

2

Developing characterisation

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Activity introduction

Quick summary

This lesson follows on from the lesson ‘Understanding Characterisation,’ which explores the indirect characterisation in a collection of short videos. In this lesson students are provided with the opportunity to apply their understanding by creating a script for a short film based on the theme of youth gambling.

Learning intention

To understand indirect characterisation.

NSW Syllabus outcomes

- **EN4-1A** responds to and composes texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure
- **EN4-2A** effectively uses a widening range of processes, skills, strategies and knowledge for responding to and composing texts in different media and technologies
- **EN4-3B** uses and describes language forms, features and structures of texts appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts
- **EN4-4B** makes effective language choices to creatively shape meaning with accuracy, clarity and coherence
- **EN4-5C** thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically about information, ideas and arguments to respond to and compose texts
- **EN4-7D** demonstrates understanding of how texts can express aspects of their broadening world and their relationships within it

General capabilities

Critical and creative thinking

Literacy

Ethical understanding

Personal and social capability

Relevant parts of Year 7 and 8 achievement standards

NSW Stage 4 English Syllabus Statement

By the end of Stage 4 students respond to a variety of texts critically, imaginatively and interpretively and compose accurate, clear and coherent texts. They use English in personal, social and learning contexts with increasing control and understanding of the form and features of language and structures of texts, and with increasing awareness of purpose, audience and context. Students make connections between texts, they recognise the main ideas and points of view, and the ways in which texts seek to position responders. They make decisions about whether content and language are appropriate to purpose, audience and context.

In speaking, writing and representing, students shape meaning through the thoughtful selection and ordering of appropriate content and by drawing on a widening repertoire of language choices. They can express a personal point of

Activity introduction

view, give words and images to their imaginings and compose logical argument. They experiment with form and language in different modes and technologies to produce various types of texts for specific purposes. As appropriate, they plan, draft and edit to produce polished texts.

Students apply their knowledge of textual features and conventions to their texts. They constructively analyse and evaluate their own and others' compositions and they articulate their response to texts and to the process and experience of composing. Students reflect on their learning, becoming aware of how they learn and identifying what they have learned, effective ways to learn and what they need to learn next.

Australian Curriculum Year 7 Level Description

Students create a range of imaginative, informative and persuasive types of texts, for example narratives, procedures, performances, reports and discussions, and are beginning to create literary analyses and transformations of texts.

Australian Curriculum Year 8 Level Description

Students create a range of imaginative, informative and persuasive types of texts, for example narratives, procedures, performances, reports and discussions, and continue to create literary analyses and transformations of texts.

Topic

Character development

Unit of work

Stage 4 English

Time required

80 minutes

Level of teacher scaffolding

This lesson builds upon the explorations in the lesson 'Understanding Characterisation,' asking students to apply their learning about indirect characterisation. The level of support required for students will depend on the level of understanding developed through this prior session. Students may also require additional support to understand the structure and features of a script. Examples of this have been provided within the lesson.

Resources required

- [Video: Youth Gambling -headspace Rockingham \(YouTube\) \(optional\)](#)
- 'Script Example: Footy Mates' handout
- 'Script Features' handout
- 'Script Writing Task'
- 'PIP Peer Feedback Observation Sheet'
- Learning Intention Display (optional)

Keywords

Theme, character, characterisation, direct characterisation, indirect characterisation, gambling, impact, effect, script, scene, dialogue, parenthetical.

Teacher worksheet

Teacher preparation

This lesson has been developed as the second in a pair of lessons exploring indirect characterisation. Lesson 1 focuses on developing and understanding of this concept, while lesson 2 allows students to apply this understanding through development of a script. It is recommended that these two lessons are implemented together to optimise learning.

Gambling

This lesson focuses on the presentation of theme and character in texts based on the risks of youth gambling. Given that gambling can be a high-risk activity and is a priority concern for young people it is recommended that teachers and parents read the Facilitator pack before implementing the lesson. The pack provides teachers and parents with essential information about gambling harm amongst young people and clarifies the nature of gambling-related behaviours as well as how to approach sensitive topics.

