YEAR 12 ENGLISH

Wide Reading

What do you have to do?
Finding books
Keeping a journal

Using your journal to write your comparative essay
In term 3, as part of Unit 3, you will be required to complete a **comparative review** based on two texts of your own choosing that you have read throughout the first three terms. Early in term 1 you will select a **general theme** and a **sub-issue within that theme** to guide your reading. It is important that by the time you begin the review task in August that you have read a **range of texts** so that you have **more than two to choose from** to complete the assessment task. The **library** and **book room** publish extensive lists of suitable books for this task – your class teacher will have copies of these for you to peruse and plan for your reading. The book lists are organised around the following **themes and sub-issues**:

- **Relationships** – growing up, neglect, love/hate, family, friendships, change etc
- **Alienation** – loneliness, sexism, bullying, status, culture, individual and/or group etc
- **The Future** – future visions and dreams, ambitions, technology etc
- **Empowering Individuals** – gender identity, equality, freedom for individuals or groups etc
- **Race and Religion** – racism, religious discrimination and vilification, importance of religion etc
- **To Die For** – love, ambition, courage, war, sacrifice for a cause, terrorism etc
- **Quests and Journeys** - personal mission, fantasy and science fiction etc
You will need to keep a record of your reading in the form of a reading journal. Your teacher and/or teacher librarian will demonstrate possible templates for this early in term one. Whatever format you use, you will need to include:

- Details about key events and characters
- Personal reflections about these events and characters and how they relate to your chosen issue
  - Relevant quotes and page numbers are a compulsory part of this
- Personal reflections about authorial choices that have been made to explore your issue and to engage you as a reader
  - Relevant quotes and page numbers are a compulsory part of this
- For top students in the cohort, comparisons with other texts you have read/viewed (beyond your two key novels) both in terms of positioning as well as authorial success.

You will need to select books carefully for the review as they must deal with a very specific common issue. You also need to carefully consider the following conditions:

- Students aiming for an **A** will need to choose their texts from different time periods, places or cultures –
  - A text from List A or B AND a text from Lists C, D or E
- Students aiming for a **B** will also need to choose their texts from two different places or cultures
  - Texts from two different lists
- Students aiming for a **C** will need to choose their two texts from any list

**NB:** Books chosen from outside the lists will need to be approved by either the Teacher-Librarian or your class teacher.
Your review will be for the new literary magazine, **Still Standing** which combines features of two current magazines:


**Conditions:**

- Supervised task
- Seen task – 5 days notification of task
- No access to teacher feedback after planning phase
- Unannotated texts permitted
- 100 word notes on grid allowed + list of quotes, page numbers, and bibliographical information
- Quotes must be referenced in text by the provision of relevant page numbers and a bibliography provided at the end of your review.
- A lesson allocated to preparing layout – headline, images, lines, columns etc.
- The form on the back of the criteria sheet re: details of novels read to be completed prior to exam
Death is present in most stories; whether it is a force to be reckoned with, a devastating event, an open-ended dare, or just a gentle presence lurking in the background. These two surprisingly similar stories are linked through their common theme of death, but also by the simmering undertones of ownership and obsession.

Penni Russon’s new book *Only Ever Always* is part fairytale, part ghost story, part fable. Claire and Clara are two sides of the same coin. Existing in opposite worlds, they become connected when the two people they love most come face to face with death. Clara is determined to face the seedy side of her already cracked reality to save the only family that she has ever known, while Claire doesn’t want to accept that her own pristine world might be vulnerable to cracks.

This is a challenging book to get into, as the narrative is different for each section, and it takes a while to discern that Clara and Claire actually inhabit two different worlds, rather than different parts of the same one. For this reason, the incorporation of “magic” or at least a magical element that allows the travel between the two worlds seems a shock, but not an unwelcome one. Rather than setting itself up as a fantasy novel, this unassuming book incorporates only very subtle elements of another reality, adding to the ghostly, creepy, and delightful quality of the whole piece.

