Operationalising the Victorian Novel for Dutch Pre-University Students

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis operationalises the long and complex Victorian novel into a literature curriculum for sixth-year pre-university students that not only meets the core objectives pertaining to literature established by the Dutch Ministry of Education, but also stimulates the use of higher-order thinking skills in the study of the most influential works of the period in a constructivist, differentiated learning environment.

Following the introduction, the second chapter provides an overview of the reading level of Dutch pre-university students in order to show that Victorian literature is at the appropriate outer rim of the average student's zone of proximal development. The third chapter explores the theories of constructivism, differentiated education, and teaching literature in context used to inform the theoretical framework. The fourth chapter presents the results of a questionnaire on the teaching and testing of English literature at eleven pre-university schools throughout the Netherlands. The fifth chapter contains the literature curriculum, which takes shape as a 12-lesson series that is divided into four sub-series of lessons based on social issues of the Victorian period, as well as the principles used to inform its design. Students explore the themes of the Victorian period through individual close reading, group discussions, and student presentations in order to increase student agency in the learning process. The extracts read are allocated per student on the basis of reading level or student interest in order to differentiate. In this way, students are activated and building knowledge through social interaction, which is a hallmark of constructivism. The fifth chapter also contains expert appraisal of the perceived curriculum. It is hoped that pre-university English teachers find this thesis paper useful to teaching literature in the current educational climate and see value in adapting the basic didactic philosophy to subsequent literary periods.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Dutch College of Testing and Exams (CvTE) publishes an annual exam programme that provides the core curriculum standards for each level of secondary education: preparatory applied education (VMBO), higher general continued education (HAVO), and pre-university education (VWO)[1]. In short, the main difference between the educational levels is the amount of theory each contains in its curriculum (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 7-8). Whereas preparatory applied education is more practical, combining vocational training with theoretical education to varying degrees, pre-university education is highly theoretical and prepares students to study at university upon completion (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science 7-8). This thesis focuses exclusively on pre-university education, and then on how English literature – a required component of the national exam syllabus – is approached at this level.

The exam syllabus for the modern languages at pre-university level divides the core curriculum standards into five distinct categories (Meijer and Fasoglio 13):

National exam: sixth year (50% of final mark)	School exams: fourth, fifth, and sixth years (50% of final mark)
Domain A: Reading skills (expository texts)	- Domain A: Reading skills - Domain B: Listening skills - Domain C: Oral communication skills - Domain D: Writing skills - Domain E: Literature

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[1] This paper will refer to the levels of education using their English translations instead of the Dutch abbreviations.

Domain E is further divided into three sub-domains, presented below (Meijer and Fasoglio 16):

Subdomain E1: Literary development

The candidate can provide substantiated reports of his/her experiences of at least three literary works.

Subdomain E2: Literary terms

The candidate can recognise and distinguish different types of literature, and employ literary terms in the interpretation of literary works.

Subdomain E3: Literary history

The candidate can give an overview of the main lines of literary history and place literature in its appropriate literary period

These nationwide, or macro-level attainment targets, can be interpreted, taught, and tested at the meso level in ways the individual secondary school deems most suited to its didactic vision (Thijs and van den Akker 23-24). In this way, the teachers at Dutch secondary schools are given considerable autonomy to design their own content, as long as they work towards meeting these global objectives (Thijs and van den Akker 24). A conceivable situation is that one school could focus on one or two literary works per period, while another school focuses on ten. It could be that one English department presents extracts in English along with Dutch translations, while at another school students are expected to read entire works in English. The classroom, or micro-level content, and meso-level attainment targets all depend on the didactic vision of the modern language department and the school of which it is a part. This decentralised control is:

highly motivating and will stimulate professional development; as a result, it will lead to a more sustainable form of educational improvement. However, the risk involves a lack of a clear communal focus on objectives and content, making it more difficult for schools and teachers to work systematically towards large-scale improvement (Thijs and van den Akker 23).

Bloemert et al. conducted descriptive research for their paper "Exploring EFL literature approaches in Dutch secondary education" that was focused on the four approaches to foreign language literature education: the text approach, the context approach (both of which place focus on the literary work), the reader approach, and the language approach (both of which place focus on the student) (Bloemert et al. 174). Bloemert et al. found "huge differences between foreign language teachers regarding the amount of time they spent on literature and, more specifically, on the four approaches" (Bloemert et al. 184). Their findings offer valuable insight when read alongside the findings presented in this paper and support Thijs and van den Akker's evaluation of both the advantages and disadvantages of decentralised control.

Unless descriptive research is periodically conducted to gather information on how the previously provided attainment targets are realised at pre-university schools throughout the Netherlands, it is not possible to be aware of the different interpretations and didactic approaches in existence. Nor is it possible to be aware of the extent to which these attainment targets are realised or of teachers' attitudes towards them. This is why the fourth chapter of this thesis provides the results of descriptive research in this area that focuses on the link between classroom content and attainment targets rather than the four approaches investigated by Bloemert et al.

If a student is to be able to "give an overview of the main lines of literary history and place literature in its appropriate period" then an overview of English

literary history must be taught (Meijer and Fasoglio 16). However, as previously mentioned, what makes up the main lines might be different at different schools. Working chronologically, the major literary periods are as follows: Old English, Middle English, Renaissance, Neo-Classical, Romantic, Victorian, Modern, and Post-modern. However, what teachers consider essential components of the canon is liable to vary. Not only that, but to what extent the main lines are taught depends on the amount of time each department is able to or wants to devote to the teaching of literature.

The inspiration for this project came from the impracticability of working with the long, complex form of the Victorian novel with sixth-year pre-university students, and the lack of an efficient and dynamic curriculum pertaining to the teaching of Victorian literature to Dutch students. This is less of an issue with the earlier literary periods, because the novel only became a popular literary medium in the 18th century. Old English poetry, Middle English works such as *The Canterbury Tales*, and Renaissance sonnets, for example, are far easier to operationalise into lessons than the complex plots and many characters typical of Victorian novels.

The main goal of this research is to operationalise the Victorian novel for presentation in the upper levels of pre-university schools and teach it within its historical context so that students are capable of meeting the core objectives related to literature. In this way, the materials explicitly connect macro-level objectives to micro-level content to contribute to systematic educational improvement. In addition, the self-developed material aims to provide differentiated education and give students increased agency in the learning process. If the intended curriculum and associated materials are determined to be successful after being tested in practice, the didactic approach could be adapted to suit other literary periods as well, especially the Modern

and Post-modern periods, both of which are known for the complexity of their novels. In lieu of this, the main research question is:

1. How can the Victorian novel be operationalised for efficient and effective learning in the upper levels Dutch Pre-university Education (VWO)?

In order to be able to answer this question, the following sub-questions are addressed:

2. What are Dutch pre-university students expected to achieve when it comes to language and literature?

3. What are efficient and effective approaches to teaching Victorian literature and how can these be adapted to teaching literature to Dutch pre-university students?

4. How are the core objectives related to literature experienced, taught, and tested by pre-university secondary schools throughout the Netherlands?

5. What Victorian literature should be included in the literature program in order to meet the core objectives related to Domain E: Literature?

The second question is answered in chapter two. The third question is answered in the chapter three. The fourth question is answered in chapter four and the fifth question is answered in chapter five. The thesis as a whole answers the main question.

Chapter 2

AN OVERVIEW OF THE READING LEVEL OF DUTCH PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

It must first be noted that sixth-year pre-university students are tested at what is considered a B2+ English reading level on the Common European Framework of Reference in their central exam, which is a national exam that counts for 50% of a student's final mark for each subject studied at secondary school. The English central exam is an intensive reading test, made up of authentic reports, articles, literary extracts, and messages with corresponding multiple-choice and open-ended questions (CvTE 18). The rest of the domains that make up the English exam syllabus (part of the modern language syllabus) are tested in school exams, which are developed by the English department at the individual secondary school.

The English language level of the central exam at pre-university level is not as easily definable as it might seem. First, in order to realise a B2+ level, the exam is made up of a combination of B2 and C1 level texts and questions, with C1 level texts and questions making up the larger bulk of the exam in recent years (CvTE 11, 13). In 2011, experts concluded that the central exam was, in fact, at a C1 level rather than at the intended B2+ level. Therefore, in order to achieve a C1 level, it was determined that candidates had to have 64% of the answers correct, while 57% of the answers correct was enough to achieve a sufficient mark, which is a 5.5/10 (CvTE 11). In short, a "higher sufficient mark" is aligned with a C1 reading level, while a lower sufficient mark is considered a B2+ reading level (CvTE 11). It seems unlikely that this calculation can ever be precise, however, because language is not exact.

This breakdown is important because it sheds light on the English reading level expected of Dutch pre-university students. In 2015, the average mark among

pre-university students on the English central exam was a 7.0, which is the highest average mark of any central exam after Maths B, for which the average mark was a 7.4 (CITO 1). The average mark of a 7.0 can certainly be considered a higher sufficient mark, which means that many pre-university students throughout the Netherlands are reading at a C1 level. Only 11% of candidates failed the English central exam in 2015, which is the lowest percentage of insufficient marks of any subject after Frisian, the language spoken in the Dutch region of Friesland (CITO 1). These results show the generally high level of English reading ability throughout the Netherlands.

It is important to briefly consider what B2 and C1 reading levels entail and the differences that set them apart. The Common European Framework of Reference provides the following global descriptors:

B2 reading level	C1 reading level
I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.

(Council of Europe 235)

The main difference between these two levels is the decrease of limitations at the C1 level. Whereas a B2-reading level is largely restricted to contemporary prose, a C1-reading level implies that this restriction no longer exists. Furthermore, instead of only being able to read and understand the texts, a C1-level reader can appreciate

distinctions of style (Council of Europe 235). Lastly, a C1-level reader is not limited to his or her realm of familiarity when it comes to the content of texts being read.

At this stage, it becomes essential to consider the language and reading levels of Victorian literature and describe how and why Victorian literature can successfully be taught to Dutch pre-university students who use English as a second language. Two different readability evaluations were used for this assessment: the Flesch-Kincaid readability test and the readability score given by the website Novellist.nl, which was created by Syb Hartog, an independent author of teaching materials in the Netherlands.

On the Flesch-Kincaid scale, the first chapter of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* receives a readability index of 69.7, making the language level appropriate for English native speakers between 13 – 15 years old, provided they have followed a normal course of study. The first chapter of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* receives a readability index of 59.7, which would make it more difficult than *Jane Eyre* and appropriate for upper-level high school students and university students. The opening pages of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* receive a readability index of 65.6, putting in in line with *Jane Eyre*. However, the Flesch-Kincaid readability test uses a calculation that involves the total number of words divided by the total number of sentences, and the total number of syllables divided by the total number of words, which can be restrictive when assessing the level of a literary work in its entirety. Taking *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as an example, the opening lines are famously florid, lengthy, and complex. These lines on their own have a readability index of 28, which would make them appropriate reading material for university graduates. Following these lines is a conversation between the characters Basil Hallward and Lord Henry, which naturally contains shorter sentences typical of an

actual dialogue. In this way, the readability scores provided by the Flesch-Kincaid scale are volatile. Moreover, they do not take into account the complexity of the content of the novels or their themes. Nevertheless, the results do provide a useful reference when it comes to shorter extracts and if their limitations are taken into consideration. Mailloux et al. write that "researchers have long argued that readability formulas should not be relied on too heavily, that they should be used as quick guides rather than as the only instrument to determine readability levels" (Mailloux et al. 224). Si and Callan hypothesised that adding content into the calculation would increase the accuracy of readability test results, which they they found evidence for in their research through the use of an original algorithm (Si and Callan 1-3). While it is agreed that content plays a crucial role in evaluating reading material, such a complicated algorithm would not be a practical tool for use among teachers.

Syb Hartog combines CEFR language levels with an assessment of the difficulty of the content presented by novels on his website Novellist.nl. The main scale ranges from A – C, with 'A' pertaining to children's literature, 'B' pertaining to youth literature, and 'C' pertaining to adult literature: Within each of these headings are sub-scales, which can be understood by considering the following example:

C: Adult Literature

C 3a (suspenseful works in simple English) → **C3e** (suspenseful works in simple English that are classic or old)

C 4a (frequently suspenseful works) → **C 4e** (frequently exciting and also classic works)

C 5a (literary works) → **C5e** (literary and classic works)

C 6a → **C 6e** (the most difficult and most literary works)

(Hartog 2016)

All three of the previously described novels (*Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*) are given a C1 language level on the website Novellist.nl with reference to the CEFR. However, they each have a different reading level, according to Syb Hartog's analysis. *Jane Eyre* is rated as a C5d, placing in in the upper bracket of literary and classic novels, but not among the most difficult in English. *Wuthering Heights* is given a C5e reading level, placing it one level higher than *Jane Eyre* on the list of classic literature. Lastly, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is given a rating of C4e because it contains exciting and suspenseful moments, but it is still a classic piece of literature. Although it is often the case that a suspenseful novel keeps a person reading, assessing *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as easier to read than *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights* is questionable, because of the complexity of the language, content, and, moreover, the experiences and interest of the student who is reading it. Furthermore, while Syb Hartog has explained the rationale behind his system of evaluating the content of literary works, there is currently no information available on the validation of his levels (Hartog 13-17). That is why, though both of these readability evaluation tools give a general idea of the type of language we are dealing with when it comes to Victorian literature, it is important for the teacher to be aware of their limitations and use his or her expertise to inform and guide students in their choice of literature.

It is also important to note that extensive reading, which is most suited to the reading of a novel, is different from intensive reading, which is expected of the students in the central exam under exam conditions and increased pressure. We may be able to expect more of the students when it comes to extensive rather than intensive reading, especially because the students do not have to choose the correct

multiple-choice answer, but discuss and analyse the literature more globally, and the text is open to individual interpretation (Kwakernaak 146-147).

Finally, Lev Vygotsky attests that learning happens when the material to be learned is not at the learner's current level, but slightly ahead of it, naming the distance between the learner's actual level and the level that can be reached with the support of someone more knowledgeable the "zone of proximal development" (Woolfolk 55). Victorian literature appears to be at the appropriate outer rim of the zone of proximal development and could be read by Dutch pre-university students successfully, provided that the educator offers the appropriate tools and support to facilitate the learning process.

Chapter 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: *A CONSTRUCTIVIST, CONTEXT-*

BASED, DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH TO LITERATURE

INSTRUCTION

There are three interrelated didactic philosophies that go into the creation of

the learning materials: constructivist learning theory, which is rooted in cognitive

psychology, a focus on context, which aims to increase associations and solidify

knowledge, and differentiated learning, which is emphasised in the contemporary

education climate. Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives informs

the cognitive psychological discussion of effective instruction (Heer 2; Anderson and

Krathwohl 67-68). These theories, combined with Theo Witte's levels of reading

comprehension, form the basis of the differentiated curriculum. The focus on a

context-based approach is inspired by Adrian Barlow's *World and Time: Teaching*

Literature in Context. All of these different elements are synthesised into a functional

curriculum using the curricular spider web model introduced by Thijs and van den

Akker, which is described in detail in chapter five (Thijs and van den Akker 11-12).

3.1   Introduction to Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivism emphasises the active role of the learner in building

understanding and making sense of information and places vital importance in social

interaction among learners when constructing substantive knowledge (Woolfolk 402-

403; Biggs 349). In this way, learning is more than receiving and processing

information provided by an educator; learners are actively engaged in constructing

knowledge both individually and socially. As the literature curriculum designed as

part of this thesis is constructivist in design, it is important to address the common elements of constructivist perspectives, which include:

1. Embedding knowledge in complex, realistic, and relevant learning environments

2. Providing for social negotiation and shared responsibility as part of learning

3. Supporting multiple perspectives and using multiple representations of content

4. Nurturing self-awareness and an understanding that knowledge is constructed

5. Encouraging ownership in learning (Woolfolk 407-408)

John Biggs writes in his article "Enhancing Teaching Through Constructive Alignment" that "the key issue is whether the teacher can operationalise desirably high levels of understanding in ways that denote performances that can be elicited by teaching/learning activities, and that can be assessed authentically" (Biggs 360). Levels of competence are measured using Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, which is described in more detail in the following section.

> Biggs emphasises the importance of being clear about:
>
> [what we] want students to learn and what students should have to do in order to demonstrate that they have learned at the appropriate level; [teachers] should know and enact ways of getting their students to learn effectively at the desired cognitive level, to be more student-centred in their teaching-learning activities, and more authentic in their assessments (Biggs 361).

In this literature curriculum, clarity of learning objectives comes from communication of clearly formulated goals that make use of the vocabulary from Bloom's Taxonomy. Learning objectives are set at different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy so that students at different levels are able to have successful learning experiences and so that students can aid each other in reaching higher cognitive levels when they work in

heterogeneous groups. The lessons are almost entirely student-centred as the teacher functions as a facilitator of the learning process and a classroom manager, but does not lecture about the literature. Explanations from the teacher are limited to short introductions and links between literary works. The curriculum strives for authentic assessments in the form of on-going discussions in which students analyse and interpret the literature from their own perspectives and student-designed presentations that teach the works of literature to classmates. The school exam is a culmination of these activities as it is conducted orally and students are able to choose what extracts and novels they prepare for it.

Constructivist learning theory aligns with contemporary perspectives towards pedagogy in the Netherlands, not only for students but also for teachers. Thijs and van den Akker describe the social-constructivist approach to teaching in the Netherlands and highlight the importance of "stimulating active construction of meaning," "aiming for the zone of proximal development," and "stimulating interaction and collaboration" (Thijs and van den Akker 34). Thijs and van den Akker also describe the main priorities of the Dutch secondary school system, which are noted here because they reflect constructivist sensibilities and offer insight into the educational climate and goals in the Netherlands:

- *Knowledge*: Academic and cultural heritage for learning and future development
- *Social preparation*: Issues relevant for inclusion from the perspective of societal trends and needs
- *Personal development*: Elements of importance for learning and development from the personal and educational needs and interests of learners themselves (Thijs and van den Akker 14).

It is worth mentioning that these priorities coincide with reasons for teaching literary history, as described by Bolscher in his book *Literature and Fiction*, who writes: "knowledge of our cultural history contributes to the ability to function in society" (knowledge and social preparation), "knowledge of the past provides a greater understanding of the present" (knowledge and social preparation) and "the past offers a mirror that can increase our self-awareness" (knowledge and personal development) (Bolscher 183-184).

3.2   Defining and Building Knowledge

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives is a valuable tool to use to design curriculum and lesson aims and objectives because it provides a hierarchy of learned capabilities that can be used as a frame of reference as well as a means of providing differentiated instruction (Krathwohl 212). It provides a scale of levels of expertise, ranging from lower order thinking skills to higher order thinking skills or declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge, and a description of the measurable outcomes at each of these levels, as seen below:

lower order thinking skills ──────────────────► higher order thinking skills					
remember	**understand**	**apply**	**analyze**	**evaluate**	**create**
recognizing • identifying recalling • retrieving	interpreting • clarifying • paraphrasing • representing • translating exemplifying • illustrating • instantiating classifying • categorizing • subsuming summarizing • abstracting • generalizing inferring • concluding • extrapolating • interpolating • predicting comparing • contrasting • mapping • matching explaining • constructing models	executing • carrying out implementing • using	differentiating • discriminating • distinguishing • focusing • selecting organizing • finding coherence • integrating • outlining • parsing • structuring attributing • deconstructing	checking • coordinating • detecting • monitoring • testing critiquing • judging	generating • hypothesizing planning • designing producing • constructing

(Heer 2; Krathwohl 67-68)

As shown in the chart on the previous page, being able to remember the names of authors or dates of literary periods would be a lower order thinking skill. Remembering facts does not yet show an understanding of the material. Understanding is achieved when a learner is able to interpret, exemplify, classify, summarise, infer, compare, and explain the material, which links back to the constructivist viewpoint that learning is a social activity and interaction solidifies understanding. By linking a concept, for example the Victorian class system, with a piece of Victorian literature and interpreting the text with this concept in mind, the learner has applied knowledge, and increased a level of cognitive mastery according to Bloom's Taxonomy. By making connections between themes and concepts in literature within the same and different literary periods, the learner exercises and exhibits analytical skills. This is what is expected in the sixth year of pre-university education (Witte 107). Being able to not only analyse, but share insightful perspectives and well-supported opinions on a piece of literature places a student at a level five, or advanced, reading ability on Theo Witte's scale of reading comprehension, which has become a standard tool among Dutch teachers since its publication in 2008 (Witte 107). At this level the learner shows a deep understanding of the material and is able to make connections between the immediate source and related knowledge. For pre-university students in their final year, a level five reading competence is considered high, while a level four reading competence is considered normal. Witte's reading competence profiles are described in more detail in the following section.

Finally, production of new or original work is at the highest level of the taxonomy, which is asked of students in the form of presentations and essays. The cognitive activities associated with each of Bloom's levels combined with the

characteristics of readers at each of Witte's levels, related to reading comprehension, can be used to target the individual student's zone of proximal development.

3.3   Theo Witte's Levels of Reading Comprehension

Theo Witte's six literacy competence profiles have informed Dutch literature teaching since their introduction in 2008. This framework provides a comprehensive reference of reading levels from "experiential" to "academic," the types of texts that correspond with each profile, and an overview of how the descriptions correspond with the norms for general higher education and pre-university education (Witte 107).

Witte's instrument was designed with the intention to aid literary development (Witte 11). By employing it, teachers can differentiate among students with different reading levels, plan lessons to strengthen reading competence at one level, and plan lessons designed to bridge one level to the next (Witte 14). The table below offers a breakdown of these levels and shows how they correspond to the final norms of pre-university schools:

	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Level 5**	**Level 6**
Literary competence	Extremely limited	Limited	Neither limited nor extensive	Somewhat extensive	Extensive	Extremely extensive
Text difficulty	Extremely simple	Simple	Neither simple, nor complex	Somewhat complex	Complex	Extremely complex
End result VWO 6	Extremely insufficient	Extremely insufficient	Insufficient	Normal	High	Extremely high

(Witte 107)

Though Witte's research focused on Dutch students reading in their native language, his six levels of reading competence are a suitable reference for foreign language teachers if students' foreign language levels are taken into account alongside their reading level (Hartog 14). Syb Hartog adjusted Witte's scale to include the CEFR levels in order to adjust it for foreign language teachers:

CEFR Level	Level on Witte's scale	Type of reading
High A1 – Low B1	1	Experiential reading
A2 – Low B2	2	Identifying reading
High A2 – Low C1	3	Reflective reading
Average B1 – C2	4	Interpretive reading
Very high B1 – C2	5	Literate reading
High B2 – C2	6	Academic reading

(Hartog 12 – 13)

As sixth-year pre-university students must be able to read at a B2+ level for their final exam, they should at least be able to read reflectively. This closely aligns with Witte's assessment of a reflective reading level as "insufficient" for a sixth-year pre-university student reading in Dutch. Indeed, exam candidates must be able to read interpretatively for the national exam (Meijer and Fasoglio 13).

Evaluating reading level in a foreign language is especially complicated because language and cognitive level are interlinked. This is arguably why a foreign language learner with a high cognitive level but low language level can reach higher levels on Witte's scale of reading comprehension, as shown above. Contrarily, the fact that a reader has a high language level does not mean that his or her reading level is highly developed. While Hartog's scale provides a valuable synthesis of language level, based on the CEFR levels, and level of reading comprehension, based on Witte's six descriptors, it has not yet been validated by scientific research.

In addition to identifying levels with which to distinguish reading comprehension, Witte provides five principles from the cognitive development theory that makes up his theoretical framework. These principles are as follows:

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Firstly, different levels or stages must be defined so that teachers and students can focus on the development process (point of orientation). Secondly, the 'foundation' to be built on at each level must be sufficiently strong before students can successfully move on to a higher level. Thirdly, literary development should be encouraged through active exploration and should be mediated through social interaction with peers, teachers and other readers. Fourthly, to encourage development, students must be confronted with activities leading to cognitive conflicts in their zone of immediate development. Fifthly, it is essential that students regularly experience pleasure while reading books and doing tasks to ensure a good balance between effort and result (Witte 525).

