

THEORY BOOKLET

NAME:.....

YEAR 9
ENGLISH

TERM 1, 2017

TEXT AND REPRESENTATION

1300 008 008

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PLAGIARISM POLICY

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

“Plagiarism is when you pretend that you have written or created a piece of work that someone else originated. It is cheating, it is dishonest, and it could jeopardise your HSC exam results.”¹ Plagiarism includes:

- Copying and pasting information from the internet.
- Using the ideas of others as if they were your own.
- Copying and pasting information from the internet, then changing the words.

WHY DOES PLAGIARISM MATTER?

- Because it is cheating. It is stealing other people’s ideas.
- Because you are not developing the skills that are important for your learning
- Because authors own their own words and ideas.
- Because there are penalties
- If you are plagiarising, you are not gaining any deep knowledge.

HOW CAN YOU AVOID PLAGIARISM?

- Providing a reference list, which shows where you have found your information
- Using footnotes where you cite your sources
- Writing a bibliography
- Use quotation marks around text which comes directly from another written source

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR ENGAGING IN PLAGIARISM?

Matrix Education treats each case of plagiarism with the seriousness that it deserves. If a teacher detects plagiarism, they will inform the student of the situation. The assessment in question will be awarded a mark of 0. If a student engages in multiple instances of plagiarism, the academic coordinator will be informed and the parents of the student contacted. Plagiarism does not represent academic excellence or the approach to deep learning that Matrix seeks for all its students. A pattern of plagiarism may result in being disenrolled from Matrix Education.

¹ New South Wales, Board of Studies, 2006: <http://studentonline.bos.nsw.edu.au/go/assessment/>

OBJECTIVES FOR THE UNIT

This unit focuses on the continued development of skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. These skills are fundamental to students' literacy in English. This unit also develops students' visual literacy through the development of skills in viewing and representing a diverse range of texts including texts in print, film and other technologies.

