



Textual Conversations Between  
Al Pacino's *Looking for Richard* and  
William Shakespeare's *King Richard III*  
Unit of Work

(NSW English Stage 6 Syllabus for the Australian  
curriculum: Advanced – Year 12)

Unit of work and lessons based on a comparative  
study of textual conversations between Al  
Pacino's *Looking for Richard* and William  
Shakespeare's *King Richard III*, including analysis  
of context, content, key ideas and intertextuality

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<b>Unit of work:</b>	<i>Textual Conversations Between Al Pacino's Looking for Richard and William Shakespeare's King Richard III</i>	<b>Year:</b>	12 (Stage 6)
<b>Duration:</b>	8 weeks	<b>Assessment:</b>	Comparative study essay
<b>Concept:</b>	Comparative study	<b>Module:</b>	A: Textual Conversations

### Learning experiences:

reading, writing, viewing, listening, creating

### Links to other learning areas:

- History

### General capabilities:

- literacy
- critical and creative thinking
- ethical behaviour
- personal and social competence.

Essential Learning Goal	Overarching Questions	Key Learning Ideas
<p>To explore how meanings of a pair of texts can reveal resonances and dissonances by considering the textual conversations between them or the ways texts are influenced by other texts.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the contextual shaping elements of both texts?</li> <li>2. What textual references exemplify these contextual shaping elements?</li> <li>3. What are the 'questions of value' in each text? What questions does the composer believe are worth asking?</li> <li>4. does <i>Looking for Richard</i> converse (or is influenced by) with <i>King Richard III</i>?</li> <li>5. does <i>King Richard III</i> converse (or is influenced by) other texts of its time?</li> <li>6. What do we learn about life, texts and society from both texts?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural, historical, literary and social context of each text</li> <li>• key concepts, values, perspectives, attitudes and assumptions in each text</li> <li>• content of each text</li> <li>• intertextuality and its significance</li> <li>• how texts are influenced by other texts</li> <li>• how texts influence other texts</li> </ul>

## NSW English Advanced Stage 6 Syllabus (Year 12) – Objectives, Outcomes & Content Descriptions

HSC English (Advanced) Objectives	HSC English (Advanced) Outcomes	Content Statements	HSC English (Advanced) Content Descriptions
<p><b>Objective A</b></p> <p>Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing and representing.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 1</b></p> <p><b>A student:</b> independently responds to, composes and evaluates a range of complex texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure EA12-1</p>	Engage personally with texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate the relationship between responder, composer, text and context 🌐 🌐</li> <li>• critically evaluate the aesthetic qualities of texts and the power of language to express personal ideas and experiences 🗣️ 🌐 🌐</li> </ul>
		Develop and apply contextual knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• critically engage with complex texts from a variety of personal, social, historical and cultural contexts, and evaluate how these contexts impact on meaning 🗣️ 🌐 🌐</li> <li>• analyse and evaluate how and why texts influence and position readers and viewers (ACEEN040) 🌐 🗣️</li> </ul>
		Understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analyse how text structures, language features and stylistic elements shape meaning and create particular effects and nuances, for example through allusions, paradoxes and ambiguities (ACELR005) 🌐 🗣️</li> <li>• judiciously select aspects of language, style and convention to represent experience for interpretive, imaginative and evaluative purposes 🌐 🗣️</li> </ul>
		Respond to and compose texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a creative, informed and sustained interpretation of texts supported by close textual analysis (ACELR062) 🌐</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>compose texts that integrate different modes, media and forms and assess the impacts of this combination on meaning and response (ACELR065) 📄 🗣️ 🌟</li> </ul>
<b>HSC English (Advanced) Objectives</b>	<b>HSC English (Advanced) Outcomes</b>	<b>Content Statements</b>	<b>HSC English (Advanced) Content Descriptions</b>
<p><b>Objective B</b></p> <p>Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to use language to shape and make meaning according to purpose, audience and context.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 3</b></p> <p>› <b>A student:</b> critically analyses and uses language forms, features and structures of texts justifying appropriateness for specific purposes, audiences and contexts and evaluates their effects on meaning EA12-3</p>	Engage personally with texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage with complex texts through their specific language forms, features and structures to understand particular representations of human experience and appreciate the power of language to shape meaning 🗣️ 🌟</li> <li>explore and evaluate how mode, medium and form shape and inform responses to texts</li> </ul>
		Develop and apply contextual knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>critically select, use and analyse language forms and features in a variety of personal, social and cultural contexts and reflect on how these choices influence responses 🗣️ 🌟</li> <li>use appropriate and effective form, content, style and tone for different purposes and audiences and evaluate their effectiveness in real and imagined contexts (ACEEN011)</li> </ul>
		Understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>skilfully use language for making connections, questioning, affirming, challenging and speculating about texts with clarity and control</li> <li>skilfully use appropriate language and terminology of critical and creative expression in refining arguments, interpreting texts and crafting imaginative compositions (ACELR063) 🌟</li> <li>make innovative and imaginative use of language features including punctuation and syntax for particular effects (ACEEN051) 🌟</li> </ul>

