

**Prescribed literature as a vehicle for the
enhancement of 21st Century soft skills of
English language learners**

MJ Rossouw

 orcid.org/0000-0002-6617-7816

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Supervisor: Dr S. Romylos

Co-supervisor: Mrs J. Kruger

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Student number: 27233235

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have given acknowledgement where due. I have not previously, in part or in its entirety, submitted this dissertation to any university for a degree.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Rossow', is written over a horizontal line.

Signature

_____ 19 November 2022 _____

Date

ABSTRACT

The 21st century workplace is challenging and dynamic, and most individuals do not have the necessary skills to flourish in this environment. It has been thoroughly established in the literature that individuals lack the skills referred to as soft skills and this is problematic. Most notably, the biggest concern is that a lack of soft skills hinders new graduates from finding employment, which means that their livelihoods are at risk. The aim of this study was to illustrate how and to which extent prescribed literature can be used as a vehicle to enhance the 21st century soft skills of English language learners who find themselves in a technologically-driven environment.

The study followed four phases. Firstly, a literature review was conducted to determine which soft skills are of value to 21st century Grade 12 learners. Secondly, I analysed two purposefully selected prescribed novels and two poems (*Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton and *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, as well as *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings and *Poem* by Barolong Seboni) to determine how soft skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration, can be developed while teaching these texts. Thirdly, I explored how technology can be used when teaching these selected texts. Finally, the CAPS documents for EFAL and HL Grade 12 were consulted to determine what is required of teachers and learners to ensure that learners become well-rounded citizens who will be able to cope and be successful in the 21st century. I provide example lessons on how to develop the said soft skills while teaching the texts mentioned. These may serve as examples to in-service or prospective teachers in future.

This study followed a qualitative research approach with a social constructivist world view, set within an interpretivist paradigm. The study was guided by humanist and socio-cultural theory, and it was conducted by means of document analysis with hermeneutics as a strategy of data analysis. The study may encourage and assist teachers in their endeavour to develop the soft skills of learners using literary texts.

Key terms: soft skills, communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, 21st century, technology, literature in English

OPSOMMING

Die werksplek van die 21ste eeu is uitdagend en dinamies en die meeste individue beskik nie oor die nodige vaardighede om in hierdie omgewing te floreer nie. Die wêreld ekonomie en die huidige opvoedkundige stelsel benodig individue wat 'n holistiese bydrae tot die samelewing kan maak. Dit is egter nie moontlik as werknemers nie oor die nodige sagte (mensgerigte) en harde (werksgerigte) vaardighede beskik nie. Die literatuur bevestig dat die vaardighede waarna as sogenaamde sagte vaardighede verwys word, by individue ontbreek en dit blyk problematies te wees. Die tekort aan sagte vaardighede wek kommer omdat dit pas afgestudeerde graduandi verhinder om werk te kry en so hulle lewensbestaan bedreig. Die doel van hierdie studie is om te illustreer hoe en tot watter mate voorgeskrewe letterkunde aangewend kan word om die sagte vaardighede van leerders met Engels as vak in 'n tegnologie-gedrewe omgewing te ontwikkel.

Die fokus van hierdie studie word onder vier primêre afdelings uiteengesit. Eerstens is daar bepaal watter sagte vaardighede letterkunde bied wat in die 21ste eeu vir Graad 12-leerders van waarde kan wees. Tweedens is voorgeskrewe romans (*Cry, the Beloved Country* deur Alan Paton en *Life of Pi* deur Yann Martel), en twee voorgeskrewe gedigte (*somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* deur ee cummings en *Poem* deur Barolong Seboni) ontleed om vas te stel hoe sagte vaardighede soos kritiese denke, kreatiwiteit, kommunikasie en samewerking, ontwikkel kan word gedurende die onderrig van hierdie tekste. Dertens ondersoek die studie hoe hierdie voorgeskrewe tekste in samehang met tegnologie onderrig kan word. Laastens is die KABV-dokument (CAPS) vir Engels Eerste Addisionele Taal en Huistaal geraadpleeg om vas te stel wat van onderwysers en leerders verwag word om te verseker dat leerders in geronde burgers sal ontwikkel wat in staat sal wees om tred te hou en suksesvol te wees in die 21ste eeu. Laastens bied die voorbeeldlesse wat illustreer hoe sagte vaardighede ontwikkel kan word gedurende die onderrig van genoemde tekste.

Hierdie studie het 'n kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering gevolg met 'n sosiaal-konstruktivistiese wêreldbeskouing binne 'n interpretivistiese paradigma. Die studie is begrond deur 'n humanistiese en sosiokulturele teorie deur middel van dokumentanalise, met hermeneutiek as strategie, vir data-analise. Daar word gehoop dat hierdie studie onderwysers sal bemoedig en bystaan in hulle poging om leerders se sagte vaardighede te ontwikkel wanneer hulle hierdie genoemde literêre tekste gebruik.

Sleutel terme: sagte vaardighede, kommunikasie, samewerking, kreatiwiteit, kritiese denke, 21ste eeu, tegnologie, Engelse letterkunde

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

The importance of “soft skills” – creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration – has perhaps never been as clear as it is now. The year 2020 started like any other; little did we know that it would be an unprecedented year. On the 11th of March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic (WHO, 2020c) and the world as we knew it, changed, seemingly irrevocably. On the one hand, the pandemic exacerbated the entrenched neglect of soft skills in the education system with the migration to online learning, and on the other, it highlighted the consequences of inadequate soft skills as schools and universities emerged from the pandemic to find learners underdeveloped in this area. How do we address the problem of inadequate soft skills? It is here where teaching of literature in English can make a contribution. This study explores how the literature in English curriculum can contribute to the development of soft skills among learners.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a national lockdown was imposed in South Africa on the 27th of March 2020 (BBC News, 2020). Citizens were forced to adapt daily routines accordingly. This greatly affected schools, businesses and families, as events could not run their normal course (UNESCO, 2020b). After nearly six months in varying stages of lockdown, President Ramaphosa proffered that “now is the time to return our country, its people and our economy to a situation that is more normal, that more resembles the lives that we were living six months ago” (BBC News, 2020).

Perhaps, instead of merely returning to a “more normal” life, the events of 2020 offer us an opportunity to improve and to address some of the challenges we faced before lockdown. This is applicable to the neglect of soft skills as well (Nussbaum, 2010:2), as these skills are now an even greater concern considering the surge in technological activity and the hard skills that accompany it during the time of lockdown (Koeze & Popper, 2020). If we are not vigilant as we use technology, especially during these trying times, we may impede our children’s holistic growth. The migration to online learning during the pandemic only serves to further highlight the importance of soft skills, as these are a crucial part of the 21st century (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:3), even with the advancements of technology (Cox, 2019). As such, these skills must indeed not be neglected as they currently are (Ramsoomair & Howey, 2004:231; Dorsey & Nunn, 2013:31; Cukier *et al.*, 2015:12; Denisov, 2017; Patacsil *et al.*, 2017:347; Schooley, 2017:70; Vlolino, 2017; Forrest, 2018; Wood, 2018; Adekeye, 2019; Dean & East, 2019:7; Gilchrist, 2019; Vasanthakumari, 2019:66; Wilkie, 2019; Graham, 2020; Rockwood, 2021; Schislyaeva & Saychenko, 2022:1). The South African

Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011) implicitly advocates for the enhancement of soft skills by means of literature teaching, yet this remains an underexplored area of research. The next section gives some background to this problem to guide us to the problem statement for this study.

1.2 Background to the study

The CAPS for Grade 10-12, English First Additional Language (EFAL) (DBE, 2011:9), requires teachers to pursue various aims as part of their teaching practices. Some of these aims include equipping learners to communicate with both precision and pertinence (DBE, 2011:9). Moreover, learners are expected to use the four language skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:124) – with “confidence and enjoyment” (DBE, 2011:9). Learners are also expected to develop the ability to express their own thoughts and feelings so that they become critical thinkers (DBE, 2011:9). Bialik *et al.* (2015:7) consider questioning to be a crucial aspect of critical thinking. They propose that thinking critically implies that a student does not accept anything at face value, but rather evaluates and synthesises information. One way in which teachers often attempt to teach critical thinking is through peer assessment (Merckel & Van der Merwe, 2018:164). Another strategy is through group work, yet another requirement of the CAPS document. Group work is meant to encourage effective communication and comprehension of the interrelated systems found in everyday life (DBE, 2011:5). Moreover, the CAPS document encourages the development of learners’ imagination so that they can learn to express themselves with regard to their subjective experiences: “...use their Additional Language and their imagination to find out more about themselves. This will enable them to express their experiences and findings about the world orally and in writing” (DBE, 2011:9). Additionally, the CAPS document underlines the importance of learners becoming information literate as “information literacy is a vital skill in the ‘information age’ and forms the basis for lifelong learning” (DBE, 2011:9). Katz (2005a:44) maintains that information literacy is crucial in the 21st century with the internet being readily available. These same objectives are found in the South African Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement for Grade 10–12, Home Language.

In summary, the aims of the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:9) are directed towards producing learners who leave the schooling system equipped to express themselves confidently, individually and in group settings, on matters concerning their reality, based on what they hear or read, be it via the spoken or written language. These aims envision the soft skills required for the work environment (Hirsch & Alliance, 2017:12). More specifically, these “preferred skills” constitute the four Cs (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:3) that learners must acquire to survive in the 21st century: creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. However, Jang (2016:284) explains that the

demand for competencies in fields such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) is on the rise during the technologically-driven fourth industrial revolution (4IR). As the emphasis on STEM competencies continues to increase in the 4IR, the teaching of literature in English is in danger of being neglected (Jang, 2016:284). This tacit marginalisation of the subject would have dire consequences as literature teaches us valuable soft skills (Azmi, 2016). Fortunately, various sources state the importance of adding an “A” to the STEM acronym for the inclusion of the arts (Wynn & Harris, 2012:42; Guyotte *et al.*, 2014:12; Granger, 2016:1). STEAM education highlights the importance of “making connections between disciplines that were previously perceived as disparate” (Guyotte *et al.*, 2012:12). The educational movement from STEM to STEAM promises to be beneficial for the development of soft skills, especially when there is a focus on the relation between seemingly dissimilar concepts, as life too consists of interrelated but seemingly contradictory concepts. Wynn and Harris (as cited by Guyotte *et al.*, 2012:12) point out that both art and engineering require creative metacognitive processes, and in focusing on this intersection where hard and soft skills intertwine, there is an emphasis on “the role of creative and synthetic thinking”.

Soft skills – creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration – are at the heart of what it is to be human, so these skills are an indispensable part of every individual. These skills are especially interwoven in literature. Hake (2001:1) declares that the focus of literature is “...nothing less than human life, human experience.” Human life in the 21st century is technologically-driven (Diggory, 2018), even more so now since the WHO (2020c) declared the COVID-19 virus a global pandemic. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the pandemic forced the closure of schools and other places of business worldwide (UNESCO, 2020b), causing an increase in online activities (Koeze & Popper, 2020).

However, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, learners engaged in online activities. Firth and Jones (2019:51) refer to the learners of the 21st century as the “YouTube generation”. Kress (2010:5) maintains that since we find ourselves in the digital era, we cannot only focus on the written or spoken word alone; we must also take into account images and symbols as we are surrounded by them, especially with the introduction of the internet into our social contexts. Kress (2010:186) focuses on multimodality as a “social semiotic approach to contemporary communication” and he maintains that smartphones, for example, which provide access to the internet and all its applications, “illuminate how we learn to make meaning of the world through their use” (Kress, 2010:186). Subsequently, learners thrive when they are connected, have online communities, choose what to focus on and create their own content (Kress, 2010; Firth & Jones, 2019:51; Ganimian *et al.*, 2020). Firth and Jones (2019:54) continue to state that the 21st century is fast-paced and consists mostly of self-directed learners. These learners are often guided by,

among other technological artefacts, a countless variety of YouTube videos that touch on assorted subjects, from self-help tutorials to new discoveries, and to topics as ageless as literature (Firth & Jones, 2019:55). Chyr *et al.* (2017:11) state that over the last twenty years, technology has had a massive influence on teaching practices. Particularly the internet and all soft- and hardware associated with it has greatly affected students' learning methods and study habits, and as such teachers also had to adapt their ways of teaching (Chyr *et al.*, 2017:11). It is imperative that teachers must “keep up with the rapid evolution of the education environment, [and] must update themselves on the potential of new teaching approaches frequently, and apply those to their instruction” (Chyr *et al.*, 2017:11). The interactive whiteboard is an example of where technology has been influential with regard to teaching practices; it caters for visual, auditory and tactile learners since learners can view images, watch videos, listen to recordings and move objects around on the board (Firmin & Genesi, 2013:1611). Consequently, technology has afforded most teachers the opportunity to easily transition their lessons from being teacher-centred to being learner-centred (Firmin & Genesi, 2013:1605). However, some teachers are not enthusiastic about the use of technology in their classrooms, simply because they do not understand it well enough themselves, are unwilling to learn and because of numerous other factors such as a lack of equipment, resources and training (Winter *et al.*, 2021:235). Nonetheless, technology has become a common instrument in our teaching repertoire (Firmin & Genesi, 2013:1603) and its prominence in the modern-day classroom seems to indicate that it is capable of doing all that teachers can do, perhaps even more since it is unaffected, unlike human teachers, by stress and fatigue (Firth & Jones, 2019:55).

In the 21st century, technology in the South African classroom may contain traces of artificial intelligence (AI) (Chen *et al.*, 2022:28), though it is not common that such technologies are used in South African classes (Sanusi *et al.*, 2022:1). Nonetheless, AI refers to technologies that can mimic human intelligence and behaviour to the extent that it is programmed to do so (Merriam-Webster, 2022a). This implies that human teachers may be replaced to some extent, because AI is equipped “with algorithmic power for making predictions, diagnosis, recommendations, and decisions” (Chen *et al.*, 2022:28). AI is capable of measuring learner participation and analysing their performance in real time. This allows for the timely identification of learners at risk, which further enables opportune intervention (Chen *et al.*, 2022:28). Subsequently, it may seem wise to work towards employing AI in South African education systems to such an extent that it replaces teachers. However, such an endeavour elicits questions about machines' abilities to deal with uniquely human aspects. Machines simply cannot deal with the human aspects of teaching unless they are specifically programmed to do so beforehand by a human programmer. Evidently, this is impossible when the uniqueness of each learner is considered.

Where AI is used in assessments, formal or summative, it is programmed to identify keywords and grade learners' work accordingly (Gardner *et al.*, 2020:1208). It can happen that a learner understands the work perfectly but does not use the sought-after words or descriptions, so the AI determines that they fail. The opposite may also be true: AI may pass a learner who does not know a thing simply because they used the correct terminology in their assessment. It is worrisome that some *human* teachers, like AI, are only concerned with the final answers which learners provide and that these teachers often advocate the learning and repetition of specific vocabulary (Rogers, 2018). Though it is important, for teachers and learners, to be able to identify and incorporate keywords in the teaching and learning process, sole reliance thereon is indicative of a lack of critical thinking skills and often showcase an ignorance of the subject matter (Carney, 2016). However, the use of AI, and more specifically in the South African context – technology, is not solely to blame for the poor development of soft skills. Some reasons behind poor development of soft skills will be provided in the section titled, “evidence of a lack of soft skills”. Regardless, despite machines being able to supposedly accomplish anything nowadays, they are still inept when considering a few innate human pleasures such as the appreciation of art, creative expressions of innermost thoughts and the ability to philosophise about new ideas and concepts (White, 2020). Consequently, human guidance is still needed as part of teaching practice, and especially in the modelling of the four Cs.

This is where literature can be a helpful tool. Hake (2001:1) argues that literature is important since it is similar to a looking glass in that it reflects human existence. However, human existence is not reflected in AI on its own in the same way (Hake, 2001:1). AI is unable to reproduce or explain human phenomena without it being programmed to do so by a person who understands experiences and emotions (Kolchenko, 2018:250). Yet, English as a subject has been marginalised, especially during recent years, resulting in literature not being explored properly (Mathew & Pandya, 2020:6137). The response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting declaration of a National State of Disaster in South Africa exacerbated the marginalisation of English, and consequently, literature in English. There was a surge in online activities during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in an attempt to provide learners with the opportunity to continue their schooling (UNESCO, 2020c; Koeze & Popper, 2020). AI was used fruitfully during periods of strict lockdown all over the world to ensure that educational endeavours continue (Hershock, 2020:3). However, the focal point of these online lessons, in most cases, was on STEM competencies (SASOL, 2020); an effort to cater to the needs of a globalised society (Reiter, 2017:2). Wherever online lessons were not focused on STEM but rather on literature in English, the teaching of literature was “limited and compromised” due to a lack of proper contact between learners and teachers and between learners and other learners (Mathew & Pandya,

2020:6138). Doecke and Mead (2018:251) concur that the “social exchanges that occur within classroom settings are not simply incidental or instrumental to this process [of making meaning when reading a text] but the necessary conditions for meaning making to occur at all”. The researchers (Doecke and Mead, 2018:262) emphasise that the teaching of literature is a process of co-construction of knowledge in a “sociable space where students can engage in activities that are meaningful to them”.

The in-person teaching of literature is a crucial part of developing soft skills, making it relevant in the 21st century. Nussbaum (2010:2) and others such as Heckman and Kautz (2012:452), Balcar (2016:453) and Bates and Morgan (2018:412), emphasise the necessity of these skills. Nussbaum (2010:2) maintains that soft skills lead to “complete citizens” who can think independently, comprehend their surroundings and the emotions of others as elicited by their failures and successes. Nussbaum’s (2010:2) view corresponds with the aforementioned objectives set out in the CAPS document where learners are expected to emerge from the schooling system as holistic individuals (DBE, 2011:9). Moreover, Heckman and Kautz (2012:451) maintain that soft skills are imperative when individuals want to succeed in life. However, many classrooms of the 21st century make use of technological advancements (Cox, 2019), which inadvertently marginalises and displaces the development of soft skills (Mathew & Pandya, 2020:6137) and subsequently thwarts the success of learners in life (Heckman & Kautz, 2012:451). This use of technology as such is not problematic; it is the over-emphasis on technology that is detrimental to the development of soft skills in learners (Matthews, 2016; Schooley, 2017:70). An over-emphasis on technology diminishes the number of in-person interactions learners have (Schooley, 2017:70). Technology is used more and more as the tools we use to communicate and collaborate; technology is even used as an instrument to aid creative and critical thinking (Schooley, 2017:70). For example, whenever one has trouble coming up with an idea of one’s own, one uses technology; or when one is presented with a question to which one does not know the answer, a quick Google search is usually the solution. Consequently, the increased use of technology correlates with the decreased in-person interactions and the consequent under-development and use of soft skills. Nonetheless, learners value technology and Cox (2019) confirms that “technology occupies an important place within students’ lives.” Even though machines do not have the ability to portray emotions such as love or hate (White, 2020), which relate to soft skills, machines can still be an asset in the teaching of literature (Kolchenko, 2018:249) and subsequently in the teaching of soft skills.

Technology aids many teachers “by providing additional student training that frees classroom time for higher level learning activities” (Kolchenko, 2018:251). However, in a technologically-driven society, the in-person teaching of literature in tandem with technological advancements, allows

for the preservation and development of human qualities. According to Saavedra and Opfer (2012:8), employers seek staff who are capable of “complex thinking and communication skills.” These skills can be developed through the proper teaching of literature. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused this to be put on the back burner. Rogoff (2020b) warned early on in the pandemic that another recession would be looming. South Africa is indeed experiencing “its steepest recession in over a century” due to the pandemic (Henderson, 2021). This means that the over-emphasis on technology and the marginalisation of literature will likely continue, in the process alienating teachers and students from one another (Mathew & Pandya, 2020:6137). This consequence may not be apparent immediately.

The alienation between teachers and learners due to the over-emphasis on technology occurs in various ways. Firstly, a large percentage of the learners across the world come from poor socioeconomic environments and as such have little to no access to the soft- and hardware needed for online schooling (Mathew & Pandya, 2020:6138). Secondly, separation occurs due to teachers and learners being dehumanised and simply seen as two-dimensional images on a flat screen – human interaction is lost (Škobo & Đerić, 2019:84). Considering these difficulties, the pandemic may be catastrophic in more ways than one in that it affects not only health, but also the economy and the education system (Henderson, 2021; Nussbaum, 2010:1; Rogoff, 2020b). The effect will be lasting, as “it will be difficult to persuade businesses to invest [in] and hire” matric graduates during these difficult times (Rogoff, 2020a). Nussbaum (2010:1) briefly refers to the 2008 international economic crisis and what the greed to escape this crisis led to – a shift in focus on what we teach our young. Originally, the focus of education was on developing holistic individuals who can contribute profitably to their communities in terms of ethos, ethics and social responsibility (Charles, 1998:43). In some cases, this is still true. However, the focus of education has shifted to the skills that learners need to navigate a path for themselves in a globalised environment (Parreira do Amaral & Fossum, 2021:304).

Radical changes are still taking place in the educational realm since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, as many teachers, learners and parents attempt to salvage learners’ schooling so that none of the learners are left behind during these unprecedented times (UNESCO, 2020a; BusinessTech, 2021). Most South African learners had to attend school on certain days based on a “rotational system”. They were expected to “learn online from home” on the days when they were not physically at school (BusinessTech, 2021). This attempt to salvage the academic year was supported by technology in the form of online schooling with various resources available (UNESCO, 2020c). One of these resources include the STEM digital school where the focal point is to support and enable “access to quality education at all levels and the promotion of excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics” (SASOL, 2020). However, on exiting the

pandemic, it is now becoming clear that education has become unbalanced. If STEAM education had been the clear focal point during this global crisis, then perhaps learners would have been able to execute basic human concepts such as communication (Buczynski *et al.*, 2012:29). According to Razi and Zhou (2022:1), the evolution of the STEM concept to iSTEM, which refers to integrated STEM, and eventually STEAM, came with its share of uncertainties.

Teachers are still unsure which framework is best suited to support society's pursuit of financial stability. These uncertainties seemed to have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic as teachers had to endure the added stress of dealing with significantly reduced classroom time; limited to no face-to-face interactions (Huang *et al.*, 2022:108); the stress of having to work with unknown technologies for which they received little training; and an increase in workload for some (Marshall *et al.*, 2020:47; Winter *et al.*, 2021:235). STEAM education has seemingly been the more prominent framework in recent years (Bequette & Bequette, 2012:41; Wynn & Harris, 2012:42; DeJarnette, 2018:1), as "shifting from STEM to STEAM felt like a truly well-rounded approach" (Christenson & James, 2020:6). However, STEAM education has not been the focal point during the COVID-19 pandemic (SASOL, 2020; Huang *et al.*, 2022:108). Being forced to use technology during these trying times highlighted the gap in science and technology education, so it immediately became a focal point in order to provide equal opportunity to continue education while adhering to the strict no-contact, COVID-19 protocols (Joffe, 2020:99). Moreover, engineering and mathematics also took priority (SASOL, 2020) to equip learners to join the workforce after school so that they can gain financial stability. Buczynski *et al.* (2012:29) state that even, and especially, in technical subjects, the teaching of art is crucial. As science requires art to illustrate different concepts, so artists require technical skills to "apply analytic, linear and logical thinking to compose and scale their work of art" (Buczynski *et al.*, 2012:29). Likewise, the teaching of other art forms, such as literature, develops "adaptability, complex communication skills, nonroutine problem solving, self-management, and systems thinking" (Buczynski *et al.*, 2012:29). "Disrupt" is a keyword in the digital era (DBE, 2022), and our lives have most certainly been disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This disruption is evident in "how people function, in how institutions function, in how government functions, in how the economy functions and in how society functions" (DBE, 2022). According to the Implementation Programme Guide for the National Digital and Future Skills Strategy of South Africa 2021–2025 (DBE, 2022) STEAMiE, which is the evolution of STEM to STEAM, to now incorporating "innovation" and "entrepreneurship" to form STEAMiE, is the most appropriate approach to teaching and learning following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Innovation is crucial in times of crisis, as is entrepreneurship (Am *et al.*, 2020; Pattinson & Cunningham, 2022:7; Newman *et al.*, 2022:119; Tang *et al.*, 2022). Innovative and

entrepreneurial skills can serve the community “by finding solutions for social and environmental problems” (Méndez-Picazo *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, provide many opportunities for new and creative business possibilities (Fairlie & Fossen, 2019; Betterton, 2021; El-Chaarani, 2021; Peek & Casarella, 2021), though various soft skills such as creative thought, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, adaptability and perseverance are required to ensure the proposed business plan succeeds (Cooney, 2012; Beqiri, 2021; De Oliveira, 2021; Tarver, 2022).

In the aftermath of the pandemic, one can assume that the focus of education will be on competencies such as STEM to salvage the economy as it was after the 2008 international economic crisis (Nussbaum, 2010:1). Necessary as this may be, we have to realise the importance of soft skills in trying times with an emphasis on STEAMiE even in a technologically-driven society. Vacancies will now be even more difficult to fill as the competition for the best increases not only because we are in a technologically-driven era, but also because of the recession caused by the pandemic. The teaching of soft skills is more vital than ever to ensure that aspiring employees distinguish themselves from machines (Ma, 2018a; Christensen, 2020; Crawford, 2021; International Labour Organization & World Bank, 2021; Tabieh *et al.*, 2021:129).

1.3 Problem statement

The humanities and the arts are being “cut away” from the education system (Nussbaum, 2010:2; Reiter, 2017:2), leaving education mainly knowledge-based (Ma, 2018a). The neglect of soft skills is an indirect result of globalisation, which has become the driving force behind many companies (Bialik *et al.*, 2015: ii) and efforts to gain national economic gain (Nussbaum, 2010:3; Razi & Zhou, 2022:1). Reiter (2017:2) highlights the increased focus on STEM, but she also underlines the fact that the arts and humanities are being neglected due to “the global shift towards innovation and technological development [and] the rapid changes in the global economy”. Nussbaum (2010:2-4) considers this oversight of the imagination, creativity and critical thought, which are developed when people study the humanities and art, as an “assault upon [the] soul”. Furthermore, Ma (2018) urges teachers to rather teach these “soft parts” or the soft skills as they are currently not taught as they ought to be. Reiter (2017:2) very aptly argues why the humanities or soft skills must not be neglected as they currently are: they “strengthen our global view, broaden our intellectual foundation, teach us to communicate clearly, help us to develop creative and critical thinking skills, teach us to be problem solvers, create engaged citizens and thinkers, reinforce cultural and ethical responsibilities and values, help us to understand the impact that science, technology, and medicine have had on society, and create well-rounded academics, students and thinkers”.

Unfortunately, however, one of the biggest issues arising from the improper teaching of soft skills (Ma, 2018a) is that learners do not have critical thinking skills (Dorsey & Nunn, 2013:31; Bialik *et al.*, 2015:1; Soufi & See, 2019:140; Shavelson *et al.*, 2019:338; Haber, 2020). Although critical thinking has long been emphasised in the educational realm, learners continue to lack the ability to think critically (DBE, 2020:40). Additionally, according to Arum and Roksa (2011:61), most university graduates lack the ability to reflect on what they learn and to evaluate, analyse and interpret (Arum & Roksa, 2011:61). The natural conclusion is that these competencies are not being developed at school level. Soufi and See (2019:141) state that there is little proof “that [critical thinking] skills are taught in an explicit and systematic way at undergraduate level”. The teaching of critical thinking skills is not the only skill that is being neglected in education, but also communication and collaboration. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic further diminished opportunities to communicate and collaborate (Huang *et al.*, 2022:108). One way to improve the development of the arts and humanities is through literature teaching (Reiter, 2017:2). “Humanities are an essential part of a well-rounded education that must begin in the elementary school years and continue throughout a person’s life” (Reiter, 2017:1).

Romylos (2018:160) indicated that some teachers, teaching senior and FET learners, devote more than half of their allocated time to literature teaching. The participants in her study “indicate[d] that literature is given ample attention in classes.” Consequently, Romylos’s (2018:161) study indirectly shows that there is ample opportunity for the enhancement of soft skills, since a great deal of time is spent on literature teaching. Literature teaching offers hope for the dire situation in which the humanities find itself, since literature teaching enhances the development of soft skills (Hake, 2001:1), the amount of time dedicated to literature teaching can help address the silent crisis (Nussbaum, 2010:2).

However, Romylos (2018:172) clarifies that the time spent on literature teaching is often wasted on superficial and mainly content-based engagement with literature focusing on recall of information instead of deep engagement with the content. Learners are provided with pre-packaged knowledge to reproduce in pen and paper examinations. Literature is only one component of the behemoth English subject. Generally, English as a subject is divided into two main categories: English language and literature in English (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:1&187). These are further divided into sub-categories where novels, short stories, dramas, poetry and folklore form part of literature in English (DBE, 2011:13, 18, 28 & 33), while English as language is divided into five components (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:2–3). These components are arranged from the simplest units of language to the more complex language concepts and include, in order, “phonology, morphology, syntax, discourse and pragmatics” (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:2–3). The CAPS document for Grades 10–12, for both English First Additional Language

and English Home Language, take all of these aspects together as four skills that must be mastered: speaking, writing, reading and listening (SWRL) (DBE, 2011). The CAPS document (DBE, 2011) refers to “introducing the languages” and “content and teaching plans for language skills” (SWRL) in the list of contents but, interestingly enough, literature in English is not mentioned in the index of the CAPS. I acknowledge that there are circulars, in the case of this study reference is made to Circular E39 of 2016, which state the names of the literary texts to be studied at the various grade levels. However, these circulars are not equivalent to the CAPS document in that it does not carry quite the same weight as the official CAPS document; neither does it provide information on *how* to teach literature. Regardless, the expectation is that teachers should address all the various categories and sub-categories in the CAPS as stated in the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP). However, with sport, absenteeism (Cuffe *et al.*, 2014:2) and the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its regulations, among other things (UNESCO, 2020b), time is more limited than ever. This leads to a neglect of certain categories of the English subject. According to Reiter (2017:6), carelessly inserting the ‘A’ into STEM education still leads to “missing the point and devaluing the arts and, by association, the humanities, by not recognising the importance of these areas of study”. The superficial teaching of literature in the bigger context of the subject leads to the under-exploitation of soft skills. This brings to reason that literature in English should be a stand-alone subject in order to fully exploit the teaching of soft skills at a deeper level. This is, however, a debate that is complex and the scope of this dissertation does not allow a full exploration of this issue.

The notion of curriculum reform, specifically with the focus on “skills required for global competition” (Hilton, 2008:63), is not new as it has been a focal point from 2008. Hilton (2008:63) mentions that “technology is driving increased demands for higher skills.” As a result, hard skills, or STEM competencies, have been the focus of many curricula since 2008 with the idea that it would give learners the edge in a competitive global market (Hilton, 2008:63; Nussbaum, 2010:1). However, Ramrathan (2021:383) conducted a review of the actions taken during the closure of schools as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and “argue[s] that these actions and proposals constitute a missed opportunity to critically review the school curriculum to move beyond the notion of education for all, and to strive for education that is relevant at both local and global levels”. He (Ramrathan, 2021:384) points out that there is greater concern about merely covering the curriculum, where the focus should rather be on the type of knowledge learners will require after the lockdown. Though hard skills are imperative, Hirsch and Alliance (2017:12) clarify that increased focus on soft skills or apparent 21st century skills could also improve learners’ chances of being employed in a global work environment. Ma (2018) is of the opinion that globalisation cannot be stopped. He states that local companies and graduates do not have many opportunities

in the international business world (Ma, 2018b). Subsequently, we cannot continue to neglect soft skills as it will come at the cost of our livelihoods (Ma, 2018a; Nussbaum, 2010:1; Grose, 2017:33).

Using prescribed literature as a vehicle for the enhancement of the 21st century soft skills of English language learners, proves necessary as the world is continually moving away from what makes us human – our soft skills (Ma, 2018a). Our souls (Nussbaum, 2010:2) are being neglected as we attempt to keep up with the demands of a technologically-driven era, a demand that is now more urgent due to the impact of COVID-19 (WHO, 2020b; UNESCO, 2020b). Considering that Nussbaum is a classical scholar, the possibility exists that the reference to our souls being neglected could in fact be a reference to the classical concept of the psyche, the mind, being neglected. As such, for the purposes of this study, the usage of the term 'souls' is not to be taken as religious but must rather be considered for its secular and more universal meaning which represents emotional intellect (Nussbaum, 2012:2). The soft skills referred to in this dissertation are those specifically identified by Bialik *et al.* (2015:3), namely communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking. Of course, soft skills are not exclusive or limited to the four Cs, as there is a plethora of soft skills. For instance, Nycum (2022:1), who conducted research in Virginia, includes a fifth "C" in the set of soft skills as discussed in this dissertation, namely citizenship. In this case citizenship refers to a social responsibility whereby an individual's behaviour must not only benefit himself but also the greater society in which he resides (Nycum, 2022:1). The amalgamation of the other four Cs, (communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking), results in this fifth C, citizenship, and it is for this reason that citizenship is not discussed as a separate entity in this dissertation (Nycum, 2022:34). However, it may be proffered that citizenship, or character, as an integrated soft skill (Poindexter, 2003:26) contributes to the idea of learners emerging from the schooling system as holistic, well-rounded, individuals (Nycum, 2022:1; DBE, 2011:9).

For an individual to be seen as a well-rounded citizen in the 21st century, they must possess both hard and soft skills (The World Bank, 2022). "Cognitive-, socio-emotional-, technical- and digital skills" are necessary to thrive in the current labour market (The World Bank, 2022). Meacham *et al.* (2014:366) even included *online* collaboration and *online* communication as a soft skill to be mastered in the 21st century prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, even though it is founded in certain hard skills, such as the technical ability to make use of a computer. Since the pandemic, researchers Shtaltovna and Muzza (2021:58) have advocated for "soft digital skills" such as "digital communication, problem-solving, collaboration skills, as well as digital content creation and media literacy". Moreover, other soft skills that are crucial in a post-Covid society include flexibility, leadership skills, social skills, good work ethos, attentiveness, kindness, compassion,

negotiation, enthusiasm, self-directedness and confidence (Janove, 2020; Doyle, 2022; Stephanie, 2022), just to mention a few. Nonetheless, when taken into consideration, the four Cs form the focal point of this study as they seem to form the foundation of most other soft skills.

Bialik *et al.* (2015:3) refer to soft skills as desirable and sought after by employers. According to Nussbaum (2010:3), if businesses do not have employees who possess these skills, financial economic gain will not be palpable, and this is quite crucial considering the current economic situation (Rogoff, 2020a). The lack of these skills implies that the objectives as set out by the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:9) have not been achieved. The humanities and soft skills must not be disregarded because “in the humanities, we teach our students to be analytical, to question, to engage in out-of-the-box thinking, to ask the difficult questions and to use their imagination in solving real world problems” (Garuba, 2021). Soft skills may be addressed in literature teaching, but the efficiency of these efforts depends on the depth of discussions and how much learners are allowed to be co-constructors of knowledge instead of presenting literature as pre-packaged information (Romylos, 2018:172). The next section clarifies the concepts applicable to this study. Given the situation sketched above, this study explores how prescribed literature for Grade 12 EFAL and HL can be used to develop and enhance soft skills needed for the 21st century in the South African context.

1.4 Conceptual framework

1.4.1 Concept clarification

The following concepts are key to this study:

1.4.2 Literature in English

Literature is defined as “the body of written works produced in a particular language, country, or age” (Merriam-Webster, 2020a). Accordingly, literature in English would refer to written works in the English language, regardless of its country or culture of origin. Consequently, literature in English includes African literature, Caribbean literature, African-American literature and so forth, all written in the English language. Contrary to this, English literature is a strand of literature that only includes British writers such as Shakespeare, Keats, Dickens, and DH Lawrence, among others. This study focuses on literature in English, which broadens the field to writers from all origins, with the only condition being that the literary works must be written in the English language.

Van der Walt and Evans (2019:211) include oral discourse along with written works, “that [are] not functional or referential in its intention” as a part of literature. Consequently, “literature” may

refer to works that form part of the canon, but also everyday texts, such as “newspapers, advertisements and subject texts” (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019: 212). Literature may also be seen as a division of various literary genres such as novels, drama, short stories and poetry (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:212). Thus, in context of this study, literature in English refers to pieces of written fictional work by authors from many different countries (Amigoni & Sanders, 2003:5), including for example the novels *Life of Pi* and *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Yann Martel and Alan Paton respectively as prescribed by the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2016 & 2017). Poetry is included as another genre. The poems, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni and *somewhere i have travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings, also fall into the category of literature in English and are also prescribed by the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE 2016 & 2017). The study does not analyse short stories, as this is not a genre that is an option for Grade 12 English Home Language learners. The drama genre is excluded from this study because of the limited scope of the dissertation.

1.4.3 Soft skills

Soft skills refer to the behavioural and social intelligence or “fuzzy people issues” that affect the success or failure of an undertaking (Levasseur, 2013:566). Weber *et al.* (2009:354) refer to soft skills as “interpersonal, human, people or behavioural skills.” However, since soft skills comprise all the characteristics that make us human (Levasseur, 2013:566; Weber *et al.*, 2009:351), it is only natural that “soft skills” would entail so much more than a specific set of skills. It is important to acknowledge that the term “soft skills” is not exclusive to the four Cs identified by Bialik *et al.* (2015:3), namely creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. Nevertheless, considering the abovementioned, the four Cs are regarded as the foundation for all other soft skills that form the focal point of this study.

1.4.4 Creativity

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2011:335) defines creativity as “relating to involving the use of imagination or original ideas in order to create something.” Creativity may also refer to the ability to think outside the box to “develop, design or create new applications” (Jang, 2016:290). Creativity, or the use of the imagination, is essential for problem-solving in life since no two problems are similar. Creativity in this study refers to the ability of learners to think innovatively about texts and complete creative assignments.

1.4.5 Critical thinking

Critical thinking refers to an active process of metacognition where an individual deliberately investigates a phenomenon. Bialik *et al.* (2015:7) break down critical thinking as analysing situations, evaluating them, visualising possibilities, integrating and then implementing them. In this study, critical thinking refers to the analysis and evaluation of situations as found in novels and poems. Moreover, critical thinking searches for what makes sense logically and how this information may be applied to real-life situations (Schmaltz *et al.*, 2017:1).

1.4.6 Communication

In this study, communication is regarded as the process of conveying information between individuals through writing or speaking, all the while adhering to the four competencies as discussed later in the paper. Collaboration can be used to “train and measure true communication skills” (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:8).

1.4.7 Collaboration

“Collaboration is the joining together of multiple individuals in service of working towards a common goal” (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:9). It refers to teamwork where individuals are still responsible for their own learning (Goertz, 2015). Collaboration applies to this study in that it builds on the aggregation of creativity, critical thinking and communication among several individuals.

1.4.8 Home Language (HL) and English First Additional Language (EFAL)

The first language a child learns is referred to as his or her home language, “mother tongue” or “native language” (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:3). A second language or first additional language, on the other hand, refers to a language learners are taught in addition to their home language and/or a foreign language for the purposes of communication within a multi-lingual community (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:6). The language situation in South Africa is unique, considering that there are 12 official languages. These include “Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, siSwanti, Xisonga, Setswana, Tshivenda, isiXhosa and isiZulu” (Skovsholm, 2000:11). Sign language is the twelfth official language. Learners are compelled to take two of the 11 official languages at school level (excluding sign language), “one of which must be the language of learning and teaching, and the other one as a subject” (Gina, 2017). However, in the South African context with its many official languages, it is often the case that learners take English as their Home Language subject, even though it is not their home language – their mother tongue – but more likely a first or second additional language (Gina, 2017; Kretzer, 2019). This

complicates matters and must be taken into account when teaching students, since they are actually being taught in a language that is not their home language.

1.4.9 Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document

The South African Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is “a single, comprehensive, and concise policy document, which has replaced the Subject and Learning Area Statements, Learning Programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines for all subjects listed in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12” (DBE, 2021a). It guides teachers and learners from Grades R to 12 in the teaching and learning process. The aims and objectives of the Grades 10–12 EFAL and Grades 10–12 HL CAPS documents form the focal point of this dissertation. It guides the process of helping learners acquire proficiency in the English language and develop the skills needed to enter the work force, to follow a trade or to gain access to tertiary education on completion of Grade 12.

1.4.10 Twenty-first century

The 21st century is the time period from 2001 to 2099. In this study, the 21st century is defined by the skills required for the economic environment and the development of these skills through teaching and learning. The 21st century has been characterised by an increase in technological advancements and the use of technology (Wyman, 2016). Specific skills of the 21st century refer to “core competencies such as collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving” (Rich, 2010).

1.4.11 Holistic individuals

For a better understand of what a holistic individual is, I refer to the concept of holistic education. Poindexter (2003:26) explains that holistic education refers to “teaching and learning from an integrated perspective.” The entirety of the learners’ surroundings as well as their unique personality must be considered to achieve an optimal teaching-learning process (Poindexter, 2003:30). This can be attained by incorporating various teaching and learning methods to address and develop the learner as a whole. Subsequently, holistic individuals refer to individuals who are well-developed in all aspects of their being. Cognitive, physical, emotive and social development is crucial for an individual to function fully and to lead an optimal life (Mcilroy, 2021). This correlates directly with the objectives set out in the CAPS document Grade 10–12, EFAL and HL. I reiterate here that the aims of the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:9) highlights the need for learners to use their imagination and to communicate, individually or in group settings, their feelings about what they perceive around them. These aims address the cognitive and physical abilities of

learners as they must develop the mental and mechanical capacity to express themselves. It also addresses their emotional and social development as these aims require learners to function in a social setting while being compassionate towards those they find around them. Individuals who are developed holistically will “succeed and reach their full potential” (Mcilroy, 2021). This is yet another objective as set out in the CAPS document, namely “that children [should] acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives” (DBE, 2011:9).

1.5 Research questions

1.5.1 Primary research question

How can the use of prescribed literature for Grade 12 EFAL and HL learners in the South African context enhance the soft skills needed for the 21st century?

1.5.2 Secondary research questions

- Which soft skills are addressed in literature that can be of value to Grade 12 learners in the 21st century?
- To which extent can literature be used to fulfil the requirements of the CAPS document in terms of the development of holistic individuals?
- How can literature be taught in agreement with the technologically-driven classroom in the 21st century?

1.6 Research aims

1.6.1 Primary research aim

The primary aim is to explore the role of prescribed literature for Grade 12 EFAL and HL in the enhancement of soft skills needed for the 21st century.

1.6.2 Secondary research aims

The subsidiary aims of the study are to:

- explore the soft skills addressed in literature that could be of value to Grade 12 learners in the 21st century;
- assess the extent to which literature in English is used to fulfil the requirements of the CAPS document in terms of the development of holistic individuals;
- explore the ways in which literature in English could be taught in agreement with the technologically-driven classroom of the 21st century; and to

- provide FET English teachers with guidelines on how to focus on soft skills when teaching literature.

1.7 Theoretical framework

The study is underpinned by a humanistic educational framework and is guided by Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory. The humanistic approach to education highlights the "cultural and practical rather than the scientific and speculative" in the teaching and learning process (Firdaus & Mariyat, 2017:30). A humanistic framework further encourages the holistic development of learners and is often focused on the well-being of the learners (Drew, 2022). Additionally, D'Mello (2017:72) describes humanism as a "progressive life stance that affirms our ability and responsibility to lead meaningful, ethical lives capable of adding to the greater good of humanity". This further links to the Bill of Rights enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa, 1996, which states that "every person under the age of 18 has the right to basic food, shelter, basic health care services and social services. Everyone has the right - to a basic education, including adult basic education" (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2014:19). These rights as set out in the South African Constitution are echoed in the aims and objectives of the CAPS (DBE, 2011:1), as the "curriculum aims to ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives". Consequently, it may be proffered that a humanistic educational framework advocates for the holistic development of learners so that they may excel in all aspects of life. Veugelers (2011:1) argues that humanist education "focuses on developing rationality, autonomy, empowerment, creativity, affections and concern for humanity". Veugelers's (2011:1) argument is based on the core principles as set out by Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, the fathers of humanism (Deacon, 2017:161; D'Mello, 2017:72). During his therapy sessions, Rogers focused completely on the client, calling it the "person-centred approach", placing emphasis on the subjectivity of the client (Deacon, 2017:161–163). Furthermore, he saw human nature as a concept that can be explained through three focal aspects: people have "constructive potential, [are] mainly goal-directed [and are] capable of change" (Deacon, 2017:163). These three aspects indicate that individuals should be understood in terms of how they see the world, their experiences, their feelings and how they process it all (Deacon, 2017:160). However, Maslow highlights individuals' hierarchy of needs and argues that certain basic needs must be fulfilled before individuals can focus on satisfying the next need and obtaining their maximum potential (D'Mello, 2017:72). Maslow lists the following needs from most basic to more complex: "physiological needs, security and safety needs, social needs, esteem needs [and] self-actualization needs" (Cherry, 2022a). Learners must be well looked after and safe before teachers can even begin the endeavour to impart knowledge regarding skills which learners may need in a social setting. Thus, humanism, as underlined in the Bill of Rights as well as the CAPS document

Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2014:19; DBE, 2011:1), deals with learners' interests as well as their growth regarding the skills necessary in their field of interest, which can be honed to contribute to society (Merriam-Webster, 2022b).

This dissertation aims to highlight that any skills individuals obtain throughout their schooling must contribute to them leading a life that is fulfilling on all levels, while also contributing to society. In essence these necessary skills, among others, delineate soft skills such as creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration and so this study advocates the development thereof. According to Fauzan and Akrim (2017:25), the purpose of a humanistic framework in education is to guide the teaching and learning process "for the benefit of humanising mankind." Moreover, Fauzan and Akrim (2017) state that "the implication of [a] humanistic approach in education [refers to how] teachers encourage students to think critically and act according to the values of humanity." A humanistic framework is applicable to this study, considering that the aim is to enhance the acquisition and development of soft skills through the teaching of literature in English. Also conducive to the development of soft skills, and consequently this research, is the socio-cultural theory, which emphasises the significance of the interconnectedness between societal relations and collaborative environments (Vygotsky, 1978; Wang *et al.*, 2011:296). The socio-cultural theory allows for the development of desirable soft skills in social settings where learners interact, communicate, deliberate and assist one another.

1.7.1 Research design and methodology

Databases consulted: ResearchGate; ERIC; JSTOR Web; EBSCOhost Web; Google Scholar and Google.

Keywords: Prescribed literature, novels, 21st century, soft skills, creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, Home Language and English First Additional Language, Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), holistic individuals, work environment, *Cry, The Beloved Country* by Alan Paton, and *The Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings and *Poem* by Barolong Seboni.

