The English Teacher's Handbook

A to Z

second edition

by

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PHOENIX EDUCATION

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Introduction

This book represents an attempt to capture a sense of the profound richness, scope and depth of English in education. It is not our intention to provide an exhaustive list of pedagogical strategies or literary terms, nor to cover in extensive detail the expansive range of theoretical principles and conceptual frameworks that have contributed to the evolution and development of English in education. Rather, the book offers teachers an accessible compilation of the major concepts, research, ideas, pedagogical approaches, historical movements, theories and debates that have informed and continue to inform teaching and learning in subject English. The entries selected are not intended to advocate any one particular point of view, theory, model or position. It is anticipated that the entries in this book will act as a springboard for teachers to investigate specific areas of interest more fully.

This book is being published at a time when English, as an academic discipline and as a school-based subject, is once again the focus of public scrutiny: the work of teachers and the experiences of students are regularly misrepresented or partially reported in the public domain. It is not uncommon, for example, for English to be reduced to a set of basic literacy skills or knowledge about a canon of literature. We believe it is therefore important to re-emphasise the intellectual, pedagogical and historical underpinnings and scope of the subject, and to identify the corpus of knowledge, concepts, processes and practices which will not only be helpful to pre-service and practising teachers, but will also reassert what is central to the subject and to teaching and learning in the subject in the 21st century.

We have deliberately included entries on the historical influences on the development of English in education. This is based on our firm belief that all practising teachers need to know and understand the roots of their professionalism and the accumulated wisdom that continues to shape their craft. As Reid observes, 'Ours is a forgetful era, often oblivious to ways in which past cultural practices have shaped the foundations of much that we think and do' (Reid, 2004: ix).

It is not enough to be 'up to date' with the latest classroom pedagogical strategy or the latest commercially produced resource. It is vital, as a profession, to understand where the 'latest trend' or school of thought is situated in the evolution of the subject. It is our belief that effective practice relies on a deep knowledge of the history of English in education; an ability to identify and articulate clearly the beliefs about English teaching which underpin classroom practice; an understanding of how learning occurs in diverse classrooms and other settings; and how these beliefs reflect (or do not reflect) the major principles and theories of the subject.

Subject English draws theoretically and pedagogically on other disciplines such as, for example, drama, visual art, music, film and media studies. Thus, a number of the entries highlight the continuities between English and these other fields. We believe that English is the 'palace for thinking, imagining, creating, feeling, knowing and expressing' (de Bono, 1996: 44). At its core is the commitment to students' affective, creative, imaginative, intellectual, social and embodied learning and development. As teachers, we seek to begin where students are at, moving them forward to explore new horizons that are made possible and understood through authentic engagement with, enjoyment of and critical attention to language, literature and other texts. We believe that students are not merely 'spectators' but also 'participants' (Britton, 1975): actively 'making and doing'; creating and critiquing; discovering and synthesising; and weighing up and evaluating the experience of others, and representations of this experience, in the light of students' own growing and deepening understanding of themselves and the increasingly complex world they inhabit.

English is far more than a set of skills that can be transmitted or a body of knowledge that can be packaged and delivered in a one-size-fits-all model of curriculum. English does not merely educate students about the 'what' of knowledge, understanding, values and skills. Importantly, it strives to equip students with the 'how' of thinking and knowing, the ability to use language accurately and

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appropriately in a range of contexts and to reflect on and critique this language use. Such holistic teaching and learning cannot be atomised into discrete elements, for every encounter with language – our own and others' – draws on the senses, the intellect, the emotions and the spirit. Such endeavours support, inform and encourage students' curiosity and their thirst for and right to meaningful learning. Such endeavours aim to develop in all students the desire and ability to engage with and understand the ways language works to shape the personal, imaginative, creative, intellectual, ethical, social, cultural and critical dimensions of human experience. It is through sustained immersion in language, literature and other texts that English attends to the greater questions of values, meaning and purpose in human experience. Through enlightened teaching, English education, as 'the meeting point of experience, language and society' (Dixon, 1967) may build resilience, empathy, increased social awareness and a sense that attention to the inner life is at least as compelling and primal as attention to the outer life.

