CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL®

Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate ®

TEACHERS' GUIDE FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH B.

This material has been developed for

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)

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Acknowledgements

This **Teacher's Guide** is a synthesis of intense reflection and collaboration among a wide range of teachers, students, education officials, examiners, literary critics and artists. It combines the principles and guidelines culled principally from the following:

The Appendices present samples of unit plans, concept maps, and rubrics suggestive of a pedagogical orientation or approach which emphasises student speculation on the conscious creative process by the creator of the text to affect the reader, audience or listener. It is not a method or program with mandates on what teachers must do. The aim, always, is to lead students to examine the texts, to consider how artists use the form of their art to influence our thoughts and feelings, and to make us imagine. It is the teacher, and more so the students who take the lead in their response to the text as an example of the genre.

As part of the ongoing mission of teachers to make a difference in the lives of our students, we encourage you to critically adopt, build on and add to the suggestions here in your classrooms and schools and share your experiences with fellow teachers so that a critical mass of sensitive readers will begin to make the kind of changes that 'the Ideal Caribbean Person' is expected to effect.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This Resource Guide is meant to supplement the CSEC English Syllabus for English B (CXC 01/O/SYLL 03). It serves as an authoritative source for teachers to realise the goals and ideals of the literature curriculum. The syllabus (CXC 01/O/SYLL 03), Specimen Papers and Marking Schemes for 2012 -2017 encourage a greater focus on a reader response approach to Literature interpretation and appreciation. The Reader Response approach underscores the need for teachers to provide the support for students to be able to experience and respond to literary texts in an individual, personal way. Accordingly, it encourages students' genuine responses to the texts. It actively welcomes a diversity of interpretations based on critical examination of the text as a final product and allows students to speculate on the processes involved in the author's creation of the text. Moreover, it invites the reader to connect the experience of the text with his/her life world. Invariably, this means that teachers will have to entertain interpretations different from their own. *The popular hard and fast idea that there is* **one correct answer** *to a literature question should be scrupulously avoided*.

This Teacher Resource Guide provides teachers with the support for which they have called[1]. It is not a textbook or a self instructional course for individual student use, recent examples of which are readily available[2]. Most texts like these are based on the behaviorist tradition and principle of developing learners' skills by progressively focusing on the skills and competencies of the parts which, it is claimed, gradually provide the learners with the platform to comprehend and appreciate the whole. These texts remain true to the hierarchy of Bloom's Taxonomy. This Teacher's Resource Guide recommends an alternative strategy, springing directly from a reconceptualisation of the application of Bloom's theory, moving from the whole to the details of the parts. It also honours and depends on the incipient skills and competencies of the modern teenage students. The strategies suggested here require students to

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[1] Report to the English Subject Panel 2008 of the Survey of Teachers' Views on the review of the CSEC English Syllabus.

[2] *Carlong English B for CXC* (Text with DVD). Keith Noel, Sheila Garcia-Bisnott and Carol Hunter-Clarke, and *Writing about Literature A Self-Instructional Course* Paula Morgan with Barbara Lalla, UWI, St. Augustine School of Continuing Studies 2005.

describe how they feel about and understand the literary texts and media that they do know, the hymns, gospel songs, rap, hip-hop, calypso, chutney, soca, comic strips, videos, movies, the literary experiences of Generation Y. This Teacher's Guide is therefore intended to provide the teacher with the strategies that should allow him/her to manage the learning experiences of a group of students in a class as they develop their skills of literary appreciation in preparation for the CSEC English B examination.

Moreover, this Teacher's Guide is offered in the light of a renewed awareness of the potential of English B to contribute to the development of the Ideal Caribbean Person[3]. This challenge is made all the more onerous in the face of a plateau in entries for English B[4] over the last three years and a growing trend of aliteracy[5] among Caribbean teens. Compounding the difficulty for teachers of English in the Caribbean is the significant divide between students with and without access to the web. We cannot ignore the tremendous potential that the web holds for the transformation of English teaching.[6]

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[3] The competencies identified for the Ideal Caribbean Person (at the 18th Summit Caribbean Heads of Government). In particular, students who experience an integrated approach to language and our selected literature texts will:

- be imbued with a respect for human life since it is the foundation on which all other desired values must rest;
- be emotionally secure and confident, with a high level of self confidence and self esteem and will see ethnic, religious and other diversity as a source of potential strength and richness;
- be aware of the importance of living in harmony with the environment, sharpen their appreciation for family and kinship values, community cohesion and moral values;
- be appreciative of our cultural heritage;
- develop multiple literacies, independent and critical thinking and a willingness to question past and present practices;
- value and display the creative imagination.

[4] **CXC 2008 Annual Report** p. 79

[5] Students are able to read but are unwilling to read the material that school demands. They may engage in a wide array of reading as they surf the net, and may master a complex system of cultural differentiation and appreciation as it relates to urban/street and/or mass culture, but may erroneously regard this as completely unrelated to English B classroom activity.

[6] ENGLISH IN AOTEAROA 2.0 be or not 2.0 be: *how english teachers are embracing the world wide web* Karen Melhuish April 2008, p. 23 - 30

The 2009 CSEC June English B Schools Report avers:

> The genre-based focus of the syllabus and examination since 2006 should have signaled a major shift in teaching and learning of literary appreciation. Instead of a focus on the content of the texts and the themes explored, teaching and learning in English B should now focus on how the artist (dramatist, poet and prose writer) shapes his/her work to affect the minds and hearts of the readers or audience. Previous schools" reports have emphasized that the questions will remain essentially the same, but the unseen passages will change. The syllabus outlines that the objectives are meant to cover the techniques the artist uses to manipulate how the reader will most likely think and feel about what the artist produces. Teachers who faithfully follow the philosophy and intent of the syllabus will produce students who are critical thinkers, who will be able to read between the lines and see strategies of persuasion at work and so become less gullible and less easily manipulated. (p.2-3)

This Teacher's Guide will focus on assisting teachers to understand, explore and implement the different classroom management styles and procedures necessary to achieve the knowledge, skills and values outlined in the syllabus.

TEACHING POETRY

Caribbean people are characterised internationally by our innate capacity to be creatively expressive in speech, music and movement. This creative expressiveness is manifested in our common daily lived encounters on the streets, as much as they are exhibited by the finest exemplars of Caribbean artistes who have earned international acclaim. West Indian children live poetry. Yet, the examination performance of our students in (Profile II) poetry understanding and appreciation suggests that the vast majority of our best students are woefully deficient.[7] As teachers, we need to build on, rather than ignore or discard the individual sensitivities and aesthetic values that our students are developing and refining as they live. In fact, as experienced teachers who nevertheless recognise that this generation of students has developed norms of which we may not be fully aware, we may go one step further and adopt cultural modeling[8], in which students' knowledge is the center of pedagogy and practice; students take the lead and are asked to model the strategies that they use to understand texts, including the popular oral literature of hip hop, dub, reggae, soca, chutney or calypso.[9]

Teachers need to provide the emotional climate in the classroom for students to share their aesthetic preferences in the use of language. Students must be encouraged to critically appraise the lyrics of the songs that they select. We need to provide students with the language to talk about language – which is what the language of literary appreciation is! But especially for most of our monodialectal speaking students, we need to do it orally before we demand it in writing. Teachers of English need to manage controlled talk in the classroom to ensure the use of the appropriate registers in the metalanguage of literary appreciation, allowing students to recognise how nuances of feeling, tone, and meaning can be captured and communicated.

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[7] In 2009, in Paper 01, the mean mark out of 15 was for Drama (7.04), Poetry (4.9) and Prose Fiction (8.43)

[8] Cultural modeling is developed around several objectives, among them the following: helping students to understand disciplinary frameworks for problem solving, making clear for and with students the uses of knowledge that are being taught or that they possess, making explicit the links between what students know and what they need to understand, providing precise techniques to address multifaceted learning tasks, and creating learning contexts that are based on classroom practices that offer engaging learning experiences with ongoing student supports.

