

# Stage 5 Unit starter

## Our digital world – fame, facts and fortunes

### Rationale

How do you make your mark in the digital world? How can you promote yourself, your product or your passion with the plethora of texts, mediums, artists and institutions competing for attention? This unit explores three different texts asserting their authority on their subjects and views of the world in different ways. Firstly, Wikipedia, 'the free encyclopedia', is a collaborative information source built on its 5 pillars; it is editable, verifiable and neutral among other things. Its uniqueness comes from its belief in distributed authority and enabling users to both acquire and share information, which has also led to inferences of questionable authority (especially by teachers) at times. Kevin Alloca's, 'Why videos go viral' TED talk explores what leads to YouTube fame and asserts the view that there are 3 characteristics 'of a new kind of media and a new kind of culture where anyone has access and the audience defines the popularity.' As a trends manager for YouTube he speaks with conviction, humour, examples and statistics in sharing his knowledge and views of this medium. Finally, the AdEspresso site provides a number of articles to explain the popularity of advertising via Instagram and how to succeed in this marketplace. Each of the texts, provide insight and examples of different mediums for students to explore along with the many codes and conventions associated with each. The unit asks students to consider how both the composer and responder are co-creators of authority in texts and provides multiple opportunities to discuss the importance of context in defining the success and impact of different forms and features. There are also many opportunities for students to experiment with the effects of changing contexts, shifts in authority and manipulating codes and conventions throughout the unit.

### Outcomes

EN5-1A, EN5-2A, EN5-3B, EN5-4B, EN5-5C, EN5-6C, EN5-8D, EN5-9E

### Concept/s

**Authority:** Students understand how authority may be constructed, confirmed or challenged. They learn that

- a sense of authority may be constructed by language use
- authority is strengthened through citation and references to established sources
- groups of responders may be included or excluded by language use
- texts may contradict or subvert cultural assumptions

**Context:** Students understand how the complexity of their own and of other contexts shape composition and response to texts. Students learn that

- their perceptions of the world are filtered through their own context

- context shapes language, forms and features of texts
- language, forms and features of texts inscribe values and attitudes in their representations of people, information and ideas
- texts may be responded to and composed differently in different contexts

### Code and convention:

Students recognise that codes and conventions reflect and shape power relationships and culture. Students learn that:

- some codes and conventions are valued more than others and that this can depend on context
- understanding and using these conventions is potentially a source of power

## Exemplar texts

[Wikipedia](#)

[Kevin Allocca: Why videos go viral](#), TEDYouth 2011: November 2011 (7mins 20 secs)

[20 Instagram Ads Best Practices That Will Make You an Outstanding Marketer](#), AdEspresso, 22 December 2015, webpage

[37 Great Instagram Ads Examples To Inspire You](#), AdEspresso, 23 February 2016, webpage

[How to make creative people \(truly\) collaborate](#), Benjamin Hoguet, 11 November 2014, A Medium Corporation, USA

## Focus questions for responding and composing

How can using certain codes and conventions lend power to a text?

How does context effect both the composition and responses to digital texts?

How is authority constructed through different elements of a text and what part do responders play?

## Prior knowledge

Language techniques including persuasive devices, and ways of building an argument. Visual features of texts.

## Assessment

Assessment task: Students choose a specific digital text or form of text to investigate and decide on a topic associated with the text to present to the class. Students then analyse and evaluate the text and prepare a persuasive multimodal presentation on their chosen topic, using logic, imagery and rhetorical devices to engage their audience whilst asserting themselves as an authority on the topic. Audience members will be asked to evaluate a number of the presentations considering their effectiveness against a list of criteria connected to the use of codes and conventions, the construction of authority and visible links to the context. **(Code and convention, Authority, Context)**

Processes

Lessons and evidence of learning

**Understanding**

Students use a range of strategies to discriminate nuanced meaning. In their responding and composing they transfer their knowledge of texts to new contexts.

