for discovering what type of activities they wanted to participate in most. Then, conducting a questionnaire five weeks into the project enabled me to gather a concrete idea of their responses.

The student questionnaires differed from the verbal feedback I had received in class as they were more formal and done individually, meaning that the students were encouraged to take the time to reflect and compare. I used the feedback that I received from group one *Romeo and Juliet* to inform the planning for the next 2nd ESO group the following year, looking at the feedback about the lessons and resources to create a unit plan for *Of Mice and Men*.

With 4th ESO there was less freedom to use questionnaires because of time constraints. Preparation for examinations in this year group is intense as five classes a week are used to prepare students for two significant external examinations. Student feedback data was gathered from unstructured interviews, lesson observations, and artefacts. In the podcast example, comments were taken on the Google Classroom forum. Because the class had only twelve students, this helped maintain a relatively informal atmosphere where it was not difficult to take general feedback. However, the inclusion of more formal methods of gathering opinions would perhaps have been beneficial for receiving candid and detailed responses.

Ethical considerations

At the time of writing, the school had been collaborating with an external trainer and encouraging teachers to become researchers. The Head of School and Head of Secondary were both aware and supportive of my thesis project, as was the Head of English.

I sent consent forms to the students' parents via email in the first year, following the ethical standards of Pompeu Fabra University and the school. I translated the forms into English and Spanish. I also paired the email consent form with a printed document in case any parents found this easier to sign and return. While some of the more enthusiastic students returned their neatly signed forms in plastic wallets the same week that it had been given to them, this was not always the case. I received one email from a concerned parent who was worried that the project would imply more work for her son (as I mentioned before, the students in second cycle are preparing for exams so the workload is intense). I also received an email checking that all the responses would be anonymous and requesting that their child's specific learning difficulties would not be mentioned in the write-up. For the sake of anonymity, I have not used students' names and I have deleted them from the artefacts included in the thesis.

My experiences asking for consent during the pilot study and the first year proved complicated and laborious because I had to keep a check of whose response forms I had received in paper and electronically. In the second year I chose to use Google forms instead. This method was more efficient as it did not require parents to have to open any documents or send anything back. Instead, they just had to open one electronic form and tick the boxes. This approach is recommended. It is easy for the parents to use, and it also gathers their responses in one live document, making it simple to collect the responses after they have been submitted.

Student compositions

A significant part of the data was the body of student compositions produced in classes. I collected their videos, screenshots, drawings, written work, and audio recordings. The first objective was to analyse the kind of opportunities that arose when using multimodality. The second objective was to observe how the students engaged with the literature. The third objective was to observe how the students responded through creating their own compositions.

Considering group one's mask design for *Romeo and Juliet* as an example, this composition task was accompanied by a rationale in which the students had to describe their design choices. Reading the rationales, we can observe the thought-processes behind the students' designs. This gives indications of some of the advantages of using multimodal composition in class. In one example, the student connected the bold colour choices they had made to the "fiery temperament" of the character, showing literary analysis applied using colour and design. This added to the evidence for the effectiveness of multimodal composition tasks and gave credibility to activities that may otherwise have been regarded as "just drawing".

Including a body of student compositions is intended to give insight into the learning events that occurred as students produced their compositions. Because the modes used were varied, including speaking activities, model production, digital presentations, written texts, and digital video production, it was possible to collect a range of data that could indicate the benefits and the difficulties associated with each mode.

e) The school context

Access to data was made possible through my position as a teacher of English Language and Literature at a private international secondary school in the Sarrià district of Barcelona. The school opened in 1968, with the aim of giving a trilingual education to its pupils. Pupils are taught in English, Spanish and Catalan by native teachers. Children attending the school are aged between 3 to 18. Language is taught using the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach in which "the non-language subject is not taught *in* a foreign language but *with* and *through* a foreign language" (Eurydice, 2006:8); the ethos is to provide linguistic and communicative competence and increase learners' motivation and confidence. Approximately 50% of subjects are taught in English at the Secondary school (or Educación Secundaria Obligatoria/ ESO): English Language, English Literature, Music, Art, Drama, Science, Ethics, and Physical Education.

The students have computing lessons once a week and have their own individual iPads, which they use from 1st ESO upwards (prior to this, they have access to a shared store of iPads available in primary school). All classrooms have electronic whiteboards and a computer that the teacher can use to project their screen. The internet connection is relatively reliable, and the students usually have good access to the web. Some sites are restricted to prevent the students from accessing games or inappropriate content.

It is required that all staff have a degree of technical competency. The teachers use Google Drive to store and share unit plans and resources. Most of the communication is done via email and the class registers and grades are administered electronically using ClickEdu. The school has an IT department with two members of staff; students and teachers can request help from the technicians and have any problems resolved rapidly.

The English Department

The Secondary English Department teaches English literature and language lessons to students in 1st to 4th ESO (12-16 years). The purpose of the English literature curriculum is to engage students with reading, understanding, and responding to a wide range of literary texts, helping them to develop an appreciation of the ways in which authors achieve their literary effects. The curriculum is not fixed by any external body for 1st and 2nd ESO students but has been devised to prepare students for 3rd and 4th ESO when they study for Cambridge International Certificates, an international qualification for 14-16-year-olds. ²

There are six teachers in the department, four that teach only in Secondary and two that teach across Secondary and *Bachillerato*. The Head of English was new to the role in 2018 but had been working at the school for three years previously. The two teachers that teach across the levels have been at the school for eight and fifteen years. One of the current full-time teachers joined the school in 2018 and had been teaching at a state school in the UK prior to this. The other full-time teacher joined in 2020 from a different private high school in Barcelona.

The teachers had one official meeting time each week to discuss agenda points and had regular daily communication both via email and casual meetings in the staffroom. As I was not working in *Bachillerato* at the time, I collaborated with the teachers that worked in the secondary school. The collaboration for the research project on reading for pleasure was more explicit as the project was shared between me and two other teachers. For subsequent projects I worked primarily with my own classes and only collaborated with other teachers to share ideas and resources. In this way the collaboration was more informal and did not require any additional work for anybody else, but they could choose to use the resources that I shared if they were interested.

² For more information please visit the Cambridge international qualifications web page: <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-upper-secondary/cambridge-igcse/>

The students

The principal data was taken from a study of 5 different classes. The younger students are in 1st and 2nd ESO, age 12-14; the older students are in 3rd and 4th ESO, age 14-16. Within the year groups the classes were set by letter, from A (top set/ highest ability) to D (lowest set/ students with specific learning needs). This setting was changed in 2020 for the 1st and 2nd ESO students because of the COVID-19 restrictions, meaning that the younger groups were taught in mixed ability tutor groups.

For the pilot study, I gained permission to use a small sample of work collected from my class of 24 3rd ESO students. I chose to use two samples made by four students, who were working in pairs. The decision was made as I was interested in looking at digital video production in response to our set text, *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles (1959). These students were engaged with the project and proactive in returning the consent forms. All the students were native Catalan and Spanish speakers. It was their third year at the school and their English level was between B2 and C1.

Study one was with a group of 21 1st ESO students. All the students are native Catalan and Spanish speakers. The set was group B and recognised as capable English users with a fair level of ability in the subject. Study two was with a group of 16 Catalan and Spanish speaking 2nd ESO students. The group level was C. The ability level was supposed to be moderate, and some students were considered to have additional learning needs including dyslexia and hyperactivity.

In year two the organisation of the younger students was changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The classes in 1st and 2nd ESO were taught in tutorial groups instead of set by ability. Study three was carried out with my 2nd ESO class, which had 24 students. The students were primarily native Spanish and Catalan speakers. Four of the students have one English native-speaking parent. The older students were kept in ability sets because they were preparing for different examinations. The higher-level groups take the English as a first language³ exam and the lower groups take English as a Second language⁴. Study four was with my 4th ESO

³ <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-igcse-english-first-language-0500/>

⁴ <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-igcse-english-second-language-oral-endorsement-0510/>

class of 12 students. All the students are native Spanish or Catalan speakers. One of the students has a parent with English as a mother-tongue.

f) Corpus

The data for this study was collected over approximately two years between September 2018 and December 2020. The data was collected in one school and the primary data was sourced from the teacher/ principal researcher's classwork and notes.

Literary texts

The data refers to five chosen literary texts:

- First cycle (1st & 2nd ESO): *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck (1937) and *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare (1597).
- 4th ESO Genre project: *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller (1953); *The Buck in the Snow* by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1928).

Students buy a paper copy of the books at the start of the year so that they can annotate and make notes of important events and vocabulary during the reading. This is viewed as useful preparation for the end of course exam in 4th ESO. During the exam, students have limited time to analyse a text and need to use annotating skills to mark up the important parts of the text that they wish to comment on. No discussion of the examination format moving to digital had occurred, so the idea of shifting to digital texts was not being addressed. This could conceivably be an area for exploration in coming years. PDF copies of the texts are available on the department's shared drive but are intended for instances when students forget or misplace their paper text.

The literary genres covered are prose, drama, and poetry. In each year of ESO, students study one novel, one play, and a range of poems. The objective is to offer textual diversity and exposure to literature from different cultures and time periods. Choosing different genres to focus on for the research helped document how a multimodal approach can be used for different genres of literature and for different levels of study.

The options for the texts for students were chosen by the previous Head of Department from seven years ago and had not been reviewed since then. As a result of teacher discussions in

2021 (including feedback from this study), the set text for 2nd ESO novel study will be changed in favour of a novel containing less dialect and more modern and relatable themes (title yet to be confirmed at the time of writing). The decision to include a Shakespeare play is usually quite unanimous with English teachers because of the classic nature of the texts and the perceived richness of activities that they offer. The department use the original text published by Oxford School Shakespeare⁵, which has a useful combination of pictures depicting key events, vocabulary lists, and explanations of complex phrases.

In third and fourth ESO the texts are chosen from a list given by the Cambridge examination board. The department looks at the options and chooses based on knowledge and enjoyment of the texts, resources from previous teaching experiences, and suitability of level for our students. In 2017 the choice of novel *Spies* by Michael Frayn (2002) had been considered difficult. In the UK it is taught at A-Level and so its suitability for non-native students of a lower age had been questioned. The teachers were pleased to see that *A Separate Peace* was an option on the 2018 list because the language and themes were considered more relatable for the students.

The list of poetry was prescribed by Cambridge exam board and a recurrent theme of nature that ran throughout the poems. The poets ranged from classic to contemporary and included a range of authors in terms of gender and nationality/ background. The play (Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*) was also favoured by the teachers for its high drama and the engaging topics of witchcraft, jealousy, and greed, which usually attract students' attention. The Cambridge examination board usually include a play by Arthur Miller as an option and in previous years the teachers had taught *All My Sons* and *A View from the Bridge*. The teachers generally liked Miller and were positive about *The Crucible* as a choice of text for this cohort of IGCSE students. The texts are all taught using the original versions, in English. Students study English literature as though they are native speakers. In the exam, their level of English is not tested. It is their literary analysis skills that are being developed. This said, it is of course beneficial that students can express their analysis effectively in English.

Student groups

The principal data was taken from a study of 5 different groups. The classes were chosen to facilitate data collection as they were taught by the principal researcher. The pilot study was carried out with a 3rd ESO group of 24 students in year one. Study one was with a 1st ESO group

⁵ <https://global.oup.com/education/content/secondary/series/oxford-school-shakespeare/?region=international>

of 21 students and study two a group of 16 2nd ESO students. In year two the studies were with one 2nd ESO class of 24 students and one 4th ESO class of 12.

Artefacts

The composition data consists of student work: 00.10.29 minutes of digital video; 00.45.04 minutes of digital audio; 23 essays; 15 written texts; 7 3D models; 66 visual representations; 13 keynote presentations. All artefacts were produced during the school day and on school premises (either in the classroom or outside or in empty classrooms when students needed to record video or audio). I set up the tasks by giving instructions and examples before instructing the students to work independently. My role during the production process was to be on-hand to answer questions and help resolve any difficulties, for example with collaboration during group work or comprehension difficulties for textual analysis. The students submitted their work by uploading it to the Google Classroom or Showbie so that it could be viewed by the teacher and shared with the class, where applicable.

Student questionnaires

The questionnaires were used to ascertain students' opinions after taking part in the composition tasks. The data includes 10 sets of questionnaire results that give insights into students' experiences before and after participating in various multimodal composition tasks.

Table 1: Corpus

Task	Dates	Level	Work of Literature	Number of Participants	Number of 50 minutes lessons	Teacher Journal (words)	Artefacts collected	Questionnaires
0	October 2018– January 2019	3 rd ESO	<i>A Separate Peace</i> by John Knowles	4	3	571	Digital videos 1. Characterisation of Finny/ Draw My Life 00:01:52	
1	October 2018 to May 2019	1 st ESO	Independent Reading Practices	21 principal (all questionnaires + pupils' artefacts) (+ 50 second / questionnaires)	10	1050	3 Digital videos 2.1 Book Trailer / iMovie 00:00:59 seconds 2.2 Book Trailer/ iMovie 00:00:59 seconds 2.3 Book Trailer/ iMovie 00:00:59 seconds Visual/ drawn 2.4 – 2.46 Written/ text 2.47- 2.62	Primary Data: 21 initial (group B) 21 interim (group B) 21 final (group B) Secondary Data: 71 preliminary (all 1 st ESO) 13 initial (group C) – (plus observations doc.) 70 Final (all 1 st ESO)
2	November 2019 to February 2020	2 nd ESO	<i>Romeo & Juliet</i> by William Shakespeare	15	24	1538	Digital Videos 3.1 Prologue video/ keynote 00:00:59 3.2 Prologue video/ keynote 00:00:54 3.3 YouTuber video / iMovie 00:01:47 3.4 YouTuber Video / iMovie 00:01:29 Visual / drawn 3.5 Mask 1 3.6 Mask 2 3.7 Mask 3 3.8 Mask 4 3.9 Mask 5	Primary Data: 15 preliminary (in students' notebooks) 15 post-composition

							3.10 Mask 6 3.11 Mask 7 3.12 Mask 8 3.13 Mask 9 3.14 Mask 10 3.15 Mask 11 3.16 Mask 12 3.17 Mask 13 3.18 Mask 14 3.19 Storyboard 1 3.20 Storyboard 2 3.21 Storyboard 3 3.22 Storyboard 4 3.23 Storyboard 5 3.24 Storyboard 6 3.25 Storyboard 7 Written texts 3.26 – 3.41 written essays (extension average: 250 words per essay) 3D Models 3.42 Model 1 3.43 Model 2 3.44 Model 3 3.45 Model 4 3.46 Model 5 3.47 Model 6 3.48 Model 7	
3	Oct- Nov 2020	4 th ESO	POETRY <i>The Buck in the Snow</i> by Edna St. Vincent Millay DRAMA	12	5	478	Audio podcasts 4.1 Putnams podcast (713 words) 00:04:07 4.2 Proctor podcast (1412 words) 00:08:09 4.3 Hale podcast (405 words) 00:02:26	
					5	1046		

			<i>The Crucible</i> by Arthur Miller				<p>4.4 Parris podcast (850 words) 00:06:38</p> <p>4.5 Tituba podcast (402 words) 00:02:10</p> <p>Written texts (300-400 words extension per text) 4.6 – 4.14</p> <p>Presentations (16 to 17 slides per presentation) 4.15- 4.23</p>	
4	Oct- Nov 2020	2 nd ESO	<i>Of Mice and Men</i> by John Steinbeck	<p>23 principal (my class questionnaires and artefacts)</p> <p>+ 22 secondary (questionnaires)</p>		<p>414</p> <p>868</p> <p>588</p>	<p>Audio podcasts</p> <p>5.1 Podcast 1 (919 words) 00:05:28</p> <p>5.2 Podcast 2 (842 words) 00:05:14</p> <p>5.3 Podcast 3 (933 words) 00:05:26</p> <p>5.4 Podcast 4 (1021 words) 00:06:26</p> <p>Group Keynote presentations (7 to 18 slides per presentation)</p> <p>5.5 5.6 5.7 5.8 5.9</p> <p>Creative projects (Visual/ textual)</p> <p>5.12 Storyboard 5.13 Board game 5.14 Storyboard 5.15 Storyboard 5.16 Board Game</p>	<p>Primary Data: 23 Yellow class/ group projects</p> <p>Secondary Data: 55 2nd ESO Creative projects</p>

							5.17 Board game 5.18 Storyboard 5.19 Map 5.20 Board game 5.21 Board game 5.22 Map 5.23 Diary Entries 5.24 Board game 5.25 storyboard 5.26 Board game 5.27 Diary entries 5.28 Storyboard	
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Table 2: the phases of the study

Phase	Participants	Approach & Research questions	Key findings
0. Pilot	3 rd ESO (age 14/15)	<p>Students were given free choice of modes of representation to respond to a task about the character Finny in the novel <i>A Separate Peace</i>.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate video production into English Literature classes?</p> <p>Two: What can this mode offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The classroom ambience became less teacher-led and assessment driven, and more authentic (connected to students’ real-world experiences and <i>learning by doing</i>), collaborative and social. ● The students brought outside knowledge of digital and cultural tools (e.g., <i>Draw My Life</i>) to the classroom. ● Creating revision videos encourages students to re-read texts to improve their understanding. ● Student videos often involve an oral response which can reinforce learning. ● Video production tasks often encourage collaboration with peers. ● Producing video responses often involves the student with a sense of audience which helps them to communicate their ideas about a text (in this example the students were creating videos for their peers, I explain later how they adapted their style for this context). ● Video production can encourage students to consider issues of cohesion and register that will help them express themselves effectively.
1.	1 st ESO Students (12/13 years)	<p>Integrating multimodal composition to promote pupils’ independent reading practices.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate multimodal activities for students’ reading?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing multimodal projects as part of a student reading programme can help develop a school’s reading culture by raising the visibility and presence of reading in school life (e.g., creating visible displays, sharing work with peers, prioritising reading in the school day). ● Students’ concentration was seen to be enhanced when working on their compositions. ● The compositions facilitated a range of essential skills, such as iPad use, writing, and vocabulary building. ● The project encouraged reflective learning as students were required to complete a self-review at the end of each composition.
2.	2 nd ESO (13/14 years)	<p>Integrating multimodal composition into the <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> unit for lower secondary pupils.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate a multimodal approach into a Shakespeare study for 2nd ESO pupils?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multimodal tasks involving images, drawing, crafts and speaking, were more popular with students than traditional writing-based activities. ● Implementing multimodal composition such as video production, drawing and crafts provides the opportunity for creativity in the classroom. ● Building up to the individual extended essays with pair and group talk provided an effective way into challenging writing tasks ● Timing tasks can be a challenge that requires careful thought on the part of the teacher. ● Implementing pair and group tasks raises interesting challenges for promoting the use of English during the composition process.

3.	2 nd ESO (13/14 years)	<p>Implementing multimodal composition into a unit of work on the novel <i>Of Mice and Men</i>.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate a multimodal approach to a lower secondary novel study?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Producing digital compositions collaboratively was an effective way to promote student cooperation and social skills. ● Using multimodal composition can encourage students’ independence and autonomy. ● Students enjoy multimodal composition tasks that allow them the freedom to be independent, creative, and use technology.
4.	4 th ESO (15/16 years)	<p>a) Integrating multimodal composition as part of a six-step process for poetry analysis.</p> <p>b) Using student-produced podcasts to develop their understanding of dramatic texts.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate podcast production into 4th ESO students’ study of poetry and drama?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The use of images can facilitate students’ visual engagement with poetry. ● Combining modes (visual, written, and spoken) can provide an effective <i>way-in</i> that can build students’ confidence when analysing poems, both orally and in writing. ● Producing podcasts encourages students to consider their audience to be effective communicators. ● Podcast preparation gives students opportunities to discuss their interpretations of literary texts in an informal way. ● Producing podcasts helps students to develop their structural skills as they consider how to present and order their work effectively.

i) Pilot study: multimodal composition by 3rd ESO English literature students

i. Context of the pilot study

At the subject school, the students study for Cambridge International General Certificates of Secondary Education (IGCSE's). This is a popular international curriculum for 14–16-year-old (upper Secondary level and the equivalent of second cycle/ 3rd and 4th ESO in Spain) and is often chosen by private schools. One benefit is that the qualification is recognised globally and gives students access to varied further education. Cambridge says its aim is to “encourage learner-centred and enquiry-based approaches to learning develop learners’ skills in creative thinking, enquiry and problem solving, giving learners excellent preparation for the next stage in their education”⁶.

Students begin the two-year English Literature course in 3rd ESO, and study selected texts from different genres: poetry, prose, and drama. They learn to read and evaluate texts, recognise deeper themes, explicit and implicit meanings, and how the authors use language to create effects. A core objective is to help learners consider universal issues so that they may better understand themselves and the world around them.

In 2018 the novel was *A Separate Peace* by American author John Knowles. This bildungsroman centres around boys at an American boarding school during World War II. It explores an awkward central character, Gene, his friendship with charismatic leader Finny, and his transition from teenager to adulthood during one school year. The book fits into the category of 1950s novels that examine adolescent individualism. A well-known example is the character Holden Caulfield’s adventures wandering around New York after his expulsion from preparatory school in J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* (Salinger, 1951).

We read the novel together in class and I ensured that the students knew what the exam would involve. They would be tested at the end of 4th ESO on a previously unseen exam written and sent by the Cambridge board. It would include a choice of two questions and students would have forty-five minutes to write their essay response. For one of the questions there would be a section of text provided, for the other there would be a more general or theme-based question with no extract. The exam board had decided not to let students take their own copy of the book into the exam, so students also had to memorise quotations from the novel to use as evidence.

⁶ www.cambridge.org/es/education/qualification/cambridge-international/cambridge-igcse/?layout=grid&page=3

The memorisation aspect of the exam was a cause of some nervousness for the students. I introduced a multimodal activity designed to help students understand how to pick out and analyse important quotations from the book.

Video Production Task Instructions:

On Tuesday 29th January you will have a “closed-book” exam on the character of Finny in chapters 1-4 of your class novel. Work with your partner to create a revision resource that will help your classmates revise the important quotations. You can choose the format of your resource. However, it must include important facts and quotations that can be applied and used for evidence. You have three lessons to plan and prepare your resource and will present the finished piece to myself and your classmates during Friday’s lesson.

The students chose to present their work in various forms. They had three lessons to prepare their revision resource and the presentations were scheduled for Friday (so that they could finish off their work at home if they needed to before the presentation time). They worked independently and I was there to facilitate and answer any questions. Two of the groups made physical poster presentations and three of the groups made videos. When they had planned their pieces, the groups making the videos asked to go to empty classrooms to record.

I chose to focus on the use of Digital Video production for the pilot study. DV was not being used much in the department and was relevant to the research project *ForVid: Video as a Language Learning Tool in and Outside the Classroom (ForVid)*⁷. Of the three videos produced, one was an eight-minute production that used a slideshow format with *Storyboard that*⁸ software. It showed the characters as avatars, conversing between slides showing detailed analysis of quotations. The second was an eight-minute production where the students filmed themselves writing on a whiteboard. They had sped up the audio because they had not managed to say everything they wanted to and felt that their video was already getting too long. The students all presented their work to the group. The groups that made posters presented their work at the front of the class. The groups that made videos emailed their videos to me prior to the lesson so that I could play it for the rest of the class on the whiteboard. The most interesting product for my research purposes was the brief two-minute video that used the idea of a popular

⁷ Please see (<https://sites.google.com/view/forvid/home?authuser=0>).

⁸ <https://www.storyboardthat.com/>

internet video style *Draw My Life* to convey key points about Finny, one of the main characters. I analysed the students' work for the pilot study, which I document in the section below.

ii. Table three: pilot stage summary table

Phase	Participants	Approach & Research question(s)	Key findings
0. Pilot Study	3 rd ESO (age 14/15)	<p>Students were given free choice of modes of representation to respond to a task about the character Finny in the novel <i>A Separate Peace</i>.</p> <p>One: What kind of 'affordances' can be observed when we integrate video production into English Literature classes?</p> <p>Two: What can this mode offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The classroom ambience became less teacher-led and assessment driven, and more authentic and collaborative. ● The students brought outside knowledge of digital and cultural tools (e.g. <i>Draw My Life</i>) to the classroom. ● Creating videos can encourage students to re-read texts to improve their understanding. ● Creating videos often combines an oral response which can reinforce learning. ● The nature of video production often encourages collaboration with peers. ● Producing videos implies an audience and leads to students adapting their communication style for the purpose. ● Composing videos requires students to consider issues of cohesion and register for effective communication.

iii. Layers of analysis (context and transcription; social semiotic account)

I analysed the results, adapting Thibault and Curwood (*Multiliteracies in Practice*, 2018):

- (a) context and transcription,
- (b) social-semiotic account to describe the: narrative aspect, the students' interaction with the viewer, the juxtaposition between the modes,
- (c) juxtaposition of modes to convey meaning: image, voice.

(a) context and transcription

The pupils were instructed to provide a revision resource in answer to this question:

How does John Knowles characterise Finny in this part of the novel *A Separate Peace*?

The response below uses *Draw My Life*⁹. I looked at what the *Draw My Life* tool offered to the task and used the findings to generate a criterion for planning future multimodal activities.



Figure 1 'Draw My Life' is a type of fast-motion video that uses drawings and author narration.

The students chose a format based on *Draw My Life*, a YouTube trend that began in 2013 (started by a contestant on the television show *Big Brother*) in which people illustrate an aspect of their lives using sped up video footage of illustrations drawn on an erasable whiteboard. The students said that this style helped them to select meaningful quotes and to express ideas orally, adding that it was enriching to hear their classmates' opinions and share ideas.

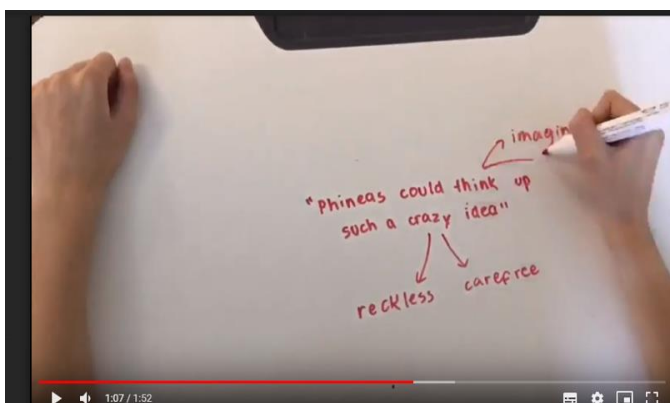


Fig.2 A student analyses implicit meanings of selected quotations from the novel.

⁹ Link to video: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CFIGS-LRIAhaKhrh3IdUaymhYNim2ngS/view?usp=sharing>

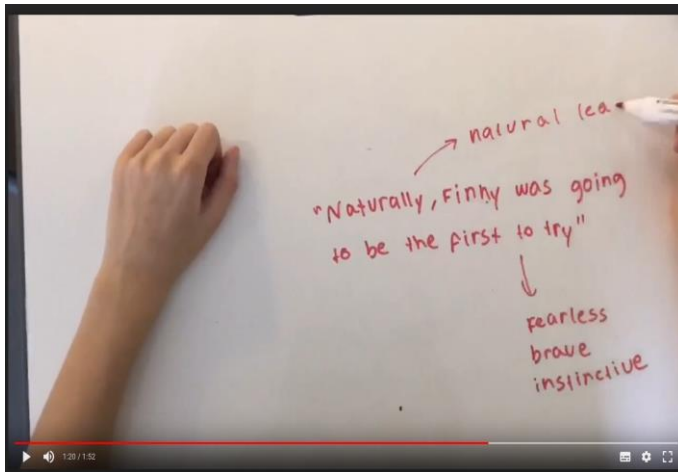


Fig. 3 A student examines character qualities by dissecting a quotation from the book.

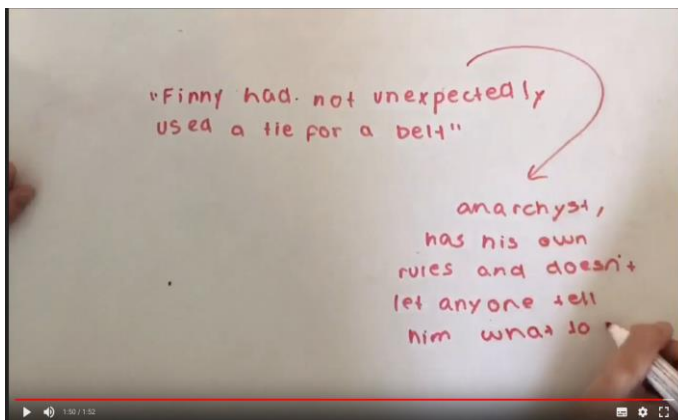


Fig. 4 A student draws out wider meanings through the development of ideas.

b) Social Semiotic Account

Using the Thibaut and Curwood (2018), model I analysed the video using three main categories: (a) the narrative aspect, (b) students' interaction with the viewer, and (c) juxtaposition of modes to convey meaning (adapted from the three metafunctions system: ideational, interpersonal, and compositional (Halliday, 1978)).

- The Narrative Aspect. Image and sound work together to communicate to the reader in a multi-layered sensory experience (Thibaut and Curwood (2018, p. 52).
- Students' interaction with the viewer. The student opens with the line: "Welcome to a brief *Draw My Life* about Finny, one of the main characters in the novel *A Separate Peace*, immediately creating a proximity of closeness between the spectator and the

commentator. Use of the pronoun “we” throughout, again adds to this personal and friendly tone and develops the sense that the author is working with the audience to achieve a shared goal.

Transitions between the quotations are smooth and create a natural pause to assist the ease of understanding on the part of the viewer. The idea of camaraderie between author and viewer is reinforced at minute 1.37: “Finally we wanted to mention this quote for your study guide”, finishing by saying “thank you and good luck in your exam”.

- Discussion

Design Features: Students used an erasable whiteboard and marker to record an analysis on iMovie. They edited using a pace that would be easy to follow and entertaining, appealing to an audience by mixing hand drawn images with an attractive narrative voiceover and varied pitch and tone.

Vocabulary & Formality: the students mimicked the style of an instructional video, using a slow rhythm and descriptive elegance to explain the key ideas. There is congruence in the images and voice, that works to deliver the message to the audience in a clear and paused fashion. Vocabulary development is evidenced: the students pick out the characteristics gleaned from the language used to describe the character (e. g. “loyal, innocent, athletic”, and the more ambitious: “recklessness, inattentiveness”).

Cohesion: the structure of the speech, using connectives (“first” “another” “finally”) to introduce the different parts of the video gives evidence to the students’ capacity for ordering their points cohesively and logically, an essential component to successful communication.

Voice: the students combine the author’s text with their own language production, this gives them confidence by providing a base for the English used in the video; students add to descriptions using embedded quotations and discuss the quality of written texts. The voice and the language evoke in the audience a feeling of being assisted and supported in their aim to understand the novel better.

iv. Conclusion and opportunities for further research

In this example, the students chose to use video to answer a question about a character in the novel. They used a combination of skills to produce a short audio-visual resource to help

themselves and their peers understand literary material. The results indicate that multimodal projects can incorporate cultural phenomena (such as the example here taken from *Draw My Life*) that allow students to draw on their cultural awareness and bring this into the classroom, crossing the divide to generate a more authentic experience.

The students selected a format that they were familiar with from their personal use of the internet and adapted it for their purpose. They used planning skills to imagine a response and combined speech and writing to convey their message to an intended audience (i.e., their classmates).

Using a multimodal approach gave the students the freedom and choice to use different tools and practices to construct meaning and communicate their ideas. The practice changed the classroom dynamic by taking the focus away from teacher-led and didactic learning towards a purpose-driven style that celebrates the individual tastes and talents of the students. Students commented that the task helped them to collect meaningful quotes from the book and describe quotes orally. This gave them the chance to practise synthesising information and conveying it to an audience, which is a skill that is useful in general school life and the world outside the classroom.

Using video gave students more opportunities to record their ideas; the resource that was created was a digital piece that they could watch back and share with others as part of their studies and exam preparation. The mode permitted them to use more oral expression and to draw upon their experiences from leisure activities.

The project supported that further research could be carried out to show how formal learning (including text structuring; language analysis; vocabulary building) can be demonstrated through multimodal composition, allowing students to creatively present their interpretations of texts whilst practising skills that are useful in a wider context. They can build a separate body of work in response to the original that incorporates a range of modalities in the process.

This pilot study showed that I could experiment with multimodal tasks in the classroom and indicated that the results could be interesting. It showed that students could complete academic challenges by bringing in their knowledge and tools from outside the classroom. It also implied a potential for change in the classroom, giving a break from didactic and teacher-led instruction and leading to an environment where students could “learn by doing”. It led the way for future experimentation in cycle one, looking into how multimodal composition tasks could be used to help students to be readers.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Cycle 1 Multiliteracies in practice: integrating multimodal production to promote pupils' independent reading practice.

a) Summary

Age	Research Question	Findings
1 st ESO Students (12/13 years)	<p>Integrating multimodal composition to promote pupils' independent reading practices.</p> <p>One: What kind of 'affordances' can be observed when we integrate multimodal activities for students' reading?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementing multimodal composition tasks can have a positive effect on student concentration. ● Using multimodal composition tasks can help to facilitate a range of essential skills, such as iPad use, writing, and vocabulary building. ● Implementing multimodal tasks can help encourage more reflective learning. ● Offering pupils with a choice of activities as part of their reading programme can be beneficial for developing a school's reading culture.

Table 3 Summary of the research questions and key findings.

This project examines the English department's change in strategies to encourage and monitor reading for pleasure for first year secondary students. We first generated curiosity about the project by asking students to guess the mystery readers in posters we displayed in the school corridors. We gave reading questionnaires to all first-year pupils and planned a list of activities for children to complete in response to their reading. We gave one further questionnaire to the two middle groups after completion of the first task. We adapted our method for taking in students' work by setting up a Showbie account for digital submission. Tasks completed by hand would be submitted electronically as a photograph. Findings demonstrated that students are motivated when given a choice about how to respond to the books they read. We saw how

integrating multimodal tasks encouraged the teaching team to use alternatives to traditional writing assignments. The project boosted the identity of reading in the school and helped develop a reading culture by increasing its visibility and giving it a priority in English classes and tutorial time.

We questioned 1st ESO pupils to find out their opinions on reading.

b) Findings from the initial pupil survey

The English teachers gave a questionnaire to 1st ESO pupils to discover their attitudes and experiences connected to private reading. See Appendix A, figures 1-3 (p. 209 –211). We included eighteen questions, intended to give a broader picture of pupils' experiences. Here I address the responses to questions 2, 8 and 11, which were most relevant for planning the project. We learnt that 44% of 1st ESO pupils enjoyed reading. Only 14% said that they disliked reading. 40% said that their reading had decreased since primary school, while 25% said that it had increased, and 33% said that it had stayed the same. We were surprised to discover that the majority preferred reading paper to digital books (85%). Time limitations were a significant factor that stopped children from reading, as well as “other hobbies” and “not knowing what to read”. Not having a secondary school library meant that we needed to find other ways to generate a visible reading culture and promote a love of reading in our students.

As a response, we decided that more time would be dedicated to reading, both in weekly tutor periods and in 1st ESO English classes. We would encourage students to develop their identities as readers by giving opportunities for reading for pleasure and choices about how to share their reading experiences.

c) First Steps to address the barriers to reading: time and choice

I worked collaboratively with two other teachers on this part of the project. We hoped to increase pupil motivation by including a range of activities. It is often perceived that giving choice encourages students to take ownership of their work because they have chosen activities that most interest them. I had seen evidence of this in the pilot study, where students had brought their cultural knowledge from outside of the classroom to create imaginative

educational texts. Giving children choice over the materials they are reading has been shown to help develop a positive reader identity (Bang-Jenson, 2010). When children perceive a text as interesting, it requires less processing demands (McDaniel, Waddill, Finstad and Bourg, 2000).

We planned a list of twenty-two activities (see Appendix B, figure 1, p. 212) that pupils could complete in response to their independent reading outside of school. The activities could be completed either before reading (for example task number six: *Before reading your book, write a description of the front cover with 5 predictions for the story*), during (e.g., number fourteen: *Draw a picture of a character's brain which illustrates what they are thinking at a particular moment in the story*), or after reading (e.g., number eighteen: *Write an alternative ending/or a deleted scene for your book*). Activities were designed to include visual, video, written, audio, drama, and a combination of these modes. The intention is to develop students' comprehension through asking them to focus on one aspect and elaborate upon it.

Instructions: During terms 2 and 3 you will bring your private reading book in from home and read it during your tutor period on Thursday mornings and then in the subsequent English class (that you have straight after). You work individually to produce three of the tasks on the sheet per term. When you have finished you need to upload the task to your class Showbie account. You should also tick it off on the sheet and show your teacher. If you need help choosing a book to read - see your English teacher - we have lots of great ideas!

We received permission from the headteacher to give 1st ESO pupils one fifteen-minute period of tutor time per week to read, meaning that they brought their books to school. We asked for the collaboration of the tutors so that if any pupil did not have a book, we would be informed, could find out why, and act. We planned to give pupils three months to select and produce three tasks from the list, based on the book(s) they were reading. They had to do this individually to demonstrate their knowledge of the texts they had read. We gave out paper task sheets (shown in table 4, p. 59), which they glued into the back of their notebooks. We included a column to the right of the activities for the students to tick once they had completed a task. We gave reminders in class and used occasional extra class time to keep up the momentum.

During the initial stages of the project, teachers commented on a higher level of student engagement when completing the activities. There was a perceived improvement in concentration levels. Some students were excited to speak about the books that they were

reading at home. One student read *The Maze Runner* series by James Dashner, they rated the activities as highly enjoyable (five out of five) and commented in the January survey:

"I did a collage and now I'm doing the trailer. I've read the books and seen almost all the movies and I have to get the important parts and give tension. You. Have. To. Read. Maze Runner. You will do yourself a favour, really. But you will cry".

The children were working alone, but still there remained a sense of collaboration in the class. The tables were set up in group formation, with four students at each table. They could quietly share ideas or tell their peers what they were working on. As a form of ongoing reflection, I would choose a student to stop and tell the group what they were doing, or what they had done during that class or the class before. We did not have time to show all students' work during the project but used regular opportunities for mini plenaries to reflect on what they were doing.

An enjoyable alternative for future projects could be that students read the same book as a partner or small group and produce a response together. This would still need to be accompanied by a piece of individual work, to allow for individual assessment. I collated pictures for a digital display in the school foyer, showing students with their books. An extension of this could be to take photographs of students from the different year groups reading, as well as teachers and other staff. The display could also be themed by genre (e. g. biography week) or by author. This sort of project does require substantial administration time; ultimately, the digital display idea did not come into fruition because the other teachers were too busy to join in the project. A solution could be to have a team of older students responsible for the reading display as an extracurricular activity.

d) The results of the second questionnaire.

The two middle ability classes (thirty-six students) were given a second questionnaire in class in January. The results showed that pupils showed a preference for visual tasks:

- 78% chose a task involving drawing or designing.
- 8% chose the video production task (the trailer).
- 5% chose a task that involved writing (one diary entry and one poetry).
- 53% of the students used the words "creative", "fun", or "imaginative", in the comments.

- 25% said that they enjoyed the “freedom” or “choice”.

Additionally, pupils showed they could reflect on their learning. They commented that while completing tasks, they were also improving their skill sets (e.g., iPad use, writing, vocabulary building):

- *“Now I am doing the collage and this makes me get better at my ipad skills and doing projects on the ipad.”*
- *“I am more of a visual learner, this helps with tasks with drawing/ labelling”*
- *“What I like about the project is that you can choose what you like. You can draw, for example, another book cover if you like and get better at drawing skills. You can also make a newspaper to get better at your writing skills”*

Asking students to comment upon their learning is an exercise that encourages them to reflect and develop a core lifelong learning skill. The comments showed a sense of metacognition and self-awareness that is useful not only for developing readers, but for general learning. Furthermore, if pupils can reason that the skills they are using are helpful across the curriculum (and beyond), tasks become more relevant and meaningful.

e) Impact on assessment

We changed to a more student-centred approach that involved students in decisions about their work. This encouraged a shift in assessment methods. We added a self-assessment section (see Appendix B Figure 2, p. 213) for pupils to complete at the end of each task, aiming to help develop their metacognitive skills by evaluating their participation and outcomes. We wanted to create a culture where students took ownership of their learning through active involvement.

Using a self-assessment sheet is not the only way to encourage reflection. We could also have used “pair and share” strategies where two students describe the perceived strengths and weaknesses of their project, or asked students to identify an improvement for a piece of work to demonstrate in the next class, for example. This pedagogy requires thought and imagination and is valuable for developing active learners. It is a system that could be developed further and adapted to grow in sophistication with the students as they get older.

Table 4: the selection rate for each task by students in group B.

Task	Description	Number
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1	Draw a picture of a character from your book, write 10 sentences.	8
2	Draw a picture of the setting from your book and label it.	3
3	Pretend you are a character and write a postcard home.	2
4	Produce a diary entry for your character describing an interesting event.	10
5	Write a list of 10 questions you would like to ask your favourite character.	3
6	Before reading your book, describe the front cover and add 5 predictions.	4
7	Design a new cover for your book.	18
8	Create a word cloud of new vocabulary you have learned while reading.	15
9	Write a poem inspired by your book.	0
10	Draw a comic strip (at least 6 boxes with captions) to illustrate an event.	1
11	Write a newspaper article based on an event in your book.	7
12	Create a collage inspired by your book.	11
13	Write a script or record a news/weather report based on your book.	0
14	Draw a picture of a character's brain which illustrates what they are thinking.	19
15	Write or perform a monologue as a character from your book.	2 (written)
16	Compose a letter to the author of your book.	6
17	Interview a character from your book for a magazine article.	0
18	Write an alternative ending/or a deleted scene for your book.	4
19	Design a travel blog based on the places your book has taken you.	0
20	Create a trailer for the film of your book.	7
21	Review your book.	7
22	Draw a map of the book's setting.	11

f) Discussion of the student work sample

Students had to complete a minimum of three tasks per term to show their engagement with their chosen book(s), including one piece of extended writing. I analysed the selection rate for my class in the first two terms. The most popular tasks combined drawing with writing:

- 90% chose task fourteen: “Draw a picture of a character’s brain which illustrates what they are thinking”.
- 86% chose task seven: “Design a new front cover for your book”).
- 71% chose task eight: “Create a word cloud of new vocabulary you have learned while reading”

Seemingly, students perceive drawing tasks as an opportunity to be creative and participate in assignments that are out of the ordinary. Most of the drawings were completed digitally using iPads, indicating that these students enjoyed practising design with the use of technology.

The most popular written tasks were:

- Twenty-one: “review your book” (33% selection rate).
- Four: “produce a diary entry for your character describing an interesting event” (47%).

These assignments would be familiar to students from primary school. Conceivably they chose them because they felt confident with the format. The majority were word-processed using iPads.

One of the production tasks asked the students to produce a video trailer of a book that they had read, imagining it was being released as a movie. As mentioned previously, the first-year students all bought their own iPads at the start of the year and had varied experience using iMovie to make their own videos. They had not been taught this skill in school but some of them had played with iMovie in their own time, meaning that they could complete the task independently. In the iMovie app there is a choice of templates for making trailers. The user can select a storyboard panel and add credits, titles, videos, music, and images. Two samples are included in Appendix C (p. 214).

Figure C1 (p. 214) shows screenshots of a student’s trailer for Lemony Snicket’s *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. This book follows the adventures of Violet, Klaus and Sunny Baudelaire after their parents’ death in a fire, when they are sent to live with their evil relative Count Olaf. The learner chose a book which already exists as a film, indicating the multimodal nature of

storytelling that has been the case for several generations of readers. The learner followed the structure of a movie trailer, using the iMovie app to produce a piece that includes: a relevant soundtrack that creates mood; a chronological sequencing of the events; still shots that create a dramatic effect; selected quotations from the book; a montage introducing the main character. This shows their ability to recognise genres, select appropriate music, represent chronology, and structure, and choose suitable text from the book. This task was done independently using students' knowledge and skills, but educational use of the genre could be extended as a class project over several lessons. *Film Education*, a charity established in 1985 to encourage cineliteracy, suggests "reading trailers"; through recognising typical characters, plots, genres, editing techniques, and exploring the use of camera angles, music, sound, light and colour, children can enter sophisticated thinking about author's choices.

Figure C2 (p. 214) shows screenshots from a student's trailer for the fantasy novel *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs. This is a story about a boy who follows clues from his grandfather's old photographs, tales, and last words, which lead him to an abandoned orphanage on a fictional Welsh island. In the sample we see how this student also chose a fantasy book which has been made into film, intended to bring the magical spirit of the book to screen. The student included title credits, a picture of all the children that appear at Miss Peregrine's house, a caption stating, "where Jacob finds out his peculiarity" (i.e., the special talent or uniqueness that each child there has, other "peculiarities" include the ability to float, super strength, and even the ability to transform into a bird), a picture of a magical scene at the house, and the end credits. They edited scenes from the film and inserted captions to show the viewer some highlights about the main character and the story premise, demonstrating the ability to read for meaning and showing criticality by selecting material for a specific audience.

In the third trailer example (see Appendix C figure 3, p. 215) the learner has chosen a popular novel which was made into a film in 2014, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner. This is the first *In the Maze Runner* series (but third in the narrative order). It is a post-apocalyptic dystopian science fiction novel in which the hero Thomas wakes up one day in a mysterious setting (called "the Glade") with no memory of how he got there and must try to solve the mystery of the maze to escape. The learner used iMovie, cutting scenes from the film with short phrases to entice the viewer to want to know more. The music is exciting and fast-paced, fitting the adventure genre. These factors allow the pupil to show their understanding of genre and create tension and intrigue for their audience. A possible extension to this task could be to have

the students produce a written or spoken rationale for the choices made as the “director” for this trailer. This would be a way of encouraging reflection about authorial choices that could help students think about their work and make connections with other constructed texts.

The collage task could be done digitally or manually; interestingly all my class did it on their iPads. In the example (see Appendix C figure 4, p. 215) the student read *The Stars at Oktober Bend* by Glenda Millard. This story is about the friendship between Alice, a girl who writes poems to express the words she cannot say, and Manny, an orphan adapting to his new life after his parents’ death. The resulting digital collage is a form of graphic art that juxtaposes images chosen from various online sources to convey a theme. The images show the book’s author, three different book covers, a picture of the main character, and pages depicting handwritten poetry. The collage shows how the student organised their ideas about the book. The mode could be used across the curriculum, for example collecting pictures of an artistic movement, finding themed pictures of sports for physical education, or combined with words for learning new vocabulary in language lessons. Students can find free digital collage makers online with templates for adding their own images. As well as exploring ideas and meanings of literature through image collation, learners practise digital and design skills that they can use in other contexts.

In the sample response to task 22: “Draw a map of the book’s setting”, (see Appendix C, figure 5, p. 216) the student chose *The Future of Us* by Jay Asher. Set in 1996, the book’s main characters receive a free AOL CD which logs them into their Facebook profiles, fifteen years in the future. The learner drew a simple depiction of a complex setting: characters’ lives are split between their ordinary existence in the present, and their future, imagined through their Facebook profiles as adults. This indicates the proliferation of social networking in adolescents’ lives, making its way into their literature. Facebook is a well-known platform, but its popularity is dwindling. In 2012, a Pew Research survey of 12-17 year olds found that 94% had a Facebook account. In 2021, its use was shown by Piper Sandler to have decreased to 27%. Instagram led in monthly usage in 2021, followed by Snapchat and TikTok. Teenagers regard Facebook as a social media platform for older people and prefer TikTok and Instagram for learning about viral trends (Press-Reynolds, 2021).

The sample response to task fourteen “illustrate what’s happening inside a character’s thoughts at a moment in the story” (see Appendix C6, p. 216) is a student’s representation of sixteen-year-old Jacob Portman, the hero of *Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom

Riggs. Jacob makes surprising discoveries when he travels from his home in Florida to a remote island off the coast of Wales, finding the ruins of Miss Peregrine’s orphanage and uncovering the fate of the children who lived there. Visualising the thoughts of a character is important for developing empathy and is one of the objectives set by the examination board that children follow later when they prepare for their IGCSE examinations.

In writing task five: “write a list of ten questions you would like to ask a character from your book” the objective was to see how the students engaged with a character from their book by writing relevant questions to ask them. We also found that this gave an opportunity for practising grammar and question formation. In the example in Appendix C7 (p. 217), we see a student’s questions for the main character in the book *The Parent Agency* by David Baddiel. In this story nine-year-old protagonist Barry Bennett has tired of his parents and decides to travel to an alternate world where he can try out new mums and dads. Five of the questions that the student posed were specific to the book:

- *What was the favourite parents you has (have) been with?*
- *Do you like your friends calling you Barry?*
- *Did you have a good time with the sportive parents?*
- *Why did you hate so much your parents at the start of the book?*
- *Is your little sister the worst little sister you can imagine?*

An extension of the task could be for students to both write and answer the questions, using the material as an effective pair task that could be acted out as a role play or an interview.