[9] *Culture, Literacy, and Learning*: *Taking Bloom in the Midst of the Whirlwind.* Carol D. Lee. 2007. New York: Teachers College Press. 232 pp

The talk may be controlled in part by the use of concept maps[10] which may be filled out by the students during their period reflection and analysis of the lyrical pieces they selected. But teachers who recognise the implications of Howard Gardener's Multiple Intelligences will also allow students to express their appreciation through alternative, appropriate forms. Through dance and movement, art, symbols and tactile expressions, students may be called upon to share and communicate their appreciation. Ultimately, however, as teachers of English, we must help students find the language to define, expand and support their response to the texts they select.

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[10] *Concept maps* are graphical ways of working with ideas and presenting information. They reveal patterns and relationships and help students to clarify their thinking, and to process, organise and prioritise. Displaying information visually--in *concept maps*, word webs, or diagrams--stimulates creativity. Being able to think logically teaches students to present ideas effectively in writing and speaking. By positioning ideas and moving them around, students learn to see how the ideas are connected and understand how to group or organise information effectively.

On the lead of our students, as teachers, we need to model through Think Alouds our metacognitive strategies to illustrate how we communicate our appreciation of our selected text.[11] Pairs of students should then be required to apply that process to explain to each other their appreciation for the texts that they selected, using the evidence and logic to support their claims.

We can help to facilitate the conversation by linking the discussion to core constructs important to the interpretation of texts generally, and, by extension, allow students to demonstrate their knowledge, determine when they need help to deepen analysis, and understand the goals and purposes of the larger task of developing literary appreciation skills.

Teachers can then arrange to publish the lyrics and students' related completed concept maps. The class may append to their publication an example of a well written appreciation of a popular song, calypso, chutney or dub. Students may be encouraged to source what they consider to be well written reviews of the music they listen to and to identify the criteria to distinguish the effectiveness of the reviews selected. The class will be able to complete a comprehensive rubric[12] for effective critical appreciation of poetry and/or lyrical compositions which could then provide a framework for their written pieces.

Literary reasoning related to close text analysis is important. Teachers need to model 'code-switching' to allow students to see how to transition from their dialect to the conventional register for literary reasoning and expression. Ultimately, this code-switching is a choice made by the individual student but the modeling that the teacher highlights must emerge after the students have produced their verbal text. That teacher modeling represents the major element of the teaching strand in 'Speaking Academic English', which teachers must consciously and formally introduce to students as a precursor to students writing their critical appreciation of poetry for academic purposes. Teachers must then emphasise the significance of audience in the composing process, as composing is dependent on the audience for which a person is writing and will determine how carefully the writer in her or his language attends to the rules of mainstream English.

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[11] Does feeling come first? How poetry can help readers broaden their understanding of metacognition. Amy L. Eva Wood **Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy** 51:7 April 2008 pp. 564 -576.

[12] Off the Grid: The debate over rubrics and what is missing. Barry Gilmore **California English** September 2007 pp. 22-25

This Teacher's Guide advocates that teachers should adopt this holistic approach to poetry teaching even as the most popular textbooks present, in the main, the part to whole approach. English B School Reports typically lament thus:

> The most important skill being tested is the ability to show how poetic devices are used to highlight themes and achieve particular effects. Most candidates seemed to have been exposed to the discussion of poetic devices and could name devices used. However, discussion of how the devices actually worked, and how they were linked to the overall meaning or theme being discussed, was often vague, rambling and confused.[13]

This trend most likely springs from the disconnect in students' minds between their lived experience of real feelings and aesthetic appraisal and the depersonalised language thought to be expected in response. Students who recognise poetry analysis and appreciation as an extension of their lived and natural ability to judge what is beautiful and emotional will find it easier and natural to connect device, technique and effect. Teachers' use of these strategies should cement this connection.

Teachers at CXC English B Workshops in Belize, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago suggested the following procedures to help students transit from concrete, literal levels to abstract and/or multiple levels of meaning in poetry appreciation:

- Allow for multiple dramatic readings of the poem;
- After each reading, allow students to consider differences in meaning and feeling caused by differences in stress, pace, tone, rhythm and other features of the speaking voice;
- Let students speculate on how the speaker wants to make them feel at different sections in the poem;
- Let students close their eyes to help minimise distractions and concentrate on the spoken words to create a mental image;
- Let students be guided in their reaction by the hints in the poem more than by general principles on what to do with a poem;

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[13] 2009 CSEC June English B Schools Report p. 7

- Make students aware that the poet created all the characters and situations in the poem including even the speaker of the poem;

- Encourage students to compare and contrast the techniques used by different poets to achieve their effects;

- Have students discuss formally how poets manipulate language to affect the readers' feeling and effect their thinking about the poem's themes.

After students are introduced to the study of poetry by these means, and with the gradual introduction of the selected poems from the set text, *World of Poetry for CXC*, teachers should feel confident that students would eventually create a matrix of the themes, forms and techniques employed by the poets in the selected poems. Students' active involvement in drafting, redrafting and refining the matrix in the final term will serve as an ideal foundation for what the 2009 Schools Report for English B refers to as 'the well prepared student.'

Teachers need to make an authentic assessment of students' level of competence in the area of poetry appreciation and their ability to communicate ideas in the appropriate language register. Ideally, collectively, teacher and students should chart the details of the developmental stages that they would expect to transit as they lead up to the examination. This collectively formed rubric can also become a contract between teacher and students, indicating how the more advanced candidates will display greater precision in language use, provide more examples from the text to support their interpretation, and link argument and thesis to the question posed. This dynamic between teacher and students runs counter to the fiercely competitive, individualistic achievement oriented culture that dominates the scholarship mills. It also challenges the dominant power relations between teacher and students and replaces it with a culture that encourages the notion that all can succeed. Teachers[14] who are able to enlist that level of co-operation with students will then be assured not only that their candidates will be well prepared, but that they would have made a solid contribution to the formation of the Ideal Caribbean Person.

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[14] The teacher as instructional guide will need to be an active and attentive listener constantly seeking to showcase student talent and intervene to 'translate' experiences into the formal register.

What Resources Will You Need?

Dictionary

Thesaurus

Reference Materials

Participation in CXC's U Tube

Current Syllabus

Appropriate Specimen Paper

Prescribed Texts

School Reports (from CXC website)

Collaboratively constructed rubrics (framework by English Department, details by teacher and students).

Performance Assessments of students' poetry reading, Reader's Theatre, Hotseating, reflective journal entries.

TEACHING DRAMA

Comments on students' performance in Paper 01 of the English B examination, 2008, indicate that students were weak in demonstrating awareness and appreciation for dramatic techniques. The observations were similar in the 2009 examination. The average performance in Drama was 6.18 in 2008, better than that of Poetry and Prose but still not good enough. The CSEC English B Syllabus describes literature as a storehouse of humankind's collective imagination and ideas and directs teachers to explore how writers, poets and dramatists craft their work to influence our feelings and thoughts about life (p.22). It theorises that writers do this through historical, current or future events and that these events often impact persons socially, economically, psychologically and sometimes even physically. Ultimately though, the literary work reflects attitudes, values and beliefs that are portrayed in a way to develop a student's sense of empathy as they see their own humanity reflected in literary characters and situations. In addition to literary analysis however, the literature teacher is also a language teacher, therefore, he/she is expected to use whatever methodology that works to create appreciation and enjoyment of language. The teacher is encouraged to use a number of approaches in order to heighten appreciation and awareness. One approach that is encouraged is the language base approach along with the personal growth model. Such approaches to the teaching of drama should appeal to all students. These approaches are less concerned with the literary text as a product and more concerned with processes of reading and relating the texts to the experiences of the students. This means that the text can be used as a cloze passage, it can be used to make predictions and for creative writing. Re-writing and role play are activities that can be engaged in to bring about integration of language and literature as a means of creating interest in students who need to enjoy the text without necessarily having to analyse it first.

With the changes in the syllabus, it is hoped that there will be corresponding changes in the teacher's delivery of the subject. It is important that the teacher be reminded that the English B Examination syllabus has changed in some aspects: in its weighting and the types of questions to be answered by students. Section 1 of the examination requires the students to answer a "type A" question choosing modern Drama in this case Old Story Time or Shakespeare. A "type A" Question means that the student uses ONE text and the student does not compare texts. Students are given four questions (TWO

questions on Shakespeare and TWO on modern drama) and they are expected to choose ONE text in answering ONE question.

