



Lesson 1

Topic: Hybrid text features

Speculating about information texts

Lesson concepts:

- Purpose, audience and structures of different types of texts
- Visual language — Still and moving images communicate meaning: symbols, icons and myth
- Evaluating texts — Representations of life matters in texts
- Texts and context — Influence of cultural perspectives and other texts
- Comprehension strategies — Constructing meaning about representations
- Text structures and language features construct meaning — Visual choices that present: information, opinions, perspectives

Lesson notes

In this lesson, students will revise their understanding of speculative fiction. They will read and discuss **Sheet 1 — Achieving utopia? You must be dreaming!** Students will consider how the images add meaning to the speculative fiction text on utopian/dystopian societies.

Students are also required to brainstorm films, television series and novels that revolve around the concepts of utopian/dystopian societies. It may be helpful to have a prepared list of texts to refer to in discussion.

This lesson requires access to ICT, where possible, to gather images or symbols to match descriptions of utopian/dystopian societies.

Lesson answers

1. a) What does it mean to speculate? (1–2 sentences)

For example: To engage in thought or reflection about a subject; to reach a conclusion about something; to take a risk on a future possibility.

- b) What is speculative fiction? (1–2 sentences)

For example: Speculative fiction is an imaginative narrative about the possibility of an unlikely subject being real or likely to occur in our world.

- c) Brainstorm four examples of popular speculative fiction genres.

For example:

- science fiction
- fantasy
- utopia and dystopia
- alternate history.

d) What do all the different types of speculative fiction genres have in common? (1 sentence)

For example: They are all forms of writing that speculate about 'what if?' They discuss ideas or issues that push the boundaries of our reality to provide interesting insight into human nature and make us consider the consequences of contemporary practices.

2. Read **Sheet 1 – Achieving utopia? You must be dreaming!**

No answer required.

3.

Term	Answer	Meaning
utopia	e.	a. to claim or express
dystopia	i.	b. filth and misery
squalor	b.	c. to put an end to; crush or subdue
ambiguous	h.	d. a comparison or likeness drawn between two things
oppression	f.	e. an imagined place or state of perfection; an ideal world
purport	a.	f. the exercise of authority or power in a hard, cruel, or unjust way
suppress	c.	g. to place two ideas side-by-side (in a text) for a specific purpose, usually to highlight or contrast something in particular
analogy	d.	h. open to various interpretations; having more than one meaning
juxtapose	g.	i. an imagined place where society is far from perfect or ideal

4. Read the text on **Sheet 1** and answer the following questions.

a) What is the subject matter of the text? (1 sentence)

For example: The text explores the concepts of utopian and dystopian societies and how they are represented in literature.

b) What perspective is communicated in the text about utopian societies? (1–2 sentences)

For example: The perspective communicated about utopia is that while the idea of utopia, or an 'ideal state of existence', is a common genre of speculative fiction, utopian worlds cannot be achieved in reality because they will always turn into dystopia.

c) What ideas do 'most authors of dystopian fiction' comment on? Find examples in the text. (1–2 sentences)

For example: The text states that, 'Most authors of dystopian fiction explore at least one reason why things are that way, often as an analogy for similar issues in the real world.'

d) Explain why the use of the word 'dreaming' in the title of the text is a play on words. (3–4 sentences)

For example: The word 'dreaming' in the title is a play on words because it can be interpreted both literally and figuratively. When questioning the possibility of achieving a utopian state, the author responds by exclaiming that people are dreaming. The audience can interpret this to mean that they are literally asleep and dreaming about the possibility. Otherwise, the audience can interpret the idea figuratively and understand that the author is insinuating indirectly that achieving a utopian state is not a possibility.

e) Explain why you think the author uses a play on words in the title. (**Hint:** Think about how it relates to the perspective presented in the text about the idea of achieving an ideal state of existence.) (1–2 sentences)

For example: The author uses a play on words because it is an engaging device that works to encourage the audience to continue reading the text. It also positions the audience from the outset to accept the perspective presented in the text.

