This resource is intended to support English teachers explore *The Intervention: An anthology*. This important collection can be studied within a teaching program for multiple levels of secondary English. Due to the historical and political context that students will need to understand, it would be most suitable in a Year 11 or 12 English classroom. This Anthology, or aspects of it, could also be explored in a Year 10 English program, and some of the activities in these pages can be used in various classroom environments. The text, and this resource, could also be helpful for teaching the *Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship* content for Year 10.

The assessments and activities suggested in this teaching resource target the *Australian Curriculum: English* course, specifically Unit 2 (version 8.1), which requires that ‘students analyse the representation of ideas, attitudes and voices in texts to consider how texts represent the world and human experience’. The content targeted within the activities includes, but is not limited to, (ACEEN021) (ACEEN024) (ACEEN025) (ACEEN028) (ACEEN029) (ACEEN030) (ACEEN034). The assessment tasks outlined will indicate the curriculum content that teachers could assess through the suggested tasks.

The numerous activities suggested are not intended as a linear program; they should be selected or adapted by teachers to assist in unit planning and teaching activities.

**Introductory Activities**

**Class Activity: What is the Intervention? What do we know? What can we find out?**

Students need to have an understanding of the debate surrounding the Intervention. Depending on the students’ familiarity with Indigenous history and the extended campaign for Indigenous rights, teachers may need to provide more direct instruction. Create a class timeline showing major moments and events related to Indigenous rights from 1930 to 2016. Students can contribute to this timeline by viewing websites such as:

**SBS: Timeline: Indigenous rights movement**

**Share Our Pride: Reconciliation Australia**

**Creative Spirits: Get Aboriginal Culture Without Agenda**
Using the timeline as a discussion piece, students can make some predictions about what you might expect the Anthology to represent. These predictions, made by each student, should be recorded either on a shared document/web space or in student workbooks.

Below are some websites that might be useful for students to establish a better understanding of the policies behind the Intervention and the responses to it:

**Australians Together: The Intervention**

**Amnesty International: The NT intervention and human rights**

**ABC: NT Intervention**
http://www.abc.net.au/indigenous/special_topics/the_intervention/

**Northern Territory Government: A summary of the government report of the ‘Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse’**

The below image appears on the inside back cover. As a class, perform a visual analysis of this image and discuss its possible meanings. In addition, discuss the inclusion of this image within the Anthology and what it might represent in relation to the Anthology. Ask students to write a short, individual reflection about what they predict about the Anthology at this point and what they understand about the issues they think it will represent.
Shared Investigation: Form, voice and perspective. This unit of work, and *The Intervention: An anthology*, requires students to be familiar with the various forms of writing, responsive to multiple voices and understand specific perspectives on this issue. To comprehend the breadth of this collection, allocate an Anthology contribution to every student (some students may cover more than one contribution). Do not allocate the Introduction as it will be considered in the next activity. Using the points below, make an initial assessment of each contribution and feed this back to the class so they understand the breadth of contributors, genres, arguments and views, and the overall perspective of the collection.

- Contributors – who are they? Where are they from? What is their connection to the Intervention? What is their writing background?
- Genre/Form – in what form is this contribution? Describe the elements of the contribution.
- Voice – list the words that you associate with the voice of this text.
- View – what ideas about Indigenous culture, political conditions, discrimination, equality or the Intervention do you think are being promoted?

As a class, try to make an assessment of whether there is a collective perspective offered by this text. Discuss the different views in the text and the representation of voices. Try to agree on a statement that explains the perspective of this Anthology.

**Personal Response**

**Class Reading Exercise: Introduction by Rosie Scott**

Divide the class into groups of four. Every student should read the Introduction silently, then one pupil from each group should read the final three paragraphs aloud for the group. After some discussion (and assistance from the teacher if necessary) each group should complete the following statements:

- This introduction is about ...
- We think the audience is ...
- A feature of this introduction that stands out is ...
- The last three paragraphs of the Introduction position the audience to ...

Each group should display their answers and allow others to read and consider them. In a class discussion explore the various summaries of this text and then allow students to write their own reflective response to the Introduction.

**Key Elements of the Text**

**Synthesising Tasks**

**Reading Strategies: Where do we find meaning?** Using the information gathered through the class reading activity above, students should begin to explore close readings of their allocated poem. Providing evidence or explanations for our response to poems is a critical skill in literary studies.