1.7.2 Research design, methodology and philosophical orientation

This study follows a qualitative research approach with a social constructivist world view, set within an interpretivist paradigm. The study is guided by a humanistic and socio-cultural theory and it was conducted by means of document analysis. These aspects are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

1.7.3 Sampling method

The texts and documents analysed as part of the study were selected using purposive sampling. Nieuwenhuis (2020:220) states that when a researcher wishes to conduct a study with a specific aim in mind, a purposive sampling method is used. Since I conducted document analysis, no human participants were involved in this study. The sampling pertained to texts and documents alone. Seeing that I had a specific aim in mind – to explore the role that prescribed literature plays in the development of 21st century soft skills – I made use of texts and documents that address these specific aspects. The purposive sampling method demands that specific aspects must be identified to gather the sample (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:220). Consequently, I focused on four specific soft skills namely: creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking. I selected two novels and two poems based on the criteria tabulated in Chapter 3, section 3.3. titled, *Selection of primary texts*, which facilitate the development of these skills. Considering that the context in which I conducted my study is South Africa, I chose two novels and two poems from the national prescribed set work list. Taking into account the diverse levels of proficiency among learners in South Africa, I chose one novel and one poem prescribed for English HL learners and one novel and one poem prescribed for English FAL learners.

1.7.3.1 Possible criteria

The problem statement and rationale for this study underlie the consideration of the text samples selected for this study. As already stated, the criteria that formed the focal point for the texts that were chosen for this study, are tabulated in Chapter 3, Section 3.3. titled, *Selection of primary texts*. The texts had to adhere to the following criteria:

The text had to be prescribed for Grade 12 learners, either for HL learners or FAL learners. The themes presented in the texts should elicit vivid emotional responses because when an appeal is made to emotions it will allow for complex discussions where diverse viewpoints are expressed (Jasinski, 2017; Beqiri, 2018; Amutan *et al.*, 2020). Thus, emotional intelligence ought to be developed, which is yet another desired soft skill employers look for in their employees (Kapoor, 2017; Stahl, 2018; Adekeye, 2019). And lastly, the themes found in the texts should be relevant to 21st century issues.

1.7.3.2 Data collection

Document analysis refers to “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents” (Bowen, 2009:27). In this study, data were collected via document analysis of four literary texts, namely *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel; *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton; *Poem* by Barolong

Seboni and *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings. These texts are all prescribed by the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE 2016; 2017). I collected data by reading, re-reading and taking notes on the chosen texts, with the aim of answering the research questions to reach the research aims of this study. Furthermore, data were purposively and specifically collected with the aim of exploring the four Cs – creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:3) – in the context of the chosen texts.

The process related to document analysis typically includes the critical examination of data (Bowen, 2009:27). According to Bowen (2009:27), texts must be “examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge”. The evaluation of documents calls for an objective approach. However, the humanistic approach acknowledges that I could not remain completely impartial, and as such the interpretations were influenced by my own subjectivity to some degree. A response to literary texts has a degree of subjectivity (Mart, 2019:79). However, I consulted the literature to compare my findings and interpretations to those of other researchers. Additionally, according to Rasch (2020), document analysis is a “straightforward structure and procedure [which] enables the researcher to adapt the method to their special case – nearly to every need.” When considering the statements made by Bowen (2009:27) and Rasch (2020), document analysis as data collection method was suitable for this study.

1.7.3.3 Data analysis

As already stated by Nieuwenhuis (2020:66), hermeneutics is crucial to a study in the interpretivist paradigm. Therefore, I analysed the data by relying on hermeneutics. According to the online Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (2020), hermeneutics is “the methodology of interpretation”, which concerns issues within texts. Nieuwenhuis (2020:125) declares that hermeneutics relates to “a way of understanding textual data”. Moreover, when hermeneutics is used as the method of analysis, the aim is to gain an understanding of the “text as a whole”, and also to interpret its various parts (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:125). Hermeneutics as a method of analysis was suitable to the study as I endeavoured to make meaning of the chosen texts as a unit by investigating these in sections in relation to creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration.

1.7.3.4 Researcher’s role and positionality

My role in this study was to provide an objective answer to the research question, namely how prescribed literature can act as a vehicle to enhance the soft skills that Grade 12 English language learners need for the 21st century. Considering my own traditional worldview, which favours

traditional methods and which is not keen on changes, including technological advancements, it was my responsibility to remain impartial and to explore what there is in the literature. Moreover, I recognised the positive aspects of technology as something that makes our lives more convenient. I also explored how these soft skills, as discussed, might be taught in a technologically-driven time.

1.7.3.5 Contribution of this study

This study may contribute to English for Education in that it highlights how literature, specifically novels, may be used to enhance 21st century soft skills. Four foundational soft skills, namely communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:3) are important to the 21st century workplace and may contribute to the nurturing of other wanted skills. Moreover, this study makes a practical contribution with its explicated approach in which example lesson plans are presented to incorporate the teaching of the mentioned soft skills using prescribed novels. These lesson plans are in correlation with the objectives as set out by the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:9).

CHAPTER 1: SUMMARY

Chapter 1 outlines the influence of COVID-19 in South Africa given its already struggling economy. The pandemic only served to worsen the current economic problems. In addition, the pandemic severely affected learners' schooling, since most schooling endeavours migrated to online platforms. Many learners were left behind in this movement, since poverty is a grave problem in the country. These learners simply do not have access to online platforms. Added to this, learners' soft skills could not be honed as they ought to be. With the emphasis on STEM competencies from as early as 2004, the migration to online schooling during the pandemic and the influence of technology in the 21st century classroom only further hinders the development of soft skills. Chapter 2 examines soft skills in the context of the 21st century in more detail. I explore the nature of the 21st century, the influence of globalisation on the lack of soft skills, as well as the four Cs. I also probe the evidence on the current lack of soft skills as well as the value of literature in developing 21st century soft skills. Furthermore, literature as facilitator to achieve the objectives as set out in the CAPS is discussed and the chapter concludes by examining how literature can be taught in agreement with the technologically-driven classroom in the 21st century along with the role of teachers in teaching literature to develop their learners' soft skills. The next chapter entails the literature review of this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Over the last decade, there has been a notable dissatisfaction among employers about the lack of 21st century soft skills among their employees (Dorsey & Nunn, 2013:31, Bialik *et al.*, 2015:1; Gilchrist, 2019). In a study by Dorsey and Nunn (2013:31), the most sought-after soft skills that are lacking in St Louis, Missouri include: “communication or interpersonal skills, critical thinking and problem-solving, to think creatively [and] teamwork and collaboration”. On the African continent, the soft skills employers hope to see, but do not see in their employees, include adaptability, innovation and emotional intelligence (Adekeye, 2019). In layman’s terms, soft skills encompass the whole of the “fuzzy people issues” that play an important role in the successful completion of duties (Levasseur, 2013:566). More specifically, in this study, these skills refer to creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:1). These are explored in Section 2.4 “What is creativity?”, Section 2.5 “What is critical thinking?”, Section 2.6 “What is collaboration?” and Section 2.7 “What is communication?” The lack of these skills is also referred to as the skills gap (Hayward & Fernandez, 2004:117) and it “is a global and widespread issue” (Karzunina *et al.*, 2020). As a starting point for the discussion, I define what is meant by the general term “soft skills” in this study.

Levasseur (2013:566) distinguishes between hard and soft skills. Hard skills refer to an individual’s dexterity in executing various technical tasks (Levasseur, 2013:566) and this is often related to competence in STEM-related tasks (Jang, 2016:284). However, hard skills do not only refer to STEM competencies, but also to propositional knowledge in each subject or field (Moser, 1987:91). However, what is important to note is that there has been increased emphasis on STEM in the education environment over the years (Nussbaum, 2010:2). The reason for this increase is an attempt to produce learners from their schooling careers who will fit in well with the demands of society (Nussbaum, 2010:1; Razi & Zhou, 2022:2). These demands are driven by constitutional and commercial priorities (Razi & Zhou, 2022:1-2) to such an extent that “STEM was soon seen as an economic movement”, albeit one that takes away from our humanity (White, 2014:7; Razi & Zhou, 2022:2). These STEM-related tasks often relate to intellectual intelligence, where soft skills pertain more to behavioural and social intelligence (Levasseur, 2013:566). It is worthwhile to explore the characteristics of the 21st century to aid our understanding of this dilemma.

2.2 What is the 21st century?

According to Kiger (2017), the 21st century started in the year 2001 and will end in the year 2099. However, there are many controversies regarding the exact time when the 21st century started, as some state that the 21st century began in the year 2000 (Kiger, 2017). Coolman (2020) addresses this issue by referring to the use of the Gregorian calendar and the rectification of errors in the Julian calendar. Regardless, in this study the 21st century is defined by its characteristics and the skills required in terms of teaching and learning, as well as the economic environment – the latter is the next point of discussion. The main descriptor of the 21st century is an increase in technological advancements and their use (Wyman, 2016). According to Wyman (2016), education in the 21st century is inspired by the economy of the 21st century. Many positions are superseded “by digital technologies” including “software, apps and online technology” (Wyman, 2016). Moreover, in the 21st century there is a demand for individuals who can create, produce and maintain machinery (Wyman, 2016). Other characteristics of 21st century learning as identified by Heick (2015) include learning that is media-driven, adaptable, and diverse. In addition to this, Joynes *et al.* (2019:8) explore the meaning of 21st century learning and find that “no clear and unique definition of ‘21st century skills is provided and adopted internationally”. However, Chalkiadaki (2018:5) narrows down the extensive definitions of the 21st century into four core groups, namely “personal skills, social skills, information and knowledge [and] digital literacy”. From her explorations it is evident that the 4 Cs – creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration – are crucial skills for the 21st century. For the purpose of this study, the 21st century refers to our present time in which individuals are in a technology-driven environment, also their schools and the community, which compel them to have certain skills in order to survive.

2.3 The influence of globalisation on the lack of soft skills

Globalisation is the driving force behind many companies (Ristovska & Ristovska, 2014:83; Bialik *et al.*, 2015: ii), which results in the lack of soft skills being an international issue (Karzunina *et al.*, 2020; Singh, 2018; Schislyeva & Saychenko, 2022:1). Likewise, national economic gain is the drive behind education worldwide, seeing that “education is a key determinant of economic well-being and increases the human capital inherent in the labour force of a country” (Marquez-Ramos & Mourelle, 2018:21). Societies’ greed for profit has an economic influence on education (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:ii; Marquez-Ramos & Mourelle, 2018:21), seeing that the desire for lavish living in the 21st century arises from financial instability. Societies that are well-versed in what Jang (2016:284) calls the STEM competencies, thrive financially (Menon, 2020; Huang *et al.*, 2022:109). STEM has been moved to the forefront of education to comply with the workplace

demands found in the 21st century (Jang, 2016:284). This change in educational focus is understandable, considering that STEM competencies enable individuals to advance financially. According to the International Labour Office and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2021), digital transformation, globalisation and demographic changes — are shaping skills demand, and in turn these changes affect the focal point of education (SASOL, 2020; Huang *et al.*, 2022:108). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020a) defines globalisation as “the increased interconnectedness and interdependence of peoples and countries”. Thus, globalisation includes international trade, which refers to an exchange of “goods, services, finance, people and ideas” (WHO, 2020a). Moreover, Brende (as cited by Cann, 2018) states that globalisation is about technology as well as information. Brende (as cited by Cann, 2018) further maintains that “globalization cannot be stopped, but it can be improved. It should be more inclusive, sustainable and job creating”. Ma (2018) supports that globalisation cannot be stopped and emphasises the fierce competition in the international business world. This strict competition is what makes the development of soft skills so important – to be able to stand out from other candidates when vying for employment.

According to Young (2016), hard skills such as STEM competencies are necessary for businesses to operate on an international scale: “Equipping students with specific hard skills to compete in a global job market is important”. Ironically, however, the scarcity of soft skills, which is also vital to competing globally (Young, 2016) and which now negatively influences the economic sector, originates from the economic sector’s high demand for STEM competencies. The neglect of arts and humanities that come with STEM education is a major concern for the sustained shaping of holistic individuals in the education system (Strauss, 2017). This neglect to incorporate arts and humanities is in direct contrast to the objective as stipulated in the CAPS document for both Grade 12 HL and EFAL, which state that learners must be equipped, “irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country” (DBE, 2011:9). The implication is that when learners lack soft skills, they will not entirely be able to obtain the knowledge or values they require in life and so they will not be able to fully participate in society as holistic beings (Whitehead, 2016; Stepanova & Zeer, 2019; Dodge, 2022).

The reckless pursuit of national income and economic gain has resulted in the discarding of skills that will ensure that democracies stay intact (Nussbaum, 2010:2; Frieden, 2020:5). This pursuit of financial betterment has brought STEM competencies to the foreground while soft skills, such as communication, have been moved to the backdrop (Jang, 2016:284). Young (2016) is of the opinion that “cultivating [students’] abilities to effectively share ideas and communicate across

cultures in appropriate and respectful ways, is critical". STEM education in itself does not present a problem, as these subjects prepare workers who will play a key role in every country's economic growth (Jang, 2016:296). Moreover, STEM education fosters resilience in learners as they are often confronted with problems that require critical thinking skills (Lynch, 2019). STEM also encourages the use of technology, which will be advantageous to learners in the 21st century (Lynch, 2019). Evidently, globalisation is a reality that is unlikely to change and therefore, STEM competencies are indeed necessary. But, considering that globalisation is also about knowledge (Brende, as cited by Cann, 2018), of what use will this information be if it cannot be communicated? Once again, the attention turns to the demand for soft skills such as creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication. It must be acknowledged that though the 4Cs are desperately needed in the 21st Century, these concepts are not new to the teaching and study of literature in English as evident by the work of many 20th Century scholars. An example of one such a scholar is Edward de Bono who addressed issues surrounding critical thinking, problem solving, creativity as well as communication (De Bono, 1994:154, 161, 203, 248). The terms creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication are now further explored.

2.4 What is creativity?

According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2011:335), the term creative refers to "relating to or involving the use of imagination or original ideas in order to create something". Customarily, creativity is a term only heard in artistic circles (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:4). However true, it is not used exclusively in the artist's world. Recently, the fundamental role of creativity in other areas of expertise has been revealed (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:5). These fields include "scientific thinking, entrepreneurship, design thinking and mathematics" (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:5). These fields relate closely to the STEM competencies as defined by Jang (2016:284). Creativity refers to the ability to think outside the box to "develop, design or create new applications" (Jang, 2016:290). It can be argued that creativity is an essential skill for the 21st century workplace. Subject and technical knowledge without the ability to apply this creatively, is knowledge that is latent. Bialik *et al.* (2015:5) imply that creativity allows a person to solve unprecedented problems, "[creativity is a] quality to meet the challenge of increasing complexity and uncertainty in the world". As such, possible solutions to novel conundrums often lead to questioning – *will this work and if so, how exactly?* These types of questions bring us to another one of the four Cs: critical thinking.

2.5 What is critical thinking?

Critical thinking is the ability to question everything and not accept anything at face value (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:7). It is an active process of metacognition where an individual deliberately

investigates a phenomenon. Bialik *et al.* (2015:7) point out that critical thinking follows a process of analysing situations, evaluating them, visualising possibilities, integrating and then implementing them. According to Schmaltz *et al.* (2017:1), critical thinking denotes the ability to “accurately assess the world” by means of scientific measures that produce evidence. To be able to think critically, a person must observe, reflect, reason and communicate. Bialik *et al.* (2015:7) argue that critical thinking is our only defence “against delusion, deception, superstition and misapprehension of ourselves and our earthly circumstances”. In this study, critical thinking refers to the analysis and evaluation of situations as found in novels. Moreover, critical thinking refers to what makes sense logically and how this information may be applied to real-life situations (Schmaltz *et al.*, 2017:1). Considering that we are social beings (Thackeray, 2020), the application of ideas resulting from critical thinking will often entail some sort of interaction or collaboration between people.

2.6 What is collaboration?

“Collaboration is the joining together of multiple individuals in service of working towards [...] a common goal” (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:9). In the case of isolation during a pandemic, this common goal was to beat loneliness. Within the educational realm, however, collaboration means that interaction is regarded highly while individuals remain responsible for their own learning (Goertz, 2015). Teamwork allows for the combination of skills as retained by people from various backgrounds (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:9). To collaborate is to recognise the skills and contributions of others (Goertz, 2015). Additionally, Laal *et al.* (2012:1696) define collaboration as teamwork “that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product”. It may be argued that collaboration builds on the other soft skills, specifically creativity, critical thinking and communication. When faced with intricate problems, collaboration to bring together different people’s skill sets may allow for creative solutions to arise. Ideas may be combined and implemented (Murphy *et al.*, 2014:565) – this relates to critical thinking and communication. Lastly, the researchers maintain that collaboration is a way to encourage inclusiveness of diversity (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:9). Collaboration applies to this study in that it builds on the aggregation of creativity, critical thinking and communication among several individuals. Good collaboration skills are crucial for the smooth functioning of relations in the workplace – it is especially imperative in the South African context as we are such a diverse¹ nation. Once again,

¹ Diverse nation – The South African context is home to a diverse nation. It is diverse in the sense that the South African population comprises different races, ethnic-, cultural-, language- and religious groups (Britannica, 2022).

a person can be highly skilled and knowledgeable, but without the ability to collaborate with others in a work environment, this knowledge does not mean much.

2.7 What is communication?

Regardless of who we are or what we do, communication is a part of our everyday lives (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:7). Van der Walt and Evans (2019:80) differentiate between accurate communication and fluent communication. The former refers to correct use of grammar, concord and other language rules, while the latter's main concern is getting the message across, irrespective of whether there are some mistakes (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:80). In this study, communication refers to the act of conveying information between individuals through writing or speaking while mastering the four communicative competencies. The four communicative competencies are sociolinguistic, grammatical (or linguistic), strategic and discourse competence (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:37-41). Sociolinguistic competence pertains to the ability to communicate with others outside of a formal setting and particularly cross-culturally. Grammatical or linguistic competence refers to an individual's ability to apply the rules of a language, which are often taught explicitly (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:37-41). Strategic competence indicates how a message is carried across, whether non-verbally or verbally. Lastly, discourse competence entails the mastery of combining all the competencies to communicate effectively with others and to derive meaning from what others are producing in terms of communication. Discourse competence pertains to the spoken as well as written word (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:37-41). Bialik *et al.* (2015:8) maintain that one-sided communication practices, such as writing a paper or giving a presentation, is not true communication. Collaboration can be used to "train and measure true communication skills" (Bialik *et al.*, 2015:8). The English language classroom is a space where co-construction of knowledge takes place, especially when dealing with literary studies and the very personal views each learner brings to the discussion. These views mediate the social class environment. However, a lack of soft skills results in a "Silent Crisis" as none of the processes of creativity, critical thinking, collaboration or communication occur (Nussbaum, 2010:1, Heckman & Kautz, 2012:462). Although the crisis is not as unheard of as it was before, the lack of soft skills remains a tangible issue (Dean & East, 2019:7; Gilchrist, 2019; Vasanthakumari, 2019:66; Wilkie, 2019; Graham, 2020; Rockwood, 2021; Schislyaeva & Saychenko, 2022:1).

2.8 Evidence of a lack of soft skills

2.8.1 Evidence of a worldwide lack of soft skills

According to Walsh and Schawbel (2019), the skills gap refers to "the gap between [what] the skills employers want and the skills job seekers have". Based on the evidence from the diagnostic

reports from 2018 to 2021 (DBE, 2018; DBE, 2019; DBE, 2020 & DBE, 2021), which will be elaborated on in the next section, current matriculants, the future employees of the 21st century, are definitely lacking in the required skills. Considering the humanistic framework of this study, this more accurately refers to a “human values gap”. Human values refer to those things that allow us to connect with our fellow human beings (Tomasson, 1980:194). Evidently, there is an abundance of research to indicate that soft skills are lacking, especially among graduates and job seekers. I refer to some of the research here as found in the literature.

There has been “a rising tide in business literature regarding soft skills” as far back as 2004 (Ramsomair & Howey, 2004:232). One event that may account for the rise in discussions on soft skills versus hard skills is presumably the “dot com bubble burst” (Ramsomair & Howey, 2004:231; Carlson, 2021). The dot com bubble is also referred to as the “internet bubble or the information technology bubble” (Carlson, 2021) and it describes the event that occurred in the 2000s where many companies who ventured into online business, failed (Carlson, 2021). The propagation of the World Wide Web piloted “a new era of internet-based companies” who were keen to exploit the evolution of technology (International Banker, 2021). Amidst these technological advances there has been a lot of talk about soft skills, which indicates that “there seems to be support for them, but the words are not followed by action” (Ramsomair & Howey, 2004:231). This is indeed the case as the dominant voice of the ongoing debate argues that soft skills are lacking and that it is a problem (Dorsey & Nunn, 2013:30). Denisov (2017) refers to a US survey where a company with approximately a hundred staff members lost roughly \$420 000 yearly due to miscommunications. In a study conducted by Ngang *et al.* (2015) on issues surrounding the development of soft skills in professional teacher training it was found that soft skills may be developed by embedding it in existing courses”. Their study (Ngang *et al.*, 2015:128) specifically focused on the identification of “critical issues of soft skills development through teaching professional training”. According to the researchers, concentrating on aspects such as “the development of human capital and the improvement of the mentality and intellectual capacity of a nation”, will lead to a greater “capacity for knowledge, creativity, and innovation, which are critical elements in the context of globalisation” (Ngang *et al.*, 2015:129). Furthermore, special attention is paid to ways in which undergraduate teacher trainee students’ soft skills can be enhanced Ngang *et al.* (2015:129).

The researchers found that soft skills are neglected due to “big class size, academic focus and insufficient period of training” (Ngang *et al.*, 2015:129). These factors, especially teachers having insufficient training, as identified by Ngang *et al.* (2015:128), necessitates this research since guidelines on how to incorporate soft skills in literature lessons may negate the effects of poor training of pre-service teachers where soft skills are concerned. Moreover, the researchers

(Ngang, 2015:128) recommend that an “embedded model will be a better solution to ensure integration of soft skills in every course design”. This suggestion of Ngang *et al.* (2015:128) may direct the way in which I set up guidelines for the incorporation of the use of soft skills in literature lesson plans. The researchers (Ngang *et al.*, 2015:129) specifically identify English as a subject that may be used in this endeavour to enhance soft skills, such as communication in “English (both written and oral discourse)”.

A relationship has been established “between [teacher’s] knowledge as English teachers and the meaning-making that occurs when students interact with one another within classroom settings” (Doecke *et al.*, 2021:1), which means that knowledge construction is indeed possible in the English classroom, though somewhat unconventional. Knowledge construction in the English classroom is classified as unconventional, or even complex, because English does not fit “neatly within a particular epistemological framework” (Sawyer & Mclean Davies, 2021:105). Though, it is exactly the potential of this factor that we are exploring in this study since soft skills are “messy” (Levasseur, 2013:566) and likewise, the English classroom is often perceived as being unorganised (Sawyer & Mclean Davies, 2021:105), which makes it the perfect setting to develop and enhance soft skills. Teachers and learners have unique sets of knowledge that they bring with them to the English classrooms (Diaz, 2017:1; Geoffrey, 2021:1). Any knowledge subsequently constructed in the English classroom is subject to what teachers and learners make of it, evidently resulting in knowledge that is never exactly the same year after year. This relationship between prior-knowledge and meaning-making must be utilised (Diaz, 2017:1; Geoffrey, 2021:1). The advantages of reading literature include an increase in “wisdom, [and] enhance attunement to certain registers of human experience [and] exposure to core national values or problems” (Sawyer & Mclean Davies, 2021:105).

Wisdom refers to the “ability to discern inner qualities and relationships, to have insight or a good sense of judgement” (Merriam-Webster, 2022c). This definition of wisdom further delineates the concept of an individual’s character (Merriam-Webster, 2022c), which refers to how individuals act in certain circumstances; this is yet another important soft skill (Rockwood, 2021). Literature allows wisdom to develop as learners engage with the situations that characters encounter. Moreover, literature nurtures a mindfulness of the dimensions of language as a vehicle through which experiences are described and as such can lead to “intense, transformative experiences” (Sawyer & Mclean Davies, 2021:105). Sadly, however, it is evident that these skills are not currently developed by Grade 12 English learners as they ought to be (DBE, 2018; DBE, 2019; DBE, 2020 & DBE, 2021). Disconcertingly, the current educational system does not make provision to assess the obtainment of soft skills since there is a “consistent use of evidence-based practice” (Kechagias, 2011:109; Snape, 2017:1; Wescott, 2021:120). This forces teachers’ hands

and they base their decisions surrounding the construction of knowledge on preparing learning for “high-stakes testing” (Reyneke, 2016:1; Wescott, 2021:120).

High-stakes testing has a negative effect on the quality of teaching (Minarechová, 2012:82; Romios et al., 2020:194; Wescott, 2021:121). This is contrary to what was initially intended, “to raise the academic standards and to hold both educators and learners accountable for meeting those standards” and to produce learners from the educational system who are qualified and equipped for the working environment (Minarechová, 2012:82). This has also become a problem in South Africa. Aside from learners reverting to rote learning in an attempt to score high marks (DBE, 2020:33), teachers’ creativity is curbed as they are inadvertently encouraged to assume “a teach-to-the-test approach” (Reyneke, 2016:3; Wescott, 2021:121). With the current way of assessing learners, via high-stakes testing (Wescott, 2021:121) and in some cases pre-programmed educational AI systems (Anderson, 2018; Richardson & Clesham, 2021:2; Swiecki, *et al.*, 2022:2), there is no way to measure whether knowledge acquisition or construction of knowledge truly take place in learners, especially those who engage in rote learning (DBE, 2020:33). High stakes testing influences learners’ schooling careers greatly since it, much like programmed AI systems that determine whether a learner passes or fails based on a certain score obtained (Gardner *et al.*, 2020:1208), focuses on a certain level of competence from the learners (Wescott, 2021:121). These behaviours of teachers and learners alike, may be ascribed to the “pressures of bureaucratic expectations” that place “emphasis on results-based tasks” (Reyneke, 2016:3; Wescott, 2021:121). I reiterate that learners are not empty vessels, simply to be filled with knowledge, made to achieve a top score (Diaz, 2017:1; Geoffrey, 2021:1). Classrooms, especially English classrooms, are social spaces, where learners should be encouraged to construct their own knowledge, with the help of peers and more knowledgeable others, rather than receiving pre-packaged ideas and analysis to be regurgitated in a high-stakes tests. This is supported by Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory which states that social interactions and collaborative environments are an integral part of the learning process (Vygotsky, 1978:79; Wang *et al.*, 2011:296). In essence, Vygotsky promotes collaborative learning, or cooperative learning (Malatji, 2016:34), since knowledge is co-constructed by learners (Cherry, 2022b; Newton *et al.*, 2020:1). Cooperative learning affords learners the “opportunity to react on ideas, experience, insights and knowledge” (Malatji, 2016:34). This results in different opinions and emotions (Malatji, 2016:34). Considering this, literature is the perfect medium to aid both teachers and learners in the construction of knowledge and in so doing honing their soft skills – if we can steer it away from rote learning and high-stakes testing.

2.8.2 Evidence of a lack of soft skills in the South African context

Verbal communication skills, learners' ability to work in groups and their ability to be creative are not easily measured by summative assessments such as the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. However, these skills have been measured elsewhere and results have been reported in the literature. Summative assessments are intended to measure and record what learners have learned previously (Ahmed *et al.*, 2019:110). The NSC examinations are always written individually and do not always leave room to be creative. English HL comprises of three papers and focuses primarily on language, literature and writing. However, even these summative assessments reveal learners' lack of ability to think critically.

As evidence to this lack of soft skills, and specifically critical thinking, I refer to the diagnostic reports on the NSC examinations of 2018 to 2021, which reveal that learners' inability to think critically when attempting to answer examination questions is a worsening problem. The NSC report of 2018 revealed that learners do not think critically when attempting to answer the novel section of the literature paper, "essays lacked critical discussion and often focussed on only one aspect of the question" (DBE, 2018:29–30). Additionally, "candidates seemed to assume that the repetition of key words from the question was all that was required to develop an argument". This is disconcerting, as learners seem to have this misconception that the repetition of keywords are indicative of them understanding the coursework. This incorrect assumption is widespread among learners in the 21st century (DBE, 2018:29-30; DBE, 2019:42; DBE, 2020:39; DBE, 2021:38)

The report concludes that learners do not attempt to decipher questions, which indicates a lack of critical thinking (DBE, 2018:29). More specifically, these findings are echoed in the 2019 NSC report for the North West province (DBE, 2019:10). According to this report by the DBE (2019:10), learners have a "lack of insight", which suggests once more a lack of critical thinking. Moreover, a further indication of a lack of critical thinking skills as identified in the report (DBE, 2019:11) is the fact that "they [the learners] were unable to connect different scenarios in the novel". This inability to think critically, among other things, is referred to as a "skills gap" (Hayward & Fernandez 2004:117; Gray, 2018:5; McKenney, 2019:332). Evidently, as per the 2020 and 2021 NSC reports, the skills gap is still prominent today.

It is clearly stated in both the 2020 and the 2021 NSC reports that, "the majority of the candidates could not respond to questions that required critical thinking" (DBE, 2020:32; DBE, 2021:32). Additionally, the 2021 NSC report further indicates that learners showed an inability to understand the requirements of "abstract topics and higher-order questions" (DBE, 2021:6b). This is a worrisome confirmation that soft skills are in fact not being developed as they should be. If

learners cannot think critically, and by extension think for themselves, they are no better than machines being programmed to perform a certain function (Nussbaum, 2010:2; Lake *et al.*, 2017:1; Ma, 2018a; Raveh & Tamir, 2018:1). According to Raveh and Tamir (2018:1), AI still has a long way to go before being entirely comparable to human intelligence, but what are we to say when our learners are already acting like thoughtless machines? Learners, like unprogrammed machines, do not understand the input they encounter during summative assessments, “[learners] fail to comprehend basic examination terminology” (DBE, 2020:31) and are consequently inept when it comes to comprehending and ultimately answering the questions asked. Learners possess insufficient “linguistic and comprehension skills”, which hinders their performance (DBE, 2020:37). The department recommends that teachers use previous examination papers to allow learners to familiarise themselves with “the phrasing of questions and the standard expected in the NSC examination” (DBE, 2020:40). This seems like a very mechanical way to solve a serious problem.

In fact, when learners rely on previous examination papers to such an extent that they wrongly provide “pre-pared essays” as an answer to a new, unrelated question, is disconcerting (DBE, 2020:39). This is an issue that was seen in the 2021 NSC examinations as well (DBE, 2021b:38). “Regurgitating previous answers should be strongly discouraged” (DBE, 2021b:38), although working through past examination papers does allow learners to better prepare themselves for their final examinations (DBE, 2020:40); provided they are able to apply some insight to the question asked. Most learners seem to be unable to engage with the text on a figurative level and consequently, they are unable to “present a critical discussion when required to do so” (DBE, 2020:37; DBE, 2021:38). It is suggested that learners lack “higher order thinking skills” as they rotely react to certain keywords presented in questions (DBE, 2020:33). The DBE (2020:38) warned in 2020 that “candidates’ ‘lifting’ of responses from previous marking guidelines is becoming problematic and must be strongly discouraged” (DBE, 2020:38). However, in 2021 the issue resurfaced since in 2021 “far more candidates were ‘lifting’ directly from the text than in the past” (DBE, 2021b:32). Considering the innovative world in which we currently live, it is quite crucial to be able to think critically, amongst other things, in the work environment (Walsh & Schawbel, 2019).

2.9 How can literature aid in the development of 21st century soft skills?

Hişmanoğlu (2005:54), state that literature is used in school classrooms because it serves as “valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement”. These four categories reveal every other significance of literature. Aghagolzadeh and Tajabadi (2012: 206) argue that literature texts supply meaningful contexts and an insightful

variety of vocabulary, while it also awakens the imagination and encourages creativity, cultural awareness and critical thinking. When considering literature as valuable authentic material, literature makes a valuable contribution to communication as it exposes learners to “many different linguistic forms, communicative functions and meanings” (Hişmanoğlu, 2005:54; see also Aghagolzadeh & Tajabadi, 2012:205; Ilankumaran & Deepa, 2018:187). The same is true for the language enrichment category, where learners have the opportunity to enhance their communicative competence (Ilankumaran & Deepa, 2018:187).

In addition to this, literature encourages cultural enrichment as it allows learners to explore “a full and colourful setting in which characters from many social/regional backgrounds can be described” (Hişmanoğlu, 2005:54; Wright, 2018). Tolerance and understanding for those who are different from oneself are vital in a time where there are increased international, cultural and racial tensions worldwide. According to Wright (2018), literature allows readers the opportunity to “see the world through the eyes of others”. Moreover, the reading of literature allows for a malleable attitude towards those who are different from oneself (Wright, 2018). Even though the possibility exists that the reader might reject the ‘other’, the exposure to various characters is conducive to the soft skill collaboration as learners can learn from and grasp methods that characters use in engaging with characters who differ from them (Hişmanoğlu, 2005:54; Boyd *et al.*, 2015:378). Blanding (2012) makes use of the term “cultural metacognition” and he equates it to “the heightened awareness you have when driving in a foreign city, where you will pay more attention to the road signs and traffic signs”. Likewise, reading about different cultures can transport a reader to another world where they can experience cultural metacognition. “It’s this kind of heightened awareness and reflection about what I think about cultures and how other cultures think about me that helps cross-cultural creative collaboration” (Blanding, 2012). This means that literature can increase collaboration and communicative competence. It can also enhance creativity.

When learners read, they begin to dwell within the text as they are pulled into it, “a literary work lies halfway between the text written by the author and the ‘realisation’ of that text by the reader, in the act of reading” (Benjamin, 2018). This engagement with the text indicates an activation of learners’ imagination, which in turn inspires creativity as learners are able to put themselves into the shoes of the characters. It is this formation of ideas that acts as a steppingstone to critical thinking. Bryant (2017) maintains that “creativity is associated with generating ideas, while critical thinking is associated with judging them”. In effect, literature enhances critical thinking when learners apply themselves and question the actions of certain characters. Hişmanoğlu (2005:63), Aghagolzadeh and Tajabadi (2012:205) and Ilankumaran and Deepa (2018:187) all identify specific advantages of the use of novels in the teaching of language. Naturally, language forms a

part of literature and as such, the benefits of using novels in language teaching are relevant to this study. Some of these benefits include the development of “knowledge about different cultures and different groups of people... the opportunity to make use of their [the students’] creativity, improves critical thinking skills, [and] enables students to go beyond what is written” (Hişmanoğlu, 2005:63). However, even though literature may enhance these skills, perhaps a bigger concern is how to keep these skills intact once developed. Literature, as vehicle, may assist in this endeavour. Santoli and Wagner (2004:65) maintain that motivation, inspired by interest, is a prerequisite in the formation of life-long readers. Considering that literature is conducive to the development of soft skills as already discussed, then surely the life-long pursuit of reading literature will maintain the skills gained through it. In the light of enhancing soft skills of Grade 12 learners, the next section explores how literature can facilitate in achieving the objectives set out by the CAPS.

2.10 Literature facilitating the achievement of the objectives set out in the CAPS

Several of the CAPS objectives Grade 10–12, EFAL centre on preparing learners to converse with precision and pertinence (DBE, 2011:9). Learners must also be taught to use the language in all its expressions, i.e., reading, writing, listening and speaking (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:124) with “confidence and enjoyment” (DBE, 2011:9). Furthermore, learners must display the ability to think critically by expressing their own thoughts and feelings (DBE, 2011:9). Group work and the development of learners’ imagination is yet another requirement of the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:5 & 9). In accordance with the high demand to be technologically savvy in the 21st century, learners are expected to be information literate: “Information literacy is a vital skill in the ‘information age’ and forms the basis for lifelong learning” (DBE, 2011:9). These same objectives are found in the CAPS for Grade 10–12, HL regarding learners’ mother tongue. Learners must be adequately prepared for them to be able to participate in society and this implies having soft skills to facilitate such participation in a meaningful way (DBE, 2011:9).

Literature can play an integral part in this regard because texts often touch on themes that are related to humanity. According to Walton (2022), identity and technology are major themes in 21st century novels. The former is directly related to our humanity, while the latter affects our humanity to some extent. Moreover, other themes in modern novels may include “survival, peace and war, love, good and evil, suffering [and] coming of age” (Fleming, 2020). These themes may teach its readers something about current events, politics, the economic situation, humanity and history (Fleming, 2020; Walton, 2022). Mayle (2021:1) encourages the use of modern young adult literature as it is conducive to a “learning environment that is relatable, relevant, inclusive, engaging, and beneficial for high school students and teachers”.

Although the effect of literature on readers has been observed, not all learners are equally motivated to read. According to Santoli and Wagner (2004:65), a disinterest in reading has been reported among some students since they are only assigned “classic literature with novels that have been traditionally used because of the belief in timelessness”. This finding by Santoli and Wagner (2004:65) is indicative of a lack of intrinsic motivation, meaning that enjoyment is gained from participating in an activity (Wigfield, 1994:52) such as reading. There is evidence that the use of more modern novels will encourage learners to participate in reading activities (Mayle, 2021:1). Santoli and Wagner (2004:65) maintain that the use of young adult literature will prove beneficial to students. The use of novels that interest learners will lead to increased participation in pleasing reading experiences, which will lead to learners becoming lifelong learners (Santoli & Wagner, 2004:65).

Reading literature develops learners’ “imagination, elicits a wealth of emotions, and develops compassion” (Pantaleo, 2002:211). This means that literature develops an understanding of the world within learners (Culp, 1977:245). As early as the 1970’s, Culp (1977:247) has argued that literature exposes learners to different viewpoints and values other than their own. It may be assumed that this occurrence will inspire critical thinking within learners as they attempt to reconcile these different viewpoints and morals with their own. Fenner (2020:113) argues that novels hold more intricate meaning than mere words on a page. According to Fenner (2020:113), novels convey mental images of “places, people, times, attitudes, beliefs, events” which might be unknown to the reader and which encourage them to think about what they read.

Culp’s work makes evident that the four Cs as defined by Bialik *et al.* (2015:3-8) are integral to the reading experience learners have. Firstly, creativity is evident in the way a participant envisions a character from the novel, so much so that he becomes real to them (Culp, 1977:245). Secondly, critical thinking is engaged when one participant feels sympathy for one of the characters. This engagement of critical thought indicates that the participant places themselves in the shoes of the character and experiences their endeavours as their own. Thirdly, communication results from the reading experience when a participant shares their opinion regarding characters’ thoughts and behaviours (Culp, 1977:251). Lastly, collaboration can very easily be incorporated by encouraging learners to work together in groups to discuss pertinent issues related to the novel. Ultimately, the use of literature can act as a facilitator in reaching some, if not all, of the aims and objectives stipulated in the CAPS document. However, we must not forget that education is still driven by economic gain as it is “a leading determinant of economic growth, employment, and earnings” (Grant, 2017:2) and highly influenced by technology (Chyr *et al.*, 2017:11). Since soft skills are paramount for survival in the 21st century, we must find a way

to teach literature that will enhance soft skills despite all the technological advancements of the times.

2.11 Literature teaching in the technologically-driven classroom of the 21st century

Although an over-emphasis on the use of technology can be detrimental to soft skills, the balanced incorporation of technology can be a useful aid in the teaching of literature (Kolchenko, 2018:249). McDonald and Battaglia (2015:1) state that “there is a growing need for educators to adapt to 21st century learners”. This means that teachers must familiarise themselves with the latest teaching techniques. In the 21st century, many teaching techniques revolve around, or include, technology (Sole, 2015; Cox, 2016; Chandrasoma & Chu, 2016:35; Kim *et al.*, 2019:100). Not only do teaching techniques revolve around technology in the 21st century, but our daily lives are centred around it too. Whether it is our cell phones’ alarm clocks waking us up, or colleagues sending us a quick email or WhatsApp, we are surrounded by technology. As a result, 21st century learners are “raised in the era of the internet [and] are product[s] of their environment (Kress, 2010; Chandrasoma & Chu, 2016:36; McCormack, 2019). Considering that our environment is fast-paced and ever-changing (Brooke, 2022), it comes as no surprise that 21st century learners are accustomed to the use of technology, and the advancement thereof, to such an extent that they hardly notice “huge advancements in communication, global integration and information sharing” (Chandrasoma & Chu, 2016:36). The consequence is that teachers must come up with innovative ways to keep the attention of their learners. Fortunately, technology can be used to find appropriate resources that will cater to the needs and learning styles of a variety of learners (Chandrasoma & Chu, 2016:36). In fact, if learners and teachers are to succeed in the 21st century, it is crucial that technology be incorporated into lessons since “digital and technological literacy, civic responsibility and global awareness” are vital factors in this era (Kim *et al.*, 2019:100). Thus, technology, if well incorporated, can further the enhancement of soft skills through literature teaching (Lieberman, 2018).

There is a magnitude of technologies that can be incorporated into the 21st century classroom. Technologies such as “computers, multimedia, cellular mobile, audio-visual and social media applications” may be used in the 21st century classroom, if available (Pallathadka, 2020:9006). “Web-conferencing software, blogs, wikis, social networking sites (Facebook and Twitter), and digital games” may also be included in the list of technologies that can be incorporated into the lesson (Schindler *et al.*, 2017:1). However, technologies that are presumed to be most popular in a classroom setting in 2022 include: “gamification, augmented reality and virtual reality, online courses, mobile learning in higher education and open educational resources” (Kumar, 2022).

Though not all teachers and learners may have access to these, the use of various technologies have a positive effect on learner involvement (D'Angelo, 2018).

It is argued that, “contrary to reputation, literature classrooms are full of technological possibilities (Lieberman, 2018). Literature classrooms are often, mistakenly, perceived as spaces where uninteresting and out-dated matters are discussed by the old and where there is no room for anything modern such as technology (Lindell, 2020). Though, this is far from true. Literature classrooms can be just as hip-and-happening as the science classroom. According to Lieberman (2018), technology may be used in the literature classroom to create objects in an attempt to better understand words as it is used in a text, for example, the use of 3-D printers to recreate an important object as found in the text. Moreover, technology allows teachers to connect to a bigger audience (Lieberman, 2018), which has been especially helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic (Koeze & Popper, 2020). Lastly, technology enables teachers and learners to put thoughts into action through the use of “Google Earth to map character journeys” (Lieberman, 2018).

Theoretically, technology in classrooms can “help students acquire the skills they need to survive in a complex, highly technological knowledge-based economy” (Canough, 2013:1). Technology can possibly create a fun learning environment that satisfies learners' curiosity, allows learners to work at their own pace while interacting with a programme that offers personalised learning, and reduce the workload of teachers (Cox, 2019). However, the effectiveness of technology in English literature classrooms must still be explored, especially since not all learners are exposed to the same level of technology while growing up due to inequalities in their socioeconomic statuses. Differences in socioeconomic statuses lead to some learners having access to technological devices, while others do not (Cassette & Botsane, 2020; Collaborative on Health and the Environment, 2022). This inequality results in not all learners being equally efficient when using technology in the classroom. This is known as “tech disparity” (Gaskell, 2019; Allen *et al.*, 2021). Unfortunately, aside from inequality and as with everything in life, there is another side to using technology (Brown, 2017). The use of technology often serves as a distraction to learners, and it requires training sessions for both learners and teachers (Brown, 2017). It is often expensive and results in less in-person communication (Brown, 2017).

Kaba (2020) investigates the effect of technology on “teaching and studying literature in the digital era”. Technology can complement literature teaching and the role of literature in enhancing 21st century soft skills as technology “enables one-to-one correspondence between an author and a reader, simplifying access to and understanding of literature” (Kaba, 2020). However, without soft skills being enhanced by literature, we will not be able to use technology effectively. Kolchenko (2018:250) states that even advanced technologies such as AIs, which are mainly automated,

rely on human input for it to be functional. For instance, how would I know how to deal with a malfunctioning AI when I do not possess the ability to think critically? Or creatively? Or to communicate the problem to a colleague and ask for assistance? Soft skills are vital; without some sort of human input, technology is ultimately a dead creation. Thus, we are presented with a catch 22. A lack of soft skills and the inability to apply knowledge will result in failure to comply with what the CAPS document requires “that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives” (DBE, 2011:9).

White (2009:423) attempts to pinpoint what it means to lead a meaningful life in the 21st century. He (White, 2009:423) relates a meaningful life to “a life of personal well-being” where individuals can express themselves and where every action is carried out with a certain purpose in mind. Thus, learners should know *what* knowledge to use in certain aspects of their lives and *how* to use certain skills so that they can express themselves fully. Moreover, learners must be able to plan their actions purposefully. In other words, learners must be familiar with technology and must be able to use it responsibly as well as be able to employ soft skills as needed.

Kaba (2020) identifies some ways in which literature may be taught in harmony with technology. He (Kaba, 2020) states that technology affords learners a “higher level of control when sharing knowledge: they can access information, learning fields, as well as other sources”. Moreover, technology provides an easy way of communicating, “emails or other communication platforms provide them with precious environments in which communication can continue” (Kaba, 2020). Again, however, if students do not possess the ability to communicate (to form proper sentences), of what good would technology be to them? One of the biggest advantages of using technology in the classroom is that it appeals to students who are highly stimulated in their everyday lives. According to Lieberman (2018) and Kaba (2020), technology can enhance the visual appeal of literature while relying less on verbal understanding. This aesthetic approach to teaching literature sparks learners’ interest and that will mark the true beginning of enhancing soft skills via literature. However, human teachers are vital to the teaching and learning of literature, as learners must first be introduced to literature – this is something that technology cannot do on its own (Kolchenko 2018:250). There are various ways in which teachers can incorporate technology in their lessons when teaching literature.

Firstly, teachers and learners alike can use information technology to help orientate themselves when dealing with unknown technologies (Pallathadka, 2020:9009). When teachers and learners are self-directed in their endeavours, it links indirectly to the necessary soft skills, such as flexibility, motivation and character required to overcome challenges in the 21st century (MacWelch, 2015; Janove, 2020; Doyle, 2022; Stephanie, 2022; Rejbain, 2022). A quick Google search may yield various teaching strategies that may be employed in the 21st century

technologically-driven classroom. Examples of these include the flipped classrooms (Ofgang, 2021), project-based learning (Kokotsaki *et al.*, 2016:3), cooperative learning (Marzano *et al.*, 2013:3624), gamification (Alomari *et al.*, 2019:396), problem-based learning (Kurt, 2020), design thinking (Gekeler, 2019:15), thinking-based learning (Tajudin *et al.*, 2019:397) and competency-based learning (Juraschka, 2021). All these strategies may be employed by making use of various technologies. How teachers can use these various teaching strategies in class will be further elaborated on in Chapter 4, under the section titled “technology in the classroom, teaching strategies and e-learning platforms”.

2.12 The role of teachers when using the teaching of literature to develop soft skills

According to Van der Walt and Evans (2019:193), there are four ways in which to ensure teachers conduct successful and valuable literature lessons. Firstly, they must be well read in literature for all ages (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:193). Understandably, teachers would have to be specifically well-read in the phase they are teaching. One powerful literary device that can stimulate critical thinking, is allusions (Valotka, 2019:1). Authors employ allusions, the reference to another a text within a text, to assess the readers’ skills, their ability “to notice and decrypt a text in absentia” (Valotka, 2019:1). Teachers can only notice allusions and use them if they are well-read themselves (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:193). In this way teachers can guide the lesson to evoke past experiences from learners by asking questions, enhancing critical thinking in so doing, and encouraging learners to co-construct knowledge based on what they know now and their past experiences (Doecke & Mead, 2018:251). Evidently, when teachers are well-read, they can better guide class discussions, leading to the enhancement of critical thinking skills and communication. Collaboration may also be enhanced if the lesson is steered correctly and group work and the co-construction of knowledge are promoted.