5. Look at the two images on the sheet. The author has chosen to combine these images with the text for a specific purpose.

a) Why do you think the author included these images? (1 sentence)

For example: The images work to support the ideas presented in the text about the nature of utopian and dystopian societies.

b) How do the images combine with the information in the text to create additional layers of meaning? (Hint: Think about how each image positions you, as a reader, to think about that type of society.) Refer to the background, font and colours used in the images.

For example:

Visual elements	Utopia	Dystopia
background image	The image adds meaning to the text by providing a visual explanation of the idea. The background shows a blue sky with a few clouds and rays of sunshine breaking through, giving a positive feeling of hope.	The image adds to reader's understanding about the idea. The background shows a dark sky with black clouds covering the sun. This gives a gloomy feeling and shows that a dystopia is dark and unhappy.
font	The font is orderly and organised, reflecting the idea of an ideal world.	The font looks like it is written in blood and the words are messily arranged. These elements all show a dystopia as a disorganised, horrible society.
colours	The words are in white, which is a symbolic colour of peace.	The colour red is used to reinforce the font looking like blood. Red can also be an aggressive colour especially when combined with that font.

c) After reading the text, what is your personal perspective about the possibility of achieving a utopian society? Explain your opinion in two or three sentences.

Personal response required.

6. Write three complete sentences below describing what a utopian or dystopian society would be like. You might consider connecting your sentences to form an extended description.

For example: (The following sentences are connected together to describe a dystopian society.)

Razor wire cut across the barren plain, creating a pattern of rectangles that looked neat and tidy from within the cockpit of the black helicopters that hovered busily above the exclusion zone. A small girl, no more than eight, clutched at the wire and looked across the dull brown, dying grass to the mountains beyond. A voice full of static and indifference buzzed through the metallic speaker boxes that adorned the spotlights crowning the tall pylons that held the perimeter fence taut and severe, 'Magenta 1243, move away from the perimeter and re-join your work group. You have ten seconds before consequence sequence B is initiated.'

Lesson 2

Topic: Hybrid text features

Examining features of a hybrid short story

Lesson concepts:

-  Evaluating language – Direct and indirect expressions: evocative vocabulary
-  Purpose, audience and structures of different types of texts
-  Cohesive devices – Signpost ideas, make connections, build semantic associations
-  Sentences – Creative use for particular effects
-  Evaluating texts – Representations of life matters in texts
-  Creating literary texts – Creating literary texts and hybrid texts: allusion, appropriation
-  Comprehension strategies – Constructing meaning about representations
-  Text structures and language features construct meaning – Visual choices that present: information, opinions, perspectives

Lesson notes

This lesson briefly reviews elements of short stories, then examines a speculative short story, 'Trapped forevermore' by Caitlin Adie (**Sheet 3**) and has students identify short story features. This story was inspired by the information text from Lesson 1 and forms the basis of the majority of the learning activities.

Students will then read a hybrid speculative short story (**Sheet 4**) based on the same short story and consider how the hybrid elements add layers of meaning to the story and emphasise the author's perspective about the speculative issue.

Lesson answers

- Use the information in the table below to match an element of short stories with the correct definition.

Element	Answer	Definition
climax	e	a. The time and location a story takes place.
theme	b	b. The message of the text; the author's perspective on a central idea or issue.
characterisation	f	c. The problem or conflict that starts the rising action in the story.
setting	a	d. The particular way an author writes.
complication	c	e. The highest point of the story.
narrative point of view	g	f. The representation of a person in a story, conveyed through descriptions of their thoughts, words and actions.
author's style	d	g. Who tells the story? It can be first person (the story is told by the main character using words such as I, me, we, our) or third person (the story is told by another character or narrator).

2. Read about the different elements of a short story on **Sheet 2 — Elements of a short story**. Use the information on **Sheet 2** to revise your answers, if necessary. **No answer required.**
3. Read the speculative short story on **Sheet 3 — Short story: 'Trapped forevermore'**. This story presents ideas about what can happen when someone madly pursues their ultimate utopia. **No answer required.**
4. Describe how the short story on **Sheet 3** has intertextual connections with the information text on **Sheet 1**. (2–3 sentences)

For example: Both the information text and the short story are connected by the idea of utopia ultimately turning into dystopia. The information text presents ideas about utopian and dystopian fiction. The short story presents a fictional story about a character who strives to achieve her utopia, but in doing so she is doomed to an eternal life of misery. Both texts present the idea that utopia is not possible in reality. The story may also have intertextual links with the sombre image of the sad woman depicted on the information text.

