

Introduction: *The Journey*

Requirements for the Area of Study

How the Area of Study works *The Journey* is the prescribed Area of Study for the HSC English Advanced and Standard Courses in 2004 and 2005. Students are required to choose ONE particular focus for this Area of Study. This focus will be determined by the prescribed text that you choose to study.

You must choose ONE prescribed text from ONE of the following focuses:

Physical Journeys

Texts prescribed for study Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
Michael Gow, *Away*
Peter Skrzynecki, *Immigrant Chronicle*
Jesse Martin, *Lionheart*
Philip Noyce, *Rabbit-Proof Fence*

Imaginative Journeys

Texts prescribed for study Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Complete Poems*
Melvyn Bragg, *On Giants' Shoulders*
Robert Zemeckis, *Contact*

Inner Journeys

Texts prescribed for study J G Ballard, *Empire of the Sun*
Louis Nowra, *Cosi*
Ken Watson (ed), *Imagined Corners*
Sally Morgan, *My Place*
Roberto Benigni, *Life is Beautiful*

As well as these texts, any answer for the Area of Study examination question must also contain reference to the Stimulus Booklet *Journeys* and other related texts of your own choosing.

Notes on The Journey

Types of
journey

At some stage in everyone's life, they will embark on a significant journey. This will usually involve much more than leaving their home to go somewhere else. The journey may be **physical** of course, but it may just as easily be an **inner** journey, or even one that is totally **imaginary**.

Whatever the type of journey undertaken, it usually produces some form of **effect** in those who take part and often leaves them **fundamentally altered** in some way. This change could be a subtle as a shift in **perspective** of the protagonist or could be as far reaching as a major change to their way of thinking.

Definition of The Journey

Think beyond
simple
definitions

When dictionaries define the word 'journey', they tend to look at it in a very literal sense and treat it almost synonymously with the word 'travel'. This definition is correct of course.

However, for the purpose of the Area of Study, this definition is probably too narrow and it would be better to think as widely as possible. As well as providing a greater scope for thought, a wider definition of the topic will allow for a much more varied and interesting selection of related texts as well.

The need for a broader definition is also suggested by the three focuses set for study. The titles themselves suggest that the concept of the 'journey' can go far beyond the idea of 'travel' and that journeys can be **'inner'** and **'imaginative'** as well as **'physical'**.

Journey: noun
and verb

Even a quick look at a dictionary definition reveals that a 'journey' can be either a **noun** or a **verb**. Put another way, we could say that a journey can be viewed as either a **product** or a **process**. For example, it is possible to examine a person's journey to some exotic location as a product. That is, the actual trip itself and the results that it produces for that individual. However, it is

also possible to view the same journey as a process, examining how the person went about their journey and how they develop incrementally as it progresses.

The concept of 'journey' therefore suggests more than mere travel between point A and point B. A journey can be a **physical movement** that has some **significance** for those who are involved. It likewise can involve no movement at all and can be a **purely internal process** that is the result of some **significant event**. Similarly, a journey can be **entirely imaginative** and be solely the result of the **creative vision** of the composer.

Connotations of The Journey

Journey as
movement

Although each of the three focuses is quite different, the repeated use of the word 'journey' in each suggests that they have some common ideas. The word 'journey' has a wide range of connotations. A thorough consideration of these associations will allow for a more solid understanding of each individual topic.

Personal
movement

Using the word 'journey' immediately carries with it the idea of **movement**. This may be a physical movement in the case of a protagonist who travels to another destination during the course of a text. This same idea of movement can also extend to inner and imaginative journeys. A protagonist may not physically 'move' anywhere, but may experience a profound emotional or spiritual 'movement' as the result of some **inner** journey. The **consequences** of an **event** or **relationship**, if they hold a great personal significance, could similarly be described as a journey for the person involved.

Journey as
challenges

Another concept that is associated with journeys is the notion of **challenge** and **adventure**. A journey, of any kind, usually involves some form of challenge to the participants. Such challenges can be quite varied, depending upon the type of journey undertaken. A journey could provide physical challenges to the protagonist, such as climbing Mt Everest or negotiating one's way through a foreign city.

A journey can also be challenging in other ways, such as coping with a difficult personal situation or creating an imaginary world. Despite the huge variety of situations involved, most journeys in some way suggest that the participant undergoes some form of **challenge** that is of a personal nature. In order to

complete the journey, no matter the kind it may be, the individual must meet various obstacles, overcome them, and ultimately develop as a result.

*Journey as
change*

Almost all journeys involve, in some way, a **change or development** of the people who are involved. This change could be as a result of experiencing different people and new places that have had an effect on the traveller. Alternatively the change could be a purely spiritual or emotional one that is brought about by a more personal inner or imaginary journey. There are very few people who undertake a journey of some sort and manage to remain unaltered in some way.

A textual example of The Journey

*The Lord of
the Rings*

A concrete textual example may assist in clarifying these concepts and tying them together. Many people are familiar with *The Lord of the Rings*, both as the original novels by JRR Tolkien and more recently as the film adaptations directed by Peter Jackson.

*Journey of
imagination:
both novel and
film versions*

These texts reflect the concept of the journey in a variety of ways and can have a range of variant readings. On one level, the texts are an **imaginative journey** in themselves. They represent the journey of the author to construct a narrative that would allow the imaginary world and characters of his creative vision to come to life. The novels may be read as Tolkien's **personal journey** to transform his **private imaginary world** into a coherent and 'believable' form that can be accessed by other responders. Similarly, Peter Jackson's film adaptations represent the **personal journey** of the director to translate Tolkien's prose on to the big screen.

*Physical
journey*

These texts can also be read as a **physical journey**. The texts set up a plot line in which the protagonist Frodo embarks on a grand **physical quest**. The challenges of this journey are carefully conveyed through the narrative as Frodo is forced to overcome various **physical obstacles** and face a series of **difficult personal encounters** with other creatures. In order to reach the end of his quest Frodo must travel physically from one place to another. He moves from place to place and from challenge to challenge as he heads towards his goal.

However this **physical journey** is only one aspect of Frodo's journey. In order to complete his task he must also undertake an

*Inner
journey*

inner journey that accompanies the physical. The **significant experiences and people** he encounters during his physical journey have an impact on him and cause him to **develop as an individual**. This inner journey sees Frodo become a more **self-confident and self-aware individual** who, by the end of his physical journey, is able to complete the task with which he has been entrusted.

It is not by accident that the physical settings of the texts reflect Frodo's incremental development during his journey. The challenges of his physical journey mirror his personal development and inner journey. In this sense, his journey can be viewed as both **process and product**. The responder can trace the process of Frodo's inner journey and see the product at the end of the text.

This multifaceted exploration of the journey is one that is quite common in literature and popular culture. It could be thus more rewarding to consider all aspects of the journey in any text examined.

Physical journeys

Any text based around the concept of a **physical journey** raises a number of ideas to consider. Obviously, by definition, the text will involve a real or imagined character embarking on a trip of some sort. However, the reasons for and the effects of this journey are as important as the journey itself. Indeed, they could be seen as part of the journey process itself.

Following are issues that will need to be examined:

*Questions to
ask yourself*

- **What was the motivation for the journey?** Did the protagonist begin their journey in order to search for something or was it to run away from something at home?
- **What is it precisely that the protagonist is searching for?** Is this something tangible, or is it an inner need that the person has?
- **Where does the person choose as a destination for their physical journey?** What does this say about them as a person?
- **Does the journey challenge the protagonist?** How? What are the most challenging parts of the journey?
- **What are the most important events of the journey?** Why are these events important?
- **Does the protagonist meet people who become significant for them?** Who are these people and what is their significance?
- **Does the physical journey mirror any personal or spiritual**

journey of the protagonist? Do different places have any symbolic meaning?

• **How does the journey affect the protagonist?** Are there any noticeable changes in the protagonist that are a direct result of the journey?

Experiential (real life case study) example

Linda, having recently successfully completed her HSC, decides to return to her parents' home country. She has never before left Australia and wants to clear her head before going to university. She feels drained by the hard work that she has put into working for her HSC and meeting her parents' expectations of academic success. Besides this, she wants to visit relatives that she has never met before and to see what life was like for her parents before they migrated to Australia (before she was born).

Linda enjoys seeing her relatives, most of whom she only recalls from photos, telephone conversations and the stories of her parents. However, she is struck by the relative poverty of her family and the difference in living conditions compared to her life in Australia. The lack of opportunity for her cousins is particularly poignant, as they are the same age as her.

Linda returns from her trip with a greater sense of her own good fortune and the opportunities her parents have worked hard to provide for her. She begins university but considers changing courses and aims to pursue something that will be of more social use to other people.

Text examples

Easy Rider, film, directed by Dennis Hopper (1969)

This is the most famous of all 'road movies' and was at the time considered a 'cult film'. It was made at the height of the 'counter culture' and hippie period (late 60s), and depicts two 'bikers', Wyatt and Billy, who leave Los Angeles on their motorbikes and head across the country towards New Orleans, bound for the Mardi Gras. On the way, they encounter a variety of stereotypic individuals, who represent the different aspects of American society. Things turn nasty as they reach the Deep South, and their long-haired anti-establishment ways draw the attention of

Physical
journey
(overseas)

Challenges

Effects of
journey

Journey
across
America

Journey ends

the local rednecks. The shock ending to the film sees them shot to death on the open road in a senseless act of vigilante killing. The two learn a lot about their country, and a little about themselves, in the course of their journey, even though the political point (about the bigotry of mainstream US society) made by the ending overrides and negates the lessons they have learnt.

Fly Away Peter, novel, by David Malouf (1981)

A contemporary classic, this novel by the celebrated Australian author concerns two men, Ashley (a well-to-do squatter) and Jim (his hired help) in pre-war Queensland. Ashley has set up a bird sanctuary on the marshes of his property, and Jim becomes the sanctuary keeper. The Great War breaks out, and both men 'join up'. They are shipped to France, and go into battle in the trenches. The story at this point is told from the perspective of Jim, whose former innocence is shattered by the unrestrained bloodletting all around him. Only by focussing on the birds he sees on the battlefield can he keep himself sane. He is eventually wounded, fatally, and dies in a field hospital, seeing his old friend Ashley through a delirious haze before he dies. Only Ashley survives the war, and comes back home. The novel is a powerful account of how people can learn, the hard way, from brutal experiences.

*Journey to
war*

Learning

Journey ends

Imaginative journeys

An imaginative journey provides the reader with almost unlimited scope. As the journey is imaginative, by definition, the world open to the composer and responder is limited only by the imagination of both. The imaginative journey may also represent or involve a symbolic journey of the composer or the protagonists. Some points that could be considered when examining an imaginary journey are:

- **What is the nature of the imaginative journey? Who is involved and how does the journey take place?**
- **Does the journey involve the physical or is it entirely the result of the composer's imagination?**
- **What is the relationship between the composer and responder?** To what extent does the responder's imagination contribute to the creation of the journey?

*Questions to
ask yourself*

- **What reaction does the text aim to produce in the responder?** Does the text take the responder on a journey as well?
- **What type of imaginary world is created in the text?** What does this suggest about the composer's journey?
- **What role do the protagonists play in the imaginative journey?** Do they change as a result of the journey?

Experiential (real life case study) example

Marcus is a young man in his HSC year, studying, amongst other things, Wordsworth. While many of his classmates are barely able to tolerate the Romantic poets, Marcus sees why their 'back to Nature' enthusiasm made so much sense, in the context of nineteenth century industrialism and urban squalour. Marcus becomes a Wordsworth enthusiast, reading the poet's letters and journals, and delighting in his personal investigation of a very different time and place. During the year, Marcus and his family visit Tasmania, and trek up Cradle Mountain. On the summit, he has a kind of epiphany. He remembers Wordsworth's hymns to Nature, seeing a breathtaking link between what the English poet understood in the early 1800s and what he sees in the early twenty-first century. Marcus determines that he will use his studies to advance environmental causes, and to celebrate the wonder of the natural world.

Text examples

Star Wars, film, directed by George Lucas (1977)

The first of the famous *Star Wars* series, this was at the time a ground-breaking movie. It is celebrated for two reasons: it was technically brilliant, pioneering the use of 'special effects' which have since become stock in the industry; and narratively, it was cleverly eclectic, tapping myth and legend to create a rich storyline which transposed such traditional figures as 'knights' and princesses, together with swords and sorcery (the 'Force') into a futuristic setting. It concerns of course the journey of Luke Skywalker, together with his companions Princess Leia Organa and Han Solo, to defend the rebel alliance against the seemingly all-powerful Empire and its sinister agent, Darth Vader. In the course of accepting his monumental challenge, Luke not only

Imaginative
journey
(to the past)

Lessons learnt,
growth and
change

Journey
through space

Lessons
learnt

finds the resources to cope with what he must do, but incidentally finds his own identity: he has the power to become a Jedi knight. The journey also transforms Han, who changes from a cynical mercenary into a 'good guy' who fights for right, against the forces of evil.