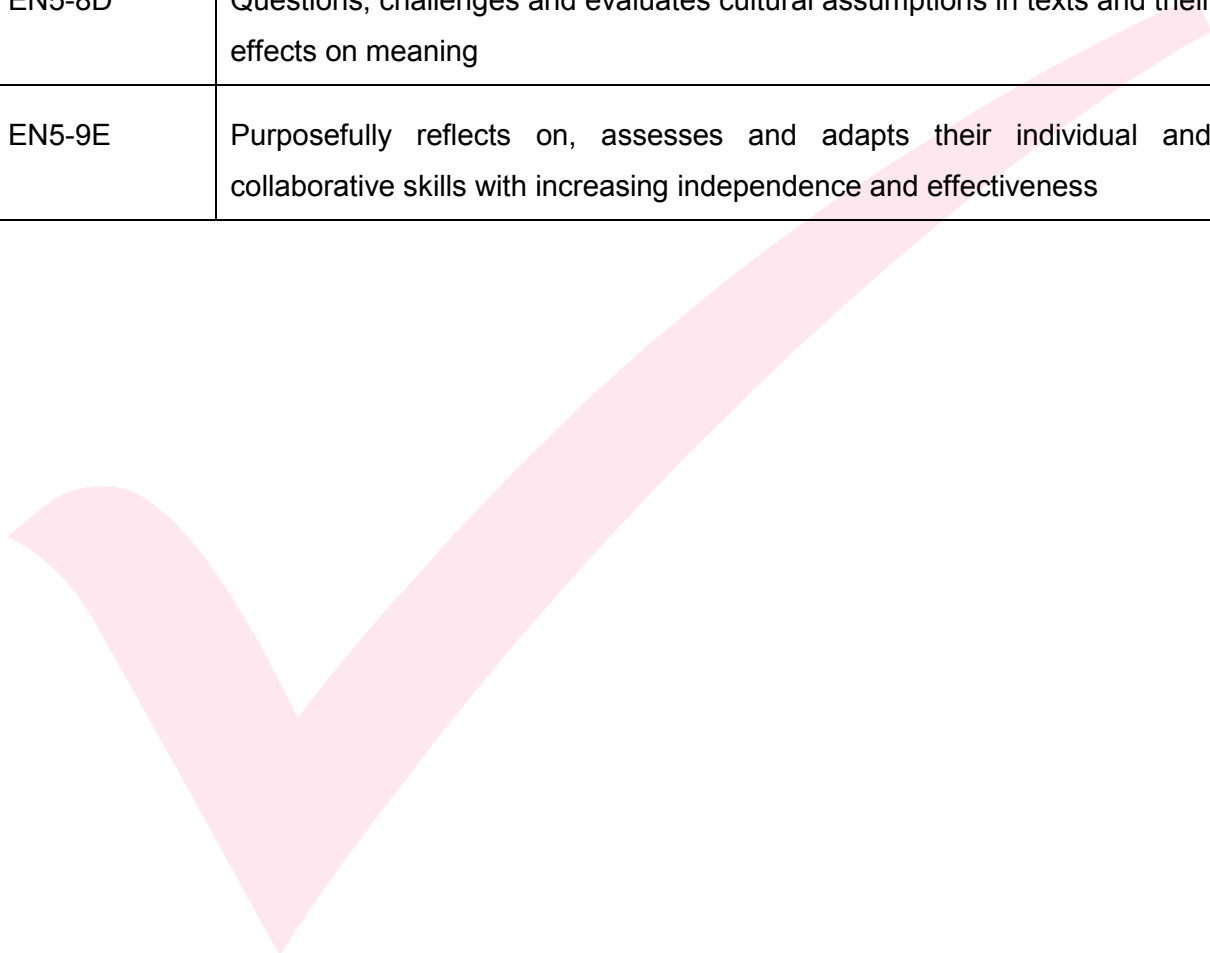
This unit requires students to develop skills in composing and responding to texts created in and through different information and communication technologies and to understand the effects of the technology on meaning. It develops the skills, knowledge and understanding for students to acquire, process, question, challenge, reformulate and evaluate information in texts from a wide variety of sources.

This unit encourages students to respond to and compose in various social contexts and it enables students to understand the effects of such contexts on meaning. Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts in context and through close study of texts, students will develop skills, knowledge and understanding in order to fulfil the National Curriculum Stage 5 outcomes.

This unit has been designed to meet the syllabus requirements of the Australian National Curriculum as listed below:

EN5-1A	Responds to and composes increasingly sophisticated and sustained texts for understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, imaginative expression and pleasure
EN5-2A	Effectively uses and critically assesses a wide range of processes, skills, strategies and knowledge for responding to and composing a wide range of texts in different media and technologies
EN5-3B	Selects and uses language forms, features and structures of texts appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts, describing and explaining their effects on meaning
EN5-4B	Effectively transfers knowledge, skills and understanding of language concepts into new and different contexts

EN5-5C	Thinks imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically about information and increasingly complex ideas and arguments to respond to and compose texts in a range of contexts
EN5-6C	Investigates the relationships between and among texts
EN5-7D	Understands and evaluates the diverse ways texts can represent personal and public worlds
EN5-8D	Questions, challenges and evaluates cultural assumptions in texts and their effects on meaning
EN5-9E	Purposefully reflects on, assesses and adapts their individual and collaborative skills with increasing independence and effectiveness



HOW WILL THIS MATRIX COURSE HELP ME?

The National Curriculum provides the following outline in terms of required content for Stage 5 English students:

CONTENT AND TEXT REQUIREMENTS FOR STAGE 5

Over Stage 5, students must read, listen to and view a variety of texts that are appropriate to their needs, interests and abilities. These texts become increasingly sophisticated as students move from Stage 4 to Stage 5. Students will undertake the essential content and work towards course outcomes through close reading of, listening to or viewing the following:

Stage 5

Fiction	At least two works
Poetry	A variety drawn from different anthologies and/or study of one or two poets
Film	At least two works
Nonfiction	At least two works
Drama	At least two works

The following specifications may be fulfilled through the required types of texts outlined above and/or through other texts. In each Year of Stage 5 students must study examples of:

- spoken texts
- print texts
- visual texts
- media, multimedia and digital texts.