In Appendix C figure 8 (p. 217) I show how I used the Showbie platform to interact with students. Showbie was installed on all the students’ iPads at the start of the year. It is an educational app that works well with the iPad and combines tools for assignments, feedback, and communication. The teacher sets up a virtual class in the app and gives students the code so they can enrol. This creates an online class list and establishes a folder for each student to upload their work for designated tasks. Teachers can use the folders to communicate with students about their work. The app is easy to use. The main disadvantage is that you must upgrade to a paid account to upload large files. This was an issue for our class when uploading the video trailers. Students had to keep their videos to a strict one-minute limit and then create zip files. In the image you can see an interaction between teacher and learner, encouraging the learner to check and correct their work before re-submitting an improved version.

Using the digital submission system helped students be organised, showing their upcoming assignments and due dates. You can also use your Apple ID to sync calendar events. These digital portfolios did not replace written work. The students still had notebooks and, when assignments were produced by hand, they took a photo of their work to upload to the app. This method helped bring the literature teaching into a modern context, blending online and traditional activities and giving students opportunities to participate in a range of tasks during lessons. The children were able to interact with the teacher in the classroom as well as in the virtual space while they worked at home. The overall effect was to create a more social subject where private reading and individual writing were transformed into digital practices and students and teachers could interact in a dynamic way using the Internet.

At the end of the two terms, each student had a portfolio on Showbie. The portfolios included their drafts, showing how they reached the outcome of six compositions presenting their reading that year. One example of a pupils' submissions is included in Appendix C, figure 9 (p. 218 –225).

g) Findings

The aim of the reading project was to support children's wider reading in their transition year from primary to secondary education. We perceived the outcome to be more far reaching as, through devising strategies for developing a reading community at the school, we integrated multimodal learning opportunities that encouraged us to change our approach to curriculum design and assessment. Monitoring and encouraging pupils' private reading through the implementation of multimodal compositions proved a successful way of creating a 'buzz' about children's literature and helped to generate discussion between adults and pupils about the books that children were reading at home. The project offered a sophisticated way for the pupils to synthesise what they had read by producing new texts, in a range of styles and for a variety of intended audiences. The activities included problem-solving, synthesis and artistic expression, typically associated with right brain, and analysis and logic, more associated with the left, which has been found to have positive effects on student engagement (Bolte-Taylor, 2008; Sloan & Nathan, 2005, quoted in Simmons and Daley, 2013). The following is a discussion of the changes that were noticed after including multimodal instruction in the children's personal reading project:

- Using multimodality led to student-centred learning

Firstly, the multimodal pedagogy promoted student-centred and purpose-driven learning. We supported students to recognise their identities as learners by integrating a reflective task and using Showbie to show their drafts and improvements. Pupils worked independently on the project and the teacher's role was to respond to questions and give general guidance. They worked to deadlines, used technology, researched genres, manipulated texts for different audiences, and drafted a range of written texts, all in response to the reading that they had done. The classroom atmosphere was felt to be supportive and nurturing. We saw students taking responsibility for their work and enthusiastic to have more time on the project.

A distinct opportunity arose when we let students choose the books they wanted to bring from home. They had the freedom to progress at their own pace with a book of their choice, which was a step towards a more personalised curriculum. This was a compromise that enabled us to give students autonomy whilst exposing them to the classics (we have a set of prescribed books that are also read during ESO).

There was just one incident where I intervened in the book selection process. A child was reading a book that was too low for their ability: *The Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by author and cartoonist Jeff Kinney. It was another child that drew my attention to this, commenting that many of them read this book two years ago in primary school. To help facilitate choice it can be a good idea to introduce a dedicated "reading wall" in the classroom. Children can print a picture of their book cover and add it to the wall, they can add a short blurb and a recommendation. A digital version of this could be a class blog, where children post to talk about a book they are reading or have read. This can be helpful for giving ideas about suitable books and help to create more dialogue about reading.

I asked my class members to take a photo of themselves reading the book and write a short description of it so that I could display this on the wall for others to look at if they needed inspiration about what to choose. Some children also shared and passed their books around, which was especially helpful considering the absence of a library at the school. It would be interesting to see which of the more reluctant readers had perhaps become so in connection with a lack of access to books at home. Krashen (2011) questioned the decline in children's love of literature, arguing that children read just as much now as before (more so when we include reading online), suggesting that the problem with literacy is not related to encouraging reluctant teenagers to read, but rather providing access to books to those living in poverty.

Krashen's argument related to children's deprivation due to economic status, but we must not assume that children coming from more affluent families enjoy the same access to cultural resources. On the contrary, we found that children coming from backgrounds of a similar economic status received varying degrees of encouragement to read at home, and that not all had access to books, which in turn had consequences for the development of their reading identities. A further solution to this perceived inequality of access to cultural resources could be to approach one of the local libraries and find out about the availability of English books. This could provide useful encouragement and exposure to local facilities, as well as developing children's curiosity about books and learning.

- Multimodal projects led to more varied assessment

The project led the way for alternative assessments that did not focus solely on writing, but also credited children's creativity, diligence, and independent work ethic, as well as allowing them to showcase their knowledge of popular culture and develop their ICT skills.

Through the production of multimodal texts, students showed more varied skills than if they were only assessed for their writing. Choosing this form of assessment, it becomes possible to acknowledge the importance of different skill sets and foster an appreciation for a wider range of abilities and talents, rather than discriminating in favour of traditional notions of academia. We give more opportunities to children that have other kinds of knowledge and skills, that are not related to school and writing.

While watching videos in the classroom is now very common, video production in the classroom is currently underused and writing remains the predominant assessment tool (Cassany & Shafirova, 2021). There is a growing movement of research into the affordances of video production in the classroom as investigators are recognising how it can be used to deliver curriculum content and facilitate collaboration and creativity.

Planning a curriculum that integrates multimodality means using activities that are handwritten and word processed, combining writing with images and orality, and showing an appreciation for how students switch between modes to complete their work. When carefully designed, this approach can help to reflect the demands of modern society, where writing is often accessed online in a context that has been designed to be public, encompassing links, images, videos, and podcasts, which have been designed and produced for a specific audience.

The project showed how multimodal compositions can be assessed in a similar way to monomodal projects. We used the same assessment rubric for each of the twenty-two tasks (Appendix B, Figure 2, *Reading project student and teacher assessment sheet*, p. 213). Students were expected to complete a range of tasks (for example by combining one that included extended writing, one that was more artistic, and one digital). The final teacher assessment was based upon the range, the accuracy, the quality, and the perceived effort that the student had made. This suggested further evidence of the versatility of multimodal composing as a pedagogical approach.

- Multimodality can connect effectively with technology use

Students used iPad apps to produce movies, presentations, and drawings. They learnt to make zip files to compress movies before uploading them to Showbie. Students' ability with technology differed; some were unsure how to use iMovie and one nominated themselves as a helper, creating an environment of peer sharing. This highlighted how video production facilitated cooperation between the class members and let them bring their own personal knowledge and skills into the classroom.

Projects such as this can be useful for identifying students' needs in terms of technological capacity, highlighting room for development in future classes. Unless the teacher is especially passionate about technology, it is possible that one or more of the students will bring a higher level of skill in certain areas such as app mastery or knowledge of viral trends.

The shift to online work submission facilitated easy communication between teacher and students. Incorporating a digital hand-in system with a chat function meant we could communicate with students as they were working, get insights into their working patterns, and let them ask questions and receive efficient feedback outside of formal classes.

This topic is discussed in a study of book trailers and reading carried out during an initial teacher training program (Heredia-Ponce et al., 2020). Book trailers work in the same way as movie trailers and are created to be distributed on social networks, using various multimedia to promote a book to an audience. The findings show the convergence of digital and linguistic competence seen when students collaborate to produce book trailers. The authors suggest that specific literary competencies have corresponding digital competencies.

One example of this is that for students to fulfil the communication of a certain social practice, they must also know which digital formats are available so that they can choose the most

suitable one (p. 279). The findings indicate a lack of technical skills of teachers and insufficient access to computers at schools. It is suggested that teachers need to recognise this congruence and see the value that video production such as book trailers can have in the classroom. One way to promote this idea is by emphasising the links between linguistic and digital competency:

Para su creación, se establecieron grupos cooperativos y se llevaron a cabo una serie de pasos: en primer lugar, elaboraron un borrador para determinar cómo se iba a construir, qué elementos se iban a incluir, de qué música iban a hacer uso. Una vez que habían planificado cómo organizar el booktrailer, lo editaron con diferentes programas informáticos como, por ejemplo, MovieMaker. Paralelamente, los alumnos completaban un diario donde justificaban cada paso que llevaban a cabo en la creación del booktrailer. Para ello, se les ofreció una serie de preguntas orientativas. (Heredia-Ponce et al., 282)

The pupils in the study shared their book trailers on a blog and had the opportunity to comment and ask questions to their peers via this medium; I shall return to this method of sharing between peers in the next cycle, where we used Google Classroom to facilitate peer commentaries for students' podcasts. Overall, the trainee teachers agreed that the use of a digital method such as book trailers provided a useful and entertaining tool compared to tasks with a more traditional focus.

- Multimodal composition offers opportunities for deconstructing and constructing texts.

The reading project enabled pupils to synthesise what they had read by producing new texts, in a range of styles and for a variety of intended audiences. In multimodal composition, students appropriate different genres, becoming more active in their viewing practises to recognise metalanguages and understand the real choices that writers and composers make.

The project showed that we could include multimodal activities as a means of formal assessment. One of the benefits of a multimodal pedagogy is that it does not exclude students who are not academically strong. Using a range of modes including oral, digital video production, crafts, and word processing means that students have the chance to access tasks from different angles. It helped to inform some of the choices regarding resource design for cycle two of the study. Cycle two focused on children in 2nd ESO the following November. The students involved had participated in the reading project.

I wanted to look at how a range of tasks could be implemented into a unit of taught classroom instruction. We had seen that using multimodal compositions could help children to develop

their identity as readers, and I wanted to investigate how using these kinds of activities could help students to access more academic texts, in this case, Shakespeare.

4.2 Cycle 2 Multiliteracies in practice: integrating multimodal production into a *Romeo and Juliet* unit of study for lower secondary age pupils

a) Summary

Age	Questions	Key findings
2nd ESO (13/14 years)	<p>Integrating multimodal composition into the <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> unit for lower secondary pupils.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate a multimodal approach into a Shakespeare study for 2nd ESO pupils?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multimodal tasks involving design, drawing and craft making were more popular with students than traditional writing-based activities. ● Using multimodal composition provided a “way in” to traditional writing tasks ● Implementing multimodal tasks helped to encourage reflective teaching and learning practices. ● Implementing multimodal tasks for groups and pairs raises interesting challenges for promoting the use of English during the composition process.

Table 5 Summary of the research questions and key findings for cycle 2.

This project explores the possibilities and issues that arose when integrating a multimodal pedagogy into a 2nd ESO Shakespeare study. Shakespeare’s plays have strong themes (such as love, jealousy, and family relationships) that run throughout the works and a rich use of language and literary devices, making them a popular choice even 400 years after their production. The question is how to convince a modern teenage audience of the relevance of these works, and how to bring the literature to life in a way that students find enjoyable and memorable. I redesigned the existing scheme of work on *Romeo and Juliet* to include both traditional and modern tasks, took notes on students’ reactions and participation, and analysed the work that they created over a five-week period.

b) Context

In this section I describe the process of an experimental classroom project I developed with a group of 12–13-year-old pupils in the second year of high school (2nd ESO). The participants were members of my English class of sixteen pupils (aged thirteen and fourteen). The tasks

involved students' own compositional responses to *Romeo and Juliet* through different modes: traditional writing tasks, video production, internet searches, model making, and artistic design. Ten weeks had originally been dedicated to the study of this play. Unfortunately, the teaching was interrupted first by the school's annual ski week, then by a programmed break for English language coverage, and finally by the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Accordingly, the data was collected from pupil surveys 5 weeks into the study and analysis of the student compositions in weeks 1-5.

The project links to the work of multimodal composing (Miller & Bruce, 2017; Cercone, 2017; Vasudevan, 2009) and student-centred learning (Showalter, 2003). I aimed to promote critical thinking, writing, oral, and listening skills, with a group of pupils who were considered to have difficulties in various aspects of their English studies. This generally suggested difficulty in concentrating for extended periods of time, and extra support in comprehending more challenging or abstract themes or topics. Additionally, all the learners were native Spanish or Catalan speakers and had English as an additional language. In cycle one the previous year (carried out with 1st ESO students, this year's 2nd ESO students), I saw that sometimes, students who are not usually enthusiastic about tasks in English show a willingness to design their own compositions, either digitally or on paper. I had seen these students engrossed in project work in Catalan lessons, reinforcing how they were motivated to work collaboratively towards goals.

Prior to starting the *Romeo and Juliet* unit, we used a more traditional approach to Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. This unit was taught using a paper dossier that had written tasks to complete either before, during or after reading parts of the novel. We had an informal discussion in class to see how the students found the experience. They expressed difficulty understanding the language and complained about not enjoying the reading experience: "it's too slow, nothing really happens".

I decided to give the students a questionnaire to find out what kind of activities they wanted to do in English¹⁰. I went to visit my students in their Catalan class to see what they were doing in other subjects. In Catalan they were working on a project, creating a marketing campaign to promote a Barcelona neighbourhood. The project seemed to be tapping into their curiosity and inspiring them through its connection to real-life situations. I remarked to one of my pupils that

¹⁰ Unfortunately, these questionnaires are not included in the appendix as they were in the students' notebooks and it was not possible to retrieve them after the lockdown.

she appeared to be having fun, she said that she was enjoying it so much that it “didn’t feel like work”.

I saw that the pupils were most engaged when they were working together and collaborating to reach a shared goal. Additionally, from the questionnaires I learnt that my pupils wanted: more pair work and group work and more visual and creative tasks. I had some ideas about what would work from the pilot study and from cycle one, so I set out to redesign the next unit of work to incorporate tasks that would involve new ways of engaging these students with literary analysis and help them to be more effective readers.

c) Initial questionnaire

At the start of term one, the class was taught using traditional teaching methods. This included a class reading of the novel *Of Mice & Men* by John Steinbeck and various activities to involve pupils in the text and help them understand the text, its context, its characters, and its plot. We mainly used the class dossier as the resource; this is a paper-based booklet that contains questions and activities pertaining to the novel. This resource was assembled several years ago. It is a large paper file that is given to the students at the start of term one and contains all the literary and language resources typically used for the corresponding school year. The 2nd ESO dossier has three literature sections (*Of Mice and Men*, *Romeo and Juliet* and assorted poetry) and a language section containing grammar points.

The section on *Of Mice and Men* has thirty-six pages and is organised as follows:

- contextual information: discussion prompts for class discussion about the American dream; a page to fill in research findings about the author; a pair activity for considering the turtle of the book; a page showing six different book covers for different publications of the text for prompting pair discussion; a gap-fill activity focusing on the setting;
- keeping track of the chapters: students are asked to review the chapters and find quotes to demonstrate certain ideas, e.g., *find two quotations that describe the physical appearance of the main characters* (done individually or in pairs);
- pages with a drawing of each of the main characters, for the pupils to note down relevant quotations as they read the book;

- comprehension questions about the chapters to develop students ‘understanding of characterization, plot and themes (done individually or in pairs);
- a page giving instructions on how to mind map all of the characters;
- a page with a table for summaries of the six chapters;
- a page reminding students about appropriate essay language and structure;
- several pages supporting extract study where the students focus on the language and style of writing;
- several pages to use as revision guides for collecting ideas about the main quotations from the book and what they show.

At the end of the *Of Mice and Men* study, pupils answered questions in their notebook to give their feedback about their experiences studying the novel. The questions were designed to give an idea about which activities the pupils thought had been most memorable and useful.

Of Mice and Men end of Unit Review

Please answer the questions in your notebooks. Do so thoughtfully and carefully to make your opinion count!

- 1.
2. Describe your feelings while reading the book.
3. List **three things that you learnt** during the reading of the book.
4. List **three activities that you enjoyed** taking part in during the reading of the book. Explain **why** you enjoyed them.
5. How would you **rate your understanding** of the characters, events, and themes of the book?
 - a. LOW (pretty confused) - AVERAGE (I mostly get it) - HIGH (I understand it well)
6. What kind of **activities would you like to do** in the next unit?

Well done & thanks for your participation during this unit of study!

Figure 5 The *Of Mice and Men* unit review.

The students had generally found the novel difficult and commented that the unit was “slow” and involved “too much writing”. Students requested more collaborative and digital work. The data from this initial questionnaire was used, together with the findings from the pilot study and cycle one, to inform planning for the subsequent unit of study on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*.

d) Task design and discussion

Romeo and Juliet had been taught at the school for many years. There was a paper dossier (like the one used for the previous study for *Of Mice and Men*) and there was already a tradition of including a mask design and a 3D model task. We had a copy of the 1996 Baz Luhrman film adaptation of the play saved on the department’s Google Drive (I planned to show parts of the film after reading key scenes, to help reinforce the meaning and break up the reading with viewing activities). I aimed to make a cohesive work plan that would incorporate traditional analysis tasks, active reading, and more modern composition tasks involving pair and group work and using a mixture of digital, visual, manual, and written modes. The group had expressed a dislike of what they considered “too much writing” so I wanted to put the emphasis on the creative and tactile tasks, taking the focus away from extended writing.

We do not read the whole play with students at this level as it is considered overwhelming due to the difficulty of the language. Instead, we cover key moments or scenes. The group I was working with was considered weaker at English and I wanted to support their understanding and enjoyment of the text by showing the film in sections after reading. The students enjoyed watching the film and looked forward to continuing (“can we see the film?” was usually asked by several students at the start of most lessons).

Week	Content: Play / Film	Composition
1	Before reading.	YouTuber task (digital video production), completed in pairs. Shakespeare research and fact sheet composition (online and digital), completed in pairs.
2	Watch the Baz Luhrman version of the play up until the end of Act I scene iv (22 minutes 45 seconds, Act I Video). Read Act I scene v.	Prologue digital presentations (digital), completed in pairs.
3	Read Act II scene ii (the balcony scene). Watch the Luhrman version of Act II scenes i and ii.	Mask design (tactile and visual) completed individually. Essay: How does Shakespeare make Act I scene v dramatically effective? (writing), completed individually.
4		Storyboards (visual and tactile), completed in pairs.
5		Balcony scene models (visual and tactile), completed in pairs.

Table 6 A summary of the course content covered in the first five weeks.

i. Composition 1: Shakespeare research project and factsheet

Description

The students needed an overview of William Shakespeare and, following a student-centred pedagogy, they would retrieve the information themselves. The intention was to design a mini project that would let pupils use their research skills to learn more about Shakespeare and Elizabethan theatre.

Instructions: Work in pairs to create a fact sheet about William Shakespeare. Include information about his life, life in the theatre during that time, his plays, and modern interpretations (2 classes).

Pupils were given a set of guidelines to follow to help them produce a fact sheet about the playwright, his life, and his works (Appendix Fig. D1, p. 225).

Discussion

When producing the factsheets, students used summary skills, synthesising information to decide what was important, and giving information a clear and logical structure. They gained comprehension of the subject by creating new content for a specific audience. This process indicated how well they understood and connected with a topic, providing an interesting alternative to a traditional piece of writing. Sharing the finished pieces provided a useful way of disseminating knowledge between peers. Because the outcome was a physical artefact, it gave the opportunity for displaying students' work, which has benefits for increasing their satisfaction and involving others in the project as spectators.

This linked with previous studies by Manterola et al. (2020), indicating how multimodal composition can encourage students to participate in linguistic activities that follow specific structures, "students learn how to produce texts in a communicative situation; they become aware of some features of specific communicative situations as well as of text structures and linguistic forms" (p. 30). With digital word processing, pupils can incorporate graphic design and text organisation as well as focusing on content. The style aspect means students had to write informatively whilst incorporating rhetorical devices to entertain the reader, developing their skills writing for different audiences and purposes as well as learning to design attractive texts.

In section F of the Appendix (fig. F1, p. 238) we see how two students worked together to produce a classic leaflet digitally. They used a classic template that they found on the Pages App (free to all Apple users), divided into six sections to present the information. The information presented is mostly accurate, except for the summary of *Macbeth*, which appears to have been misunderstood or misinterpreted from an online source. They included pictures of Shakespeare, of a scene from Elizabethan England, and a photo of the Globe theatre.

In the sections: “Tudor Times” and “The Globe Theatre” there is evidence that the students have connected with the historical context of the play; they give facts about ‘fun examples of sports’ like “shin-kicking” wearing metal boots, jousting, and performing headstands. This showed agency because the students chose to include information that interested them.

Students used online searches to research the material for their factsheets. Some younger students did not understand issues of originality and needed to be shown how to re-write information in their own words rather than using “copy and paste”. This reminder becomes weightier as the students move up the school. Plagiarism is taken seriously and if a student is found to be copying (either from another student or stealing content directly from the web), their project will be disregarded, and they will be awarded a minimum grade. This topic is discussed further in cycle three: a multimodal approach for teaching *Of Mice and Men*, in the discussion of the group research presentation task.

A further issue for planning consideration is the different speeds that children worked at. It is advisable to recommend a word count for each section to ensure that students do not include too much or too little information. I had suggested that the leaflet be two sides and include information under four predetermined headings: Shakespeare’s life, life in the theatre during that time, his plays, and modern interpretations. As an extension, more ambitious students could be encouraged to work with hyperlinks and QR codes to include extra information online.

In the surveys, students commented that they enjoyed the collaborative aspect of the task (working in pairs) and had fun researching the information.

I enjoyed it because I like research projects like looking for information on the internet.

The finished leaflets were displayed in the classroom and at the school “family day” but one student commented that they would have liked to also present their work to the rest of the class: “*We didn’t present*”.

This raised the question of timing. Students often want to show their work to their peers to receive feedback and there is not always time. As it appears to be important for children, this suggests that it should be prioritised, even if only over a collective fifteen minutes. Teachers could choose students who have produced exceptional work to share, creating a culture of sharing best practice with a specific purpose. In this scenario the students would only expect to share their work with the aim of sharing a particular objective or learning point; the teacher retains control of the time and can use the time saved for other important learning goals.

This concept of a real audience is raised in “Edmodo E-portfolios in EFL – A Case Study” (Pop, 2013); the author describes the use of the platform with a group of undergraduate Tourism English students designing E-flyers: “the added value of creating online leaflets was represented by the facility the tool offered of inserting digital images and videos while at the same time making their writing public and, therefore, likely to receive comments from the real world.” (p. 338). In the future it would be interesting to select completed student portfolios to publish online, perhaps also receiving comments from a genuine audience.

ii. Composition 2: *YouTuber* task

Description

Following the earlier student feedback, I wanted to integrate a digital aspect early in the unit and followed on with the second composition: the *YouTuber* task. We had not started reading the play and, after introducing Shakespeare, I wanted to introduce its context. I decided that starting with a video lesson using *YouTube* would be an interesting first task to engage pupils’ attention as we rarely watched videos in class. In Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* Pyramus and Thisbe are introduced as two tragic lovers, prohibited from being together and ultimately united by death. As this is believed to be the inspiration for the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, I wanted to take advantage and position Shakespeare’s tale within a greater literary heritage.

We began by watching *Pyramus and Thisbe - A Love Story - Greek Mythology*¹¹, followed by *The Fates Present: Pyramus & Thisbe*¹². The first video gives a clear narrative of the story, slowly recounted in plain standard American English. The narration is accompanied by pictures

¹¹ *Pyramus and Thisbe - A Love Story - Greek Mythology* <https://youtu.be/jrlvRv8JApC>

¹² *The Fates Present: Pyramus & Thisbe* <https://youtu.be/j9xZsM2hAFU>

that give more information about the story, for example a building like the one the characters lived in, or a picture of two teenagers communicating through a crack in a wall. At minute 1:09 there is a picture of John William Waterhouse's *Thisbe*, painted in 1909 (Waterhouse enjoyed the theme of unfulfilled love and painted *Medea*, *Ariadne* and *Cleopatra*, showing an interesting example of the intertextuality present in works of art through time).

We watched this video once to give an initial view of the story. Afterwards we discussed the events, and I gave time for questions. The students had understood the story and reacted with frustration to the unfortunate chain of events that caused Pyramus and Thisbe to be separated. To give another representation of the events of the story, I followed with a second video *The Fates Presents...* a longer animated tale that has a voiceover and shows the characters and events in more detail. It also has subtitles. After watching these two videos to help secure the pupils' knowledge of the story, I asked them to retell it in their own words.

Instructions: *Viewing task: The Fates Present: Pyramus & Thisbe. After watching, you will be asked to recall the events in no more than ten sentences! (1 Class).*

I asked them to try to retell the story freely at first, showing picture prompts to help them recall the different parts of the story, illustrated below:



Activity: Use the picture prompts to retell the story in your own words!

Figure 6 A pictorial summary of Pyramus and Thisbe for 2nd ESO students.

The students found it hard to retell the story without extra support. To assist, we watched an example of a *YouTuber* called Dael Kingsmill¹³ explaining the story in a *YouTube* video. This modelling gave the pupils a better idea of how they could perform their own *YouTube* summaries, giving them confidence and stylistic grounding. The pupils practised filming each other telling the story in the “casual and unrehearsed” manner of a *YouTuber*. Whilst doing so, they used English to retell the story, experimenting with tone, and rehearsing how to their voices to communicate key information.

Instructions: *Work with a partner to retell the story of Pyramus and Thisbe.*

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU SUCCEED: What is the **persona** you want to create?

What **accent** are you using? What’s your **style**? *Geeky, funny, random, sweet...* Aim to speak for 2 minutes. *Person A directs and records and person B acts.*

Discussion

This task required more time so that the students could practise and make the most of the content and language learning opportunity. At the time, I noted how quickly the students started to participate after watching the *YouTuber* example, compared to their hesitancy before. There was an issue of space when all the pupils were recording their audios. Fortunately, having a relatively small group meant it was easy to find a corner of the classroom or a neighbouring classroom for students to record in.

Timing was an issue because students wanted to stop and start their recording to make improvements. As the teacher, I found this uncomfortable because it caused the task to run into the next lesson. I wanted to return to a more teacher-led class and start with the reading. It felt like the students had been directing the time for too long (as the previous task was also a pair task) and I wanted to take back some control.

However, from the perspective of student participation, this can be seen as positive. It showed their concentrated efforts to make the video and to want to improve it:

What I liked about the project was that it was new and I had never done it before. What I disliked was that we didn’t have enough time to edit it.

¹³ Dael Kingsmill (https://youtu.be/mM9_GI7hRPI).

A future solution would be to either: make this a more significant task and assign it more time; change the position of the task within the work scheme to ensure a balance between pair tasks and more directed teacher time; ask the students to record the video at home in future.

One interesting feature of the composition was the group members' ability to play with language and take on imagined roles. They were instructed to use a "casual and chatty" tone (see the example transcript below). I noted that it would be interesting to contrast this style by setting an assignment that required a more formal tone (such as a news report or a speech) later in the term. In the end this was not possible due to interruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sample transcription

L: Hello my friends and welcome to my YouTube video

Screen shows text: WELCOME BACK

Pop music in the background

I've not been uploading videos since two weeks ago but here I am. Welcome back. Also subscribe to my channel and below (points to where the banner would be), you have the link to subscribe to my Instagram.

So the story of Pyramus and Thisbe it's similar to Romeo and Juliet but this story in reality came before the play of Shakespeare. And to read about its history, a love of two people that love each other but they're separated by their families, that they hate each other. And they plan both to live together, to elope, and get married. So, the plan didn't go very well, like with Romeo and Juliet. So, what happened was they went together and they wanted to pretend that Thisbe was dead. Because she had like this scarf that was like full of blood, to pretend that she had died. But then a lion came and went to her and then her scarf fell and it was full of blood. And when Pyramus came he thought that the scarf was from her and she'd died, so what he did was to hurt himself. Then Thisbe was saved she saw that he had stabbed himself. She got the knife and stabbed herself and then they both died. She couldn't live in a world without him.

Screen edit: new screen flashes over with the presenter's image and the text: LIKE AND SUBSCRIBE

Thank you for watching and hoping to see you soon and if you liked the video give it a thumbs up.

We recognise one major affordance through the way the students use their cultural knowledge to develop a "persona" as a *Youtuber*, imagining that they are a regular poster and apologising for not uploading any videos for a while. They connected with the audience, implying a

relationship with their “regular viewers”. They made references to their wider social media presence by asking the viewers to “subscribe to their Instagram” profile.

In the main part of the video, they summarised the story of *Pyramus and Thisbe* in clear and casual language. At the end of the summary, they inserted a page of text reminding viewers to “like and subscribe”, showing more evidence of knowledge brought in from their own experience as viewers to make their video realistic.

One further sample can be seen in the appendix in the example portfolio of student work (Appendix F Figure 2 p. 239).

iii. Composition 3: the prologue video

Description

The third task was the prologue video. The play’s prologue is just as important for teenage readers as it was for Shakespearean audiences. It shows them what will happen in the play, leaving them free to enjoy watching how the events of the story unfold.

Instructions: Read and understand the prologue. Small groups: work together to practise recording the lines in different ways to see which tone best communicates the meaning. COMPOSITION – In pairs, make a digital presentation to represent the key words & phrases. Use images to reinforce important ideas. Add a voiceover of the words (2 Classes).

Conceivably, with a secured understanding of the prologue, pupils have more chance to connect with the play and its themes during the class reading. We read the prologue aloud as a group and experimented by reading it in different tones of voice, depending on the content of the line and the mood it implied. I divided the pupils into small groups to practise recording the lines in different ways and decide which tone best communicates the meanings. I then asked students to work in pairs to make a digital presentation to represent the key words and phrases, using one slide per line and adding relevant images and a voiceover. I wanted them to engage with the details of the language and show that they had read closely by selecting appropriate images that supported and reinforced the words’ meanings, reading aloud with appropriate tone, pace,

and rhythm. The intention was that the learners could move away from being passive recipients of literature, beginning to use their own thoughts and initiative to investigate the text.

Discussion

Designing the prologue videos, students combined the original script from the prologue with their own choice of pictures and a voiceover, mixing visual, oral, and digital to create a new representation of the text. They generally read in a slow and clear manner to present their narrative to their audience. Some students succeeded in varying the tone by focusing on certain words for emphasis, adding dramatic effect. This showed the affordance of participation in a close reading of the text through intellectual, physical, and vocal engagement (Folger Shakespeare Library, 2013).

The oral and visual modes are juxtaposed in this task as each of the twelve lines of the prologue is supported by one visual image. The students picked out a key image from each line to show their interpretation and reinforce the meaning for the audience. I include an example of pictures chosen by one student pair for the twelve lines of the prologue in the following table.

Table 7 Commentary on the students' choice of images for the prologue video.

Voice	Image
<i>Two households, both alike in dignity,</i>	The Capulet and Montague emblems
Commentary: the students researched online to find out what the symbols were for the two important families. They show the family crest for the Montagues and the Capulets, which are significant visual icons that represent the two proud and historic households.	
<i>In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,</i>	An aerial view of Verona
Commentary: the students researched the geography of the play's setting and learnt that the play takes place in Italy in the city of Verona. They show the city from above to give a larger perspective for the audience to be able to imagine the location of the action.	
<i>From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,</i>	The <i>Game of Thrones</i> characters
Commentary: the students took the idea of an "ancient grudge" and applied the concept by using their own cultural knowledge, referring to the television series <i>Game of Thrones</i> (Martin, George RR, writer. <i>Game of Thrones</i> . HBO, 2011-2019) that tells the story of a mediaeval country's civil war as characters fight to win the "Iron Throne".	

<i>Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.</i>	Blood-stained hands
Commentary: the students use the idea of blood to suggest the violence that happens in the play. This violence and bloodshed drives the plot forward towards the untimely death of several of the main characters, including the protagonists Romeo and Juliet.	
<i>From forth the fatal loins of these two foes,</i>	A different picture of the Capulet and Montague emblems
Commentary: the students returned to the idea of the two central families and show their crests once more to represent the origins of the protagonists, Romeo and Juliet.	
<i>A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life,</i>	Juliet sits over Romeo's body with a dagger in her hand ready to take her own life
<i>Whose misadventured, piteous overthrows</i>	Some basketball players reaching for the net.
Commentary: the idea of the downfall of the two protagonists is replaced with a more accessible interpretation of the "overthrows" from sports terminology; this misses the intricacy of the phrase's original meaning and shows how young readers bring different interpretations to the texts when they are reading alone.	
<i>Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.</i>	A tombstone.
Commentary: the students chose an icon of a gravestone to represent death.	
<i>The fearful passage of their death-marked love,</i>	A photo still from the Zefirelli version of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> showing Juliet holding the dagger to her chest, positioned next to Romeo's corpse.
Commentary: this version of the play (directed by the Italian filmmaker Franco Zefirelli) is the most accurate film adaptation. It is not uncommon to hear English teachers remind students that there would have been no guns in the times of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (an inaccuracy that was made popular by the Baz Luhrman 1996 film adaptation which changes the scene to modern day Venice beach).	
<i>And the continuance of their parents' rage,</i>	A photo still from the Baz Luhrmann film adaptation of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> showing Lord Montague and Lord Capulet sitting next to one another.
Commentary: the students identified the characters from the Baz Luhrman adaptation of the play to show these two important characters side by side.	
<i>Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,</i>	A still shot from another film adaptation of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> showing their faces with Romeo caressing Juliet's cheek.
Commentary: this example indicated the number of images of different film versions of the play that are available online. The film website " film.list.co.uk " includes thirty-six different film	

versions of the play in its count, including a production by the Royal Ballet, a Tamil romcom and a Broadway feature. When students research images online, they can also be encouraged to engage with the different perspectives and interpretations of how a play has been received by different readers.	
<i>Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage,</i>	A photo of cars in a line of traffic.
Commentary: the students focused on the rhetorical figure of the “two hours traffic” (referring to the duration of the play) by showing a visual representation of a line of cars.	
<i>The which if you with patient ears attend,</i>	A close up of a human ear.
Commentary: the students suggest the act of listening by selecting an image of a human ear.	
<i>What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.</i>	A black background with white calligraphy writing: “The End”.
Commentary: it is suggested here that anything missed by the narrator of the prologue will be explained later by the hard work of the actors. The students imply that the play will reach its natural end when all the details of the story have been delivered to the audience.	

Analysing the students’ choice of images showed the way they brought their knowledge of culture to the project to help them understand the text. The reference to *Game of Thrones* that the students used to show the feud between the Capulets and Montagues gave a visual indicator of how students can use their own cultural references to deepen their understanding in the classroom.

An additional affordance was how students used their voices to dramatise the text. This corresponds with the numerous studies that have suggested the benefits of using a performance, including:

- Positive overall response towards learning Shakespeare,
- Stronger sense of mastery of the subject
- Greater sense of accomplishment and intellectual competence
- Understanding Shakespeare’s language easily
- Perception of study of Shakespeare as a positive experience,
- Greater engagement, less dependence on teacher
- Thinking abstractly, understanding causality
- Use of logic to draw conclusions, greater gain in evaluation skills.

(Cheng & Winston, 2011; Heller, 2005; Strom, 2011 quoted in Danner & Musa, 2019)

The reading aspect appeared enjoyable for those students who like to be orally expressive. They had the opportunity to experiment with the language with a partner and practise reading the words aloud to experience the rhythm and the metre:

Saying the sentences melodically was interesting.

iv. Composition 4: Mask design

Description

The next activity was the mask design task. The pupils were given the task of designing a mask for one of the characters to wear to the Capulet family's masquerade ball.

*Instructions: Pick one character: Romeo, Juliet, Lord Capulet, Tybalt, Mercutio, or Benvolio. Create a mask that represents their character! Consider their: attitudes, actions, emotions. Think about the **symbolism** of the colours and patterns that you choose... **LOOK-** <http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/meaning-colors.htm>*

*This project has two parts – the mask itself and the written explanation/ **rationale** of the choices you made! The rationale should be about 100-150 words (Appendix D3, p. 227).*

I chose to integrate this project into the unit before pupils wrote their formal essay. Extended writing can seem unmanageable for some students, so the idea was that this would act as an enjoyable “way in” to the critical thinking skills that they would need for their writing.

Feeding on from cycle one, acknowledging the importance of the design process for multimodal compositions, I decided students must also submit a short written rationale explaining the symbolism of their designs (Appendix D3, p. 227). Writing a rationale is a way of showing the reasoning and justification for the choices made when producing a piece of work. In this case, the students gave an unofficial oral rationale to me after producing an initial draft, and then a final written rationale to accompany their final submission. I explained to the students what the rationale was for and advised them about the kind of language that they should use to show their reasoning, modelling language use such as: “because”, “in order to”, “so that”, “this highlights”, and “this shows”.

The students found information about the connotations of colours and symbols in the Elizabethan era online¹⁴. They chose a character and began their design on a rough draft planning sheet. I moved around the room and discussed students' work with them sporadically, sitting next to groups of students and asking them to briefly explain their choices of colours and patterns. When they had completed their drafts and shown me, they moved on to the final drafts.

Discussion

The nature of the task formed part of a student-centred pedagogy. The planning stage enabled casual interaction that resembled the sort of natural conversation students have in their daily lives, reducing the gulf between teacher and students (Wilén, 2004).

Students used information from online, information from their texts, and images copied from the internet. This supports the suggestion that multimodal composition involves students to jump between a range of media, described in "What's up with transmedia and education? A literature review":

If the leap between different environments is frequent, we should highlight that the leap between the analogical and the digital is also common. Not all transmedia sequences take place completely in virtual space, the process involves notable analogical elements". The task had potential for being a memorable way for students to access the characters and themes more deeply. (Gonzalez Martinez et al., 2019, p. 217)

A further affordance was the drafting process. I made sure that the work was well-considered by instructing the students to first do a practice draft and then explain to me how they had designed it before moving on to the final version. I gave them a practice sheet so they could properly participate in the drafting process. This is an important process as it encourages students to modify and improve their ideas. For example, at figure D4 (p. 228) the student explained their design choices:

I chose to do Mercutio's mask because he is a very different character compared to all the other ones. He is very crazy and that's the reason why I chose to paint the mask with a lot of colours and draw a lot of abstract shapes. I also drew at the top right part of the mask the

¹⁴ <http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/meaning-colors.htm>

letter “M” for Mercutio. I coloured it silver because it belongs to him. I only chose happy colours because they stuck out more and it's perfect for Mercutio.

It was interesting to read the students' explanations for the choices for their mask designs and see how they interpreted the characters' features into their artwork. They showed that they could connect with the personality traits conveyed by the author and represent these visually; in the example above the student drew abstract shapes to show that Mercutio is an unpredictable character.

In a mask design for Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, the student explained:

The red and black relate to the character's hot-tempered attitude. He likes to fight and will do anything to protect the Capulets. He always has the same idea in his head, he doesn't change so I represented it in straight lines. Also the red lines represent how intimidating Tybalt is and the no symmetry tells the personality.

The student expressed how this character is volatile and stern by using rigid lines drawn asymmetrically to represent an intimidating imbalance that conveys tension to the audience, showing their interpretation through visual design and supporting the ideas by elaborating in writing.

The mask activity was the one that this group enjoyed the most. This corresponds with previous research indicating that drawing can be used as a tool for increasing students' motivation and encouraging creative thinking in English lessons (Rawat et al., 2012; Seglem & Witte, 2009). Through this kind of activity, we can achieve a dynamic way of viewing and sharing our interpretations: “We need a kaleidoscope of views that convey both our own dimensionality and dynamic capability [...] Understanding, like seeing, is grasping this always in relation to that” (Sousanis, 2015, p. 148–150).

Through drawing, the students were able to develop ideas that they might not have been able to express so clearly with written language. The result was that each student had an attractive and thoughtfully designed mask that we could display on the wall in the classroom (Appendix D4, p. 228). When I entered the classroom for the first time after putting the display up, all the students had gathered around it to look at each other's designs. This was testament to the success of the task.

Feedback from the students was that they really enjoyed the task and the calm environment as they worked on their compositions. The average enjoyability rating was 92%. It was considered

by the students to be “creative”, “fun” and “entertaining” and “helped me to understand the character better”.

The students only raised one drawback in their commentaries: the written element (i.e., the rationale). This was either unenjoyable because it involved any writing at all, or because it was perceived to be difficult. Some members of the group showed a persistent dislike for writing; the word length for the rationale was one hundred words but this still proved enough writing to merit complaint for some students. It is conceivable that some students struggle with ideation, have difficulty with the mechanics of writing or of organising their ideas (perhaps due to dyslexia) or have difficulties getting started and feel overwhelmed by writing tasks.

One solution is to ensure that writing scaffolds are available for even those written tasks that may appear to be simple or basic. Through explicit structuring help, for example using cards with starter phrases (e.g., “I chose to include... (colours) because...”, “I selected.... (shapes) because...” and “I chose to draw (symbol) because...”.) we can try to address this perceivable lack of confidence that some students have and that may manifest itself in reluctance towards participating in written assignments.

v. Composition 5: traditional written essay

Description

I followed with the traditional written essay (3 classes). It is expected that pupils at this level practise writing critical essays in preparation for the “Cambridge IGCSE English Literature” examination, taken at the end of fourth ESO. We begin this process from the students’ first year at the secondary school so that they gradually develop their writing skills.

In my experience teaching literary arts, a common feature of students’ academic writing is to narrate, rather than describe the text.

Stavropoulos (2004) suggests that educators use these categories for discussing art: formal — elements or principles of design, media, technique; descriptive — objects, subject matter; interpretive — meaning, emotion, feeling, expression; historical — names, dates, information regarding the artist, and the artist's background (p. 241).

Moving students from narrative to descriptive writing requires students to critically connect with literature to see how it is shaped and communicated through the author’s choice of language and structural devices, making connections between the formal, descriptive,

interpretive, and historical features. I gave the essay question a “how” focus to facilitate this approach:

Essay question: *How does Shakespeare make Act I scene v dramatically effective?*

Before reading the scene together, we discussed how the drama had already been built prior to the scene. The pupils gave suggestions about: the drama in the prologue (where the main events of the play are mapped out); the feud between Montagues & Capulets (announcing the tension); Romeo’s initial love for Rosaline (causing the audience to question his constancy and strength of character); Romeo’s dream (in which he sees his own death); and the way that Shakespeare delays the meeting of the two lovers (we know from the prologue that they will meet, but we don’t know how).

In *Act I scene v*, Lord Capulet has organised a masquerade ball to encourage a courtship between his daughter, Juliet, and Paris, an aristocrat and relative of the prince. Meanwhile, Mercutio has heard about the ball and persuaded Romeo that they should attend in secret, to distract Romeo from his heartache over his former love, Rosaline. It is here at the ball that Romeo and Juliet meet.

We read the scene together up to the end of the soliloquy given by Romeo when he first sees Juliet. I read the narration to keep up the momentum of the reading and selected confident volunteers to read parts.

After reading the scene, we used the “gap fill” (Appendix D5, p. 229) to focus on Shakespeare’s use of language for Romeo.

I checked pupils’ understanding of essay writing from the previous year and saw that the skills had been taught and needed to be reviewed. The “Point Evidence Analysis Link” approach is taught by English and Humanities teachers to help students build paragraphs; students start with an idea, use a quote as supporting evidence, analyse it, and make the connection with their original argument.

PEAL Paragraphs, the basics:

- Turn the question being asked into a statement or **POINT**.
- Find **EVIDENCE** from the text to support your point.
- **ANALYSE** the evidence to show how it proves the point (this is the longest section and requires critical and original thinking)

- **LINK** the reader back to the **POINT** to conclude the paragraph

I showed the students a framework to help them organise their ideas for the introduction and main body paragraphs one, two and three (Appendix D6-D9, p. 229–231). I differentiated by sharing an example essay plan and including page numbers so that all students could find the evidence that they needed in the book (Appendix D9, p. 231). The objective was to help them feel secure with the direction that they would follow to write the essay, to ascertain the points they would focus on in each paragraph, and which quotations they could use as evidence.

After two classes, I intervened with a self-assessment activity to encourage more detailed language analysis (Appendix D10, p. 231).

Students completed their first drafts by hand. They had the choice to write the final draft digitally or manually. Interestingly, only two pupils chose to write by hand, and both asked if they could have extra points as they perceived this as “more difficult”.

Discussion

The essay is a monomodal task that is representative of the traditional assessment style typically favoured in schools. Pupils are often resistant to essay writing and complain that it is “hard” or “tiring”. I worked towards the essay activity, using multimodal tasks to prepare students. Prior to starting, we had used video production to understand the events of the prologue, mask design to develop engagement and critical thinking skills, and discussion to generate ideas.

I followed a scaffolded approach, making outlines and identifying the main ideas to help empower students to overcome challenges and barriers to writing (Fadda, 2011; Lee and Tajino, 2008; McLeod, 2012). I incorporated an essay skeleton, gap fill, and sentence starters. My role was to act as a knowledgeable guide, giving students the necessary support and resources to help them achieve the objective. This is a task that is returned to each year and the skills building directs them to one day they complete the tasks unassisted.

The gap-fill stage promoted active reading. Focusing on Romeo’s soliloquy encouraged thinking about Shakespeare’s use of comparisons and metaphors. We discussed how Shakespeare uses comparisons to show Romeo’s passion for Juliet when he first sees her, for example in “Oh she doth teach the torches to burn bright”. The words “torch” and “bright” were erased, leaving students to use logic to solve the puzzle.

In the second gap, “It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night. Like a rich jewel in an Ethiopie’s ear” the words “cheek”, “night” and “rich jewel” were eliminated; the children thought about how the simile suggests Juliet’s beauty was comparable to a jewel, appearing as a star in the dark sky. This provided an enjoyable way of recognising the creative ways Romeo expresses his attraction to Juliet.

“Chunking down” the essay into its distinct parts helped students to conceptualise its structure. We first discussed the introduction’s role for signposting the essay’s direction and then pupils wrote their introductions using given prompts (Appendix D8, p. 230). This gave them the starting point for writing the first draft. This approach provided a supportive way of helping struggling students. Essay writing can perform an important role in teaching students to communicate effectively and appropriately, and perform effectively in academic contexts (Byrne, 2000; Keene, 2000). I was working with reluctant writers and the process helped them develop a perspective.

A further recommendation builds on the results from cycle one, indicating the affordances of self-reflection in a student-centred approach. I asked the students to return to one of their own pieces of analysis from the last lesson, that they could then improve. As suggested by Peterson (2010), interim feedback can be a valuable tool that gives students timely information on the clarity and impact of their writing. I asked them to focus on a part of their essay to rewrite using the advice on my sheet and the class discussion. Interrupting the class after they had started writing felt unnatural, but it meant that students had an example of the high standard of writing that they could produce, which they could refer to during the drafting process.

The question of manual or digital writing is one that commonly arises in classes where students have access to word processing facilities. Only two students chose to hand write their essays, which indicated a preference for word processing. Handwriting appears to pose a challenge for some students, but it is commonly considered important to maintain it because it helps students with their spelling and vocabulary, unlike digital word processing which will auto correct and give synonyms (that may be used incorrectly if the child is using them without guidance).

It is my opinion that a balanced school curriculum should develop students’ capacity for handwriting as well as digital word processing, and view the skills as being complementary and intertwined, rather than distinct and competing. Recent studies have indicated the benefits that handwriting has for cognitive and fine motor skills, as well as for the increased generation of ideas (James & Berninger, 2019; MacKenzie, 2019). If essays are handwritten, there is also

less likelihood of plagiarism. With the increased use of the internet in the classroom there has emerged a culture of ‘de-plagiarism’ (Wrigley, 2019), in which students paste content from the internet into their work and then edit it so that it is not picked up by plagiarism detection software.

While students at the school are given exposure to technology from an early age (each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard, projector, speakers, and internet access), they tend to have varied capacity for its use. They have opportunities to learn to use computers, tablets and whiteboards, but the children that are most skilled and confident tend to be those that are self-motivated and practise the skills at home. This poses the opportunity for the inclusion of a digital writing skills course in the curriculum.

I will come back to this question in the discussion of cycle 3.

Sample discussion

In the example essay shown in Appendix F, figure 5 (p. 242) we see how the student demonstrates their understanding of the play, beginning with a succinct introduction to give an overview of their points:

Throughout the play, we can see how Shakespeare makes act 1 scene 5 dramatically effective. We can see all the dramatic moments, for example, when Romeo and Juliet meet, when they find out they are enemies, or when they kiss.

This starting point acts as an anchor, giving three examples of drama that the student will return to and elaborate on in the next paragraphs.

In the first paragraph they explain how the poetic language creates a dramatic and romantic tone, which is emphasised by the audience’s knowledge that the couple will have a tragic ending:

Firstly, Shakespeare transmits to us Romeo’s reaction when he watches Juliet for the first time: “O she doth teach the torches to burn bright”. This shows the reader how Romeo falls instantly in love with Juliet, and the words “burn bright” are adjectives that Shakespeare used to describe her. These makes a dramatic scene, because the audience wants to be involved in the play, for how Romeo is expressing how he felt about Juliet and how beautiful she is with a poem. It also makes a dramatically effective scene to the audience, because

many people know that the play is going to end badly, because the two characters are both going to die, so this makes the audience feel nervous.

In paragraph two, the student describes the tension that Juliet feels because of the dangerous and prohibited behaviour that she is engaged in (she is promised to Paris yet entertaining Romeo):

Another dramatic scene in the play is when Romeo and Juliet kiss: “O then dear saint, let lips do what hands do: they pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair”. In this quote, we can clearly understand that after Romeo sees Juliet, he wants to kiss her. This makes a dramatically effective scene because when they are finally kissing, Juliet takes her eyes away from Romeo because she is not supposed to be with Romeo, she is supposed to be with Paris (a suitor), and she is worried that her mum watches her kissing Romeo. This also makes a dramatic scene, because it is a very important event in the play, when they finally kiss, and it’s also romantic.