Gulliver's Travels, novel, by Jonathon Swift (1786)

This is, together with *Robinson Crusoe*, is the best known of early travel fantasies. It is also, and significantly, a clever satire, secretly describing the England of Swift's own time through cunning caricatures of people and social tendencies. The story concerns Lemuel Gulliver, an English gentleman, who embarks on a sea voyage, only to find himself shipwrecked repeatedly, on a series of highly symbolic islands. Most famously, he ends up on Lilliput, where everyone is tiny. Gulliver saves the Emperor and his people when an invasion (of tiny ships) appears, and puts out a fire in the palace in an unforgettable way. His second voyage takes him to Brobdingnag, a land of giants, where he is forced to see the grotesque aspects of human existence through his microscopic view of the world. His third voyage takes him to Laputa, a flying island, and its associated lands, where he learns a great deal about politics and philosophy. His last voyage is to the land of the Houyhnhnms (pronounced 'Hwin-ums'), where the gentle folk are horses and the brutes are Yahoos. From this experience, he learns about the usefulness of reason and compassion. It is a utopia.

Journeys to
imagined
(symbolic)
worlds

Lessons learnt

Inner journeys

An inner journey can take many forms and can be seen in a wide variety of texts. The inner journey, of course, is an entirely personal process that suggests a significant change in the protagonist. This inner journey may be due to external forces or may be entirely a conscious decision by the individual. Some points that could be considered when examining an inner journey are:

- **What is the individual like before the inner journey begins?** Is the journey forced upon the individual, consciously sought or accidental?
- **What factors combine to cause the inner journey for the**

Questions to
ask yourself

protagonist?

- **What is the nature of the inner journey?** How does it occur for the individual being studied?

- **Does the inner journey accompany any form of physical journey?** Does this physical journey mirror the development of the individual?

- **Can the inner journey be viewed as a process that the individual goes through?** If so, are there any discernable stages in this process?

- **What challenges or difficulties does the individual meet along the way?** How do these challenges influence the individual and the course of their inner journey?

- **Does the inner journey have any lasting effects on the individual?** What are these effects? How does the individual differ from the way they were prior to the inner journey?

Experiential (real life case study) example

Peta is horrified to learn that her parents are relocating to Queensland. She is just about to go into Year 12, and is doing very well at her studies. She knows that the education system there will be quite different. How will she adjust, and how will it affect her career chances? Worse still, she will have to leave behind all her friends, and the city she loves, Sydney. Peta rages. She gives her parents the silent treatment. She invents schemes whereby she can stay with a friend throughout Year 12. She weeps herself to sleep. Nothing alters the fact that she will be going. Her last Christmas in Sydney is the most miserable she can ever remember. She humiliates her parents by refusing to open their present. In January, they are in Brisbane. Peta's new school is good, but she sits in silence, laughing inwardly at the 'clueless' behaviour of her new classmates. Her marks suffer. She smokes dope and drinks too much. One day, however, she finds one of her classmates crying bitterly in the toilets. This girl has just learnt that her mother is dying. Peta cannot help herself. She forgets her own problems and comforts the other girl. They become friends. Helping her friend through the trauma becomes a bonding experience, and despite the pain, they end up very close. Before she knows it, the year is nearly over. Peta wakes up, with a shock, to the fact that she has 'survived'. One day, she hugs her mother, for no particular reason, and apologises for her behaviour the

Educational
journey (away
from friends and
familiar places)

Lessons learnt,
growth and
change

previous Christmas. Life goes on, and she realises that she has grown up, just a little.

Text examples

Amelie, film, directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet (2001)

This modern cult favourite concerns a shy French girl, Amelie Poulain, child of a dysfunctional family, who works as a waitress in a Paris cafe. She takes it on herself to enrich the lives of those around her by intervening secretly in their existence – fostering a romance, helping out an invalid, and righting wrongs. She also becomes aware that her own life is missing something: love. She finally finds it and the film ends happily. This marvellous film is a spell-binding example of 'magic realism', cinematic trickery (with a point) and the clever interweaving of multiple genres. It is also a feelgood narrative about an individual who, in trying to find the right way for *other* people, finds it also for herself.

Journeys into
the lives of
others

Change and
growth

To Kill a Mockingbird, novel, by Harper Lee (1960)

A twentieth century classic, this novel concerns a small town in the American South in the 1930s. The story is told by a young girl, 'Scout', daughter of the town's only lawyer, who is appointed to defend a black man accused of rape. The father, Atticus Finch, is a truly honorable man who teaches his children (Scout has a brother Jem) that violence and prejudice are to be avoided at all costs. Atticus successfully proves that the black man is innocent, only to have the all-white jury find him guilty anyway. In the tragic aftermath, the black man is killed. The novel's principal theme is the need for tolerance. It is this that Scout and Jem learn as they journey through the transformative experiences recounted in the story.

Journeys of
understanding

Writing about *The Journey*

The Area of Study in the syllabus

What the syllabus advises

Any writing about the *Area of Study* should consider the requirements of the particular question at hand, any marking guidelines provided, as well as the content outlined by the syllabus.

The syllabus for the *Standard* and *Advanced* courses describes the course content for the *Area of study* as 'an exploration of a concept that affects our perceptions of ourselves and our world'. It says that 'students explore, analyse, question and articulate the ways in which perceptions of this concept are shaped in and through a variety of texts'.

The syllabus goes on to explain that as part of the *Area of Study*, students 'explore and examine relationships between language and text' as well as the 'interrelationships among texts'. In doing this it is necessary to explore the 'individual qualities of texts' whilst at the same time 'considering the texts' relationships to the wider context of the *Area of study*'.

When writing about *The Journey*, it would be a good idea to keep these points from the syllabus in mind. Unless the specific question directs otherwise, writing for the *Area of Study* should include reference to a prescribed text, the stimulus booklet and other related texts of your own choosing.

Some points to consider when writing

Make sure you consider different aspects of the writing before commencing. As with any writing, a well thought out and structured piece of writing that answers the question being posed is preferable to one that does these things poorly.

Balance

There is a need when writing to consider a balance between the

texts being used. Often the type of writing expected will require adherence to time or word limits. It is therefore necessary to ensure that each of the texts included receives adequate analysis and attention. Too much time or space spent on one text will rob detail and any possibility of an extended response from the other texts.

Be selective
(within a text)

Under the constraints of time or word limits, it is also important to consider which aspects of the texts are chosen for in-depth analysis. Especially when dealing with lengthy and complicated texts such as novels, dramas and films it may be helpful to concentrate on some significant sections. An in-depth analysis of some important sections of a complicated text is preferable to a cursory and superficial overview of the whole thing.

Treat all texts
equally

It is also important to ensure that each text is treated as rigorously as possible. In order to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the topic, it is *not* advisable to discount any texts used in a response as being less important than other texts. *Each text* should be examined with equal regard to its content and technique. Making selective and informed choices about which texts to choose (which is discussed in the next section) will help greatly with this.

Technique – the issue of 'how' a text works

It is necessary to consider the composer's technique in each of the texts. Teachers often refer to this as the 'how' of the texts. Unless directed otherwise, most *Area of Study* writing tasks expect a discussion of **HOW** the texts communicate ideas about the journey as well as **WHAT** they actually say. The type of discussion that will be involved regarding technique will, of course, depend on the particular choice of text.

Analyse
'technique'

For example, a discussion of a composer's use of language, characterisation and narrative for a journey related novel would be vastly different from one that dealt with a poem or visual text. The texts may be similar in **WHAT** they have to say about the journey but being of *different text types* and media they will undoubtedly *communicate* their message *in different ways*. Even texts that appear very similar on the surface may go about **HOW** they deal with the concept of *The Journey* in vastly different ways.

Don't just
summarise

It is thus necessary to **look closely at the techniques used in the individual texts** that have been chosen for a response. It is

certainly not adequate to provide a mere recount of the events that take place in texts. Put simply, 'telling the story is nowhere near enough'.

Text Type (of response)

It is necessary to **look for the text type required by the question** and be prepared to write in the form that is specified. A question may ask for a response in formal essay style. However, it is also possible that another text type could be specified. For example, a question may direct students to produce a response in the form of a letter, a newspaper article, a speech, an interview or so forth. There are many text types that may be required and the few examples given above are certainly not exhaustive.

When directed to write in the form of a particular text type, it is necessary to **consider the conventions of that text type before beginning**. The text type specified will determine the level and style of language that should be used and this will vary greatly depending on the question. For example, it may be quite appropriate to use a colloquial form of verbal language (including some slang) to answer a question that directs students to construct a conversation between two friends discussing the journey. Such a level of usage and style would **not** however be appropriate for a question that directs students to respond in the form of a formal essay.

When considering the conventions of different text types, it may be helpful to **examine a variety of different examples from real life** (letters, speeches, articles etc). Such examples can be used as models for the conventions of various text types as well as the types of language and structure that they employ. Obviously, one of the best ways to prepare for this is to read as often and widely as possible, both about *The Journey* and other areas of personal interest.

Structure

It is well worth the time to **give thought to the structure of a piece of writing** before commencing. This is especially so when answering as an extended response for the Area of Study. Different questions require different responses and this factor will influence the structure of the answer given.

Shape the response to the set text type

Remember conventions

Emulate real examples

Moreover, the selection of texts and where they are inserted in a response should also be considered. Because most responses to an Area of Study question will require an answer that includes several texts that relate to *The Journey*, it is wise to consider the relationships between these texts before writing.

All the texts used in an answer for the Area of Study will deal, in some way, with the concept of *The Journey*. However, they may offer very different perspectives on the same topic, or may communicate similar ideas but use different techniques. It is thus a good idea to examine the placement of these texts in an extended answer. The requirements of the question should also give some idea about which of the chosen texts will be best placed at the start, in the centre and at the end of the response.

Depending on the texts that are being analysed, it may be of benefit to group texts that are of similar content and technique so that they can be more easily linked together and compared. Similarly, it may be of benefit to group texts that contrast in terms of content or style. This may allow for a clear analysis of the contrasts between the various texts.

Synthesis

Giving thought to the structure of a response and the placement of texts within it can also allow for a more sophisticated degree of **synthesis** in an answer. When people refer to synthesis they mean **the ability of the writer to draw together the various threads of a piece of writing into a more holistic and sophisticated argument**.

A good analogy for synthesis is the comparison to chocolate cake. All the ingredients that make up a chocolate cake, such as, flour, sugar and cocoa are quite all right individually. However, when they are all mixed together (or synthesised) in the form of a cake, they taste far better.

For the Area of Study this means linking a discussion of the various texts together rather than just discussing each in isolation. Try to make connections between the various texts and what they say about *The Journey*.

It is also good to make links between the different techniques used in different texts. Each of the texts discussed in a response will probably use a variety of techniques to communicate the text's message about *The Journey*. It can be useful to compare the similarities and differences in effect of these techniques and the

Order discussion of texts

Group texts that are similar or different

Link texts

Compare technique

reasons why the particular composers chose to use them.

Compare
viewpoints (on
The Journey)

Writing with a high degree of synthesis suggests that a student demonstrates the ability to look at the answer as a whole and can construct an argument based on this. To achieve this it requires a student to look at the texts together and to draw conclusions based on what they each suggest about *The Journey*. Although each of the texts may make an individual statement about *The Journey*, it is good idea to consider what statement they make collectively. It is, of course, necessary to link this clearly to the requirements of the question being posed.

Checklist for writing about the Area of Study

The following points may assist when drafting or commenting on writing about *The Journey*.

- Does your written (exam) response
- Pay attention to the **syllabus requirements**?
 - **Interpret the question** correctly and answer as it directs?
 - Write in the **correct text type** that is asked?
 - Write about a **prescribed text**, the **stimulus booklet** and **other related texts**?
 - **Balance the time** spent on each text?
 - Select **key sections** of complicated texts and **analyse them in depth**?
 - Discuss the **how** (as well as the **about**) of each text?
 - Give consideration to the **structure** of the writing?
 - **Synthesise** the discussion of the texts by comparing and contrasting?

Choosing suitable related texts

Quality texts

A sound strategy that can make writing extended responses easier and more effective is giving thought to the choice of 'other' texts. Obviously, the choice of texts from the Stimulus Booklet and prescribed text list is limited to those provided by the Board of Studies. The other related texts required in an Area of Study

response are subject only to the choice of the individual student.

However, common sense and an awareness of what an Area of Study question may require should prevail when choosing texts. As with most things in life, things that come easily and cheaply often have a hidden cost.

Don't just
choose 'easy',
common texts

The texts that are the easiest and quickest to find may not be of the highest quality. They may have been quick to locate, readily enjoyable and easily accessible, but they may have hidden drawbacks. For example, it may require no more than a trip to the front yard to access a copy of the current local paper. It may require very little time to flick through it and find anything that has something to do with a journey. It will probably also be very quick to write about it later – because there is very little to say.

Often, texts that are overly simplistic may have only a tenuous link to the concept of *The Journey*. Although they may be related to the topic of *The Journey*, such texts may contain only superficial ideas about the topic, thus allowing little scope for writing later.

Even some quite valid forms of writing sometimes allow for little scope to discuss language. For example, often newspaper and magazine articles may raise intelligent and quite sophisticated ideas about the topic but allow little scope to discuss the writer's use of technique. This is not to suggest that such forms of writing are deficient – they are deliberately composed in this way to achieve clarity of meaning for a diverse audience.

Go for
enduring,
'quality'
texts

This does not mean that students should dismiss texts that they enjoy, are from popular culture or appeal to a young audience. Such texts are often quite sophisticated and subtle in their use of technique and make excellent related material. However, try to choose texts that have some lasting claim to fame. If they have endured, it is almost certainly because of their quality.

