English Stage 4 (Year 8) – core texts booklet

Transport me to the ‘real’

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**Updating the table of contents**

Want to update the table? Have you added content to the document and noticed the page numbers have changed? As you add content to this report, you can update the table of contents to accurately reflect the page numbers within the resource. To update the table:

* Right click on the table and select ‘Update table of contents’ (in the browser version) or ‘Update field’ (in the desktop app). In the browser version, it will automatically update the entire table.
* In the desktop app, you will then need to select ‘Update entire table’. Your table numbers should then update to reflect your changes.

# About this resource

This core texts booklet has been developed to assist teachers in NSW Department of Education schools to create learning experiences that are contextualised to their students’ needs, interests and abilities. It provides an example of one way to approach programming through a conceptual lens and how the [English K–10 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview) (NESA 2022) could be implemented.

## Purpose of this resource

This core texts booklet is not a standalone resource. It has been designed for use by teachers in connection to the following resources:

* Year 8 – scope and sequence
* Teaching and learning program – Transport me to the ‘real’
* Resource booklet – Transport me to the ‘real’
* English Stage 4 (Year 8) – sample assessment notification – podcast transcript – Transport me to the ‘real’
* Core formative tasks booklet.

This resource is intended to support teachers to provide a model of syllabus-aligned programming and assessment practice.

It is acknowledged that many schools have their own resource and assessment templates. The content in activities is student facing and the content in resources is usually teacher facing, however, this can be modified for students.

All documents associated with this resource can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing English 7–10 webpage](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/english/planning-programming-and-assessing-english-7-10#Stage1).

## Target audience

This core texts booklet is created as a teacher resource. It provides the full version of core texts or the full excerpts that are licensed and explored in the Year 8 ***Transport me to the ‘real’* program**. It has been designed for use by teachers in connection to Year 8 resources designed by the English curriculum team for the NSW [English K–10 Syllabus](https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia) (NESA 2022). Links contained within this resource were correct as of 18 March 2024.

## When and how to use

The core texts provided can be used as a basis for the teacher’s own programming and assessment processes. It can also be used as an example of how the [English K–10 Syllabus](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/version-3-of-national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/) (NESA 2022) can be implemented, specifically the text requirements for Stage 4. Additionally, the annotations provided in this resource are aligned with [National Literacy Learning Progression (V3)](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/version-3-of-national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/). Teachers can use this resource to consider how the texts selected for study challenge and support all learners and meet syllabus requirements.

The following is an outline of some of the ways this program can be used. Teachers can:

* use the core texts booklet as a model and make modifications reflective of contextual needs
* examine the core texts booklet during faculty meetings or planning days to collaborate regarding programming and text choices
* examine the core texts booklet during faculty meetings or planning days and collaboratively plan opportunities for team teaching, collaborative resource development, mentoring, lesson observation and the sharing of student samples
* use the core texts booklet as a model for appropriate text selection using the [National Literacy Learning Progression (V3)](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview) to guide this process.

This resource aligns with the completed [Stage 4 scope and sequence](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/english/planning-programming-and-assessing-english-7-10) as set out in the planning, programming and assessing English 7–10 documents.

## Texts and resources

A succinct overview of the texts required for the teaching and learning program are outlined in the table below. This brief overview provides the name and details of each text, the syllabus requirement being addressed and points of note.

The NSW Department of Education has licence agreements to use sections of the texts below while the other texts have been chosen because they are either in the public domain or are popular in English faculty book rooms.