Van der Walt and Evans (2019:193) also maintain that teachers must possess “knowledge of criteria for the selection of texts at school level”. Some of these criteria have already been touched upon in this chapter. These typically include that texts must be interesting and relevant to learners (Culp, 1977:251). Alternatively, these must provide a way to gain new experiences – if only in the readers’ minds (Bibby, 2014:17). Moreover, the text must satisfy the curiosity of learners and draw their interest (Bibby, 2014:17). Once a text is relevant and interesting to learners, they are more likely to put themselves into the shoes of the characters, and this allows for critical thinking. Learners even use creativity to think how they would get out of scenarios like the ones in which characters find themselves (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:193, Bibby, 2014:17).

Thirdly, it is vital that teachers are aware of the reading process, strategies and habits of learners (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:193). Such awareness will better aid teachers in their preparation for literature lessons as they will be attentive to the possible pitfalls that accompany literature teaching. Some of the greatest pitfalls are that teachers, in the hope of better guiding learners and with the added pressure of little time in the syllabus, unintentionally spoon-feed the information learners will need to pass formal examinations (Reyneke, 2016:4; Wescott, 2021:120). This occurrence is more commonly referred to as “teaching to the test” and is a practice that is frowned upon (West, 2018; Wescott, 2021:120). The CAPS document warns us against this type of teaching, spoon-feeding – especially with regard to literature, “it [the teaching of literature] is impossible without personal, thoughtful, and honest interpretations and comments from the learners themselves” (DBE, 2011:12). These kinds of teaching practices inhibit the development, much less the enhancement, of soft skills (Tulgan, 2016). “Soft skills cannot be spoon fed to young people or forced upon them”, it must be lived through and experienced first-hand, repeatedly, in order to hone the skills (Tulgan, 2016).

Lastly, Van der Walt and Evans (2019:193) highlight the importance of pedagogical content knowledge along with knowledge of “aims and goals of the syllabus”. Pedagogical content knowledge and a familiarity with what is expected in the curriculum is especially crucial as it directs literature teaching and prevents the aimless teaching of literature teachers find enjoyable personally, but which is irrelevant to learners. Romylos (2018:216) supports this assertion that teachers may be motivated by their personal taste when choosing texts. This is a finding of a case study conducted with English literature teachers. However, she states that some teachers do in fact consider “texts that represents learners’ cultures and social groups”, albeit to a lesser extent than personal preference (Romylos, 2018:216). Consequently, teacher strategies and learner activities play a vital role in the teaching of literature and the development of the four Cs – creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication. As such the importance of the choice of literature cannot be emphasised enough.

“Learners need to read literary works which are closer to their own environment and interests, and prose fiction is the major source of such input” (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:221-222). One of the roles of literature is to create curiosity in the lives and experiences of other people who are not like us and who have different experiences (Wright, 2018). However, this statement by Van der Walt and Evans (2019:221-222) restricts the exposure to characters that are different from oneself and so the idea of the ‘other’ is marginalised where literary texts for study are linked to the self. However, as the CAPS document further states, “The teaching of literature is never easy” (DBE, 2011:12) and this is particularly true in the diverse South African context where learners come from different ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Learners’ backgrounds can affect

literature teaching in that some learners will have prior knowledge of certain concepts as they have been exposed to experiences regarding it, while others may not have sufficient background knowledge due to no exposure. Conversely, the teaching of literature in the South African context can be greatly beneficial to raising awareness of cultural differences (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:194) and this in turn may lay the foundation for the development of the four Cs. However, the choice of teaching strategies and learner activities within a technologically-driven classroom is just as vital to ensure enhancement of the four Cs. This is discussed further in Section 4.4.4, titled “Themes of the novels and poems, soft skills and the South African learner”.

CHAPTER 2: SUMMARY

Chapter 2 highlights the lack of soft skills by referring to the NSC diagnostic reports of 2018–2021. The feedback about learners’ abilities in these reports is disconcerting and underline the issue at hand: soft skills are not being developed as they ought to be. This puts learners at risk of unemployment, since soft skills are especially sought after by employees worldwide. The literature review brought to light that literature may be used to enhance soft skills, even in an environment where technology and STEM competencies enjoy prominence. However, teachers must intentionally focus on teaching soft skills during literature lessons. The teaching of soft skills is something that must be planned and facilitated in lessons, especially since soft skills cannot be spoon-fed. Consequently, teachers must allow for co-construction of knowledge among learners. Chapter 3 expounds the methodology used to conduct this research before the discussion turns to the selected primary texts in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 provided a brief description of the theoretical framework and methodology used to conduct this study. This chapter elaborates on the methodology, selection of texts, and the ethical considerations relevant to the study. The research was conducted following a qualitative research approach based on a social constructivist world view. The research is set within an interpretivist paradigm, guided by socio-cultural theory. The data analysis method used was document analysis (hermeneutics).

3.2 Research design

Nieuwenhuis (2020:56) defines qualitative research as an investigation guided by words. He further maintains that words contain a “complex set of meanings that are often particular to a specific setting.” Bhandari (2020) states that qualitative research is the use of various systematic approaches to analyse the social world of individuals. These investigations typically occur in natural, undisturbed settings (Bhandari, 2020). It may be proffered from these statements that it is quite important that the settings be left undisturbed as far as possible, otherwise the set of meanings related to a specific setting ceases to be trustworthy. Moreover, transparency is crucial, since “unless other scholars can examine evidence, parse the analysis, and understand the process by which evidence and theories were chosen”, trustworthiness is drawn into question (Moravcsik, 2014:48). Nieuwenhuis’s (2020:56) definition corresponds with the earlier work by Davies (2000:292), who argues that “social facts [are] frequently called into question by the variable meanings, interpretations and values of ordinary people.” Qualitative research is particularly concerned with the many ways in which we make sense of the world, regardless of contrasting cultural and social backgrounds (Aspers & Corte, 2019:292). These definitions recall social constructivism since individuals, as a collective, attempt to find meaning in their lives and in their relations to others (Davies, 2000:292). Social constructivism serves as the philosophical orientation of this dissertation considering that the two novels and the two poems selected for analysis depict the different values of characters and different readers have different interpretations. Consequently, I attempted to construct and evaluate these meanings from the texts.

Andrews (2012:2) contends that social constructivism delineates information that is not generated but constructed. Moreover, he states that the world is “both objective and subjective.” This definition of social constructivism is suited to the study as it strives to come to an objective

understanding from the very subjective opinions of others. Nieuwenhuis (2020:58) characterises paradigms as the way in which phenomena are understood. The comprehension of phenomena is often done through “organising principles” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:58). He further argues that “hermeneutics and phenomenology” play a crucial role in what constitutes the interpretivist paradigm (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:66). Furthermore, he maintains that individuals’ thoughts are the main source of information and meaning (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:68). This paradigm is suited to the text analysis that follows later on in this study. I took into account what other scholars argue in terms of developing soft skills in the 21st century. Moreover, the study was guided by socio-cultural theory. When a study is guided by socio-cultural theory, it “describe[s] learning and development as being embedded within social events and occurring as a learner interacts with other people, objects, and events in the collaborative environment” (Vygotsky, 1978:79; Wang *et al.*, 2011:296).

Vygotsky developed the socio-cultural theory based on his belief that “parents, caregivers, peers and the culture at large are responsible for developing higher-order functions” (Cherry, 2022b). Most higher order functions consist of soft skills such as analysis, evaluation, creation, critical thinking, application, collaboration and communication (Cherry, 2022b; Newton *et al.*, 2020:1). This implies that knowledge is co-constructed by individuals and not something that can be achieved in isolation. “Social relations, community, and culture” are crucial aspects of learning and the holistic development of learners (Wang *et al.*, 2011:197). Reality, our living environment, is “shaped by cultural, political, ethnic, gender and religious factors which interact with each other to create a social system” (Rehman & Alharti, 2016:57). Considering that the authors and poets whose texts I analysed are naturally influenced by the aforementioned factors simply because they are human, it may be proffered that socio-cultural theory is best suited to this study. Each of these authors and poets experienced a reality, a social system, that is unique and subjective to them and this is showcased in their work and their work, in turn, influences others. Interacting with others is crucial to learning (Cherry, 2022b) and even though there is no physical interaction when dealing with literature, there is an interaction with human emotion and the events that transpire as depicted by the author or poet. Even if these emotions and occurrences are fictional, the author or poet had to draw on their own experiences to some extent (Foxwell *et al.*, 2020:1).

As the researcher, I am also influenced by the factors mentioned above and by the texts that I analysed, so my reality is created, my learning is influenced and my development is affected (Rehman & Alharti, 2016:57). However, as Rehman and Alharti (2016:57) advise, I endeavour to be aware of my own “presuppositions and communicate them clearly when entering into an investigation”. I clearly state my subjective worldview in the “researcher’s role and positionality” section. Socio-cultural theory is most applicable to this study as it “is considered primarily a developmental theory” and the aim of this study is to develop learners’ soft skills to enable them

to thrive in the 21st century workplace (Allman, 2022:26). Louw *et al.* (2017:28) point out that the focus of socio-cultural theory is “on ways that adults convey to children the beliefs, customs and skills of their culture”. One way to convey all these aspects to learners is via literature. This does not mean that learners do not have their own beliefs and ideas. The whole point of studying literature is for the reader to respond to the texts (Matterson, 2016:75; Blake & Blake, 2018:193-194; Hassan, 2020; Adams, 2022; Helper, 2022; Sharna, 2022). Moreover, Vygotsky believed that since all societies aim to equip children with cultural values and skills “every aspect of a child’s development should be considered against this backdrop” (Louw *et al.*, 2017:29), and when considered, literature is an ideal backdrop to teach our learners what they need to know to face the world. Socio-cultural theory aims to better comprehend a certain situation, in this case, the neglect of soft skills and how this issue may be improved through the co-construction of knowledge while working collaboratively in classes to promote these skills. This study hopes to encourage an increased emphasis on soft skills and specifically so through the effective teaching of literature.

3.3 Selection of primary texts

This study did not include human participants and therefore the sampling pertains to the texts and documents used in the study. I made use of purposive sampling, seeing that I conducted this study with a specific aim in mind: to explore the role that prescribed literature plays in the development of 21st century soft skills. However, such a method demands that specific aspects must be identified to gather the sample (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:2020). I focused on four specific soft skills, namely creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking. Therefore, novels and poems that facilitate the development of these skills, were considered. Considering that the context in which I conducted my study is South Africa, I chose two novels and two poems from the national prescribed set work list. Taking into account the diversity of learners in South Africa regarding their levels of proficiency, I chose one novel and one poem prescribed for HL and one novel and one poem prescribed for EFAL learners.

The following criteria, in table form, were used to consider novels for this study.

Table 1: Criteria to consider when choosing novels and poems to enhance soft skills

Title of novel/ poem, author's name and year of publication.	Is it a prescribed novel/ poem as per the national list of set works?	Is the novel/ poem prescribed for HL learners?	Is the novel/ poem prescribed for EFAL learners?	Does the novel/ poem contain themes that will elicit vivid emotional responses?	Do the themes in the novel/ poem relate to 21 st century issues?
<i>Life of Pi</i> by Yann Martel, published in 2001.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes. The themes include religion, loss of innocence and survival.	Yes, see the articles by Gobry (2015), Niederberger (2015).
<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> by Oscar Wilde, published in 1890.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes. The themes include mortality, appearances and youth.	Yes, see the articles by Case and Deaton (2017:397) and Givhan (2020).
<i>Cry, The Beloved Country</i> by Alan Paton, published in 1948.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes. The themes include emancipation, religion and justice.	Yes, see the articles by Motta and Esteves (2014:2), Gobry (2015) and Polack (2004:281).

<i>The strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i> by Robert Louis Stevenson, published in 1886.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes. The themes include good versus evil.	Yes, see the article by Johnson (2014).
<i>Poem</i> by Barolong Seboni, published in 1998	Yes	No	Yes	Yes. The themes include communication and verbal abuse.	Yes, see the article by Hafizh (2018) and Huizen (2019).
<i>somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond</i> by ee cummings published in 1931	Yes	Yes	No	Yes. The themes include love and mystery.	Yes, see the article by Raypole (2020).

On reflection, I used *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel and *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton for this study. *Life of Pi* is also a more recent novel and *Cry, the Beloved Country*, specifically engages with the South African apartheid context. Furthermore, these two novels can be used to develop soft skills related to emotional capacities (Levasseur, 2013:566). More specifically, I used these novels because of the themes that they develop, particularly the theme of survival in *Life of Pi* and the theme of justice in *Cry, the Beloved Country*. These themes are particularly relevant in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, asking for survival skills, and justice, which is a theme relevant to the South African context when considering the atrocities of the apartheid system in the past. The themes are transferable to the real-life contexts of 21st century learners and therefore relevant. Givhan (2020) maintains that there are numerous factors that individuals living in the 21st century must survive. These include environmental breakdown, resource shortages, military weapons that can bring devastation, climate change, international polluting, famine, over-population, fatal viruses, threatening technologies and egotism (Cribb, 2017). The need to survive, whatever the circumstances may be, elicits certain characteristics such as adaptability,

resourcefulness and motivation (MacWelch, 2015). These characteristics can be taught by using *Life of Pi* as a platform to develop such skills in learners. Moreover, in the same way the theme of justice in *Cry, the Beloved Country* can be used to teach learners soft skills that will enable them to face “new challenges [regarding] social work in the arenas of social and economic justice” (Polack, 2004:281) given the globalisation of the economy. Similar to the novels, the poems can be employed to cultivate soft skills involving emotions (Levasseur, 2013:566).

I chose to use the poems *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings and *Poem* by Barolong Seboni because both these poems contain themes that relate, whether directly or indirectly, to the four primary soft skills discussed in this study. Poets write to express their emotions, thoughts or feelings surrounding events that they experience in their daily lives and so poetry is generally relatable to all, especially since mankind is exposed to certain common factors such as relationships and environmental issues (Barkley, 2016; Newfield, 2020). The major theme found in *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings is love and it is this profound emotion that often gives rise to all other manner of emotion (Letourneau, 2018), which renders us *human* (Levasseur, 2013:566). A strong feeling of love can incite the need within individuals to improve communication between themselves and the object of their affections, whether it is to get to know them better or to simply avoid a lovers’ spat (Serlin, 2020; De Netto, Quek & Golden, 2021:1). Love also often brings out creativity in individuals as they attempt to find ways to express the emotions they are feeling (Liberman, 2009; Andrews, 2021). The theme of love can also enhance critical thinking as well as collaboration (De Netto *et al.*, 2021:13). Critical thinking may be enhanced especially when dealing with this poem, since the reader cannot possibly truly know which kind of love the poet is referring to – whether lustful, romantic, familial or love for a friend. Consequently, the poem, *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings, provides fertile ground to enhance soft skills since we all experience love to some extent and in various forms throughout our lives. The theme found in *Poem*, by Barolong Seboni, on the other hand, is directly related to communication.

The notion that there is power in words is not a new concept as can be gathered from the book of Proverbs 18:21 (Bible, 1973) and so, the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni it is about the power of words, which is integral to communication. Barolong explicitly describes the effect words can have on individuals and he urges the reader to be kind in their speech, and if they cannot be kind to be quiet. Communication in itself requires another person, which automatically exposes the individual to an opportunity to enhance his communication skills, as well as his collaborative skills. Additionally, some communicative practices require creativity to get the message across, especially when the two parties do not speak the same language (Christensen, 2016). A situation like this, also provides the opportunity for critical thinking to be enhanced since the two parties

must think of how they can be understandable to one another. Additionally, the learning of a new language requires critical thinking (Shirkhani, 2011), even if that “new” language is just to be kind to one another and thoughtful of one another. Lastly, considering that many learners experience poetry to be challenging (Syed & Wahas, 2020:189), collaboration may be enhanced during group analysis of the poems.

The reason I did not use *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde and *The strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson is, although they meet the criteria, the themes found in these novels are not as relevant to this study when the four Cs are taken into account. Although mortality, appearance and good versus evil are themes that are relatable to the relationships between people, both these novels were written in the late 1800s, possibly making them less relevant to South African learners living in the 21st century. Moreover, a more important and determining factor for not using the latter two texts are that they are not particularly relevant to the South African context or to South African experiences. Even though I argue that *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde and *The strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson are set in spaces very different from South Africa and that transferring soft skills while working with contexts that are markedly unrelated could complicate the process, an argument may also be: is not the very point of literature to engage learners in imagined other worlds? (Wright, 2018). This argument highlights the tension in our critiques of the prescribed lists and the need for our national prescribed works to address more directly our South African context. How do we address this tension in our critique of the very list of prescribed texts from which we as teachers have to choose? Is the list not too narrow, for example? Moreover, my choice not to use any of the other prescribed poems is subjective in nature. As a learner, and now a high school English teacher, I simply enjoyed, and still enjoy, the chosen poems more than the others. However, all the poems provide fertile ground for the development of soft skills among English language learners.

3.4 Primary texts

The primary texts – *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel and *Cry, the beloved country* by Alan Paton, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni and *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings – contain themes that are transferable to the real-life contexts of 21st century learners and are therefore relevant. However, there are many other texts that can be used to develop soft skills. The list of set works is extensive and the scope of this dissertation does not allow me to analyse all of them while focussing on the 4 Cs.

Individuals living in the 21st century are faced with numerous socioeconomic challenges they must overcome to survive. The socioeconomic environment consists of “economic systems and social structures [which] impact the distribution of resources, money and power in a community and around the world” (Collaborative on Health and the Environment, 2022). It is when these components are distributed unevenly that a challenge arises to meet basic human needs (Collaborative on Health and the Environment, 2022). This was especially evident during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa (Cassette & Botsane, 2020). Despite South Africa’s constitution, which was intentionally designed to promote social justice, “South Africa remains one of the most unequal countries in the world, and the current crisis [COVID-19] has simply served to highlight just how far we need to go to make provision for even the most basic of rights for all in this country” (Cassette & Botsane, 2020). Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, we were already facing challenges such as “ecological collapse, resource depletion, weapons of mass destruction, climate change, global poisoning, food crises, population and urban overexpansion, pandemic disease, dangerous new technologies and self-delusion” (Cribb, 2017). The COVID-19 pandemic only served to exacerbate these challenges (Cassette & Botsane, 2020; Josephson *et al.*, 2020; Furbush *et al.*, 2021; Naidu, 2021; Duby *et al.*, 2022; OECD, 2022). Overcoming challenges, whatever the circumstances may be, requires certain characteristics such as flexibility, ingenuity, self-discipline, incentive and the capability to learn from mistakes and from others (MacWelch, 2015; Rejbain, 2022). These skills all rely on the four Cs. For example, the ability to learn from mistakes requires communication in the form of feedback and questions regarding the issue, creativity in the form of thinking about new solutions, critical thinking in the form of foreseeing which possible solutions might not work and why, and lastly, collaboration in the form of groupwork and sharing past experiences of what worked and what did not.

The prominent themes found in the novels and poems explored in this study, namely emancipation, justice, religion, loss of innocence, survival, communication and love, link to soft skills as these are founded in human existence, challenges, emotions and everyday experiences, which are the very things that distinguish us from machines (Ma, 2018a). This is explored in detail in Section 4.4.4, titled “Themes of the novels and poems, soft skills and the South African learner”.

3.5 Text analysis and interpretation

Six primary texts are used in this study, the four selected texts discussed above, and two official documents, namely the CAPS documents for Grade 10–12 for HL and for EFAL in the senior and further education training (FET) phase respectively.

3.5.1 Process of analysis

Document analysis was used in this study to determine the ways in which the selected literature may enhance soft skills in accordance with the CAPS documents for Grade 10–12, English HL and EFAL in the Senior and FET phases. Document analysis refers to “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents” (Bowen, 2009:27). The methodical process related to document analysis typically includes the critical examination of data, or in this case, the primary texts (Bowen, 2009:27). According to Bowen (2009:27), texts must be “examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge”. The evaluation of documents calls for an objective approach, but as is acknowledged by the humanistic point of departure, I could not remain completely impartial and as such the interpretations were influenced by my own subjectivity to some degree, as argued by (Mart, 2019). However, I consulted the available literature to compare my findings and interpretations to those of other researchers. Additionally, according to Rasch (2020), document analysis is a “straightforward structure and procedure [which] enables the researcher to adapt the method to his or her special case – nearly to every need”.

I analysed the data using hermeneutics, which is a method of textual analysis (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:66). The novels, *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel and *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton, as well as the poems, *Poem*, by Baralong Seboni and *somewhere i have travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings were analysed in this manner.

Logically, it is important to keep the research question in mind, which in this case is how the use of prescribed literature for Grade 12 EFAL and HL learners in a South African context can enhance soft skills needed for the 21st century. Rasch (2020) encourages the collection of that data that will be most suitable to answer the question. I chose to make use of prescribed literature for Grade 12 HL and EFAL learners in South Africa, as the research question hopes to determine how literature may develop soft skills that learners need for the 21st century.

The prescribed novels are a convenient, purposive sample as learners are required by the CAPS document to study literature. The novels were selected as they are practical and applicable to every Grade 12 learner in South Africa following the syllabus of government schools. However, according to the National Recovery Annual Teaching Plan for EFAL, not all EFAL Grade 12 learners do the genre of novels. Teachers choose two genres from poetry, short stories, dramas or novels, while HL Grade 12 learners have to study poetry, a drama and a novel, the specific text being chosen by the classroom teacher from a list of set works (DBE, 2021c).

The selection and preparation of data for document analysis also entails the identification of “important parts of documents” (Rasch, 2020). Considering this criterion by Rasch (2020), the process of document analysis requires researchers to ascribe codes to various parts of the selected data to highlight the important sections of a text – this also refers to the identification of themes during data gathering (Rasch, 2020). Rasch (2020) stipulates that these themes must be analysed with reference to the research questions. Lastly, and most importantly, document analysis requires the researcher to “interpret and present the data in a suitable way and be transparent when reporting the findings” (Rasch, 2020). As a first step, I gained an understanding of each text as a whole through multiple readings. I also investigated specific chapters and scenes in both novels to further my understanding of the texts. I then tried to understand the texts in relation to the four Cs.

The analysis and interpretation of the primary texts involved various steps. First, I viewed the CAPS documents and I read both novels as if for mere enjoyment. This was done to familiarise myself with the texts. Second, as I always do on completing a novel, I pondered over the information presented in the novels and the thoughts it evoked. Third, considering why I read the novels in the first place – to answer the research questions – I read the novels again, while keeping the research questions in mind. During the second reading, I made notes when passages in the novels reminded me of information I had come across in the literature review with regard to soft skills, more specifically, the four Cs. Moreover, I made notes whenever a certain passage reminded me of ways in which literature may be taught to enhance soft skills in such a way that these are still relevant to learners’ everyday lives. Lastly, I came to conclusions about the research questions I had set out to answer. In recapitulation, the questions are:

- How can the use of prescribed literature for Grade 12 EFAL and English HL learners in a South African context enhance the soft skills needed for the 21st century?
- Which soft skills are addressed in literature that can be of value to Grade 12 learners in the 21st century?
- To which extent can literature be used to fulfil the requirements of the CAPS document in terms of the development of holistic individuals?
- How can literature be taught in technologically-driven classrooms in the 21st century?”

The conclusions in answer to the questions are shared in Chapter 5.

3.6 Ethics considerations

3.6.1. Ethics considerations and ethical procedures

All researchers have to consider the ethics of their research and the impact of their work on any involved parties. However, since there were no human participants in this study, the ethics considerations were minimal and pertained to my own conduct as a researcher. I have applied and obtained ethics clearance from the relevant ethics committee, namely EduRec, the ethics committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University. I endeavoured to remain objective in my writing and consulted valid, reliable and verifiable sources that I cited truthfully. As such, I did not claim any information, views and arguments as my own when they were not. In a study such as this, informed by document analysis, it is feasible that my own personal beliefs could influence the outcome of the study. I was, however, aware of my own subjectivity and therefore endeavoured to remain impartial. Then again, complete impartiality was not always possible in this study of literature, which involves subjective interpretations to a large extent. It is due to this subjectivity present in most qualitative studies that most critics doubt the trustworthiness of such a study (Shenton, 2004:63). As a precaution, and to ensure the trustworthiness of the study, I paid close attention to the trustworthiness criteria as suggested by Schwandt *et al.* (2007), Guba and Lincoln (1982) as well as Guba (1981). The criteria that must be considered to ensure the trustworthiness of the study include credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability (Guba, 1981:79). Credibility refers to the "...true value..." of a source, while transferability refers to the suitability of a source (Guba, 1981:79). Dependability, on the other hand, refers to the consistency of the study – if this study were to be repeated in the same manner – will it yield the same results? Lastly, confirmability is indicative of neutrality in the study (Guba, 1981:80). The criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are seconded by Nieuwenhuis (2020:144–145).

To ensure credibility of the research, I made use of a distinct purposive sample as suggested by Nieuwenhuis (2020:144). Moreover, I familiarised myself thoroughly with the data sample early in the research process and kept my findings in agreement with reality as constructed by the scholars (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:144). To ensure that the study would be transferable, I do not claim a generalisability but through thorough explanations and clear indicators of what constituted the sample and the context of the study, readers will be able to conclude for themselves whether the findings this study produced, are transferable to their unique situations.

Dependability refers to the "research design and its implementation; the operational detail of data-gathering; and the reflective appraisal of the project" (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:145). I clearly

documented the way in which this study was conducted and what constituted the purposive sampling. The purposive sampling consisted of texts that are prescribed according to the national list of set works for both HL and EFAL. Other than the four soft skills of critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration, that had been addressed in the sample of texts, these texts had to have the ability to elicit a vivid emotional response in its readers. The themes found in the texts also had to have some relevance to 21st century issues.

Lastly, Nieuwenhuis (2020:145) maintains that confirmability improves the neutrality of the study. Generally, the findings of a qualitative study will be informed by the participants without any biases or interests from the researcher hindering the study. However, considering that this study makes use of documents and not participants, I refrained from allowing my own subjective views to unduly influence the document analysis I conducted (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:144).

Guba and Lincoln (1982) suggest that dependability and confirmability be ensured using an “educational audit”. This was done by remaining truthful in all accounts and ensuring that that which is written correlates with what the scholars mean in an accurate and appropriate way (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). Findings were shared with and discussed with my supervisors on a continuous basis.

CHAPTER 3: SUMMARY

The primary texts in this study were selected via purposive sampling as I had a specific aim in mind – to prove that literature may act as a vehicle to enhance soft skills in 21st century English language learners. The primary texts were chosen based on certain criteria. These criteria included whether these texts are prescribed as per the national set list, whether these are prescribed for HL, or EFAL learners, if the texts contained themes that elicit emotional responses and lastly, whether these themes are relevant to 21st century issues, thus making them relevant to learners. The chapter outlined the process of document analysis, also discussing any ethics considerations of the study, as well as issues related to trustworthiness. The study is low risk since no human participants were involved. The next chapter presents the results of the data analysis as well as a brief overview of teaching strategies and e-learning platforms that may be incorporated into a literature lesson when the aim is to enhance learners’ soft skills. The next chapter also includes examples of how a lesson plan might look when technology is incorporated into the lesson, all the while enhancing soft skills.

CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter follows the analysis of four primary texts and two official documents used in this study, namely: The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) documents for Grade 10-12, Home Language (HL) and for English First Additional Language (EFAL) in the senior and further education and training (FET) phase, along with, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, by Alan Paton and *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings (prescribed for Home Language learners) and, *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel as well as *poem* by Barolong Seboni (prescribed for English First Additional Language learners).

The following sections present a detailed exploration of the texts mentioned. Firstly, the official documents, namely CAPS for HL and EFAL for Grades 10-12 are explored. This is done by referring to the general aims found in the EFAL CAPS document (these are the same in the CAPS document for HL learners Grades 10-12). In addition to this, languages and language teaching approaches as found in the EFAL CAPS document are studied, as well as the rationale for teaching language skills as found in the HL CAPS document. The chapter then offers some background to each novel, followed by the main themes found in each novel. The discussion of the novels is concluded with practical examples on how soft skills may be enhanced when addressing the various themes found in the novels. The same structure is then followed when discussing the poems.

4.2 Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements for English Home Language and First Additional Language, Grade 10-12

The CAPS documents for Grades 10-12 HL and EFAL guide teachers on what is expected of learners with respect to proficiency in the language and skills needed to enter the work force, to follow a trade or to gain access to tertiary education after completion of Grade 12. Given that the aims stipulated in the CAPS for Grades 10-12 EFAL are replicated in the CAPS for Grades 10-12 HL, only the aims as found in the former are explored in the following section to avoid repetition. This exploration touches on general aims and languages in the CAPS, as well as language teaching approaches (DBE, 2011:1). I reiterate here that when learners take English as their Home Language, it may not be their actual home language but rather a first or second additional language (Kretzer, 2019).

The CAPS for Grades 10-12 HL does contain a section on the “rationale for teaching the language skills” (DBE, 2011:1). These expectations are explored in the following sections.

4.2.1 General aims in the EFAL CAPS

The crux of the South African curriculum is to support the learning of “knowledge, skills and values” (DBE, 2011:4) that are of importance to learners not only in the South African context, but also in a global context (Balistreri *et al.*, 2012:10). Naturally, the diversity of the country must be considered. Coincidentally, the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:4) hopes to preserve learners’ individuality in that “children [should] acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives”. This aspiration of the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:4) implies that teachers must have some sense of the information and abilities that are significant to the lives of learners. As a result, learners must be equipped to function well “in local contexts, while being sensitive to global imperatives” (DBE, 2011:4). The instruction of global necessities is especially important considering globalisation as discussed in Chapter 2.

The CAPS document has four main aims. The first is to provide learners with information, abilities and morals integral to their “self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation as citizens of a free country” (DBE, 2011:4). Once again, it is clear that learners’ schooling must prepare them for a world that will be not only be relevant to their lives but also to that of their community. Secondly, in line with this, the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:4) clearly states that learners must be provided “access to higher education” as well as facilitation pertaining to “the transition [...] from education institutions to the workplace”. This last statement is especially noteworthy considering that the neglect of soft skills, which are essential in the workplace, as discussed in Chapters 1 to 3, does not support learners in the transition from a learning environment to a place of work. Lastly, the CAPS document hopes to be able to provide “employers with a sufficient profile of a learner’s competences” (DBE, 2011:4). Curiously, these reports on learners’ competencies make no explicit reference to soft skills, only to the competence of the English language in its entirety alongside science, technology, engineering and mathematic (STEM) competencies and other subjects learners can take for the National Senior Certificate, or the Independent Examination Board examinations. In order to achieve these aspirations, the CAPS document is founded on certain principles. These are explored below.

South Africa is widely known for its unique² history and it is with the aim of redressing the issues of the past that the first principle of the CAPS document is formed, namely social transformation. The CAPS document is, firstly, based on the foundation of “ensuring that the educational imbalances of the past are redressed, and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of the population” (DBE, 2011:4) regardless of “socioeconomic background, race,

² South Africa is widely known for its cultural diversity after the 1994 dismantling of the racist political regime of apartheid (Lowe, 2022).

gender, physical ability or intellectual ability” (DBE, 2011:4). Secondly, the CAPS document underpins dynamic and favourable learning habits, “active and critical learning” (DBE, 2011:4) which discourages “rote and uncritical learning of given truths” (DBE, 2011:4). Consequently, it is implied that critical thinking is an essential skill that learners must develop and use throughout their schooling years. The third principle that the CAPS document is based on, is that of “high knowledge and high skills” (DBE, 2011:4). This third principle of the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:4) not only delineates the minimum requirements learners must meet to be promoted to a higher grade, but also the attainment of knowledge that is considered on par with international standards. The fourth principle is an extension of the third, where a progression is prescribed so that, “content and context of each grade shows progression from simple to complex” (DBE, 2011:4).

The fifth principle of the CAPS draws from the South African Constitution (South Africa, 1996) and refers to “human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice” (DBE, 2011:5). It is for this reason that the CAPS document promotes diversity, which is especially fitting when considering the Rainbow Nation context of South Africa. “The Rainbow Nation” is a moniker used by most when referring to the South African nation’s acceptance of diversity, multiculturalism and unity as it formed after apartheid (Palmer, 2016:1). This principle of unbiased and fair inclusivity carries over to the sixth principle, which pertains to the significance of native wisdom and which aims to acknowledge “the rich history and heritage of this country as important contributors to nurturing the values contained in the Constitution” (DBE, 2011:5). Spoken communication can be of great value in this regard considering that elders often possess knowledge regarding the youth’s history and heritage, which they may share with learners by means of storytelling. However, for learners to be able to comprehend this wisdom, they must be able to communicate properly. Here, I refer to Chapter 2 where the four communicative competencies are explained. These include sociolinguistic, grammatical (or linguistic), strategic and discourse competence (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:40-44). Finally, the last principle advocated by the CAPS document is “credibility, quality and efficiency” (DBE, 2011:5). This last principle lays the foundation for standardised schooling and promotes equivalence to the schooling offered in other countries (DBE, 2011:5). Consequently, it is implied that learners must be able to compete with other learners on an international scale, and as such they must possess certain skills. The aims of the CAPS document are explored in this regard in the following section.

As already stated in Chapter 1, teachers must pursue various aims with their teaching practices (DBE, 2011:5) to produce well-educated and well-rounded learners from the schooling system. The first is of a very practical nature where learners are expected to emerge from the schooling system with the ability to “identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and

creative thinking” (DBE, 2011:5). These skills of identification and problem solving are directly related to creativity and critical thinking, which are paramount in dealing with common day issues (Birgili, 2015:71-72). The second aim, as described in the CAPS document, is the ability to collaborate successfully, “work effectively as individuals and with others as members of a team” (DBE, 2011:5). This second aim as described in the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:5) marks three of the four soft skills identified as the focus of this study. Collaboration is at the very heart of human existence considering that we are social creatures with an inherent need for interaction. Note that even though some individuals dislike social interaction, it is *needed*, even if in minimal doses, to avoid serious mental and physical health issues (Robinson, 2019; Pietrabissa & Simpson, 2020). Some researchers, like Mascarelli (2013:1), even argue that social isolation may lead to a shorter life expectancy. This is seconded by Hutten *et al.* (2022), who found that “indeed, loneliness has been found to increase the risk of premature mortality”. Thirdly, the CAPS document aims to produce individuals from the schooling system who value a harmonious society (DBE, 2011:5); this is especially relevant in the South African context. Learners must be able to “organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively” (DBE, 2011:5). Learners are thus held accountable for their own learning experiences, which may lead to increased creativity and critical thinking, as well as communication and collaboration considering that learners must make sense of the world for themselves vis-à-vis their own thoughts and the input of others. This brings me to the fourth aim as stipulated in the CAPS document, namely that learners must be able to “collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information” (DBE, 2011:5). Fifthly, learners must be successful communicators whether it is via “visual, symbolic and/or language skills” (DBE, 2011:5). Thus far, the ability to communicate was only implied, but it is later explicitly stated as an objective (DBE, 2011:5), which further highlights its importance. Sixthly, learners must be experienced in the “use of science and technology” (DBE, 2011:5). This aim directly reflects the time in which we find ourselves, where STEM competencies are prominent and often driven by greed as stated in Chapter 1 of this study. However, the CAPS document makes provision for the development of a sense of accountability “towards the environment and the health of others” (DBE, 2011:5). Strangely, the health of individuals relates to soft skills being neglected as discussed in this study, seeing that without creativity, critical thinking, communication or collaboration we are just empty vessels in danger of mental unwellness (Boocock, 2019). Lastly, the CAPS document wishes to produce learners who can demonstrate a sense of comprehension of the world “as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation” (DBE, 2011:5).

The successful obtainment of these aims will produce holistic individuals from the schooling system. Ultimately, however, the CAPS document is the greatest advocate of inclusivity. It is

stated that “inclusivity should become a central part of the organisation, planning and teaching at each school” (DBE, 2011:5). This is then also exactly what this study hoped to achieve – to incorporate soft skills into the design and formulation of teaching practices. This aspiration to incorporate soft skills in the teaching process, refers specifically to the teaching of literature in such a way as to include the enhancement of soft skills in the 21st century, where STEM competencies enjoy prominence.

4.2.2 Language in the EFAL CAPS

The CAPS states that “Language is a tool for thought and communication” (DBE, 2011:8). It is becoming more and more evident that the soft skills as discussed in this study are central to the CAPS document and the teaching of English. However, somehow, these skills are neglected as has been established in the literature review in Chapter 2. This neglect of soft skills is a great cause for concern, especially since language is a “cultural and aesthetic means commonly shared among a people to make better sense of the world they live in” (DBE, 2011:8). Thus, it may be implied that language itself evokes critical thinking when individuals are confronted with having to make sense of their lives. According to the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:8), learners must know a language to obtain information, to convey their personality, emotions and thoughts, as well as to engage with others, all the while managing their world. Consequently, learners need to know a language to be able to engage in critical thoughts and to be able to collaborate with others via communication. Naturally, these endeavours require a sense of creativity as all individuals are unique with regard to their culture, mannerisms, dialects based on home language and area where they grew up or still live, and so some may have to be addressed differently while keeping the aforementioned factors in mind. As such, the CAPS document maintains that creativity may be enhanced through the learning of a language.

A language “provides learners with a rich, powerful and deeply rooted set of images and ideas that can be used” (DBE, 2011:8) in their everyday lives. In fact, the CAPS document implicitly states that all four soft skills as discussed may be enhanced through encounters with the English language. According to the CAPS document, it is “through language that cultural diversity and social relations are expressed and constructed, and it is through language that such constructions can be altered, broadened and refined” (DBE, 2011:8). Exposure to a variety of individuals from different backgrounds allows for the enhancement of creativity in that one must often adapt to certain customs within a culture (Vedantam *et al.*, 2020). Moreover, communication is enhanced through social encounters. Encounters with different people may provide thought provoking conversations, which lead to critical thinking (Quang, 2006:35; Stobierski, 2019). Consequently,

collaboration, on the other hand, may be enhanced when individuals attempt to better understand one another.

4.2.3 Language teaching approaches in the EFAL CAPS

The CAPS document mentions four approaches that are used in the teaching of a language, namely: “text-based, communicative, integrated and process orientated” (DBE, 2011:16). These are only briefly defined as the focus of this study is on the teaching of literature. The CAPS includes the approach to teaching literature as well (DBE, 2011:12). However, it is important to take note of these language approaches to gain a better understanding of the teaching practices in English in general. Firstly, the text-based approach refers to the creations of various texts in which learners are expected to communicate fluently and accurately (Richards & Rodgers, 2015:393). More specifically, the text-based approach comprises “listening to, reading, viewing and analysing texts to understand how they are produced and what their effects are” (DBE, 2011:16). Moreover, the text-based approach relies heavily “on the continuous use and production of texts” (DBE, 2011:16). According to the CAPS document, this approach improves learners’ ability to be “competent, confident and critical readers, writers, viewers and designers of texts” (DBE, 2011:16). This statement indicates that the four soft skills as discussed in this study are used in the teaching of the English language. Firstly, competence in reading and writing implies a skilfulness in communication, while being critical requires creativity and critical thinking. It is only natural that collaboration may occur in the designing of texts (as already stated, these include various verbal scenarios too) as one cannot truly have a discussion by oneself. Therefore, the communicative approach is often inherent to the teaching of English.

The communicative approach, as the name suggests, focuses on the use of authentic verbal language in the correct manner (Richards & Rodgers, 2015:390). According to the CAPS document, learners must be exposed to a language in all its forms to be able to “practice or produce the language” (DBE, 2011:16). The CAPS document explicitly states that “learners learn to read by doing a great deal of reading and learn to write by doing much writing” (DBE, 2011:16). This, however, is a contentious issue as some researchers feel that more reading, just for the sake of reading, does not necessarily improve reading (Küçükoğlu, 2013:710). Clearly then, the reading of literature ought to be of great importance in the English classroom. However, the aspects of a language cannot stand in isolation and as such, the integrated approach is introduced.

The integrated approach merely makes use of various combinations of the existing approaches, while lastly, the process-orientated approach pays special attention to the way in which certain

contexts require language to be used. The process approach turns learners' attention to "different stages of the listening, speaking, reading, and writing processes" (DBE, 2011:16) which ultimately allows them to converse with others while expressing their ideas. However, the CAPS document elaborates even further on reading and the teaching of literature. The key function of reading literature in an educational setting is to cultivate within learners a "sensitivity to a special use of language that is more refined, literary, figurative, symbolic, and deeply meaningful" (DBE, 2016:8). Moreover, the "imaginative use of language" (DBE, 2016:8) can reveal, reinforce and highlight learners' ideas about what they have read. Therefore, literature may awake within learners a natural curiosity that relies heavily on critical thinking and creativity. Ultimately, learners will want to share these wonderings with peers by communicating their ideas with them. Consequently, collaboration may ensue in the pursuit of answers to these questions learners may have. The CAPS document suggests four approaches that may be employed in the teaching of literature. These are briefly explored in the next section.

Firstly, the CAPS document encourages continuous reading activities, "read as much of the text in class as possible without breaking for any other activity" (DBE, 2011:17). Continuous reading will allow learners an opportunity to gain a proper understanding of the text (DBE, 2011:17). Secondly, the purpose of reading literature is to interpret texts and is as such encouraged as it indicates how a language may be "used with subtlety, intelligence, imagination and flair" (DBE, 2011:17). Soft skills are also built on these skills as it takes a certain ability to read between the lines, of activating the imagination and of expressing oneself to be considered human.

Thirdly, the use of creative writing activities is closely linked with the teaching of literature in that it can help learners reach "more creative levels of appreciation" (DBE 2011:17). In this sense, reading may be the language input while writing may be seen as the creative output, as a response to what has been read. Lastly, the teaching of literature promotes individuality as there are no right or wrong answers (DBE, 2011:17). Once again, this freedom of interpretation relates closely to creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration in that learners are free to interpret texts based on their own experiences, to analyse a text and to communicate these findings with peers. From what has been discovered in the CAPS document thus far, it is clear that all language skills are important in the cultivation of soft skills and that this may be enhanced by teaching literature. The rationale for the teaching of language skills as stipulated in the CAPS for HL Grades 10-12 is briefly mentioned in the next section.

4.2.4 Rationale for the teaching of language skills in the HL CAPS

According to the CAPS document, the language skills learners ought to master are “listening and speaking reading and viewing [and] writing and presenting” (DBE, 2011:10-11). Firstly, “listening and speaking are central to learning in all subjects” (DBE, 2011:10). It may be inferred that listening and speaking are skills that enable inclusivity in that various interests may be discussed and learners can reach a level of comprehension. It is necessary to note that these skills allow learners to build on prior knowledge, resolve issues and articulate thoughts and feelings (DBE, 2011:10). Consequently, considering the benefits, these are skills that must be incorporated into the teaching of literature to better enhance soft skills.

Secondly, reading and viewing are crucial for “full participation in society and the world of work” (DBE, 2011:10). This underlining of the importance of reading and viewing links directly with what has been discussed in this study so far with regard to the soft skills needed in the work environment and how literature may enhance these skills. The most notable benefit of reading and viewing, and ultimately the use of literature in the classroom, is that these skills afford learners the opportunity to “recognise how genre and register reflect the purpose, audience and contexts of texts” (DBE, 2011:10). Moreover, it is once more highlighted that nothing stands in isolation in this world as the comprehension and analysis of literature and other visual material “are determined by the learners’ knowledge of language structures, conventions, and their own life experiences”. Lastly, the language skills would be inadequate without the skills to write and present. “Writing and presenting allows learners to construct and communicate thoughts and ideas coherently” (DBE, 2011:11). In effect, writing and presenting offers learners ways to express themselves after having listened to or read something.

The CAPS documents for Grades 10-12 HL and EFAL clearly state what is expected of both teachers and learners. As such, the prescribed novels, *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton and *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, were analysed according to specific themes and their influence on the enhancement of soft skills as identified in the existing literature. This was done to determine the extent to which the novels adhere to the requirements of the CAPS documents for Grades 10-12 HL and EFAL.

4.3 Background to analysing literary texts

The key to truly understanding any piece of literature is not only to have technical knowledge such as on semantics, but also knowledge about the context of the written work and knowledge about the author or poet (Walia, 2014:322; Shea & Ceprano, 2017:48; Fleming, 2019; Deane, 2020:1). Semantics relate to the meaning of any given text (Van Olmen & Athanasopoulos, 2018:9;

Merriam-Webster, 2022d). Such meaning is derived from various factors such as “phonetics, phonology, morphology [and] syntax” (Filip, 2008; Feist, 2022:1). These components differ from language to language (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:3) and considering that South Africa is a place of multilingualism, the determination of meaning within a given social setting is complex (Cenoz, 2013:3). Additionally, Riemer (2016:1) states that semantics is erratic and obtruse, making it a difficult concept to explore. However, it is widely agreed that context further influences semantics (Slotta, 2018:1; Siddiqui, 2018:77; Betti, 2021:1). According to Siddiqui (2017:78), “pragmatics deals with meaning and it involves the fundamental approach to view meaning and its relationship with reality”, though the concept of reality is relative to individuals (Estrada, 2020). Reddy and Pereira (2016:584) explore the “subjective aspect [which is] associated with the objective phenomena” that is reality. This is a complex concept that is not elaborated on here, but it is vital to keep in mind that reality consists of different contexts.

Walia (2014:322) states that the context of any piece of literary work is related to the “biographical, sociological context [and the] time and space” in which it takes place. The biographical context refers to the author or the poet’s background, including but not limited to personal beliefs, formal education and morals that influence the writing, while the sociological context refers to the social environment of the writer at the time of writing a particular text (Shea & Ceprano, 2017:48; Fleming, 2019, Walia, 2014:322; Deane, 2020:1). Consequently, the cultural context along with background information on the author or poet must be considered when the aim is to truly comprehend the literature in question (Mustofa & Hill, 2018:108). Du Plessis (2016:5) explicitly states that “literature tends to be the most accessible form of textual culture”. This view is of course contrary to the view of Roland Barthes as expressed in his seminal work *The Death of the Author* (Barthes, 1977). We should not view a work of literature as a kind of secular version of a sacred text where the author is a ‘god’ who has imbued the text with a single meaning (Barthes, 1977; Kennedy, 1981:381; Ott, 2016). Instead, the literary text is a place where many previous works of literature ‘blend and clash’, a host of influences and allusions and quotations (Barthes, 1977; Jadou, Al-Ghabra, M & Al-Ghabra, I 2021:472). Consequently, analysis seems to be the key practice in understanding literature.

Deane (2020:1) proffers four techniques to truly engage in literary analysis. I discuss these in the next section. Naturally, in order to analyse a text, it must be read first and then, according to Deane (2020:1), it must be reread “to find cues that suggest new possibilities for interpretation”. Deane (2020:1) advocates for texts to be discussed to encourage different interpretations of the same text. Interpretative discussions are instrumental in making meaning since the “perspectives and backgrounds” of those who engage in the conversation are likely to be different, resulting in “collaborative exchanges” where the literary text is concerned (Haroutunian-Gordon, 2014).