This shows their ability to interpret events through relating to the audience’s reaction and the structural devices (i.e., the prologue).

The student then continues with a third example, describing the action that follows when Romeo and Juliet discuss their feelings about belonging to two rival families. They elaborate this point by relating to the audience’s reaction and the prologue, which acts as a constant reminder that the two young lovers will meet a tragic end.

The finished essays were accomplished and indicated what Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) describe as basic and advanced writing skills, trying to use proper punctuation and spelling as well as proper organisation of ideas, correct grammar, and original expression. The essay follows the correct structure and uses connectives successfully to signpost the direction of the argument (for example “firstly”, “another”, “thirdly”, “in conclusion”). The learner pays attention to the dialogue as well as the actions of the characters, observing that Juliet appears nervous because of this dangerous predicament.

I provided written feedback suggesting that the student could focus more on giving detailed language analysis, for example when Romeo says that Juliet “doth teach the torches to burn bright” – the student identified that Shakespeare makes use of an adjective but could go on to say that the alliterative phrase with the repetition of “b” is used as a powerful voice stop effect that also mimics a pounding heartbeat.

Through completing the task, the students showed they were on-track for their age and level through employing the formal essay writing devices and style.

A further method that could be investigated to help students writing in response to literature is to consider the use of online peer feedback. This method has been shown to improve pupils' argumentative writing and knowledge base (Huisman et al., 2018; Haro et al, 2019) but needs to be carefully administered, for example by providing resources that enable students to become more knowledgeable in order that they may give useful feedback to their peers, or through an initiation whereby older students act as peers to support the process.

vi. Composition 6: Balcony scene storyboard

Description

Following the traditional essay was the balcony scene (Act II: scene ii) storyboard.

Instructions: PAIRS: Choose the best 14 lines from AII sii. Choose the lines that you consider to be the most important. Put them in a storyboard. In the caption space, you should write an explanation of what is happening. (1 Class).

The storyboard task was designed to help students organise the events of the balcony scene by identifying the main events and selecting important quotations to use in speech bubbles. They had to write their explanations of the events in each box as captions (see Appendix F6, p. 243).

Discussion

Storyboards are a media that reproduce a text using drawings or photographs; the composition enables students to learn through combining linguistic and visual representations (Abraham, 2008). The original idea was to include this task to help students to explore the balcony scene; the entire second ESO year group were going to be producing balcony scene posters which

would be assessed, and I wanted to help my class to prepare by encouraging them to think about how this scene is structured, what the main events are and what the characters say.

It was ultimately a more sophisticated task because to complete the exercise, the students had to refer to the original text very closely. For some students this was quite challenging because of the close reading and extraction skills required. As the facilitator, I moved around the room helping the different pairs to choose their lines and this took longer than I expected; the retrieval skills that they were using were quite advanced.

Sample discussion

In the example in the student portfolio (Appendix F, figure 6 p. 243) we see how the students divided the scene into fourteen events, using quick pencil drawings and handwriting to summarise the events. In the table below I analyse how the student communicated the main events using the storyboard format:

Box	Speech/ Caption	Analysis
1	<i>"It is the East and Juliet is the sun"</i> / We can clearly see how Romeo loves Juliet.	The students chose the hyperbolic language that expresses how Juliet is now "everything" to Romeo. This caption would be improved if the student had used the word "metaphor" in their explanation, to show evidence of their stylistic awareness.
2	<i>"It is my lady. Oh it is my love"</i> / Romeo thinks he is watching Juliet.	The students focused on a plot feature: when Romeo stops to observe Juliet in her chamber. A more advanced study by older children could discuss the contrast between this line and Mercutio's earlier bawdy comment to Benvolio (when the two characters are looking for Romeo after the masquerade ball and expect that he is alone being lovesick somewhere): <i>"O Romeo, that she were, O that she were / An open-arse"</i> .
3	"two of the fairest stars in all the heaven"/ Romeo is saying that she is the brightest star	The poetic language compares Juliet's eyes to stars, saying that their beauty is comparable. The caption could be improved with the inclusion of rhetorical devices (personification and simile).
4	"the brightness of her cheek"/ Romeo talks about her bright cheeks	The students choose a description that shows how Romeo admires Juliet's beauty. The quotation choice is satisfactory for the ability of the student. An extension would be to refer to the full quotation ("The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars as daylight doth a lamp") and refer to the imagery and specifically the personification.
5	"Oh that I were a glove	The students interpret Romeo's gesture and how he wishes he

	upon that hand”/ Romeo wants to be the glove to touch Juliet	were a glove on her hand so that he may touch her skin.
6	“Romeo Romeo wherefore art thou Romeo” / Juliet can’t understand why Romeo is a Montague	They switch their focus to Juliet, who is desperately disappointed that Romeo is a Montague, son of her father’s enemy.
7	“Shall I hear more or shall I speak at this?”/ Romeo wants to hear what Juliet says about him	Romeo is eager to speak up to announce his presence to Juliet, but he also wants to stay quiet to hear more of what Juliet has to say about him.
8	“doff thy name”/ Juliet wants to be with Romeo but she can’t	Juliet wishes that Romeo would change his name and not be a Montague.
9	“my name, dear saint, is hateful to myself”/ Romeo doesn’t like being a Montague	Romeo declares that he doesn’t want to be a Montague because it means he cannot be with Juliet. The reference to the “saint” is part of the religious imagery that Shakespeare uses for Romeo and Juliet that could be interpreted as a warning of the dangers of idolising one person and casting religious belief and duty aside.
10	“if they see thee they will murder thee”/ Juliet is worried because Romeo could die	The students chose the line where Juliet warns Romeo that if he is found there, then he will be killed by her family.
11	“alack there lies more peril in thine eyes”/ Romeo finds Juliet’s eyes beautiful	Romeo says that the main danger to him is in Juliet’s eyes because her beauty makes him act in a way that will prove dangerous, and one wrong look from her would do more damage to him than Juliet’s guards. He adopts a tone of chivalry (reminiscent of a noble knight) in his efforts to win over Juliet, imagining himself as a hero overcoming danger to find his love.
12	“dost thou love me” Juliet asks Romeo if he loves her	The students focus on Juliet’s decisiveness, she wants to know if Romeo really loves her. Juliet’s boldness makes her insist with Romeo and shows her willingness to disobey her parents to carve her own future.
13	“Oh swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon”/ Juliet swears to Romeo	Juliet rebukes Romeo’s offer to vow by the moon, saying that the moon changes its appearance; she wants a more solid and constant promise.
14	“If thy purpose marriage, send word to me tomorrow”/ planning the wedding	Juliet declares that if Romeo is serious then he should send a messenger to her the next day to confirm. She does not trust this irrational and spontaneous exchange and wants more rational and practical action.

Table 8 Commentary on the students’ organisation of the storyboard task.

In response to the storyboard task, the students summarised a long and complex scene into fourteen events by scanning the original version to find the most important phrases. This is an important skill for students, who will often be asked to read, comprehend, and show their understanding by picking out key points. Storyboards give a visual outline that helps students to organise their thoughts. They are a device that can be used across the curriculum, for example showing the processes involved in a scientific experiment in chemistry or showing a timeline of important events in a period of history.

The storyboard was originally intended to prepare for the 3D model, resultantly it indicated the importance of the planning stages, which may be overlooked. Large scale models may look impressive, but it is often the less visible “figuring out” stage that important learning happens. The challenge posed by the planning implied that this collection of images and phrases to support extended writing or “big” compositions ought to be given significant value as a reflection of the child’s progress from point A to point B. Accordingly, an inclusive curriculum should consider the building and scaffolding stages as crucial to the assessment pieces.

In the analysis in table 8, I have shown how the captions could be elaborated on by older or more capable students, suggesting differentiation by outcome. One way to add sophistication to the task would be to ask students about their interpretation of the scene before they produce the storyboard. In doing so, they can look for quotations from the scene that support a distinct argument (for example by choosing quotations that show how Romeo is “immature and hasty” by demonstrating his grandiose and cliched speech, or perhaps a focus on Juliet to show her self-awareness).

The storyboard mode appeared to have potential for varied use in the classroom, providing a useful tool to help students investigate aspects of a script. I will return to storyboards again in cycle four as I return to the medium for eliciting creative student responses to Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*.

vii. Composition 7: 3D balcony scene model

Description

The next task was an opportunity for kinaesthetic and tactile learning through composing a “Balcony scene 3D model” in small groups. Pupils had five lessons to craft a model of the balcony scene with a partner. This was intended to be a memorable key piece that would show the students’ understanding of Act II scene ii through summarising the key events and analysing the important speech.

Instructions: ACTIVITY: Make a creative 2D or 3D poster (pairs). Choose 14 most important lines from the balcony scene (you can use the 14 lines you used for your storyboards). Make a 2D or 3D poster to illustrate the balcony scene. Include an in-depth analysis of the 14 lines you have chosen.

I explained the task and the marking criteria (Appendix D, figure 11, p. 232) and asked students to discuss the following with their group:

Could you create a 3D poster? What images could you use? How could you use the balcony and garden setting creatively? How could you explore the characters?

The production had to be completed in A2 or A3 (minimum), including a selection of “keywords”, reference to themes, and analysis of the 14 most important lines from the scene. The students had five lessons to produce their balcony scene model. This would be followed by a presentation to the group and a vote for the “winning” poster.

Discussion

This tactile task was well-received by the students and its average score was a 4.2 out of 5 for enjoyability. Students liked the collaborative and creative aspects, working independently in their groups in a project-based learning environment. Some student comments included:

- *We could have (use) a lot of imagination.*
- *You could be creative and you learned at the same time. The good thing was that it didn't have to be perfect.*
- *I loved doing this because it was in pairs and you could show your creativity.*

- *It didn't end as I wanted.*
- *I think it was a great present. We all had fun and we learned a lot.*
- *I liked it because we had a mix of everything.*
- *We could disconnect and it was fun.*

Sample discussion

For the model in Appendix D, figure 12 (p. 232), the students used an empty cardboard box as a base and then decorated this with images and words from the scene. They covered one side in black card and used correction fluid to paint white dots to represent the stars. As well as showing that the scene occurs at night, the stars are also relevant for creating the romantic mood and act as a visual reminder of the comparison Romeo makes between the stars and Juliet's eyes.

The students showed Juliet standing on her balcony with Romeo standing in the orchard below, out of sight. This shows their comprehension of a key narrative device: Juliet thinks that she is speaking to herself, unaware that Romeo is listening. The fourteen quotations (which they chose for the storyboard previously) are included and analysed on the back of the box. One example is given here:

"Oh Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo". Juliet can't stand that Romeo is a Montague and shows the audience how much she loves him.

The activity enabled the students to move around and use their hands, which can be especially interesting for students with low attention spans or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). This idea was supported by the response of one student with attention difficulties, who rated the activity with full marks and commented: *"I liked that it was very creative and in pairs because we could share our creativity; dislike: nothing!"*.

This connects with Lengel and Kuczala (2010); in *The Kinesthetic Classroom: Teaching and Learning through Movement*, it is suggested that when the body is inactive for twenty minutes, there is a decline in neural communication, suggesting that "brain breaks" should be considered as a way of providing an enjoyable opportunity to refocus the group. Students in this group could move around freely and were not limited to sitting still to respond to the task. I will return to this idea in the discussion of Cycle 3: A Multimodal Approach to *Of Mice and Men* for 2nd ESO.

Research question three was concerned with recognising criteria for planning and implementing multimodal composition. As suggested previously, it is recommended to prioritise time for students to demonstrate their learning and explain their choices. Students presented in front of the group, narrating their models by reading out the quotes that they had chosen and explaining their significance. In this way, they practised an essential writing skill: justifying and explaining an argument, through speech. This provided an indication that visual and tactile compositions can support formal writing and should be considered for inclusion in the curriculum to prepare students with the skills they need for essay writing.

e) Discussion of the data from the student questionnaire

Quantitative Results: Numerical ratings awarded by the pupils for each of the tasks.

At the end of five weeks, the participants completed a questionnaire. The quantitative part asked them to rate each of the seven activities out of 5, 0 lowest and 5 highest (Appendix E, figure 1, p. 233). Results of the quantitative questionnaire showed that pupils enjoyed the mask design the most, followed by the 3D Balcony Scene Model. They enjoyed learning activities with an element of craft and paper design more than the digital video making tasks. Second in popularity were the YouTuber & prologue video tasks, followed by the storyboard, then the research/ factsheet, and lastly the written essay. This indicates that the pupils enjoy activities most when they can be active and creative, and work with their hands to achieve something personal and imaginative.

Qualitative data showed that pupils appreciated being given a choice of tasks and being enabled to use their imaginations and creativity. They liked working with partners (if the work balance was equal). Multimodal tasks were more popular than the traditional writing task and most pupils liked participating in activities that seemed original, mixing different modes of expression and communication. Students often viewed time to be a barrier, for both multimodal and monomodal tasks, which raises the issue of the density of the curriculum and the volume of learning objectives affecting classroom practice.

There was a clear sense in this classroom context that achieving the trust of the pupils and involving them with reflection upon their own practises is a valuable motivational tool. When pupils felt that they understood the objectives, they were more likely to take them seriously and participate fully. This was also true when encouraging pupils to speak English during group

work: this had to be outlined using a point system before most made a full effort to speak in English with their partner or group. I took the opportunity to make a chart and praise those that worked in English vocally, which had the effect of encouraging those students that were not speaking in the target language to switch to English. Several of the group members were keen to have positive comments written for their tutors and liked the idea of receiving praise for speaking in English.

This cycle showed how multimodal activities helped 2nd ESO students to understand and enjoy a Shakespearean play. Further activities were planned; the students had been preparing their own video versions of Act III scene i (the fight scene), when the March 2019 school closures were announced because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the next cycle I investigated how multimodality could be incorporated for a different group of 2nd ESO students in the new classroom context during the 2020 COVID-19 restrictions.

4.3 Cycle 3 A multimodal approach to *Of Mice and Men* for 2nd ESO

a) Summary

Age	Questions	Key Findings
2 nd ESO (13-14 years)	<p>Implementing multimodal composition into a unit of work on the novel <i>Of Mice and Men</i>.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate a multimodal approach to a lower secondary novel study?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Producing digital compositions collaboratively can be an effective way to promote student cooperation in a hybrid classroom environment. ● Using multimodal composition can encourage students’ independence and autonomy. ● Students enjoy multimodal composition tasks that allow them the freedom to be independent and creative and use technology.

Table 9 Summary of the research questions and key findings for cycle 3.

In this study, I investigated a multimodal approach for teaching the novel *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck to a group of twenty-five mixed ability 2nd ESO students. Classes at this stage were normally set by ability but the *COVID-19* pandemic restrictions called for reduced mixing. By integrating a multimodal approach, it was possible to observe some of the affordances that can result when incorporating non-traditional activities into English Literature classes. The activities included: a group presentation on a given aspect of the book's context, completed digitally and then shown to the class; a creative project, completed individually and chosen from a list of options; a podcast production, completed in pairs after finishing the book. Data is drawn from student questionnaires and the artefacts produced during classes.

b) Context

In September 2020, pupils returned to the school premises for the first time since the closures in March that same year, in response to the *COVID-19* pandemic. The school environment had to undergo significant changes to meet new health and hygiene standards, and a new challenge was posed by the increasing need to facilitate not only for those children attending class in person, but also for those joining virtually.

Teachers had to ensure that all students could access their classes remotely on Google Meet using the pre-established links set up and shared at the start of term. A key objective was to ensure online teaching parallel to face-to-face education, referred to as “hybrid learning”. We were encouraged to rethink our curriculum to make it compatible with online teaching and to seek as much interaction as possible with students attending virtually.

On a practical level, the restrictions meant that taking in paper notebooks would be an inconvenient way of assessing students; teachers had to wait for three days between submission and physically handling the notebooks, and then a further three days between correcting and returning them.

This situation encouraged the use of digital strategies and meant that designing a “digital portfolio” approach could offer more efficiency and support the investigation into adopting a multiliteracies methodology. The students' portfolios would include various activities, combining work generated on their iPads with photos of notebook work, enabling everything to be saved and shared through uploading to the Google classroom. The portfolios were

intended to provide formative and summative opportunities and show students that their classwork was important, despite their notebooks not being checked as normal.

Feedback from the previous *Of Mice and Men* study, suggested it had been “slow” and “difficult to read”. The traditional approach of reading and following with the typical dossier activities (described in detail in cycle two, p. 73 –74) had been uninteresting. The feedback given by the same students during the remastered *Romeo and Juliet* unit showed that the explicit integration of a multimodal pedagogy, facilitating a more student-centred and project-based approach, had been successful in helping them understand and enjoy the literature. The intention for this year’s study of *Of Mice and Men* was to adapt the work scheme for this new classroom context, to incorporate different modes and make the experience more enjoyable for students.

Participants

The participants were twenty-five second ESO pupils (eighteen female; seven male). This year, students had to be kept in the same groups during the day (the popular “grups bombolla”) to prevent too much mixing. This meant classes were mixed ability instead of grouped by attainment. Ten of the students were indicated as needing extra support due to difficulties in the subject (for reasons of previous attainment, and, in two cases, due to having changed from the Catalan to the trilingual school system recently). Six of the students had one English speaking parent at home, and one student was regarded as talented in the subject.

Unlike in previous years, this year the class seating plans were predetermined; base groups for all the classes were set by the form tutors and then disseminated to the subject teachers. The figure below shows the formation of the class and the base groups, with each colour representing one group (students’ names have been replaced with M (male) and F (female):



Figure 7 The organisation of the 2nd ESO classroom into base groups.

c) Task design and discussion

i. Group presentations

Description

Instructions: You will have three classes to prepare your group presentation on the context of *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. You will collaborate on Google Meet. The person highlighted in yellow must set up a Google Meet & invite the others (and me). You will delegate tasks and collaborate to research and complete a presentation of 2-3 minutes, which you will then perform for the class.

As an introduction to the novel, I asked pupils to work in their base groups and research an aspect of its context. Following a student-centred approach where students actively seek out and construct meaning, topics were chosen to inspire interest and curiosity, preparing the class for the subsequent shared reading by increasing their background knowledge and widening their frames of reference. It was intended that, by taking a thematic approach to begin the novel study, I could encourage pupils to develop their historical, cultural and geographical awareness and make the book's content more relevant. The five topics were:

- The American Dream
- The Great Depression
- The life of John Steinbeck
- Migrant workers
- The farmland of the Salinas Valley

I gave pupils three classes to prepare their presentations before delivering them to the rest of the group. Most of the class was in school for the duration of the project but a few were at home for one or two lessons due to COVID-19 restrictions, meaning that they joined via Google Meet. There was one large meet that I set up on my iPad and the five “mini-meets” set up by the groups. Students wore headphones and used the mini-meets to discuss and plan their work in their base groups. The first two classes were spent designating tasks and carrying out the research, and the last class was used to edit and rehearse the presentations. After the three classes of preparation time, students performed their presentations to the class.

After the presentations had been delivered, pupils filled in a survey to describe their experiences participating in the task¹⁵. The survey included ten qualitative questions designed to reveal the students’ thoughts about participating in the group work. A summary and brief discussion of the results is included in Appendix J (p. 250).

Student artefacts: group one presentation

A sample presentation is given on the following page. The group was given the American Dream topic, which was a new concept for them and a key theme in *Of Mice and Men*. The topic encouraged the children to reflect about their own ideals and values surrounding social mobility and equality.

¹⁵ <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R736JMF>


What is the American dream?

- The American dream is the belief that anyone can access their own version
- Democracy, rights, liberty, opportunity and equality



Who invented the American Dream?

- The American dream was invented by James Truslow Adams in his best-selling book "Epic of America" which he wrote in 1931
- Adams was American.
- He was born on October 18, and died on May 18.



Is the American Dream still going on nowadays?

- Same opportunities:
- Wealth.



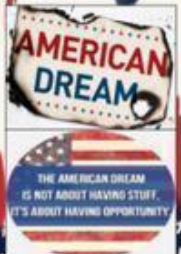
Is the American dream a fantasy or reality?

- Puritans New World in 1630.
- The American Dream was a **reality**
- Many people believe it's real but too much fantasy.




How do we create equal access to the American Dream?

- By having a good education and a good mentor to help them
- 300 government members believe in helping all Americans



Bibliography

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Background made by 

Figure 8 Students' group presentation slides presenting information about the American Dream.

Discussion

This task showed how image selection can help students engage with a topic. One of the students in the group designed a background using stars and stripes evocative of America's national flag, symbolic of American history and ideals of freedom and hope, the stars representing the union of thirteen united states, a new constellation. The first picture shows what looks like a typical American family, until we see that the mother is holding a large shotgun. Through selecting this image, the students used humour, showing the juxtaposition of this concept of an ideal society with weaponry. Gun control is a topic commonly associated with the USA, which some students have heard about through their experience as media consumers.

The second picture on this slide shows three working people in America. The image shows a manual worker and a man and a woman in business suits, representing the idea of diversity and equal opportunities in the American Dream.

Repeating the process, I might ask the students to briefly comment on the pictures that they had chosen and their significance. The students had discussed equality in ethics classes and had some background to the Civil Rights and Women's Liberation movements: so this could have been an opportunity for extended comments leading to deepened understanding.

It suggested scope for following an approach like that used in AR case study two (p. 23), where the teachers set the theme of 'privilege and power' as central to the study rather than the literature (*Hamlet* and *Yummy*). This theme would let students explore contemporary movements (for example #metoo and #blacklivesmatter, which arose in the example presentation) in *Of Mice and Men*. We have seen that students respond well when they can bring their personal knowledge into the classroom space. This would perhaps provide an opportunity to deepen their participation and engagement.

The activity raised the idea that using images as a tool can promote cross curricular content, encouraging students to use their agency to bring in knowledge from other subjects, as well as from their background as cultural consumers. This idea is reinforced on slide 3; the group used a rhetorical question to engage their audience: *Is the American Dream still going on today?* They contradicted the notion that, in America, everyone has the same employment opportunities, and included an image of a banner saying "the American Dream is over" to show

people's disillusionment with the inequality that still exists. They included a picture of the Statue of Liberty, originally intended as a global symbol of freedom to greet the millions of immigrants sailing to America with the hope of a better life. They juxtaposed these two contrasting images to show criticality, signifying their awareness of a complicated truth and showing the potential for introducing counter arguments.

The affordance of encouraging students' autonomy and connection with topics is reinforced on slide 4. The group showed agency by researching the historical aspect of their topic, describing how, for puritans coming to the "New World" in 1630, the American Dream was a reality. Reinforcing their previous point (which they explained using slide 3), they described how a contemporary understanding of the concept is more complex, using a picture of people following the American Dream across a crumbling bridge to represent this idea. Like the pictures of the mother with a shotgun and the banner which stated "the American Dream is over", this image was chosen to be subversive and questioning, suggesting that meanings and concepts are there to be challenged, and encouraging criticality and independent thinking.

A further affordance of the presentation mode was that it enabled students to practise communication. The most successful presentation included a quiz at the end to test listeners on the learning points. Here the students took on the role of engaging presenters, using lively interactions to connect with the other students.

Observations from the study indicated that, while presentation apps are often used by teachers to deliver content and to assess students' comprehension, their success as a learning tool depends on how they are used.

Limitations of the format are summarised in Jordan and Papp (2014), who suggest vigilance for: the 'bulletising' that occurs and often neglects context and the relationship between points; the possible loss of connection due to a lack of interaction and discussion and the omission of student-centred learning techniques like problem-solving and debating; its assumption that everyone is a visual learner; the common tendency of the presenter to use expositional rather than conversational vocabulary, the former being less effective in promoting learning.

The presentation format offered the affordance of encouraging students to follow an argument to reach a conclusion. The group concluded their presentation by asking a question: *How do we create equal access to the American Dream?* They supported this question with an image they had chosen of some text: *The American Dream is not about having stuff. It's about having the opportunity.* This worked as a visual tool to reinforce their conclusion that people do not

have access to equal opportunities and that through giving access to better education, inequality can be challenged. They suggested a possible solution to their own question: voting for a government that promises to invest in helping *all* American people. This showed that they had considered society and justice as a group. This showed the pupils' interest in entering into social commentary and suggested room for further discussion.

Their presentation acted as an interesting introduction to the deeper exploration of inequality during the class reading, where students participated in discussions about sexism, ageism, and discrimination as these themes arose in the narrative. Repeating the process, I would perhaps encourage students to think more about this topic and access further materials relating to the specific welfare issues that prevent people from accessing equality, for example minimum wage, or access to child and health care.

Best practice concerning mixed grouping suggests that we aim for differentiation through questioning, feedback, and outcome; pre-teaching (e.g., by first introducing knowledge, vocabulary, and preparatory research) may also be helpful (Francis et al., 2018.) Pre-teaching in this example was done using a student-centred model where the students found the information themselves and shared it with the class. This strategy of inverted or “flipped” learning has been found to increase students' knowledge retention; reduce content preparation time; and encourage self-regulation and motivation (Bergmann and Sams, 2014; Hirsto et al., 2019). It is popular in tertiary education, where students are expected to behave autonomously and often asked to prepare knowledge by reading texts or watching videos prior to attending a class. In this example the inverted method was chosen as a way of minimising too much “teacher-talk” at the start of the literature study and making students as active as possible in the development of their understanding.

Considering the reasons for implementing this context study as a group rather than an individual project, previous studies have indicated that the outcome of group presentations can be higher than pupils would normally achieve in individual presentations (Karjo, 2008). In ordinary classroom situations, it is sometimes observed that seating arrangements can cause inequality and have an impact on pupil motivation; it is commonly suggested that pupils who sit at the front will have more access to the teacher's attention and correction, while pupils that sit at the back do not benefit from the same proximity.

Shamim (1996, p. 129) approaches this topic under three terms: opportunity, attitude, and aspiration. In a group work situation, we can tone down this structure as the emphasis moves

away from teacher-led activities and towards a situation in which all students should actively participate in the teaching learning activity. I wanted to begin on an equal level and hoped that the outcome would motivate students by their perceived success.

When working from online sources, students should receive guidance about how and where to access information; we have seen that the concept of digital natives is problematic, and the reality is that students' experience and ability is varied. As discussed briefly in cycle two (the Shakespeare leaflet project), reinforcing the importance of using proper referencing skills for children at this level of study means they understand issues of plagiarism and become accustomed to writing bibliographies, which is necessary when they reach Bachillerato level.

The final slide of the presentation is the reference slide; it includes hyperlinks to the references used for the information in the presentation. They used Wikipedia in English twice, to source information on the origins of the American Dream concept and its creator John Truslow Adams¹⁶. They referenced "Investopedia"¹⁷, a financial website and economics guide. They cited an article from "Scholarly Commons" webpage from Ouachita Baptist University¹⁸ and "Planetizen"¹⁹, a planning related news website. They also referenced the "US chamber of commerce foundation"²⁰. These more specific references show a deeper level of engagement and success with the content and the research strategies.

It is important to educate pupils about how to conduct proper web searches and be critical of the information that they are exposed to online, not passively accepting it. This is part of what it means to be literate. Further guidelines for this type of research task are suggested by Morrisson (2020) in *Don't 'just Google it': 3 ways students can get the most from searching online*. The author presents research findings which suggest that young people are not being taught how to search the internet effectively; many teachers assume young people know how to use internet searches effectively already, but usually they are only familiar with leisure and private search, not with academic or scholar ones. She recommends teaching young people techniques including looking for "key words" instead of isolated facts, taking more time over searches by focusing on writing proper queries and giving time for evaluating websites for

¹⁶ https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Truslow_Adams; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Dream

¹⁷ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/a/american-dream.asp>

¹⁸ https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/english_class_publications/21/

¹⁹ <https://www.planetizen.com/blogs/30899-real-meaning-american-dream>,

²⁰ <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/blog/post/equal-access-opportunity-needed-keep-american-dream-alive>.

accuracy and relevance (her data confirmed that young searchers frequently click on only the most prominent links and first websites returned by their search).

ii. Creative projects

Description

This task connects with the findings from cycles one and two, and with previous studies suggesting that giving students choices can increase their motivation and autonomy when producing a response to a literary text (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Evans & Boucher, 2015). The project offered pupils the opportunity to work with a variety of modes, encouraging them to choose an activity that interests them. Tasks were designed to appeal to different pupils' interests and to include written, visual, and digital modes of communication.

The creative task was designed collaboratively by teachers in the English department, intended as a way for students to produce an original response to a text that they had read in class. It originally consisted of four options (a newspaper article; a painting or collage; three written diary entries; a monologue performance), and the work had been carried out at home in the students' own time. With increasing complaints from students and parents about workload, we had to change how the task was done and give it class time.

In 2019 the pupils were given the following tasks to choose from:

1. **Write an article** on The Life and Times of John Steinbeck. *Your article should be split into 5 different sections with subheadings. Remember you are writing both about the man and what was happening in the world at that time. Your article must contain at least 500 words.*
2. **Create a board game.** *This game must include question cards with answers about characters, events and themes from the novel. Some cards may contain facts and instructions, others must show a deeper understanding of feelings and themes in the novel.*
3. **Write diary entries** for 3 different characters from the novel where they are all reflecting on the same event that has just happened. *Each character's diary entry should contain at least 150 words. The final presentation of each diary should represent the character.*
4. **Create an illustrated map** of the ranch and surrounding area. *Include at least 5 important locations. Analyse the importance of each place you have included. The analysis can either be added to the map or on a separate sheet. The analysis of each location should be at least 100 words.*

3. **Write diary entries for 3 different characters from the novel**, where they are all reflecting on the same event that has just happened. Each diary entry should contain at least 150 words. The presentation of each diary should represent the character.
4. **Create an illustrated map of the ranch and surrounding area**. Include at least 5 important locations. Analyse the importance of each place. The analysis can either be added to the map or on a separate sheet. Each analysis should be at least 100 words. You can use any app to create the map, such as <https://app.genial.ly/inspiration>.
5. **Create a comic strip of a scene in the novel (at least 8 boxes)** with notes to analyse what is happening in each box. You can draw the piece manually or use a website such as <https://www.storyboardthat.com/storyboard-creator> to create the comic. Each box must contain: an image, thought/speech bubbles, an analysis of the importance of that moment, linked to other parts of the book or life in America at that time.

Task number and title	Number of student submissions
1. Article	0
2. Online challenge	9 (7F; 2M)
3. Diary entries	4 (3F; 1M)
4. Map of the ranch	3 (2F; 1M)
5. Comic strip	7 (4F; 3M)

Table 10 The rate of selection for each creative task by my teaching group.

Comments on the rate of selection for each task

The article was not chosen by any of the students in this class, perhaps due to the length indication (five hundred words) or because this type of task is more ordinary and regularly assigned by class teachers at both primary and secondary level. The online challenge was the most popular. In the previous year this ‘game design’ activity was also enjoyed by the students, who had produced physical board games that they then had the opportunity to play together in class. This year the students were instructed to create the challenge so that it could be played online. In technology lessons, the students had been shown how to use Jamboard²², a digital

²² <https://youtu.be/eRG8MiLPUxk>

canvas or whiteboard that lets users collaborate synchronously by sharing a code. Six of the pupils used Jamboard, two used Genially app²³ (which has numerous templates for board game design), and one pupil used Flippity (which gives simple instructions for board game creation²⁴). Interestingly, although the students had been given the task sheet days in advance, several had not planned their task or decided which app to use and were unsure of how to begin, suggesting that our expectations around pupils' autonomy had been too optimistic. The diary entries were all word-processed, using *KeyNote* and *Pages* and including a combination of writing and images chosen from the internet. The maps of the ranch were also produced in this way, and the comic strips were created using Clip Studio Paint²⁵ and the website <https://www.storyboardthat.com/>.

A further change to the task this year was in response to student comments from the 2019 questionnaires, suggesting the project could be completed in pairs or small groups. For the 2020 version, we aimed to make the task more interactive by introducing the 'critical buddy' system where all pupils presented their work to an assigned partner at the end of each day. We hoped to create a sense of collaboration despite the solitary work conditions. They shared their work with their partner via email (this was the best we could offer due to the restrictions) and then received feedback. Their buddy filled in a peer assessment sheet to describe their perception of their partner's progress and this sheet was then submitted with the partner's final project.

²³ <https://genial.ly/>; [https://view.genial.ly/5fa3b95c89da530d018cabf2/game--r](https://view.genial.ly/5fa3b95c89da530d018cabf2/game--r;);
<https://view.genial.ly/5fa3b7285ef4550d7bcc2a70/game-of-mice-and-men-board-game>)

²⁴ <https://www.flippity.net/BoardGame.htm>; https://www.flippity.net/bg.php?k=1iCp0ivkWxKOO_465D8fkiUIcito2HrX8b4JZXnEY6RM

²⁵ <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/clip-studio-paint/id1262985592>

2nd ESO Creative Project: Of Mice and Men - marking criteria

9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is developed to a very high standard and shows consistent evidence of thought and reflection. • The use of language is excellent, with a wide range and minimal errors. • There is evidence of a big effort having been made, in a very original and creative way. • Presentation of work is excellent. 	
7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is generally well-developed and shows some evidence of thought and reflection. • The use of language is good, with some range and the occasional error. • There is evidence of a big effort having been made, in an original and creative way. • Presentation of work is very good. 	
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some work is well-developed and shows some evidence of thought and reflection. • The use of language is good, despite some errors. • A good effort has been made. • Presentation of work is good. 	
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is not well-developed and shows little evidence of thought and reflection. • The use of language is poor, with frequent errors. • Sufficient effort has not been made. • Presentation of work is poor. 	
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is not well-developed and shows almost no evidence of thought and reflection. • The use of language is poor, with frequent errors. • Almost no effort has been made. • Presentation of work is very poor. 	
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence of plagiarism. 	

Figure 10 The rubric for the Creative Project task

At the end of the second day, students uploaded their submissions to the Google Classroom and answered a questionnaire to describe their experiences of the project. A summary and brief discussion of the results is included in Appendix I (p. 248).

Sample one: online challenge

The example shown below demonstrates how the student redesigned the novel’s content to make an online quiz using genially²⁶. To play the game, players click to roll the dice and drag a character icon from the starting box to make their way around the board. The board is decorated with pictures of the setting and characters. The questions are printed on a separate document that the players refer to as they proceed.

The list of questions (Appendix I, p. 248) is divided into three difficulty levels, and an “understanding” round that asks players to think more deeply about the characters, events, and themes. The boxes on the board all have a visual icon indicating which challenge the player must take. The start box indicates the starting point, and the finishing box shows the finish

²⁶ <https://view.genial.ly/5fa3b7285ef4550d7bcc2a70/game-of-mice-and-men-board-game>

point. If a player lands on the death box (a picture of the *grim reaper*), they must go back to the start of the game. The roll again box (a picture of *dice*) gives the player another turn. There are three categories of question boxes (labelled as easy, normal, hard) and the understanding questions are indicated by a picture of a light bulb. A player that lands on the *switch* box (a picture of two arrows pointing in different directions) can decide to exchange places with the player to their left or to their right.

Figure 12 An online challenge designed using genially.



Discussion

The pedagogical affordances related to the way the students had to connect with the book to research and write the questions (see Appendix I, page 248). In the example, the student wrote three different categories of questions, so players could decide which level they wanted their game to be. The easy category asks for information such as the author's name and the relationships between the main characters. The student also included a vocabulary question ("ranch"), testing players on new lexis.

In the 'normal' difficulty questions, the student included problems that required more development or recall answering, for example 'How much money will Candy give to help with George and Lennie's dream?'. The "hard" questions test players by asking about thematic information relating to the historical context.

Interestingly, the student included three questions related to the civil rights movement (i.e., regarding slavery, lynching and segregation) that was learnt before reading the book and then reinforced during class reading. This indicated the cultural knowledge that the student acquired during the process. Designing questions for the 'understanding' round, the student wrote questions that required more complex explanations. For example, question six: "Why did George stop playing jokes on Lennie?". This was a topic that we discussed as a group during the reading process. The answer was not revealed explicitly in the book; the students had to infer how George had matured as he stopped teasing Lennie, realising that his friend was vulnerable and recognising him as a faithful companion. The student's suggested answer to the question was: "Because once, George told Lennie to jump into a river and Lennie did it, after that, Lennie nearly drowned so George helped him. After, Lennie wasn't angry, he was grateful because George had helped him". This showed a certain emotional intelligence and the maturity to recognise this dynamic between the characters.

In the previous year, the students had enjoyed making tactile board games and playing them in class. This interpersonal aspect was taken away this year with the shift online; pupils could play each other's games by sharing links, but we would not see small groups of children together competing around a table.

Sample two: illustrated map of the ranch and surrounding area

Drawing a book's setting can help students to apply context; through drawing, they can activate their imaginations and plan, brainstorm, and develop new ideas. John Steinbeck's ranch is a symbol of the freedom and self-reliance that the main characters dream of. During the Great Depression, farmers and their families often had more resilience due to their ability to grow crops and raise animals. Through analysing the setting of the book, the students gained deeper insights into these themes and the connected social significance.

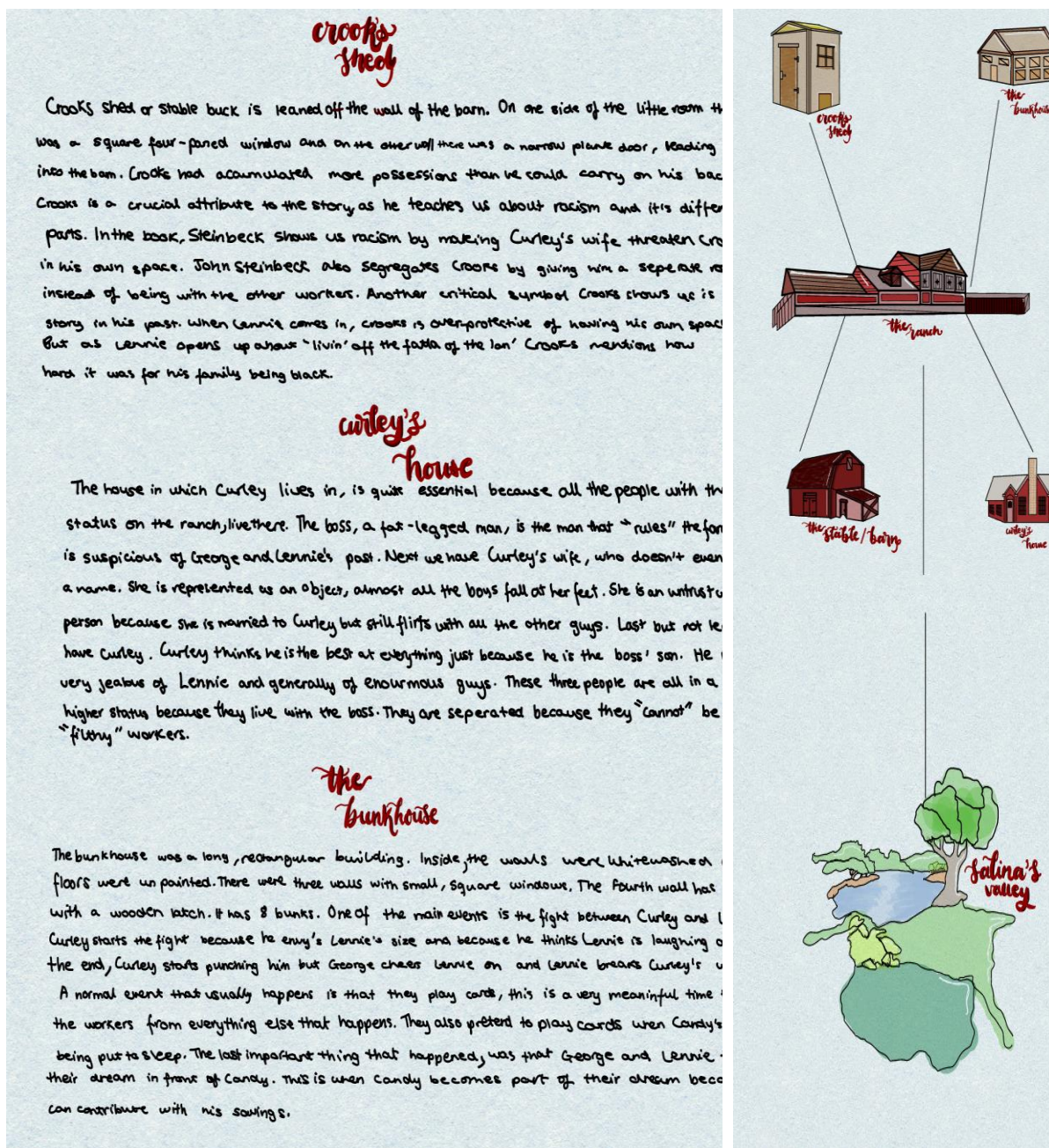


Figure 11 An illustrated map of the ranch.

Discussion

Drawing settings is an activity that can be done manually or digitally. The educational benefit relates to how the student must connect with the ideas in the book to draw the scene. Drawing may be too quickly disregarded by writing teachers and not considered rigorous enough learning outside of the Art room at secondary level. I counter this standpoint and argue that drawing can be a powerful tool for literature teachers. Of course, students' capacity for drawing will vary, but we can narrow this gap by introducing more practice across the curriculum. Introducing technology is another way to confront this difference, as students can use apps and programs to help with their designs. The example in figure 11 shows how the student described the book's setting through visual design, digital proficiency, and textual analysis. They drew the pictures on their iPad using Procreate and took time to label the different parts of the ranch by hand using their Apple pencil. They wrote accompanying descriptions of each location and the significance relating to the novel. As well as helping students to conceptualise ideas, the process enables them to develop transferable skills. After all, a child who leaves school equipped with technological drawing skills will arguably be employable in more fields than a child who can only write about a text. Through combining drawing with text, the child shows how they have processed information visually and semantically. They develop fine motor skills and become familiar with different tools for self-expression. The benefits of the mode suggest that all children should have ample opportunities to practise drawing across the curriculum. While it may be the role of the Art teacher to help students reach technical proficiency, we can see how drawing may serve an important function in Science, Geography and Mathematics. Recognising the importance of the mode and encouraging children to develop the skill should be seen as crucial to a rounded curriculum. Horn and Giacobbe argue for the status of drawing "For young children, drawing is writing: it gives them opportunities to do what writers do: to think, to remember, to get ideas, to observe, and to record." (2009, p. 52. Quoted in Smith, 2011.). It is later, when students mature in age, that the activity becomes the domain of only those individuals perceived to be good at it, but this level of skill is rarely acquired without adequate guided instruction.

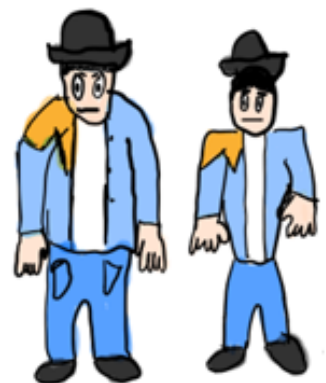
Previous studies have argued for combined drawing and writing instruction (Kress, 1997; Kress, 2003; Sheridan, 2001). In their study of the *Drawing into Reading* program (Smith, 2011), the authors investigated the effects of using drawing to develop children's fine motor skills, investigating the impact for advancing literacy. Participating teachers commented on the

wide-reaching effects, including children’s increased focus levels, improved handwriting legibility, higher word generation, their ability to “notice things”, for example noticing punctuation in texts, spacing between letters, and details in images that even they as adults had missed. Parents and teachers commented that their children displayed more confidence to try new tasks. As was the case during the mask drawing activity with 2nd ESO, teachers in the program reported that classes became calm and relaxing and not at all stressful for the children, noting that 100% of them achieved success in the lessons. The children’s work was kept in a portfolio and not sent home, removing the opportunity for children to compare their work with others and become demotivated by perceiving any inferiority. While several studies have explored the use of drawing for developing literacy in young children, less has been said of its use with children of secondary age. I argue for the importance of regular drawing lessons for children. This should continue in the transition from primary to secondary, with equal attention paid to visual and textual literacy, and consideration of how this can be taught in unison.

Sample Four: a comic storyboard of a scene in the novel

Why is this moment important?
 I think this moment is important because it shows the setting of the story very well and also a bit of the friendship/relationship between George and Lennie

Box 1: Box 1 shows the nature of the place and the sort of setting that the story is set in.
 Box 2: Box 2 shows the nature and a bit of the wildlife in the valley.
 Box 3: Box 3 shows how the wildlife adds to the writing of the first chapters.
 Box 4: Box 4 shows a shot of a path where the characters will emerge from.
 Box 5: Box 5 shows how the characters first appear and disrupt the peace of the wildlife and also how the characters first meet to their surroundings.
 Box 6: Box 6 shows a bit of an interaction between the characters and a bit of the relationship they share with each other.
 Box 7: Box 7 shows a bit more of how these characters interact with each other.
 Box 8: Box 8 shows George trying to tell Lennie to try and explains a bit more about their friendship.



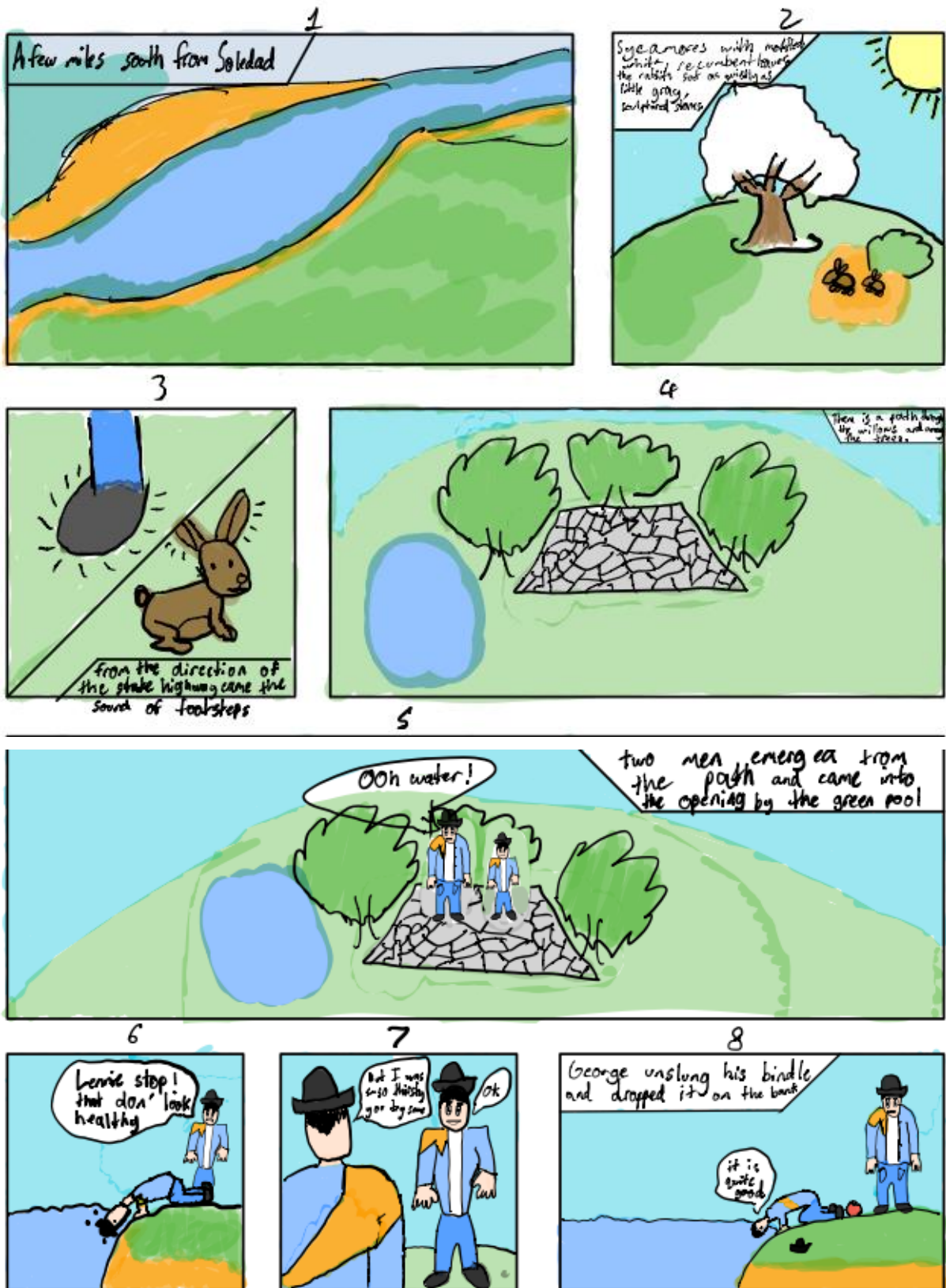


Figure 14 A storyboard representation of George and Lennie.

Discussion

The task instruction was to produce a comic strip of an important scene in the novel. Students could use online templates such as Storyboardthat²⁷ (a website which provides free access to editable storyboard templates) or produce the comic using a method of their choice.

In the example, the student referred to the original text and imagined the peaceful scene where George and Lennie have arrived in Soledad and sit together at the river before going to the ranch to start work. The student had to re-read the scene to create the storyboard structure. They show the events chronologically, as they appear in the chapter. This demonstrated evidence of close reading.