Table 1 – core texts and their alignment to the text requirements

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Text | Text requirement | Annotation and overview |
| Ellis D (2022) *Parvana,* Allen & Unwin Children’s. ISBN 9781761068676NB: this text is sometimes called *The Breadwinner.*No extracts have been included from *Parvana*. | This novel contains a range of markers which align to the complex level of the Text complexity scale as per the [National Literacy Learning Progression (NLLP) (V3)](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/version-3-of-national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/). It provides students opportunities to engage with a text with less common vocabulary, complex multiclause sentences and unconventional ideas. It also demonstrates elements of moderately complex texts.**EN4-RVL-01** requires students to read texts that are complex in their ideas and construction. The text helps meet the [Text requirements for English 7–10](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview#course-requirements-k-10-english_k_10_2022): a work of extended prose from around the world which explores intercultural and diverse experiences and perspectives. | The novel follows the journey of a young Afghan girl who is forced to provide for her family when her father is taken away by the Taliban. Readers engage with the cultural expectations of the context and setting. It explores ideas of survival, family and loyalty. The novel addresses real world issues in a sensitive way.A study of this text will allow for students to explore real world issues in a sensitive way. It will allow for the development of reading skills, the appreciation of genre, and the ways in which composers reflect the real world in a fictional text. |
| Smith C, Daniels M and Beard M (hosts) and Lee J (series producer) (6 December 2022) ‘[BITE – Family Sacrifices](https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/shortandcurly/bite-family-sacrifices/101707300)’ [podcast], *Short & Curly – Curly Bites:* S2 Ep 5, ABC Listen, accessed 4 April 2024.The link to the podcast has been provided through ‘Free Online Rights’ and the transcript has been reproduced and made available for use by NSW Department of Education for its educational purposes with the permission of Australian Children’s Television Foundation. We are grateful for their support in the development of this resource. This resource is licensed up until 16 May 2029. Reproduced by permission of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation – Library Sales © 2022 ABC. | This podcast contains a range of markers which align to the moderately complex level of the Text complexity scale as per the [NLLP (V3)](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/version-3-of-national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/). It provides students opportunities to engage with a text with moderately complex vocabulary, language, content and print and layout features such as figurative language, literary devices, and multiple perspectives through a diverse form. It also demonstrates elements of predictable texts.**EN4-RVL-01** requires students to read texts that are complex in their ideas and construction. This text demonstrates elements of a complex text as it is an example text that contains unique structural elements. The text helps meet the [Text requirements for English 7–10](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview#course-requirements-k-10-english_k_10_2022): a range of text types (spoken and digital); a range of texts by Australian authors and a range of cultural, social and gender perspectives, including from popular and youth cultures. | This short podcast is an ABC Listen podcast that explores the ‘big’ questions of life. It is part of the *Short & Curly* podcast series designed for kids and their parents. This particular episode explores the idea of ‘sacrifice’ for others. Listeners engage with the idea as a precursor for the sacrifices made in the novel *Parvana.*A study of this text will allow for students to explore the podcast form and stylistic features in preparation for creating their own podcast transcript for the formal assessment task. It also allows students to consider the idea of ‘sacrifice’ from a broader real-world perspective providing a clear connection and understanding of ideas presented in the novel. |
| Wong J (2022) ‘Swimming with Dolphins’, in Stavanger D, Chowdhury R and Awad M (eds) *Admissions – Voices within Mental Health*, Upswell Publishing, Perth WA.The text has been reproduced and made available for use by NSW Department of Education for its educational purposes with the permission of the author. We are grateful for the author’s support in the development of this resource. This resource is licensed up until 9 April 2028. | This hybrid non-fiction article contains a range of markers which align to the complex level of the Text complexity scale as per the [NLLP (V3)](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/version-3-of-national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/). It contains less common vocabulary, complex multiclause sentences, a range of tenses and punctuation used for effect, a hybrid structure, challenging ideas and less predictable reading pathways. It also demonstrates elements of complex and moderately complex texts.**EN4-RVL-01** requires students to read texts that are complex in their ideas and construction. The text helps meet the [Text requirements for English 7–10](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview#course-requirements-k-10-english_k_10_2022) as it is a quality non-fiction text from an Australian author. It represents intercultural and diverse experiences represented in ways that allow students to engage with a variety of language forms and features. | This non-fiction article explores a personal perspective about depression through the hybrid features of informative writing, text messages and reflective writing. The representation of a serious real-life issue through humour, descriptive writing and authentic reflection and analysis engages readers with a series of voices representing different perspectives.A study of this text will support students to explore hybrid non-fiction forms of writing to expand their understanding of the codes and conventions of various forms. Students respond analytically and creatively to engage with the ways authority, subjectivity and objectivity are constructed in this representation of the ‘real’. |

# Core texts

## Core text 1 – *Short & Curly* podcast transcript

This is an ABC podcast.

Big questions, bite-sized.

Short and curly bites.

Bites, bites, bites, bites.

Short and curly bites.

Big questions, small serving size.

