

MACQUARIE PEN ANTHOLOGY *of* AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

TEACHING GUIDE

Unit 5: Landscapes/Mindsapes

for Middle to Upper Secondary English

www.macquariepenanthology.com.au



This Teaching Guide unit may be printed out and used in an educational institution by educators and students free of charge. Student handouts may be printed out or photocopied for groups of students free of charge. Student handouts may be copied and uploaded onto a closed intranet belonging to an educational institution for use by students free of charge.

No element of this Teaching Guide may be reproduced for sale or uploaded to a publicly accessible website or included in another print or electronic publication without prior written permission from Allen & Unwin. Please contact permissions@allenandunwin.com

The Teaching Guide for the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature* is © copyright Allen & Unwin, 2009.



**NELSON MEERS
FOUNDATION**

This Teaching Guide was produced with the support of the Nelson Meers Foundation.

Landscapes/Mindsapes

FOCUS	How do writers draw on the distinctive Australian landscape in their work? In what ways do landscapes represent aspects of the individual or collective self? How does landscape become mindscape?
LEVEL	Middle to Upper Secondary
LENGTH	Approximately 12 – 14 lessons
KEY TEXTS	<p>From the <i>Anthology</i>:</p> <p>Banfield, E.J: <i>Confessions of a Beachcomber</i> Hope, A.D.: ‘Australia’ Mackellar, Dorothea: ‘My Country’ Malouf, David: ‘A First Place’ Slessor, K.: ‘Beach Burial’ Stewart, Douglas: ‘The Fierce Country’ Sze-Pui, Taam: <i>My Life and Work</i> Wright, Judith: ‘South of My Days’, ‘The Surfer’</p> <p>Supplementary resources:</p> <p><i>Anthology</i> film clips from www.macquariepenanthology.com.au ‘Memory, reflection and the music of writing’ – David Malouf ‘Landscape in the Poetry of Wright, Slessor , Stewart and Hope’ – Ivor Indyk</p> <p>Film: <i>Australia</i> (2008; Rated PG)</p>
ADDITIONAL TEXTS	<p>Additional examples of texts from the <i>Anthology</i> that teachers could use for this unit include:</p> <p>Goldsworthy, Peter: ‘Australia’ Smith, Vivian: ‘Tasmania’ Stewart, Douglas: ‘Marree’ Walwicz, Ania: ‘Australia’ Williamson, David: <i>Emerald City</i></p>

<p>LEARNING & TEACHING ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Introduction</p>	<p>The focus of this unit of work is to develop students’ awareness of how texts, both visual and written, are constructed to recreate the distinctive nature of the Australian landscape. From its sweeping red deserts to its lush tropical forests and its white pristine beaches, these landscapes are dynamic . They are changing constantly, according to the cycle of the seasons, from the day to the night, or through human activity. The writers of these texts represent the Australian landscape in diverse and vibrant ways through the power of experience and memory.</p>
<p>1. Exploring landscapes of different countries through a range of images</p> <p>(1 lesson)</p>	<p>Activity 1(a)</p> <p>To introduce this topic, show students images of landscapes from different countries, including some from Australia. Students identify which country’s landscape is being represented and what features in the image suggest this. (Images could be obtained from travel agents, brochures, posters, travel magazines, online sites etc.).</p> <p>Students could work in pairs first and examine the images.</p> <p>Class discussion: What features make the Australian landscape unique and recognisable?</p>
<p>2. Using the senses to evoke memories of place</p> <p>(1-2 lessons)</p>	<p>Activity 2(a)</p> <p>In the real world, landscape is experienced through the five senses. Sometimes, for example, a certain smell can bring back memories of a past event or long-forgotten place.</p> <p>Describe to students a place that you love; it might be a beautiful beach, picnic spot or a favourite restaurant. Revise the concept of the five senses. Give students five minutes to jot down some thoughts about a place they love. Remind them to focus on how they experience this place through their five senses.</p> <p>Have students share their thoughts with the rest of the class. Which of the five senses seem to be dominant?</p>