The best way to find suitable, quality texts is to read often and widely. This is one of the intentions of the Area of Study and it is one of the best ways to gather a wide range of texts. Besides being exposed to a wider variety of texts, wide reading will also allow a student to experience a wide range of opinions and ideas related to *The Journey*. This can only assist in developing a deep understanding of the topic.

Variety of texts

Besides choosing texts on the basis of their individual quality, it is also important to consider the other texts that will be used in an answer. When describing the Area of Study, the syllabus uses the phrase ‘a variety of texts’.

The significance of this goes beyond choosing more than one related text. It suggests that texts should be chosen from a variety of sources and styles. Thus, when choosing texts it is valuable to ensure that when viewed together, the texts reflect variety.

Choosing texts from a variety of text types is a good idea and the obvious starting point for this is the prescribed text that has been studied. One of the aims underpinning the Area of Study is to encourage students to read a wide and diverse range of texts. Knowing this, it is desirable to reflect this in a response to an Area of Study question.

For example, if a student had studied Coleridge’s poetry as a prescribed text in class, it may be counter productive to compose a response using Frost’s poem from the Stimulus Booklet and several other poems as related material. This may demonstrate that the student is good at analysing poetry, but does not reflect their skill in dealing with other kinds of texts.

To help achieve variety in an Area of Study response it may be useful to consider including texts which reflect a variety of forms, text types and media. Although it is certainly not desirable to include too many, using a selection from the following may be of help: novel, film, poetry, drama, short stories, multimedia, visual texts, non-fiction.

This idea of variety can extend beyond choosing texts of different text types. It may be of interest to study texts that contain opposing or dissimilar ideas about the concept of *The Journey*. Such texts allow for a ready contrast of ideas and opinions.

It could be similarly interesting to study texts from very different contexts, such as texts from different cultures, texts in translation or texts from different time periods. All of these could offer quite diverse and unique insights into the topic of *The Journey*, as well as employing a variety of language techniques and styles.

Choose a range of texts

Examples to choose from

Checklist for choosing quality related texts

When choosing related texts, it’s important to be methodical. It may be helpful to consider the following:

- **Start early** (in the year) rather than later.
- **Consider the prescribed text and stimulus booklet** when choosing.
- Look for texts that have **sophisticated ideas** about *The Journey*.
- Choose **texts that allow discussion of technique**.
- **Avoid overly simplistic or superficial texts**.
- Choose **texts that reflect variety** when viewed together.
- Consider texts that represent **different text types, styles and media**.
- Consider texts from a **variety of contexts**.

You might like to make a planner or ‘ready reckoner’ checklist, listing the text types you have read. Below is an example. Blow it up in order to make detailed notes.

	Prescribed text	Stimulus booklet	Related texts
Novel			
Film			
Poetry			
Drama			
Short stories			
Multimedia			
Visual text			
Non-fiction			

The Stimulus Booklet: analysis

Text 1 – The Road Not Taken, poem

Context

The where? Origin? Text type? Medium? Time period?
Background? Composer information?

Source of the
text and its
significance

'The Road Not Taken' is by the American poet Robert Frost (1874–1963). It is a very famous twentieth century poem that is well known all over the English-speaking world. The poem is quite popular, is often quoted and is considered a 'classic' by many. It appeared in *Mountain Interval* (1916), Frost's third published collection of verse. Frost won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize in 1923 and is regarded as one of the most important American poets of the century.

The Journey

The what? What ideas does the text raise about the concept of the journey? How does the text relate to the focus areas of Physical Journeys, Imaginative Journeys and Inner Journeys?
Can the text be read in a variety of ways?

The poem describes a persona's choice of journey. This *persona* (or narrative 'character') is the 'I' of the poem. It would however be incorrect to assume that this 'I', from whose perspective the poem is written, is necessarily Frost himself.

Summary of
the text

The plot of the poem is quite simple. The persona, while walking through a wood one morning, comes to a fork in the road. He (though it could be she) contemplates the two roads before him which stretch out of sight, not sure which to choose.

The dominant
metaphor

Eventually, he chooses 'the one less traveled', and sets off. Years later, he will remember the branch in the road, and the choice of journey he made, because that choice 'made all the difference'.

The poem can be read as an extended metaphor for the journey. The persona describes, in a literal sense, his physical journey through the 'yellow woods' down one of the 'two roads' that lay before him. However, this physical journey is merely the basis for the more important symbolic journey of the persona.

The persona describes himself as a traveller who 'stood long' looking down one of the roads, contemplating which road (and journey) to choose and imagining what may lie ahead on each path. This choice of journey, symbolically, is presented as being possibly difficult or unclear. Frost suggests that both roads are 'just as fair' as each other and that on each 'leaves no step had trodden black'. When looking down and contemplating the first road, Frost suggests that this vista ends as he cannot see beyond the bend in the road or the 'undergrowth'.

What the text
says about The
Journey

The poet also suggests that the choice of journey may be final or may have consequences as yet unseen, which cannot be changed once commenced. After a lengthy contemplation the persona eventually decides upon the second road. Although he tells himself that he may return to the first road 'another day' and see what it holds then, he realises that this may never happen. He may never again have the opportunity to travel this first road as he knows that 'way leads on to way', suggesting symbolically that when the journey is begun it may have many unseen twists and turns that make a return to the past impossible. With this understanding the persona doubts if he 'should ever come back'.

The poem also can also be seen as offering an opinion on the type of journey that could or even should be chosen. The persona describes his choice of road as the 'one less travelled by'. This could suggest that this choice of journey is less common than that usually chosen by other people.

The text's
symbolism

The symbolism here is the same whether the poem is read as a physical, imaginative or inner journey. The poet suggests that this choice of unusual or less common journey is a positive experience for the persona. When reflecting upon the experience later in life the persona describes it as having 'made all the difference'.

Clearly this choice of journey, that is the 'one less travelled by', has had a huge impact on the individual. Moreover, this particular moment in time, when the persona decides to embark on

one road over another, is significant enough to be remembered 'ages hence'. Indeed, the memory and the recounting of it to others is done with a 'sigh'. This could be a suggestion of contentment or satisfaction with the journey. It also could suggest a slightly whimsical reminiscing about the possibilities that could have unfolded had another journey been chosen. The sigh could also suggest a form of regret at the impossibility of knowing what other paths may have held. Significantly, the title of the poem focuses not on the journey *chosen* by the persona but on the 'road *not taken*'. No matter how positive the chosen journey may have been, there nevertheless remains a contemplation of what may have been had the other road been chosen.

Technique

How does the text communicate ideas about the journey to its audience? What effect does language, structure or other techniques have on the meaning of the text?

As previously stated, the poem is an extended metaphor for the journey and the various choices available to the individual throughout the course of a human lifetime. Symbolism is used extensively by the poet to reflect the idea of the journey and to shape the meaning of the poem.

Imagery

The 'two roads [that] diverged in a wood', an image that Frost repeats in stanzas 1 and 4, is symbolic of the endless possibilities that a person's life holds. The use of the word 'diverged' creates an image of two roads stretching off in vastly different directions at a fork. It is obviously impossible for a person to travel in two vastly different directions simultaneously.

The implication here is that any life or any journey, whether physical, imaginative or inner, will offer the individual various possibilities. Committing to one journey necessitates the loss of the *other* possibilities. An individual cannot know whether any particular choice of journey will yield happiness or disappointment.

The image of the road is continued through the entire poem and is extended in stanza three, where the poet describes the road as 'way leading on to way'. The image here is that the roads, and by implication journeys, interconnect at different points, forming

a complex maze of choices and possibilities. The persona 'knows' that the roads interconnect but "doubts" whether he 'should ever come back'. This suggests a level of uncertainty about the future and the choices that are yet to be made.

First person
narrative angle

The deeply personal nature of this journey is reinforced through the repetition of the *first person* throughout. Whether the poem is a symbolic representation of Frost's own inner thoughts or is an imaginative creation, the journey described is deeply personal.

This is particularly evident in the final stanza when 'I' is repeated, separated by a hyphen. This suggests a pause and personal reflection on the part of the persona before the final idea of the poem is offered in the last two lines. The personal nature of the journey is reinforced by the mood of the poem. The persona is alone in the 'yellow wood'. The language describing the scene is deliberately simple, as is the regular but simple rhyme scheme, and these help to create a reflective mood. All of this helps to create an atmosphere that is deeply personal and contemplative.

Setting

The setting of the poem is also significant. The poem is set in the natural environment of the 'yellow woods' yet a road is something that is planned and created by human beings. Even if the 'road' is merely a forest track, it has still been quite deliberately created for a purpose with the intention of heading somewhere. The poem describes the time as the morning, the start of a new day and symbolically the start of something new.

Interestingly, the road is obscured firstly by the 'undergrowth' and then later by grass and finally by 'leaves'. Symbolically this suggests that the various ends of a journey, no matter how well planned, can never be seen. In any person's life or in any journey, events will unfold though chance. Although a road may head in one direction, it may end up in another place entirely.

Text 2 – The Ivory Trail, cover

Context

The where? Origin? Text type? Medium? Time period?
Background? Composer information?

Remember: this is a visual text

Although this text is the cover of a novel, *The Ivory Trail* by Victor Kelleher, it should be treated as a *visual text* in its own right. The text itself is a montage of images that have been digitally constructed. The images have been appropriated from other sources and re-arranged to produce a new visual text that has its own meaning.

Obviously any cover of a novel will have some relationship to the novel contained within and an understanding of the novel is of assistance to understanding the visual text. However this should not necessarily determine the way a responder interprets the image.

The purposes of a novel's cover

It may be of use to consider the purpose of a novel's cover (sometimes called a dust jacket) and the design that has been chosen. The purpose of the cover is quite straight forward – to boost sales of the novel by attracting attention to the novel and encouraging interest in possible purchasers.

The concept and design for a novel's cover is organised by the publishers after the novel has been completed. Many covers contain images that are representations of events from the novel or are inspired by the novel.

However, other dust jackets do not contain images at all or contain images that do not directly relate to the novel's plot or characters. Such covers achieve their purpose by promoting an atmosphere that is designed to compliment the novel. For example, some modern novels employ colour instead of images to represent the mood of the text. Similarly, the 'classic' editions of novels often contain artwork from the time period in which the novel was composed. Apart from an historical link this artwork however, bears no relationship to the novel itself.

Although the cover can be considered as a visual text that is quite distinct from the novel, the chosen design is based upon *The Ivory Trail*. A background knowledge of the novel itself will assist in interpreting the visual text.

Notes on the author

The Ivory Trail is the seventeenth novel written by Victor Kelleher (1939–), a British-born Australian who started writing in 1976. Kelleher is a multiple award winner, who achieved fame for his fantasy novel *Master of the Grove* (1983), and its sequels. He is by profession an academic, though he has been a full-time writer for many years.

The Ivory Trail (2001) concerns a boy called Jamie Hassan. There is a strong tradition of mysticism and spiritual channelling

Summary of the text

in his family, but Jamie rejects this. However, when his grandfather dies, Jamie is given an ivory carving of an elephant. This mysterious talisman sends him on four journeys through time in search of his own spiritual guide.

In the first journey, Jamie channels the spirit of a young slave trader working in Africa who goes on a hunt for a legendary elephant possessed of enormous tusks. The journey to something reminiscent of the mythical elephant's burial ground forces the practical young man to recognise the power of spirituality.

In the second journey, he channels the younger brother of a Victorian gentleman who, plagued by illness, travels to Europe in search of a cure.

The third sees Jamie, now the son of member of the British Raj who died while hunting, asked to repeat the actions of his father, and defend a village from a marauding tiger. It forces him to confront courage and honour.

Finally, Jamie finds himself as a young orphan in outback Australia, forced to decide between a friend who wants him to do wrong, and people who he barely knows, but who have befriended him.

The Journey

The what? What ideas does the text raise about the concept of the journey? How does the text relate to the focus areas of Physical Journeys, Imaginative Journeys and Inner Journeys? Can the text be read in a variety of ways?

The cover is constructed from images sourced from other places that have been digitally placed together. The choice, combination and placement of the images create a new meaning when viewed as a whole. This meaning is unique and is distinct from the images individually. As with any appropriation however, the individual images all bring with them associations that help to shape the meaning of the whole.

Details of the images

The artist has included images of the Great Pyramid of Giza, The Sphinx and a collection of buildings that appear to be the rounded spires of traditional Indian architecture. These are combined with a partial image of a young man's face whose eyes are averted. The image of the young man has been positioned so that his eyes are

looking up at the other images. His eyes appear to look beyond the other images into a distance beyond the scope of the cover.

The name of the novel's author is centred prominently to the left in a stark white capitalised font which brings these words forward as the cover's focal point. The novel's title is slightly lower and smaller than this, positioned to the bottom right of the novelist's name. The positioning and sizing of the words of the title look like a trail themselves. The hook phrase '**Not all journeys have an ending**' is superimposed at the far top right of the image.

The visual text has strong links to the concept of the journey. The three architectural images have been chosen because of the connotations they carry.