		Respond to and compose texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support critical interpretations of texts through sustained argument and relevant detailed textual analysis (ACELR046) ⚙️</li> <li>analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of language patterns in their own and others' compositions, for example grammatical and figurative choices ⚙️</li> </ul>
<b>HSC English (Advanced) Objectives</b>	<b>HSC English (Advanced) Outcomes</b>	<b>Content Statements</b>	<b>HSC English (Advanced) Content Descriptions</b>
<b>Objective C</b> Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to think in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive and critical.	<b>Outcome 6</b> › <b>A student:</b> investigates and evaluates the relationships between texts EA12-6	Engage personally with texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>read, listen and/or view widely to compare and contrast how composers use patterns and conventions in texts, for example through wordplay, parody and hybridity, and the ways in which appropriations of earlier texts allow new insights into original texts (ACELR024) 🗣️ 📺</li> </ul>
		Develop and apply contextual knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluate how texts reflect, confirm or challenge expectations associated with particular genres and styles</li> <li>analyse the ways in which perspectives are conveyed through texts drawn from other times and cultures, and how these may be renewed for a contemporary Australian audience (ACELR057) 🇺🇸 🌐 🗣️</li> </ul>
		Understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>compare and evaluate the use of textual conventions and patterns in texts from different contexts to deepen their understanding of how meaning is made 🗣️ 🌐 📺</li> <li>analyse how composers (authors, poets, playwrights, directors, designers and so on) combine elements from different texts, sources and genres to create new texts for particular audiences and purposes ⚙️ 📺 📖</li> </ul>

		Respond to and compose texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>critically analyse how intertextuality and textual appropriation influence interpretation and meaning ✨</li> <li>evaluate and discuss whether textual appropriations lead to a deeper understanding of the original text and their own cultural context 🌍 ✨</li> <li>adapt literary conventions for specific audiences, challenging conventions and reinterpreting ideas and perspectives (ACELR051) ✨</li> </ul>
<b>HSC English (Advanced) Objectives</b>	<b>HSC English (Advanced) Outcomes</b>	<b>Content Statements</b>	<b>HSC English (Advanced) Content Descriptions</b>
<b>Objective D</b> Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to express themselves and their	<b>Outcome 7</b> › <b>A student:</b> evaluates the diverse ways texts can represent personal and public worlds and recognises how they are valued EA12-7	Engage personally with texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>appreciate, analyse and speculate about the power of language to represent personal and public worlds for critical reflection and pleasure (ACELR038) 🌍 📖 🗣️</li> </ul>
		Develop and apply contextual knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluate the effect of context on shaping the social, moral and ethical perspectives in texts ✨ 📖 ✨</li> <li>evaluate how texts, including their own compositions, are influenced by personal, social and cultural contexts and recognise how they are valued 🌍 📖 🗣️ 🌐 ✨</li> </ul>
		Understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluate and select language forms, features and structures of texts to represent diverse human experience, universal themes and social, cultural and historical contexts 🌍 📖 🗣️ ✨</li> <li>evaluate how particular thematic, aesthetic, generic and technological elements represent personal and public worlds and reflect on how this influences how texts are valued 🌍 📖 🗣️</li> </ul>