As with other well-established subjects, the specialised discourse/s of English in education reflects its complexity, uniqueness and intellectual, scholarly depth, as well as its ability to shift with corresponding developments in theory, research and pedagogy. This complexity and uniqueness can partially account for why English, as a discipline and school-based subject, is often misunderstood by the wider community and non-specialist commentators. Developments in the pedagogical practices of English teachers reflect advances in research and our understanding of how optimal learning occurs. But these developments may also at times reinforce the distance between what we do as educators and what the community understands about our work.

It is impossible to complete a publication such as this without reference to and recognition of seminal works with a similar purpose: in particular, Wayne Sawyer, Ken Watson and Anthony Adams' *English Teaching from A to Z* (1989); J.A Cuddon's *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (1991); M.H. Abram's *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (5th edn, 1985) and C. Hugh Holman's *A Handbook to Literature* (1976). We are indebted to the scholarship evident in these books and acknowledge their importance in the development of this publication.

As editors, we have aimed for an informed eclecticism in the decisions about what to include and to omit in terms of theory and pedagogy. These decisions have been partly pragmatic due to the limitations of space, and partly based on the recognition from research evidence that this informed eclecticism distinguishes effective teaching and learning in English. For this reason, the range of practical strategies included here should be considered contextually, as part of the integrated approach to teaching, learning and progression in English 7-12 that is advocated in this book. We have sought to reflect the integrated nature of the subject by indicating related entries and further reading where appropriate. It should also be noted that the length of an individual entry is not intended to indicate the importance of that entry in relation to other entries.

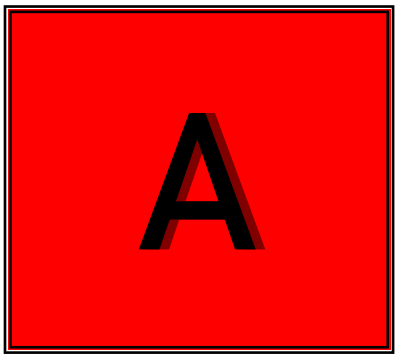
Our purpose in publishing this book is to contribute to the continued professional development of teachers. It can be utilised as a reference; a resource; a stimulus for further reading and research; and a useful companion in day-to-day teaching.

It is almost inevitable, given the contested nature of English education, that aspects of this book may fuel further debate about what constitutes teaching and learning in secondary English. We welcome such informed, collegial debates and consider them as the lifeblood of informed professionalism.

Jacqueline Manuel and Don Carter

References: de Bono, E. (1996) *Serious Creativity*, NY: Harper Collins Publishers.
Dixon, J. (1967) *Growth Through English*, Huddersfield: OUP and NATE.
Reid, I. (2004) *Wordsworth and the formation of English Studies*, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing.

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Act

This item refers to a structural unit within a play. Within an act, there may be further divisions into scenes. An act usually contains action that is distinctive and thereby structured as a unit within the play, through the thematic focus, time sequences or character development. Scenes and acts are often marked by the exits and entrances of characters, changes in the set, lighting and mood, or the use of a device for closure such as a curtain. Some dramatists during the Elizabethan period adopted the five-act structure of the classical Greeks and Romans. From the 20th century on, experiments with form and structure have seen the conventional five-act play give way to three-act plays and plays that do not necessarily adhere to traditional divisions into acts and scenes. See also **Drama**

Action and Adventure

This is a genre of fiction, film and computer gaming that includes a range of subgenres: for example, disaster, espionage, crime, thriller, survival, superhero, adventure comedy, swashbuckler, and military. In action and adventure texts, there is an emphasis on plot with fast-paced, continuously unfolding action. With the rise of the novel in the 19th century, adventure fiction became increasingly popular, and drew on the genre of the Medieval Romance. Typically, the story is set in a realistic environment with the action taking place across a number of locations.

