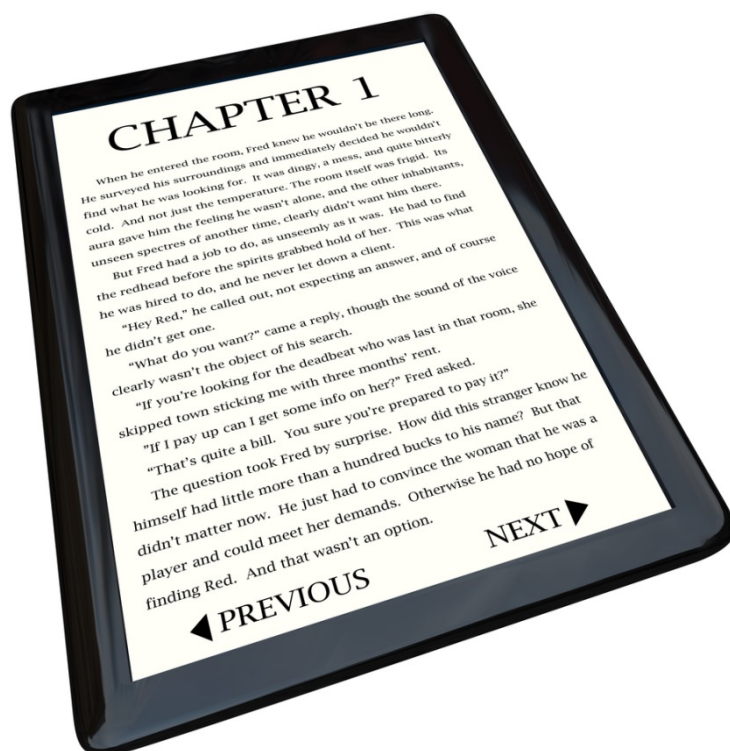# Unit Support Notes — English: Responding to Fictional Texts (National 2)

Valid from August 2015

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Contents

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *English: Responding to Fictional Texts* (National 2) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

♦ the *Unit Specification*
♦ the *Unit Assessment Support* pack

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The *English: Responding to Fictional Texts* (National 2) Unit is a free-standing Unit and is designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners who may choose to study it.

The general aim of the Unit is to provide opportunities for learners to explore and engage with works of fiction.

Progression into this Unit

Entry into this Unit is at the discretion of the centre.

This Unit may be suitable for learners who have successfully completed qualifications in English, communication or related areas at SCQF level 1.

Prior learning, life and work experiences may provide an appropriate basis for entry into this Unit. This could include relevant skills, knowledge and understanding and appropriate experiences and outcomes.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

As this Unit will be delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Content and contexts which are used in the teaching of this Unit are at the discretion of the centre. However, content and contexts should provide evidence that all Outcomes and Assessment Standards in the Unit have been achieved.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

1   Recognise the features of a given work of fiction.
2   Respond to the main ideas of a given work of fiction.

Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to:

♦ Units in the English and Communication Course at National 2
♦ other Units, Awards and Courses at National 2
♦ other related Units, Awards and Courses at National 3
♦ further study, employment and/or training

Further details about these Units can be found on SQA's website.

Learners may progress to other Units at the same level or Units and Courses at higher levels. The nature of this progression will depend on the individual needs of the learner.

The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could also support progression in other curriculum areas as well as life and work contexts.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning, teaching and assessment which can be used for the delivery of this Unit.

Learning and teaching
The skills-based focus of the Unit lends itself to the use of a variety of learning and teaching approaches, reflecting the values and principles of the curriculum. Effective learning and teaching will draw on a variety of approaches to enrich the experience of learners. In particular, a mix of approaches which provide opportunities for personalisation and choice will help to motivate and challenge the learners.

Learning should be relevant to the learner's everyday life, their overall learning programme, and/or work and leisure. Teachers/lecturers could also consider interdisciplinary and cross-curricular approaches to learning and teaching, and explore how extra-curricular activities or the personal interests of learners could be included and recognised.

Many of these approaches could involve group work. Group work approaches can be used within Units where it is helpful to simulate real-life situations, share tasks and promote teamworking skills. However, there must be clear evidence for each learner to show that they have met the required Assessment Standards for the Unit.

Learners should be given the opportunity to use their normal mode of communication and have access to the appropriate resources for support where they would normally be available in real-life situations in which the activity is being carried out.

Examples of learning and teaching approaches and ways of recording evidence are provided in the table on the next page.