relationships with others and their world.		Respond to and compose texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate interpretations of texts that derive from different perspectives and recognise how this influences personal composition and response ✨ ⚙️ 🗣️</li> <li>• experiment in own compositions with the different ways in which form, personal style, language and content engage and position the audience (ACELR052) ⚙️ 📄 🗣️</li> </ul>
	<b>Outcome 8</b> › <b>A student:</b> explains and evaluates nuanced cultural assumptions and values in texts and their effects on meaning EA12-8	Engage personally with texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore the ways that texts represent alternative ways of seeing the world 🗣️ 🌐 🗣️</li> <li>• critically evaluate the effect of engaging with other cultures and values through texts on their own perspectives and values 🗣️ 🌐 🗣️</li> </ul>
		Develop and apply contextual knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate and reflect on values and perspectives in texts from different historical and cultural contexts, including their own 🗣️ 🌐</li> <li>• evaluate and reflect on the relationship between representations of significant historical and cultural events and figures, and their representations in texts (ACELR041) 🗣️ 🌐 🗣️</li> </ul>
		Understand and apply knowledge of language forms and features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• critically reflect on the way particular uses of language, for example imagery and allusion, convey values and perspectives in texts ⚙️ 🗣️</li> <li>• analyse and evaluate how personal and cultural assumptions can be inferred from particular uses of language, for example figurative language, irony and rhetoric 🗣️ 🗣️</li> </ul>

		Respond to and compose texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluate cultural assumptions in texts from different personal, social, historical and cultural contexts, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People(s) and people with Asian heritage 🙌🌐⚙️🌍</li> <li>• evaluate, select and adapt significant elements of texts to represent or reinterpret cultural assumptions in texts 🙌🌐⚙️🌍</li> </ul>
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NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), *NSW Syllabus for the Australian curriculum: Advanced Stage 6*, April 2017, pp.43-51

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Content descriptions	Quality Teaching Model	Lesson Outline	Suitable for homework	Resources
<p>Outcome 1 Develop and apply contextual knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>analyse and evaluate how and why texts influence and position readers and viewers (ACEEN040) 🛠️🌐</li> </ul> <p>Outcome 8 Respond to and compose texts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluate cultural assumptions in texts from different personal, social, historical and cultural contexts 🌐🌐🌐</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intellectual quality</b> Deep knowledge Deep understanding Higher-order thinking</p> <p><b>Significance</b> Background knowledge Cultural knowledge</p>	<h2 style="color: #2e8b57;">Purpose and audience of the film</h2> <p><b>Guidance</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain, discuss or read notes from the worksheet about the personal audience of the film.</li> <li>Ask students to complete the task below:</li> </ol> <p><b>Task: Analysing purpose and audience</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does the quote by Kline above tell you about the way Shakespeare is often received in the classroom? Has this been your experience? Explain your experiences with Shakespeare?</li> <li>Consider the following key question as you learn about the purpose and audience of <i>Looking for Richard</i>:   <div style="text-align: center; color: #4682b4; font-style: italic;">‘How does <i>Looking for Richard</i> communicate to an American audience?’</div> </li> <li>Below are some quotes from the opening scenes of the documentary film. Read these. In your own words, write 2-3 sentences explaining Pacino’s purpose and audience. Try to use parts of the quotes that you feel epitomise his purpose and audience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>‘It has always been a dream of mine to communicate how I feel about Shakespeare to others.’</li> <li>‘We’re peddling him on the streets.’</li> <li>‘Our main goal with this project is to reach an audience that would not normally participate in this kind of language and world.’</li> </ul> </li> <li>Are there any other scenes where Pacino expresses his purpose? What are they and what purpose does he express?</li> </ol>		<p>Purpose and audience of the film worksheet</p>

		v. In your view, does Pacino achieve his purpose through the film? Explain your ideas with reference to the textual conversation between <i>King Richard III</i> and <i>Looking for Richard</i> ? (Write two, 250-word paragraphs.)		
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