**Carl**: Another classic day of podcasting, done and dusted. See you tomorrow, Molly.

**Molly**: Oh, actually, Carl, I'm not coming in tomorrow. Or ever again. My dad has decided he wants to become the Prime Minister of Denmark.

**Carl**: I see. Is he Danish?

**Molly**: No. So it probably won't work out for him, but he's moving the whole family to Denmark so he can give his dream job a red-hot go. So I obviously won't be able to come into short and curly HQ anymore.

**Carl**: Molly, that is madness. What about your life here, your friends, your career?

**Molly**: I know, I'm super bummed to be leaving it all behind.

**Carl**: And the rest of your family have so much going on here in Australia too. Your dad can't just ask all of you to leave everything for his dreams, can he?

**Voiceover**: Today's short and curly bite-sized question.

**Molly**: How much should a family sacrifice for one person's dreams or goals?

**Carl**: M-m-m-matt Beard!

**Matt**: One of the oldest questions in philosophy is about what makes a life worth living. One of the answers that lots of people pay serious attention to comes from ancient Greek philosophers, and another comes from ancient Chinese philosophers. They might be helpful to think about here.

**Molly**: Well then, would you like to help us think about them?

**Carl**: Of course I would! The Chinese philosophers believed that all life was ultimately about becoming a banana, whilst the Greeks thought humans should strive to become hippos.

**Molly**: I kind of thought Matt might take that question, Carl.

**Carl**: Well, I guess he could.

**Matt**: Look, you were close, Carl, but the Greeks thought the good life was about flourishing, living your best life, using all your skills and being the best person you could be. Chinese philosophers like Confucius thought the best life was about harmony, both within ourselves and with other people.

**Molly**: Well, guess I'm on team Confucius because check out these harmonies.

**Carl**: And many more.

**Matt**: Not exactly that kind of harmony. But what if we tried to bring these two ideas together? One of the things that happens when we love someone is that we want what's best for them. We want them to live their best life. And in a way, if they're not living their best life, then neither are we. We can't be happy if the rest of our family are miserable.

**Molly**: Except for this one time when my sister was being so annoying on a family holiday, but then one night she left her window open while she was sleeping and got eaten by so many mozzies and she was itchy for like a week. She was miserable, but I was molto happy.

**Carl**: Just itch was served. Get it? Just itch?

**Matt**: Any whoozles. The point is, a family should be a place where everyone supports and sacrifices so that the others can live their best lives. And sometimes we'll give something up because we love the other person and want them to do well. But the question is, is everyone making sacrifices? Or is just one of you? And is it a sacrifice that you're willing to make? And now, a dance exit! MmmMmm.

**Molly**: Is that the Danish national anthem playing?

**Carl**: It is. Not a very dancey tune, but he's really going for it.

**Molly**: Short and Curly Bites is made by ABC Audio Studios.

**Carl**: Tell your friends and teachers to find more episodes of Short and Curly via the ABC Listen app.

**Molly**: And thank you so much to Eli for today's awesome question.

**Carl**: And hey, why don't you, and maybe your family, think about some examples from your family life? Whether it's someone else's sport, or hobby, or job, and then try and answer this question.

**Molly**: How much should a family sacrifice for one person's dreams or goals?

## Core text 2 – foreword from *Parvana*

**Teacher note:** extracts used from *Parvana* have been indicated from the first few words of the text to the final words of the extract. Indicated page numbers are linked to the 2022 version identified in the ‘core texts table’.

It's been forty-three years … to live in peace forever. (Ellis 2022)

## Core text 3 – *Parvana* by Deborah Ellis extracts

**Teacher note:** extracts used from Parvana have been indicated from the first few words of the text to the final words of the extract. Indicated page numbers are linked to the 2022 version identified in the texts and resources table.

