

Secondary English newsletter –National coordinators

Issue 2 | Term 2 | May 2012

The newsletter that we circulated last term outlined the free professional learning and development available to English departments this year under the new MOE contract.

It is our intention to publish a newsletter each term with two main purposes in mind: to ensure that you are aware of any new developments, resources or changes, and to share some reflections around effective pedagogy.

Workshops

In the first instance support will be delivered through a series of regional workshops to consider the

- design of effective NCEA teaching and learning programmes.
- use of effective assessment practices that are consistent with *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

You should have received details about these from your local facilitator.

If you have not done so, make contact.

Contact details and workshop dates for term 2

Whakatane June 6 [pm]
Tauranga June 7 [pm]
Hamilton June 27 [pm]

Contact for these:

Cynthia Orr
Team Solutions
Phone: 027 5504133
Email: c.orr@auckland.ac.nz

NCEA updates

The latest NCEA Update [issue 4- April 2012] contains a lot of important information about the:

- Introduction of grade score marking for level 2 externals
- Updated support materials for literacy US
- Changes to Best Practice Workshops
- Changes to external moderation
- Level 3 post consultation draft standards available
- Level 1 internal assessment materials updated.

These NCEA Updates are published online in the last week of each term. You can subscribe to receive an email notification when they are available online.

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/publications/newsletters-and-circulars/ncea-update/issue-4-april-2012/>

Professional learning for middle leaders

There is an increasing focus on building middle leader capability. At a recent meeting in Wellington, an MOE official described HODs as the 'engine room of change'. One could unpack that metaphor in a number of ways, but I think the image that he had was one of you being the driving force. Some of you are involved in He Kakano and that project is focusing on middle leaders this year. The MOE has recently released a new resource to support middle leaders:

- Leading from the Middle: Educational Leadership for Middle and Senior Leaders
<http://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Leadership-development/Professional-information/Leading-from-the-middle>

You may also find it useful to look at Tu Rangatira: Maori Medium Educational Leadership released in 2010

- <http://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Leadership-development/Professional-information/Tu-rangatira-English>

Newsletter compiled by: Cynthia Orr, English facilitator. Phone: 09 623 8880 ext. 48182

Email: c.orr@auckland.ac.nz, www.teamsolutions.ac.nz

Team Solutions, Faculty of Education, The University of Auckland

Epsom Campus Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street, Auckland 1150, New Zealand

Tai Tokerau Campus Private Bag 9002, Whangarei 9002, New Zealand

- NCEA on TKI

This website has recently been updated. The home page makes a very clear division between resources for the aligned standards and resources for the non-aligned standards. Access to these is now much clearer.

Go to <http://ncea.tki.org.nz/>

- Reflections on NCEA data 2011

Looking at the overall 2011 NCEA results for English the Level One internal standard with the largest number of entries last year was *Produce Creative Writing* with 37 649 entries. There is probably no surprise in that. However, what did surprise me was how few students were entered for the new *Use information literacy skills to form conclusion(s)* standard. There were only 6 550 students entered and even if I add in the 4 838 students entered for the old *Research, organise and present information* standard that is still approximately 1/3 the number of students entered for creative writing. Of course this is only one year's data. However, it does mirror a similar trend from the 2010 results with the old standards. Something similar was also evident at Level 2.

Taking an even closer look at the data, of those 11 388 students who attempted a Level One "research" achievement standard in English in 2011 only 17% were Maori and 7% Pasifika Peoples. It was interesting to note that Maori and Pasifika boys had better Achieved rates in the old *Research, organise and present information* standard compared with their female counterparts although the reverse was true in the new *Use information literacy skills to form conclusion(s)* standard. Although in both standards the Merit and Excellence rates for these boys were well below the national rates.

Research, organise and present information

(Merit)	Maori Males	9.8%	National	23.4%
	Pasifika Males	8.9%		
(Excellence)	Maori Males	5%	National	12.6%
	Pasifika Males	2.1%		

Use information literacy skills to form conclusion(s)

(Merit)	Maori Males	8.2%	National	17.6%
	Pasifika Males	9.7%		
(Excellence)	Maori Males	3.9%	National	10.8%
	Pasifika Males	2.3%		

While it may be argued that students are potentially doing "research" in other subjects not all students take subjects such as History and Technology that contain research standards and nor are students necessarily required to use *information literacy skills to form conclusions* in those other subjects. On the rapidly growing information superhighway I believe that following a systematic inquiry as defined by the English standard may be one of the most important skills that we can teach our students.

[*Use information literacy skills* means completing a systematic exploration into a valid area for inquiry in order to form conclusion(s). The steps taken include:

- framing the inquiry within an authentic and relevant context based on carefully considered information needs. This may include identifying an area or direction for investigation, or posing a question(s)
- selecting and using appropriate strategies for locating and processing information
- evaluating the reliability and usefulness of selected information in relation to the inquiry.]

I have recently been reading "The Girl who was on Fire" edited by Leah Wilson, which contains a number of essays about issues raised in "The Hunger Games" trilogy. Carrie Ryan in her essay about Reality TV says, "Too often we accept what is labelled "reality" as truth rather than trying to understand what narrative the source might be promoting..." I think this is an interesting point not just about Reality TV in general or the power of the media in "The Hunger Games". But is also a point worth considering as we create teaching and learning programmes that incorporate the vision of the NZC to develop young people who are life long learners; "literate, numerate; critical and creative thinker; active seekers, users, and creators of knowledge and informed decision makers" (NZC pg 8). So I wonder, is there a way of effectively incorporating an inquiry into another unit of work for perhaps a speech or to extend knowledge for either the visual or written text externals or for the making connections standard?

