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Exploring sustainability in Literature for the Australian Curriculum: An annotated guide

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The Australian Curriculum: English (AC:E) is being implemented in Queensland and asks teachers and curriculum designers to incorporate the cross curriculum priority of Sustainability. This paper examines some texts suitable for inclusion in classroom study and suggests some companion texts that may be studied alongside them, including online resources by the ABC and those developed online for the Australian Curriculum. We also suggest some formative and summative assessment possibilities for responding to the selected works in this guide. We have endeavoured to investigate literature that enable students to explore and produce text types across the three AC:E categories: persuasive, imaginative and informative. The selected texts cover traditional novels, novellas, Sci-fi and speculative fiction, non-fiction, documentary, feature film and animation. Some of the texts reviewed here also cover the other cross curriculum priorities including texts by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers and some which also include Asian representations. We have also indicated which of the AC:E the general capabilities are addressed in each text.

The AC:E v.5.1 (ACARA, 2013) states:

Across the Australian Curriculum, sustainability will allow all young Australians to develop the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary for them to act in ways that contribute to more sustainable patterns of living. It will enable individuals and communities to reflect on ways of interpreting and engaging with the world. The Sustainability priority is futures-oriented, focusing on protecting environments and creating a more ecologically and socially just world through informed action. Actions that support more sustainable patterns of living require consideration of environmental, social, cultural and economic systems and their interdependence.

In the Australian Curriculum: English, the priority of sustainability provides rich and engaging contexts for developing students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading, viewing and writing.

The Australian Curriculum: English assists students to develop the skills necessary to investigate, analyse and communicate ideas and information related to sustainability, and to advocate, generate and evaluate actions for sustainable futures. The content in the language, literature and literacy strands is key to developing and sharing knowledge about social, economic and ecological systems and world views that promote social justice.

In this learning area, students may interrogate a range of texts to shape their decision making in relation to sustainability. They develop the understanding and skills necessary to act responsibly and create texts that inform and persuade others to take action for sustainable futures.

The selected texts below explore one or more aspects of this description of sustainability in the curriculum and we hope are helpful to teachers wanting to incorporate this CCP into their English work programs and units.

| Exploring Sustainability in Literature for the Australian Curriculum | |
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| Novel: <i>Holes</i> Sachar, Louis (2000) | Year level suitability: Year 7 |
| Synopsis: This easy to read dystopic, futuristic novel is about persistence, and distortions of the truth. The plot revolves around a group of young misfits who have been sent to detention at 'Camp Green Lake' in an American desert populated by venomous lizards. The mindless occupation of digging holes is the punishment meted out to young miscreants. The central character, Stanley Yelnats, quickly learns the power dynamic of the group, and tries to keep a low profile. He discovers something one day in one of the holes of interest to the brutal and treacherous warden of the camp and the consequences of that are personally damaging to him. He escapes into the desert and survives by finding a hill and another 'lost' boy. When he returns to the camp, a 'treasure' chest has | |