Across the stage, the selection of texts must give students experience of:

- texts which are widely regarded as quality literature
- a widely defined Australian literature, including texts that give insights into Aboriginal experiences in Australia

- a wide range of literary texts from other countries and times, including poetry, drama scripts, prose fiction and picture books
- texts written about intercultural experiences
- texts that provide insights about the peoples and cultures of Asia
- Shakespearean drama
- everyday and workplace texts
- a wide range of cultural, social and gender perspectives, popular and youth cultures
- texts that include aspects of environmental and social sustainability
- nonfiction, picture books, graphic novels
- an appropriate range of digital texts, including film, media and multimedia.

This term we examine a range of text types that are valuable for Stage Five English studies. In the opening lessons we consider the way that different perspectives are conveyed in texts. The study of biographies and autobiographies provide students the opportunity to consider how different perspectives are explored through non-fiction texts.

The focus on the study of characterisation and the analysing of literary techniques in lessons three and four enable the study of fictional texts which are widely regarded as quality literature, as well as being from other countries and times.

The focus in the second half of the term on reviews and visual texts provides students with the chance to apply their critical skills to new text types and present a range of cultural and social perspectives.



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YEAR 9

ENGLISH

TEXT AND REPRESENTATION

LESSON 1: INTRODUCTION TO CONTEXT

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1. UNIT INTRODUCTION: TEXT AND REPRESENTATION

Module C in HSC English involves the study of how an event, personality or situation is represented in a text. The module emphasises that these representations are not *objective*, that is, they do not reflect reality as it *really* is, but are a *construction* created by the composer for a particular purpose. HSC students are required to analyse how the subjectivity of the composer, the characters within the text, and the textual form all combine to influence interpretation. This unit serves as an introduction to these important ideas.

WRITING TASK

Divide into pairs and write a summary of your day for the person sitting next to you.



You will notice that it is impossible for you to include everything that happened in the space provided. This constraint already imposes a degree of subjectivity and perspective on your writing. But even if you had infinite space, there is the question of *how* you would accurately represent what has happened to you today. What techniques would you use to describe the taste of the kebab you had before arriving at Matrix?

The physical sciences you study in school offer precise, mathematical descriptions of the natural world. Their scope is very limited, however. There are many other aspects of reality people need to represent, and this task is taken up by the texts you study in English. In this course, we will be examining the ways texts represent reality.

Composers of texts are always guided by particular motivations. In the writing task above, you probably avoided including details you consider to be embarrassing. You probably aimed to represent yourself in a certain way. You might have wanted to finish the task as quickly as possible, thereby distorting what happened in your day. What this suggests is that it is essential to consider the purpose of the composer.

When considering the relationship between text and representation then, we need to ask the following questions:

- How is the subject matter of this text being represented to me?
- What meaning does this representation hold for the responder?
- What purpose might the composer have had in representing it this way?

With these questions in mind, you will start to achieve a much more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between text and representation.

2. AUTOBIOGRAPHIES, MEMOIRS AND LIFE WRITING

Traditionally speaking, an autobiography is the written account of a person's life written by that person. Nowadays, it is possible to speak of an autobiographical album, such as Kendrick Lamar's *Good Kid, M.A.A.D City*, or an autobiographical film, such as Katy Perry's 2012 film *Katy Perry: A Part of Me*.

While you will often find non-fiction texts such as autobiographies separated from fiction in your local bookstore, the distinction between the two texts can sometimes be unclear. Writers have often composed works of fiction that are closely related to their own lives and many autobiographies claim to hold truths that have actually been fabricated.