Using the model of a Venn diagram, teachers should discuss ‘reading’, or the process of making meaning of a text, as a practice dependent on interpreting what we know and understand from:

1. our own knowledge or experience (Reader’s Context)
2. information about the writer’s world (Writer’s Context)
3. the text’s construction (Text).

Each of these can be represented by a circle in the Venn diagram.

It is often thought that the point at which these three circles intersect is where ‘meaning’ is made, but sometimes our reading is influenced more by one of these aspects of reading than another.

Teachers should have students cut out three circles and consider what is shaping their response through the visual representation of the circles. Which is most influential? What within the circle informs your response the most? Students should write a summary of their ‘reading’ as a formal exercise in class or at home.

Having students practise this articulation of ‘reading’ will be important throughout the Australian Curriculum: English course, so this might be an activity that you return to and create more permanent, laminated circles for students.
Close Study
Writer’s Craft

Protest Writing: What is it? The form of protest writing that students would be most familiar with is the protest song. Students who have internet access in class might Google some of the instantly recalled songs and listen to the lyrics. In classes where this isn’t possible or preferable, teachers should provide some copies of different songs used for protest with historical significance, as well as some that students might be familiar with. Some significant Australian artists in this genre include Archie Roach, Kev Carmody, Midnight Oil, The Herd, Yothu Yindi, the John Butler Trio, Redgum, the Warumpi Band, Helen Reddy and Eric Bogle. Students might also be familiar with international examples, especially from the rap genre with bands like N.W.A or Public Enemy.

Explore the other forms of writing used for the purpose of protest and discuss possible reasons why particular forms may be used over others. These reasons might be related to audience, context, purpose, distribution and available technologies. Once students are aware of the content and context of some well-known protest works, ask them to contribute statements about what we expect to find in Australian protest writing about; war, immigration policies, the environment, race, gender, class, etc.

Generic techniques and language devices: Revision. Each text in this Anthology uses form in a very specific way. There are short stories, poems, speeches, letters, memoirs, declarations, collections of statements and essays. Divide the class in groups to define these forms. They do not need to come up with complex or formal definitions, but ones that outline the generic structures and devices. This information should be recorded in an accessible location in the classroom or online so that students can refer to it throughout their study of this Anthology. Once this information has been recorded and shared, ask students to reflect on the following question:

Why do you think the Anthology combines so many forms of writing?

Teachers should select a variety of texts to study as examples of their form. This should include close analysis of language features, structural elements and rhetorical devices.

Persona/Voice Activity. The voices in each of the texts in the Anthology are unique and distinct – but some are more powerful that others. Using Rosalie Kunoth-Monks statement on the ABC program Q&A analyse the how the persona is constructed and the voice communicated. (Page 23 of the Anthology.)

Genre and Structure. Anita Heiss and Jeff McMullen both provide well-considered, structurally effective and subtly affective arguments in this Anthology. In groups of three, students should jigsaw one of these pieces of writing. Each group member should read and take notes on different components of the text; (a) structure and argument, (b) language and emotion, and (c) perspective and contextual connections. When these three areas are reported and combined, students should construct an essay using Heiss and McMullen’s work as a model, and their three areas as their essay body paragraphs.

Text and Meaning
Themes: Handout

Below is a diagram listing some of the many themes and issues explored in the Anthology. Provide this diagram to students, who should cut out the bubbles. They may also add bubbles for other themes that they feel are important. Whenever reading texts students can have these cut-outs with them to place on the text where they feel the theme is revealed. At the end of the piece students should summarise their observations about the themes so that they are recorded for future reference.
Synthesising task/activity

1. **Group Presentation**
   In groups of three, students should select two contributions that they feel are connected through ideas/themes, forms/structure or poetic devices. In approximately five minutes groups should explain the connections between the texts, using close references to support comments and observations.

2. **Response: Close Reading**
   As an in-class assessment, provide students with a copy of ‘A Statement’. Teachers should decide the conditions of this assessment – whether students will have a chance to prepare their response, annotate the poem, or respond to the poem unseen. Students should then answer the following prompt:

   Explain how structural and language conventions work to influence an audience to agree with a statement.
Wider World
Ways of Reading the Text

World Literature

Western Australian writer and academic, Kim Scott, explores a number of Indigenous stories through his influential novels and community centred projects. He explores the Indigenous histories of the people he is descended from, considers the loss of cultural connection and values the continuation of language above all. We could say that the cultural concepts his work embodies could be lost through the Intervention. His work has been read by people of other indigenous cultures throughout the world who recognise the connections between the circumstances of Australian Indigenous peoples and their own circumstances.