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| <p>been unearthed which leads to the breakdown of the deception that has been controlling the camp. Keeping people, especially children in such inhumane conditions is not sustainable.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities: Report, enquiry or investigation into the conditions of the camp</p> | <p>AC:E GCs: Ehtical understanding, personal and social capability.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts: Film: <i>Holes</i> (adaptation) (Davis, 2003) Novel: <i>The Barrumbi Kids</i> (Norrington, 2002)</p> |
| <p>Novel: <i>Green Tara</i> Brower, K.H. (2013)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability: Year 7</p> |
| <p>Synopsis: Scientist–in- training and neophyte space pilot, Virginia, lives on a space ship colony permanently floating in space, many generations after the earth has been destroyed. She and her cousin, Gordy, break security to fly into a forbidden zone, to the legendary planet Green Tara, which has a sun and gravity, wildlife and oceans much like Earth.</p> <p>As a teenager she discovers a navigation chart marking her mother’s last-known destination. Her green Tara expedition is motivated by searching for her mother who had left when Virginia was just five years old. She discovers that her mother became lost on a science expedition, illegally searching for a planet where colonists could breathe fresh air and drink clean water.</p> <p>Virginia finds her mother. Unfortunately, her mother’s mission to recolonise Earth has passed along her ancestral line, and seems more important to her than bonding with her daughter. Their mission is dogged by security agents of the Triumvirate — unwilling to relinquish control of precious natural resources— who track the party down and threaten the mission and the family’s freedom.</p> <p>This is a story about what can happen if we do not look after the planet and the importance of human relationships. <i>Green Tara</i> explores the need for taking informed action and caring for each other as well.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities: Speculative Fiction Illustrated hand –written journal entries on how to revive the Earth’s ecosystem, written in the persona of Virginia’s eight times removed great grandmother.</p> | <p>AC:E GCs: Ethical understanding, personal and social capability.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts: Novel: <i>Refuge</i> (French, 2013) Film: <i>Avatar</i> (Cameron, 2010)</p> |
| <p>Novel: <i>The Barrumbi Kids</i> Norrington, Leonie (2002)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability: Year 7-8.</p> |
| <p>Synopsis: Norrington’s first young reader’s novel demonstrates the complexities of cross-cultural living in a remote community in Northern Territory. The novel follows the adventures of primary school aged children as they navigate their way through the blended culture of their community, demonstrating their lived social, cultural and sustainable practices; particularly the importance of fire in managing the landscape.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities: Poetry or journal writing exploring the difference between informed and</p> | <p>AC:E GCs: Personal and social capability, intercultural understanding, ethical understanding.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts: Film: <i>Avatar</i> (Cameron, 2010); <i>Fire power</i> (ABC, 2013) Novel: <i>Refuge</i> (French, 2013) (See below)</p> |

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| uninformed action | <i>Incorporates the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.</i> | Poetry: <i>The Hot Ridge; Fire-Stick Farming</i> , from <i>Fire-stick Farming</i> (O'Connor, 1990) |
| TV Series and Picture Book: <i>My Place</i> Wheatley, Nadia (ABC3, 2012; Wheatley & Rawlins, 1987) | | Year level suitability: Year 7-8. |
| Synopsis: My Place tells the story of one “place” in Sydney, as experienced and lived in by a succession of children. Told in intervals of ten years, beginning in 2008 and reaching back in time to before the First Fleet arrived in 1788. The stories are told by the children of each time period, as they hide and play in the same fig tree, and illustrates how the “place”, as well as the people who inhabit it, change over time. Themes of sustainability are illustrated by the need to preserve historic trees, and the changing relationship between people and their environment. The series highlights the importance of preserving nature in terms of identity and place, as the tree remains the central character throughout 220 years. | | |
| Assessment possibilities: Digital storytelling or podcast about the importance of Place, create a picture book | AC:E GCs: Literacy (cineliteracy), ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability. | Suggested Companion Texts: Online resources http://www.abc.net.au/abc3/myplace/ ACMI digital storytelling archive acmi.com.au |
| Novel: <i>Trash</i> Mulligan, Andy (2010) | | Year level suitability: Year 8 |
| Synopsis: Set in Manilla on the dumpsite, where young people sift through the trash, this novel is a page turning story of survival. The central characters are the dump kids, little more than street kids, but two of them are literate and find a wallet and a bag whilst sifting through the trash for recyclables. This leads to intrigue which uncovers police and political corruption in Philippines. It encompasses the theme of sustainability in that it is impossible to imagine what the earth will be like if we continue to throw everything away, as if when it is out of sight it is out of mind. If a developing country is drowning in trash, what is our own country doing? Are lifestyles like these sustainable? | | |
| Assessment possibilities: Imaginative: students create narratives around items discovered in a manufactured “rubbish bin” Motivational speech delivered by one of the characters as adults in the new land. Speculative fiction: archaeological report from the future “what rubbish says about people” at a particular time and place. | AC:E GCs: Literacy, intercultural understanding, ethical understanding, personal and social capability, critical and creative thinking. | Suggested Companion Texts: <u>Years 7 to 10</u> Website: http://e4ac.edu.au/ Four empowering literature-based units of work that pursue imagination and inquiry to develop critical literacy skills and ethical understandings across a range of social media and authentic texts, for the Australian Curriculum. Film: <i>WALL-E</i> (Animation) (Stanton, 2008); <i>The Age of Stupid</i> (Hybird drama/documentary) (Armstrong, 2009); <i>Trash</i> (adaptation, scheduled for release 2014) (Daldry, 2014) |