From a Euro-centric perspective, the images immediately convey associations of the 'exotic East'. The mysteries and lure of the 'exotic East' has been a part of the collective European consciousness for hundreds of years. Although the novel is Australian, this cultural symbolism has been transmitted to our dominant culture. Despite mass immigration and Australia's geographic position in Asia, it is still common to hear people speak of the 'Far east' or 'exotic east'; which ironically lies west of Australia.

The Pyramid and Sphinx images draw upon a continued sense of mystery and wonder associated with the cultural and architectural achievements of the Ancient Egyptian civilisation. The Indian buildings in the background have similar suggestions of adventure, the unknown and the exotic. The very title of the novel evokes the game hunters and adventurers of past times who journeyed to Africa in search of sport and fortune.

Viewed as a whole, the images may be read as symbolic of the mystery and adventure associated with a journey. It is quite common to see similar images used in advertising to inspire people to undertake a physical journey and travel to such places in search of the exotic and exciting.

Beyond the physical, the images also have a sense of an imaginative journey through time. Although this relates directly to the plot of the novel, the visual text conveys the idea independent of this. There is a direct contrast between the youth of the young man's face and the extreme age of the civilisations represented by the architectural images.

The images also hint at the idea of civilisation as a journey. The images represent different civilisations and different historical

periods. Civilisation itself can be viewed as the great journey of human endeavour.

Inner journeys

In contrast to grand ideas of civilisation, the visual text also conveys a sense of the inner and imaginative journey of the individual. A responder who has a knowledge of the novel is likely to relate the image of the young man on the cover to the inner journey of its protagonist, Jamie Hassan.

However, even without this knowledge, the image of the young man, alone, looking starkly into the distance suggests a possible imaginative or inner journey on his part.

The hook line at the top of the page reinforces the relationship of the whole text to the journey. The sentence begins in the negative with the word 'not'. The line contrasts this (as yet unidentified) journey with others from the responder's experience, implying that although other journeys may have an end, this one is different and does not. The lack of punctuation of the sentence reflects the message it conveys. The journey in the text has no ending and the sentence has no grammatical conclusion with a full stop.

The line supports the mystery of the rest of the image, leaving the responder to question and contemplate the type of journey being suggested. Whose journey is it? What types of journey will it be? To where? Will it be physical, imaginative or spiritual? Why doesn't it end?

Technique

The how? How does the text communicate ideas about the journey to its audience? What effect does language, structure or other techniques have on the meaning of the text?

A variety of techniques are used to shape the meaning of the cover and to represent the idea of the journey.

The connotations of the various images have been mentioned above. However, the layout of the text is also significant. The images have been positioned to direct the view of the responder along particular vectors. This can be seen in the positioning of the image of the young man in the bottom left hand corner. The eyes of the young man direct the view of the responder to the author's name, the novel's title and the other images on the cover.

*What
the images
connote*

*Journeys as
wondrous*

*Journeys
in time*

'Reading'
images

Most responders (viewers, readers) tend to 'read' an image from left to right and top to bottom. This has implications for the way in which this visual text shapes the responder's 'reading' of the journey. For example, the text creates a sense of mystery surrounding the idea of the journey. This is created, in part at least, by the connotations of the images chosen. However, this atmosphere shading to total blackness suggests mystery and possibly something ominous related to the journey.

Viewed as a whole, the cover has a surreal quality to it, created through the use of colour and light. This adds to the mysterious atmosphere surrounding the journey.

Colour and light

The light unifies the objects and is of the same red and burnt orange hue, suggesting the natural light of a sunset. However, the sources of light are quite unnatural when viewed together. In the background the light emanates from the sun setting behind the buildings and presents them in silhouette, but the images of the sphinx and the pyramid are lit from in front and right. The young man's face, in contrast to this is lit from above. Above the author's name is a very subtle arc of light that washes across the images, suggesting light reflected off a lens.

Composition

The surreal and dramatic atmosphere of the cover also extends to the composition of the images. The image of the young man's face blends seamlessly into the image of the sphinx. All of this has the rippled windswept sand superimposed over it, suggesting the sands of time. The idea of time is also reinforced by the inclusion of a setting sun, which implies transience and the passing of time. The font used for the author's name appears slightly eroded, like stone that has been weathered over a long period.

Texture

The edges of the images are not clearly defined, and in some cases, such as the buildings at the back, the pixels are clearly evident. This gives the entire image a grainy and rough texture. The images are deliberately overlapped, one behind the other, giving the cover the feeling of depth and suggesting a distance to journey between them. The buildings are arranged in order of size to visually create a sense of distance from the responder.

Eyes

Finally, the expression on the young man's face, conveyed by his eyes, raises questions about the journey. As the young man's eyes are a major visual element of the piece, drawing attention to themselves and then directing the gaze of the responder, they are significant. The emotion they convey raises questions about the

young man, his physical journey to the places and times depicted and his inner (and imaginative) journey. The cliché of 'the eyes being the mirror to the soul' fits well here. What precisely do the young man's eyes suggest about his thoughts? The expression on his face could possibly be expressing a range of emotions. Is the look one of fear? Amazement? Shock? Wonder? Surprise? The ways in which the individual responder 'reads' this expression helps to shape the meaning of the entire text and what is has to say about *The Journey*.

Text 3 – The Wind in the Willows, extract**Context**

The where? Origin? Text type? Medium? Time period? Background? Composer information?

The Wind in the Willows is a famous children's novel written by the English author, Kenneth Graham. The novel was written in 1908 and has proven so popular with children and adults that it is regarded as part of the canon of English language literature.

Significance
of the text

It is the very first full length animal fantasy novel for children. Its central characters are Toad, a spoilt rich playboy (loosely based on Grahame's own tantrum-throwing son 'Mouse'), Ratty, a conservative homebody, and Mole, who likewise loves his little house in the river bank. The setting is the beautiful countryside in turn of the century England.

Summary of
the text
(extract)

This extract is a famous one in which Toad shows Ratty and Mole his beautiful new caravan. Toad has a habit of buying expensive new 'toys', playing with them for a while, then becoming bored and accidentally destroying them. Here we see Toad in his first delight with the caravan, which he has had outfitted luxuriously, sparing no expense. He shows his friends through the caravan, proudly pointing out all its features. He then adds that they are all about to go off in it on an adventure. This is news to Ratty and Mole. The comic end to the extract sees Toad claiming that the proposed journey will 'make an animal [man] of [him]', and that Toad will 'show [him] the world', but Ratty refuses point

blank to go along with this latest of Toad's hair-brained schemes.

The Journey

The what? What ideas does the text raise about the concept of the journey? How does the text relate to the focus areas of Physical Journeys, Imaginative Journeys and Inner Journeys? Can the text be read in a variety of ways?

*Physical
journey*

The extract relates to *The Journey* on both a literal and metaphorical level. The focus of the extract is the Toad's attempt to persuade Ratty and the Mole to accompany him on his physical journey. Even a cursory reading of the extract shows that the three characters have very different reactions to the prospect of this journey.

*Attitudes to
the journey*

The Rat is described as looking at the gipsy caravan with a 'mistrustful expression'. He clearly does not relish the idea of a journey and would prefer to 'stick to [his] old river, and live in a hole, and boat as [he has] always done'. The Rat does not desire the promise of excitement or adventure that a journey may bring and wishes to avoid the change that is inevitable with any journey. He desires foremost security, comfort and surety. Implied is the threat to Ratty's peace of mind, not only in the danger of embarking on a trip with Toad, but in the stress of confronting different people and places.

The Toad on the other hand is the complete opposite. He views the journey as a challenge and actively pursues 'travel, change, interest, excitement!' Indeed, the Toad views the journey as 'real life'; that is, a complete, fulfilled and stimulating life. To him, life is about accepting challenges and going for the ride.

The Mole's attitude to the journey is the least obviously reflected in the extract. He is somewhere in between the other two and both characters attempt to persuade him to their 'side' of the issue. The Mole is described as being 'tremendously interested and excited' by the caravan and the prospect of the journey. However, his enthusiasm for all that the journey may hold is less vocal than the Toad's.

The characters represent almost the classic difference of viewpoint between the extrovert adventurer and the stay-at-home introvert. Here are the opposing attitudes that people tend to have

about 'journeys': the thrill and chance for new experience on the one hand, and the worry and chance for disaster on the other.

Inner journeys

The characters' reactions to the Toad's proposed journey can be read as having a wider metaphorical meaning beyond the plot of the novel. Just as the extract's animal characters have varying attitudes to the journey, so do people.

The extract suggests that any journey involves changes and challenges and along with these come adventure and excitement. Although the journey in the extract is a physical one, this may be read as being symbolic of an inner journey as well.

Whether the journey is some encounter, travel, a personal dilemma or any of the varied forms that may represent a journey for an individual, the extract implies that there are two ways to approach it. Take the challenge head on and relish it like the Toad or shrink from the journey and seek the security of home like the Rat.

The journey proposed by the Toad can be read also as being like the journey of life. The different reactions of the extract's animal characters are like different philosophies for negotiating the 'journey' of life.

Technique

The how? How does the text communicate ideas about the journey to its audience? What effect does language, structure or other techniques have on the meaning of the text?

The various attitudes to the journey presented in the extract are tied to Grahame's characterisation and speech of the different animals. The Toad's eagerness for the journey is shown through the series of exclamations with which he presents his plan to the others.

*Toad's
language*

His tone is enthusiastic and his speech dominates the extract as he gushes energetically about his subject. Some of the Toad's sentences are either grammatically incomplete ['Travel ... excitement', 'And mind ... exception'] or are littered with commas and hyphens ['The open road ... rolling downs', 'You see ... you'll find']. Grahame has used both of these techniques to reflect a character whose mind is racing with excitement as he blurts out

information and adds details as they quickly spring to mind. Even physically the Toad is described as 'straddling and expanding himself', reflecting his inner confidence and zeal for the journey.

Rat's
language

The Rat contrasts directly with this. He is described in the opening sentence as 'mistrustful'. In contrast to the gushing of the Toad, the Rat speaks 'slowly' and only on two occasions. His lack of speech shows his attitude is completely different to that of the Toad. His insecurity and hesitation is implied by the emphasis in his speech. The author has italicised particular words ['we ... start ... this afternoon'] to emphasise the aspects of the Toad's speech that have had the greatest impact, and hold the greatest fear for the Rat.

In the final paragraph the emphasis on 'am' and 'and' reinforces the description of the Rat speaking 'doggedly'. The Rat's speech at the end communicates his determination to avoid the journey, yet his insistence that the Mole 'stick to me and do as I do' implies his lack of confidence in his own decision.

Besides the characters themselves, the passage also communicates its messages in other ways. The image of the 'open road' has been used so often that by our own time it has become a cliché implying freedom and change. The litany of other places that the Toad includes in this sentence ['the dusty highway ... heath ... common ... hedgerows ... rolling downs ... camps ... villages ... towns ... cities'] reflects the changes and variety of experiences that any journey brings with it.

Symbolism

The Toad's caravan is used as a symbol of the journey. It is no accident that it is a 'gipsy caravan'. It is described in vibrant exciting terms, 'shining with newness' and is coloured in the bold primary colours of 'canary yellow ... green ... and red'. In Europe gipsies have long been associated with the journey and particular freedom and adventure.

Also, the fact that the novel was written for an audience of children should not be discounted. Grahame had written other children's stories prior to *The Wind in the Willows*. This novel grew from characters and stories that he created to amuse his son who was blind in one eye and needed a great deal of care.

As a piece of writing aimed at children, the narrative communicates some quite complex ideas about the journey in an accessible way. Thus the personification of the three animal protagonists who represent very human attitudes to the journey. The setting, language

and voice of the extract are unmistakably English and would have been quite familiar to Grahame's original young readers.

Text 4 – Journey to the Interior, poem

Context

The where? Origin? Text type? Medium? Time period?
Background? Composer information?

The source

Journey to the Interior is a poem by the acclaimed Canadian writer, Margaret Atwood (1939–). Atwood is a novelist and poet who is celebrated for her insightful studies of people in crisis. Her characters tend to be middle class American or Canadian women in the throes of a struggle to resolve their identity.

The Journey

The what? What ideas does the text raise about the concept of the journey? How does the text relate to the focus areas of Physical Journeys, Imaginative Journeys and Inner Journeys? Can the text be read in a variety of ways?

The title of the poem gives an immediate hint that it will explore the idea of the inner journey – a journey into mind and memory. Atwood begins with the use of a comparison, suggesting the 'similarities' between the physical journey and the spiritual.

The poem is deliberately obscure in much of its imagery and thus makes suggestions about the journey but stops short of offering clear, cut and dried opinions. The whole *modus operandi* of poetry is to hint, to awaken echoes and suggest connections, rather than to 'nail down' specifics.

What the poem
suggests

We cannot therefore hope to cut the poem up see what Atwood is referring to. That is the sort of thing that happens in her novels. We have to make our own connections. Is she talking about revisiting an old childhood home? Is it family? Is it just an attempt

to fathom one's own identity – made up as it is of people, places, memories, contradictions? Is the interior territory she describes the mind itself – that strange inner 'landscape', and sometimes 'wilderness', which is so familiar, and yet so enigmatic?

What the poem *does* make clear is that this inner journey, although enigmatic, is a difficult process that is deeply personal. The familiar markers that we use to negotiate our way are 'useless' on this journey.

Technique

The how? How does the text communicate ideas about the journey to its audience? What effect does language, structure or other techniques have on the meaning of the text?