5. Record ideas about how the different elements have been used in the short story on Sheet 3 by completing the graphic organiser below. For example:

<p>Subject matter (from the information text)</p> <p>a) What is the issue or main idea from the text (Sheet 1) that relates to the ideas represented in the short story (Sheet 3)?</p> <p>The characteristics of utopia/dystopia.</p>
<p>Theme (from the short story)</p> <p>b) What is the central message of the short story?</p> <p>Achieving a state of utopia is impossible and will result in dystopia.</p>
<p>Character</p> <p>c) Who is the main character (the protagonist)? Charlotte</p> <p>d) What are the traits demonstrated by this character?</p> <p>Initially, she is young, carefree, in love, happy. Later, she is lost, alone and miserable.</p>
<p>Setting</p> <p>e) Where and when does the action occur?</p> <p>A fictional setting in a wintry forest that seems to stretch across a range of times —from medieval times to times of modern science.</p>
<p>Complication</p> <p>f) Describe the moment when something occurs that causes a change for the main character and starts the rising action.</p> <p>As the woman wanders through the gloomy forest, she suddenly sees a new vision flash into view. It is a young bride and groom, chasing each other happily through the forest, laughing. The groom calls his bride 'Charlotte' and the woman realises that she is Charlotte.</p>
<p>Narrative point of view and author style</p> <p>g) Who is telling the story? Third-person point of view.</p> <p>h) How would you describe the author's writing style?</p> <p>The author writes very descriptively using evaluative and figurative language. The author also uses dialogue to add to the story.</p>

6. Why can the short story be considered an example of speculative fiction?

For example:

- the central issue of utopia/dystopia
- the idea of immortality
- the idea of alternate dimensions — what if ...
- the idea of a 'time loop'

7. Examine the plot structure more closely by recording notes about what happens in the short story and when it occurs.

For example:

Plot structure	Notes about the short story
Title	Trapped forevermore
Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the main character who is wandering aimlessly in a cold, gloomy and deserted forest.• The woman doesn't know who she is or why she is in the forest.• There are mysterious flashes of events from across time.
Complication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suddenly, a new vision flashes into view; the woman sees a young happy bride and groom chasing each other in the woods.• The groom calls his bride 'Charlotte' and the woman realises she is Charlotte.
Rising action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The image is replaced by one of a young Charlotte kneeling alone on the forest floor. She is rambling feverishly as she mixes a concoction in a bubbling cauldron.• The young Charlotte tries to convince her husband, William, to drink the potion so that they can be together forever, in perfect happiness.• William refuses angrily and warns her not to drink the potion.• In her alternate dimension, the woman realises what is happening and begs her young self not to drink the potion.
Climax	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The young Charlotte grabs the potion and drinks it.• She vanishes into eternity leaving William behind full of despair.
Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The woman realises with horror why she is stranded alone in the forest— by drinking the potion, she has doomed herself to an eternity of loneliness, trapped in a time loop.• The woman screams and wails, sobbing herself to sleep.• The woman wakes an indefinite time later, and wanders dazed and confused through the forest again.

8. Skim and scan **Sheet 4 — Hybrid text: 'Trapped forevermore'**.

No answer required. Ensure students identify the additional visual and textual elements that have been integrated in the story.

9. Read the elements that have been embedded in the short story to create the hybrid text.

a) What is meant by the line 'There's a Divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will' in the quote from Shakespeare's play Hamlet?

For example: Humans try to shape their own destinies.

b) What is happening in the image included in the hybrid short story?

For example: A woman, who personifies fate, is turning the 'wheel of Fortune', affecting the fate of many people. It seems some people have good fortune (at the top of the wheel) and others have poor fortune (at the bottom of the wheel).

