



Example texts for Year 7–8

A supplementary resource for the Year 7–8 English Learning Area

This resource provides a short list of texts that exemplify the expectations for text forms and complexity outlined in the learning area. This guidance needs to be considered alongside the ‘working with texts’ sections in the teaching sequence guidance.

The intent of this resource is to provide a starting point for teachers to select a range of high quality texts that fulfill the text specifications and meet the needs of the learners in front of them. This is not an exhaustive list nor are the texts on the list mandated; they are examples. Teachers know their students best and different texts will be suitable for different classes.

NOTE

- › Different types of text forms can be studied together to show how they compare and contrast. Some texts can be studied in more detail than others.
- › While full-length texts are encouraged, carefully selected extracts, chapters, scenes, or visual segments may also be appropriate, provided they offer rich opportunities for student engagement.
- › High-quality texts are well crafted, engaging works of fiction or non-fiction that address meaningful themes, offer rich opportunities for interpretation and discussion, and provide significant educational value and challenge.



This resource forms part of a package of supports for the learning area that are currently being developed, and will be released to the sector over the coming terms.



Example texts for Year 7 and 8

Teachers know their students best and know what content is suitable for them to engage with. Texts suitable for one class may not be suitable for another class; this can be for a variety of reasons, including plot details or themes.



Example novels

These texts have been chosen because they fulfil the complexity expectations by having:

- › a straightforward narrative with an aspect that encourages discussion and critical thinking
- › inclusive and engaging content with a variety of sentence structures
- › themes that students can identify and will need support to discuss
- › an opportunity to broaden students' worldviews
- › characters that students can understand or relate to, such as being of a similar age.

Examples:

- › *Charlie Tangaroa and the Creature from the Sea* by Tania Roxborough
- › *Dawn Raid* by Pauline (Vaeluga) Smith
- › *The Breadwinner* by Debroah Ellis
- › *Holes* by Louis Sachar
- › *Pax* by Sara Pennypacker



Example poets and sources of poetry

The expectation is that students engage with a selection of poems from one or multiple poets. These should vary in length, complexity, and theme, and support both literary analysis and student engagement.

The poems within **School Journal Level 4** have been crafted specifically for students in Year 7 and 8 in an New Zealand context. They include poetry written by students.

SkinnyDip is an anthology of poetry from New Zealand aimed at students in Year 7 to 10.

Examples:

- › School Journal Level 4
- › *Pasifika Navigators* edited by Emeli Sione & Darcy Solia
- › *SkinnyDip* edited by Kate De Goldi and Susan Paris
- › Selected poems by Hone Tuwhare, including *Rain*
- › Selected poems by William Carlos Williams, including *This Is Just To Say*

Please note that not all texts within collections will be suitable for the specified year groups. Teacher discretion must be applied.



Example non-fiction texts

The expectation is for students to engage with a selection of non-fiction texts. These may be drawn from other learning areas or contexts.

The non-fiction texts within **School Journal Level 4** have been crafted specifically for students in Year 7 and 8 in an New Zealand context.

Examples:

- › School Journal Level 4
- › Non-fiction texts may be drawn from other learning area contexts to help students develop content knowledge alongside their understanding of language and text structure. For example, an information report in Science about water cycles, or an extract from a speech studied in Social Sciences about the women's suffrage movement.



Example range of other text forms

School Journal Level 4 contains many different text forms, including articles, stories, poems, plays, and short graphic novels. These texts have been crafted specifically for Years 7 and 8 in an New Zealand context by a wide range of authors, illustrators, and creators. Physical copies are sent to all state and state integrated schools. Digital copies, plus teacher support materials, can be found at [School Journal – Series introduction](#).

Annual is a collection of a wide range of written and visual text types from a variety of authors and illustrators, edited by Kate De Goldi and Susan Paris. It includes texts exemplifying a range of complexities, features, ideas, and elements.

Examples:

- › School Journal Level 4
- › *Annual* edited by Kate De Goldi and Susan Paris (collection)
- › *Toi Toi Journal* published by Charlotte Gibbs & edited by Vicki Birks (collection)
- › *Wonder* directed by Stephen Chbosky (feature film)

- › *Spirited Away* directed by Hayao Miyazaki (feature film)
- › *Bridge to Terabithia* directed by Gábor Csupó (feature film)
- › *The Gift* by Carol Ann Duffy (sophisticated picture book)
- › *My Two Blankets* by Irena Kobald & Freya Blackwood (sophisticated picture book)
- › *The Word Collector* by Sonja Wimmen (sophisticated picture book)
- › Malala Yousafzai's United Nations Speech (2013)
- › *I am Eleven* directed by Genevieve Bailey (documentary)
- › *War Horse* by Michael Morpurgo (novel with stage adaptation by National Theatre and sophisticated picture book illustrated by Tom Clohosy Cole)
- › *New Kid* by Jerry Craft (graphic novel)

Please note that not all texts within collections will be suitable for the specified year groups. Teacher discretion must be applied.

Text specifications for Year 7 and 8

| Text forms and range ¹ | Text complexity |
|--|---|
| <p>In each year, students must engage meaningfully with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › at least one novel › a selection of poetry² › a selection of non-fiction texts.³ <p>Teachers may also choose from a range of other text forms, such as, film, drama, short stories, and visual, spoken, multimodal, and digital texts.⁴</p> <p>Teachers should ensure that students experience historical and contemporary texts that are widely regarded as high quality.⁵ These texts must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › seminal texts⁶ that have had a significant and lasting impact on how people understand key ideas from different cultures and times › texts by a range of authors representative of New Zealand’s rich bicultural (both Māori and Pākehā) and multicultural literary heritage › texts from around the world › texts from popular and youth cultures. <p>Students should also be supported to select texts for personal interest and enjoyment.</p> | <p>Texts should be of varying lengths, have an appropriate level of complexity, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › words and phrases with multiple meanings that require students to know and use effective word-solving strategies › sentences that vary in length, including long, complex sentences that contain a lot of information › visual features that contain main ideas, such as illustrations, photographs, text boxes, diagrams, maps, charts, or graphs › language features that support analysis of how meaning is shaped, including those explicitly identified in the teaching sequence › ideas and contexts that are relevant to students’ lives – for example, age-appropriate characters overcoming challenges › ideas that invite critical thinking › layers of meaning and/or information that require students to infer meaning or make judgments. |

1. Different types of text forms can be studied together to show how they compare and contrast. Some texts can be studied in more detail than others.
2. A selection of poems, varying in length, complexity, and theme, from one or multiple poets, that support literary analysis and student engagement.
3. Non-fiction texts may be drawn from other learning area contexts to help students develop content knowledge alongside their understanding of text language and structure, for example, an information report in Science about water cycles or an extract of a speech studied in Social Sciences about the women’s suffrage movement.
4. While full-length texts are encouraged, carefully selected extracts, chapters, scenes, or visual segments may also be appropriate, provided they offer rich opportunities for student engagement.
5. High-quality texts are well crafted, engaging works of fiction or non-fiction that address meaningful themes, offer rich opportunities for interpretation and discussion, and provide significant educational value and challenge.
6. Seminal texts are influential works that introduce new ideas, frameworks, critiques, or stylistic approaches that significantly shape how others engage with a particular topic. Their importance lies in the way they initiate new directions, challenge existing norms, and become enduring reference points for future work. Their influence may be constructive or controversial – what matters is the depth and reach of their impact, as such texts are continually revisited, debated, and built upon.



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