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| Novel: <i>Refuge</i> French, Jackie (2013) | | Year level suitability: Year 8 |
| Synopsis: This novel is an interesting blend of magical realism, speculative fiction and the stories of refugees. Young readers will learn much about asylum seekers and the tragic circumstances from which they have come. This tale is set on a beach trapped in time characters from different times and places come together to explore their readiness to leave and join the real world. It explores sustainability in the sense that it explores a 'socially just world through informed action'. Each of the characters in the refuge must decide to leave to face reality. The way we currently treat asylum seekers in this country is unsustainable. | | |
| Assessment possibilities: Memoir for a character – brief biographical or autobiographical extract of their time at the refuge bay. Script of two people from the refuge meeting in the same time zone in the future. | AC:E GCs: Intercultural understanding, ethical understanding, personal and social capability, critical and creative thinking. <i>Incorporates the CCP of Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia.</i> | Suggested Companion Texts: Novel: <i>Green Tara</i> (Brower, 2013) Play: <i>Monkey Mother</i> (Ta Binh, 2000) |
| Novel: <i>My Sister Sif</i> Park, Ruth (2009) | | Year level suitability: Year 9 |
| Synopsis: This novel borders on speculative fiction, as it deals with a central character Erika; Riko to her family and her sister, Sif. Both sisters grew up on a Pacific island, Rongo. The sisters belong to the 'water people' although their father was a 'landcrab', from Scandinavia, whilst their mother was part mermaid. Their children inherited more or less of the characteristics of the water people and have the ability to swim well, breathe for longer than usual underwater and communicate with sea creatures, such as dolphins and whales. When a young scientist and shell collector discovers Riko selling a very rare shell, in order to pay for a flight back to Rongo from Melbourne, he discovers her identity and follows her to the Island. On Rongo he develops a relationship with Sif. The Island is subject to volcanic tremors and it transpires that French nuclear testing in the Pacific has damaged the ecosystem and the water creatures begin to suffer sickness, deformities and still births. The story explores the idea that it is unsustainable to carry out such ecologically dangerous activities in the ocean and that there will always be dire consequences of nuclear testing for the people living in these fragile environments. | | |
| Assessment possibilities: Persuasive speaking about the environment; alternative narrative from the young scientist's POV (eg journal entries/logs of his observations of the water people) | AC:E GCs: Intercultural understanding, ethical understanding, personal and social capability, critical and creative thinking. | Suggested Companion Texts: Film: <i>Tank Girl</i> (Talalay, 1995) (See below) Novel: <i>Terrene: The hidden valley</i> (Liu, 2011); <i>Hope Bay</i> (Pluss, 2005) |
| Film: <i>Tank Girl</i> | | Year level suitability: |