Just like in the original text, the student achieves a gradual focus on the human characters, choosing to first show the natural habitat. In box one they drew a riverbank and wrote: “A few miles South from Soledad”. In box two they wrote original text from the book: “sycamores with mottled, white, recumbent limbs and branches that arch over the pool” and drew a tree on a sunny hill and two rabbits. Readers who are familiar with the book will recognise the importance of the rabbits, which feature as a part of conversations that come up about George and Lennie’s dream farm.

The rabbit is focused on in box three, where a drawing of one larger rabbit and a human foot are made vivid by short black lines, included to give the impression of movement. The caption: “And then from the direction of the state highway came the sound of footsteps on crisp sycamore leaves. The rabbits hurried noiselessly for cover” is included and shows how the natural world is disturbed by men, a technique used by the author John Steinbeck to foreshadow the disturbance that the men will cause at the ranch.

The student creates their own narrative for the storyboard, threading together the parts of the story with effective transitions. In box four the caption says: “There is a path through the willows and among the sycamores...” which prepares the viewer for the content of box five; its caption: “two men emerged from the path and came into the opening by the green pool”, and drawing of two men: one small and one large, clearly conveying that one is George and

²⁷ <https://www.storyboardthat.com>

the other Lennie. In the last three boxes the student illustrates the interaction between the two men and captures the characterisation through their action, appearance, and speech bubbles.

George is the character that must act like a parent to Lennie. In box six, the student has drawn Lennie with his head in the water, drinking, and George's speech bubble: "Lennie stop, that don't look healthy". The student paraphrased the original text; in the original, George gives several different arguments to Lennie to try to discourage him from drinking from the still pool: Lennie will be sick again; you shouldn't drink from a still source; it might not be clean. But his childlike companion happily ignores his friend, content to have his animal needs met for an instant. Interestingly the student also showed that they had been receptive to the colloquial style of the book, imitating the characters' speech style by including the "don't" vernacular.

The student showed the camaraderie between the two men as the conversation continued; George agrees to try the water, which is representative of the compromise that the two men make in their friendship and the qualities that both bring to it, one being cautious and vigilant and the other naive and spontaneous. The storyboard gives an effective representation of the two men's friendship through conveying this moment of tranquillity that they share before their arrival at the ranch.

iii. Podcasts

Description

The class had read *Of Mice and Men* together and were at the consolidation stage. In-keeping with the school's objective to promote oracy as a central focus, the intention was to begin with an activity that included speaking. Choosing the podcast format provided the opportunity to include a range of modalities, as it offered an occasion for students to review the text and then work with scripting, producing dialogue, and voice recording, to produce their own original audio texts.

I gave students a listening activity to introduce the podcast format. They first listened to an audio text²⁸ and then answered questions to produce a summary about typical podcast themes,

²⁸ <https://www.thepodcasthost.com/listening/what-is-a-podcast/>

subscription methods, and formal features such as length and presenting. Once that was completed and the students were familiar with the mode, I gave them the task instructions.

Instructions:

1. **Introduction.** Discuss the book *Of Mice and Men* with your partner and note three ideas about your reading experience:

- How much did you enjoy the book?
- How did you feel about the characters?
- What did you think about the story?

2. **Choose a short passage from the book** (one page and a half maximum). Plan a 2-3-minute discussion of the passage. Use these prompts to help you:

- Why you chose the passage
- What details are most important-what themes and issues the passage raises
- How the passage relates to the rest of the novel

3. **Plan your episode.** You do not have to write a script exactly, but you will need a list of prompts to remind you of what you will talk about

Homework: Plan a Google Meet with your partner and record your episode!

The data consists of four student podcasts. Link to the transcription document

https://docs.google.com/document/d/12nTQh9FIMIO8UUj0ShW0PVEV5IMhRFIJQGAEUr_bH-8A/edit?usp=sharing

Table 11 2nd ESO Podcasts.

	Formal aspects	Subject	Student Roles	Register	Content	Mode	Rhetoric	Acoustic effects	Audience
1	5:28 minutes 2 participants	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Podcast presenters	Informal Elaborate	Detailed Subjective/ personal	Speech Reading aloud	Dialogic	Intro music Closing music	Teenagers (“not for children”) J & N podcast regular listeners
2	5:14 minutes 2 participants	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Podcast presenters, one in role as a ‘Lennie’-type character	Informal Elaborate	Detailed Subjective/ personal	Speech Reading aloud		Sound effects for the animals on the farm; gunshot; crying baby	Teenagers Regular listeners of the “Literary Ladies” podcast
3	5:26 minutes 2 participants	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Podcast presenters	Informal Elaborate	Detailed Subjective/ personal	Speech Reading aloud	Dialogic	Intro music Closing music	Teenagers
4	6:26 minutes 2 participants	<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	Podcast presenters	Informal Elaborate	Detailed Subjective/ personal	Speech Reading aloud	Dialogic	N.A.	Teenagers

Table 12 Categories and their rates of occurrence.

	Podcast one	Podcast two	Podcast three	Podcast four
Cohesive devices: students demonstrated knowledge of how to structure a talk.	14	6	6	7
Stylistic awareness: students adapted the mode for their audience.	7	6	0	0
Interaction: the podcast format encouraged dialogue.	4	11	4	1
Creative language use: the podcast format encouraged students to be playful with English.	3	2	0	0
Cultural awareness: the format enabled students to draw from their knowledge of the world outside the school classroom.	5	6	2	0
Collaboration: students worked together to form opinions about literature.	19	3	10	5

Categories and examples can be seen in Appendix J (p. 250).

Discussion

First it was clear that the students enjoyed the project and had fun with it. In podcast two, the students played with the podcast genre, giving themselves the parodic name *literary ladies* and creating an identity as book reviewers. Student C led the conversation and student D took on the persona of a less knowledgeable counterpart, imitating the two central characters in *Of Mice and Men*. This also showed agency as it represented some autonomous choices that the students had made in the design process.

Another important affordance was that students brought their own knowledge to the project. In podcast one, the students' connections with #blacklivesmatter showed their engagement with the themes through appropriation to their own experiences:

- ‘The themes of this passage are absolutely unequal, but at the same time we learn about our world history. As we can see in the book, Crooks (a black man) working in the stable house is segregated from the rest’. (Student A)
- ‘In those days, black people were sadly mistreated and had different rules. It’s a relief that the “Black Lives Matter” movement has changed that and with many strong people standing up for themselves and their race’. (Student B)

Giving space for teenagers to draw connections with their knowledge and backgrounds appeared more empowering than a traditional approach that gives autonomy to the text and doesn’t leave room for their interpretations.

The same two speakers furthered their social commentary later in the podcast when they analysed the interaction between the stable worker and a woman (referred to in the book “Curley’s wife”):

Notice how Curley’s wife doesn’t even have a name? This shows us the inequality between men and women. Throughout the book we can see that these men objectify Curley’s wife and do not even consider her as one of them.

The literary analysis and social critique went a step further as the speakers elaborated:

- *So, my question is that, if Curley’s wife is being sexualised, why should she treat Crooks so badly?* (Student A)
- *I guess that Curley’s wife just needs to fit in with everyone. Remember that if you supported the black race you were probably looked at quite badly?* (Student B)
- *Yes, good point.* (Student A)
- *Well basically, the things that we have to discuss are all the racism back then, and sexism. Two very touchy topics.* (Student B)

The speakers showed independent thinking and went some way to explore the content. This gives a good basis for the level of detail that they will need to show while exploring evidence and writing extended essays in the future, making the skills used quite transferable to those they will need in humanities and language subjects later in their school lives.

As we saw in cycles one and two, multimodal compositions require structuring skills. Designing the podcasts gave students practice using cohesive devices. For example, in podcast four, the speakers used connectives consistently to make the narrative flow fluently:

- *Today we will...*
- *The book is about...*
- *It was set...*
- *On the other side...*
- *We would highlight...*
- *Let's have an explanation...*
- *We chose this because...*

The podcast form let students form and share opinions through dialogic practice, for example, in podcast two the presenters discussed their reaction to the ending, making suggestions for an alternative:

- *If you really want to change the ending, how would you want the book to end? (Student D)*
- *Oo good idea- so I want George and Lennie to run away and before that, run back to the ranch and get the money. Then go to their dream house and get Candy and live happily ever after. Now that's an ending! Obviously, the complement of the dream was the cherry on top (Student C).*

The mode encouraged creative use of language. For example, the figurative language employed by students A and B in podcast one:

- *This story is just a roller coaster of feelings*
- *Just when we think everything is okay, a bomb or something or other would explode*

Or in podcast two:

- *Obviously, the complement of the dream was the cherry on top.*

Implications for fluency arose looking at podcast two students' use of new vocabulary learnt in the term, referring to a 'poignant' moment in the text. They ended their podcast using colloquial English, *'that's a wrap'*.

They showed engagement with the book's ending and discussed an alternative one. Their disagreement about the ending (student D says *'no, that's what makes the story what it is!'*) shows how the dialogic mode can encourage debate.

The podcast one producers, *J and N*, used their agency to incorporate introductory music which combined with the fast pace and high volume of the speech to give an entertaining opening. They warned the listeners that they had better read the book to “avoid spoilers”. The idea of spoilers was topical because some children in the class had read ahead and given away the ending of the book to others; this is something which happens frequently.

Because podcasts use an informal register compared to written essays, the students are free to use colourful descriptions and imagery, free from the confines of the standard formal language expectations. The students used their voices for expression in a way that they wouldn't normally have the chance to in class, for example for conveying emotions about the book's sad ending or by experimenting with pitch and volume to generate excitement at the start of the episode.

Students read the extracts aloud and emphatically, using voices for the different characters. In podcast two, the presenters used an American accent for the narrator and then varied their voices for George – a sharp and quick-spoken man – and for Lennie, who speaks slowly and with difficulty. Even the students who are normally reluctant to read aloud in class read confidently because they had time to practise and record. This was particularly apparent with podcast three Student F, who had been having difficulties in English due to joining the school from the Catalan system the year before and had read happily during the recording.

Podcasting lets students practise speaking with different registers, considering different audiences. In the podcasts, there are various examples of how the students employed their understanding of stylistic devices to entertain the audience, showing awareness of the purpose of the podcast and an ability to manipulate language to achieve effects. In podcast one, the students related to the audience by speaking directly to them:

- *So, get reading and then come back!*
- *For all the fanatics of drama out there- this is your book!*

They used rhetorical questions strategically to introduce one of their ideas: ‘*Notice how Curley's wife doesn't even have a name? This shows us the inequality between men and women*’. The effect is to emphasise a point that they feel is important and that the listener should pay attention to. In podcast two, we can also observe this feeling of direct communication with the audience:

- *Get your packet of tissues ready!*

The mode encouraged agency, apparent in the way that students incorporated music and sound effects. In two instances, the students used music, showing awareness of the audience and podcast form and purpose (to inform and entertain).

McKee (2006) suggests that podcast listeners receive much of the information not by attending only to the words that are stated, but from nonverbal cues and how the words are said (p. 340). We saw how students considered the delivery style to create an interpersonal connection with the listener. In podcast two, the 'literary ladies' incorporated sound effects into their podcast; during the reading of the passage, they played animal sounds to represent the farmyard that the characters dream of having on their ranch and played crying noises to show sadness at the book's 'sorrowful ending'.

Research question three was concerned with recognising criteria for planning and producing multimodal tasks. In accordance with *Reader Response Theory* (Fish, 1980), we can use multimodal projects to invite students to create their own interpretations of texts and make space for the meanings that they generate depending on their shared experiences.

Podcasts can be used as formative and summative assessment; they let the students showcase what they have learnt. The groups chose different content to focus on and, although they were all participants in the same class discussions, their interpretations and memories differ. The task was open-ended, student-centred (giving space for their chosen content) and not prescriptive.

4.4 Other genres: integrating multimodal production

a) Summary

<p>4th ESO (15/16 years)</p>	<p>a) Integrating multimodal composition as part of a six-step process for poetry analysis.</p> <p>b) Using student-produced podcasts to develop their understanding of dramatic texts.</p> <p>One: What kind of ‘affordances’ can be observed when we integrate multimodality into 4th ESO students’ study of poetry and drama?</p> <p>Two: What can the different modes offer to the literature classes?</p> <p>Three: Which criteria can be considered to look for, plan, and produce multimodal activities for the literature classroom?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The use of images can facilitate students’ visual engagement with poetry. ● Combining modes (visual, written, and spoken) can be beneficial in helping students to build their confidence when analysing poems, both orally and in writing. ● Podcast production can encourage students to explain the characters, plot, and audience experience of literary texts. ● Podcast preparation gives students the opportunity to discuss their interpretations of literary texts in a knowledgeable and informal manner. ● Producing multimodal compositions can help students to develop their structural skills.
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Following the previous studies using images, presentations, and video and podcast production to help teenagers understand literature, this project examines how images can be used to access poetry for older students and investigates how podcast production can help their understanding of a dramatic text. Data is drawn from 4th ESO lesson observations over a three-month period, focusing on two units of study: Poetry (*The Buck in the Snow* by Edna St. Vincent Millay) and Drama (*The Crucible* by Arthur Miller). I analyse student artefacts and describe the effect of actively integrating visual and oral modes into the curriculum.

b) Context of part one: poetry task design and transcription

This task was taught in the context of compulsory 4th ESO study for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) English Literature examination. The students had

to study fourteen poems and be prepared to respond extensively to one in their final exam. The Cambridge examination board states that the learners must:

- show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts, supported by reference to the text;
- understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts;
- explore texts beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes;
- recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create and shape meanings and effects;
- communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts;
- read and evaluate texts and to describe the deeper themes or attitudes that they recognise²⁹.

I designed the unit of work to take place over five lessons. It came after a more traditional, teacher-led class study of two other poems from the prescribed list. The objective was to create a scenario for students to practise their analytical skills together and work towards a final in-depth analysis and written essay. The pupils had sufficient prior knowledge of poetic devices; the idea was to draw out their understanding, building on their existing capacity for literary analysis. This was a move away from a teacher-led approach (where the teacher imparts information to be passively accepted by the pupils) to include multimodal composition and promote collaborative learning.

The approach was to first look at the images within the poem and use this as a starting point for analysis. The final composition was a digital presentation made by each student that would show the steps they had taken to secure their personal response and communicate this in essay form.

C) Analysis: context and transcription (steps 1-6)

Drawing upon the initial analysis from the pilot study of IGCSE multimodal composition, I returned to Thibault and Curwood (*Multiliteracies in Practice*, 2018), to analyse the artefacts through: (a) context and transcription, and (b) social-semiotic account to describe the narrative aspect, the students' interaction with the viewer and the juxtaposition between the modes.

²⁹ <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/english-literature-0475/>

Step One

The initial step was to read the poem together to give a voice to the writing and avoid misunderstandings caused by unfamiliar vocabulary. The poem is included below, the unfamiliar words raised by the students are underlined and discussed in the section underneath:

The Buck in the Snow by Edna St. Vincent Millay³⁰

White sky, over the hemlocks bowed with snow,
Saw you not at the beginning of evening the antlered buck and his doe
Standing in the apple-orchard? I saw them. I saw them suddenly go,
Tails up, with long leaps lovely and slow,
Over the stone-wall into the wood of hemlocks bowed with snow.

Now lies he here, his wild blood scalding the snow.

How strange a thing is death, bringing to his knees, bringing to his antlers
The buck in the snow.
How strange a thing, — a mile away by now, it may be,
Under the heavy hemlocks that as the moments pass
Shift their loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow —
Life, looking out attentive from the eyes of the doe.

Vocabulary queries:

- “buck”: the male deer.
- “doe”: the female deer. Some of the students were familiar with the word from their knowledge of the film *The Sound of Music* (Wise, 1965) and the song *Do-Re-Mi*; verse two of the song begins with the lyrics “Doe, a deer, a female deer”.
- “orchard”: a piece of enclosed land planted with fruit trees. Some of the students remembered the word from their study of the novel *A Separate Peace* (Knowles, 1960). One of the themes in this novel is the fall from grace of a character which is represented

³⁰ Millay, Edna St. Vincent. and Curwen Press. *The buck in the snow, and other poems, [by] Edna St. Vincent Millay* Harper & Brothers London (England) 1928.

through the symbol of a tree, evocative of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden.³¹

- “hemlocks”: pine trees.
- “bowed”: as this word has different possible meanings, we clarified that the “bow” most likely referred to the arch-shape that the branches took because they were holding so much snow.
- “scalding”: burning hot/ painful and distressing

Step Two

I instructed the students to make a simple presentation of the poem, using one slide and one image for each of the twelve lines. I had uploaded a presentation to our Google Classroom that they could use as a template; it had thirteen slides: one cover slide with the title of the poem and the name of the poet, and twelve further slides with the text of the poem included. The objective was to encourage these students to focus on the particular words and phrases and think about the images that were created.

Instructions: Focus on the images. Produce a slideshow: 12 slides, 1 slide per line of the poem, 1 picture per slide. You have 15 minutes.

The time allocated (fifteen minutes) was deliberately short; the students had already read the poem and conceivably already had an idea of the type of images they would look for to represent each line. While I did not intend to be rigid about the time limit, I did want to communicate to the students that they should search for their images efficiently, which perhaps suggests a common desire for control on the part of the teacher when delivering a full curriculum under heavy time constraints.

This first stage encouraged students to review the poem, pick out images in isolated lines, and familiarise with its content. The lesson took place at 8 o'clock on a Monday morning and was felt to provide a pleasant and manageable start to the week. The plan was to facilitate a soft approach to the poem that could be developed in stages as the students' awareness and understanding expanded.

³¹ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” — Genesis 2:16–17, English Standard Version.

The image below shows an example of a composition for step one. What may at first be seen as a simplistic image retrieval task and online search, can be seen to provide deeper learning opportunities as, through this multimodal mixing of text and images, the poem begins to exist in another dimension as the pictures and words interact to give the original text new scope. The pedagogical benefit was that the students achieved an initial understanding of the poem through their individual interaction with the text and their interpretation of it.













<p>"White sky, over the hemlocks bowed with snow,"</p> 	<p>"Saw you not at the beginning of evening the antlered buck and his doe"</p> 	<p>"Standing in the apple-orchard? I saw them. I saw them suddenly go,"</p> 
<p>Tails up, with long leaps lovely and snow"</p> 	<p>"Over the stone-wall into the wood of hemlocks bowed with snow"</p> 	<p>"Now he lies here, his wild blood scalding the snow"</p> 
<p>"How strange a thing is death, bringing to his knees, bringing to his antlers"</p> 	<p>"The buck in the snow"</p> 	<p>"How strange a thing-a mile away by now, it may be"</p> 
<p>"Under the heavy hemlocks that as the moments pass"</p> 	<p>"Shift their loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow"</p> 	<p>"Life, looking out attentive form the eyes of the doe"</p> 

Figure 15 A student's slideshow of images for *The Buck in the Snow*.

In the table below, I give further examples of the types of images chosen by the students. Example one in the table is more typical of the images chosen by most students, whose images showed deer alongside snowy landscapes, creating a presentation with a cohesive feeling of a wintry land. Example two was an anomaly as the student chose images regardless of the season or geographical setting, choosing keywords from each line to represent without so much consideration for the meaning of the poem as a whole. This indicated an interesting variation from this student, whose choices raised alternative semantic connotations.

Line	Images chosen
<i>1. White sky, over the hemlocks bowed with snow.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Snow-covered hemlock trees. 2. Two people dressed in business suits greeting each by bowing.
<i>2. Saw you not at the beginning of evening the antlered buck and his doe</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An illustration of a doe and a buck looking for food under a hemlock tree. 2. A photo of a buck and a deer against a grassy background.
<i>3. Standing in the apple-orchard? I saw them. I saw them suddenly go,</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A photo of a snowy apple-orchard. 2. A photo of a sunny apple orchard.
<i>4. Tails up, with long leaps lovely and slow</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A vintage-style drawing of a buck jumping over some branches. 2. A photo of a man's silhouette, jumping across a large gap as the sun sets.
<i>5. Over the stone-wall into the wood of hemlocks bowed with snow</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A photo of a lone buck against a grey and white background. 2. A dry-stone wall typical of those found in the countryside in the UK.
<i>6. Now he lies here, his wild blood scalding the snow</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A drawing of a buck lying bleeding in the snow. 2. A photo of a bloody hand against a black backdrop.
<i>7. How strange a thing is death, bringing to his knees, bringing to his antlers</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A photo of the silhouette of a buck standing on a grassy hill. 2. A drawing of a desolate looking man on his knees with his face in his hands.
<i>8. The buck in the snow</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A photo of a lone deer with a snowy background. 2. A photo of a lone deer with a green vivid background.
<i>9. How strange a thing-a-mile away by now, it may be</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An empty, snowy path in between rows of pine trees. 2. A photo of an empty road with a sunny sky and yellow fields.
<i>10. Under the heavy hemlocks that as the moments pass</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A photo of some pine trees taken from below so that they seem larger. 2. A drawing of a weight.
<i>11. Shift their loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A photo of a single white feather against a snowy background. 2. A photo of a single white feather against a blue sky
<i>12. Life, looking out attentive from the eyes of the doe</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A painting of a doe's head 2. A photo of a lone doe in an autumnal setting

Table 11 Image choices for step one of the poetry analysis project.

Step Two extension (activity for early finishers)

Some students completed the task quicker and were given an extension activity:

Having completed the slideshow, you should now have a clearer idea about what the theme and the tone of the poem are. Begin to make notes.

Afterwards, students wrote their first impressions of the poem as a plenary task:

Return to your slideshow. Add a slide and give it the title My first impressions of The Buck in the Snow. Include your ideas on the theme, the tone, and three striking images or phrases which stand out to you.

I asked pupils to describe their first impressions and then explain in more detail by writing about three parts of the poem which they found memorable, moving from visual to written analysis to form a personal and express their opinion. Two examples of students' first impressions are included below:

Example one:

My first impression. I was a bit shocked when first reading the poem. I didn't expect death to be the main theme as it's so taboo. The poem starts as very descriptive, and you imagine I find it really interesting because it's something different. One of the images I find striking is "his wild blood scalding the snow"; "Life, looking out attentive from the eyes of the doe"; "the buck in the snow" line 8.

Example two:

My first impressions of The Buck in the Snow. I believe the theme speaks of the fragility of life and how the ones left behind have to watch and live on. In my opinion, the tone seemed to be a little apathetic to the death of the buck and was just curious about it. What really strikes me was the words 'bowed with snow' and then 'bringing to his knees'. The 'blood scalding' and how the doe is 'looking out attentive'.

Developing an understanding of the central idea of a poem can be key to unlocking its meaning and is pivotal for investigating the 'how', i.e., the methods and techniques used by the poet. In the sample comments below, we see how the learner engaged with the poem and developed a feeling about its mood and atmosphere.

My first impression was a mix of feelings at the beginning I felt happy. I like how she talk about the atmosphere and talked about the snow but when I reach to line 6 and all my happiness change to sadness. With the description of the dead doe it really made me feel like I was there watching it. Line 6 really stand out cause I was impressed how he could make you change your emotions so quickly. Also line 12 it links with the theme of death, life and vitality, it talks about how you could see 'life looking out attentive from the eyes of the doe'.



Figure 16 Student's reflections after developing a first impression using images.

We notice how their response was affected by the change in line six, as they comment on the author's technique and skill in affecting the emotions of the reader for poetic effect. They explained how the final line of the poem encouraged them to consider its deeper meaning and reflect upon profound themes.

In the next example, the student commented on how the speaker seems nonchalant about the death of the animal and how this is a surprising response.

My first impressions of "The Buck in the a Snow"

I believe the theme speaks of the fragility of life and how the ones left behind have to watch and live on. In my opinion, the tone seemed to be a little apathetic to the death of the buck and was just curious about it. What really strikes me was the words "bowed with snow" and then "bringing to his knees". The "blood scalding" and how the doe is "looking out attentive".

Figure 17 Student's reflections after developing a first impression using images.

They perceived the doe's response to the death as 'curious' and 'apathetic' and described a lack of emotion. In class we later discussed this interpretation as a human projection of emotion, recognising how we personify the subjects of artistic works to relate to their themes.

After developing their initial slideshows, the students could identify their initial feelings and responses to the poem. They could express an opinion on the structural quality of the poem through commenting on the shift from a 'pleasant mood' in the first stanza to a 'sombre tone' in the second stanza, when the buck is presented alone and lying still on the snowy ground.

One student commented on the taboo nature of the theme: death, and how it was surprising to be confronted with this theme in a poem that at first seems to be a pleasant description of a natural scene.

Step Three

On day two the students were asked to focus on the poem following a set of guided tasks.

Instructions:

- *number the lines; number the stanzas;*
- *note the definitions of unfamiliar or striking words at the side of the poem;*
- *note the rhyme scheme;*
- *note the syllables per line;*
- *look for repetition & consider its effect;*
- *mark the figurative language & consider the effect; come up with a theory about the purpose of the poem.*

(40 minutes).

This part of the task was designed following suggestions that intrinsic motivation and effective engagement rely upon adequate challenge (Lepper & Henderlong, 2000). The students had experience recognising and commenting upon the formal aspects of poems from their language arts classes; in the Catalan and Spanish classes they put particular emphasis on these formal qualities, so students are usually familiar with this aspect of analysis.

I include two sample responses showing students' annotations (Appendix K, figures 1 and 2, p. 253). I ordered the questions by difficulty. Beginning by asking students to simply number the lines and the stanzas, meant that they could all engage with the structure and be motivated to continue to the more difficult steps.

The next focus was on lexis, looking up the definitions of new words and noting their meanings on the page. They could also do this with words that they found "striking", this is an example of differentiation where students could engage with vocabulary that they found interesting as well as unfamiliar. Students had access to the internet, so it was simple for them to use the Cambridge online dictionary to look up vocabulary. Some students asked me directly, meaning that they received a more immediate and personalised answer; this generated more potential

for building literary insight and comprehension through discussion. In one example, a student highlighted the word ‘scalding’, adding a definition (burning) and suggesting that this could be personification that shows the snow is also in pain. Another student highlighted ‘hemlocks’ and discussed their interpretation of the tree being affected by the snow, explaining that despite its poisonous berries implying power, the tree still has its weakness (ie. the snow that is making it ‘bow’ with its weight). This indicated how focusing on lexical choices gave richness to students’ ideas and interpretations.

Next the students had to note the rhyme scheme, I encouraged them to read the poem aloud with their partners and familiarise with its sounds. This encouraged them to appreciate how poetry can be playful and melodic, something they could also observe as they read the poem to count the syllables, noticing its melodic qualities compared to prose or other writing styles.

The rhyme scheme (aaaaa a bacdaa) has a noticeable regularity and the students recognised that its change at line seven marks the shift from the poet’s description of the physical actions of the deer that she sees amongst the trees, to a more universal question as she begins to contemplate and try to make sense of life and death. Several students commented on the ‘long leaps lovely’ and the graceful effect of this soft, liquid alliteration in creating a gentle mood. It was significant that they first noticed the quality of the sound before being given the definition “liquid”, meaning that they constructed the analysis and were then able to apply the formal language, adding to their fluency and communicative ability in English.

Looking for repetition in the poem was another accessible way of helping students to focus on the poet’s techniques. In the example: ‘I saw them. I saw them suddenly go’, the students recognised how the repetition conveys the speaker’s excitement at first seeing the deer. They pointed out how the repetition of ‘how strange’ conveys how the speaker is mystified and in awe of the events that they are witnessing.

Students identified numerous rhetorical devices used by the poet and commented on the effects, for example the personification of ‘Life. Looking out attentive through the eyes of a doe’, which conveys how the doe is now alone and vulnerable (later, in the group discussion, we discussed how the vulnerability is arguably a projection of human emotions onto the animal and implies empathy on the part of the reader).

Finally, after completing the seven annotation tasks that increased in difficulty, the students were asked to suggest a theory about why the poem was written. This question formed the feedback part of the lesson; the responses generally suggested that the poem had a

philosophical meaning, and that the poet wanted the reader to think about the nature of life and how it can surprise us with unexpected events.

At the end of the class, the pupils had to follow these instructions:

Instructions: *Take a photo of your dossier page - Paste it into your presentation -Save your work as NAME The Buck in the SnowAnalysis -Upload it to the Google Classroom (Buck in the Snow, day two).*

This work prepared the pupils for the next activity, which was to participate in a class feedback session and group annotation of the poem.

Step Four

The stage was used to check pupils' understanding by generating class discussion and giving time for them to write more detailed annotations.

I began the class by showing some brief context information about the poet: *Millay was born in Rockland, near Maine's Penobscot Bay; this is often a setting for her poems. She was an American poet and playwright. She received the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1923. The poet Richard Wilbur once said: 'She wrote some of the best sonnets of the century'.* This brief introduction activity helped the students to locate the poet geographically and historically and make connections between the poet's background and the scenery presented in the poem (i.e., the iconic hemlock trees and deer).

Having studied the poem individually and made notes about the stylistic features, pupils were ready to develop a shared understanding through oral feedback and discussion. They wanted reassurance that their own answers were "accurate", highlighting the inevitable emphasis on content when preparing for exams.

Due to the preparation time given previously, students were ready to share their ideas and seemed empowered to discuss their interpretations openly as a group. There was no evidence of the shyness or hesitancy that is sometimes found during literary discussions; we could consolidate their learning from the previous two lessons by creating a forum for oral participation. Students all identified the theme of the poem and made suggestions about its meaning. This provided an effective starting point for the discussion of how this meaning is created. We looked at the poem in line order, identifying the strategies that the poet had used. The students discussed colour, imagery, repetition, and the use of a 'turning point' at line six.

The discussion was a combination of voluntary comments and pair responses solicited by the teacher. By selecting pairs rather than individuals, I avoided causing anyone to feel insecure or isolated if they did not feel confident answering. Generally, having the support of the peer meant that one student led the explanation and their partner elaborated. Students were free to share ideas with their partner for the previous step, meaning they had all had the opportunity to collaborate, form opinions, and clarify uncertainties.

Step Five

Following the feedback session, I was confident that all students could answer the comprehension questions to solidify the learning points and ensure that everyone had a set of notes that they could return to for revision purposes.

1. In this poem the speaker philosophises over which topic?
2. What is the theme of the poem?
3. Describe the tone of the poem.
4. Who does the speaker address in the first line and what does she wish to know?
5. What use of sound effects is present in stanza one? Describe the effect.
6. Which phrase has associations of physical beauty/ perfection before death?
7. Describe the form of stanza two and how this contributes to meaning.
8. How does the speaker appear to understand and accept death in the final stanza?

Describe three poetic devices used.

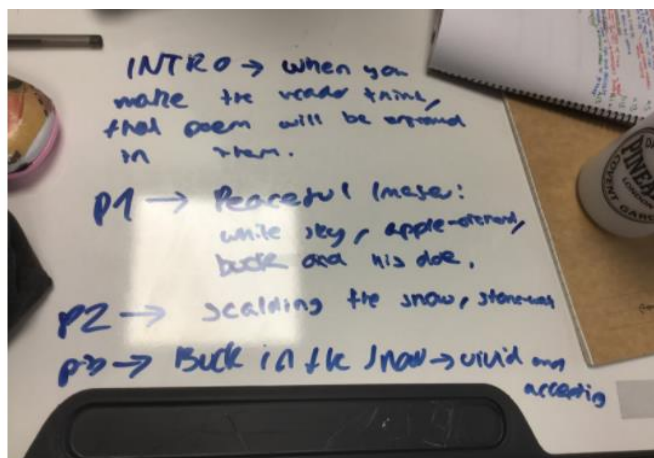
9. Which phrase suggests that nature seems to shed a tear for the loss of purity witnessed?
10. Analyse the final line of the poem. Why is life personified as being “attentive” at this moment?

This activity followed a more formal and traditional approach. In the example response in Appendix K figure 3 (p. 256) we can observe how the questions were designed to encompass a range of techniques including theme; tone; point of view; alliteration; assonance; imagery; metaphor; structure and form. Through answering the questions, the student showed evidence of the understanding that they had developed through completing the previous steps. Despite their confident appearance, the students wanted to write the answers to the questions together. Students at the school tend to be quite focused on their examination grades, especially in the higher ability sets. One colleague, who is responsible for teaching a parallel group this year,

commented that his class had requested that they ‘skip creative tasks’ to focus purely on the academic information that they would need for the exam.

Step Six

The final stage was the critical essay. In the final exam (taken during exam season in May/June at the end of 4th ESO), students’ writing and comprehension skills are tested in a forty-five-minute exam answering one of two essay titles. It is important to embed as much critical essay writing practice as possible in the build-up to this exam so that students are confident about how to approach it. For this practice essay, they were asked to work in pairs to answer the question collaboratively. They began by drawing a plan; the tables also function as wipeable white boards so many students bring impermanent markers to class. They worked in a shared Google document and gave me access so that I could also read the essay simultaneously as they worked and add suggestions and comments.



Essay:
Imagery is a very effective poetic device used by the majority of poets. This technique works so well because making the reader imagine the scenery will result in the poem being engraved in their memory. Millay is no stranger to imagery and uses it frequently throughout her poem: The A Buck in the Snow, the imagery used is crucial for the poem to be as memorable as it is.

From the beginning of the poem we are introduced to imagery, which evokes peaceful

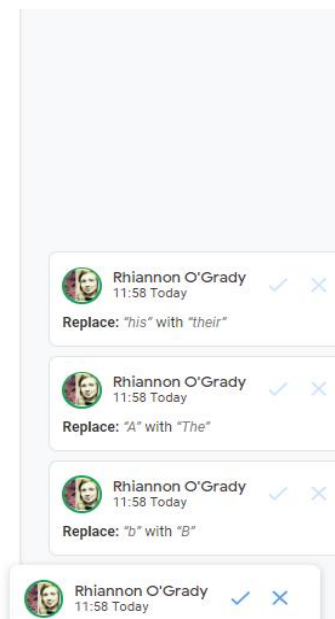


Figure 18 Students worked from a plan with the use of Google docs and live teacher comments.

The digital collaboration allowed me to view and comment on several essays simultaneously and help students make improvements by suggesting precise phrases and correcting formal issues of punctuation and grammar.

Explore the ways in which Millay uses words and images to striking effect in this poem.

Millay acknowledges the strange power of death, which has the power to conquer even the most powerful and beautiful creature. She also emphasizes death's strangeness but at the same time it's ~~its~~ inevitability ~~natural~~ity. Millay often uses ~~words missing here???~~ words and images to create a striking effect in the poem.

By describing the buck as antlered we allude to the idea of a strong and very powerful masculine figure, on the other hand, his doe represents a pure and ~~innocent~~ feminine figure. By referring to t

In the first line, Millay ~~does a wonderful job by using~~ uses the word bowed, as we allude to the idea of the hemlocks bowing, almost in admiration of the snow's beauty, which highlights how breathtaking nature is. ~~One alternative interpretation (that works more favourably in the light of the poem's rhyme scheme) is that the branches are weighed down by snow, which adds to the heaviness at the start of the poem. We may also interpret this to mean also-~~ ~~allude to a~~ weapon commonly used to kill Bucks, that also foreshadows the bucks death.

Following on, ~~The fact~~ idea that the animals' ir tails are "up" represents their joy and their excitement, the consonance and alliteration of "f" reinforces their beauty and how graceful they are as they play in the snow.

In the poem there is a transition between stanza 1 and stanza 3. At first the poet uses words to create a magic atmosphere between life and nature. The buck and the doe, representing

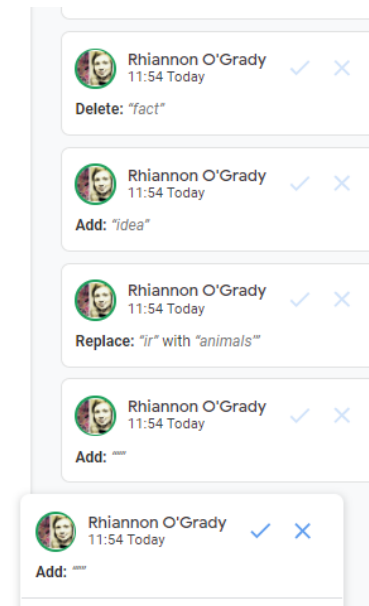


Figure 19 Examples of collaborative essay writing.

All questions are marked out of 25. The assessment objectives for the paper are:

- AO1: show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts, supported by reference to the text
- AO2: understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts, and explore texts beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and attitudes
- AO3: recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language, structure and form to create and shape meanings and effects
- AO4: communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literary texts.

Due to the formative nature of the task, the essays were not given official grades. I gave the class the rubric and asked them to pick out the important words and phrases. They chose 'detailed'; 'ideas and attitudes'; 'language, structure, form'; 'meanings and effect'; 'sensitive and informed'.

The finished essays were well-structured and included sophisticated literary analysis, indicating that the six-step process combining textual analysis with multimodal production had been successful in building students' comprehension and their ability to articulate a response. The approach felt comprehensive, and students were engaged and happy with the strategies used.

d) Essay sample

In the essay sample below, we can observe how one pair of students applied the steps in the first stages of the work plan to form their critical essay:

Essay question: *Explore the ways in which Millay uses words and images to striking effect in this poem.*

In paragraph one, the students wrote an introduction explaining the purpose of the poem and giving it geographical context by referring to the iconic hemlock trees in North America:

In the poem The Buck in the Snow by Edna St. Vincent Millay, there are many techniques used to create images with words, many of which are powerful in the way and the place they are used. They encourage the reader to join Millay's reflection on the "strange" but natural stage of death. She portrays her message using an "antlered buck and his doe" located in a "wood of hemlocks" in North America.

In the second paragraph they focused on the imagery created by the 'white sky' and suggested a religious connection due to the poems' theme of life and death linking to Christian imagery. They focused on a visual image of the hemlock branches weighed down with snow, drawing our attention to the beauty observed in nature and the power of the sound effects as the emphasis of the 'o' slows the reader down and helps convey a sense of awe:

At the beginning of the poem, "White sky" could bear a religious meaning, referring to heaven as heaven is a vast and pure place and the sky is also vast so it could relate to this. In the Christian faith, God is in the sky and sees everything which once again relates to this religious interpretation of the "white sky". In the same line, "over the hemlocks bowed with snow" creates a heavy and slow reading caused by the assonance of the deep and low "o" sound. The phrase "hemlocks bowed with snow" makes a return in line 5. This repetition evokes the importance of the branches being bent by the heavy load of the snow. Millay does this not only to emphasise the fact that they are free in the woods but also as a way of closing the stanza and therefore closing the tone of beauty and admiration as the following stanza changes dramatically.

In the third paragraph, the students extended their analysis of the religious connotations by discussing the resemblance of the couple of deer to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. This interpretation had been raised in the class discussion. They extended the comment to discuss the purity of the natural world in contrast with humanity:

In the third line, the poet says that the "buck and his doe" are "standing in the apple-

orchard". This may be referring to the Bible and the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. In the line, however, the buck and the doe leave without doing anything impure which could be referring to how nature is better as the animals have not fallen to temptation like humans have and thus they are pure unlike us. This image that the speaker is so amazed by, as shown by the repetition of "I saw them. I saw them", is broken by humanity as shown by "them suddenly go". This is probably implying that the speaker startled them and thus they left, showing that humans disturb nature and this beautiful moment which the poet was so enraptured with. Humans, just by being there, destroy this moment as if we couldn't be part of a moment such as this. The poet could be seen to lament the impermanence of beautiful moments and the transience present in life.

In the fourth paragraph the students emphasised the elegance of the deer and how this is accentuated with the alliteration and the 'liquid l sound'. They drew a contrast between the cold image of the man-made stone wall and the beauty of the animals in their natural habitat, indicating that humans can only observe this and not really be a part of it:

The alliteration "long leaps lovely and slow" makes a graceful and liquid 'l' sound that emphasises the graceful movements of the animals and also serves to show them as intangible and fleeting. We broke the image that was created in the first few lines, which was beautiful and bewitching. This is further implied by "the stone-wall", which is a cold image in contrast to the lines before it, not only that but it could also mean that the speaker is excluded from nature and separated.

In the fifth paragraph the students marked the change that is signified through the word 'now' as the once vital buck meets his death. They analysed specific words and gave extended comment on their connotations and function within the poem:

With the sudden change, it breaks the mood and image created previously, this is further highlighted by the use of the time preposition "Now" at the start of the stanza and line. The image and the sudden change is made more striking by the fact that the stanza only has that single line. All of this combines to make "his wild blood scalding the snow" more effective and to catch the reader's attention better. The "wild blood", which is a vivid contrast with the white snow and the fact that it is "wild" may mean that it is free or that it is unruly and flowing everywhere making the image more noticeable. The fact that the blood was "scalding the snow", may be hinting at the fact that the snow (and by relation nature) was in pain by the death of the buck. "snow", and by relation winter, is also associated with death.

In the sixth paragraph the students showed their knowledge of structure and enjambement, connecting the techniques to the religious theme and investigating the significance of the image

of the antlers (once a symbol of strength and masculinity; now powerless in the face of death). They connected their response to the line length, the short line acting to add starkness to the image:

The enjambment in lines 7 and 8 speaks about how death is “strange” and how it brings the buck “to his antlers” and “his knees”, which could be a religious allusion referring to the buck meeting its maker now or it could also mean that we are hopeless against it and can’t escape it. It is further supported by the fact that its “antlers”, which were so strong and used for fighting, are now useless and served for nothing in death. Not only that but death is given power by the fact that it brings it to its knees. The enjambment could be referring to how the buck on its death is a lonely image which may be further enhanced by the fact that the line is so short. The final two lines are the most powerful and meaningful line of the stanza as it indicated how “life” is always “looking attentive” to avoid death. It shows the insignificance of the “antlered buck[‘s]” life. The personification “shift their loads” creates the importance to let a “feather of snow” fall. This “feather of snow” could be the equivalent to a teardrop of the saddened hemlocks to mourn the life of the fallen buck. The alliteration “loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow” makes the atmosphere quiet and soft. As if the snow that was falling the whole way through the poem stopped and isolated this one falling “feather of snow”. The repetition of the “f” sound helps the reader understand how light the “feather” is. The last line starts with an alliteration with the ‘l’ sound and personification of life, the fact that life is “attentive” is probably because life is so present in everything. The word attentive could also make reference to the fact that the doe is now alone and vulnerable whilst before it had the strong and powerful buck for protection. This portrays how no matter how strong you are, death will always catch on to you with no mercy.

In the seventh paragraph the students concluded by summarising the poet’s intention to reflect and come to terms with death:

In conclusion, Millay uses a lot of powerful and meaningful words to portray images to mourn over how merciless death can be and how, from one minute to the next, a lot can happen. Not only does the poet think that death is “strange”, she also refers to life as strange in line 9. The theme of the poem not only could be life and/or death but also of time as shown in line 10, “the moments pass”. Millay may refer to death as “strange” but by the end of the poem she also seems to accept that death is inevitable.

e) Discussion

Using multimodal strategies gave me the opportunity to consider students' knowledge base and find creative means to apply their learning through collaborative classroom experiences. This connects with what Shulman (1987) defines as a 'special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding' (p. 8, quoted in Young, 2016).

The final outcome was a formal essay of the kind that had been incorporated in the curriculum every year since 1st ESO and that many students complained was arduous and formulaic. This argument may also be shared by the teacher; the essay writing process follows a tight structure that is difficult to personalise. It is normally only a talented few students that can supersede this scripted approach and add personal flair. By approaching the task from a different angle (i.e., beginning with the images, giving the students a chance to voice their comprehension, allowing them to structure their own meanings from a comfortable starting point, and giving them the opportunity to write with a partner), classroom activities became more interactive and participatory and less routine and predictable.

Using multimodal compositions gave students a platform to demonstrate their understanding. Windschitl (1999) describes this as the 'fluid intellectual transformations that occur when students reconcile formal instructional experiences with their existing knowledge, with the cultural and social contexts in which ideas occur, and with a host of other influences that serve to mediate understanding' (p. 752). Students switched from image retrieval to writing to pair and group discussion and back to writing again. They developed their content in stages in a way that was collaborative and enjoyable.

The multimodal pedagogy offered a 'creation culture' which was supportive of encouraging students to develop independent thinking skills. This group was considered a high ability set and in previous lessons I had been encouraging them to use their interpretation skills to connect with the deeper meaning of poems, even if their initial analysis might seem 'far-fetched'. I wanted to move away from the preconception that the meanings of texts are pre-held, and towards a classroom situation where students are involved in the meaning-making process.

Personal engagement does not occur if interpretation is imposed on students. Through composition tasks, students are put into a role where they investigate meanings for themselves, going against a more didactic or teacher-centred pedagogy which is instructive and often only accepts one 'correct' response. This corresponds with the argument that 'the resultant reading

is likely not to be authentic but manufactured. Manufactured readings are learnt, not made; they occur when readers are denied the space to engage in their own process of interpretation' (Giovanelli and Mason [2015] quoted in Lawrence, 2019, p. 3). The approach encouraged freedom of thought and allowed pupils to explore their own perceptions. They saw that, if they could support their answer convincingly by using close reference to the text, their responses could be accepted as being significant.

By first focusing on the images, we prioritised what Rosenblatt (2013) refers to as the "evocation" that lets students develop their own personal response by experiencing the poem aesthetically. Through this approach we do not exhaust students with analysis and terminology, but rather reach the analysis when the students are more ready. The presentation task let students combine text and images to shape "a new multisensory experience" for the reader (Thibaut and Curwood, 2018, p. 52).

This issue is addressed by Bridget Omatseye in 'The Discussion Teaching Method: An Interactive Strategy in Tertiary Learning' (2007), describing her efforts to make classes more engaging by adopting a pedagogy of discussion: 'what is pertinent in teaching and learning is the ability to apply skills to the art of teaching with an aim to motivate the learners... A teacher who can effectively do this is an active constructor of learning, who can, and should transmit knowledge, but should allow students' voices to be heard as contributing members of class (Omatseye, 2007, p. 88). The aim of the approach was to construct an active learning environment, rather than supporting the alternative view of students as empty vessels waiting to be given the teacher's views, without developing a genuine understanding or critical response.

It has been observed that a heavily analytical approach to poetry can be disengaging, suggesting that we emphasise feelings and the aesthetic experience of poetry instead (Farber, 2015; Rumbold & Simecek, 2016; Snapper, 2013, quoted in Sigvardsson, 2019). Part of the issue that constricts the creative teaching of language arts such as poetry and drama is that current secondary pedagogy is often focused on standardised examinations and therefore limited to a particular assessment system and rigid content demands (Weaven & Clark, 2011; Pike, 2000). The students in my colleague's class reinforced this idea when they requested this teacher-led instruction style, indicating that we have created a culture where some students even favour being "taught to the exam". These pressures mean that, when teaching English Literature at secondary or tertiary level, instructors may often take on the role of lecturer, and students as passive receivers of information.

A further criterion was prioritising time for feedback during the composition process. The discussion activities established a more democratic learning environment, lessening the perceived gulf between the teacher and pupils by giving opportunities for pupils to present and discuss their opinions. This connects to arguments put forward by Garlikov (2007) and VandeWeghe (2007), that discussion activities play an important role in helping students to make sense of texts with their own thinking and insights. The discussions were motivating and reassured students of the validity of their responses.

The group was a high ability set but I would advocate using this method regardless of ability. It was a crucial part of the student-centred pedagogy and helped us to move away from the culture of “spoon-feeding” which is so often found in exam preparation classes. Creative thinking and interpretation of language arts need not be limited to those students that are successful at formal elements of a language such as grammar or composition. During this investigation I found it worked best with the two smaller groups that I taught (both had twelve students in the class). This small group size allowed members to take a more active role.

In this section, I described how poetic study could be enhanced through using a six-step approach that integrated different modes to encourage students’ participation and make them active in their learning. In part two, I describe the process of using podcast production with the same group of students to facilitate their comprehension of the dramatic text *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller as part of their compulsory examination preparation.

f) Context to part two: drama task design and transcription

In this section, I describe a podcast composition task given to the same class of sixteen 4th ESO students as part of their English literature course in November 2020. The activity was incorporated to develop students’ understanding of the iconic American playwright Arthur Miller’s classic play *The Crucible*. I examine how using podcasts as part of English literature classes can enable students to develop and demonstrate their understanding of a literary text, and discuss issues that teachers can reflect upon when planning and executing multimodal composition in schools.

Following the same method outlined in Thibault and Curwood (2018), I transcribed the podcasts and analysed the occurrence or absence of the recognised codes to elucidate the underlying relationships existing between the content and the mode (Curwood & Gibbons,

2009). The data source includes student artefacts produced during the project and students' comments on the class forum.

In class we had read and discussed the first act of *The Crucible*, a 1953 play by American playwright Arthur Miller. The play is based on real historical events that happened at the time of the Salem witch trials of Massachusetts in 1692-93. The author used the events as an allegory for the US government's treatment of citizens it accused of having communist sympathies. The objective of the podcast task was to first help the students understand the different characters and review the events, and then communicate a personal response through producing a podcast.

The process

Instructions: *Record a 3–5-minute podcast discussing the details of your character and using an informal and chatty tone. Focus on the following details:*

- How do they contribute to the rising hysteria?
- What are their motivations? Who are they in conflict with?
- Key moments.
- Key quotes and meaning.
- Dramatic irony, stage directions & Miller's asides
- What does the audience think of your character?
- What do you think of your character?

