HIAS English Open Resources

Identity, self and society

How to Be a Woman by Caitlin Moran

We Should All Be Feminists
by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

**KS4 writing journey developed by the
KS4 writing steering group**

Overview

In this document

This short *writing journey* is intended for use at Key Stage 4. Please note that if adapting for KS3, extracts from *How to Be a Woman* by Caitlin Moran should be carefully selected; the text as a whole is more suitable for older readers.

At KS4, planning for writing can be limited due to pressure on curriculum time and students' main regular experience of writing can be through exam-style task practice. The units in this series of writing journey planning for KS4 are intended to support improvements in students' writing through explicit teaching and the use of rich textual extracts as both stimulus for ideas and models for writing.

The focus for this series of KS4 writing journeys is on structural and cohesive features of texts and the adaptation of sentence structures for effect. These elements have been identified as being key to success in writing at GCSE, as well as being noted areas for improvement for many students.

Each of the KS4 writing journeys planned has a loose thematic link to the majority of the key texts specified for GCSE English Literature, meaning that these units can be integrated into planning linked to a literature text, either at a key moment in the text or once study has been completed. They can also be used as a bridging unit between two or more literature texts or adapted as stand-alone units in preparation for narrative/descriptive writing at GCSE.

In this writing journey, the stimulus texts are extracts from the opening chapter of *How to Be a Woman* by Caitlin Moran (Ebury Press, 2011) and the written version of the TEDX talk *We Should All be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Fourth Estate, 2014). Both texts explore ideas about feminism, culture and identity; ideas about personal identity and the self are central to many of the GCSE English Literature texts, as are the patriarchy, gender roles/stereotypes and the oppressive expectations raised by social norms.

Points to consider when using this resource

Teachers must adapt example plans to reflect AfL, prior learning, national curriculum and specification requirements and the needs of individuals.

It is important that students have the opportunity to apply the learning from these writing journeys to other, more independent writing tasks, including those completed under examination conditions.

Main Outcome

Write an opinionated article for a blog, website or newspaper

Examples of potential writing tasks:

- Write about gender stereotyping and address ideas about characters from Shakespeare's plays, eg

    o *Shakespeare taught me to hate the patriarchy. Write an article explaining your views, etc…*

    o *Lady Macbeth is not such an unnatural woman after all. Write an article explaining your views, etc…*

- Write about identity and being yourself, eg

    o *Man is not truly one, but truly two. Write an article explaining your views, etc…*

    o *To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.* (Ralph Waldo Emerson) *Write an article explaining your views, etc…*

- Write in an opinionated style about an issue on which students feel strongly – offering choice can enable students to express themselves more freely and fluently

Key features of writing expected as an element of the final written outcome:

- use of an extended metaphor to shape and link ideas

- use of *jigsaw words* and the *introduce, explain, expand* sequence across paragraphs to link and develop ideas

- use of parenthesis (pairs of dashes and pairs of commas) and varied sentence length imitated from both sources, adapted as appropriate for desired impact on the reader

- (if appropriate) establishment of ironic, humorous tone, including the use of a combination of ambitious vocabulary and colloquialisms for humorous effect.

Summary

Stimulate and Generate	Capture, Sift and Sort	Create, Refine, Evaluate
Explore ideas about identity, self and society	**Explore Moran's and Adichie's distinctive styles**	**Plan and write an article using elements of Moran's and Adichie's styles**
During this phase, students explore ideas around identity, the self and society – as presented in the literary text(s) that they are studying, as abstract and philosophical concepts, and from a personal standpoint.	Students explore the structural and cohesive features of the text and use sentence imitation strategies to mimic elements of the writers' styles, focusing on:	In the final phase, students use structural and grammatical elements from the style of the extract studied to shape their own writing. Time is spent planning and drafting in order to create a polished final written outcome.
Read extracts that will be used as 'WAGOLLs' (What A Good One Looks Like) using active reading strategies such as visualisation, summarising and drawing links between parts of the text. Active reading approaches are less frequently and confidently used by students when reading non-fiction texts and the opportunity to practise is a valuable one.	• the use of extended metaphors • the use of jigsaw words • the use of parenthesis	Students evaluate their writing, focusing on the impact of the structural features used to create the desired atmosphere.