Theme

This lesson assumes a prior understanding of theme and the ability to identify themes within texts. Supplementary references are provided within the lesson if students have not yet developed this skill. Identifying themes in a text requires students to be able to identify a focus subject or topic within a text, and the comment made about that theme. All theme statement should be a full sentence that express the idea or opinion on a topic as represented through character experiences and events within the text. If you wish to develop your understanding of theme, explore the resources below:

[Home of Bob: Fiction, it's story elements, and quality characteristics](#)

[Literarydevices.net: Theme](#)

[Writing Explained: What is Theme? Definition, Examples of Theme in Literature](#)

Characterisation

The central focus of this lesson is indirect characterisation. Students explore how the personality of a character is represented in the text through speech, thoughts, effect on others, actions and looks (appearance). It is important to have a strong understanding of characterisation prior to implementation of this lesson. If you wish to explore this concept further, some resources you may wish to explore are included below:

[Writing 101: Guide to Direct Characterization and Indirect Characterization](#)

[Grammarly: What is Indirect Characterization in Literature?](#)

Learning intention

To understand indirect characterisation.

Success criteria

Students can:

- understand that the theme in a text is shown through character experiences.
- explain direct and indirect characterisation.
- identify indirect characterisation in a text.
- make intentional choices to develop reader and viewer understanding of a character through use of indirect characterisation.

Teaching sequence

10 minutes - Lesson introduction

15 minutes - Part A: Exploring scripts

45 minutes - Part B: Script writing

10 minutes - Reflection

Lesson introduction

Display the learning intention and success criteria for the lesson. This can be written onto the board, or the included resource can be displayed. Invite students to read and discuss the learning intention and success criteria to ensure understanding before beginning the lesson.

Step 1

If the previous lesson ('Understanding Characterisation') has been conducted prior to this one, invite students to share what they explored and learnt in this session, prompting them to define:

- Theme
- Characterisation
- Indirect characterisation

And also to explain what factors contribute towards indirect characterisation in a text.

Step 2

Display the learning intention and success criteria for the lesson. This can be written onto the board, or the included resource can be displayed. Invite students to read and discuss the learning intention and success criteria to ensure understanding before beginning the lesson.

Part A:

Exploring scripts

Optional Step (if previous lesson has not been conducted):

If students have not previously viewed the scenarios from [Youth Gambling -headspace Rockingham](#), watch these as a class and discuss:

- the themes presented in each video
- what factors contributed to the viewer's understanding of the central characters

Step 1

Explain to students that in this session they will focus on writing their own screenplay for a short film reflecting a similar theme to those in [Youth Gambling -headspace Rockingham](#).

Show 'Script Example: Footy Mates' demonstrating how scenario 1 may have been written as a script. Invite students to comment on the features they observe in the text. Pose the questions:

- How is the location shown?
- How are the movements of the characters included?
- How is dialogue recorded?
- What other features can we see?

Provide students with the handout 'Script Features' and explain the name for each feature identified in the script. Ensure students have an understanding of:

- Transitions
- Scene Headings
- Action
- Dialogue
- Parentheticals

Part B:

Script writing

Step 1

Provide students with 'Script Writing Task' and explain that they will work in pairs to develop their own script based upon a youth gambling scenario. Explain that the focus of this task is to use indirect characterisation building the audience's understanding of characters through their speech, thoughts (where possible), effect on others, actions and looks, as explored in the previous task.

Step 2

Invite students to form pairs to work in. Allow time for them to complete the task.

While students are working, roam around the class, taking time to check in with all students. Support them to ensure they are making intentional decisions about indirect characterisation in their script.

Step 3

Once students have completed their scripts, encourage them to pair up with another group, share their ideas and provide each other with feedback. You may wish to provide students with the 'PIP Feedback sheet' as a guide.

Step 4

Allow time for students to make amendments to their scripts based on the feedback received.

Reflection

To conclude the session, invite students to reflect on their learning and growth over the previous lessons by writing individual responses to the following questions:

1. *What have you learnt about indirect characterisation?*
2. *How do you think this will help you when producing texts in the future?*

Differentiation

Extension - Students who complete their script and have additional time available can be encouraged to select and film a particular scene from their script, considering how the written form of the script translates into the actual performance.