- c) Read the other hybrid element, 'Fortune's malice'. Some of the words may be new to you. Put these words or phrases in your own words to help you understand the text. Use a dictionary to help you, if needed. Some have been done for you.

For example:

Word/phrases from the text	In my own words
<i>malice</i>	nastiness or spite
<i>'Mad Fortune sweeps along in wanton pride'</i>	Fortune (fate) is crazy, rushing around destructively
<i>'tramples mighty kings beneath her feet; now sets the conquered in the victor's seat'</i>	If 'she' chooses, Fortune can decide to 'trample' a king and make his enemy the winner on the throne.
<i>'She heedeth not the wail of hapless woe'</i>	Fortune (personified as 'she') does not listen to cries of unhappiness from people.
<i>'Such is her sport; so proveth she her power'</i>	Fortune finds 'sport' or fun in changing people's lives at will. This is how she proves her power over them.
<i>'great the marvel, when in one brief hour'</i>	People are amazed that their lives can change so quickly.
<i>'lifted high in bliss, Then headlong plunged into misery's abyss'</i>	One moment people can be blissfully happy then, in the next moment, their lives will be full of misery.

Source: Boethius & James, H. R (Trans) 1897, 'Fortune's malice' in *The consolation of philosophy of Boethius*, Elliot Stock, London.

- d) Sum up how 'Fortune' is being described in the text. (1–2 sentences)

For example:

Fortune is described as being an unpredictable and malicious force that can change people's lives in a moment, without any apparent reason. Personification has been used to show Fortune as a 'mad' woman who enjoys proving her power by creating ups and downs in the lives of everyone, from ordinary people through to kings.

10. At the beginning of the lesson, you considered the central message of the short story. After reading the story in combination with the hybrid elements, how has your understanding of the short story been enhanced? Write a paragraph to explain your ideas. (4–5 sentences)

Answers will vary, but should include a combination of ideas about why achieving a utopian state is not possible based on the ideas presented in the hybrid speculative short story.

Lesson 3

Topic: Hybrid text features

Experimenting with a hybrid text

Lesson concepts:

- Cohesive devices — Signpost ideas, make connections, build semantic associations
- _A Creating literary texts — Creating literary texts and hybrid texts: allusion, appropriation
- _N_A Experimentation — Using hyperlinks
- Texts and context — Influence of cultural perspectives and other texts
- _A Text structures and language features construct meaning — Visual choices that present: information, opinions, perspectives
- _A Creating texts
- _A Editing texts — Content, organisation, audio visual features

Lesson notes

In this lesson, students will consolidate their understanding of the features of a hybrid text. They will require access to ICT to utilise the **Learning object 1 — Creating a hybrid speculative short story**. As students work through the learning object, they will experiment with aspects of the short story by investigating the effects of including different sounds, images and other elements, to create additional layers of meaning. They will then be asked to reflect on and evaluate the digital aspects of the hybrid speculative short story.

Lesson answers

1. Skim and scan the hybrid text on **Sheet 4** to help you review your understanding of hybrid texts and answer the following questions.
 - a) What is a hybrid text? (1–2 sentences)
For example: A hybrid text is a text that results from combining elements from different genres.
 - b) Why would an author create a hybrid short story? (Hint: Think about how the hybrid text creates additional layers of meaning.) (1–2 sentences)
For example: Hybrid elements allow an author to add additional layers of meaning to the story to emphasise ideas and perspectives.
2. Open the **Learning object 1 — Creating a hybrid speculative short story** based on the familiar short story 'Trapped forevermore'. **No answer required.**
3. Click the 'Read the story' button to begin experimenting with elements of a hybrid text. The button is located on the lower right of the screen. **No answer required.**
4. As you complete each stage of the learning object, check the boxes.
No answer required. Ensure that students check each box as they work through the learning object activities.
5. How do the visual images in the hybrid speculative short story create additional layers of meaning? (3–4 sentences)
For example: The images help the reader visualise the setting, tension and conflict in the plot. The first image shows the setting and the total isolation the main character is experiencing. The second image emphasises the desperation of the main character as she attempts to achieve her utopian state.