These principles are important because they link to two important aspects of the lesson design here: differentiated instruction and constructivist learning theory. In addition, they form the underlying philosophy of the lesson series.

3.4   Differentiated Education

Differentiated education has become an essential feature of the Dutch education system in recent years (Rijksoverheid 13). The Dutch Ministry of Education published a plan of action with regard to the contemporary state of affairs in May 2011, which included the following essential features that have direct relation to this project:

1. Schools will strictly track student progress with a student-tracking system. This will allow schools to quickly respond to students who require extra support or contrarily are capable of more challenges.

2. Schools will stimulate excellent and gifted students to achieve more than they do, for example through customised programmes or with special, specific teachers (Rijksoverheid 6; Rijksoverheid 7-8).[2]

From Witte's model, we can expect that pre-university students will show varying levels of reading competence. In addition, we can expect that the students will show different levels of language ability, with reference to the CEFR levels. A literature curriculum should thus build in opportunities for extra support for weaker students and opportunities for greater challenges for stronger students who are interested in delving deeper. This curriculum ambitiously approaches literature education at different levels, which is only made possible by having an awareness of the core objectives with regard to literature at pre-university education and ways of meeting them, as outlined in chapter one. The curricular spider web and Witte's instrument provide the tools necessary to designing a differentiated literature curriculum that complies with the above features of education as presented by the Ministry of Education.

3.5   A Context-Based, Mixed Approach to Literature Instruction

Beach et al. identify three different theories of literature instruction: text-centred, which is focused on the analysis of texts, student-centred, which focuses on the student's perspective, and socio-cultural theory, which emphasises social context and community in the learning of literature (Beach et al. 42-44). The relationships between Models of Literature and Goals for student learning from Beach et al. are provided below:

Theories of Literature	Goals: Student learn:
Text-centred: Literature is the	Analysis of a text as an autonomous,

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[2] These points of improvement have been translated by the author from the website of the Dutch Ministry of Education.

autonomous and opaque text for analysis.	aesthetic object as modelled by teacher as expert reader.
Text-centred: Literature is a tool for teaching reading skills.	Reading comprehension strategies with less emphasis on students' aesthetic experience.
Text-centred: Literature as an expression of/window on a place in time.	Background understanding of historical and cultural contexts or literary period in which it was set.
Student-centred: Literature provides personal enjoyment through an aesthetic transaction.	Responding to literature as a transaction with a text.
Student-centred: Literature is a tool for clarifying beliefs and values.	Defining connections to and reflecting on ethical and identity issues in their own experiences.
Socio-cultural focus: Literature is capable of being seen from different critical perspectives in a social context.	Creating the classroom community to foster and respect diverse expressions of different critical perspectives.

(Beach et al. 43)

While Beach et al. refer to teachers who adopt one approach or the other, this thesis paper sees a mixed approach as essential to a quality, multi-faceted, and flexible literature programme that not only prepares students to meet the core objectives related to literature, but also for the final reading exam and, in addition, aids their individual, social, and ethical development. Each of these approaches on its own has limitations, while together they form a dynamic and far-reaching didactic vision. This conclusion is corroborated by Bloemert et al. who, in their conclusion,

"suggest that implementing a Comprehensive Approach to FL[3] teaching could enrich literature lessons as well as students' understanding of contemporary literary prose" (Bloemert et al 184).

Context is given the primary focus because it provides a frame of reference for students that includes attitudes and events of the time period that influenced literature, it offers a frame of reference which should actually facilitate understanding, and it is an essential component of the exam programme. Madingley Hall lays out the importance of flexible contextual study in *World and Time: Teaching Literature in Context*:

> The whole point of contextual study is to make English a more open-ended subject than ever, one in which going beyond the set text is essential. Giving students time and guidance to explore the literary landscape for themselves, encouraging them to take risks with what they read and showing them how to find connections between texts are what makes for good teaching and students (Hall ix).

This lesson series takes context as a basis with which to provide a frame of reference and insight into the literary period in which each work was written, but does not neglect links to the contemporary world or the student's own interpretation of the text. Instead, it "bridges the gap between [the former age] and our own. [Historical contexts] remind us that no truth is absolute, that our own readings … take place within a discrete historical epoch" (Vaughan 8). In this way, the past and the present engage in a meaningful dialogue in which the individual student, in connection to his or her classmates, takes part (Brody 38). This literature curriculum has the text, the

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[3] Foreign literature

student, and the socio-cultural approach at its tripartite core, offering a more dynamic

and mixed didactic experience.

Chapter 4

A STUDY OF LITERATURE PROGRAMMES THROUGHOUT DUTCH SECONDARY SCHOOLS: *MESO-LEVEL INTERPRETATIONS OF MACRO-LEVEL ATTAINMENT TARGETS*

Secondary schools are given considerable freedom to realise the macro-level attainment targets with regard to literature. First, the school can choose whether to present literature as a component of the individual school subject, which means that the German teacher would teach German literature and the English teacher would teach English literature, or as part of a separate, overarching subject in and of itself. This latter option would mean that literature from all the modern languages was taught together by a teacher with enough knowledge to be able to do so or by a group of teachers who share the class.

Aside from choosing what form literature lessons take, the school and its teachers can choose when to begin with the presentation of literary texts, what literary texts to include in the curriculum, how many literary texts are presented, what processing tasks to offer the students, and to what extent they work with other departments to make connections between literature across languages. While empirical studies have been conducted on the nature of Dutch literature education throughout the Netherlands and Bloemert et al. investigated what approaches are used and how much time is spent on literature across foreign language departments throughout the Netherlands, it does not seem that a similar survey has been conducted on the nature of English literature education throughout Dutch secondary schools. In order to achieve a clear grasp of the contemporary state of English literature education in the Netherlands, a questionnaire was sent out to various pre-university secondary schools.

4.1   Research context

11 secondary schools throughout the Netherlands at pre-university level

4.2   Participants

Twelve English department heads from twelve different pre-university schools responded to the questionnaire; however, one response was left out because the teacher had not been working in the Dutch school system for four years. Four pre-university schools were part of larger school communities, which also include preparatory applied schools and higher general continued schools. Four pre-university schools were part of larger school communities that also include higher general continued schools. Four pre-university schools were categorical gymnasia, which means that Latin and Ancient Greek are mandatory subjects. It is the highest level of secondary education in the Netherlands. Of these twelve schools, four are bilingual, meaning that students are taught in English for the first three years and in Dutch for the final three years and eight are not, meaning that the standard curriculum is given in Dutch, and teachers can choose to teach English with either English or Dutch as the medium of learning. Bilingual schools also offer an International Baccalaureate programme in the upper school with a strong focus on literature education outside of and in addition to the national core objectives pertaining to literature (IBO.org).

4.3   Instrument

A digital questionnaire was published in December 2015 and left open until February 2016. The questionnaire first acquired general information about the participating school, then asked specific questions about literature education. The questions focused on the following themes: the core objectives regarding literature education, school exams on literature, the literature curriculum, and theories of

literature instruction. Special emphasis was given to Victorian literature, since this is the subject of this thesis paper.

Questions were a mix of closed and open, depending on the nature of the question. For example, respondents were given a selection of all the English literary periods for the question "Which literary periods does your department teach?" from which a selection could be made. Contrarily, respondents provided an open answer to the question "If you teach works from the Victorian period, what works do you teach? Please also explain why you have chosen to work with these particular texts."

4.4 Validity and reliability

The discussion of the data matches the findings, which are descriptive in nature. This shows internal validity (Cohen 135). The issue of external validity is more problematical, since it is difficult to determine to what extent this dataset can be generalized to the wider population. External validity is increased by the fact that data come from different types of pre-university schools, including wider school communities and categorical gymnasia. Furthermore, the schools involved are spread throughout the Netherlands, which shows the geographical scope. In this way, the results are illustrative of the wider population. However, a richer dataset would unquestionably lead to increased external validity.

The data show content validity in that the questionnaire "fairly and comprehensively covers the domain or items that it purports to cover" (Cohen 137). The main question is thoroughly covered in questions pertaining to the teaching of literature at pre-university schools, the testing of literature at pre-university schools, and the specific teaching of Victorian novels. The specific topics included in the questions are core objectives pertaining to literature, the status of literature within the

curriculum, literature school exams, the teaching of literary history in order to meet subdomain E3, other approaches to literature, and what Victorian literature is handled. With this data it is possible to describe the salient elements related to this thesis.

4.5 Results

1. The core objectives for literature (Domain E) are realistic for VWO students.

Figure 1
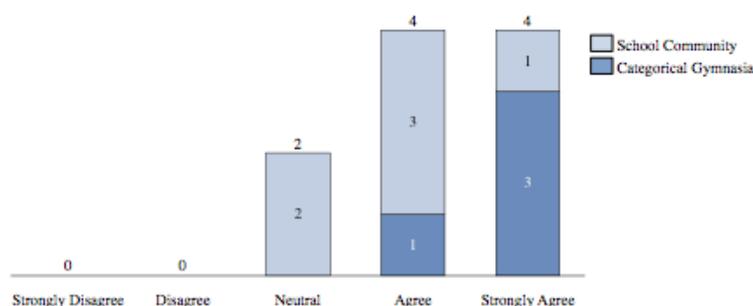
On a Likert scale ranging from 1-5, ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree," two teachers neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Both of these teachers teach at wider school communities that provide different levels of education. Four teachers agreed that the core objectives for literature are realistic for pre-university students. Two of these responses came from wider school communities that provide different levels of education and two responses came from categorical gymnasia. Four teachers strongly agreed with the statement. Three of these responses came from categorical gymnasia and one came from a wider school community. One teacher did not respond to this question. From these data it can be concluded that the English teachers who filled in the questionnaire consider the core objectives for literature realistic, and these results are illustrative of attitudes throughout the Netherlands.

2. The core objectives for literature (Domain E) are relevant for VWO students.
Figure 2
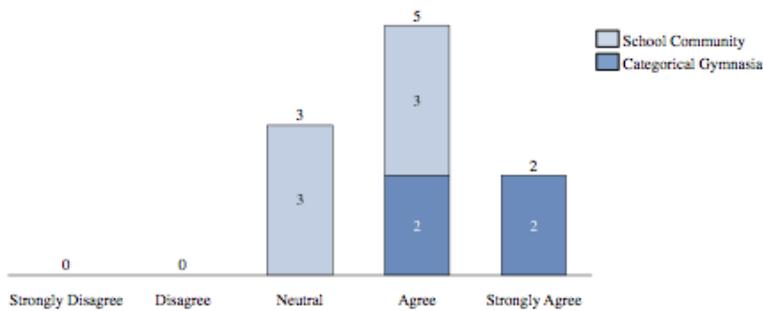
Three teachers neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, and these included the two who remained neutral toward the first question. Five teachers agreed that the core objectives are relevant for pre-university students, and two teachers strongly agreed with this statement. The same teacher also neglected to respond to this question. From these data it can be concluded that the respondents feel that the core objectives are relevant for pre-university students.

3. What status does literature have in your curriculum?

Figure 3
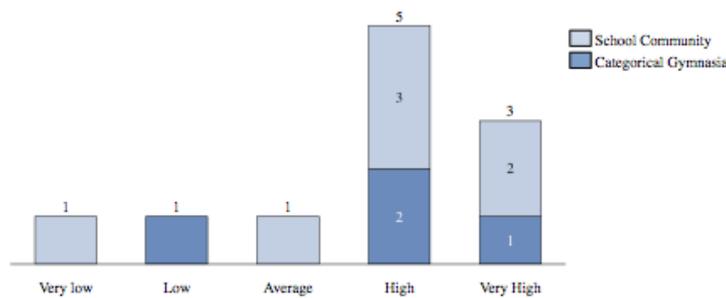
This question was also answered via a Likert scale with 1 representing a "very low status" and 5 representing "a very high status". One teacher from a wider school community responded that literature has a very low status in the curriculum. One teacher from a gymnasium responded that literature had a low status in the curriculum. One teacher from a school community responded that literature had an

average status in the curriculum. Four teachers responded that literature had a high status in the curriculum. These responses came from both larger school communities as well as categorical gymnasia. Finally, three teachers responded that literature had a very high status in their curriculum. Of these responses, two came from school communities and one from a gymnasium. These responses are interesting because it shows that literature has a very different status in the curricula at different schools, and it is not related to whether the students are at athenaeum or gymnasium level. The fact that literature has a very low status at one gymnasium is surprising because gymnasia are known for their focus on culture, the humanities, and intellectual and academic development (Kromhout 25-26). It is also surprising that literature has a very high status in the curriculum at three schools because it is only one domain in the exam programme.

4. Is literature tested in a school exam at your school?

Figure 4
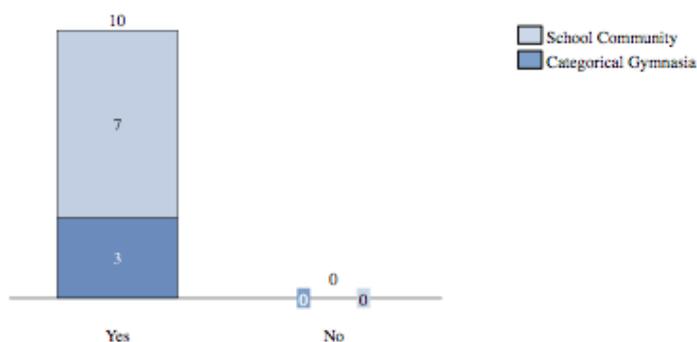
Literature is tested in a school exam at all of the schools that completed the survey. This complies with the exam programme established by the Ministry of Education. However, we cannot rule out response bias, which means that it is possible that teachers who do not comply with the exam programme chose not to fill in the survey.

5. What weight (%) does literature carry in the overall school exam mark?

Figure 5
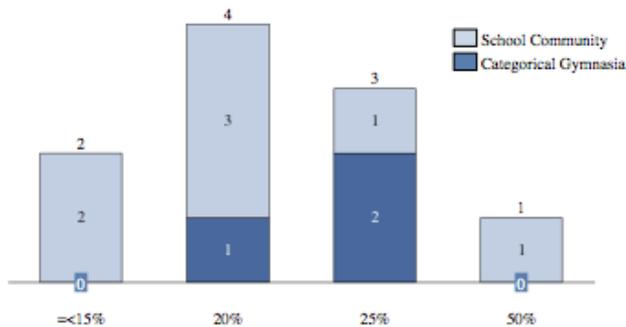
As previously mentioned, English departments are able to determine the weight that each school exam carries at a particular school. The Central Exam makes up 50% of the student's mark and the school exams make up the other 50%. It seems logical that each domain (literature, listening, writing, and speaking) would then make up 25% of the overall school exam mark (12.5% of the total mark), but different schools make this division differently. Literature carries a weight of 50% at one school, 25% at three schools, a weight of 20% at four schools, a weight of 15% at one school, and a weight of 10-15% at one school. One respondent neglected to answer this question. These data prove the freedom that teachers have throughout the Netherlands to place varying amounts of value on aspects of the curriculum to suit their and/or their school's vision.

6. How is this weight determined?

Table 1: Open-ended questionnaire answers

We use it as the reading component of the school exams, so it counts equally with listening, speaking and writing. The relationship with the time spent on literature is also taken into consideration.
Same weight as listening, speaking and writing
Equal weight all 4 skills plus literature
Importance of literature
Based on other requirements
The subject does not carry a lot of weight, and is part of the 'combinatiecijfer' together with ANW and PWS.
Next to communicative language skills
10%: SE on Renaissance: Test in year 5; 15% Romantics SE Test in year 6
Don't know
there are eight testing moments for both streams and each test counts the same. Half of all tests are literature based.
Representative percentage of the amount of time that is invested in literature as a separate subject

Again, a great variety among the respondents is shown here. Most schools make a logical division of weight based on the skills, plus literature. Several schools decide on a weight that is proportional to the amount of time spent on literature. Some respondents were unable to answer the question, or did so vaguely. The most divergent response showed literature to be integrated into a combination mark together with the mark for general science and a student's final year project.

7. How does your department measure whether the core objectives have been met?

Table 2: Open-ended questionnaire answers

We test the end goals in two school exams and the book reading component in book reports made under test conditions.
We are still looking for a way to do that. We have been teaching literature in the past, we stopped doing this a few years ago and this year we are doing it again. We are in the middle of writing a literature project.
Students have to show an understanding of the works that are taught as well as an understanding of the relationship between historical context and the work.
Regular students: reading log (5%), book test (5%), essay on a literary work (15%). IB students: poetry test (5%), test on part 3 books (5%), essay on literary work (15%).
Literature taught: Literary theory: literary period and its characteristics +   Read (parts of) original work from that period.   Literature tests: - written test with questions on literary period in English   - write an essay about a Shakespeare play that has been dealt with entirely in class   - 3 books read: hand in book reports prior to individual oral test on 3 books. (10-15 mins per pupil) Or: - Written test on 1 book, but 3 books have been prepared by the pupil
Answer questions mostly.
VWO- a book report, a short story presentation, a literature test and an individual oral. TTO - a literary essay, an individual oral, two literary history tests
The literature exam consists of a number of questions that deal with literary history

and the works which belong to each literary timeframe. Students have to be able to answer questions relating to individual works and the time in which they were written. Students are expected to understand the questions which often include literary jargon.

During an oral exam (25%) students are required to answer questions about 7 different books. The questions test whether or not students have comprehended the literature they have read and whether they are capable of answering these questions in proper English.

As evidenced by these responses, the large majority of schools interpret the core objectives strictly and design exams that explicitly measure whether the core objectives have been sufficiently met by the student. The most divergent response explained that his/her department had not yet designed an appropriate exam programme after several years of not having taught literature, which is surprising considering that 100% of respondents answered that they tested literature in a school exam. This shows that is possible for departments to neglect to test the core objectives even though they should.

8. How is literature organised for presentation?

Figure 6
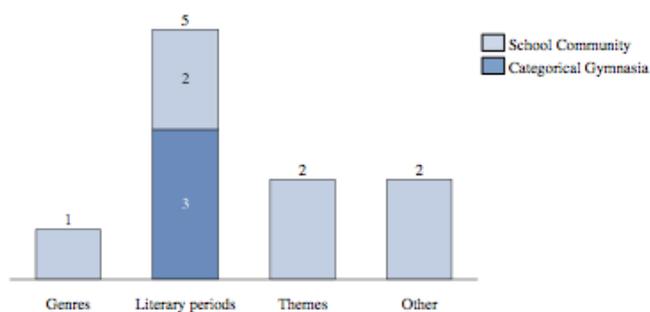
Figure 6 shows the different ways in which teachers can and do organise literature for presentation in their lessons depending upon the didactic vision of the teacher, the department, and/or the school. The fact that most English departments teach literature per period make sense because a) then there is a logical, chronological development and b) this organisation prepares students to meet subdomain E3, which focuses on placing literature in its proper historical context and tracing literary development (Bolscher 2004; Kwakernaak 2009).

9. Is literature taught in its socio-historical context?

Figure 7
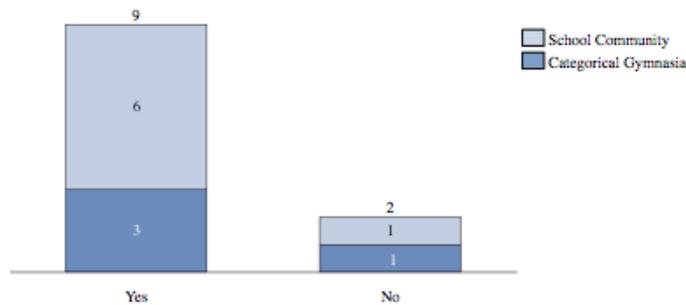
It follows logically from the previous discussion that nine of the English departments teach literature in its socio-historical context. Otherwise, it would be very difficult and perhaps impossible to meet subdomain E3. The fact that two schools do not teach the socio-historical context is thus surprising.

10. Does your department teach literary works as part of their literary periods?

Figure 8
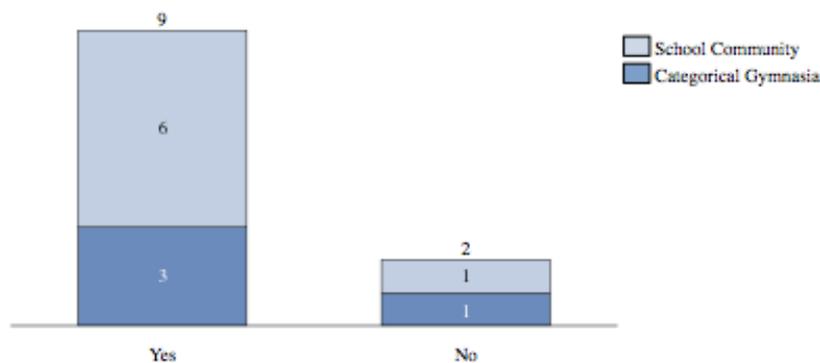
These responses follow logically from the previous questions. The two schools that do not teach literary works as part of their literary periods would, as a result, not be able to test students on subdomain E3, which is non-compliant with the national exam programme for Pre-University Education.

11. How important is it to present a literary work as part of its socio-historical context?

Figure 9
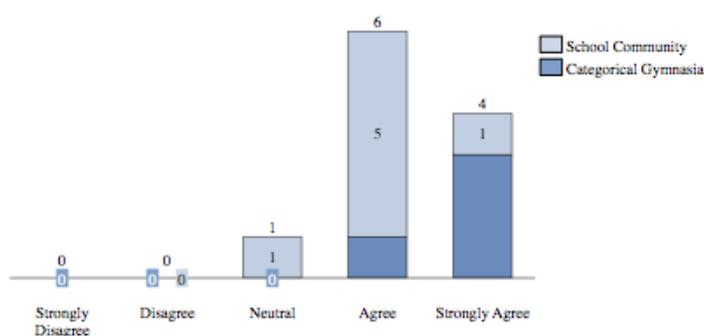
The teachers were almost unanimous in their feeling that literary works should be presented as part of their socio-historical context. Only one teacher gave a neutral response to this question. This is important to this particular research because the socio-historical context plays an essential role in the lesson design. As a literature course book does not exist in the Netherlands, teachers have to design the content themselves. This research can provide useful examples and materials for teachers who either do not know how to effectively teach literature to meet the core objectives or find it challenging to do so, because of lack of time or other reasons.

12. What literary periods does your department teach?

Figure 10
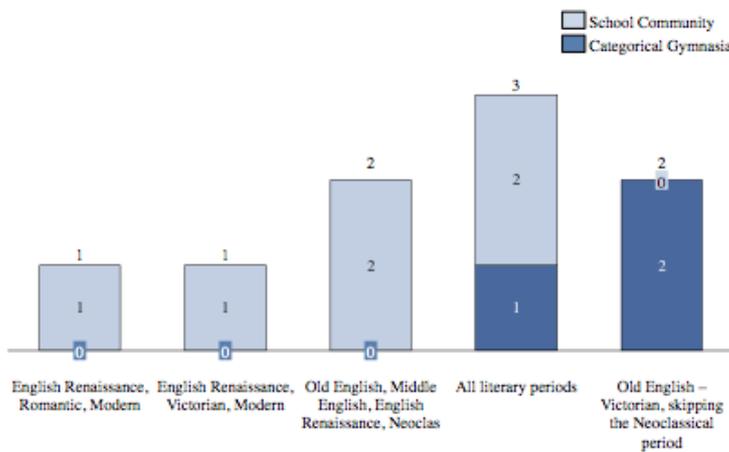
As seen above, approximately 90% of schools teach Victorian literature. Some schools make the choice to skip entire literary periods and the large majority of schools (nearly 70%) do not teach postmodern literature.

13. If you teach works from the Victorian period, what works does your department teach? Please also explain why you have chosen to work with these particular texts.