The characters are often strong male heroes with exceptional physical, intellectual or other abilities that equip them to overcome adversity and confront life-threatening situations. The hero frequently meets a woman and there is a turn in the plot that separates them. The remainder of the adventure involves a movement towards their eventual reunion. There is often an emphasis on plot over intense character development in both action and adventure. These texts frequently include violence (sometimes graphic violence); intrigue; suspense; female love interests; cars; weapons; high technology devices; and military apparatus. Action and adventure films are extremely common and enduring in their popularity: many blockbuster Hollywood films of recent decades attest to the continuing appeal of this genre. Computer games and interactive fiction regularly draw on the conventions of action and adventure. See also **Fiction, Film, Genre**.

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Active and passive voice

When the *subject* of a sentence controls or performs the action identified by the *verb,* this is the *active* voice. For example:

At the conference Professor Smith will present her research on climate change.

The subject (Professor Smith), performs the action identified by the verb (will present). The subject is *active*.

When the passive voice is employed, the subject is acted upon. For example:

Research on climate change will be presented at the conference.

The active voice is the more naturalised mode for oral language and is promoted in writing that seeks to persuade, entertain and engage an audience through the use of a distinctive voice. In scientific writing, the passive voice is more common: the removal of active subjects (I, we, they) from the writing is designed to convey the impression that the information or conclusions presented are 'objective' rather than based on personal beliefs, attitudes or bias. The passive voice may also be adopted for rhetorical and persuasive purposes, where the composer deliberately seeks to understate or neutralise a subjective point of view for the purpose of making generalisable (and thereby apparently more authoritative) statements. Conversely, the passive voice may also be used to camouflage the import of a statement.

A writer can decide to use the passive voice in order to evade identifying specifically who or what should carry out the action. This can occur in, for example, bureaucratic and legal texts such as reports, policies and legislation. Language written and spoken in the active voice is generally more engaging and often more concise than that written in the passive voice.

Adaptation

This term refers to a reworked or altered version of a novel, play or other text. Adaptation refers to a process involving the shift from one genre to another: novel into film; drama into film; drama into musical; the dramatisation of prose fiction; or more rarely, a novel adapted from a film. A poem can be adapted: for example, the poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo' has been adapted to music in a chorus and orchestra ensemble by Elizabeth Maconchy (1978). It is not only texts that are considered classics or canonical which are adapted: contemporary works too can be adapted. Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple* (Spielberg, 1985) and Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (Demme, 1998) are two examples of contemporary adaptations.

'Adaptations are a synergy between the desire for sameness and reproduction on the one hand, and, on the other, the acknowledgement of difference' (Hayward, 2001: 6). The word 'adaptation' comes from a Latin word meaning to fit to a new context, and this 'recontextualisation is an important aspect of the process that leads, for example, to rewrites of *Othello* by black writers and women writers' (Fischlin and Fortier, 2000: 3). Deborah Cartmell (in Sanders, 2006: 20) posits three broad categories of adaptation: transpositional; commentary; and analogue.

Transpositional adaptation is characterised by layers of change. For example, Baz Luhrmann's 1996 *Romeo + Juliet* adapts Shakespeare's play not only generically (through the medium of film), but also temporally, geographically and culturally. Adaptation in terms of commentary includes adaptations that comment on the politics of the original text. Patricia Rozema's 2000 film version of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* makes explicit reference to British colonialism and the use of slaves in Antigua: details which are only implied in Austen's novel. Finally, the category of adaptation known

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as analogue involves recontextualisation. For example, the film *Apocalypse Now,* directed by Francis Ford Coppola (1979), recontextualises Joseph Conrad's 19th century novel *Heart of Darkness* from its late 19th century African setting to a Vietnam War setting in the latter half of the 20th century.