Stimulate and Generate Phase

<mark>**Explore the ways that people present (and conceal) their true selves**</mark>

Use the metaphor of Russian *matryoshka* dolls to explore layers of a person or character's personality. This activity, which is intended to support students to deepen their understanding both of fictional characters and of themselves, is adapted from a therapeutic approach. Teacher models with a known character:

- The largest, outermost doll is always the most beautiful and perfectly painted because it is the layer that everyone sees and is intended for display – it attracts buyers. This layer of the personality is the surface, most seemingly perfect version that is the version of the self that the character/person wants others to see. This may be a carefully constructed image that hides the more imperfect reality. *For example, Lady Macbeth's outer layer is the perfect Thane's wife, later queen: she is calm, hospitable, gracious and confident; she shows a charming femininity when speaking to King Duncan and appropriate feminine weakness when she seemingly faints at the discovery of the murder.*

- The next doll in represents the version of the character/person seen by those who know them well; there are clues about their personality and emotions creeping through that show that the outer layer is not quite the whole story. *For example, Macbeth knows that beneath Lady Macbeth's hospitality and graciousness lies a steely determination and ruthlessness, and that she is prepared to go to almost any lengths for power.*

- The third doll is the version of the character/person's personality and emotions that show when they are under stress – these emotions and motivations are known only to those who know the character best or are seen when their masks come off and might be more raw and powerful, such as anger, grief, jealousy. *For example, Lady Macbeth hides her fears and physical reactions beneath a layer of anger and practicality when she has to manage Macbeth in order to escape detection in Act 2 Scene 2, but even she cannot control the fear and guilt that creep through in her sleepwalking scene.*

- The final, innermost doll represents the character/person's innermost feelings – the fear, shame, needs and beliefs that really drive them, perhaps things that they keep secret even from themselves. *For example, Lady Macbeth might be driven by shame that she has not managed to produce a living child – arguably a wife's primary role in the society of the play – and a fear that Mabeth might turn away from her if she does not manipulate and control him through her force of personality.*

Adapt the task as appropriate – for example, use the approach to explore a character from the literature text being studied, share an Instagram feed with students and ask them to imagine the layers that might lie beneath the seemingly perfect life represented in order to create a character with real depth, or ask students to carry out the task about themselves. If choosing the self-exploration option, be aware that students will find it difficult to explore the innermost doll/layer as they may wish to avoid thinking about their deepest fears and desires; allow students to keep this private if they prefer. It is a good idea to offer students choice about whether they wish to explore their own personality (which many will enjoy, but those with more troubling emotions may not) or the personality of a character. If a literary character is chosen,

this task can be assessed for inference and interpretation of the text.

Opportunity for Site of Application writing task: Remind students of the *show, not tell* approach in fiction writing. Students can be offered the opportunity to write a character-driven story in which layers of the character's personality are revealed through actions and dialogue, perhaps inspired by an image of a character, or the images of an Instagram feed previously explored.

Explore ideas about and stereotypes of gender

Stimulate discussion using images that represent gender in stereotypical ways – these can be subtle or overt. Advertising materials are a good source, as is the humorous book *How to be Successful without Hurting Men's Feelings* by Sarah Cooper. There are frequently current issues/debates in the media that can be used to stimulate thinking about gender expectations: think of news and gossip items that can be explored, such as the debate around the way that Serena Williams's anger at an umpire's decision was seen as inappropriate (because of gendered expectations that women do not display anger), or the way that Piers Morgan mocked Daniel Craig for being unmanly when carrying his baby in a sling.

Design a task that will support exploratory talk, such as a ranking task (eg diamond 9) looking, vocabulary sorting task into masculine/feminine, annotation of an advert or image with the assumptions that are represented etc.

Potential resources include:

- *Gillette* adverts

- *Man Up!* campaign

- Emma Watson's *He for She* speech to the UN

- Rich Williams's tweet about the royal baby dated 23 April 2018 ("*Prince William looked stunning in a navy suit jacket, black trousers & light blue shirt. He cut a glowing figure, his skin appearing radiant in spite of such an early start. His hair styled before leaving, he stepped out alongside Catherine for the photographers. #RoyalBaby*")

Explore ideas about feminism

Ask the students *Are you a feminist?* Create a mind map that collates and organises their ideas about what feminism means. Discuss the idea that feminism means refusing to accept and be limited by gender stereotypes. Counter the idea that 'person-ist' or 'human-ist' or 'meninist' is an alternative to feminism because "feminism has had its day" or that "it has swung too far the other way" – anticipate these misconceptions and prepare materials that give weight to the argument that sexism is still an issue and feminism is still necessary in today's world. See Chapter 6 of Pinkett and Roberts *Boys Don't Try?* for shocking examples of everyday sexism and sexual aggression in schools. The *Everyday Sexism* website www.everydaysexism.com has a wealth of striking examples.