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| Talalay, Rachel (1995) | | Year 9 |
| <p>Synopsis: This 1995 Australian, sci-fi comic film derives from a British cult comic-strip. A futuristic tank-riding, feminist, anti-heroine, Tank Girl (Lori Petty) fights a mega-corporation, which controls the world's water supply. This comedy deals satirically with sustainability in terms of what could happen when the world runs out of clean drinking water. The action is set in the year 2033, after an ecological disaster of drought and pollution has ravaged the countryside, and water is at a premium and being hoarded by the Department of Water and Power. Tank girl's and her mutant friends battle the bureaucracy and its villainous chief, Kesslee (Malcolm McDowell). At stake is the world's water supply, which the rebels frequently raid. Rock star Iggy Pop has a cameo as Rat Face, one of the half-human, half-kangaroo Rippers.</p> <p>*This film divided viewers, especially those who were fans of the original comic strip, who reviewed it unfavorably. It however can be critically reviewed as such to examine different media representations of issues.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities:</p> <p>Create comic strip from an alternative scene</p> <p>Cross over fiction (Tank Girl meets Sif or Virginia from <i>Green Tara</i>)</p> <p>An exposition critically comparing the representations of feminist heroines across genres</p> | <p>AC:E GCs:</p> <p>Critical and creative thinking, ethical understanding, personal and social capability.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts:</p> <p>Novel: <i>My Sister Sif</i> (Park, 2009)</p> <p>Comic trade paperbacks: <i>Tank Girl</i> (Hewlett & Martin, 2009)</p> <p>Animation series: <i>Aeon Flux</i> (Chung, 1991-)</p> |
| <p>Novel: <i>Hope Bay</i> Pluss, Nicole (2005)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability:</p> <p>Year 9 or 10</p> |
| <p>Synopsis: <i>Hope Bay</i> is set primarily on 'Mallee Island' off the southern Coast of Australia, where teenage, Possum and her friend Ben fiercely protect the pristine environment. The narrative sub text explores the backstory of old Olga, an immigrant from war torn Europe, whose affinity with Possum develops through their love of the Island's wildlife. A narrative subtext follows Olga and her sister Stella's escape from Nazi-occupied Holland during the second world war. Olga, having found refuge on this isolated Island, can 'call in' the local dolphins. When tourists flock to the Island upsetting the balance of nature Possum goes into overdrive as an ecowarrior. When Olga becomes ill, she passes on a gift to Possum who must rise to the legacy. The book deals with sustainable sea and land practices and the importance of protecting the environment in wild places.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities:</p> <p>Euology</p> <p>Narrative backstory from Olga's first person viewpoint</p> <p>Persuasive speech on protection of wildlife</p> | <p>AC:E GCs:</p> <p>Eco-literacy, Ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts:</p> <p><i>My sister Sif</i> (Park, 2009)</p> <p><i>What now Tilda B?</i> (Lomer, 2010)</p> |
| <p>Novel: <i>What now, Tilda B?</i> Lomer, Kathryn (2010)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability:</p> <p>Year 9</p> |

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| <p>Synopsis: Tilda Braint is nearly sixteen, restless and having trouble figuring out her next step in life. Living in a small coastal town in Tasmania doesn't seem to offer much opportunity, as everyone knows everyone else, school is full of petty conflict and her family unit has broken down. When a mother elephant seal gives birth to a pup at the local beach and Tilda discovers them, and becomes involved in their care, her life changes irrevocably. Tourists flock to witness the novelty of these marine strangers so far from their usual habitat. The spectacle of the seals unite usually disparate people in the community. We learn along with Tilda that these seals used to populate this beach before they were hunted almost to extinction. Alongside the seal's progress, Tilda's wild best friend, Shell, is forced to make decisions about her future. The importance of friendship and discovering 'who you really are' are central themes of this moving novel.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities:</p> <p>Fleshing out details of the 'school project' undertaken by Tilda and her classmates</p> <p>An alternative ending or sequel to the novel: or what Tilda does next.</p> <p>A first person account through the POV of the marine biologist Meg</p> <p>A newspaper report featuring the discovery and progress of the seals.</p> | <p>AC:E GCs:</p> <p>Eco-literacy, Ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts:</p> <p><i>My sister Sif</i> (Park, 2009)</p> <p><i>Hope Bay</i> (Pluss, 2005)</p> |
| <p>Novel: <i>River Child</i> Logan, Carolyn (1995)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability: Year 10</p> |
| <p>Synopsis: On the ship journey bound for Australia, Sarah's mother and step father have died. Sixteen year old Sarah must fend both for her four year old brother Tommy and herself in the new land. A determined and strong young woman, Sarah soon make a new life and home on the edge of the wilderness. She takes a position as a servant to the surveyor-general of the colony. Here, beside the river, she finds herself drawn towards the unknown, and into a deep and mysterious relationship with Bilu, an Aboriginal woman, and her son Warlu and with the river upon which they depend. The narrative is interspersed with fragments of diaries and letters of different characters, Sarah's dreams and memories of an unhappy past and the poetic thoughts of Bilu. <i>River Child</i> is an intensely moving story of one colonial woman's adventure, love, tragedy and courage. Like <i>The secret river</i> (Grenville, 2006) and <i>Nanberry</i> (French, 2011), this novel exposes how the early colonists' approach to developing land was unsustainable. River child asks the question how things may have been different if colonists had learnt from Indigenous people and their understanding of, and relationship with, the land instead of viewing both of them as hostile.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities:</p> <p>Extensions of the written diaries from some marginal characters</p> <p>Adapt a scene from the novel as a film or play</p> | <p>AC:E GCs:</p> <p>Literacy, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability.</p> <p><i>Incorporates the CCP</i></p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts:</p> <p><i>Novel: The Secret River</i> (Grenville, 2006) – more suitable for senior readers in year 11 or 12, this could be a comparative story; <i>Nanberry: black white brother</i> (French, 2011)</p> <p><i>Short story: South</i> (Drury, 2001b)</p> <p>from <i>The shaman's quest</i> (Drury, 2001a, pp.</p> |