Although Claire is the character living in the reality of the reader, and it is most likely her lifestyle that most readers will identify with, it is Clara who is given the bulk of the story. She is feisty character, who could be any street kid, but she has an innocence that brings out protectiveness and sympathy from readers, and from the other characters she comes across. Her life is a carnival of the underworld, as she weaves her way through the seedy street readers, catching the eye of various overeared and collectors. Although she is unique and fiercely independent, the character that she interacts with want, in some way, to own her, and with all of the characters in this broken, upside-down world, identity is something that should be fiercely guarded.

Penni Russon has created a novel that speaks eloquently of the human desire to own that which we find curious, and to control our lives and surroundings.

This is a rich and dark parable that will appeal to lovers of Neil Gaiman’s *Coraline* or Stevie Hartnett’s *The Ghost’s Child*.

It was unexpected that *Hereafter*, which on first glance looked like the mass-produced paranormal romances that have adorned our shelves of late, should share such poignant themes and offer deep insights into the human condition. This said, *Hereafter* doesn’t have the subtlety of *Only Ever Always*, nor is its plot as surprising. However, it is an enjoyable read and it is refreshing that no vampires are waiting to leap out from any darkened corners.

Amelia is dead, reliving the nightmarish moments of her drowning over and over again in the afterlife. The details of her life are a mystery, and she relives this colourless existence day after day, with no desire to change, until she saves a boy from drowning in the very spot she lost her own life. Amelia isn’t surprised when she sees her, moments before his own heart stops, but is shocked when he returns days later, one hundred percent recovered, and still able to see her. Joshua and Amelia are fated to be togethe, connecting in a way that they never have with anyone else. But things are in the way. A dark fate is awaiting Amelia, and isn’t going to give her up without a fight. There are secrets in Joshua’s family that he isn’t even aware of.

*Hereafter* is an enjoyable book and while the characters don’t do anything surprising, the story is different enough from other paranormal romances in the way that it unfolds. Readers who enjoyed the *Piper* series will find themselves sucked in.

*Russon’s latest book continues the recent slew of high-calibre novels by Australian authors that show just how brilliant and insightful young adult fiction can be.*

Bec Kavanagh is a Melbourne reviewer.
Where do I find digital copies?

List A: The Classics Pre-1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>Alienation</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Empowering</th>
<th>Race and Religion</th>
<th>To Die For</th>
<th>Quests and Journeys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austen, Jane</td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>British 1816</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austen, Jane</td>
<td>Pride and Prejudice</td>
<td>British 1813</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wide Reading Summaries

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a novel written by English author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll. It tells the story of a girl named Alice who falls down a rabbit hole into a fantasy world populated by peculiar and anthropomorphic creatures. The tale is filled with allusions to Dodgson's friends. The tale plays with logic in ways that have given the story lasting popularity with adults as well as children. It is considered to be one of the most characteristic examples of the genre of literary nonsense, and its narrative course and structure have been enormously influential, mainly in the fantasy genre. The book is commonly referred to by the abbreviated title Alice in Wonderland, an alternative title popularized by the numerous stage, film and television adaptations of the story produced over the years.
### YEAR 12 ENGLISH READING JOURNAL TEMPLATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>List</th>
<th>Time period, and location/culture that the book deals with</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Book synopsis and key characters in the book for whom your issue is applicable (Keep this brief!)**

---

**My notes about how my book explores my chosen issue (spread across many pages either in sections or a large entry right at the end)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details about sections of the book where your chosen issue arises: How is the issue represented? (This can be done along the way or as a single entry at the end of the book: whatever works for you)</th>
<th>Page numbers and key quotes</th>
<th>Thoughts and comments (including specific examples and explanations) about how your chosen issue is dealt with in this section of the book. Some things to consider (not all will be applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🟢 Is the author's treatment of the issue successful?</td>
<td>🟢 Is the issue realistically treated through the narrative and characterisation?</td>
<td>🟢 How does the time period and location/culture affect the author's treatment of the issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🟢 Is the issue treated with suitable complexity/balance OR is the treatment superficial with many silences on the topic?</td>
<td>🟢 How does the author's treatment of the issue compare and contrast with other texts you have read/viewed (both in terms of positioning as well as authorial success)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**My Chosen Theme**
(E.g. Relationships)