If appropriate, explore one or more of the literary texts studied for GCSE from a

feminist critical perspective – Eva Smith's experiences lend themselves well to this (potentially, stretch students by exploring the male gaze, cultural accomplices, etc, as well as the social constructs that are in play in An Inspector Calls).

<mark>Identify and summarise the main points in an argument</mark>

Read one or both extracts from Adichie's *We Should All be Feminists* – practise using active reading strategies such as visualising/annotation with images, summarising paragraphs or sections with a key word or phrase, highlighting links between parts of the text. Add notes to mind maps exploring ideas about feminism and mine the text for useful vocabulary that can also be attached to the mind map.

We Should All Be Feminists is also available to view as a TED talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_we_should_all_be_feminists?language=en

Do the same with the prologue to Moran's *How to be a Woman* – active reading strategies; add to mind map; create vocabulary bank.

Discuss and explore the ideas put forward in both texts.

<mark>Generate appropriate vocabulary for choice of task</mark>

Share with students the task/choice of tasks that they will complete. Notice how both Moran and Adichie use abstract nouns (masculinity, ideology, inequality, misogyny, humanity) and sophisticated diction (deleterious, pilloried, momentous, pioneering, stifle, subordinate, privileges). This vocabulary can be re-used in pupils' writing, but they may need to capture vocabulary specifically adapted to their own topic from writing on this topic. In order to generate appropriately ambitious vocabulary and knowledge around the content they plan to write about, students may need to conduct some research.

If required, pupils can generate vocabulary around core words frequently used in opinionated writing to increase their ambition in diction. The resource *What exactly do you mean?* challenges pupils to build vocabulary knowledge around the tier one words *good, bad, weird, important* and *a lot.* This could be set as an appropriate homework task or completed in class – please note that completing each vocabulary set takes quite a long time for students, particularly if using a thesaurus. Allow sufficient time or spread completion over a number of sessions.

Capture, Sift and Sort Phase

Explore the use and impact of extended metaphors and/or semantic fields

Examples of extended metaphor are frequently used in poetry – explore the use of extended metaphor in Carol Ann Duffy's *Valentine*, Vicki Feaver's *Coat,* or Simon Armitage's *The Manhunt.* Use this as an opportunity to practise approaches for unseen poetry, exploring meaning and overall message first, supported by teasing out the strands of imagery.

As a shared reading task, explore the extract from *How to be a Woman* "But – like a soldier dropped into a warzone…whether you like it or not" and identify the words that fit the semantic field of warfare. Discuss the overall impact of the comparison of puberty with going into battle and annotate with layers of meaning within each element of the comparison.

Independently, review the rest of the text and identify where the imagery of battle and warfare re-emerges. Make notes on the layers of meaning within these uses of imagery.

Apprentice task: Using the same metaphor of battle (re-using the vocabulary from Moran's text and/or adding further vocabulary linked to warfare), write two paragraphs, the opening and the ending, of a piece about one of the following:

- Starting secondary school for the first time
- Getting a school dinner from the canteen
- Preparing for the prom
- Looking after younger siblings/babysitting

Start the piece *"Like a soldier dropped into a war zone, you…"*

Generate extended metaphors

Using the *Semantic Fields* resource as a starting point, students generate vocabulary around a range of images or ideas that can be used as extended metaphors around any number of topics. A mind map is an excellent graphic organiser for this task. Starting point ideas include:

- Sports/games
- Weather
- Wild animals
- Peace
- Disease and contagion
- Journeys and maps
- The sea - ships, sea monsters and pirates
- Etc.

Use extended metaphors to create cohesion in writing

Teacher models how to develop an extended metaphor to create cohesion in writing, using the metaphor of disease and contagion:

- Display the task title *"The Internet: Curse or Cure?"* and model jotting down a few ideas around pros and cons of the internet before shaping these into a straightforward plan for an article, using a planning model familiar to the students, such as:

    o Me; those around me; society; those around me; me

    o Before; now; bad future – no changes; good future – if we make changes; what we need to do now

    o Issue and stance; counterargument; reasons for stance; supporting anecdote; next steps

    o Ethos; pathos; logos

- Create a boxed-up plan setting out key points about the internet for each section and the desired effect on the reader of each section of the argument. In a separate column, map out how the metaphor of disease will change to suit the content and desired effect, eg a paragraph about how information and ideas spread via the internet might be linked with ideas about viruses and contagion; a paragraph about dealing with the dangerous parts of the internet and addressing cybercrime might be linked with ideas about medication or surgery, etc.

