

Scheme of Work 1 – Rubicon 2nd Ed.

Below is a sample unit of work. This should not be seen as prescriptive but rather as a template. Teachers should feel to adapt this to suit their own school's context. There is plenty of scope to substitute the suggested texts here and modify the activities.

This unit of work is based around the core concept, Where I'm From. This is meant in its broadest sense in terms of geography, family, identity and social values. This unit should allow students to draw on their own personal experiences and express them using learnt literary technique. The unit is assessed by means of selection of students' redrafted pieces from the unit.

Unit of Work: Sample 1 – Theme: Where I'm From (Approx. 6 weeks: 18-24 classes)		
Classes	Learning Intention	Methodology
1 class period	To introduce the concept and explore the general idea of place	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher led discussion: <i>Where are you from?</i> Teacher should encourage students to understand their personal identities by looking at place, family, social values, club/organisation identities, politics, religious values. Teachers should have in mind the LC concept of Cultural Context/ Social Setting as the discussion unfolds 2. Student activity: <i>My World in My Palm</i>. Each student traces one of his/her hands on a piece of paper. On the palm, each should write or draw ideas that identify their world as they see it: What it means to him/her, what it is like, what its values are, where it is, who is in it. 3. Peer-to-peer discussion: <i>Where are you from?</i> In pairs or small groups, students should share their creation. There should be a class discussion of any notable examples. 4. Homework: Students should reflect on their earliest memory. They should jot down notes on the memory and be prepared to discuss it the next day
1-2 class periods	<p>To explore early memories and how best to articulate them</p> <p>To understand the genre of memoir and the use of descriptive language</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class discussion: Students share their earliest memories orally with the class. 2. Reading: Read <i>I Was on Fire</i> (P.18) 3. Discussion of text. Teacher should explain the concept of memoir and encourage students to recognise the use of descriptive language (see also P.95) and how the family context is suggested by the text. Making use of the Style Guide, the teacher should discuss the genre of memoir. 4. Extended writing activity (in class or at home): Using <i>I Was on Fire</i>, students should write about an early memory that says something about where they are from or their family. They should make use of descriptive language (see also P.95).

<p>2-3 class periods</p>	<p>To explore the idea of place and home</p> <p>To understand the concept of autobiography</p> <p>Learn about and practise the literary techniques of hyperbole and 'writing with colour'</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> My home in three words: Students should be asked to choose three adjectives that describe their home. These should be written large on a piece of paper. Once finished, students should stick them to a wall or display them in some way. Teacher should lead a discussion on some examples. Reading: <i>Space to Play</i> (P.10) and <i>Growing Up in Des Moines</i> (P.16). Each reading should be followed up with a discussion (see below). Discussion of text: Teacher should encourage students to explore the worlds of the text. Choose three words that the writer might have used to describe his home (as per the intro. exercise). What kind of place is it? How does the writer communicate the sense of place (literary techniques used)? Would you like to live there? Which of the worlds described by the writers was the most interesting? The teacher should point to the Style Guides associated with each piece (writing with colour, autobiography, hyperbole) Extended writing activity: <i>My Home</i>. Using the texts explored in class as models, students should describe where they grew up. This composition should try to capture the three adjectives offered at the start of the class. Students should be encouraged to use the techniques used by Merton and Bryson in the readings above.
<p>1-2 class periods</p>	<p>To use the language of travel brochures to explore the idea of home</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring travel brochures: Using an online resource, show students a travel brochure. Explore how brochures use words with a positive resonance to 'sell' a place. Examples can be found in travel company websites such as www.trailfinders.ie or www.sunway.ie. Writing activity: <i>Brochure for My Place</i>. Students should write copy for a travel brochure, 'selling' the idea of their local area as a travel destination. Some students may choose to do this in a satirical, light-hearted fashion. Extended writing activity: Produce a polished version of this brochure page, including images.
<p>1 class period</p>	<p>To use visual language to explore the idea of home</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: <i>Seoul, South Korea</i> (P.246) and <i>A Normal Subway Ride</i> (P.247). Discussion: <i>How can a visual image express a sense of place?</i> Using the texts above and the list of photographic techniques on P.243, students should be encouraged to 'read' images. The teacher may make use of an 'adjective board' on which students pin/write adjectives to describe each of the images. Students should be encouraged to compare the images and to infer from the images what the 'spirit' of the world is in each case. Homework: <i>Where I'm From Photo Essay</i>. Using smart phones or cameras, students should create a photo essay of their personal areas. Encourage students to express the 'spirit' of their place, looking at both forensic details and big picture views. These could be printed or shared digitally. This activity may need to be modified depending on individual schools' mobile phone policies.

