AURORA
COLLEGE

HSC English

Extension 1

Common Module
Literary Worlds

Key Rubric Points

❑ Complexity of individual and collective lives in literary worlds.

❑ Idea and ways of thinking are shaped by personal, social, historical, and cultural contexts.

❑ Texts contribute to the awareness of the diversity of ideas, attitudes and perspectives evident in texts.

❑ Textual representations of the experiences of others, including notions of identity, voice and points of view.

❑ Representation of values in texts.

❑ Texts construct private, public and imaginary worlds that can explore new horizons and offer new insights.

Key Rubric Points

❑ Students consider how personal, social, historical and cultural context influence how texts are valued.

❑ Students consider how contexts influences their responses to these diverse literary worlds.

❑ They appraise their own values, assumptions and dispositions as they develop further understanding of how texts make meaning.

❑ Explore critical and creative compositions.

❑ Express complex ideas and emotions, motivations, attitudes, experiences and values.

Key Questions?

- What are literary worlds?

- What is meant by the canon?

- Why do we compose literary worlds? (purpose)

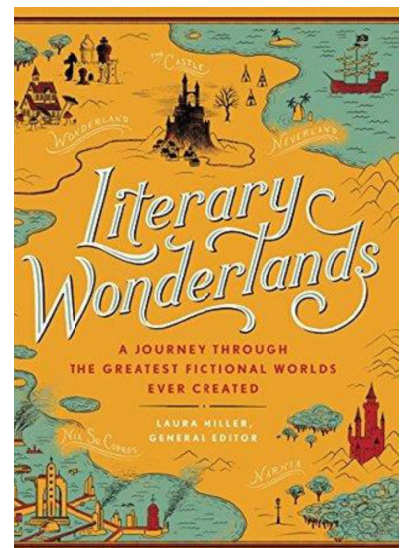- How do literary worlds influence understandings of our world?

What Are 'Literary Worlds?'

"Fantastic literature has always conducted a complex dialogue with the real world. Many of us read it to escape from that world, but more often than not, this fiction aims to make us see our own lives in a new light."

Laura Miller, Literary Wonderlands

Why Do Composers Create 'Literary Worlds?'

Composers throughout time have been creating literary worlds – fictional places and experiences in their art – to create places for readers, audiences, viewers and listeners to experience imaginary places and times that can be very much like the world we know or it can be completely different.

"You don't write because you want to say something, you write because you have something to say."

— F. Scott Fitzgerald

Authr.com

Why Do Composers Create 'Literary Worlds?'

❑ To entertain

❑ To inform

❑ To offer new insights

❑ To alter/change/subvert/reinforce perspectives

❑ To alter/change/subvert/reinforce attitudes

❑ To alter/change/subvert/reinforce beliefs

❑ To raise awareness about key issues

WAIT BUT WHY

George Orwell's 'Why I Write'

I give all this background information because I do not think one can assess a writer's motives without knowing something of his early development. His subject-matter will be determined by the age he lives in – at least this is true in tumultuous, revolutionary ages like our own – but before he ever begins to write he will have acquired an emotional attitude from which he will never completely escape. It is his job, no doubt, to discipline his temperament and avoid getting stuck at some immature stage, or in some perverse mood: but if he escapes from his early influences altogether, he will have killed his impulse to write. Putting aside the need to earn a living, I think there are four great motives for writing, at any rate for writing prose. They exist in different degrees in every writer, and in any one writer the proportions will vary from time to time, according to the atmosphere in which he is living. They are:

George Orwell's 'Why I Write'

(i) Sheer egoism. Desire to seem clever, to be talked about, to be remembered after death, to get your own back on grown-ups who snubbed you in childhood, etc., etc. It is humbug to pretend this is not a motive, and a strong one. Writers share this characteristic with scientists, artists, politicians, lawyers, soldiers, successful business men – in short, with the whole top crust of humanity. The great mass of human beings are not acutely selfish. After the age of about thirty they abandon individual ambition – in many cases, indeed, they almost abandon the sense of being individuals at all – and live chiefly for others, or are simply smothered under drudgery. But there is also the minority of gifted, willful people who are determined to live their own lives to the end, and writers belong in this class. Serious writers, I should say, are on the whole more vain and self-centered than journalists, though less interested in money.