The students were given two lessons to plan and prepare, and one further lesson to record their podcasts using their iPads. For the recording stage, students took turns to leave the room to find a quiet recording space on school premises. The technological side of the project was left to the students' autonomy as they were already confident using iRecorder. When the students had recorded their podcasts, they uploaded the files to the Google Classroom. Over the next two classes, we listened to each of the podcasts together as a group. I set up a thread for each podcast on the Google Classroom forum and, after listening to each podcast, students wrote a comment, widening the interactive quality of the task for the feedback session³².

The data set consists of five podcasts that students created working either in pairs or groups of three over five classes after finishing the first Act of *The Crucible*.

³² Link to the transcriptions of the *Crucible* podcasts:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZMYVT1ZJBqj0y_0cYoBfoMqY3KJM0OLD/view?usp=sharing

	Formal aspects	Subject	Student Roles	Register	Content	Mode	Rhetoric	Acoustic effects	Audience
1	4 minutes 3 participants	Thomas & Anne Putnam	Specialist	Formal/ Elaborate	Detailed / Subjective	Reading aloud	Monologic	None	Unknown
2	8:39 minutes 3 participants	John Proctor	Specialist	Mostly formal/ Elaborate / Some colloquialisms	Detailed/ Subjective	Reading aloud / Performing	Dialogic	None	Unknown
3	2:26 minutes 3 participants	John Hale	Specialist	Colloquial	General/ Subjective	Reading aloud / Performing	Dialogic	None	“Boys & girls”
4	6:38 minutes 2 participants	Reverend Parris	Host & Specialist	Colloquial	Detailed/ Subjective	Spontaneous discussion	Dialogic	None	“Ladies & gentleman”
5	2:10 minutes 2 participants	Tituba	Host & Tituba	Colloquial	General/ Subjective	Performance	Dialogic	Intro Music. Drum roll to announce the guest. Parting music	Listeners of the “daily podcast”

Table 12 showing formal aspects of the podcasts.

	Podcast 1	Podcast 2	Podcast 3	Podcast 4	Podcast 5
Explicit reference to the play's audience	0	6	2	1	0
Rhetorical devices to interest the podcast audience	0	4	3	1	1
Dialogue between the presenters	0	6	1	9	0
Focus on the writer's effects / word choices	2	4	1	1	0
Phrases that show the speaker as critic and expert	0	5	0	2	0
Cohesive devices	3	10	3	3	3
Speaker's own interpretations of the literature	3	19	7	9	0

Table 13 showing rates of occurrence of the formal aspects

i) Commentaries

i. Podcast one

In this podcast there is little interaction with the audience. The group appears to be reading from a rehearsed script. They transmit their knowledge and analysis in essay-like speech.

The first 347 words act as a summary of Thomas and Anne Putnam's role in the play and do not contain extended analysis. It is only after this point that the podcasters began to add their own interpretation of the characters through studying the language used by the playwright. The second half of the podcast shows more engagement with the text as it includes three instances of the pupils' own interpretation of the literature. There are three examples of cohesive devices that are added to give structure to the podcast and no clear use of rhetoric to engage the audience. This pair of students did not give any sense of an ending to their podcast and ended it abruptly with no farewell message for the audience.

Stylistically this example was less successful and would have benefited from further drafting in relation to the podcast genre. Nevertheless, for the purpose of revising the characters and their role in the play, it can be seen as a success as the students give significant detail about the characters and show their understanding of the characters' roles in the play.

In the peer feedback there was one comment that it appeared that the podcasters 'were reading' rather than speaking, but generally this example was well-received by the other students for its fluency and detail. They were praised by one peer listener for their pace and another for their 'marvellous vocabulary'. In terms of a revision exercise, the activity can be seen as effective (however not so in its effort to follow or include the features of podcasts). Further action would be to ask the students what they had learned or thought of because of their discussion, as the dialogue seemed quite scripted and conceivably therefore, not so effective for promoting the development of ideas through discussion.

While the overall feel of this podcast is rehearsed and scripted, rather than spontaneous, there are some parts where the presenters interrupt this to add a humorous comment, such as in the following exchange:

When Mrs Putnam is introduced for the first time, she is described as a "twisted soul of forty-five, a death-ridden woman haunted by the dreams" which is not exactly what you would call an encouraging description (Student A)

Generally, the language is quite academic and often sounds like a spoken essay. While not entirely in line with the original intentions of the podcast assignment, this characteristic can be seen as helpful for students as they practised their formal essay writing skills for their examinations, for example:

In scene four, Putnam declares that witchcraft is to blame for the loss of his seven children and Mrs Putnam becomes hostile to Rebecca; she is suspicious as Rebecca has not lost any of her children. Here we are already used to seeing their egocentric ways of viewing the situation. "Last night my Ruth were ever so close to their little spirits, I know it Sir." This quote conveys the reader that Anne Putnam is not just desperate to find out answers about their loss, but she's also fully convinced that the fact that her daughter Ruth Putnam is very ill is due to the devil's acts that make her feel close to the dead daughter's spirits. (Student B)

The students have been trained during their time studying literature at the school to make points using relevant quotations as evidence, and then to elaborate on these points to show that they are capable of in-depth analysis. The students did this by choosing a scene, giving a demonstration (in the form of a quote), and then commenting upon the content with their own elaboration. This does show reluctance from some students at this level to deviate from the usual method of responding to texts; the instructions were to use a less controlled and more conversational style which would give opportunities for the development of ideas through spontaneous speech.

In the podcast, as well as summarising the characters and events, the speakers show evidence of their personal engagement and interpretation of the texts. For example:

Through her opening lines we can easily see that Mrs Putnam is a manipulative and assertive woman. (Student C)

Here the student makes a judgement about the character that shows their interpretation of the character's behaviour, giving evidence of their thought processes as they connected with the literature.

The student soon after says:

We think that the Putnams are a selfish couple as their only intentions in act one is to find out information about their seven lost children by sneaking in Betty's situation and talking to the doctor. (Student C)

This indicates the collective 'we' that is a result of collaborative discussion and opinion-forming and indicates the value of the collaborative planning stages at the start of the project.

These findings add to previous research (Barton & Baguley, 2014; Jocius, 2018) indicating how multimodal composition enacts collaborative learning: ‘formative assessment seemed to be an important part of collaborative teaching strategies since the focus is to help the student understand comprehensively not only how to improve individually but also how the overall performance of the team could be enhanced to communally produce meaningful ideas’ (Papageorgiou & Lameris, 2017, p. 136).

ii. Podcast two

In podcast two, which was eight and a half minutes in length, the students worked together to describe the play’s protagonist: John Proctor. While this podcast is also too scripted and rehearsed to appear as a genuine podcast, it does show more awareness of the audience as the students have written interactions with the audience into their script. Firstly, the students give their podcast a proper introduction and connect with their audience by using the pronoun ‘we’. Secondly, the speakers use a rhetorical question at the beginning of the analysis, showing awareness of stylistic conventions for attracting the audience’s attention. Showing awareness of structural techniques, the students divide their podcast and vary the speakers. They also use connectives for continuity and fluency. There is dialogue between the speakers, including questions and answers that help the audience to follow the conversation. Colloquial language choices (such as the question tag, ‘right?’ at the end of a sentence), signal that the speakers are using the naturalistic conversation style expected by a podcast audience.

The specification for the podcast was 3-5 minutes long so the detail that this group gave was above what had been instructed. The level of analysis is high, and the text shows many examples of the students’ insight and interpretation of the events and descriptions in the play. During the feedback, their peers said that the piece was clear, fluent, and well-organised. One criticism was that it was ‘too formal’ and another that it was ‘too long’.

One peer listener praised the group’s use of structural devices, i.e., the questions inserted to indicate what would be discussed next. The style is upbeat and lively with clear consideration of entertaining the audience, as we can see from the instances of rhetorical questions. The level of analysis is detailed, and the criticism is specific and uses several pertinent examples. The structure is clear and is marked for the audience to enhance the listening experience. The podcast resembles a conversation, with participants responding to one another and asking and

answering questions. It is designed to seem like a spontaneous conversation, although it is clearly scripted. This indicates that even for confident and able students, the idea of engaging in spontaneous literary criticism is perhaps a difficult concept.

Perhaps to make the task more authentic, it could be interesting to give students preparation time but ask them to record the piece without their notes. This way we could see how much of the knowledge could be developed through interaction and discussion with peers.

Like podcast one, this example resembles less spontaneous dialogue and appears more rehearsed and scripted; the students put considerable emphasis on formal language and key phrases to show that they are analysing the play. For example:

As an audience we are shown his importance from the start by the use of Miller's aside as he introduces him. Miller introduces John as a sinner. But he does not cover up for Proctor's mistakes. He airs them out to the audience. By doing this he achieves to form a more intimate bond with the spectator. They know John's sins but see the good in him. This forms a trust. The playwright also expresses how John fears Salem and the ungodly acts that happen. Finally, we learn that he is confident and assured of himself but Miller implies that he is hiding his force. (Student D)

The students chose elaborate and detailed phrases to argue their point to ensure that their explanation was sufficiently extended. As suggested in the analysis of podcast one, this is perceivably a result of 'training' undertaken in previous classes aimed at helping students to reach a sophisticated level of literary analysis. This indicates that students are drilled in this manner of speech in literature classes and are subsequently less comfortable when the assignment calls for a less formal style.

However, the students do interact more in this podcast and show more awareness of the audience as they include several rhetorical features and devices. For example:

Could this foreshadow near events? Only time will tell. (Student E)

In this example the student uses a rhetorical question aimed at drawing their reader into a shared feeling of suspense and intrigue. This strategy is repeated in the following example:

You could go as far as saying that Proctor is voicing the spectator's thoughts, but what motivates him to do these things? (Student F)

Here, the student encourages the listener to engage with what they are saying by asking relevant questions. These act as cohesive devices and make the text sound more like a natural dialogue.

This technique is used again in an exchange designed to emphasise the chatty and natural podcast style:

Do we like him?

for the most part I say we do (Student F)

The use of the ‘we’ implies a collective voice and a connection with the audience, suggesting a sense of proximity. This is enhanced through listening to the presenters’ voices, something that arguably comes across with greater force than with written text. This use of ‘we’ to share a collective opinion was also observed in podcast one (Student C) and reinforces how multimodal composition empowers students to work collaboratively to interpret literature and then transmit their shared findings to an audience.

Podcast three

The podcast begins with a lively and entertaining tone (*Let’s go!*) and a greeting for the audience. The students try to achieve an appropriate style through using a rhetorical question and a question-and-answer format to meet the task objectives. They also use an appropriate ending style. However, the overall content is not so effectively adapted to meet the audience’s expectations, as the dialogue is underdeveloped.

This example takes an informal tone compared to podcast two. The speakers align themselves more with the audience of the play and use a casual tone, instead of speaking in a more formal ‘expert voice’. The piece did not meet the guidelines for length as it was only two minutes long. The group had arguably not worked as efficiently together, perhaps due to the motivation of the members and perhaps due to one of the members working from home due to COVID-19 restrictions. The peer listeners commented that two of the group members came across as enthusiastic and lively, but one did not (the student working from home).

This highlights the question of how to engage all pupils to perform and get into character. One option is to set this as a clear target by recognising it as an oracy objective that is important to presenting in later life. It is conceivable though, that this it is not a skill that we should expect all adolescents to achieve in secondary school, as some students of this age may have more natural capacity and confidence than others. Regarding the duration of the podcast, this group could have paid more attention to timing to reach the length set out in the guidelines. In future

it could be advisable to include a checklist that students must complete before they submit their work, to avoid submissions varying in this way.

As previously mentioned, this podcast, just over two minutes in length, is relatively short and did not meet the instructed format criteria. Two of the students were in class and one of the group members was working from home in isolation due to COVID-19 procedures. It starts with a livelier tone than the previous examples and uses informal colloquial English:

Welcome to Which Witch is Which. Today we're gonna talk about Reverend Hale, a character from The Crucible written by Arthur Miller. Let's go! (Student G)

The style of speech at the beginning appears animated and entertaining. However, the style is not maintained and at times the sound quality is poor and renders the words indistinguishable:

So how does his persona <un> xxx <un> scene? (Student G)

This exchange shows the use of a question-and-answer format which brings a conversational style to the podcast. However, the quality of the exchange is rendered incomprehensible due to the poor sound quality affecting the clarity of the question. As the podcast proceeds, there is some evidence of engagement with the audience:

What are his key moments? (Student H)

Here, the rhetorical question is used as a cohesive device to lead to further analysis of the character in a way that the audience feels is natural and conversational, whilst also permitting them to follow the thread of the conversation in an accessible way.

The podcast shows some evidence of analysis when the students begin to look more at the motivation behind the character's actions:

This is what Hale says to Tituba: "We're going to help you to let your soul free" So what does this mean? Tituba sees an escape route and plays along. He gains her trust; this could be a dangerous strategy for Tituba. (Student I)

Dramatic irony: the audience knows that Tituba's confession is false. They know Tituba has been threatened by <un> xxx <un> to do and say certain things. Hale doesn't know this yet. (Student G)

Here, the students worked collaboratively to describe the scene where Reverend Hale offers to help Tituba if she admits to working for the devil. We had discussed this 'confession' previously in class, and the pupils concurred that Tituba was not sincerely confessing and instead was manipulating the situation by lying to save her own life. Student G showed their

understanding of rhetorical devices by describing the use of dramatic irony, where the audience knows more than the characters on stage, showing their ability to apply their knowledge of the dramatic devices when discussing the text.

Later in the audio there is evidence of personal interpretation as Student G relates their experiences reading the play:

At this point in the play, I am starting to question Hale's motivation - at first I thought he was the voice of reason and much needed in the village. Then I became suspicious and started to ask myself: is he just as bad as the villagers? Is he going to kill innocent people?

This is followed with a reply from student I:

I think the audience is probably asking the same question, it puts tension and makes Hale an interesting character.

The input from student G indicates the student's reading process and how their reception of the character was opened to change as further events and clues were given by the author. This gives evidence for the active reading process that the student has been a part of in their personal reading experience. The comment from student I reinforces this point and enables the group to meet the criteria for 'referring to the audience', which is a crucial objective when studying dramatic texts intended for the theatre.

Generally, the podcast is short and underdeveloped. This could have been worsened by the students not being in the same room, meaning that dialogue did not happen naturally and the opportunities for spontaneity were reduced.

Podcast four

As with three of the other podcasts described, this sample begins with an introduction that helps to set the scene for the audience. The student presenting the podcast immediately interacts with the audience, assuming a friendly and natural style and welcoming their 'guest speaker'. There are several examples of structural devices and exemplifications for the audience. The format is largely question and answer, with answers being elaborated upon and thus reinforced for the listener, who is guided by the host's comments. The naturalistic pace encourages the listener to follow the thread of what is being discussed and engage with the ideas. Additionally, the presence of explicit opinions encourages the listeners to consider their own perspective and whether they agree, creating an interactive design. As with the following podcast, in this

example there is also reference to dialogues that happen outside of the podcast space (as the presenter refers to a conversation that they “had yesterday”).

- One peer listener said *“I liked the informal style of the conversation as it made the podcast easier to follow. They had some good ideas that I agree with, however I don’t agree with the animal kingdom reflection, though I would’ve liked them to elaborate on that idea. It would have also been nice if they backed up their opinions with quotes. The ending was a bit abrupt”*.
- Another student said *“I really liked their expressions and tone, it really kept it interesting. It was very good information that will be very useful when revising the play. I agree with their opinions. There were some points that I didn’t think of before and made me see a different part of the character.”*

The podcast was generally well-received for being quite entertaining and natural. It was considered to use the right level of formality and the listeners appreciated the humour (3 of the 10 commentators said that the podcast was “funny”). It is arguably the example which remains truest to the podcast genre, largely due to the extended speech from the interviewer (who is Bilingual English/Spanish). Both students in this pair were confident speakers and contributed to class discussions regularly. It is perhaps this ease with oral communication that led to their podcast being quite effective. The conversational style that they achieved could be used as an example of good practice.

Podcast five

This podcast begins with a lively greeting for the listeners and incorporates music to give the audience more entertainment. This shows how the students understand the task as a communicative practice that is intended to be posted to the followers. They showed an awareness of the audience by using the question-and-answer format, which makes the dialogue easier to follow. Additionally, the position of the questions arouses the curiosity of the audience. They engage to listen to what the answer will be, which makes the piece interactive in its design. As in podcast four, the student playing the presenter role imagines that the listeners had been commenting on the character previously. This widens the context by imagining audience interaction outside the podcast space. They also asked the guest to comment directly for the audience and share any final thoughts, acting as a way of extending the commentary for the benefit of the audience at the end of the podcast.

These two students changed the format of the podcast and set it up as an interview between an interviewer and Tituba, one of the important characters in the play. Their peer listeners commented that this was an entertaining alternative, but that the comments were lacking depth. The music and presentation were described as entertaining and ‘playful’ by the listeners. The relatively short length prevents descriptions from going into detail. This is the same issue found in podcast three, where students do not meet the instructed length in the task overview, which was specified as between three to five minutes. It is not my wish to be overly prescriptive and deny students the chance to be playful with tasks. However, in a position of experience having done this task once and recognised the issues, it could be advisable in the future to add a rubric to give to students before they make the podcasts. This would aim to provide clearer objectives surrounding the length and style of the composition to optimise the results. A further idea could be to include the students in the rubric design process at the start of the project.

Concerning the contents of this podcast, the students discuss the character Tituba, the Reverend Parris’s slave, a woman from Barbados who practices what the Puritans view as ‘black magic’. Tituba is acted by one student and the presenter, ‘Sancho’, is acted by the second student. The students took a different approach by deciding to act the part of one of the characters:

Today I have a very special guest... (drum roll) Tituba! (Student J)

Hello! Thank you so much for having me here today. (Student K)

In doing so, they do manage to show an understanding of the characters and events, through one student speaking in first-person and the other posing as the interviewer. For example:

Being a slave is very hard. It affects both your physical and mental health. I have to admit that having goals in life keeps me going. Aspects like friendship are my main motivation, as I hope that someday I can be free to leave and having people who support me can help a lot in this. However, people who have the most power, such as Reverend Parris, don’t tend to like me. (Student K)

There is perceivably some benefit to be drawn from ‘becoming the character’, which may enable students to empathise more as they get into the role. but the objective of generating dialogue and natural discussion about the character is missed. However, this example does show some focus on the character and the intensity of her situation due to being blamed for the village girls’ participation in witchcraft by several people in the community:

I fully understand their point of view, as hearing that a slave did such things must make them furious, maybe even weary about their own slaves. However, and as I said before, I hope that

God, as well as everyone in Salem, will forgive me, as I believe that I deserve a second chance. After all, I am now a tool that people like Reverend Parris can use to their advantage, so they need me alive. (Student K)

In this example, the student demonstrates an understanding of the role of Tituba and the response of the villagers. It shows Tituba to be self-aware and God-fearing, as well as wise to Reverend Parris and the politics surrounding her ‘confession’. It conveys a tone of regret and sorrow which is appropriate to the situation in the town.

Discussion

The findings support suggestions from Thibault and Curwood (2018) that using multiliteracies in everyday school situations, supported by constantly evolving digital tools and online spaces, can help to close the gap between teacher directed, individual, and assessment-driven learning, and authentic, shared, and purpose-driven learning (Curwood, 2018 p. 49). The students’ enjoyment of this type of task, and the interactive classroom environment that it facilitated, indicated a level of engagement from the planning stage, where students worked independently in pairs or small groups to discuss their given topic, to the production and the reception (or sharing) of finished artefacts.

Applied to the teaching of literature, by asking students to respond to texts using a multiliteracies pedagogy, we can empower them to participate in the cultural cycle of literary social practices. While we may initially receive a text on our own, the process is not complete until we take the next step, which is to re-connect with others (Evans, 2006). Students were encouraged to quote and expand upon each other’s words, and to think about the play as a collaborative process, something living and dynamic, so that they could enrich their experience and understanding through sharing interpretations.

The podcast project resulted in students showcasing several of the skills that we want to instil in them in their time at school: it enabled them to give their interpretations of a text through communicative means; work collaboratively as part of a small team; use rhetorical devices to attract their audience; focus on how professional writers achieve their effects; use cohesive

devices to structure an argument; use technology; give constructive criticism on the work of other students.

Of particular interest is the way that the participants took on the role of entertainers, showing their agency and their appropriation of the task by including features of mass media and adopting a journalistic style. This point connects to the cultural cycle mentioned previously and indicates how the students brought evidence of their own identities as media consumers to the task.

From a sociocultural perspective, learning should be problem-based and authentic, shaped through our access to cultural tools. Lund (2008) describes learning events as ‘processes that involve learners’ capacity for sharing and constructing knowledge through joint efforts and by using available artefacts’ (p. 34). From this standpoint, learning is a collective and social process, and the collaborative creation of artefacts is an essential component of any curriculum.

The inclusion of multimodality encouraged students to reflect and give their opinions in the feedback session, listening to the podcasts together and writing feedback for their classmates on the class forum³³. Selfe (2014) suggests that multimodal composition increases the opportunities for students with different learning styles to reflect upon the world, preparing them for the globalised world’s changing communication needs (p. 137). For this task, the students were given a real audience for their work when the class listened to the podcasts and gave feedback. This is something that can also be done with more traditional written essays, but perhaps less enthusiastically than through the aural mode, which tends to be more entertaining and interactive and thus often considered more favourably by the students.

The students showed criticality by commenting on their listening experiences, indicating the aspects of compositions that they had enjoyed and those they felt could be improved. Comments were made about: the suitability of the level of formality; the sound quality; the entertainment value; the presentation style; the pace of the speech; the perceived authenticity; the structure of the composition; the use of special features and sound effects; the use of rhetorical features to “hook” the audience; the clarity; features of the argument that they did / did not agree with; the use of humour; the editing style.

The primary modes involved in podcast composition are (a) linguistic: including the word choice and the organisation into sentences, phrases and paragraphs; the delivery and tone; the

³³ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RfPe50Lf6qVcOuxo5Ii6ij81evF0l6XX/view?usp=sharing>

coherence of the ideas, and (b) audio: the music; sound effects; background noise silence; emphasis and accent of voice in spoken language; volume of sound.

When producing the podcasts, the students had to prepare by researching and writing enough information to fill the instructed amount of time. Stylistically, the nature of podcasts then required them to present in a way that was more informal and less 'scripted'. This objective was met to varying degrees of success and can be best demonstrated in the results of podcast four, where the presenters appeared knowledgeable and informed and the dialogue produced was entertaining and spontaneous, showing a more confident handling of the content.

According to McKee (2006) with the spoken word, a podcast listener receives much of the information not by attending only to the words that are stated, but from nonverbal cues and how the words are said (p. 340). This suggests that, with careful consideration to the delivery style, the podcast's audio performance can create a better understanding and interpersonal connection with the text not only from the perspective of the participants, but also from the point of view of the listener. The spoken mode is much more personal than typography and a podcast can connect more emotionally with the audience than a written text. The challenge for some students may be to move away from the script and find the confidence to discuss literature in a more naturalistic way.

For the students, the challenge was to prepare their material and then to deliver it in the podcast style. The juxtaposition between the written and the spoken text was apparent when listening to the results. Some students were more dependent on the written style of text reporting, while others were more comfortable to improvise and be more spontaneous with their speech. It appears that for some students there is a big leap between understanding the material and then expressing their opinions in a less formal style.

In the example of podcast four, the two speakers entered enthusiastically into the task, driven by the student playing the host. They appeared to adapt more naturally and entered the genre by adopting a dialogic style that was emphasised for the imagined audience and extended through various rhetorical devices. One of the students in particular had enjoyed the modality of more spontaneous and improvised speech. This podcast was favoured by the audience and showed that the other students also appreciated the authentic dialogic style. In podcast one the speakers were less confident to take on this casual style, indicating that they felt more secure preparing and reciting a script, and that spontaneous speech can prove a discomfort, even for more able students.

The results indicated that more time should be given to help students to express their literary interpretations orally, perhaps by organising regular oral response groups so that they can become more comfortable with this kind of activity. One strategy could be to integrate weekly reading response groups and offer statement cards about the literature for students to discuss with their peers. In this way, students can practise their critical thinking and spontaneous verbal analysis skills while participating in an activity that is “authentic” (in the sense that it resembles the kind of discussions that people have in everyday contexts). This is applicable to both learners of English as a first and second language, but perhaps even more important for non-native speakers, who may be nervous about speaking the language correctly. In this example, the students had been studying in English since primary school and mostly had a high degree of spoken fluency and accuracy.

Creating a culture that encourages spontaneous communication means incorporating more practice into the curriculum and explicitly challenging habitual patterns such as passive learning or reliance on written text. Liu & Littlewood (1997) suggest the use of ‘buzz groups’, which encourage the use of English in low-threat environments and a cooperative ‘jigsaw method’ where each student has a ‘piece’ to perform so that the task may be completed.

In the example of secondary or tertiary education, each participant could be responsible for an in-depth analysis of a question or one aspect of a discussion topic. This helps to avoid the situation where one or two students can disappear and hide, relying on the other members to answer for them and thereby not benefiting by participating fully in the activity.

Introducing the podcast task to the students, I gave basic instructions and guidelines about the content, length, and style. No official rubric was included as the task was intended to be more formative in nature, avoiding the scenario where every classroom activity is weighted towards a percentage of the final grade. This issue is addressed by Hennessey (2010), describing the ‘existence of calculation... a framework in which ‘value’ appears to replace ‘values’” (quoted in Young, 2016, p. 181) and is a tension familiar to teachers in the school’s English department. It had been decided that students should be given information about the official examination slots in the school term and then be encouraged to understand our ethos that every other class activity would count equally towards their participation grade. However, the resulting products showed some students that had made significant effort to write long podcast scripts, and others that had seemed to spontaneously produce work that was less detailed and rigorous.

Silseth and Gilje (2018) argue that, if learning and knowing are collaborative and interactional achievements, then collective classroom activities should be included in both formative and summative assessment processes. The project raised the issue of student effort levels in projects that are designed to be formative: how do we ensure that less motivated students still put in effort even when there will be no explicit grade for a piece of work? It is conceivable that teachers may not always wish to be too prescriptive when assigning tasks, concerned that in doing so they may take away the opportunity for students' creativity. Perhaps one way around this would be the implementation of a more participative process, where students are also involved in the rubric making process. This way, students could be held responsible for their learning and outcomes without being domineered by the teacher.

The analysis indicated the potential benefits of using podcasts as an educational tool in the English literature classroom. In preparing the podcasts the students were able to describe the experience of a member of an audience in viewing the play and describe the audience's reaction to the characters and events. The requirement for podcasts to be listened to for their message to be communicated means that students must think about the way that they present their spoken information and pay attention to the delivery and style.

Podcast composition can provide an opportunity for students to discuss their interpretations of literary texts in a way that is knowledgeable yet informal, allowing a form of communication that is more natural and enjoyable to enter the classroom environment. Through producing podcasts, the students can take on the role of expert, consolidating their previous learning about literary characters and events and developing their own interpretation and opinions. The production process also allows students to practise structuring skills and use cohesive devices to communicate their ideas effectively.

5) CONCLUSION

5.1. Research questions and answers

Research question 1:

What kind of ‘affordances’ or teaching and learning possibilities can be observed when we integrate a multimodal approach to English literature classes?

Pupils enjoyed the multimodal approach; they had fun when working and appreciated being offered tasks that they perceived to be more interesting. As commented by one student in her Catalan class, participating in composition projects is collaborative and ‘doesn’t feel like work’. The students viewed the projects as being more related to their own lives than traditional writing tasks and appeared to be engrossed.

The pilot study drew our immediate attention to the opportunities that composition tasks offer for students to bring their outside knowledge into the classroom. Some students adopted a popular internet trend, the *Draw My Life* fast-motion video, to fulfil the objective and produce an elegant short video that included oral and written literary analysis.

Introducing choice and giving students the freedom to select the medium for communicating their content gave the classes a student-centred view; we saw how students worked independently to construct meanings using their chosen tools and how they collaborated and used their team working skills to meet objectives. Students appreciated the different styles of tasks and recognised the variety as useful for helping them to develop in different areas, such as writing or digital capability. Choice, freedom, and independence were themes that arose in all the questionnaires completed by the learners. This suggests that giving students more autonomy encourages them to take responsibility and enter more happily into activities.

Multimodality including images, video, and music, appears to connect well with children’s previous knowledge. This idea was demonstrated by the artefacts that learners produced that showed features that do not belong to the scholarly world, for example the video using *Draw my life*, the music used for the podcasts, the references to *Game of Thrones* in relation to *Romeo*

and Juliet, the social network culture referred to in the 1st ESO Reading Project, and the stylistic features used in the *Pyramus and Thisbe* YouTuber videos.

Importantly, when connecting literature work with their interests, students could understand and learn more about each topic. This was demonstrated initially when the students in the pilot study used the fast motion *Draw My Life* video to narrate and describe points to use in response to a literary essay title. During the reading project, we saw raised levels of enthusiasm and engagement when students were encouraged to bring their own books into school.

Learners used their knowledge of video production to make trailers to summarise their favourite books, using music to fit the genre. They made connections between books and their film adaptations and made recommendations for readers and viewers. The learners studying *Romeo & Juliet* brought their knowledge of YouTuber videos to the creation of videos explaining *Pyramus and Thisbe*, imitating a colloquial style to describe classic literature in a contemporary way.

Students identified parallels in the feud between the Capulets and Montagues in *Romeo and Juliet* and the characters in *Game of Thrones*. Collecting images to show their comprehension of the prologue in *Romeo and Juliet*, learners showed how using internet searches can help develop their understanding of texts. Letting students apply their artistic backgrounds for the mask design and 3D balcony models showed how they can relate symbolism to characters, for example by drawing abstract shapes to represent a character they perceive as unpredictable or using strong colours to represent a character they understand to be volatile.

The learners studying *Of Mice and Men* used their cultural knowledge to develop an understanding of the themes of the literature, making references to #blacklivesmatter and #metoo. The podcasters included music and sound effects to imitate the genre and add to their representation of ideas from the novel. They copied the informal style of podcasts and radio shows to communicate successfully and made their audios engaging for their audience by bringing emotion to their speech.

The use of video and podcast activities instead of written products seemed to have its own particular significance. These texts appear more colloquial, offering a stronger connection to the English that students may both encounter and use in their regular day-to-day communication. This characteristic allows the students to connect their reading of classic literature, containing formal and archaic language, with their linguistic competence. The combination of these different linguistic varieties and registers (classic and literary language

from the readings, and more colloquial and contemporary language from the classroom tasks) did not cause problems for the students, who were able to clearly distinguish between the different forms and their uses.

Digital multimodal compositions resulted in a more sophisticated product than a traditional piece of writing. These compositions belong to the Internet, which implies an authentic audience, a plausible content, and communicative purpose, and so requires an attractive result. These features generate more motivation from the learners: they don't just have to solve the tasks for the teacher, but for a real audience. This creates a direct connection with the multimodal task and learners' knowledge, interests, and identity. Using these tasks gives students valuable practice considering how to shape their work and manipulate the style and form for effective communication. This result aligns with the findings of Fjørtoft (2020), whose study of learners' video composition for foreign language learning suggests that students can be held accountable by publishing and applying learning through multimodal means. The author's participants did not find the accountability stressful or demotivating, but seemingly appreciated the function of the videos as opportunities for recall. The findings suggest that the practice could "provide a "soft" accountability mechanism that could avoid construct-irrelevant variance stemming from test-induced stress or low effort" (Fjørtoft, 2020, p. 7).

The pedagogical benefits of using multimodal compositions will be most effective when taught and prepared as a whole communicative task. This means incorporating explicit preparation regarding audiences (for example the rest of the class, the school, the families), textual purpose (for example to inform, describe, or persuade), and acknowledging the personal features that each student can bring to the task.

Multimodality sometimes implies some form of online research. For example, in the instances of the research students carried out to design their masks for the Capulet ball, to find content for *Of Mice and Men* presentations, or to discover content for *The Crucible* podcasts. An interesting affordance of online research is that students may find information that captures their attention, for example the 2nd ESO students that investigated unusual sports in the Elizabethan era. Students can find satisfaction learning new information online and presenting it to amuse their classmates.

It also contributed to the student-centred learning environment, as we saw participants collaborating to search for and construct meaning within the established guidelines. This highlighted the potential for combining literature research and online literacy, providing

opportunities to teach students about originality and avoiding plagiarism by citing their sources. This is a characteristic that requires support and students should be taught to be critical users of the internet through incorporating checklists to test the credibility of websites.

Multimodal composition led to more varied assessment in class. Students produced portfolios, a body of work that included drawing, written work, design, video production and model making. The assessment criteria had to be given careful consideration. Sometimes a multimodal composition can be assessed as a final product (like in the example of the balcony scenes) and sometimes it can be employed as a tool to support learning before a traditional assessment, for example in the case of the preparation for the *Romeo and Juliet* and poetry essays.

Research question 2:

What can each of the modes offer to the literature classes?

- Video

In the pilot study we saw that video production can be a collaborative process that can be used to encourage learners' revision of literature. Students worked together to plan the content of the videos. They used their digital skills to record and edit and used their voices to narrate the content. The video trailers produced by 1st ESO students showed awareness of genre and form. Learners chose appropriate images and music according to the types of books they had read. An idea for an extension of this task could be to introduce book trailer composition into the curriculum. This kind of activity encourages learners to engage in text production that helps to develop and instil critical literacy.

Producing videos as YouTubers gave an opportunity for students to narrate a story using a persona of their choice. They saw how presenting includes an element of acting and used this idea to have fun whilst re-telling a classic tale. They brought knowledge of colloquial English that they had learned through watching and listening to media content into the production of their videos and used features of videos that they had experienced, such as 'click to subscribe'.

The *Romeo and Juliet* prologue video gave students the opportunity to work with their voices and play with Shakespearean language. They selected images to accompany the lines of text, but the most interesting affordance was the way that they planned the videos, experimenting with pace and tone to produce a dramatic reading. This was enjoyable for students who like to be orally expressive and gave opportunities for those that are normally too shy to enjoy reading for the class. The format provides a more comfortable situation for practising speaking. The students brought their own cultural knowledge to the task, for example indicating the significance of the feud in the story by drawing a connection with *Game of Thrones*.

Through verbalising content, learners can reflect about whether they understand it or not. The videos that they produce become permanent artefacts which they can refer to later for reference purposes. Because they are digital and shared online using cloud storage, the learners can access them easily from any location and any device.

The problems with students composing videos in the classroom include organisational factors such as time limitations and practical considerations such as space and the need for silence for effective recording to be possible. It is most effective when due thought is directed towards the planning of the composition unit, with priority being given to sufficient rehearsal and production time, as well as some allowance for viewing the products as a class. Students can be assisted with the provision of support for focused planning stages and the communication of a clear and structured time frame. It is beneficial to make learners aware that extra time can be taken at home if they feel that it will be necessary. In this way it can be ensured that the teacher and students have clarity about the process and how long each stage should take, and that students who wish to can put in extra time at home if they consider it useful or necessary.

Students who are filming in the school space need an area of relative silence for recording to be successful. It may be possible to find empty classrooms by looking around the corridors or consulting the school timetable. In some instances, it might be necessary for the students to film outside, but this can be detrimental to the sound quality.

Consideration must be given to issues of consent and ensuring that parental permission is given for children to record images of themselves, particularly if it is intended that the videos are shared.

- Images

Using photos and displays helped develop students' interest in literature. In the case of the reading project, showing images of teachers and students reading was used as a strategy to prompt conversations about books. Initial interest in the project was generated by displaying posters of teachers hidden behind the books they were reading. Having students guess the identity of the person in each image aroused their curiosity. This interest was followed up by displaying images of students reading their favourite books, accompanied by a short text they had written about it. In the case of the *Romeo and Juliet* study, the masks display became a central talking point with students in the class and gave them a sense of community and investment in the classroom space.

Focusing on the use of images helped facilitate students' engagement with poetry and contributed to a more varied lesson structure. Asking the students to begin by picking out key images from each line was an accessible way to begin an exploration of the poem and its themes. This strategy can be used with students of varied ages and levels. The discussion of images can generate interesting conversations and highlight diverse literary interpretations. In this instance, it gave the students more confidence and preparation time to connect with the literature and feel more capable when participating in group discussions.

As we saw in the *Of Mice and Men* presentations, when selecting images to use from online sources, students can enter a sophisticated process that can enrich their learning experience. We saw how 2nd ESO students chose images that suggested a particular tone, for example those images that represented cynicism about the American Dream. Looking for images online encouraged the students to enter individual avenues of exploration. As an example, we saw how looking online for a picture of the America flag opened conversations about history and culture. Importantly, we recognised how enriching it can be to discuss these images with children to optimise their potential for developing awareness. Often the process of picture choice can stimulate curiosity and other lines of inquiry for the student, so it should be considered a valuable visual tool for expanding knowledge.

The mode has some limitations. Students might need guidance when looking for images, such as suggestions for suitable search terms or relevant websites. It may also be helpful to spend some time discussing original use of images to avoid the situation where all students use the same or similar images. Giving some time to the discussion of the images learners select can be helpful in encouraging them to enter thoughtful dialogue about the process. It appears that the process behind the selection of images is sometimes not given sufficient attention. This part

of the activity can be given more explicit instruction and discussed during regular plenaries where learners reflect upon about their work.

The problem of looking for images can also be supported by giving students knowledge about ethics and copyright. This can be helpful for students beyond the classroom and facilitate their work using online content in future non-educational contexts. An additional idea is to empower students to understand legal issues of reusing images. Directing learners to Creative Commons materials that have already been registered as suitable for reuse can provide certainty concerning their rights to use particular images when composing both inside and outside of the classroom.

The question of ethics and consent is relevant to images as we must ensure that parents give permission for photos to be taken of their children.

- Podcast

In the case of the podcast activity, digital tools were combined with students' aural skills to interesting effect. It was observed that students had the confidence to play with different accents when they read aloud. Students showed their capacity to structure and organise talks by using suitable cohesive devices and employed sound effects and verbal cues for their audience. The podcasts showed how students enjoy taking on the role of presenter to formulate and communicate an opinion about literature. The style and tone adopted was evidence of the agency that students brought to the activity.

Reading aloud was done well by the participants, including those who would not normally volunteer to read in class. This suggested that the context provided a comfortable space to practise reading. Students used discourse markers to structure their talks and used idiomatic phrases to connect with the audience. They included sound effects and music, demonstrating agency through the knowledge that they brought in from outside the classroom. This agency was signalled again when two students connected the themes in the book to current news issues, without being told to. This showed active participation from the students and gave insight into their cultural awareness and the connections that they made between the literature and their own experiences.

As podcasts are recorded, they offer a permanent artefact that students can return to for revision of course content. It would be interesting to ask students to return to their podcasts later in the

course and comment on how their learning has evolved since making the work, particularly for those students on two-year courses such as in the case of IGCSE Literature.

A benefit relating to assessment is that multiple student voices can be heard at once, meaning that assessment can be made more efficient. However, a related problem may be that it can be difficult for teachers to identify which student made the contributions. Additionally, there may be ambiguity when distinguishing between knowledge of academic content, and skill in the use of digital technology (Silseth & Gilje, 2017, referenced in Fjørtoft, 2020).

A further limitation of the mode connects to learners' effort levels. In institutions where formal writing has been used as the standard form of assessment, it may be the case that multimodal composition assessments are not yet recognised by learners as serious and demanding rigorous attention and effort. This claim is supported by Fjørtoft (2020), who found some variation to exist in the attitude and amount of effort given by mid-performing students to such tasks (p. 6).

Careful consideration must be given to formulating appropriate rubrics that help ensure that learners are aware of the expectations surrounding the task. Giving time for sharing production with a real audience can also be a motivating factor in encouraging students to give careful attention to their compositions. Podcast production requires structured preparation. The learners will need time at the start to gather their ideas, some rehearsal time, and a silent space for the recording. Time then needs to be given for listening to the pieces. The teacher must decide whether to let the students listen to the podcasts together in the class or set it as a listening activity to be done in the students' own time outside the classroom. Audience feedback can then be given either orally or in writing, perhaps in the form of comments on the class forum. This requires some organisation and could be facilitated by allocated feedback groups that work together, meaning that students need only listen to and comment on a select few pieces, rather than them all.

- Drawing and design

These tasks are popular with students. In the reading project, 78% of students chose tasks that involved drawing in the first round. Collages can provide an attractive means for students to collect pictures and information about books, either digitally or on paper.

This action can make thinking visible, especially if we encourage written or oral reflection from the students about the design process. The manually drawn mask designs for *Romeo and Juliet* were the most popular activity for 2nd ESO in 2019. The students showed what they had

understood through representing the characters visually, using colour and design to give symbolic meanings. I combined this task with a written rationale to show the students' reflections, but a spoken explanation could be equally effective for enabling students to reflect and explain their methods.

Drawing projects that were completed digitally included the collage (offered as a response to 1st ESO reading), and the storyboard and setting maps (offered as part of the 2nd ESO *Of Mice and Men* creative project). Both modes were popular with the students and one key message was that introducing variety was an important factor for helping students maintain their enthusiasm. The limitations to manual drawing and design due to COVID-19 restrictions highlighted how learners felt the absence of the manual mode when it was taken away.

Some limitations of the mode connect to learners' perceptions of their ability to draw and design. Unlike textual literacy, attention to drawing and illustration is sometimes not given priority in the school curriculum and the onus may vary depending on the interest of the teachers in charge. Resultantly, children's skills and confidence producing art and design can vary. Conceivably, if all children were to be given consistent encouragement and guidance in the area, then this gap could be addressed. A suggestion is that schools integrate a cross-curricular policy for encouraging drawing and design, encompassing regular practice across the different subjects to give all learners better access to visual literacy practices.

- Digital presentations

Digital presentations can be considered a 'macro mode' that can include images, videos, podcasts, and written texts. Their versatility means that they are appropriate for traditional academic assignments as well as multimedia learning approaches. The presentations can be used by students as tools to aid the discussion of their work in class, or to showcase their work to their teacher or peers.

The context studies used as an introduction to *Of Mice and Men* enabled students to learn about history, culture, and society, and practise their collaborative and online research skills. The presentations functioned as part of a student-centred approach where the students were responsible for being the 'conductors' of their learning. The presentations were researched collaboratively in groups, giving the opportunity for shaping effective delegation and problem-solving, as well as the chance to use and develop technical skills.

Summarising information for the presentations gave students practise reading for meaning and selecting key points. They had to paraphrase and cite their sources, which shaped their ideas about information sharing and contributed to develop their critical and digital literacy. Designing the presentation to be performed to an audience meant using stylistic features such as rhetorical questions. Because the presentations related to American history and society, students were able to incorporate relevant information about cultural movements that they had identified independently, which showed their agency.

Choosing pictures for the slides gave the students the opportunity to choose a tone for their presentations. The students' selection of humorous images indicated a process of complex and sophisticated thinking that encouraged them to consider multiple perspectives. This process works most effectively when accompanied with children's own explanations to show their comprehension and the development of their thoughts.

A problem that arose with students composing digital presentations in groups was the effective delegation of tasks. This requires structuring so that each participant has a role. Teachers can facilitate this by setting sub-questions so that each pupil is responsible for a part of the presentation. This can encourage timid or less motivated students to participate fully and discourage more confident and domineering students from taking over.

A further consideration is how students find the information that they will use in their presentations. Often the information is sought online, and this requires guidance from the teacher regarding strategies for effective web searches and regulatory guidelines for reusing information from the internet. Sometimes, children's tendency is to copy and paste information. They will need guidance about finding key facts from texts and summarising them in their own words. This is an important skill that must be given attention in class.

A further consideration pertains to the use of images. Learners should be guided through the process of legitimate image retrieval in the same way that they are for the gathering of textual information. Ethics surrounding textual and visual reuse can be addressed and reinforced across the curriculum and it should be the responsibility of all teachers to assist learners with this aspect of learning in the digital age.

Presenting skills can be addressed by dedicating lesson time to features including correct usage of bullet points as prompts and discouraging students from using large sections of text on their slides. Designing a rubric that includes interactivity as part of the objective can help students understand the importance of presenting for their audience in a way that is more considered

and dynamic. With consistent attention to presenting skills over the school years, it is conceivable that teachers can support students to develop these skills and work towards a competent and rounded use of the mode for communication and learning purposes.

- Online challenges

Designing online games can be an effective way for students to demonstrate what they have learned by challenging and competing with their peers. Game-making apps and websites such as Genially, Kahoot and Quizlet, can provide helpful support for learners working with this objective. The method is seemingly a modern way for learners to engage with material by doing something enjoyable. The search for information and questions requires learners to connect closely with the original literary work. The learning benefits become clear when students share their games with their teacher and peers and then play against each other.

Developing online games and challenges in response to works of literature is an assessment that can be adapted for learners of different ages. The teacher can help the learners to devise topics and write questions; the latter aspect may conceivably be more difficult for younger learners, especially as question-formation often poses a challenge for students learning English as a foreign language. This grammatical challenge can conceivably be used to motivate learners to become more adept at forming questions as the activity is entertaining and attractive.

- Manual artefacts

The balcony scene models were a popular activity that students planned through storyboarding. They had the opportunity to review the story of *Romeo and Juliet* and choose important parts to represent by using quotations and writing their interpretations. This meant that they used collaborative planning skills, drawing, quote selection, and craft skills to put together their 3D models.

A storyboard gives a visual outline to help students plan. It can be a powerful tool to help the drafting stages as it helps students to order and make sense of events in a narrative. The week given to the model construction was regarded favourably by the students and transformed the classroom into a space for student-centred group work. When they presented their work, they could speak confidently about the balcony scene and improvise to add information, indicating that tactile work is an effective tool for reinforcing learning. They justified and explained their argument connected to the design of the model, which showed transferable skills that are useful for formal essay writing.

The omission of the tactile tasks from the 2020 creative project was disappointing for some students. This indicated that not all young learners prefer working with digital technology. This echoes the findings from the reading project, where many of the children still prefer paper books and choose tasks that involve paper, writing by hand, and drawing, and the success in cycle two of the visual and tactile mask and balcony scene projects.

One suggested limitation of this mode connects to the preconception of the position of different subjects within the curriculum. In an immersion approach that advocates project work and ‘learning through doing’, model making can be considered a valid tool for use in English lessons. For the educational merits to be maximised, children need encouragement to speak in the target language (in this case, English) while working on their projects. This can be supported through positive reinforcement and praise for groups using English to communicate during the composition process.

A further problem can be seen in the time required for model making. In the example of the 3D balcony scene, five lessons were dedicated to the composition. It is recommended that teachers devise a plan for the project that includes different objectives (for example the use of the target language and achieving successful group work through collaboration and communication), in addition to demonstrating learning about the literary work. It should also be a priority to include time for plenaries and presentations so that students have more opportunities to reflect on their learning and comment on the processes that they have been a part of.

- Writing

This multimodal approach did not seek to replace writing, but to explore how it could be enhanced through the introduction of visual, aural, and tactile modes. During the study we saw learners writing scripts to perform in video compositions, writing notes for content for digital presentations, writing captions for storyboards, and writing rationales to accompany visual artefacts. Each literary study included a formal essay as part of the assessment of the entire literary work. Learners built up to this piece of writing by participating in activities that improved their understanding and their depth of knowledge, so they could write more confidently.

Writing developed a new function and was used as part of a wider approach that included a variety of oral responses, group work, creative projects, and digital and manual composition.

Its role was no longer to form the major assessment objective, but to help shape a larger and more varied body of work.

Writing was found to be unpopular with some students. These learners preferred writing digitally to manually and viewed digital word processing as easier. Learners' enjoyment of writing seemingly depended on their individual background and their perspective of the level of its difficulty. In the *Romeo and Juliet* study, the children first drafted their essays by hand and were then offered a choice of word processing or manual writing for their final draft. This is no longer realistic of how many adults operate. The ease and efficiency of word processing means that many people now disregard traditional methods in favour of digital modes.

However, while handwriting may be declining in social settings, in educational contexts, it is still valued as an important skill with distinct advantages for its users. Children writing by hand are less likely to become distracted clicking between screens, they can not rely on online dictionaries or autocorrect, and must think for themselves about correct spelling and grammar. Additionally, handwriting is helpful for literacy development such as improving fine motor skills and memory, and most external examinations still require children to respond by hand. Accordingly, to provide children with a balanced experience in school, it is therefore important to create and maintain high standards of both manual and digital literacy.

The benefits of digital word processing mean that text can easily be combined with images and the internet. In the studies, we saw how the act of word processing can be transformative, as students made choices about design features and fonts, playing with the visual and written elements of their texts, and designing their pages with careful consideration of the layout and style features such as borders and images. Using digital technology meant students could plan, draft, and redraft, free from commitment and without the artistic skill that would be required were this technology not available.

Writing combined with multimodality presented opportunities for students to communicate in an authentic way, using manual and digital technologies to create and display their messages for different audiences and purposes. Activities became writing experiences instead of standard assessments. By helping students to express themselves through art and orality, we can develop a more enjoyable curriculum for the students and simultaneously provide opportunities for enhanced written expression.

The role of publishing students' writing also presented the opportunity to increase students' interest and motivation, whether through online forums, classroom displays, or sharing work

with teachers and classmates. This helps to give students a sense of responsibility to fulfil the purpose of the textual assignment for the intended audience. Introducing multimodality gives the publishing of texts an extra dimension, whereby students can present their writing orally, in presentations, podcasts or videos.