Table 3: Open-ended questionnaire answers

We cover the best-known works briefly in class and expect the students to read one of them. The writers are Austen, Mary Shelley - Frankenstein, Dickens, Charlotte and Emily Bronte, Thomas Hardy, Stevenson - Jekyll and Hyde, Oscar Wilde, Henry James - The Turn of the Screw, Mark Twain, Lewis Carrol and Arthur Conan Doyle
Dickens (A Christmas Carol) as he is both of literary and social value and Charlotte Brontë (Jane Eyre) to show the influence of Romanticism and its Gothic substream in later works
(IB students only!) Jane Eyre because of its relevance with regards to context (classes, religion etc.)

(earlier:) Pride and Prejudice / Silas Marner / Wuthering Heights (same reason basically)
Not applicable. We do NOT teach literature in the English department, this is done by the 'Literatuur in Context' department at our school.
Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray - its theme, Victorian society and manners Oscar Wilde, The Importance of Being Earnest - Victorian manners ridiculed, it's a relatively modern play.
Our curriculum offers a variety of (parts of) works.
Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens, examples of realism (Hardy), social context (Dickens)
Jane Eyre - Brönte / Wuthering Heights - Brönte / Pride and Prejudice - Austen / Great Expectations, The Christmas Carol - Dickens / Annabel Lee, The Raven, The tell-tale heart - Poe. The novels are characteristic for the period, whether they deal with early feminism or the situation of the poor, or both. Poe shows the gothic side of Victorian literature and is just a lot of fun.

Furthermore, two respondents left this question blank, which is in line with the findings of Figure 9. It is important to note that Dickens comes up three times for his social relevance and that several respondents choose literature based on its social value in addition to its literary value. These answers, in addition to being informative, shed light on the attitudes teachers have towards teaching literature, which provides additional insight.

14. Please explain the way(s) in which you operationalise Victorian literature.

For example, do you offer extracts or full texts? Do you offer the works in

English or (partly) in translation?

Table four: Open-ended questionnaire answers

Extracts of the books and film version. We do not use any translations and use English subtitles for the film extracts if they are available, but not Dutch subtitles.
We offer plot overviews, extracts and film clippings
(This applies only to the IB Students!) Full text only. Context explained also using assignments.
Not applicable. We do NOT teach literature in the English department, this is done by the 'Literatuur in Context' department at our school.
Offer extracts. Never in translation, always the original text. If available in combination with film footage of performances. Full texts can be read and used for book list.
Both
We do not work with translations. With the above texts we use extracts only, the Victorian period is not one we spend a lot of time on.
We use very detailed summaries and extracts from the text. Texts are never offered in translation! Students are welcome to read the full novel for their oral exam and many of them do so.

These responses shared two main similarities, namely the exclusive use of English texts instead of translations and film material to supplement the text. Three respondents did not answer this question.

15. If you do not teach works from the Victorian period, what influences this decision?

The schools that do not teach Victorian literature cited the following reasons for this decision: time constraints (4), length, interest (teachers – 2), interest (students – 1) complexity of the novel(s) (1). One respondent stated that there was "no specific reason" why his/her department does not teach Victorian literature.

4.6   Conclusions

The large majority of English teachers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the national core objectives related to literature education are both realistic for and relevant to Dutch pre-university students, which implies satisfaction with the current exam programme, though a future questionnaire could ask about attitudes toward their brevity. The large majority of respondents place literature at a high status in their school curriculum, which is surprising considering it forms only one part of the exam programme, with the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) making up the rest. It would be interesting to find out the motivation behind this decision in future research.

The results of the questions pertaining to the literature school exam, including the set-up of the exam and the weight it carries, confirmed the variation expected among different schools, since Dutch schools have the freedom to make these decisions themselves. Question 7: "How does your department measure whether the core objectives has been met?" gave insight into the different ways in which English teachers operationalise the core objectives into exams, though an empirical study of the exams themselves, combined with interviews with teachers and students, and an analysis of students' results per exam would provide a far greater understanding of how literature is tested and the effects of different methods of testing. Being able to

study the exams themselves would also allow for a greater understanding of how it is possible that subdomain E3 can be met by schools that, for example, do not teach literary works as part of their literary periods.

Finally, most teachers explicitly stated that they teach literature using extracts without offering translations, which again confirms the high reading level of Dutch pre-university students and suggests that the lesson series provided here would be suitable for implementation at these schools.

Chapter 5

THE VICTORIAN LITERATURE CURRICULUM

5.1   Curriculum Design Principles

When designing a curriculum, it is important to be focused and establish priorities (Thijs and van den Akker 14). There are many interrelated elements to take into consideration, the most essential of which have been described in the theoretical framework. Van den Akker visualises these aspects in what he called "the curricular spider web," visualised below:
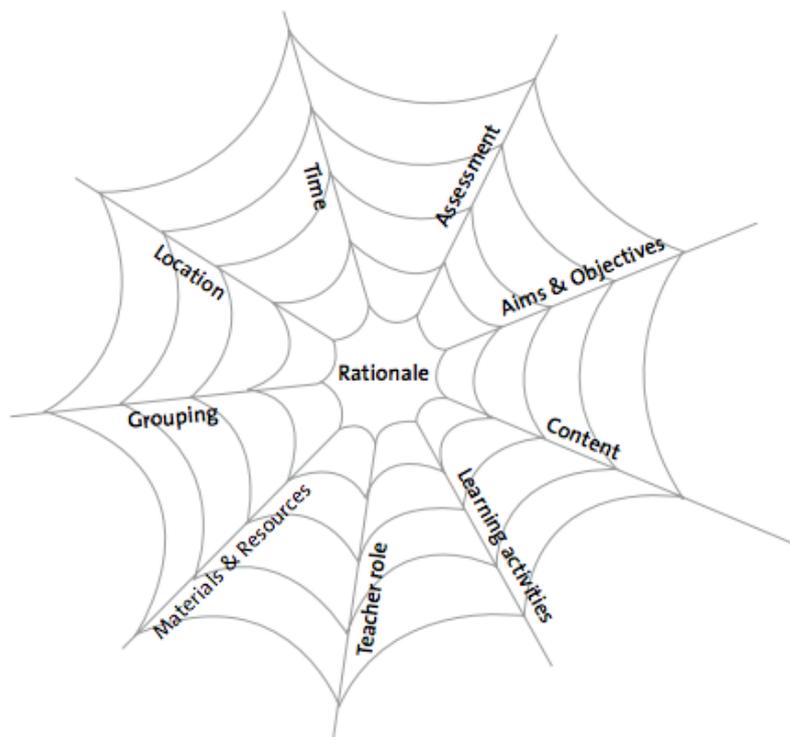
(van den Akker in Plomp and Nieveen 41)

The curricular spider web is used as a basis for the curriculum design here. The model is not only practical, but the metaphor emphasises how important each of these components is when designing a curriculum, as a web is only as strong as its weakest link (Thijs and van den Akker 11-12). A strong self-designed curriculum takes all of these aspects into consideration.

At the centre of the curricular spider web is the rationale for the curriculum, which is described in detail in the theoretical framework, along with overarching aims and objectives. This chapter predominantly focuses on content, learning activities, materials, resources, and assessment with additional attention given to each of the other curricular elements that make up the web per lesson.

The curriculum was designed according to an instrumental approach, meaning that there is a systematic design process in which measurable learning objectives provide the main reference points (Thijs and van den Akker 16). Ralph Tyler created a framework for this approach called the Tyler Rationale which focuses on four key questions:

- *Objectives*: which objectives should education aim for?
- *Learning experiences*: which learning experiences are most suitable in order to obtain these objectives?
- *Organisation*: how could these learning experiences be organised effectively?
- *Evaluation*: how can we determine whether the objectives have been achieved? (Thijs and van den Akker 16)

Learning objectives were created per lesson with reference to Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. The learning experiences, their organisation, and eventual evaluation are part of the original lesson design.

Each of the lesson plans in the series was designed according to and Bimmel et al.'s *Handbook for Language-Lesson Design*[4]. Bimmel et al. identify "HOT rules for lesson design," which fall under eight main categories: 1. Motivation, 2. Goals and criteria, 3. Choices, 4. Language acquisition, 5. Focus on form, 6. Success, 7.

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[4] Handboek Ontwerpen Talen

Learning how to learn, and 8. Collaboration (Bimmel at al. 40). In each of the lessons, students are predominantly motivated by variation, clear and explicit learning goals, negotiations, working in teams for a collaborative result, activating tasks, and visualisations. Variation comes in multiple forms: there is variation in content and working methods. Students work individually, in groups, and as a class as they read, watch, and discuss the different literary works. Students work in groups to create presentations that teach other students about a literary work they have not read, which provides students with increased agency in their learning process. Each lesson different students present and by the end of the lesson series, all of the students will have presented at least once. These presentations can be for a mark or given as a mandatory in-class assignment.

Explicit goals and criteria were carefully constructed using Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives and show a balance between each of the different levels of cognitive ability, so that students are able to build knowledge, show comprehension, apply what they have learned, analyse the literature, synthesise information, and eventually create a product that educates their classmates. Students are also made aware that their answers to the close reading questions and their notes on the presentations and films can be used to study for their eventual school exam, which is the over-arching learning goal aside from the acquisition of cultural awareness and cognitive development.

Choices were built into the curriculum in various forms. In some cases, students are allowed to choose what literary works they read. Students can also choose what extract(s) they present on, if there is one that speaks to them in particular. Also, students make choices when it comes to the material that they present to the rest of the class and this is very important because they, as a group, have to

determine what the most salient points of the extracts are, with help from the guiding close reading questions, and synthesise this information into an educational presentation.

Bimmel et al. write that "if language acquisition is the goal, then give the students a complex and realistic task. Make sure the students use as many language skills as possible (oral and written, productive and receptive) in carrying out the task. Use the target language as the official language" (Bimmel et al. 45). First, the students use receptive skills to read the extracts and watch the accompanying film extracts. Second, productive skills are used to write answers to the close reading questions, engage in group discussions in English, and give presentations. Third, English is always the medium and target language in the classroom.

At this point in the students' English-language learning career, they have finished learning grammar and are moving towards a more academic language level. It is important that students are able to communicate in English about abstract topics clearly and effectively, as many students in the Netherlands go on to use English at university level and in their following professional lives. That is why there is no specific attention placed on linguistic form, Bimmel et al.'s fifth design principle, in this lesson series.

Bimmel et al.'s sixth design principle regards building opportunities for successful experiences into the curriculum. This includes "providing tasks that are challenging but achievable" (Bimmel at al. 48). This is done through differentiating among students with different reading levels in three different ways, depending on the task, provided below:

1. Providing students with easier or more difficult extracts based on reading level

2. Dividing students into homogenous groups based on reading level in which to discuss the material; in this case the teacher can remain present and facilitate the group discussion among weaker readers

3. Dividing students into heterogeneous groups based on reading level in which to discuss the literature so that stronger students can lead the discussion and aid weaker students

A second means of building successful experiences into the curriculum, according to Bimmel et al., is by giving feedback throughout the learning process, which is done as students work individually on the close reading assignments, during the group discussions, and after the presentations on the reading material.

Bimmel et al.'s seventh design principle emphasises the importance of teaching students to learn to take responsibility in their learning process and become independent learners. This curriculum gives students an extremely high amount of agency; in fact, the teacher acts as a facilitator in the learning process and manager of the classroom, especially during discussions, but scarcely teaches in the classical or traditional way. Bimmel et al. also describe the task of teaching a) the necessity of "life-long learning," meaning that learning does not only take place in the classroom and end upon graduation, and b) constructivist approaches to learning (Bimmel et al. 50). As described in the previous chapter, this curriculum is built on constructivist pedagogy.

The final design principle focuses on collaboration among students, which is divided into four key areas:

- Positive co-dependency
- Individual accountability
- Equal contributions from each individual

- Simultaneous interaction (Bimmel et al. 52)

Each sub-lesson series involves student collaboration that necessitates each of these actions. However, it is important that the teacher manages the group discussions and makes contributions where necessary to stimulate interaction and better ensure that all students are contributing positively.

5.2   Introduction to Selected Works

When it comes to content that represents the main lines of literary history, Barbara Dennis identifies several main subjects of the Victorian novel in her book *The Victorian Novel*:

- Economic prosperity in England

- The rich and the poor

- The effects of the Industrial Revolution on society

- Parliamentary Reform

- Education

- The Empire

- Religion

- The novel and the middle class

- The novel and the bourgeois ethic

- The search for identity

- The question of the gentleman

(Dennis 10-50)

Dennis noticeably leaves out two subjects of the Victorian novel which are included in this thesis: the role(s) and representations of the Victorian woman and the Gothic sub-stream in Victorian literature.

The curriculum is introduced through two works of Charles Dickens because he is likely to be the most familiar author to the students, and because *David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist* offer several common subjects of the Victorian novel simultaneously, including, for example: aspects of the Victorian novel (e.g. length, complexity), the Victorian class system, the effects of the Industrial Revolution on society, the dichotomy between rich and poor, and Victorian optimism. In addition, *David Copperfield* is of autobiographical value since Dickens loosely based its contents on his own experiences.

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* are all ideally suited to teaching the roles and representations of Victorian women. Students learn about the different backgrounds and circumstances of Jane Eyre, Elizabeth Bennet, and Tess Durbeyfield in order to determine to what extent their lives are shaped by fate and circumstance versus free will and individual agency.

In typical Victorian fashion, *Jane Eyre* and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* are famously long and complex novels. Instead of trying to teach the entirety of their complicated plots, they are presented together through their shared Gothic elements. By introducing Gothic novels with *Frankenstein* and studying the Gothic elements in *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, students will have learned something concrete and identifiable. In addition, they will learn about the Brontë sisters at once and discover major aspects of the timeless love stories in both works.

The final lesson cycle focuses on Victorian morality and the reaction against the pressure to conform to these high moral expectations with extracts from Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

The curriculum is organised into a cycle in which the lesson focus is presented by the teacher, students engage in individual study of the reading material with accompanying close reading questions, students discuss the literature and their answers in small groups, and finally present their findings to the rest of the class, who take notes on the extracts they have not read. The fact that students read extracts that have been pre-determined to be more suited to their reading level or work in mixed ability groups to facilitate understanding allows for differentiated learning. The manner in which students build their knowledge and understanding in groups is constructivist pedagogy. The literature is frequently supplemented with scenes from film adaptations. The length of a lesson is 45 minutes because that is standard at the school for which this lesson series was designed, though this is easily adjustable and the approach would benefit from longer lessons. If the twelve-lesson cycle is too time consuming overall, then it is easy enough to remove a topic or literary work from the curriculum without disrupting its cohesion.

5.3 Aspects of the Victorian Novel, the Victorian Class System, and Social Criticism in *David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens

Lessons 1 and 2:

Dickens is known as the preeminent Victorian author, and *David Copperfield* is considered his most autobiographical novel, which makes it an excellent introduction to the author (Jones xiii). *David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist* are seen together as an ideal introduction to the Victorian period because they contain so many elements that are typically Victorian, with links to all of the elements on Dennis's list as well as an introduction to the serialised novel and bildungsroman. The following extracts have been pre-selected for their social and thematic significance:

David Copperfield	*Oliver Twist*
1. Chapter VII. *My "First Half" at Salem House*: David Copperfield goes to school (Dickens 85-87; Dickens 99) 2. Chapter XI: *I Begin Life on My Own Account, and Don't Like It.* David Copperfield works in a factory and boards with a family in debt (Dickens 139-151)	1. Chapter I. Treats of the Place Where Oliver Twist was Born and of the Circumstances Attending His Birth (Dickens 3-5) 2. Chapter II. Treats of Oliver Twist's Growth, Education, and Board (Dickens 6-17) 3. Beginning of Chapter III. Relates How Oliver Twist Was Very Near Getting a Place Which Would not have been a Sinecure (Dickens 17-18)

As it is not possible to separate these two works based on language level or content in order to differentiate among stronger and weaker readers, here the students are divided into heterogeneous groups made up of a mix of reading levels. In this way, students with varying skill levels work collaboratively to understand and analyse the text. This grouping allows for students with different strengths, backgrounds, and interests to discuss the literature and construct knowledge together, with students who quickly master material being able to achieve greater depth of understanding by helping students who struggle to understand and analyse literature. Flexible grouping is considered a "hallmark" of differentiated education: "sometimes students work with peers on the same level of readiness and sometimes work with different levels of readiness" (NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development

3). It is important that weaker and stronger students also have the ability to engage with each other as it can be beneficial to enriching the knowledge of both parties.

In the pre-selected extracts, young David Copperfield begins his harsh and abusive education at Salem House boarding school, and then begins working at a factory in London when his mother dies and he is left destitute. These extracts depict the taxing conditions children lived, studied, and worked in during the Victorian period, which, in turn, exhibits Dickens's call for social reform in his works. From the perspective of a contemporary reader, these scenes will stand in stark contrast to social conditions today. The mature David as first person narrator looks back on his childhood to describe the abuse suffered at the hands of the headmaster, Mr Creakle, who begins the term by shouting "Silence!" at the boys with ferocious power (Dickens 85). "Half of the establishment was writhing and crying, before the day's work began" on account of Mr Creakle's cane, David describes, and remembers him angrily as an "incapable brute, who had no more right to be possessed of the great trust he had, than to be Lord High Admiral, or Commander-in-chief" (Dickens 85-86). The narrator goes on to describe Mr Creakle's abuses, life at school, and how he looks forward to the upcoming holiday. Students are asked to identify injustices suffered by the students and the explicit nature of Dickens's social criticism. In addition, students are asked to pay close attention to the effect of the narrative style, as David's mature narration of his childhood experiences is a special aspect of this work.

In the second extract from *David Copperfield*, David is orphaned and working long hours in a factory. Years later he describes how

it is matter of some surprise … even now, that I can have been so easily thrown away at such an age. A child of excellent abilities, and with strong powers of observation, quick, eager, delicate, and soon hurt bodily or

mentally, it seems wonderful to me that nobody should have made any sign in

my behalf. But none was made and I became, at ten years old, a little

labouring hind in the service of Murdstone and Grinby (Dickens 139).

This is an excellent example of Dickens criticising the Victorian social system, in

which vulnerable children are forced to work long hours in dangerous conditions.

Furthermore, children in poverty, despite their capabilities, are denied a means of

education. The incongruity of such a small child being left more or less on his own in

the world reaches a powerful climax in the scene in which ten-year-old David enters a

public house "for a glass of ale or porter" with which to wash down his lunch and the

owner and his wife are so sympathetic to his plight that they draw the beer, return

David's money to him, and the woman gives him a kiss that is "half admiring and half

compassionate" (Dickens 146). Here we see how truly alone David is, how he is

abandoned by the social systems, and how he is forced to make his way in a harsh,

adult world, a time that David refers to later as "the slow agony of my youth"

(Dickens 151). The narrative technique employed by Dickens powerfully influences

the reader's perception of and sympathy for the young David, thus students are asked

to pay close attention to this.

    Oliver Twist famously explores similar themes and criticises the social system

in the same way as in the opening pages the reader learns of "the hungry and destitute

situation of an infant orphan." Siersema writes:

    Dickens' descriptions of the misery, the injustice and cruelty which the

    poor suffered were infinitely more intrusive than government statistics and

    reports. He brought the world of outcasts to life, and he made it

    frighteningly real. In *Oliver Twist* Dickens made his first attack on the social

    evils of his time and the book brought him the reputation he has held until

today, of social reformer and someone who stood up for the poor and
oppressed (Siersema 153).

Oliver is utterly alone from the beginning and becomes the immediate "victim of a
systematic course of treachery and deception" (Dickens 6). These extracts contain
bitter irony and scathing satire aimed at the lack of functioning social systems in
England, systems that profit the rich at the expense of the poor. In these extracts,
students will be asked to pay special attention to social commentary and ironic
comments made by the narrator, such as the following, as Oliver sobs himself to sleep
on a "rough, hard bed" after learning that he will be forced to pick oakum for work:
"What a novel illustration of the tender laws of England! They let the paupers go to
sleep!" (Dickens 13).

In addition to learning about life in Victorian England, especially among the
destitute, students are also asked to pay attention to narrative tone and style, which
enhances their understanding of literary techniques, another element of the exam
syllabus. Students are also asked to think about social problems and injustices in the
modern world in order to compare Dickens's call for social reform with the issues of
today.

Lesson 1: A Call for Social Reform in the Victorian period I	
Rationale	Social, historical, cultural, and literary value as described in 5.3
Objectives	1. The student is able to comprehend, describe, interpret, summarise, and discuss key elements of the extract with the assistance of close reading questions. 2. The student is able to analyse the text with the assistance of close reading questions. 3. The student is able to identify and discuss narrative techniques used by the author for specific effect. 4. The student is able to identify and discuss elements of Victorian society, as well as compare and contrast them with the modern world. 5. The student is able to form opinions on the text and support those opinions with specific evidence from the text. 6. The student is able to appraise the extract from a 19th century as well as 21st century perspective.
Content	• Either the opening scene from *Oliver Twist* (in any of the many film adaptations) or a BBC Two clip on the plight of poor children in Victorian times in order to enter the atmosphere of the time. • Two extracts from *Oliver Twist* or *David Copperfield* per student • Worksheet with close reading questions
Learning	During the initial activity, students are asked to note main points,

Lesson 1: A Call for Social Reform in the Victorian period I

activities	which are used to inform a short discussion.
	Students read two extracts individually and answer close reading questions in order to prepare for a group discussion in the following lesson.
	Students who finish early can already start discussing the answers to the questions in pre-determined groups.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, and facilitates the learning process
Materials and resources	Film and/or BBC Two audio clip, extracts, worksheet
Grouping	Individual, followed by heterogeneous groups based on reading level per extract, created by the teacher
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	10 minutes for introduction and introductory activity
	30 minutes for independent reading
	5 minutes for conclusion
Assessment	1. The teacher checks on students' progress throughout the lesson and facilitates understanding.
	2. Assessment follows in the following lesson

Lesson 2: A Call for Social Reform in the Victorian period II	
Rationale	Social, historical, cultural, and literary value as described in 5.3
Objectives	1. The student is able to demonstrate an awareness of social issues in the Victorian period that Charles Dickens was calling attention to (related to child labour, the education, and the

	failure of social systems to protect the destitute).
	2. The student is able to discuss what he/she has learned from the previous lesson in small groups in English.
	3. The student is able to support his/her answers with textual evidence.
	4. The student is able to synthesise relevant information into a short presentation.
Content	• Two extracts from *Oliver Twist* or *David Copperfield* per student, completed worksheet per student
Learning activities	Students discuss their individual findings in groups of 3-5, share knowledge, build on their understanding of the material, and prepare a short presentation on living and working conditions in the Victorian period as described by Charles Dickens, social criticism, narrative style and narrative techniques. During the presentations, the rest of the class are expected to take notes, which they can use to study for their school exam. Also, the presentations are used to stimulate class discussions about social issues, then and now.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, and facilitates the learning process During the class discussion, it is helpful if the teacher writes the main points on the board so that the most important points are explicit.
Materials and resources	Worksheet with close reading questions, extracts
Grouping	Heterogeneous groups based on reading level per extract, created

	by the teacher
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	5 minutes for introduction
	15 minutes for group discussions
	3-4 minutes on presentations per extract, plus time for questions and feedback (approximately 20 min. total)
	5 minutes for conclusion
Assessment	1. The teacher checks on students' progress and understanding throughout the lesson.
	2. The worksheet can be checked.
	3. Presentations and class discussion

Extra material: There is a plethora of material on living and working conditions in Victorian times, Charles Dickens, and social commentary on the BBC websites. These can be used to expand and enrich these lessons. Furthermore, if there is extra time the teacher can show (parts of) any of the many film adaptations of these books in order to visualise the reading material.

