Sample virtual program: Stage 4 Poetry

# Core text: Timothy Winters (poem)

English Textual Concepts focus: Character

Charles Causley ‘Timothy Winters’ (poem). Collected Poems for Children, MacMillan Classics Edition 2016

This poem could be used:

* in a sequence of poems about interesting/engaging/challenging characters
* In a unit of work about character in poetry
* In a unit of work about different poetry forms, some that focus on character as opposed to those that focus on setting.

The contrast between character-driven poems as opposed to more thematic ones would allow for a deep analysis of the concept ‘Character’. This poem would also be engaging and appropriate in a wider unit on ‘Representations of school’, or on Representations of difference/identity/acceptance, with the emphasis on the English textual concept ‘Representation’. In their work on ‘Character’ students learn that character constructs may draw on such devices as stereotype and generic convention to reflect values.

## Considerations for programming virtual classrooms

The following lesson sequence makes use of various online and offline tools. Digital resources are linked to throughout the learning sequence and alternatives for school or offline home study are included where relevant. The lesson sequence focuses on personal and critical engagement with the poem so the activities lean towards ‘discussion’ that would normally happen in the classroom with teacher guidance and a mixture of class question and answer, and techniques such as think-pair-share. The online options for this type of teaching and learning depend on the platform and whether a ‘live’ teaching opportunity exists within Adobe or Teams for example, for the class and school context. Alternatives for the a-synchronous digital space are suggested.

Table 1: Guiding questions for establishing learning expectations and communication processes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Guiding question | The structure of teaching and learning activities |
| What are your students going to learn?  Outcomes and concept | Content from outcomes EN4-5C and EN4-8D and the ETC Character have guided this learning sequence. The coding for the outcomes reflects the [English Textual Concepts resources](http://englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/portfolio) found at: [englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/portfolio](http://englishtextualconcepts.nsw.edu.au/portfolio) Copyright © State of NSW, Department of Education 2016   * From EN4-5C: * S405RC12: critically analyse the ways experience, knowledge, values and perspectives can be represented through characters, situations and concerns in texts and how these affect responses to texts * S405RC13: discuss aspects of texts, for example their aesthetic and social value, using relevant and appropriate metalanguage (ACELT1803) * From EN4-8D: * S408EP1: consider the ways culture and personal experience position readers and viewers and influence responses to and composition of texts * S408UA7: understand and explain how combinations of words and images in texts are used to represent particular groups in society, and how texts position readers in relation to those groups (ACELT1628) * S401RC08: recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives, and discuss the purposes and appeal of different approaches (ACELT1622) |
| How are they going to learn it? (Resources and Strategies) | Students will:   * Read and respond to a provided poem * Discuss personal and critical responses * Compose a ‘creative extension’ activity |
| Lesson sequence timing | * This learning sequence constitutes approximately 3 one hour learning ‘blocks’ with scope for extension |
| Collecting evidence of student learning (Verification) | Student learning will be collected:   * Online: student posts to discussion board or class blog in class LMS (Learning management system such as, Google Classroom or MS Teams) * Offline: students work with supplied resources in own workbooks then post to teacher or take in when normal lessons resume. |
| Feedback | Feedback provided:   * Online via formative assessment feedback including teacher comments to blog posts * Online and offline: formal summative assessment of creative extension task |
| Communication | How will student learning be oriented?   * Each lesson will utilise the following structure: * Understanding our learning goals: 10 minute live or recorded check in and discussion of learning sequence and goals. Provide students with a to-do list. * Question & answer: students record questions in the Q&A document for that sequence of learning. Students ask clarifying questions of the teacher and all students have access to this information which will not get lost in a Posts thread. * Response to teacher-provided poem * Student completion of set tasks which are then sent/posted and given feedback * Final creative extension activity to demonstrate learning. |