Atwood opens the poem noting the 'similarities' between a journey through a physical landscape and an inner journey into mind and memory. The poem's start is quite abrupt, as if it is part of an inner monologue in which the poet has long engaged but to which the reader is only now privy.

The natural images of the first stanza take the reader through a symbolic landscape relating to an inner journey. There is a strong sense that the journey appears daunting and unachievable at the outset. From a distance 'the hills' appear 'flat as a wall' and thus untraversable. Indeed, it is as if the hills are 'welded together' so tight that there is no way through.

However hard the journey may appear at the start, Atwood makes clear that it is not impossible. The poet implies that it is only perception, not reality, which makes the hills appear impassable. She tells us that it is only 'the eyes' that make the hills appear 'flat as a wall' and as she moves towards them this perspective changes and they 'open as [she] moves to let [her] through'.

The image of this first restrictive landscape changes and now 'becomes endless as prairies'. The landscape, and symbolically the inner journey, rather than being barred and confined is now totally open and 'endless'. This presents the reader with a different landscape but no less daunting a task.

This idea is continued through yet another set of images that suggest a challenging journey. The path of the inner journey

becomes possibly obscured by 'trees' that 'grow spindly' and 'have their roots often in swamps'. Atwood again explores the idea of perception stating that 'the cliff is not known as rough except by hand'. How does the individual know about the world, and by implication the journey, except through their own senses and perception? It is this perception that makes the cliff 'inaccessible'.

The poem's second sentence introduces fresh imagery relating to cartography (map making). Atwood explains that 'travel is not the easy going from point to point' and that it has no grid reference to mark the way like a 'dotted line on a map' or a 'location plotted on a square surface'. The suggestion again is that the way 'to the interior' is not clear, as Atwood moves 'surrounded by a tangle of branches, a net of air and alternate light and dark'.

The first stanza ends with a statement that is quite bluntly and forcefully presented, yet is enigmatic in its meaning. Atwood ends the stanza saying that 'there are no destinations apart from this'. What is her implication here? Is she suggesting that the inner journey is the only real journey of worth? Is it a suggestion that all journeys, of any type, are essentially a 'journey to the interior'?

The next stanza begins with an echo of the first, beginning 'there are differences of course'. The imagery of maps and their lack of use is continued here with the mention of 'lack of reliable charts'. However, the physical details of this stanza become more domestic combined with more natural images.

Atwood suggests that the 'small details', whilst a 'distraction', are 'more important'. Such distractions include domestic items of 'small details' such as 'your shoe among the brambles under the chair where it shouldn't be' and a 'paring knife on the kitchen table'. There is a confusion of domestic images combined here with more natural ones such as 'brambles', 'lucent white mushrooms' and a 'fallen log'.

The 'distraction' of these details causes the poem's persona to question and doubt herself. The doubtful 'I'm sure I passed yesterday', is followed directly by a self directed rhetorical question, 'have I been walking in circles again?' which is bracketed and placed off centre as if it is a fleeting aside.

The poem resumes from this aside, stressing the possible 'danger' of the journey. The poet implies that this 'journey to the interior' is a place that 'many have been' but that 'only some have returned safely'. The source of this danger is not directly stated

Detailed
commentary on
the text

How the
language and
imagery evokes
journeys

here. Is it related to the warning that the poet offers in the final stanza? That is, the necessity to 'keep my head' because it is 'easier for me to lose my way forever here, than in other landscapes'. Is the implication that the inner journey, being the only 'destination' can be so totally consuming that it is possible to forsake everything else and become lost?

Whatever the implication of these lines, Atwood makes clear that there is no easy way to negotiate the journey. Once again all the usual ways of making sense in an unfamiliar or confusing landscape, such as a 'compass' or 'the movements of the sun' are 'useless'. Even language is described 'as pointless as calling in a vacant wilderness'. Clearly, the individual is on their own in negotiating their way through this 'journey to the interior'.

Text 5 – Blood on the Tracks, extract

Context

The where? Origin? Text type? Medium? Time period?
Background? Composer information?

The source

This extract is from a cinema education magazine *Metro Magazine* by Renay Walker. The article provides a review and comment on the contemporary Australian film *Beneath Clouds*. It begins by providing a discussion of the 'road metaphor' in our culture. The article goes on to examine a range of quite diverse texts that the composer sees as being linked through their use of this metaphor. The article concludes with a more specific discussion of the film *Beneath Clouds*.

The Journey

The what? What ideas does the text raise about the concept of the journey? How does the text relate to the focus areas of Physical Journeys, Imaginative Journeys and Inner Journeys?
Can the text be read in a variety of ways?

Although the specific purpose of the magazine article is to discuss the film *Beneath Clouds*, it makes several interesting points relating to the theme of the journey.

The article suggests that the 'road metaphor' is 'significant' in our culture and that its use is widespread in a variety of texts. This very concept can be seen in some of the other texts included in the stimulus booklet, such as *The Road Not Taken* and *The Wind in the Willows*. The road metaphor is tied closely to the concept of the journey as composers often choose to use this symbolically to represent a character's physical, imaginative or inner journey.

The text begins by examining the 'road metaphor' in movies, pointing out that 'road movies' are commonly about lives – as much as physical spaces. It argues that they represent significant life issues, such as 'the divide between nature and culture'; that is, the divide between our natural, primitive selves and our constructed civilized side.

This discussion of the road metaphor points to some of the symbolic ways it has been used by composers to represent different aspects of the journey. For example, Walker suggests that the road 'points to a path which has been laid down, mapped out and directed'. As a human construction, a road (even if only a primitive track) was made for a specific purpose to link a beginning and an end. As a metaphor, it has connotations of direction; all roads lead from somewhere to another place. The use of such an image to describe a journey conveys the same suggestion; any journey has some logical beginning and end.

Walker similarly discusses the other implications of this symbolism. Just as a road allows a user to go back and forth, the road metaphor suggests that the journey may 'move in either direction'. If this symbol were used, for example, to represent an individual's inner journey, it may suggest either that an individual can either progress or regress. Walker also sees this idea of movement as representing the movement between places (a physical journey) but also that it 'implies that the passage of time can move in either direction'.

The article also touches on the same concept that is explored in the Frost poem (Text 1). This is the concept that any decision to journey along one particular 'road' necessitates the individual losing the possibilities that other roads may offer. Walker sees this idea as represented particularly by the symbol of the

Links to
other texts

The 'road
metaphor'

Implications

crossroads 'where the route (not) taken may simultaneously render something in/accessible'.

The article continues its discussion of the concept that 'personal identity', or in other words an inner journey, can be represented by a 'pathway'. Walker examines a range of texts from Homer's *Odyssey* – the first great work of European literature – to the contemporary film *Where Eskimos Live*. Her point here is that similar concepts of the journey have been written and re-written in a huge number of texts, varying in both form and context, over a large span of time.

Indeed, the continued re-telling of this same concept over the course of human history can itself be seen as a kind of journey. The recurring use of familiar imagery and symbolism to represent the same theme suggests that the journey is a central concern of the human condition. The need to continually re-work this familiar theme itself could be read as the journey of humanity to find some type of meaning in existence or the ongoing journey of composers to document the human experience.

Technique

The how? How does the text communicate ideas about the journey to its audience? What effect does language, structure or other techniques have on the meaning of the text?

The article in part alternates between providing information about the film and offering the writer's opinion about it. For example the article moves from a basic summary of the film's plot and characters to offering opinions about it, such as the film being 'hardly groundbreaking in terms of style or approach'.

The language of the article and the concepts explored in it reflect a type of writing targeted at a fairly specific audience. The style of the article is quite academic and is largely accessible only to responders with a level of formal education.

Besides the language of the extract, this can also be seen in the texts mentioned in the article. Walker refers to a range of texts in her discussion of the journey, yet only provides any background information on *Beneath Clouds*.

The implication in this is that she assumes that the other textual

references used are familiar to her audience, whereas *Beneath Clouds*, as the subject of the article, is not. For example, Walker also assumes that her readership will be familiar with the Frost poem that is included in the Stimulus Booklet. With a mild touch of ironic humour she uses the phrase 'the route (not) taken' to mirror the title of the Frost poem, while avoiding the cliché of a direct quotation.

Each of the texts mentioned, but not explained, has implications for the concept of the journey, as Walker sees a common thread between them. The texts lend a range of associations to the article for a responder who is familiar with each of them.

In doing this the article helps to shape the responder's thoughts about the film *Beneath Clouds* as the writer has made connections between this film and the other that are included. Without having watched the film, a responder gets some impression of what it will be like, as it by implication, draws on a long tradition of 'road movies'. Indeed, Walker describes the movie as 'laying bare its own metaphorical status as part of the genre'.

The following is a brief background on each of the textual references used in the article:

• **Homer, *The Odyssey* (c.800BC):** One of the most ancient and famous of literary works, supposedly written by the blind poet Homer – it is in fact probably an oral work that was eventually written down in the first millennium BC. It concerns the Greek hero Odysseus (Ulysses in Latin), and his epic adventures.

After the battle, Odysseus and his men set off for home. But their journey turned out to be a long one. Amongst other challenges, they encountered the Cyclops (a one-eyed giant), from whom they barely escaped alive, Circe (an enchantress), the Kingdom of Death (from which Odysseus had to talk his way out), the Sirens (spirits who lured men to their doom), Scylla and Charybdis (enormous clashing rocks), and more.

The Odyssey is thus the classic adventure tale, about a hero on a lengthy and perilous quest. Odysseus' survival, and final success, depends very much on his courage, cleverness and persistence. He is rewarded in the time-honoured way for these heroic virtues by a happy ending. The text can be read as a metaphor for the journey, suggesting ideas such as 'Life is a challenge, full of dangers and surprises, and only the bold survive'.

Significance
of the text

Summary
of the text

Type of
journey text

Language

Significance of the text • **Stanley Kubrick, *2001 A Space Odyssey* (1968):** The most celebrated of intellectual science fiction films, and considered one of the masterpieces of the great Anglo-American film 'auteur', this landmark movie, based on the Arthur C. Clarke novel (of the same name) is visually spectacular, and famously enigmatic.

Summary of the text The movie starts in the year 1999, and the discovery of a strange monolith on the moon. It appears that extraterrestrials have been there long before man, and left a 'calling card'. This monolith points to a destination near Jupiter. In flashback, we see another such monolith playing a key role in human evolution, back at the dawn of time, the implication being that alien forces taught early man the use of tools, and specifically how to kill. An expedition is launched to investigate the Jupiter possibility.

Two young astronauts on board the space station SS Discovery, Dave and Frank, spend months in space, passing their time partly in communicating with the human-like brain of the station's computer, HAL-9000. However, HAL causes the death of all the suspended animation passengers, and then arranges for the 'accidental' death of Frank too. Dave barely survives and figures out how to disable HAL. He arrives alone at the Jupiter destination and undergoes a series of bizarre 'out of body' experiences that lead through time and space to his reincarnation as a foetus.

How the text comments on *The Journey*

How does the film relate to the journey theme? The Clarke novel and Kubrick film are suggesting that life is a struggle, and always has been. They take their title from the famous Homer epic (above), in which the fight to survive is the main thematic constant. In Kubrick's film, life is still a battle: primeval predators facing the cavemen (thousands of years ago) are replaced by a murderous supercomputer (HAL) in the 'future'. A battle of wits characterises the human 'journey' through time and (in this film) space. At the end of the journey there is no prize, no magical goal, nothing except a baby – symbolising the endless cycle of life – and suggesting that this endless struggle will go on forever.

Summary of the text

• **Raoul Walsh, *They Drive by Night* (1940):** Walsh had been a successful director since silent film days. The movie is based on the novel *The Long Haul* by A.I. Bezzerides. Paul (Humphrey Bogart) and Joe (George Raft) run a trucking business in California, shipping fruit from farms to the markets in Los Angeles.

However they are struggling to make ends meet in the face of corrupt businessmen and mob bosses. They are forced into driving

long hours, fighting sleep deprivation and dangerous roads. One night they pick up a waitress, Cassie, who has just quit her job at a truck stop. The three characters witness the death of a mutual acquaintance when he falls asleep at the wheel. This has a profound effect on Paul and Joe and they become determined to find a way to make the business pay so they can quit.

Significance of the text

• **Federico Fellini, *La Strada* (1954):** A classic film from one of the all-time great Italian directors. A waif-like and simple woman, Gelsomina, is sold for a few coins by her poor mother to Zampano, a travelling fairground 'strongman'. She follows him on the road, 'la strada', and helps him during his shows. Zampano, a brute, ill-treats her, but she suffers in silence.

Summary of the text

Then Gelsomina meets 'The Fool', a fun-loving circus tight-rope walker. She feels like going with him, but their relationship awakens in Zampano a terrible, and fatal, jealousy. The strongman kills the clown, leaving Gelsomina to pine away. Only after her death does he realise how important she was to him.

This beautiful and tragic film, featuring unforgettable performances from Guilietta Masina (Gelsomina) and Anthony Quinn (Zampano), is about the harshness of life, in which the only hope is a little love, and even that is hard to get and keep. The film features repeated shots of the main characters travelling along an endless road, which comes to represent life itself.