**My Chosen Issue**
(E.g. Bullying
though final choice might come later)
KEEPING A JOURNAL: OPTION A

You will need to keep a record of your reading in the form of a reading journal. Your teacher and/or teacher librarian will demonstrate possible templates for this early in term one. Whatever format you use, you will need to include:

- Details about key events and characters
- Personal reflections about these events and characters and how they relate to your chosen issue
  - Relevant quotes and page numbers are a compulsory part of this
- Personal reflections about authorial choices that have been made to explore your issue and to engage you as a reader
  - Relevant quotes and page numbers are a compulsory part of this
- For top students in the cohort, comparisons with other texts you have read/viewed (beyond your two key novels) both in terms of positioning as well as authorial success.

YEAR 12 ENGLISH READING JOURNAL TEMPLATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Chosen Theme (E.g. Relationships)</th>
<th>Alienation/Dying for Cause/Empowering In.</th>
<th>My Chosen Issue (E.g. Bullying: though final choice might come later)</th>
<th>The effects of isolation on individuals who cut themselves off from the world OR who are cut off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Book</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>List</td>
<td>Time period, and location/culture that the book deals with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leviathan</td>
<td>Scott Westerfeld</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Alternative history: World War 1 in a steampunk parallel universe. Europe...but not as we know it!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Book synopsis and key characters in the book for whom your issue is applicable (Keep this brief)

- Prince Aleksander, would-be heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, is on the run. His own people have turned on him. His title is worthless. All he has is a battle-torn war machine and a loyal crew of men (Good Reads 2011). He is isolated from everything that he has known and is on the run.
- Daryn Sharp is a commoner, disguised as a boy in the British Air Service. She’s a brilliant airman. But her secret is in constant danger of being discovered (Good Reads 2011). She is isolated through her deception: she must hide her gender if she is to have a chance of achieving her dreams.
- With World War I brewing, Alek and Daryn’s paths cross in the most unexpected way...taking them on a fantastical, around-the-world adventure that will change both their lives forever (Good Reads 2011).
KEEPING A JOURNAL: OPTION A

You will need to keep a record of your reading in the form of a reading journal. Your teacher and/or teacher librarian will demonstrate possible templates for this early in term one. Whatever format you use, you will need to include:

- Details about key events and characters
- Personal reflections about these events and characters and how they relate to your chosen issue
  - Relevant quotes and page numbers are a compulsory part of this
- Personal reflections about authorial choices that have been made to explore your issue and to engage you as a reader
  - Relevant quotes and page numbers are a compulsory part of this
- For top students in the cohort, comparisons with other texts you have read/viewed (beyond your two key novels) both in terms of positioning as well as authorial success.

Details about sections of the book where your chosen issue arises: how is the issue represented?

This can be done along the way or as a single entry at the end of the book: whatever works for you.

Page numbers and key quotes should be included.

Thoughts and comments (including specific examples and explanations) about how your chosen issue is dealt with in this section of the book. Some things to consider: (not all will be applicable)

- Is the author’s treatment of the issue successful?
  - The issue is realistically treated through the narrative and characterisation
  - Is the issue treated with suitable complexity/balance or is the treatment superficial with many silences on the topic?
- How does the time period and location/culture affect the author’s treatment of the issue?
- How does the author’s treatment of the issue compare and contrast with other texts you have read/viewed (both in terms of positioning as well as authorial success)?

In the early stages of the novel, the book is told via parallel plots thus providing the reader with two viewpoints on the impact of isolation on both Alek and Deryn. This narrative device also works nicely in terms of narrative tension: in much the same way that Lord of the Rings intertwined the subplots of Frodo, Sam and Gandalf.

Alek and Deryn’s response to their respective isolation is to rise above it: to battle all obstacles in their paths. The steampunk setting hence is a wonderful vehicle for showing the bravery of these two characters that are isolated from the world.