It is therefore important to remember that all auto/biographical narratives, whether personal or fictional, are subjective. They are a way of *representing* reality through writing and not a record of reality in itself. However, while there is some vagueness to the distinction, it is important to be as precise as possible in your description of a text. A case in point is the distinction between the autobiography and memoir.

Memoirs are a subgenre of autobiographical writing. The main objective of an autobiography is to tell the story of an individual's life. Memoirs, on the other hand, form a more particular story of someone's life based on key memories, hence the name of the genre. A memoir will often begin with a key event or idea, and ask how this event or idea should be understood. For example, a great athlete might begin his or her memoir by asking what event motivated them to such great achievements. The memoirist would then construct a series of memories to answer this question.

Some key aspects of memoirs include:

- The 'framing' of a narrative using a key memory or question.
- The memoirist will often critically analyse their memories and history. They will ask questions like *why* they undertook certain actions, what the *meaning* of an event was, or how it contributed to their development.
- The memoirist may choose to present memories in a **NON-CHRONOLOGICAL** order. This may be done in order to analyse specific questions or create certain effects, such as nostalgia.

- Subjective expression. This is an individual providing a subjective account of their memories. Therefore, it is appropriate to use subjective expressions, such as 'I think' and 'As far as I remember.'
- The author may choose to incorporate other people’s memories. These can make a memoir more complex, such as in cases where these outside memories do not correspond to the author’s own.
- The author may ‘resolve’ the mystery or question they introduced at the start of the text. This brings a sense of unity and order to the disparate memories.

WRITING TASK

Plan a memoir of your life below. What key memories will you include? Will there be a framing question or a central mystery that is resolved in the memoir?



3. GARY SHTEYNGART: LITTLE FAILURE

Today we will be exploring memoir as a genre by looking at an example, Gary Shteyngart's 2014 book *Little Failure*. Gary Shteyngart is an American author of Russian Jewish descent. These three aspects of his identity and the complications they generate form major themes in his writing. In 2014, Shteyngart released his memoir *Little Failure*, having already published three successful novels, *The Russian Debutante's Handbook* (2002), *Absurdistan* (2006) and *Super Sad True Love Story* (2010).

We learn from *Little Failure* that Shteyngart was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, during the Soviet years. When he was seven Shteyngart immigrated with his parents to the United States of America. They settled in New York City, where Shteyngart's parents struggled to work as immigrants who spoke little English, and where Shteyngart struggled first in a Jewish school, then a selective school.

The title *Little Failure* derives from a nickname Shteyngart's mother gave him: *Failurchka*, which applies a Russian diminutive to the English word *failure*. Shteyngart's overwhelming sense of failure is a major **THEME** of the book, as are his experiences of being an immigrant and a Jew.



An image of Shteyngart as a boy used for the cover of *Little Failure*

MEDIA VIEWING: Little Failure Promotional Video

Shteyngart’s two suggested titles are *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Mentsh* and *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Jewness*. Both titles are references to other works: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce and *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* by Dave Eggers. Joyce’s book is an autobiographical novel and Eggers’ book is a memoir.

Note to Students: Mentsh

Mentsh is a word in Yiddish, which was once the major language of the European Jews. According to Leo Rosten’s *The Joys of Yiddish*, *mentsh* signifies “someone to admire and emulate, someone of noble character. The key to being ‘a real mensch’ is nothing less than character, rectitude, dignity, a sense of what is right, responsible, decorous.”

FOCUS QUESTIONS:

1. What does Shteyngart suggest about his own work by incorporating Jewish terms into the titles of well-known autobiographical writings?

