

ETA HSC Study Day 2012
Extension 1 English
Elective 3: Navigating the Global

Creative Writing Scenarios

Use the following ideas as a springboard to help you develop ideas of your own. In order to make your story a successful one you must devote time to RESEARCH. That is, research the setting/s, context and historical period of your story. Also keep the RUBRIC in mind.

Compose the story of a character (3rd person narrative) who has to navigate his/her way in local and global worlds, for example:

- Japanese girl takes part in tea ceremony full of ritual and respect contrasted with rudeness of communication on a cell phone. Realises there are lessons to be learnt from traditional culture.
- Young man/girl in a fish shop in a traditional village setting arranges the day's catch. Reflects on the ways of the ancestors and how these ways are being lost. At the same time welcomes the influence of modern technology and new ways of thinking.

Compose a narrative set in Tokyo, Shanghai, or any equivalent mega/global city in Asia. Develop a bleak, inner monologue or series of reflections/commentary by an alienated Westerner trying to navigate in a world that is in one sense totally familiar but in other ways totally foreign. Perhaps there is a small, transient moment of 'connection' with something/someone and an opportunity for some sophisticated reflection on the nature of the world today. (LIT)

Set in New York, a narrative about 9/11. Try two voices, one in New York and the other in Australia, watching the event unfold live on CNN TV news?

Set in New York, young woman in subway station with her partner/husband on the way to work. Reflects on tired relationship, tedium of job and chaos of city living. Reflects on the life she would prefer. Train pulls in. Makes a momentary decision...husband gets on the train and she turns her back and walks up the platform to a 'new life'.

A series of journal entries or vignettes from a character (politician, environmentalist, soldier in Iraq war, doctor or scientist etc.) working in a small community etc. Chart the character's 'navigation' of an event, situation, problem in the new/different community and the possibilities for positive change as a result of global influences.

A soldier reflects on how war is global. Describe his experience in a war zone. Focus on the ways that soldiers can influence the shift from conflict to peace. Soldiers can work with locals to influence the transition to peace. He/she delivers a speech about this to community forum in home country. There is a dissenter in the audience.

A series of letters/emails/meetings between 2 authors of prescribed texts, for example, Annie Proulx and Sophia Coppola. The purpose is to acknowledge/debate ways of thinking on an issue. This could also be between thinkers/theorists with different viewpoints.

Use quotes by poets/thinkers/theorists to preface a vignette. Have at least 4 vignettes or 'snapshot' narratives. Each one could be different and focus on a different character time and setting. Alternatively each vignette could be part of the same story that represents different dates/times within the historical period.

A theorist/philosopher/contemporary voice who reflects on a current issue and the way of thinking that underpin it. Place in a relevant context/setting.

'A touch of nature makes the whole world kin' Shakespeare said this. (Being in touch with the natural world brings humans together) Use this idea to develop a narrative that explores our connection to the natural world and new ways of doing this, perhaps through global efforts to save the environment.

Have a character who is a zoologist reflect on the role of zoos in preserving species, through global exchange. For example, Taronga Zoo in Sydney is playing an important role in preserving the Thai elephant. The first elephant has recently been born in the zoo. The mother was transported despite huge obstacles (storms, poachers). Few zoos on the planet will be able to do what Taronga is doing. (ABC TV interview by Peter Thomson with Guy Cooper, former director of Taronga Park Zoo)

Or use similar report about saving the endangered African Rhinoceros as the starting point for a narrative. Perhaps one of the team of scientists/zoologists responsible for the breeding of the animals and their return to Africa could reflect on the experience of this international effort.

Have a character who is a global volunteer. Reflect on his/her experience and what he/she has learnt. (Check Lonely Planet's book *A Traveller's Guide to Making a Difference Around the World*)

Compose a narrative which ends with the main character reflecting on the importance of traditional culture when navigating in the modern world. Give the character a contemporary problem that must be solved using traditional wisdom.

Select 2 events/situations/contexts in 2 different parts of the world that occur roughly at the same historical time. Flash from one to the other in a narrative that captures characters' responses to a) shifting realities, b) lack of boundaries in time/space, c) knowledge and experience being both global and local, d) impact of global communications etc.

Compose a series of vignettes about a businessman (Australian?) in Japan/Hong Kong/Mumbai who lives in technologically sophisticated world. Ironically his communications with his wife back in Australia (sms and mobile) fail miserably as they are overridden by the demands of his boss. Have your character reflect on the idea that technology and the boundary-less world is a curse. His life and relationships are impoverished. Think of a clever twist or resolution to end the narrative.

Compose a narrative from the perspective of a public figure such as a political leader, focused on an event or situation that has a global impact. Juxtapose the character's public negotiations surrounding the event with his/her more philosophical inner reflections on the event and the best way to navigate.

A young man/woman from the countryside (China?) leaves his family to study in Beijing or Shanghai. Train journey...views out the window...He reflects on the local and global worlds and the good and bad in both. Returns to village and reflects on the changes within himself. Play with time, memory, flashback, framed narrative.

Use recent (2011, 2012) political, social, religious, economic or scientific events etc. and use as inspiration to write your own narrative which reflects ways of thinking.

For example:

- Greece economic crisis and impact in Europe and world
- The Arab Spring: peoples uprisings against dictatorships
- Murdoch enquiry: the power of the media
- The influence of social networking as vehicle for global change etc.