<p>3. Close study of Malouf's essay 'A First Place'</p> <p>(1-2 lessons)</p>	<p>In his essay, 'A First Place', David Malouf recreates for the reader, not only the landscape and topographical features of Brisbane, the city of his youth, but the mindscape which his memories have recreated and through which he will always recall that city.</p> <p>Activity 3(a)</p> <p>Read the essay to the class. Provide students with a copy of the text and ask them to identify where they think Malouf has used sights, sounds, and textures to bring the place to life. Have students work with a partner to choose a particularly interesting image, and explain why it is powerful and effective for them.</p> <p>Follow with a class discussion about the chosen examples and the reasons for their choice. Identify the ways in which Malouf's description is both a landscape and a mindscape.</p> <p>Activity 3(b)</p> <p>View the film clip: 'Memory, reflection and the music of writing' available at www.macquariepenanthology.com.au, in which David Malouf discusses his writing. Ask the students how memory and reflection relate to the idea of a mindscape.</p> <p>Activity 3(c)</p> <p>Ask the students to choose a place that has real significance for them personally and to describe it in one paragraph. Focus on both the physical characteristics and emotional connections this place has for them.</p>
<p>4. Comparing texts in terms of style and content</p> <p>(1 lesson)</p>	<p>Activity 4(a)</p> <p>Revise briefly the distinctive features of David Malouf's style in 'A First Place'. Read the extract from <i>My Life and Work</i> by Taam Sze Pui to the class. In groups, ask students to reread the extract and discuss its distinctive features.</p> <p>Ask students to compare the 2 extracts in terms of each writer's style. Reach a consensus about which text they prefer and provide reasons for their choice. Each group should report back to the class.</p>

<p>5. Close study of Judith Wright’s poem ‘South of my Days’</p> <p>(1 lesson)</p>	<p>In ‘South of My Days’ Judith Wright writes about the landscape as if it were part of her very being, which makes it an excellent text for thinking about how landscape and mindscape can merge.</p> <p>Activity 5(a)</p> <p>Discuss the mood created by the connotations of the title and explore the students’ expectations of the poem. Read the poem aloud. Ask for first impressions. Ask them to identify at what point the mood changes.</p> <p>Read the poem again. Students find examples of the ways that descriptions of the landscape offer insights into the state of the poet’s mind.</p>
<p>6. Close study of Judith Wright’s poem ‘The Surfer’</p> <p>(1 lesson)</p>	<p>Activity 6(a)</p> <p>Ask if anyone in the class surfs or has seen someone surfing. Discuss any key aspects they identify: what it looks like, the emotions etc.</p> <p>Read Judith Wright’s poem, ‘The Surfer’, aloud. Allow students to reread the poem silently. Give students the opportunity to share their ideas about the poem in small groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impressions do they gain of the surfer? Why? • How does Wright use language and image to capture a sense of the experience of surfing? Give examples. • How does the mood of the poem change? • How do you interpret the darker imagery in the second half of the poem? <p>Activity 6(b)</p> <p>Students write a brief response to the poem, explaining how it affects them and why.</p>
<p>7. Close reading and creative tasks</p> <p>(1-2 lessons + homework time)</p>	<p>Activity 7(a)</p> <p>Students read the passage from E.J. Banfield’s <i>Confessions of a Beachcomber</i>, highlighting unfamiliar words. Ask students to find synonyms for these highlighted words, using a thesaurus.</p> <p>See Student Handout 7(a) for individual worksheet of questions on the passage. Discuss students’ answers as a class.</p>