(ii) Aesthetic enthusiasm. Perception of beauty in the external world, or, on the other hand, in words and their right arrangement. Pleasure in the impact of one sound on another, in the firmness of good prose or the rhythm of a good story. Desire to share an experience which one feels is valuable and ought not to be missed. The aesthetic motive is very feeble in a lot of writers, but even a pamphleteer or writer of textbooks will have pet words and phrases which appeal to him for non-utilitarian reasons; or he may feel strongly about typography, width of margins, etc. Above the level of a railway guide, no book is quite free from aesthetic considerations.

(iii) Historical impulse. Desire to see things as they are, to find out true facts and store them up for the use of posterity.

(iv) Political purpose – using the word 'political' in the widest possible sense. Desire to push the world in a certain direction, to alter other people's idea of the kind of society that they should strive after. Once again, no book is genuinely free from political bias. The opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is itself a political attitude.
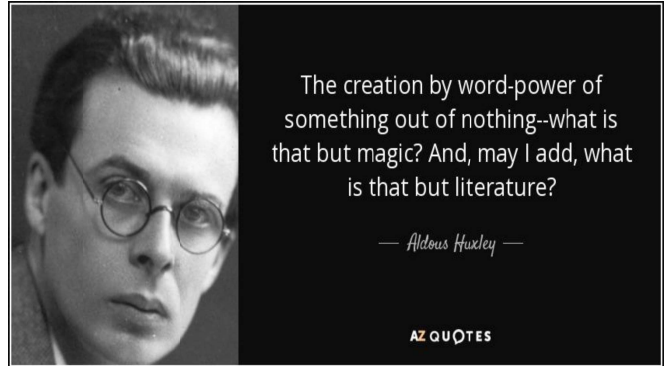
Power of Literature

❑Transcends time

❑Transcends place

❑Transcends culture

❑Enlightens, empowers, impacts change

❑Reflects/mirrors reality

❑Escapism
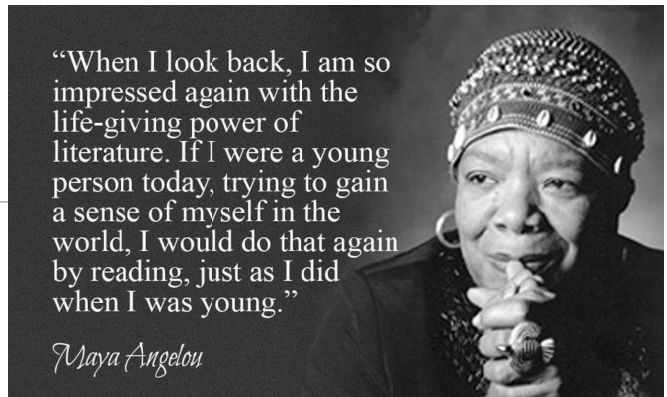
"When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young."

Maya Angelou

The creation by word-power of something out of nothing--what is that but magic? And, may I add, what is that but literature?

— *Aldous Huxley* —

AZ QUOTES

Examples

❑Allegories like The Faerie Queene (1590-1609) and epics like The Divine Comedy (1308-21) offer their readers moral instruction.

❑In Don Quixote (1605-15), Miguel de Cervantes impishly used the structure of a chivalric romance to mock the conventions of the 'romance' itself.

❑Thomas More's Utopia (1616) and other didactic texts have invented worlds and nations to critique and exhort readers to change the world.

❑Utopian literature springs from the great age of exploration, when Europeans set out to discover unknown and unmapped parts of the globe.

❑Utopian literature also arose from Enlightenment thinking itself.

Different Kinds of Literary Worlds

A word after a word after a word is power.