- Ask students to identify the ways the different texts use and manipulate visual images, hyperlinks, sound and written words to create meaning. Complete a table to link these choices to purpose, audience, perspective and style. Ask students to write a considered point of view of how the choice of this technology influences their construction choices at the bottom of each table. Discuss with students the similarities and differences found and the connections between the context, codes and conventions and the authority asserted by the composers in each text. **(Authority, Code and Convention, Context)**

		How is each elements use connected to these?			
Text 1 – Wikipedia		Purpose	Audience	Perspective	Style
How are these elements used in this text?	Visual images • •				
	Hyperlinks • •				
	Sound • •				
	Written word • •				
Statement about context:					


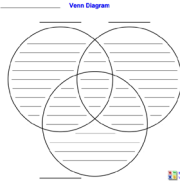
- Discuss with students the different views held about Wikipedia. What do they think about it? Do they use it/ trust it? When should/shouldn't you use it? How is it valued? Who values it and who doesn't? etc. Are the opinions consistent within the class? What does this tell us? Students read the [Wikipedia:About](#) page and write 5-10 cultural attitudes or values that they believe are expressed on the page. For example, what does it say about the ownership of knowledge? Ask students to decide whether Wikipedia sustains or challenges the established cultural attitudes and values of our society? **(Authority, Context)**



**Engaging personally**

Students' responses to and composition of texts demonstrate a personal understanding of the world based on their own ideas, their experience of texts and their experience of life. They project an

- Ask students to think about the ways language can be used to include or exclude an audience. Students share their ideas with a partner and then another couple before the class comes up with a list of ways. Students use this list to help them identify examples found in, 'Why videos go viral'. Students then consider these techniques and examples affect them personally. Students write a reflection on the ways language choices have included or excluded them from this text and the overall impact of the composer's choices of language. **(Authority, Code and Convention, Context)**



Processes	Lessons and evidence of learning
<p>authentic voice through different types of texts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a dice rolling activity for students to consider and discuss in small groups, possible changes to one of the texts due to changing contexts and the likely effects. Students are provided with two different coloured di with a question or direction assigned to each number on each dice. For example, the red dice is linked to context 1 = you are now aged over 50, 2 = you are the opposite gender, 3 = you have a new nationality, 4 = you are living in a time of war, 5 = you are living in a 3<sup>rd</sup> world country, 6 = you are an elite athlete. And the white dice is linked to the techniques of the medium 1= Language feature, 2 = visual technique, 3 = vocabulary choices, 4 = medium used, 5= aspect of style, 6 = sound. So a student rolling Red 2 and White 5 needs to consider ‘What would be the effect of the composer’s style on me if I was now male instead of female?’ OR ‘How should the composer change an element of their style to have a greater impact on males?’ <b>(Code and Convention, Context)</b></li> <li>• After reading and viewing the Instagram articles on effective ads, create a list of the features that contribute to the effectiveness according to the article and add any ideas students provide with class consensus. Students then number the features in terms of the power of each technique in their opinions. Ask students to ask 1 or 2 people from outside of school and preferably from a different age group, to also number the features in order of power over them. Graphically represent the findings for different age groups, Secondary students, 20-30 year olds, 40+ years. Help students identify patterns and trends and write about their findings of key features for Instagram advertising and how codes and conventions can be powerful knowledge for creating texts. <b>(Code and Convention, Context)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Connecting</b> Students appreciate the impact of texts on each other. In their responding and composing they use the connections between texts to come to new understandings about how ideas are reinterpreted in different contexts.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin with a brain storm of all the ways we use visual texts, media and multimedia. Then ask students to decide on the purpose and audience of each of the 3 texts studied and describe the effect of the technology. Identify the different language and visual combinations each text uses to construct the authority of the text such as citations, statistics, personal connections, language, body language, video, examples etc. Complete a Venn diagram to highlight the common features and uniqueness of each text. Next consider the cohesive devices each text uses to support their audience in understanding the key ideas, making connections, and associations between ideas. How does this support of the audience further contribute to the sense of authority of a text? <b>(Authority, Context)</b></li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare the purpose, text structure and language features of a traditional encyclopedia with those of the</li> </ul>