Provision for Learning Support - Students who have difficulty developing ideas can be provided with a specific scenario to develop a script for.

Script example: Footy Mates

FADE IN:

INT. SUBURBAN HOME – NIGHT

We open in a middle class suburban apartment furnished with necessary items including couch, coffee table and television but few decorative elements or luxuries. Four late teen/young adult friends are present. Three are sitting on the couch watching an AFL match. One is in the adjoining kitchen.

KITCHEN

Friend 2 pours a bowl of chips in the kitchen and then walks to the lounge to sit down with the other friends to watch the football match on TV.

LOUNGE

Friend 1 is distracted from the football match looking at his phone.

FRIEND 2

(Holding chips towards Friend 1 while focused on watching the game)

Chip mate?

FRIEND 1

(Looking up from his phone)

No, mate, no

FRIEND 2

(glancing at Friend 1's phone, then looking back to the game)

Oh, you talking to your missus again?

FRIEND 1

(looking up from phone again to answer, but not watching game)

Nah, I'm just, uh, placing a couple of bucks on the Hurricanes.

FRIEND 2

(taking a chip from the bowl in his hands)

You backing a winner again?

FRIEND 1

(looking back to phone and tapping the screen, leg shaking)

Yep ... Always do.

FRIEND 2

(watching TV screen and reacting to the game)

Nice!

Friend 1 returns focus to his phone with a worried look on his face. Bodily movements such as a shaking leg and rubbing his chin showing his worry. He grips his phone tightly and looks up to the TV in response to the sound of the crowd cheering. Friend 2, 3 and 4 cheer in response to the action on the TV. Friend 1 slouches back onto the couch, rubbing his head in worry.

FRIEND 2 AND 3

5... 4... 3... 2... 1...

FRIEND 2, 3 AND 4

(screaming)

Yeah!

Friend 3 and 4 walk away to the kitchen.

FRIEND 2

(turning to Friend 1 and rubbing his head in friendly banter)

Better luck next time mate.

Friend 2 also gets up and walks towards the kitchen.

FRIEND 1

(turning to face Friend 2 as he walks away)

I didn't lose that much ...

Friend 1 turns to look back at phone, still sitting slumped on the couch.

FRIEND 1 (CONT'D)

I guess ...

FRIEND 1'S POV

Swipes the phone to show balance. Phone displays a current account balance of -\$0.57. Looks up to television showing a betting advertisement.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FOOTY PLAYERS CHANGING ROOMS

Players are running off the field back into the changing rooms. Training sounds such as whistles, coaches voice and players running in can be heard.

Friend 1 runs in towards his backpack and takes his phone out of his bag, checking it.

FRIEND 1'S POV

Phone shows a 'try again' message on the betting App in use. Thumbs hover above screen as if deciding what to tap next.

INT. FOOTY PLAYERS CHANGING ROOMS

Friend 2 enters and sits down beside Friend 1

Script features

Subheader

(To show minor changes in location)

Character

(Indicates who is speaking)

Dialogue

(What the character says)

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Transition

(Fade in, dissolve to, cut to)

Action

Describes the actions taking place in the scene

Parenthetical

(Information on how the character should say the line)

Script writing task

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Task outline:

Work in pairs to develop a script for a short film of two to three minutes in length, focused on the topic of Youth Gambling. Your script should demonstrate the impact of youth gambling on a specific character and their close friends or family.

Task expectations

Literary elements – characterisation

The key focus of this lesson is characterisation. While writing your script, be sure to consider how you develop the audience's understanding of characters through indirect characterisation.

Remember that you can use:

- Speech
- Thoughts
- Effect on others
- Actions
- Looks

To develop the audience's understanding of a character.

Text structure and features – script writing

You are writing a script in order to be able to demonstrate your understanding of characterisation, but you are also to show your ability to accurately use suitable text structure and features. Be sure to include all of the elements of a script shown on the script example and script features sheets that you have been provided.

PIP Peer feedback observation sheet

Students work:

Students providing feedback:

Task Expectation	Positive	Improvement Idea	Positive
Characterisation			
Text Structure and Features			

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Students providing feedback:

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Characterisation			
Text Structure and Features			

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