Other examples of adaptations:

Novel/story to film:

Emma (Clueless)
Schindler's Ark (Schindler's List)
Once Were Warriors
Whale Rider
The Namesake
Romulus, My Father
Love in the Time of Cholera
Atonement
Harry Potter series

Stage/drama to film:

Romeo and Juliet
Billy Elliot
Death of a Salesman
My Fair Lady/Pygmalion
Twelve Angry Men
Cabaret
West Side Story

References: Fischlin, D. & Fortier M. (eds) (2000) Adaptations of Shakespeare- *An Anthology of Plays from the 17th Century to the Present*, London: Routledge.
Sanders, J. (2006) *Adaptation and Appropriation (The New Critical Idiom)*, London: Routledge

Aesthetic and efferent reading

In *The Reader, the Text, the Poem* (1978), Louise Rosenblatt (1904-2005) articulated an important distinction between two kinds of reading: what she termed 'aesthetic' and 'efferent' readings. She used the latter term, 'efferent' to describe the process whereby the reader seeks to 'comprehend' or 'carry away' what the text is saying. This is an information-seeking exercise: what the reader brings to the text, by way of their own past experience, is of minimal importance. When responding to the text in the 'aesthetic' mode, however, the reader's past experience, the associations he or she makes with other previously read texts, along with personal thoughts and feelings, plays a significant role in the reader's transaction with the text and the resulting 'meaning' that the reader comes to.

Rosenblatt argued that 'in aesthetic reading, the reader's attention is centred directly on what he [*sic*] is living through during his [*sic*] relationship with that particular text' (Rosenblatt, 1978: 25). At the same time, she recognised that in reading any particular text the reader may shift along a continuum between the efferent and aesthetic experience. See also **Reader-response criticism**.

References: Rosenblatt, L. (1938 republished 1968). *Literature as Exploration*,. New York: Noble.
Rosenblatt, L. (1978). *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: the transactional theory of the literary work*,. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Aesthetic/s

(Greek: 'things perceptible by the senses') This term denotes a mode of experience and knowing that relies on the relationship between the senses and emotion: 'one of those distinct categories of understanding and achievement – the aesthetic and creative – is exemplified by the arts: music, drama, literature, poetry, dance, sculpture and the graphic arts' (Abbs, 1991: 245). The aesthetic experience is not merely one of 'response' to a work: it is also deeply bound up in the process of creativity and judgement. As John Dewey argued:

> The product of art is not the work of art. The work takes place when a human being cooperates with the product so that the outcome is an experience that is enjoyed because of its liberating and orderly properties (1934: 72).

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Abbs locates this argument in teaching and learning contexts by asserting that:

> Responses to art, as art, are sensuous, physical, dramatic, bodily, preverbal. For this reason the often-heard casual remark 'Well what's it do for you?' is aesthetically much sounder that the intellectual question 'What is it saying?' or 'What did the artist intend?' Premature answers to these latter questions take us quickly out of the aesthetic realm into the documentary and discursive. Too much theory, too much knowledge, in isolation from the aesthetic experience, can block and impede the immediate bodily response, the imaginative indwelling of mind in the pattern of sensation (1991: 252).

The implication of this approach is the need for teachers to encourage aesthetic response to texts prior to the intellectual, descriptive or evaluative acts of engagement that form an essential part of English teaching and learning.

Attempts to define art and the concept of beauty have always figured to a greater or lesser degree in philosophy. Plato (c. 428-348 BCE) and Aristotle (384-322 BCE) were both concerned with the question of art's ability to convey truth and knowledge, although the term 'aesthetics' did not appear until A.G. Baumgarten (1714-1762) introduced the term in *Aesthetica* (1750). For Baumgarten, the term defined the specialised activities of the artist: art is generated from mental representations that are bound up with feelings and the sensuous and as such, 'beauty' as an artistic quality and as an abstraction, is a complex concept. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) regarded aesthetic consciousness as an important and unitary element in human experience. Kant believed that aesthetic judgment is unlike theoretical (cognitive) judgment or practical (moral) judgement because it is enacted through individual subjective means. In his *Critique of Judgement* (1790) Kant argued that the integration of the cognitive and moral aspects of our nature is realised through aesthetic judgement.