What are the texts for 2012-2014? *Old Story Time,* written by Trevor Rhone and Shakespeare's, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are the chosen texts. (pp.26-28).[15] How best can the literature teacher improve the quality of the responses of the students and create appreciation for literature? It is perhaps necessary to begin with a definition of the genre in order to make a clear distinction between this genre and others.

Drama as defined by Steven Croft and Helen Cross[16] is, "something intended specifically for performance on stage in front of an audience." I might identify that "something", as a story. Nevertheless this definition emphasises the fact that drama should not be approached as a text that we read in much the same way we read prose and poetry. The discussion of a novel focuses more on content and poetry on language, however, drama focuses most on structure, not only on the structure of the story but also on the interrelationships of characters. Drama is about the dramatics, that is, conflicts and resolution, compelling actions and reactions, conflicts and discoveries. Get as many responses from your students as possible regarding their definition of drama as you can. The teaching of drama according to teachers is made even more challenging with the inclusion of Shakespeare. In fact, in answering the questionnaire conducted by the Caribbean Examinations Council Western Zone Office 2008, on the CSEC English syllabus, teachers opined that Shakespeare is a foreign language to the students. This of course begs for teachers to allow students to translate! They love the idea of reading Shakespeare – the dialect version, that is.

Shakespeare presents the teacher and students with cross-cultural challenges. These challenges arise as a result of language and setting which are very different from the students normal everyday experiences. Thus cross-cultural adaptation becomes necessary. Even without these challenges, teachers recognise that different strategies are needed for the teaching of drama than those employed

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[15] See the CXC English Syllabus and Specimen Papers and Mark Scheme 2012

[16] Literature Criticism and Style.: Steven Croft &Helen Cross .1998,Oxford University Press.pp38

for poetry and prose. Indeed, teachers do try to teach drama by making the students dramatise scenes with or without the aid of costume. This is really not a negative activity as long as students have a feel of the scenes they are performing. This is very easy for some students to do, as Caribbean people we are very expressive and like to talk using a lot of gestures.   Sometimes however, students find this activity interesting without fully understanding the relationship between performance and the tools the playwright employs to create the finished product. Other students are not fortunate enough to even perform the play, as it is taught in much the same way as the novel, that is, by simply reading and largely ignoring the playwright's craft. This is a serious mistake as drama's unique characteristics would have been lost. A play is a living piece of art performed and viewed by an audience. The script is the written basis of the play through which a playwright attempts to convey an idea. A script consists of many components (plot, setting, character, music, atmosphere, action, and more) conveyed by two means: dialogue and didascaliae. Inevitably however, one has to anlayse drama and its issues and it begs the question, how can the teacher do this?   Through the theories of New Historicism[17] and Cultural Materialism as well as other pedagogic practices, the teacher can find different ways of accomplishing the task of comprehensively analysing the written script.   New Historicists aim simultaneously to understand the work through its historical context and to understand its cultural and intellectual history. A writer's work usually reflects his/her history and culture and that is why it is important for the literature student to research the culture, history and sometimes the life of the writer in order to have greater insight into meaning.   The characters created by the writer will more than likely behave according to the norms of their society or critically assess society's weaknesses through the things that they say and do. H. Aram Veeser,[18] in his work, *The New Historicism* (1989), noted some key assumptions that continually reappear in New Historicist discourse:

- every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices;
- every act of unmasking, critique and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practice it exposes;

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[17] A school of literary theory that developed in the 1980's primarily through the work of Stephen Greenblatt and gained widespread influence in the 1990's

[18] H. Aram Veeser.Ed.*The New Historicism.* New York: Rutledge, 1989.

- no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths, nor expresses the notion that human nature cannot be changed.

Cultural materialists deal with specific historical documents and attempt to analyse and recreate a particular moment in history. Cultural materialists seek to draw attention to the processes being employed by contemporary power structures, such as the church, the state or the academy, to spread certain ideas. To do this they explore a text's historical context and its political implications, and then through close textual analysis, note the dominant hegemonic position.[19] They identify possibilities for the rejection and/or subversion of that position. Cultural materialists analyse the processes by which dominant forces in society make use of historically-important texts, and use them in an attempt to validate or inscribe certain values on the cultural imagination through historical, religious, political, theoretical contexts, among others. This knowledge forces the teacher to find strategies to examine with the students, what values are being imparted be it political, religious or otherwise and what devices have been used to accomplish this mission.

Some models that can be used to interrogate drama as well as other literary genres are: the cultural model mentioned before, the language model and the personal growth model.

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[19] British Critic, Graham Holderness, Professor of English at the University of Hertfordshire, defines cultural materialism as a "politicized form of historiography" alluding to history being politicized by the artist.

APPROACHES TO

TEXTS

THE CULTURAL

MODEL

THE LANGUGE MODEL

THE PERSONAL GROWTH
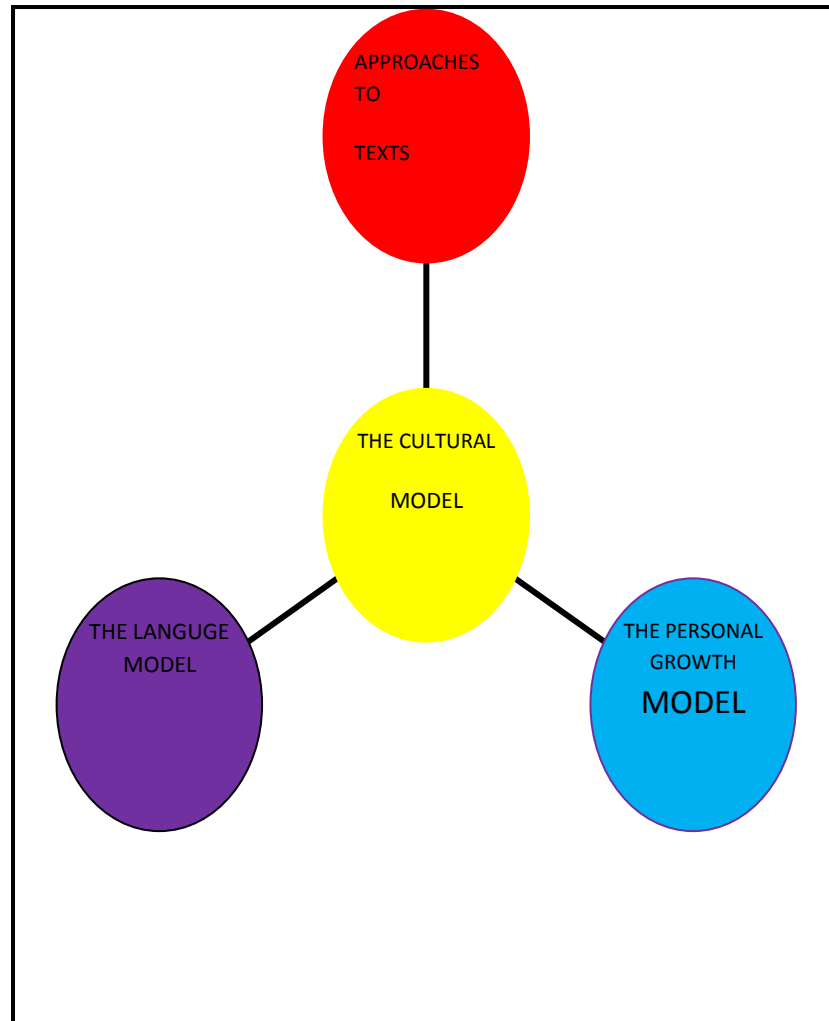
MODEL

Figure 1: Models for Teaching Drama

Each of the models above demand a different approach to the teaching of drama, therefore, different methodologies are needed.

The cultural model is a more teacher–centred approach than the others. It focuses on the text from which students acquire information. The personal growth model, on the other hand, is pupil centred. The overall aim is to motivate students to read by relating the themes and topics depicted in the text to their own personal experiences. The language base model focuses on how language is used in the text and views activities as central to the learning of the text.

Essential Drama Teaching Requirements

In the English B Examination Paper 1, of 2009, students were asked to identify a prop and explain its function in section 1, question 1(b) and (c) respectively. Many students by their responses indicated that they did not understand the terms "prop" and "function."

