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Programme of Study: Applied Drama: Education, Community and Well-Being

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Tasks in order I received them:

Task 1 - Jonathan Pugh - Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think? (516 words)

Task 2 - Ryan Moule - Observational Writing: Identify an image and write a semiotic analysis. (526 words)

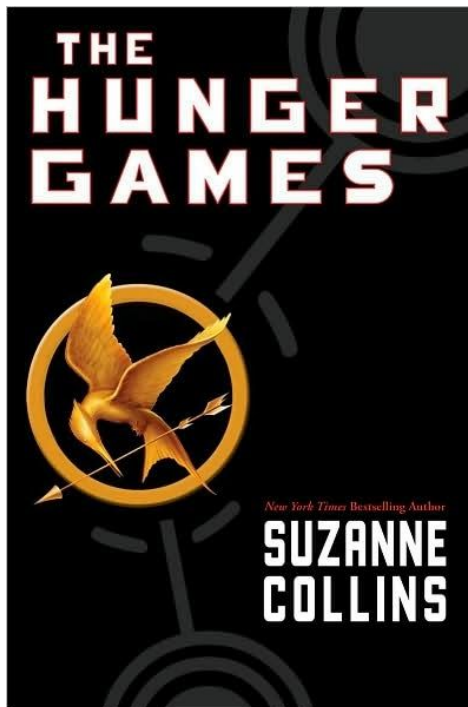
Task 3 - Julia Lockheart - Manifesto Writing: "What do you believe in?" (526 words)

Task 1 - Jonathon Pugh - Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think?

The book *The Hunger Games* was published in 2008 by Suzanne Collins and Scholastic. While reading this book, one can see that the dystopian novel touches on many issues in society during that time. The prime issue being the rise in popularity towards Reality TV shows, with shows such as *The X Factor* and *Keeping up with the Kardashians*, it's hard to ignore the use of Reality TV to broadcast the Hunger Games live. In the book *Reality TV: Key Ideas in Media and Cultural Art*, it says this, "There are live formats that recruit public votes for each media event (*The X Factor*)," (Hill, pp12) this highlights a similarity between *The X Factor* and *The Hunger Games*. During the event that is the Hunger Games, competitors, or tributes, are sent gifts from sponsors in order to help them survive, this depends on whether they are likeable in the public's eye or not. Another big theme in The

Hunger Games is the importance of one's appearance. Tributes are constantly being dressed up and being made to look presentable in the week leading up to the Games. Something that relates to this is something that I read in The Oxford Handbook of the Psychology of Appearance, "*The media are arguably the most potent sociocultural transmitter of social beauty ideals,*" (Rumsey, pp151) because the Hunger Games and everything leading up to it is broadcasted live to the country, the public are able to decide which tributes they like based on social impressions and looks.

As of 2012, four years after its release, the book had sold 17.5 million copies when the first film adaptation was released. This increased to more than 28 million copies sold by 2014 when the third film adaptation, Mockingjay Part 1, was released. This book wasn't very popular during the time it was released due to people being oblivious to the issues being explored in the novel. It became more popular when the first film adaptation was released, they would be able to see these issues playing out, therefore being unable to ignore them. This piece of work stood out in its time because our generation, among others, were shown a strong female character who was thrown into a situation and stood up for what she believed in, despite the consequences that she could face in the future.



The Hunger Games helped a lot of women feel empowered in themselves due to feeling inspired by the female lead, Katniss Everdeen: a strong, independent and intelligent sixteen year old. The book also taught a lot of important life lessons to better society, as it shows a country where the majority of people have no human rights. Personally, I loved reading this book because it gave me a lot to think about and made me grateful for the life that I have. I loved how the author, Suzanne Collins, made Katniss a character that everyone could relate to but also look up to, this made the book highly enjoyable to read because, for once, I wasn't reading about a girl who was seeking and desperate for love.

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Task 2 - Ryan Moule - Observational Writing: Identify an image and write a semiotic analysis.



The image that I have chosen is an inspirational quote with a very important message to it. The quote says, "*Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud,*" this is telling the viewer that they should try to be happy to help raise someone else's mood. The message behind this quote could mean that no matter how bad your situation could be, someone else's could be a lot worse. Therefore, trying to be happier could help someone else, or maybe even a group of people, feel positive in one way or another, therefore making them happier in themselves. While reading *Instructional Message Design: Principles from the behavioural and cognitive sciences*, I found that, "*Some (for example, Hannafin, 1984) have suggested that giving the learner control over the rate of presentation is the solution,*" (Fleming, pp68) meaning that it may be hard for the viewer to understand the message of something complicated but by simplifying it, however, it makes it easier. I do think that this is the case with image as it is simple to read and understand with little text and the background image that relates to the quote.