6. How do the audio/sounds in the hybrid speculative short story create additional layers of meaning? (3–4 sentences)

For example: The music and sound effects create additional layers of meaning because they work to evoke an emotional response from the reader. The mystical music supports the description of the action and setting — a woman wandering aimlessly through the forest. This music also puts emphasis on the loneliness and isolation represented in the story. The sound effect of the man calling 'no' makes the audience feel William's utter devastation at Charlotte's decision to drink the concoction and enhances the impact of the climax.

7. How do the written texts (comic strip/quote from Macbeth) create additional layers of meaning in the hybrid short story? (3–4 sentences)

For example: The comic strip texts emphasises the tension of the climax and adds an extra dimension to the characters' roles and relationships. It emphasises Charlotte's wild determination to achieve her goal, despite Will disagreeing with the plan. The inclusion of the famous Shakespearean text emphasises the negative connotations associated with the mixing of the concoction. Charlotte's actions are associated with the witches in Macbeth, the creation of her potion is an unnatural and evil endeavour. This makes the comment that the relentless pursuit of utopia can have disastrous consequences.

8. Give three tips about how to choose different elements to integrate within a hybrid short story text.

For example:

- Hybrid elements must be chosen with care to create an additional layer of meaning for the reader.
- Hybrid elements should link to and emphasise particular aspects of the short story such as the theme, setting or characters.
- Hybrid elements should be integrated in a strategic way (for example, hyperlinked if it's a digital text).

9. Evaluate how effectively the combination of hybrid elements in the learning object (including written, visual and audio elements) express speculative ideas and create different levels of meaning to engage and entertain an audience.

Personal response required. Ensure students make judgments about the text by answering the following questions:

- Impact — Did it grab me?
- Quality — Did I like it?
- Balance — Was it well-constructed?
- Complexity — Was it hard to follow?
- Value — Was it worthwhile?

Lesson 4

Topic: Speculative short story features

Examining text structures

Lesson concepts:

- 🎯 Purpose audience and structures of different types of texts
- 🎯 Cohesive devices — Signpost ideas, make connections, build semantic associations
- 🎯 Punctuation — Punctuation, layout and font variations: combinations in more complex texts
- 🎯 Sentences — Creative use for particular effects
- 🎯 Spelling — Spelling creatively for particular effects: characterisation, accents, styles of speech
- 🎯 Evaluating texts — Representations of life matters in texts
- 🎯 Experimentation — Effects of stereotypical characters and settings
- 🎯 Creating texts

Lesson notes

This lesson examines short story text structures including purposeful use of sentence structures and punctuation, selective use of direct speech and use of cohesive devices.

Lesson answers

1. Brainstorm three features that make an effective short story.
Personal responses required. For examples, refer to the hot tip box that follows Task 1.
2. Re-read **Sheet 3 — Short story: 'Trapped forevermore'**.
No answer required.
3. View the **Video 1 — Short story: Sentence structures and effects**.
4. a) List four effects a writer can achieve by purposefully using sentences as a tool.
For example:
 - create atmosphere
 - provide detail
 - create meaning
 - vary the pace
- b) List the three types of sentence structures you should use to vary your writing.
 - simple
 - compound
 - complex

5. Highlight or underline the coordinating conjunction in each of these sentences adapted from the text 'Trapped forevermore'.
 - a) The woman stirred from her position in the snow and rose gently to her feet.
 - b) The door burst open and the man called William came charging determinedly into the room.
 - c) Ghostly images flickered about her but she paid them no heed.
 - d) A look of utter calm passed over her face and she gazed around the room in wonder.
 - e) All she had wanted was to live forever yet she was now doomed to walk through the forests of time alone.

Story excerpts: Adie, Caitlin. Used with permission.

6. How do the variety of sentence structures in 'Trapped forevermore' work to engage the audience and create an effective short story? (1–2 sentences)

For example: A variety of different sentence structures that vary in length and complexity makes the writing more interesting. It works to speed up or slow down the pace, depending on the length and combination of sentences, which, in turn, creates a particular atmosphere.

7. View **Video 2 – Short story: Punctuation for effect**. No answer required.
8. Examine and explain the effects of different types of punctuation in the short story on **Sheet 3** by completing the table below.