	<p>Activity 7(b)</p> <p>To prepare the class for this activity, revise the codes and conventions of visual language and advertising. Use an advertisement from a magazine or a film poster for this purpose. See Student Handout 7(b) for poster activity.</p>
<p>8. Comparing texts on landscapes through essay writing</p> <p>(1-2 lessons + homework time)</p>	<p>Activity 8(a)</p> <p>Through writing an essay, students will be comparing the representations of landscape in two poems. You should revise the key points to address in an essay before students complete this task.</p> <p>Students could work collaboratively on reading, annotating, discussing and writing notes on the poems first. Using their notes, students should individually plan and write the essay response.</p> <p>Task: Write an essay of approximately 750 words, comparing the poetic representations of the Australian landscape in both Dorothea Mackellar’s ‘My Country’ and Douglas Stewart’s ‘The Fierce Country’.</p> <p>See Student Handout 8(a) for essay details.</p>
<p>9. Landscape as allegory</p> <p>(2 lessons)</p>	<p>Activity 9(a) (extension work)</p> <p>Provide copies of A.D. Hope’s ‘Australia’ and Kenneth Slessor’s ‘Beach Burial’. Students to discuss in pairs their interpretation of these poems. Whole group to discuss whether these landscape poems carry several levels of meaning. If so, in what senses?</p> <p>Activity 9(b)</p> <p>Tell students they are going to watch a film clip of Ivor Indyk talking about poems about the Australian landscape, particularly those of Wright, Slessor and A.D.Hope.</p> <p>To prepare them for Indyk’s discussion revise the concept of poems and stories having allegorical meaning.</p> <p>Watch the film clip at www.macquariepenanthology.com.au Indyk talks about the landscape of the poems being ‘alive with beauty and filled with meaning’. Discuss with the students their responses to his views.</p> <p>Students to choose one poem and write a paragraph about their interpretation of its meaning.</p>

<p>10. Presenting personal views about the Australian landscape</p> <p>(1-2 lessons + homework time)</p>	<p>Activity 10(a) Students to be given two minutes each during which they present to the class a visual or written text which best captures the essence of ‘their’ Australia. They should explain the features of their selected representation of either an Australian landscape or mindscape. Encourage students to provide audiovisual aids to enhance their presentations.</p> <p>This text must be one that the students locate for themselves, not one already covered in class. Allow preparation time before the presentations. This task could be prepared as homework.</p>
<p>11. Extension activity: Viewing the film Australia</p>	<p>Activity 11(a) Arrange for students to view Baz Luhrmann’s <i>Australia</i>, the most expensive and eagerly anticipated film made in this country. The day after the lavish premiere in Sydney, critics began to have their say: ‘A love letter to the Australian landscape and our history, <i>Australia</i> has international blockbuster written all over it’, gushed one. ‘A film of such unrelenting awfulness that it will struggle to return its massive budget’, warned another.</p> <p>After viewing the film, have the students write an evaluation in which they state their own responses and speculate on possible reasons for varying interpretations among viewers.</p>

Landscapes/Mindsapes

Student Handout 7(a)

Answer the following questions about E.J. Banfield's *Confessions of a Beachcomber*:

1. What is the passage is about?
2. In your own words, explain the meaning of the title.
3. What is the effect of using Latin names for plant species?
4. How would you characterise the style of writing? Look closely at some examples and provide some reasons for your response.
5. If this text was published today, do you think it would become a bestseller as it did in 1908? Support your opinion.

Landscapes/Mindsapes

Student Handout 7(b)

Your task:

Create a poster, advertising the island referred to in E.J. Banfield's *Confessions of a Beachcomber* as a holiday destination for a particular target audience.

- Work collaboratively, either with a partner or in a small group.
- You need to decide on a target audience and select features of the island which could be the hook to attract your audience. What would entice them to visit this destination?
- Prepare the poster, demonstrating your knowledge of visual language and advertising techniques.
- You may prepare your poster by using a software program such as Publisher or else complete it on cardboard.
- Each group will present its poster to the class, identifying and explaining the choices made.

Landscapes/Mindsapes

Student Handout 8(a)

Write an essay of approximately 750 words, comparing the poetic representations of the Australian landscape in both ‘My Country’ and ‘The Fierce Country’.

- Read Dorothea Mackellar’s ‘My Country’ and Douglas Stewart’s ‘The Fierce Country’.
- You may work with a partner to read, annotate, discuss and write planning notes for the essay.

Some points that may assist you in your planning:

- Consider how the Australian landscape represented in each poem. Give examples.
- Identify poetic devices such as: sound effects (for example, alliteration and onomatopoeia); figurative language (for example, similes, metaphor, personification); and the use of rhyme and rhythm used to create images. Consider the effect created by these techniques.
- Consider the context in which each of the poets was writing, and how that may be significant for his or her representations, and also the factors that might influence your own context and responses.
- Consider what similarities and differences exist in the two poems in terms of structure, style, and tone.