Some of the limitations of the written mode seemingly connect to the preconceptions that children have towards it. These preconceptions are seemingly somehow shaped by their former experiences in school and the way that writing has been presented. Students that complain about writing in school may spend significant time writing on online forums and gaming sites outside of the classroom. It was particularly those learners in lower-level English classes that said that writing was ‘hard’ and ‘boring’. This attitude seemingly relates to the perceived difficulty when students are given long writing assignments that at first appear unachievable.

By ‘thinking aloud’ and making writing processes visible, teachers can show learners the practices for generating ideas and structuring texts (Fellowes & Oakley, 2014). Scaffolding the stages of writing (e.g., brainstorming, note making, drafting, considering features of form and genre), and discussing the process as a group, can help to make writing less solitary and intimidating and more collaborative and achievable.

Research question 3:

Which criteria can be considered in order to look for, plan, and produce multimodal activities for the literature classroom?

Seeking to discover how students like to learn helps communicate to them that their views and interests are valued. Involving them in the curriculum design process can create a more democratic environment and give opportunities for personalised learning that consider who our students are and what motivates them.

- Use questionnaires, interviews, and observations to seek out the opinions, feelings, and experiences of the pupils in previous projects.

With the example of the reading project, the creative project, and the *Romeo and Juliet* study, we showed how finding out about students’ opinions and interests can inform future planning.

In the example of the reading project, we learned that students do not always prefer digital activities and that many still like to read paper books, which was contrary to what we imagined. We learnt that many of our students would like to read more and that they feel burdened by a lack of time. This suggested that we needed to involve our senior management team and be supported to integrate more time for private reading into the school day.

Conducting short questionnaires using online websites such as SurveyMonkey³⁴ can be an effective way of learning about secondary school pupils' views. Questionnaires should include a small number of open questions that allow students to express their views, and that make data easy to recover.

Informal observations are a simple tool for the teacher to use to view how tasks are received by learners. This should form part of a reflective practice where teachers focus on learners' responses to tasks, make a record of their observations, and then act by implementing informed and purposeful changes.

Part of the success of multimodal projects is the interest generated by their novelty. This means that it is important to adapt the projects and introduce new ones for students in different year groups. Part of this process of evolving the projects should consider the opinions of previous students, showing the learners that their viewpoints are valued.

- Plan different multimodal project initiatives into each year of the curriculum.

The reading project was successful in generating enthusiasm from first year students. In the second year, we changed the activities to give variety. It is advisable to undertake long-term planning and include different multimodal composition activities each year that evolve with students' maturity and interests. Showcasing older students' compositions using physical displays can be aspirational for younger pupils. It can help develop the identity of English as a subject and help develop a positive impression for students through publishing attractive activities. This long-term planning can also help to create the impression of a cohesive approach that develops through the school years and give students an idea of what they can look forward to in subsequent projects as they move up the school.

The findings showed that multimodal compositions require time for planning, drafting, producing and editing. This process is important for students' learning and consideration

³⁴ <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>

should be given to allocating sufficient time for this in the curriculum. Another part of the planning should focus on the skills and abilities that students will require to reach their objective, with due consideration given to any support that they might need to reach their objectives.

- Consider the amount of time, technological knowledge, and skills that the pupils will need for each multimodal task.

Time pressures are often a factor for teachers considering including multimodal projects in the curriculum. This can be especially true when, like in the case of the reading project visual campaign, coordination is necessary between various teachers. One possible solution is to involve older students, for example to help with display work. A distinct advantage of multimodal production is that it is often visual; displaying students' artefacts can be an excellent way to showcase their efforts and inspire interest.

Judging the composition time that students will need can be difficult because students will work at different speeds. It is useful to give students a checklist to help them consider if their work has been developed sufficiently and it is recommendable to set up an extension task for early finishers. One suggestion is to use the framework: *everyone will...*; *some will...*; *a few will...* to guide students about the minimum that is required and show them how to extend and improve their work if they are more ambitious.

Video production requires time for the planning, recording, and editing stages. It is necessary to give clear guidelines about when the different stages should happen and be aware that some students may take longer than others in the quest for perfection. It can be useful to leave a lesson between the final class and the presentation, and let students know that the expectation is that they will complete unfinished work in their own time.

It is important to prioritise time for the presentation of students' work. This does not have to mean giving time for every student to showcase their work. It can be beneficial to choose examples that demonstrate the achievement of a specific learning point, such as the manipulation of the mode for the audience (for a presentation task), effective use of voice (for podcasts), or interesting symbolism (for mask designs).

When using a multimodal teaching approach involving digital work, consideration must be given to the amount of time that learners will be seated and using screens. Giving time for

regular breaks and face to face communication can improve the working atmosphere and encourage students to work more happily and effectively.

- Prioritise time for screen breaks and peer interaction.

Comments from the 2nd ESO creative projects indicate that we must be vigilant and include screen breaks when technology is incorporated. We should ensure that its use does not become isolating and encourage social connectedness by giving students regular opportunities to share and discuss their work. Some students struggled with the lack of peer interaction when work was done digitally over an extended time, highlighting the importance of social interactions for building a happy classroom environment. It is incorrect to assume that all teachers have the same opinion on this, and it is an area for the school team to address to develop an ethos, perhaps as part of a student wellbeing policy.

The findings showed that learners in the 11-16 age group have differing digital abilities and knowledge, often depending on their interests and background. Multimodal composition projects that include a digital element can offer opportunities for assessing students' skills and identifying needs.

- Do not expect digital competence (but encourage sharing if it is there).

The reading and creative projects showed that students' confidence using digital tools varies. This suggests that it is incorrect to assume that children have a natural aptitude and too general to subscribe to any concept of "digital natives". The participants appeared to have more or fewer skills depending on their interests and behaviour outside of school. As an example, I refer to the 2nd ESO child that ran to help their classmates to edit and upload their trailer videos, and the students that loved using Flippity to create an online board game. On the opposite side of the spectrum, were those learners that pleaded to use pens and card and chose to draw their "online challenge" on paper. Giving students a choice helped to clarify their differences and preferences and highlighted that specific programs and tools must be taught if required for an assignment. It may be advisable to find out the students' level of competency first and discover any gaps in knowledge and skills that can be addressed before starting, perhaps forming part of a student digital competency framework.

Multimodal pedagogies give scope for the development of different literacies (oral, written, visual and digital) and encompass a range of media that exist simultaneously to written texts. This knowledge can be drawn from children's knowledge of series, social media, music, and literature read outside of school, and can be used to help learners engage with more classic literary works.

- Encourage the connections students can make between classical works and modern cultural references.

Encouraging students to bring their knowledge from outside of school often prompts higher levels of interest and participation. When choosing topics for group work, we can begin by selecting broader topics relating to the literature and then dividing these into narrower sections that consider students' interests. In the example *Of Mice and Men* and the American Dream, the students could give an overview of the concept and its meaning and then investigate subcategories such as: rights for women; racial justice; perspectives on freedom.

Giving students' work a real audience can make the production process more meaningful and interesting. It encourages students to think about how to optimise their work by choosing strategies for effective communication.

- Make the 'audience-factor' a central idea.

When it came to presenting, the most successful examples were those that had considered the audience and made their text (slides, video, podcast, etc.) interactive. This finding correlates across the cycles and indicates the importance of having an audience for compositional tasks and prioritising presentation time so that participants can see their work received. This gives extra authenticity to tasks and may also be a motivating factor for students due to the element of interaction.

It is not only audience participation that enhances presentations, but also the language and style that the presenters choose. It is useful to remind students of strategies for persuasive writing so that they may deliver information more successfully. One relevant example is the AFOREST acronym, which reminds students to use stylistic features (alliteration; fact; opinions; rhetorical questions; emotive language; statistics; tripartite structures) to capture their audience's attention.

A common theme across the research studies was that composition tasks brought opportunities for encouraging students to think about how to manipulate and design their content for different purposes; much more than a traditional writing task, which would classically only be seen by the teacher. Another acronym, GAPS (genre, audience, purpose, and style), is also popular among English teachers. The challenge is to bring these ideas to life by creating a culture of composition and letting students practise a variety of production tasks in class time.

Other factors for consideration connect with students' use of the internet. The “mini-meets” were a useful tool that helped students to talk in their groups when the COVID-19 restrictions prevented them from sitting together. This strategy has been particularly helpful since the pandemic and allows facilitators to organise “breakout groups” in their online classes so that students may discuss pertinent topics.

The use of the internet as a research tool should be structured by the teacher by modelling what an effective search looks like. This might involve choosing an example topic and demonstrating how to cross-reference using different sites, and making judgement calls on credibility by asking questions about the institution, the author, the date, and signs of bias.

Students will also need to be taught how to paraphrase the information that they find so that they do not plagiarise content. Additionally, learners will require clear instructions about how to use citations and reference correctly.

Incorporating multimodality for teaching poetry and drama to older students.

a) Poetry

- Use multimodality to break literary study into parts.

Multimodality can be used as a tool for breaking literature studies into more manageable steps. The six-step process for poetry analysis began with learners' online image selection. It then developed to use a more traditional method of poetry study, where students used their formal knowledge to annotate the literature (in pairs). The annotation exercise built on the students' former knowledge (i.e., looking at the number of lines; looking for

repetition; marking the figurative language). This was empowering for learners, who felt confident and assured because of the familiarity of the task. This traditional approach was then developed as students engaged in a textual focus, making notes on the theme and tone. The ongoing process of combining images and words digitally in a presentation throughout the work unit offered a student-centred structure that allowed learners to build their competency gradually. It provided them with a final revision resource at the culmination of the project.

- Use multimodality to motivate students and offer adequate challenge.

This activity required higher and lower-level thinking skills with the core objective of learners deciding what they thought the poet's message was. Including activities of varying difficulty was motivating and offered a scale of adequate and reachable challenge.

- Prioritise regular plenary sessions.

Gathering as a group to produce a class annotation of the poem acted as a plenary for the work in the sessions that had come before. It helped ensure that students felt comfortable with their understanding of the poem. Subsequently, the traditional comprehension style questions that students answered independently provided valuable consolidation.

Some students will be concerned with (and motivated by) having the 'correct information'. This is symptomatic of the perceived dichotomy between the objectives of literary study and the way that it is assessed in schools. Where final assessment is carried out by means of an externally assessed examination, a multimodal pedagogy (including teamwork and a student-centred approach) seeks not to replace traditional writing tasks, but support them, by providing an indirect 'way in' that develops students' understanding of the concepts and ideas.

b) Drama

- Considerations about the assessment of multimodal compositions.

Taking a step back following the class reading of Act I of *The Crucible* gave the opportunity to let children construct knowledge as part of a social process. Because of the formative nature

of the task, there appeared to be differing levels of effort given. We were moving away from giving assignment grades and weightings to avoid students making calculations about which tasks to invest more time and effort into.

However, judging by the difference in quality of the artefacts, it would be advisable to at least implement a checklist so that students could reflectively judge themselves before submitting work. This could help remind students to be conscientious and aware of the expectations for standards, reinforcing a more responsible ‘everything counts’ mentality.

Group work should be organised, establishing the student groups prior to the class, with clear guidelines and instructions visible on the virtual classroom (if used) that indicate a clear timeline for completion. In this instance, students required one lesson to plan and gather initial ideas, an additional lesson to plan in detail, and then one or two further classes to complete their preparation and record the podcast. This facilitated natural revision and discussion of the literature and helped students to expand their understanding through peer discussion.

- Make the distinctions between the styles for different compositions explicit.

The most effective podcast resembled a dialogue between two speakers. This outcome was not achieved by all participants. Two of the groups relied too heavily on a script, trying to replicate academic analysis; one group chose a dramatic form that did not facilitate language analysis. Part of our concern should be to prepare students to discuss literature in more informal contexts. Dialogue gives opportunities for reflection about literature, suggesting that teachers should plan composition tasks that encourage conversations, such as interviews and talks, and that this format can be more effective than using monologues or formal presentations.

5.2. Limitations and future perspectives

While it is my hope that this thesis will make an important contribution to the field of English literature instruction using multimodality, there are some limitations which must be mentioned. One of the main limitations connects to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the school closures that occurred during the research stage, affecting data collection. Our initial plan was to study the same group of participants (those that appear in cycle two) over two academic terms, to follow the progress of these students. The students were enthusiastic about using different modes in lessons and we had built a positive relationship as a class. The original

Romeo and Juliet plan included ten compositions. The students had begun planning the eighth, a video, and were engaged in animated discussions about how to adapt *Romeo & Juliet* for their film versions. Unfortunately, it was necessary to abandon this and the other final tasks (a “word cloud” and a newspaper article) when lessons were forced online in March 2020. The poetry unit that was intended to follow had to be abandoned and it was necessary to postpone the research until the following academic year when schools reopened. It was not possible to continue with the same class because the groupings were adapted to meet the COVID-19 restrictions. These unforeseen circumstances meant that the research plan had to be adapted. We were working within a new context in the direct aftermath of the pandemic. This had implications for planning, and we were limited to digital, written, and spoken modes. Tactile work was not possible and group work posed new challenges due to the limitations imposed on students mixing.

Additionally, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were making plans to collaborate with other schools to experiment with the tasks in different educational settings. The intention was to share the 2nd ESO *Romeo & Juliet* resources with other teachers, take their opinions, and conduct surveys with the children, to comment on the impact of using the approach in different schools. The pandemic made collaborations difficult, meaning that the data collected was ultimately taken from one school.

An interesting avenue for further research would be to study the opportunities for multimodal composition in different subject areas. We focused on multimodality for instructing English literature, but these modes can be adopted for different subjects. In addition, it would be interesting to follow the same students through their secondary education to describe their progress over the years. Finally, observing how the multimodal resources used in this study are received in a different subject school could deepen our understanding of the range of their affordances and illustrate how this may vary according to the educational context.

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Appendices

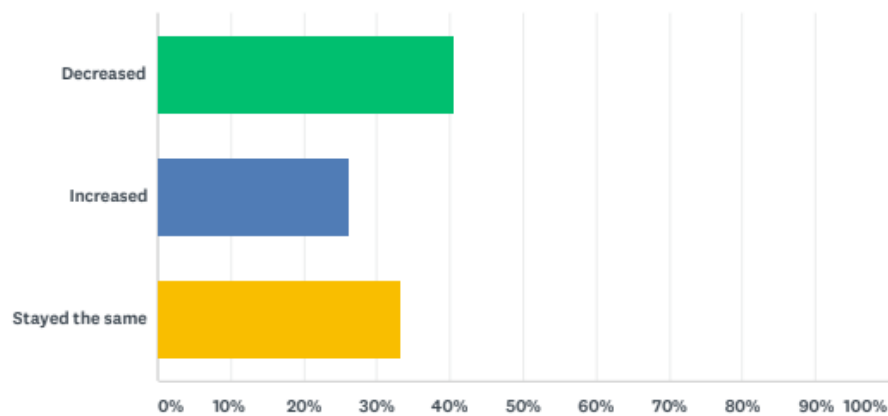
Appendix A: Questionnaire one results/ students' reading practices.

Number of informants: 71; level: 1st ESO; age 11; November 2018. Google Forms.

Fig. A1

Q8 Has your reading time increased or decreased since you were in Primary School?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 1

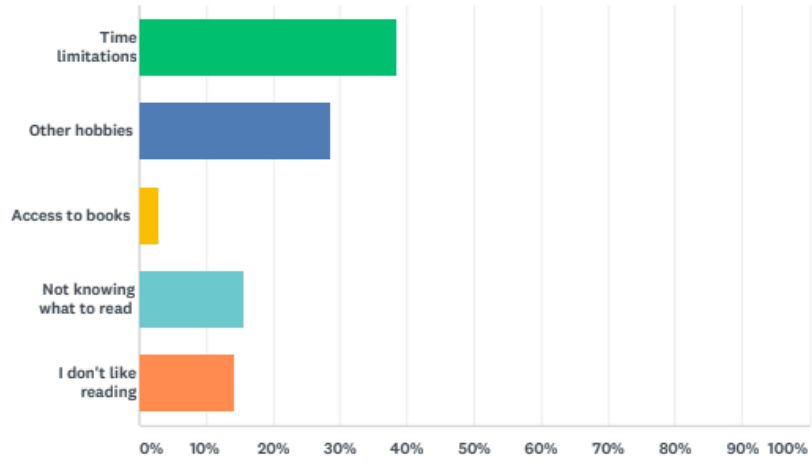


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Decreased	40.58%	28
Increased	26.09%	18
Stayed the same	33.33%	23
TOTAL		69

Fig. A2.

Q17 What prevents you from reading more?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 0

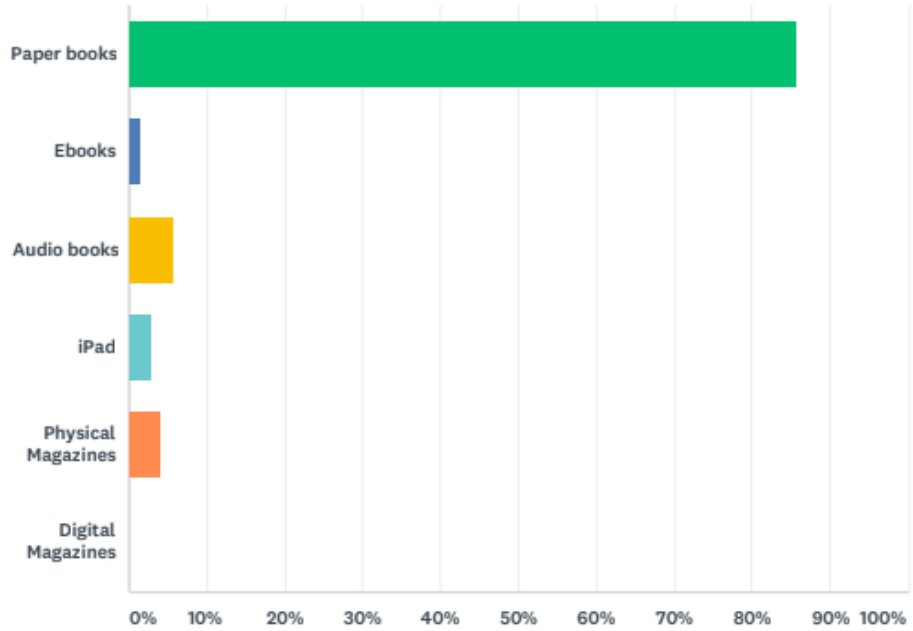


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Time limitations	38.57% 27
Other hobbies	28.57% 20
Access to books	2.86% 2
Not knowing what to read	15.71% 11
I don't like reading	14.29% 10
TOTAL	70

Fig. A3.

Q11 What book format do you prefer?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Paper books	85.71%	60
Ebooks	1.43%	1
Audio books	5.71%	4
iPad	2.86%	2
Physical Magazines	4.29%	3
Digital Magazines	0.00%	0
TOTAL		70

Appendix B: The 1st ESO Reading Project

Fig. B1. Reading project tasks.

No.	Task/ Description	Modalities
1	Draw a picture of a character from your book, write 10 sentences. Choose a character, illustrate them and write some additional information by looking closely at your book.	Drawing/ writing
2	Draw a picture of the setting from your book and label it. Use the information in the book to draw the area that it takes place, include all the important locations.	Drawing/ writing
3	Pretend you are a character and write a postcard home. Imagine one of the characters from the book is writing a postcard home to describe recent events. Draw the front picture and remember to write an accurate address.	Drawing/ writing
4	Produce a diary entry for your character describing an interesting event. Choose an event one character experiences and write about it in detail.	Writing a diary
5	Write a list of 10 questions to ask your favourite character. What would you like to know more about? Form your questions to ask the character.	Writing questions
6	Before reading your book, describe the front cover and add 5 predictions. Write a description of the design and what clues it gives you about the book.	Writing descriptions
7	Design a new front cover for your book. Think about characters and events and design a new cover. Remember to add the blurb and barcode to make it realistic!	Drawing a cover
8	Create a word cloud of new vocabulary you learned while reading. Add the words to an online generator such as https://www.wordclouds.com/ and choose a fun design.	Digital apps
9	Write a poem inspired by your book. Think of a topic from the book that inspires you. You can ask your teacher to recommend a poetic form to help structure your work.	Writing poetry
10	Draw a comic strip (6+ boxes with captions) to illustrate an event. Think about an event and represent it using illustrations. Look at the examples here https://www.illustrationhistory.org/genres/comics-comic-strips	Drawing a comic
11	Write a newspaper article based on an event in your book. Look here for some tips: https://steemit.com/steemiteducation/@frieda/transactional-writing-newspaper-articles-reports	Writing news
12	Create a collage inspired by your book. Choose pictures that represent the people, places, and ideas. Put them together in an attractive manner using <i>Collage Maker</i> or an app of your choice.	Drawing/ Digital
13	Write or record a weather report based on your book. Prepare a report that will help the characters plan their activities for the next few days.	Writing/ audio
14	Draw a picture of a character's brain to illustrate what they are thinking. Imagine the inner monologue of a character from your book. Draw them and then draw thought bubbles that show what's on their mind.	Drawing
15	Write or perform a monologue as a character from your book. Think about your character, their story and point of view. Plan a talk that they would give about their experiences.	Writing/ acting
16	Compose a letter to the author of your book. Think about the book and why it is important to you. Describe this to the author. Maybe you can include some questions as well.	Writing letters
17	Interview a character from your book for a magazine article. Think of some questions that you can ask to get more details about the events in the book.	Writing interview
18	Write an alternative ending/or a deleted scene for your book. Be imaginative and rewrite the ending or create a scene that you would like to see included!	Writing narrative

19	Design a travel blog based on the places your book has taken you. What is the setting of your book? What sites can we see there? What are people like? How about the food? Describe these things in an entry for a travel blog.	Writing about trips
20	Create a trailer for the film of your book. Use software that you are comfortable with and create a one-minute trailer to advertise the film adaptation of your book.	Record videos
21	Review your book. Write your opinion of the book, the characters, its ending. Say who it is suitable for and give it a rating.	Writing reviews
22	Draw a map of the book's setting. Draw the location and don't forget to label all the important places.	Drawing maps

Fig. B2.
Reading project student and teacher assessment sheet

1ST ESO Reading Project – Mark sheet.

1. Self Assessment.			2. Teacher Assessment																																	
Pupil Self-Reflection Questions	Yes	No																																		
Did you complete a range of different types of tasks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																																		
Did you use iPad skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																																		
Did you do any extended writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																																		
Did you show an artistic response to your reading?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																																		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long did each activity take? • Which activity did you enjoy the most and why? • How did it help you read? 																																				
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Appendix C: Sample of reading project artefacts.

Fig. C1. Response to Activity: Design the movie trailer for the screen adaptation of your book, *A Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket.

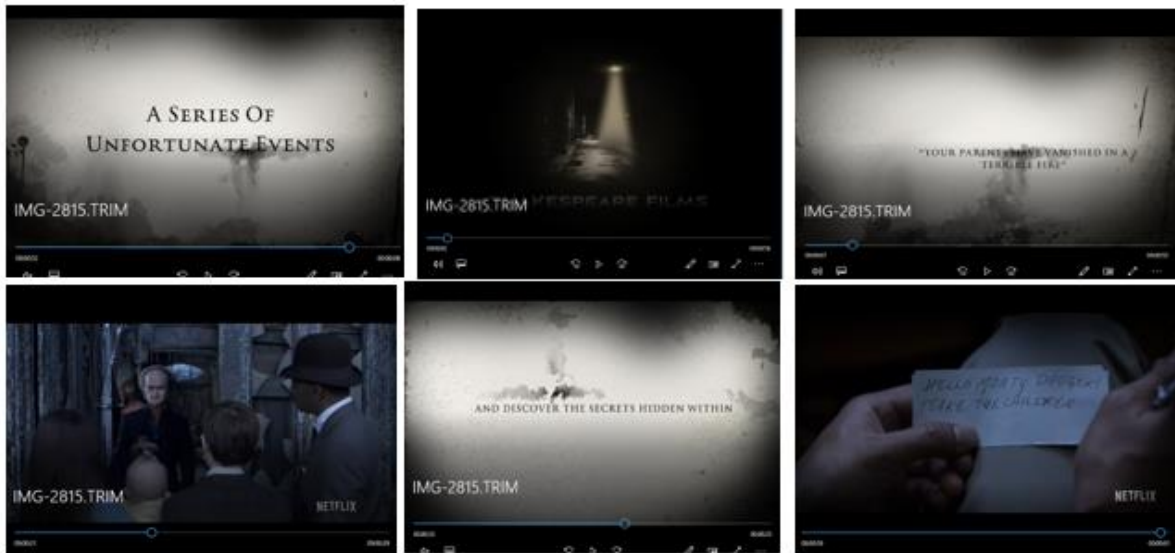


Fig. C2. Response to Activity: Design the movie trailer for the screen adaptation of your book, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs.

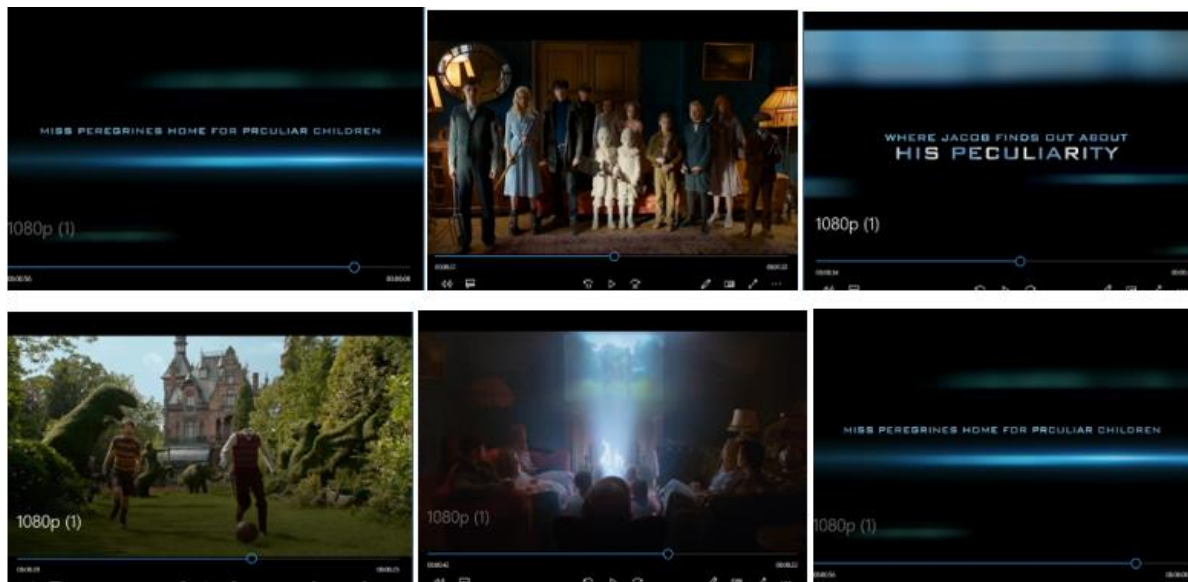


Fig. C3. Response to Activity: Design the movie trailer for the screen adaptation of your book, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner

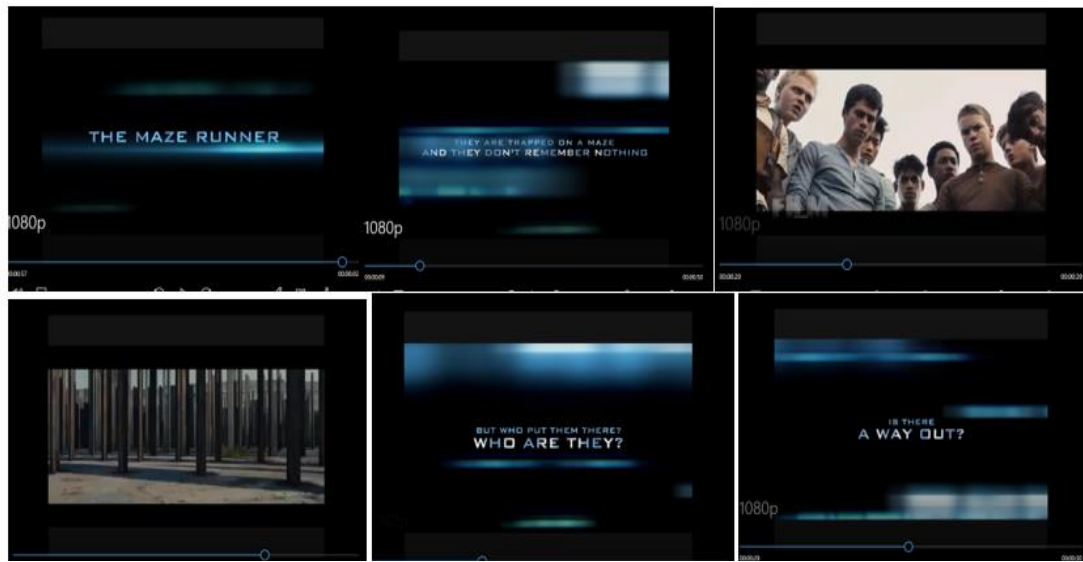


Fig.C4. Response to Activity: Create a collage about your book

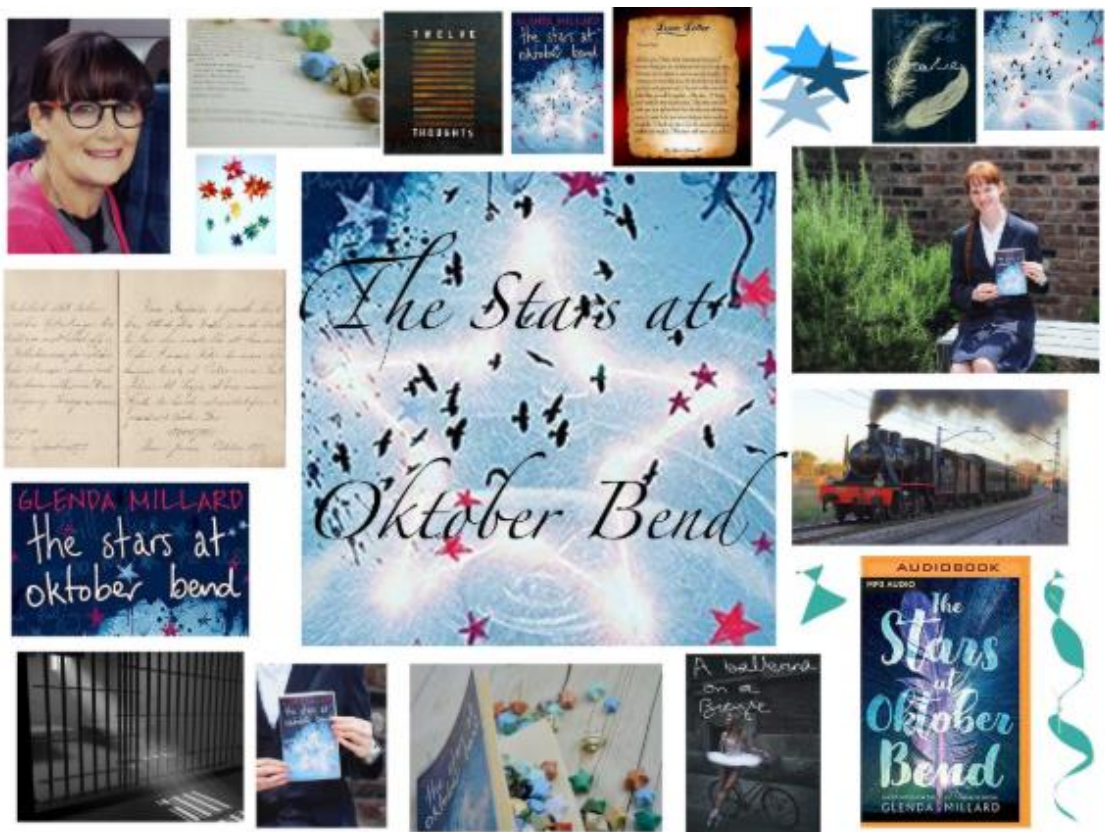


Fig. C5. Response to Activity: Draw a map of the book's setting.

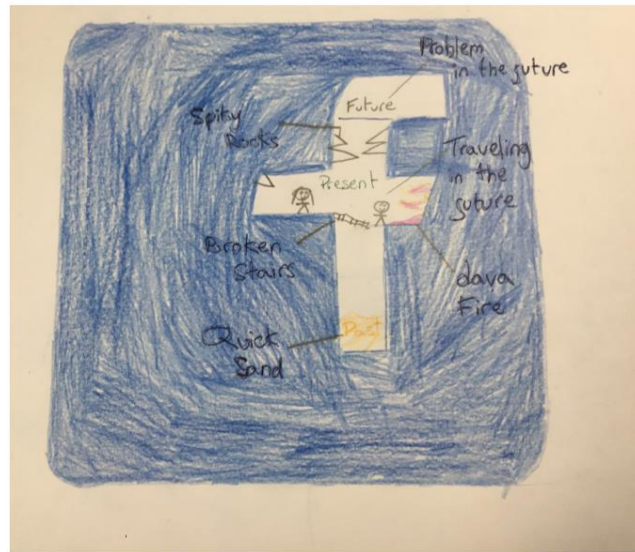


Fig. C6. Illustrate a character's thoughts at a moment in the story.

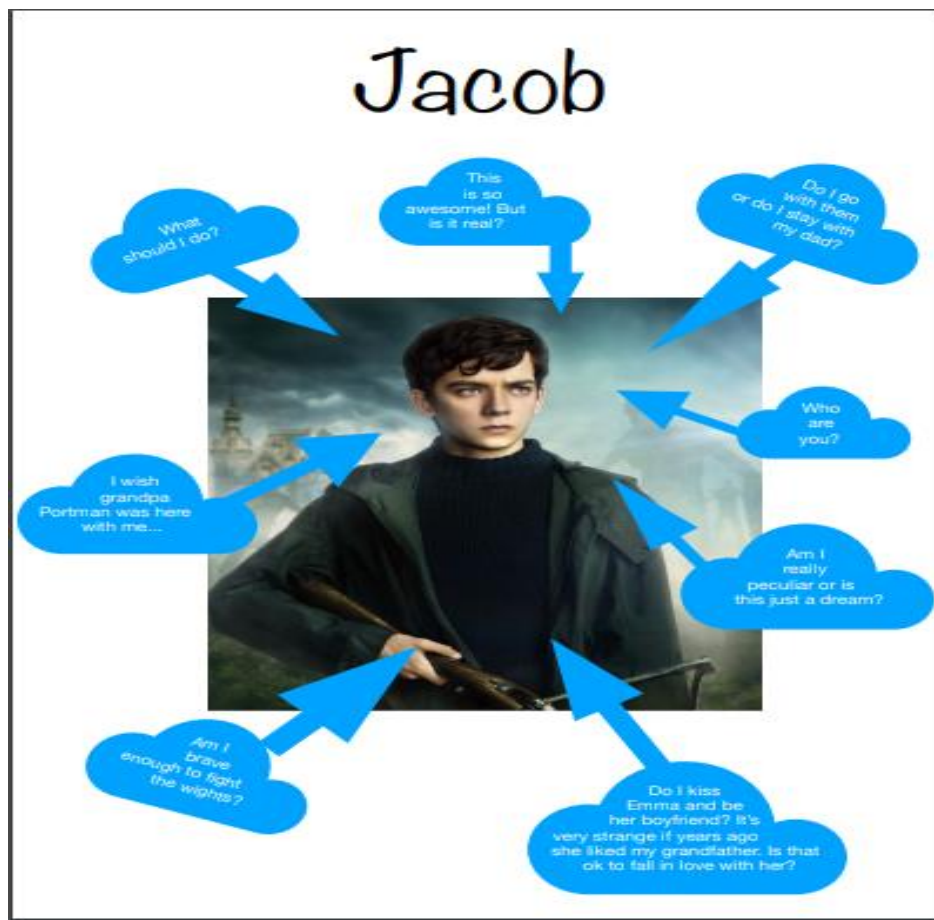


Fig. C7. Response to Activity: a list of ten questions.

Write a list of ten questions you would like to ask the character of your book.

- 1) What was the favorite parents you has been with?
- 2) Do you like your friends calling you Barry?
- 3) Did you have a good time with the sportive parents?
- 4) Why did you hate so much your parents at the start of the book?
- 5) Is your little sister the worst little sister you can imagine.
- 6) What is your favorite music band?
- 7) What is your worst nightmare?
- 8) Do you like football or basketball?
- 9) What's you're favorite book?
- 10) What's you're favorite activity to do in you're free time?

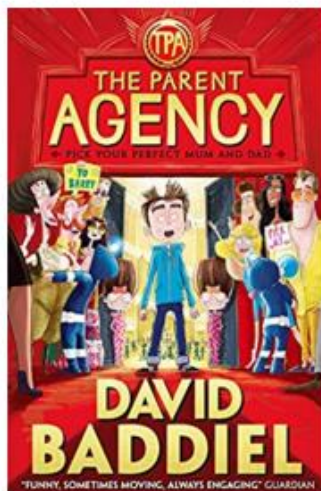
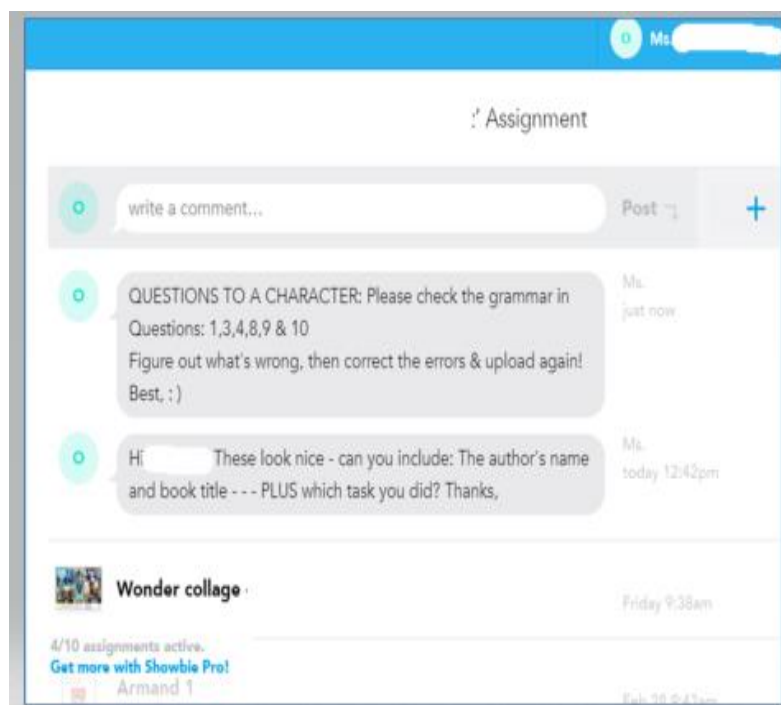
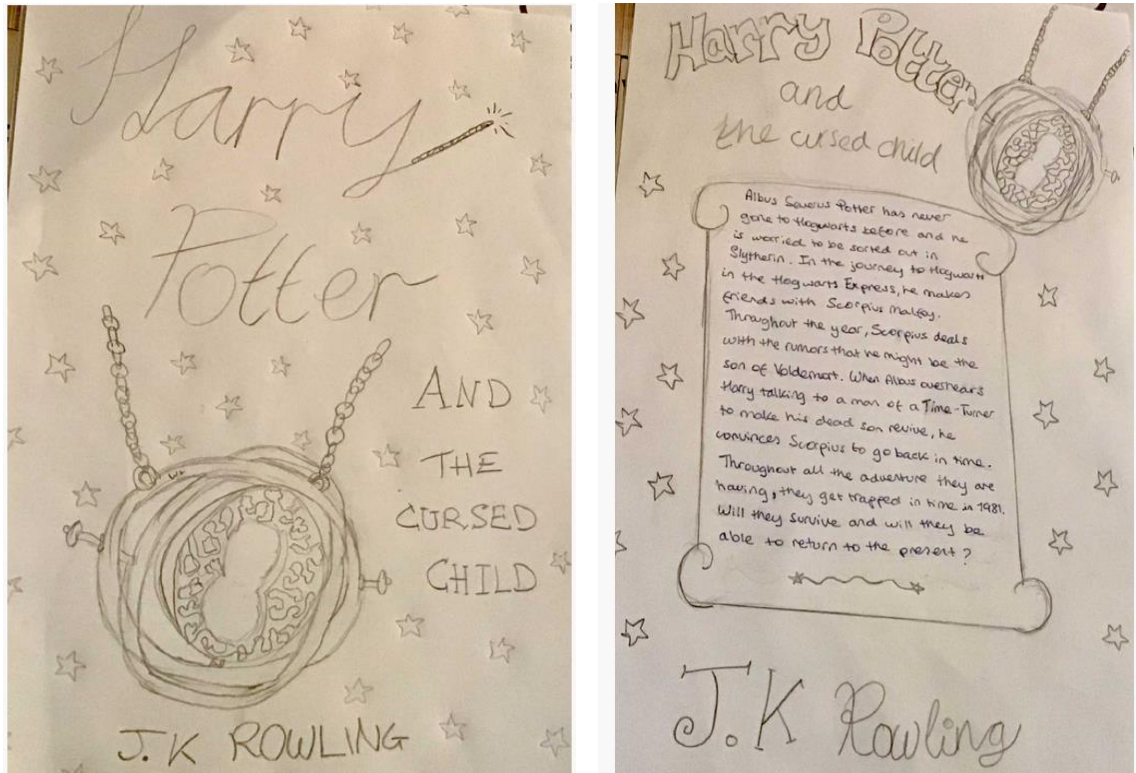


Fig. C8. Interaction on the Showbie app.



Appendix C9. One student's portfolio of submissions to the reading project.

Fig. C9 I. Submission one design a book cover



“Albus Potter has never been to Hogwarts before and he is worried about being sorted out in Slytherin. On the journey to Hogwarts in the Hogwarts Express, he makes friends with Scorpius Malfoy. Throughout the year, Scorpius deals with the rumours that he might be the son of Voldemort. When Albus hears Harry talking to a man of a time turner, to make his dead son revive, he convinces Scorpius to go back in time. Throughout all the adventure they are having they get trapped in time in 1981. Will they survive, and will they be able to return to the present?”

Fig. C9 II. submission two: a postcard from a character.

Dear mum and dad,

When you read this letter it will mean that you have been searching in my bedroom to see if I was there, because you haven't seen me for a while. It's a long story to tell and I know you are worried about me, but I'm fine. I only need you to trust me about what I will say in this card. I don't mind if you think I'm mad or I'm a psychopath, because I know I'm not, but I need you to read this postcard and think about what I'm saying. I also don't mind if the police or any other person in this entire world think I'm completely, remotely lunatic when you show them this letter to try and find me, but I preferred not to as it's something personal. I'll need my parents support, especially in this moment, as I'm in a difficult situation of life or death.

This summer, when grandpa Fortman died, I saw a monster with a white deathening look in his eyes and his enormous mouth with his sharp teeth, killing him in the dark forest near his house. I know it sounds as I'm crazy, but it's true. Grandpa Fortman had a peculiar ability that I have inherited from him. Yes, it's what you're thinking, he also saw monsters. All the scary stories he told me when I was little were true. Every single character that he explained to me where as real as I am now. The stories that he told me were not invented, they were the stories of Grandpa Fortman's childhood before you, father, were born. I suppose that you're frustrated because your father preferred to say it to his grandson before than to his own son, but don't be angry with him now, because it wasn't his fault. He didn't tell it to you because of a reason. It was because he knew you were not peculiar and he didn't want you to introduce you to this strange and dangerous situation during your childhood. He wanted you to live as an ordinary boy with an unknowledge of this other 'world' where you are always the same age and every day repeats, and for this, they don't have a future. He didn't want you to discover it, as there is a very small quantity of people in this world that have a PECULIAR ability and that they don't want to be seen by other people from another time. Peculiar. Strange. Unknown. They are people that have been and are stuck inside a loop of time, as I said before, they are always the same age. During this days, I have met some of this peculiar people that are now my friends. I met them at the house at the end of the street where I've been passing the time this past days. The friends I made were: Emma Bloom, is peculiar because of her ability to make fire with her hands; Enoch O'Connor,

is peculiar because of his ability to transform an object or a dead animal or person to life again with real hearts; Bronwyn Bruntly, is peculiar because she has the power to lift up any heavy thing, she has the ability of superhuman strength; Victor Bruntly, (Bronwyn Bruntly's brother) is peculiar because of the same ability as her sister, superhuman strength; Millard Nullings, is peculiar because he has the ability of being invisible; Claire Densmore, is peculiar because of having an extra mouth at the back of her head that is carnivorous; Fiona, is peculiar because she makes plants grow with her mind; Hugh, is peculiar because he has plenty of bees living inside his mouth; Horace, is peculiar because he has dreams about the future; the twins, they are peculiar because they are capable of turning a wight/hollow/monster into a stone and they also have a telepathic mind; Olive Abroholos Elephanta, is peculiar because she is lighter than air; Miss Avocet and Miss Peregrine are peculiar because they are ymbryne's that have the power to manipulate time and transform into a form of a bird, and finally, Grandpa Fortman and I are (Grandpa Fortman was) peculiar because we have/had the ability to see the wights. This have been my friends during this days and they will always be.

One of the days we went out of this loop and we saw some wights that wanted to get hold of us. The wights are some type of human monsters that are desperate to kill peculiar people. They are hollows that killed Grandpa Fortman, and for this, as I'm also a peculiar person, when they find me they will also want to kill me. They have already tried to kill me and my peculiar friends one of this days at night, but we have survived.

Mum, Dad, I'm sorry not to tell you all this information face to face, because I didn't have time before leaving. Before you read even further, I want you to know that it has been a very difficult decision to make and that I'll always remember you, but I'm going to live with them forever. To another loop, because this one has been destroyed. There are small chances that I'll see you and the rest of the family again, but I wanted you to know that I'll take care of myself and I'll bring you and the rest of the family in my heart forever.

Lots of love and an enormous hug from your son, Jacob. ❤️

P.D: doctor Gollan, my psychiatrist, was a wight/hollow.

Fig. C9 III. submission three: word cloud of new vocabulary.

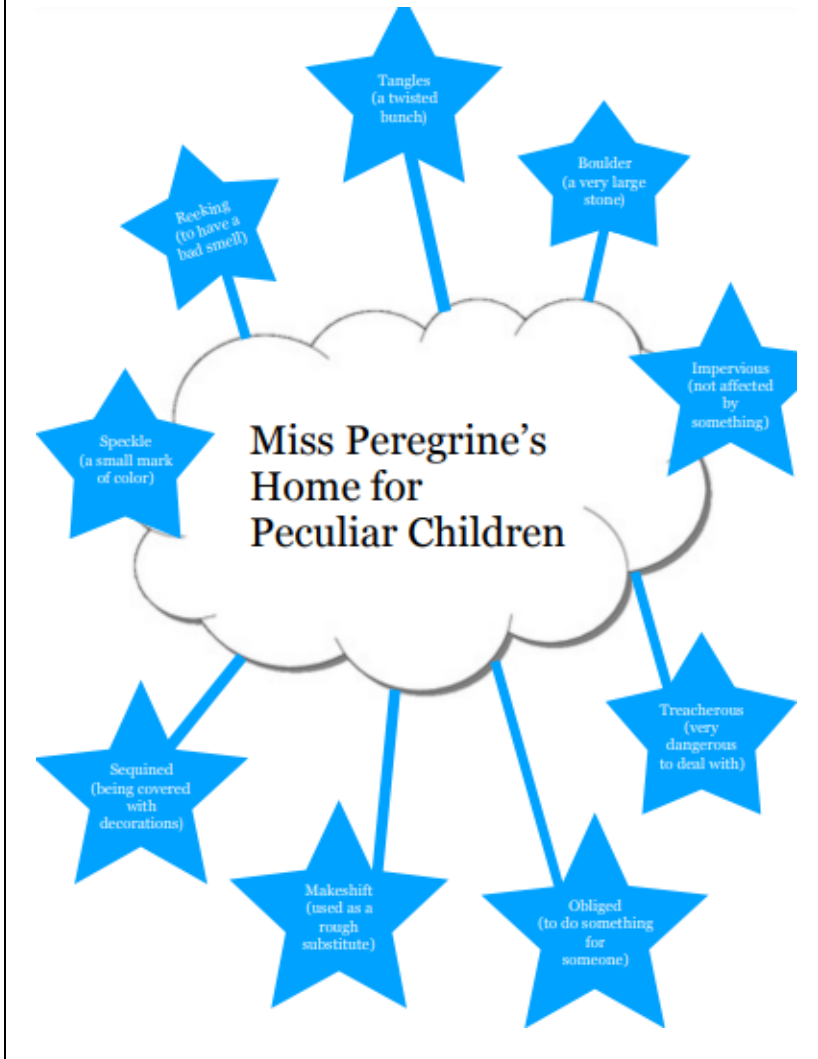


Fig. C9 IV. submission four: 10 questions.