Punctuation	Example from the text	Effect of punctuation
font variation and italics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Charlotte was her name — she was the bride.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using italics on certain words puts emphasis on them. It reinforces the character's realisation, making the intended meaning clear.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLAM! The door burst open and the man called William came charging determinedly into the room. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting 'SLAM' in capitals letters adds to the force. Using onomatopoeia in this way adds to the imagery of the story.
ellipsis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'No ... please no,' she begged, as though her words might somehow stop the flow of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasises the character's sense of desperation. The ellipsis signifies a pause in the character's speech.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'NO!' William interrupted, advancing angrily towards her. 'No, we will not drink that poisonous swill — that foul, evil ... ' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightens the emotion and emphasises William's frustration. The pause created through the ellipsis, as he tries to think of another word to describe his total opposition to the concoction, gives Charlotte the opportunity to interject.
quotation marks for direct speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'It's beautiful', she breathed. 'Eternity', she whispered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The words 'breathed' and 'whispered' convey the character's total wonder at what she can see. We can't see what Charlotte can see but because the character is in awe, we are encouraged to use our imagination.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Please,' she choked, holding forth the chalice, 'please, drink it!' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charlotte is crying as she says these words, so using the verb 'choked' instead of 'said' conveys emotion.

9. Read the following extract from the short story on Sheet 3.

No answer required.

10. Identify two examples of text connectives and explain how they work to create cohesion.

'however' — a text connective to show contrast

'suddenly' — a text connective to indicate time

11. Read the following extracts from the short story.

a) Extract 2 refers to Charlotte stirring 'the concoction'. Identify two other expanded noun groups from extracts 2 and 3 that have been used to replace 'the concoction'.

- a thick grey liquid (Extract 2)

- that poisonous swill — that foul, evil ... (Extract 3)

b) Explain how the substitution of the noun group 'the concoction' works to create cohesive links in the short story. (1–2 sentences)

For example: The noun group substitutions establish cohesive links that consistently represent Charlotte's potion as undesirable. This encourages the audience to perceive the concoction as a negative thing.

12. Read and complete **Sheet 5 — Writing for effect**.

Sheet 5 — Writing for effect (see attached).

Writing for effect

Use your knowledge of effective short story text structures to complete the following creative writing activity.



HOT TIP

The orientation of a short story needs to introduce the main character and establish the context of the story – that is, the time and place and the setting.

It should also 'grab' your reader in the first sentence, so try to think of an engaging way to start. Consider starting with:

- a moment of action or drama
- a statement or a question from a character
- something that will make your reader curious
- a humorous statement.

1. Follow this brief plan to write an orientation for a speculative short story. Use your imagination to write at least three or more sentences for each section.
 - a) Firstly, create your orientation using the ideas below. Use suitable descriptive sentences to create atmosphere, introduce the main character and establish the context:
 - a still night on a lonely street
 - a lone pedestrian walking
 - someone watches from the darkness.



HOT TIP

The complication is key to the plot of a short story. It could be an event, a thought, a problem, a find – anything that causes a complication in the life of the main character. Something has to happen that requires the main character to respond and act.

The complication is usually established early in the story so that the rest of the story works towards the resolution of that event, problem or conflict.

- b) Next, add in a complication:
 - there is a flash of lightning that hits the ground directly in front of the lone pedestrian
 - a wormhole opens where the lightning struck the ground.

Try to apply the tools we have learned in this lesson.
Vary your sentence structures and craft them purposefully.
Use punctuation and direct speech selectively, to add meaning.



c) Write your draft orientation/complication.

Responses will vary. Students should attempt to experiment with effective use of language features such as:

- figurative language – allusion, metaphors, extended metaphor, metonymy, similes, personification, onomatopoeia
- evocative vocabulary – expanded noun groups, verb groups, purposeful use of language.

2. Use a range of language features to enhance your orientation/complication. You should try to include:

- figurative devices such as similes, metaphors, allusions, personification and onomatopoeia
- evocative language featuring purposeful use of verbs, adverbs and expanded noun groups to create engaging descriptions.