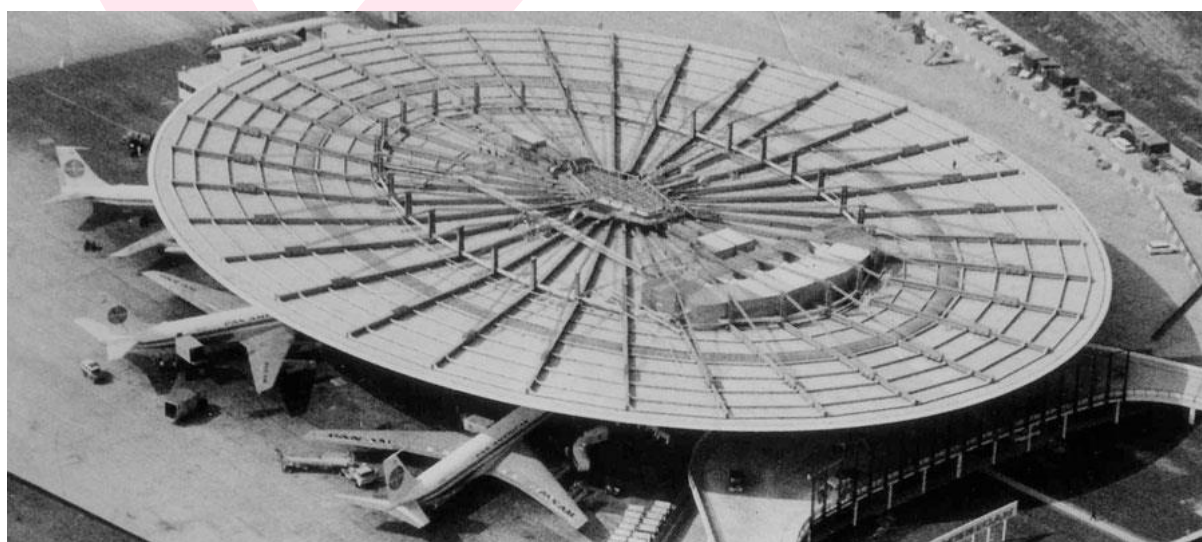
2. How does the promotional trailer establish our expectations about Shteyngart’s memoir?

4. IMMIGRATION AND MEMORY

In 1979, Shteyngart moved with his parents from Russia to The U.S.A. He was seven. Moving to a new country, with a different culture and language is often a traumatic experience. To make matters worse, the U.S. and Russia were engaged in The Cold War at the time. The war was described as ‘cold’ since it lacked direct military conflict between the major powers involved. Instead, the war was characterised by intense political and military tension between the major powers Russia and the U.S. Shteyngart refers to this context in the chapter title *We Are the Enemy*.

Shteyngart, Gary. 2014. *Little Failure* - Extract

1979. Coming to America after a childhood spent in the Soviet Union is equivalent to stumbling off a monochromatic cliff and landing in a pool of pure technicolor. I am pressing my nose to the window of the taxiing jetliner, watching the first hints of my new homeland passing by. Oh, that immense solidity! The sweep of what used to be JFK’s Pan Am terminal with its “flying saucer” roof and, above, the expanse of sky that doesn’t press down on Queens, as the Russian sky trambles Leningrad, but flows past in waves, allotting a bit of itself to each red-bricked or aluminum-sided house and to each of the lucky families that dwells within. The airliners in their bright liveries are clustering around a sea of gates like hungry immigrants trying to get in, Sabena, Lufthansa, Aer Lingus, Avianca.



The Pan Am airport terminal at John F Kennedy International Airport (JFK) in Queens, New York,

FOCUS QUESTIONS:

1. Identify some examples of **VISUAL IMAGERY** in this extract.

<p>IMAGERY, IMAGE</p>	<p>The elements in a poem used to evoke mental images, not only of the visual sense, but of sensation and emotion as well. Imagery is a variable term which applies to components of a poem that evoke sensory experience and emotional response, whether figurative or literal, and <i>also</i> applies to the concrete things so imaged. The different senses evoked or appealed to by imagery can be specified in the following main ways:</p> <p>Olfactory imagery – smell</p> <p>Tactile imagery – touch</p> <p>Visual imagery – sight</p> <p>Auditory imagery – hearing</p> <p>Gustatory imagery – taste</p>
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2. Explain the emotional effect produced by one of the examples of visual imagery you have identified.