• Reflections post Best Practice Workshop

I had the benefit of attending a BPW in Dunedin last term. Some of the questions raised during the day showed that not all teachers were aware of the following:

- Moderators will answer specific questions about assessment tasks. They will not moderate the whole task, but there may be some aspect of it that you are not confident about. You do not have to send the student work with the task.
- Where two pieces of work are required for a standard [e.g. level 2 writing] the student will be awarded the lower of the two grades gained. That is, a student who gains an M and an E will be awarded an M.
- There is some ambiguity in the Conditions for Assessment Guidelines for AS 91107 [Analyse aspects of visual and/or oral text[s] through close viewing and/or listening supported by evidence.] Under the heading *Assessment Tasks* there is a reference to "extracts from larger texts. These extracts may come from a longer text that has been studied, but the specified assessed aspects of the extract must not have been studied." The confusion arises from the next section [*Authenticity of Student Work*] where it states that the texts cannot have been studied. The reference to 'texts' needs to be interpreted as 'whole texts or extracts from larger texts.'
- Students are not required to develop more than one response for each text for the personal reading standards. Quality is more important than quantity

Moderators talked of the value of

- sending Optional Teacher Selected Evidence. You can send up to ten samples for a standard. Be pro-active. Get feedback now and build up a bank of your own exemplars. You do not have to send the entire collection of a student's work e.g. you could send 2 of the 6 personal reading responses. Contact your Principal's Nominee if you are unsure of the process.
- getting students to include a statement of intent with their work to explain what they set out to do e.g. I wanted to write an alternative ending that was more final, not one that leads to the next novel in the trilogy. This will encourage students to keep their focus and also make it easier for assessors and moderators to gain insights into the intended audience and purpose.

AS 91107 [Analyse aspects of visual and/or oral text[s] through close viewing and/or listening supported by evidence.] The discussion and the exemplars for this standard got me thinking about a number of things in relation to teaching and learning, and assessment of close viewing .

- **Why do we offer this standard? What do we want students to learn?** I suspect that we spend more time considering the texts that we will use, rather than the learning that is important. Helping students to understand how the techniques and conventions position a viewer helps them to become more critical viewers
- The Level 7, making meaning strand, of the NZC refers to '**texts shaped for different purpose and audiences**' and '**within and across texts**'. Given these statements should we be limiting students to the study of a single feature film? Would students' learning increase if they explored a range e.g. a number of music videos, or some NZ short films? Would viewing clips within a genre e.g. chick flicks, enable students to make comparisons about how the camera manipulates viewers to view characters and develop themes? Is studying a feature film every year the best way to develop students as critical viewers?
- If we are clear about what we want students to learn maybe we could create **umbrella questions** for students to answer e.g. How do horror films create suspense? What techniques and conventions are used to position us to see as a romantic hero? The Focus on Film TKI activity lists a number of questions for students to answer. If students make a random choice of four questions they may produce a rather fragmented answer that limits their ability to gain merit or excellence. One of the indicators of language features at this curriculum level reads *understands and analyses how text conventions work together to create meaning and effect*. Techniques never work in isolation. Understanding what meaning is created will not suffice at this level. Students need to understand how it is created and how techniques work together to create effects.

Useful resources

English online: <http://englishonline.tki.org.nz/>

A site for all teachers of English

The English Senior teaching and Learning guidelines: <http://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/English>

This guide has been designed to help teachers create quality teaching and learning programmes. They will support teachers in their planning for the alignment of standards to *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

Communities on TKI: <http://www.tki.org.nz/Communities>

Includes curriculum documents, news, guidance, resources, and stories and Assessment Information and assessment tools to improve teaching and learning, including [e-asTTle](#).

And in particular <http://secondary.tki.org.nz/>, **which is your one-stop-shop for information, resources and guidance, to support secondary teaching and learning.**

NZQA subject page:

<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/qualifications/ncea/subjects/english/levels/>

Everything you need to know in relation to English and NZQA including the standards, clarifications, moderator's newsletters, benchmark samples for the internal standards and sample external exam papers and benchmark samples.

New up are the Level 2 benchmark exemplars of student work, which can be found in the Resources for Internally Assessed Standards [all levels]

NZATE:

<http://www.nzate.co.nz/>

Information about the conference, regional associations and resources that are available to support you in the delivery of NCEA.

There is a link to the National Conference *Words to Burn, Ideas to Ignite*

<http://www.wordstoburn.org.nz/>

Studyit: www.studyit.org.nz

Assistance for students and teachers with NCEA

Down the Back of the Chair: www.thechair.minedu.govt.nz 0800 660 662

A place to get copies of Ministry of Education teaching and learning resources

The Teachers Council: <http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/rtc/index.stm>

The *Registered Teacher Criteria* describe the criteria for quality teaching in New Zealand and replaced the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions in 2011. All teachers seeking to gain and maintain full registration are required to meet the *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

Trish Holden
Secondary Curriculum and Learning Facilitator
UC Education Plus/Matauranga Nui Ake
University of Canterbury/Te Whare Wananga o
Waitaha
Dovedale Avenue
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch 8140

Direct Dial: 03 3670 756
Cellphone: 027 273 7035
Email: trish.holden@canterbury.ac.nz

Cynthia Orr
National Co-ordinator [English], Secondary
Student Achievement Contract
Team Solutions partners in professional learning
te kahui akoranga ngaio

Faculty of Education
The University of Auckland
M: 027 550 4133
F: 09 623 8881 ext.48182
E: c.orr@auckland.ac.nz
W: teamsolutions.ac.nz