5.4 The Gothic Sub-stream in Victorian Literature in *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë and *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë

 <u>Lessons 3, 4, 5, and 6:</u>

5.4.1 Introduction to the Gothic Novel: Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

Before students can be expected to learn about the Gothic sub-stream in Victorian novels, it is essential to introduce them to Gothic literature, which is done here through brief extracts from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. After the teacher introduces the lesson with a PowerPoint presentation designed to attract attention by

busting myths about *Frankenstein*, the students will be asked to do two close
readings.

The first assignment is a close reading of the extract in which Victor
Frankenstein brings his creation to life and then abandons him, which has been
selected for its thematic significance as well as key role in the plot (Shelley 50-52).
Students are asked to focus on remarkable descriptive vocabulary in an effort to draw
their attention to elements of the Gothic lexicon, such as "breathless horror," "livid
with the hue of death," "demoniacal corpse," "grave-worms crawling in the folds of
flannel," etc. (Shelley 50-52). The consequences of Frankenstein's decision to
abandon the wretch are investigated in a close reading of the first part of his creature's
tale (Shelley 96 – 100). Students are provided with close reading questions that are to
inform a plenary discussion. By the end of the lesson, students should be able to
defend the classification of *Frankenstein* as a Gothic novel, will have explored several
of the book's themes (e.g. the danger of knowledge, monstrosity, and the need for
companionship), and will be able to make an ethical judgment on Victor and his
creation's actions.

Lesson 3: Introduction to the Gothic Novel	
Rationale	To learn the key features of a Gothic novel in order to be able to identify and discuss Gothic features in Victorian literature
Objectives	1. The student is able to identify Gothic descriptions in the extract.
	2. The student is able to interpret and analyse the extract with the help of close reading questions.
	3. The student is able to infer the author's intent.

	4. The student is able to make predictions about the text.
	5. The student is able to form opinions and ethical judgements and support these with textual evidence.
Content	• Two extracts from *Frankenstein* per student
	• Worksheet with close reading questions
Learning activities	Students are given both extracts to read with accompanying questions designed to stimulate literary analysis. If more advanced students finish early, they can read another extract or start reading a short story by Edgar Allen Poe.
	The answers to the questions are used to inform a plenary discussion.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, and facilitates the learning process at an individual level.
Materials and resources	PowerPoint Presentation, worksheet with close reading questions, extracts, board
Grouping	Individual close reading session
	Plenary discussion
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	8 minutes for introduction and introductory presentation
	27 minutes individual close reading
	10 minutes for plenary discussion and conclusion
Assessment	1. The teacher checks on students' progress and understanding throughout the lesson.
	2. The worksheet can be checked.
	3. Plenary discussion

5.4.2 The Gothic Sub-stream in Victorian Literature & The Brontë Sisters

The teacher introduces the lesson with a short presentation on the remarkable Brontë family, which also explains the relevance of their environment on the isolated moors. A link is made to the two novels being explored through visuals of the accommodations of the characters (Thornfield Hall, Wuthering Heights, and Thrushcross Grange) and the landscapes in which they live. The teacher has the responsibility to provide a concise summary of essential plot points so that students have a frame of reference when they begin reading, which can be enhanced by showing two film clips: Lockwood's arrival at Wuthering Heights and the beginning of Nelly's tale from the 1939 film adaptation and an early conversation between Jane Eyre and Mr Rochester from the 2011 film adaptation.

Students are then given extracts to read from *Wuthering Heights* or *Jane Eyre* based on their level with corresponding assignments. The following extracts were selected for their thematic significance as well as their connection to the Gothic, though only two from each novel are discussed in detail below owing to lack of space:

Wuthering Heights	*Jane Eyre*
1. Lockwood encounters Catherine's ghost begging to enter her old room: "Let me in!" (Brontë 20-31)	1. The Red Room episode: "What a consternation of soul was mine that dreary afternoon!" (Brontë 1-17)
2. Cathy confesses her love for Heathcliff yet decides to marry Edgar: "I *am* Heathcliff!" (Brontë 82-90)	2. The Madwoman in the Attic: "This is my wife. Such is the sole conjugal embrace I am ever to know – such as the endearments which are to solace my
3. The build-up to Cathy's death: "Would	

you like to live with your soul in the grave?" (Brontë 171-178) 4. Heathcliff digs up Cathy's grave: "I was sure she was with me, and I could not help talking to her" (Brontë 307-310).	leisure hours!" (Brontë 339-357)

5.4.3 *Wuthering Heights* I: Lockwood encounters Catherine's ghost begging to enter her old room: "Let me in!" (Brontë 20-31)

These pages succinctly and powerfully present the singular strangeness of life at Wuthering Heights. The first paragraphs already foreshadow odd events to come in the room that Lockwood is placed in for his unwelcome overnight. Because Lockwood narrates in a straightforward and conversational manner, and the Flesch-Kincaid readability score is a 64.3 (appropriate for 13-15 year old native speakers, provided they have followed a normal course of study), this text is deemed suitable for students with an average reading level in the sixth form. There is difficulty in the fact that Lockwood reads from Catherine's diaries which disrupts the linearity of the narrative. In addition, he begins to dream, which can be confusing for some students, and when Catherine's ghost arrives the situation becomes even more mysterious. In order to assist weaker readers, the teacher could provide the disruptions to the linear narrative in a differently coloured text.

This short extract introduces several crucial elements of *Wuthering Heights*, including the strangeness of the house, its occupants, and its history, which the servant Zillah touches upon when she tells Lockwood that her master had an "odd notion about the chamber," "never let anybody lodge there willingly," but she did not dare to voice her curiosity because there were "so many queer things going on"

(Brontë 20). In addition, it exposes Catherine Earnshaw's identity crisis as her engravings on her wooden bed oscillate between Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Linton, and Catherine Heathcliff, and it introduces Catherine and Heathcliff's troubled relationship with her brother Hindley. Finally, it shows that Catherine is the source of Heathcliff's violent passion, as he wails "Come in! Come in!" when he realises it was her ghost that disrupted Lockwood's sleep (Brontë 30). Students are asked to answer questions on these aspects of *Wuthering Heights* in addition to identifying Gothic elements in a worksheet, the findings of which are discussed in homogenous groups, made up of other students who have read the same extracts, before being presented orally in the following lesson.

5.4.4 *Wuthering Heights* II: Cathy confesses her love for Heathcliff yet decides to marry Edgar: "I *am* Heathcliff!" (Brontë 82-90)

Catherine's identity crisis reaches a climax in this scene, in which she tells Nelly that she has agreed to marry the gentlemanly Edgar Linton though she confesses: "I have no more business to marry [him] than I have to be in heaven" because of her eternal love for Heathcliff (Brontë 86). It is unarguably one of the most important scenes in the book, as it exposes Catherine's acute internal dilemma, which has indelible consequences for all of the characters and their offspring. In addition, students can further identify links to the Gothic. With a Flesh-Kincaid readability score of 77.5, this material would be appropriate for even younger students than the previous text. Furthermore, because the text is made up of dialogue, it is simpler than Lockwood's interrupted narration. Students who study this text can be asked to identify elements of the Gothic, comment on Catherine's psychology, and provide her reasons for and against marrying Edgar Linton or Heathcliff, before discussing their answers in homogeneous groups and presenting their findings in the following lesson.

5.4.5 *Jane Eyre* **I: The Red Room episode (Brontë 1-17)**

This is a longer text which introduces Jane's situation as an unwanted dependent in her aunt's upper class home and exposes the abuse to which she is subjected, the latter of which includes her temporary confinement in the red room where her uncle died. The psychological consequences of Jane's altercation with her cousin, followed by her punishment and the terror it instils in her are complex and arguably more suited to a more advanced reader. Aside from containing elements of the Gothic, this extract gives a clear view of Jane's background, her struggles, and how these events shaped her character. Dennis corroborates these comments in her summation that:

> *Jane Eyre* is a novel of the inner life, depicting Jane's voyage of self-discovery. As Jane moves from the breakfast-room at Gateshead where she is tormented by John Reed, and the red room, where she is driven by fear almost to the point of mental breakdown, to Mr Brocklehurst's Lowood, to Thornfield, and to Moor House, the reader is not so much concerned with the outward events of her life as with what is happening in her head in her passionate search for her destiny. It is her sense of self which predominates throughout (Dennis 18).

This remarkable ability for introspection is evidenced in the red room scene, in which the young Jane contrasts herself with the other inhabitants of Gateshead Hall and disturbingly reflects on suicide as a means of escape from her constant suffering, inflicted by her caregivers (Brontë 11-13). Here, Jane is all but psychologically broken, but hereafter she begins to make her ascent towards an individual with a clear sense of self.

The advanced students who work on this text are also given close reading questions and be expected to present what they have learned in the following lesson.

5.4.6 *Jane Eyre* II: The Madwoman in the Attic (Brontë 339-357)

These pages open with a foreboding conversation between Jane and Mr Rochester, in which she confesses to having seen "a woman, tall and large, with thick and dark hair hanging long down her back" with "a savage face" who "removed [Jane's] veil …, rent it in two parts, and flinging both on the floor, trampled on them" (Brontë 340-341). Once the extract has been read in full, stronger students can return to this conversation from the night before the wedding to identify examples of foreshadowing as well as explore the complex relationship between Jane and Mr Rochester. They can also make ethical judgments regarding his decision not to inform Jane about his mad wife, Bertha Mason. This climactic scene is full of Gothic elements as well as strong examples of both Jane and Rochester's characters.

Finally, in just eighteen pages, Jane Eyre goes from a young woman on the brink of marriage to the man she loves to "a cold, solitary girl again" with "desolate" prospects (Brontë 355). Students can muse on what action they believe follows the discovery of Rochester's wife and perhaps it will inspire some to read the entire novel. After individual study, students discuss their findings in groups, and then present to the class in the following lesson.

Lesson 4: The Gothic Sub-Stream in Victorian Literature & The Brontës I	
Rationale	To identify Gothic elements in Victorian literature and to what effect they are used as well as discover main plot points of two of the most famous works of the Victorian period
Objectives	1. The student is able to comprehend, describe, interpret,

	summarise, and discuss key elements of the extracts with the assistance of close reading questions.
	2. The student is able to analyse the text with the assistance of close reading questions.
	3. The student is able to identify and discuss narrative techniques used by the author for specific effect.
	4. The student is able to identify Gothic elements in the text and to what effect they are used.
	5. The student is able to make predictions about the text.
	6. The student is able to form and substantiate opinions on character behaviour and actions in the text.
Content	• PowerPoint presentation that includes the lesson objectives and the following elements: a short description of the Brontë family history, visuals of the Yorkshire moors, visuals of Thornfield Hall, Wuthering Heights, and Thrushcross Grange (in order to show the distinction between the Gothic and its foil in Linton's home).
	• Students are given extracts with close reading questions based on their level:
	Below average:
	• *Wuthering Heights*, pp. 82-90
	• *Wuthering Heights*, pp. 171-178
	Average:
	• *Wuthering Heights*, pp. 20-31
	• *Wuthering Heights*, pp. 307-310

	Above average:
	• *Jane Eyre*, pp. 1-17
	• *Jane Eyre*, pp. 339-357
Learning activities	Students read the extracts provided by the teacher individually and answer close reading questions. Unfinished work must be completed at home.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, and facilitates the learning process
Materials and resources	PowerPoint presentation, extracts, worksheet with close reading questions
Grouping	Individual
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	10 minutes for introduction and introductory presentation 35 minutes for independent reading
Assessment	1. The teacher checks students' progress throughout the lesson 2. More formal assessment follows in the next lesson in the form of student presentations.

Lesson 5: The Gothic Sub-Stream in Victorian Literature & The Brontës II	
Rationale	To discuss, share, and build upon the knowledge gained in the previous lesson as well as gain insight into the literary work that was not read in the previous lesson
Objectives	1. The student is able to discuss gained knowledge and analyse the text in groups. 2. The student is able to demonstrate an understanding of the text.

	3. The student is able to construct deeper knowledge and understanding by sharing insights with fellow students.
	4. The student is able to synthesise information from the answers to the close reading questions into a presentation.
	5. The student is able to respond to and form opinions on film adaptations of the text that was studied as well as the one that was not.
Content	• Each of the scenes from the 1939 film version of *Wuthering Heights*, completed worksheet, extracts
Learning activities	Students discuss and analyse the extracts they have read in homogeneous groups pre-determined by the teacher, based on reading level and thus also on the text that has been read. Students watch the scenes in the 1939 film adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* and take notes on Gothic elements as well as the characters of Catherine and Heathcliff.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, and facilitates the learning process
Materials and resources	Extracts, worksheet, DVD
Grouping	Homogeneous groups based on reading level and thus on extract read
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	3 minutes for introduction and introductory presentation 15 minutes for group discussion and presentation preparation 20 minutes for film study 7 minutes for student presentation and plenary discussion

Assessment	1. The teacher checks students' progress throughout the lesson.
	2. Presentation
	3. Plenary discussion

Lesson 6: The Gothic Sub-Stream in Victorian Literature & The Brontës III	
Rationale	To discuss, share, and build upon the knowledge gained thus far on this topic as well as gain insight into the literary work that was not read.
Objectives	1. The student is able to discuss gained knowledge and analyse the text in groups.
	2. The student is able to demonstrate an understanding of the text.
	3. The student is able to construct deeper knowledge and understanding by sharing insights with fellow students.
	4. The student is able to respond to and form opinions on film adaptations of the text that was studied as well as the one that was not.
Content	• Each of the scenes from the 2011 film version of *Jane Eyre*, completed worksheets, extracts
Learning activities	1. Plenary discussion on what was read and viewed in the previous lesson on *Wuthering Heights*, led by the teacher with input from both students who read the text and students who only watched the scenes from the film.
	2. Students view the appropriate scenes from the 2011 film adaptation of *Jane Eyre*, taking notes on Gothic elements and

	Jane and Rochester's characters.
	3. Students who read the extract from *Jane Eyre* give a presentation on the scenes that have been read and watched.
	4. Students who have not read the extract take notes and ask questions.
	5. The teacher leads a plenary discussion on the elements of *Jane Eyre* that have been covered in the extracts, worksheet, and film scenes.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, facilitates the learning process, and leads the plenary discussion
Materials and resources	Extracts, worksheet, film
Grouping	Homogeneous groups based on reading level and thus on the extract read Plenary session
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	3 minutes for introduction to the lesson objectives and activities 5 minutes for review of *Wuthering Heights* and link to *Jane Eyre* 20 minutes for film study 17 minutes for student presentation and plenary discussion, which concludes the lesson
Assessment	1. Presentation 2. Plenary discussion 3. Worksheets from both groups can be checked.

5.5 Exploring the roles of Victorian Women in *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontē, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy

Lessons 7, 8, 9, and 10:

Through the characters of Elizabeth Bennet (*Pride and Prejudice*),[5] Jane Eyre (*Jane Eyre*), and Tess Durbeyfield (*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*), the student is offered a wide array of experiences of the Victorian woman, especially with regard to the influence of circumstance versus the amount of agency exercised by each. The following extracts have been preselected for their significance with regard to this subject:

Pride and Prejudice:	*Jane Eyre*:	*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*:
1. Opening discussion of Mr Bingley's arrival: "It is a truth universally acknowledged .." (Austen 1) 2. The entailment of the Bennet home (Austen 4) 3. Making fun of the Bennets' low connections (Austen 29-31) 4. The accomplished woman, according to	1. Jane decides to become a governess: (Brontë 98 – 104) 2. Jane rejects Rochester: (Brontë 379-384) 3. Jane rejects St John Rivers (Brontë 486-495)	1. The Maiden, V: Because Tess allowed the horse to get run over, she has to go work for the d'Urbervilles (Hardy 35-44). 2. The Maiden XI: Build-up to the rape scene (Hardy 69-74) 3. The Consequence XXXIV and the beginning of The Woman Pays

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[5] Jane Austen is often grouped with the Victoria novelists even though her work precedes the Victorian period by nearly three decades.

Darcy (Austen 32-34) 5. Collins's visit, the entailment (Austen 53-57), Collins's proposal to Elizabeth (92-97), and Mrs Bennet's arguments for Elizabeth marrying Collins (97-101) 6. Charlotte Lucas gets engaged to Collins out of convenience (110-112) 7. Darcy's first marriage proposal to Elizabeth (165- 170)		XXXV: Tess confesses and Angel Clare rejects her (Hardy 224-235)

The lessons that focus on the woman question in Victorian England begin with an article written by Lynn Abrams for the BBC entitled "Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain." This article is straightforward and approachable, explaining the woman's role in the domestic sphere, her inferior role in the sexual hierarchy, and emphasising the importance of female virtue. Students are asked to read the article and answer comprehension questions in a worksheet. As an example of the ideal appearance and qualities of a Victorian woman, Rosamond Vincy (of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*) is used alongside visuals in a PowerPoint presentation that is presented by the teacher in a plenary session.

Following this introductory task, students are divided into groups. According to Novellist.nl, *Pride and Prejudice* is considered more difficult (5d) than *Jane Eyre* (4e), while information on *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is not available. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is arguably the most complex story, and seems most appropriate for advanced students. Novellist.nl is used here as a means of assessment instead of the Flesch-Kincaid scale because there are so many different extracts being read from each of the novels that it is more useful to have an evaluation of the complexity of the book as a whole rather than a single extract.

Each group is given the same worksheet, with questions on a) the character's circumstances, b) traditional aspects of Victorian society evidenced in their extracts, c) to what extent the characters exercise free will in their extracts, d) to what extent the character is a typical Victorian woman, and e) treatment of their character by the author and by society.

Taking *Pride and Prejudice* as an example, the chosen extracts emphasise:

- The preoccupation with advantageous marriages

- The disadvantageous position of women such as the Bennet sisters who are among the lower order of gentry, and prejudice toward them because of their predicament

- The concept of entailment, which gives power and property to some men over women

- The characteristics of the ideal Victorian woman, explained by Caroline Bingley and Darcy

- Marriages of convenience, such as the one Mrs Bennet tries to set up between Collins and Elizabeth and the ultimate marriage of Collins and Charlotte Lucas

By reading these extracts, students can discover a considerable amount about the Victorian class system and the place and expectations of women who were part of the gentry, though left in a precarious position because of lack of wealth and an entailment. They will also discover aspects of Elizabeth Bennet which are atypical of a woman of her time period, such as her rejection of both Mr Collins, who has the ability to restore her home to the Bennet family, and Mr Darcy, who is one of the most eligible bachelors of the aristocracy. Just before the students present their work, excerpts from both the 1995 BBC series and 2005 film version are shown to visualise the material for the entire class. The students and class can discuss the film adaptation and the director and actor's interpretations of the original work.

Jane Eyre is another atypical Victorian woman, who carves out a life on her own terms and does not succumb to societal pressures. At this point, students will already have learned about Jane's engagement to Rochester and his mad wife whom he hid from Jane prior to their aborted marriage ceremony. This lesson studies the consequences of that event and Jane's reaction to it. Firstly, students read the scene in which Jane reflects on her life thus far, her monotonous teaching position at Lowood, and her desires for a more fulfilling life. In a powerful moment of realisation of the limitations imposed upon her as a young woman of no means, she initially wishes for "liberty," but realising that it is too much to ask, abandons it and replaces it with a "humbler supplication. For change, stimulus." Finally, she cries out, "grant me at least a new servitude!" (Brontë 99). Realising that liberty and true stimulus are too much to ask, she will accept the only option available to her: a different environment. This is a powerful example of a woman exercising free will even against the restraints of Victorian society, and following this epiphany Jane applies for her position at Thornfield Hall.

Jane's rejections of both her love, Mr Rochester, and the principled but passionless St John Rivers show that she is inflexible when it comes to her self-established moral code, which develops throughout the bildungsroman. In the extract provided to the students, Rochester arguably redeems himself for keeping the existence of Bertha Mason from Jane in an impassioned speech in which he offers his sincere apologies and affirms his true love for Jane. In response to his candour, Jane narrates:

> I was experiencing an ordeal: a hand of fiery iron grasped my vitals. Terrible moment full of struggle, blackness, burning! Not a human being that ever lived could wish to be loved better than I was loved; and him who thus loved me I absolutely worshipped: and I must renounce love and idol. One drear word comprised my intolerable duty – 'Depart!' (Brontë 380)

Despite her consuming love for Rochester and her awareness of his devotion to her, she feels compelled to leave him because she refuses to live as his mistress, as he is still legally married to Bertha Mason and cannot, by law, be divorced from her. Rochester argues that it is better to "transgress a mere human law" by living together while unmarried than "drive a fellow creature to despair" by separating, and though Jane takes his argument into consideration, ultimately decides to hold fast to her own principles (Brontë 381). She concludes that "Laws and principles are not for the times when there is no temptation: they are for such moments as this, when body and soul rise in mutiny against the rigour" (Brontë 382).

In addition to denying herself the love she so desperately wants, she also gives up her livelihood and subsequently chooses to enter a world in which she does not have many opportunities. This scene powerfully communicates Jane's fierce compliance with her own principles and protection of her self worth in the face of

nearly debilitating temptation. Jane shows this resilience again later in the final extract, in which she denies St John Rivers's marriage proposal of convenience that would more accurately be described as a passionless partnership as missionaries abroad. Jane is unafraid of what the world has in store for her because her sense of self and her principles offer both strength and a guiding light.

The final extracts studied come from *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and include Tess's circumstances as a poor farm girl forced to work for Alec d'Urberville because of her hand in the accidental death of the family's horse, Alec's rape of Tess, and Angel Clare's hypocritical response to her confession of this defining incident in her life. These extracts powerfully show the role of male domination in the Victorian period, which Hardy describes as "our sense of order," and the precarious role vulnerable women are put in as a result (Hardy 74). The rape scene also shows Tess's passivity in the face of imminent danger, a moment in which she crucially does not exercise agency, and the role of fate as, the narrator acknowledges, her rape "was to be" (Hardy 74).

Students are given a brief synopsis of the following chapters, which include the story of how Tess comes into contact with Angel Clare and their developing relationship. The following extract includes their wedding night, in which Angel Clare confesses to having had premarital sex and Tess finally explains to him what Alec did to her. Though Tess forgives Angel for his previous indiscretion, which he engaged in willingly, Angel hypocritically is unable to forgive her for her rape, because, as he says: "O Tess, forgiveness does not apply to the case! You were one person; now you are another. My God – how can forgiveness meet such a grotesque prestidigitation as that!" (Hardy 228). In this way, students learn about the double

standard in existence in Victorian England, which Hardy was fiercely criticising in this work.

Lesson 7: Exploring the Roles of Victorian Women I	
Rationale	To discover and factual information about the lives of Victorian women, which will be used as a basis of knowledge for the comprehension of fictional female characters in following lessons
Objectives	1. The student is able to exhibit comprehension of an article that describes main aspects of the lives of Victorian women in writing and orally.
Content	• PowerPoint presentation • BBC Article on the Victorian woman • Worksheet
Learning activities	1. The teacher uses a PowerPoint presentation to visualise the concept of the Victorian woman, using descriptions from books being read as well as *Middlemarch*'s Rosamond Vincy as an example. 2. Students read the article and answer questions individually. 3. Plenary check of and discussion on the worksheet. 4. Students begin reading literary extracts: Below average: • Extracts from *Jane Eyre* Average: • Extracts from *Pride and Prejudice* Above average:

	• Extracts from *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* Students are expected to finish the reading and close reading questions for homework.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, facilitates the learning process, and leads the plenary discussion
Materials and resources	PowerPoint presentation, article, worksheet, extracts
Grouping	Individual Plenary session
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	10 minutes for introduction and presentation 15 minutes to read the article and answer questions 5 minutes for plenary check 15 minutes to start reading assigned extracts, determined by reading level
Assessment	1. Plenary check

Lesson 8: Exploring the Roles of Victorian Women II	
Rationale	To determine the extent to which circumstance and fate versus free will and agency influence the lives of three Victorian female characters
Objectives	1. The student is able to identify aspects of Victorian society in the provided extracts. 2. The student is able to describe the circumstances of the female

	character(s) in the provided extracts.
	3. The student is able to identify examples of the female character exercising free will or, contrarily, the lack of ability to do so.
	4. The student is able to determine to what extent the female character is typical or atypical of a Victorian woman and substantiate this judgment.
	5. The student is able to evaluate the author's treatment of the female character.
	6. The student is able to make ethical and moral judgments on the actions and behaviours exemplified in the texts as well as substantiate these opinions.
	7. The student is able to analyse the text with the assistance of close reading questions.
Content	• Provided extracts from *Jane Eyre*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* • Appropriate scenes from the 2011 film adaptation of *Jane Eyre*
Learning activities	1. Students read through their answers to the close reading questions to refresh their memories.
	2. Students work together and build on their knowledge of the reading material in order to be able to present their findings to the rest of the class. The teacher can sit with the group of weaker students who are working on *Jane Eyre* in order to facilitate the discussion, especially if they have difficulty.
	3. Students watch the appropriate scenes from the 2011 film version of *Jane Eyre*.