Millard Nullings:

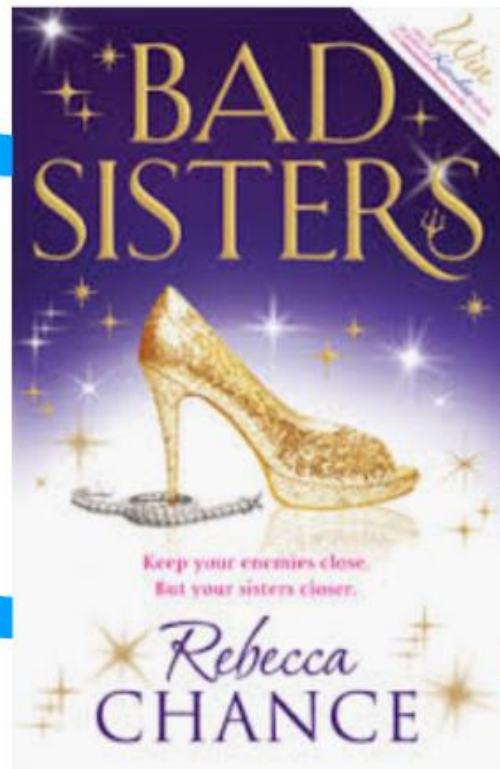
- 1) *How did you become invisible?*
- 2) *How old were you when you knew you and your friends were peculiar?*
- 3) *Did you know you had this special ability of being invisible since you were born?*
- 4) *Can you pass through walls or other objects?*
- 5) *Do you make noise when you walk, or when you walk you are a few centimeters up from the floor?*
- 6) *Do you sometimes sneak out to hear other people's conversations?*
- 7) *Have you ever made yourself look like a normal person and never been caught as a peculiar one?*
- 8) *Do you eat normal or special food? Do you even eat?*
- 9) *Can you touch and sense people?*
- 10) *Is/was someone of your family invisible or are you the first generation of your family to be it?*

Fig. C9 V. submission five: a prediction from the book's cover.

1) One of the things that I think will happen in the story, is that there will be a terrific fight between sisters that will make their lives change forever, and maybe get to the point of killing someone. I think this, because of what the small sentence in the front cover says (*Keep your enemies close, but your sisters closer*), and for what the title of the book is (*Bad Sisters*).

2) Secondly, I think that the main characters of the story will be some sisters that will need to control every step of their sisters because they may be up to something, that will take them to prison.

Finally, I think that there will be a moment in the story related with this splendid high heel shoe, that it will be the reason for the story's problem and evolution.



3) Thirdly, supporting the perspective of before, they/the sisters, may need to control every step of their sisters, as they may be in a serious trouble, by stealing in a jewelry.

Description of it's front cover:

The front cover of this book is mainly decorated with the colors: purple, yellow/gold and white. It has a gold sparkling heel shoe with a silver shiny necklace surrounding the high heel. There is a small sentence written in pink that give us a clue of what the story could be about and makes it mysterious. The name of the author is written in purple and with a cursive letter, and her surname also in purple, but bigger and without being cursive. It's title is written in gold, with an enormous letter that excels from it's front cover. It also has loads of shiny white and gold stars. For all of this, it makes it stand out from the others and makes it attractive.

4) Another thing that I think will be involved in the story, is that it will be in a castle or mansion very luxurious with loads of expensive jewelry. I think this because of the shiny high heel shoe in the front cover.

Fig. C9 VI. submission six: drawing & ten facts.

Hermione Granger



1) I'm a muggle-born, but this doesn't stop me being the best student in the year.

2) I'm brave, intelligent and I'm obsessed with books/book-lover. Literally, I've read ALL of them.

3) I'm a hard worker student and I'm really good at it, but I have more difficulty in socializing with other people, fortunately, I've got Ron and Harry that are my best friends.

4) I have sometimes been bullied by people like Draco Malfoy because of being a Muddblood, but I'm proud of it and I'm not going to hide anything from them .

5) I've had moments in which all the students from Hogwarts have looked at me during a period of time. One of the times in which they've looked at me, is when I was in the first year and I was seated in front of everyone in the Hogwarts Hall, waiting for the Sorting Hats' decision, whether I'd be sorted out at Gryffindor, Slytherin, Hufflepuff or Ravenclaw.

6) I've also had moments at class time, in which I've been pointed out and for this, embarrassed. An example for this, is at Professor Snape's lessons, saying that I'm a know it all/smarty.

7) On the other hand, I've had moments in which all students eyes were on top of me, not because I've been pointed out in the wrong way, but for looking extraordinary. At the year when we did the Goblet of fire, where we had to dress up and go with a pair to the ball. As I went with someone participating in the Goblet of Fire Tournament, Victor Krum, we entered the ball bewildering everyone and we had the chance to be one of the first pairs to start the dance ball.

8) Sometimes I've got angry with Ron and/or Harry because I couldn't stand them anymore because of their silliness, and the spot where I always went was to the library.

9) The lessons that I most hated were Divination lessons. I was always the teacher's favourite student and top of the class/year, but I always struggled with this lesson. One day I stormed out of the class, when the teacher, professor Trelawney, told me that I didn't have the skills for it.

10) In my second year at Hogwarts I was almost going to die by a Basilisk if I looked at it with my own eyes. Fortunately, I didn't die but I got petrified, as I didn't look directly into its gaze. As I investigated in the library about this situation, I read that for precaution, you would not die seeing the Basilisk's eyes through a mirror, than seeing them with you bare eyes. So I always wore a mirror on top of me, just in case.

Fig. C9 VII. submission seven: a comic strip illustrating an event.

Lying About Last Summer

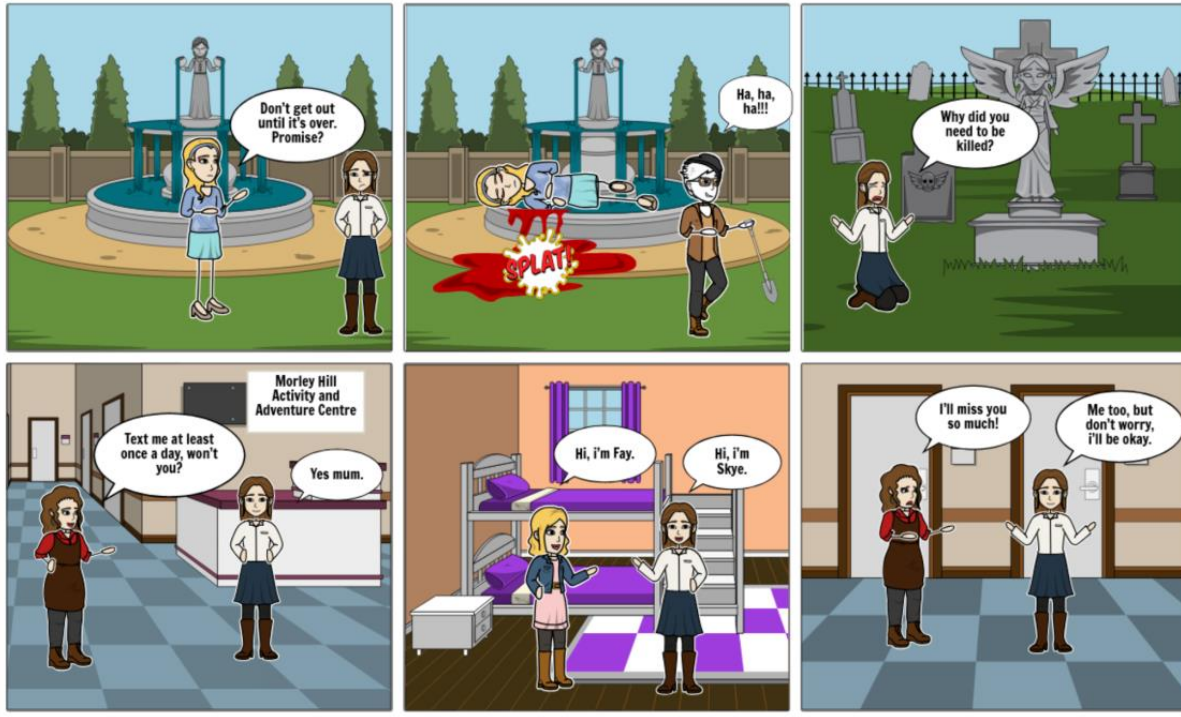
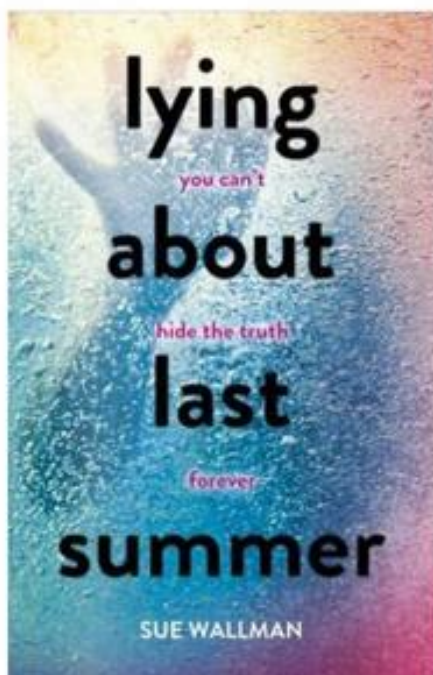


Fig. C9 VIII. submission eight: a letter to the author of your book.

Dear author,

I am in the middle of reading the book you have written, *Lying about last summer*, and even though I haven't finished reading the book, I couldn't wait writing to you. I am so inside of the book, that I'm looking forward to finishing it. Since my grandmother gave it to me some days ago, I couldn't stand not reading it, because the blurb at the back of it made me feel intrigued, especially at the part where you mention that Skye's sister is dead and that when she goes to a summer camp, she then receives messages from her dead sister. This part from the blurb made me want to read it, i felt so intrigued! Coming to the point for why I've written to you, is because I have so many questions to ask you about it, that I don't know where to start from!

At the first page at the beginning, when you dedicated it to your sister, 'To my sister, Clare, who inspires me,' why and how does she inspire you? Did you have the idea yourself, or has your family or some friends told you this idea? If not, how did you get the idea of receiving messages from a dead sister of Skye? Now, getting to the point, apart from writing your own books, do you then read them or do you leave them in your shelf as another of your written books? I'm so joyful waiting for your interview in the television next week, explaining all about your written books. For then, I'll have already finished reading '*Lying about Last Summer.*' Hope that you talk about this book in the interview.



Appendix D: Artefacts from the Romeo and Juliet work unit

Fig. D1. Shakespeare Factsheet Instructions

SHAKESPEARE FACTSHEET


Who for?

Visitors at family day!

What should I include?

- Shakespeare's life
- life in the theatre when he was living
- his plays
- modern Shakespeare

REFER TO YOUR TASK SHEET FOR DETAILS!



Shakespeare Mini Research Project

Create a factsheet William Shakespeare. Include details about his life, life in the theatre when he was living, his plays, and modern Shakespeare.

1 - Shakespeare's Early Life

- Where was Shakespeare born and raised?
- Why did Shakespeare move to London?
- What would Shakespeare's life have been like there?

IMAGES: include pictures of Elizabethan London

2 - The Theatre in Shakespeare's Time

- What was it like to perform in the Globe Theatre?
- How would watching a play be different in Shakespeare's time compared to now?
- Who performed in plays?
- Who went to the theatre?

IMAGES: include pictures of The Globe theatre (then and now!)

3 - Shakespeare's Plays

- Find out the names of 5 of Shakespeare's plays
- What three categories/types do Shakespearean plays fall into?










IMAGES: include images of the costumes and of famous characters from his plays

4 - Modern Shakespeare

- Find out about modern versions of Shakespeare plays. Which of his plays have been made into films for teenagers?
- Have you seen any of these films? If so, write down your views.
 - o *Spoken!* Can you also find out about a Disney film that's based on a Shakespeare play?

Fig. D2. Picture prompts to help students retell the story of Pyramus & Thisbe

"PYRAMUS & THISBE"

Activity: Use the picture prompts to retell the story in your own words!

Fig D3. Capulet Ball Task Instructions

CHARACTER MASKS

Pick one character: Romeo, Juliet, Lord Capulet, Tybalt, Mercutio, or Benvolio. Create a mask that represents their character!

Consider their: attitudes, actions, emotions.

Think about the **symbolism** of the colours and patterns that you choose... **LOOK-** <http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/meaning-colors.htm>

This project has two parts - the mask itself and the written explanation/ **rationale** of the choices you made!

The rationale should be about 100-150 words.



THE MASK DESIGN PROCESS

- **Scan** the play
- **Highlight** clues about your character
- Examine their interactions
- Write some ideas in your notebook connected to the **colours** and **patterns** they should wear

THEN GET STARTED ON
YOUR DESIGN!

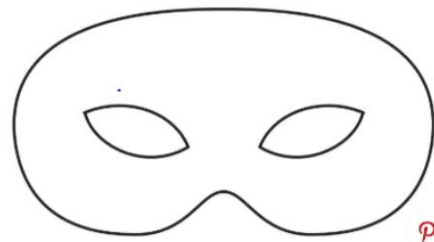


Fig. D4. The classroom mask display and an example of a mask design and rationale.



Rationale:
I chose to do Mercutio's mask because he is a very different character compared to all of the other ones. He is very crazy and that's the reason why I chose to paint the mask with a lot of colours and draw a lot of abstract shapes. I also drew at the up-right part of the mask the letter 'M' for Mercutio. I coloured it in silver colour because it belongs to him. I only chose happy colours because they stick out more and it's perfect for Mercutio. I would have coloured the back of the mask in colour black because the abstract shapes would stick out more but I couldn't.

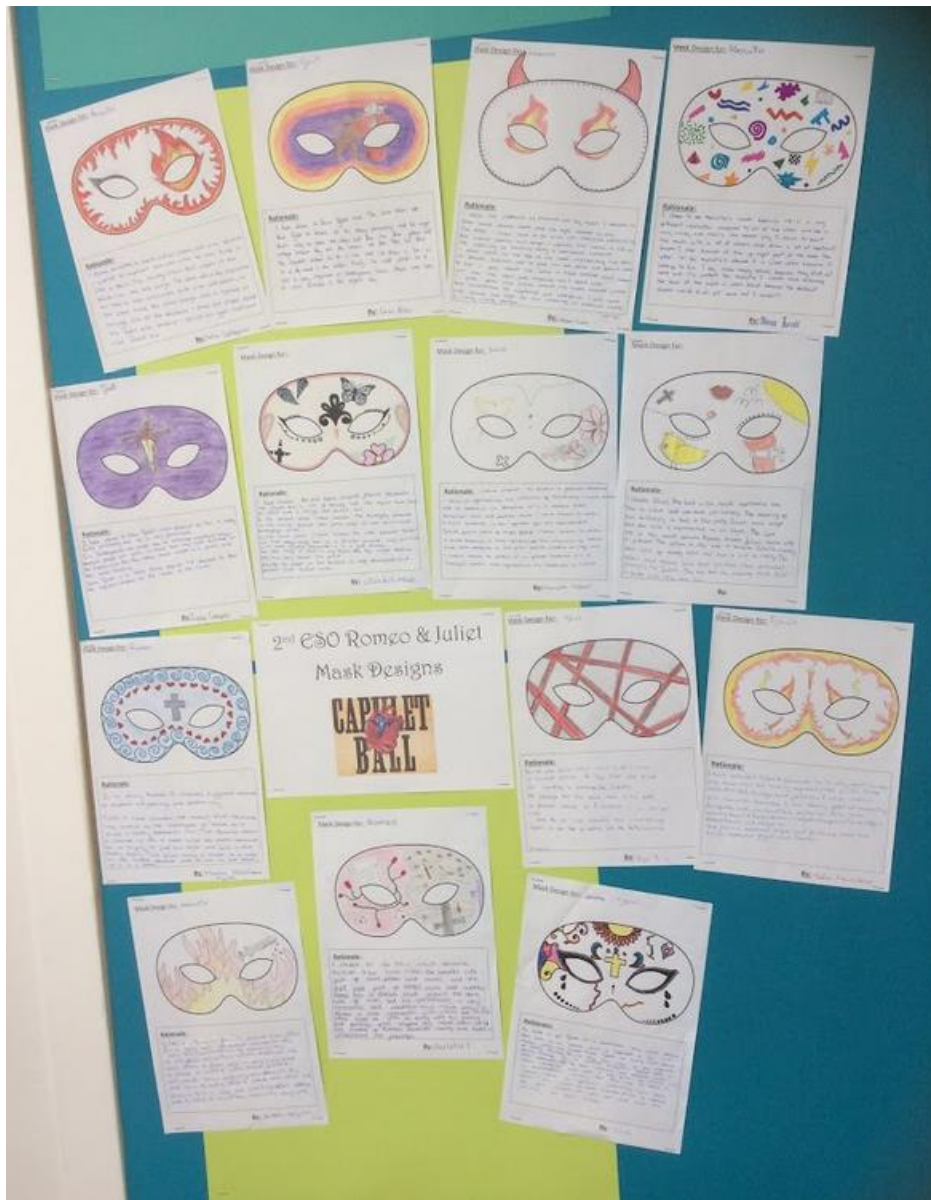


Fig. D5. Gap fill task focusing on Romeo's use of language when he sees Juliet.

ROMEO SEES JULIET

Here are the missing words - what do you notice about them? How do they add drama?

O, she doth teach the _____ to burn _____!

It seems she hangs upon the _____ of _____

Like a _____ in an **Ethiophe's** ear;

_____ too _____ for use, for earth too dear.

So **shows** a _____ **trooping** with _____,

As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.

The **measure** done, I'll watch her place of stand

And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.

Did my _____ till now? **Forswear** it, sight,

For I ne'er saw _____ till this night.

Bright, rich, rich
jewel, torches,
cheek, night, crows,
snowy dove, heart
love, true beauty,
Beauty

THINK: How does Shakespeare make the moment dramatic?

Language
study

Dossier p52

Fig. D6. Structuring the *Romeo and Juliet* Essay.

PEAL ESSAY PLAN

Ideas for the intro:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Focus for p1:

Key quote(s):

Focus for p3:

Key quote(s):

Focus for p2:

Key quote(s):

HOW DOES SHAKESPEARE MAKE ACT I
SCENE V DRAMATICALLY EFFECTIVE?

Fig. D7. Structuring the *Romeo and Juliet* Essay.

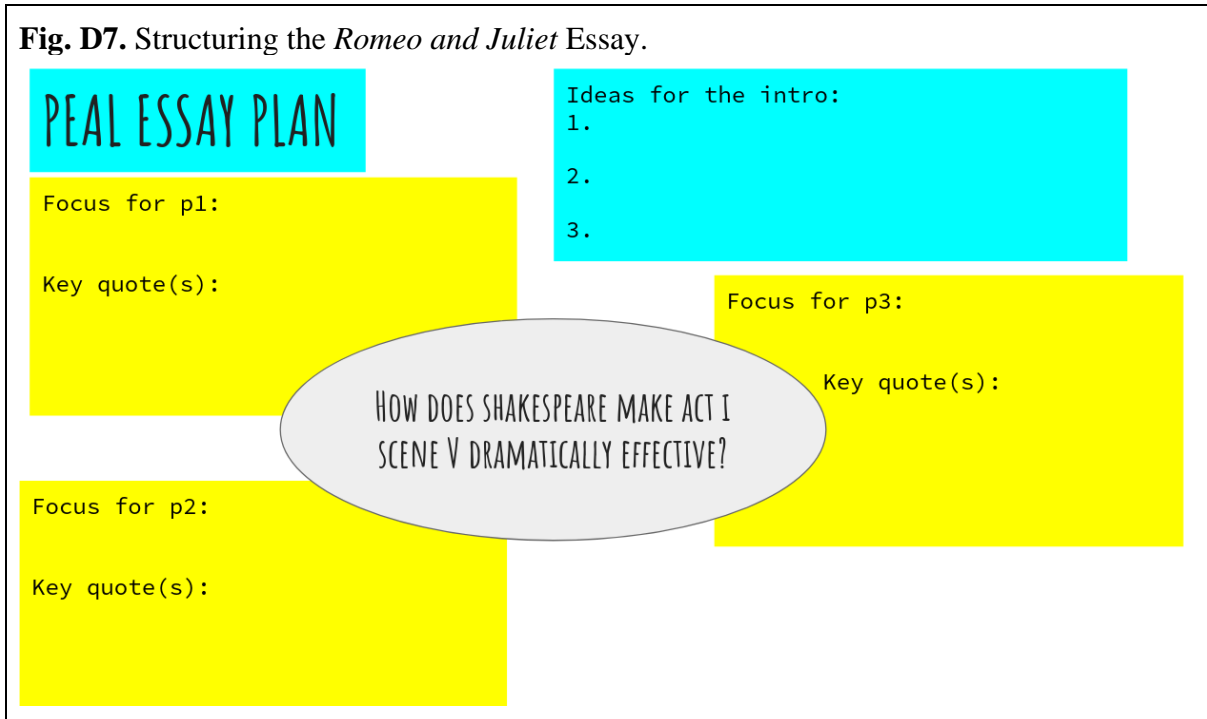


Fig. D8. Structuring the *Romeo and Juliet* Essay.

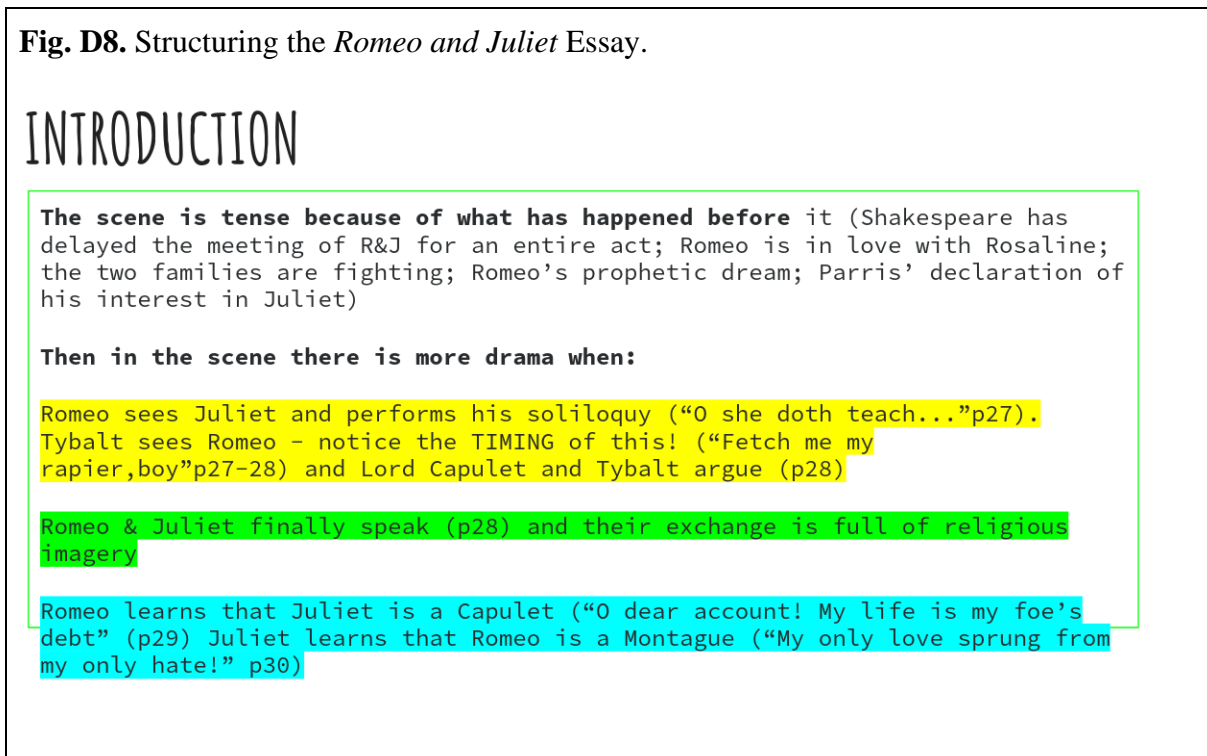


Fig. D9. Structuring the Romeo and Juliet Essay.

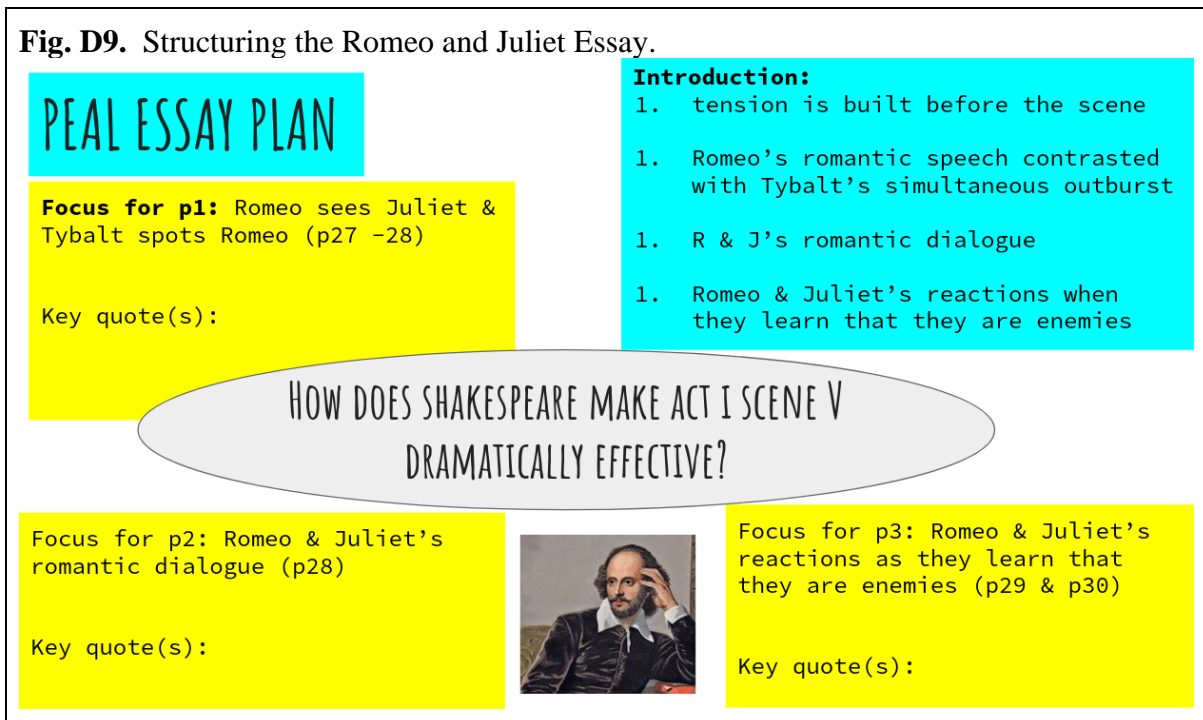


Fig. D10 Structuring the Romeo and Juliet Essay.

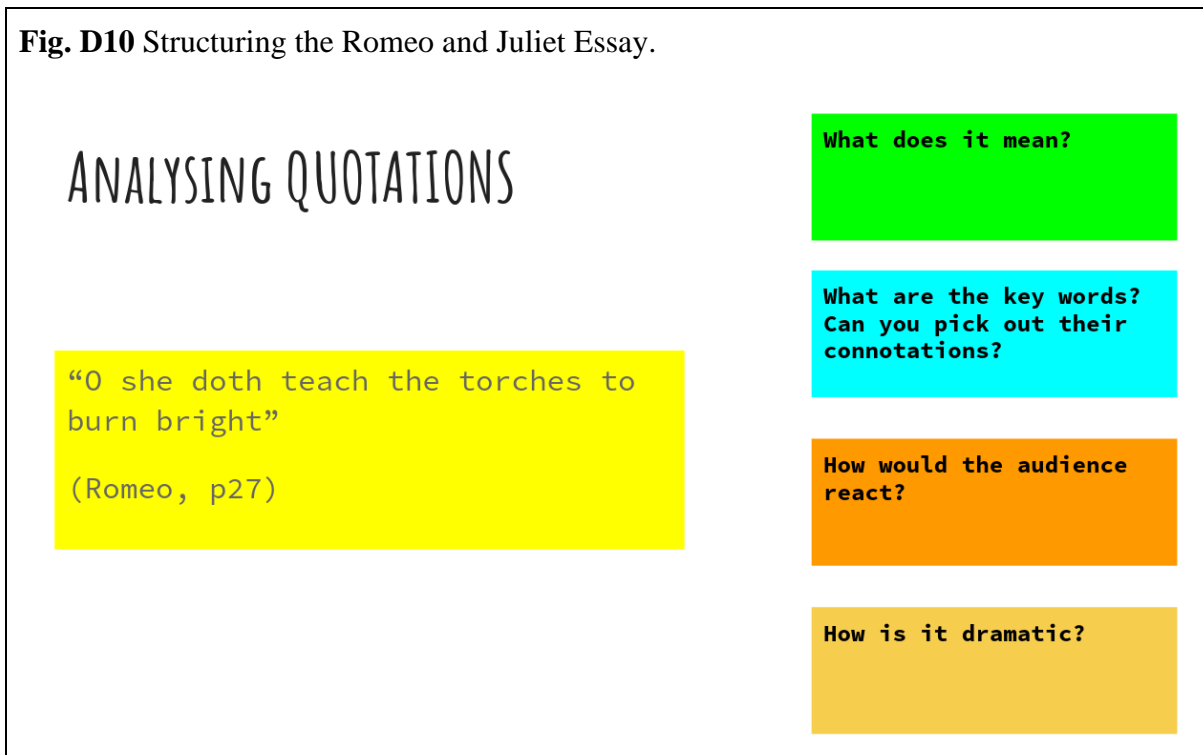


Fig. D11. Balcony Scene Model Marking Criteria.

Marking criteria

9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is developed to a very high standard and shows consistent evidence of thought and reflection. • Presentation of work is excellent. • Analysis of quotes is detailed and accurate.
7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is generally well-developed and shows some evidence of thought and reflection. • Presentation of work is very good. • Analysis of quotes is generally detailed and accurate.
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some work is well-developed and shows some evidence of thought and reflection. • Presentation of work is good. • Quotes are well chosen and analysed.
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is not well-developed and shows little evidence of thought and reflection. • Presentation of work is poor. • Quotes are accurately analysed.
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is not well-developed and shows almost no evidence of thought and reflection. • Presentation of work is poor. • Little evidence of quote analysis.

Fig. D12. 3D Balcony scene model.



Appendix E: Data from the *Romeo and Juliet* Questionnaire

Fig. E1. Numerical rating of the tasks

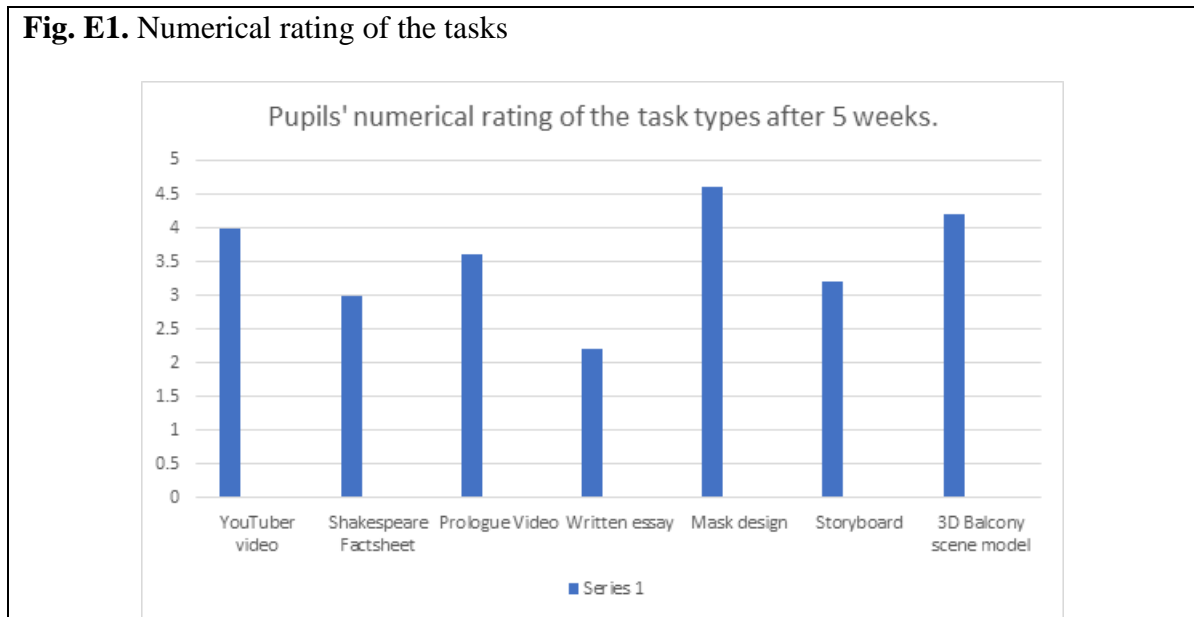


Fig. E2. Pupils' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of the YouTuber task

Pupil rating: 61/75 (based on 15 pupils giving a score out of 5). Average 4/5		
Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
planning-preparation	2	7, 11
fun-interesting-enjoy	2	9, 10
collaboration-pair	1	15
creative-artistic-imaginative	4	2, 8, 1, 10
It helped me understand	1	10
different-unique-novel	1	5
recording/filming	3	4, 15, 3
Modern	1	13
Acting - choosing a persona	2	14, 9
No drawback	2	14, 16
Embarrassing-shy	2	1, 13
Time limits- not enough editing time	3	2, 5, 8
Planning	1	4
Not showing in class	1	7

Fig. E3. Pupils' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of the Shakespeare Fact Sheet

Rating: 48 /80 (based on 16 pupils giving a score out of 5). Average score 3/5		
Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
Interesting-informative - factual - learning	8	1, 11, 8, 5, 7, 9, 10, 15
Research - online- finding	6	1, 5, 7, 9, 4, 15
Collaboration- pairwork	1	15
Making the factsheet	1	4,
No drawback	2	15, 9
Missed opportunity to share/ present upon completion	1	14
Not fun - boring	2	7, 10
Some of the topics/ categories were limited/ unexciting	2	3, 13
Collaboration -pairwork- levels of effort- working with the same partner	2	5, 2
Too much writing- too long	2	11, 8

Fig E4. Pupils' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of the prologue video task

Rating: 47 /65 (based on 13 pupils giving a score out of 5). Average score 3.6 /5		
Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
The story	1	1
Learning styles - visual - slideshow	2	11, 4
Learning styles - aural - speaking - melodic - old English- rhythm	3	8, 15, 7
Collaboration -pairs - satisfaction working with a partner - works well	1	4
Fun	2	3, 2
Production - video - filming - editing	3	4, 15, 14
No drawback	2	1, 15
Pronunciation- difficult	1	11
Boring information - dislike content - poetry	2	3, 9
Missed opportunity to present - evaluate - receive feedback	1	7

Fig. E5. Pupils' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of the traditional essay task

Rating: 35/80 (based on 16 pupils giving a score out of 5). Average score 2.2 /5		
Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
Learning- understanding - familiarity with the play - practising skills	3	11, 2, 7
Using your own evidence - opinions	3	4, 12, 13
The collaborative part	1	3
Background music	1	3
I was good at it - fun - like writing - interesting	3	1, 5, 8
No drawback	1	12
Tiring - long	2	2, 13
Prefer active or creative tasks	2	15, 7
Boring -repetitive - intense	3	9, 5, 8
I don't like writing - PEAL - too many paragraphs	4	14, 10, 4, 11, 7
Time - too many consecutive days	2	9, 16
Time - insufficient	1	2

Fig. E6. Pupils' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of the mask design task

Rating: 74/80 (based on 16 pupils giving a score out of 5). Average score 4.6 /5		
Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
Creative - imagination - artistic -design - drawing	11	7, 2, 15, 13, 12, 11, 8, 5, 10, 4, 14
Enjoyable - love - fun - relaxing - calm - entertaining	4	15, 3, 8, 16
Engagement - thinking about the character - learning	3	11, 8, 10
Choice of focus/ character	1	9
No drawback	5	7, 15, 12, 8, 5, 9
Individual - not collaborative	1	2
Writing the rationale - difficult - long	4	3, 13, 4, 16
Made an error- bad start - lost motivation	1	14

Fig. E7. Pupils’ perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of the storyboard task

Rating: 52 /80 (based on 16 pupils giving a score out of 5). Average score 3.2 /5		
Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
Creative - fun - cool - like - different - memorable - nice	8	16, 1, 10, 8, 12, 11, 2, 3
Drawing - artistic - combination with writing	3	4, 15, 7
Collaborative- pairs	1	4
Learning	2	12, 3
It didn’t have to be perfect	1	3
Finding & working with quotes	4	14, 12, 11, 13
Pace - quick	2	4, 5

Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
No drawbacks	3	16, 15, 7
Time limitations	5	14, 10, 8, 11, 12
I missed a class - difficult	3	9, 5, 13
Collaboration - imbalance of effort	1	10
Unfair for people who can’t drawer	1	2

Fig. E8. Pupils’ perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of the Balcony Scene Model Task


Rating: 68 /80 (based on 16 pupils giving a score out of 5). Average score 4.2 /5		
Theme	Instances	Pupil Number
Creative - imagination -making	10	13, 3, 5, 8, 16, 1, 4, 2, 7, 15
Learning - learning styles - mixed	4	3, 10, 11, 12
Fun - love - disconnect- amazing	5	1, 10, 2, 7, 5
Collaboration - pairs	2	5, 15
Language- remembering quotes	1	12
No drawback	5	3, 10, 11, 7, 15
The result - didn’t meet expectations	1	8

Workload - too much to do - would be better in threes than pairs -	1	5
Time constraints -	2	5, 16
Problems with collaboration- inequality	2	12, 2
Lack of skills	1	9

Appendix F: Sample student portfolio for *Romeo and Juliet*

Fig. F1. Leaflet showing information about the life and works of William Shakespeare.

SHAKESPEARE



INFLUENCE

- He influence European theatre by characterisation plot, language and genre. Characterisation by showing how the characters were before and after the play. Language by changing the English language to one witch is much more like our language.
- English change in Elizabeth times because as there were lots of wars, lots of word used in Shakespeare's play were from foreign language.

SHAKESPEARE'S MOST POPULAR PLAYS WERE:


- **HAMLET** - It was written in 1600, it's about a child who thinks about live instead of killing.
- **MACBETH** - It was written in 1605, it's about a Scottish lord how is persuaded by three witches to murder his wife.
- **KING LEAR** - It was written in 1905, it's about King Lear dividing his territory between his children.
- **ROMEO AND JULIET** - It was written in 1594 it's a about the children enemies families fall in love.

SHAKESPEARE BIOGRAPHY

William Shakespeare was baptized on the 26 April of 1564. He died in 23 April 1616 aged 52. He was an English poet, play writer and actor. Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. At the age of 18 he married Anne Hathaway with whom he had three children: Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith.

TUDOR TIMES

The Tudor period started between 1485 and 1603 in England and Wales and which included the Elizabeth period. At those times people had many sports to play and entertainment. They played: jousting, pitching the Bar, throwing the sledgehammer, leaping, Shin-kicking (with iron tipped boots), sword fighting and performing headstands. Banquets were very popular in this period. Feasts were served for the rich people but the other people who were not rich also organized banquets.



THE GLOBE THEATRE

Globe Theatre was built in London in 1599 by Shakespeare's playing company. Later it was destroyed by a fire on 29 June in 1613. After this event, a second theatre was built in the same exact site by June 1614 but closed by an ordinance issue. In 1997 a modern reconstruction of the Globe named Shakespeare's Globe was built.




Fig. F2. Task two: transcript of the *YouTuber* version of *Pyramus and Thisbe*

The presenter slides into the frame on a wheelie chair

M: What's up guys so today I'm going to talk about the story of Pyramus and Thisbe.

The presenter spins on the chair with her hands in the air

Welcome to my YouTube channel. So today I'm gonna talk about a myth that inspired William Shakespeare. Pyramus and Thisbe were rivals but they fell in love

Presenter smiles and makes a heart shape with her hands

But their families didn't want them to be together. But in the gardens they found a chink in the wall where they could talk to each other and kiss. They decide to meet by a mulberry tree so they can always be together.

Screen edit: new cut to show the presenter with another student in the background acting as the lion.

So the lion already had blood because he had already killed someone. Then Thisbe went to the mulberry tree and saw a big lion.

Acting: the presenter puts her scarf on her head to represent Thisbe's scarf and the student playing the lion begins to act aggressively and growl

And she accidentally dropped her scarf.

The presenter drops her prop and there is a new cut to show only the presenter.

And then Pyramus found Thisbe's scarf.

The other student that previously played the lion now plays Thisbe and acts out finding the scarf.

And he thought she was dead

Pyramus gasps *Oh no*

so he killed himself

Pyramus mimes stabbing himself in the chest.

Then Thisbe went to the tree and saw Thisbe dead. So, she killed herself.

Thisbe mimes stabbing herself and falling to the floor.

New screen cut to show both students, one with their hand together above their head to represent the mulberry tree. The other with a block of red plasticine to represent the blood in the myth of the mulberries.

So, then the fruit was falling to red because of the blood.

New screen edit to show only the presenter in shot.

Thanks for watching and I hope you enjoyed it.

Presenter gestures with two fingers in a salute to the audience.

New screen with black background and white text THANKS FOR WATCHING

Fig. F3. Task three: prologue video

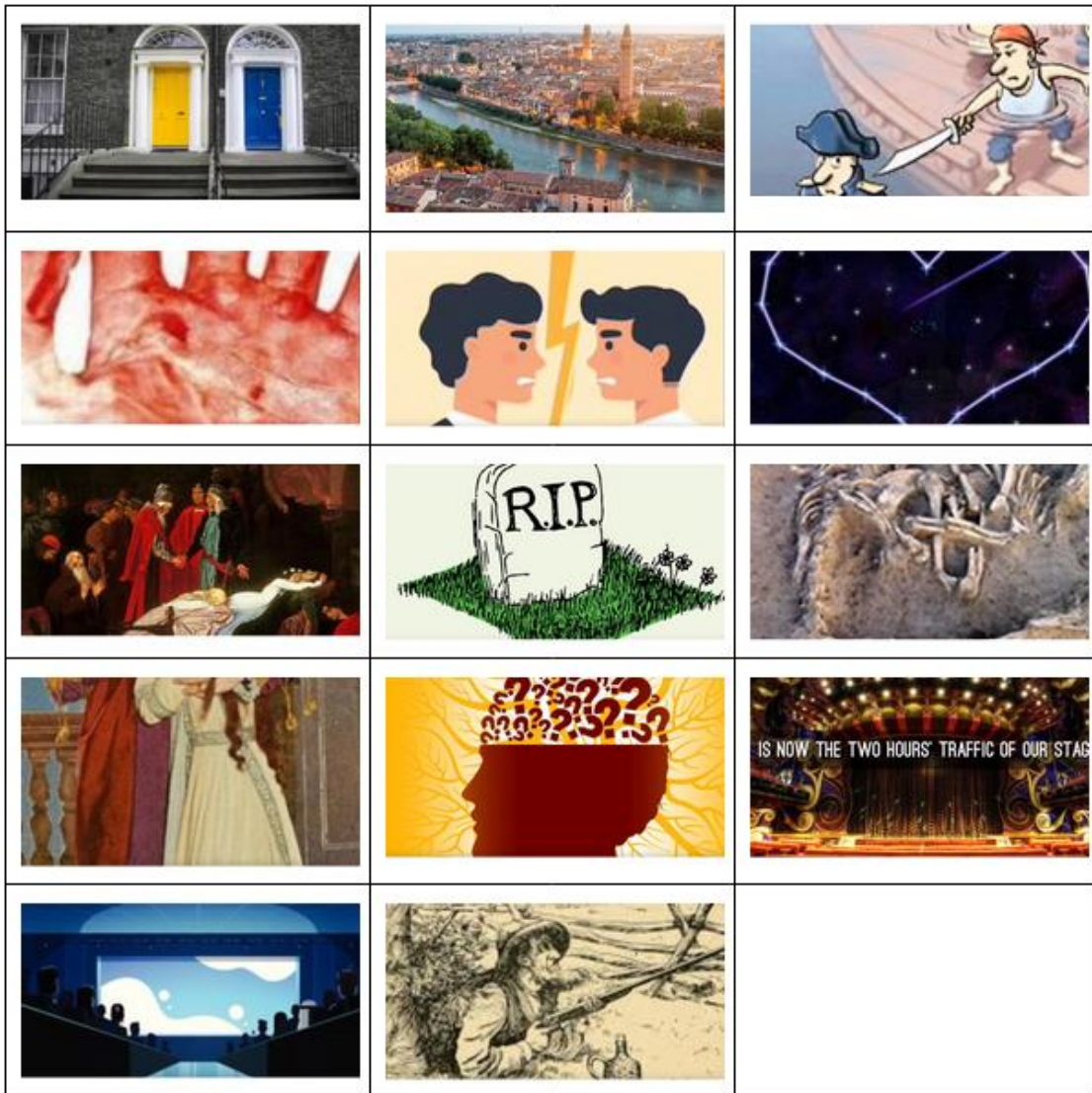
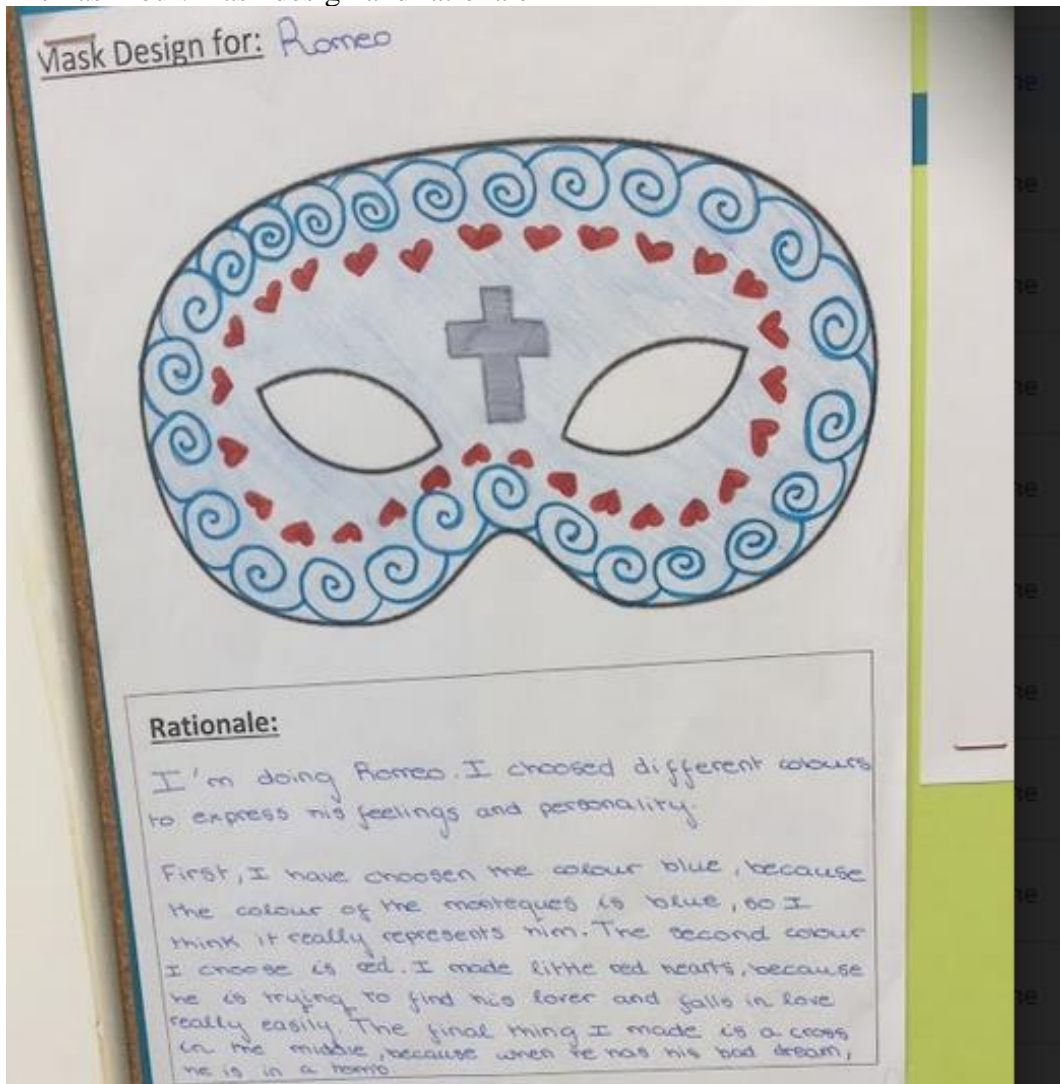


Fig. F4. Task four: mask design and rationale



Wednesday 22 January

HOW DOES SHAKESPEARE MAKE ACT I SCENE V DRAMATICALLY EFFECTIVE?

Throughout the play, we can see how Romeo, makes act 1 scene 5 dramatically effective. We can see all the dramatic moments, for example, when Romeo and Juliet meet, when they find out they are enemies, or when they kiss.

Firstly, Shakespeare transmits to us Romeo's reaction to when he watches Juliet for the first time. "O she doth teach the torches to burn bright". This shows the reader, how Romeo falls instantly in love with Juliet, and the words "burn bright" are adjectives that Shakespeare used to describe her. These makes a dramatic scene, because the audience want to be involved in the play, for how Romeo is expressing how he felt about Juliet and how beautiful she is with a poem. It also makes a dramatically effective scene to the audience, because many people know that the play is going to end badly, because the two characters are both going to die, so this makes the audience feel nervous.