### Lesson sequence – character study within poetry

Student guided inquiry

**Table 2: Stage 4 Learning and Teaching Activities Outline.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Lesson sequence and syllabus outcomes | Teaching and Learning Activities | Evidence of learning – synchronous, asynchronous and workbook |
| What are your students going to learn? | Learning intentions  Students will:   * Describe and explore the characterisation of the persona in a poem * Analyse how the language features used by the poet create and employ stereotypes and generic conventions in order to make the reader feel sorry for the character/angry about his experiences * Success Criteria * So you can: * Explain how the emotional power of a poem depends on the creation of character * Discuss how stereotypes and genres are used and disrupted by the poet in order to reflect his or community values. * Create your own stanza of character-driven poetry as a personal response to the text studied here. |  |
| How are they going to learn it? (Resources and Strategies) | **Resources**:  Links are embedded within the teaching sequence.  **Strategies utilised in learning sequence below**   * Reading and response to set text (poem) * Critical response and discussion * Creative response and extended writing |  |
| Lesson sequence 1  Setting up learning sequence and goals | **Understanding our learning goals:** 10 minute live or recorded check in and discussion of learning sequence and goals (see Resource 1)   * Outline the sequence of learning intentions and success criteria * Building the field: notetaking, if you have not taught students how to take notes the Cornell Method is easy to follow, has many templates online and many guiding videos. Students need to be explicitly taught how to takes notes. * Cornell notetaking: [How to take Cornell notes properly](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErSjc1PEGKE) (duration 3:24) [youtube.com/watch?v=ErSjc1PEGKE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErSjc1PEGKE) * [How to take Cornell notes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtW9IyE04OQ) (duration 5:26) [youtube.com/watch?v=WtW9IyE04OQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtW9IyE04OQ) or use another method. | Record and actively engage in discussion of learning intentions.  Record of notetaking method instructions in personal working document.  This section may need to be completed as hard copy documents given/sent to students |
| Lesson sequence 2  Engagement with the text and character through predicting and understanding   * Students discuss aspects of texts, for example their aesthetic and social value, using relevant and appropriate metalanguage (ACELT1803) (S405RC13) | **Connecting and engaging personally:** students examine set material and connect new learning to prior learning   1. Students are given a copy of the poem (see Resource 2) with the first lines of each stanza only (there needs to be a gap for the remaining lines)  * Teacher explains that this is a poem about someone’s experiences of school. In pairs, students work to PREDICT what kind of experience this is, what kind of character it is about etc. * Discuss/share predictions * Students must then attempt to write a second line for each stanza that ends with rhyming word…  1. Teacher then provides each student with a complete copy of the poem and reads it aloud (always!) Whole class discussion follows on:  * How close their predictions were. Predictions wide of the mark are very useful here! Employ Socratic questioning techniques etc to explore why students went down a particular predictive direction. * Key concepts and words that need unpacking for example - Welfare State * Contextualised metalanguage: rhyme, character, theme, stanza * Initial personal response to the character: students may write a ‘personal response’ type paragraph exploring how they feel about the character, and what they think might happen to him later in life (this connects to Task 3) | Online:  Material is provided to students via LMS (Google Classroom or MS Teams) and students post response to class chat/blog.  Teacher can upload a recording of the poem reading or do live via a web conferencing site such as Adobe connect.  Discussion can take place via Adobe connect or via posts to class blog that all students are able to then reply. |
| Lesson sequence 3  Exploring and analysing the construction and meanings of the poem   * Students consider the ways culture and personal experience position readers and viewers and influence responses to and composition of texts (S408EP1) * Students understand and explain how combinations of words and images in texts are used to represent particular groups in society, and how texts position readers in relation to those groups (ACELT1628) (S408UA7) | * **Connecting and engaging critically:** higher order thinking activities to stretch student thinking  1. Teacher sets up a ‘Knowing/Inferring’ activity, with the focus on distinguishing between what we ‘know’ about the character and what we might ‘infer’.   Here are 2 options for doing this:   * 1. In hard copy or digital form provide students with a visual outline of a boy (stick figure on an A4 age will do). Students then begin with a think-pair-share structure where they add details from the poem to the A4 sheet. Students look for what we ‘know’ about Timothy, and then what we can ‘work out/assume/guess/infer’ (teacher will have to choose most appropriate language and perhaps explicitly instruct re inference). These can be done on different halves of the paper   2. Use an adapted [PMI](https://lo.unisa.edu.au/mod/book/view.php?id=611321&chapterid=100451&clearCache=78cc745b-cf82-4e27-670d-9725982ba249) chart [bit.ly/3bm90Zi](https://bit.ly/3bm90Zi) . Instead of Plus, Minus, Interesting use Know, Infer, Implications. Students fill in chart then post to discussion board/blog within the teachers/schools learning management system. The ‘sharing stage’ can happen live via Adobe connect for example, or via the teacher setting a specific number of responses that each student is required to make to a blog post.  1. At the end of the ‘sharing stage’ the teacher will set up the following tasks for each student (or if possible each pair of students):  * Give each student a different language technique for example onomatopoeia, metaphor, simile, hyperbole and have them label the points about Timothy with the correct language technique. * Discuss: which type (know or infer) of information was most likely to be developed by the poet using figurative techniques? Why? * Individual work: which line do you think was the most powerful in getting across a sense of Timothy’s character? Students explain in their journals or via the online space giving a full explanation involving a quote and a language technique drawn from the poem.  1. Class debate. Use the following structure to explore the implications of the use of character in this text:   Post a series of controversial statements about the poem on the digital noticeboard for example ‘There are no longer children like Timothy Winters’ or ‘Poets should not use stereotypes like these in their poems’. Students must add a comment to each statement and then choose the one they feel most strongly about. Options for following activities:   1. have a class vote to decide which statement to make the class debate topic and hold a live debate via Adobe or Teams 2. students write persuasively or discursively about their chosen topic | Students send hard copy to teacher or post visual/chart on class digital noticeboard  Students complete this work in their hard copy notebooks or in a simple word doc that can be uploaded. |
| Lesson sequence 4  Creative extension for understanding   * Students critically analyse the ways experience, knowledge, values and perspectives can be represented through characters, situations and concerns in texts and how these affect responses to texts (S405RC12) | **Understanding, connecting or engaging personally:** students examine set material and connect new learning to prior learning   1. Teacher begins by posing a problem around the line: “ears like bombs and teeth like splinters”. Is this line mean to Timothy and children like him, or sympathetic? After discussion and appropriate care/preparation from the teacher, students select an image of a character from the internet and write descriptive lines following the format of the poem. Each line must use a specific language device. One line must be ‘mean’ in tone and one must be ‘sympathetic’. Share examples and discuss the power of imagery to create a character that we can have strong feelings about…   NB teacher will need to be very clear on guidelines for appropriate descriptive writing here.   1. Creative extension. Here are possible writing activities for wrapping up this activity:  * Create a visual representation/collage of the poem * Write a modern version using the ballad form and following Causley’s structure and techniques * Change the existing poem. Change one line or pair of lines in each stanza to change the tone or theme of the poem | Students post images with descriptive captions (teacher can set access to moderate before work is uploaded live)  Students send hard copy, email or upload creative extension work. (See Resource 3 for example marking criteria for an A-range response to this task.) |
| Lesson sequence 5 | **Where to next?**   * Once work on this poem is complete, students should be encouraged to share and discuss the creative work they have produced in Task 3 above. From there, a comparison to another poem focusing on character would extend student awareness and analysis. |  |