	4. Students give a presentation on the scenes from *Jane Eyre*, answering the questions from their close reading session for the rest of the class and making connections to the film.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, facilitates the learning process, and supports the group discussion on *Jane Eyre* for weaker readers
Materials and resources	Extracts, completed worksheets, DVD
Grouping	Individual

Group

Plenary session |
| Location | Classroom TBD |
| Time | 8 minutes for introduction and and review of individual answers

15 minutes for group discussion and presentation preparation

10 minutes for film study

12 minutes for presentation, accompanying discussion questions, and conclusion |
| Assessment | 1. The teacher listens in on and steers group discussions where necessary.
2. Presentation
3. Worksheets can be checked. |

Lesson 9: Exploring the Roles of Victorian Women III	
Rationale	To determine the extent to which circumstance and fate versus free will and agency influence the lives of three Victorian female

	characters, ctd.
Objectives	1. The student is able to identify aspects of Victorian society in the provided extracts.
	2. The student is able to describe the circumstances of the female character(s) in the provided extracts.
	3. The student is able to identify examples of the female character exercising free will or, contrarily, the lack of ability to do so.
	4. The student is able to determine to what extent the female character is typical or atypical of a Victorian woman and substantiate this judgment.
	5. The student is able to evaluate the author's treatment of the female character.
	6. The student is able to make ethical and moral judgments on the actions and behaviours exemplified in the texts as well as substantiate these opinions.
	7. The student is able to analyse the text with the assistance of close reading questions.
Content	• Appropriate scenes from 2005 film version of *Pride and Prejudice* Student presentation on *Pride and Prejudice*
Learning activities	1. Students watch the appropriate scenes from the 2011 film version of *Pride and Prejudice* and take notes on salient points.
	2. Students give a presentation on the scenes from *Pride and Prejudice*, answering the questions from their close reading session for the rest of the class and making connections to the film.

	3. Students who did not read *Pride and Prejudice* take notes on the presentation. 4. Class discussion on social aspects, the circumstances of women as portrayed in *Pride and Prejudice*, typical and atypical women in the book, the treatment of women by men, differences and similarities between the book and the film, and differences and similarities between this time period and our own.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, facilitates the learning process, and leads the plenary discussion
Materials and resources	Extracts, completed worksheets, DVD
Grouping	Group presentation Plenary session
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	2 minutes for introduction to the lesson 25 minutes for film study 8 minutes for presentation and accompanying questions 10 minutes for plenary discussion and conclusion
Assessment	1. Presentation 2. Plenary discussion

Lesson 10: Exploring the Roles of Victorian Women IV	
Rationale	To determine the extent to which circumstance and fate versus free

	will and agency influence the lives of three Victorian female characters, ctd.
Objectives	1. The student is able to identify aspects of Victorian society in the provided extracts.
	2. The student is able to describe the circumstances of the female character(s) in the provided extracts.
	3. The student is able to identify examples of the female character exercising free will or, contrarily, the lack of ability to do so.
	4. The student is able to determine to what extent the female character is typical or atypical of a Victorian woman and substantiate this judgment.
	5. The student is able to evaluate the author's treatment of the female character.
	6. The student is able to make ethical and moral judgments on the actions and behaviours exemplified in the texts as well as substantiate these opinions.
	7. The student is able to analyse the text with the assistance of close reading questions.
Content	• Appropriate scenes from 2008 mini TV series of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*
	• Student presentation on *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*
Learning activities	1. Students watch the appropriate scenes from the 2008 mini TV series of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and take notes on salient points.
	2. Students give a presentation on the scenes from *Tess of the*

	d'Urbervilles, answering the questions from their close reading session for the rest of the class and making connections to the visual material. 3. Students who did not read *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* take notes on the presentation. 4. Class discussion on social aspects, Tess's circumstances, fate, typical and atypical behaviour of Tess, the treatment of women by men, differences and similarities between the book and the film, and differences and similarities between this time period and our own.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, facilitates the learning process, and leads the plenary discussion
Materials and resources	Extracts, completed worksheets, DVD
Grouping	Group presentation Plenary session
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	2 minutes for introduction to the lesson 25 minutes for film study 8 minutes for presentation and accompanying questions 10 minutes for plenary discussion and conclusion
Assessment	1. Presentation 2. Plenary discussion

5.6   A Reaction Against Victorian Morality in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde

 <u>**Lessons 11 and 12:**</u>

At this point students have encountered examples of the Victorian class system, the high standards that women were held to, and glimpses of a rigid society based on sometimes impossible and often hypocritical moral codes. Two books that show the extreme consequences of denying the baser desires of human nature are *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Students are asked to discover these consequences themselves by reading the following extracts:

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde:	*The Picture of Dorian Gray*
1. Chapter I: Story of the Door 2. Chapter Remarkable Incident of Dr Lanyon	1. Basil Hallward finishes the painting and Dorian makes his wish (Wilde 24-27) 2. Dorian breaks off his engagement with Sybil Vane and sees the portrait alter for the first time (Wilde 87-98)

Novellist.nl rates both of these books as level C4e. The Flesh-Kincaid grading scale assesses both of these works as being at a lower grade level than they actually are, considering that the second extract from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is assessed at a grade level of 4.2, when this literature would be nearly impossible for a nine or ten year old to understand. This leaves the teacher with the final word when it comes to assessment of the material or the possibility of dividing students into heterogeneous groups by level again. Taking the narration into consideration, Utterson is a sober and

straightforward narrator, while Wilde's narrator is poetic as well as more descriptive. In addition, Lord Henry especially speaks in witticisms and epigrams. Furthermore, Dorian's rejection of Sibyl Vane is a more psychological event than the quite clear and concrete description of Hyde running over a child. In many ways, Dorian's wickedness is more subtle and embedded than Hyde's obvious evil. Finally, because students are probably already familiar with the main plot points of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, it is assumed that this book is a bit more approachable. Besides, providing choices is another means of differentiating, and students might also be given the choice of which extract they prefer to work on.

The first extract from *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* introduces the mystery and infamous cruelty of the elusive Mr Hyde. Mr Enfield recounts the story of how a "man trampled calmly over [a] child's body and left her screaming on the ground" (Stevenson 8). When Enfield called out to him to stop, the man returned "one look, so ugly that it brought the sweat on [him] like running" (Stevenson 8). Enfield describes how all of the bystanders were repulsed by the pure evil of the man's appearance, and even a sober doctor turned "sick and white with desire to kill him" (Stevenson 8). With these descriptions it is possible to make a link back to the Gothic, and the first chapter already introduces the main theme of the evil lurking inside human beings.

The second extract expands upon the mystery of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde without giving away the ending. Throughout this lesson series, spoilers have, where possible, been avoided. This is the case here, especially, because *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* is a popular choice among students due to its brevity and familiarity. Many students are, of course, aware that the popular term Jekyll and Hyde refers to a split personality, so they will have some idea of what the solution to the

mystery is, but not be aware of how or why Jekyll and Hyde are embodiments of the same man unless they read the whole novella. Even without reading it in its entirety in the lesson, the teacher can explain its themes, including reaction to Victorian morality, in the introduction to the work.

In the second extract, Utterson visits Dr Lanyon, a friend of his and Dr Jekyll's, and learns that he, like Dr Jekyll, is ill. Lanyon, strangely, declares himself "a doomed man" on account of having "a shock" from which he "shall never recover" (Stevenson 39). Upon hearing Dr Jekyll's name, Lanyon reacts violently and expresses his wish to never hear or see him again, which perplexes Utterson. Even more perplexing is Jekyll's written response to Utterson's plea to make amends with Lanyon, in which he describes himself as "the chief of sinners" (Stevenson 40). The height of suspense comes when, upon Lanyon's death, Utterson receives a letter which is not to be opened until Dr Jekyll dies, which Utterson complies with out of loyalty despite his curiosity. It is hoped that by reading this suspenseful scene students will be compelled to read the rest of the novella and fit the pieces of the puzzle together. The worksheet questions are designed to stimulate discussion about the mystery.

The extracts selected from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* work similarly to build intrigue and suspense. The students are introduced to Oscar Wilde and the scandal that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* caused when it was published, and then presented with the extracts. In the first extract, Lord Henry and Basil Hallward admire Dorian's exquisite beauty, captured in the portrait that Hallward has made of him. When Dorian views it himself, "The sense of his own beauty came on him like a revelation. He had never felt it before" (Wilde 25). Immediately after revelling in his beauty, he realises that "the scarlet would pass from his lips, and the gold steal from his hair. The

life that was to make his soul would mar his body. He would become dreadful, hideous, uncouth" (Wilde 25). As a result of this unpleasant realisation, he makes his damning Faustian wish to trade his soul, in this case, for eternal beauty. Students cannot know at this point that the wish has come true, but the second extract shows the first example of the portrait altering with every ugly deed that Dorian does as his youthful beauty remains unmarred.

In the second extract, Dorian brutally rejects his fiancé, the stage actress Sibyl Vane, after she performs badly as Juliet. Her disastrous performance ruins the aesthetic ideal Dorian had of her, and he cries:

> You have killed my love. You used to stir my imagination. Now you don't even stir my curiosity. You simply produce no effect. I loved you because you were marvellous, because you had genius and intellect … You have thrown it all away. You are shallow and stupid (Wilde 87).

After leaving Sibyl without pity or remorse, Dorian returns home to find the painting changed for the first time to include "lines of cruelty around the mouth as if he had been looking into a mirror after he had done some dreadful thing" (Wilde 91). It is with this change that Dorian remembers his "mad wish that he himself might remain young, and the portrait grow old" and reflects on the cruelty he exhibited towards Sibyl, who he learns in the following pages has committed suicide as a result of his rejection of her (Wilde 91). To learn more about Dorian's downward spiral into a life of debauchery and his ultimate plight, students will have to read the rest of the book. Accompanying questions are designed to stimulate discussion of Dorian's behaviour and predictions regarding the rest of the story. Furthermore, these passages are visualised in scenes from the 2009 film adaptation.

Lesson 11: A Reaction Against Victorian Morality I	
Rationale	To discover main plot points and elements of the shared theme of the duality of human nature in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as well as make links to the Gothic
Objectives	1. The student is able to describe and summarise key elements on the extracts with the assistance of close reading questions. 2. The student is able to analyse the extracts with the assistance of close reading questions. 3. The student is able to make and substantiate ethical judgments with regard to the material being read. 4. The student is able to make predictions about the text.
Content	• Extracts from *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, divided either by reading level or by student interest • Worksheet with close reading questions
Learning activities	1. The teacher draws on prior knowledge, introduces both works, their authors, and their controversial aspects in an introductory presentation. 2. Students read the extracts individually and answer close reading questions, an activity that is facilitated by the teacher where necessary. 3. Students complete the reading and accompanying questions for homework.

Teacher role	Explains, instructs, facilitates the learning process
Materials and resources	PowerPoint Presentation, extracts, worksheets
Grouping	Plenary during the presentation Individual during the close reading activity
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	10 minutes for introduction to the lesson and presentation 30 minutes for individual close reading 5 minutes for conclusion and homework instruction
Assessment	1. The teacher checks on students' progress throughout the lesson 2. Formal assessment follows in the next lesson.

Lesson 12: A Reaction Against Victorian Morality II	
Rationale	To discover main plot points and elements of the shared theme of the duality of human nature in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as well as make links to the Gothic
Objectives	1. The student is able to discuss and analyse the read extracts in groups. 2. The student is able to share and construct knowledge with classmates. 3. The student is able to synthesise information into a presentation
Content	• Extracts from *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

	• Completed worksheet • Student presentation
Learning activities	1. Students discuss the read literature in groups and prepare a presentation 2. Students either present on the extracts read or take notes on another student's presentation 3. Students watch appropriate scenes from the 2009 film version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and take notes on salient points 4. Students engage in a plenary discussion on moral and ethical codes, then and now, and reactions against them.
Teacher role	Explains, instructs, facilitates the learning process
Materials and resources	Extracts, worksheets, 2009 film version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
Grouping	Group during class discussion Plenary during presentations and concluding discussion
Location	Classroom TBD
Time	2 minutes for introduction to the lesson 15 minutes for group discussions and presentation preparation 5 presentation on *The Picture of Dorian Gray* 15 minutes for film study 5 minutes for presentation on *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* 3 minutes for concluding plenary discussion
Assessment	1. The teacher checks on students' progress throughout the lesson 2. Presentation

	3. Worksheets can be checked.

5.7 Summative assignments

<u>In-class assignments or to be given as homework:</u>

Now that the students have encountered all of the main focus areas of this lesson series, it is important to see whether they can make connections between the literature and produce original work that evidences their acquired knowledge and tests their analytical skills. The following essay questions could be posed to students upon completion of the reading as the final assessment or in order to prepare them for the final assessment:

1. Explain what a bildungsroman is with reference to at least two works you have read from the Victorian period.

2. Discuss how far the novelists whose work you have studied are critical of the society in which they live.

3. Discuss some ways in which Victorian novelists explore the issues of class and/or gender in their works.

4. Compare the various ways in which women are portrayed in at least two different novels you have read. Does the gender of the author (or reader) have any bearing on the way you respond to the presentation of the female characters?

5. Choose any two novels that seem to you to have particularly strong story lines, and identify the elements in the narratives that make them compelling.

5.8   Final Assessment: The School Exam

When it comes to assessment, Biggs writes that "it is necessary to judge the extent to which [assessment tasks] embody the target performances for understanding, and how well they lend themselves to evaluating individual student performances" (Biggs 356). Biggs makes points against several traditional means of assessment, including essays which are marked as points are made by the candidate, short answers, and especially multiple-choice tests, because the latter do not normally extend beyond Bloom's comprehension level (Biggs 357). When it comes to constructive alignment, the concept of carrying constructivist theory from the inception to the summation of the curriculum, Biggs advocates for an assessment portfolio, "where the students select at least some of the evidence that they consider matches the unit objectives" (358). While a portfolio increases student agency and allows for differentiated assessment and greater flexibility on the student's behalf, secondary school teachers would probably not be likely to embrace such a progressive means of assessment. It leaves room for plagiarism and a wide disparity of interpretations, which could raise questions and cause issues for the exam secretary. However, a more flexible, student-centred means of assessment that aligns with constructivist principles is seen as an advantage.

The school for which this lesson series was designed tests the Victorian, Modern, and Post-modern literary periods in an oral exam for which students must prepare one whole book and one extract per period, which is seen as a good means of evaluating whether students have met the core objectives pertaining to literature and "evaluating individual student performances" (Biggs 357). As students are able to choose what books and extracts they prepare for the school exam, they are still given

considerable choice, freedom, and agency. Plus, their own original interpretations of the material play a central role in the assessment.

The choice of reading material means it does not matter that students have read different extracts during the lessons. However, this lesson series is suited to a written exam as well, since students should be able to give an overview of the main lines of literary history and be able to place literature in its appropriate literary period. Even though students have not read all the extracts during the lesson, they have all been presented in class and students should have taken notes during the presentations. Furthermore, all the extracts are available in the reader, and students should be able to identify typical features of a Victorian novel in an extract even if the extract has not been encountered before. In fact, in the written exam on the Old English, Mediaeval, Renaissance, Romantic, and Neoclassical periods, students are given unfamiliar texts and asked to place them in the right periods as well as name their defining features.

In advance of the school exams, students are presented with a study guide that provides them with the defining characteristics of each literary period as well as the marking scheme so they know what to expect and how best to prepare. It is up to the student to make connections between those characteristics and the literary works they have read in preparation for the exam. This study guide is in the appendix as well as the marking scheme that is currently used to assess the students in the oral exam.

5.9 Evaluation of Perceived Curriculum

Thijs and van den Akker explain that "in order to develop a high-quality curriculum, evaluation is of great importance" (Thijs and van den Akker 40). A high-quality curriculum is defined by Thijs and van den Akker as not only specifically related to students' results, but also "relevant, consistent, practical, and effective" (Thijs and van den Akker 41). Evaluating curriculum design "calls for intensive interaction with various experts and potential users," a process referred to as "expert appraisal" (Thijs and van den Akker 41; Thijs and van den Akker 43). This evaluation is seen as a first step in curricular improvement and continual development, as the curriculum will be evaluated by students and teachers after its implementation in the 2016-2017 academic year.

5.9.1 Participants

Participants are all teachers at pre-university level but exhibit a mix of academic backgrounds, subjects taught, and native languages. It is considered advantageous that there is feedback from both a teacher who works exclusively within an IB programme (Teacher D) and a Dutch teacher who also has a master's degree in psychology (Teacher A). The Dutch teacher provides an outsider's perspective on teaching English literature and offers different insights than a teacher who regularly teaches Victorian literature. Teachers A, B, and C work at the same school, which is the school that is going to implement this curriculum next year.

Participant	Academic background	School type	Master's	Teaching experience	Native language
Teacher A	Dutch and Psychology	Gymnasium	Yes	$\geq$ 10 years	Dutch

Teacher B	History and English	Gymnasium	Yes	≥ 10 years	Dutch
Teacher C	English	Gymnasium	Yes	≥ 10 years	English
Teacher D	English	VWO / IB programme	In progress	≥ 10 years	English

5.9.2 Instrument

Participants were sent a sample of the thesis paper that included: a) the abstract, b) the table of contents, c) a sample lesson series (The Gothic Sub-Stream in Victorian Literature & The Brontë Sisters), d) the accompanying teaching materials, and e) a questionnaire. The questions were formulated according to the criteria described by Thijs and van den Akker in 5.9.1 and are included in the following section.

5.9.3 Results

This section summarises patterns across the responses given by the practical experts per question. Full answers can be found in the appendix. Teacher A and Teacher B responded to the questions in Dutch, so their answers were translated by the author.

1. **To what extent does the perceived curriculum meet the national core objectives pertaining to literature education?**

All four respondents attested that the perceived curriculum meets the national core objectives related to literature education. Teacher B elaborated upon her answer to explain that the core objectives provided by the Ministry of Education are vague compared to other countries such as Germany where there is more centralised control

of education, which means that teachers in the Netherlands have considerable autonomy when it comes to what they present as the main lines of literary history. She assumed that at many pre-university schools very little Victorian literature is handled. The first part of her response is interesting because it shows an attitude towards the freedom given to teachers in the Netherlands, an aspect that is a hallmark of the education system. The second part of the response is in conflict with the results of the questionnaire discussed in the third chapter, though more thorough research would have to be done in this area to determine the quantity and quality of the Victorian literature curriculum at different pre-university schools.

2. **To what extent does the perceived curriculum include relevant authors, themes, and works?**

All four respondents thought that the reading list included relevant authors and were satisfied with it. Teacher B suggested replacing *Jane Eyre* with *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for weaker readers, because she considers the latter work more approachable. This is an element that can be altered by the individual teacher based on his or her preferences and rationale.

3. **What authors, themes, and works are missing?**

None of the respondents thought that specific literary works were necessarily missing, though Teacher A suggested replacing one or both of the works by the Brontë sisters in the lesson series about the Gothic sub-stream with Henry James's *Turn of the Screw*. Again, this is a personal preference on behalf of the individual teacher. Teacher B responded that she missed *Alice in Wonderland* "a bit, but understands that choices have to be made. With this approach, students read more independently and analyse works more than they used to. This means that we can't offer all the works that we have been until now." Teacher C responded that "literature

about the social dislocation caused by industrialisation in the Victorian period is not really represented, and seeing how this is probably the most important and best-known characteristic of the period, it should be included in some way. Perhaps *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens could be added to the list instead of *Oliver Twist*, although this is also an important topic – the Victorian attitude towards and abuse of children. The first detective stories also appeared during this period. *Sherlock Holmes* may be worth including, if not least because of the belief in rationalism that it typifies." There is probably room for more focus on industrialisation and urbanisation, including in the works by Dickens and Hardy that are already featured in the curriculum; however, when it comes to the second point, this is a clear example of teachers having to make choices and limit learning material if they want to offer quality over quantity. This curriculum was initially inspired by dissatisfaction with a literature programme that offered many extracts from different works, but without depth because of a lack of time that resulted from this method. This curriculum offers fewer works that are studied in greater depth.

4. How important are the social issues covered in the lesson series?

Teachers A, B, and C responded that the social issues covered in the lesson series are important, but did not elaborate further or specify, which indicates that this question could have been formulated better by, for example, presenting the social issues once more as they are featured in the table of contents. Teacher D neglected to answer this question.

5. Is anything missing?

The responses to this question were generally less relevant because teachers only received a sample of the dissertation and were thus not fully aware of the content in its entirety. Teacher D commented that if a goal is to activate higher-order thinking

skills, then it could be better achieved by broadening the scope of the close reading questions. It is interesting to note that Teacher D works within an IB programme, which is known for teaching more literature and in greater depth than regular programmes of study. After implementing the lesson series, the questions in the worksheet could be assessed by teachers and students to determine whether they present the right amount of challenge. Teacher D also noted that she misses a connection to the reader in the assignments: "The literature seems distant, something read for understanding the time period and literary genre but not applicable to students today. If it can be made more relevant, it becomes more dynamic." This advice could be used to make the literature curriculum even more approachable and motivating for the students. Curriculum design is a cyclical process and the second version of this curriculum will focus on increasing reader connection to the material if this element is felt to be missing by the students.

6. **Is the curriculum dynamic? Is there a way to make it more interesting and dynamic?**

Teacher A thought that the structure of the lesson series was dynamic, but that it could be improved by giving students more choices. Teacher B responded that the lesson series is dynamic, because students are challenged at their own level, but included that a lot is dependent upon the teacher's enthusiasm for the literature that he or she is presenting, which is not surprising considering teacher enthusiasm is always a relevant factor. Teacher C considered the curriculum "a very interesting development" and noted that he "would like to try it out." Teacher D commented, as in the previous answer, that the Victorian world is alien from the student's world and more could be done to connect the two and modernise the learning material.

7. **What is your opinion on the basic structure of the lesson series: individual close reading > group discussion > presentation (constructivist design)?**

Teacher A commented on her experience as a developmental psychologist who is very familiar with the theory of constructivism and thought that this lesson structure was very appropriate. Teacher B thought that "students will now be more actively challenged to read closely than they have been, though it will remain a challenge for teachers to get students to take this seriously." Teacher C considered the structure "very appropriate" and Teacher D found it to be "a good approach because it forces the student to analyse individually and then discuss collectively and present a coherent summary to the class."

8. **Do you see this working?**

All four respondents saw this as a feasible learning method, with the two respondents who will test the curriculum out next year showing interest in doing so. Teachers A and D commented on the importance of the teacher's role in the process if the lesson series is to be effective.

9. **Would this be stimulating for your students?**

Teachers A, B, and C found the lessons to be stimulating. Teacher A cited collaborative efforts and variation in working methods as stimulating factors. Teacher C cited productive activities and feedback as encouraging aspects that would stimulate participation. Teacher D did not provide a coherent response to this question.