Through focussing on connotation with this image, I have seen that this quote has many different meanings. One that I have mentioned above, but also that seeing the world in a different light could be beneficial not only to one's self, but the people around them too. Negativity is something infectious but by showing people even a little bit of positivity, it can change someone's day for the better. The background image is very aesthetically pleasing to the eye, with a dark sky and cloudy sky and bright rainbow cutting through it. The light and dark aspect of this image highlights how negativity and positivity is a part of everyday life and affects people of different ages, some more than others. Through reading *Connotation and Meaning*, I have found that it says, "*His absolute terms have more than one definition; they cannot be described in one sentence,*" (Garza Cuarón, pp16) I feel that this relates to the image because, in terms of connotation, it has more than one definition depending on how it is perceived by different people.

I have also looked at the use of narrative in this image. Relating to connotation and message, this image does have a story in it with every aspect being considered. For example, the use of text in the image has a narrative in itself, with using clouds and a rainbow to tell the story of negativity and positivity in everyday life. I have read the book *Narrative* by Paul Cobley and it says that, “‘Narrative’ is the showing or telling of these events and the mode selected for that to take place,” (Cobley, pp6) this relates to the image in the way that they, again, have chosen clouds and a rainbow to symbolise negativity and positivity in life.

By completing a semiotic analysis on this image, I am able to see it in a completely different way. Instead of simply looking at the image, I am able to look into the bigger picture: what the meaning behind the image is.

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Task 3 - Julia Lockheart - Manifesto Writing: “What do I believe in?”

1. All students to engage with plays and drama pieces, such as monologues.

2. High quality workshops for drama students to take part in.
3. Encouragement for children and young people to work in the drama industry.
4. Drama and theatre experience for all children and young people.
5. Professional advice from practitioners in the drama industry.
6. High quality drama teaching standards for students.
7. High quality drama teacher training for all teachers in this field.
8. Drama to be made a part of every school's curriculum.

It is very important for all students, who are interested in the world of drama, to be encouraged to pursue a job in this industry for without encouragement, they will have no initiative to do so. By encouraging students to pursue a career in doing what they are passionate about, it will be their first step on the road to success. While reading *With Drama in Mind: Real Learning in Imagined Worlds*, I have come across this, "*Most children will answer they do at least some of the above and that is one of the reasons that I know they will be so good at drama,*" (Baldwin, pp4) this shows that, with someone believing that students will be good at something and succeed, like in drama, they will feel more motivated to strive for that success in that area of their education. Just knowing that one person sees that they are capable of being successful in something that they love and are passionate about can mean a lot and, therefore, push them to do their absolute best to have the most successful outcome in the future.

Great teacher quality is important in all aspects of education in order for students to succeed, the same quality should be in drama lessons in all schools. Drama teachers should be up to the same standard of teachers in maths and English, but in some schools this is not the case. In the book *Drama, Narrative and Moral Education*, it says this, "*Drama, to quote the words of Raymond Williams again, moves 'beyond myth to dramatic versions of myth,'*"

(Winston, pp75) this connects to my point because we can use what we learn in subjects like English to fuel our creative minds to create outstanding work in drama and vice versa. It also says this, *“In proposing a historical relationship between drama and myth where drama interrogates, reviews and renews the moral values within the myth,”* (Winston, pp75) this is saying that in drama, we take a deeper look into literature and analyse it creatively, therefore advancing the academic mindset to perform better in other subjects in school.



The world and the people in it are forever changing, there are schools that still don't offer an education in drama and this needs to change. These schools are denying their students the chance to express themselves and their beliefs through the art form that is drama and theatre. The majority of people don't notice this because either the school that they went to offered this opportunity or they simply don't care for drama. In the book *Drama in Education: Exploring Key Research Concepts and Effective Strategies*, it says this, *“As schools have become more aware of their role in addressing personal and social issues, the importance of ‘values and attitudes’ has begun shaping education and curricula worldwide,”* (Ragnarsdóttir, pp1) this supports my point because some schools have started to see drama as a beneficial subject and have made it a part of their curriculum. It is time for the remaining schools without drama in their curriculum to make a change and offer creative students this opportunity to express themselves in a different way.

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