**VCE English: Sample lesson sequence – supporting students to develop writing skills**

**VCE English Unit 3, Area of Study 2: Creating Texts**

This sequence of lessons is designed to show the transition from short writing activities to more sustained pieces of writing

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| Lesson | Area of study | Learning Activities | Lesson content | Formative assessment tasks / feedback |
| 1 | **Area of Study 2: Creating Texts** | Short writes starting activities | *Short writes are brief, focused writing tasks designed to hone specific skills or techniques. Typically completed within a short time frame, these tasks concentrate on one element of writing, such as crafting vivid imagery, developing a character, or using rhetorical devices effectively. Each of these activities is designed to last for between 15 and 30 minutes*  Before each of the short writes tasks, students should be given a brief outline of the components of what they might need to include in their writing. A list of elements or techniques that they might wish to use can be provided to them.  Creative Description:  Task: write a 100-word paragraph describing a protest / aspect of a personal journey / element of country / moment of play, focusing specifically on imagery.  Skill: using sensory details to create vivid descriptions of moments or places.  The start of an argument  Task: write a persuasive opening paragraph about why an attitude towards protest / play / country / personal journeys should/shouldn’t be believed  Skill: quick introduction of a point of view and also establishing a tone. | Students should complete these short writes in a writing journal. The short writes will be revisited in their later work and students should be encouraged to edit their work in the journals.  Feedback and assessment of this work is completed via:  Class discussion and reflection  Paired editing of work to seek to improve what has been written  Oral feedback from the teacher with student annotations to reflect advice |
| 2 | Short writes | Before each of the short writes tasks, students should be given a brief outline of the components of what they might need to include in their writing. A list of elements or techniques that they might wish to use can be provided to them. Students may need to be reminded about how to write dialogue and the conventions of language for this before embarking on the task  Character snapshot:  Task: write the opening paragraph of an internal monologue or reflection for a character facing a dilemma that is connected to the idea of protest / country / play / personal journeys.  Skill: Developing voice and using it to present a point of view.  Creating dialogue  Task: Write a short dialogue between two characters arguing over an aspect of play / protest / personal journeys / country. The argument doesn’t have to be resolved but you need to establish the two sides of the argument.  Skill: creating authentic sounding dialogue | Students should complete these short writes in a writing journal. The short writes will be revisited in their later work and students should be encouraged to edit their work in the journals.  Feedback and assessment of this work is completed via:  Class discussion and reflection  Paired editing of work to seek to improve what has been written  Oral feedback from the teacher with student annotations to reflect advice |
| 3 | Short writes | Begin the lesson by reminding students of the Framework idea that is being studied. Students may wish to refer to their notes or handouts about the Framework idea when completing this task  Thematic Exploration:  Task: write a 200-word reflection on the theme of the Framework idea that you have studied. The reflection should be connected to a personal connection to the idea.  Skill: connecting personal insights to Framework themes and ideas. | Students should complete their short write in 30-minutes. They should then be placed in small groups to share and discuss their writing and the ideas that they wish to focus on.  Following group discussion, students may wish to edit their work for clarification.  Whole-class sharing of ideas and samples from writing (complex sentences or effective reflections) |
| 4 | Using a title with a short write task  Students will draw upon mentor texts for these tasks  **NOTE: Sample titles to use for this activity are included at the end of the document** | *When students are familiar with short writes, it might be useful to provide students with a title for each piece of work that they start to produce.*  *Students could be taught about the purpose of a title and how it reflects the essence of the work that has been produced in response to it. To bridge the gap between ideas and writing, titles offer a way of framing and shaping responses.*  Teachers could consider the following short writes classroom activities as a means of supporting students to understand how a title works and to build initial written responses using that title. The tasks are designed to take around 20 minutes:  Quick response brainstorming with Framework prompts  Objective: To practice generating ideas quickly that connect a Framework theme with an unseen prompt.  Activity: Provide students with a list of unseen titles or prompts related to the Framework idea they are studying (e.g., “A moment of protest,” “The memory of place,” “Finding oneself in the unknown,” “The roles we play”).  Task: In pairs, students choose one title and brainstorm possible interpretations in a short time frame (e.g., 5 minutes). Students then write a few sentences linking the prompt to their Framework and one of the big ideas that they have about it.  Reverse engineering the title  Objective: to deepen understanding of how a title or prompt shapes the direction of a piece of writing  Activity: Ask students to look at one of the mentor texts for their Framework. Ask them to look carefully at the relationship between the title of the text and the content of it. They should be encouraged to annotate the text in this task  Task: Each group produces a list of ways in which the title is reflected in the content of the mentor text. They share why they think that this title was used for the text and the way in which it might influence an interpretation of the purpose of the text. | Students should complete these tasks in their writing journal. The short writes will be revisited in their later work and students should be encouraged to continue to edit their work in the journals.  Feedback and assessment of this work is completed via:  Class discussion and reflection  Paired editing of work to seek to improve what has been written  Oral feedback from the teacher with student annotations to reflect advice |