<p>1-2 classes</p>	<p>To explore how visual language can express something about a person in context</p> <p>To look at the relationship between social setting and the human experience</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Context: Teacher should provide context for the text (<i>The Migrant Mother</i>) by explaining what the Great Depression in America was. Teachers might consider using an extract from <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> to support the discussion. Reading: <i>The Migrant Mother</i> (P.244). Students should be asked to silently contemplate the picture for three minutes, focusing on the details and emotions of the image. Short writing activity: <i>Thought Bubble:</i> Students should create a thought bubble for the image in which they try to image what the mother is thinking. These should be shared and discussed as a class. Discussion: How does the picture capture the woman and her world? Students should be encouraged to look at the details of the photograph and should make use of the list of photographic techniques on P.243. Thought experiment: <i>The Veil of Ignorance.</i> What kind of world would it be fair to live in? Go to the following video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-JQ17X6VNg) and conduct The Veil of Ignorance thought experiment (from about 3 mins into the video) as a class. Do <i>The Migrant Mother</i> and The Veil of Ignorance thought experiment lead to the same conclusion? My World in One Picture: Each student should choose one image from their photo essay (see above), that they feel best captures their world. They should display this image to the class and speak for one minute explaining their choice. These presentations could be split up, say five per class over the course of a week.
<p>1 class</p>	<p>To explore how poetry can suggest family homelife</p> <p>To understand how comment threads work in modern digital media</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: <i>My Papa's Waltz</i> (P.165). Each student should read the poem silently twice. Listening: Listen to Roethke read his poem (see Speaking and Listening instructions P.165) Activity: <i>Comment Thread.</i> Complete the Writer's Workshop Comment Thread activity (P.166-167) Discussion: Discuss this poem. How is family life portrayed in this poem? What details from the poem suggest something about the father-son relationship?
<p>1-2 classes</p>	<p>To explore an amusing sketch of a family member</p> <p>To reinforce the concept of hyperbole</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: <i>Your Father Has the Hay Fever</i> (P.20) Discussion: Is this piece of writing successful in sketching an image of the father? Do the students find the writing humorous? How does the inclusion of short anecdotes and hyperbole add to the effect? Extended writing activity: <i>A Member of my Family.</i> Follow the instructions in the Writer's Workshop (P.22)
<p>2-3 classes</p>	<p>To explore how poetry and prose can be used to sketch a family member</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group Reading: <i>Weakness</i> (P.168). Read as a class: each student reads until he/she reaches a punctuation mark, then the next student takes over. Discussion: What does this poem say about the father described by the speaker? Why is the poem called 'Weakness'? What sort of relationship do you imagine the speaker and his/her father have? Reading: <i>Korea</i> (P.144). Teacher reads the story to the class. Class discussion comparing the two texts: In what ways are the fathers in these two texts similar? In what ways are they very different? Explore how both texts reach surprising, yet revealing, conclusions. How do both texts portray men who hide their feelings and true thoughts. Extended writing: Dramatised interpretation. Write a scene to be performed on stage, inspired by either text, in which the speaker confronts his father.

1-2 classes	To appreciate how humour can be developed in writing and how a humorous sketch of family life can be achieved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening discussion: Encourage students to discuss amusing incidents from family life. 2. Reading: <i>The Toity Jar</i> (P.29). Read and discuss. Explore the concept of hyperbole (Style Guide, P.31). Teachers may choose to pair this piece with <i>Making a Fiery Impression</i> (P.34). 3. Extended activity: Write a humorous account of an incident from family life, using <i>The Toity Jar</i> as a model. 4. Extended activity: <i>Interview</i>. See Speaking and Listening exercise P.31
3-5 classes	<p>To practise the craft of speech writing and deepen students' understanding of the core theme (Where I'm From)</p> <p>To understand anecdote as a literary device</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speech openings: Explore how to write an effective speech opening. Use the activities and information on P.199-200 as resources. 2. Appreciating Anecdote: Using the piece <i>Facing Down a Bully</i> (P.8-9) and associated activities, explore what an anecdote is and how it can be used to communicate an idea. 3. Extended writing activity: Students are to write and deliver a 2-5 minute speech, entitled: <i>Where I'm From</i>, in which they may discuss their area, identity, family etc. Students must make use of an effective opening as described above and at least one anecdote as per <i>Facing Down a Bully</i>. These speeches could be delivered over 2 classes or over a number of weeks, 2-3 speeches per class.
Final two classes	Evidence of learning and assessment	Students should select four pieces of writing that they have completed over the unit of work. These should be pieces that they are most proud of and should offer a range of writing styles. Over two classes and at home, students should redraft these pieces using the teacher's feedback. These polished redrafted pieces should be submitted for final assessment of the six weeks unit. Students will be familiar with this process having completed CBA2 of Junior Cycle.