Another dramatic scene in the play, is when Romeo and Juliet kiss. "O then dear saint, let lips do what hands do: they pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair". In this quote, we can clearly understand, that after Romeo sees Juliet, he wants to kiss her. This makes a dramatically effective scene because when they are finally kissing, Juliet takes her eyes away from Romeo because, she is not supposed to be with Romeo, she is supposed to be with Paris (a suitor), and she is worried that her mum watches her kissing Romeo. This also makes a dramatic scene, because it is a very important event in the play, when they finally kiss, and it's also romantic.

Thirdly another important event in the story, is when Romeo and Juliet find out they are both from different families, and that they are enemies. "is she a capulet? O dear account! My life is my foe's debt". This shows how effectively sad Romeo is, because, he loved her, and didn't know since that moment, that she was a capulet. This makes a dramatic scene because, they both like each other, but they are enemies, so they can't be together. It makes the audience feel furious and annoyed because, they want both of them to be together. And we all know that it's not going to end well.

In conclusion, in this play the audience felt dramatically effective, many times, because the majority of people know what's going to happen next, so we all feel, sad, happy and angry in many scenes of the play.

Fig. F6. Task six: balcony scene storyboard

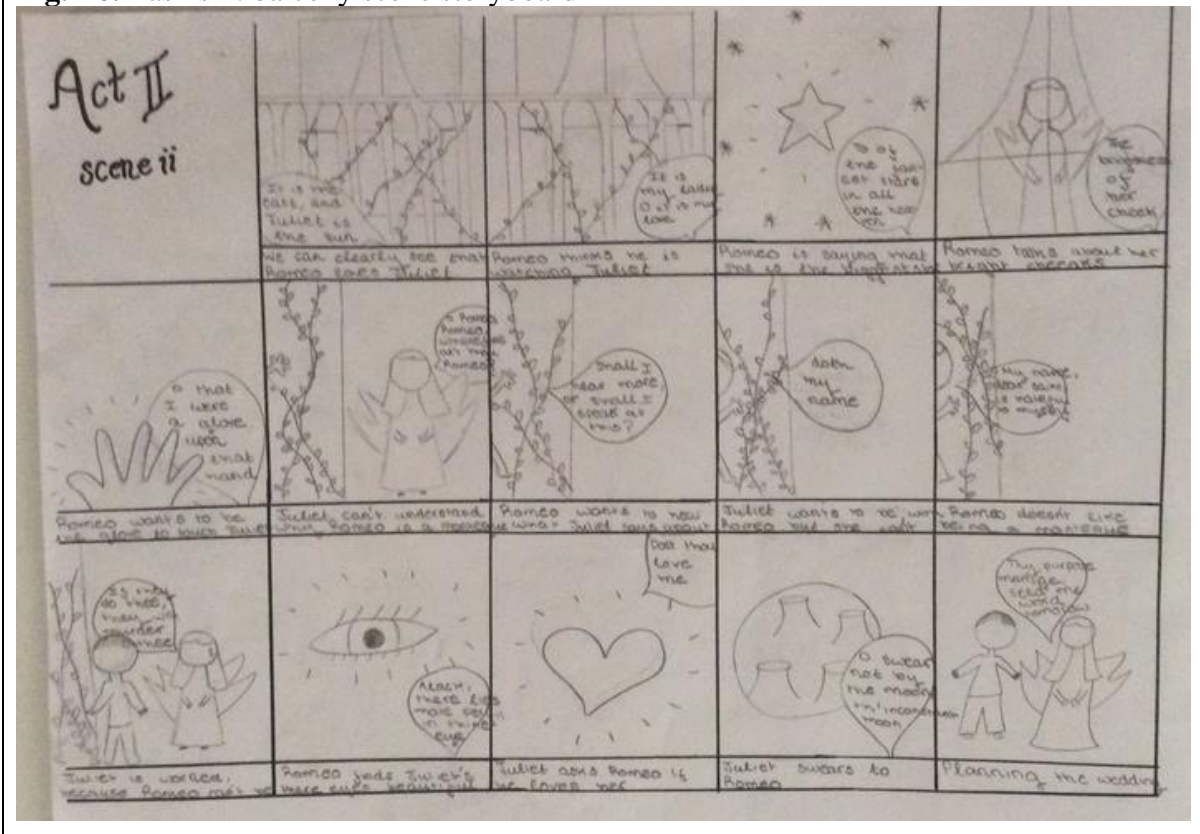
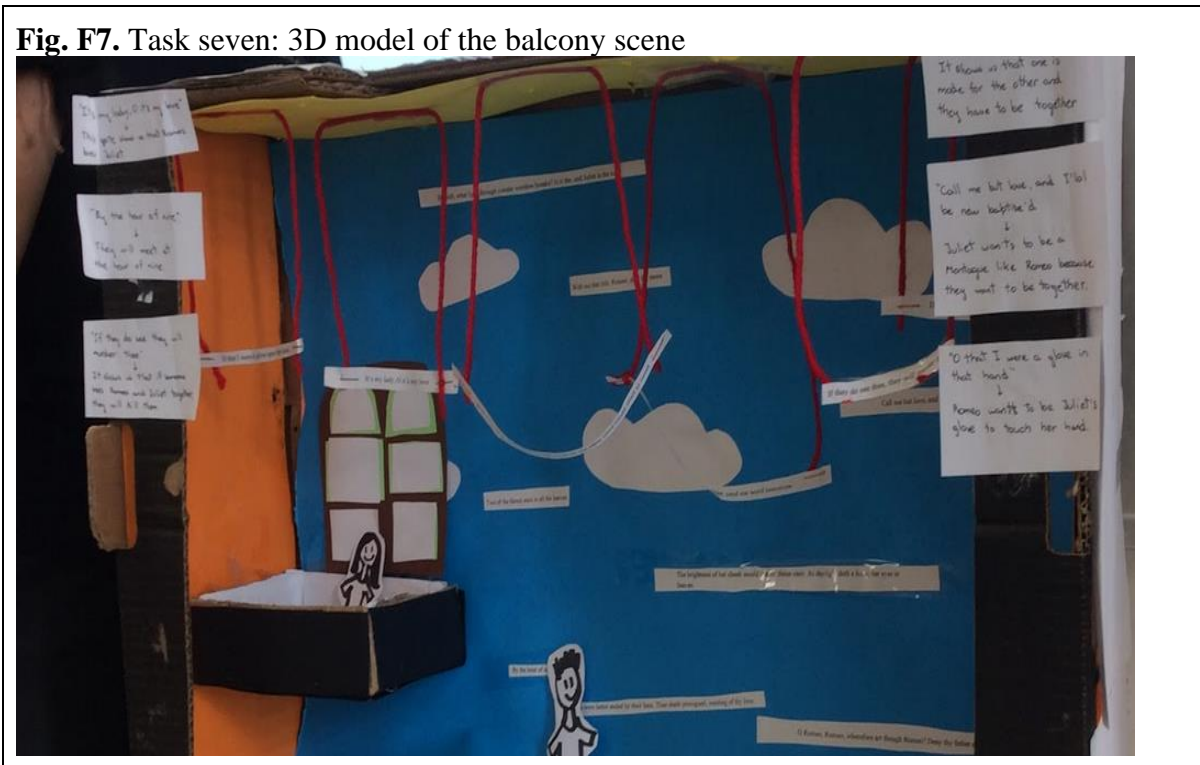


Fig. F7. Task seven: 3D model of the balcony scene



Appendix G: Summary of students' responses to the 2020 creative project questionnaire

Which task did you choose?

The diary entry task was the most popular (37%). Interestingly it was the one that required the most writing and the most empathy with the different characters. The comic strip (26%) and the online challenge (22%) were in second place, followed by the article (12%). Very few students chose to design an illustrated map of the ranch (4%). Students' choices indicated a preference for writing about characters foremost. The popularity of the online challenge and the comic strip indicated that students enjoyed using websites to redesign content.

How much did you enjoy the project?

79% of the students commented that they enjoyed the creative project either *a lot* or *a great deal*. 22% said that they enjoyed it *moderately* and no one responded negatively (i. e. that they enjoyed it only a little or not at all).

What did you enjoy about the project?

Key words in the response to this question related to: *creativity; difference / originality; new technologies; visual design/ presentation; choice/ freedom/ independence*. It can be perceived that students of this age often appreciate the time to work independently on a task of their choice, which they can concentrate on undisturbed. Some of the students did comment that they were disappointed to lose the tactile tasks due to the pandemic, but the majority responded well to the opportunity to use technology to design their content and convey new meanings. Most students were engaged and absorbed in their projects and the comments reflected how giving the students independence enables them to pursue their own lines of research in an enjoyable and productive manner.

How did the project help you to understand the book?

Students' responses raised ideas such as: *forming questions for the board game made me reinforce my knowledge; enhanced empathy with the characters that will help when we read on; re-reading the book to complete the task; the visual aspect/ drawing made it easier to understand; it helped me see a deeper meaning in the book; research/ learning new facts*. It can be concluded that this kind of redesign task requires students to revise class material and provides an effective way for them to consolidate their learning and delve deeper into previous knowledge in a way that is autonomous and purposeful.

What did you dislike?

Most students said that there was not anything to comment upon. However, the following ideas were observed from some members of the group: *difficulty with technology; tiring/ too much screen time; finding the relevant part in the book; too little communication with peers; doing the project before completing the reading of the novel*. While many students had perceived the quiet time as productive to work, some students commented that they missed peer interaction; this can perhaps be linked to the atmosphere generated in the classroom. Instructions had dictated that students had to work silently and independently, and some students were naturally more comfortable with this environment than others. This can arguably be linked to the maturity of the individual students and their capacity for concentration over extended periods of time. It also raises an interesting point about the use of silence as a pedagogical tool; a calm and quiet space is often considered to be an effective environment for

learning and is generally used to encourage student concentration. While the use of silence may be appropriate for some tasks, it is important that we consider the extent of student and teacher talk and vary the approach to help sustain an interesting classroom dynamic where all students can do well. The comment from two students that they needed “screen breaks” perhaps indicates the need to give more reminders about the importance of taking rests during activities. This could be made more visible in classrooms in which technology is being used a lot; regular breaks for stretching and taking time away from the screen should be incorporated into the daily routine and considered during task planning. This last point could also act as a brief time for students to interact, resolving the break from silence previously mentioned and suggesting the importance of regular mini plenaries when using project work in the classroom.

What technology did you use?

All students had use of an iPad and most could operate this technology unassisted due to daily usage. They used: *flippity; notability; Pages; Genially; Paint redux; comic maker websites; apple pencil*. One student described their own strategy of using Google docs for drafting and correcting spellings, paint redux for drawing and adding images, and notability for general drafting, which indicated a considered personal approach to technology and a level of discernment and criticality. Some difficulties concerning technology were raised in the answers to the next question.

How was your overall experience of participating in the project?

Commenting on their overall experience of participating in the project, students used the terms: *enjoyable/ fun; pleasure of using technology/ new technology; interesting/ unique; entertaining; learning; stressful; independent; helpful*. Most students responded positively to the project and the work environment. One of the two students that found the project *stressful* had wanted to do their work on paper and was disappointed that the *COVID-19* situation made this impossible. They had chosen the comic book task and commented that they had begun with the online challenge task, but that had been too difficult, suggesting that extra support would be needed to help this student feel confident enough with the technical aspect of the project. The other student also reported only having enjoyed the project *moderately* and feeling *disappointed* with their work. This student chose to design an illustrated map of the ranch and commented that the project had *helped them a lot* and that the technology had been useful, but they felt that they had spent *too much time drawing on the procreate app*, and that this had perceptibly affected the level or quality of the written content. When asked if they would do anything differently next time, most students said that they would not. Other comments included: *better planning and more effective time management; add more writing; add more images; choose a different task*.

Asked to rate their satisfaction with the finished piece of work that they produced, over 80% rated their feelings as “satisfied or above”. The remaining students were neutral, with just 3% expressing feelings of dissatisfaction.

Appendix H: Summary of students' responses to the context presentation questionnaires

Question one: write 3-4 sentences to explain the topic of your presentation.

Most students wrote an extended description of the presentation that they had prepared and given to the class. Together, their responses form a profile of the context to the novel in terms of its geography, era, author, and themes. This is a sample answer from student one:

The topic of my presentation was migrant workers. Migrant workers are workers that are employed in a host country. In the presentation we explained what they are and things about them and their lives, including: what their life is like and how it was in the 1930s, their working conditions, advantages and disadvantages and the type of workers they are.

Question two: Write down which sources you used to find your information.

Some students had used two distinct websites for their research, as recommended. Others had only referenced Wikipedia as their main source, which indicated the need to reinforce the idea of how to conduct more efficient and reliable web searches. Sample answer from student one:

The two websites I used are: Annual reviews and Eurofound.

Question three: What did you enjoy about this group project?

Key words in the students' responses to this question were: *help; teamwork; ideas; deciding; best friends; presentation; researching; explore; investigating; organised; collaborated; learning; contributed; together; respectfully; listening*. Sample answer from student one: *I enjoyed that we could all help each other, and that the teamwork was really good. Also, that it was all equally distributed and that everybody did their work as well as possible.*

Question four: Was there anything that you found difficult about the project?

The responses to this question raised the following key words and phrases: *understand; bossy; plagiarism; put it in your own words; search yourself; Google Meet; ignore; search reliable websites; explaining to the class; people not working*. Sample answer from student twenty: *Not really, at the start some things were confusing but we figured it out in the end.*

Question five: What was the mood of your group like? How did everyone cooperate?

The responses from the students raised the following key ideas: *cooperating; bossing; paying attention; struggle; silly fight; divide information; happy mood; motivated; nobody complained; nice; chaotic; perfect*. Sample answer from student one:

The mood was really good, everyone cooperated, and they did everything as good as possible, including helping other people understand something or get a topic.

Sample answer from student eleven:

Sometimes people were not agreeing and had a silly fight but once again we were getting along fine.

Question six: Describe your use of the Google meet - was this a useful tool?

Most students found *Google Meet* to be a useful tool to use, either in class or with students in their group who were joining from home. Because of the *COVID-19* restrictions, students were not

permitted to move around the classroom, so this tool permitted them to talk using a headset and be able to hear each other more clearly. Sample answer from student one:

I think it was very useful for all our group because it is easier to talk through there than in class with all the noise, for me it was also very useful because I was at home, so it was the only way to communicate with my group.

Question seven: Which group's presentation did you enjoy the most and why? Explain what made their presentation so impressive.

The students' responses praised presentations that were: *clear; not used too much text; included pictures; been interactive; taught them new ideas.* Sample answer from student one:

I liked the presentation about the American Dream, I liked it because their topic was really interesting, and they explained it really well; also, because their slides were really well presented so it was also interesting to look at the pictures to understand a bit better.

Question eight: Write down 5 things that you learnt through preparing for your group presentation.

Students' responses indicated that they felt they had learnt about group work skills as well as some features of the context of the novel. Sample answer from student one:

I learned that migrant workers have really harsh working conditions; they didn't have a good life condition, that they are people who come from other countries to work, that they have to accept all offers so that they can survive a bit well and that they have to go through a lot to have a minimally good life condition. Sample answer from student five:

You can't always do everything - You have to help people when they are lost - You can't read off the screen - People do not always do their part - people do not always listen.

Question nine: Write down five things that you have learnt through watching the other presentations.

The responses to this question varied in detail, with some students answering fully and thoughtfully and others writing more generic and undeveloped statements. All the respondents were able to answer by suggesting one or more ways that the other projects had helped them, either in terms of learning about America during the Great Depression, or by acting as examples of how to present well. Sample answer from student one:

I learned what the American Dream is; who John Steinbeck was, I learned a lot about John Steinbeck's life, I learned that in the American dream everyone is given opportunities and that James Truslow invented the American dream.

Sample answer from student thirteen:

How to make our presentation more interesting, the use of questions.

Question ten: any other comments.

Most of the students left the space blank. Two students wrote that they enjoyed the teamwork-based presentations. This is the sample answer from student seven: *I really like working in groups and learning new information.*

Appendix I: Questions for the online board game.

Easy

1. Who wrote 'Of Mice and Men'? **John Steinbeck**
2. What is the relationship between George and Lennie? **Friends**
3. Who is Curley's dad? **The boss**
4. Who is described as a 'jerk line slimmer'? **Slim**. Who joins George and Lennie's dream? **Candy**
6. Who lives in the stables? **Crooks**
7. Is it true that Lennie was kicked by a horse? **No**
8. What is a ranch? **A ranch is a farm**
9. Who has a Vaseline glove? **Curley**
10. Who has a dog? **Slim and/or Candy**

Normal

1. Who kills Candy's dog? **Carlson**
2. Why did George and Lennie leave Weed? **Lennie and George had to leave because Lennie touched a girl's dress because he thinks it is soft and he gets accused of raping her.**
3. What year is the book based on? **The 1930s**
4. Where is the book based? **Salinas Valley**
5. Who is Clara? **Clara is Lennie's aunt**
6. Which day were George and Lennie supposed to arrive at the ranch? **They were supposed to arrive Thursday**
7. What does George find beneath a bed? **A yellow can**
8. Who shows George and Lennie around the bunkhouse? **Candy**
9. Name 6 characters of the book? **George/ Lennie/ Whit/ Candy/ The boss/ Curley/ Slim/ Crooks...**
10. How much money will Candy give to help? with George and Lennie's dream? **He will use £350**

Hard

1. When did the first slaves arrive in America? **In 1619**
2. What expression is used to describe Curley's wife? **The expression 'has the eye'**
3. Why does Curley dislike Lennie? **Because Lennie is bigger than him (physically)**
4. What is segregation? **It is when they separate something or someone.**
5. What does lynch mean? **Lynch is to hang someone from a tree.**
6. Why does the boss not trust George? **. Because he doesn't let Lennie talk, so he thinks he is using Lennie to win money and that after he has the money he wants, he is going to leave him without anything.**
7. What was happening at the time of the book? **The great depression**
8. What does scornful mean? **Bitter**
9. What does George tell Lennie to explain to him why he can't pet a mouse? **George tells him that the mouse is dead so he can't pet him, but that if they find a mouse that is alive, he will be able to pet him.**
10. What person is the book written in? **3rd person**

Understanding

1. How is the theme of inequality represented in the book? This theme can be seen every time they segregate Crooks because he is black.
2. Why is George and Lennie's relationship balanced? It is balanced because they both rely on each other, George is very strict and serious, but Lennie makes him relax a bit; on the other hand, Lennie is very childish and irresponsible, and George takes care of him and helps him not get into trouble.
3. Give an example of a moment where racism is shown in the book. When Curley's wife threatens Crooks about lynching him.
4. What was the society like in the time of the book? Society was racist, they segregated black people and they took away their rights.
5. What are three examples of main themes of the book? Friendship/ inequality/ loneliness/ dreams/ violence.
6. Why did George stop playing jokes on Lennie? Because once, George told Lennie to jump into a river and Lennie did it, after that, Lennie nearly drowned so George helped him. After, Lennie wasn't angry, he was grateful because George had helped him.
7. What inspired John Steinbeck to write the book? He wrote the book because of what was happening at the time, this was that there was a lot of racism. An example of this is that in 1931, 2 women were supposedly raped by nine black men, in the end they arrested most of them even though they didn't have enough evidence to do it.
8. When is the theme of loneliness shown in the book? When Lennie talks with Crooks and Crooks explains he feels lonely.
9. Give an example of when the theme of friendship is shown in the book and explain how we can see it. (Example) When George tells Slim about how he has to take care of Lennie; here we can see it because George explains his and Lennie's past and can clearly see that he cares for him as he always protects him and helps him with everything he can.
10. Give an example of when the theme of violence is shown in the book and explain how we can see it. (Example) When Curley starts hitting Lennie and they start a fight, we can see it because they hit each other, and this is violence.

Appendix J: Categories and examples in the *Of Mice and Men* podcasts.

Jl. Categories and examples in podcast one.

Category	Examples
Cohesive devices: students demonstrate that they know how to structure a talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Welcome back to J & N productions”</i> • <i>“Today we will be discussing ...”</i> • <i>“In this episode ...”</i> • <i>“Character-wise ...”</i> • <i>“If I had to pick a favourite it would probably be ...”</i> • <i>“This story is just a roller coaster of feelings...”</i> • <i>“It is necessary to talk about the use of language because it influences the whole situation....”</i> • <i>“The themes of this particular passage are ...”</i> • <i>“In those days”</i> • <i>“The themes”</i> • <i>“Now we will read”</i> • <i>“As we can clearly see”</i> • <i>“Well, to conclude”</i>
Stylistic awareness: students adapt their spoken text according to their audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“So, get reading and then come back”</i> (imperative to rouse the audience) • <i>“For all the fanatics of drama out there- this is your book!”</i> (engagement/ talking on a personal level) • <i>“This book is not for children because of some of the inappropriate language that the author uses”</i> (awareness of audience) • <i>“The boss’ son’s wife”</i> (clarification for the audience) • <i>“And of course, you might ask why we are so surprised”</i> (addressing the audience) • <i>“Notice how Curley’s wife doesn’t even have a name?”</i> (Rhetorical question) • <i>“It has been a pleasure to speak and discuss our ideas with you and we hope you’ve had a delighted time listening to our first “J and N” episode”</i> (addressing the audience personally/ style feature) • <i>“Bye - see you in the next one!”</i> (Signing out/ establishing a relationship with the listener)
Interaction: the podcast format encourages dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Really? Mine would be George. Well, we’re getting off topic”</i> • <i>“It is totally unbelievable”</i> • <i>“Yes, good point”</i> • <i>“We have enjoyed talking about ...”</i>
Creative language use: the podcast format encourages students to be playful with English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Roller coaster of feelings”</i> (figurative language) • <i>Just when we think everything is okay, a bomb or something or other would explode</i> (figurative language) • <i>and reveal the dark paths, threats, or... Unexpected actions</i> (figurative language)
Cultural awareness: the format enables students to draw from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“In those days, black people were sadly mistreated and had different rules. It’s a relief that the Black Lives Matter movement has changed that and with many strong people</i>

their knowledge of the world outside the school classroom	<i>standing up for themselves and their race. Although in some cases we can still see racism...</i>
Collaboration: students work together to form opinions about literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“We really liked how you could imagine each character or each page due to the amount of descriptive vocabulary”</i> • <i>“We also liked the action,”</i> • <i>“Another one of our opinions is that the ending could have been a bit more joyous ...”</i> • <i>“We can really put ourselves in their shoes”</i> • <i>“The themes in the book that we can clearly see, as mentioned, are racism, sexism and Curley’s wife is taking immediate power and intimidating Crooks in his own space” (Student A)</i> • <i>“It’s so sad that, let alone he is segregated, but people invade his space, the only thing he had”. (Student B)</i> • <i>“But the fascinating thing is that Curley’s wife threatened him when Crooks stood up for himself” (Student A)</i> • <i>“It is totally unbelievable” (Student B)</i> • <i>“This shows us the inequality between men and women. Throughout the book we can see that these men objectify Curley’s wife and do not even consider her as one of them. So, my question is that, if Curley’s wife is being sexualised, why should she treat Crooks so badly?” (Student A)</i> • <i>“I guess that Curley’s wife just needs to fit in with everyone. Remember that if you supported the black race, you were probably looked at quite badly?” (Student B)</i>

III. Categories and examples in podcast two.

Cohesive devices: students demonstrate that they know how to structure a talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hi everyone and welcome to the literary ladies podcast</i> • <i>We’re gonna talk about ...; So, let’s get into it, literary girl</i> • <i>Go on...; Let’s get on to it (Student C)</i> • <i>We hope you have a very nice day! (Students C and D)</i>
Stylistic awareness: students adapt their spoken text according to their audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Literary Ladies (alliteration)</i> • <i>Get your packet of tissues ready! (emotive)</i> • <i>We’ll have a cow, (cow sound effect) said George. “An’ we’ll have maybe a pig (pig sound effect) an’ chickens... (chicken sound effect) an’ down the flat we’ll have a... little piece alfalfa-</i> • <i>He pulled the trigger (gun sound effect and sobbing sounds)</i>
Interaction: the podcast format encourages dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>So what are we gonna talk about today? (Student C)</i> • <i>Oh I don’t remember (Student D)</i> • <i>Would you like to start us off? (Student C)</i> • <i>What do you mean, are you in favour of killing Lennie? (Student D)</i> • <i>Well it seems like someone is trying to associate themselves with the characters in the book</i> • <i>Mmm now I know why</i> • <i>What do you think of the story in general?</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No! The ending makes it the story that it is! (Student D)</i> • <i>What, what do you mean?</i> • <i>If you really want to change the ending, how would you want the book to end? (Student D)</i> • <i>Oo good idea-</i>
Creative language use: the podcast format encourages students to be playful with English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No! not at all, but after all - sometimes it's hard to be a lifetime babysitter</i> • <i>...was the cherry on top</i>
Collaboration: students work together to form opinions about literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>two totally different characters and the only thing they shared was their dream ...</i> • <i>(both) living off the fat of the land (Students C and D)</i> • <i>I want George and Lennie to run away and before that, run back to the ranch and get the money. Then go to their dream house and get Candy and live happily ever after. Now that's an ending!</i>

JIII. Categories and examples in podcast three.

Cohesive devices: students demonstrate that they know how to structure a talk	News style music plays: <i>Good morning, Today we're gonna discuss So... And now we're going to read the passage of the book where Thanks for listening and we hope you enjoyed it (Student F) (Ending music plays and fades)</i>
Interaction: the podcast format encourages dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you think about the book?</i> • <i>What did you think about the book?</i> • <i>What did you think about this passage?</i> • <i>What do you think about it?</i>
Collaboration: students work together to form opinions about literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"I liked all of it but not the part where the author described, because he went over little things a lot. I also liked it because of the characters. My favourite characters were Curley's wife and Lennie because they are interesting and have some background story which justifies what they do and how they act"</i> • <i>"So I didn't really like it because I find that they repeat a lot like the same part for example"</i> • <i>"We think that the story was boring and a bit hard to understand because the author describes a lot so it is a little bit repetitive. Even though we think that the ending was really well-written, but we didn't like it because they killed Lennie." (Student E)</i> • <i>"We didn't really like it cos they killed Lennie. But it was the best-written part of the book because it was sad and surprising"</i> • <i>"It is the most interesting part of the novel, and it is the best-written part because it is slow, and you understand what is happening and you feel like you were there. They were in a place where George had told Lennie to go and hide in the brush if something happened. Lennie stares into the river to imagine better George and Lennie's dream" (Student F)</i> • <i>"It has friendship, which is one of the main themes of the novel. We can see this when George kills Lennie so that, instead of letting him</i>

	<p><i>live and letting Curley kill him in the sad and violent way for Lennie, he kills them quickly when they are thinking about their dream”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“I think it was an interesting ending and it's not predictable because you don't imagine that it is going to happen”</i> • <i>“And you can also empathise a lot and feel like ...”</i> • <i>“We liked a lot the final part of the book but it ...”</i> • <i>“... not to people who are really young because it's a difficult book to understand”</i>
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JIV. Categories and examples in podcast four.

<p>Cohesive devices: students demonstrate that they know how to structure a talk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Good afternoon, everybody! Today we are going to ...”</i> • <i>“It talked about ...”</i> • <i>“The book was set ...”</i> • <i>“On the other side ...”</i> • <i>“Other events we would highlight ...”</i> • <i>“Well so let's have an explanation”</i> • <i>“So, we chose this part of the book because ...”</i>
<p>Stylistic awareness: students adapt their spoken text according to their audience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Really impacting and made the end a bit sorrowful” (interesting adjectives)</i>
<p>Interaction: the podcast format encourages dialogue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“What do you think in this moment of the passage?”</i>
<p>Collaboration: students work together to form opinions about literature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“We felt really bad for Curley's wife and we liked this tense situation”</i> • <i>“Lennie has started to get closer to Curley's wife and has started to stroke her hair as he really likes to stroke soft things. We start to notice how Lennie is conscious of what he is doing - he doesn't want George to get angry with him. But he doesn't take care and continues stroking Curley's wife's hair until suddenly Lennie breaks Curley's wife's neck”</i> • <i>“This is the part that we felt empathy for the characters as Lennie has just broken Curley's wife's neck. In this part of the passage, we think that nothing worse can happen ... And we suddenly see that he has just killed the poor woman. Suddenly the story changes a lot because at the beginning we see the lovely part of Lennie and at the end he kills Curley's wife, and we discover his childish attitude. After this we can see how Lennie suddenly regrets what he has done as he says, “I done another bad thing”. How do you think Lennie feels in this moment?” (Student G)</i> • <i>“I think Lennie feels miserable, he's scared that George finds out he killed Curley's wife and won't let him tend the rabbits”</i> • <i>We think that Curley and the others are going to react to this impacting scenery by trying to find the person that killed Curley's wife when they notice that the woman is dead. (Student H)</i>

Appendix K: Using images as a 'way in' to poetry study.

Fig. K1. Student annotations to show their technical understanding of the poem.

91

The Buck in the Snow - Edna St. Vincent Millay

iconic UK landscape

Repetition
Figurative language (simile, metaphors...)

life cycle

1 White sky, over the hemlocks bowed with snow, A1B

2 Saw you not at the beginning of evening the antlered buck and his doe A B

3 Standing in the apple-orchard I saw them I saw them suddenly go, A B

4 Tails up, with long leaps lovely and slow, A 9

5 Over the stone-wall into the wood of hemlocks bowed with snow, A10

6 Now, he lies here, his wild blood seeping the snow, A11

7 How strange a thing is death, bringing to his knees, bringing to his antlers B 8 11

8 The buck in the snow, A 5

9 How strange a thing - a mile away by now, it may be, C12

10 Under the heavy hemlocks that as the moments pass D13 - time, can't stop

11 Shift their loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow, A 14

12 Life looking out attentive from the eyes of the doe, A 15

personification

She feels stumped she doesn't understand beyond human comprehension

The poet talks about life and how it works. Also about getting it and how life can surprise you when you least expect

Handwritten annotations include:
 - "A heavenly (hope)"
 - "romantic iconic UK landscape"
 - "hemlocks bowed with snow, A1B"
 - "antlered buck and his doe A B"
 - "apple-orchard"
 - "I saw them I saw them suddenly go, A B"
 - "Tails up, with long leaps lovely and slow, A 9"
 - "Over the stone-wall into the wood of hemlocks bowed with snow, A10"
 - "Now, he lies here, his wild blood seeping the snow, A11"
 - "How strange a thing is death, bringing to his knees, bringing to his antlers B 8 11"
 - "The buck in the snow, A 5"
 - "How strange a thing - a mile away by now, it may be, C12"
 - "Under the heavy hemlocks that as the moments pass D13 - time, can't stop"
 - "Shift their loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow, A 14"
 - "Life looking out attentive from the eyes of the doe, A 15"
 - "personification"
 - "She feels stumped she doesn't understand beyond human comprehension"
 - "The poet talks about life and how it works. Also about getting it and how life can surprise you when you least expect"

Fig. K2. Student annotations to show their technical understanding of the poem.

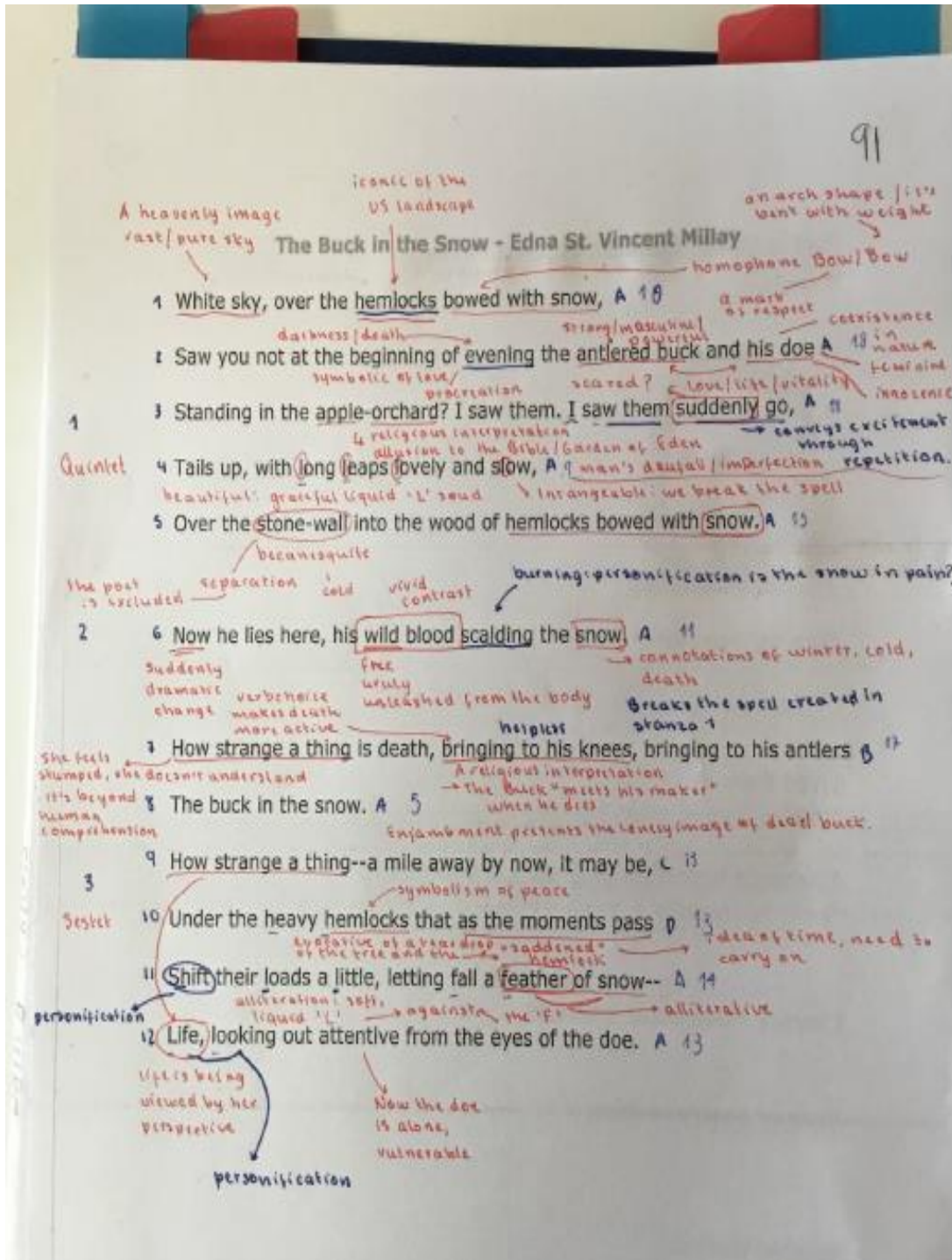


Fig. K3. Sample of the written responses to the questions about the poem

Questions: The Buck in the Snow - Edna St. Vincent Millay

1. In this poem the speaker philosophises over which topic? *Over the strangeness of death and life and how it can instantly pass away.*
2. What is the theme of the poem? *Death and life*
3. Describe the tone of the poem. *It starts with a beautiful, peaceful, graceful tone. Until it gets to line 7 where it suddenly breaks that beauty reflected in stanza one by emphasizing death.*
4. Who does the speaker address in the first line and what does she wish to know? *He addresses the sky, which has a higher power like God. She wants to see the buck and the doe.*
5. What use of sound effect is present in stanza one? Describe the effect. *Liquid 'L' in "long leaps lovely and slow" gives a majestic, peaceful sense of natural beauty. Assonance 'o' deep slow heavy vowel sound.*
6. Which phrase has associations of physical beauty/ perfection before death? *"long leaps lovely and slow", suggests a graceful sense and beauty in their movements*
7. Describe the form of stanza two and how this contributes to meaning. *Single line - emphasises how quickly events can turn stark, lonely image.*
8. How does the speaker appear to understand and accept death in the final stanza? Describe three poetic devices used. *Line 7, 'bringing to his knees', suggests death's power. Graceful quality in the alliteration in line 11. Concludes that life and death are 'strange' but totally natural.*
9. Which phrase suggests that nature seems to shed a tear for the loss of purity witnessed? *"Shift their loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow"*
10. Analyse the final line of the poem. Why is life personified as being "attentive" at this moment? *The doe now feels sad, alone and vulnerable, as she no longer has his powerful masculine protector. Life is personified as being "attentive" as it is being viewed from the perspective of the doe, who just presents the power of death.*

Appendix L: Categories and examples in *The Crucible* podcasts.

Fig. L1. Podcast 1 discussing the characters Thomas & Anne Putnam.

Focus on the writer's effects / word choices	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>"death-ridden woman"</i> ● <i>"vindictive"</i>
Cohesive devices	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Today we will talk about...</i> ● <i>As far as Mr Putnam is concerned...</i> ● <i>We think...</i>
Speaker's own interpretations of the literature	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>"Through her opening lines we can easily see that Mrs Putnam is a manipulative and assertive woman who believes in witchcraft, and she instantly blames that Betty's problem has been caused by witchcraft."</i> ● <i>"However, his description in page 22 he is called vindictive, instantly revealing more about his character".</i> ● <i>"We think that the Putnams are a selfish couple as their only intention in act one is to find out</i> ● <i>information about their seven lost children by sneaking in Betty's situation and talking to the doctor; they are taking advantage of the situation"</i>

Fig. L2. Podcast 2 discussing the character John Proctor.

Explicit reference to the play's audience	6	<p><i>"As an audience we are shown his importance from the start by the use of Miller's aside as he introduces him"</i></p> <p><i>"... he does not cover up for Proctor's mistakes. He airs them out to the audience"</i></p> <p><i>"By doing this he achieves to form a more intimate bond with the spectator"</i></p> <p><i>"I would like to add that we as an audience are also inclined to like him thanks to his physical description"</i></p> <p><i>"As you mentioned of his affair with Abi, it is important to note that the audience learns of this before we are directly told about it"</i></p> <p><i>"This shortens the distance between opinions and from him and the audience"</i></p>
Rhetorical devices to interest the podcast audience	4	<p><i>"Could this foreshadow near events? Only time will tell"</i></p> <p><i>"But what motivates him to do these things?"</i></p> <p><i>"Do we like him? ...for the most part I say we do"</i></p>

		<i>"You may disagree with some of our statements, as literature is mostly open to interpretation. Even if you didn't agree, we hope you have enjoyed our take on it"</i>
Dialogue between the presenters	6	<p><i>"You are referring to "sweating like a stallion, right?"</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, and that is a key phrase - would you like to expand on that?"</i></p> <p><i>"Gladly, ..."</i></p> <p><i>"Furthermore, Proctor becomes a likeable character thanks to his key moments..."</i></p> <p><i>"Ah yes, we are shown how respected he is in his first appearance,"</i></p> <p><i>"But what motivates him to do these things?"</i></p> <p><i>"Do we like him? For the most part I say we do..."</i></p>
Focus on the writer's effects regarding word choices	4	<p><i>"The adjectives...are bold and effective"</i></p> <p><i>"stallion" implies that he is good-looking, bold, and masculine"</i></p> <p><i>"With the use of the word sympathy, Miller implies...."</i></p> <p><i>"He goes angrily to the door"</i></p>
Phrases that show the speaker as critic and expert	5	<p><i>"Society is usually inclined to favour the good-looking person"</i></p> <p><i>"I would also like to comment that he is also motivated by his high sense of moral integrity, and protection of his name and reputation"</i></p> <p><i>"Furthermore, Proctor becomes a likeable character thanks to his key moments ..."</i></p> <p><i>"I would also like to comment that he is also motivated by his high sense of moral integrity, and protection of his name and reputation".</i></p> <p><i>"As you mentioned of his affair with Abi, it is important to note that the audience learns of this before we are directly told about it"</i></p>
Cohesive devices		<p><i>"Welcome to another episode of "Which Witch is Which" with your hosts _____, _____, and _____".</i></p> <p><i>"In this episode we will be discussing ..."</i></p> <p><i>"We've rambled an awful lot about Proctor's action, but have failed to mention his key quotes..."</i></p> <p><i>"The first one I would like to mention is ..."</i></p> <p><i>"I would also like to add that, ..."</i></p> <p><i>"Reversing our attention from the obvious object, ..."</i></p> <p><i>"Stage directions really favour Proctor's character, ..."</i></p> <p><i>"Lastly, a key stage direction worth mentioning is,"</i></p> <p><i>"Again, as in the previous point, ..."</i></p> <p><i>"That was our personal take on"</i></p>

<p>Speaker's own interpretations of the literature</p>	<p>19</p>	<p><i>"But he does not cover up for Proctor's mistakes"</i></p> <p><i>"But Miller implies that he is hiding his force"</i></p> <p><i>"We are shown how respected he is in his first appearance, as he breaks the commotion the young girls have formed. Without hesitation they all keep silent, as if his words must be of great importance".</i></p> <p><i>"Lastly, Putnam and Paris are respectable figures that have power over the village and people fear them, but the audience dislikes them".</i></p> <p><i>"Proctor being the all-called hero Miller portrays him as, does not hesitate to call them out".</i></p> <p><i>"Putnam insinuates the land he has hunted on is his property, or when Paris praises himself as this marvellous speaker, when in reality he can only speak of death and hell".</i></p> <p><i>"You could go as far as saying that Proctor is voicing the spectator's thoughts"</i></p> <p><i>"John's motivation is solely his farm and Abi"</i></p> <p><i>"He doesn't seem to be too bothered with Betty or the devil, as he uses that as an excuse to see Abi".</i></p> <p><i>"John is in conflict with Abi and himself, regretting the decision he took not long ago of having an affair with Abi".</i></p> <p><i>"Another factor that makes him likeable is that he is also more mentally evolved than the other characters and manages to separate his opinions from his religious beliefs, and uses reason".</i></p> <p><i>"By the use of the nickname Miller portrays that Proctor does feel softly for her. This makes the action of him ending the affair..."</i></p> <p><i>"He is criticising what Mr Paris does for a living, which makes the scene so much more powerful"</i></p> <p><i>"This reflects his boldness and fearlessness he has towards one of the most respected men in the community. It also seems like a warning towards Mr Hale"</i></p> <p><i>"Proctor is being made a more likeable character by the reader as he is shown to be not so selfish and egocentric as we thought"</i></p> <p><i>"Another point is that he does it firmly, thus letting us know that he is ashamed of his affair with Abi and is determined to be loyal to his wife and not to make the same mistake twice".</i></p> <p><i>"This may be because he cannot stand the idea of not knowing what is going on. Or maybe he is even scared because it is not something usual".</i></p> <p><i>"Proctor may be scared and lets his anger take over him when he leaves. Or maybe he really hates hell and the idea of witchcraft".</i></p> <p><i>"Maybe the constant reminders of hell and death frightens him as he knows he will go there".</i></p>
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Fig. L3. Podcast 3 discussing the character Reverend Hale.

<p>Explicit reference to the play's audience</p>	<p>2</p>	<p><i>"I think the audience is probably asking the same question, it puts tension and makes Hale an interesting character"</i></p> <p><i>"The audience know that Tituba's confession is false"</i></p>
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Rhetorical devices to interest the podcast audience	3	<p><i>"In this scene, he is God's representative. In this scene he is the most confident person in the room"</i> (repetition for effect)</p> <p><i>So how does his persona...? (Rhetorical question)</i></p> <p><i>"However, this is only act one- ..."</i></p>
Dialogue between the presenters	1	<i>"What are his key moments?"</i>
Focus on the writer's effects regarding word choices	1	<i>"Miller uses quite a lot of adverbs to direct things to Hale, things like: "fearfully", "disturbedly", "deeply". They add to his power and his ability to make people panic and lose control"</i>
Cohesive devices	3	<p><i>"Welcome to "Which Witch is Which". Today we're gonna talk about Reverend Hale, a character of "The Crucible" written by Arthur Miller. Let's go!"</i> (Structural device/ signposting)</p> <p><i>"So, what does this mean? (Rhetorical question)"</i></p> <p><i>"And here we finish today's podcast of Which Witch is Which. Bye boys and girls"</i> (Structural device/ signposting)</p>
Speaker's own interpretations of the literature	7	<p><i>"He's presenting himself as a man you can trust. He is beyond the devil's touch"</i></p> <p><i>"His motivation seems to be finding the truth and helping the village"</i></p> <p><i>"it could be a trick to get ...a death sentence as possible, we're not sure yet"</i></p> <p><i>"Right now he's in a conflict with the villagers, who seem to be happy to accuse each other of all kinds of witchcraft"</i></p> <p><i>"So what does this mean? Tituba sees an escape route and plays along"</i></p> <p><i>"Dramatic irony: the audience know that Tituba's confession is false"</i></p> <p><i>"At this point in the play, I am starting to question Hale's motivation - at first I thought he was the voice of reason and much needed in the village. Then I became suspicious and started to ask myself: is he just as bad as the villagers? Is he going to kill innocent people?"</i></p>

Fig. L4. Podcast 4 discussing the character Reverend Parris.

Explicit reference to the play's audience	1	<i>"But that means that the audience for example.... we were speaking to some of our colleagues yesterday ..., their names will not be shared but they said that they thought reverend Parris was a selfish ** BEEP **"</i>
Rhetorical devices to interest the podcast audience	1	<i>"So, let's get right into it shall we"</i>

Dialogue between the presenters	9	<p><i>“So (name), what do you think he contributes to this rising hysteria?”</i></p> <p><i>“I completely agree with you, cos he’s very errr... contradictive, not contradictive but conflictive maybe you’d say. He creates conflict and tension just by being in the room. He is so disliked by everyone”</i></p> <p><i>“The fact that so many people hate him in the village doesn’t really help matters”</i></p> <p><i>“Yeah yeah yeah and I think that’s one of the main conflicts he has, he has conflicts with the villagers a lot and that’s what basically makes the play, I think”</i></p> <p><i>“Especially with John Proctor and Mr Putnam”</i></p> <p><i>“Yeah yeah”</i></p> <p><i>“Err yeah yeah yeah I really agree with that”</i></p> <p><i>“how diminishing he is of the village”</i></p> <p><i>“he believes he is so much superior”</i></p>
Focus on the writer’s effects regarding word choices	1	<p><i>“My ministry’s at stake, my ministry’s at stake. My ministry and perhaps your cousin’s life”, which makes it seem as if Betty’s life is just an after-thought. Like he doesn’t really care, he’s just saying it so that Abigail gives it more importance”</i></p>
Phrases that show the speaker as critic and expert	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>“I think his character is really shown in one of the moments which would be one of the key moments when he says”</i> ● <i>“Hmm, page 20 by the way”</i>
Cohesive devices	3	<p><i>“Hello and welcome ladies and gentlemen to the iron podcast. Today we’re gonna talk about “The Crucible” with the lovely guest ____ (name anonymised)”</i></p> <p><i>“So, let’s get right into it shall we”</i></p> <p><i>“Today’s topic is...“</i></p>

Fig. L5. Podcast 5 discussing the character Tituba.

Rhetorical devices to interest the podcast audience	1	<i>(music)</i>
Dialogue between the presenters		The entire podcast is produced as structured as an interview, and the dialogue that happens is not critical but more imaginative or descriptive.

Focus on the writer's effects regarding word choices		The format used does not include analysis of quotes and language used by the author.
Phrases that show the speaker as critic and expert		The students act as interviewer and character, so the character is the "expert", in this sense.
Cohesive devices	3	<p><i>Good morning everyone, this is your daily podcast, with Sancho Sachuva!</i>" (structural device)</p> <p><i>Today I have a very special guest</i>" (structural device/ introduction)</p> <p><i>"Thank you so much for coming, Tituba. As always, this is your daily podcast, with Sancho Sachuva"</i> (structural device/ sign off)</p> <p>The Question & Answer format is used as a cohesive device.</p>
Speaker's own interpretations of the literature	9	<p>"he is a paranoid, power-hungry, yet oddly selfish, pitying figure. Many of the townsfolk, especially John Proctor, dislike him"</p> <p>"Parris is very concerned with building his position in the community"</p> <p>"I think his need to have more power and his self-centeredness is one of the contributing factors because he only cares about himself and it just adds more to what's already happening"</p> <p>"I think... rrr, the drive that he has with his motivations have been so much more powerful, having so much control over the village"</p> <p>"I think one of the key moments and critical points of the play for example would be when he says that "I am not used to this poverty", on page 34 and that really shows how well he has been living"</p> <p>"As if, because of it, he is better, like before that he talked about the farmers as if they were beneath him, as if they were too much like under him"</p> <p>"I think the playwright has been really smart with Reverend Parris especially because he portrays him in different ways in certain scenarios, where people would agree or disagree with him, and I think that's one of one of the key moments as well"</p> <p>"I don't really like him. He is a character that is so selfish- he doesn't really care about his family. But also, I find him a little naive and a little pathetic but that's depending on how the actor portrays him because in the book if you read the book, you just think of him as an angry and selfish person "</p> <p>"And especially my thoughts are that he's a very mentally strong character, erm cos for example- you can't blame him, he's a follower of God. So God is almighty and all powerful he creates destiny, so if you look at this word destiny, destiny is set by God- that's what they believed in. So Reverend Parris believes that his destiny is to be the best Reverend of Salem village. So basically, I think you should be blaming God rather than Reverend Parris. Now obviously a lot of you are going to disagree with me but it's another look in the Crucible and I think it's a very important one as well, that should have more presence in our mind. Also, if you relate this to the animal kingdom, Rev Parris could be related to lions, fighting for future generations and for legacy. Legacy has no time limit, it is endless. Life on the other hand is. So that's what he fights for- he fights to be the best Salem minister. And he gains this as we ourselves are studying Reverend Samuel Parris, who was a real person. So I think that's very important"</p>