| 5 | Using a title with a short write task  Students will draw upon mentor texts for these tasks | Continuing to use the skills and knowledge from the previous lesson, students move to the following tasks:  Free writing  Objective: to build fluency and confidence in responding to prompts related to Framework themes under timed conditions.  Activity: select an unseen title or prompt that connects to your Framework. Set a time limit (e.g., 20 minutes) and ask students to write freely on the title, connecting it to a Framework idea without worrying about structure or making their writing perfect. Emphasise this is a free writing exercise  Task: after the time is up, students read through what they’ve written, highlighting ideas, phrases, or sentences they feel have a clear connection to the title. Students share their work with a partner to see how they could refine or improve their ideas further  Group analysis  Objective: to simulate the experience of responding to an unseen title under exam conditions with peer support.  Activity: present students with an unseen title relevant to their Framework idea. Divide students into groups and provide them with a brief time limit (e.g., 15 minutes) to brainstorm a collective response to the title that also draws upon complex ideas about the Framework.  Task: each group creates a plan for a response that includes the form, main idea, supporting points, and purpose, ensuring that the response reflects a complex engagement with the Framework idea. The group presents their outline to the class, explaining how they approached the title and its connection to the Framework and how it is reflected in their plan. The listening students are encouraged to ask questions and probe the use of the title. | Students should complete these tasks in their writing journal. The short writes will be revisited in their later work and students should be encouraged to continue to edit their work in the journals.  Feedback and assessment of this work is completed via:  Class discussion and reflection  Paired editing of work to seek to improve what has been written  Oral feedback from the teacher with student annotations to reflect advice |
| 6 | Moving onto sustained writing  Using mentor texts from all of the Framework areas | *Having established writing exercises linked to ideas and titles, students could focus on building their confidence and expertise in elements of writing that they might wish to draw upon in their own work.*  *The following activities draw upon a range of mentor texts as models for this writing. Teachers can use the mentor texts that link to their own Framework of ideas as well as mentor texts from other Framework ideas or supplementary texts to support students and provide models for them.*  Establishing a voice  Students could explore how authors establish a unique voice, understand its importance in storytelling. Students can use this insight to develop their own distinct narrative voice.  What is it? Voice is the distinct personality, style, or perspective an author or narrator brings to their writing.  Why use it? Voice can heighten the reader’s engagement with the text and establish an emotional connection to the ideas  Elements: tone, language choices, perspective on the world, pacing, rhythm tec.  Examples:  The paragraph beginning “I am a storyteller …” from ‘The Danger of a Single Story’  The paragraph beginning “For so long I carried around this awful sense of self-loathing …” from ‘Friday Essay: On the Sydney Mardi Gras’  The lines beginning “I want to take you to every restaurant …” from ‘Monologue from Cyrano’  Tasks: Students should read the extracts carefully to identify how the writers do the following:  (a) Use tone to establish connections or trust with their audiences  (b) Use personal anecdotes or insights to offer a unique perspective  (c) Use specific words, phrases or moments in time that reveal something about their personality or world view  Having read the extracts carefully and considered the questions, students should use one or two elements of voice that appeal to them and adapt them to create a short text that establishes their own sense of identity in relation to an aspect of their Framework idea. | Sustained writing takes place in a writing journal. Oral feedback and discussion can be used to support student writing  Teachers could also consider the use of a feedback form for this work |
| 7 | Sustained writing  Using mentor texts from all of the Framework areas | Using imagery  Students could learn how to identify sensory imagery in texts and then experiment with writing their own vivid descriptions to create a sense of mood and atmosphere.  What is it? Language that draws upon the senses (sight, sound, touch, taste, smell).  Why use it? Imagery is extremely efficient in evoking emotions in readers as well as helping writers to vividly depict scenes, places and moments in time. Imagery can be highly sensory and be used to connect readers to unfamiliar places or experiences.  Elements: metaphors, similes, personification, symbolism, precise (rather than generic) language, word choices that have specific resonances for readers  Examples:  The paragraph that begins “"A little Lardil girl and her brother grow up along the winding river on Latje Latje Country …” from ‘bidngen’  The paragraph that begins “The rain began. And five minutes later heavy rain came down, covering the sky. The dogs, already drenched…” from ‘Gooseberries’  The paragraph that begins “Behind me, the bush murmured to itself …” from ‘All That We Know of Dreaming’  Tasks: Students should read the extracts carefully to identify how the writers do the following:  (a) Use sensory details (which ones?) to describe a setting  (b) Link images or physical experiences to emotional responses  (c) Strike a balance between metaphor, simile and simple description  Having read the extracts carefully and considered the questions, students should use one or two elements of imagery that appeal to them and adapt them to create a short text that uses vivid imagery to connect with an aspect of their Framework idea. | Sustained writing takes place in a writing journal. Oral feedback and discussion can be used to support student writing  Teachers could also consider the use of a feedback form for this work |
