

Novel Worlds: An Interactive Literary Adventure

Materials Needed:

- A student-selected novel for each child (age and reading level appropriate)
 - Notebook or digital document for a Reading Journal
 - Computer or tablet with internet access
 - Access to free design software (e.g., Canva) or word processing software
 - Optional: Art supplies (paper, markers, colored pencils) for non-digital options
 - Optional: Smartphone or camera for video-based projects
 - Handout: Project Choice Board (detailed below)
 - Handout: Assessment Rubric (detailed below)
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Lesson Overview

Subject: English

Grade Level: Combined Year 7 & Year 10 (Australian Curriculum)

Topic: Novel Study & Creative Response

Time Allotment: 4-6 Weeks (flexible, with 2-3 dedicated sessions per week)

This project-based lesson encourages students to move beyond traditional book reports. By creating modern, interactive responses, they will engage deeply with character, theme, and plot, developing their analytical and creative skills in a way that feels relevant and fun.

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

Year 7 Student:

- Identify a main character's key personality traits, values, and relationships.
- Summarize key plot events and conflicts from the character's perspective.
- Create literary texts (e.g., letters, social media posts) that imitate a character's voice and point of view.
- Select and justify creative choices that reflect an understanding of the novel.

Year 10 Student:

- Analyze how a character's motivations, conflicts, and development are revealed through their actions and interactions.
 - Analyze how the author uses language and stylistic features to construct character and theme.
 - Create complex literary texts that experiment with voice, style, and form to explore themes and character complexities.
 - Justify creative choices by referencing specific textual evidence and explaining their analytical purpose.
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2. Alignment with Australian Curriculum (English)

- **Year 7:** Focus on creating literary texts that create character, setting, and plot (ACELT1625), and experimenting with text structures and language features (ACELT1805).
- **Year 10:** Focus on creating literary texts that experiment with structures, voices and stylistic features (ACELT1642), and analyzing how authors use language to create particular views and perspectives (ACELT1644).

3. Lesson Plan & Instructional Strategies

Phase 1: The Launch (Week 1)

Goal: Select a novel and begin active reading.

1. **Novel Selection:** Guide your children in choosing a novel that interests them and is appropriate for their reading level. The power of choice is a huge motivator. Encourage them to read the blurb, look at the cover, and read the first page before deciding.
2. **Set up a Reading Journal:** This can be a physical notebook or a digital document. For the first entry, have them write down:
 - Why they chose this book.
 - Their predictions based on the cover and title.
 - Three questions they have about the story.
3. **Introduce the Final Project:** Explain that instead of a traditional essay, they will create an "Interactive Character Portfolio" to show their understanding. This portfolio will include a few different creative pieces. This builds excitement and gives them a purpose for reading.

Phase 2: Deep Dive (Weeks 2-3)

Goal: Read the novel while analyzing character and plot.

1. **Active Reading & Journaling:** As they read, encourage them to use their journal to jot down important quotes, note character changes, track major plot points, or ask questions.
2. **Weekly Check-in/Discussion:** Have a conversation once a week about their book. Use guiding questions to deepen their thinking.
 - **For Year 7:** "Who is your favorite character and why? What is the biggest problem they have faced so far? What do you think they will do next?"
 - **For Year 10:** "What internal conflict is the main character struggling with? How does the author show you this instead of telling you? How does the setting influence the character's choices?"
3. **Introduce Portfolio Tasks:** Once they are about halfway through the book, formally introduce the two mandatory tasks.

Phase 3: Creation Station (Weeks 3-5)

Goal: Develop and create the portfolio pieces.

Students must complete the two mandatory tasks and choose one task from the Project Choice Board.

Mandatory Task 1: The Letter Exchange

Students will write a letter from the perspective of one main character to another, discussing a significant event, a shared secret, or an internal conflict. Then, they will write the other character's

reply.

- **Year 7 Focus:** Capturing the character's distinct voice. Accurately describing a key event from their point of view.
- **Year 10 Focus:** Using subtext and tone to reveal unspoken feelings. Exploring a complex theme (e.g., betrayal, loyalty, justice) through the characters' correspondence.