# Resources

## Resource 1: goal setting and daily planning

**Table 1: today’s reflection and planning (remember to copy and paste and create a new one each lesson).**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Outline | Today’s reflection and planning: “Wake up with determination. Go to bed with satisfaction.” (Insert your own motivational quote each lesson) |
| Today is | My daily goal(s) are:  Today’s energy levels  2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  I have enjoyed… |
| One thing I will do **today** for my energy and exercise |  |
| General To-Do List or Notes |  |
| Reminders:  (tag your teacher once you have finished goal setting) |  |

# Resource 2: poem for learning sequence

Timothy Winters by Charles Causley

This poem is available at: [Poetry archive](https://poetryarchive.org/poem/timothy-winters/) or via the link [//bit.ly/39fLjR3](https://bit.ly/39fLjR3)

Timothy Winters comes to school

With eyes as wide as a swimming-pool,

Ears like bombs and teeth like splinters:

A blitz of a boy is Timothy Winters.

His belly is white, his neck is dark,

And his hair is an exclamation-mark.

His clothes are enough to scare a crow

And through his britches the blue winds blow.

When teacher talks he won't hear a word

And he shoots down dead the arithmetic-bird,

He licks the pattern off his plate

And he's not even heard of the Welfare State.

Timothy Winters has bloody feet

And he lives in a house on Suez Street,

He sleeps in a sack on the kitchen floor

And they say there aren't boys like him anymore.

Old Man Winters likes his beer

And his missus ran off with a bombardier,

Grandma sits in the grate with a gin

And Timothy's dosed with an aspirin.

The welfare Worker lies awake

But the law's as tricky as a ten-foot snake,

So Timothy Winters drinks his cup

And slowly goes on growing up.

At Morning Prayers the Master helves

for children less fortunate than ourselves,

And the loudest response in the room is when

Timothy Winters roars "Amen!"

So come one angel, come on ten

Timothy Winters says "Amen

Amen amen amen amen."

Timothy Winters, Lord. Amen

From Collected Poems 1951-2000 (Picador, 2000), © Charles Causley 2000, used by permission of the author’s Estate [Poetry Archive](https://poetryarchive.org/poem/timothy-winters/)