Levine *et al.* (2021:491) state that when emotion is incorporated into discussions on literary texts, “multi-layered interpretations” are more likely to ensue from the discussion. Consequently, it is implied that when readers interpret a text subjectively by placing themselves in the shoes of the characters, they are more likely to comprehend the meaning of the text in relation to the biographical and sociological factors at play in the text (Mambrol, 2016). Only when an individual is “in a dialogue with another person does the human disclose meanings important to him” since a first person, or ‘I’, perspective is assumed in the discussion (Zagórska, 2017:51). Additionally, Zagórska (2017:51) argues that subjectivity in a person is distinguished by “reflexive awareness and cognitive openness”, which often allows for analysis of lived experiences, doubts, difficulties and an active search for meaning in “external events as well as in their own lives”. It may be suggested then that readers activate their “literary imagination” (Koopman & Hakemulder, 2015:1), which allows them to have deeper understanding of and compassion for the characters they encounter in literary works. Aside from interpretive discussions, Deane (2021:1) also proposes that writing be used as a tool to express interpretations regarding a text and to “communicate interpretative arguments”. Lastly, Deane (2021:1) suggests that readers “maintain an openness to new interpretations and a willingness to revisit previous interpretive conclusions in the light of new evidence”. This is supported by Zagórska’s (2017:51) definition of subjectivity, which also requires constant revisitations to determine meaning. It is clear that the analysis of a text is a continuous process, continuously offering new interpretations based on how the reader perceives the text in relation to his perceived reality, his personal experiences and the background information on the writer.

Smith *et al.* (2021:1) conducted a detailed study to examine “the influence background knowledge has on the reading comprehension of primary school-aged children”. The researchers (Smith *et al.*, 2021:1) found that individuals with a weaker sense of background knowledge seem to gain more from a piece of writing “with high cohesion”, whereas weaker readers could, to some degree, counteract their poor reading dexterities “in the context of a high degree of background knowledge”. Though the researchers’ review is focused on young learners, their findings are applicable to adult readers too, since “literacy skills decline with age” (Riddell, 2019:60; Shoba, 2021). Additionally, Ben-Aharon (2020) argues that most “reading comprehension problems are lifelong issues”. Fortunately, however, Rashid and Islam (2021:36) maintain that extensive reading allows for the development of “rich background knowledge, vocabulary recognition and a strong desire to read more”. Moreover, by reading often learners improve their reading abilities and experience an “increased context guessing ability” (Rashid & Isalm, 2021:36). However, as previously stated, readers’ own background and subjectivity (Zagórska, 2017:51; Deane, 2021:1; Smith *et al.*, 2021:1) also contribute to the understanding of the text. In this regard, Rosenblatt

formulated the reader response theory. This theory is built on the premise that the reader forms the focal point where construction of meaning is concerned (Woodruff & Griffin, 2017:108; Wilson, 2020:79). Moreover, Browne *et al.* (2021:1) identify “ability, culture, gender and overall experiences” as aspects that influence readers when constructing the meaning of any given text. However, Wilson (2020:79) emphasises the importance of the reader engaging with the text, “bringing to it a combination of interest and experience”, otherwise the text will remain meaningless. More specifically, the reader response theory “promotes transaction between readers and texts as readers are given the freedom to analyse literary pieces based on their personal experiences, diverse cultures, and unique perspectives” (Woodruff & Griffin, 2017:108). The texts in the following sections are analysed by taking into account the background of the authors and the historical context of the text. Naturally, my own subjective context also influenced my analysis, although I strived to support my analysis with secondary sources.

4.4 Background to *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton

To better understand the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, the background of the author and setting of the novel must be considered (Shea & Ceprano, 2017:52). Background knowledge on an author and on the socioeconomic factors relevant to the time when a piece of text is written, allows readers “to make gap-filling inferences, predict, make logical connections, and perform other higher-level thinking skills” (Shea & Ceprano, 2017:52; Deane, 2020:3). Consequently, I provide background on Alan Paton, author of *Cry, the Beloved Country*, as well as a discussion on the socioeconomic factors that influenced his writing of the novel, specifically the political background of the time.

“Alan Stewart Paton was born on the 11th of January 1903, in the city of Pietermaritzburg, in Natal” (Du Plessis, 2019:16). It is noteworthy that KwaZulu-Natal is one of the settings of *Cry, the Beloved Country*, since it is where Paton was born and an environment he knows well (The Presidency, 2022). Paton grew up to be a teacher, “literary artist” and activist who fought “against injustices against humanity” (Du Plessis, 2019:1). This is particularly noteworthy since Paton was a white male who stood up for the rights of black people during the pre-apartheid era of segregation and the apartheid era in South Africa (Iannone, 1997:442; Wittenberg, 2007:307; Ahn, 2012:113; Du Plessis, 2016:iv; The Presidency, 2022). It was uncommon during this time for whites to take an interest in the well-being of black South Africans, since it meant opposing a “powerful white supremacy force” (Du Plessis, 2016:33). However, it must be noted that the white population were involved in the electoral process, and racial politics were a part of that process (Du Plessis, 2016:33) which meant that the whites did take an interest in black South Africans,

albeit subtly. Consequently, Paton was a prominent person among the white minority in that he opposed the apartheid regime (Lirola, 2007:101).

The “white minority” Lirola (2007:101) refers to in her article are specifically those who fought against the legislation that implied that whites are superior to blacks. This legislation was enacted in 1948 by a white minority group, the National Party, who “kept the country’s majority black population under the thumb” (Boddy-Evans, 2019; Blakemore, 2021). Boddy-Evans (2019) pertinently states that “the primary purpose of apartheid laws was to promote the superiority of whites and to establish and elevate the minority white regime”. This legislature was in place until 10 May 1994 and was an “oppressive system of government that ordered people by the colour of their skin” (Mhlauli *et al.*, 2015:204). Many atrocities were committed during the apartheid era in South Africa, the nature of which I will not elaborate on here. Nonetheless, Paton was involved in politics and played a part in founding the Liberal Party in South Africa, which was “formed in May 1953 as a non-racial political party” and which opposed the governing party of the time (Moffatt, 1999:1; Ahn, 2012:113). Paton not only helped found the Liberal Party but he also acted as “vice chairperson and then president” (The Presidency, 2022). This leadership position in the party surely emphasised Paton’s passion for racial justice and equality (The Presidency, 2022). Another instance where Paton showcased his enthusiasm for the rectification of social injustices is with his work at Diepkloof Reformatory (Du Plessis, 2016:7-8; The Presidency, 2022), where he faced opposition from Hendrik Verwoerd³ about how he managed it (Du Plessis, 2016:22). Paton became proficient in Zulu “during his time at Diepkloof Reformatory”, where he was tasked to turn the institution into a place of education (Chisholm, 1991:23; Du Plessis, 2016:93). Paton managed to transform Diepkloof Reformatory into an operational educational institution where he entrusted the occupants with “increased liberties and freedoms” (Du Plessis, 2016:22). However, not all reformatories were as focused on the humane aspect of reform as the Diepkloof Reformatory under Paton’s charge (Du Plessis, 2016:22).

According to Lirola (2007:101), Paton was heavily influenced by his religion in his fight for a better society. This statement is supported by the Presidency (2022), which states that Paton’s work “was deeply influenced by the Christian faith of his parents and the Old Testament”. Paton’s religion instilled in him certain principles and morals “that made him very sensitive to the racial conflicts in South Africa” (Lirola, 2007:101; McKay & Whitehouse, 2014:1). The Liberal Party devoted “itself to the fight against all unjust laws, to the elimination of discrimination, and to the destruction of the colour bar” (Watson, 1982:40). Sadly, the Liberal Party was only active for 15

³ Hendrik Verwoerd, a former prime minister of South Africa, was an orchestrator of apartheid and was widely known as the “architect of apartheid”, according to Kenney (as cited by Venter, 1999:415).

years until it was forced to dissolve in 1968 “under a law that prohibited multiracial party membership” (The Presidency, 2022). Unfortunately, Paton passed away in 1988, six years before the current democratic South Africa was established (The Presidency, 2022; Mitgang, 2022). However, Paton managed to leave his mark and is now most commonly known for “the extraordinary and long-lasting international success” of his first novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, which was first published in 1948 (Jordan, 1996:681).

It is believed that Paton wrote *Cry, the Beloved Country* as an appeal to South Africans to forget the historical events that led to the state of unrest in the land at the time and to “look to a new and brighter future” (Jordan, 1996:681; Mnyandu, 2014). Watson (1982:30) states that a close exploration of the novel reveals that it serves to “expose a certain state of affairs in South Africa; namely, the social consequences of the destruction of the tribal system by the whites and the general disintegration, both moral and otherwise, which characterises South African society as a whole”. Consequently, Du Plessis (2016:iv) goes as far as to define Paton as “a literary activist, despite being a fictional novelist”. According to a digitised version of Mitgang’s article (2022), which was originally published in 1988 in the New York Times, Paton protested against racial segregation in his written work. According to Watson (1982:29), *Cry, the Beloved Country*, was written “at a time when liberalism still seemed to provide an answer to South Africa’s problems”.

Without relaying the details of the South African political history, it is important to note that the policy of apartheid became national policy in 1948 (Augustyn, 2020), from there Watson’s (1982:29) statement. However, many years of racial segregation preceded formal apartheid. Liberalism refers to a broad-mindedness that is not bound to authority or traditional norms (Merriam-Webster, 2022e). An acceptance of or at the very least a tolerance for dissimilarities among individuals is what South Africa needed at the time when Paton wrote *Cry, the Beloved Country* (Watson, 1982:29). Today, racial issues in South Africa are still prominent, although most South Africans pretend not to notice for fear of being publicly pilloried (Mashaba, 2015; Morris, 2020). This means that *Cry, the Beloved Country* can still make a special contribution to learners’ development.

More pertinent to this study and *Cry, the Beloved Country* is that acceptance of differences among individuals is central to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, which “can be classified as prescribing a liberal democracy” (Harden, 2014). At the time of the writing of *Cry, the Beloved Country*, illiberalism was at the order of the day and Paton illustrates this effectively through the violence found in the novel (Foley, 1996:21; Harden, 2014:1; Evans, 2015). Loubser (2015:132) eloquently describes illiberalism as “the belief in evil and consequent violence”. Loubser (2015:132) continues to say that violence tends to ensue when there is strife over

resources, but more pertinently, people tend to engage in violence out of fear of one another. This was evident during the apartheid era considering the one example of “the slums [that] breed murderers, and thus greater hatred and more violence” (Du Plessis, 2016:70). Paton was exposed to violence and domination as a child, resulting from “a narrow-minded, overzealous, religious and class-conscious family”, consequently showcasing the illiberalism of the time. This ultimately manifests in his novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country* (Du Plessis, 2016:7;16). However, Paton’s growth “in enlightenment and the acceptance of all people, mirrors the struggle to achieve a free and democratic South Africa” (Du Plessis, 2016:16).

Paton touches on the themes of poverty, corruption, violence, and “racial hatred and displacement” (Du Plessis, 2016:7) in his novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*. Although this novel was published in 1948, the themes are evidently still applicable to modern-day South Africa and discourses around these issues may greatly contribute to the development of the four soft skills that form the focal point of this study. According to Prescott (as cited by Du Plessis, 2016:27), the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, is a true representation of the quandary black South Africans faced during the apartheid era. The novel is divided into three books, each with a different focal point. These are briefly explored in the next section.

4.4.1 Plot summary of *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton

4.4.1.1 Book 1

The first book focuses on Stephan Kumalo, a black reverend, and his quest to find his family members who have been enveloped by the city of Johannesburg. Chapter 1 is devoted to describing the land. The first image of the land is that of a beautiful road running “from Ixopo into the hills” (Paton, 1948:1). Ixopo, a small town in KwaZulu-Natal, is one of the settings of *Cry, the Beloved Country*. However, the first picturesque image of the land falls away as Paton describes how land is being neglected in certain parts of the country. Chapter 1 recounts how the youth have left for Johannesburg in search of better opportunities, leaving behind not only their families and the land, but also their traditions. It is only in Chapter 2 that the reader is introduced to Stephen Kumalo, who is a Zulu “Anglican priest” (Ahn, 2012:115; Paton, 1948:8). Chapter 2 establishes a setting that reflects the poor socioeconomic conditions of the time (Schlemmer & Møller, 1997:15; Du Plessis & Smit, 2006:2; Muntingh, 2013; Mariotti & Fourie, 2014:113; Kwenda *et al.*, 2020; Ballard & Hamann, 2021). The novel’s rising action is rooted in Kumalo receiving a letter hand-delivered to him by a small hungry child.

In the letter, Theophilus Msimangu, a reverend from Sophiatown, summons Kumalo to go and see his sister in Johannesburg, who had fallen ill, and from whom Kumalo has not heard in a long

time. This silence is a sensitive matter for Kumalo, seeing that not only his sister but also other members of his family, particularly his son and his brother, have all seemingly deserted him to go to Johannesburg, “they go away and they do not write anymore” (Paton, 1948:8). The matter of Kumalo having to go and see his sister is especially troublesome seeing that he and his wife are modest people who have in their possession only a few “old and dirty notes, and a flood of silver and copper”, again highlighting the impoverished times in which they live (Paton, 1948:8; Harden, 2014; Loubser, 2015:28; Letseka, 2022). Nonetheless, Kumalo makes his way to Johannesburg, where he enlists the help of his new friend, Msimangu, to find his sister, Gertrude, and his son, Absalom. Once in Johannesburg, Kumalo comes to know that his sister’s illness is “not that kind of sickness; it is another, a worse kind of sickness” – prostitution (Paton, 1948:23). Kumalo manages to temporarily liberate Gertrude from her situation and so he sets out further to find his son. On Kumalo’s quest he is briefly reacquainted with his brother, but learns that his brother has changed drastically as he no longer believes in fidelity or supports the church. It is only after a great deal of effort, help from Msimangu, and an encounter with his brother, that Kumalo comes to learn that his son has gone astray. It comes to light that his son has not only impregnated a young girl but has also murdered a white man. It is also revealed that Absalom had spent time at the reformatory. Although Absalom’s actions reflect badly on the reformatory and the man who works there proclaims that he “was grieved” (Paton, 1948:93), it is this young man who suggests that Kumalo procures a lawyer for his son, but Kumalo does not know any lawyers.

Fortunately, Absalom’s case is defended by Mr Carmichael, who agrees to take the case “*pro deo*” (Paton, 1948:110). Kumalo does not understand the term, again highlighting the issue of language barriers (Reagan, 1987:299; Du Plessis, 2016:103; Hunter-Adams & Rother, 2017:2; Saneka & De Witt, 2019:1; Shayne, 2020; Mataka *et al.*, 2020:117). Additionally, Kumalo is concerned about what it may cost to have a lawyer defend his case in court and he anxiously asks Father Vincent, “what will it cost? My little money is nearly exhausted” (Paton, 1948:111). Father Vincent puts Kumalo at ease when he says that it means the lawyer will take the case “for God” and that it will cost nothing (Paton, 1948:111). Father Vincent adds “that is what it meant in the old days of faith, though it has lost much of that meaning” (Paton, 1948:111). Nonetheless, Kumalo is overwhelmed by such kindness and so he cries. Ultimately, Book 1 ends with Father Vincent who goes “back to the lawyer who was taking the case for God” (Paton, 1948:109).

4.4.1.2 Book 2

Book 2 mainly focuses on the story of James Jarvis, a white farmer, who lost his son, Arthur, to black crime in Johannesburg. At the start of Book 2, the reader is presented with an exact reiteration of the description of the landscape of Ixopo where “hills are grass-covered and rolling,

and they are lovely beyond any singing of it" (Paton, 1948:113). The landscape in the beginning of Book 2 is viewed from the perspective of James Jarvis, a white farmer, owner of "one of the finest farms of this countryside. The farm "is called High Place" (Paton, 1948:112). However, the reader is introduced to an already "gloomy" Jarvis, seeing that his lands are unfruitful because "rain, rain, there was no rain" (Paton, 1948:112). The situation worsens when a police captain visits Jarvis one afternoon, saying, "I have bad news for you" and continues to inform him that his son "was shot dead at 1.30 p.m. this afternoon in Johannesburg" (Paton, 1948:115-116). This unfortunate event, the murder of their son, calls Jarvis and his wife to Johannesburg.

It is in Johannesburg where Jarvis discovers the extent to which his son, Arthur, was interested in the black people and their plight for justice and equal treatment of all races. Sadly, however, Arthur's interest in the blacks had caused a rift between Jarvis and his son as they "didn't see eye to eye on the native question" (Paton, 1948:121). The views of these two men are sharply contrasted and as such successfully captures the political sentiments of the time. Arthur can be seen as progressive, hoping for "moderate political change and especially social improvement by governmental action" (Merriam-Webster, 2022f) while Jarvis is rather conservative. Jarvis admits that he tries "to treat a native decently, but he's not my food and drink" (Paton, 1948:122) and as such showcases his contempt for the blacks. Arthur, in turn, was widely liked by people of all races and it is perhaps this fact that is responsible for the difficulty Jarvis experiences in reconciling the horrendous crime of Arthur's death with Arthur's love for the blacks. Arthur was sympathetic to the plight of the blacks, and Jarvis seemed to think that his involvement was too deep. Jarvis continues to state that "there are too many of these murders and robberies and brutal attacks" (Paton, 1948:122) and so Paton reinforces the fear in the reader. Arthur, however, was bold in his fearlessness and spoke his mind about the mistreatment of the blacks while he was still alive. This makes Arthur's death at the hands of a black man even more tragic. Absalom and two others are on trial for the murder of Arthur Jarvis in Book 2. It is during the hearing that readers are made aware of the fact that the revolver that killed Arthur Jarvis, was only meant to scare the inhabitants of the house.

For a short while, however, the trial seems to be forgotten by those who have been following it as everyone focuses on "gold [that] has been discovered, more gold, rich gold" (Paton, 1948:145). However, Jarvis and his wife escape the hustling and bustling of the city and go to visit Barbara Smith "on a day when the Court was not holding the case" (Paton, 1948:152). It is here where Jarvis, the father of the murder victim, and Kumalo, the father of the murderer, meet prior to the court hearing. The exchange between these two men is awkward at best, though filled with signs of humility and humanity. Though the meeting between Jarvis and Kumalo is peaceful and without incident, Absalom must still be tried for his crime, and he is sentenced to death while his two

accomplices are set free. Right after Absalom is sentenced to death, he is married to the girl who is carrying his child and so Kumalo adopts her and the unborn child as his own. It is also here where Kumalo greets his son for the last time and tells him that he will be leaving for Ndotsheni the following day. However, before Kumalo leaves, he visits his brother, John, not with the thought of reproaching him but rather to warn him that his speeches touch on dangerous matters and that the police will arrest him when they think it is time. Unfortunately, this encounter ends badly because “brother had shut out brother” (Paton, 1948:182). Thus, Kumalo gains a daughter and grandchild but he loses a son, a brother and a sister. Jarvis’s character on the other hand shows growth in Book 2 as he donates one thousand pounds to “do all the things [Harrison] Arthur wanted to do” (Paton, 1948:183). Regardless, Book 2 of the novel concludes on a note of fear and a seeming hopelessness as Kumalo thinks by himself, “the murderer afraid of death had once been a child afraid of the night” (Paton, 1948:185).

4.4.1.3 Book 3

The third and final book of the novel depicts Kumalo’s train journey home, to Ndotsheni, and there is a noticeable change in scenery, “the white flat hills of the mines drop behind, and the country rolls away as far as the eye can see” (Paton, 1948:193). However, as Kumalo, Gertrude’s little boy and Absalom’s young wife come “down into the great valley of the Umkomaas, where the tribes live”, they see that “the soil is sick almost beyond healing” because “the rains will not fall [and so] they cannot plough or plant, and there will be hunger in this valley” (Paton, 1948:186). In addition to this, Kumalo is still haunted by feelings of fear since “many people know him, and he is afraid of their questions” (Paton, 1948:193). Consequently, Kumalo avoids the pending questions by reading the “sacred book” so that “they turn to another who has taste for conversation” (Paton, 1948:187). Interestingly, however, Kumalo is eagerly welcomed by the villagers who are pleased that he has returned.

Kumalo leads the village in prayer, just as he has done before, and the reader is given the sense that all hope is not lost and that the Lord is present there. Kumalo is welcomed to such an extent that “his heart is so warmed that he casts out his fear, and prays that which is deep within him” (Paton, 1948:190). However, the land and its people are experiencing desperate times. “There had never been such a drought in Ndotsheni” (Paton, 1948:195). Kumalo knows that prayer alone will not be sufficient and that “somewhere down here upon the earth men must come together, think something, do something” (Paton, 1948:195). As a result, Kumalo breaks custom and sets out to discuss the matter of the drought and the resulting devastation with the chief of the tribe. Kumalo also enlists the help of the white headmaster of the school “yet there he was not more successful” (Paton, 1948:198). The meeting with the headmaster consists of talk surrounding

various “schemes of work” and ways in which “the life of the child [can be related to] the life of the community” as is depicted in “circulars from the Department in Pietermaritzburg” (Paton, 1948:198). Seeing that the community and the children are dying, this meeting ends with Kumalo being “dispirited and depressed” (Paton, 1948:199). Against all odds, Kumalo receives help from Jarvis right after he meets Jarvis’s grandson, who enquires out of child-like curiosity after Kumalo’s language, the community and why there is no milk in Ndotsheni. As a result, Kumalo receives milk from Jarvis to give to the young. At first Kumalo feels “a dull sense of fear”, but is pleasantly surprised when “there outside the door was the milk, in shining cans in the cart” (Paton, 1948:202). Shortly after having received the milk from Jarvis to give to the dying children, Kumalo receives four letters.

One of the letters Kumalo receives is from Mr Carmichael, the lawyer “who took the case for God” and he learns that there is no mercy – Absalom will be “hanged on the fifteenth day of that month” (Paton, 1948:203-204). It is only natural that this news shocks Kumalo and his wife. In accordance, Kumalo just “sat there an hour, two hours maybe” and his wife has the same reaction when she reads the letter, though “she did not sit as long as he had done” but strongly says that “it is not good to sit idle” (Paton, 1948:204). The negative effect of the news about Absalom is still evident when Kumalo’s wife reads the letter from Absalom himself while Kumalo just “stared before him on the floor, only his eyes were not looking at the floor but at no place at all, and his face was sunken, in the same mould of suffering from which it has escaped since his return to this valley” (Paton, 1948:204). However, his wife urges him not to be idle and sends him to the store and it is then that both Kumalo and his wife notice “the great heavy clouds that were gathering on the other side of the Umzimkulu valley” (Paton, 1948:205). They also notice strange sticks and flags that are being planted by white men. Later, after the rain has come, it is revealed that the purpose of the sticks and flags is to build a dam for the community – at Jarvis’s expense.

Even though the community experiences betterment, Jarvis’s wife dies in the third book of the novel and Kumalo, at first, suspects that it is due to grief over the death of her son, Arthur. Kumalo wishes to express his grief over Jarvis’s loss but knows that showing up at Jarvis’s home would be against the custom, so instead he writes a letter. Kumalo’s letter is returned in kind when Jarvis sends a reply that ends with “you should know that my wife was suffering before we went to Johannesburg” (Paton, 1948:223). With this sentence, Kumalo is set free and he speaks in “a voice in which there was relief from anxiety and laughter and weeping” (Paton, 1948:223). Sadly, the novel concludes with Kumalo paying tribute to his son on the day he is to be hanged.

Three prominent themes: emancipation, justice, and religion, are first explored as they are presented in the novel. It is important to note that fear is the driving emotion behind all three these

themes in the novel (Morphet, 1983:4; Lirola, 2011:75; Du Plessis, 2016:25). In fact, “the emotion that is most pervasively present in the story, is unquestionably fear” (Morphet, 1983:4). However, “fear is a powerful motivator, but it can also be crippling” (Burns, 2017). *Cry, the Beloved Country* is multi-layered in its application of the themes and as such can be made applicable to any reader, especially considering that it is rooted in such an innate human emotion — fear (Morphet, 1983:4; Lirola, 2011:75; Du Plessis, 2016:25; Burns, 2017; Piórkowska & Wrobel, 2017; Gu *et al.*, 2021:1). The themes are explored in the next sections as they relate to the soft skills explored throughout this study and to South African learners.

Themes in *Cry, the Beloved Country*

The three themes of emancipation, justice, and religion are explored as they emerge from the novel. Underlying all three these themes in the novel is the interwoven theme of fear (Morphet, 1983:4; Lirola, 2011:75; Du Plessis, 2016:25). Fear is a strong driving force throughout the novel and is responsible for many of the actions of the characters (Toledo *et al.*, 2020:327; Mones, 2020:379). It may be argued that fear is “a unifying force in the novel, an almost connective tissue, that binds the characters together regardless of race, class and age” (Du Plessis, 2016:65). Fear is one of the most basic of human emotions and thus, when an individual experiences it, all pretence tends to fall away in a fight for survival (Piórkowska & Wrobel, 2017; Gu *et al.*, 2019; Ortony, 2021:1).

4.4.2 Emancipation in *Cry, the beloved country* by Alan Paton

The Merriam Webster online dictionary (2020b) defines emancipation as the action of freeing something or someone “from restraint, control, or the power of another especially: to free from bondage”. With reference to *Cry, the Beloved Country*, emancipation may also refer to the liberation of black people from the governing party during the apartheid era, which is the setting of the novel (Foley, 1996:21; Schlemmer & Møller, 1997:15; Foley, 1998:79; Du Plessis & Smit, 2006:2; Muntingh, 2013; Harden, 2014:1; Mariotti & Fourie, 2014:113; Evans, 2015; Kwenda *et al.*, 2020; Ballard & Hamann, 2021). According to Foley (1998:79) this idea of emancipation as liberation from oppression, is portrayed in Msimangu’s sermon in which he discusses the “emancipation of the Israelites from Babylonian captivity”. As such, emancipation refers to “peace-making, righteousness and justice on earth”, which in essence, is to be liberated from various socio-political issues (Foley, 1998:79).

I opted to include the importance of land in the analysis of emancipation because the characters in the novel are dependent on land and influenced by it, in essence they are either constrained or freed by it. The term “land” refers to soil, “a rural area characterised by farming” (Merriam-

Webster, 2022ah) such as Ndotsheni, though it may also refer to “the people of a country”, a place (Merriam-Webster, 2022g) such as Johannesburg for instance. In rural areas, like Ndotsheni, the people are “bound” to the land and are especially dependent on rain so crops can succeed. However, in cities like Johannesburg, people are also trapped by what the city offers – in the case of the novel the city offers its black inhabitants unequal payment, institutionalised poverty, illegal liquor, prostitution and so on and this restricts them in what they can do and forces them to do things what they may not have done otherwise. Essentially, it may be suggested that the environment entraps the characters of the novel, both the physical environment and the systemic environment or “land”. The theme of emancipation is highlighted by the stories of the elderly black Reverend Stephan Kumalo, and of the white farmer, James Jarvis (Nash, 1983:13). The image of the land is used at the beginning of both Kumalo’s and Jarvis’s stories in Book 1 and Book 2 of the novel respectively. The image of the land is used throughout the novel to symbolise the state of both characters' hearts.

In Chapter 1, Paton uses a setting that was familiar to him in real life; this merely serves to highlight, once again, the importance of the reader having background knowledge on the text, especially since it lends a sense of credibility to the writing (Goodwin, 2018). The hills, which Paton (1948:7) describes in Chapter 1, are hills covered in foliage, “rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it”. This image of nature evokes a sense of tranquillity (Ulrich, 1979:17; Kweon *et al.*, 2008:355; Law *et al.*, 2020:1; Garza-Terán *et al.*, 2022:1). Garza-Terán *et al.* (2022:1) state that engagement with nature tends to evoke positive emotions and since Paton (1948:7) so vividly describes the scene to the reader, positive emotions may be kindled. This picturesque image is further enhanced by the implication of the influence of a Higher Power, “the ground is holy, being even as it came from the Creator” (Paton, 1948:3). Du Plessis (2016:24) rightly states that with this, Paton “creates an idyllic world illustrating his own Christian values which could influence his readers”.

However, still in Chapter 1, this peaceful image dissipates as “the rich green hills break down” and the reader is exposed to ominous “hills [that] break down. They fall to the valley below, and falling, change their nature” (Paton, 1948:1). Here Paton subtly employs simple, yet powerful, vocabulary. “Falling”, depending on the context, may have various meanings. I find no less than seven of these meanings relatable to the context of *Cry, the Beloved Country*. Firstly, according to the Merriam Webster online dictionary (2022h) the term “falling” may refer to descending to “a lower position”, in this case literally to move from a high place to a lower place. This may also have figurative implications with reference to the novel as can be inferred from the second meaning listed, “to become lower in degree or level” (Merriam-Webster, 2022h). During the apartheid era in South Africa, many blacks were stripped of their dignity when they involuntarily

became the people of “lower” status, forced to relocate and to live in poverty (Seay, 2015). This supports the next definition of “falling” which may refer to a “decline in quality, activity, or quantity” (Merriam-Webster, 2022h). Blacks during this time suffered from a poor quality of living in nearly every aspect of life, from housing to education (Møller, 1998:27; Leibbrandt *et al.*, 2007; Kon & Lackan, 2008:2272; Mpeta *et al.*, 2017:1-2; Blakemore, 2021). Their movements were also restricted by means of the pass laws (Savage, 1986:181; Nagan, 1988:445; Boddy-Evans, 2020; Blakemore, 2021). As stated earlier, suppression of this nature may lead to violent outbursts (Loubser, 2015:132) resulting in immoral acts, which is yet another definition of the term “fall” (Merriam-Webster, 2022h). This leads to the next definitions of the “falling”, which include devastation, “defeat or failure” and “to drop down wounded or dead” (Merriam-Webster, 2022h). These are aspects found not only in South African history, but also in the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, ultimately leading to the final definition of “falling”, which is “to assume a look of shame, disappointment, or dejection”. Consequently, the notion of falling creates a feeling of unease within the reader, though it may not be apparent at first.

Moreover, the once luscious hills, now flattened, may be likened to the rich black culture that is now nearly completely destroyed as a consequence of colonisation and urbanisation (Sapignoli & Hitchcock, 2013:362; Kaya & Seleti, 2013:30; McDonald, 2015; Oliver & Oliver, 2017:2; Securun, 2018; Omotosho, 2020:53; Idowu, 2021:107). The reader is introduced to the destruction brought about by “the civilization of the white man” in this second image where Paton illustrates “a set of values and a way of life that neglected traditional African values” (Lirola, 2007:108; Du Plessis, 2016:24). Consequently, the reader is introduced to the “apartheid”, the separation, that individuals experienced at this time (Du Plessis, 2016:24). In addition to the image of the beautiful landscape that starkly turned sombre, there is a forewarning at the very beginning of the novel that can be so easily overlooked by an inattentive reader.

“Destroy it [land] and man is destroyed” (Paton, 1948:3). This refers to the consequences of destroying land literally, such as “malnutrition, disease, forced migration, cultural damage, and even war” (OECD, 2001; Thakur, 2010; El-Zein, 2018; Watts, 2018; Choudhary & Chauhan, 2015:305; Gwangndi *et al.*, 2016:485; Maurya *et al.*, 2020:2; Begum, 2021). Gwangndi *et al.* (2016:485) maintain that “the environment plays a central role in the life of human beings”. Maurya *et al.* (2020:2) go on to identify the main culprit in land degradation as humans, though natural causes may also contribute to the destruction of land, as “modern urbanization, industrialization, overpopulation growth, deforestation” are the main contributors of the destruction of land. The interrelatedness between the destruction of land and the destruction of man may also be seen on a figurative level since the concept of land is often tied to an individual’s culture (Shipton, 1994:347; Le Polain de Waroux *et al.*, 2021; Mumtaz *et al.*, 2022). Ng’ombe and Mushinge

(2014:124) remind us that there is a close relationship between the land and the “cultural perspectives, including belief systems and the role of ancestors” of indigenous people. Korff (2021) states that most people indigenous to a country, like the black Africans in South Africa during the time of apartheid, has a “spiritual, physical, social and cultural connection” to the land in which they live. Contrastingly, people who are not indigenous to the land, such as the white settlers that dominated the apartheid era “might consider land as something they own, a commodity to be bought and sold, an asset to make profit from” (Korff, 2021). Paton once again subtly establishes the social and racial setting by contrasting images that “metaphorically represent a racial hierarchy which was clearly present in South African society at this time” (Du Plessis, 2016:105).

Jarvis’s “dwelling-place stands high above Ndotsheni, and the great valley of the Umzimkulu” (Paton, 1948:112). The fact that Jarvis’s home is elevated above Ndotsheni, which is the dwelling place of a group of black people – including Kumalo and his family – indicates the perceived difference in status between races during the apartheid era (Blakemore, 2021). On the other hand, it may also be argued that Jarvis does not see the land as a commodity even though he lives in the higher built rich farmhouse that is in stark contrast to the village of the black people lower down. It may be that Paton uses the image of the land to emphasise the characters’ state of mind. For instance, when Kumalo is upset about his family not writing and when Jarvis receives news about his son being murdered, there is drought. Then later when Kumalo and Jarvis reconcile, when they both come together not as a black man, father of the murderer and a white man, father of the murdered, but as two fathers who have each lost a son, the land is blessed with rain. Consequently, it may be suggested that the images of the land indicate that we are all Africans together, and that if we see that and come together, we will be blessed. In the end, it is Kumalo’s and Jarvis’s mutual understanding of the land that enables them to come together, and when they do so, it rains. Paton emphasises land in his novel to indicate to readers that we have this potential in South Africa to truly come together, precisely because we all belong to the land and regard the land highly.

Regardless, in Chapter 1, Paton (1948:7) describes the destruction of land when he speaks of a land that is no longer respected or cared for, “great red hills stand desolate, and the earth has torn away like flesh”. The image of torn flesh further contributes to the ominous feeling the reader may experience, and this is further enhanced by “the dead streams [that] come to life, full of the red blood of the earth” (Paton, 1948:3). This also gives merit to Shipton’s (1994:347) argument of bloodshed over ownership of land and Loubser’s (2015:132) warning against violence from the oppressed. Consequently, this gloomy image of the ruined land may foreshadow the uprising of the silently oppressed. However, it is not without the consequence of blood being spilled.

Still in Chapter 1, Paton (1948:8) despondently states that “the men are away, the young men and the girls are away. The soil cannot keep them anymore”. It was not uncommon during apartheid for the blacks to leave their families and to flock to the urban areas in search of work in order to sustain themselves and their loved ones (Katzb, 2005; Delius, 2018; Skosana, 2019). However, little did the black citizens know that the new land, the deceptively attractive City of Gold otherwise known as Johannesburg (Harrison & Zack, 2012:551), would not keep them either. Chapter 1 of the novel succeeds in subtly establishing an accurate representation of the “economic and social conditions” of the time (Du Plessis, 2016:105). Additionally, the use of landscape imagery as found in the beginning of Book 2, once again reinforces the chasm between different races during apartheid.

However, there is also an equality between Jarvis, the white farmer, and Kumalo, the black reverend, considering that both see the landscape in the same way at the beginning of their respective stories in Book 1 and Book 2. Nature may be seen as an equaliser of men (Stevens, 2016). Just as man can see nature for what it is without prejudice, so nature does not prefer one race over another; just take the Covid-19 virus as an example as it infected and affected people of all races (DeSimone, 2022; Hill & Artiga, 2022). Another example found in Book 2 is that of rain – rain is not selective. In Jarvis’s story, “there was no cloud in the sky” (Paton, 1948:112). Consequently, the land unkept is illustrated to the reader once more, “the hills of Ndotsheni were red and bare, and the farmers on the tops had begun to fear that the desolation of them would eat back, year by year, mile by mile, until they too were overtaken” (Paton, 1948:113). The phrase “until they too” is significant as it indicates that they, the white farmers, are well aware of the suffering of the blacks below in Ndotsheni. Nonetheless, with this image, Paton (1948:3 & 113) once more reminds readers of the earlier image that may be equated to the uprising of the oppressed, the dead rivers coming to life full of blood. With this threatening imagery of the red earth moving closer and closer, Paton implicitly states that the oppressors of the time fear the uprising of the oppressed. I find it necessary to reiterate here that these two men, despite their races, are also bound to the land seeing that their survival is dependent on the land being prosperous. Unfortunately, the land is not fruitful; “the maize hardly reaches the height of a man” (Paton, 1948:8) because “there was no rain” and “the people were ignorant, and knew nothing about farming methods” (Paton, 1948:113). The people’s reliance on the land and their inability to care for it is noteworthy as this serves as a basis for the theme of justice, a theme that is strongly linked to equality, which is discussed in Section 4.4.2.

The Native Land Act of 1913, which was still in place at the time in which the novel is set, prohibited blacks from owning or buying land. Those who possessed land were forcibly removed and relocated to designated black areas (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014:680). The importance of the

land is emphasised at the beginning of each of the three books of the novel as Paton (1948:7, 112 & 186) vividly describes the land each time. Man's reliance on land, and therefore their bondage to it, is highlighted when Paton (1948:7) notes at the beginning of the novel that when man destroys land "man is destroyed". These words ring true in any society at any time. As stated previously, destruction of land takes on many forms, with disastrous consequences (OECD, 2001; Thakur, 2010; El-Zein, 2018; Watts, 2018; Choudhary & Chauhan, 2015:305; Gwangndi *et al.*, 2016:485; Maurya *et al.*, 2020:2; Begum, 2021). Man destroying land, and suffering for it, is not new since it "has been a major global issue since the 20th century and it has remained high on the international agenda in the 21st century" (Eni, 2012). In Book 1, the reader is first introduced to a longing for the betterment of the land because "it is not kept, or guarded, or cared for, it no longer keeps men, guards men [or] cares for men" (Paton, 1948:7). This is again emphasised in Book 2 where the people long for rain.

The dire situation in Book 2 is emphasised by the repetition of the word "rain" (Glatch, 2021a) and the reader is left with a feeling of being surrounded by lifelessness. The dreadful atmosphere to which the readers are introduced in the beginning of Book 2 creates an uneasiness within readers and serves as foreshadowing of what is to come. However, even if the rain were to come and even if the people were informed enough to care properly for the land, "a boy with education did not want to work on the farms, and went off to the towns to look for more congenial occupation" (Paton, 1948:113). Nowadays, there are various ways to prevent the land from degrading, but all of these methods include a degree of knowledge and hands-on work (Saturday, 2018:44). Sadly, the black people in the book, as stated before, were ignorant where farming practices were concerned. Man is powerless and cannot manipulate nature – rain will come when it comes. Shipton (1994:348) emphasises that "land produces nothing without water, labour, capital, or all three". Consequently, certain bondages can be escaped, while others cannot. Though land can free men from hardships such as drought, and only if they put in the labour to work the lands, mankind remains bound to it as it is not in man's power to change the weather. Sadly, the men are not working in the fields as they have all left for Johannesburg. The landscape in the novel progresses from the barren village of Ndotsheni to Johannesburg where "the buildings [that] are endless, and the white hills, and the great wheels, and streets without number, and cars and lorries and buses" set the scene (Paton, 1948:17).

Both Kumalo and Jarvis want to be emancipated from the consequences of the social system that is even more evident in the city of Johannesburg. Before Kumalo departs on his journey to Johannesburg, he is well aware of the evils of the city and "now the fear is back again, the fear of the unknown, the fear of the great city where boys were killed crossing the street, the fear of Gertrude's sickness" (Paton, 1948:15). Above all, Kumalo hosts "deep down the fear for his son"

(Paton, 1948:15) all with good reason because the city has corrupted his people. Kumalo's first experience of the city, aside from fear, is that of petty theft as a man cheats him out of his money while offering to get Kumalo a bus ticket never to return. Fortunately, Mr Mufolo frees Kumalo from this dire circumstance and helps Kumalo to the house of Mr Msimangu, the one who has sent for Kumalo in the first place. Here Kumalo settles in at Mrs Lithebe's house, where he rents a room, and is made further aware of the evils of the city. "They all talked of the sickness of the land, of the broken tribe and the broken house, of young men and young girls that went away and forgot their customs, and lived loose and idle lives" (Paton, 1948:22). This is the epitome of the setting of Johannesburg. Moreover, "they talked of young criminal children, and older and more dangerous criminals, of how white Johannesburg was afraid of black crime" (Paton, 1948:22). The most significant piece of information arises from their discussion when his companions admit that the blacks are afraid of the crime as well, since it is directed at them too when "these youth attacked one of our own African girls" (Paton, 1948:22). Consequently, it may be deduced that race is not the issue, but rather immoral character. Msimangu comes to the same conclusion when he ponders how "it suited the white man to break the tribe, but it has not suited him to build something in the place of what is broken" but "they are not all so. There are some white men who give their lives to build up what is broken" (Paton, 1948:25). Nonetheless, Kumalo is further exposed to Johannesburg's evils when he finds out about his sister's "sickness". Illnesses can prevent individuals to live to their fullest and so it relates to emancipation.

As stated before, Kumalo learns that this sickness of his sister, Gertrude, refers to prostitution. Gertrude is caught up in her circumstances as Kumalo also learns that she makes and sells illegal alcohol and as such there are "liquor running in the streets, bad liquor" (Paton, 1948:23). Alcoholism thrives along with gambling and murder, and subsequently, "a man has been killed at [Gertrude's] place" (Paton, 1948:23). The juxtaposition of Kumalo, as a man of God, and the seeming godless city, creates a source of conflict throughout the novel. Kumalo is yet to find out of his son's crimes, but at this stage he realises that "the peace of God escapes [them]" (Paton, 1948:23). It is as though Kumalo finds himself trapped in a godless city filled with sin and sinners alike and these are the things he wishes to escape from. It is disconcerting that Kumalo should find out from Msimangu that John, Kumalo's brother, "has no use for the church any more". It is Kumalo's desire to liberate his family members, namely his brother, John, his sister, Gertrude, and his son, Absalom, from the corruption of Johannesburg. Ultimately, it is fear from which they must be emancipated, for as Msimangu says, "it is fear that rules this land" (Paton, 1948:25). Unfortunately, emancipation from fear does not occur. Book 2 of the novel concludes on a note of fear and a seeming hopelessness as Kumalo thinks by himself, "the murderer afraid of death had once been a child afraid of the night" (Paton, 1948:185). This line shows how Absalom's

innocence is shattered but fear remains as it is a basic human emotion (Piórkowska & Wrobel, 2017; Gu *et al.*, 2019; Ortony, 2021:1). Additionally, at the end of the novel Kumalo still wonders when the day will come that they will be set free from the captivity of fear. With these statements, it may be gathered that perhaps fear is something that cannot be escaped – it merely varies in its severity and form. Nonetheless, despite Kumalo’s fear of the great city, he sets off to find his family members.

Msimangu accompanies Kumalo to Claremont in search of Kumalo’s sister, Gertrude, and “Kumalo was shocked by [Claremont’s] shabbiness and dirtiness, and the closeness of the houses, and the filth in the streets” (Paton, 1948:27). Kumalo notices children in the street and in response to Kumalo’s question as to why they are not in school, Msimangu states that “some [are not in school] because they do not care, and some because their parents do not care, but many because the schools are full” (Paton, 1948:27). Kumalo finds his sister in Claremont, and there he confronts her, but her responses are short and vague. Kumalo finally loses his temper at Gertrude’s brief replies and says to Gertrude that she has shamed them.

Kumalo sums up Gertrude’s predicament and the reason for his shame by identifying her as “a liquor seller, a prostitute, with a child [who she does] not know where it is” (Paton, 1948:29). Kumalo’s anger is seemingly replaced by shame when he mentions that he, her brother, is a priest. Kumalo wishes to liberate his sister, Gertrude, from this way of life and so he asks her, “do you wish to come back [to Ndotsheni]?” (Paton, 1948:29). At this, Gertrude sobs even more and claims that she dislikes Johannesburg but she also realises that she is “no woman to go back” (Paton, 1948:30). She is trapped by her circumstances. However, on hearing Gertrude’s remorse, Kumalo’s anger subsides and “his deep gentleness returns to him”. Kumalo and Gertrude pray for forgiveness of their sins “and thus [are] reconciled” (Paton, 1948:30). Here again, though implicit, it is made clear that religion is a key to emancipation, as is seen in the later discussion of religion as a theme. Kumalo liberates Gertrude from her questionable practices in Claremont, which involve liquor and men, and he arranges for her to come to Mrs Lithebe’s house; he even buys her “a red dress and a white thing that they called a turban for her head” (Paton, 1948:31).

It is striking that Gertrude should have a *red* dress. It may be suggested that Paton, again, subtly influences his readers as red is a colour with strong connotations to anger, lust and desire (Bourn, 2011; Kinsella, 2016; Peperkoorn *et al.*, 2016:4; Cottier, 2021; Wolchover, 2022). This is worth mentioning, seeing that Gertrude has turned to prostitution since she came to Johannesburg and that “the prospect of escaping the [prostitution] industry seems impossible or at the very least too dangerous to endure” (Martin, 2009; Glass, 2016; Norak & Kraus, 2018; Mau, 2020). Although Gertrude has left Claremont, she continues to laugh carelessly. This is indicative of the fact that

Gertrude has in fact not been set free of her sinful life in Johannesburg, and it may be argued that it is because she does not want to be set free. This seemingly insignificant reference to Gertrude's careless laughter may serve as a reminder that "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink" (Cambridge, n.d.; Reilley, 2014).

Kumalo does all he can to help his sister, yet later on when Kumalo goes to wake her so they can start their journey back to Ndotsheni, "Gertrude was gone" without word or warning (Paton, 1948:185). Gertrude ultimately does not go to Ndotsheni with Kumalo but simply disappears, leaving her young son behind, with no one but Kumalo and his wife to care for him. It becomes clear that each person is responsible for their own liberation through the decisions they make and the actions they take (Murray, 2018). However, people are accountable for their own actions and so there are certain choices, and actions, from which a person cannot be set free (Ahmed, 2017; Murray, 2018).

In Absalom's case, he chose to go with the other young men to a white man's house even though he was afraid, and as a result he had shot and killed Arthur Jarvis's. Although Absalom's father, the white man from the reformatory, Father Vincent and the lawyer who takes the case for God, attempt to set Absalom free from the circumstances in which he is now entrapped, he must be held accountable, so justice must take its course. The theme of justice is discussed further in section 4.4.2. However, I will proffer here that Paton shows in the novel that the crux of emancipation in our human existence is to be set free from all sin, along with its earthly consequences of shame, guilt and death (Riaz, 2018; Paton, 1948:29,102,192,195,219). Absalom's repentance also frees Kumalo. He can face Absalom's death because he knows that his son has repented and that his son is in a sense free of this sin through forgiveness. Some knowingly seek to be set free, while others do so unknowingly, but the result of sin is undesirable as it entangles us and prevents us from living our lives the way we ought to.