Both Alek’s and Deryn’s plights are common tales throughout history: the nobleman deposed through revolution; the son/daughter rendered parentless by war; the sexism present throughout history and still today in many countries. In the latter instance, one only needs to consider Joan of Arc who, like Deryn, dressed as a man to carry out her calling. (The Church in History, 2006: http://www.church-history.org/pages/intro-sum/saint-witch.html).

To be isolated means to encounter the world without support and this is true to varying degrees in the case of the two protagonists. While on the run, it can’t be said that Alek was completely isolated: he had both Otto and Count Volger by his side for much of the time. Nevertheless, beyond this inner circle, Alek is very much alone. As he notes after a brief foray on the streets: “(Alek) had always impressed his tutors in Latin and Greek. But Prince Aleksandar ... could barely manage the daily language of his own people well enough to buy a newspaper” (page 125). Deryn’s isolation was of a different sort: she had people around her all the time but with them she could never show her true self. As she notes P105: “Barking hard work being a boy”. Certainly, Westerfeld treats his characters realistically: their isolation is not easy.
Details about sections of the book where your chosen issue arises: how is the issue represented?  
(This can be done along the way or as a single entry at the end of the book: whatever works for you)

Page numbers and key quotes should be included

---

**Chapters 1 – 2, 5 – 6, 9 – 10, 13 – 14 (Alek)**
- Prince Aleksandar is whisked away from home by close advisors to his parents, Count Volger and Otto. By the end of CH2 we learn that his parents have been murdered, and in a horrible twist, a life which had been a life of privilege was no more. His isolation is instant. Alek’s world (the Austrian-Hungarian alliance) is machine driven and he rapidly learns to master the Cyclop Stormwalker a monstrous battle machine that he escapes on. Literally, the only familiar world to Alek is inside the Stormwalker with his friends.

**Chapters 3 – 4, 7 – 8, 11 – 12, 15 - 16 (Deryn)**
- **Deryn** Sharp desperately wants to join the British Air service but can’t even sit the tests if she’s female. P21: “But what was in her head wouldn’t matter unless she could fool the Air Service boffins into believing her name was Dylan and not Deryn”. Deryn’s isolation is that she must pretend to be something she is not: male. Deryn’s world is that of the British where Darwinist “Fabricants” (genetically engineered superbeasts) rule the world. Like Alek she masters, first the Huxley, (a jellyfish-like living flying device), and later shows her brilliance on the Leviathan, a huge zeppelin-like flying machine made up of the genetic material of hundreds of animals from amoebas to whales!
Thoughts and comments (including specific examples and explanations) about how your chosen issue is dealt with in this section of the book. Some things to consider: (not all will be applicable)

- Is the author’s treatment of the issue successful?
  - Is the issue realistically treated through the narrative and characterisation?
  - Is the issue treated with suitable complexity/balance OR is the treatment superficial with many silences on the topic?
- How does the time period and location/culture affect the author’s treatment of the issue?
- How does the author’s treatment of the issue compare and contrast with other texts you have read/viewed (both in terms of positioning as well as authorial success)?

In the early stages of the novel, the book is told via parallel plots thus providing the reader with two viewpoints on the impact of isolation on both Alek and Deryn. This narrative device also works nicely in terms of narrative tension: in much the same way that *Lord of the Rings* (1956) intertwined the subplots of Frodo, Sam and Gandalf.

Alek and Deryn’s response to their respective isolation is to rise above it: to battle all obstacles in their paths. The steampunk setting hence is a wonderful vehicle for showing the bravery of these two characters that are isolated from the world.

Both Alek’s and Deryn’s plights are common tales throughout history: the nobleman deposed through revolution; the son/daughter rendered parentless by war; the sexism present throughout history and still today in many countries. In the latter instance, one only needs to consider Joan of Arc who, like Deryn, dressed as a man to carry out her calling. (The Church in History, 2006: [http://www.churchinhistory.org/pages/intro-sum/saint-witch.htm](http://www.churchinhistory.org/pages/intro-sum/saint-witch.htm).
**KEEPING A JOURNAL: OPTION B**
(Note: your teacher may provide other options as well but all should include the key parts)