Summary of the text

• **John Ford, *The Searchers* (1956):** John Ford is best known for his Westerns, of which he was a master. In this one, Ethan Edwards (John Wayne), returns from the Civil War to the Texas ranch of his brother, hoping to find a home with his family and to be near the woman he obviously but secretly loves. But a Comanche (Native American) raid destroys these plans, and Ethan sets out, along with his half-breed nephew Martin, on a five year long journey to find the niece kidnapped by the Indians. But as the quest goes on, Martin begins to realize that his uncle's hatred for the Indians is beginning to spill over onto his niece, who has now become one of the Indians. Martin becomes uncertain whether Ethan plans to rescue Debbie, or kill her.

This is a thoughtful Western, devoted to moral and social problems as much as the traditional shootouts.

Summary
of the text

• **Theo Angelopoulos, *Ulysses's Gaze* (1995):** Angelopoulos is a famously difficult Greek director, who specialises in long shots and highly personal, enigmatic storylines. This film concerns 'A' (Harvy Keitel), a Greek filmmaker exiled to the United States, who returns to his native land to attend a screening of one of his extremely controversial films. But A's real interest lies elsewhere – the mythical reels of the very first film shot by the Manakia brothers, who, at the dawn of the age of cinema, tirelessly criss-crossed the Balkans and, without regard for national and ethnic strife, recorded the region's history and customs. Did these primitive, never developed images really exist? If so, where are they?

Summary
of the text

• **Abbas Kiarostami, *A Taste of Cherry* (1997):** Kiarostami is an internationally known Iranian director. *A Taste of Cherry* is the story of the last day in the life of Mister Badii. He is going to Teheran, where he wants to find somebody to bury him, after he has killed himself. It is an easy job, just shovel some earth on him, and besides, it is well paid. First he tries to persuade a young Kurdish soldier who does not say much, feels more and more uncomfortable and then runs away. The second man he talks to is an Afghan seminarian, who gives a lecture about suicide and guilt but does not help either. The third man he tries is an old Turkish taxidermist, who will do the job, but who tries to persuade Badii that it is not a good thing to do. He tells him a joke about some ill-feeling Kurd to make Badii change his attitude, and says the taste of the cherry kept him from suicide once.

Summary
of the text

• **Peter Jackson, *The Lord of the Rings* (2001):** Jackson is a New Zealand independent film maker who leapt to international prominence with his *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, based on the celebrated Tolkien fantasy novels.

The first in the series sees Frodo Baggins, a hobbit, accepting the challenge from the wizard Gandalf to guard the One Ring, a talisman so powerful that if Sauron, the Dark Lord (the story's super-villain) ever found it he would rule the world forever. Frodo has been bequeathed this ring by his vanished uncle, Bilbo Baggins, who accidentally acquired it on an adventure (*The Hobbit*).

Frodo accepts the most perilous of all quests: to journey across Middle-Earth, deep into the shadow of the Dark Lord and destroy the Ring by casting it into the Cracks of Doom. This film has him

Summary
of the text

and his companions outrunning the fearful 'Riders' (spirit-like agents of Sauron), traversing epic distances, fighting off attacks by Orcs and other creatures from the dark side, and entering dangerous territory.

Summary
of the text

• **Tomasz Wiszniewski, *Where Eskimos Live* (2002):** Sharkey (Bob Hoskins), part of the sinister world of child trade, picks up Vlado, an orphan of war, dreaming of freedom and a better life. They embark upon a strange and enlightening journey through war torn Bosnia. As they struggle to get out of the country and fight to stay alive, they find a special love and compassion from which emerges their ultimate moral and spiritual redemption.

Connection to
The Journey

• **Ivan Sen, *Beneath Clouds* (2002):** Beneath Clouds is the story of Lena, daughter of an Aboriginal mother and Irish father. She is running away from a hopeless existence in a country town. When she misses the bus to Sydney, she accidentally meets up with Vaughn, an Aboriginal boy who's just escaped from a minimum security prison. They set out together, distrustful and suspicious, with no money and no transport.

To Lena, Vaughn represents the life she is running away from. To Vaughn, Lena embodies the society that has rejected him. But a series of shared challenges, including saving her from sexual predators, brings them closer together. She gradually humanises him. In the most strikingly symbolic part of the film, they near a mountain where Aboriginal people (in colonial times) were exterminated. Lena at last makes contact with her Aboriginal heritage.

When they get to Sydney, it turns out that Vaughn's mother is already dead (she is the reason he made the trip). Lena tries to console Vaughn and he rejects her, only to chase after her and finally accept her embrace. He heads off, presumably back to prison, and she into an uncertain future.

Director Sen has described it as 'a road movie ... about the retreat from Aboriginality, in the search for identity.' Like all good road movies, *Beneath Clouds* isn't about the destination, it's about getting there. It is as much about Lena and Vaughn's exploration of their own identity. Sen has described Beneath Clouds as 'a road movie spiked with an unconventional love story'.

Text 6 – Journeys over Land and Sea, screenshot

Context

The where? Origin? Text type? Medium? Time period?
Background? Composer information?

Source
of the text

This text is as a screenshot reproduced from a website. The website is from the Smithsonian Institution, which is located in Washington DC and is the most famous museum in the United States. The Smithsonian Institution has one of the most comprehensive museum collections in the world and is regarded as one of the great repositories of human knowledge, along with the British Museum in London and the *Louvre* in Paris.

The text is promoting the collection of the museum and particularly an exhibition entitled *Voyages*. The *Voyages* exhibition includes a range of artefacts, documents and art works that span five centuries of the 'human journey'.

At the time of writing, the web page was still viewable at the Smithsonian website, at www.sil.si.edu/exhibitions/vooyages. The original web page appears to have been altered by the Board of Studies for the purpose of the Stimulus booklet. Despite this, viewing the page in the context in which it was intended gives a good insight into how it represents its ideas about *The Journey*.

The Journey

The what? What ideas does the text raise about the concept of the journey? How does the text relate to the focus areas of Physical Journeys, Imaginative Journeys and Inner Journeys? Can the text be read in a variety of ways?

The text introduces a number of ideas that relate to *The Journey*, both as a physical act and as a vehicle for understanding. The text begins by discussing people who have journeyed in the past as 'pioneers'. Such people are 'compelled ... to pursue the unknown

Types of
journey

farther from home'. The idea inferred here is that the need to undertake a journey is part of the human condition. That 'every age' has its own particular journey, whether that is the physical need to explore 'the unknown' or a more imaginary need to create, such as 'fictional accounts of space travel'.

Beyond seeing the journey as a basic human need, the text also stresses the gains in knowledge and understanding that come as a natural result of a journey. The obvious 'scientific' discoveries of past journeys are discussed as are the 'artistic' and 'commercial' benefits that have arisen. The artefacts on display all relate to past explorations, but reveal the far-reaching effects that such journeys have had for all humankind.

Similarly, the documentation and representation of past voyages is also raised as a significant part of the journey process. The important role of 'scientists and artists' who 'collaborated with writers and printers' is discussed. As the works of these people will be on display in the exhibition being promoted, the composers clearly see this aspect of the journey as being of great interest to the public.

Significance
of journeys

The website presents this idea as if the documentation of the journey is almost as important as the journey itself. The 'body of literature' that documents the experiences and discoveries of past explorers is described in the text as being of 'great beauty' and 'unparalleled value'. The text presents the physical journey as only one aspect of the experience. Responding to the artefacts and texts on offer will be like a journey of a different sort for the individuals who attend the museum.

The 'ever expanding world view of humankind' is also discussed in the final paragraph. Once again the composers present the journey as being of global importance. The journeys of individuals and the knowledge that has been shared as a result have had an impact on the way that we all view the world and ourselves.

The text mentions past beliefs and fears that appear quaint and silly to a contemporary responder. The concept of people being afraid of 'monsters' or 'plummeting over the edge of the map' may bring a smile to a reader of the website, but it also shows just how much our understanding has changed as a result of past journeys. This idea is reinforced through the visuals to the right of the text.

The composers thus choose to present the journey from a

number of quite different perspectives. Voyages of discovery can be of many kinds: a physical journey to an unknown place, the factual or artistic documentation of experience, a mental exploration of new or familiar territory, or a wholly new episode of creative thought.

Technique

The how? How does the text communicate ideas about the journey to its audience? What effect does language, structure or other techniques have on the meaning of the text?

The web address cited in the Stimulus Booklet opens at the home page for the *Journeys* exhibition. This page contains a hyperlink to the web page included as Text 6 in the Stimulus Booklet. The hyperlink is deliberately enticing in its language, using the second person, urging the responder with an open ended '**Begin your journey...**'. Underneath the heading of this page are three animated headlines that fade in and out reading, '**Journeys of the imagination**', '**Journeys of the mind**' and '**Journeys over land and sea**'. These highlight the three main themes of the exhibition and the web page.

Language used
in the text

The text is primarily promotional material and thus uses a form of language that is appropriate to this purpose. As the 'product' being promoted here is a museum exhibition, the 'over the top' language of some commercial advertising is avoided in favour of a more factual and credible style. However, the text does deal with its subject in an overwhelmingly positive way and actively attempts to make the exhibition appear appealing and interesting.

The opening paragraph stresses the concept of the journey as one of 'discovery' and uses a string of words to do this, such as 'pioneer'. The visuals support the idea of past discovery and lend interest to the text. They particularly reinforce the ideas of the final paragraph that deal with the changing 'world view of human kind'. Both of the visuals are woodcut images from the past that represent different views of the world at different times. There is an interesting contrast between the extreme age of the woodcuts and the very modern medium (the website) through which they are communicated to a wide audience.

The top image is from *History of the Northern Peoples and*

Image 1 in
the text

Nature of Things (Venice, 1565) by Olaus Magnus (1490–1557). Magnus was a Swedish bishop who travelled widely in Scandinavia and Europe during the mid-1500s, compiled the first major work on the peoples, geography, economy, and fauna of northern Europe. It depicts a sea monster rising out of the ocean to threaten a tiny European ship. From a modern responder's perspective the image reflects that changing understanding that we have of the world as a result of past exploration and its documentation.

Image 2 in
the text

The bottom image is from *Naturalis Historia* (Natural history) by Pliny the Elder (23–79AD), published in Frankfurt in 1582. *Naturalis Historia* is the most thorough zoological and botanical treatise known from the ancient world. Gaius Plinius Secundus, a well-travelled military officer of the Roman Empire and a naturalist, attempted to record all knowledge of the world and nature, preserving that written by earlier authors and adding to it from his own observations.

This particular image reflects a very different view of the universe from our own. The prevailing belief at the time was of a universe with the Earth at its centre, about which the sun, moon and planets orbited in circular motions. All things were created of four basic elements; earth, air, fire, water. The inclusion of this image underscores the idea introduced in the text that our world view has changed considerably over time. It also suggests that history itself can be viewed as a type of journey.

Meaning of
the images

The implication of these images is that our world view has changed dramatically over time as a result of the discoveries that journeys bring. Indeed, the way we view the world changes with different time periods, as each time has its own challenges and journeys to pursue.

The information in the web page is quite deliberately structured to make the final comments enticing. The text speaks of 'explorations of the American West', 'fictional accounts of space travel' and 'wonder at the unusual' to appeal to its (mostly American) audience. These 'unusual' aspects of the exhibition are left undescribed, and thus act as an added enticement to attend the exhibition.

Text 7 – The Town Where Time Stands Still,**poem extract****Context**

The where? Origin? Text type? Medium? Time period? Background? Composer information?

Background on the poet

The final extract is a short quote from Shirley Geok-lin Lim. Dr Lim is a Malaysian academic who has gained international attention through her poetry, short stories and a novel. She won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize in 1980, becoming the first woman and the first South East Asian writer to receive the award. She is currently Chair Professor of English and Head of the English Department at the University of Hong Kong, as well as Professor of English and Women's Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

The Journey

The what? What ideas does the text raise about the concept of the journey? How does the text relate to the focus areas of Physical Journeys, Imaginative Journeys and Inner Journeys? Can the text be read in a variety of ways?

This piece calls attention to the way 'travellers through the centuries' have often had a compulsion to find the 'genii loci' – the 'location or centre of things'. This term suggests that in an attempt to find the centre of all things in the physical world – an impossible task as such a place does not exist – a traveller instead finds their own 'genii loci' within themselves.

Uses of journeys

This view of the journey is interesting as it suggests that an important use of travel is to clarify the important issues in life. The extract describes this in terms of an 'external geography' and 'internal psychology'. This implies that any physical journey is as much about an inner journey and self discovery

What the poet is saying, by implication, is that we are often so enmeshed in our everyday lives that we cannot clearly see 'the big picture'. The old cliché of not being able to see the forest for the trees is appropriate here. We are so preoccupied with living our daily lives that we lose sight of what our own personal 'journey' is all about. We only regain this clarity of direction during times of crisis or change, such as birth, marriage or death.

Self discovery

Geok-lin Lim goes on to suggest that self discovery is not always a deliberate motive for undertaking a journey. Indeed, often the overt purpose for the journey is a 'baser motive' like 'profit', 'pleasure', or a 'vacation'. Despite this, on some unconscious level we have the 'hope to be moved rather than to move'.

What travel offers thoughtful people goes beyond recreation – it allows them to see other people, other lives, and to see the essentials in life. Through any journey, no matter why it was begun, the chance exists for a person to escape the mundane aspects of the everyday.