Kumalo is determined to find his son, Absalom, and learns from his sister that "the son of our brother John and your son were often together" (Paton, 1948:30). The estrangement that has grown between the two brothers is immediately evident when Kumalo enquires after the wellbeing of John's wife, Esther, to which he responds that "my wife Esther has left me ten years, my brother" (Paton, 1948:33). When John is asked by Kumalo whether he has married again his answer is somewhat unsavoury when he says, "well, well, not what the Church calls married, you know" (Paton, 1948:33). John too is entrapped by his circumstances, particularly where infidelity is concerned. Additionally, Kumalo is made aware of how his brother is shackled by the ways of this strange city when John simply says, in defence of not having written, "you people in Ndotsheni do not understand the way life is in Johannesburg" (Paton, 1948:29-30). When asked to explain

“how life is different in Johannesburg”, John responds, “do you mind if I speak English? I can explain these things better in English” (Paton, 1948:33). John’s inability to express himself on this matter in his mother tongue, is another clear indicator that he has forsaken his traditional tribal values. Nonetheless, John starts to explain and it is made clear that he longs for education because he does not want to be “subject to the chief, who is an ignorant man; he is an uneducated man” (Paton, 1948:33). At least in Johannesburg, John is “a man of some importance, of some influence” (Paton, 1948:34). He wishes to be emancipated from being uneducated. John also shows some insight when he says to Kumalo, “I do not say we are free here. I do not say we are free as men should be. But at least I am free of the chief. At least I am free of an old and ignorant man, who is nothing but a white man’s dog” (Paton, 1948:34). It is noteworthy that John dehumanises the chief by referring to him as “a white man’s dog” (Paton, 1948:34).

Dehumanisation is defined as the deprivation “of human qualities, personality, or dignity” (Merriam-Webster, 2022i). Thus, by referring to the chief as a dog, John, deprives him of his worth and likens him to a generally loyal creature, dependent on its owner for survival (Pendergrass, 2019). This reveals that aside from education, John longs to be independent, but the apartheid regime makes complete independence impossible (Schlemmer & Møller, 1997:15; Du Plessis & Smit, 2006:2; Muntingh, 2013; Mariotti & Fourie, 2014:113; Kwenda *et al.*, 2020; Ballard & Hamann, 2021). Additionally, John wants to break free from uneducated leaders who enforce strict rules and he says “the church too is like the chief. You must do so and so and so. You are not free to have an experience. A man must be faithful and meek and obedient, and he must obey the laws, whatever the laws may be” (Paton, 1948:34). John does not negate the importance or value of the church, he only protests the fact that the church has been preaching “for fifty years, and things get worse, not better” (Paton, 1948:34). John wants to break free from bad circumstances and so he flees to Johannesburg in an attempt to obtain that which he longs for – betterment.

However, things are not better in Johannesburg since the blacks who find work in the city with hopes of a brighter future, are subject to inequality and injustice (Schlemmer & Møller, 1997:15; Du Plessis & Smit, 2006:2; Muntingh, 2013; Mariotti & Fourie, 2014:113; Kwenda *et al.*, 2020; Ballard & Hamann, 2021). John realises that the success of South Africa is not built on the mines but “on our backs, on our sweat, on our labour” (Paton, 1948:35). His bitterness is made known through his monologue here and it is as if he urges Kumalo to see his point by saying that the “white priests get four, five, six times what you get, my brother” (Paton, 1948:35). Consequently, John’s failure to write to his family and his disregard for the church may be ascribed to his bitterness and it is from this bitterness that John must also be set free. Unfortunately, John’s attempt at freedom, his new customs, comes at a cost.

The validity of John's new customs is questioned when Msimangu doubtfully asks John whether "there are any customs here?"; he also indirectly asks John whether it is because of these new customs that his wife has left (Paton, 1948:35). It comes to light that John's wife had left him because he was unfaithful due to his new customs. The influence of the city on traditional customs is perhaps also the reason why Kumalo's son does not write home. Absalom may be choosing to avoid his parents for fear of disappointing them with his rejection of traditional customs. It is not strange for a child to experience anxiety where parental dissatisfaction is concerned; therefore, it is a viable possibility for Absalom not writing home (Pickhardt, 2010; Cichy *et al.*, 2013:894; Chen, 2015). Regardless, John's unfaithfulness to traditional customs and lack of familial support is showcased again later in the novel.

John feigns concern for Kumalo's quest to find Absalom as he seemingly teasingly asks Kumalo, "have you found the prodigal?" (Paton, 1948:86). It is noteworthy that John makes a biblical reference, even though he has become apostate from the church. Nonetheless, there are similarities between Absalom's tale and that of the prodigal son from the Bible. The parable of the prodigal son is told by Jesus in Luke 15:11-32 (Bible, 1973). In verse 13, it is stated that a young son "got together all he had [and] set off for a distant country" (Bible, 1973). However, this young son "had spent everything [and] there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need" (Bible, 1973). Though he did not feel worthy enough to go back to his father's house as his father's son, his father rejoiced when he came home and welcomed him (Bible, 1973). Likewise, Absalom had left his people and went to the city of Johannesburg, where he ended up stealing to survive. It is noteworthy that both fathers do not denounce their sons but accept them as they are (Bible, 1973; Paton, 1948:87). A parallel may be drawn between Kumalo's son, Absalom, and Absalom in the Bible. 2 Samuel 3:3 states that Absalom was the third son of David, the King of Israel, with "Maacah, daughter of Talmi, King of Geshur" (Bible, 1973). 2 Samuel 18 describes Absalom's rebellion against his father and how he is killed during the Battle of Ephraim's Wood (Bible, 1973). Bucher (2021) states that "Absalom's life was marked with discord and collusion, murder and separation from his family". This is similar to what happens to Kumalo's son, Absalom, as he also rebelled against his upbringing by not returning home to Ndotsheni and by choosing to stay in Johannesburg. Absalom involuntarily kills a man and as such was even further separated from his family by being sentenced to death. However, it is with sadness that Kumalo answers John, in response to his question about the prodigal, that Absalom "is found my brother. But not as he was found in the early teaching. He is in prison, arrested for the murder of a white man" (Paton, 1948:86). John is shocked at hearing this news and is filled with fear when he "remembers that his own son and his brother's are companions" (Paton, 1948:86). The outspoken John Kumalo, who previously criticised the church now "whispers *Tixo, Tixo*. And

again, *Tixo, Tixo*” (Paton, 1948:87), perhaps in an attempt to escape the pain and brokenness that now shackles him down into fear. John makes yet another religious reference here, even though he had denounced his faith previously, which supports Azar’s (2010) argument that humans have a need to believe in something, even if it is just to escape the sorrows of this life.

The Bible also warns us in 1 Corinthians 5:11 where it is stated, “but now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people” (Bible, 1973). Kumalo is fortunate to have Msimangu as a friend. However, John is influenced by different people and this is seen from the ways in which he attempts to free himself, and his son, from the things that entrap them in the novel. John is immoral and so when John’s son, along with Kumalo’s son, and a friend of theirs are arrested for forcibly entering Arthur Jarvis’s home by knocking his black servant, Richard Mpiring, unconscious, John jumps at the opportunity to have his son released, even though he knows he is guilty. After having visited their children in prison, John says to Kumalo, “well, well, we must go at once and see a lawyer” (Paton, 1948:90). Kumalo is concerned about the costs involved in getting a lawyer and asks John, “a lawyer, my brother? For what should we spend such money?” (Paton, 1948:90). Kumalo’s concern about the expenses related to such an endeavour only serves to highlight, once more, albeit subtly, Kumalo’s desire to be set free from poverty (Kraay & McKenzie, 2014:127; Gordon, 2022; Hegde, 2022). Readers are introduced to the theme of poverty from the very beginning of the novel. It may be suggested that poverty entrapped most blacks of the time, even the little girl who brought Kumalo the letter which summoned him to Johannesburg. When the girl lingers, after having delivered the letter, Kumalo tells the girl to “go to mother then. Perhaps she has some food” (Paton, 1948:8). By using simple, yet power vocabulary, the reader is exposed to the situation of the black people. The words “perhaps” and “some”, as used by Kumalo when telling the child to go eat, indicate times of uncertainty and scarcity due to institutionalised poverty (Cheru, 2001:506; Lephakga, 2017:1). Nonetheless, aside from financial issues, Kumalo sees no need for a lawyer because “the story is plain, there cannot be doubt about it” (Paton, 1948:90).

John’s immoral character, presumably corrupted by the influence of the city of Johannesburg, is revealed when he feigns innocence and responds, “what is the story?”, as if he is not well aware of his own son’s guilt (Paton, 1948:90). Kumalo is, at first, so caught up in his own grief that he answers John’s question without realising what his brother is implying and he humbly relays the story. “These three lads went to a house that they thought was empty. They struck down the servant. The white man heard the noise and he came to see. And then... and then... my son... mine, not yours... shot at him. He was afraid” (Paton, 1948:91). With this retelling of the story, John sees how his own son and the friend that was with them may be set free from the long arm

of the law, because “there is no proof that [John’s] son or this other young man was there at all” (Paton, 1948:91).

Astounded, Kumalo tries to respond in defence of Absalom, “not there at all? But my son...” (Paton, 1948:91). However, John does what is in his own best interest and that of his son and he says to Kumalo, “with cruel and pitiless meaning” while smiling at him, “who will believe your son?” (Paton, 1948:90-91). John, who is wealthier, has the advantage over Kumalo and Absalom, since money is a commodity that can set people free from many circumstances. Also, as is still evident today in South Africa, money can set a person free from all manner of illegal activities (Manyaka & Nkuna, 2014:1572; Loubser, 2015:135; McCain, 2020; McCain, 2021; Haffajee, 2021; Chutel, 2022; Maseko, 2022; Mashego, 2022; Maughan, 2022). Fortunately, the white man from the reformatory who had been helping Kumalo and who have been witnessing this ordeal between the two brothers, says to John, “you are a clever man, but thank God you are not my brother” (Paton, 1948:92). With this being said by a near complete stranger, John’s betrayal of his brother is highlighted. The young white man from the reformatory helps Kumalo find a lawyer because “it needs a lawyer to make the court believe” that Absalom had no intention of killing Arthur (Paton, 1948:93). The reader realises that both John and the system are corrupt when he is able to obtain a lawyer who successfully defends his son and the friend who was with him and Absalom at the time of the murder. Matthew and Pafuri are ultimately physically free, but not free from the bondage of their sinful ways, while Absalom is ultimately physically in captivity and later killed, but on repenting, he is freed from the bondage of his sin and from fear and hatred. The theme of emancipation, the need to be set free, is further illustrated by Paton as Kumalo searches his son, Absalom.

Throughout the novel, Kumalo becomes caught up in the evils of society at the time as he searches for Absalom. One instance is when Kumalo and Msimangu are about to catch a bus to the address in Alexandra where Absalom presumably is. Dubula, a friend of John’s, persuades them not to take the bus as they are protesting the fact that the bus fare has gone up to “sixpence, that is one shilling a day. Six shillings a week, and some of us only get thirty-five or forty shillings” (Paton, 1948:40). This is yet another example of the oppression from which the black people wanted to be free. Boycotts were not an uncommon occurrence during apartheid (Shaw, 1986:59; Hyslop *et al.*, 2006:62; Graham & Fevre, 2020) and seeing that, according to Dubula, “this is a cause to fight for”, Kumalo and Msimangu oblige and walk “eleven miles” to find Absalom. Kumalo admits that he is anxious because “this Johannesburg – it is no place for a boy to be alone” (Paton, 1948:41). Absalom, however, is not found at Alexandra but it is here where Kumalo learns from Mrs Mkize that Absalom has been stealing and that he left about a year before. The next clue leads the two men to Shanty town, to the house of “the Hlatshwayos” (Paton, 1948:58). This

search for Absalom contributes to readers' anxiousness as they too get caught up in the search for Absalom. The suspense of the novel builds with each new piece of information.

The atmosphere of agitation, which builds as the search for Absalom continues, reaches a high point when Kumalo learns in Shanty town that his son has indeed been in trouble with the law and "that they took him away, and I heard that the magistrate had sent him to the reformatory" (Paton, 1948:58). However, they find that Absalom has left the reformatory, "partly because of his good behaviour, partly because of his age, but mainly because there was a girl who was pregnant by him" (Paton, 1948:60). This is yet another shock for Kumalo as his son has conceived an illegitimate child. Finally, Kumalo and Msimangu find Absalom's current address, a place in "Pimville, where Absalom and this girl are living" (Paton, 1948:61). In Pimville, Kumalo, Msimangu, and the white man from the reformatory find the girl, but not Absalom. At this stage, the reader too becomes eager to find Absalom as it feels like a lost cause. Paton employs a foreshadowing technique once more through the white man from the reformatory who attempts to encourage Kumalo by saying, "let us not give up all hope. It has happened sometimes that a boy is arrested, or injured and taken to hospital" (Paton, 1948:63). These are not promising prospects, but at least then Absalom will have been found. The feeling of Absalom being in trouble is further strengthened by a headline in the "*Evening Star*" which reads "MURDER IN PARKWOLD. WELL-KNOWN CITY ENGINEER SHOT DEAD. ASSAILANTS THOUGHT TO BE NATIVES" (Paton, 1948:65). Shortly after having seen the headline in the newspaper, it is suspected that Absalom is responsible for the murder in Parkwold. Kumalo is so overcome with fear that he cannot even pray and again the idea of a godless world is brought to the readers' minds because "there are times, no doubt, when God seems no more to be about the world" (Paton, 1948:67). Whether it is through divine intervention, luck, or pure determinedness, the theme of emancipation, the need to be set free, is further illustrated by Paton when Kumalo finally meets his son in prison.

While Absalom "stands unhappy" with "no gladness in his eyes" Kumalo cries and utters, "my child, my child" (Paton, 1948:87). These four words seem to be filled with a range of emotions, from gladness, despair, to hopelessness at the situation. Though Absalom is reluctant to speak and only provides Kumalo with brief answers at first, Kumalo presses Absalom for answers in an attempt to understand why he did the things he did, as most parents would do (Goodwin & Hattenstone, 2011) and so Kumalo asks Absalom, "why did you do this terrible thing, my child?" (Paton, 1948:88). Silent, Absalom "makes no answer" (Paton, 1948:88). Kumalo continues to say to Absalom, "you wrote nothing, sent no message. You went with bad companions. You stole and broke in and – yes, you did these things. But why?" (Paton, 1948:89). Absalom may have been looking for a way to escape his circumstances and so "seizes upon the word that is given him"

and answers that “it was bad companions” (Paton, 1948:89). However, Kumalo keeps Absalom to a set of moral standards and rebukes his son, Absalom, by saying that “I need not tell you that is no answer” (Paton, 1948:89). When Kumalo presses his son as to why *he* did what he did, he responds, “it was the devil” (Paton, 1948:85). Absalom still takes no responsibility as he first blames the company he keeps and then the devil. This is yet another instance where Absalom tries to escape his situation by shifting the blame from the company he keeps to the devil (Schneider, 2018; Streep, 2021; Smith, 2021b).

Unfortunately, Kumalo cannot set his son free from these evil powers. Nonetheless, according to Freud (as cited by Schneider, 2018), blame-shifting is “a self-defence mechanism” which a person employs when they want to be rid of “their own unwanted thoughts, feelings or motives” and as such transfers it to another person. Absalom’s blaming of the devil is significant in that Johannesburg, with all its sinful customs, is equated with evil, who binds individuals to their sin. This brings to mind how “the girl who was with child” (Paton, 1948:99) is bound to her unborn baby as well as Absalom, her “husband” (Paton, 1948:100), on the grounds of premarital sex, which is considered a biblical sin in Hebrews 13:4 (Bible, 1976). Kumalo also sets out to set this girl free from her circumstances.

The girl, not more than a child, opens the door to Kumalo “and she smiled at him uncertainly, with something that was fear, and something that was child-like and welcoming” (Paton, 1948:99). Aside from informing the girl of Absalom’s imprisonment, Kumalo’s goal with visiting her is to see if she is still willing to marry his son, Absalom. Kumalo realises that this girl is also trapped by the sinful nature of the city and so Kumalo wants to set her and the child she is carrying free by taking them back to Ndotsheni. It comes to light that the girl comes from a broken family, with an alcoholic father and parents who often quarrelled. In addition, this girl is trapped by lustful desires as she already had “only three [husbands]”; in this case ‘husband’ is a “word that does not quite mean husband since the girl is not married to any of these men” (Paton, 1948:100, 101).

The girl’s unfaithfulness angers Kumalo “and a wish to hurt her came into him”. However, he stops himself and asks her condescendingly, “will you now take a fourth husband?” (Paton, 1948:101). The girl desperately cries that she “want[s] no husband any more” and at this a “wild thought came to Kumalo in his wild and cruel mood” and he asks the girl, “not even if I desired you?” (Paton, 1948:101). At first, she shrank from Kumalo but then “she looked round and about her, as one that was trapped”. However, when he presses her she says “in a low voice, I could be willing” (Paton, 1948:102). This admission of the girl indicates that she is indeed imprisoned by her own lustful flesh. However, she may also be imprisoned by having to have a man for survival. Lust is defined as an “intense or unbridled sexual desire” (Merriam-Webster, 2022) and so people are

often warned against lust in the Bible as it can cost a person dearly. Kumalo “sat down and covered his face with his hands; and she, seeing him, fell to sobbing, a creature shamed and tormented” (Paton, 1948:102). The girl realises that she is trapped and she wishes to break free from her situation. Kumalo provides her with the opportunity to escape her circumstances when he asks her, “do you truly wish to marry my son? And to go to a quiet and far-off place, and be our daughter?” (Paton, 1948:102). She eagerly agrees with unmistakable gladness in her voice and Kumalo “walked on like a man from whom a pain has lifted a little, not altogether, but a little” (Paton, 1948:103). The pain Kumalo still carries with him may be attributed to the loss of his son, Absalom, who is tried and sentenced to death. Paton, however, does not entertain the readers with a detailed account of Absalom’s perspective of the events, but he gives the readers plenty of insight into Kumalo’s circumstances.

I reiterate here that Kumalo is not only a black person who must adhere to the inhumane legislation of the governing apartheid regime of the time (Du Plessis, 2016:105; Kwenda *et al.*, 2020; Ballard & Hamann, 2021), he is also a reverend who must lead his congregation despite being the father of a murderer. Kumalo’s role as fatherly leader in the community is in stark contrast to the emotions he experiences having learned that his son is a murderer. Kumalo also cannot understand why Absalom committed murder and he presses him for an answer. Though Absalom fails to provide a proper answer, it does come to light that he has spent time in a correctional facility. These correctional facilities were often exploitative and brutal in their methods (Chisholm, 1991:24). Absalom reveals his experiences during his time at the reformatory when Kumalo asks him, “did they treat you well?” and he “turns his head from side to side”, indicating that he was not treated well, but he answers, “they treated me well” (Paton, 1948:89). This contradiction between body language and verbal language is indicative of the oppression that Absalom has been exposed to. Additionally, Kumalo struggles to break free from the guilt and shame he experiences when Jarvis, the father of the man whom Absalom murdered, aids the community of Ndotsheni during an extreme drought and as a result prevents the starvation and death of yet another person in the community.

Guilt can be defined as “a bothered conscience or a feeling of culpability for offenses” (Riaz, 2018). Kumalo feels a sense of guilt at having raised a son who turned out to be a murderer, especially considering the godly home in which Absalom must have been raised (Stoffels, 2004; Ramsland, 2017; Mligo, 2020:48). Though Paton does not divulge Absalom’s childhood, it may be argued that Absalom’s crime does not originate from neglect but rather from desperation since “Arthur Jarvis, had been murdered by Absalom during a botched robbery attempt” (Du Plessis, 2016:25). Absalom’s circumstances led him to turn to crime since the black people of the time were exposed to institutionalised poverty (Cheru, 2001:506; Lephakga, 2017:1). Nonetheless,

this crime of Absalom's only serves to denigrate "the pastoral identity" of Kumalo "instead of magnifying it" (Mlilo, 2020:48). Kumalo feels shame since his son's heinous act of murder is repaid, not in kind, but with kindness (Riaz, 2018). The idea of shame is later further established in the novel when Kumalo wonders whether he should stay in Ndotsheni and he adds bitterly "what, with a sister who has left her child, and a son who has killed a man? Who am I to stay here?" (Paton, 1948:192). Shame results from the "perception of having done something dishonorable, immoral, or improper" (Cuncic, 2021). Although Kumalo himself does not murder Arthur Jarvis, he has such a strong sense of morals, a sense of what is right and wrong, that the incident bothers him on a personal level (Cuncic, 2021; Merriam-Webster, 2022k). In an attempt to break free of the feelings of shame, guilt, and even to some extent, fear, Kumalo asks after Jarvis's well-being once he has returned to Ndotsheni and he is informed of the poor health of Jarvis's wife, who is now "sick and thin" (Paton, 1948:195). This ill health of Mrs Jarvis may be equated with the "bare red fields of the broken tribe" (Paton, 1948:197). Just as this mother is broken by the death of her son, so the tribe is broken by the reckless and negligent behaviour of their greed and their inability or unwillingness to tend to the earth. However, the first instance of slight emancipation for Kumalo is when he visits Ezenzeleni and he finds a release of the emotions that have been weighing him down.

Kumalo experiences a sense of peace that replaces the fear he has been feeling, as he overlooks Ezenzeleni after having heard of the suspicions regarding Absalom being a murderer. Kumalo does not know why he feels less fearful at this moment and so he ponders "whether it was the warmth of [the sun], or the sight of the wide plain beneath stretching away to blue and distant mountains, or the mere passage of time, or the divine providence for the soul that is distressed" (Paton, 1948:77). I also reiterate here that it is proven that nature induces feelings of calm and happiness in a person (Ulrich, 1979:17; Kweon et al., 2008:355; Law et al., 2020:1; Garza-Terán et al., 2022:1). However, people also tend to feel closer to God when they spend time in nature (Kosloski, 2020; Brodie, 2021; Norcross, 2021). "The beauty of creation is seen in the eyes of faith as a 'profession' of the existence of God, of the One who created all the beauty that we see" (Kosloski, 2020). Thus, it may be proffered that Kumalo experiences peace, instead of fear, since his faith is strengthened again by realising that God truly exists when observing the beauty he sees around him in Ezenzeleni (Kosloski, 2020). Additionally, according to Norcross (2021), "finding God in nature can reconnect people with faith and the biblical tradition" even those who "are less attracted by the trappings of the institutional church". Though Kumalo momentarily feels a "rising of the spirit, some lifting of fear", "his thoughts turned to the girl, and to the unborn babe that would be his grandchild" (Paton, 1948:77, 78) and so Kumalo is once more overwhelmed by fear and uncertainty (Van Hooser, 2020). The second and slightly more prominent instance where

Kumalo is emancipated is when he escapes the city, Johannesburg, and returns home, “they all set out on the narrow path that leads into the setting sun, into the valley of Ndotsheni” (Paton, 1948:194).

The imagery Paton (1948:193) uses is striking when he describes Kumalo’s journey home, “the white flat hills of the mines drop behind, and the country rolls away as far as the eye can see”. This image reinforces the idea of freedom as opposed to the chaotic circumstances of Johannesburg that bound and suppress one’s soul, even though Kumalo fears the questions he may encounter from the villagers upon his return. It is stated that the villagers “talk like children and it is nothing to ask” many personal questions (Paton, 1948:187). Once Kumalo reaches home he “embraces [his wife] in the European fashion” and she in turn “lifts the small boy and kisses him after the European fashion” (Paton, 1948:187). As a result, Kumalo and his wife also transcend the barriers set in place by society as they break their own Zulu customs by greeting each other in the European fashion. Moreover, this homecoming of Kumalo is a significant event in that he has managed to set his sister’s child and the wife of his son free and to bring them back home to Ndotsheni even though some of his family members are still bound by the false attractiveness of Johannesburg. However, Kumalo’s son cannot be set free, “when people go to Johannesburg, they do not come back” (Paton, 1948:7). Although Kumalo’s son is not spared the death penalty, he is also emancipated to the extent that he is survived by a wife who bears his son and through whom his spirit may live on.

Nonetheless, Kumalo’s feelings of guilt and shame are underlined by fear. Du Plessis (2016:37) eloquently describes that it is “fear and misunderstanding that divided a handful of white rulers and millions of black men”. Jarvis’s story is also driven by fear. Thus far the discussion of emancipation has been focused on Kumalo, the father of a murderer who goes in search of his lost family members, namely his brother and sister and their respective offspring. I have elaborated on their desire for emancipation and I also briefly discussed the emancipation of Absalom, the murderer, but the father of the murdered must also be considered. This brings the discussion to James Jarvis and his quest for emancipation.

Jarvis, in contrast with Kumalo, is a white farmer who is part of the ‘elite’ race of the time (Du Plessis, 2016:105; Kwenda *et al.*, 2020; Ballard & Hamann, 2021), and who loses his son at the hands of a black native person, resulting in the whites living in fear of ‘black crime’, which is an offence against white people carried out by a black perpetrator (Martin, 2015; Sara, 2018). In the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, a police captain delivers the tragic news of Arthur’s death and Jarvis is trapped by grief, so much so that he is dazed and cannot think what to do next. Moreover, it is noteworthy that Mrs Jarvis “isn’t strong”, she is ill, and possibly trapped in a physical body

with limitations. Fortunately, Jarvis is assisted by the captain and arrangements are made for Jarvis and his wife to go to Johannesburg immediately, even though “black crime” or “native crime” (Paton, 1948:65) thrive in the city. Arthur’s murder is tragic because not only did he understand that they, the whites, “were to blame somehow” for the “native crime” which consists of, to mention only a few examples, “murders and robberies and brutal attacks” (Paton, 1948:122), but it is also greatly unfortunate since Absalom was merely “frightened when the white man, [Arthur], came”; Absalom had no evil intention (Paton, 1948:88). Nonetheless, once Jarvis and his wife arrive in Johannesburg, they are received by Arthur’s brother-in-law, “John Harrison, Mary’s brother”, who informs Jarvis of “the paper that Arthur had been writing just before he was killed, on ‘The Truth About Native Crime’” (Paton, 1948:118-119). As mentioned earlier, Arthur was an activist who fought against the ill and unfair treatment of natives. The fact that Jarvis admits that he and his son, Arthur, “didn’t see eye to eye on the native question” highlights yet another factor that people need to be emancipated from – fear of the unknown, such as different races (Henderson, 2005; Balter, 2010; Hicks, 2022). John Harrison, the late Arthur’s brother-in-law, admits that he and his father “don’t see eye to eye on the native question either” (Paton, 1948:119). It is significant that the younger men seem to be more tolerant of the black people while the fathers are not; this may indicate a generational trap in which the older men are caught (Hayes, 2022). Irrespective, Rivers (1949:51) highlights the theme of *Cry, the Beloved Country* as “an indictment of a social system which drives the native races into resentment and crime”.

Naturally, Jarvis struggles to come to grips with the fact that his son, Arthur, was murdered by a black person even though he did so much to aid the black community. Before Jarvis is informed of Arthur’s murder, he sits on top of the hill on the lookout for any sign of the much-needed rain, and he thinks about how he would have liked his son, Arthur, to take over High Place from him, but “the young man had entertained other ideas, and had gone in for engineering” (Paton, 1948:114). This is noteworthy seeing that Arthur, a white man living during apartheid, also leaves his family behind in search of better opportunities. It is ironic when Jarvis thinks to himself that Arthur’s “life was his own, and no other man had a right to put his hands on it” (Paton, 1948:114). Here too it is evident that Arthur’s decision to leave home ultimately leads to his tragic end. “Arthur Jarvis had been a champion for justice in racial issues” (Du Plessis, 2016:25) and so his death is exceptionally tragic. Arthur “kicked up a hell of a dust in the papers about the conditions at the non-European Hospital” and “he was hot about the native compound system in the Mines, and wanted the Chamber to come out one hundred per cent for settled labour – you know, wife and family to come with the man” (Paton, 1948:121). Arthur was not only cognisant of the mistreatment of the natives, but he was also outspoken about it and made a point to be multilingual, so “he spoke Afrikaans like an Afrikaner, he spoke Zulu [and] he was talking of learning Sesotho” (Paton,

1948:121). This was frowned upon by many whites who supported the apartheid regime, though Arthur positively influenced “coloured people, and Indians and Jews” (Paton, 1948:120-121). This too, was difficult for Jarvis to process since it felt like his son had become a stranger. Jarvis later fears losing the memory of his son entirely and he expresses his regret and grief about not having known the man his son had become. It is significant that Jarvis realises that he “didn’t know it would ever be so important to understand [his son’s life]” because this may be the driving force, along with fear, that inspires Jarvis’s actions later in Ndotsheni (Paton, 1948:124). Jarvis, along with the reader, come to know a bit more about Arthur.

Arthur’s thoughts were liberal, and he recognised that change was necessary before circumstances could improve. In essence, Arthur realised that the social situation was entrapping all races and so preventing them from simply being human. In one of Arthur’s papers, he elaborated on how various behaviours were acceptable in the service of development “but in the light of what we know now, with certain exceptions, it is no longer permissible” (Paton, 1948:127). According to Blakemore (2021) “Dutch and British settlers”, in this case referring to white South Africans, “viewed black South Africans as a natural resource to be used to turn the country from a rural society to an industrialized one”. The social conventions of the time trapped whites in their haughtiness, while the blacks were trapped in a state of being dehumanised, which leaves no room for either race to truly act humane and to show compassion for one another. Considering that Arthur was a white male during the apartheid era, he can easily justify the use of black labour to cultivate the land. It was acceptable to develop the country by whichever means possible, such as using “unskilled men for unskilled work”. However, “it is not permissible to keep men unskilled for the sake of unskilled work” (Paton, 1948:127). Consequently, as a human recognising another human based on merit and not skin colour, Arthur can no longer validate black slavery. Arthur argues that it is unacceptable to act in a way that is detrimental to fellow human beings just for the sake of a certain group’s prosperity, in this case the whites. As a result, Arthur’s papers in which he addresses these sensitive issues, may have liberated quite a few people from their depressing circumstances. Another example where the struggle to overcome and be free of what is and what is not permitted, is the encounter between Jarvis and Kumalo – the father of the murdered son and the father of the murderer. Jarvis ignores the social customs where whites do not go out of their way to help black people in any way when he hands Kumalo his walking stick which he accidentally dropped. This action of Jarvis is noteworthy because he has probably been taught since childhood that on grounds of his race, he is superior to black people (Boddy-Evans, 2019; Blakemore, 2021). The struggle to completely overcome the social norms is evident when Jarvis is unable, or perhaps rather reluctant, to offer Kumalo a hand when he struggles to stand up. Jarvis may have helped Kumalo sooner “but such a thing is not so lightly done as picking up

a stick" (Paton, 1948:156). However, the action of Jarvis physically bowing before Kumalo, a black man, to pick up his walking stick is indicative of Jarvis's inherent character, that which comprises his "mental and ethical traits" (Merriam-Webster, 2022k). In this instance it has nothing to do with race but rather compassion for another human being.

Jarvis has compassion for his fellow human being irrespective of his race. Evidently, Kumalo's ailment stems from the knowledge that his son murdered Jarvis's son. Once Kumalo makes this knowledge known, Jarvis is "bewildered" at first, but then he leaves Kumalo and walks "out into the trees of the garden" (Paton, 1948:155). When Jarvis returns to Kumalo he says, "I have heard you. There is no anger in me" (Paton, 1948:156). This reaction of Jarvis's indicates his strong character and his desire for a peaceful life, one free of hate. This is indicative of great character growth since survivors of homicide, like Jarvis and his wife, are affected severely and often permanently on various levels (Hourigan, 2016:1). Jarvis's soft answer towards Kumalo is indicative of forgiveness, though we cannot know for whose benefit this answer is, as forgiveness can set free the transgressor as well as the one who has been wronged (Hourigan, 2016:1). The concept of forgiveness may be viewed from both the victim and the offender's perspective (Jenkins, 2019:408). In many cases, forgiveness from the victim's perspective is a reaction that enables "them to 'let go' or 'get over' personal harms" (Field *et al.*, 2013:235; Hourigan, 2016:1; Jenkins, 2019:408; Pineda-Marin *et al.*, 2019:226; Eaton *et al.*, 2021:33; Smith, 2021a), while the concept of forgiveness from the perpetrator's point of view is often "conditional or unconditional" (Jenkins, 2019:408). Conditional forgiveness, from the offender's point of view, relates to true repentance for the crime committed, while unconditional forgiveness is characterised by love (Jenkins, 2019:408). Thus, Jarvis presents Kumalo with unconditional forgiveness and Kumalo, being overwhelmed by the unexpected response, can simply respond with "Umnumzana", which means "sir" (Paton, 1948:156 see also Paton, 1948:153). Unfortunately, the law is the law regardless of Jarvis's forgiveness and so Kumalo's son, Absalom, is sentenced "to be hanged by the neck until [he is] dead" (Paton, 1948:174).

It is almost as an afterthought that the Judge adds "and may the Lord have mercy upon your soul" (Paton, 1948:174). Significantly, though, the law is corrupt as Absalom's companions during the crime is set free without any punishment whatsoever for breaking and entering. Absalom's sentence results in him falling "to the floor, crying and sobbing. And there is a woman wailing, and an old man crying" (Paton, 1948:174). Eventually, everyone leaves the courtroom, "the white on one side, the black on the other, according to the custom" (Paton, 1948:174). Against all odds, "the young white man breaks the customs, and he and Msimangu help the old and broken man, one on each side of him" (Paton, 1948:174). Paton shows here that it is quite difficult for a person to ignore their humane side, regardless of race, even though the law dictates that whites and

blacks must not fraternise. The idea of compassion for one another is emphasised when Paton (1948:174) states that “it is not often that such a custom is broken. It is only when there is a deep experience that such a custom is broken”. The notion of compassion is especially highlighted in the character of “a small white boy on a red horse”, Jarvis’s grandson, who is indeed not afraid to break the traditional customs as he speaks freely to Kumalo (Paton, 1948:207). In addition, it is noteworthy that the small white boy “smiled at Kumalo and raised his cap and said, good morning” (Paton, 1948:199), since this type of greeting is a show of respect and friendliness (Collin’s Online Dictionary, n.d.). Consequently, the greeting of the small white boy gives Kumalo “a strange pride, and a strange humility, and an astonishment that the small boy should not know the custom” (Paton, 1948:199). This may be seen as an emancipatory moment since the boy, in his ignorance, is not bound by the custom and so Kumalo is not oppressed by the custom.

The fact that the small white boy does not know the customs of the time – that it is unusual for whites and blacks to interact – especially in such a friendly and respectful manner (Blakemore, 2021), is a clear indication that racial hatred is taught and not inborn (Gjersoe, 2018; Weir, 2021; Cuncic, 2022). The boy is curious though, and asks if he may see inside Kumalo’s home because he has “never been inside a parson’s house, I mean a native parson’s house” (Paton, 1948:199). The acknowledgement that Kumalo is a native parson is indicative that children are not blind to race; they are simply less prone to prejudice (Gjersoe, 2018; Weir, 2021; Cuncic, 2022). However, regardless of Kumalo’s race, the boy shows respect when he enters Kumalo’s home as “he dusted his feet on the frayed mat outside Kumalo’s door” and takes off his cap before entering the house (Paton, 1948:200). This boldness of the boy is indicative of the power of the youth to bridge the gap that has been created between cultures. Moreover, this power of unification is supported by the boy’s inquisitive and caring nature. This recalls the message in Timothy 4:12, which states, “don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity” (Bible, 1973). However, this does not mean that the sentiment cannot apply to older individuals as well. It may be proffered that kindness, regardless of the situation, can set individuals free from social norms that entrap them by preventing them from communicating freely and openly with whomever they choose. Considering that the novel is prescribed to South African matriculants, the little boy’s mannerisms in the novel provides fertile ground for further discussion.

Jarvis sets out to help the people in the community even though his son was killed by Absalom. This may be seen as him being liberated from his narrow-mindedness regarding the different races, as he mentions that he did not share Arthur’s liberal view of the blacks. Thus, Jarvis’s view on the matter is restricted by the social norms of the time. However, the rekindling of Arthur’s spirit in Jarvis is evident in the way in which Jarvis changes his perception, and how he breaks free

from the customs of society at the time when he gives a helping hand and sends a message to Kumalo, "this milk is for small children, only for those who are not yet at school" (Paton, 1948:210). This provision of the milk marks the turning point in Jarvis's view of a segregated society where intercultural relations of any sort are frowned upon. It shows growth in his character as he is now able to assist another race with something as life-giving as milk for the young. Previously he could not even help Kumalo, an old man, to get up. Significantly, the black man who brought the milk and who works for Jarvis, says "I have worked only a week there, but the day Jarvis says to me, die, I shall die" (Paton, 1948:203). This declaration shows the man's loyalty to Jarvis and gives the reader another glimpse of Jarvis's kind, well-meaning, character. Loyalty is characterised as a faithfulness directed at another on the grounds of their good morals and character (Merriam-Webster, 2022l). Jarvis is set free from feelings of hate and despair which may have stemmed from his son being murdered by a member of a race to whom he only ever showed kindness.

It is this kindness though that affects Jarvis and that encourages him to continue with his son's work. This change in Jarvis's character underlines Kumalo's words, "I have learned that kindness and love can pay for pain and suffering" (Paton, 1948:200). This statement by Paton applies to both Kumalo and Jarvis. Jarvis, inspired by the kindness his son has shown to people of all sorts, is set free from the pain and hatred he experiences as he comes to understand that it is merely the way of life. On the other hand, however, Kumalo is set free of the shame and guilt he feels due to having a son as a murderer, especially when Jarvis shows kindness towards him. Both Kumalo and Jarvis are emancipated when they are freed of their hatred and grief. However, Kumalo is not yet entirely free from his circumstances and the fears that he has come to know and realise in the city.

It is in the city that Kumalo realises how greed can drive a man to forsake his familial values. As such, individuals become bound to the materialistic aspects of life, such as money, and this in turn leads to behaviour that may result in incarceration or death, or ultimately the loss of one's soul. Despite being bound to these things, the real fear lies in being bound to anything; all Kumalo yearns for, is to be set free. Accordingly, "fear, hatred, despair, understanding, forgiveness, and above all, reconciliation" are essential themes that contribute to the comprehension of the novel (Gump, 1996:1147). However, the major theme of the novel remains fear, and both Kumalo and Jarvis hope to be set free from their bondage to fear while "on a journey of reconciliation" (Du Plessis, 2016:23). Paton (1948:245) concludes the novel by stating "but when that dawn will come, of our emancipation, from the fear of bondage and the bondage of fear, why, that is a secret". However, Kumalo gladly remains bound to the principles of justice. This submission to the laws of justice is portrayed, not by sadness, but in his thanksgiving on the dawn of his son's execution, "he gave thanks, and broke the cakes and ate them" (Paton, 1948:245). This act of

taking communion shows how close he is to his Lord even if he is about to lose his son. Throughout the novel, religion is foregrounded. This is explored in section 4.4.4, but first, the next section discusses the theme of justice in *Cry, the Beloved Country*.

4.4.3 Justice in *Cry, the beloved country* by Alan Paton

Aside from emancipation, justice is yet a prominent theme in the novel. For the purposes of this study, justice is defined as the feature of something being unbiased and balanced (Merriam-Webster, 2022m). Book 1 brings to the fore injustice seeing that traditional values among the tribes are being lost – there is no balance between native and westernised knowledge. The people of Ndotsheni lost their traditional ways when they started to neglect attending church at St Chad's and they no longer show an interest in learning the indigenous knowledge of the tribe, "that knowledge without which no black man can live" (Paton, 1948:7). The neglect, and ultimate loss, of traditional customs is not necessarily deliberate, but it is probably due to the changing times which forced many natives into institutionalised poverty (Lephakga, 2017:1). As mentioned before, poverty of this kind drives people to do whatever they can to survive and so the people, especially the men, of Ndotsheni, leave for Johannesburg in hopes of a brighter future. Naturally, the women are bound to follow. This then too is the case for Kumalo's sister, Gertrude, who left Ndotsheni "to look for her husband who was recruited for the mines" (Paton, 1948:19). This realisation of an unbalanced society, which readers are introduced to right from the start, is further enhanced throughout the novel.

Black men who leave their villages to go and work in the mines are not only underpaid and overworked, but are also separated from their families. This may seem unfair when the lives of the white men are considered. They not only live with and care for their families, but are also provided the opportunity to go on vacation with their families. The mining practices of the apartheid era is commented on in an article, entitled, "Roots of Apartheid: South Africa's Mining Industry", by the CJPME Foundation in 2014. It is stated that "at the behest of the mining industry, successive all-white governments implemented measures to simultaneously oblige black men to abandon family farms for mine-work, but also prevent them and their families from permanently settling in urban areas" (CJPME Foundation, 2014). This law presents black people with a catch-22 situation, a situation which seems irrational (Merriam-Webster, 2022n). It most likely would have evoked a feeling of being treated unjustly and most likely would have left them wondering how they can be expected to leave their homes and families behind but are not allowed to settle in town. This separation of families often leads to a variety of other social ills such as prostitution, robbery and violence. Unfortunately, Gertrude surrenders to these social ills as she does not find

her husband and seeing that she has a child whom she needs to care for, she is forced to fend for herself.

Gertrude resorts to prostitution to provide for her and her son. The consequences are dire as “she has no husband now it would be truer to say that she has many husbands” (Paton, 1948:19). The resulting infidelity stands in contrast to the ideals of the tribal people, who believe in fidelity. This can be deduced from Msimangu’s words, who defends John’s wife saying, “she believed in fidelity” (Paton, 1948:32). In an additional attempt to procure an income, Gertrude takes to the making and selling of illegal liquor, putting herself at risk of being prosecuted according to the law. The difference between the traditional ways and the modern way of Johannesburg is highlighted in how liquor is “made strong with all manner of things that our people have never used” (Paton, 1948:20). It may be argued that Gertrude’s situation of having to go to such extremes to care for herself and her son is unfair because she was left with few other options seeing that the black men were compelled to work in the mines in Johannesburg. Consequently, the respectable conduct of the tribal people is tainted due to a law forced onto them by the reigning white government. This seems to be the epitome of injustice. Regrettably, there is no way to truly curb these injustices relating to the loss of traditional ways that are taking place.

Msimangu clearly identifies the changing times, brought on by the arrival of Europeans as the root cause for the loss of traditional ways. He explicitly states, “the white man has broken the tribe. And it is my belief that it cannot be mended again” (Paton, 1948:22). One may attempt to preserve the traditional ways, to mend it, but, “who can stop these things from happening? You cannot stop the world from going on” (Paton, 1948:21). Arthur Jarvis intentionally tried to intervene with the injustices he observed in society. He “was well known for his interests in social problems, and for his efforts towards the welfare of the non-European sections of the community” (Paton, 1948:64). The fact that Arthur, who did everything in his power to protest the unjust treatment of the natives, was killed by a native, Absalom, only serves to magnify the unfairness surrounding Arthur’s death.

The biblical allusion to King David’s third son, Absalom, does not escape an attentive reader. In the Bible Absalom commits murder (2 Sam. 13:28-29). The allusion serves as a foreshadowing technique where the reader is given an idea of what will happen. Interestingly, in 2 Samuel 13:39, “King David longed to go to Absalom” and Kumalo “have searched in every place for [Absalom]” (Paton, 1948:88); these two fathers longed to see their children, even though they are murderers. Regardless, the injustices as found in the novel extend to the trial surrounding Arthur’s death. Three men, Absalom, Matthew and Pafuri, planned on breaking and entering the residence of Arthur Jarvis, and these three men were present when Arthur was killed. However only Absalom

was sentenced to death for the crime while the others were set free. Since Absalom had not intent to kill Arthur Jarvis, in legal terms, the murder was not premeditated. The seeming unfairness of the law is further highlighted because “an intention to kill is an essential element in murder; but its existence may be inferred from the relevant circumstances” (Paton, 1948:176). However, Absalom’s words that he did not mean to kill are discarded and the only focal point of the case is that of the murder. Even the presence of Absalom’s accomplices is overlooked and so “this Court finds you, Matthew Kumalo and Johannes Pafuri, not guilty, and you are accordingly discharged” (Paton, 1948:176). This may have felt like unfair treatment to Absalom, who only carried the revolver because it was handed to him by Pafuri to frighten the inhabitants of the house. The injustices of this society are further highlighted when the reader considers that John, Matthew’s father, will do anything to save his son from the legal system, even though he knows his son is guilty. This incident leads to John saying that they “must go at once and see a lawyer” (Paton, 1948:88). At Kumalo’s confused reaction to this, knowing that both children and a friend of theirs were present at the crime, John simply and coldly asks his brother, “who will believe your son?” (Paton, 1948:89). There is a tension between what is morally wrong and right.

As a reverend, Kumalo recognises the importance of fairness and it is in this manner that he treats his son, pleading desperately, “can you not say you fought the devil, wrestled with the devil, struggled with him night and day, till the sweat poured from you and no strength was left?” (Paton, 1948:87-88). Kumalo in no way condones what his son has done. This behaviour of Kumalo is in sharp contrast with the way in which his brother, John, treats his own son, who is aware of his son’s wrongdoings, but who chooses to turn a blind eye. John is plainly dishonest and harsh in his manner when he says, “you see, my brother, there is no proof that my son or this other young man was there at all” (Paton, 1948:89). Interestingly, it is the law that excuses Matthew and Pafuri’s involvement in the crime, so these corrupt moral characters prevail under the guidance of the law. The law does not guarantee justice. However, this is not prominent at first glance considering that Absalom, who in fact shoots and kills Arthur Jarvis, is punished to the full extent of the law.

It may be suggested that, aside from Arthur’s father’s actions that restore some sense of justice in the tribal society of Ndotsheni, justice does prevail when Absalom is punished for his crime. Moreover, justice seems to be restored to some degree when Kumalo, even though parents will do anything in their power to protect their children, believes in justice to such an extent that he accepts that his son is to be hanged for his transgressions. Regardless of whether the law is just or not, one must keep in mind the different frames of reference of Kumalo and his brother. Kumalo, a plain man from the village of Ndotsheni whose belief system is rooted in his Christian religion and the values held by the tribal community, believes in justice, whereas his brother, John, who

has been corrupted by the city of Johannesburg, does not. John, living in the city, is more aware of politics and the injustices done to his people, and that may explain his reluctance and refusal to accept his son's crime against a white man. Thus, the actions and reactions of these men stem from very different beliefs. John may be motivated by the idea of *Ubuntu* – a sense of unity and undying loyalty to one's own; whereas Kumalo's conviction stems from his deep religion and sense of justice before God.

The most prominent instance of injustice in the novel remains the killing of Arthur Jarvis. The act of killing Arthur is not only an injustice in itself, but also an injustice towards the cause for justice. An injustice of this magnitude may result in feelings of despair, anger, hopelessness and a desire for retribution (Scher & Heise, 1993; Urbanska *et al.*, 2019:16). Fortunately, Jarvis does not seek vengeance for his son's death, indicating a slow return to an equilibrium to a society shrouded with injustices. However, the fact remains that Arthur Jarvis's death "is a terrible loss for South Africa. Arthur Jarvis was a courageous young man, and a great fighter for justice" (Paton, 1948:62). It is a bereavement for South Africa that Arthur is killed, it is implied that the work he was doing was of the utmost importance, especially in terms of resetting the equilibrium on a judicial scale.

South Africa is a liberal country where freedom and fairness are actively promoted in the South African Constitution (South Africa, 1996), and as such emancipation and justice are concepts that ought to be rooted in the heart of every South African. Throughout the novel, readers are guided and exposed to various issues which at first glance may be clearly delineated as right or wrong – however, upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that there are always two sides to a story. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, in the novel, *Cry, the beloved country*, Paton "appeal[s] to the liberal consciences of his readers" (Harden, 2014). Readers are encouraged throughout the novel to consider the controversies addressed in the novel with an open mind. Seeing that South Africa is such a diverse country, religion and a sensitivity to different religions play an integral part in many of our lives (Henrard, 2001:51; Mhango, 2012:23; Burchardt, 2017:257; Britannica, 2022). Despite the tragic turn of events in the novel, Paton manages to model "spiritual growth through suffering" (Harden, 2014). Consequently, it may be suggested that faith is a necessary component of emancipation and to be able to deal with injustices that we experience in life.