### **Chapter 1**

‘I can read that letter … Afghanistan a kinder place to live!’ he said. (Ellis 2022 pp 9–16)

### **Chapter 2**

‘The Taliban have said … soldiers burst through the door. (Ellis 2022 pp 24–32)

### **Chapter 4**

Parvana realised … year and a half before. (Ellis 2022 pp 46–47)

### **Chapter 9**

Nooria had ideas … Taliban changed her plans. (Ellis 2022 p 103)

### **Chapter 11**

‘These men are thieves … one of their hands!’ (Ellis 2022 p 123)

### **Chapter 12**

‘I need a break … was tired of it. (Ellis 2022 pp 125–132)

### **Chapter 14**

**Extract 1**

The sound was too soft … just shook her head. (Ellis 2022 pp 146–147)

**Extract 2**

Kabul was a dark city … had looked like then. (Ellis 2022 p 149)

**Extract 3**

‘I’m Malali, leading the troops … would do to her and her companion. (Ellis 2022 p 150)

**Extract 4**

‘My name is Homa … We must not give up hope!’ (Ellis 2022 pp 152–154)

### Chapter 15

Through the voices … plants that are healthy and strong.’ (Ellis 2022 pp 164–165)

## Core text 4 – historical note from Parvana by Deborah Ellis

**Teacher note:** extracts used from *Parvana* have been indicated from the first few words of the text to the final words of the extract. Indicated page numbers are linked to the 2022 version identified in the texts and resources table.

Afghanistan is a small country … where we live together without war. (Ellis 2022)

## Core text 5 – ‘Swimming with Dolphins’ by Jennifer Wong

**Source**: A guide to what works for depression: an evidence-based review by Beyond Blue

What is it? It has been suggested that swimming with dolphins may be helpful for depression. Swimming with dolphins is usually only available through a tour operator in selected locations.

How is it meant to work? This is unclear. Dolphins use sonar signals to navigate, which could affect cell membranes in the brain. Alternatively, the natural setting or the enjoyment from the activity could also help to reduce depression.

**Source**: WhatsApp messages from Jennifer Wong to her mother

Hey Mum

Thanks for checking in I'm ok

Still not feeling great

Am reading about swimming with dolphins as a way to treat depression

Dolphins?

Where are we going to get a dolphin?

Your Dad has goldfish

You want to come over and look at the goldfish?

Maybe I have to move to Queensland

To SeaWorld

Maybe my problem is I live on land too much?

I think you should try exercising

Before you try the dolphins

How about yoga?

Have you tried yoga?

Hello?

**Source:** To-do list

- Pick up medication

- Laundry

- Learn to swim

**Source:** Text messages from Jennifer Wong to swim instructor

Monday 1:12pm

Hi Liesl. It's Jennifer Wong here. I'm so sorry not to contact you earlier. Having one of those days with my depression where I can't move very much and it's taken me until now to message you. Can we please reschedule?

Monday 1:18pm

Hello Jennifer, no problem! How about tomorrow morning at 8am?

Monday 2:04pm

Thank you Liesl. See you then.

Tuesday 7:53am

Hi Liesl. I'm so, so sorry. My tendency to say yes to things without stating what my needs are, as well as the physical symptoms of my depression which make mornings very difficult has meant that I set myself up for failure yesterday when I said yes to us meeting at 8am today. I know from cognitive behavioural therapy that the use of the word 'failure’ is unnecessarily harsh labelling, and that it enforces a story I tell myself about what I can and cannot do and who I am and am not. So perhaps in the spirit of a growth mindset, I can instead acknowledge that when it comes to attending early morning appointments, there is definitely room to improve. Unfortunately my depression is so bad at the moment that I cannot tell whether it's the depression or my sensible self that's making me tell you I should postpone starting swimming lessons. I know it will be good for me in the long run, because it will mean that I can swim with dolphins, but right now I can't even leave my bed. So sorry to take up your time.

**Source:** Employee exit form

Name: Jennifer Wong

Reason for leaving: Office location is located inland; has limited if no proximity to ocean.

**Source:** A guide to what works for depression: an evidence-based review by Beyond Blue

Does it work? One study with 30 mildly-depressed adults has evaluated swimming with dolphins. Half spent one hour a day swimming and playing with bottlenose dolphins for two weeks, and the other half swam and learnt about the marine ecosystem as a control. Both groups improved, however the dolphin group improved more. Other researchers have questioned these findings. They have argued that the swimming-only group would have been disappointed to miss out on interacting with dolphins and that the disappointment made them improve less.

**Source:** Transcript of dolphin conversation

Flipper: Is it just me, or do you sense... a feeling of sadness amongst this bunch of people?

Snorky: I picked up on it too! I heard them described as 'mildly depressed'. Apparently today is the first day of an experiment?