This escape allows them the opportunity to look at their own life through different eyes and from a different perspective. The hope, expressed in Lim's writing, is that people will come back from their journeys changed, enriched or with a greater understanding, so that they 'will return to the place from which they came blessed and altered'

Technique

The how? How does the text communicate ideas about the journey to its audience? What effect does language, structure or other techniques have on the meaning of the text?

It would be a mistake to discount this poignant text due to its brevity. The clarity and poetic quality of the writing is one of the text's main achievements. Lim manages to vividly convey quite complex ideas about the journey and the human condition with an economy of words that heightens the impact of the piece.

Language

The text has been carefully constructed and Lim has given great thought to issues of word choice and structure. The language of the piece draws a clear contrast between the 'basal motives' for travel and the 'subtler', 'unconscious' reasons of the 'purer realm'. The choice of words used to express this contrast suggests

<i>Jane Eyre</i> , Bronte, Charlotte Novel	Personal journey of a young woman from innocence to maturity
<i>The Power of One</i> Courtney, Bryce Novel	Set in apartheid era South Africa – the personal journey of Peekay, a boy who faces challenges, hones his talent as a boxer, and forges enduring friendships with black people, to the greater good of himself and them
<i>Almost Famous</i> Crowe, Cameron Film, (2000)	Follows the coming of age of rock-obsessed teenager William Miller, who joins the glamorous world of pop group 'Stillwater' and groups the 'Band Aids', falls in love and learns about life
<i>The Shawshank Redemption</i> Darabont, Frank Film (1994)	Examines the journey of Andy Dufresne, an innocent man sent to gaol for murder, who must endure the appalling challenges of prison, restore his hope, and find a way to triumph over adversity
<i>My Brilliant Career</i> Franklin, Miles	Landmark Australian feminist work about a young woman, Sybilla, who rejects what is expected of her (marriage and family).
<i>Dispossessed</i> Hodgins, Philip Poem	A rare thing – a modern Australian narrative poem – explores the fortunes and misfortunes of a family 'on the land'
<i>The Breakfast Club</i> Hughes, John Film (1985)	Traces the journey to understanding of a group of teenagers, Andrew (a 'jock'), Brian (a 'geek'), John (a delinquent), Claire (a 'Prom Queen') and Allison (a 'psycho'), who have been given detention.
<i>A Patch of Blue</i> Kata, Elizabeth Novel	Deals with the developing relationship between a black man, Gordon, and a blind white girl, Selina, in New York (1960s)
<i>Summer of the 17th Doll</i> Lawler, Ray Drama	Famous Australian drama tracing relationships and life journeys
<i>A Wizard of Earthsea</i> Le Guin, Ursula Novel	One of the greatest fantasy novels: traces the journey and development of the young wizard Ged
<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Lee, Harper Novel	Deals with the journey to maturity and understanding of the two child protagonists, Scout and Jem, as they confront 1930s racism

<i>Puberty Blues</i> Lette, Kathy Novel and Film	A journey tracing teenage self discovery on and around the beaches and suburbs of Sydney in the 1970s
<i>Go!</i> Liman, Doug Film (1999)	Presents the dilemma of teenagers who are trying to get cash, do drugs and find sex in Las Vegas – told from three different perspectives.
<i>Legally Blonde</i> Luketic, Robert Film (2001)	Popular film aimed at a teen audience: traces the personal journey of Elle from dizzy blonde to successful lawyer (in a light-hearted way).
<i>The Harp in the South</i> Park, Ruth Novel	A portrait of the slums in post World War II Sydney and the life journey of a family
<i>Star Trek</i> Roddenberry, Gene TV Series	Classic American Science Fiction series of the 1960s, which gives a futuristic and optimistic vision of the journey
<i>The Colour Purple</i> Spielberg, Steven Film (1985)	Traces the hardships and racism experienced by African-American Celie over several decades in the 'Deep South' of America in the early twentieth century
<i>Reality Bites</i> Stilller, Ben Film (1994)	Outlines the personal challenges and difficult decisions facing Lelaina after graduating from College – leading to her self discovery and love
<i>The Hobbit</i> Tolkien, JRR Novel	Children's novel, celebrated prologue to <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> – concerns the hobbit Bilbo Baggins, and his heroic journey to recover the treasure from the dragon Smaug
<i>Good Will Hunting</i> Van Sant, Gus Film (1997)	Presents the inner journey of Will, a troubled but ill-educated genius, as he grapples with his demons and his potential for greatness
<i>Voss</i> White, Patrick Novel	The physical and spiritual journey of Australian explorer Voss – who sets out to cross the outback – and also seeks union with his great love Laura
<i>The Time Machine</i> Wells, H.G. Novella	Celebrated SF classic, about a time traveller who goes to the future, only to see the downfall of humankind and the end of the world
<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> Williams, Tennessee Drama	Presents the conflict that ensues when Blanche arrives to stay with her sister Stella – a journey of self-revelation and psychic destruction

Detailed commentaries

In addition to the general list (above), here are a set of additional readings, each with an analysis (the first three brief, the last two in considerable detail). They provide you with more examples of related texts which could be used in your exam response to supplement discussion of the Stimulus Booklet and your prescribed text.

Text: Robinson Crusoe
Author: Daniel Defoe
Text Type: Novel

Daniel Defoe (c. 1660–1731) is one of the most famous novelists in English literature. His celebrated novel, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), is his most enduring work. It is a text that has been adapted and transformed many times over the centuries; most recent is the film *Cast Away*.

Summary of
the text

The novel traces the physical and personal journey of the protagonist, Robinson Crusoe, who leaves his comfortable life to engage in the more adventurous world of trade and commerce. This course is directly against his parents' wishes which are to pursue the comfortable 'middle station' in life.

Crusoe's physical journey in search of monetary gain takes him across the charted, and at that time uncharted, world. His adventures take him from capture by Turkish pirates to the plantation economy in Brazil.

On a subsequent slaving expedition, Crusoe is shipwrecked on a deserted island in the Caribbean. The novel recounts his solitary life for 24 years on the island until he rescues a 'savage', later named Friday, and eventually escapes the island and returns to England.

What the
journey means

Defoe's novel examines the effects this bizarre journey has on Robinson and the changes that are produced in him upon his return to civilisation. The novel remains controversial and has been read metaphorically in very different ways over the centuries. Of particular interest is the novel's depiction of an early capitalist mentality and the way attitudes to race have changed over time.

Text: Bridget Jones' Diary
Composer: Helen Fielding
Text Type: Novel and film adaptation

In 2001 Helen Fielding adapted her highly successful novel, *Bridget Jones' Diary*, into an even more successful screenplay of the same name. The film version starring Renee Zellweger, Hugh Grant and Colin Firth was an international box office hit.

Source
(inspiration)
of the text

The film is a loose transformation of Jane Austen's late 18th century novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. It follows the protagonist Bridget Jones through a year of her life from a series of New Year's resolutions in which she aims to turn around her life. At the start of the film the viewer is presented with Bridget as an unhappy '30 something' single woman who, by her own admission, drinks too much, smokes too much and is overweight.

Summary of
the text

The film humorously traces her journey to change this situation and find personal satisfaction, love and happiness. Along the road of this journey Bridget changes career, has a disastrous affair and eventually falls in love with Mark Darcy. This journey is conveyed in comic fashion using a series of voice-overs to present the viewer with Bridget's self-deprecating inner monologue. Bridget's journey is presented with true pathos. The viewer laughs at her mishaps and embarrassments but also feels the pain that lies beneath.

Reactions to
the text

As would be expected, the film attracted a range of reactions. It proved popular with the public, and particularly with young 'Generation X' women who often identified with Bridget's tormented love life. The film was heralded by many as an exploration of what it is to be a young woman in the 21st century. However, it also received a deal of criticism from feminists who disliked the happy 'fairy tale' ending of the text and rejected Bridget's need to have a man to make her fulfilled.

Text: Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf
Playwright: Edward Albee
Text Type: Drama and film

Edward Albee's play presents a confronting view of contemporary American life and the illusions with which people surround themselves. The play was critically and financially successful on

New York's Broadway in its first run at the Billy Rose Theatre in 1962. Since then the play has been often performed around the world and was adapted into a film starring Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton and George Segal.

*Summary of
the text*

The play focuses on the conflict that ensues as a result of the meeting of two couples; the middle-aged George and Martha and the younger Nick and Honey. The journey presented in the play is one of discovery. The play presents the characters of George and Martha as living in a world of illusion and self-deception.

Through three acts, the play traces a bizarre heightening of tension until these illusions are laid bare for the characters – and the audience. The audience is privy to the personal life of George and Martha (the set is their lounge room) and we accompany them on a journey that is painful and difficult but of great personal significance.

*Meanings of
the text*

On a symbolic level Albee's characters are representative of American society and particularly the myth of the 'American Dream'. The play is often biting in its humour, language and critical perspective. It is regarded as one of the great works of the 20th century stage and has cemented Albee as one of the most important dramatists of American literature.

Text: On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

Poet: John Keats

Text type: Poem

On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer rul'd as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific – and all his men

Look'd at each other with a wild surmise --
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

*Historical and
literary context
of the text*

This Romantic sonnet was written by Keats in the early 19th Century. The sonnet presents a persona, most probably the poet, who has just read a new translation of the classical Greek epic poem, *The Odyssey*. The poem was written by Homer and had previously been translated into English many times.

This new translation was composed by a poet and translator named Chapman, hence the sonnet's title. Keats felt that this very vivid translation was particularly beautiful and opened up a whole new understanding of the poem for him.

Besides this understanding, the poem was so powerful that it transported Keats to other places and opened up a new imaginary world for him. Symbolically, the sonnet suggests the power of literature, and particularly poetry, to take the responder on an imaginative journey.

*Imaginative
journey*

Keats explores this imaginative journey through the use of an extended metaphor. Throughout the poem, Keats uses a series of images to compare his reading of Chapman's poem to the journey of an explorer making a significant discovery for the first time. The poem presents the imaginative journey of the individual as a grand physical journey. The poem suggests the power of the imagination to take the individual on a 'journey' and the huge impact that this can have.

The deeply personal nature of the persona's journey is stressed from the outset. The poem begins with heavy emphasis on the first person through the inverted word order of the first line, in 'Much have I travell'd'. This emphasis is threaded through the rest of the sonnet with the continual repetition of the word 'I'. Keats also stresses the personal nature of the individual's journey at the start of the sestet. Here he again inverts the natural word order of the sentence to stress the first person, in 'then felt I ...'.

*Detailed
analysis of
the text*

Keats begins the metaphor of journey and exploration in the sonnet's octave. The opening image suggests that the persona has travelled 'much' in the 'realms of gold'. This phrase may be read in two ways. Literally it suggests physical travel to Greece, the home of the poet Homer. However metaphorically it suggests that the persona has had a wide breadth of experience reading the poetry or 'the realms of gold'.

The octave suggests how successful this poetry has been in

transporting the persona to other imaginary places. Keats describes such places by using verbs that relate to direct experience. Thus he has 'been' to 'many western islands' and has 'seen' a range of 'goodly states and kingdoms'. The suggestion is that the persona has never physically visited such places. He has journeyed to them though poetry and the power of his own imagination.

Despite the ability of other poetry to inspire his imagination, Keats suggests that his experience with Homer's poetry has been quite different. He explains that in the past he has 'oft been ... told' of the place that 'Homer rul'd as his demesne'. The use of the verb 'told' stands in stark contrast to the verbs 'seen' and 'been' used earlier in the octave.

The suggestion here is that past translations of Homer's poetry have not had the power to take Keats on an imaginary journey like other poems. He has only been 'told' about Homer, that is, he has only experienced the poem second-hand rather than in person.

In the next line however, the entire tone of the sonnet begins to change. This change in thought and tone is signalled by the word 'yet'. Here Keats signals the difference between Chapman's translation and the others that he has read in the past. While others have failed to move him, Chapman's translation is described as 'pure serene'. The double adjective communicates the beauty of the poem. The phrase can be taken as conveying a poem that is 'serenely pure' and also 'purely serene'.

Keats' choice of verb is again significant. While he has only been 'told' about the poem previously, this particular translation is something that he 'breathes'. The contrast could not be greater. This translation is so 'pure' that it goes beyond direct experience; it is something that is essential to life like air and is taken into the body.

The next line reinforces the power of the poem and the further development of the sonnet's argument. Keats places heavy emphasis on the word 'then' at the start of the line, signalling clearly that the poem will now explore the effects of the poem on the persona.

Keats communicates this effect through a series of carefully constructed yet varied images relating to exploration and discovery. The focus throughout is very much on the personal reaction of the poet. Indeed, the rest of the poem continues grammatically from the opening phrase of 'then felt I ...'

The first image used is of an astronomer who has discovered

'a new planet'. The second is of the Spanish explorer Cortez, who has traversed the entire continent of South America and realises that he can see the Pacific Ocean.

Both images relate to discovery and exploration. It is clear that Keats sees the experience of Chapman's translation as quite similar to this. Significantly, both images, despite being very different in context, stress the same ideas.

Both images present discoveries of huge significance. The discovery of a new planet or a new ocean is one of great importance. The emphasis here is on the magnitude of the discovery. On a deeply personal level, the reading of Chapman's translation is like the discoveries presented in the images.