— Margaret Atwood —

AZ QUOTES
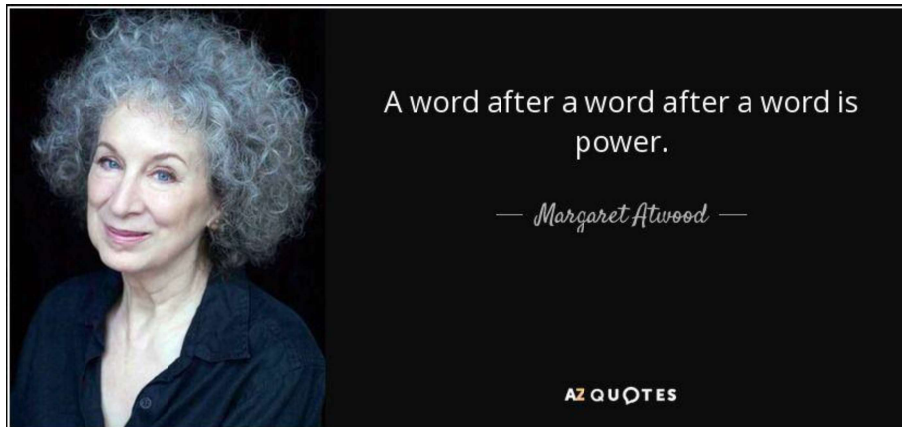
Myths and Legends

❑The oldest literary worlds created are the myths and legends: stories that explain how the world first came to exist.

❑They are often strange and complex worlds characterised by gods, lords, and different beings. They also entail miracles and other extraordinary events.

❑A lot of these myths and legends are closely related to cultures and traditions.

❑While not 'realistic' in the modern sense, they still hold great value with beliefs and attitudes.

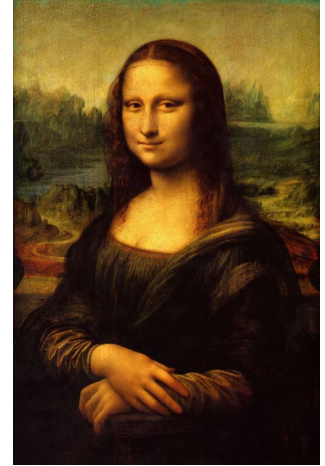**Notable examples:**

❑Pandora's Box

❑The Rainbow Serpent

Renaissance to Enlightenment (1300-1800)

- Exploration
- Scientific inquiry
- Rise of the individual
- Age of Reason

Notable composers:

- William Shakespeare
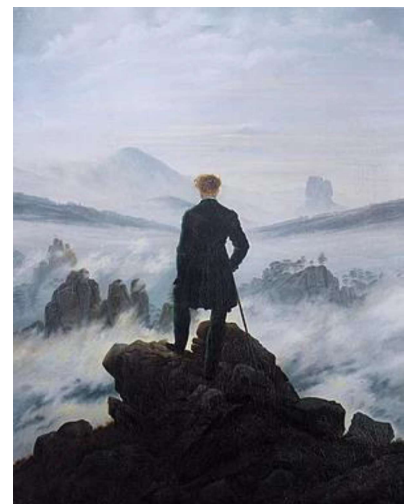- John Donne
- John Milton
- Daniel Defoe

"Mona Lisa" by Leonardo da Vinci

Romanticism (approx. 1800 – 1890s)

- Celebrating nature (its joy and passion) and the common man
- Focus on individual experience
- Idealisation of women
- Embrace of isolation and melancholy

Notable composers:

- John Keats
- Mary Shelley
- Jane Austen

"Wanderer Above the Sea" by Caspar David Friedrich

Realism (depicting the real life, early 1900s)

❑Exploring the shortcomings of modern life

❑Exploring details about daily occurrences

❑Depicting social class and social stratification

❑Plausible plots

❑Realistic characters and relatable issues

❑Realistic setting
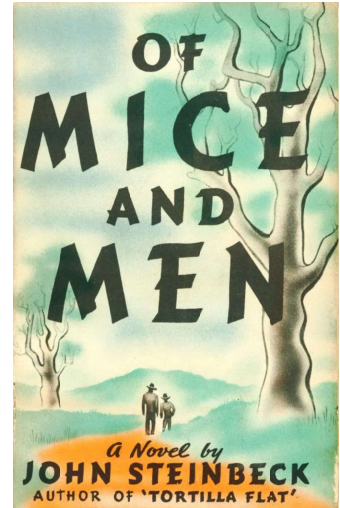
Subgenres of Realism

❑Magical realism – elements of magic woven into the realistic setting e.g. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

❑Social realism – explores the lives of workers and the poor, focuses on the social classes e.g. *Of Mice and Men*

❑Naturalism – elements of science to explore humans and their relationships e.g. *A Rose for Emily*

❑Psychological realism – deals with the psyche of the characters; rather than focusing on the plot, it looks more at the thoughts and motivations of characters e.g. *The Portrait of a Lady*

Modernism (approx. end of WWI and beginning of WWII)

❑Response to destruction and disruption caused by WWI (which is why on first reading, modernist literature and art may seem confusing)

❑Times of uncertainty

❑Despair

❑Disintegration of civilisation

❑Stream of consciousness

Notable composers:

❑Virginia Woolf

❑Henry James

❑T.S. Eliot

❑Katherine Mansfield

Postmodernism (approx. from WWII – end of 20th century)

Period of literature marked, both stylistically and ideologically, by reliance on literary conventions such as:

❑Fragmentation

❑Paradox

❑unreliable narrators

❑dark humour

❑Indeterminacy

❑Sense of paranoia

❑Pastiche

❑Intertextuality

❑Meaningless of human existence?