3. Write an additional sentence for this passage, in which you represent one of the other senses.

4. Shteyngart is recreating the memory of an event he experienced as a seven year old. Why is emphasising visual imagery appropriate for this purpose?



Stuyvesant High School, the selective New York City school Shteyngart later attended.

While they are struggling to make it in the new country, Shteyngart’s parents send him to a Hebrew school. In the extract below, he **CONTRASTS** his ability to communicate in Russia with his reluctance to speak in his new American Hebrew school.

Shteyngart, Gary. 2014. Little Failure - Extract

I am not good with others. In Leningrad, I had been too sick to go to preschool. My mother worked as a music teacher at a kindergarten, and she brought me there on several occasions when my grandmas were not around to babysit. Invariably, I would stand up in front of the class, in front of all those pretty Slavic girls with their white bows, in front of all the xylophones arranged ceremoniously beneath the requisite portrait of musical Lenin, and announce in my self-important Mama’s Only voice to the older children: “I have something to say to you! I will not participate in any activities today. I will only sit and watch.”

But in Hebrew school, unless I am choking on a pizza, I am too ashamed to say anything.

There is only one exception. The school bus is taking the Hebrew school kids back to our homes, and before the bus can get into the tonier parts of Forest Hills and beyond, we pass our five-story apartment building. “Ober zer!” I cry. “Ober zer! Look at eet! Eet izt mai haus!”

And for the first time I am not the weirdo at the lunch table, and no one is laughing at me and making crazy cuckoo signs around their temples. “That’s your house?” the kids shout. “*You live in that whole place?* You must be so rich! Why do you have to wear my Green Lantern T-Shirt from summer camp?”

As I get off the bus I finally begin to understand the miscommunication. The children think the entire building, all fifty apartments, is my home.

5. What is Shteyngart’s relationship with other children like?

6. Why would Shteyngart chose to include this **ANECDOTE** in his book? How does this memory characterise his experience as an immigrant?

ANECDOTE	A short tale narrating an interesting or amusing biographical incident.
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7. Why do you think Shteyngart chose to transcribe his thick Russian accent in this anecdote? How does it shape the representation of this story?

5. AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND SELF-ANALYSIS

Little Failure is not only a narrative of Shteyngart's life, or a collection of sad anecdotes. Shteyngart also makes it clear from the outset that he is attempting to understand his history. In particular, he is concerned with understanding what factors and events may have contributed to the psychological problems he has as an adult, including his anxiety and profound sense of failure in all aspects of life.

In a pivotal scene in the book, Shteyngart is effectively forced by a friend to attend therapy sessions. These sessions are in the psychoanalytical style pioneered by Sigmund Freud, in which the patient is encouraged to speak freely about his or her childhood. Freud thought that if a patient managed to articulate the childhood trauma behind his or her current psychological problems, they could be cured of them.

MEDIA VIEWING: Crash Course - Psychoanalysis

CLASS DISCUSSION

Do you find Freud's theories persuasive? Why/why not?

Given Shteyngart's commitment to psychoanalysis, we can conclude that the representation of *Little Failure* is substantially filtered through the lens of psychoanalysis. Shteyngart describes the importance of the therapeutic method on his life and writing in the extract below.

Shteyngart, Gary. 2014. *Little Failure* - Extract

It gets easier.

It gets easier fast.

It is fashionable now to discredit psychoanalysis. The couch. The four or five days a week of narcissistic² brooding. The reaching over to pluck Kleenex from the quilted tissue box beneath the African Pietà³ thing. The penis-y Freudianism underlying it all. I have made fun of it myself in a novel called *Absurdistan*, my hero, the overweight and self-indulgent Misha Vainberg, son of a Russian oligarch⁴, constantly calling his Park Avenue shrink while the real post-Soviet world disintegrates around him and people die.