The other idea stressed here is that of silence. In both images, the explorers make their huge discoveries without fanfare, noise or celebration. When the astronomer discovers the new planet it simply 'swims into his ken'. It is almost as if the discovery is unexpected or made by accident.

When Cortez and 'all his men' discover the Pacific for the first time their reaction is 'silent'. They are so taken with the emotion of the discovery that they are struck dumb. It is a beautiful irony that the 'stout' Cortez and his band of war hardened conquistadors are emotionally over awed by the sight of water.

The sound and structure of the sestet both contribute to this emphasis on silence. The sestet is far gentler in its use of sound than the octave. In the final lines the punctuation contributes to this. The repetition of the hyphen is like an aside, describing the band of men standing silently looking at each other without speaking, in a 'wild surmise'. In the last line Keats isolates the word 'silent' quite deliberately between the two pauses of the hyphen and the comma, causing the word to stand out quietly yet emphatically.

The sonnet thus presents the reader with an imaginative journey of great power and significance. Keats explores the power of literature to move the responder emotionally and imaginatively. Despite the age of the poem, its view of literature is quite modern in its thought. Keats obviously sees such a journey as a two way process. For Keats the journey is constructed by both the imagination of the composer and the imagination of the responder.

Text: Absolutely Fabulous – France
Composer: Jennifer Saunders
Text type: Television Comedy Series

Context of
the text

Absolutely Fabulous is a British Television situation comedy written by the comedienne Jennifer Saunders. The series enjoyed huge international success in the mid 1990s as Saunders managed to cleverly capture and satirise the *zeitgeist* of the time.

The series focuses on the protagonists of Edina, an emotionally immature 'rich bitch', her alcoholic and morally dissolute best friend Patsy and Edina's conservative teenage daughter Saffron.

France is the third episode of the comedy series. In this episode Edina and Patsy travel from London to a chateau in France for a week's vacation. The episode presents an ironic twist on the journey theme. Unlike many other texts, the characters are totally unmoved by their journey. They see nothing and learn less. Indeed, they gain nothing from the experience, either emotionally or spiritually.

The comedy of the series and its ironic take on the journey theme is created by Saunders' clever writing, the solid comic acting of the cast and a very clever use of the camera.

Summary and
detailed
analysis of
the text

The episode begins by establishing Edina as a character and revealing her reason for the journey. We learn that she is travelling to France on vacation to escape the pressure of her recent movement into the interior design business.

The camera helps to create a manic atmosphere as it follows Edina around her bedroom. We watch her frantically pack for her trip whilst giving instructions to her incompetent personal assistant Bubble. Bubble's task while Edina is absent is to finish the 'refurbishment of Bettina's apartment' in the style of 'third world chic'.

From the outset, the viewer is challenged to hope that Edina's journey to another country will give her some level of understanding about the world. We see in the opening scenes that Edina is lacking any. She laments 'poor Bettina' who has to wait for her apartment because the poverty stricken Indian workers who are making her furnishings are late. She asks Bubble to 'Fax Calcutta. What can they be doing, squatting making chapattis by the side of the road ... and poor Bettina'.

Saunders comically undermines the entire idea of the journey as a vehicle for spiritual or moral growth. We see Edina and Patsy

on the aeroplane to Paris make a string of 'resolutions' of things that they are going to give up, whilst in France, such as alcohol, smoking and sex. The camera subverts these claims as we watch the characters rudely snatch a tray full of wine bottles from the trolley and Patsy follow a passing man into the toilet.

Upon arrival in France the text makes it clear that Edina and Patsy are going to learn and achieve nothing from the journey, either on a personal or spiritual level. We see them through a long shot of a car driving through the French countryside and hear a superimposed voice-over discussing how much they 'love France' and commenting on the 'gorgeous' countryside.

Through some clever editing we are then presented with a montage of quick scenes that suggest the passing of time as they become increasingly lost. The voice-overs become increasingly desperate and frustrated in tone until we hear the aggressive yelling of 'I hate France! I hate France!'; before they have even arrived at the destination. Edina's cry of 'I hate France!', becomes a motif that is threaded through the rest of the episode.

The episode also introduces the idea of fear related to the journey. Throughout the journey Edina and Patsy are afraid of almost everything, a notion that is presented in hyperbole to produce a comic effect. They are terrified of the thunderstorm that occurs when they arrive, the ensuing darkness and even insects. Edina is convinced that the insects 'followed me here, they follow me everywhere'.

Edina and Patsy are terrified of a man who comes to tell them that they are staying in the wrong house and are so afraid that they fight about going into the village to buy food. Eventually their fear becomes so great that they call Saffron for help and to bring food, as they are 'suffering malnutrition'.

When Saffron arrives, Saunders' script juxtaposes her reaction to the journey with that of the others. In Saffron the viewer is presented with an individual who relishes the journey, the peace and the chance to develop as a person. Saffron spends her time soaking up the atmosphere of the rural retreat and using the time and space for thought and reflection.

Ironically, this use of the journey is totally alien to Edina and Patsy. Edina apologises to Saffron that she is 'sorry there's nothing to do darling'. Saffron, disagrees with this saying that 'there's plenty to do ... It's lovely here. How can you not be enjoying it ... it's so peaceful and relaxing ... and fun'.

Edina shows her lack of understanding and emotional inability to gain anything from the journey by replying that 'I know it should be fun darling. It's like a secret that no one has let me in on ... it's your sort of fun'.

The next scene has been deliberately structured to comment ironically on the one that precedes it. The scene fades out into a series of overlapped shots of Edina and Patsy in a winery 'tasting' the wines and becoming steadily drunker and drunker. This by implication is Edina's type of 'fun'. She is unable to gain anything from the journey in any other way and thus escapes engaging with it through drunkenness.

The episode provides an interesting contrast to the ideas presented in some of the other texts. Ideas about the spiritual aspect of a physical journey and the different attitudes of individuals to the journey are presented in a light-hearted and ironic way. Saunders' writing explores the journey theme but subverts it to achieve a comic effect.

Sample essay and writing task

NB: In both the following examples, a response is developed using two texts (as discussed in depth in this study guide) – one from the Stimulus Booklet and one 'related' or 'other' text. In the exam, you must also discuss your own class prescribed text. However, since there are 15 possibilities (see p.5), we have chosen to omit the prescribed text from the sample answers. It (your prescribed text) must however form part of your exam response. (See other Cambridge Wizard Student Guides for model answers involving particular prescribed texts.)

Sample essay

'Although journeys can take many forms, they all produce some form of change in those who go along for the ride.'

Discuss this statement by comparing TWO texts.

*General
introduction*

Journeys can be as varied as the people who undertake them. For some a journey is little more than a physical trip to another location. However, for most people, a journey results in some form of change. This concept is a recurring theme in literature and has been explored in different ways by different composers. This very concept is the basis for Shirley Geok-lin Lim's *The Town Where Time Stands Still*, a text that explores the compulsion for individuals to seek the 'genii loci'. A similar idea is presented by Jennifer Saunders in an episode of her situation comedy *Absolutely Fabulous*. In this episode Saunders presents a similar idea but with a highly ironic slant.

*Links made
between the
texts*

*Discussion in
detail of
Stimulus
Booklet text*

In *The Town Where Time Stands Still*, Lim explores the age old 'compulsion' of people to seek the 'genii loci'. Lim's poetic prose suggests very clearly that people do change as a result of their journeys. She describes this change in terms of people returning 'to the place from which they came blessed and altered'.

Along with this idea, Lim also explores the nature of the journey for those who 'go along for the ride'. She suggests that the decision to undertake a journey and return changed is certainly not always a conscious or altruistic one. Lim hints that for many people, the motivation to undertake the journey is essentially one based on 'their baser motives of profit and pleasure'. They do not seek to return 'altered' from their journey; it is something that happens unconsciously along the way.

The implication in Lim's writing is that the exposure to new people, places and ways of living can not but help to leave a person unchanged as a result. She describes this change as 'like an irresistible force'. Lim sees the fundamental link between the 'external geography' of the individual and their 'internal psychology'. When a person moves away from the mundane and repetitive aspects of their everyday existence this cannot but help to produce a significant change in them.

Discussion of
related text

This idea is explored again, but from a highly ironic perspective in Jennifer Saunderson's *France*, an episode of the comedy series *Absolutely Fabulous*. In this episode Saunderson tests the idea that Lim presents in her writing. She places her two protagonists in a situation that sees them journey to a new 'external geography' and embarks on a light hearted comic look at what will happen to their respective 'internal psychologies'.

The comic result of this journey is the complete opposite of Lim's writing. The trip to France has no impact on either Edina or Patsy. The new places, people and experiences offer no fresh perspective to either protagonist. They do not return from their journey 'blessed and altered' as Lim suggests – they return 'to the place from which they came' unchanged emotionally. In fact, the only thing they gain from the journey is a hangover.

Contrasts
between texts

The contrast between the two texts extends beyond this. A strong suggestion in Lim's prose is that there is an essential purity inside each of us that is waiting to be freed by a journey. In seeking to find the 'genii loci' each of us, whether unwittingly or not, embarks on the 'purer realm of travel which has nothing to do with vacations'. Lim sees this pure untainted core as our desire to 'be moved rather than move'.

The characters of Edina and Patsy offer a complete contrast to this. There is no pure core here waiting to be let free by the journey. They both break their resolutions of giving up drinking, smoking and sex before they have really even commenced their trip to

France and refuse to engage with the place on any level. Both spend their trip in a state of fear at everything from thunderstorms, insects and other people. The phrase 'I hate France!' becomes a motif that is threaded through the episode. They end up by avoiding the journey on every level, sending for Saffron to bring them food and spending their time getting drunk at a winery.

Comparison
between texts

Lim sees the journey as offering the chance for a fresh perspective and the freedom to leave the mundane aspects of everyday life behind. In Edina and Patsy, Saunderson ironically has created two characters who take the mundane with them on their journey and as a result experience nothing. Saunderson emphasises this through the contrast with Saffron, whose experience is much closer to Lim's writing. She travels to France and uses the journey as an opportunity for reflection and change.

Conclusion –
linking both
texts and the
topic

Thus both texts look at similar ideas from different perspectives. Both texts explore the changes that can take place as a result for 'those who go along for the ride'. Lim sees the journey as an important vehicle for achieving fundamental change in the individual. Saunderson also explores this concept, but undermines the idea to achieve a comic effect. Despite the very different perspectives offered by these two texts, both suggest a strong link between the 'internal psychology' of the individual and their 'external geography'. The journey is the link that allows people to return 'blessed and altered'.

Sample writing task

Compose a conversation between two students. The basis of the conversation should be the different ways that composers present ideas about the journey. Refer to TWO texts.

Chris: Hi, Nic. It's Chris. How are you? I'm sorry to ring so late. I haven't interrupted you doing anything important I hope?

Nic: Just the rotten English essay due tomorrow! I suppose that's why you are calling!

Chris: You must be psychic! I knew you would be up doing it at the last minute too! What two texts are you doing?

Nic: I've already written about that visual thing from the stimulus booklet ... you know ... the cover to *The Ivory Trail*. I don't know what else I'm going to do. I thought of doing ...

Chris: Why don't you compare it to the sonnet we did, by what's-his-name, Keats? They both deal with imaginative journeys. They'd be good to compare.

Nic: Yeah, I suppose I could find some things in common.

Chris: They both deal with an imaginative journey. You could write about how they sort of look at the same idea using different techniques. You can't get more different than a picture and a poem ...

Nic: They're both from very different times and places too. It's interesting that they are so different, but they present really similar ideas. Both of them seem to suggest that an imaginative journey can take you places.

Chris: Don't forget the idea of time too. The picture suggests a journey through different times AND places. Each of the images represents different places and times. Have you got the picture in front of you?

Nic: Yeah! I'm sick of looking at the rotten thing!!

Chris: You and 70,000 others too I bet!! Look at the font and the sand. The font looks aged by the way the edges are eroded and the sand, if you look closely...

Nic: Hey, steady on there! Don't go getting all 'Days of our Lives' on me ... 'like sands through the hour glass ...'

Chris: I'm serious! The sands could be said to be representative of the sands of time. The whole image is put together to make you look at these things, just look at the guy's eyes down the bottom, they force you to look up at the objects.

Nic: They don't force me to look anywhere! You're forcing me to look at it! C'mon, I've already written about this one! What are you going to say about the sonnet?

Chris: It's easy to draw parallels between the two. They do similar things; they just do it in really different ways. Have you got the sonnet? It shows how the persona was transported on a journey through reading Chapman's translation of Homer.

Nic: Fine ... I get all this ... but how are you going to compare them?

Chris: You just need to go into some detail about the techniques they use. For example, look at the sestet of the sonnet. Look at how quiet it is compared to the octave ... all those 's' sounds do that. It's not there by accident you know. Compare that to the hard sounds in the rest of the poem. There's heaps to say about the imagery, sound and structure of the poem.

Nic: Yeah I get it. If I look back at my notes I can go on about it for ages ...

Chris: Do you know what I don't get?

Nic: What?

Chris: Why is it that I always ring you for help, but end up doing all the talking?!

Nic: You must just need a sounding board, I guess!

Chris: Next time I'm going to talk to my cat and save myself the cost of a call.

Nic: I bet your cat doesn't have my sparkling personality...

Chris: Don't bet on it!