We refer teachers of English to "The OUTLINE OF ASSESSMENT" (pp.23) in the English syllabus which speaks to the profile dimension of drama as highlighting the study, teaching and understanding of drama as a unique literary genre with unique elements such as performance as its main vehicle;

- Stage directions
- Characters
- Spectacle

Teachers are also to facilitate understanding of the development of character, theme and atmosphere through stage conventions such as, lighting, costuming and stage prop. The students can research the conventions of drama as well as other elements. A useful activity which is quite simple but effective is the creating of a still image, also termed a living picture, or a tableau. This is meant to capture important moments in a scene or an act. To do this the student freezes in a particular position reflecting the action of a character in the text. The student can freeze with a prop and of course wear a costume appropriate to a particular character. The students will identify the character and predict what action they feel will follow. They will give reasons. They can also critique the still images suggesting improved movements and costume and explain what feeling is created by that image. This can be done as pair activity to begin and then become a small group activity. The important scenes in an act can be highlighted in this way.

Figure 2: Performance

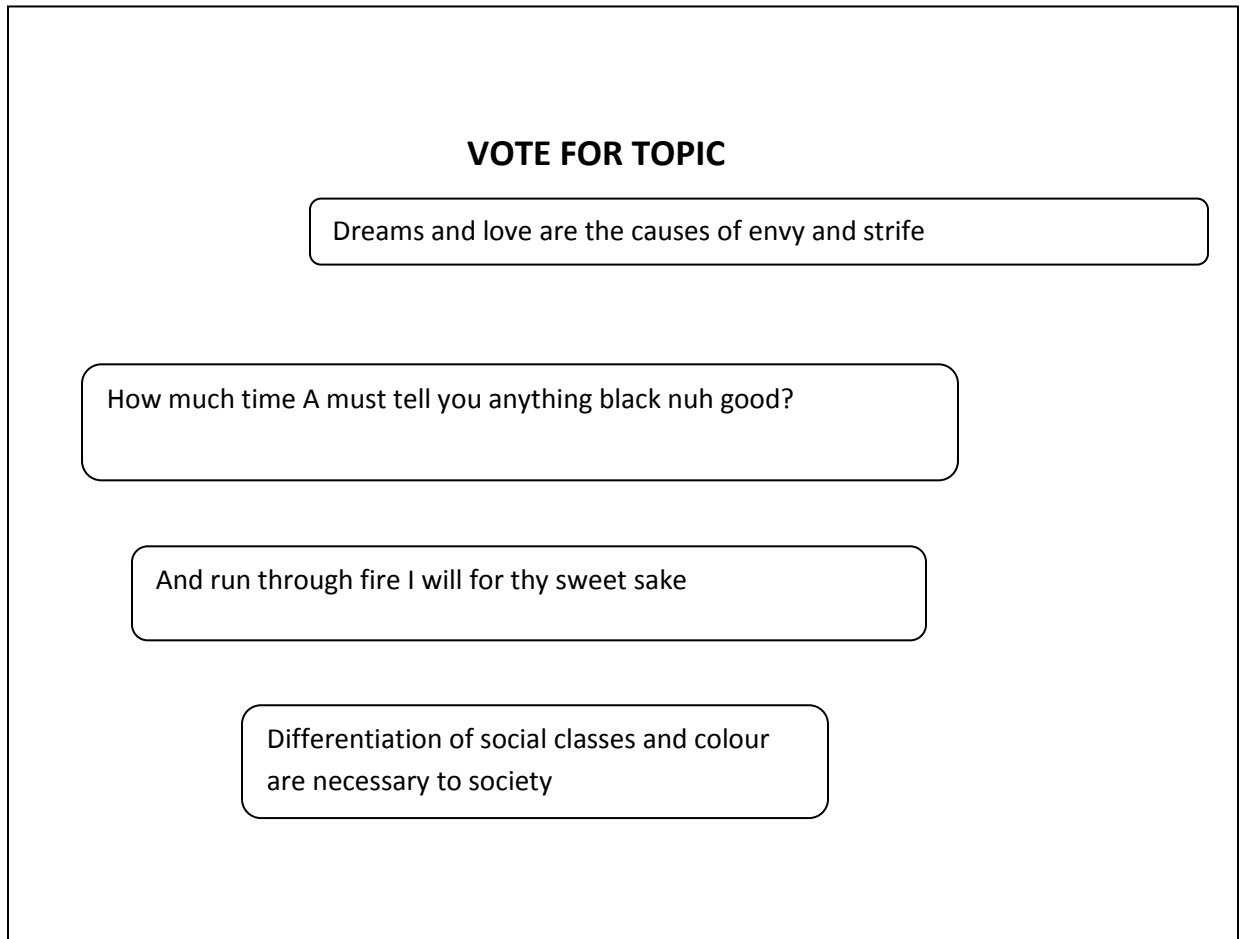Brainstorming Activity: What is meant by "performance is drama's main vehicle?

Performance is that aspect of drama that will assist the reader in arriving at his/her destination and the destination is a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of drama. This can only be fully achieved by seeing and hearing the play performed.   It is through performance that all elements of

drama are explored and exposed. Effective dramatisation of the piece is dependent on stage directions; those pieces of information which tell us where and how to move on stage, the expressions we are to assume, how to behave and so on – the conventions of drama. Of course any good literary text will have universal meaning even when culture and history seem to be different. It is true that a director will use his/her initiative and artistic judgment to direct and produce a play. However, at the same time it must reflect the playwright's message and students must be encouraged to justify their choice of props and costume when they have fun by dramatising the text. Drama incorporates sound and sight, therefore, students can experiment with different sounds that are heard throughout the day. A sound collage is useful in this respect as it captures a variety of sounds. The teacher can let students imagine that it is night and they are all alone, they must record their feelings, actions, sounds in order to create an atmosphere. Ultimately though, students are to be made aware of the fact that drama is a group activity, consequently even on the occasions when a play is read it should be done as a group activity with different students being different characters just as it would be if they were acting. A good idea before reading or dramatisation has begun, is to elicit from students as many of their own ideas, feelings and attitudes as possible so that they can relate to the drama as individuals.
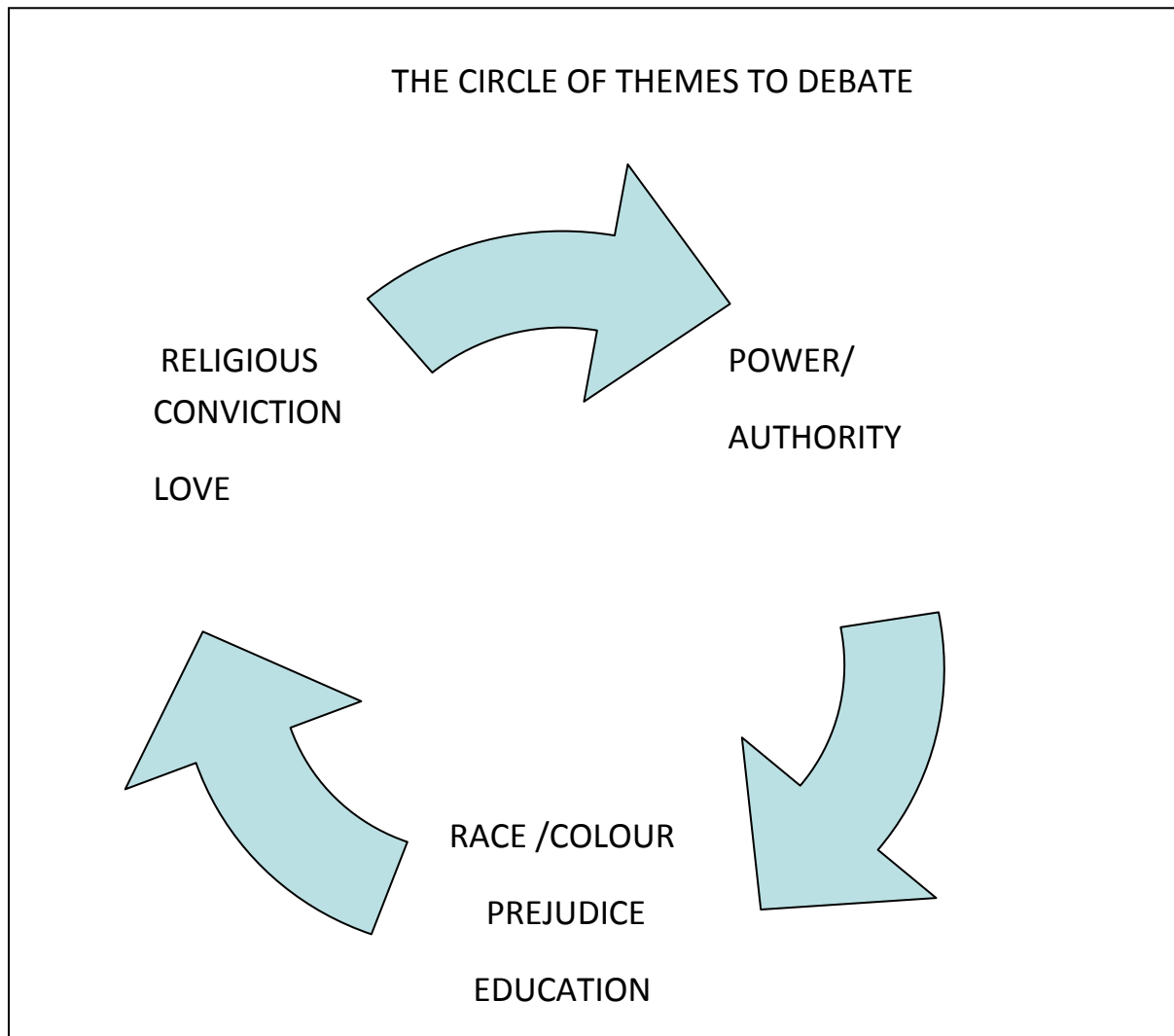
Some other suggestions that could be useful as classroom activities are: "director for a day".   Here students take a scene of the play and perform it or write a scene of their own patterning the structure in the text.   It would be interesting to compare costumes. An adaptation of *Old Story Time* was performed recently. What was most interesting about its staging was that there were different ideas about how Pa Ben should look and speak. Yes, the suggestion is that the plays or parts of it can be performed in front of a school audience and this will certainly highlight the dramatic devices whilst aiding recall! The class can develop multiple interpretations of visual and aural production choices for scripts and production ideas, and justify choices by way of hot seating.