English: Responding to Fictional Texts (National 2)

The general aim of this Unit is to provide opportunities for learners to explore and engage with works of fiction. The same work of fiction could be used for both Outcomes of the Unit. Alternatively, one work of fiction could be used for Outcome 1 and a different work of fiction used for Outcome 2. The learner will:

Outcomes and Assessment Standards	Guidance and suggested learning and teaching approaches
1 Recognise the features of a given work of fiction by: 1.1 Identifying the main features of a given work of fiction 1.2 Describing the features of main characters in a given work of fiction	Teachers/lecturers could introduce fiction to learners by taking some time to look at examples of different pieces of fictional text, as well as making learners aware of the differences between fiction and non-fiction. Examples of suitable works of fiction could include: short stories, novel extracts, TV drama, animated stories, musicals, graphic novels, comics and poems. Teachers/lecturers should select works of fiction which contain strong and clearly defined narrative and characters. While the work of fiction should be selected by the teacher/lecturer, consideration should be given to the learner's own preferences, interests, areas of study, etc. Careful consideration should also be given to the genre of fiction and the subject matter covered within the work. It may also be helpful to discuss the story with learners, either individually or as part of a group, after it has been heard or watched. Learners could also participate in a literary study on the chosen work of fiction; this could include a multi-sensory approach across different curriculum areas, for example exploring the narrative and character(s) through drama, art, music, etc. The main features could include: ♦ setting – a particular time and/or place ♦ genre – comedy, horror, crime ♦ character(s) – main and secondary ♦ plot (narrative) and/or sub-plot(s) ♦ ending

Learners identify the main features of a work of fiction. Examples of possible learner responses could include:

♦ creating drawings to illustrate the main character(s) in the appropriate setting (eg a girl in her bedroom, a group of friends in a café)
♦ using text to create a summary of the story and/or importing images to illustrate text
♦ identifying the character(s) and/or setting from picture cards
♦ responding to questions about the work of fiction orally, in writing, through signing or through responses to multiple choice statements
♦ making a storyboard or a mind map to show understanding of a story
♦ creating a timeline to chart the actions/changes of mood of the main character(s) as the story progresses
♦ highlighting text from the work of fiction, eg underlining key ideas or information
♦ sequencing information, eg sorting jumbled-up words or sentences
♦ sequencing a jumbled story/piece of fiction
♦ identifying true/false statements related to the piece of fiction

Teachers/lecturers could help learners to select the main characters to be described by providing a list of characters and asking the learner to select from this list. Examples of main features could include:

♦ appearance (eg height, distinguishing marks, clothing) and/or attributes (eg male/female, child/adult, person/animal)
♦ attitude, behaviour and/or mood
♦ actions
♦ interaction(s) with other characters

Learners then describe the features of main characters for a given work of fiction. Examples of possible learner responses could include:

♦ creating a drawing of the main character(s) which shows their appearance/attributes/mood

	(eg boy laughing, woman with curly hair) ♦ matching picture cards of characters with appropriate description/mood (eg boy-happy, woman-curly hair) ♦ making a storyboard of the character's actions throughout the story ♦ creating a timeline for the characters (eg moving from happy to sad and back to happy) ♦ highlighting words and/or phrases which show characters' feelings and/or relationships ♦ responding to questions about the relationship(s) between characters either orally or in writing
2 Respond to the main ideas of a given work of fiction by: 2.1 Expressing an opinion about the main idea(s) 2.2 Providing a reason for the opinion expressed	Examples of suitable works of fiction could include: short stories, novel extracts, TV drama, animated stories, musicals, graphic novels, comics and poems. Teachers/lecturers should select works of fiction which contain strong and clearly defined narrative and characters. While the work of fiction should be selected by the teacher/lecturer, consideration should be given to the learner's own preferences, interests, areas of study, etc. Careful consideration should also be given to the genre of fiction and the subject matter covered within the work. It may be helpful to discuss the story with learners, either individually or as part of a group, after it has been heard or watched, to help learners express their opinions and to formulate reasons for same. To help learners express an opinion, teachers/lecturers could ask learners: Do they like the story? Was the story funny/scary/sad? Do they like the main character(s)? Is/are the character(s) happy or sad? Learners could also, for example, be asked to predict what will happen with the character(s)/plot, explain why they think a character behaves in a certain way or describe the relationships between characters. This could be done through oral questioning using prompt questions and/or using pictures. Learners express an opinion about the main idea(s) of the given work of fiction. Learners also provide a reason for the opinion expressed. Learners could be presented with a list of alternative points of view/reasons and asked to select which one is most appropriate. Some learners may need to discuss alternatives and be given some prompting in order to provide their opinion and reasoning.

