**UNDERSTANDING THE MODULE: interpreting the lines**

Work in groups on the table below and read the explanation of each sentence one row at a time:

* Discuss and share thinking.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The module** | **General interpretation of the lines** |  | **Interpreting the lines for *Hag-Seed* and *The Tempest*** |
|  |  |  |  |
| In this module, students | A comparison is usually about what is similar or dissimilar but |  | You will consider *Hag-Seed*’s relationship with *The Tempest* |
| explore the ways in which the | this statement goes further than identifying points of similarity |  | and how the appropriation connects a modern reader to the |
| comparative study of texts can | or difference. It is about judgement: |  | original text, reinvigorating the characters and amplifying the |
| reveal resonances and |  |  | key ideas and issues. |
| dissonances between and | • Texts that resonate support each other – this could be |  |  |
| within texts. | through the values or through the crafting of the text. |  | You need to acknowledge how Atwood has been influenced |
|  | • Texts that are dissonant have more differences than |  | by Shakespeare’s style, concepts and values. You will look |
|  | similarities. The new text may challenge the ideas of the |  | back at *The Tempest* through the lens of *Hag-Seed* and |
|  | old text or it may be crafted in a way that may not seem |  | consider what has been retained, omitted or subverted. |
|  | as fluid or appropriate as expected. |  | You need to consider why Atwood appropriated *The Tempest* |
|  |  |  |
|  | Whether a text is resonant or dissonant with another could be |  | and why she has made changes that do not reflect the original |
|  | about the individual responders’ expectations rather than the |  | text, such as Caliban’s altered role. In other words you need |
|  | texts. For example, for a Shakespeare purist, the adaptation |  | to know what Atwood is saying about and to Shakespeare’s |
|  | of Shakespearean sonnets to rap could be offensive whereas |  | text. |
|  | for others it could open up new and interesting directions and |  |  |
|  | resonate with a new audience |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **Atwood believes that Shakespeare is still relevant to** |  | Do you have any questions? |
|  | **modern audiences. The argument is that the context may** |  |  |
|  | **change but the players do not. Why do you believe that** |  |  |
|  | **composers continue to adapt and appropriate** |  |  |
|  | **Shakespeare’s texts?** |  |  |
| Students consider the ways | There are many ways that texts are ‘adapted’. A reimagining |  | As above but the *why* becomes more significant. The |
| that a reimagining or reframing | might be very different offering a totally new perspective and |  | reimagining reflects Atwood’s purpose, context and values. |
| of an aspect of a text might | touching ton the original text occasionally or just as a |  |  |
| mirror, align or collide with the | stimulus. Reframing could be closer to the original, perhaps in |  | When texts collide the conversation is about areas of |
| details of another text. | a different form such as book to film or in a different context |  | difference; when texts align or mirror then the conversation is |
|  | (time and place) while as close as possible to the original. |  | about the perceived relevance of the base text. |
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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | This will need to be evaluated: |  |
|  | Does it ‘mirror’ and ‘stay true’ to the original? |  |
|  | Does it align with the original? – meaning it is in |  |
|  | agreement with many aspects of the original text but |  |
|  | not necessarily as close as mirroring |  |
|  | Does it collide with the original? In other words, it may |  |
|  | question or challenge what has been previously |  |
|  | composed. |  |
|  | It may be that all three actions (mirror, align and collide) take |  |
|  | place between the texts if we look at details. Some details will |  |
|  | copy or mirror while others reinforce and others dispute or |  |
|  | question the original. |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **Why would some authors want to adapt a text from its** | Do you have any questions? |
|  | **original?** |  |
|  |  |  |
| In their textual studies, they | This is reiterating the idea of resonances or dissonances | Shakespeare’s play reflects a Christian humanist perspective; |
| also explore common or | (common or disparate issues) but reminds us that these | whereas Atwood’s novel reflects a secular humanist |
| disparate issues, values, | issues are common or disparate when we consider values, | perspective. |
| assumptions or perspectives | assumptions and perspectives in the two texts. The |  |
| and how these are depicted. | comparative study must therefore include values assumptions | We can, however see common beliefs and values such as |
|  | and perspectives. | moderation, compassion, forgiveness, empathy at play in both |
|  |  | texts and acting against ambition and revenge . |
|  | Perspectives create a position of preferred reading. While |  |
|  | comparing the representation of issues, values, assumptions |  |
|  | or perspectives between the two texts, you need to consider |  |
|  | why and how these elements are similar or have changed |  |
|  | (see definitions of terms). |  |
|  | This must also include a study of the crafting of the text: how |  |
|  | are these values, assumptions and perspectives depicted? |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **How can elements of craft convey values or assumptions** | Do you have any questions? |
|  | **or perspectives?** |  |
|  |  |  |