| 8 |  | Sustained writing  Using mentor texts from all of the Framework areas | Complex use of dialogue  Building upon the initial work from their short writes, students could explore how dialogue reveals character, advances the plot or intention of a text and adds a sense of realism to what is produced.  What is it? Dialogue can form the entirety of a text (e.g. the monologues from *The Inheritance, Cyrano and City of Gold*) or be incorporated as conversation. They are the words spoken or thought that are shared with a reader / audience. It can also be direct speech as provided via a transcript.  Why use it? It is an extremely efficient way of providing complex insight into characters, as well as a way of moving a narrative forward more dynamically than narration or description alone. Direct speech can also be a powerful persuasive device to use in writing.  Examples:  The paragraph that begins “I am here as a soldier…” from ‘Freedom or Death’  The dialogue that begins “All of a sudden you look so tired …” from ‘Harrison Bergeron’  The section of ‘The Red Plastic Chair’ which begins “In the spring of 2011, my mother called…”  Tasks: Students should read the extracts carefully to identify how the writers do the following:  (a) Use dialogue in a text to imply something without explicitly saying it aloud  (b) Use dialogue to reveal character  (c) Use dialogue without commentary (i.e., without the phrase “she said angrily”)  Having read the extracts carefully and considered the questions, students should use elements and techniques of dialogue that appeal to them and adapt them to create a short text that uses conversation, reflection or direct speech to connect with an aspect of their Framework idea. | Sustained writing takes place in a writing journal. Oral feedback and discussion can be used to support student writing  Teachers could also consider the use of a feedback form for this work |
| 9 |  | Sustained writing  Using mentor texts from all of the Framework areas | Resolution  Students need to understand how to resolve or end their text in a way that conveys the purpose of their writing. Students could consider the different methods that writers use to draw their work to a close. They could also consider how the ending of a text might resonate with specific readers.  What is it? The way in which a writer draws a text to a conclusion  Why use it? Structure influences the impact of a text. Effective or powerful textual resolutions might provide a sense of closure or leave readers to resolve what has been proposed to them. In both cases, the intention is to reinforce the central themes and ideas of a text.  Elements: There is no simple or single way to end a text. Students should consider the overall purpose of the text and whether a resolution or a question is the intended purpose of the author.  Examples:  From the line “So, Thomas, to set the record straight…” to the end of ‘An Open Letter to Doubting Thomas’  From the line “There! The tower is now a fortress…” to the end of ‘The Conquest of Land and Dream’  From “And seeing us as animals…” to the end of the monologue from City of Gold  Tasks: Students should read the extracts carefully to identify how the writers do the following:  (a) Use the ending of their text to convey a final sense of tone or purpose  (b) Return to earlier ideas from their texts to re-visit them at the end  (c) Evoke a reaction from a reader / listener (how do you know what it is meant to be?)  Having read the extracts carefully and considered the questions, students experiment with a range of closing lines, sentences or paragraphs that connect with an aspect of their Framework idea. They could consider which is the most effective and share with peers to get feedback on the effectiveness of their choices. | Sustained writing takes place in a writing journal. Oral feedback and discussion can be used to support student writing  Teachers could also consider the use of a feedback form for this work |
| 10 |  | Sustained writing  Using mentor texts from all of the Framework areas | Students evaluate their own writing and choose an additional area from the list below to work on:  Structure (especially when making the transition from planning to writing)  Students could map the structure of a range of mentor texts to look at the ways in which an idea or experience is presented to an audience (this links with their work on resolution)  Tone  Students could look at the tone of texts and map how and when it changes. They could consider how this might vary across different types of texts (persuasive and reflective) included in the mentor texts  Setting  Students could consider how a setting (single or multiple settings in place and time) is integral to the story or message or idea being conveyed by a mentor text. They could contrast a text that use a very distinct and clearly described setting with one that does not. They could experiment with the use of setting in their own writing and relate it to the ideas that they want to convey | Sustained writing takes place in a writing journal. Oral feedback and discussion can be used to support student writing  Teachers could also consider the use of a feedback form for this work |