Notable composers:

❑ Samuel Beckett

❑ Vladimir Nabokov

"Decalomania" by Rene Magritte

Future and Speculative Fiction

❑ Broad category of fiction that covers various themes in the context of the supernatural and futuristic.

❑ Sometimes referred to as 'what-if' literature.

❑ Changes or manipulates what is real or possible as we know them in society and then speculates on the outcome.

❑ Includes many genres like science-fiction, horror, dystopian and fantasy.

❑ Margaret Atwood defines speculative fiction as fiction that deals with possibilities in society that have not yet occurred.

❑ Didactic and cautionary in nature

Notable composers:

❑ George Orwell

❑ Margaret Atwood

How is the common module portrayed in the electives?

Common Module	1. Literary homelands	2. Worlds of Upheaval	3. Reimagined worlds	4. Literary mindscapes	5. Intersecting worlds
Students explore, analyse and critically evaluate textual representations of the experiences of others, including notions of identity, **voice and points of view**; and how values are presented and reflected in texts. They deepen their understanding of how texts construct private, public and imaginary worlds that can **explore new horizons and offer new insights.**	Students analyse how composers **represent** different cultural perspectives through the creation of voices and points of view, and how historical and social contexts **have an impact on the extent to which perspectives are privileged, marginalised or silenced.**	They analyse how texts **represent** the predicaments, aspirations, motivations and ideas of individuals and groups in periods of upheaval and reflect on the potential of texts to **activate change** in attitudes, perspectives and social circumstances. Students consider how texts **representing** worlds of social and political change may challenge literary	They analyse the ways texts invite responders to re-evaluate understandings and perceptions of their own world, and the ways texts can **offer creative, provocative and other insights into humanity.** Students consider the potential of **texts to push the boundaries of the imagination in creating new worlds and alternative experiences.**	They analyse how texts **communicate** notions of identity and alternative ways of being and thinking through **representations** of the mind, including desires, motivations, emotions and memories. Students consider how these diverse textual **representations enable the responder to experience insight into the lives of other groups and individuals, and**	They analyse the different ways **representations** of natural worlds often **give voice to diverse individual and collective perspectives and to intense, transformative experiences.** Students critically evaluate the implicit or explicit values and assumptions in particular **representations** of nature and how their own values and assumptions have an

2019 HSC Exam Question

NSW Education Standards Authority

2019 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

English Extension 1

General Instructions
- Reading time – 10 minutes
- Working time – 2 hours
- Write using black pen

Total marks: 50

Section I – 25 marks (pages 2–3)
- Attempt Question 1
- Allow about 1 hour for this section

Section II – 25 marks (pages 4–8)
- Attempt ONE question from Questions 2–6
- Allow about 1 hour for this section

Use Text 1 and Text 2 to answer Question 1.

Text 1 — Nonfiction extract

All fiction is a masquerade.

We writers adopt disguises: we flirt, feign and play, and the story is the mask we wear. Behind every fiction, though, is fact. Behind every white page, the red of real life bleeds through …

A mask allows the wearer to say what otherwise they cannot, perhaps because of political fears or private reluctance. 'Man is least himself when he talks in his own person,' wrote Oscar Wilde. 'Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth.' Truth is not the opposite of fiction: it is the fire at its heart. Fiction tells its truths slanted in metaphor and disguised with masks. But, crucially, the disguise *discloses* meaning: the mask *unmasks* deeper truths. In this, and in so many ways, the mask is a maestro of paradox. It covers and uncovers. It offers both shelter and licence. The mask can collapse space so the moon is within kissing distance, and can tumble time so a hundred years is yesterday, and the future is in our hands now.