4.4.4 Religion in *Cry, the beloved country* by Alan Paton

Religion features very prominently in the novel right from the beginning. The reference to the Lord in the beginning of the novel gives the reader a sense of calm and hope. The reader carries this

feeling of tranquillity with them even amidst the chaos that follows in the novel. I must note here that religion and faith are often used interchangeably, and though faith may be a better term for what is evident from the novel, I refer to religion so as to not exclude any readers. Faith is defined as a stubborn confidence held by an individual in some higher power based on a spiritual experience (Haefele, 2022). The sentiment is also highlighted in the book of Hebrews 11:1, which states that “now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see” (Bible, 1973). Religion, on the other hand, refers to the man-made structure, the set of principles, that involves a system of beliefs such as attending church every Sunday (Stibich, 2022). Every reader may not have faith, but it may be suggested that every reader has a religion. Even atheism, a belief in nothing (Lipka, 2019), can be identified as a religion. Regardless, Paton (1948:7) refers to the “Creator” when he talks about the land and its beauty in the first book of the novel. The reference to a divine entity indicates that the narrator has faith, and does not necessarily belong to a religion. Nonetheless, the image of the unscathed land combined with the mentioning of the “Creator”, sets the tone of reverence for the Lord, which is apparent throughout the rest of the novel. Likewise, Kumalo being a god-fearing man who holds a position as reverend in the village of Ndotsheni, is respected. Even small children know to open the door to Kumalo’s home “carefully like one who is afraid to open carelessly the door of so important a house” (Paton, 1948:4). It is noteworthy that the girl who delivers the letter to Kumalo at the beginning of the novel refers to him as *umfundisi*. The term used here, *umfundisi*, is a Zulu word that translates to “pastor” (Du Plessis, 2016:50). It is argued that Paton incorporated Zulu in his text to “show his direct connection to the situation in South Africa” (Du Plessis, 2016:93). The incorporation of an African language in the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, is further significant as it allows Paton and his readers to transcend the language barrier that was present at the time and which is still present today (Reagan, 1987:299; Du Plessis, 2016:103; Hunter-Adams & Rother, 2017:2; Saneka & De Witt, 2019:1; Shayne, 2020; Mataka *et al.*, 2020:117).

Kumalo, as a religious man, leads and prays for his congregation, though he is still human in his flaws. There are various occasions when Kumalo’s actions are contrary to what is expected of a proper Christian, which is to abide by the 10 commandments to showcase their devotion to Christ. The commandments are stipulated in Exodus 20:2-17 as well as in Deuteronomy 5:6-21. The first instance where Kumalo disobeys one of these laws, is when Kumalo loses his temper and raises his voice “in loud and angry words” when complaining to his wife that his family members no longer write to him. Luckily, and most likely with some restraint, he comes to his senses when his wife tells him that he is hurting her with his words. Fortunately, also, it is on this day that Kumalo receives word about his sister, Gertrude. However, upon receiving the news about his sister and hoping to receive support from the Great Spirit, Kumalo cries out “Tixo! Tixo!” (Paton, 1948:19).

Throughout the novel, Kumalo trusts heavily on “Tixo”, who is “the Great Spirit” (Paton, 1948:248) and he frequently calls out to this deity for guidance, which indicates his faith. However, the city of Johannesburg seems to be a godless city where the Lord is not to be found – or rather, the people there do not seek him as earnestly as they ought to.

Msimangu reveals John’s sentiment that “what God has not done for South Africa, man must do” (Paton, 1948:21). With this statement of John’s, it may be inferred that he believes God has forsaken the black people during the reign of apartheid and that they are now forced into taking matters into their own hands. This leads readers to believe that John may be harbouring feelings of bitterness not only regarding religion but also regarding white men. Thus, John starts developing thoughts of an uprising in an attempt towards betterment. As John explains the situation to Kumalo and Msimangu, his voice changes as he becomes more passionate and says, “go to our hospital and see our people lying on the floors. They lie so close you cannot step over them. But it is they who dig for gold” (Paton, 1948:34). Thus, it seems that John does not believe God can intervene and change the apparent unfair situation in which the natives find themselves.

It may be suggested that John’s bitterness is rooted in the fact that his people, the natives, are used as cheap labour who are not compensated or cared for properly. What makes matters worse is that from John’s perspective, the Lord is seemingly inactive where this issue is concerned. This may account for John’s lashing out against the church, especially when he says that the church expects them to be “faithful and meek and obedient, and [they] must obey the laws, whatever the laws may be” (Paton, 1948:34). However, the law, as mentioned previously, is by no means beneficial to the black people. John’s bitterness is due to the seeming inactivity of the Lord regarding the black people’s situation and it may be further suggested that John develops a degree of jealousy, alongside his dislike and sense of injustice related to the church, when he points out to Kumalo that the white priests receive a much bigger salary. Consequently, it is as though there is a godlessness that reigns in the city – it is a case of every man for himself and this is portrayed when the people start to take matters into their own hands. One example is when Absalom, Matthew and Pafuri rob people – presumably on account of the institutionalised poverty they face due to the governing white regime as opposed to trusting in the Lord that He will provide them with what they need. Another example includes John who does whatever he can to get his son, Matthew, and his friend, Pafuri, set free because he feels that he must do what God does not do – set his people free. Ultimately, this behaviour of John’s may be seen as a portrayal of his lack of faith in the Lord, seeing that he does not wait on the Lord in the matter of his son’s trial like Kumalo does. However, others may justify John’s behaviour as a father’s duty to support his son, no matter what. John takes matters into his own hands and aids his son in obtaining his freedom, even though he is guilty. Unfortunately, John’s behaviour affects Kumalo as well.

One prominent instance where Kumalo's faith falters again is when he falls into a brief state of self-pity over what is happening to his family and how it affects him. Van Hooser (2020) states that the devil attacks people by making them relive unpleasant memories "and tempts them to be entrapped by these memories like a caged animal". This is exactly what happens to Kumalo after finding out that his son is a suspect in a murder investigation. At one point in the novel, when Kumalo visits Ezenzeleni, Kumalo says to Msimangu that he has found "nothing, only more fear and pain. There is nothing in the world but fear and pain" (Paton, 1948:79,80). Msimangu, being a priest himself, recognises that these are unnatural thoughts for a man of God and so Msimangu rebukes Kumalo and says "I say it is time to turn [from your thoughts]. This is madness, that is bad enough. But it is also sin, which is worse" (Paton, 1948:80). This reproach is followed by a sermon given by Msimangu and Kumalo concedes that "he speaks to me, here is no doubt of it. He says we are not forsaken" (Paton, 1948:81). Msimangu continues to read from Isaiah 40:28 and Isaiah 40:30-31 and "the people sigh, and Kumalo sighs, as though this is a great word that has been spoken" (Paton, 1948:82). Consequently, Kumalo's temporary lapse of faith ends and his fear dissipates. So much so that he says to Msimangu after the service, "brother, I am recovered", to which Msimangu humbly responds with "no pride or false constraint", "I have tried every way to touch you, but I could not come near. So, give thanks and be satisfied" (Paton, 1948:83). Kumalo's restoration of faith is short-lived as his faith falters again shortly after his visit to Ezenzeleni.

Readers again encounter Kumalo's lack of faith when he murmurs that the detriment of his son's ways "was revealed to others to whom it did not matter but to us, for whom it was life or death, it was not revealed" (Paton, 1948:95). These words of Kumalo may indicate a despondency that Kumalo experiences towards God – why did He not show him that his son's soul was at risk because of the way he was living his life in Johannesburg? Additionally, Kumalo questions why the Lord did not make this information available to him. If Kumalo had known, he might have been able to intervene in Absalom's matters and so he might have been spared the death penalty. Fortunately, Father Vincent, a white priest, comforts Kumalo and says that it may feel as though God forsakes us "but it does not happen, never, never does it happen" (Paton, 1948:94). This is also echoed in Deuteronomy 31:8, where it is stated that "the Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged". Regardless, Kumalo is human in his ways and at times have periods of little faith as he is determined not to be comforted and continues to torture himself with thoughts of how a reverend's son can turn out the way his son has. Kumalo is mortified by the fact that "a white man, a good man, devoted to his wife and children, and worst of all – devoted to our people" has been killed at the hands of his own son (Paton, 1948:95). Fortunately, Kumalo's faith is eventually restored

during his stay at the Mission House in Johannesburg and on spending time with Msimangu. Kumalo draws strength from his time at the mission house and his interaction with Msimangu, especially at times when he feels he has lost his way. It is also at the Mission House where Kumalo hears that the lawyer will take his son's case "*pro deo*" (Paton, 1948:108). It is then when Kumalo's faith is restored as the lawyer "was taking the case for God" (Paton, 1948:109). Unfortunately, Kumalo's faith is tested once more when he hears that Absalom is sentenced to death, since no mitigating circumstances are found.

The theme of religion, or faith, is also seen in the courtroom. When the judge sentences Absalom to be hanged he adds "may the Lord have mercy upon your soul" (Paton, 1948:177). This may seem like an odd wish coming from the judge since he is the one sentencing Absalom to death. Readers are left with the idea that the law is merciless, but the Lord's grace abounds. Moreover, there is a possibility that Absalom may receive mercy if the "the Governor-General-in-Council" should so decide (Paton, 1948:188). However, considering the seemingly unfair way the law has treated Absalom thus far, this information does not instil much confidence. The possibility of Absalom receiving mercy from the law provides the reader with the appearance of a just legal system. However, when the news arrives that there is no mercy for Absalom, it brings forward the idea of legal system that incorporates power play by providing the black people with hope and then crushing it again. In so doing, fear is instilled in the black people. Fortunately, faith is Kumalo's saving grace.

Upon Kumalo's return home, the tribe breaks out in song. The hymn they sing acknowledges and gives thanks to God "and it echoes in the bare red hills and over the bare red fields of the broken tribe" (Paton, 1948:197). This image is striking because even in an environment that is neglected and 'broken', it seems as though the Lord is present. This is in sharp contrast to the upscaled City of Gold, Johannesburg, where things are supposedly better than in the tribal communities, though godlessness seem to be at the order of the day. This phenomenon may be explained at the hand of James 4:8, which states: "come near to God and he will come near to you". Thus, the contrast between the two images may be attributed to the fact that the tribe seeks the Lord, whereas the inhabitants of Johannesburg do not necessarily seek him. Kumalo seeks the Lord and he prays for forgiveness for his sister and for his son and so makes his familial matters known to the entire village. Kumalo's prayer includes, "God save us from the fear that is afraid of justice. God save us from the fear that is afraid of men" (Paton, 1948:198). These two sentences are paramount to the novel and indicate that faith is in fact a crucial element of emancipation. The former, "God save us from the fear that is afraid of justice" (Paton, 1948:198), is indicative of the necessity of justice, even when it is painful and against selfish desires – naturally Kumalo does not want his son to be hanged, but it is the fair thing to do according to the law. The latter, "God save us from

the fear that is afraid of men” (Paton, 1948:198), refers to the segregation of races. Individuals are afraid to accept one another’s differences and so they deal with it through avoidance, though prayer may help the people to overcome these fears. Significantly, Kumalo prays that the children must “call and dance while you may” (Paton, 1948:199) because they are going into life and they “are not afraid because [they] do not know” (Paton, 1948:199). Children tend not to see racial differences between people, which so often cause us to drift apart. Instead, they aim to reconcile, albeit unknowingly at times. Nonetheless, despite Kumalo’s pain and shame he “began to pray regularly in his church for the restoration of Ndotsheni” for the people and the land are facing desperate times (Paton, 1948:195). Nonetheless, the image of Kumalo coming home to the tribespeople singing hymns among the broken earth, reminds the reader that God is there in the desolation too; He never forsakes us. This is also true even as Kumalo finds himself in uncomfortable social situations in the city of Johannesburg.

One day, while still in Johannesburg and after the trial, Kumalo goes to Mr Smith’s daughter to enquire after Sibeko’s daughter, “who used to work for [Mr Smith’s daughter] in Ixopo” (Paton, 1948:156). However, instead of Mr Smith’s daughter, Kumalo encounters Jarvis, who is the father-in-law of Mr Smith’s daughter, and so he asks him in Zulu where Sibeko’s daughter might be. Jarvis repeats this question to Mr Smith’s daughter, after having translated it to English for her. She replies in English that “I’m sure I do not know and I do not care” (Paton, 1948:160). These are quite harsh words to give to an elderly man seeking a friend’s child, so I would like to take a moment and explore possible reasons for these words uttered by Smith’s daughter as it is indicative of an unforgiving society. There are various reasons why Smith’s daughter may not have cared about Sibeko’s daughter’s whereabouts. Firstly, “[Sibeko’s daughter] was arrested and sent to jail for a month” and so “of course [Mr Smith’s daughter] could not take her back again” (Paton, 1948:160). Inviting an ex-convict back into their lives is something most people will not consider because ex-offenders are likely to re-offend due to the challenges they face when re-entering mainstream society (Chikadzi, 2017:288). Additionally, there seems to be an existing fear of black people among the white people in the novel, so Smith’s daughter is glad to be rid of Sibeko’s daughter. Another factor here is that white people feared being seen to help black people who had been in trouble with the law because it was so dangerous for them to do so. The regime did not look kindly on white people who were too pro-black people. Regardless, Sibeko’s daughter was only imprisoned for a month and her offense was merely “brew[ing] liquor in her room” (Paton, 1948:160), which is hardly something to be terrified of. Considering the times and the setting, especially the city of Johannesburg where crimes are fuelled by “the racism inherent in [its] society” (Evans, 2015), there are far worse crimes Sibeko’s daughter could have committed. Aside from the crime against humanity where extreme segregation was enforced based on race,

other crimes popular in the apartheid era involved “murder, enslavement [and] rape” (Ramjathan-Keogh, 2020).

Perhaps Mr Smith’s daughter sees Sibeko’s daughter’s minor crime as the beginning of something far more sinister and so she does not want to re-employ her out of fear. Consequently, Mr Smith’s daughter answers with “I do not care” (Paton, 1948:156), when asked where Sibeko’s daughter may be. Alternatively, this snide response of Mr Smith’s daughter is indicative of the seeming contempt that was generally felt by the white people toward the black people during the apartheid era. This may have deliberately been used by Mr Smith’s daughter to indicate to Kumalo that she, Mr Smith’s daughter, is superior to Sibeko’s daughter and simply does not care what happens to her. The idea of the Smiths using Sibeko’s daughter for their benefit, as if she were a mere thing to be used, as long, if, and when it suits them, is also reinforced with these words, “I do not care” (Paton, 1948:156). It may be suggested that Sibeko’s daughter has served her purpose and now the Smiths do not care about what happens or what has happened to her, “[black people] were mere chattel, that is, property or ‘things’ that can be owned, disposed of and treated in any way that the ‘owner’ thought fit” (Manji, 2019:53). Consequently, Smith’s daughter’s words, “I do not care” (Paton, 1948:156) may indicate three instances where religious practices are overlooked – once again emphasising that there is a seeming godlessness to be found in the city and among its inhabitants.

Smith’s daughter portrays a judgemental and unforgiving nature when she does not want to re-employ Sibeko’s daughter based on the minor transgression of brewing liquor. This notion is strengthened when readers learn that Smith’s daughter promised Sibeko’s husband that she will look after their daughter. However, when she “went to the bad and started to brew liquor in her room”, Smith’s daughter’s attitude changes – now she does not care about Sibeko’s daughter. Thus, readers are presented with the idea that Smith’s daughter is overly critical and it seems like she thinks of herself as being faultless. This goes against one of the most well-known Christian mantras: to forgive others as you have been forgiven. This sentiment is found in various books throughout the Bible (1973), including: Ephesians, Matthew, Luke, and Proverbs (Palmer, 2022). However, Jarvis shows kindness towards Kumalo when he translates Mr Smith’s daughter’s answer back into Zulu for him, and he omits the words that she does not care, which may be hurtful to Kumalo, “Jarvis did not tell me that she said, she did not care” (Paton, 1948:201). Moreover, Jarvis, in his own way offers his condolences to Kumalo in the anticipation of his son’s execution.

Jarvis portrays a sense of compassion as he realises that Kumalo may blame himself for Mrs Jarvis’s death. He suspects that Kumalo may think her death is a result of her grieving over the

loss of her son – who died at the hands of his son, Absalom. In essence, Jarvis shows mercy towards Kumalo when he lets him know “my wife was suffering before we went to Johannesburg” (Paton, 1948:231). Kumalo also learns that Mrs Jarvis, in her last days, wanted a new church to be built in Ndotsheni. Though this fills Kumalo with such joy that he can barely speak, his heart is heavy because he is “going into the mountain” (Paton, 1948:232). Kumalo’s reason for going into the mountains was to silently bode farewell to his son who is to be executed when the sun rises and to “pray for the child that no prayer could save any more” (Paton, 1948:233). It is also in the mountains where Kumalo confesses his sins and prays for absolution – he also explicitly admits that he lost his “faith in Johannesburg” (Paton, 1948:233). The experience in the mountains is an unpleasant one and although Kumalo is anxious and has many questions, “he calmed himself, and took out the heavy maize cakes and the tea, and put them upon a stone. And he gave thanks, and broke the cakes and ate them, and drank of the tea. Then he gave himself over to deep and earnest prayer” (Paton, 1948:236). When “the sun rose in the east” Kumalo knows his son’s life has come to an end but he still acknowledges that “it is the dawn that has come. The great valley of the Umzimkulu is still in darkness, but the light will come there. Ndotsheni is still in darkness, but the light will come there also” (Paton, 1948:236).

Ultimately, Kumalo and Jarvis – the different races – are reconciled, drawn together by common elements such as grief, regret, and most importantly: religion. Besides religion, the longing for emancipation and justice are integral elements of the novel and provide fertile ground for various discussions among its readers. At a more complex level, learners may be enticed into discussions of how characters are portrayed, whose stories are told and whose are omitted? The novel, *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel is explored in the next section to discover more ways in which various themes may be applied in the South African context.

4.5 Background to *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

Like the previous novel, the background of the author and setting of the novel, *Life of Pi*, must be considered to better understand the novel (Shea & Ceprano, 2017:52). As such, I provide information about the author, Yann Martel, and the socioeconomic factors that were relevant in 2001 when the novel was written to help readers to make valid inferences (Shea & Ceprano, 2017:52; Deane, 2020:3).

Yann Martel was born on the 25th of June 1963 in Spain (Serafin, 2022). It is noteworthy that Martel travelled quite a bit as a child and he lived in “Spain, Costa Rica, France, Mexico and the United States”. He completed high school in Ontario, Canada (Serafin, 2022). As such, Martel was exposed to various environments, personalities and religions. Lord (2016) points out that

travelling as a child may result in an increased sense of self, flexibility and independence. These aspects bear similarity to what is found in the novel, *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel. The novel was first published in 2001 and is best described as a “postmodern survivor narrative” (Duncan, 2008:167).

Postmodernism is a worldview that may be described as “full of absurdities and inconsistencies” (Cornell, 2006). Additionally, postmodernism emphasises the subjectivity of individuals (Duignan, 2022). This is reflected in the characteristics of postmodern novels such as *Life of Pi*, where the reader is left to ponder about the alternative narratives offered in terms of what happened to Pi. Moreover, “the social, economic, and psychological realities of individuals” are often depicted through the characters in novels (Dolaykaya, 2017:1000). It is evident that Yann Martel holds a postmodernist worldview when considering his novel, *Life of Pi*. Postmodern novels rely heavily on “fragmentation, paradox, unreliable narrators, often unrealistic and downright impossible plots, games, parody, paranoia, dark humour and authorial self-reference” (Sheeba, 2017:181). *Life of Pi* is filled with incongruities and irregularities, and the statement by Cornell (2006) is applicable. The most notable irregularity is that of a 16-year-old boy, Pi, who is adrift at sea for two hundred and twenty-seven days with various animals to keep him company – the most prominent being an adult tiger. Moreover, the plot, which seems rather surreal, adheres to Sheeba’s (2017:181) interpretation of what contributes to a postmodern novel. The postmodern worldview challenges all existing theories and as such it leads to a great number of questions being raised (Cornell, 2006). The question that is often posed with regard to *Life of Pi* pertains to which version of Pi’s narrative about his time lost at sea is the truth – the animal version, or the human version?

Postmodernism, however, is not about one truth or one grand narrative, but rather about *petit recits* – it is all about the little narratives (Lyotard, 1984; Sheeba, 2017:181). However, many versions of the same story will almost inevitably result in questions being raised. These questions may pertain to the examination “of the aesthetics of the memory, the construction of selfhood and cultural representation” (Duncan, 2008:167). The elements identified by Duncan (2008:167) are quite applicable to Pi as it is possible that his mind plays tricks on him – thus, his recollection of the events may not be accurate. Moreover, Pi is forced to discover his selfhood, his identity, lest he dies at sea. The reader also becomes aware of Indian culture portrayed in the novel, especially where reference is made to food. At the start of the novel, readers are first introduced to the author.

In the author’s note, Martel (2001:4) implies that the story is partly about himself as he opted for “the selective transforming of reality” in his novel. This again highlights that this is a postmodern

novel, since Martel makes use of authorial self-reference (Sheeba, 2017:181). Moreover, Martel (2001:4) highlights the importance of having characters who are *alive*, “ruddy with life that they practically need birth certificates”. Lively characters are a crucial part of any novel, seeing that readers need to be able to relate to characters before they can truly engage with and learn from them. This is exactly why Martel (2001:4) explicitly states that authenticity, a truthfulness, is an integral aspect of a novel and so he strives to portray “historical, social, climatic, [and] culinary” issues as they truly are. With this, it is as though Martel (2001:4) challenges readers to verify the information he provides against their own reality. He forces his readers to think about the information provided (Eckert, 2018). Additionally, when certain aspects of a fictional narrative read like a non-fiction, such as information regarding certain animal behaviours, readers may be compelled to do a fact-check (Brown, 2016). Regardless, Martel (2001:6) continues to challenge readers to confirm or reject the information provided when an elderly Indian man, Mr Patel, says to him in a coffee shop, “I have a story that will make you believe in God”. Considering the personal nature of the statement, many readers will be drawn to engage with the novel and to accept Martel’s arguable cleverly thought-out invitation to engage with the novel and its religious aspects. The deities are, however, not named, and we find out in the course of the novel that Pi experiments with various religions, namely Hinduism, Islam and Christianity and when asked to choose between them, he answers: “Bapu Gandhi said, 'All religions are true.' I just want to love God,” (Martel, 2002:69). This reminds us again of the multiple narratives in postmodernism. However, the author responds to the elderly man’s conviction, saying “that’s a tall order” (Martel, 2001:6). As such, Martel allows for scepticism but still manages to invite readers to explore the novel further – perhaps they can discover or re-discover some of their personal orientations about what they do or do not believe. Consequently, however, the author meets Pi and it is his story that is told in part one of the novel. First, I must mention here that according to Duncan (2008:167), narratives that are built on a foundation of postmodernist survival often depicts “the experience of an individual facing death or trauma that severely disrupts the sense of selfhood”. This too is then the crux of the novel. Three themes are prominent in the novel: religion, loss of innocence and survival. The novel, like *Cry, the Beloved Country*, is divided into three parts. A brief overview of each is given in the sections that follow.

4.5.1 Plot summary of *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

4.5.1.1 Part 1

Part 1 of the novel is in fact a meeting between the author and Pi, the person who will make the author believe in God. Martel (2001:9) introduces readers to Pi, an individual whose “suffering left [him] sad and gloomy”, with a somewhat strange combination of interests, “my majors were

religious studies and zoology” (Martel, 2001:9). Pi specifically studies the “three-toed sloth” (Martel, 2001:9) with its “calm, quiet and introspective” mannerisms (Martel, 2001:10). He was an enthusiastic student who “got every possible student award from the Department of Zoology”. Pi continues to tell the author his anecdote – where he currently finds himself and where he comes from, “I love Canada. I miss the heat of India. Anyway, I have nothing to go home to in Pondicherry” (Martel, 2001:12-13). However, he recalls Pondicherry, Richard Parker, and mentions how he misses him. Richard Parker is the name of a tiger - a very unusual name for an animal. However, considering that Pi practically grew up in a zoo, it might not seem so strange. Pi shares with the author that in the zoo, there was a curtain that conceals “THE MOST DANGEROUS ANIMAL IN THE ZOO” (Martel, 2001:37) – man, as revealed by a mirror. Pi also shares information regarding his name with the author.

His full name is “Piscine Molitor Patel” (Martel, 2001:29). This name, however, draws some unfortunate attention to Pi. But seeing that he is adamant not to be called “pissing” instead of “*Peaseen*” (Martel, 2001:27) he decides to take on the name Pi. It is also in the first part of the book that the readers learn about Pi’s religious preferences. However, these are alluded to early in the novel when Pi, recalling a tale of his student life, answers “I am who I am” when asked to give his name (Martel, 2001:26). Additionally, Pi identifies as “a Hindu, a Christian and a Muslim” (Martel, 2001: xxi). Interestingly, Pi says, “religion will save us” (Martel, 2001:34) and it does in fact save him later. However, Pi’s father also contributes to his survival later in the novel as he teaches his sons how dangerous animals are, specifically tigers. By the end of Part 1, Pi and his family decide to leave Pondicherry for Canada on the “Japanese cargo ship *Tsimtsum*” (Martel, 2001:95). However, plans go horribly awry.

4.5.1.2 Part 2

“The ship sank” (Martel, 2001:98). This unfortunate event of the ship sinking is the catastrophe that Part 2 of the novel describes. Pi finds himself alone in uncertain waters and it is in a state of shock and disbelief that he cries “Vishnu preserve me, Allah protect me, Christ save me, I can’t bear it!” (Martel, 2001:100). Throughout this ordeal of Pi being lost at sea, he relies heavily on his spirituality. Sadly, however, Pi loses his family and is the only survivor. After quite a bit of commotion and effort, he finds himself on a lifeboat with “a zebra, a vicious hyena, an orang-utan, and, to his horror, an adult male tiger known as Richard Parker” (Martel, 2001: xvii). Besides having to face the dangers of wildlife on board, especially the tiger, Pi is tormented by the elements, but fortunately, “the elements allow [him] to go on living” (Martel, 2001:109). However, his quest for survival allows Pi ample time to contemplate his situation, how he got there and whether there is a possibility for him to escape unscathed.

When Pi reflects, he realises that “the hyena was the reason those sailors had thrown [him] into the lifeboat” (Martel, 2001:111). He realises that they intended to sacrifice him in an attempt to get rid of the unwanted occupant in the lifeboat. Pi goes through a great ordeal on the boat and becomes part of a ‘kill or be killed’ saga and in the process, his innocence is lost. These primal behaviours of the occupants on the lifeboat only contributes to Pi’s helpless situation, especially his physical circumstances. The hyena kills the zebra and the orang-utan and so Pi is left to defend himself against the hyena and the tiger on board. Still stranded at sea with a hyena and a tiger, Pi realises how thirsty he is and softly breathes in anguish, “God preserve me!” (Martel, 2001:141). Shortly after, Pi discovers supplies on board and he quenches his thirst. In addition to the fresh water, he finds “fortified biscuits of baked wheat, *animal fat* and glucose” (Martel, 2001:144), which he eats with delight. Pi’s will to survive is driven by his hunger, especially considering that he eats the biscuits that contain animal fat, despite being a vegetarian. When Pi takes stock of his new-found supplies, he compiles a list and adds “1 God” to the list (Martel, 2001:147).

The survival manual Pi has at his disposal states that “an idle mind tends to sink, so the mind should be kept occupied” (Martel, 2001:166). Pi sees to it that he obtains fresh water to drink and he considers no fewer than six ways in which to kill Richard Parker. However, Pi comes to the startling conclusion that if he “wage[s] a war of attrition [against the tiger], [he] will lose it! [He] will *die!*” (Martel, 2001:161). So, Pi busies himself with various tasks on the lifeboat; most of these pertain to keeping himself and Richard Parker alive. Fortunately, by the end of Part 2 of the novel, Pi is saved. Part 3 of the novel highlights, once again, the nature of a postmodern survival novel.

4.5.1.3 Part 3

Part 3 pertinently addresses the issue of various truths (Lyotard, 1984). The author begins Part 3 by stating that what “follows are excerpts from the verbatim transcript” of an interview between officials and Pi (Martel, 2001:282). The purpose of the officials’ visit to Pi is to determine the cause of the *Tsimtsum*’s sinking. Throughout their discussion, Pi seems distracted by food “I’m a little hungry” (Martel, 2001:283), and so he interjects the conversation with phrases like, “I’d like another cookie” (Martel, 2001:284), “delicious sandwiches” (Martel, 2001:288) and “chocolate is so good!” (Martel, 2001:290). Pi provides them with the animal version of what has happened, though the officials do not seem to believe it. Pi is adamant that they should believe his story, especially the part about the floating bananas that carried Orange Juice, the orang-utan. When the officials do not believe Pi, he says “here, try for yourself. I have two bananas right here” (Martel, 2001:284). After the experiment of the floating bananas, which corroborates Pi’s story,

he asks, “could I have my bananas back, please?” (Martel, 2001:285). However, the officials remain sceptical, “we don’t want any invention. We want the ‘straight facts’” (Martel, 2001:293).

Pi responds to the investigators’ scepticism by saying that truth is relative to the individual, “the world isn’t just the way it is. It is how we understand it, no?” (Martel, 2001:293). Nonetheless, Pi humours the officials, “here’s another story” (Martel, 2001:294). It is in this second story that Pi relays events of a brutal nature, of a ship sinking, and him losing his family to the ocean and his mother to the hands of a murderer. Here, Pi no longer interrupts his own narrative with references to food. This matter-of-fact way in which Pi tells the second version of the narrative brings a more serious, if not gloomy, atmosphere in the room. One of the officials notices a remarkable similarity between the two versions of Pi’s tale. The officials conclude that should these similarities be indicative of truth then “the Taiwanese sailor is the zebra, his [Pi’s] mother is the orang-utan, the cook is the hyena – which means he is the tiger!” (Martel, 2001:301). The crux of the stories remains the same, “in both stories the ship sinks, [his] entire family dies, and [he] suffer[s]” (Martel, 2001:306). Ultimately, both officials agree that the story with the animals is the better story. By the end of the novel, Pi refers to God once more, “and so it goes with God” (Martel, 2001:306).

Themes in *Life of Pi*

The three themes that are discussed in more detail in the next sections are religion, loss of innocence and survival. Though these themes are closely interrelated, religion acts as a foundation on which Pi bases his decisions throughout the novel. Pi starts off believing in three religions, but after his tribulations he refers only to one – Christianity. However, Pi refers to Christianity merely as an amalgamation of the three religions he chooses to pursue. It is possible that Pi’s circumstances help him to grow in his faith but it comes at the cost of his innocence. The prize though, is survival.

4.5.2 Religion in *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

Religion may be seen as the foundation upon which the novel is built. Religion is a very prominent theme throughout the novel and it is found in each of the three parts. In the introduction of the novel, Martel (2001: xxi) describes how Pi “sees himself as a Hindu, a Christian and a Muslim”. Moreover, these three religions combined amount to “a great universal belief in love and a delight in life, symbolised by God” (Martel, 2001:xxi). The fact that Pi takes the crux of each religion recalls the idea that there is not one truth, but many (Lyotard, 1984). Martel (2001:xxi) concludes in the introduction of the novel that the “most positive elements of each religion add up to a sense that life is filled with wonder and purpose, if we are alive to it”. Pi is most definitely filled with a sense of wonder and purpose as he later stands in awe of a thunderstorm, even while stuck out

at sea – the majesty of the storm draws him “out of [his] limited mortal ways and thrust[s] [him] into a state of exalted wonder” (Martel, 2001:229). Consequently, due to these beliefs held by Pi, he fights to survive his circumstances at sea so that he can enjoy a purposeful and wonderful life.

In Chapter 1, Pi speaks about religion and survival, “academic study and the steady, mindful practice of religion slowly brought me back to life” (Martel, 2001:9). The theme of religion is intermingled with the setting of the zoo, especially since Pi learns at the zoo that Mr Kumar is an atheist. It is as though the idea is subtly reinforced within readers’ minds that religion and animals go hand in hand, as though it is an instinctive, animalistic characteristic for humans to believe in something higher than ourselves. Harding (2017) argues that we believe because that is what our senses instruct us to do. Sensory evidence, an experience, can result in a person believing in a supernatural element even if he did not previously (Spiegel, 2010). Moreover, Gleiser (2015) proffers that believing in something allows individuals to feel part of a community. This is a survival instinct known as the group instinct where individuals feel obliged “to do whatever [their] reference group expects from [them]” (Von der Malsburg, 2019). Thus, a shared belief – whether in a higher power, in nothing or something in between, may be “evolutionarily advantageous” (Spiegel, 2010). However, it is up to us to discover what it is that we believe. Curiously, this relation of humans to animals occurs throughout the novel.

The reference to humans as animals may reinforce the notion that humans are in essence instinctive animals (Wakim & Grewal, 2021) with a need to believe in order to survive. Mr Kumar, the atheist, refers to the zoo as his temple. Consequently, Mr Kumar also believes in something. Even though it is that God does not exist, he still *believes* in something. It is for this reason that Pi does not have a problem with him. However, Pi struggles to see eye to eye with agnostics. He states that “doubt is useful for a while but we must move on”. To choose doubt as a philosophy of life is akin to choosing immobility as a means of transportation” (Martel, 2001:35). Doubt may be good momentarily as it encourages a person to think about his options, but living in constant doubt will be detrimental to any success a person might achieve. Always being in a constant state of weighing the options and thinking about the various outcomes without acting will not lead a person anywhere. It is also when Pi refers to agnostics that the reader realises that Pi is not someone who is led by reason. Accordingly, it may be gathered that something does not necessarily have to make sense for an individual to believe in it, but to believe in something is paramount to our existence.

Pi experiences a feeling of belonging when he lives out his faith. He states, “I am a Hindu because of sculptured cones of red Kumkum powder and baskets of yellow turmeric nuggets” (Martel, 2001:54). Kumkum powder is “used to mark people’s faces in Indian religious ceremonies” while

turmeric is a spice that is “used in Indian cooking” (Martel, 2001:54). Pi goes on to describe various other elements that are found in the Indian culture. The fact that Pi uses these Indian elements to motivate his choice to be a Hindu is indicative that he feels a sense of belonging, “I feel at home in a Hindu temple” (Martel, 2001:54). These reminders of Indian culture may indicate that Pi does not associate his being part of Hinduism with doctrines and rites, but rather with a feeling of kinship. According to Allen (2019), “a broken sense of belonging increases the risk for psychological and physical dysfunction”. Consequently, by implication of Allen’s (2019) statement, Pi is kept alive by his faith, which affords him a feeling of belonging.

According to Harding (2017) “when we truly believe something it profoundly influences our actions”. This statement by Harding (2017) is evident in the case of Pi, especially considering the fact that he cannot ascribe his faith, his belief that he will survive his circumstances, to reason: “something in me did not want to give up on life, was unwilling to let go, wanted to fight to the very end” (Martel, 2001:101). Anwar (2019) suggests that people are bound to an “influence” and so “are in a continuous struggle to survive and flourish”. This *something*, or influence, may be the driving force behind Pi’s actions, whether it is inherently instinct or divine intervention, it kept him alive. Pi views “religion as light” – this is established early on in the novel when he also says, “darkness is the last thing that religion is” (Martel, 2001:34). This imagery of religion being light is noteworthy when the rest of the novel is considered, since it may be argued that religion becomes the guiding light that ushers Pi through the dark times he faces on the boat. As the ship sinks, “lights flickered and went out” (Martel, 2001:109). The flickering of the ship’s lights may reflect Pi’s emotional state and specifically his floundering faith. The darkness, or his lack of faith, is showcased in his hopeless situation with “nothing [around him]. Only rain, marauding waves of black ocean and the flotsam of tragedy” (Martel, 2001:109). The multiple meanings associated with the word ‘flotsam’ is significant.

Firstly, ‘flotsam’ refers to the wreckage of a ship or its cargo found floating on or washed up by the sea. It can also be “a floating population”, also known as castaways (Merriam-Webster, 2022o). In this context, ‘flotsam’ may be taken at its literal meaning since it refers to the *Tsimtsum*, which carried Pi and his family out to sea and which has been reduced to debris floating on the ocean’s surface, leaving Pi shipwrecked. The second meaning connotated to the word ‘flotsam’ is that of people or things that have been rejected or discarded as worthless (Merriam-Webster, 2022o). This may be seen as yet another foreshadowing technique, since the lives of those who survived the shipwreck become worthless in their battle to survive the elements and each other. However, it may be suggested that on a spiritual level, flotsam refers to individuals who have been rejected by their gods, banned into darkness. Thus, readers get the idea that Pi has been forsaken. Fortunately, hope is briefly restored to Pi when “[the orang-utan] came floating on an

island of bananas in a halo of light, as lovely as the Virgin Mary” (Martel, 2001:113). The image depicted here may be broken down into two points of discussion, the first being the “halo of light” and the second dealing with the reference to “the Virgin Mary” (Martel, 2001:113). The appearance, or rather returning, of the light to Pi’s dark, seemingly hopeless situation shortly after the ship sinks reinforces the idea that he still has his faith.

Moreover, reference to the “halo of light” suggests the image of a divine creature, possibly an angel or saint, and it is normally holy figures such as these that are illustrated with their heads encircled by a glowing light, or halo (Collin’s Online Dictionary, n.d.). Consequently, the appearance of the orang-utan, or Pi’s mother, in a halo of light, may put the reader at ease as the idea is reinforced that Pi has a guardian angel with him now. According to Storms (2018), “angels are described as ‘ministers’ [and they] provide guidance and direction for God’s people, as well as comfort and encouragement”. Thus, it may be suggested that the halo of light signifies a guardian angel. The orang-utan, or Pi’s mother depending on which version one prefers, in fact saves Pi’s life later on while submitting herself to the onslaughts of the hyena, or the cook, and so ultimately sacrificing herself to save Pi’s life. The comparison between the orang-utan and the Virgin Mary is also significant. The Virgin Mary is also known as the lady of light (Scherschlight, 2020). This notion is strengthened as “the rising sun was behind her”. The feeling of relief quickly dissipates when readers are introduced to the next image where Orange Juice is “surrounded by a mass of black spiders that crawled around her like malevolent worshippers” (Martel, 2001:113). It may be suggested that the words “crawled” and “malevolent” denote a feeling of unrest. This feeling is made worse by the fact that the spiders seem to be worshipping the orang-utan. Here again, Martel (2001:113) anthropomorphises animals by attributing the human quality of worshipping to the spiders.

Religion is once again intermingled with the image of animals, which only serves to enhance the view of the human primal need to believe in something, to hope. In line with the religious undertone of the novel thus far, Pi refers to “banana manna” (Martel, 2001:113). This reference to manna is yet another sign that Pi is deeply rooted in his religious beliefs. However, its meaning is threefold as it may refer to the Christian, Hindu and Muslim religions. Firstly, “manna” in the Christian religion alludes to the words from Exodus 16:4 where “bread from heaven” rained down on the Lord’s people (Bible, 1973). This bread, called “manna”, was provided to the Israelites when they were in a hopeless situation that seemed insurmountable. Secondly, in Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language (Bronkhorst, 2010:118), ‘manna’ refers to “inherent urges or tendencies” (Verma, 2002). Thirdly, “manna” is also mentioned in the Quran, much in the same sense that it is seen in the Bible (Quran, 2021:11, 234 & 450). These religious references strengthen the idea of basic instincts that individuals tend to fall back on when their cultural environment is disrupted

or endangered (Verma, 2002). After these events of Orange Juice “floating on an island of bananas in a halo of light” (Martel, 2001:113), quite some time elapses before Pi mentions God again. However, when he does, it is a desperate cry, “God preserve me!” (Martel, 2001:141). Pi’s cry to be preserved stems from his realisation about just how dire his situation is – “stretching, [he] could have pinched [Richard Parker’s] bottom and between [them] there was nothing but a thin tarpaulin” (Martel, 2001:141). The references Pi makes to his spirituality increases the more his understanding of just how dangerous the situation in which he finds himself is, increases. Luckily, Pi finds a locker that “glistened with shiny new things” and so he starts to take stock of the goods. Among the goods Pi finds biscuits, and though they contain animal fat, once swallowed his “stomach had only one thing to say: Hallelujah!” (Martel, 2001:144). Pi utters this one word in joy, but at the same time, it may be suggested that he is praising God for providing him with these goods that might save his life. Elated, Pi takes stock of his findings and adds “1 God” to his list (Martel, 2001:147). This addition of God to Pi’s list is indicative of his rootedness in a higher power. It is also noteworthy that though Pi has claimed to worship many gods before, he now states that there is only one – this may indicate spiritual growth. This is supported by the vigour with which Pi now prays daily. Along with other tasks, Pi’s routine includes a nearly constant state of praying from, “sunrise to mid-morning, mid-morning to late afternoon, late afternoon to early evening, sunset [and all throughout the] night” (Martel, 2001:189-190). This new vigour where his faith is concerned sustains him throughout his journey. The adding of “1 God” to his list of items suggests his reliance on a higher power and is supported throughout the novel as Pi frequently makes religious references. People tend to call on their gods when in need (Creamer, 2015; Wenk, 2021) but this does not seem to apply to Pi in the sense that he calls on his god only when in need. Pi seems to have a deep connection to spirituality from the beginning – even a strange sort of pre-occupation, which is odd for a child of his age. Nonetheless, the importance of religion is highlighted when Pi says, “so long as God is with me, I will not die. Amen” (Martel, 2001:148). However, Pi realises that calling on God and sitting idle will in no way help him, so he turns to practical thoughts too.

Pi finally devises a plan to put some distance between him and the tiger onboard and as he works to secure the makeshift raft. He implores, “God, give me the time” (Martel, 2001:150). It may be suggested that Pi realises he cannot rely solely on himself for survival and so he falls back to religion. Pi further exclaims the names of “Jesus, Mary, Muhammad and Vishnu” when he realises his life is in imminent danger (Martel, 2001:150). It is as though through the mere mention of these deities, Pi draws strength from them to overcome his situation and indeed, he does overcome his situation in the end. However, during his time at sea, Pi realises something about fear, which essentially reveals the importance of religion, or more precisely, faith.

Pi states that “fear, disguised in the garb of mild-mannered doubt, slips into your mind like a spy. Doubt meets disbelief” (Martel, 2001:161). Here fear is personified and illustrated as an infiltrator with mild mannerisms who sows fear into the mind of individuals in a very subtle way. Fear is considered the opposite of faith, which is ultimately a lack of faith or disbelief (Smith, 2018). Disbelief in its turn recalls agnostics, whose ‘religion’ is that of doubt. However, it is better to believe in something to not be fearful and to ultimately survive. It may be suggested that when people are afraid, they tend to lack confidence in their own capabilities, which results in them not dealing, or not dealing well, with whatever situation they are facing. This is supported by Pi when he says that fear “is life’s only true opponent. Only fear can defeat life” (Martel, 2001:161). Nonetheless, once fear has nestled in the mind it causes doubt and “you dismiss your last allies: hope and trust” (Martel, 2001:162). Consequently, to survive, individuals must fight against fear and cling to religion. It may be suggested that Pi’s religion guides and eventually saves him. However, toward the end of the novel Pi says, “and so it goes with God” (Martel, 2001:306). This may indicate that religion consoles Pi and brings him peace after his tribulation out at sea. It is as though fear is cast out and replaced with tranquillity as Pi indicates with these words that it does not matter which version is true because God knows and it is between him and the Lord, not man. Pi’s story concluding with these words may also be indicative of Pi choosing to be graceful in the way he tells his story – that he would rather tell the story that is less cruel, regardless of whether it is true or not. Unfortunately, traumatic events such as the one Pi experiences adrift at sea often lead to the loss of innocence (Kalsched, 2017).

4.5.3 Loss of innocence in *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

The loss of innocence is another very prominent theme in the novel. Individuals who overcame traumatic events often claim that their innocence has been lost due to the event – “something vulnerable and whole about themselves has been ‘broken’ or annihilated” (Kalsched, 2017). Although Martel (2001:xx) does not identify the theme of loss of innocence himself, he does refer to “the importance of stories”. Stories may be used when the intent is to protect someone from information that could be particularly harmful, but it may also be exploited “to frighten or depress us or to dull our minds” (Martel, 2001: xx). According to Bühler-Niederberger (2015), the concept of innocence is a trait indicative of “children’s simplicity, their lack of knowledge, and their purity not yet spoiled by mundane affairs”. This statement by Bühler-Niederberger (2015) describes Pi as he is at the beginning of the novel – innocent and ignorant.

In the beginning of the novel Pi showcases his innocence by almost idolising animals as he focuses only on their good qualities. His innocence is further highlighted in the way that he and his mother respond when his father wants to teach him and his brother just how dangerous wild

animals are. Pi thinks he is in trouble when his father calls, so he protests outright "I'm innocent!" (Martel, 2001:38-39). In addition to this, Pi's mother protesting and asking whether the lesson is really necessary indicates that she does not want him exposed to such a lesson because she knows it will affect his innocence seeing that Pi is "only eight" (Martel, 2001:39). It may be suggested that Pi's mother's reluctance to have her husband teach the children this lesson highlights their innocence. However, Pi's father insists that his children endure this lesson, even if their innocence is shaken because it "may very well save their lives" (Martel, 2001:39).

The scene of the tiger attacking the goat disturbs Pi to such an extent that he is not sure whether he "saw blood before turning into Mother's arms or if [he] daubed it on later, in [his] memory" (Martel, 2001:42). This strongly indicates Pi's ability to imagine things. Martel in a sense uses this to foreshadow what is to come. The fact that Pi is uncertain as to whether he imagined the blood, is indicative to the reader that Pi may very well have made up the animal version of his narrative. This only adds to the reader's horror as one tries to understand how a person can do the things that Pi had seemingly done. However, considering the circumstances of the events that transpired, readers may sympathise with Pi instead of harshly judging him for what he had apparently done. Consequently, it may be suggested that Martel intended the use of prolepsis to indicate future events that are yet to take place (Salzmann, 2017:1). A vivid imagination and storytelling often go hand in hand (Nguyen, 2021). Subsequently, the fact that Pi does not know whether he actually saw blood when the tiger attacked the goat or only imagined it later on shows that Pi's version of events may not always be truthful (Nguyen, 2021). It is important to note that storytelling, fuelled by a vivid imagination, is often used as an escape or way to deal with situations that are otherwise seemingly unbearable (Hurst, 2022). Pi's uncertainty regarding his memory is yet another characteristic of a post-modern survival novel (Cornell, 2006) where memory can be deceitful, and "truths" are questioned. Throughout Part 1 of the novel, information is provided about various animals to guide readers in understanding the rest of the novel.