Teachers could use the following sample titles with students: **Writing about Country**

Echoes of Home

Ties That Bind

Roots and Routes

In the Heart of the Land

Boundaries and Beyond

The Places We Keep

My Compass Points

Returning to Country

The Land Remembers

On Common Ground

Fields of Memory

The Spirit of Place

Lost and Found

Belonging and Beyond

Footprints in the Earth

The Power of Place

The Meaning of Home

A Sense of Place

The Call of the Land

Tracing My Path

Teachers could use the following sample titles with students: **Writing about Protest**

Rise and Resist

A Stand Against Silence

Echoes of Defiance

Beyond the Line

A Cause to Fight For

Against the Current

Unseen and Unheard

Marching Forward

Breaking the Chains

Defend and Demand

Raising Voices

Words as Weapons

In Pursuit of Justice

A Stubborn Heart

Courage and Conviction

A Silent Stand

Through the Storm

Power in Numbers

Truth to Power

Against the Grain

Teachers could use the following sample titles with students: Writing about **Personal journeys**

Steps to Self

Paths and Places

A Road Unseen

Through Their Eyes

Embracing the Unknown

Where I Belong

Pieces of Me

The Road Within

Seeking Self

Navigating Change

Through Every Step

Choices and Chances

The Long Way Around

Mapping A Path

In Search of Answers

Paths Taken

The Way Forward

Lost and Found

A Journey of Becoming

Roots and Wings

Teachers could use the following sample titles with students: **Writing about Play**

The Spirit of Play

Lessons in Laughter

More Than a Game

Bound by Rules

The Joy of Play

In the Moment

Playing for Keeps

Beyond the Game

Rules and Rebellion

The Game of Life

Serious Fun

You Cheated

Risk and Reward

The Heart of the Game

A World of Make-Believe

Playing With Purpose

Imagination at Play

For the Fun of It

Games People Play

Freedom in Play