

Magic Realism

AN EXPLORATION AT THE OUTER BORDERS OF REALITY

AS91106: READING PROJECT 2019

“Together, they would watch everything that was so carefully planned collapse, and they would smile at the beauty of destruction.”



Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Form developed personal responses to independently read texts, supported by evidence.	Form developed, convincing personal responses to independently read texts, supported by evidence.	Form developed, perceptive personal responses to independently read texts, supported by evidence.

Extended Reading Project

Genre, Theme and Style

"In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through to you."

- Mortimer J. Adler

MAGICAL REALISM

The task requires the student to: select and read an inclusive range of written, and visual texts and contrast elements of Genre, Theme and Style; maintain a log of the reading experience and make a final presentation.

1. Overview

During the year you will be asked to read a wide range of texts. Using texts you have selected you must complete a log of the reading process. Overall you will read six texts. You will complete log entries on each text, exploring and contrasting their style, theme and genre then present a report on your findings. The texts must have been read this year to be included for assessment. You will complete reading and log entries in this booklet or your online journal in class and at home.

2. The selection of texts will include:

- **Two extended texts, which could include non-fiction texts: Novel, Biography, Autobiography, Essays, Fact-based texts etc**
- **Two other written texts: Poetry Anthology, Short Stories etc**
- **Two Films or Oral Texts**
- **You are encouraged to select texts that support the investigation of the Magical Realism genre and the themes and style features that emerge from it.**

Extended Reading Project

Useful Information:

If you're struggling to find the right text, try the following avenues:

Check the class reading pages on surreal.edutronic.net to see what texts other students are exploring.

Speak to your teacher or the school librarian and ask them to help you find the right book.

Speak to your friends and ask them what they're reading at the moment.

Visit a bookstore and ask their advice.

Go online and search for books that expand on the genre of Magical Realism.

3. Making Journal Entries

For each text:

- Explore aspects of style, theme and genre in your selected texts and contrast their effects:
 - What noticeable linguistic styles did you notice in the text?
 - How did the author use character, plot and setting to extend their themes?
 - What was the relationship between the style of a non-fiction text and the reliability of its content?
 - What was similar or different in key aspects of the treatment of these components, compared to other texts?

Support your explanation in every journal entry with at least three specific details from the text.

You could give your reaction to the author's perspective, the events that occurred or the things you learned. To get thinking about the author's attitude, develop some statements which you think the author might agree or disagree with.

5. Assessment

Successfully completing this task will allow you to present a portfolio in an attempt to unlock NCEA 2.9 Wide Reading.

AS 91106

Title: Solo

Author: Vicki McAuley

Text type: biography

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Never before have I disagreed so strongly with an author's portrayal of a person. *Solo*, the account of Andrew McAuley's fatal crossing of the Tasman Ocean, didn't make me feel admiration for the main character. In fact, it left me with an almost totally negative impression of him. I disagreed

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strongly with Vicki McAuley's depiction of her husband as a faultless man. Andrew's decision to cross the Tasman Ocean in a kayak is a controversial one. In this book Vicki McAuley attempted to support Andrew's choice to do so, but in my opinion, she did the opposite. I had trouble figuring out how

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much was Andrew's own thoughts and what was his wife's interpretation. I saw this straight from the start of the book where she writes from her husband's point of view. Andrew thinks, "Oh God.

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Moments pass, but not the tears, nor the agony on leaving his wife and child. Oh God, please let me finish in one piece." We've only got her word for it that this is what he was thinking. The book's never-ending descriptions of 'brave', 'fearless', 'amazing' Andrew irritated me. What sort of father puts his ambitions before his parental duties? What kind of man willingly and with full knowledge leaves his wife to pay a mortgage and tend to their son so that he can enjoy an adventure? I'm sure these were not the questions Vicki McAuley was attempting to raise in the book, but they were the ones I was left with at its end. The most infuriating section of the book is that in which the author

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criticizes Justin Jones and James Castrission's joint effort to cross the Tasman in a kayak of their own. Whereas Andrew's plans to do so were deemed 'valiant', the men's competitive spirit is blamed by the author for contributing to Andrew's 'bad moods' leading up to his attempted crossing. If Andrew

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was such a wonderful and pioneering man, why couldn't he cope with this? But I do respect the section which deals with Vicki's grief. Her struggle with depression following her husband's death, as well as the emotional turmoil experienced by her son, was tragic and sounded realistic. I could empathize easily with both characters and this part left me with a deeper understanding of grief and resilience in the face of tragedy. The conclusion I came to from reading this book was the opposite of that offered by the author. It also saddened me that someone with every reason to be content should have to strive for such external shows of success in order to feel happy. Why isn't being a good husband and father enough? Why doesn't society applaud such simple but good achievements? The book, even though the author didn't mean it to, made me think about this.

For Excellence, the student needs to form developed, perceptive personal responses to independently read texts, supported by evidence.

This involves demonstrating understandings and expressing viewpoints that are insightful and/or original. This includes responding to links between text and self, and text and world.

This student has independently selected and read the biography *Solo* by Vicki McAuley as one of the six texts required. The student forms a developed personal response, supported by specific details from *Solo*, by giving a reasoned and clear viewpoint about a person's behaviour, supported with evidence (1).

There is an insightful understanding and viewpoint about the author's purpose, supported with evidence (2) and a clear and relevant link between the viewpoints about Andrew's behaviour and the author's purpose, supported with evidence (3).

For a more secure Excellence, the student could develop the understanding about the tensions between individual fulfilment and social responsibility.