**YEAR 12 ENGLISH READING JOURNAL TEMPLATE B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details About my chosen issue (though final choice might come later)</th>
<th>Possibilities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Chosen Theme</strong> (E.g. Relationships)</td>
<td>Alienation/Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The effects of isolation on individuals who cut themselves off from the world OR who are cut off.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do opposites really attract or do they destroy?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>List</th>
<th>Time period, and location/culture that the book deals with</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Book synopsis and key characters in the book for whom your issue is applicable (200 words maximum)

| Personal reflections about how your book deals with your chosen Theme and eventually Issue |
|---|---|
| Pages | Reflections |
| | |

| Chronological list of great quotes that deal with your chosen Theme and eventually Issue |
|---|---|---|
| Page | Quote | Optional comment |
| | | |
Metaphorically he is also trapped by the knowledge that he, and he alone, is the rightful heir to the throne and that the fate of the world lies on his shoulders. Initially the weight of this knowledge paralyses him, however as he hesitantly shares his terrible secret, learns to trust others and to trust his own judgement, this paralysis evaporates.

Deryn Sharp’s social isolation initially seems very different to Alek’s in that hers is self-imposed. She desperately wants to join the British Air Service but can’t even sit the tests if she’s female so she attempts the ultimate deception, to pass herself off as male: “But what was in her head wouldn’t matter unless she could fool the Air Service boffins into believing her name was Dylan and not Deryn” (Westerfeld 2009 p.21). It is also probably fair to say that she is similar to Alek in that both characters are hiding behind secrets that are extreme in their own way.

Yet whereas Alek is immobilised by his secret, Deryn is energised by hers, initially at least. She revels in the freedom of being male and soon masters the Darwinist “Fabricants” (genetically engineered super-beasts) that rule land, sea and sky. Nevertheless, Deryn is isolated too: she has people around her all the time but with them she can never show her true self. As she notes “Barking hard work being a boy” (Westerfeld 2009 p.105). Furthermore, her deception is unsustainable and, as time wears on, she must repel those around her for fear that they will discover her grand ruse. This includes Alek himself with whom she tragically falls in love. Certainly, Westerfeld treats his characters realistically: being cut-off from others is not easy.

There is also a pleasing symmetry to the characters... a well-designed machine! Deryn and Alek are like opposite parts, and they each have mentors who act as foils to each other. Deryn’s mentor is the imperious Dr Barlow, a brilliant scientist on a secret mission, while Alek’s is the acerbic Count Volger, who guards a powerful, political secret.

With these sets of characters also come parallel plots that provide the reader with two viewpoints on the impact of isolation and a high level of narrative tension, in much the same way that Lord of the Rings (1956) intertwines the subplots of Frodo, Sam and Gandalf.
YOUR PLAN OF ATTACK
(START EARLY AND WORK ON THIS REGULARLY)

1. Choose a theme and sub issue
2. Choose your first book only
3. Do your first journal and narrow down to the very specific issue that you want to explore in your comparative review. E.g.
   - The effects of isolation on individuals who cut themselves off from the world OR who are cut off.
   - Do opposites really attract or do they destroy?
   - etc
4. Choose a second book that also relates to the very specific issue from Book 1
   - See Mr Boxall your teacher if you need some help
   - Make sure you have your first journal with you
5. Do your second journal focussing on your very specific issue OR maybe refining it/readjusting it
6. Write your review using the ideas, quotes and page numbers from your journal
# Caboolture SHS Library Catalogue

Search for Author 'GRANT, MICHAEL' found 7 items in aims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Call Nr</th>
<th>Avail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BZRK</td>
<td>GRANT, MICHAEL</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>F GRA</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>GRANT, MICHAEL</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>F GRA</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gone</td>
<td>GRANT, MICHAEL</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>F GRA</td>
<td>0/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRANT, MICHAEL</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>F GRA</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRANT, MICHAEL</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>F GRA</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRANT, MICHAEL</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>292 GRA</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRANT, MICHAEL</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>F GRA</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
YEAR 12 ENGLISH

Wide Reading

What do you have to do?
Finding books
Keeping a journal
Using your journal to write your comparative essay