Flipper: Is it an experiment to find out how we'll be affected by spending time with 30 mildly depressed adults? First we have to jump through hoops for the entertainment of humans, now we have to treat their mental health? When will humans stop leaning on the animal kingdom?

Snorky: The worst thing is that we can't even communicate how much we hate being held in captivity because our faces look like we're perpetually smiling.

Flipper: On reflection, I guess I do empathise with people who are dealing with suffering and are unable to communicate it.

Snorky: I guess… it wouldn’t kill us to eat the fish they are offering…

Flipper: Who am I to swim in the way of someone wanting to improve their mental health?

Snorky: Watch out though, I get the sense that some of these guys haven't spent much time in the water before...

**Source**: A guide to what works for depression: an evidence-based review by Beyond Blue

Are there any risks? Swimming skills are required and there is a risk of accidental injury.

**Source:** Local newspaper headline

'SeaWorld dolphin injures depressed Chinese woman in freak accident'

**Source**: SeaWorld incident report

On the afternoon of Wednesday 16 February - conditions sunny and clear – Flipper (150-kilogram bottlenose dolphin, male) performed a routine hoop jump and landed on a participant involved in a study on swimming with dolphins as a way to alleviate depression.

The participant (70-kilogram Chinese, female), a weak swimmer, appeared absent-minded and slow to respond to instructions to clear the way for Flipper's landing. She sustained injuries to her ego from the extreme embarrassment of being knocked underwater by a large mammal, which was witnessed by 29 mildly depressed adults.

**Source:** Selected quotes from participant feedback forms

Male, age 53: ‘I'm not sure if my depression improved, but boy it was nice to be in the sun and the water every day for two weeks. My meals were taken care of, the hotel we stayed in was nice, and I think I even got a bit of a tan ... Not having to work for two weeks is also pretty sweet. Pity it's back to the grind on Monday.'

Female, age 41: 'This experience was a huge wake-up call for me to learn the skills I need for the environment I'm in. Since it's helpful to look at depression from a bio-psycho-social perspective, spending two weeks in the water with dolphins (as someone who's not confident in the water) made me think of what I need to do biologically, psychologically, and socially in order to be as at home and as comfortable as a dolphin in water.

'This has reminded me of what I learned when I went to hospital for depression... that for biological reasons I need medication and regular meals and exercise, that for psychological reasons I need therapy and to be mindful of my thinking, and for social reasons, I need to be around other people, especially when I'm depressed, even though my depression wants me to isolate. And through the cycle of recovery and relapse, it's the constant management of these things that will see me through, day to day, moment to moment.

'I'm not sure if the researchers intended for us participants to see this experience as a metaphor, but that's how I'm interpreting it. I guess you could say that one afternoon, the dolphin metaphorically and literally hit me: I am the dolphin, the water and the fish are my needs being met, and being able to play and socialise are crucial parts of being alive.'

Male, age 24: 'I have never laughed so hard as when the dolphin landed on that lady. Thank you for helping me see the lighter side of life as well as what it looks like when someone gets absolutely pummelled by a leaping dolphin.'

**Source:** A guide to what works for depression: an evidence-based review by Beyond Blue

Recommendation: There is not enough good evidence to say whether swimming with dolphins works.

**Source:** Text messages from Jennifer Wong to swimming instructor

Friday 2:37pm

Hello Liesl. I was wondering if I could try again. Do you have any afternoon beginners classes next week?

Friday 2:42pm

Great to hear from you! How about Wednesday at 2pm?

Friday 2:44pm

Thank You Liesl. See you then. [1345 words]

# References

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[National Literacy Learning Progression](https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/version-3-of-national-literacy-and-numeracy-learning-progressions/) © Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) 2010 to present, unless otherwise indicated. This material was downloaded from the [Australian Curriculum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/) website (National Literacy Learning Progression) (accessed 16 March 2024) and was not modified.

Ellis D (2022) Parvana, Allen & Unwin Children’s, Australia.

Smith C, Daniels M and Beard M (hosts) and Lee J (series producer) (6 December 2022) ‘[BITE – Family Sacrifices](https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/shortandcurly/bite-family-sacrifices/101707300)’ [podcast], *Short & Curly*, ABC Listen, accessed 4 April 2024.

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