- Explain how different layers of a metaphor can be used to draw parts of an argument together and how the development and sequencing of a metaphor can be important in ensuring that the conclusion of the writing is convincing (for example, in the conclusion of the piece about the internet, a conclusion about learning to live with the internet might link well with ideas about the 'road to recovery' or management of a chronic condition).

Apprentice task: Using one of the semantic fields developed earlier, create a boxed-up plan for a task explaining the student's ideas about homework (or similar generic task), mapping the content points, the desired effect on the reader and the elements of the extended metaphor to be included in each section.

Explore the use of cohesive features in *We Should All Be Feminists*

Review a few paragraphs from *We Should All Be Feminists* and draw students' notice to the way that Adichie repeats key words from one sentence to the next in order to construct a tight, clear argument at sentence level within and across paragraphs – refer to these as *jigsaw words*. In some cases, the same word is repeated or repeated in a different form, whereas in other cases, a slightly different word with a closely linked meaning is used (eg boys/men/masculinity).

Using the extract "*Gender matters everywhere in the world…a hard man."* Draw attention to the way that Adichie introduces an idea in the last sentence of one paragraph, explains the idea in the next and expands on it in the next. Annotate the

paragraphs explored with highlighted patterns of jigsaw words, and notes on how the paragraphs fit together.

Use a range of sentence forms and punctuation for deliberate effect

Explore Moran's use of dashes in the paragraph *"And, just as with winning the lottery… but lonely."* In each sentence, between a pair of parenthetic dashes, Moran drops in a personal reflection, a comment, a list, an intensifier, a repetition. Share a version of the paragraph with the comments in parenthesis removed to review how the sentences still make sense, noting the grammatical function of the dashes as similar to pairs of commas or brackets. Discuss what the comments in parenthesis add to the meaning and the impact on the reader in the case of each sentence.

Use Killgallon's sentence imitation and expansion strategies to create sentences that mimic Moran's grammatical constructions of sentences that include parenthetic dashes. Model how to erase the content words and leave behind a framework of the sentence that can be repopulated with other content.

Show a girl a pioneering hero – Sylvia Plath, Dorothy Parker, Frida Kahlo, Cleopatra, Boudicca, Joan of Arc – and you also, more often than not, show a girl a woman who was eventually crushed.

Show me a xxxxxxx – xxxxxxx, xxxxxxx, xxxxxxx, xxxxxxx, xxxxxxxx, xxxxxxxx – and you also, more often than not, show me a xxxxxxx who was eventually xxxxxxxed.

Compare with Adichie, who tends to use pairs of commas rather than dashes for the same reason and effect in her writing – support students to note the connection and the difference. Ensure that all students are confident in their understanding of parenthesis, ie that the sentence outside the parenthesis should make grammatical sense if the parenthesis is removed. Reflect on the function of commas and dashes within longer sentences to manage the reader's understanding and avoid ambiguity.

Create, Refine, Evaluate Phase

Remind students of the task/choice of tasks.

<mark>**Plan a coherent argument**</mark>

Students use a boxed-up plan to map out how they will structure their argument in their opinionated writing and the cohesive features that they will use:

Content	Elements of extended metaphor	Potential jigsaw words	Desired effect on the reader

<mark>**Write a coherent argument**</mark>

Students write their arguments, paying attention to their use of cohesive features and extended metaphor, adapting as they go along.

<mark>**Evaluate writing**</mark>

Alternative options:

- Students review each other's writing, focusing on their use of cohesive features and extended metaphor, evaluating based on the purpose of the writing and the intended effect on the reader. Students give each other feedback based on how far the writing achieves its intended effect

- Photocopy the student's writing so that A3 becomes A4; glue the photocopy into books and annotate with the reasons for the choices made and how effectively the student thinks that they have achieved their intended impact on the reader.

Students make changes in response to self- or peer-evaluation.

These tasks could potentially be presented as a spoken piece for the spoken language assessment.