Processes		Lessons and evidence of learning
		contemporary Wikipedia. Ask students to rewrite a short section of an encyclopedia for a Wikipedia page annotating the differences and explaining their choices. Alternatively, ask students to work in groups, choose a topic and co-construct a wiki page sharing their knowledge, and citing sources. <b>(Code and Convention, Context)</b>
	<p><b>Engaging Critically</b></p> <p>Through responding and composing students critically analyse and evaluate the ways in which texts represent different ideas and perspectives. They recognise the effect of context on meaning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and explore the AdEspresso pages regarding creating great Instagram advertisements and identify the codes and conventions as well as the ways bias, stereotypes, perspectives and ideologies can be used to construct texts to influence audiences. Provide students with other Instagram ads and ask them to identify and annotate the techniques used and write an evaluation of the choices and their effectiveness. <b>(Code and convention, Authority, Context)</b></li> <li>• Assessment task: Students choose a specific digital text or form of text to investigate and decide on a topic associated with the text to present to the class. Students then analyse and evaluate the text and prepare a persuasive multimodal presentation on their chosen topic, using logic, imagery and rhetorical devices to engage their audience whilst asserting themselves as an authority on the topic. Audience members will be asked to evaluate a number of the presentations considering their effectiveness against a list of criteria connected to the use of codes and conventions, the construction of authority and visible links to the context. <b>(Code and convention, Authority, Context)</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Experimenting</b></p> <p>Students compose critical and imaginative responses to texts. They adopt, combine and adapt conventions of genre and style to experiment with textual concepts and with ideas drawn from texts to come to deeper understandings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After viewing the web pages about great Instagram ads ask students to follow the advice and create their own Instagram ad for a teenage audience. Print and attach each ad to the top of a feedback page with a table for listing positives and recommendations for changes and pass them around the class. Students should consider context, purpose and effect in relation to the advice offered. Students then use the feedback to refine their Instagram ad before submitting it for display (and maybe the class advertising awards). Discuss the relative authority over the text at the different stages of the task. <b>(Code and convention, Authority, Context)</b></li> <li>• Discuss with students the collaborative nature of most digital texts. Brainstorm who they can imagine contributed to one or all of the texts studied. Then write a list of talents across the board and ask students to assign themselves to one of the categories based on their strengths and interests. For example, author, film maker, researcher, journalist, sound effects, graphic designer etc. Then form groups of students with differing interests and skills and tell the students they will be given time to work collaboratively to produce a YouTube video that changes the context of another popular video through parody or adaptation. Read 'How to make creative people (truly) collaborate' and discuss the key ideas and how they can be achieved in your school/class context, such as identifying '1. A spatial arrangement favouring creativity' and '3. An open and protective atmosphere'. Provide students with a lesson per week and set an end date to showcase their work. <b>(Code and Convention, Context)</b></li> </ul>

Processes

Lessons and evidence of learning



**Reflecting**

Students broaden their understanding and use of metacognitive processes to choose and develop certain strategies appropriate for particular situations. They extend their range of reflective practices to consider how their own context influences the ways they respond, compose and learn.

- Students use the image and descriptions from the 'How to make creative people (truly) collaborate' article to guide a reflection of their group work by writing dot points under each of the 6 headings, '0. Before, 1. Forming, 2. Storming, 3. Norming, 4. Performing and 5. Adjourning' from their experience. Students then write their own reflection on what are the important elements of effective collaboration.
- Ask students to answer each of the 3 Focus questions for the unit and include reference to the activities that best helped them to form their opinions in their responses.

**The intention of this unit starter is to illustrate teaching and learning activities for each of the processes.**

**The processes may be taught in any order to cater for the needs of all learners and further differentiation can be included in your full version of the unit.**