10. **Do you think your students would learn more or less from it compared to what they are learning now?**

Teachers A, B, and C saw this approach as an improvement on the way literature is taught now. Teacher C commented that this approach "aims to get the

student much more actively involved in the literature," which he is "very enthusiastic" about. Teacher D found the question "hard to answer" though she imagines "that it is far superior to most English literature programs in Dutch highschools (sic)."

11. Would it help your students adequately prepare for the school exam on literature?

All four teachers answered yes, with Teacher A citing how important it is to set and communicate goals to students in a constructivist learning environment: "Explain to students how this curriculum contributes to their literature school exam."

12. Do you think the learning goals (provided in the lesson plans) are realistic? Why/why not?

All of the respondents found the learning goals to be achievable. Teacher C provided a suggestion to make specific goals to match the core objectives pertaining to literature, such as the following:

- E1: has completed a substantiated report of one major work of Victorian literature.
- E2: will be able to classify the extracts according to type of literature
- E2: Will be able to identify and apply literary terms such as . . . to the text.
- E3: Will be able to recognise and specify typical Victorian characteristics in the text
- E3: will be able to place the extracts in a historical context

This suggestion will be taken into consideration and applied to the curriculum, especially in advance of the school exam so that the teachers have even more specific criteria to with which to evaluate exams than what exists in the current marking scheme.

13. Do you think the Perceived Curriculum is realistic?

Teacher A responded with "definitely." Teacher B found the lesson materials and goals to be achievable, but was concerned about the timeline. The answer is not very valuable, however, because it does not take the timeline that was presented into the curriculum (both cumulatively and per lesson) into consideration. Teacher C contributed an idea, which would be to "think about getting ways of rewarding the students for good work and results, and this would require changing the PTA[6], but we might consider allowing the course work to constitute 50% of the literature mark." His answer is interesting because it reflects the constructivist sensibilities of Biggs, who advocates for a portfolio mark instead of a traditional examination. Assessing students' efforts, work, presentations, and responses to the literature would be similar to Biggs's suggested evaluation model.

14. Do you have anything to add to improve it?

Teachers A and D suggested allowing for more interpretive reading rather than analytical reading in order to create a stronger connection between the reader and the material. The curriculum design aimed at Witte's highest levels of reading comprehension and though some of the worksheet questions included call for interpretive reading, it is possible that a greater balance could be struck while still mainly working on reading analytically. Teacher A also suggested building in more opportunities for students to make choices. Teacher B again suggested a timeline, though this is described in detail in the lesson series design and per lesson plan. Teacher C did not have any specific suggestions, but commented that he "would like to adapt [the concept] to the Modern and Postmodern literature" as well, and can think of "lots of possibilities" for doing so already.

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[6] Programme of Testing and Concluding

5.9.4 Conclusions

There was considerable enthusiasm for and value seen in this approach across teachers from different backgrounds and subject areas. The relevance of the extracts, the constructivist learning environment and the amount of agency on the student's behalf were seen as particular strengths, though the latter is seen as achievable only with enthusiasm from the teacher and perhaps ultimately a change to the existing school exam programme at the meso level that includes a mark for in-class work. This suggestion is seen as a valuable contribution to constructive alignment. The greatest perceived weakness is the amount of analytical reading questions and relatively few interpretive reading questions, though participants were only provided with The Gothic Sub-stream in Victorian Literature as a sample of the curriculum and other lessons include more interpretive questions. Student interest and reaction to the level of the material will be evaluated after the curriculum has been implemented and then close reading questions and learning activities can be adjusted accordingly.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to answer the overarching question of how the Victorian novel can be operationalised for efficient and effective learning in the upper levels of Dutch pre-university education. Making lessons engaging, dynamic, student-centred, and suited to different reading levels are other main goals. The previous chapters show that the key elements of this curriculum and corresponding didactic vision are making connections and constructing knowledge, in this case with reference to Victorian literature, which is why the curricular spider web provides such an appropriate metaphor (Thijs and van den Akker 11). The web is a connection of threads that extend outward in different directions, which is precisely how students should build knowledge according to this teaching philosophy.

The first sub-question explored what Dutch pre-university students are expected to achieve when it comes to language and literature. The core objectives related to literature provided by the Dutch Ministry of Education provide concrete focus points (literary development, literary terms, and literary history), but place minimal restrictions on teachers, which allows for a considerable degree of autonomy. With these focus points as the backbone of the lesson series and Theo Witte's levels of reading expertise providing a valuable frame of reference, the teacher is able to design original teaching material that not only meets the necessary standards, but also stimulates individual student progression. With the B2+ reading level expected of pre-university students in their sixth year, Victorian literature, which is mainly evaluated at a C1 level, should be at the appropriate outer rim of the average student's zone of proximal development. With the right processing assignments and expert support, students should be able to understand this literature, especially with differentiated

instruction. In the results of the questionnaire in the fourth chapter, the large majority of respondents agreed that these objectives were both realistic and relevant for Dutch pre-university students. In the results of the questionnaire in the fifth chapter, one respondent described them as vague. Future research could focus more heavily on these core objectives and design a sub-set of learning goals related to each of the three provided by the Ministry of Education, such as the examples provided by Teacher D in chapter five.

Nevertheless, the freedom given to teachers to design their own material in the Netherlands is seen as a great advantage here and reflects the constructivist philosophy that trickles down from the macro to micro level. Thijs and van den Akker highlight the constructivist approach to both teaching and learning in the Netherlands, which includes "stimulating the active construction of meaning," "aiming for the zone of proximal development," and "stimulating interaction and collaboration" (Thijs and van den Akker 34). First, in this curriculum learners are highly activated, a feature that was seen as an advantage by the four teachers who evaluated the lesson series sample. Second, when the zone of proximal development is targeted, the learner is constantly in a state of development and progression. Third, interactive learning environments provide students with the opportunity to build knowledge, communicate in the target language, and develop socially. Collaboration is also seen as a highly motivating factor, according to Bimmel et al. and was further emphasised by Teacher A as an important element in pre-university classrooms in her evaluation of this literature curriculum (Bimmel et al. 40).

The second sub-question explored and synthesised existing approaches to teaching and was informed by constructivist learning theory, differentiated learning theory, Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Theo Witte's six literary

competence profiles, and a context-based, mixed approach to teaching literature. In his article "Enhancing Teaching Through Constructive Alignment," Biggs describes the importance of "being clear about [what we] want students to learn" and cites Bloom's Taxonomy as a valuable source for creating explicit learning goals that are communicated to the student. Bimmel et al. also see the setting and communication of goals and criteria as an essential factor in lesson design. Being clear about goals and criteria aids constructive alignment, because teachers are able to carry their expectations from formation to summation of the curriculum. Specific assessment criteria can be even more thoroughly worked out in the manner that Teacher D proposed, as previously described. This will be done in combination with the other two teachers who will implement this curriculum in the 2016-2017 academic year.

The differentiated learning environment is made possible through the use of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives and Witte's six literary competence profiles. First, the curriculum features a mix of lower and higher order thinking skills, with higher order thinking skills being used to analyse the literature, evaluate the literature from a modern perspective, and produce original presentations and written work. It is only natural that lower and higher order thinking skills are used to complete a given task, but here specific questions were designed in order to give weaker students successful learning experiences and stronger students a more appropriate challenge. A second means of aiding differentiated instruction is by referring to Theo Witte's six literary competence profiles. When the teacher and student are aware of which level the student is reading at, it becomes easier to design a programme that targets the zone of proximal development, bridging the gap from one level to the next. In addition, Witte encourages "active exploration" of the literature that "should be mediated through social interactions with peers, teachers,

and other readers," a principle that connects to constructivist learning theory. Students can build knowledge by interacting with peers on the same level or learn from each other in heterogeneous groups in which more advanced students solidify their knowledge by aiding less advanced students. In the former case, the teacher can also choose to participate in and facilitate the discussions.

The final theory in the third chapter focuses on teaching literature in context, which is used to make English "a more open-ended subject than ever, one in which going beyond the text is essential" (Hall ix). Hall emphasises the importance of "giving students time and guidance to explore the literary landscape for themselves, encouraging them to take risks … and showing them how to find connections between texts" (Hall ix). This philosophy makes up the foundation of the curriculum, in which the teacher does not play a central role, but the student does. The teacher acts as a classroom manager and facilitator of the learning process, but not a lecturer. Furthermore, students are given time to read during the lessons and any reading that has not been finished must be completed at home. This is also seen as a means of differentiating, because more advanced students will not have to wait for weaker readers to finish and weaker readers have the opportunity to spend more time working through the material outside of the classroom. Also, by presenting the literary works according to themes and social issues, connections between texts are made somewhat, but not entirely, explicit. Students will know that, for example, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* are connected by their focus on the woman question in Victorian England, but they have to discover similarities and differences between the novels themselves. After having read the extracts, viewed scenes from film adaptations, and watched student presentations, all of the students, no matter what extracts they read, should be able to find connections between these texts. These

connections are solidified in class discussions and then students are expected to make explicit connections in essays and the eventual oral exam.

The third sub-question investigated how literature is taught and tested throughout the Netherlands through the results of a questionnaire that was answered by eleven pre-university schools. Eight respondents thought that the core objectives for literature were realistic for pre-university students and seven respondents thought that they were relevant for pre-university students. The other the respondents remained neutral to this statement, which shows that most teachers are in agreement with the existing core objectives. When it comes to operationalising the core objectives, there was considerable variation among schools in the following areas: forms of assessment, weight of assessment, justification for the weight of assessment, teaching methods, approaches to teaching literature, and literary periods taught. This was expected because of the brevity of the core objectives and the autonomy given to the teacher as a result. Future research could focus more specifically on how the core objectives are operationalised at different pre-university schools in an empirical study of forms of assessment, assessment criteria, teachers' attitudes, students' responses, and students' results in order to provide a more nuanced picture of the situation.

The final sub-question concentrated on the curriculum design itself, focusing on all of the elements that make up the curricular spider web with extra emphasis on content. The curriculum was designed using an instrumental approach called the Tyler Rationale that focused on objectives, learning experiences, organisation, and evaluation (Thijs and van den Akker 16). Bimmel et al.'s HOT-rules were used to inform the lesson design. Focus areas include motivation, goals and criteria, choices, language acquisition, success, learning how to learn, and collaboration (Bimmel et al. 40).

Dennis's book *The Victorian Novel* provides important themes and social issues of the Victorian period, which were further expanded upon in this lesson series. In order to achieve depth of understanding and quality over quantity, choices must be made, so this curriculum presents four focus areas: social criticism, the Gothic sub-stream in the Victorian novel, representations of the Victorian woman in literature, and a reaction against Victorian morality. The novels and the extracts from each were selected for their social, historical, and literary value. Teachers who evaluated the programme were in agreement with the themes and works offered in the curriculum, but three of them would have made minor adjustments. This is personal preference and these adjustments can easily be made by the individual educator and the lessons would still fit the structure of the curriculum and comply with the assessment criteria.

The lessons follow a basic structure of individual close reading, followed by group discussions, followed by student presentations. Outside of these activities, there are plenary discussions, film study, opportunities for stronger students to seek an extra challenge, and opportunities for weaker students to gain extra support from the teacher. Aside from stimulating dialogue between peers, this lesson series offers a dialogue between the past and the present in two essential ways. First, students are provided with opportunities to interact with and discuss the literature, by comparing and contrasting its content to the contemporary world and investigating the society from the historical perspective. Second, scenes from acclaimed film adaptations provide interpretations of the text which inspire further discussion, connections, and comparison while, needless to say, making the lessons more diverse and dynamic than if students are exclusively provided with the text. Visualising the source material has the additional benefit of assisting processing of the material for weaker readers. These activities, and especially the discussions, directly prepare students for the oral exam,

for which they must prepare one entire Victorian novel and extracts. This shows constructive alignment, which may be further enhanced in the future with an adjustment to the exam programme that includes evaluation of in-class efforts in the form of a portfolio. In addition, the Victorian literature provided in this curriculum and accompanying close reading assignments should indirectly benefit students in advance of the final exam, by exposing them to higher level texts, providing them with reading comprehension questions, and giving them valuable time to practise reading.

In this way, this lesson series and general approach to teaching literature appears to be a model example of the type of education teachers should be providing in the current educational climate in the Netherlands, due to the flexibility offered, its constructivist approach, and its differentiated curriculum. By using the model designed, teachers increase student agency in the learning process and still maintain their autonomy as the instructor, since the model can be applied in whatever way the teacher deems fit. Furthermore, as the lesson plans follow the same basic format: individual study and close reading followed by group discussion about the literature followed by in-class presentations, the structure can be applied to any literary work or time period. In short, the same lesson series with different literature can be used in the Modern and Post-modern literary periods as well. The Post-modern period is of particular interest because it is our current literary period and because less than 30% of the schools who responded to the survey teach Post-modern literature, though it is contemporary. It would be interesting to find out why this is so and whether Post-modern literature is avoided because of its complexity or newness, both of which could be solved by finding the right didactic approach to teaching it.

Unfortunately, due to time restrictions, it was not possible to implement this curriculum in advance of the submission of this thesis paper, though the expert appraisal of the perceived curriculum exposed several strengths and weaknesses, which will be taken into consideration before the curriculum is implement in the 2016-2017 academic year. Then the attained curriculum can be evaluated by teachers and students before being modified where necessary. Also, if more schools had responded to the questionnaire on how literature is taught and tested in the Netherlands, results would have been more nuanced and external validity would have been higher.

In order to make the differentiated curriculum work in practice communication among teachers is essential. Teachers need to be informed of their students' abilities and interests so that they can provide appropriate lesson material. This is becoming a more visible facet of the educational system as schools implement student tracking systems and focus on result-oriented education. Not only is communication among teachers within a school important, but the fourth chapter evidences the benefits of interaction between schools. Just as constructivism builds knowledge among peers in a classroom environment, communication among educators at different types of schools can lead to greater understanding, a wider perspective, and valuable curricular innovation. Future research could focus on curricular development within and throughout schools in the Netherlands, with particular reference to the benefits of shared knowledge. In an increasingly globalised world with unlimited material available online, frequent communication among peers and the sharing of materials are increasingly common. It would also be interesting to learn whether there are benefits to teaching literature across languages and cultures,

since all students also have to learn Dutch literature and, in many cases, the literature of at least one other modern language, generally French or German.

Finally, the lessons themselves were designed with the intention of offering a balance between the concrete and the abstract. Students are given particular areas to focus on as well as appropriate extracts in which these focus areas (e.g. social criticism, gender roles) are addressed. By having a subject or a theme to focus on, it is hoped that students will gain a much deeper awareness of these ideas, be able to understand them in their historical context and with reference to our modern world. In this way, the lesson series is more than a way of teaching Victorian literature, but it is a didactic approach designed to make connections, stimulate the building of knowledge, and give the student increased responsibility in his or her learning process. It is meant to be a "sustainable form of educational improvement" and contribution to an on-going cycle of student, teacher, and cultural development (Thijs and van den Akker 23).

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Appendix A:

In-class teaching material (worksheets, PowerPoint presentations, evaluation matrix)

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens (1838)

1. Briefly summarise the circumstances of Oliver's birth.
2. Identify three examples of irony and be able to explain the effect these ironic remarks have on the reader.
3. What is the tone of the narrator?
4. What was Oliver's infancy like?
5. What is the purpose of the story about the experimental philosopher and the horse?
6. How is Oliver described on his ninth birthday?
7. How are the gentleman of the board and the master who serves out the gruel described? What are the purposes of these descriptions?
8. What does the narrator do in order to get the reader to sympathise with Oliver's plight?
9. Identify three examples of social criticism and be able to explain what Dickens was criticising.
10. Why do you think Dickens chose to make Oliver an orphan? What effect does this have on the story and on the novel as a bildungsroman?
11. In your group discuss the following: Is *Oliver Twist* only typical of the 19th century or are there elements in it that are recognisable today? If the story were set in the contemporary world, what would be similar and what would be different? Where might it be set? What social criticism would it contain?

Two students should be prepared to present the above answers in a four-minute presentation.

David Copperfield by Charles Dickens (1850)

1. Make a list of some of the abuses and injustices suffered at the hand of Mr Creakle.
2. How does the mature David Copperfield look back on Salem House? Answer with reference to the text.
3. What is the effect of the mature David Copperfield narrating the story? How does it make the reader feel?
4. What is the main focus of Dickens's criticism in the first extract?
5. What is the main focus of Dickens's criticism in the second extract?
6. Provide a character description of David Copperfield, taken from both the first and second extracts.
7. What does David have to do at Murdstone and Grinby's?
8. What is David's accommodation like? In what predicament are the Micawbers?
9. Briefly summarise David's experience at the public house and be able to explain its purpose in the novel.
10. How do you feel toward David Copperfield? What techniques does the author use to get the reader to sympathise with David?
11. Why do you think Dickens chose to make David an orphan? What effect does this have on the story and on the novel as a bildungsroman?
12. In your group discuss the following: Is *David Copperfield* only typical of the 19th century or are there elements in it that are recognisable today? If the story were set in the contemporary world, what would be similar and what would be different? Where might it be set? What social criticism would it contain?

Two students should be prepared to present the above answers in a four-minute presentation.

Frankenstein presentation:

FRANKENSTEIN
by Mary Shelley (1818)
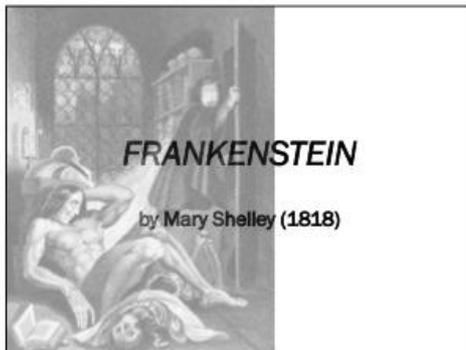
Conception

- *"How, I, then a young girl, came to think of, and dilate upon, so very heinous an idea?"* – Mary Shelley
- Percy Byssche Shelley and Lord Byron
- Lake Geneva, Switzerland
- The principle of life
  - "I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion. Frightful it must be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world."

Three myths, busted
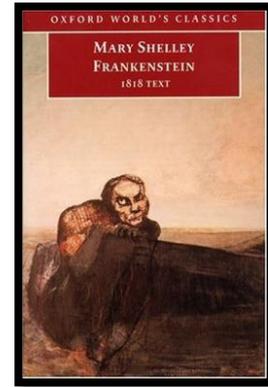

DR. FRANKENSTEIN

Assignment

- Read both extracts and answer the close reading questions provided in the worksheet you are given (25-30 min.)

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (1818)

1. Provide a description of Frankenstein's creation's appearance and Frankenstein's reaction to it.
2. How do Frankenstein's feelings about his work change when the creation comes to life? Why do you think Frankenstein feels like this about his creation?
3. What happens when he beholds the creation?
4. Provide several words and descriptions associated with Gothic literature.
5. What is the purpose of the description of nature at the beginning of the second extract?
6. What does the creation threaten when Frankenstein greets him with hatred?
7. Knowing that the creation has caused the death of two of Frankenstein's loved ones – his brother and a close family friend – with whom do you sympathise at the end of this extract, Frankenstein or his creation?
8. The creation seeks a mate so he will not be lonely anymore. Do you think Frankenstein should consent? What are the arguments for and against?
9. Provide examples of Gothic vocabulary and descriptions in the second extract.
10. What themes would you say Shelley is exploring in this work? What might she be warning her readers about?
11. What do you think happens in the rest of the book?

The Gothic Sub-stream presentation:

The Brontë Sisters &
The Gothic Substream

Brontë family
- Haworth, Yorkshire
- Large family, tragic history
- School at Cowan Bridge
  - Maria dies of tuberculosis
  - Elizabeth dies of tuberculosis
- Charlotte & Emily return home
  - Books, writing, moors, imagination, isolation
- Charlotte discovers Emily's poems

Moors

Moors

Moors

Moors

Emily Brontë
- Ellis Bell
- Reclusive, shy, unsociable
- Charlotte writes:
  - *My sister's disposition was not naturally gregarious; circumstances favoured and fostered her tendency to seclusion; except to go to church or take a walk on the hills, she rarely crossed the threshold of home. Through her feeling for the people round was benevolent, intercourse with them she never sought; nor, with very few exceptions, ever experienced. And yet she knew them: knew their ways, their language, their family histories; she could hear them with interest, and talk of them with detail, minute, graphic, and accurate; but WITH them, she rarely exchanged a word.*
- Died one year after *Wuthering Heights* was published, aged 30

Wuthering Heights
- 1847
- Produce of great imagination, originality
- Dark, dreary, vivid, powerful, painful, strange, dramatic
- Timeless and bound to its time
- Yorkshire moors, far from society
- As much about love and passion as it is about revenge
- Main characters: Catherine Earnshaw, Heathcliff, Edgar Linton

Wuthering Heights

Wuthering Heights

Thrushcross Grange

Thrushcross Grange

Thornfield Hall

Jane Eyre

- Charlotte Brontë (Currer Bell)
- 1847
- Bildungsroman
  - Orphan > school > teacher > governess
  - Development of moral and spiritual sensibility
  - Love story
- Classism, sexuality, religion, proto-feminism

Assignment

- Read assigned extracts and work on close reading questions individually until the end of the lesson.
- If you finish early, you may discuss the answers quietly in groups.
- If you do not finish, you should finish at home and be prepared to discuss the answers in groups tomorrow.

Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë (1847)
Extract I

1. What does the servant Zillah explain to Lockwood about the room in which he is staying overnight?
2. What does Lockwood notice about the bed he is sleeping in?
3. How does Catherine feel about her brother Hindley and what reasons does she give?
4. What is the effect of the dream sequence in his extract?
5. "The intense horror of my nightmare came over me." Summarise what is going on in this scene in your own words.
6. How is the ghost described? What does she ask for?
7. How does Heathcliff respond to Lockwood's yell?
8. What do we learn to be the cause of Heathcliff's torment?
9. What is the effect of having Lockwood as a narrator instead of, say, a servant or member of the family?

Extract IV

1. What does Heathcliff explain to the other characters that he has done? What is his tone and how does Nelly respond to his action?
2. What makes Heathcliff "tranquil" and even "happy?" What consoles him?
3. How would you describe Heathcliff's love for Cathy, his state of mind, and his behaviour?
4. What do you think caused this?
5. Identify and be able to explain the Gothic elements in both extracts.

Two students should be prepared to present the above answers in a three-minute presentation. The presentations will go in chronological order: I-II-III-IV.

Extract II

1. What secret does Catherine tell Nelly?
2. How does Catherine feel about this?
3. What does Nelly make of the reasons Catherine gives for accepting Edgar? What do you make of them?
4. "Where is the obstacle?" Explain what Catherine means with her answer to this question.
5. What surprising confession does Catherine make in her story about not being at home in heaven?
6. What breaks off Catherine and Nelly's conversation?
7. Compare and contrast Catherine's love for Edgar Linton with Catherine's love for Heathcliff. Provide reasons for and against marrying each.
8. Consider the time period, Catherine's situation, her character, and her relationship with each of these men. Which one should she marry and why?
9. What do you think Catherine does and why?

10. How does Nelly think of and treat Catherine?
11. Choose one line from this passage that is striking to you and be able to explain why you chose it and what it means.

Extract III

1. What does Heathcliff do when he enters the room and what does he realise when he sees Catherine?
2. Summarise the main points of Catherine and Heathcliff's passionate conversation.
3. What does Catherine give as the reason for her impending death?
4. Do you have any sympathy for these characters? If so, which, or do you sympathise with both of them? Explain.
5. "I love *my* murderer, but *yours*! How can I?" What does Heathcliff mean by this?
6. How does Nelly think of Catherine?

Two students should be prepared to present the above answers in a three-minute presentation. The presentations will go in chronological order: I-II-III-IV.