Another activity is circle discussion: Students will select from a list of statements on a particular theme, those with which they agree. For *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the themes must relate to dreams and love and for *Old Story Time*, the themes must relate to colour prejudice and dreams and aspirations. However if students feel strongly about other themes that can definitely be supported by evidence, then the teacher should go with their suggestions. Students can, in pairs, write topics for debate on the themes, then in groups of five or more, they identify topics that could arise from the themes and

quotations that can be used to support the topics. They can then vote as a class which topic/topics they would like to debate. The circle is formed with the ideas. The ideas could be made into a pyramid with those getting the most votes at the top and the least at the bottom. The same idea could be used to highlight major and minor themes as well as major and minor characters in the text.

VOTE FOR TOPIC

Dreams and love are the causes of envy and strife

How much time A must tell you anything black nuh good?

And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake

Differentiation of social classes and colour are necessary to society

Figure 3: Vote for Topic

THE CIRCLE OF THEMES TO DEBATE

RELIGIOUS
CONVICTION
LOVE

POWER/

AUTHORITY

RACE /COLOUR

PREJUDICE

EDUCATION

Figure 4: The Circles of Themes to Debate

Get students to make a map of the play so that they know what occurs in each scene. The scene can then be divided into episodes. This is an example: Act 1v; Scene 1, what Puck had promised that "Jack shall have Jill/Nought shall go ill, comes to pass:

- the lovers' relationships are resolved in a friendly way though confusion remains about what had happened during the night;
- Oberon and Titania are reconciled;
- Bottom is returned to his normal position.

THE SCENE CAN BE VIEWED AS A NUMBER OF SHORT EPISODES AND REPRESENTED BY A COLOUR CODED TABLE AS SEEN BELOW:

Bottom, led on stage by Titania and her train continues to enjoy the treatment accorded him in 3.1;
As he and Titania sleep, Puck arrives to be told by the watching Oberon that he now has the Indian boy;
Titania is given the antidote ("Dian's bud"). Now fully awake, she is repelled by the sight of Bottom (whom Puck is told to return to his proper appearance) but dances joyfully with Oberon
As they depart, Theseus Hippolyta and Egeus appear ready for the hunt and favour the two couples with a joint wedding ceremony (an honour which should compensate Egeus for any loss of face);
Their finding and waking of the lovers leads to a confused account of their presence but a very clear statement of Demetrius' love for Helena allowing Theseus to "overbear" Egeus' choice of Demetrius and favour the two couples with a joint wedding ceremony
Everyone else having left the wood, Bottom now has the stage to himself for his virtuoso prose soliloquy

The table can also be used to identify themes and popular quotes to support them as well as popular quotes within acts and scenes. Students can use a table to compare and contrast structure and content of tragedy and comedy. This will work well with all students.

The same table above can be used to highlight congruence between characteristics of dress and manner as well as how well they depict era, culture and personalities. A table works equally well in highlighting adjectives to describe characters in one column, what others have to say about the character and what the character does and says in other columns. Students can be given columns and they fill in the missing information such as background, feelings and personalities. Activities relating to character interpretations will then have been added to the "list of activities". At the beginning of each scene,

there could be a "story so far" captured in song, poetry, as also summaries of all the scenes which can be used as links or fill-ins. This means that whatever part of the play the teacher is teaching, it can be put into the context of the whole. Producing computer-based materials especially in the area of playwriting and design can be explored. Students can be made to analyse a variety of dramatic texts from cultural and historical perspectives to determine production requirements. They can read, write and evaluate plays, as well as view and critique electronic and live performances. The teacher can also allow students to use computer programs to create lighting, costume, makeup, sound and scenery. The students can compare and demonstrate various classical and contemporary acting techniques and methods.

If the students are to fully understand the activities involved in the successful staging of a play then physical and vocal warm-ups, (since drama is primarily about speech) improvisations, voice, diction and concentration exercises should be included in the list of drama activities. The teacher can ask students to create a list of performance and rehearsal expectations and design a rehearsal schedule for the actual staging of the play or the simulation.

Utilising Research as an aid to Analysis

According to Mervyn Morris in his introduction to Trevor Rhone's Play, *Old Story Time; "*With the growth of nationalism in the 1930s there were more and more attempts to write a Jamaican drama which might engage with Jamaican realities" (pp VI of the introduction to the text). This idea can be the subject of a debate.   Trevor Rhone's criticism of colour prejudice by Pa Ben who wears many hats such as character, director, narrator, social commentator, gives rise to discussion involving the theories of New Historicism and Cultural Materialism. He is a character that seems to be inoffensive, therefore his criticism of those who are misguided enough to think that colour determines the quality of a person would be supported by a predominantly black population but Shakespeare's audience would not have supported such a stance. Students can discuss the reasons for this using the theories as supportive evidence.

The teacher could interest the students in background information on Shakespeare and the reasons for the way his plays were performed. A Similar discussion on where Rhone's plays were performed and the reasons they were performed in that location can be entertained. Most of Shakespeare's plays were written to be performed in the Globe. It is important to understand the structure of the theatre as it

would have had a significant impact on how Shakespeare wrote his plays. The Globe, as the name suggests, was either circular or octagonal, the modern reconstruction has 20 sides and could house up to 3000 spectators, which, even by today's standards, is a large building. Because of its size, as well as the fact that it was open air (it did not have a roof) an actor had to have very good voice projection. Shakespeare also needed to compose his plays in such a fashion that the actions on the stage helped to clarify the plot.

