

Breaking dawn: a book study

Beyond the review...

The resource review program supports teacher librarians and teachers in the selection and effective use of resources. Lizzie Chase, Review Coordinator, School Libraries and Information Literacy, suggests teaching and learning ideas for a resource which is reviewed in this issue.

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This issue contains a mixed ability Stage 5 English book study in response to *Breaking dawn* by Stephenie Meyers. In addition, a Williams (1993) model contract focuses on the book, and Stephenie Meyers' website, to extend gifted Stage 5 English learners by developing stimulating questions to promote higher-order thinking. A programming ideas unit for teaching and learning literacy support follows.

Respond – research – re-imagine: mixed ability Stage 5 English book study

Respond

Bella always thinks of others. She doesn't notice her own strengths as a human being. *Write a letter to a friend*, pointing out the kindness that you notice and the strengths they don't even know they have.

Jake stands against the pack when he decides not to attack the Cullens. In making this decision, he becomes an alpha and a leader. *Write a journal entry* about one time when you stood alone and didn't follow others and you know that it was the right thing to do.

The relationship between Bella and Edward is unbreakable. In some ways, they have a relationship based on traditional gender roles. What are you looking for in a relationship – what qualities do you expect you and your partner to possess? Write a discussion called *An ideal partnership*.

Research

Create a power point about vampires. Include different theories about

1. How people become vampires.
2. Powers and weaknesses.
3. Why we are so fascinated by vampires? What symbolic roles do they play?

Bearing witness is an important concept in *Breaking dawn*. Carlisle believes in non-violent opposition to evil and the importance of speaking the truth. He gathers allies to speak to the Volturi. Research the impact of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent opposition in India. *Give a speech* explaining the issue/s he was addressing, the process and the outcome of his civil disobedience campaigns.

Re-imagine

When Bella becomes a vampire, she sees and experiences the whole world differently – with heightened senses. *Create a short film or digital story of the world that she now observes* – use intensity of colour, shape and form to communicate the beauty she now sees.

Alpha werewolves bend their pack members to their will when their leadership is under challenge. *Create a digital story* with each slide showing the rules of your pack – what matters, what must always be obeyed.

You have the opportunity to bring together a band of friends with super powers, who will stand by you, against trouble. *Create a digital story* which represents each friend and their strength.

The Williams model: *Breaking dawn* and *The official website of Stephenie Meyer* for Stage 5 English

Paradox	It is when we die to ourselves that we gain life. Discuss in relation to Bella's sacrificial acts in <i>Breaking dawn</i> .
Attribute listing	List all the special powers possessed by characters in the novel. Choose your favourite five and explain your choices.
Analogy	How is Bella's love for Edward like an addiction? How is Jacob's pull towards Bella also like an addiction? Use quotations from the novel to justify your response.
Discrepancy	Discuss Renesmee, Leah and Garrett as characters who do not easily fit into a group or code of behaviour. How are they different? What potential benefits for society do outsider characters such as these bring?
Provocative question	Would immortality be a blessing or a curse for you?
Examples of change	Discuss the changes in Bella after she becomes a vampire and also after she becomes a mother. How has she grown?
Examples of habit	Explain the habits that the werewolves and Cullen's vampires live by. What is the value system underpinning these rules?
Organised random search	Bella sees Edward as the ideal of beauty. Collect images of people's faces that you find beautiful. Is there a pattern? Describe your ideals of beauty – focusing on faces.
Skills of search	Research werewolves: their origins, strengths, weaknesses.
Tolerance for ambiguity	In the novel, the lives of werewolves are motivated by a combination of free will and fate. Give your response to the situation Jacob is in: how would you feel about absolute submission to the alpha and to the reality of imprinting?
Intuitive expression	Which is the most powerful scene in the novel for you? Why does it have this impact?
Adjustment to development	Visit < www.stepheniemeyer.com/twilight_outtakes.html >. Look at these earlier drafts. What did Stephenie Meyer gain and lose by leaving out these passages?
Study creative development	Visit < www.stepheniemeyer.com/twilight.html >. Which aspects of Meyer's writing process seem to have been most powerful?
Evaluate situations	Jacob has a profound change of heart, after an initial instinct to attack the Cullens. Which other events in the novel can be seen very differently with hindsight? Which events in your own life have caused complete shifts of perspective and why?
Creative reading skills	Do you believe that Meyer has written a feminine alternative to the hero's journey described by Joseph Campbell in <i>The hero with a thousand faces</i> ? Or is this merely a variation on his structure: departure-initiation-return? Name and describe the key stages you have seen unfolding across the four novels.
Creative listening skills	Visit < www.stepheniemeyer.com/twilight_playlist.html >. Listen to Meyer's playlist for <i>Twilight</i> . Create your own playlist to match the plot developments and themes in <i>Breaking dawn</i> .
Creative writing skills	Describe the scene with the Volturi from the perspective of one of the vampires who were there to bear witness.
Visualisation	Visit < www.stepheniemeyer.com/twilight_international.html >. Look at the various front covers for <i>Twilight</i> . Create your own front cover for <i>Breaking dawn</i> and explain your reasons for representing the themes of the book by using symbolic objects, colours and layout.