	Examples of possible learner responses could include:
	- liked the story — it was exciting - disliked the story — it was scary - story was sad — a character's pet died - story was funny — the main character did silly things

This Unit could also be linked with activities in other National 2 Units. For example, topics such as bullying, personal safety, caring for others, independence, could provide opportunities to study works of fiction on these themes.

This Unit could also be linked to activities in Units of the National 2 English and Communication Course.

Assessment
There is no external assessment for National 2 Units. All Units are internally assessed against the requirements outlined and described in the *Unit Specification* and the *Unit Assessment Support* pack.

To achieve the Unit, learners must achieve the Unit Outcomes.

Evidence for this Unit could be collected during learning and teaching activities.

Teachers/lecturers could therefore record naturally occurring evidence as a way of meeting the Unit Outcomes. Naturally occurring evidence is evidence which occurs within and as part of the learning and teaching, and can be recorded for assessment purposes in a variety of ways, including:

♦ observation of evidence demonstrated during an activity (using an observation checklist, visual recording, photography or equivalent)
♦ oral questioning before, during and on completion of an activity (recorded using an audio-visual or audio recording or using detailed written assessor notes as evidence)
♦ learning and teaching activities which generate physical evidence for assessment
♦ identifying opportunities to record evidence within out-of-centre activities

Alternatively, where assessment is carried out as a discrete activity, this could be as a single event or it may be broken up into smaller, more manageable sections. In this case, care must be taken to avoid duplication of evidence and potential assessment.

Learners will benefit from receiving accurate and regular feedback on their work regarding their learning. This helps to ensure they are actively involved in the assessment process. It is also important that different approaches to assessment are adopted to suit the varying needs of learners.

Authentication
For guidance on authentication of evidence that is gathered outwith the direct supervision of the teacher/lecturer responsible for the learner, eg outside the school or classroom, refer to SQA's *Guide to Assessment.*

It is important that teachers/lecturers track and keep accurate records of their assessments in order to:

♦ inform learners of their progress
♦ identify where further consolidation is required
♦ retain and store appropriately evidence of work in progress and completed work for verification purposes

It is anticipated that learners will need a high degree of teacher/lecturer assistance. More details about the type of support are provided within the Equality and inclusion section.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

The *Unit Specification* lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop in this Unit. These are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and should be built into the Unit where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Unit.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Examples of learning and teaching approaches
1 Literacy	
1.3 Listening and talking Listening means the ability to understand and interpret ideas, opinions and information presented orally for a purpose and within a context, drawing on non-verbal communication as appropriate. Talking means the ability to communicate orally ideas, opinions and information for a purpose and within a context.	Where appropriate, learners could use their normal mode of communication to: ♦ communicate, eg identifying the main features of a given work of fiction ♦ respond, eg describing the features of main characters in a given work of fiction
5 Thinking skills	
5.1 Remembering Remembering is the ability to identify, recognise and recall facts, events and sequences.	Where appropriate, learners could demonstrate remembering skills by: ♦ responding appropriately to questions about the main features and/or main characters of a given work of fiction

It is important that learners have opportunities to develop these broad general skills as an integral part of their learning experience.

There will be opportunities for the development of additional skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work throughout this Unit. These will vary from centre to centre depending on the approaches being used to deliver the Unit.

Equality and inclusion

The additional support needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences or when considering any reasonable adjustments that may be required. Assessment methods should offer all learners an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement. This should be reflected in the language used, the use of different assessment presentation methods and the use of appropriate illustrative materials that reflect an inclusive view.

Learners undertaking qualifications at SCQF level 2 are likely to require more support with their learning than at other levels. The support provided should be appropriate for the learner, for the subject area and for the activity involved. Examples of support might include:

♦ allowing extra time to complete activities
♦ practical helpers under direct learner instruction could assist with practical activities (this could also include a reader and/or scribe as appropriate)
♦ the use of specialised and adapted equipment
♦ the use of ICT, including adaptive technologies such as braille and assistive technologies (such as voice activated software) to support learners with limited capacities to write

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and where the alternative approach to assessment will generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

♦ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA's website: http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html

♦ *Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work*

♦ *Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment*

♦ *Guide to Assessment* (January 2014)

♦ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas

♦ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*

♦ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*

♦ *SCQF Handbook: User Guide* (published 2009) and

♦ SCQF level descriptors: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html

♦ *SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*

♦ *Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool*

♦ SQA *Guidelines* on e-assessment for Schools

♦ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education

♦ SQA e-assessment web page

Administrative information

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History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Unit details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date