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë (1847)

Extract I

1. How is Jane treated by her aunt in the opening scene (p.1)?
2. What does Jane do to fill her time alone?
3. Briefly summarise the incident that takes place between John Reed and Jane.
4. Describe Jane's place in the family with reference to pp. 7-8.
5. How do the family and servants view and treat Jane?
6. Why would Jane be afraid to be shut up in the red room?
7. Briefly describe Jane's frame of mind on pp. 10-11.
8. What does Jane discover about herself and her connection to the Reed family on p. 11?
9. What is the motive behind the behaviour of the Reed family towards Jane?
10. By the end of the chapter, what impression do you have of Jane?
11. Select a sentence or a paragraph that you think is significant or striking and discuss it with your group before presenting it to the rest of the class.
12. Be able to describe the Gothic elements in this extract to the rest of the class.

Extract II

1. What does Jane see and experience when she awakes from her dream?
2. What does Rochester make of Jane's strange tale?
3. How do they solve the problem of the intruder?
4. What is Rochester's behaviour like on the morning of the wedding?
5. "I did not know whether the day was fair our foul." What is the significance of this line (Hint: You should remember this from 'Macbeth'!).
6. Why is the wedding interrupted?
7. What is Rochester's secret?
8. Knowing that laws in England prevented divorce from someone who was insane, to what extent was Rochester wrong for keeping this information from Jane? Would it have changed her or your opinion of him if he had told the truth?
9. Jane reflects upon her life at this stage and realises that her prospects have become, at once, very limited. What, in your opinion, should she do? What do you think she does?
10. Be able to provide some Gothic elements of this extract in your presentation.

The Victorian Woman presentation:

The Victorian Woman

Gender roles in the 19th century
- Separate spheres
- Educating women
- Marriage and sexuality
- Prostitution

The ideal Victorian woman
Pride and Prejudice's Caroline Bingley:

The ideal Victorian woman

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

Works being studied


Assignment I

Assignment II

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (1813)

Extract I
1. Explain the irony of the opening line, which is among the most famous in all of literature.
2. What is Mrs Bennet excited about in the first chapter? How does her husband respond to her excitement and request?
3. What impression do you get of Mrs Bennet?

Extract II
4. Briefly summarise the predicament of the Bennet sisters as explained in the short extract from chapter 7.
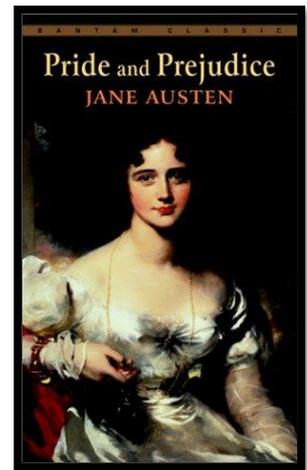
Extract III
5. What do Miss Bingley and Mrs Hurst say about Jane and Elizabeth Bennet at the beginning of chapter 8?
6. What impression do you get of the Victorian class system from this conversation?
7. What are the makings of a perfect woman, in Darcy's estimation? How does Elizabeth respond to his description?

Extract IV
8. Why does Mr Collins come to visit? What are the Bennets hopeful of?

9. What reasons does Mr Collins give for proposing to Elizabeth?
10. How does Elizabeth react to his proposal?
11. Do you think her reaction is prudent or unwise? Discuss, also with reference to the time period.

Extract V
12. How does Mrs Bennet respond to Elizabeth's rejection of Collins? What is your opinion on this?

Extract VI
13. Why does Charlotte Lucas accept Collins's proposal?

Extract VII
14. What do you make of Darcy's proposal to Elizabeth? Is she right in rejecting him?

Fill in the following chart with reference to the extracts read:

Aspects of Victorian society evidenced in the extracts:	
The circumstances of female characters:	
The examples of female characters exercising free will:	
To what extent the female characters are typical Victorian women:	
Treatment of the female characters by the author and by society:	

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë (1847)

Extract I
1. What does Jane wish for in the opening paragraph of this extract?
2. What does she quickly realise about her wish and how does her wish change?
3. What does Jane decide to do?
4. Considering Jane's background as a penniless orphan (with wealthy, though abusive family connections) and her job as a teacher at Lowood school, what do you think of her decision? What, if any, prospects do you think it could bring her?
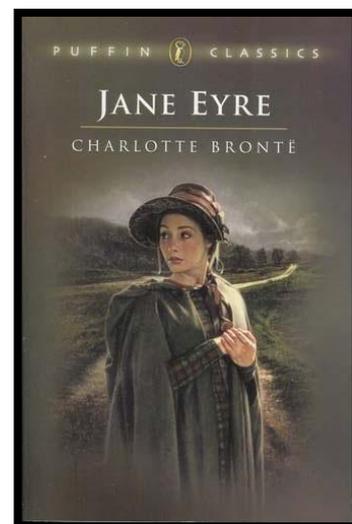
Extract II
5. What sentiment does Rochester express to Jane at the beginning of the second extract? How does he try to make amends for keeping his mad wife from Jane? Do you think she should accept his apology and live with him as his mistress?
6. What feelings does Jane experience during this conversation?
7. What is Jane's ultimate decision? Choose one line which exemplifies her commitment to her decision.
8. Where do you think Jane is going? Where can she go and what can she do? What does her future look like, in your opinion?

Extract III
9. What do you make of St John's proposal to Jane?
10. What impression does St John have of Jane?
11. What does Jane think about St John's proposal and how does she respond to it?
12. What does Jane mean when she says "Oh, I will give my heart to God. *You* do not want it?"
13. Was Jane right in rejecting St John?

Fill in the following chart with reference to the extracts read:

Aspects of Victorian society evidenced in the extracts:	
Jane Eyre's circumstances:	
Examples of Jane exercising free will:	
To what extent Jane is a typical Victorian woman:	
Treatment of the Jane by the author and by society:	

Tess of the d'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy (1891)

Extract I
1. Why does Tess's mother put pressure on her to seek employment at the d'Urberville's place? How does Tess feel about this?
2. In what kind of environment does Tess live?
3. How are Tess's family and their life described?
4. What surprises Tess when she arrives at the mansion?
5. What is the family background of the Stoke-d'Urbervilles?
6. How is Alec d'Urberville described?
7. How does Alec treat Tess when he hears of her predicament?
8. What do you make of his interaction with her?
9. "Thus the thing began." What do you think the author means by this statement and the remainder of the extract?
10. What do you predict is going to happen?
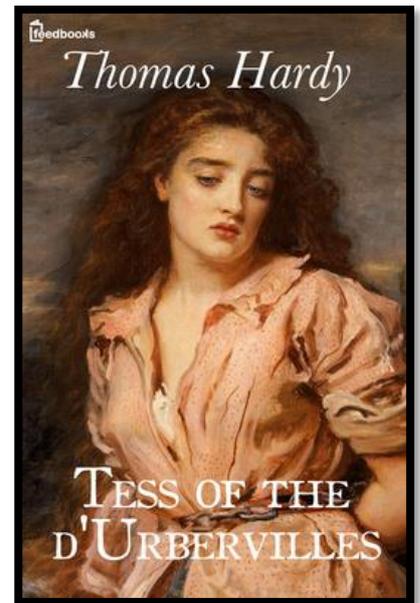
Extract II
1. Briefly summarise the interaction between Alec and Tess at the beginning of this scene.
2. Describe how Tess feels about and responds to Alec's advances towards her?
3. How does he act towards her?
4. Why is Tess stuck with him at this point?
5. What is the meaning of the lines that refer to "Tess's guardian angel?"
6. What does the narrator mean when he says "One may, indeed, admit the possibility of a retribution lurking in the present catastrophe?"
7. The final paragraph of this chapter explains to the reader that "It was to be." What was to be? What is happening here?

|	
Aspects of Victorian society evidenced in the extracts:	
Tess's circumstances:	
Examples of Tess exercising free will:	
To what extent Tess is a typical Victorian woman:	
Treatment of the Tess by the author and by society:	

***The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson (1886)**
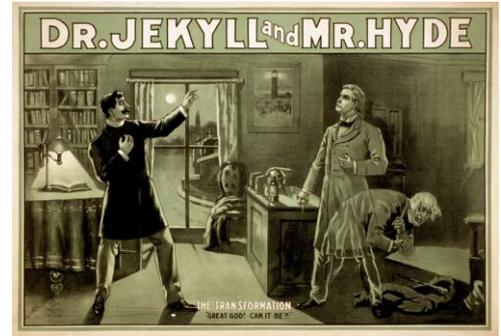
1. Provide a brief character description of Mr Utterson and his role in the novel.
2. What story does Enfield recount to Utterson?
3. How does Enfield describe Hyde?
4. What is so mysterious about the door?
5. What is the situation with Hyde at the beginning of the second extract?
6. In what state is Dr Lanyon when Utterson arrives?
7. How does Lanyon react to hearing Dr Jekyll's name?
8. What do you make of Dr Jekyll's response to Utterson's letter?
9. What information do you think the letter that Utterson receives from Lanyon contains?
10. Do you think, for the greater public good or simply out of curiosity, that Utterson should have opened his dead friend's letter, or do you think out of loyalty that he made the right choice in not opening it?
11. What genre would you classify this book as?
12. How do you think the rest of the mystery plays out?
13. Why do you think someone might choose to knowingly engage in evil deeds?

The Picture of Dorian Gray **by Oscar Wilde (1891)**

1. What is Dorian's initial reaction to his portrait? What is his second reaction to it?
2. What does Dorian wish for?
3. What impression do you get of Dorian in the first extract? What impression do you get of his friends, Basil Hallward and Lord Henry?
4. How does Dorian talk about his fiancé Sibyl Vane before the start of the performance of *Romeo and Juliet*?
5. Compare and contrasts the characters of Basil Hallward and Lord Henry.
6. How does Dorian respond to Sibyl's disastrous performance? What is your reaction to his response? Is it justified?
7. What does Dorian notice about the picture when he looks at it upon returning home? What does he consider to be the cause of this mysterious occurrence?
8. Dorian seems to have a change of heart at the beginning of the following chapter when he realises what is going on with the painting. Do you think he will become more compassionate or sink deeper into debauchery? Why? Predict what will happen in the rest of the book.
9. What genre would you classify this book as?
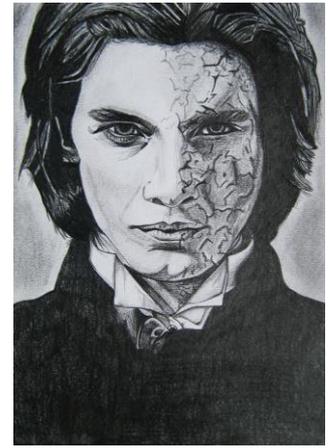
Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain

By Lynn Abrams

During the reign of Queen Victoria, a woman's place was considered to be in the home. Then the mood changed, as charitable missions began to extend the female role of service, and Victorian feminism began to emerge as a potent political force.

Victorian women comparing ball programmes, 1882

The icon

During the reign of Queen Victoria, a woman's place was in the home, as domesticity and motherhood were considered by society at large to be a sufficient emotional fulfilment for females. These constructs kept women far away from the public sphere in most ways, but during the 19th century charitable missions did begin to extend the female role of service, and Victorian feminism emerged as a potent political force.

The transformation of Britain into an industrial nation had profound consequences for the ways in which women were to be idealised in Victorian times. New kinds of work and new kinds of urban living prompted a change in the ways in which appropriate male and female roles were perceived. In particular, the notion of separate spheres - woman in the private sphere of the home and hearth, man in the public sphere of business, politics and sociability - came to influence the choices and experiences of all women, at home, at work, in the streets.

' ... Victoria became an icon of late-19th-century middle-class femininity and domesticity. '

The Victorian era, 1837-1901, is characterised as the domestic age *par excellence*, epitomised by Queen Victoria, who came to represent a kind of femininity which was centred on the family, motherhood and respectability. Accompanied by her beloved husband Albert, and surrounded by her many children in the sumptuous but homely surroundings of Balmoral Castle, Victoria became an icon of late-19th-century middle-class femininity and domesticity.

Indeed, Victoria came to be seen as the very model of marital stability and domestic virtue. Her marriage to Albert represented the ideal of marital harmony. She was described as 'the mother of the nation', and she

came to embody the idea of home as a cosy, domestic space. When Albert died in 1861 she retreated to her home and family in preference to public political engagements.

The ideal woman

Apart from the queen - who was the ideal Victorian woman? She may have resembled Mrs Frances Goodby, the wife of the Reverend J Goodby of Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire, of whom it was said at her death that she carried out her duties as mistress of a small family with 'piety, patience, frugality and industry'. Moreover, '... her ardent and unceasing flow of spirits, extreme activity and diligence, her punctuality, uprightness and remarkable frugality, combined with a firm reliance on God ... carried her through the severest times of pressure, both with credit and respectability ...' (*The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, 1840).

Mrs Goodby exemplified the good and virtuous woman whose life revolved around the domestic sphere of the home and family. She was pious, respectable and busy - no life of leisure for her. Her diligence and evident constant devotion to her husband, as well as to her God, identifies Frances Goodby as an example to other women. She accepted her place in the sexual hierarchy. Her role was that of helpmeet and domestic manager.

'... domesticity was trumpeted as a female domain.'

By the time that the industrial era was well advanced in Britain, the ideology that assigned the private sphere to the woman and the public sphere of business, commerce and politics to the man had been widely dispersed. In popular advice literature and domestic novels, as well as in the advertisement columns of magazines and newspapers, domesticity was trumpeted as a female domain.

The increasing physical separation of the home and the workplace, for many amongst the professional and commercial classes, meant that these women lost touch with production, and came to fashion an identity solely within the domestic sphere. It was through their duties within the home that women were offered a moral duty, towards their families, especially their husbands, and towards society as a whole.

However, as the example of Frances Goodby shows, the ideal woman at this time was not the weak, passive creature of romantic fiction. Rather she was a busy, able and upright figure who drew strength from her moral superiority and whose virtue was manifested in the service of others.

Thus the notion of separate spheres - as lived in the industrial period - was not a blind adherence to a set of imposed values. Rather it was a way of living and working based on evangelical beliefs about the importance of the family, the constancy of marriage and woman's innate moral goodness.

At home

The home was regarded as a haven from the busy and chaotic public world of politics and business, and from the grubby world of the factory. Those who could afford to, created cosy domestic interiors with plush fabrics, heavy curtains and fussy furnishings which effectively cocooned the inhabitants from the world outside. The middle-class household contained concrete expressions of domesticity in the form of servants, homely décor, comfortable furnishings, home entertainment, and clothing.

'The female body was dressed to emphasise a woman's separation from the world of work.'

Women's clothes began to mirror women's function. In the 19th century women's fashions became more sexual - the hips, buttocks and breasts were exaggerated with crinolines, hoopskirts and corsets which nipped in the waist and thrust out the breasts. The female body was dressed to emphasise a woman's separation from the world of work. By wearing dresses that resembled their interior furnishings, women became walking symbols of their social function - wife, mother, domestic manager.

The fashion for constricting corsets and large skirts served to underline not only a woman's prime function, but also the physical constraints on her activities. It was difficult to move freely wearing corsets that made it hard to breathe, and heavy fabrics that impeded movement. No wonder that those women who could afford to keep up with the latest fashions were prone to fainting, headaches and what was termed 'hysteria'.

Household management

Domesticity also entailed pressures to conform to other new standards. Numerous publications told women how to be good wives and household managers.

Mrs Beeton's *Book of Household Management* was first published in 1861, and remained a bestseller for over 50 years. It contained advice on how to become the perfect housewife, and how to create a domestic interior that provided a welcoming haven for the man of the house. In 1890 *The Christian Miscellany and Family Visitor* (a religious magazine) wrote in its 'Hints for Home Life' column:

'She [the housewife] is the architect of home, and it depends on her skill, her foresight, her soft arranging touches whether it shall be the "lodestar to all hearts", or whether it shall be a house from which husband and children are glad to escape either to the street, the theatre, or the tavern.'

'Most middle-class households had just one servant... '

But of course maintaining a middle-class household in the 19th century involved hard physical labour, most of it carried out by women. All the major tasks involved fetching and boiling water. Washing and ironing clothes was strenuous work. Floors were washed and scrubbed with sand. Food was prepared at home.

In addition, few families had flushing toilets before the end of the century and, although ready-made clothing became available in the middle of the century, underclothes were still made by hand and bed-linen was hemmed and repaired at home. So, if it could be afforded, servants were hired to carry out these domestic tasks.

It is a fallacy that most middle-class women were able to afford sufficient servants to allow them to spend their lives in idle leisure. Most middle-class households had just one servant - sufficient to give the woman of the house a certain status, but insufficient to allow her to spend days doing embroidery and playing the piano.

The ideology

If we approach 19th-century middle-class domestic life from the perspective of those living it, it becomes clear that women actively moulded a culture that served their own interests. The domestic sphere was a cultural expression of the female world. Their fashions, etiquette, domestic furnishings, social engagements, religious devotion and charitable activity all served to delineate a universe within which women could demonstrate their power.

It is only in prescriptive literature that the bourgeois woman, who idly spent her days exercising her creative talents, socialising with other women and supervising the servants, can be found. In reality most middle-class women were active both within and outside the home.

'This created a supply of cheap labour in the form of married women ...'

So far the ideal Victorian women has been portrayed as a member of the middle classes, but the ideology of domesticity was also powerful amongst the working classes. Working-class men began to demand the privileges of domesticity for their wives, while protecting their own jobs and rates of pay.

At the same time working-class women were beginning to demand these privileges for themselves, in order to protect their status within the home. In practice, though, domesticity meant something rather different for these women. Homework, that is paid work undertaken in the home, was regarded as compatible with marriage and children, so working-class women found themselves working at badly paid jobs in their own homes, while still maintaining the fiction that women's only duties lay within the domestic sphere.

Thus domestic industry was able to expand during the 19th century, given a boost by the ideology of domesticity. This created a supply of cheap labour in the form of married women, who earned the additional income that enabled the family to survive.

Wife and mother

At the heart of the domestic ideal was the mother and her children. Since early in the 19th century the role of mother had been idealised. Motherhood was no longer simply

a reproductive function, but was imbued with symbolic meaning. Domesticity and motherhood were portrayed as sufficient emotional fulfilment for women and many middle-class women regarded motherhood and domestic life as a 'sweet vocation', a substitute for women's productive role.

'... the childless single woman was a figure to be pitied.'

Women of the middle classes spent more time with their children than their predecessors. They were more likely to breast-feed, to play with and educate their children, and to incorporate them in the day-to-day life of the home. Middle-class women who, by mid century, were giving birth 'confined' within the home, now achieved true womanhood if they responded emotionally to their infants and bonded with them through breast-feeding and constant attendance. Motherhood was seen as an affirmation of their identity.

Marriage signified a woman's maturity and respectability, but motherhood was confirmation that she had entered the world of womanly virtue and female fulfilment. For a woman not to become a mother meant she was liable to be labelled inadequate, a failure or in some way abnormal. Motherhood was expected of a married woman and the childless single woman was a figure to be pitied. She was often encouraged to find work caring for children - as a governess or a nursery maid - presumably to compensate her for her loss.

Social responsibility

A Victorian mother, pushing a pram
The message that motherhood was woman's highest achievement, albeit within marriage, never weakened through the course of the century. Indeed, it was in this period that motherhood was idealised as the zenith of a woman's emotional and spiritual fulfilment. At the same time, however, motherhood was becoming a social responsibility, a duty to the state and thus a full-time job, which could not easily be combined with paid work. And mothering became something that was no longer natural but which had to be learned.

In the new industrial cities such as Manchester, Bradford and Glasgow, infant mortality rates were high. Responsibility for the appalling death rate amongst infants was roundly placed on the shoulders of mothers. Middle-class philanthropists, government inspectors and medical men united in their condemnation of the infant-care methods of poor women. Infant deaths, it was believed, could be prevented if poor mothers breast-fed their babies and were taught baby care.

'... the ideal of true motherhood demanded women be constantly present for their children ...'

In reality, the high infant mortality rate in the industrial cities was just as much to do with poor sanitation, dirty water, overcrowding and the pervasiveness of disease, but these were more difficult problems to solve. Yet the ideal of true motherhood

demanded women be constantly present for their children - it implied a commitment to domesticity and was therefore seen as incompatible with the demands of the labour market. Working-class mothers were therefore more likely to be labelled irresponsible and neglectful, when in truth they were struggling to combine the demands of childcare and putting a meal on the table.

Woman's mission

Victorian women took their own brand of morality into the homes of the poor.
Middle-class women of the Victorian era did leave their homes - and not just to socialise but to visit the homes of the poor. These women used their position of privilege to export expertise in domestic affairs to those regarded as in need of advice, so they might attain the same high standards of household management. The power that middle-class women had achieved in the home was now used by them in order to gain access to another world characterised by, as they saw it, poverty, drink, vice and ignorance.

'They could lecture working-class women on cleanliness ... '

At the same time, entering this world provided the lady philanthropist with a little excitement, maybe even danger, and a means to self-discovery. Moreover, these women's unshakeable belief in their own domestic morality not only informed the form of charity they chose to sponsor - mother and baby homes, kindergartens, temperance campaigns and health and hygiene reform - but also those persons deemed worthy of help and the conditions demanded for the receipt of charity.

So they provided aid to mothers and infants in the name of improving infant and maternal mortality rates, while barring illegitimate children from their crèches. They could lecture working-class women on cleanliness in homes resembling slums, while they relied on servants to keep their own homes up to the required standard.

Towards a political mission

Female charitable activity was informed by religious commitment as well as by a sense of moral superiority. In Britain evangelicalism inspired the formation of an extensive range of female associations.

These ranged from temperance, missionary and Sunday School societies to female-run benevolent institutions, and societies for the care of widows, orphans, the sick and the infirm. The numbers involved were huge. In Glasgow, for example, in 1895 there were 10,766 Sunday School teachers, all of whom were female volunteers.

These women believed that the key to philanthropy was the personal touch, so the lady reformer ventured out to those in need. Across the country it was found that one of the best ways of reaching the poorest families was by employing a 'Bible-woman' from the working classes who would more likely be welcomed inside as 'a motherly woman of their own class'. Women's mission to women was an extension of the female role of service and self-sacrifice, but by the end of the Victorian era female philanthropists began to realise that, as women, they had little power to change things.

'The aim of first-wave feminists was ... the vote - so that women might have some influence over their fate.'

Many of the first feminists were active in the philanthropic movement, and it was from this feminine public sphere that demands for improvements in the position of women began to be made. By 1900 women's moral mission had also become a political mission.

The aim of first-wave feminists was to gain better education and employment opportunities for middle-class women, better working conditions and wages for working-class women, and eventually the vote - so that women might have some influence over their fate.

Questions:

1. How were male and female roles divided in Victorian times?
2. How did Victorians perceive Queen Victoria?
3. What are some qualities of the ideal Victorian woman?
4. What was the main purpose of female fashion?
5. What is meant by the "symbolic meaning" of motherhood?
6. What were some occupations of middle class women?
7. Why did women do by way of philanthropy?
8. What do you see as the advantages of disadvantages of the life of a Victorian woman?
9. Compare and contrast the life of a Victorian woman – with regard to fashion, social issues, gender equality, family life, etc. – with the life of a woman today.