Focusing teaching and learning information literacy support: programming ideas

Topic/Unit support:

Supporting the **Research** lessons in Respond – **research – re-imagine: mixed ability Stage 5 English book study**

Quality Teaching elements:

Deep knowledge, deep understanding, substantive communication

Resources:

Internet sites, encyclopedias, nonfiction, *Breaking dawn* by Stephenie Meyer and *The official website of Stephenie Meyer* <www.stepheniemeyer.com>

Pre-unit assessment to gauge current level of understanding: (in terms of unit/topic/focus)

eg *pre-test, teacher judgment, brainstorm, discussion questions prior to unit study*

Students have previously read *Breaking dawn* by Stephenie Meyer and have responded to its major concepts, themes, language and characters' emotions.

Syllabus outcomes:

English Years 7–12

Outcomes 3; 6; 8; 9

Related computer competencies focus:

Internet searching, word processing, image formatting

Related information skills focus area:

Selecting and Organising:

By the end of this unit students will be able to select information and take effective notes from a variety of sources, including internet sites.

Literature links:

Breaking dawn by Stephanie Meyer

Suggested teaching and learning activities/strategies

1. Explain the two possible tasks – students choose one. Show students the structure and language features of an information report. Show effective models of power points and speeches which inform their audiences. Discuss the marking guidelines so students know what they need to do in order to succeed in each task.
2. With all students, explicitly revise strategies for selecting information and for effective note making: teach *how to* summarise, paraphrase and use visual diagramming so that students process the information and do

Planned assessment options – partner work

1. Create a *PowerPoint* about vampires, including different theories about
 - a. How people become vampires.
 - b. Powers and weaknesses.
 - c. Why we are so fascinated by vampires? What symbolic roles do they play?
2. Prepare and give speech about the nature and impact of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent campaigns in India. Explain
 - a. the issue/s he was addressing
 - b. the process of his civil disobedience campaigns
 - c. the outcomes of these campaigns.

Post unit assessment to determine progress towards stated outcomes

eg *post-test, guided evaluation sheet, skills achieved in context of outcomes (indicators) and planned assessment*

[Editor's note: The Gifted and Talented Unit at Curriculum K–12 Directorate, Ryde, has used the Williams model to create a framework for a nonfiction unit on *The Anzac legend*. Go to <www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/gats/assets/pdf/uhsi3hstanzac.pdf>.]

References and further reading

Chessman, A. (2009) 'Collaboration: a key ingredient to enhance teacher effectiveness', Scan 28(1), pp. X–X.

Extract from *Support package: Curriculum differentiation: the Williams model* (2004), GAT Unit, Curriculum K–12 Directorate, NSW Department of education and Training, Ryde. Viewed 03 July 2009. <www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/gats/assets/pdf/uhsi3hstanzac.pdf>.

Meyers, S. (2008) *Breaking dawn*, The twilight saga, Little, Brown, New York. SCIS 1387011 *The official website of Stephenie Meyer*, StephenieMeyer.com. Viewed 03 July 2009. <www.stepheniemeyer.com>. SCIS 1418149

Williams, F.E. (1993) 'The cognitive-affective interaction model for enriching gifted programs', in J.S. Renzulli (Ed.), *Systems and models for developing programs for the gifted and talented*, pp. 461–484. Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Vic. SCIS 823971