During the Industrial Revolution in England, a shift in the meanings of the words 'art' and 'artist' took place. The traditional meaning of 'art' referred to any type of 'skill', while 'artist' meant 'skilled person', synonymous with 'artisan'. The term 'art' shifted in meaning to refer to a particular group of skills associated directly with the imaginative or creative arts. The term 'Art' with a capital 'A' became associated with the representation of a unique category of truth: a truth represented imaginatively through art by the artist. This capacity to represent a truth imaginatively rendered the artist an 'aesthete'. A distinction was therefore created between an 'artist' and 'artisan' (or 'craftsman'). This shift in etymology also reflected a shift in the meaning of 'genius': previously the term referred to 'a characteristic disposition' but came to mean 'exalted ability'.

A new term – 'aesthetic' - thus emerged, embodying the concept of the artist, artistic value and artistic achievement. Literature, theatre, sculpture, painting and music were regarded as part of a single continuum of artistic endeavour, with one form of art linked to another by similar attributes that rendered them distinct from other types of skilled 'craft'.

References: Abbs, P. (1991).'Defining the Aesthetic Field' in *Aesthetics and Arts Education*, eds. R.W. Alexander, A. Simpson & Getty Centre for Education in the Arts. Ithaca: Illinois University Press.
Dewey, J. (1938). *Art as Experience*, New York: Minton Balch.

Aestheticism

This term refers to a literary movement of the late 19th century which held that art is an end in itself and should not be driven by didactic, political, utilitarian, moral or propagandist purposes. The 'Arts for art's sake' movement embodied a view which stemmed largely from the German Romantics and, specifically, from Théophile Gautier's preface in *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1836). Oscar Wilde (1854-

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Assessing writing

There are various models for assessing student writing. The framework below (Manuel, 2016) was developed as part of a research evaluation with the Sydney Story Factory that set out to map and describe the key features of writing development of students from primary through to secondary school age. The framework draws on a number of research-based models of writing development and describes this in terms of the broad categories of holistic development: cognitive and affective; socio-functional; inter-relational; and stylistic. The full framework encompasses nine Stages of writing development:

Emerging (5-7 yrs)	Expanding (8-10 yrs)	Refining (11-13 yrs)
Developing (6-8 yrs)	Bridging (9-11 yrs)	Capable (12-14 yrs)
Transitional (7-9 yrs)	Fluent (10-12 yrs)	Accomplished

The table below provides the achievement descriptors for writing in Stages 7-9 (Refining to Accomplished).

Writing Analysis Framework

Refining (11-13 yrs)	Capable (12-14 yrs)	Accomplished
1. Cognitive and Affective: ~ Confidently generates a range of ideas for writing with or without guidance ~ Uses pre-writing and planning strategies confidently with or without guidance ~ Presents some fresh/original ideas ~ Narrows and focuses topic ~ Develops one clear, main idea ~ Makes connections between own ideas and others' ~ Shows some evidence of a personal writing style and voice ~ Writes persuasively and engagingly about ideas, feelings and opinions (of self and others)	**1. Cognitive and Affective:** ~ Confidently generates a growing range of own ideas for writing ~ Confidently draws on a repertoire of pre-writing strategies to effectively organise and strengthen writing, with or without guidance ~ Focuses topic with minimal guidance ~ Writes organised and fluent non-fiction ~ Selects supporting details to strengthen purpose ~ Maintains purpose of writing consistently ~ Composes some authentic writings which show originality ~ Writing may demonstrates distinctive voice and style	**1. Cognitive and Affective:** ~ Capable of generating a wide range of topics/ideas based on purpose and audience ~ Confidently and skilfully creates, adopts and adapts a range of pre-writing and planning strategies ~ Writes confidently in a sustained way on a wide range of topics ~ Confidently experiments and takes risks with writing ~ Narrows and elaborates topics ~ Develops one clear idea or theme ~ Makes deliberate and considered choices for representation of people, places, events, feelings and experiences ~ Confidently and skilfully writes about feelings (generally others'), with effective control of distance between speaker and character

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