The discovery of just how dangerous tigers are, is a moment of disillusionment for Pi, because although he realises to some extent how dangerous animals are, he "quite deliberately dressed wild animals in [the] tame costumes of [his] imagination" (Martel, 2001:41). Likewise, Pi decorated inherently dangerous people with the docile characteristics of some animals, for example the sloth. Regardless, it is in fact this gruesome lesson of a tiger's enthusiasm to attack his pray that saves Pi's life later. This may indicate that innocence, and the accompanying ignorance, is not always advantageous where survival is concerned. In fact, the loss of innocence, disillusionment, is sometimes necessary to survive (Nelson, 2018).

Another instance where innocence is shattered is when Pi is carried by some sailors, presumably to safety, as the boat starts to sink. Pi “was so full of trust in them that [he] felt grateful” (Martel, 2001:106-107). At first, the idea of innocence is strengthened when Pi is carried like a child that needs protection, though this quickly dissipates when Pi realises that “[the sailors] weren’t trying to save [his] life” as he is deliberately tossed onto a lifeboat with a hyena (Martel, 2001:111). This attempted sacrifice serves as an example of how humans and animals are not all that different – all they want to do is survive, regardless of whom or what must be sacrificed. Surely, this heartless event must scar Pi emotionally, especially since he is merely a child. As Pi loses his innocence to the situation, his fear and anxiety increases. He is surrounded by utter darkness since “there was no moon. Clouds hid the stars. The contours of things became hard to distinguish. Everything disappeared, the sea, the lifeboat, [even his] own body” (Martel, 2001:119). During this event, Pi learns that the world is not as kind as he had once thought. Moreover, Pi’s circumstances force him to be unkind also and so, even though he is a vegetarian who grew up in a zoo and loves animals, he clings “to the hope that a zebra, a familiar prey, and an orang-utan, an unfamiliar one, would distract [the hyena] from thoughts of [him]” (Martel, 2001:115). It is as though Pi’s loss of innocence is confirmed by his willingness to offer innocent animals for his own sake. His loss of innocence is even more prominent when he says “I didn’t have pity to spare for long for the zebra. When your own life is threatened, your sense of empathy is blunted by a terrible, selfish hunger for survival” (Martel, 2001:121). Consequently, it may be suggested Pi allows his primal instinct to take over and help him survive being lost at sea with wild animals. Regardless, the disillusionment inflicted on Pi by his father at a young age, may serve as a forewarning for what is to come later in the novel.

It is significant that the novel concludes with two versions of the same story, an animal version and a human version. It is conceivable that the two possible endings might confuse learners and prevent them from making sense of the novel, however, this can be thwarted through proper explication by the teacher. It is feasible that the animal version of Pi’s story may be true considering that he continues to anthropomorphise animals throughout the novel, even though he has been disillusioned earlier on. However, it is just as feasible that the human story is true considering that Pi’s father calls his mother “my bird” (Martel, 2001:43). Regardless, Pi’s father continues to instruct his sons and warns them that hyenas will “start eating you while you’re still alive” (Martel, 2001:43). This information about the hyena proves to be true when the zebra is in fact eaten alive by the hyena from the inside out. Later, as Pi reflects on the nature of hyenas, he mentions that “they eat their own kind” (Martel, 2001:118). This reference to cannibalism is noteworthy when Pi recounts the second version of his story at the end of the novel where the cook also kills, prepares and eats the sailor, who is his own kind. The blurring of the lines between

animal and human characteristics creates a feeling of confusion and doubt within the reader as it is no longer clear what is true and what is not.

The blurring of the lines between animals and humans may also indicate that Pi's storytelling, that the humanising of animals and the dehumanising of people, is a way for him to desperately try and soften the harshness and surrealness of the events he lives through. Thus, Pi's choosing to share a story about *animals* and not about humans, childlike in its surrealness, may indicate an attempt at maintaining his innocence because it is natural for animals to kill each other (Castro, 2022), but frowned upon when humans do (Kluger, 2015). Consequently, it is possible that storytelling in Pi's case is no longer a sign of his innocence but rather of him trying to cope with what he has gone through. However, considering that Pi maintains in the human version that *he* is the one who kills the cook and eats him, his innocence is lost.

This loss of Pi's innocence is evident when he shares the second tale about the humans. The human version of events is anything but fantastical. The investigators do not seem to believe the animal version and so Pi urges them to test whether bananas really do float. The confirmation that bananas do in fact float, plants the seed that Pi's original story about the animals may be true – seeing that some of it can be proven. Clearly, Pi is concerned about food after the ordeal he had to endure. However, when asked for a version of events that do not sound as fabricated as the first, Pi says to the investigators that he knows what they want, they “want a story that won't surprise [them], that will confirm what [they already know]” (Martel, 2001:293). With this it is suggested that the investigators know that Pi has lost his innocence but they will not allow him the opportunity to try and retain it because they “want a story without animals” (Martel, 2001:294). This seems to indicate that the investigators may have arrived there with preconceived ideas about the incident.

The reason for this decision is not clear. Perhaps this is simply because it is the version that is not as cruel and therefore more comfortable to listen to. However, it is not important which story is true, and perhaps this fact is emphasised by providing more than one version in true postmodern form. When Pi plainly recounts the human version of events that transpired while he was lost at sea, it is as though he accepts his loss of innocence. The seriousness of Pi's retelling may be an indication that this second tale of the humans is in actual fact the true version. So, once again, Martel (2001:301) provides readers with the opportunity to question reality – that of Pi and perhaps that of their own lives. Nonetheless, the similarities between the two versions provide grounds for either story being credible seeing that there is no way to prove which is the actual version. However, considering that “the explanations for the sinking of the *Tsimtsum* is at the bottom of the Pacific” (Martel, 2001:305), it is up to the reader to decide which version of Pi's

retellings is true. Irrespective, Pi's survival may be attributed to his imagination and his faith because he says "so long as the animals were all right, we were all right" (Martel, 2001:303).

4.5.4 Survival in *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

Martel (2001: xxi) identifies "the will to survive" as a theme. Additionally, according to Anwar (2019), Martel's novel illustrates "the immense capability of humans to adapt", which may very well be the reason for Pi surviving the ordeals he experiences. Pi's first real quest for survival occurs at an all-boys' school, "Petit Séminaire", after having been previously bullied at "St Joseph's School" (Martel, 2001:28). Pi is teased over his name and so at the beginning of each lesson, Pi establishes his identity and says to his classmates, "my name is Piscine Molitor Patel, known to all as Pi Patel" (Martel, 2001:29). The way in which Pi deals with the situation suggests that he is capable of escaping and ultimately surviving his circumstances. Though people still call him something other than what he had introduced himself as, Pi knows who he is and so he declares "I am who I am" (Martel, 2001:26). This declaration as an adult is indicative that Pi has successfully reached selfhood (Woźniak, 2018:2), even though the road to that point was exceptionally difficult and extraordinary. Pi reveals his interest in different religions early on when he wears his "crown of thorns" (Martel, 2001:27) after having been mocked about his name, just as it was with Jesus Christ. Additionally, Pi realises that "it is true that those we meet can change us, sometimes so profoundly that we are not the same afterwards" (Martel, 2001:26). This statement, that people affect us indicates that Pi is forever changed by what he goes through at sea where his physical and mental limits are pushed. Fortunately, Pi survives his ordeal at sea as well. The theme of survival portrays the growth that takes place in Pi, especially with regard to his personality where "the philosophical, gentle Pi becomes a practical problem-solver who uses his wits and physical skills in a careful balancing act to stay alive" (Martel, 2001:xxi). Additionally, it may be proffered that Pi's fight for survival is a holistic experience since "it is not only the impulse to stay alive physically that distinguishes Pi, it is also his spiritual and mental strengths that drive his impulse to survive" (Martel, 2001:xxi).

The reference to spiritual and mental strength supports the notion that the theme of survival builds on the themes of religion and the loss of innocence since Pi continually refers to his god during his time lost at sea and his mental strength is tested by all the gruesome sights he must endure. Thus, it may be argued that Pi's spirituality and his imagination is integral to his survival, but also his ability to keep his mind active. Moreover, Pi's background of growing up in a zoo, surrounded by animals, greatly contributes to his survival throughout the novel. The most notable event that contributes to Pi's survival is his father's lesson with the tiger and the goat at the beginning of the

novel. Fortunately, Pi also possesses a general knowledge of animals, which gives him the upper hand as he knows how to behave around them.

Pi knows that Richard Parker is the superior creature between the two of them and he also realises that next to the tiger he “was deaf, blind and nose-dead” (Martel, 2001:110). Thus, Pi steers clear of the tiger, who is more than capable of killing him. Moreover, it may be suggested that Pi realises knowledge coupled with action is power. This notion is strengthened after Orange Juice “thumped the beast on the head” and though she has “very strong and agile arms and long canines”, she does not know how to use it to her advantage and is killed while fighting the hyena (Martel, 2001:131). For three days Pi is passive due to shock and disbelief and does not do much to save himself, however, thirst finally drives him to understand that “action was needed” if he wants to survive (Martel, 2001:142). As a result, Pi finds water and food aboard and his strength is renewed. However, this only allows him to better perceive the dreadfulness of his situation. Nonetheless, Pi realises that he cannot continue to hide from Richard Parker and so Pi focuses on the fact that he needs to “carve out [his] territory” (Martel, 2001:200). This suggests that Pi realises he too is an animal and he needs to give in to his primal instincts to survive, while being guided by the plethora of knowledge he has on animals at his disposal.

Aside from holding his territory, Pi keeps his mind active by writing his own manual for “those who should ever find themselves in a predicament such as [he] was in” (Martel, 2001:200). This suggests that not only is physical action necessary in a life-threatening situation, but the mind must be occupied as well. In fact, the survival manual that “was written by a British Royal Navy commander” suggests that “yarn spinning, [the telling of a long and unlikely story], is also highly recommended” (Martel, 2001:167). Considering that this is one of the survival tips Pi finds in a survival manual that was on the boat, the validity of the unlikely animal version of events may be drawn into question. Irrespective, in the manual that Pi compiles for those who may find themselves stuck on a lifeboat with an adult Bengal tiger he includes a programme that consists of nine classical conditioning steps to incapacitate the wild animal. The concept of disabling a wild animal reveals an element of absurdity and so the concept of a postmodern novel is enforced yet again (Dolaykaya, 2017:1000). Nonetheless, Pi uses this technique to make the tiger sick so that he can retreat to “the safest, furthest part of its territory” to recover (Martel, 2001:203). Naturally, this contributes to Pi’s survival. Additionally, Pi’s survival may be attributed to the fact that he is accustomed to some of the vulgarities of life when he saw people assaulting animals “with walking sticks, umbrellas, hairpins, knitting needles, scissors and whatnot, often with an aim to taking an eye out or to injuring sexual parts” (Martel, 2001:36).

These vulgarities prepare Pi to some extent for what he presumably encounters later on the lifeboat. However, the same type of vulgar behaviour is only presented in Pi's human version of the story where "[the cook] cut up everything, including the sailor's skin and every inch of his intestines. He even prepared his genitals" (Martel, 2001:297-298). Although this correlation between the way animals and humans are treated relates closely to loss of innocence, it can also be a prompt for survival. These cruel behaviours do not stunt Pi, as he has seen it before. However, Pi, being human, is "rocked with pain and horror" at the sight of the cook butchering the sailor (Martel, 2001:298). It may be suggested that Pi survives the duration of his ordeal out at sea by assigning animal traits to humans, just as he does right from the beginning of the novel. It is arguably a kinder and more acceptable narrative when an animal is killed by another animal than when a human is tortured and murdered by another. However, this only further serves to blur the boundaries between what is and what is not real in Pi's account of the happenings out at sea. As time goes on, Pi grows wearier and he turns to Richard Parker, the tiger, as he would a friend.

This friendly behaviour is evident in the way in which Pi speaks to the tiger, and to some extent, in the way that Pi becomes an animal himself. Nonetheless, the way in which Pi conducts himself and becomes an animal, so to speak, contributes to his survival. Pi realises that he "ate like an animal, that this noisy, frantic, unchewing wolfing-down of [his] was exactly the way Richard Parker ate" (Martel, 2001:222). This is another indication that perhaps the animal version of the story is true, seeing that Pi seems to become just like the tiger, instinctively fighting for survival (Pendery, 2015:73). Considering that Richard Parker has "razor-sharp weapons at his disposal," which makes him inherently dangerous, he "makes not a move to harm the others on the raft" at first (Pendery, 2015:70). This may suggest that Pi, being likened to the tiger and despite acting like an animal fighting for survival, is still very much aware of his humanity as he looks after Richard Parker. Pi and the tiger only eat what the sea offers them. He did not "have the time to consider what was before [him]", though if Pi did not eat immediately, the meal "was lost to Richard Parker" (Martel, 2001:221). The fact that Pi's eating habits and that of Richard Parker's are similar causes the reader to wonder, in retrospect, which narrative of Pi is true. The animal or the human version? Fortunately, regardless of which version is true, the day comes when Pi jubilantly cries out "Richard Parker, a ship!" (Martel, 2001:230). Unfortunately, however, the ship does not see them and leaves them "bouncing and bobbing in its frothy wake" (Martel, 2001:232). The momentary hope slips away and Pi is left with his own thoughts yet again. However, it is Richard Parker's presence that keeps Pi hopeful, "don't give up, Richard Parker, don't give up. I'll get you to land, I promise, I promise!" (Martel, 2001:232). It may be suggested that the responsibility to look after the tiger keeps Pi's hopes up and so aids in his survival. Heartbreakingly, however, Pi loses his sight and "had lost all fear of death, and [he] resolved to die" (Martel, 2001:238). Pi falls

into a state of delirium and he engages in a discussion with the tiger, or is this perhaps with himself?

It is possible that Pi makes up a story, as a kind of euphemism for what he is going through. Thus, it may be suggested that aside from physical survival skills, it is the act of storytelling that aids Pi, not only in preserving his innocence to some extent, but also in surviving his situation. This is especially feasible considering that there is psychological power in telling stories (Rutledge, 2011). Moreover, storytelling is integral to the process of making sense of lived experiences, “it is fundamental to how we think and make meaning of the world” (Rutledge, 2016:1). Thus, perhaps it was necessary for Pi to change the narrative of what he experiences out at sea to survive the events physically and mentally. Consequently, storytelling ensues from a subjective perspective, and as such the truthfulness of a story is brought into question. This reminds of Friedrich Nietzsche who stated that it is all about interpretation (Ogilvie, 2018). This question of Pi’s allows the reader the opportunity for introspection, one might ask – what is my truth? The next section entails a brief background on analysing poetry followed by background information on the respective poems, tabulated notes to make meaning of the respective poems while reading them as well as a brief discussion of each poem.

4.6 Background to analysing poetry

Poetry is not meant to be analysed line for line, as this often leads to a very literal, and often superficial, interpretation so that the context of the poem is ignored (Walia, 2014:322; Attridge & Staten, 2015:3; Twomey, 2016). Holistic analysis is in line with what is stated in the CAPS document for English HL learners. It is not advocated in the CAPS document that *poems* be taught but rather *poetry* (DBE, 2011:12). The distinction between poetry and poems is vital since its teaching results in different outcomes.

Poetry refers to the technical make-up of a poem, which may include any or all the various poetic devices that have been developed and established over the years (Prakash, 2020; Sarkar, 2020). Poetry specifically involves engaging with the text to determine how it was “created, manipulated, and re-arranged to clarify and emphasise what is being expressed” (DBE, 2011:12). As a result, the CAPS document advocates that open-ended questions instead of closed-ended questions be used by the teacher while presenting a poem in class (DBE, 2011:12). By asking *why* a poet uses a certain poetic device, the learners are provided with an opportunity to think critically. According to the Merriam Webster online dictionary (2022p), poetry is “writing that formulates a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience in language chosen and arranged to create a specific emotional response through meaning, sound and rhythm”. Consequently, the teaching of *poetry*,

and not *poems*, allows for the discussion of individuals' subjective emotions, feelings, and thoughts.

Poems, on the other hand, are essentially words on a page that are arranged in a specific order to convey a certain meaning or message, "a composition of verse" (Merriam-Webster, 2022q), in other words, poems are the end products produced by poets, the writers of poetry (Prakash, 2020; Sarkar, 2020). Thus, according to the CAPS "the purpose of teaching literary texts, such as poetry, is to show learners how their Home Language can be used with subtlety, intelligence, imagination and flair" and "line-by-line analysis of any text is destructive to its subtlety" (DBE, 2011:12). As a result, I discuss and do not analyse the poem line for line. I specifically look at the meaning of the vocabulary used in each line since semantics are the essence of poetry (Onkas, 2012:4718; Herbelot, 2014). At school level learners are often provided with a glossary to help them understand difficult words, though most learners still seem to struggle with the most basic of vocabulary. Poetic devices must be used as a guideline when discussing poetry as these are often integral to the meaning of a poem (Sekhri, 2021; Simmonds, 2022).

The most common literary devices include themes, metaphors, similes, alliteration, assonance, personification, enjambment, imagery, tone and mood, while less common literary devices may include hyperbole and synecdoche (Gosher & Pannal, 2016:192-205). However, poetic devices are concepts that most learners simply do not seem to comprehend (Deepa & Ilankumaran, 2018:620), most probably due to a lack of higher order thinking skills (Narsaria, 2022). In my personal experience, learners do not put in the effort to study these concepts as they expect to be provided with an analysis of poems for rote studying. For this reason, most high school learners do not enjoy poetry (Harris, 2018). Learners' dislike of poetry can be attributed to the way it is presented to them in schools (Harris, 2018). Fortunately, Deepa and Ilankumaran (2018:620) maintain that the efficient teaching of poetry "enhances the creative power [and] it expresses emotions, feelings and thoughts". In other words, the teaching of poetry is beneficial to the development of soft skills. Aside from teaching strategies, readers' interpretations and experiences must also be considered while teaching poetry, as these too contribute to the meaning of a poem (Zagórska, 2017:51; Deane, 2021:1; Smith *et al.*, 2021:1).

Ultimately, poems must be looked at as a whole to finally derive any deeper meaning from the poem (DBE, 2011:12). There are numerous ways in which a poem may be approached. First, it is paramount that the poem be read "as much as possible" before deeper exploration regarding its meaning (Collins, 2019a). It is also suggested that first impressions of the poem be noted to see how the meaning of the poem can change over time (Collins, 2019a). I engaged with the two poems multiple times and noted, in table form, my understanding of each line. These tables are

included in sections 4.7.1 and 4.7.1. for readers' perusal. After having noted my understanding of each line, I moved on to share thoughts of the two poems *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings and *Poem* by Barolong Seboni. I discussed both poems in their entirety with reference to the theme of love and the power of words respectively. The rationale behind this was to get a better understanding of both poems, so I paid attention to the impact of diction and other poetic devices as used in each poem. This was followed by discussing the 4Cs and how they can be developed by teaching the respective poems. The discussion informs the example lesson that follows later in the dissertation.

4.7 Background to *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings

Edward Estlin Cummings, who was born October 1894 and died September 1962, is one of the most celebrated poets due to the experimental nature of his poems (Elinzano, 2015; Poetry Foundation, 2022; Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2022). Cummings was born in America, Massachusetts, and he lived through both World War I and World War II (Andersen *et al.*, 2012:151). The war affected Cummings's worldview, and ultimately his writing too; this is captured in his autobiography entitled *The Enormous Room* (Andersen *et al.*, 2012:151). Furthermore, Cummings was a scholar of the Latin and Greek languages and he obtained a BA and MA degree from Harvard University, which also influenced his poetry (Sider, 2014:220; Poetry Foundation, 2022). Aside from Cummings's "idiosyncratic way with words" (Sider, 2014:220), he often ignored "conventional punctuation and syntax" to draw more attention to the language he chose to use (Poetry Foundation, 2022). Given his schooling, E.E. Cummings possessed the skills necessary to write well (Erbeli *et al.*, 2017:3). One may ask why he then deliberately changed "grammatical and linguistic rules"? (Poetry Foundation, 2022).

The unconventional use of grammar and linguistic components in Cummings's poetry may be a way to draw the readers' attention to something specific in a Cummings poem. Spacey (2020) argues that Cummings was influenced by the writers of his time, namely James Joyce and Ezra Pound. Joyce and Pound were modernist writers and their writing style influenced Cummings "to break away from genteel mainstream verse and go for something a little more idiosyncratic" (Spacey, 2020). Consequently, Cummings's poetry also contributed to avant-garde literature (Spacey, 2020). Avant-garde literature refers to experimental writing that tests the boundaries set in place by society at a given time (Talaviya & Joshi, 2020), such as following a certain set of grammar rules. It may be suggested that the experimental writing style of modernists resulted from developments such as the publication of Darwin's work combined with the two world wars which led to these artists to question "things as they are", principles as they are, reality as it is, all the societal structures, the rules, and they reflect this in their writing. Regardless of Cummings's

peculiar writing style, he touches on many themes “from love poetry to satirical verse” (Andersen *et al.*, 2012:151).

For this study, I chose the poem *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings, since it is one of the prescribed poems for English Home Language learners. It has the potential to enhance learners’ soft skills. *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* touches on perhaps the most universal themes: love.

4.7.1 somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond by ee cummings and the theme of love.

The poem, *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings is enclosed here for reference.

somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond by ee cummings

somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond
any experience, your eyes have their silence:
in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,
or which i cannot touch because they are too near

your slightest look easily will uncloset me
though i have closed myself as fingers,
you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens
(touching skillfully, mysteriously) her first rose

5

or if your wish be to close me, i and
my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly,
as when the heart of this flower imagines
the snow carefully everywhere descending;

10

nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals
the power of your intense fragility: whose texture
compels me with the colour of its countries,
rendering death and forever with each breathing

15

(i do not know what it is about you that closes
and opens; only something in me understands
the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)
nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

20

“Love may very well be the most profound emotion we’ll ever experience” (Letourneau, 2018) and it will inevitably change us, for better or worse (Slotter, 2016; Natale, 2018). The theme of love is worth exploring because it is one of the most inspiring and complicated elements of human

existence. Another factor that makes this poem so suitable and valuable as a prescribed poem for Grade 12 EHL and EFAL learners is that “love and work are the primary concerns at this stage of life” (Cherry, 2022c). Upon reading the poem, *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings, for the first time, it seems quite complex. This is likely due to Cummings’s irregular use of grammar and linguistic rules. My first impression of the poem is that the speaker is on an unknown journey. It is not a physical journey as no place is mentioned, but rather an emotional one, since the speaker refers to “your eyes” in line two. Considering this reference in line two and the fact that the journey is an emotional one, the person referred to could possibly be a lover.

Upon a second reading the poem seems less confusing, though a closer look is still required. The format and structure of a poem can be used as a starting point when discussing a poem before attempting to unravel the meaning of the poem (Collins, 2019a; Glatch, 2021b). Though closely related, form refers to “the component of a thing that determines its kind” whereas structure refers to “something arranged in a definite pattern of organization” (Merriam-Webster, 2022r). Consequently, structure determines form. For instance, when a poem’s structure consists of fourteen lines written in iambic pentameter, and is divided into three quatrains followed by a rhyming couplet, then such a poem adheres to the form of a sonnet (Jamieson, 2020).

At times the form and structure of a poem give the readers a clue as to the background of the poet. A sonnet, for example, may indicate that the poet lived during the romantic era, since sonnets were most common then (Roberts, 2019:11). However, this is not always the case and the rest of the poem must be taken into consideration. *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings, consists of five stanzas, each containing four lines or quatrains. The poem does not adhere to any set form except free verse, which, as the name suggests, gives the poet the freedom to structure the poem any way he likes (Rayfield, 2022). The fact that this poem is free verse relates to Cummings’ desire to avoid the conventional way of writing.

Having established the structure of the poem, I read the poem a third time. The speaker in the poem succumbs to the extreme power of love, even though he has attempted to keep his life and his heart guarded. However, the love that so enchants, that overwhelms him so, is not an overpowering, wilful love, but rather a quiet and fragile kind of love. Below I share the notes I made on the third reading of the poem. This is followed by a more in-depth discussion on the theme of the poem, namely love.

	Line:	Notes:
1	somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond	The words “travelled” and “beyond” indicate that the speaker is approaching the unknown. This is emphasised with the use of the word “somewhere”. Moreover, the speaker is willing to enter the unknown “gladly”, indicating that he is happy to do so.
2	any experience, your eyes have their silence:	The speaker emphasises that this journey is beyond anything he has ever experienced before. “Eyes” have become synonym to “windows to the soul” but these eyes are silent, which may be indicative of a life experience having silenced arrogance, passion, or liveliness in the person. However, the quiet eyes give the idea of a quiet confidence, which portrays strength of character, or perhaps, this person knows that she has a power over the speaker.
3	in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,	The word “frail” strengthens the idea of the person being quiet, though it contrasts with the idea of quiet confidence. “Frail” may also indicate beauty and it is this beauty that entrances the speaker. Additionally, the smallest movement of this person can transfix the speaker. However, since this poem was written by a man who lived nearly a century ago, one must consider the possibility of the word “frail” having another meaning, especially considering how meanings assigned to certain words change over time. The word “frail” did in fact have another meaning, indicating moral weakness (Wallace <i>et al.</i> , 2020). Thus, it may be suggested that the word “frail” is ameliorated.
4	or which i cannot touch because they are too near	This experience of unknown beauty renders him immovable. The speaker is unable to react on his feelings because it is unprecedented – the walls around his heart have been breached and he does not know what to do. However, this is a happy experience.
5	your slightest look easily will unclose me	Just a look can make the speaker let his guard down.
6	though i have closed myself as fingers,	His heart, feelings, have been inaccessible by choice - until now. The past tense is noteworthy.

7	you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens	This person whom the speaker is describing has a strange power over him, and like Spring, she is life-giving, allowing him to experience new feelings he had not felt before. Moreover, the description of the unclosing of himself as a rose being opened “petal by petal”, emphasises that it is a slow process – but more importantly, it is a natural process that is not forced. The speaker may be insinuating that this relationship that is developing between him and this unknown person is ‘meant to be’ because it is not forced and just occurs naturally, like a rose blossoming.
8	(touching skillfully, mysteriously) her first rose	By comparing the person to Spring, and himself to a rose, the beauty and fragility of the situation is emphasised.
9	or if your wish be to close me, i and	The speaker is at her command, should she wish not to have him, he will gladly oblige.
10	my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly,	Even should she not want him, it will be a beautiful occurrence because he is doing whatever she wants. The reference to himself as a flower, once more, indicates the speaker’s fragility in the situation.
11	as when the heart of this flower imagines	The reference to himself as a flower, once more, indicates the speaker’s fragility in the situation.
12	the snow carefully everywhere descending;	In the same way that the coldness of snow can make a flower close, the coldness of a person (especially where love is not reciprocated) can make a person close (hide or deliberately ignore their feelings). However, he is happy with whatever she wishes – whether to open or close his heart. The word “descending” has the negative connotation of decline (Merriam-Webster, 2022s). The use of the semi-colon indicates a new sentence, and so a new thought.
13	nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals	Nothing and no one compare to this person – again the idea of this being a new and happy experience is emphasised.

14	the power of your intense fragility: whose texture	No power on earth can compete with this person's "intense fragility" – which shows how she can exert control over him merely by being delicate. This is a strange metaphor. Normally "fragile" equates with "weak"; but in this case, fragility is seen as beauty. It may also describe past experiences, especially when considered with "eyes have their silence". The person the speaker is describing did not become bitter due to past experiences but continues to be soft and gentle and in so doing, renders him powerless and enchanted. It may also be that the unusualness of the beauty, the fragility, is what draws the speaker to this person, as it is not dominating, fake or superficial.
15	compels me with the colour of its countries,	There is a confusion of the senses here. Texture is being described as colourful. Her "intense fragility['s]" texture keeps his attention because of its many different colours. The reference to countries here may indicate that being with this person is like being in a whole different world.
16	rendering death and forever with each breathing	Additionally, being with this person brings both happiness and sadness. The speaker could also mean that this person has the power of life or death over him.
17	(i do not know what it is about you that closes	The speaker admits that he cannot comprehend how another human being can make him feel this way – how she can close and open his heart as she wishes; normally he has control over that.
18	and opens; only something in me understands	He realises on a much deeper level that there is a connection between them; that, perhaps, it must be that way, however inexplicable it may be to him. The idea of soul mates comes to mind.
19	the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)	If he is the rose, the language of her eyes can reach him, as it "is deeper than all roses".
20	nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands	The smallness of the person serves to highlight her fragility and delicacy once more. It is these small hands that can "touch" his heart and soul in ways he has not been touched before.

A closer look at the poem reveals that the prominent theme found in the poem is not merely love in itself, but rather the mysticism of love. Love can be described as a very deep and complex emotion that holds the power to change us irrevocably (Letourneau, 2018; Karantzas, 2020). Considering that the processing and expression of emotions closely relate to the use of soft skills, the theme of love in the poem, *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings, may enhance the 4Cs as discussed in this study. According to Sternberg's theory of love, love can be divided into no fewer than eight categories based on the type of relationship that exists between two people (Sternberg, 1986:123). The categories are: "nonlove, liking, infatuated love, empty love, romantic love, companionate love, fatuous love [and] consummate love" (Sternberg, 1986:123). I will not elaborate on the categories here, though I will mention that these different types of love are made up of a combination of three components namely, "intimacy, passion [and] commitment" (Sternberg, 1986:120; Feuerman, 2022). The crux of the matter is that love is quite a complex emotion and different types of love affect individuals differently.

I will not attempt to proffer what kind of love is exhibited in the poem. I do, however, put forward that the love the poet experiences, leaves him mystified. Likewise, learners may be confused when reading the poem. If learners can relate to a feeling of confusion in some of their relationships, it can enhance communication and collaboration skills when learners speak to peers or older persons whom they trust to make sense of their emotions. Additionally, seeing that it is a normal part of the developmental stage for learners who are in matric to be interested in love, the theme presented in this poem is especially relevant to teenagers. Most teenagers are shy when having to talk to their crush as it is a new experience for most of them, and so they must come up with creative ways to talk to the person they like. Naturally, this will enhance creativity and communication. If all goes well, and the feelings are reciprocated, learners are presented with an opportunity to work in a group with their new-found partner. Unfortunately, it is normal for problems to arise within any relationship and so learners may have to think critically about how to go about fixing the problem. Regardless, the teaching of poetry allows ample opportunity for learners to think critically, from having to figure out the meaning of certain vocabulary to interpreting the possible meaning of the poem – critical thinking can be enhanced when dealing with poetry when teachers guide learners to think about what is being said and what is meant in the poem.

In, *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond*, the poet seems to be bewildered, baffled, by the love he experiences as he has never experienced it before, it is "somewhere [he has] never travelled" before. Confusion is the result of having to deal with unknown experiences and not having developed the appropriate skills to deal with it. Thus, it may be suggested that feelings like this will give rise to introspection, critical thinking, as it is not in our nature to want to stay in a

state of confusion, we rather aim to make sense of things (Amitabh, 2020). Aside from developing valuable soft skills, it may be suggested that personal growth also occurs when we grapple with confusion and uncertainty. When learners are presented with a problem, such as a poem they do not understand, critical thinking, communication, group work and creativity may be enhanced when they try to come up with a solution to the problem. Regardless, although the poet seems mystified, he goes “gladly beyond” the known into the unknown and it is an enjoyable experience for him. The way in which the smallest acts of this person can have such a great effect on him leaves the poet confused, albeit amazed. This is evident from lines 3 and 5, which state: “in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me” and “your slightest look easily will unclose me”. These lines seem to indicate that the person whom the poet is describing has an extreme kind of power over him, a power he has not encountered before, though it is a gentle power as indicated by the words, “frail” and “slightest look”. The poet continues to say in line 6 that he has deliberately closed himself off from such experiences, but this person still manages to “unclose” him without having the intent to do so. The image in lines 7 and 8 is noteworthy where the lover is compared to spring and the poet to a rose, because with this the speaker indicates that this love he is experiencing, even though it is mystifying, seems to be natural and how it is supposed to be. The love is not forced, but gentle and beautiful, like a rose opening when it is time to do so. However, the next stanza takes a negative turn.

In the next stanza, specifically lines 9 to 12, the speaker is enchanted by his lover to such an extent that he will do whatever she wants him to, even if she wishes him to die metaphorically. Submission in the sense of completely “surrendering all of yourself to another person” (Smith, 2022) does not give rise to a healthy kind of love between two people. Likewise, when teenagers find themselves to be in an unhealthy relationship, it may lead to them wondering how they got to be there and what to do about it. Nonetheless, this lover has completely mystified the speaker and this is evident from lines 13 to 16 where her power is again highlighted. The speaker reckons that nothing in this world is as powerful as her gentleness, her “intense fragility”, that can bring him to live passionately or die happily if she so pleases. However, as stated before, love is a complex emotion and it can make us do things we would not normally do (Sternberg, 1986:122). The poet is aware that he is acting outside of the norm because even though he has “closed [himself] as fingers”, this person still “unclose[s]” him. In lines 17 to 19 the poet attempts to convey his confusion and amusement with his lover when he states, “(I do not know what it is about you that closes/ and opens; only something in me understands/ the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)”. In these lines, the poet makes use of synesthesia, the confusion of the senses (Merriam-Webster, 2022t), to highlight his misapprehension of the power that this person has over him. However, the poet still recognises that something, he does not know what, but something

knows that this is how it is meant to be, his reactions are natural and not forced. The last line of the poem, line 20, emphasises the complete power of this lover to reach deep into his soul when he states that “nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands”. Seeing that the theme of love is so relevant to teenagers, the poem does not only have the capacity to enhance learners’ soft skills, it can also teach them to be self-reflective and self-aware where their emotions are concerned. Emotions can be very complex and difficult to deal with at times, however, being emotionally aware and introspective can help learners to think more critically and in this way, many problems we face in society can be mitigated (Jacobson, 2022). Additionally, being able to communicate what we feel in an appropriate and respectful manner is just as important (Leonard, 2012). However, in a romantic relationship the expression of thoughts may require some creativity where the aim is to impress the person. The next poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni, deals with the power of words.

4.8 Background to *Poem* by Barolong Seboni

Barolong Seboni is an African poet who was born in Botswana in 1957 (Casa África, 2022). Unfortunately, there are hardly any legitimate sources that discuss the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni. However, this is not cause for concern as the lack of proper background information can be construed to mean that Seboni has universal appeal, which makes the poetry more universally relevant. Communication is a universal theme found in our everyday lives. The theme of this poem is that words have power.

4.8.1 *Poem* and the theme of the power of words

The poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni, is enclosed here for reference.

Poem by Barolong Seboni

We do not need
These jagged words
That dig a trench between us
Each time they are uttered

Those epithets 5
Sharp like spokes
That pierce the heart when spoken

There is no room in my cup
For these acidic words of sarcasm
That corrode my sensitivity 10

These cold and icy terms tossed
To deaden the heart
Venomous words

From your serpentine tongue That infect the feeling...	15
Let us speak, love In gentler tones Timid as the lamb Is soft Woolly words Worn to stand strong against the Cold-bitterness of the world.	20
Better still Let us search in our speech For words deep as the soul is still That will spell our thoughts In the silence of our smiles.	25

The saying that words have power brings to mind Proverbs 18:21, which states, “death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit” (Bible, 1973). The poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni focuses on how words can either build a person up or tear a person down. Words relate directly to the soft skill of communication and by extension collaboration as well, since communication requires a minimum of two parties. However, creativity is necessary to be able to use euphemisms (Hamilton & Foltzer, 2021) to avoid explicitly saying something in a harsh or rude way. Additionally, whether by intent or accident, when something harsh is said, critical thinking may be used to anticipate a reaction and to act in a way that can defuse a situation before it worsens. The poem seems quite straightforward after having read it the first time. In essence, the speaker says words hurt and we must not hurt one another. However, the poem is not quite that simple, as it contains many poetic devices that require that the poem be read a second time. Before I read the poem again though, I paid attention to the structure of the poem. *Poem* consists of 27 lines which are unevenly divided into six stanzas. The inconsistent structure of the poem can signify that people are often also inconsistent with what they say and how they say it. Keeping this in mind, I read the poem a second and a third time while making notes. The tabulated notes follow here for the readers’ perusal. These notes are followed by an in-depth discussion on the theme of *Poem*, the power of words. I used these notes to compile the poetry lesson that follows here which may be incorporated in the classroom to enhance 21st century soft skills.

	Lines:	Notes:
1	We do not need	“Need” is something that is required; it is more substantial than desire. In addition, “need” pertains to survival, thus it is necessary that the thing in line two is not obtained/experienced/lived.
2	these jaggered words	“Jaggered” must be a play on words pertaining to jagged, which refers to something with an uneven sharp edge. There is power in words – once it is spoken, good or bad, it cannot be taken back. The word may bring to mind a knife or saw or even cliffs.
3	that dig a trench between us	The word “trench” has a negative connotation to World War I, where many people died. Additionally, it points to separation due to hurtful words having been spoken. A trench is a long, narrow ditch in a literal sense; figuratively it may refer to distance between speakers.
4	each time they are uttered	The impact of hurtful, or jaggered, words is tremendous as these may causes a chasm between people <i>every time</i> they are spoken.
5	those epithets	The phrase “those epithets” refers to the “jaggered words”, the hurtful words, that are being spoken repeatedly. Epithets may be qualities or characteristics of a person in question. These epithets are used as terms of abuse.
6	sharp like spokes	Simile. The hurtful words are sharp. The s-alliteration here suggests a sneering sound, which further serves to emphasise the impact of the “jaggered words”. The word “spoke” is a homonym. Firstly, a sharp spoke may refer to the steel bars found in the hub of a wheel (Merriam-Webster, 2022u). This suggests the idiom that the wheel turns – what goes around comes around. On the other hand, however, “spoke” may be seen as the past tense, albeit old-fashioned, of the word “speak”, in which case the idea of word having the power to hurt are reinforced once more. f

7	that pierce the heart when spoken	The hurtful words pierce the heart. A person's heart, aside from the brain that commands the body to function, is the most important. Literally, if our hearts do not pump blood as it should, then we would not survive. Likewise, on a figurative level, if our hearts are damaged, we do not function as we should. This brings to mind Proverbs 4:23.
8	there is no room in my cup	"There is no room" indicates that the person who is being hurt by the words spoken to him cannot accommodate its effects. Moreover, "cup" has a biblical connotation. Where when a person's cup is full, he is happy and content and not in need of anything, whereas the opposite is also true. See Psalm 23:5.
9	for these acidic words of sarcasm	The speaker is stating that he has no need, "no room in my cup", for hurtful words being spoken to him. Yet another negative connection is made between "sarcasm" and "acidic". The speaker equates sarcasm to something that burns.
10	that corrode my sensitivity	Moreover, these acidic words eat at, "corrode" the person's sensitivity. Sensitivity may refer to the condition of being sensitive in how one reacts when spoken to, or it may relate to how the person speaks to others. The hurtful words that this person endures is inhibiting his sensitivity to others' needs.
11	these cold and icy terms tossed	The words "cold" and "ice" reinforce the unpleasantness of the words being spoken. In addition, these words are "tossed" around, which delineates a recklessness in the way they are uttered.
12	to deaden the heart	"To deaden" indicates that these hurtful words are "tossed" around deliberately and recklessly, with the aim to kill another person's heart. However, when something is deadened, it is made numb – likewise icy terms, hurtful words, can make a person numb and just as cold and ruthless as the one who tossed the words in the first place.
13	venomous words	"Venomous" has a connotation to a snake, it may also refer to a spiteful person who goes out of their way to hurt others. Venomous also has a double meaning. The literal meaning of the word refers to a poisonous toxin, whereas, the figurative meaning can refer to someone, or rather someone who has a malicious intention.

14	from your serpentine tongue	“Serpentine tongue” reinforces the idea that starts in the previous line – these words are dangerous and they are spoken by a vindictive person. Metaphor is also used here. The person is directly being compared to a serpentine (snake).
15	that infect the feeling....	“Infect” also has a negative connotation; it is to contaminate or to infiltrate something that is precious and good.
16	Let us speak, love	“Let us” – may be seen as a plea, asking for permission from the verbal bully, but it may also be seen as a command where the speaker is telling the bully what they should do next. They must speak love – another confusion of the senses. How does a person speak love? Love is emphasised by being placed at the end of the line but that allows the reader to read it in conjunction with the next line – “love/ in gentler tones”. They must show love in gentler ways.
17	in gentler tones	“Gentler tones” may refer to them having to speak in a more peaceful, less hurtful, quiet and soft voice.
18	timid as the lamb	“Timid” is often associated with a lack of courage, an almost pathetic softness of character. Used in conjunction with “lamb”, it reminds of Christ who was sacrificed for the sins of the world. Although Jesus is referred to as the Lamb, his timidity is not likened to weakness but to strength. It also reminds of 2 Timothy 1:7. The timidity referred to in the Bible verse is also not likened to weakness but rather quiet strength.
19	is soft	The lamb “is soft” but not weak.
20	woolly words	A lamb is woolly as well as soft and it speaks “woolly words”. Wool has a positive connotation to warm fuzziness and the words spoken by the lamb has this quality. It brings a feeling of comfort and of being safe. W-alliteration reinforces the feeling of warmth and comfort – this is in direct contrast to the cold and icy words spoken by the bully.
21	worn to stand strong against the	Enjambment allows the reader to read that the “woolly words [are] worn” as a defence against the bully’s words. S-alliteration here reinforces the idea of strength, though a quiet strength (timidity is not loud or attention-seeking).

22	cold-bitterness of the world.	The speaker is saying that the entire world is prone to cruelty where words are concerned, and it leaves him with a “cold-bitterness”.
23	Better still	“Better still” refers to a better suggestion that the speaker has
24	let us search in our speech	The better idea, according to the speaker, is that we must “search in our speech” – we must think about what we say.
25	for words deep as the soul is still	Not only must we be cognisant about what we say, but we must search “for words deep as the soul is still”. Deep words are often the product of deliberate thought and most certainly not uttered recklessly. Simile is used to indirectly compare the deep words with a soul that is still. This gives the impression that both are substantial and not to be taken lightly – again enforcing the idea that we should <i>think</i> about our words before speaking.
26	that will spell our thoughts	These deep words must be able to “spell our thoughts” – show our thoughts, without us having to speak them. “Spell” also has the connotation of enchantment, which is usually a pleasant experience and not harmful or hurtful. Our deep words must have a positive effect on our thoughts. This also brings to mind that thoughts become words, words become action and action becomes who we are.
27	in the silence of our smiles.	This line, even after a third reading, is difficult to understand. Perhaps this line indicates that silence or a smile is better than hurtful words.

I opted to discuss the poem further by looking at each stanza. The aim is to illustrate how the 4Cs may be incorporated into a lesson and developed through class discussions. The in-depth discussion is provided next.

Closer analysis of the poem, *Poem*, reveals that it is rich in imagery that highlight the issue of bullying and more specifically name calling, which is a more subtle way of hurting someone. Bullying is not an uncommon phenomenon among teenagers (Legg, 2021) and so this poem, just like the previous one, is very relevant to teenagers. Bullying may be considered the unfortunate effect of confusion during adolescence as teenagers attempt to figure out who they are by being mean to others. Fortunately, victims who successfully deal with bullies may establish a strong sense of identity. The theme of bullying, or the power of words, may enhance various soft skills as well. When learners are bullied, they may wonder, 'why me?' which can lead to critical thinking. Additionally, when the victims of a bully muster up the courage to speak to someone, they develop communication skills. More so when the victims find a way to address his bully directly in a way that is clear and effective. Bullying may also give rise to collaboration once learners learn to stand together against bullies. Lastly, creativity may be developed when learners find innovative ways to deal with his bully. Aside from real life implications, the teaching of the poem, *Poem*, may also enhance soft skills.

Again, critical thinking may develop as learners attempt to make sense of the poem. Communication and collaboration skills may also be enhanced when learners work together to make meaning of the poem. Furthermore, when learners are asked to express their thoughts on the poem, creativity may be enhanced as each learner will have a different understanding of the poem. In stanza one, "jagged words" are not only personified in that they "dig a trench between us" but they are also likened to war time given the negative connotation of the word "trench". According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary (2022v), trenches are "used for military defence often with the excavated dirt thrown up in front" to protect soldiers from onslaughts. This provides the reader with the idea that whoever the speaker is addressing is waging war with his "jagged words" that are not only unwanted, but not needed. The speaker feels attacked every time this unknown person speaks, "each time they [the words] are uttered", war is waged against the speaker. In stanza 2, the speaker emphasises once more what "we do not need".

The speaker states that people do not need "those epithets", which refer to all manner of "jagged words", because these words are sharp and they cause harm to a person's well-being. The poet uses imagery again by employing a simile in stanza 2 when he describes the words that are being uttered as "sharp like spokes". These sharp words pierce the heart. The s-alliteration in the previous line emphasises the idea of the heart being pierced with the repetition of the harsh s-sound. Additionally, it is worrisome when the heart is metaphorically damaged because everything we do flows from it, as is stated in Proverbs 4:18 (Bible, 1973). In stanza 3 the speaker provides another reason as to why he does not need these hurtful words – because "there is no room in my cup". In this context, "cup" may be seen as a metaphor for life, the speaker has no

room in his life for hate-filled, harsh words that give rise to arguments and which create chasms between people. The speaker goes on to be more specific and he says that he has no room for sarcasm, because sarcasm is “acidic” and it “corrode[s] [his] sensitivity”. With this the speaker states that he does not want to tolerate sarcasm because the more he is exposed to it, the less sensitive he becomes and the higher the probability becomes of him being the one to utter harmful words. The poet continues to speak out against harsh words in the next stanza.

The speaker describes unkind words as “cold and icy”. The connotation to these terms is not positive and does not make a person feel welcome. Additionally, these words bring to mind a sharp and pointy icicle that can also be used to pierce and “to deaden the heart”. The speaker continues to make use of negative connotations to describe unkind words. Another instance is when he refers to unkind words as “venomous” and coming from a “serpentine tongue”. Likening the person to a serpent elicits in the reader a feeling of evil, especially since the devil is also depicted as a snake in the Bible. The poet issues a request and asks the reader, “let us speak, love/ in gentler tones”. The lack of punctuation here may result in the reader seeing the word “love” here as an address to a person, but it can also be seen as an action where the speaker is asking the readers to speak and love in gentler tones.

Barolong continues to use strong imagery and he states in his request for us to speak and love more gently, that our words must be “soft/ woolly words”. We must be “timid as the lamb”. This reference alludes to Christ being the lamb who saves the world, but even though he is timid, he is not weak. Likewise, being kinder in our words will not make us weak but instead help us “to stand strong against the/ cold-bitterness of the world”. Often, those who are cold and bitter and who seem like they least deserve love are the ones who need it the most. In the last stanza the speaker comes up with a better suggestion and introduces it by saying, “better still/ let us search in our speech/ for words deep as the soul is still/ that will spell our thoughts/ in the silence of our smiles”. With this last stanza, the speaker asks the readers to examine their speech and to remain quiet if they have nothing polite to say. This poem directly addresses the issue of people not being able to communicate properly anymore, which is a tangible problem in the 21st century. Online communication allows manners to be left behind while it enables people to speak to one another in whichever way they please without thinking about the effects of their words. This poem provides learners with the opportunity to be cognisant of the way in which they communicate.

Having analysed the texts to be used to teach soft skills, the next section deals with technology in the classroom and how it can be incorporated into literature lessons to ultimately enhance learners’ soft skills.