Victorian, Modernist and Postmodern literature

Victorian Literature (1830-1900)		Reading-list 2015-2016	
General information:	**Characteristics of Victorian literature:**	**Authors:**	**Works:**
This was a period of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation which caused the impoverishment and economic servitude of a large section of the population and saw the gradual increase in power of ever more democratic governments which sought to mitigate and regulate the excesses and injustices of unbridled capitalism. Industrialisation of paper-making caused a massive decrease in cost and increase in availability of paper, leading to cheaper newspapers and books. Books were also printed in volumes and serialised in cheap literary magazines making them affordable for the masses and ensuring that the novel became the predominant literary form in the 19th century. The British Empire straddled the world, and its industrial products dominated world markets. The Victorian period was/is seen as England's second golden age, and the British were self-confidant and proud of their achievements. In society as a whole science and technology seemed capable of overcoming all problems, the world had become logical and knowable, leading to faith in progress and a feeling of optimism about the future. The main characteristics of Victorian literature are given in the adjacent column; the most obvious difference however is in the writing style and language, which appear out-dated and prolix. The greatest English novelist of the 19th century is considered to be **Charles Dickens**. His best works, which expose the harsh social conditions of London life, are complex, language rich works, which make wide use of irony and caricature. The characteristic hero or heroine is a deprived and oppressed orphan who is redeemed and reconciled with society through the bourgeois virtues of industriousness, honesty and charity.	**Realism:** attention is given to detail in order to make the setting and action as realistic as possible. We can believe in and relate to the *fictional reality* created by the writer. **Optimism:** in the end everything works out for the best, the hero triumphs and society's values are reconfirmed **Reason** was the ultimate judge of what is true, and therefore of what is right and good. Life is rational and understandable. There is a growing realisation, however, that events are not always explicable and virtue does not guarantee success. Hardy is a good example of this. **Social commitment:** There is a readiness to examine and challenge social issues and values. **Class consciousness** is deeply rooted in Victorian society **Sexual restraint and prudery** are paramount. There is an excessive concern for appearance, propriety and good form. Women faint at the drop of a hat. But, given the overcrowded and cramped living conditions, sexual restraint was probably absolutely necessary, a condition of survival **Moralistic:** the good succeed and the villains get their just desserts, but the boundaries of what is good are very narrowly defined and very restrictive. **Materialisti**c: possessions and wealth are all important and help define the person. The belief that at birth the mind is an empty slate, a **tabla rasa,** which is filled in by upbringing, education and experience. Theoretically, anyone can transcend his/her origins given the right chances. Stories are **melodramatic**: cliff-hangers, page turners. Novels were often serialized in popular literary magazines, and the writer would try to make the readers buy the next copy by ending each episode at a suspense filled moment in the story – will the protagonist survive? **Characterisation** is often **unrealistic** with stories made up of people types with extreme character traits	Mary Shelley Jane Austen Charlotte Brontë Emily Brontë Lewis Carroll Charles Dickens Mark Twain Robert Lewis Stevenson Oscar Wilde Thomas Hardy Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Henry James Theatre Oscar Wilde	*Frankenstein* *Pride and Prejudice* *Jane Eyre* *Wuthering Heights* *Alice in Wonderland* *David Copperfield* *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* *The Picture of Dorian Gray* *Far From the Madding Crowd* *The Hound of the Baskervilles* *The Turn of the Screw* *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Evaluation matrix for oral test English Literature

Topic	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Postmodern book: presentation and answers				
Setting	Answers are cursory, lack depth and show very limited knowledge.	Mainly limited to concrete details about the plot. Unable to express supported opinions on particular or general features	Able to explain the topics in some depth, able to go beyond plot details and comment on themes, characters narrative etc.	Able to discuss in depth and at length and give well formulated and personal opinions. No obvious limitations
Theme and plot				
Characterisation				
Narrative style and language				
Typical postmodern characteristics and historical context	Very little knowledge.	Some ideas about historical context. Weak on general characteristics	Able to relate characteristics to time period and answer questions in some depth	Shows excellent understanding
Comparison with extracts	Unable to draw comparisons	Comparisons are superficial	Valid and correct	Knowledgeable and articulate
Modernist book				
Theme, plot and characterisation	As above, Answers are cursory and lack depth	As above, only comfortable with concrete details of plot, specifics and opinions are weak	Able to discourse in some depth and substantiate opinions	Able to discuss in depth and at length. Shows clear understanding on all points
Narrative structure and language				
Setting and historical context				
Period specific characteristics	Weak	Some ideas but shows limited understanding.	Shows good understanding of characteristics	Able to discuss in depth and at length.

Comparison with extracts	Unable to draw comparisons	Comparisons are superficial	Valid and correct	Knowledge able and articulate
Comparison with postmodern book	Comparisons limited and unedifying	Superficial. Unable to explain features in any depth.	Shows good understanding	Able to give well reasoned conclusions and arguments
Victorian book				
Theme, plot and characterisation	As above, Answers are cursory and lack depth	As above, some idea of concrete details of plot, but themes, context etc. are weak	Able to discourse in some depth and express reasoned opinions about theme, plot etc.	Able to discuss in depth and at length. Shows good knowledge of characteristics
Narrative structure and language				
Setting and historical context				
Period specific characteristics	Weak	Some ideas, but shows little overall understanding	Shows good understanding of characteristics	Able to discuss in depth and at length.
Comparison with extracts	Unable to draw comparisons	Comparisons are superficial	Valid and correct	Knowledge able and articulate
Comparison with other periods	Comparisons limited and unedifying	Superficial. Unable to explain features in any depth.	Shows good understanding	Shows excellent understanding
General comparisons Considering all 3 works, beginning with the Victorian period and explaining the following as exemplified by the 3 books:				
Developments in society – the historical context	Answers are cursory, lack depth and show very limited knowledge. Little or no idea of historical context.	Only really comfortable with concrete details. Limited ability to make comparisons, relate	Able to give coherent answers about the developments, able to draw lines and compariso	Knowledge able and articulate. Shows excellent understanding of historical developments and effect
How these developments are reflected in the themes/ social concerns raised in the stories				
Developments in literary style: plot/narrative structures/ characterisation/ language				
Which characteristics firmly				

		events to time periods or draw conclusions. Only able to give superficial comments and descriptions	ns between books of different periods. Knowledge able of typical characteristics. Clear idea of historical context.	on literature. Able to improvise in depth to unexpected questions and give well reasoned answers.
locate the stories in the time they were written. Could they have been written in another period? What would have to be changed?				

Marking

Consistently weak:	3 - 4,5
Mostly weak, some satisfactory	4,5 – 5,5
Most satisfactory, one or two weak	5,5 - 6
Predominantly satisfactory, no weak	6 – 6,5
Mixture of satisfactory and good, no weak	6,5 - 7,5
Predominantly good 7,5 – 8, one or two satisfactory	7,5 – 8
All good or excellent	8 – 8,5
All excellent	> 8,5

Appendix B:

Full responses to expert appraisal questionnaire

Teacher A:

To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum meet the national core objectives pertaining to literature education (See below)?	Subdomain E: Literary development De gekozen werken dragen bij aan de subdomeinen E1,2 en 3
To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum include relevant authors, themes, and works?	Absoluut relevant. De gekozen werken zijn topwerken uit de Engelse, Victoriaanse literatuur.
What authors, themes, and works are missing?	In je scriptie: geen. Het gaat hier ook niet om een uitputtende lijst met werken, maar om als belangrijk bekend staande werken uit de canon van de Victoriaanse literatuur. In de lessenserie: Als een van de subdoelen van de lessenserie is: kennismaking met de Brontë-sisters, dan is deze keuze prima. Als je vooral de nadruk wilt leggen op Gothic substreams in Victorian literature, dan kun je overwegen of je een andere schrijver gebruikt naast Emily of Charlotte. (Henry James, The turn of the screw bijv.)
How important are the societal issues covered in the lesson series?	In mijn eigen Nederlandse literatuurlessen zeg ik altijd tegen leerlingen: Literatuur wordt geschreven op de zenuwen van de tijd. Daarmee maak ik duidelijk dat de maatschappij van dat moment bepaalt wat voor literatuur er wordt geschreven. Dus ja, alle societal issues zijn belangrijk.
Is anything missing?	Van wat ik gelezen heb over de Victoriaanse literatuur weet ik dat een thema als identiteitontwikkeling heel belangrijk is. Het zoeken naar een eigen identiteit binnen het keurslijf van wat de maatschappij van je verwacht. Ik zie dit niet terug in de Literature Study (chapter 5) als een aparte paragraaf. Je behandelt wel Oliver Twist en Jane Eyre die beiden die identeitsontwikkeling als thema hebben. Zeg je er iets over in par. 4.1?

Is the curriculum dynamic? Is there a way to make it more interesting and dynamic?	Het curriculum is niet dynamisch omdat het een vaste basisstructuur heeft. De structuur zelf is wel dynamisch: die bestaat uit verschillende onderdelen. Ik denk dat de dynamiek ook bevorderd wordt als leerlingen keuzes kunnen maken. Misschien is daar nog wat aan te verbeteren.
What is your opinion on the basic structure of the lesson series: individual close reading > group discussion > presentation (constructivistic design)?	Als docent en ontwikkelingspsycholoog ken ik de theorie en de praktijk van het constructivisme. Daarbij is voorkennis bepalend: je borduurt voort op wat je al weet. De lessenserie zit theoretisch heel goed in elkaar.
Do you see this working?	Ja, leerlingen kunnen op deze manier veel leren, mits de docent haar/zijn rol als initiator/begeleider serieus opneemt.
Would this be stimulating for your students?	Ja. Leerlingen hebben volgens mij heel veel aan de selectie van de bruikbare fragmenten vooraf en de vragen die je stelt. Ze kunnen direct aan de slag en gaan meteen naar de tekst. Dat stimuleert. Daarnaast moeten ze veel samenwerken en dat geeft ook extra stimulans. Ook de afwisseling in werkvormen is stimulerend.
Do you think they would learn more or less from it compared to what they are learning now?	Bij Nederlands heb ik de ervaring dat verschillende opdrachten bij literatuur, individueel en in groepen, leiden tot meer kennis van dat wat gelezen is. Presentaties zijn daar een belangrijk onderdeel van. Leerlingen luisteren graag naar elkaar en nemen dingen van elkaar over. Dus ja, ze zullen meer leren van dit curriculum.
Would it help them adequately prepare for the school exam on literature?	Ja. Binnen het constructivisme is de term doelgericht leren belangrijk. leg leerlingen dus uit hoe dit bijdraagt aan hun schoolexamen literatuur. En zorg ervoor dat het op een of andere manier meetelt in hun schoolexamencijfer.
Do you think the learning goals (provided in the lesson plans) are realistic? Why/why not?	De leerdoelen zijn op zich wel haalbaar. Misschien nog even kijken naar het SMART formuleren? Het enige probleem lijkt mij de tijdsinvestering. 45 minuten per les is weinig.
Do you think the Perceived Curriculum is realistic?	Zeker.
Do you have anything to add to improve it?	Tips: ►Vwo-leerlingen hebben een positievere waardering voor de tekst als ze die

	identificerend lezen en niet alleen analyserend. Je hebt een aantal vragen opgenomen die dat aspect naar voren brengen. Dat zouden er meer kunnen zijn. ►Kijk of er ergens keuzes kunnen zijn voor leerlingen. Op wat voor gebied dan ook. Dat motiveert enorm. ►Ergens in je lessenserie schijf je "gisteren", dat moet je even veranderen in "vorige les"

Teacher B:

1. To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum meet the national core objectives pertaining to literature education (See below)?

Met deze lesopzet worden goed en overzicheljk de belangrijkste aspecten van Victoriaanse literatuur behandeld.

NB. De lesdoelen van literatuur voor MVT zijn in Nederland relatief vaag, b.v. in vergelijking met Duitsland waar helemaal vastligt wat een docent moet behandelen in zijn lessen. Wie bepaalt immers wat de "overview of the main lines of literary history and place literature" is? Dit is tot op zekere hoogte subjectief en op verschillende scholen zal op verschillende manieren hier invulling aan geven worden en, zo is mijn ervaring, op veel scholen zal er zeer weinig aan Victoriaanse literatuur gedaan worden.

2. To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum include relevant authors, themes, and works?

De belangrijkste schijvers en werken worden behandeld maar misschien had ik Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" genomen voor de zwakkere leerlingen ipv "Jane Eyre" omdat het werk toegankelijk is.

3. What authors, themes, and works are missing?

Ik mis "Alice in Wonderland" een beetje maar ik begrijp ook dat er keuzes gemaakt moeten worden; leerlingen gaan in deze opzet meer zelf lezen en analyseren dan ze tot nu toe gewend zijn. Dit betekent dat we niet alle werken aan bod kunnen laten komen die we tot nu toe gedaan hebben.

4. How important are the societal issues covered in the lesson series?

Heel belangrijk. Er zijn gigantische veranderingen in de Victoriaanse samenleving die goed behandeld moeten worden om ook de literatuur beter te kunnen begrijpen.

5. Is anything missing?

   NVT

6. Is the curriculum dynamic? Is there a way to make it more interesting and dynamic?

Ja, de lessenserie is dynamisch. De leerlingen worden uitgedaagd op hun eigen niveau en ook de introductieles met PPT speelt hier een grote rol in. Veel is natuurlijk ook afhankelijk van het enthousiasme van de docent voor deze literatuurperiode van de wijze waarop hij erover kan vertellen.

7. What is your opinion on the basic structure of the lesson series: individual close reading > group discussion > presentation (constructivistic design)?

Prima. de leerlingen gaan meer actief uitgedaagd worden tot "close reading" dan tot nu toe het geval was. Het zal echter een uitdaging blijven voor de docenten om de leerlingen ertoe te bewegen het ook echt goed en serieus te doen. De meeste leelringen zijn immers niet erg in literatuur geinteresseerd en zien niet het directe nut ervan in. Een bijkomende moeilijkheid is dat we ze geen tussentijds proefwerk kunnen geven en ook strafwerk geven als ze hun huiswerk niet doen wordt moeilijk bij 6e klassers. Hier ligt dus een uitdaging bij docenten; dit lesmateriaal is goed en wij, de docenten, moeten de leerlingen enthousiasmeren.

8. Do you see this working?

Ja. En ik heb er zin in om het uit te proberen.

9. Would this be stimulating for your students?

Ja.

10. Do you think they would learn more or less from it compared to what they are learning now?

Meer.

11. Would it help them adequately prepare for the school exam on literature?

Ja.

12. Do you think the learning goals (provided in the lesson plans) are realistic? Why/why not?

Ja.

13. Do you think the Perceived Curriculum is realistic?

Het vakinhoudelijke aspect is absoluut haalbaar maar het tijdpad is mij onduidelijk. Hoeveel lessen besteden leerlingen bv aan het beantwoorden van de vragen? En hoeveel tijd gaan de presentaties kosten?

Het gaat in deze lessen serie om in totaal 12 lessen voor de Victoriaanse literatuur maar er is ook een voorbereidingsles dus er blijven 11 lessen over voor in totaal 4 thema's die allemaal een intro, zelfstudie, voorbereiding en presentatietijd nodig hebben. Dus, wat is het tijdpad?

14.Do you have anything to add to improve it?

Een tijdpad.

Teacher C:

1. To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum meet the national core objectives pertaining to literature education (See below)?

As far as Victorian literature is concerned, I would say it covers subdomains 2 and 3 very well.

2. To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum include relevant authors, themes, and works?

Very well considering that the programme is designed for twelve lessons

3. What authors, themes, and works are missing?

Actually, two things struck me about the list: Firstly that the main works, apart from Charles Dickens, are written by women or have female protagonists, which just appears remarkable not wrong in any way. Secondly, literature about the social dislocation caused by industrialisation in the Victorian period is not really represented, and seeing how this is probably the most important and best-known characteristic of the period, it should be included in some way.
perhaps *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens could be added to the list instead of *Oliver Twist*, although this is also an important topic – the Victorian attitude towards and abuse of children.
Elizabeth Gaskell wrote about the effects of the industrial revolution in Manchester in works such as *North and South.* Again a female writer with a female protagonist; it appears that if the Victorian period was the heyday of the English novel, it was female writers that made it so.
The first detective stories also appeared in this period. *Sherlock Holmes* may be worth including, if not least because of the believe in rationalism that it typifies.

4. How important are the societal issues covered in the lesson series?

They are important, but I think I have already answered this question.

5. Is anything missing?

We do try to get our students to read a Victorian novel too, which is also an important part of our existing programme, and to write about it, which satisfies subdomain E1, but I did not see this mentioned. Otherwise, I think I have answered this question in 3 above.

6. Is the curriculum dynamic? Is there a way to make it more interesting and dynamic?

I think it is a very interesting development, and I would definitely like to try it out.

7. What is your opinion on the basic structure of the lesson series: individual close reading > group discussion > presentation (constructivistic design)?

Very appropriate

8. Do you see this working?

Yes, and I see it as a definite improvement on our existing programme.
9. Would this be stimulating for your students?

I believe so yes, but the teacher would also need to encourage and motivate the students. Though I think that the productive activities and feed-back contained in the programme will encourage and ensure participation.

10. Do you think they would learn more or less from it compared to what they are learning now?

At the moment we have tended to concentrate on writing style and themes of individual books rather than placing the books in larger contexts and considering the works comparatively, and the extracts we use have been from the beginning of the book rather than presenting highlights. This is a different approach and a very interesting improvement.
The lessons too have been rather theoretical and passive, aiming more to give a general impression of Victorian literature, they are more like entertainment that analytical study. Your approach aims to get the students much more actively involved in the literature, and I am very enthusiastic about that.

One thing you do not mention is the development of general language skills: reading, analysing, summarising, evaluating and presenting. These are very important goals too and ones that we have, until now, not really achieved in our literature course, though presentations have always been part of it.

11. Would it help them adequately prepare for the school exam on literature?

Yes.

12. Do you think the learning goals (provided in the lesson plans) are realistic? Why/why not?

I think the specific goals are realistic and attainable.
I think that you might add some goals to match the core objectives like:

- E2: will be able to classify the extracts according to type of literature
- E2: Will be able to identify and apply literary terms such as . . . to the text.
- E3: Will be able to recognise and specify typical Victorian characteristics in the text
- E3: will be able to place the extracts in a historical context

- E1: has completed a substantiated report of one major work of Victorian literature.

13. Do you think the Perceived Curriculum is realistic?

Yes, though getting some of the students to read can be a problem.
We should think about ways of rewarding the students for good work and results. At the moment there is no way of giving points for course work in the sixth class, and this would require changing the PTA, but we might consider allowing the course work to constitute say 50% of the literature mark.
I am afraid that without extrinsic motivation it may be difficult to get some of the students to participate fully. We will have to see how it goes and evaluate the course on completion.

14. Do you have anything to add to improve it?

I think it is a very interesting way of revamping our literature course and I like your division of the works according to main themes and your selection of key scenes from the works.
Your differentiated tasks do much more to involve the students actively in the literature than is currently the case and I also felt quite stimulated reading it. I would definitely like to try it out and I want to congratulate you on developing this.
Your ideas have a lot of potential and I think they are just what we needed. I would also like to adapt it to Modern and Postmodern literature, as you suggest. I can think of lots of possibilities already.

Well done! An excellent piece of work.

Teacher D:

1. To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum meet the national core objectives pertaining to literature education (See below)?
   Good
2. To what extent does the Perceived Curriculum include relevant authors, themes, and works?
   Good
3. What authors, themes, and works are missing?
4. How important are the societal issues covered in the lesson series?
5. Is anything missing?
   The introduction mentions utilising higher-order thinking skills as an objective.
   Could you achieve this objective by broadening the scope of your questions?

You've covered the Literary/Historical approach, text inherent/immanent approach, and social approach (Kwakernaak's *Didactic van het vreemdetalenonderwijs)* but I think the social approach could be strengthened and I miss the receptive/aesthetic approach.

Eg. Jane Eyre Extract 1, question 5 How do the family and servants view and treat Jane? What does this say about the Victorian time period and social class? How are "servant's" treated today? (e.g. I've come across several blogs from nannies working in New York City or Washington D.C. for weathly families who work incredibly long hours under a great deal of criticism from the parents.)

I know the focus is on understanding the characteristics of Victorian literature and in this case, the Gothic element, but I miss a connection to the reader. The literature seems distant, something read for understanding the time period and literary genre but not applicable or relevant to students today. If it can be made more relevant, it becomes more dynamic.

6. Is the curriculum dynamic? Is there a way to make it more interesting and dynamic?
   The Victorian gothic world is so alien from most students' world - Could you come up with modern examples (e.g. the extremeness of current goths outward appearance, reading a nanny blog) to set the mood/setting to the novels?

7. What is your opinion on the basic structure of the lesson series: individual close reading > group discussion > presentation (constructivistic design)?
   This is a good approach b/c if forces the student to analyse individually and then discuss collectively and present a coherent summary to the class

8. Do you see this working?
   personal enthusiasm from the teacher counts for a lot, so I think that yes, it would work

9. Would this be stimulating for your students?
   Several of the questions are straightforward, factual questions, and may be quite leading – factual/checking for knowledge and for a 6L class more understanding/interpretive questions may help them achieve higher thinking skills. For example:
   a. What does the servant Zillah explain to Lockwood about the room in which he is staying overnight? Factual/checking for knowledge (F/K)
   b. What does Lockwood notice about the bed he is sleeping in? (F/K)
   c. How does Catherine feel about her brother Hindley and what reasons does she give? (F/K & understanding/interpretation U/I)
   d. What is the effect of the dream sequence in his extract? (U/I)
   e. "The intense horror of my nightmare came over me." Summarise what is going on in this scene in your own words. (U/I)
   f. How is the ghost described? What does she ask for? (F/K)
   g. How does Heathcliff respond to Lockwood's yell? (F/K)
   h. What do we learn to be the cause of Heathcliff's torment? (F/K)
   i. What is the effect of having Lockwood as a narrator instead of, say, a servant or member of the family? (U/I)

10. Do you think they would learn more or less from it compared to what they are learning now?
    This is hard to answer…but I imagine that it is far superior to most English literature programs in Dutch highschools.

11. Would it help them adequately prepare for the school exam on literature?
    yes
12. Do you think the learning goals (provided in the lesson plans) are realistic? Why/why not?
    yes
13. Do you think the Perceived Curriculum is realistic?
    yes
14. Do you have anything to add to improve it?
    My main point, is the additional literature approach which allows for interpretation, application to today, etc. I think when students begin putting themselves in the character's situation, they begin to understand the character better, or can see how different the character's time period is from the current one.

Appendix C:

VERKLARING: INTELLECTUEEL EIGENDOM

De Universiteit Utrecht definieert het verschijnsel "plagiaat" als volgt:

Van plagiaat is sprake bij het in een scriptie of ander werkstuk gegevens of tekstgedeelten van anderen overnemen zonder bronvermelding. Onder plagiaat valt onder meer:

het knippen en plakken van tekst van digitale bronnen zoals encyclopedieën of digitale tijdschriften zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;

het knippen en plakken van teksten van het internet zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;

het overnemen van gedrukt materiaal zoals boeken, tijdschriften of encyclopedieën zonder aanhalingstekens of verwijzing;

het opnemen van een vertaling van bovengenoemde teksten zonder aanhalingstekens en verwijzing;

het parafraseren van bovengenoemde teksten zonder verwijzing. Een parafrase mag nooit bestaan uit louter vervangen van enkele woorden door synoniemen;

het overnemen van beeld-, geluids- of testmateriaal van anderen zonder verwijzing en zodoende laten doorgaan voor eigen werk;

het overnemen van werk van andere studenten en dit laten doorgaan voor eigen werk. Indien dit gebeurt met toestemming van de andere student is de laatste medeplichtig aan plagiaat;

ook wanneer in een gezamenlijk werkstuk door een van de auteurs plagiaat wordt gepleegd, zijn de andere auteurs medeplichtig aan plagiaat, indien zij hadden kunnen of moeten weten dat de ander plagiaat pleegde;

het indienen van werkstukken die verworven zijn van een commerciële instelling (zoals een internetsite met uittreksels of papers) of die tegen betaling door iemand anders zijn geschreven.

Ik heb de bovenstaande definitie van het verschijnsel "plagiaat" zorgvuldig gelezen, en verklaar hierbij dat ik mij in het aangehechte essay / werkstuk niet schuldig heb gemaakt aan plagiaat.
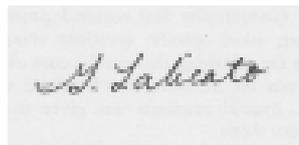
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