ASTRID SCHOLTE: SO, YOU WANT TO BE A WRITER

REFLECT: THE INFLUENCE OF POP CULTURE

"I was raised on a diet of Spielberg, Lucas and Disney."

(Astrid Scholte)

The media we engage with can shape our worldview in so many ways, and even impact our identity, decision-making, and our future. If you were 'raised on a diet' of three things from pop culture, what would you say they are? How do you think they influence you?

BOOK OR FILM?

Let's debate the ultimate question: does a film ever do the book justice? Can you think of an example of a screen adaptation being *even better* than the written version? Chat with your classmates and see what you can come up with.

You may like to set up a formal debate in your class: which is better, books or movies? Try and get people to argue against their personal preference, to make it more interesting!

WRITING ACTIVITY: WORLD-BUILDING

While most streets had been cleared of any substantial trees and the shadows they could cast, hundreds of lampposts lined the sidewalk to flood diffused light at nighttime. With nearly constant cloud cover during the day, the lampposts' shadows shouldn't be a concern.

But now, with the sun streaking through the cloud, the thick gray lines on the sidewalk turned black. And within the pitch-black shadow lay a shifting substance – as though something dark and simmering has been spilled onto the pavement.

Edem.

Edem allowed you to manipulate time and change your reality.

(*League of Liars*, pg.3)

Astrid Scholte is an expert at world-building. She creates settings that are fantastical and imaginative, but entirely believable because of the details she includes. She uses world-building to entice the reader into the story.

Write a paragraph that introduces a reader to a new setting, with elements they've never heard of, and don't fully understand (at least not yet). Include plenty of vivid descriptions. Can you draw the reader into your story, while also leaving enough unknown, causing them to want more?

BOOK TRAILER

Work in groups to create a 30-second trailer for a favourite book. Your goal is to try and convince people to read the book, and also let them know what it's about without giving any spoilers. Your trailer could be live action, stop-motion animation, or use any other media elements you wish. Be creative!

PUBLISHER TEACHING NOTES

League of Liars (extract)
The Vanishing Deep (extract)
Four Dead Queens (extract)

Astrid Scholte

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

Learning areas: English, media arts

Capabilities: Critical and creative thinking, literacy

RELEVANT BOOKS

League of Liars series

The Vanishing Deep

Four Dead Queens

About the Author

Astrid Scholte is the internationally bestselling and award-winning author of *Four Dead Queens*, *The Vanishing Deep* and *League of Liars*. She has worked in film production, including at Industrial Light & Magic and on James Cameron's *Avatar*. *Shadows of Truth*, the sequel to *League of Liars*, is to be published in early 2024.

Curriculum Links

Understand that authors innovate with text structures and language for specific purposes and effects (VCELA429)

Present an argument about a literary text based on initial impressions and subsequent analysis of the whole text (VCELT436)

Analyse text structures and language features of literary texts, and make relevant comparisons with other texts (VCELT439)

Analyse and evaluate how authors combine language and visual choices to present information, opinions and perspectives in different texts (VCELY442)

Experiment with the ways that language features, image and sound can be adapted in literary texts (VCELT447)

Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that present a point of view and advance or illustrate arguments, including texts that integrate visual, print and/or audio features (VCELY449)

Reflect on, discuss and explore notions of literary value and how and why such notions vary according to context (VCELT454)

Recognise and analyse the ways that characterisation, events and settings are combined in narratives, and discuss the purposes and appeal of different approaches (VCELT374)

Analyse and explain the effect of technological innovations on texts, particularly media texts (VCELY376)

Analyse and explain the ways text structures and language features shape meaning and vary according to audience and purpose (VCELY379)

Experiment with text structures and language features and their effects in creating literary texts (VCELT385)

Create literary texts that adapt stylistic features encountered in other texts (VCELT386)

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas to a specific audience (VCELY387)

Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view (VCELT394)

Experiment with ideas and stories that manipulate media elements, and genre conventions to construct new and alternative viewpoints in images, sounds and text (VCAMAE040)

Develop and refine media production skills to integrate and shape the technical and symbolic elements in images, sounds and text to represent a story, purpose, meaning and style (VCAMAM042)

Plan, structure and design media artworks for a range of purposes that challenge the expectations of specific audiences by particular use of media elements, technologies and production processes (VCAMAM043)

Suspend judgements to allow new possibilities to emerge and investigate how this can broaden ideas and solutions (VCCCTQ044)

Challenge previously held assumptions and create new links, proposals and artefacts by investigating ideas that provoke shifts in perspectives and cross boundaries to generate ideas and solutions (VCCCTQ045)

Investigate the nature and use of counter examples structured as arguments (VCCCTR048)

Critically examine their own and others' thinking processes and discuss factors that influence thinking, including cognitive biases (VCCCTM051)

Consider how to settle matters of fact and matters of value and the degree of confidence in the conclusions (VCCCTR038)

Consider a range of strategies to represent ideas and explain and justify thinking processes to others (VCCCTM040)