The truth of it is that it is not for everyone. It is not for most people. It is difficult, painful, and tedious work. It feels, at first, like a diminution⁵ of power rendered upon a person who already feels powerless. It is a drain on the bank account and it takes away at least four hours a week that could be profitably spent looking oneself up on the World Wide Web. And, quite often, there is a seeming pointlessness to individual sessions that makes my days studying Talmud⁶ in Hebrew school brim with relative insight.

But.

It saves my life. What more can I add to that?

FOCUS QUESTIONS:

1. How does Shteyngart use **FRAGMENTED SENTENCES** to convey the importance of psychoanalytic therapy on his life?

SENTENCE FRAGMENT	A sentence that cannot stand grammatically on its own. Usually it is missing a finite verb or a subject. E.g. 'His small, pathetic dreams. His fractured memories.'
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² Narcissism is characterised by exaggerated feelings of self-importance.

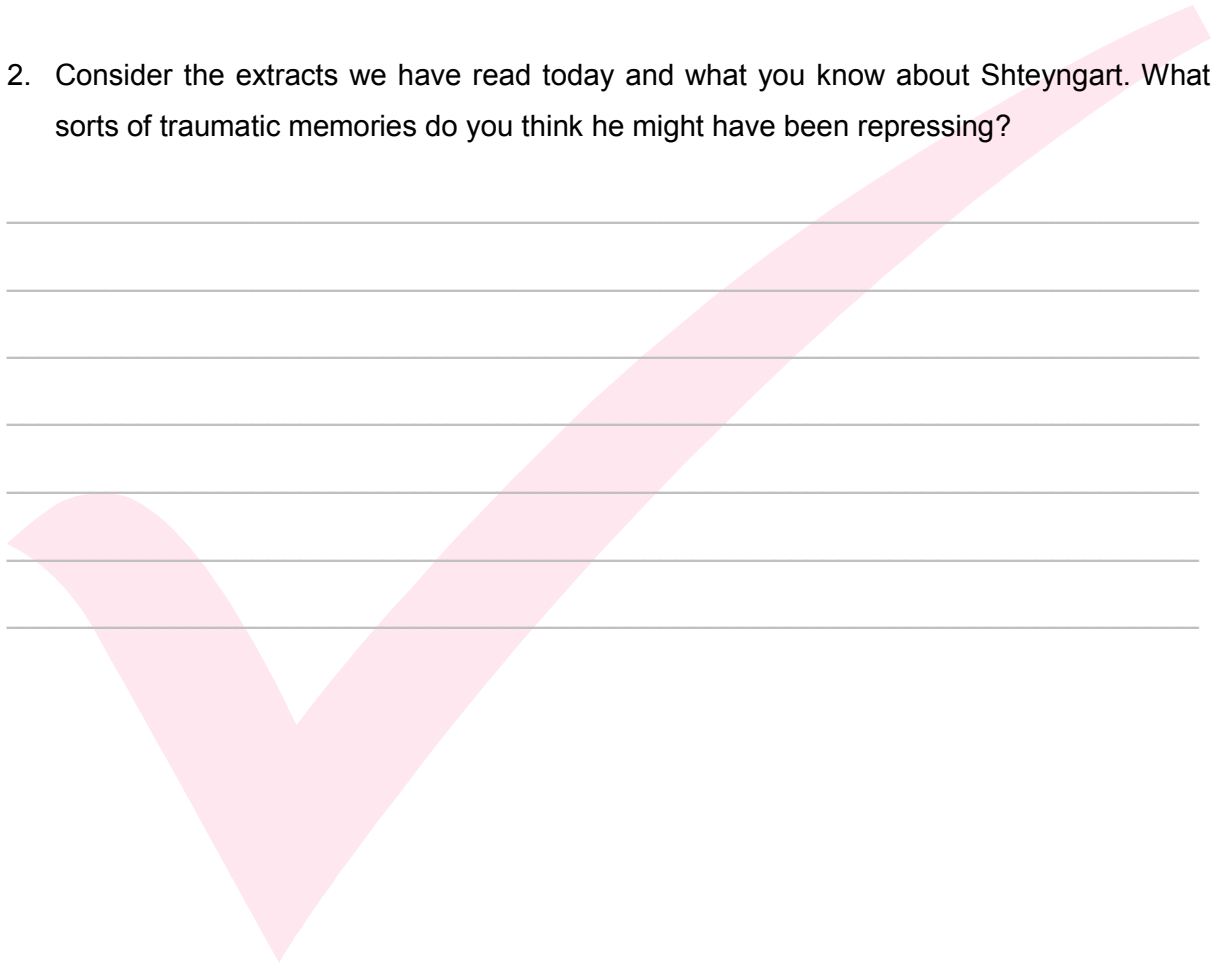
³ A depiction of the Virgin Mary holding the baby Christ, usually in the form of a sculpture.