Read this article and discuss the significance that Australian Indigenous writing has to world literature:


Comparison with other texts

Indigenous Connections

The poetry of Oodgeroo Noonuccal has been an important and powerful inclusion in the secondary English canon of texts for study for an extended period. This poetry is complex yet direct, strong and tender. Compare the poems ‘We Are Going’ and ‘No More Boomerang’ to Ali Cobby Eckerman’s four poems in this Anthology. Students should be directed to consider the poetic features of all of the works and how they construct a political and cultural perspective.

Bureaucratic Register

Read the ‘Yolngu Statement: 24 June 2012’ alongside the Stronger Futures legislation. This is a protest not only of ideas, but also in relation to form and language. Using the opening statements of the government document, analyse the use of language and the bureaucratic register. Compare this to the ‘Yolngu Statement’. Ask students to reflect not only on the objections made by the statement, but also on how the way it has been written is able to make a statement about bureaucracy.

Evaluation of the text as:

- **Australian Enchantment.** ‘Australia’ has always been a concept of the imagination as much as it is a geographical entity. From Indigenous conceptions of origin to European fascinations with a great southern land ripe for discovery, a series of good and bad enchantment stories have created Australia within the world’s imagination. Students should explore how the works in this Anthology connect with ideas of enchantment:
  - are there examples of enchantment in the texts?
  - which enchantment traditions are they connected to?
  - do they challenge the perceptions about Australia that have been established in world literature?
  - what conclusions can be formed about reality and enchantment through reading this collection?

Rich Assessment Tasks

- **Comparative Study – Debra Adelaide’s ‘Welcome to Country’ and P.M. Newton’s ‘567,000 kms driven’.** Placing these two texts alongside each other creates a powerful juxtaposition. After revising the features of a short story and the construction of voice as a class, students should read the two texts closely with the following question in mind:

  **Consider how voice and setting can be constructed differently to have a similar effect and response from an audience.**

- **Individual Writing Task: Protest Poem.** After studying the genre of protest writing, students should construct their own example of the form. In *The Intervention* Samuel Wagan Watson’s poem ‘Intervention Rouge’ is very different in form and style to Lionel Fogarty’s ‘Philosophies
Exterminated’. Students should perform a close reading of both of these poems and experiment with ways of explaining their own response to a concept related to the Intervention. It is important that students do not feel that they must encompass everything about this political decision or their numerous objections to it. Their connections might be thematic, individual or even abstract.

This task is focused on poetic form as much as the ideas it expresses. Experimenting with form and language should be a focus of teaching and working time, and students should submit their poem along with an explanation of their process.

Informed Reaction

Synthesise core ideas by:

- **Reconsidering Your Response.** Once they have read some of the contributions, students should revisit the predictions they made about the Intervention in the Timeline activity and their close reading of the Introduction. With these earlier thoughts in mind, students should write an evaluation of the accuracy of their predictions about the Anthology.

- **Individual Comparative Task.** While this Anthology comprises a number of pieces of writing, it is ultimately one text. This text has a clear perspective about the political intervention in the Northern Territory. Test this premise by comparing three texts – one from the beginning, one from the middle and one from the end of the Anthology – and then return to original statements made about perspective in the Introduction task. Do these statements need amending in relation to the whole Anthology? If so, what is the reason for the amendment?

Rich assessment task:

1. **Create an Imaginary Text.**
   Write an academic dialogue between two people taking differing views on the Intervention. Consider the context of this discussion and create voices that are authentic and informed, in a tone that is respectful. This discussion may draw on the voices of the Anthology but should demonstrate an understanding of perspective.

2. **Response: Essay.**
   Write an essay style response to the following prompt:
   
   **Alexis Wright has said of writing her novel Swan Book, ‘it was like writing a story to the ancestors, to the spirits of the country’. Discuss this statement with reference to her short story in the Anthology, ‘Be Careful about Playing the Path of Least Resistance’.**

3. **Response: Tutorial Discussion.**
   In the style of a shared discussion between students and teacher, explore the following quote by Yalmay Yunupingu:
   
   ‘We are exhausted by the routine attacks that undermine and destabilise the community, educators and systems in place. We are frustrated with naïve people coming into our communities, unfamiliar with cultural differences, making decisions and recommendations for us.’

   Students should be given an opportunity to prepare for this discussion and create notes to aid their participation in the discussion. Teachers should consider how much structure the class requires for this discussion to occur.

   Teachers could also extend students’ study of this topic by suggesting they consider the 2016 White Paper reviewing the Intervention.