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| script Design a digital story or narrative poetry written from the river's point of view | <i>of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.</i> | 59-103). Set in Central Australia, this describes the quest of Kalu, an Indigenous 'clever man', of the lizard dreaming. The story has intertextual connections with the coming of the 'River child' to Sarah and the importance of people's lives and deaths and spiritual connection to the water and land. |
| Novel: <i>Riding the Black Cockatoo</i> Danalis, John (2009) | | Year level suitability: Year 10 |
| Synopsis: <i>This is the memoir of a creative writing student who returns an Indigenous skull that had been thoughtlessly removed from a midden in South-western Victoria by his relatives. It is also the story of awakening to culture through the return of the skull to its rightful place. Partially set in Queensland University of Technology, Queenslanders will recognise many of the figures in the story. The aspect of sustainability comes into play in the notion of disappearing tribes due in part to genocide and the stealing of land and redirecting of waterways.</i> | | |
| Assessment possibilities: Book trailer Short story demonstrating local knowledge Podcast about the local traditional owners | AC:E GCs: Literacy, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability. <i>Incorporates the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.</i> | Suggested Companion Texts: Novel: <i>Crow Country</i> (Constable, 2011) |
| Novel: <i>Terrene: The hidden valley</i> Liu, Eric (2011) | | Year level suitability: Year 10 |
| Synopsis: <i>Terrene: The hidden valley</i> is a dual-reality fiction set in both the present day/near future, as well as a post-human utopia. A young girl, Flora, seeks answers to what lies beyond the utopic hidden valley. The victim of blackouts she is unable to control, she begins to live two lives: one when awake, and another when she sleeps. From these two existences, she begins to discover clues to the world beyond the valley, and why the last humans settled in Terrene. Selected as a scholar, she journeys to the mysterious Institute, facing challenges along the way, and must combine what she knows about her world, as well as what she learns when asleep, to discover what hope remains for the future of humankind. This novel promotes a focus on protecting the environment and creating an ecologically and socially just world through information action. The novel also explores the theme of unsustainable patterns of living, and the impact on the environment of climate change. A fast paced, action-packed story incorporating current scientific theories makes this novel suitable for a variety of readers. | | |
| Assessment possibilities: News report Speculative fiction inspired by current events | AC:E GCs: Eco-literacy, Ethical understanding, personal and social capability. | Suggested Companion Texts: Film: <i>The Hunger Games</i> (Collins, 2011); <i>The Age of Stupid (Drama/Documentary)</i> (Armstrong, 2009); <i>WALL-E</i> (Stanton, 2008) Novel: <i>Green Tara</i> (Brower, 2013). |