There were three main sections of the audience. In front of the stage was the yard. The yard was the cheapest place from which to view a play. Spectators who purchased admission to the yard were known as groundlings and had to stand throughout the whole performance. There were then three levels of seating surrounding the yard, two levels called two-penny rooms**,** and the highest level known as the one penny gallery. This arrangement reflected society in Elizabethan England where there was quite a lot of difference between classes of people. Of particular relevance is that only people of high social status received quality education.   For our study of Shakespeare it is important to note that this indicates a diverse audience that Shakespeare would have had to compose his plays to reach. As mentioned earlier, this required Shakespeare to compose his plays so that each member of his audience could understand the plot and themes of the play. In Shakespeare's plays, the techniques would appeal to varying classes. A smutty sense of humour is often used to appeal to the more 'uncouth' groundlings. Ultimately, the teacher should lead students to the realization that characters, setting, technical and physical locations all contribute to theme, therefore, students could identify and compare the lives, works, and influences of dramatic works in several cultures and historical periods.   For the students who are gifted in the area of visual art, perhaps this is an opportunity for group work creating a model of Shakespeare's Globe! The teacher can ask students to explain how culture affects the content and production values of theatre, television and films created.

The teacher can integrate social studies and drama by asking students to research the theories of social stratification and how they relate to dramatic techniques. They will find that there is a relationship between social class and costuming, grooming, manners, language and lifestyle which includes: tastes, preferences, and a general style of living. Let students research to understand the links.

Assessment strategies can include a portfolio of work done; oral presentations can be peer assessed as well as assessed by the teacher, based on a set of criteria that all students have agreed on. Different types of assessment are encouraged.

Whatever methods and theories that the teacher uses to teach drama, his/her job would be incomplete if the structural elements of drama, such as the act, exposition and scene were not emphasised. The features of drama such as dialogue, stage directions and movement as well as literary devices and their functions are equally important. Ultimately though, the literary context comprising, social, historical, religious, moral, among others highlight the issues that performance surrounds.

Understanding of the requirements of Paper 1 of the English B examination would have been enhanced by a comprehensive understanding of drama. However, the teacher needs to give students practice in determining which elements of drama are being highlighted more than others in the extract that the students are given. There are resource materials available which can assist in this area.

Teaching Prose Fiction: The Novel and the Short Story

This section of the Teacher's Guide focuses on strategies for teaching Prose including the novel and the short story. The intention is to ensure that teachers provide students with the scaffolding to develop the sensibilities, insights, and competencies to appreciate how prose writers structure their text to impact on the reader. This scaffolding should deepen students' pleasure and understanding of the act of reading fine literature.

Teachers are expected to take students beyond a knowledge of what happens in a text. Teachers must carefully structure class events to ensure that as students read they are conscious of *how* [20]they are making sense of what the writer has produced.

Writers *create* fictional worlds. Every line of prose is consciously chosen to create a particular effect or effects. Very often writers revell in the tensions between the mind and the heart of the reader, sometimes even more so than their fascination with that tension between the minds and hearts of their characters. Diverse interpretations are possible because each reader brings something unique from his/her own experience to interpret or understand what the writer writes.

The beauty in reading literature is the contention between and among these different expectations, interpretations, and understandings that actively play in the reader's mind while reading the text. The teacher needs to capture the excitement of this process. This is necessary notwithstanding consensus on what the text is "really" about.

The popular notion that critics' interpretation of a text is the final definitive statement on a text should never be the basis for one voice to dominate class discussions on a text. Even if class opinion eventually reaches that consensus the teacher's task is to ensure that the excitement, uncertainties, the euphoria, and depressions in the process of reliving the vicarious experiences of the text are never sacrificed. This is the experience that students will be expected to

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[20] This is the essence of **metacognition**

recreate in the examination room when they encounter the unseen passage in the prose section.

Teachers therefore need to facilitate and encourage students' statements and defense of their interpretations. Furthermore, teachers need to encourage students to use the text to provide the evidence to support their interpretations. This evidence must come from not only what is written, but *how* it is written and speculations about why it is written *in that way*. If students have regular encounters of this type regarding the set novels and short stories they would be eminently well prepared to perform excellently in paper one.

Reading literature shapes our minds, our hearts and ultimately our actions. It shapes our heart so that the mind would be able to understand emotion. It shapes the mind so that the mind would be able to analyse cause and effect. It shapes the soul so that the mind would be able to understand what is beautiful. It subtly influences the reader's willingness to appreciate paradox, ambiguity and myth to resolve why we must fight against injustice. It is a person with a literary sensibility who would be able to entertain the incongruities of life and still live with hope.

As far as possible, then, teachers should encourage a three stage process in which the class:

1.   Prepares to raise big ideas of the text. Ideally, these big ideas come from what excites or intrigues readers (of Prose), listeners (of Poetry) or audience (of Drama) on first encounter with the text. These big ideas pose the lead questions that would generate class discussions.

2.   Inquires into *how the artist tried to shape our thoughts or feelings*. This takes up most of our class time, and it involves students' repeated oral and close reading of the text to find evidence and question author's motives.

3.   Reflects on our inquiries to re-evaluate our assumptions, processes or evidence.

Use 'Septimus' to illustrate:

1.   Let students suggest what 'Septimus' is about after their first reading. What big idea/s led the author to create it? What does the writer want us to think about? What is the most memorable part of the story? What is the most deliberately dramatic part of the story? Do we get a sense that the author is forcing a point, straining our credibility?

2.   How do the characters, the setting, the mood, the story line, the inception point, the climax contribute to what the author wants us to feel and think?

3.	How valid is the evidence we have collected to support the claims we make? What more do we need to make a more convincing argument? Is how we feel more important than how we reason in this story? What kind of words do we need to explain ourselves clearer here? Do we get a sense of how the writer shaped the work, or does the work appear to shape itself?

The teacher should provide a few moments for students to consider a prompt to have them focus on how they process or reason or think about or think through a passage of prose. Some of these problems may be:

> **Reading literature shapes our minds, our hearts and ultimately our actions.**

- What does the writer want me to expect about what will happen?

- Where will the setting be in the next episode?

- Whose thoughts are being described here? How do I know that?

- When did this happen? Is it past action, present hope, a dream sequence, or a figment of someone's imagination?

- Why does the writer focus on this event at this time?

- How does the writer want me to think and feel at this point?

Edgar Allan Poe emphasised the role of the reader as co-creator since meaning was submerged beneath the obvious surface of the stories.

The story radiates a whole that is not described, but suggested. Story becomes metaphor.

"I think that everything is true, that fiction is just a way of saying something that is truthful from the very beginning. What is fiction? A bunch of lies, but it wouldn't work if those lies didn't come from a very honest truthful space inside you." Isabel Allende.

"Readers are in dialogue with stories. They are asked to project from the details on the page something that is not on the page." Clarke Blaise

Because the revised syllabus (CXC 01/O/SYLL 03) is genre-specific, it will be necessary for teachers to devote more time to look more closely at the strategies used by prose writers—setting, characterisation, dialogue, and so on. Students have to be sensitised to the undercurrents of mood, conflict and irony.

Teachers should regularly make questions relate to the texts as genre, more so than themes or content. This is a logical consequence of the change in the syllabus from theme based to genre based. The questions should guide the students along these lines.

The focus on genre requires an assessment approach that minimises emphasis on marking for correct content and prioritises discussion on how the student receives the artist's shaping of the art. Since this is a matter of interpretation, it will be necessary to set the broad parameters of the writers' craft and allow the students the chance to argue how they received (or interpreted) the text. Their argument can be graded according to a rubric that allows for variation in how they present their interpretation or argument. This process puts a premium on the teacher listening to the thought processes of the students. This major shift cannot be introduced by fiat. Teachers must compose rubrics, ideally with the students' participation, to effect this shift.

Perhaps it will be easier for students to develop this skill if they apply these skills to the regular literature they read independently before they apply it to the school texts which tend to assume canonical status.

Consider this approach suggested by an experienced educator:

When I am faced with text that I think the writer has manipulated, I often make the manipulation the subject of the question. In other words, I ask the students about how convincing is the presentation of such and such,… I would ask questions about stereotyping. I could easily have said to a class "Get real, Is this how you would expect such and such to be portrayed? Or, " Make a comparision for me between this and such another text." (Daphine Simon)

Students who regularly encounter such challenges will have the necessary background to master the novel and short story form.

To develop students' awareness of the differences between the novel and the short story form, teachers may challenge students to categorise Curdella Forbes' *Songs of Silence*.