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| By comparing two texts | Many texts remind us of other texts. Sometimes this is | Although *The Tempest* is also one of the few Shakespeare |
| students understand how | purposeful but sometimes it is not. If you know the text that | plays not to have a clear literary source, it intertextually links |
| composers (authors, poets, | one text draws from another, you read the texts in different | explicitly and implicitly links to by the following texts: |
| playwrights, directors, | ways conscious of one text against the other: the meaning is | • Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia* influenced Gonzalo’s Utopia |
| designers and so on) are | influenced by what you know of the other text. | speech |
| influenced by other texts, |  | • Michael de Montaigne’s essay ‘Of the Canibales’ helped |
| contexts and values, and how | Context is a key component of Module A. The context in | shaped Gonzalo’s utopia speech and influenced |
| this shapes meaning. | which the text is produced or in which you read the text will | Shakespeare’s representation of Caliban who speaks |
|  | also influence the way the meaning is understood. | lyrically in places. |
|  | Texts absorb ideas and values from their present as well as | • a letter written by William Strachey, a shipwreck survivor |
|  | on the Sea Venture who was stranded for months on a |
|  | the past so it is a constant exchange. Readers also absorb | deserted island in the Bermudas |
|  | ideas and values from their own personal context and | • Prospero’s renunciative speech is appropriated directly |
|  | experiences and they bring these to the text, so one reader | from a speech by Medea in Ovid’s poem ‘Metamorphoses’ |
|  | may realise different meaning to another reader of the same | • Machiavelli’s *The Prince* with its exploration of power. |
|  | text or pair of texts. | • The Ancient Greeks and the Romans – in particular |
|  |  |
|  | When exploring context, focus on the details that can explain | Stoicism, a Hellenistic philosophy - influenced *The* |
|  | aspects of the text. That is, if an understanding of context | *Tempest*’s ‘theatrum mundi’ – ‘all the world’s a stage’- the |
|  | helps the responder appreciate the representation, then it is a | belief that human life is like a play scripted and directed |
|  | valid contextual reference. | by a mighty producer (God, Fortune, Fate), a play in |
|  |  | which each player is given an allotted role. |
|  |  | The metatheatrical in the play – aspects of the play reminding |
|  |  | the audience that is just a performance derives from the plays |
|  |  | of the ancient Greeks. ‘Meta’ means ‘a level beyond’ . |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **Why do we keep reading and enjoying books from** | Do you have any questions? |
|  | **different contexts?** |  |
|  | **Why do composers keep being influenced by past texts?** |  |
|  |  |  |
| Students identify, interpret, | You need to provide textual evidence for your analysis of the | What is the textual evidence in both texts that supports your |
| analyse and evaluate the | texts. This is the HOW. When we compare textual forms we | reading? |
| textual features, conventions, | have to be particularly conscious of how the form affects the |  |
| contexts, values and purpose | presentation. Films engage visual and auditory senses in the | The context and values are referred to again but the purpose |
| of two prescribed texts. | experience but even the written text engages us visually and | of both composers has been added. Purpose is an element of |
|  | aurally through the imagination. Different conventions may | conversation and frames what and how it is being said. |
|  | highlight different meaning or values for the same ‘story’. |  |
|  |  | Another consideration is the audience. Can we assume that |
|  |  | Atwood addresses an audience who knows Shakespeare? |

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|  | Different forms serve different purposes which carry different | This is another form of conversation: the author with the |
|  | weight and are valued in different ways. For example, | audience. |
|  | information conveyed through a documentary is accepted as |  |
|  | truth more than information in an imaginative text. |  |
|  | The context and values are referred to again but the purpose |  |
|  | of both composers has been added. Another consideration is |  |
|  | the audience |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **How do you react to different forms that you encounter?** | Do you have any extra questions? |
|  | **Do you apply the same reading method?** |  |
|  |  |  |
| As students engage with the | When we watch a text and realise its connection to another | You need to consider how your own context has shaped your |
| texts they consider how their | text, we feel pleased with our ability to identify this connection | response to the texts. |
| understanding, appreciation | but we also judge the second text against the original. We |  |
| and enjoyment of both texts | may feel impressed by the insights the recent composer has | What is your conversation to be: |
| has been enhanced through | brought to the text or we may feel critical. We feel empowered | Do you see *Hag-Seed* differently because you know *The* |
| the comparative study and | by the experience of bringing knowledge from our personal | *Tempest*? |
| how the personal, social, | context and of the social historical and social contexts around |  |
| cultural and historical | each text to a new text and we see the new text in the light of |  |
| contextual knowledge that they | the past text. The reverse also operates as we return to the |  |
| bring to the texts influences | previous text with renewed interest. |  |
| their perspectives and shapes |  |  |
| their own compositions. | We start to realise how texts can be reinterpreted in different |  |
|  | contexts through different eyes. The textual combination may |  |
|  | lead to new perspectives which we can then bring to our own |  |
|  | compositions. |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **Does reading a text against another one make you** | Do you have any extra questions? |
|  | **appreciate texts more?** |  |
|  |  |  |
| By responding imaginatively, | Writing imaginative interpretive and critical responses could | You will have to write imaginative interpretive and critical |
| interpretively and critically | include reimagining or reframing each of the texts or even | responses that address or converse with the text/s in different |
| students explore and evaluate | creating a blended version of the two | ways. |
| individual and common textual |  |  |
| features, concepts and values. | Comparison of two texts doesn’t just take place through |  |
|  | critical responses but also imaginative responses which allow |  |
|  | you to demonstrate textual reimagining and reframing by |  |