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| Novel: <i>The Bleeding</i> Wheatley, Nadia (1989) | | Year level suitability: Year 10-11 |
| Synopsis: The novel explores the tensions between ecologists and loggers. The central character Col, echoes these tensions in his own character, as he lies in hospital reflecting on his dual nature as part time gang member and part time ecowarrior, Set in the forest area of NSW. The future of the old growth forest is in jeopardy if it is unsustainably logged. The central character becomes involved in political action to save the forest and discovers some truths about adult life and his own place in the world as part of this reflection. | | |
| Assessment possibilities: Persuasive speech representing one or the other side of the issue Script for podcast or talkback radio A memoir of an event from Col or a minor character's point of view | AC:E GCs: Eco-literacy, Ethical understanding, personal and social capability. | Suggested Companion Texts: Novel: <i>Into the woods</i> (Krien, 2012); <i>What now Tilda B?</i> (Lomer, 2010) Film: <i>Ferntree Gully – The Last Rainforest</i> (Animation) (Kroyer, 1992); <i>Princess Mononoke</i> (Animation) (Miyazaki, 2004); <i>An Inconvenient Truth</i> (Documentary)(Guggenheim, 2007) See also: TED Talks http://www.ted.com/talks |
| Novella: <i>The Tea Goddess</i> Dreyer, Dekker (2010) | | Year level suitability: Year 11 |
| Synopsis: In the novella that coined the term “ecopunk”, Dreyer presents a dystopic future in which unemployed Remy embraces a peculiar travel invitation to travel from his downtrodden Brooklyn flat to London. Teaming up with mysterious Clint he is soon arrested, before teaming up with wayward heiress Darling Daniels to escape. Themes of Buddhism and reincarnation emerge as Remy and Darling begin to remember past lives, and they are called upon by the followers they left behind to finish what their past selves began. At approximately 90 pages, this novella combines action and suspense with the sustainability themes of informed action and creating an ecologically and socially just world. (Infrequent coarse language). | | |
| Assessment possibilities: Script of a scene exploring what Remy and Darling remember from their past lives Newspaper report or blog entry about a political protest or environmental issue in the novella | AC:E GCs: Critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, ethical understanding. | Suggested Companion Texts: Film: <i>Avatar</i> (Cameron, 2010); <i>Food, Inc</i> (Documentary) (Kenner, 2009) Novel: <i>All Over Creation</i> (Ozeki, 2004) |
| Novel: <i>Other Country</i> Scourfield, Stephen (2007) | | Year level suitability: Year 11-12 |
| Synopsis: Prequel to the novel <i>As the river runs</i> , Scourfield explores the relationship between two brothers who have been brutally raised by a violent father and developed both the toughness and consummate skills of station ringers. They are helped by a sympathetic landowner who invests them with trust and the responsibility of running a cattle station. The older brother Ace, wants to keep running things as they were, but the younger brother, Billy, is a visionary and sees that the future of the land must take in other options other than cattle raising if it is to be sustainable in the long term. | | |

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| <p>The personal battle between the brothers echoes the battle between cattle raising and sustainable land use ecotourism involving landcare and Indigenous knowledge. Caution: violence and some sexual content.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities: Model a book trailer, panel discussion on sustainability and land care</p> | <p>AC:E GCs: Ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability. <i>Incorporates the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.</i></p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts: Novel: <i>As the Rivers Runs</i> (sequel) (Scourfield, 2013) Film: <i>Food, Inc</i> (Documentary) (Kenner, 2009)</p> |
| <p>Novel: <i>As The River Runs</i> Scourfield, Stephen (2013)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability: Year 10-11</p> |
| <p>Synopsis: This novel explores the conflict between development on the beautiful and delicate, water-rich, West Australian Kimberly region and the need for water in the capital city. A young eco warrior, Dylan Ward becomes embroiled in the secret plans of a developer Jack Cole and an ambitious politician, Michael Mooney. Dylan accompanies Col and Mooney's smart assistant, Kate Kennedy, on a 'fact finding' mission to the Kimberly. Dylan Ward has positive relationships with the traditional people, as well as the mining industry but finds himself ethically compromised part way through the journey. Kate's ambitions and city life ideals are also challenged as the Kimberly works its magic on her. Positive representations of the Indigenous Kimberly people show that their relationship with the land is still very much intact and alive and that this relationship is both physical and spiritual. The story uncovers political corruption and the possible devastating effects of development when people are not regarded in decisions about developing sensitive environments.</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities: Film script adapted from a chapter/scene, book trailer, speeches or panel discussions, newspaper reports (eg corruption)</p> | <p>AC:E GCs: Ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability. <i>Incorporates the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.</i></p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts: TV Series: <i>Two men in a tinnie</i> (Cordell, 2006) Collection of stories: <i>Kimberley Stories</i> (Toussaint, 2012) Novella: <i>The Biologist and The Ethicist</i> (From <i>Unaccountable Hours</i>) (Scourfield, 2012)</p> |
| <p>Novel: <i>All over creation</i> Ozeki, Ruth (2004)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability: Year 11 or 12</p> |
| <p>Synopsis: The novel is set in the rural town of Liberty Falls, Idaho. Estranged childhood friends Yumi Fuller and Cassie Unger, have different early memories of this place as home. Yumi, beautiful and talented and pregnant, left early in her teens to escape the claustrophobic small town confines. Meanwhile Cassie who never left is ironically caring for Yumi's aging and ill parents Lloyd and Momoko Fuller. Cassie and her husband stand to inherit both families farmlands. Cassie tracks Yumi down to ask her to take responsibility for her aging parents and she reluctantly returns to the farm with three children in tow. The plot thickens when Yumi's former teacher and lover, Elliot, also returns to the town with a very different corporate, reactionary, agricultural agenda. Elliot represents the commercial interests of unsustainable farming practices and Yumi finds herself in the middle of a conflict of interests. The subtext of a feral band of eco-activists, 'The Seeds of Resistance' travelling</p> | | |