They say that art mirrors life. I am interested in the way we artists can trick life into imitating art. I wanted to explore a singular grief in my life and to rewrite my own script. To transform grief to transcendence, turning bitter water into wine.

Artists weave their past into their work … With my book, I wanted to write my future: to write it in order to make it come true. If writing the past is an act of memory, and writing the present an act of confession, then mine is a spell. If you stencil your dreams on the walls, you can walk through them. Anyone can, though writers make their spells literal.

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JAY GRIFFITHS
Extract from 'Masks of Fiction', *Griffith Review 34*

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Text 2 — Prose fiction extract

Does such a thing as 'the fatal flaw', that showy dark crack running down the middle of a life, exist outside literature? I used to think it didn't. Now I think it does. And I think that mine is this: a morbid longing for the picturesque at all costs …

On leaving home I was able to fabricate a new and far more satisfying history, full of striking, simplistic environmental influences; a colourful past, easily accessible to strangers.

The dazzle of this fictive childhood – full of swimming pools and orange groves and dissolute, charming show-biz parents – has all but eclipsed the drab original. In fact, when I think about my real childhood I am unable to recall much about it at all except a sad jumble of objects: the sneakers I wore year-round; colouring books and comics from the supermarket; little of interest, less of beauty. I was quiet, tall for my age, prone to freckles. I didn't have many friends but whether this was due to choice or circumstance I do not now know. I did well in school, it seems, but not exceptionally well; I liked to read – *Tom Swift*, the Tolkien books – but also to watch television, which I did plenty of, lying on the carpet of our empty living room in the long dull afternoons after school.

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DONNA TARTT
Extract from *The Secret History*

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Question 1 (25 marks)

In your response to parts (a) and (b), draw on your understanding of the module Literary Worlds and the extract(s) provided.

Answer part (a) of the question on pages 2–5 of the Writing Booklet.

(a)   Use Text 1 and Text 2 to answer this part.   **10**

   To what extent do both extracts resonate with your understanding of why we compose literary worlds?

Answer part (b) of the question on pages 6–12 of the Writing Booklet.

(b)   Use Text 2 to answer this part.   **15**

   Using the character in Text 2, imagine a moment in which the past intrudes on this character's fabricated world. Compose a piece of imaginative writing that explores this intrusion.

2019 Markers Feedback

Students should:

❑ensure they address **all** components of the question

❑demonstrate a strong conceptual understanding of **why Literary Worlds are constructed** and **how they interact with the reader**

❑demonstrate control of language and form for both critical and imaginative responses

❑communicate clearly, taking care with syntax, grammar, paragraphing and punctuation.

Question 1 (a) continued...

In better responses, students were able to:

❑establish an effective and sophisticated thesis

❑synthesise and make connections between stimulus texts in response to the question

❑evaluate the extent to which the stimulus text aligned with their understanding of Literary Worlds

❑provide relevant textual evidence

❑construct concept-driven responses that used the texts to support their insights about the purpose of Literary Worlds

❑write precisely and concisely

❑sustain control of language.

Question 1 (a) continued...

Areas for students to improve include:

❑using the texts to develop a thesis in response to the purpose of Literary Worlds rather than simply listing literary devices

❑sustaining their focus on the question

❑referencing the texts in a purposeful way

❑demonstrating control of language and effective communication of ideas in response to the question.

Question 1 (b)

In better responses, students were able to:

❑ address all aspects of the question

❑ use the stimulus to develop an engaging and authentic voice

❑ consider their imaginative form and use of language

❑ demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the ideas and values of Literary Worlds in an imaginative way.

Question 1 (b) continued…

Areas for students to improve include:

❑ engaging with the stimulus beyond superficial references to elements within the stimulus

❑ avoiding clichéd responses to the question and stimulus

❑ using their story as evidence of their understanding of the module and the ideas and values of Literary Worlds

❑ demonstrating a consideration of the imaginative form and language

❑ demonstrating effective control of language, including punctuation, syntax, sentence structure and dialogue.

Exam Tips

Things you need to remember…

- ❑ Allocate 60 minutes for this section
- ❑ Read the stimulus thoroughly
- ❑ Pay attention to the form and language that is used
- ❑ Read all aspects of the question carefully and thoroughly first before writing your response
- ❑ Underline the key words in the question
- ❑ Write using legible handwriting

Questions?

Thank you very much and I wish you all the best on your Extension 1 Examination!

☺