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|  | experimenting with textual features to illustrate understanding |  |
|  | of concepts and values. |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **How do you approach imaginative texts?** | Do you have any extra questions? |
|  |  |  |
| They further develop skills in | You are expected to know the texts well and evaluate how the | You are expected to know the texts well and evaluate how the |
| analysing the ways that | textual features, values and key concepts or ideas. | textual features, values and key concepts or ideas. |
| various language concepts, for |  |  |
| example motif, allusion and | Intertextuality literally means ‘between texts’ so this module is | You need to understand how intertextuality allows Atwood to |
| intertextuality, connect and | about the relationships formed between one text and another. | reimagine *The Tempest* and consider how Atwood’s |
| distinguish texts and how | Texts connect with each other in many ways: through | innovative appropriation has added new meaning to the |
| innovating with language | language such as the use of similar motifs and through ideas | original play. You need to read between the lines to |
| concepts, form and style can | that may be imparted by allusions. An allusion carries the | understand what her conversation is. Even Atwood’s playful |
| shape new meaning. | richness of the previous text it comes from. For example, a | parody of the names of the characters amplifies their motives |
|  | Biblical allusion to the Garden of Eden may be understood as | and actions. |
|  | a comment on gender as well as religion. It may offer a subtle |  |
|  | critique or it may be an affirmation of element in a text. It’s | Practising your own appropriations around a motif will help |
|  | important to think carefully about how much meaning an | you to understand the process of adaptation. |
|  | allusion carries and whether it is sustained or occasional. |  |
|  | Again, students are encouraged to experiment to reimagine |  |
|  | and reframe the text but this time the direction is more specific |  |
|  | with the suggestion of crafting a text around a motif or allusion |  |
|  | that connects it to another text. This practice will help you to |  |
|  | understand the process of adaptation. |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **What are some motifs that we see recurring in different** | Do you have any extra questions? |
|  | **texts?** |  |
|  | **What are some other language concepts that connect and** |  |
|  | **distinguish texts?** |  |
|  | **What does it mean to ‘innovate with language? Share** |  |
|  | **occasions when you have done this.** |  |
|  |  |  |
| They develop appropriate | You need to think about how to introduce evidence, how to | You need to think about how to introduce evidence, how to |
| analytical and evaluative | explain it, how to synthesise it into a cohesive response. | explain it, how to synthesise it into a cohesive response. |
| language required to compose | Cohesion is about how the response is ‘glued’ together. This | Cohesion is about how the response is ‘glued’ together. This |
| informed, cohesive responses | comes from taking care with referents, referring back and |  |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| using appropriate terminology, | forward in a paragraph to show how an idea builds up. You | comes from taking care with referents, referring back and |
| grammar, syntax and | need to select the right evidence to connect the two texts | forward in a paragraph to show how an idea builds up. |
| structure. | logically. |  |
|  |  | You need to select the right evidence to connect the two texts |
|  | Analysis and evaluation need the right vocabulary: academic | logically. |
|  | precision is important. This may come about from |  |
|  | ‘nominalisation’ or the use of the passive but this is not always |  |
|  | necessary and may in parts become pompous and |  |
|  | ponderous. There needs to be balance between straight- |  |
|  | forward and direct statements and more deliberate controlled |  |
|  | extended explanations that may become more formal. |  |
|  | An informed response is one that has been thought about, |  |
|  | that has evidence to prove its case; it may also mean that |  |
|  | extra reading from critics has been considered but this is not |  |
|  | necessary and certainly should not replace a personal textual |  |
|  | critique. |  |
|  | Appropriate writing includes choosing the right grammar and |  |
|  | sentence structures. Casual simple sentences need to be |  |
|  | replaced with more sophisticated sentence structures, adding |  |
|  | more information to modify a response to make it more exact. |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **Share ways that you write academic responses.** | Do you have any extra questions? |
|  |  |  |
| By composing critical and | A considered personal perspective is the aim but it comes not | You need to reflect on how you have grown as an English |
| just from reading but from writing. Reading and writing are | student and how each task you have been set has helped |
| creative texts in a range of |
| ways of engaging with ideas and coming to understand the | your understanding. |
| modes and media, students |
| importance of craft. |  |
| develop the confidence, skills |  |
|  |  |
| and appreciation to express a | Reflecting on your skills and knowledge s you build these can |  |
| considered personal |  |
| lead to more confidence in writing |  |
| perspective. |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Discuss:** | **What was the most important thing you learnt in Year 11** | Do you have any extra questions? |
|  | **about the relationship between reading and writing?** |  |
|  |  |  |