⁴ An English loanword from Russian, describing an immensely powerful businessman, whose wealth has been acquired through secretive and undemocratic means.

⁵ A lessening or reduction.

⁶ The central text of Rabbinical Judaism. It covers a variety of topics, including Jewish laws, folklore and philosophy.

2. Consider the extracts we have read today and what you know about Shteyngart. What sorts of traumatic memories do you think he might have been repressing?



6. LESSON ONE HOMEWORK

YEAR 9 CREATIVE WRITING MARKING CRITERIA

	Band 5-6 13-15 marks	Band 4-5 10-12 marks	Band 2-3 6-9 marks	Band 1-2 1-5 marks
Originality	2.5 Ideas are unique, engaging, and demonstrate insight about human experiences.	2 Elements of originality that may demonstrate insight about human experiences, but may rely on some clichés.	1 Relies heavily on clichés with some elements of originality.	0.5 Cliché is prevalent throughout.
Connection to Stimulus	2.5 Strong connection to stimulus which is clear and engaging.	2 Clear connection to stimulus. There is potential for the connection to be developed further.	1 Some connection to stimulus. Connection needs greater development or may feel forced.	0.5 Minor connection to stimulus. Connection may be tenuous or unclear.
Setting and Plot	2.5 Setting and plot demonstrate a well-developed understanding of narrative form. There is consistency throughout.	2 Setting and plot demonstrate an understanding of narrative form. There may be minor inconsistencies in either.	1 Developing understanding of setting and plot. There may be gaps or inconsistencies in either area.	0.5 Some elements of setting and plot. Revision of setting and plot is needed.
Characterisation	2.5 Characterisation is complex and consistent throughout.	2 Characterisation is complex, but there may be inconsistencies at times.	1 Developing sense of characterisation, but with some inconsistencies.	0.5 Characterisation is basic or underdeveloped. Revision of characterisation needed.
Language Devices (Use of techniques such as symbol, metaphor, motif)	2.5 Strong use of language devices that enhance the ideas explored. Strong understanding of techniques is clear.	2 Use of language devices, with a developing connection to the ideas explored. There may be gaps in understanding of some devices.	1 Some language devices used. The connection of devices to the ideas explored may be inconsistent. There may be gaps in understanding of some devices.	0.5 Few language devices included. Connection of devices to the ideas may be unclear. Revision of figurative devices may be needed.
Language Use (Control of Sentence Structure, Word Choice, Punctuation)	2.5 Consistently good sentence structure, word choices, and punctuation.	2 Sentences are mostly well-formed. There may be minor errors in sentence structure, punctuation, and/or some inappropriate word choices.	1 Some sentences are well-formed and show a developing grasp of sentence structure, appropriate word choice, and/or punctuation.	0.5 Underdeveloped sentence structure, word choice, and punctuation.

Note to Students: How to Submit Homework

Submit your homework online through the Matrix Learning Management System (LMS)!

Accepted file types for online submission: .docx, .doc, .one (onenote), .txt, .pdf

Memoirs

Compose two of the memories that you would include in your memoir. Incorporate some of the key features of memoirs described at the start of the lesson.

Aim for 600 words.