Teachers should also encourage students to find in that text as many of the gems of passages in which a wide range of the creole to standard English continuum is found. Students will intuitively analyse the shifts to explore what Jean D'Costa says:

> "Jamaican Creole in its turn provides the language of satire, derision, passionate engagement and immersion in one's Jamaicanness."(p. 15 2001-2002 ***JET***)

This level of analysis of the language of literature contributes to the most profound development in the creative thinking of readers.

PLAN FOR *SONGS OF SILENCE* by Curdella Forbes

UNIT TOPIC	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES *At the end of this unit, students will be able to:*	TEACHING\LEARNING STRATEGIES	RESOURCES	EVALUATION
The author's presentation of the theme <u>Spirituality and religion</u>	1. Offer their definitions of the concept 'spirituality' as it presented in this novel. 2. Work in groups to obtain various definitions of spirituality 3. Show how the author makes a distinction between being spiritual and being religious. 4. Speculate, with evidence from the text, on the benefits and disadvantages of being spiritual. 5. Discuss what the chapters suggest is more important to "man" - the attempt to be spiritual or to be religious.	1. The teacher elicits a discussion about the relationship and differences between 'spirituality' and religion. 2. Students form groups based on each chapter and are to creatively present (drama, art, graphic organizers, reflections) the various references to 'spirituality' and religion. 3. The students are asked to discuss and distinguish the differences between being "religious" and "spiritual". 4. Students form new groups and debate author's treatment of whether being religious or spiritual is more important to man. 5. Draw and paint the images of the spiritual that you experience in reading the text.	1. Audio recordings of students' readings of relevant excerpts. 2. Posters with concept maps of themes, with examples of characters, quotes, images, symbols. 3. Reflection Sheets, readers' diaries or journals recording students' personal responses. 4. Multi media player recordings of dramatic presentation of relevant scenes, freezes, author's chair monologues by students.	<u>Formatively:</u> Assess students' ability to locate appropriate references to religion and spiritual awareness in the chapters. Assess their willingness to infer and speculate on the references. Their ability to identify the theme of spirituality and religion from the novel as a whole. Describe three instances in which Forbes encourages the readers to think about religion and/or spirituality. Explain the message you get from these instances. <u>Summatively:</u> Via their written essays on theme using collaboratively created rubric prioritizing elements of writer's craft.

UNIT PLAN FOR *SONGS OF SILENCE* by Curdella Forbes

UNIT TOPIC	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES *At the end of this unit, students will be able to:*	TEACHING\LEARNING STRATEGIES	RESOURCES	EVALUATION
The Structure of the Text: Unified Novel or Collection of Short Stories	1. Identify the elements of story structure in 'Effita' as the first Chapter of the text. 2. Suggest the elements of storytelling that they expect the author to build on in the following chapters. 3. Show how at least two elements of story structure which was introduced in Chapter One have been repeated or developed in succeeding chapters. 4. Compare the story structure of 'Effita' and 'So Few And Such Morning Songs' 5. Read "Epilogue, A Beginning' aloud and suggest all it implies	Assign groups of students to close read 'Effita' and 'So Few And Such Morning Songs' and present graphic organizers showing how the elements of story structure are revealed in each. Use ven diagrams to let students identify the similarities and differences of the elements of story structure in the two chapters. Let students explain 'Epilogue, A Beginning' in relation to the chapters/stories. Invite students to select the story/chapter that has the least interconnections with the other stories. Debate whether the text is better if read as a collection of stories or a unified novel. Author's chair monologues by students assuming the role of Forbes.	Other texts, for example: World of Prose for CXC Lonely Londoners Miguel Street Other texts by Crudella Forbes, for example: Flying with Icarus A Permanent Freedom Storyboards Charts on Elements of Story Structure	Formative: Self and peer evaluation of the relevance of the selected textual references to the tasks assigned. Collaborative creation of rubric for each group task by teachers and students. Teachers are encouraged to allow students to grade their performances on the basis of the criteria established in the rubric. Summative: Teachers should encourage multiple forms of final assessment, for example, Posters, charts, oral presentations, written summaries of group presentations, as well as individually written essays (which are better done after multiple forms of presentation).

UNIT PLAN FOR *SONGS OF SILENCE* by Curdella Forbes

UNIT TOPIC	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES *At the end of this unit, students will be able to:*	TEACHING\LEARNING STRATEGIES	RESOURCES	EVALUATION
The effects of Forbes' use of Language in Songs of Silence	1. Identify the wide variety of emotions that readers experience during the reading of the text. 2. Assess the contribution that the author's use of language plays, in addition to other elements of story structure, to evoke the reader's emotion. 3. Identify the range of different voices (for example, young, old, frightened, confident, schooled, unschooled, contemplative, agitated) that the writer employs in telling the stories in the text. 4. Evaluate the impact of the contrast of these voices on the reader.	Analyse the popular routines of comic strips, advertisements and television programmes that make the audience (a) laugh (b) anxious (c) sad (d) happy at the end. Have students identify and analyse the episode that evoked their strongest emotions in the text. Let them explain why they think they were moved in this way. Have students extend their vocabulary of feeling words by distinguishing the range of responses from readers. Select passages in which the speaking voice changes and have students perform dramatic readings of these sections.	Teacher and student audio recordings of read alouds of extracts from the text. Comic strips from newspapers or comic books	Performance Assessment: Select an excerpt from the text in which the author employs (a) Standard English and (b) at least two varieties of Jamaican Creole. Present the text in a way which emphasises the differences among the languages used.

PRINCIPLES TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF OPEN BOOK EXAMINATIONS AT IN-CLASS TESTS AND END OF TERM SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Most schools and teachers use the framework, format and structure of the final CSEC examination as a model for the preparation of their monthly class tests and End of Term Examinations. We suggest that this is not a developmentally appropriate practice. A recommended alternative is to allow students to use their Literature texts, no matter how packed with their notes, in their class and school examinations. In other words, teachers and schools should allow open book examinations in English Literature.

This practice will afford students more opportunities to formally examine and analyse the texts as examples of the different genres of Literature. Moreover, it will place less emphasis on the need for students to remember the storyline, and allow them to focus on the text as a deliberately constructed work of art by its writer.
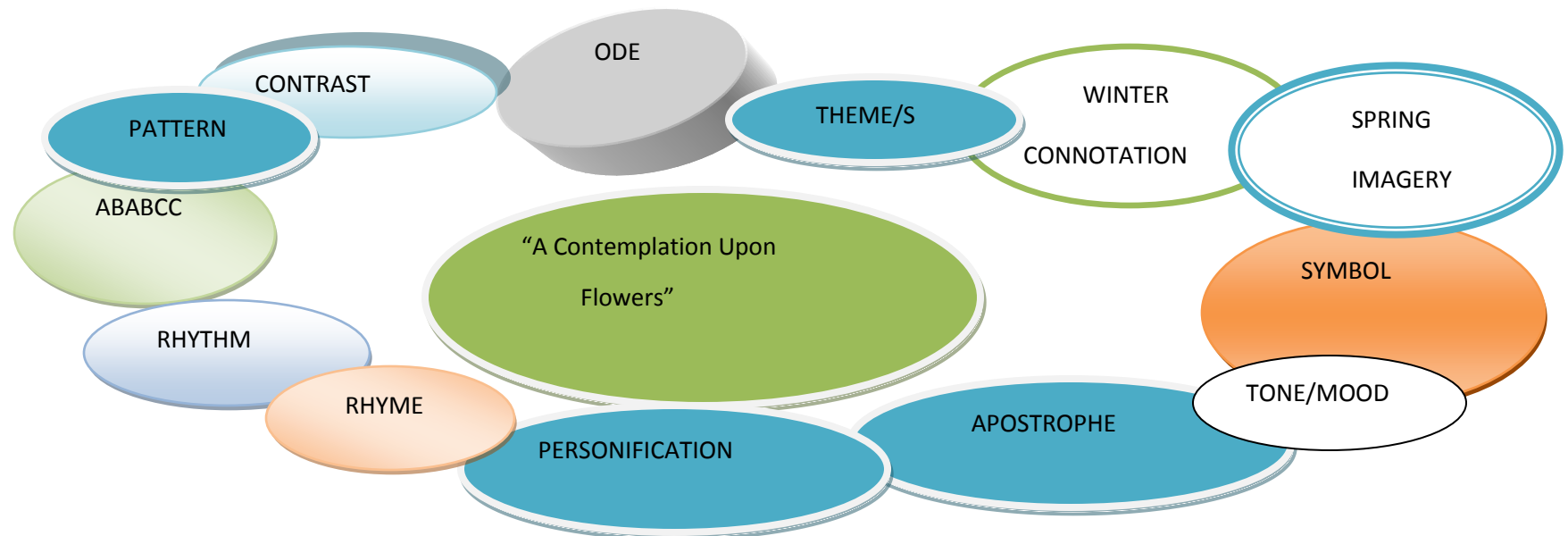
Concept maps should be used to help students understand and demonstrate their mastery of literary concepts including plot, differences and similarities among characters, symbols and what they represent, the evocation of mood and tone, connotations, evidence and inferences, filling in the gaps in narration. After students have been given copious practice in these exercises, they will be better able to demonstrate their understanding of literary concepts through continuous prose, presently the sole medium for external assessment.