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| <p>the US in a Winnebago and protesting against genetic modification discover that old Lloyd and Momoko have been assiduously seed saving for decades. They hold him up as a trailblazer of sustainability and camp at the farm headquarters trying to carry on the conservation work the Fullers began and caring for the old man. The battle between ecology and monoculture collides and values and friendships and familial relationships are severely tested. (Some sexual references.)</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities: Persuasive speeches on aspects of seed saving and sustainable agriculture or related issues Drama or film script of the critical show down between farmers and ecowarriors.</p> | <p>AC:E GCs: Eco-literacy, Ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts: Documentary film: <i>Food, Inc</i> (Kenner, 2009)</p> |
| <p>Non fiction: <i>Into the woods</i> Krein, Anna (2012)</p> | | <p>Year level suitability: Year 12</p> |
| <p>Synopsis: An important non-fiction book which explores the issue of conservation of old growth forest in Tasmania. The journalist writer spends time with all the stakeholders in the issue of deforestation in Tasmania. Duplicity, corruption and shady deals surround the issue over successive governments. Krein tries to present a balanced viewpoint by also representing the stories of the loggers as well as the ecowarriors, all of whom have huge emotional stakes in the business of forestry and the huge pulp Mill planned for the Tamar Valley. This is a fascinating and shocking read and remains current, in the light of the debate recently revived by the Abbot government's idea to rescind the Gillard government's policy which saw the Styx valley protected and the logging managed sustainably. The economic versus ecological argument is exposed in this book sensitively, although the fall out is often brutal for communities and individuals. It's an important story for Australia as state and federal elections have been fought and won over the issue. It is not an easy book to begin with- there are so many statistics and facts to bamboozle the reader. When Krein starts to focus on individual people with real stories, however, the book becomes riveting and you realise that fiction is sometimes stranger and more brutal than fiction could ever be. Perhaps this could be read in sections in conjunction with other works of fiction, such as those suggested below</p> | | |
| <p>Assessment possibilities: Persuasive speeches or panel discussions on aspects sustainable forestry, or industrial encroachments onto agricultural or residential land Persuasive writing covering angles on ecological issues which explore the concept of 'informed action' Create a narrative in the form of a short story or</p> | <p>AC:E GCs: Eco-literacy, Ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability.</p> | <p>Suggested Companion Texts: Novels: <i>As the river runs</i> (Scourfield, 2013); <i>The bleeding</i> (Wheatley, 1989); <i>What now, Tilda B?</i> (Lomer, 2010) Recent news footage of conflict in the old growth forest of Tasmania</p> |

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| <p>digital story, fictionalising events based on one or more of the story's 'characters' Drama or film script of the critical show down between loggers, politicians, residents and conservationists.</p> | | |
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