Mandatory Task 2: Social Media Profile

Students will create a social media profile page for a main character. They can use a template (Canva has excellent free ones) for a platform like Instagram, TikTok, or Facebook.

- **Year 7 Focus:** The profile should include a profile picture, a bio that captures their personality, and 3-4 posts about key events in the novel. Each post should have a relevant image and a caption in the character's voice.
- **Year 10 Focus:** The profile should be more nuanced. It should include a clever bio, a curated selection of 5-6 posts that show character development over time, and a list of "followed" accounts that reflect the character's relationships and interests. Comments from other characters on the posts are encouraged to show relationships.

Project Choice Board (Choose One)

This allows students to showcase their understanding in a way that suits their interests and skills.

1. **The Novel's Soundtrack:** Create a playlist of 5-7 songs for the novel. For each song, write a short paragraph explaining which character or scene it represents and why the lyrics or mood fit.
2. **The Missing Scene:** Write a 1-2 page "deleted scene" that could fit into the novel. It should develop a character or a relationship further. Include a short note explaining where in the book this scene would go and why you included it.
3. **News Report:** Create a short (1-2 minute) video or write a newspaper article reporting on a major event from the book. Interview an "eyewitness" (another character) and report the key facts.
4. **Redesign the Book Cover:** Design a new cover for the book. On the back, write a new, compelling blurb. Include a short justification explaining how your design choices (colors, images, fonts) represent a key theme or conflict in the story.
5. **Map the World:** If the book is set in an interesting world, draw a detailed map of it. Label key locations where important events happened. Include a legend and a short description of 3-4 key locations and their significance to the plot.

Phase 4: Showcase & Reflection (Week 6)

Goal: Share work and reflect on the learning process.

1. **Portfolio Presentation:** Have each student present their "Interactive Character Portfolio." They should walk you through their creative pieces, explaining their choices and what they were trying to show about the character and story.
2. **Guided Reflection:** After the presentation, have a discussion or ask them to write a short reflection on these questions:
 - Which project were you most proud of and why?
 - How did creating these pieces change your understanding of the main character?
 - What do you think the author's main message was in this novel?

4. Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **Pacing:** The multi-week format allows students to work at their own pace.
- **Choice:** The novel selection and the "Project Choice Board" empower students to focus on their strengths and interests, whether they are more visual, auditory, or text-based learners.
- **Scaffolding:** For students who need more support, provide templates for the social media profile or sentence starters for the letter exchange. Use graphic organizers like character webs to help them plan their ideas.
- **Extension:** For the Year 10 student or an advanced Year 7 student, challenge them to incorporate direct quotes from the novel into their projects as evidence, or ask them to create a short "behind the scenes" commentary explaining their stylistic choices.

5. Assessment

Assessment will be based on the final "Interactive Character Portfolio" and the student's presentation/reflection. Use the following rubric, adjusting expectations for the different year levels.

Assessment Rubric: Interactive Character Portfolio

Criteria	Developing	Achieved	Excellent
Understanding of Character & Theme	Projects show a basic understanding of the character's personality and major plot points.	Projects accurately represent the character's voice, relationships, and motivations. Shows a clear understanding of the story's main events.	(Yr 10) Projects demonstrate a deep, analytical understanding of the character's complexities, internal conflicts, and development. Connections to major themes are insightful.
Creativity & Effort	Projects are complete but meet only the minimum requirements. The effort is adequate.	Projects are thoughtful, well-presented, and show clear effort and creative thinking. Choices are deliberate and purposeful.	Projects are highly original, polished, and demonstrate a sophisticated level of creative risk-taking. The student has gone above and beyond the requirements.
Justification & Reflection	Student can give simple reasons for their creative choices.	Student clearly explains how their creative choices connect to the novel and its characters.	(Yr 10) Student provides a detailed justification for their choices, referencing specific textual evidence and explaining how their project offers a unique interpretation of the text.