A CONCEPT MAP ON "A CONTEMPLATION UPON FLOWERS" by Henry King in the text, <u>A World of Poetry</u> for CXC by Mark McWatt and Hazel-Simmonds McDonald
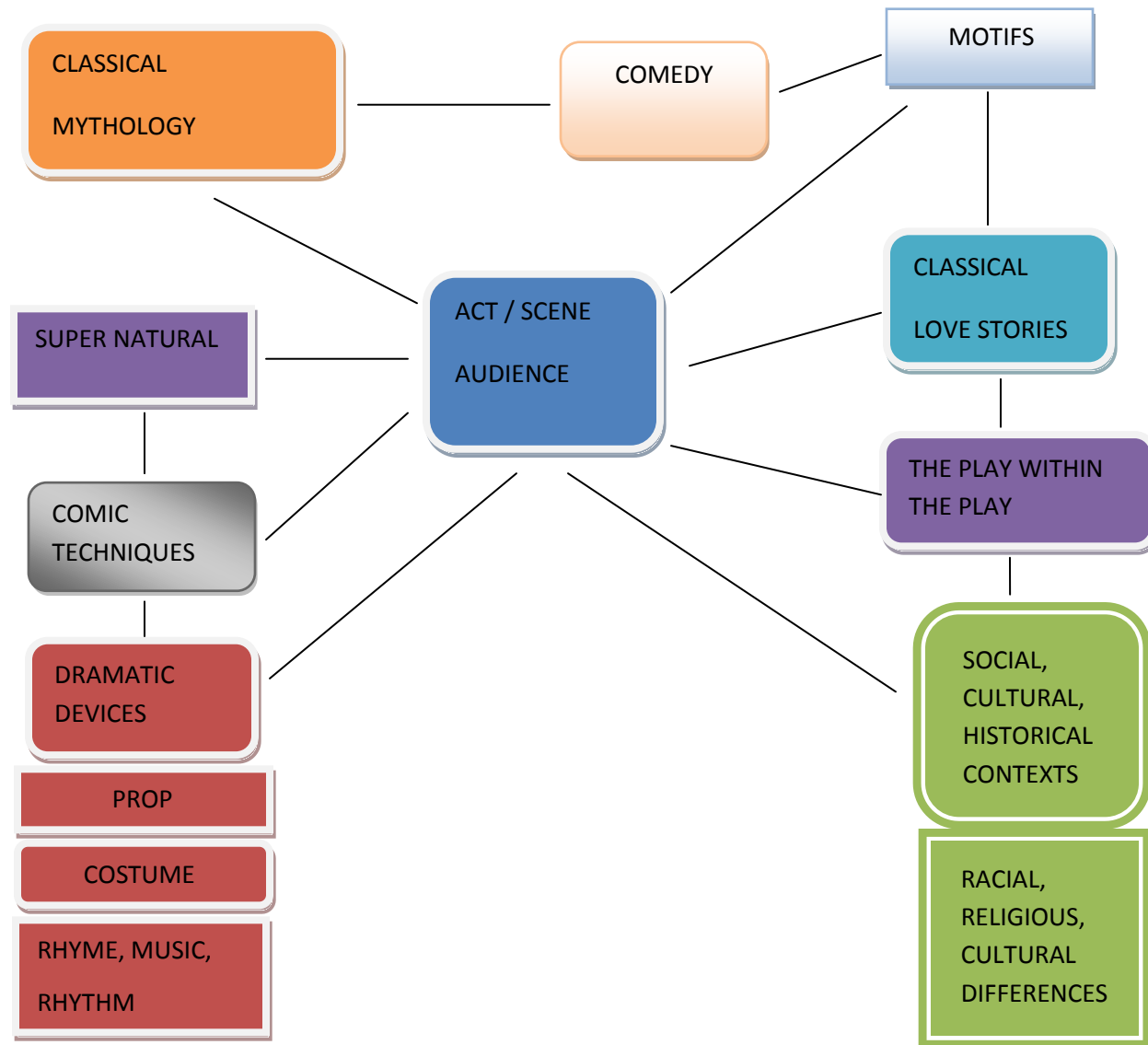
THE IDEA OF A CONCEPT MAP IS A VERY USEFUL ONE, NOT SIMPLY BECAUSE IT CAPTURES INFORMATION IN A VERY ECONOMICAL AND EFFECTIVE WAY BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT IS A VISUAL REPRESENTATION. STUDENTS CAN USE TH   IS TO APPLY AND CREATE KNOWLEDGE. THEY CAN KEEP ADDING CONCEPTS AS THEY LEARN MORE.

In order that students optimally experience the poem, the teacher might want to do repeated readings of the poem unless there are particular students who are good at making a poem come alive. The teacher can then place the students in groups and ask some groups to write questions for the poem – questions which will focus on techniques and devices used by the poet while the other groups provide answers. This activity is invaluable in providing varied responses. In this way students will arrive at the conclusion that there are multiple interpretations of a poem that can be valid as long as they are supported by evidence. The students themselves determine which questions are relevant to the poem being studied.

DEVICES AND TECHNIQUES IN: "A CONTEMPLATION UPON FLOWERS"

ODE

CONTRAST

PATTERN

THEME/S

WINTER

CONNOTATION

SPRING

IMAGERY

ABABCC

"A Contemplation Upon Flowers"

SYMBOL

RHYTHM

RHYME

PERSONIFICATION

APOSTROPHE

TONE/MOOD

2

A Midsummer Night's Dream

CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY

COMEDY

MOTIFS

CLASSICAL LOVE STORIES

SUPER NATURAL

ACT / SCENE AUDIENCE

COMIC TECHNIQUES

THE PLAY WITHIN THE PLAY

DRAMATIC DEVICES

PROP

COSTUME

RHYME, MUSIC, RHYTHM

SOCIAL, CULTURAL, HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

RACIAL, RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The above map provides the students with vocabulary related to drama. The play, <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u> incorporates all the elements above. Again, students can be asked by teachers to find evidence of these elements in the play they are currently studying noting that <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u> is a comedy. The students can be given both the evidence and questions and instructed by the teacher to find a partner. That partner should either be the evidence or the questions. It is an activity that can become very noisy and requires much monitoring by the teacher but it is also an enjoyable activity.

A Midsummer Night's Dream: Tree Concept

SCENERY SETTING LIGHTING

ATMOSPHERE

THEME

ASIDE

EXIT/ EXEUNT

PLOT LANGUAGE COMEDY

PARALLEL/ SUB-PLOT

CHARACTERS

STAGE DIRECTION

DIALOGUE FACIAL EXPRESSION

IMAGERY

IRONY

MOTIF

SOLILOQUOY

The above concept provides the students with vocabulary related to drama. The play, <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u>, incorporates all the above elements of a play. Again, students can be asked by teachers to find evidence of these in the play they are currently studying. Note that <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u> is a comedy. The word "tragedy" would take the place of comedy if the play being studied is viewed as a tragedy. The students can be given both evidence and questions and asked to find their partners.