4.9 Technology in the classroom, teaching strategies and e-learning platforms

As discussed, the 21st century is characterised by technological advancements (Heick, 2015; Wyman, 2016; Kiger, 2020). According to Sharma (2017:10), we have the digital revolution to thank for bringing about changes in our educational system; “it is transforming the way children and young people play, access information, communicate with each other, learn, relearn and unlearn”. The changes brought about by the digital revolution include “interactive smart boards, hybrid or blended learning, flipped classrooms and digital libraries” (Sharma, 2017:10). Additionally, Patil (2020) goes on to say that a digital classroom may also comprise of “mobile technology, smart devices and automated systems enabled with mobile applications and software”. This implies that teachers have to change their traditional teaching methodologies to ensure the teaching and learning processes that occur in their classrooms are successful. Costley (2014:2) adequately states that “the use of technology in teaching and learning is essential if we are to make a lasting impact on how students learn”. Unfortunately, most teachers are not keen on adapting their teaching strategies to fit in with the new technological mode of learning that 21st century learners seem to have assumed (Lynch, 2021a). This is problematic since it directly impedes the successes of learners’ future career-related endeavours. However, considering the inequalities in the socioeconomic circumstances of South African learners, it is understandable that teachers do not want to use technology when not all learners are fortunate enough to have the most basic of technological devices at home or in their classrooms (Mathew & Pandya, 2020:6138; Cassette & Botsane, 2020; Collaborative on Health and the Environment, 2022).

Due to these inequalities, not all learners are equally proficient in using technology, giving rise to what is known as the “tech disparity” (Gaskell, 2019; Allen *et al.*, 2021). Other than South Africa’s inherent issue with inequality (Levy *et al.*, 2021; Nwosu & Oyenubi, 2021:1), some teachers show a reluctance when it comes to employing technology in the classroom because of a lack of understanding of modern devices and their applications, as well as insufficient training and equipment (Winter *et al.*, 2021:235). Perhaps the biggest issue that affects teachers’ disinclination in using technology in the classroom is the unrealistic expectation that simply *using* technology in the classroom will increase learners’ successes (Walsh, 2014; Alhumaid, 2019:10; Lynch, 2021a). In the cases where South African schools are lucky enough to have access to technology, teachers must not think that their guidance in the use of technology is irrelevant. Young (2013:102) argues that teachers should not put such trust in the “emancipatory capacities” of learners. He (Young, 2013:102) believes these capacities have been boosted misleadingly by the belief that if teachers allowed learners “unfettered access to the enormous information resource available on the internet, successful learning would become the norm for all and not restricted to a few”. He continues to say that despite the “superficial persuasiveness of this argument”, there

is still “no evidence that an information resource can on its own promote learning” (Young, 2013:103). If technology is not used intentionally with a specific aim in mind, then it is futile. When there is an over-emphasis on technology, to such an extent that it dominates teaching and learning, may also be detrimental to deep learning.

The *incorrect* use of technology in classroom, that is to say using technology without proper training or without a particular objective in mind, can deteriorate learners’ abilities where the four language skills namely, speaking, writing, reading and listening, are concerned (Bakken, 2014; Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018:34; Wilson, 2018:262; James-Rodil, 2019; Bronzan, 2019; Pietrangelo, 2019; Alhumaid, 2019:10). Technology is an instrument that is meant to complement teachers’ practices. Should this be forgotten and the focus shifts entirely from how learners engage, or do not engage, in the learning process to technology as the sole instrument in the teaching process, failure usually occurs (Nielsen *et al.*, 2013:1). Although some South African schools, especially in rural areas, are not equipped with the most basic of technologies (Parker, 2017; Prior, 2020; Soomar, 2021), most schools are and teachers ought to take advantage of that privilege (Soomar, 2021). It is crucial that teachers make use of technology, if available, in the 21st century classroom since young learners who are not digitally skilled, or who do not have access to the internet, “are not equipped to participate in the digital economy” (Soomar, 2021). Consequently, having unskilled learners exit the South African education system on completion of matric will result in South Africa’s position in the global market not being secure. As such, the importance of incorporating technologies in classrooms when available is emphasised. Early exposure to technology in schools is vital to bridge the gap between the current lack of soft skills and where future matriculants ought to be – holistically skilled (Darvell, 2021).

Though there are numerous articles advocating the use of technology in classrooms, I reiterate that it is the way technology is incorporated that makes the difference (Costley, 2014:2; Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018:33; Kishore, 2018:26; Ioannou & Ioannou, 2020:81; Carroll, 2021). Technology, like anything in this world, can have a negative impact on learners. The overuse of technology can lead to learners finding themselves in impersonal, dehumanised learning environments (Alhumaid, 2019:10). Additionally, learners will also find themselves in distorted, isolated social environments, which impedes on the development of soft skills (Alhumaid, 2019:10). However, not using technology where it is warranted, is an injustice towards our children (Lynch, 2021a). According to Kalantzis and Cope (2010:210), “while traditional print-based forms of literacy continue to dominate school curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, in their out-of-school lives students are increasingly participating in online worlds”, digital cultures, and various literacy (reading, writing, creating) websites. “These experiences are transforming students’ expectations of and orientations toward text, literacy, and pedagogy” (Kalantzis & Cope,

2010:210). Learners' enthusiastic acceptance and implementation of new technologies presents challenges "to traditional school-based teaching and learning relationships, pedagogies, and curricula" (Kalantzis & Cope, 2010:210). Nonetheless, Lynch (2021) claims that if technology is applied correctly in classrooms "it enhances [learners'] involvement, increases their confidence, and better enables them to reproduce the material they learn during assessments".

Learners have to be tech-savvy to survive in this technologically-driven 21st century. Burns and Gottschalk (2019:4) emphasise that "the key is to maximise the cognitive, physical and social benefits [technology] brings while minimising the risks". Therefore, the focus of this research remains to provide guidelines that will aid in the development and enhancement of soft skills in learners, and where applicable, to do so in cooperation with technology. We must guard against complete reliance on technology. Carstens *et al.* (2021:105) emphasise that too heavy reliance on technology can "effect student[s'] fine motor development and problem-solving skills". This only further supports the assertion that technology must be incorporated mindfully into the classroom and that it cannot be seen as a substitute for human educators. In fact, teachers should not, and cannot, be replaced by technology (Kolchenko, 2018:251). Thus, I provide guidelines on how teachers may aid their learners in the use of technology, with the focus being on maximising the various benefits of technology and especially the development and enhancement of soft skills. However, first, I want to briefly highlight a few teaching strategies and technological platforms that may be used by teachers in their classrooms in the 21st century.

4.9.1 Teaching strategies in the digital classroom

A strategy refers to "a carefully developed plan or method for achieving a goal" (Merriam-Webster, 2022w). Thus, teaching strategies refer to *how* teachers teach to reach the desired lesson outcome. In the 21st century, teaching strategies had evolved from being teacher-centred and narrow-minded to being learner-centred and innovative (Muganga & Ssenkusu, 2019:16). With the former, learners were often seen as empty vessels into which knowledge must be deposited by the teacher. In the latter, learners have the capacity to impart knowledge to their teacher as well as their peers. In the 21st century classroom, the relationship between teacher and learner ought to be a mutually beneficial one. This is suggested so that both parties are afforded the opportunity to contribute knowledge to the process. In the process, both parties expand their knowledge (Bhanudas & Salauddin, 2019:36). However, the teacher still remains the authority figure in the class, but instead of having a dominating role, the teacher now has a supportive role and must act as facilitator.

The role of a facilitator is to provide “indirect or unobtrusive assistance” to learners (Purnama, 2015:361; Merriam-Webster, 2022x). Various methods can be employed as part of a teaching strategy. However, the needs of the learners must never be neglected or forgotten and so the “assessment of the learning capabilities of students” is a crucial element in the success of any given teaching strategy (Armstrong, 2020). This means that learners who are not able to use technology effectively must also be considered when planning a lesson. This calls for teachers who are adaptable in their teaching strategies (Collie *et al.*, 2018). Teachers must be able to teach learners irrespective of their circumstances and regardless of whether learners have exposure to technology. A teacher who is flexible ought to have knowledge on various teaching instruments that are at their disposal and they must be equipped to use these instruments in order to add them to their teaching repertoire (Firmin & Genesi, 2013:1603; McDonald & Battaglia, 2015:1). Next, I briefly discuss eight different teaching strategies, though there are many more that may be employed in the 21st century.

4.9.1.1 Flipped classrooms

The literature offers many definitions for the concept of a flipped classroom (Bergmann & Sams, 2012:13; November & Mull, 2012; Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Ozdamli & Aşiksoy, 2016:98; Zheng *et al.*, 2020:1; Galindo-Dominguez, 2021:44; Ofgang, 2021; Yang *et al.*, 2021:1). In essence and as the name suggests, the flipped classroom is a teaching strategy where the traditional order of a lesson where the teacher instructs the learners in class and the learners do homework at home, is swopped around. The teachers’ instructional role, which was normally performed in class, is now executed by the learners at home, while the learners’ original role of doing homework at home, is now done in class with the subtle assistance of the teacher, who acts as facilitator. The flipped classroom especially promotes “the effective use of out-of-class time” during which learners are expected to engage with the content of a lesson, otherwise they will not be able to participate in class discussions (Yildirim & Kiray, 2016:2). Consequently, the importance of learners being active participants in their learning is emphasised in the flipped classroom approach as opposed to the learners being passive ‘empty vessels’ that just absorb information. Poems can, for example, be addressed in a flipped classroom when learners are required to do research on the poet and poem as there are numerous sources available prior to their class time. In class, they can then perform various activities, ranging from small or large group discussions. This may be presented as a world café activity where certain questions are posed to certain groups.

4.9.1.2 Project-based learning

Project-based learning is another teaching strategy that can transport learners out of the classroom and place them in the centre of their learning attempts. The project-based learning strategy requires teachers to present their learners with an actual real-world issue with which they must engage “by developing a question or inquiry” that will result in a legitimate project (Le, 2018:230; see also Kokotsaki *et al.*, 2016:3). Project-based learning is described as “a learning-by-doing practice” (Tseng & Yeh, 2019:94). This implies that trial-and-error may be expected, and in fact, should be encouraged, since the conditions surrounding the concept of trial-and-error provide learners with an advantage when expected to transfer knowledge they have gained to a new task (Jones *et al.*, 2010:35). Thus, when project-based learning is employed as a teaching strategy, learners are afforded the opportunity to develop and acquire transferable knowledge. The ability to transfer knowledge in the 21st century is vital to dealing with all manner of novelties, especially since change is a constant in this modern age (Motallebzadeh *et al.*, 2018:265). A good example here where learners can actively participate in their learning, is where they are presented with a problem such as the one Pi faces in *Life of Pi*. Learners may for example be asked to find a solution for when Pi runs out of fresh water onboard.

4.9.1.3 Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning, in laymen’s terms, is learning that occurs when learners are engaged in groupwork (Marzano *et al.*, 2013:3624; Bhanudas & Salauddin, 2019:37). However, referring to cooperative learning as groupwork is an oversimplification of the teaching strategy. Though cooperative learning is in essence groupwork, the focus of cooperative learning is on the interrelationship of the participant and how each member of the group carries a responsibility for the success of the group (Wang & Wu, 2022:1-2). This suggests the idea of individual and group accountability. If one learner fails to do his part, his group may fail, but if each learner contributes to the project at hand, the likelihood of the group succeeding is much higher. Consequently, cooperative learning advocates socialisation, which adds many additional benefits to the ultimate learning process, including the development of soft skills (Gillies, 2016:39). Cooperative learning has many benefits, the most notable being that learners learn “faster and more efficiently, have a greater retention” and have a more positive learning experience overall (Bhanudas & Salauddin, 2019:37-38). Successful groupwork includes five components, as identified by (Johnson & Johnson, 2014:843), and includes “positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, social skills and group processing”

4.9.1.4 Gamification

As the name suggests, gamification is the modification of an activity to turn it into a game. It is noteworthy that gamification is not synonymous to game-based learning where learners merely play games to acquire certain skills. Instead with gamification, learning becomes the game through the incorporation of gaming elements such as “points, timers, badges, and leader boards” (Jackson, 2017; Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2018:545). It may be suggested that the inclusion of these elements may lead to learners working together, obviously communicating in the process, to beat the other team, all the while learning in the process. Additionally, it may be proffered that games allow learners to think critically and creatively since it may be seen as a rather unorthodox manner of teaching. Consequently, 21st century skills can be enhanced by using gamification as a teaching strategy (Fischer & Barabach, 2020:89). Gamification may be considered a successful teaching strategy since it “engages and excites students” (Squires, 2016:20). What makes gamification even more suitable to the 21st century classroom is its magnitude of positive influences on the learners. The proper incorporation of gamification may help reduce the negative effects learners experience due to being overstimulated by technology, while it increases learners’ involvement in online educational platforms (Hew *et al.*, 2016:221; Kocadere & Caglar, 2018:12; Gordon, 2021). Gamification also contributes to a higher motivation rate among learners when faced with complex tasks (Hew *et al.*, 2016:222; Westera, 2019:59). Prescribed literature can be taught by using a gamification strategy when, for example, learners are challenged to see which group can finish an activity, such as a vocabulary crossword activity first.

4.9.1.5 Problem-based learning

Problem-based learning, though seemingly similar to project-based learning, focuses on the process needed to solve a particular problem (Genareo & Lyons, 2015; Kurt, 2020), whereas project-based learning focuses on a solution to a particular problem, or the product that resulted from the problem (Le, 2018:230). With the problem-based learning approach, learners are required to “engage with an authentic, ill-structured problem that requires further research” (Genareo & Lyons, 2015). Though it may seem counterproductive to deliberately structure the problem poorly, this will aid learners in identifying gaps in their knowledge and further assist them in coming up with a solution to the problem by forcing them to do research on what they do not know (Genareo & Lyons, 2015). Additionally, problem-based learning also enables learners to develop transferable skills and knowledge that may come in handy later in their lives (Guido, 2016). This teaching strategy also promotes the development of soft skills (Cotton, 2014). An example where the problem-based strategy can feature while enhancing soft skills, is through a moot court activity. For example, when discussing the prescribed text, *Cry, the Beloved Country*,

the teacher may suggest that Absalom has been falsely accused since there is no concrete evidence aside from his own testimony. Learners can then work on a plan to have Absalom set free.

4.9.1.6 Design thinking

Design thinking is yet another problem-solving approach that ought to be employed in the 21st century classroom (Gekeler, 2019:15; Dam & Siang, 2022). Design thinking is defined by Panke (2019:281) as “a process and mindset for collaboratively finding solutions for wicked problems”. These kinds of problems have no right or wrong answer and therefore, learners are allowed some freedom in search of a suitable answer. Thus, with this approach, learners are required to design a solution to a given problem. The design process is continuous and learners will always be able to improve a solution they came up with until it is entirely suitable to address the problem they are facing (Collins, 2019b). However, this teaching strategy is challenging since there is no “quick fix” to a solution and learners’ answers may vary greatly (Panke, 2018:281). As an example, I refer to the second learner activity of the example lesson plan on *Life of Pi* that follows later where learners are to place themselves in the characters shoes and indicate how they might have acted differently to survive.

4.9.1.7 Thinking-based learning

Thinking-based learning advocates the explicit teaching of thinking strategies and so forces learners to think about what is being asked (Swartz, 2018; Tajudin *et al.*, 2019:397). Khalil (2020) distinguishes between two types of thinking, namely “lower-order thinking and higher-order thinking”. The aim of thinking-based learning is to get learners to engage with their higher-order thinking skills, which comprises critical thinking (Watson, 2019). More importantly, this teaching strategy provides learners with the opportunity “to think creatively and autonomously” (Swartz, 2018). The ability to think well is crucial as it allows an individual to disclose information by using various thinking processes such as “reasoning, analysing, problem solving, and decision-making” (Khalil, 2020). As an example, I refer to part 2 of activity 3 in the example lesson of *Cry, the Beloved Country*, where learners are expected to debate the fairness of the law, which will allow them to make a decision regarding which side they are for and why. Learners will also have to listen, think, evaluate, and apply information (Khalil, 2020)

4.9.1.8 Competency-based learning

Competency-based learning is aimed at developing and honing learners’ unique skills with regard to the lesson (Juraschka, 2021). Competency-based learning, alias, “mastery or proficiency-

based learning” (Hudson, 2022) allows learners the opportunity to complete a lesson, regardless of the impact their socioeconomic situations may have had on them. This particular teaching strategy is based on the production of evidence and it also highlights the importance of being adaptable (Hudson, 2022). Moreover, competency-based learning has real-life value as learners’ competency in completing certain class assignments serve to show whether they will be able to “provide solutions that matter to real-life problems” (Neelakandan, 2020). Learners may, for example, be asked to create a blog – the purpose is not to see whether learners can create an actual blog online, but rather to see if they are capable and if they have the knowledge to create a blog.

4.9.2 E-learning platforms in the digital classroom

There is a magnitude of e-learning platforms available for use in the 21st century classroom (Arden, 2021; Harman, 2021; Katz, 2021; Monzon, 2022; UNESCO, 2021). I briefly discuss a few. Many of these applications qualify as student response systems (SRSs). An SRS is a modern and engaging way to incorporate technology in the 21st century classroom (Ahman *et al.*, 2021:86). The function of an SRS is to quickly gather answers from learners anonymously during a lesson and it can also enable teachers to create an electronic visual representation of the data collected (Walklet *et al.*, 2016:35). The anonymity of SRSs allows learners to be unafraid of judgement when they participate in class activities (Wong, 2016:144-145). The great benefit of SRSs is that they encourage class participation, even in a class with many learners (Heaslip *et al.*, 2014:11). To successfully use these e-learning platforms, learners and teachers need access to smartphones, tablets or laptops. E-learning platforms may be used to gather a poll on learners’ understanding of basic concepts such as vocabulary, or it may be used to determine how learners, for example, feel about the death sentence in *Cry, the Beloved Country*, or on which version of Pi’s story they believe. Anonymous polls may give learners the courage to provide their opinions without fear of what others may think. These polls may give rise to a fruitful class discussion.

4.9.2.1 Kahoot!

Aside from being an SRS, Kahoot! is a game-based application and may work well with a gamification teaching strategy (Golubeva, 2021; Dicheva *et al.*, 2015:75). As per the definition of gamification, Kahoot! is a non-game with game-like elements (Dicheva *et al.*, 2015:75). Essentially, Kahoot! is a competitive multiple-choice quiz with a time limit and score board (Golubeva, 2021). As such, Kahoot! is suitable to 21st century learning and the application provides immediate feedback (Plump & LaRosa, 2017), which contributes to learners’ willingness to engage in the learning activities (Bashir *et al.*, 2016:38). Aspiring users of Kahoot! can find a step-

by-step guide online on how to make use of the application (Golubeva, 2021). As with most online applications, individuals who want to make use of Kahoot! must first create an account, after which they will be able to insert quiz questions along with possible answers (Golubeva, 2021). Following this, a code can be shared with learners where they use their cell phones to gain access to the specific questions (Golubeva, 2021). As with most online applications, Kahoot! also has different payment options with varying types of questions such as “true or false, type answer, puzzle, poll, slide, word cloud [and] open-ended” (Golubeva, 2021). Moreover, Kahoot! allows for pictures or videos to be uploaded with each question, making it even more attractive to learners, especially those who are visual learners (Roell, 2019). Fortunately, Kahoot! is a user-friendly application (Sabandar *et al.*, 2018:127) that can be used to refresh learners’ memories about the facts of a novel, on the characters, or even the plot.

4.9.2.2 Plickers

Plickers is an SRS that is mostly used for formative assessments (Kent, 2019:92). Plickers, like Kahoot! requires the teacher to set up questions. However, Plickers makes use of physical cards that act like barcodes that are scanned by the teacher to determine the success of the learners (Topal, 2020). Plickers may be seen as a good e-learning platform to use in rural or other areas where learners do not have access to technology, since the teacher is the only one who uses technology, i.e., mobile cell phone. Aside from providing immediate feedback, which allows the teacher to intervene right away, Plickers “can stimulate active learning, highlight student knowledge gaps, focus learners’ attention, and encourage engagement” (Kent, 2019:91). The identification and rectification of knowledge gaps is crucial so learners may be well prepared for life after school (Omaish *et al.*, 2022:5). The fact that teachers can stop the lesson and address issues that the learners are experiencing as they are experiencing them suggests that Plickers may be coupled with the competency-based learning teaching strategy since it assists learners “in developing mastery of skills” (Premkumar, 2016:1851; Kent, 2019:92). An example where Plickers may be used is where learners are expected to correctly identify the meaning of technical terms, such as in the case of the courtroom trial in *Cry, the Beloved Country*.

4.9.2.3 Mentimeter

Mentimeter is an “interactive presentation tool” that can be used to aggregate answers from every learner within a few minutes, which is then visible to the class as it is collected (Hanifan, 2020). This is similar to Kahoot!, where teachers can create questions and provide learners with a code to join a particular presentation. Mentimeter has many features such as “multiple choice, image choice, word cloud, quiz, scales, questions from the audience [and] quick slides” (Mohin *et al.*,

2020:7-8). Mentimeter may be used to facilitate a lesson that deals with taboo topics, such as religion in *Life of Pi*. Learners may be asked what their religion is, whether they think theirs is the only right religion, whether they have ever been discriminated against because of their religion, etc. Answers from the audience are anonymous and can be viewed by the entire class so that a class discussion may follow (Pichardo *et al.*, 2021:11). Consequently, Mentimeter enables learners to be heard, even the shy learners, since this application also works on an anonymous basis. Additionally, the flipped classroom teaching strategy may be used with Mentimeter as homework questions can be asked, answered and discussed in class (Bergmann & Sams, 2012:13). The cooperation teaching strategy may also apply here since the learners can divide into groups and answer the questions per group (Bhanudas & Salauddin, 2019:37).

4.9.2.4 miMind

miMind is an online tool used to create all manner of mind maps (Cryptobeets, 2022). A mind map is a way of organising thoughts. However, Erdem (2017:1) state that a mind map is considered a “note-taking technique [and is] an application which has the power of uncovering the thoughts which the brain has about a subject from different viewpoints”. Thus, with this online application, miMind, learners are able to be the architects of their own concepts and activities. miMind allows learners to do “project planning, brainstorm ideas, design, structure thoughts, summarise ideas, have discussions, create poster presentations [as well as] project demonstrations” (Cryptobeets, 2022). It is stated that mind maps comprise a big part of the thinking process (Elhadidy, 2015; Cunnah, 2020; Elmeshai, 2021) and so, considering miMind has an interactive interface, various teaching strategies may be employed in combination with this online platform. Project-based learning, problem-based learning, design thinking and thinking-based learning are teaching strategies that may work well in conjunction with miMind. Individuals constantly have some or other thought in their minds throughout the day (Tseng & Poppenk, 2020:2). People face situations that require action to be taken, but before action can be taken, the situation must be thought over and a decision must be made. Consequently, thinking and decision-making is part of our everyday lives. Mind maps come in handy when more serious decisions have to be made (Pugalendhi & Senthil, 2011; Elmansy, 2015; Kaplan *et al.*, 2017; Lynch, 2022). As such, miMind, with its many mind maps, can be considered a “life-long learning tool” (Erdem, 2017:1). miMind can come in handy when learners have to get a grasp on the plot of a novel, or when they need to make sense of a character’s emotions by looking at his action.

4.9.2.5 Quizlet

Quizlet is not as much an SRS as an electronic method of studying (Acton, 2019). In essence, Quizlet is a “digital pop-quiz database” (Edwards, 2021) that can aid learners in their study by creating digital flashcards (Acton, 2019; Gresehover, 2019). These flashcards may be set up by the teacher, but since Quizlet is an interactive online tool, it allows learners to set up their own set of study cards (Edwards, 2021). In addition to helping learners memorise information, Quizlet also has a test feature where learners can answer various questions which the application automatically generates (Acton, 2019; Edwards, 2021). A major benefit of Quizlet is that teachers can create tests for learners of various skills levels and merely share a link with the respective learners to match their skills level (Gresehover, 2019). Considering that Quizlet’s main function is for learners to improve their retention of information, this online tool may be suitable to any teaching strategy. One example where Quizlet may be used is as part of the flipped classroom strategy where learners test their knowledge on the facts of the literary text at home and it is discussed in class.

4.9.2.6 Padlet

In essence, Padlet is the electronic equivalent of a notice board (Edwards, 2022). The benefit of an ‘electronic notice board’ is that it can be filled with all manner of media such as images and links to videos. Additionally, Padlet is referred to as a visually attractive “discussion board app” (Yung, 2020; see also Halsted, 2014). As such, Padlet promotes group investigations and generally increases participation due to its visual attractiveness. Padlet is an effective instructional tool when the teaching strategy used is cooperative learning (Bhanudas & Salauddin, 2019:37). The use of this online application encourages learners to participate in the creation and sharing of information with their peers and it furthers online discourse between learners (Beltrán-Martin, 2019:204). However, learners are in control of the content they create on Padlet (Deni & Zainal, 2018). Learners can decide “over the content, design, layout and privacy of the walls;” and they are also in control of other learners’ access to their wall (Deni & Zainal, 2018). Moreover, the application allows its users to share and export the document so learners who do not have access to the internet may also be able to join the discussion. Padlet may even contribute to the success of project-based learning, problem-based learning, design thinking, thinking-based learning and competency-based learning, considering that Padlet also employs mind maps. An example of where Padlet can be used is where learners are asked to create a Padlet poster that visually represents the theme of the selected literary text. Learners must also add a voice recording of no longer than three minutes to their poster to explain how the visuals support their understanding. Canva, a similar application to Padlet, also works well for the creation of posters.

4.9.2.7 Google

Google has many built-in applications such as “Gmail, Google Meets, Google Chat, Google Calendar [and] Google Contacts” (Stokes, 2015; Rink, 2017; Rogers, 2020). One of the most common applications is Gmail, which is Google’s email service, that comes with 15 gigabytes of storage space (Karch, 2021). This is fortunate, considered that digital storage space is almost a necessity in the modern era. Another Google application that is similar to Microsoft Teams and Zoom, is Google Meet, which is a secure video-conferencing system that can be used by teachers and learners (Finnegan, 2020; Johnson, 2021; Sanglaji, 2021). Google Meet provides teachers and learners with the opportunity to be productive and interactive without having to be in the same vicinity. It may be suggested that this broadens learners’ opportunities as they can learn from various teachers, provided that they have internet access. Google Meet includes features such as “screen-sharing, polling, file and image sharing and text-based chat” (Simon, 2021a see also Citron, 2021). Other Google applications also include productivity tools like Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Google Slides. These tools are the online equivalent of MsWord, Excel and PowerPoint (Turner, 2022). Considering that it is an online platform, it may be suggested that collaboration and sharing can occur more easily. Furthermore, a Google account allows users access to interactive platforms such as Google Drive, Google Forms, Google Sites and Google Classroom (Rink, 2017; Rogers, 2020).

In essence, Google Drive is predominantly a sharing service and an umbrella under which Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Google Slides can be found. Unfortunately, technology is not faultless, and anyone living in the 21st century may have experienced a device’s software crashing (Price, 2019; Stegner, 2020) or the hardware being stolen (Nield, 2021). The benefit of Google Drive is that teachers’ and learners’ data is safe since Google Drive has an auto-save feature and is accessible from any device if users log into their Google accounts (Mendoza, 2019). Additionally, Google Forms allows teachers to collect data from learners easily (Melo, 2018), which may be beneficial with regard to determining learners’ prior knowledge (Nguyen *et al.*, 2018). However, there are various other ways to incorporate Google Forms into the 21st century classroom. Sivakumar (2019:36) makes several suggestions such as using Google Forms for parent and learner surveys, exit tickets, registration sheets, flipped classroom assessments, preparation for tests, polls and RSVPs for school events. In addition to Google Forms, teachers and learners can also make use of Google Sites to enhance the teaching and learning experience. Google Sites is “an innovative learning tool” where actual websites can be created (Roodt & De Villiers, 2012). Presenting learners with a website that is uniquely tailored to their learning needs can be greatly beneficial to the learning successes of learners since “learning becomes more attractive [and]

students get teaching materials more easily and quickly (Ramadannisa & Hartina, 2021:108). The last feature of the Google suite I discuss here is Google Classroom.

As the name suggests, Google Classroom is a virtual classroom. An application like this comes in handy in crisis situations like when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of schools (UNESCO, 2020b; Knerl, 2021). Google Classroom mimics an actual classroom where the teacher can present lessons, administer assignments and receive assignments, with the exception that Google Classroom allows the teaching and learning process to be a paperless experience (Hall, 2021; Mukundan, 2022). With Google Classroom, unlike traditional face-to-face classes, teachers can create different 'groups' for different classes and easily keep track of learners' individual contribution to the group (DiMaria, 2016; Hall, 2021). Google Classroom also allows teachers to grade assignments online. This alleviates teachers' physical workload of having to lug around stacks of books and paper in order to assess assignments, projects and tests (DiMaria, 2016; Lin, 2017; Fine & Kanter, 2022; Priya, 2022). However, many teachers prefer paper-based assessments as it is quicker.

4.9.2.8 Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams is "a collaborative workspace that acts as a central hub for workplace conversations, collaborative teamwork, video chats and document sharing" (Finnegan, 2020). With Microsoft Teams users can use a chat box to communicate once in the call and this call can either be a video or voice call (Khalili, 2022). Considering that Microsoft Teams is like face-to-face teaching, with the exception that it is online, it can be used as part of any teaching strategy depending on the nature of the lesson.

4.9.2.9 Zoom

Zoom, like Microsoft Teams, is an online conferencing tool where users can connect using audio or video or via a chat box, once inside the call (Johnson, 2021). Additionally, Zoom affords its users the ability to share their screen with their peers (Reed, 2002; Torman, 2020). Screen sharing allows all users in the call to view one person's screen and that one individual may then offer a presentation. Zoom is advantageous for teachers who have large classes, since it can support many participants at once (Simon, 2021b). Zoom can also increase learners' educational resources, improve their ability to be adaptive and provide them with valuable information from a range of sources (Earon, 2016). I will not elaborate on the exact functionality of Zoom here, although an online step-by-step guide is available for teachers who would like to incorporate this application into their teaching practices (See Stone, 2020).

4.9.2.10 HandBrake

HandBrake is not an e-learning platform, but rather an application that can assist teachers and learners who manage to incorporate technology into the teaching and learning process (Domingo, 2016). It is an application that can convert videos into nearly any format so that teachers and learners may, for example, be able to view videos on any device, such as a cell phone, tablet, gaming console or laptop (Hoffman, 2013). In the 21st century, technology is favoured as it often saves physical storage space (Shrivastava, 2022:34). However, electronic storage space must also be managed (Vopson, 2021). HandBrake compresses a video's size significantly, without compromising the quality of the video, which makes it an ideal application to use in the 21st century. Fine and Kanter (2022) claim that modern technology "has the potential and power to help us rehumanise work". The researchers (Fine & Kanter, 2022) mean to say that 21st century technologies have the capacity to lessen individuals' workloads and to provide them with an opportunity to turn their attention to the aspects of work for which humans are well-suited. These aspects for which humans are more qualified include all the things that machines cannot do "such as relationship building, intuitive decision making, empathy, and problem solving" (Fine & Kanter, 2022; see also Chui *et al.*, 2016; White, 2020). The next section suggests guidelines as to how teachers can focus on maintaining the human aspect of a lesson while incorporating technology in the classroom, all with the aim of enhancing 21st century soft skills.

4.10 Example lesson plans to enhance the soft skills of the South African learner

The discussion in this section is based on the premise that all learners, teachers and classrooms are equipped with smartphones, tablets, laptops or computers since that is the ideal in the technologically-driven 21st century classroom. However, realistically, that is not the case in most South African schools (Gustufsson & Nuga, 2020:20). Therefore, I also provide alternatives in the lesson plans that do not require technology but that will still enhance EFAL and HL learners' soft skills. I would like to explicitly state here that the focus of these lessons is not on the use of technology but rather the development of soft skills, whether the lessons are aided by technology or not. Rigorous planning is essential to ensure a successful lesson. Most lesson plans are guided by the four language skills as identified in the CAPS (DBE, 2011; see also Herrmann, 2017), namely speaking, writing, reading and listening (SWRL). However, I propose using the four Cs to guide the lesson when the aim is to develop soft skills. The teacher must actively plan to incorporate activities into the lesson that will promote creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. The way in which a lesson is planned is unique to each teacher (UNESCO, 2022), however, having been taught the backward design of lesson planning, that is what I incorporate here. The backward design, developed by Wiggins and McTighe (2005), is meant to

improve teachers' planning and provide them with a better grasp of the teaching and learning process. The backward design involves creating the lesson by first identifying the end goal and how it will be assessed and then working backwards from there, as opposed to identifying the content that should be assessed and then planning an end goal (Gonzales, 2020; see also Dávila, 2017:140). I first clarify a few concepts related to lesson planning.

A lesson must be structured with a beginning, middle and end. A structured lesson will guide learners in knowing what is expected of them and how it can be achieved (Chizhik & Chizhik, 2016:210). Teachers may convey the desired outcome of the lesson to the learners in simple terms to avoid any confusion. Furthermore, it is suggested that a lesson must have introductory material, which lets the learners know what the lesson will be about (Dalmeida, 2016). If the introduction of the lesson does not catch learners' attention, then the rest of the lesson will most likely be futile. Relevant pertinent questions may be used to get learners interested in the lesson. Pertinent questions are open-ended questions that allow learners to truly think about what is being asked. Often, pertinent questions activate learners' prior knowledge, which better enables learners to be co-constructors of knowledge (Kriegel, 2016). Additionally, a lesson must have various activities that may be concluded in a single lesson or spread out over a period of time. These activities would typically be structured from easiest to most difficult in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy. Bloom's taxonomy is a classification system that differentiates between different levels of human cognition and ability and consists of six levels, ranging from lowest to highest in difficulty and the hierarchy refers to remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating (Chandio *et al.*, 2016:205; Ruhl, 2021 & Shabatura, 2022). When learners are given easier activities at the beginning of a lesson, it can act as scaffolding to ultimately enable them to accomplish the more difficult tasks towards the end of the lesson.

Scaffolding, in education, is defined as support provided to learners as it is required to ensure their success (Van de Pol *et al.*, 2015:615; Taber, 2018; Boonmoh & Jumpakate, 2019:13; Kampen, 2020; Sarikas, 2020). The idea of scaffolding in education relates closely to the concept of the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD), which emphasises the relationship between the community and the learning environment – this also relates directly to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978:79; Wang *et al.*, 2011:296; Cherry, 2022b). Consequently, the ZPD encourages teachers to act as facilitators, as this is the area where learners can accomplish certain tasks, though they need some guidance to reach success. Therefore, the aim is to give learners easier activities that will act as scaffolding for them to accomplish the more difficult tasks and ultimately the final task, or SMART task, at the end of the lesson. SMART is an acronym that is meant to help teachers create a summative task that is "specific, measurable, attainable, relevant [and] time-based" (Drew, 2022; see also Johnson *et al.*, 2014:42; Manning, 2019). In

essence, a SMART task is meant to be specific in that it contains clear and succinct instructions, and it must be measurable by having a definite way in which it will be assessed, be it via a rubric or memo. Additionally, to improve learners' success, a summative task must be attainable, that is to say within learners' reach and it must be relevant in terms of learners' contexts or learners will not be interested in completing the task. Lastly, the task must be completed within a specific timeframe so as to further guide the learners in successful completion of the task. In conclusion, for a lesson and ultimately the SMART task to be successful, the backward design is most beneficial, especially when scaffolding has to be incorporated into the lesson as well. I now provide two example lessons based on the theme of justice, as found in *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton, and the theme of survival, as found in *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel.

4.10.1 Example writing lesson plan based on the theme of justice as found in the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton

Justice is a prominent theme throughout the world and specifically within the South African context where corruption is evident in society (Manyaka & Nkuna, 2014:1572; Loubser, 2015:135; McCain, 2020; McCain, 2021; Haffajee, 2021; Chutel, 2022; Maseko, 2022; Mashego, 2022; Maughan, 2022). The definition of justice has many variations and for the purposes of this lesson, it is defined as "the quality of being just, impartial, or fair" (Merriam-Webster, 2022m). As such, the following lesson is inspired by the courtroom scene where Absalom is on trial for murdering a white man in the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, by Alan Paton. When addressing the theme of justice in a literature lesson, the teacher may pose various questions to the learners to activate their prior knowledge (Rutledge, 2016:1; Shook, 2019). Prior knowledge not only refers to information learners have learned in previous grades, but also to information that learners have acquired throughout their lives outside of school. Questions that allow learners to think deeply, which activates prior knowledge and that deals with the topic of the lesson are called pertinent questions (Sood, 2019; Merriam-Webster, 2022y). Pertinent questions may include:

1. Why do you think people engage in corrupt activities?
2. Why do you choose to associate with certain groups, even when you know association with this group may be harmful to you in some way?
3. How would you liberate yourself from a bad situation that resulted from an association with wrong people?
4. If you were caught doing something you should not be doing, because of bad influences, how would you react when you find yourself in the hands of a corrupt justice system?

These pertinent questions will allow learners to place themselves in the context of the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton. The pertinent questions directly relate to the theme of justice. Once learners' prior knowledge is activated, they should be introduced to the topic of the lesson explicitly, which, in this case, is justice.

In order to incorporate technology into the classroom, a video clip of the film, *Cry, the Beloved Country* may be shown to the learners as an introduction to the lesson by using a data projector and a white board. For this specific lesson, I want to focus on Absalom's trial and so that is the clip I would want to show my learners. Once learners have been introduced to the topic, vocabulary becomes key. If learners do not understand the vocabulary, they will not grasp the lesson. Thus, the first learner activity focuses on enhancing learners' vocabulary. In this case, learners must be cognisant of vocabulary that may be found in a courtroom. However, considering that most learners have never been exposed to a court case, I suggest employing a gamification teaching method to keep learners interested. I reiterate here that gamification is beneficial in the development of the four Cs, "communication, cooperation, creativity and critical thinking" (Fischer & Barabach, 2020:89). This may be done by using the e-learning platform, Kahoot!, to test learners' vocabulary, as well as their knowledge on the content of the novel against their peers while they are also playing against time (Jackson, 2017). A non-technological alternative may involve the learners writing a short class test or a class discussion. Additionally, vocabulary exercises directly improve learners' communication skills since vocabulary is in essence the building blocks of a language (Miller, 2019; Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:44). Following the vocabulary activity, learners can move on to activity two, where they are required to write a diary entry.

Learners must write a diary entry as if they are Absalom Kumalo who had just killed a man. They must think about their thoughts and feelings and notate it. By having learners place themselves in the shoes of an unintentional murderer, they will be forced to think critically and creatively. Moreover, aside from enhancing these soft skills, learners will be exposed to an uncomfortable moral issue that creates an opportunity for transferable knowledge – what to do when facing an ethical conundrum? Learners can think about whether Absalom did the right thing by pleading guilty and giving an honest account of events, or whether he should have rather followed Pafuri's suit and acted as if he were above the law and that his circumstances are to blame for his actions. Additionally, this activity will allow learners an opportunity to practise their spelling and sentence construction, which will be a crucial element if they wish to master the SMART task at the end of the lesson. The benefit of the second learner activity, the diary entry, is that it acts as scaffolding for the SMART task since the same rubric can be used for both assignments. The teacher can assess the diary entries and provide learners with timely feedback on where they can improve.

Feedback is essential when learners' success is at stake. Prompt feedback prior to the summative assessment increases learners' performance. Moreover, providing continuous feedback allows teachers to intercept the lesson with intervention as soon as needed. Since the diary entry is a paper-based task, it is not as complex as the SMART task which incorporates technology in the planning stages as well as the final product. As such, the lesson adheres to Bloom's taxonomy, which states that activities must be administered with various cognitive levels. Though, cognitive levels cannot always be seen in terms of difficulty. Nonetheless, following the second learner activity, the diary entry, I suggest providing learners with the following argument which may either be incorporated into a debate or a moot court, depending on the class's circumstances, such as class size and learners' behaviour. In the following example, I incorporate debating as an activity simply because it allows for participation by all learners as opposed to a moot court where some learners will have to take up passive roles such as being part of the judiciary.

The argument may be made that the implementation of the law during Absalom's trial is unjust since his cohorts are set free while he is sentenced to death. Although Absalom has killed the white man – "it was not his intention to kill or even to shoot" (Paton, 1948:168). Moreover, it is one of his associates, Johannes Pafuri, who "put forward [the plan and who] struck the blow that rendered unconscious the servant Mpiring" (Paton, 1948:168). Although Mpiring identifies Pafuri as the man who had struck him down, his testimony as eyewitness is not considered valid (see Paton, 1948:169). This being said, there is no proof that Absalom did indeed kill the white man, except for his own testimony. The question may be asked why Absalom would implicate himself by sharing an honest account of what had happened that evening, knowing what the consequences for killing a white man may be? Moreover, even though he is not on trial, the Judge acknowledges the "disaster that has overwhelmed [the] native tribal society" and its influence on Absalom, but the Judge continues to excuse himself from his "own complicity in this disaster" (Paton, 1948:171). Furthermore, the Judge contradicts himself when he says, "even if it be true that we have, out of fear and selfishness and thoughtlessness, wrought a destruction that we have done little to repair, even if it be true that we should be ashamed of it and do something more courageous and forthright than we are doing, there is nevertheless a Law" (Paton, 1948:171). It may be argued that the law of the time is unjust. On the other hand, however, the argument may be put forward that a crime had been committed because Absalom indeed did take a life. A class discussion may ensue and learners' views will most likely correlate with what they wrote in their diary entries. A class discussion must be allowed before commencing with a formal debate. A large-scale brainstorming session will allow soft skills such as the four Cs to be further developed. Learners should be encouraged to write down their thoughts and ideas from peers as this will aid them in the debate that is to follow. Moreover, a class discussion on such a

controversial topic such as the death sentence may provide fertile ground for a teaching moment to take place where the teacher can elaborate on the importance of all life, the effectiveness and flaws of the law, corruption, reconciliation, forgiveness and faith. These are real-life and very relevant issues for the South African learner. Additionally, a class discussion of such a nature will act as scaffolding for the debate that is to follow.

It is important that learners notate their arguments during the debate as well, since it facilitates critical thinking. Although learners can use Padlet or miMind to organise their thoughts, I suggest that notes be taken in the traditional way – by using pen and paper. The reason behind this is that technology should not overpower the lesson and during a debate, quick thinking is necessary (Lynch, 2021a). In this instance, technology will keep learners from thinking on their feet because the use of technology here will draw learners' attention away from the debate, which requires immediate attention. Furthermore, the use of traditional pen and paper notetaking will not exclude any learners from the activity. Debating is an effective way to promote 21st century skills such as communication, since learners practise to articulate (Syamdianita & Maharia, 2019:22; Lynch, 2021b) and creativity is enhanced when learners must provide counterarguments, especially where controversial topics are concerned (Zawawi *et al.*, 2018:2). Additionally, collaboration, and most of all, critical thinking, is enhanced through debating (Devitt, 2022). Listening and speaking skills are developed at the same time and learners learn a skill that is very necessary in life – that of posing one's views in a non-offensive way and also to try and persuade others that one's viewpoint may be valid and worth considering. Once learners have gathered enough information pertaining to the argument as well as the counterargument, the SMART task may be administered.

For the suggested SMART task, creativity and empathy is crucial, since learners are expected to place themselves within the context of the novel, while remaining within the timeframe of the 21st century so as to incorporate technology into the lesson. I suggest that learners pretend that they witnessed Absalom's trial, but that they also pretend the trial took place in modern day South Africa. In the third learner activity, learners must assume the role of a disgruntled audience member at Absalom's trial and create a blog post about their dissatisfaction about the outcome of the case. Learners will create an actual blog by using Google's Site application to do so. These blogs can be published for the teacher to assess via a rubric. Not only will learners' knowledge about the content of the novel be tested but also their ability in using technology, which is a vital skill in the 21st century (Jang, 2016:284). The alternative includes a simple pen-and-paper based approach. The lesson is tabulated for convenience, starting with the SMART task, as the backward design is used.

SMART task

By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to:

Publish a thought-provoking blog post on their dissatisfaction with the outcome of Absalom and his two co-accused's case.

Instruction: envision yourself as a disgruntled audience member who witnessed the trial of Absalom Kumalo and his two associates. You are dissatisfied that Absalom got the death sentence, while his two co-accused were found to be not guilty, even though they were also at the scene of the crime. Create a blog post of 180-200 words by using Google's Site application, where you express your views regarding:

1. Absalom's sentence
2. The acquittal of Absalom's associates
3. The Judge's words before he delivers their sentences
4. The law's effectiveness in serving its purpose
5. Mitigating circumstances that should have been considered.

You must plan prior to publishing the final blog post. You may make use of miMind, Padlet, or Google Docs to plan. Submit a link with your planning to your teacher in Google Classroom. Remember to consult Chapter 11 of your novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, by Alan Paton prior to completing your assignment. Your blog will be assessed by the teacher using a rubric and it should be submitted in three days' time to provide room for any technical issues that you may experience.

The rubric to assess the task is the assessment rubric for longer transactional texts for HL as provided by the Department of Education in the examination guidelines (DBE, 2021d). Though, considering that this task will be submitted online, the teacher may incorporate a criterion into the rubric related to learners' ability to use technology effectively and creatively so that the end product is visually attractive and error-free.

Criteria	Exceptional 13-15	Skilful 10-12	Moderate 7-9	Elementary 4-6	Inadequate 0-3
<p>CONTENT, PLANNING & FORMAT</p> <p>Response and ideas; Organisation of ideas for planning; Purpose, audience, features/ conventions and context</p> <p>15 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outstanding response beyond normal expectations - Intelligent and mature ideas - Extensive knowledge of feature of the type of text - Writing maintains focus - Coherence in content and ideas - Highly elaborated and all details support the topic - Appropriate and accurate format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very good response demonstrating good knowledge of features of the type of text - Maintains focus – no digressions - Coherent in content and ideas, very well elaborated and details support topic - Appropriate format with minor inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate response demonstrating knowledge of features of the type of text - Not completely focused – some digressions - Reasonably coherent in content and ideas - Some details support the topic - Generally appropriate format but with some inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic response demonstrating some knowledge of features of the type of text - Some focus but writing digresses - Not always coherent in content and ideas - Few details support the topic - Has vaguely applied necessary rules of format - Some critical oversights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response reveals no knowledge of features of the type of text - Meaning is obscured with major digressions - Not coherent in content and ideas - Very few details support the topic - Has not applied necessary rules of format
<p>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING</p> <p>Tone, register, style, purpose/effect, audience and context; Language use and conventions; Word choice; Punctuation and spelling</p> <p>10 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Virtually error-free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary very appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Generally grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Very good vocabulary - Mostly free of errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Some grammatical errors - Adequate vocabulary - Errors do not impede meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Inaccurate grammar with numerous errors - Limited vocabulary - Meaning obscured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary do not correspond to purpose, audience and context - Error-ridden and confused - Vocabulary not suitable for purpose - Meaning seriously impaired

Teaching strategies, learner activities, assessment and resources.

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>Gamification:</p> <p>The teacher instructs the learners to take out their cell phones and connect to the school's Wi-Fi. While the learners get their devices ready, the teacher turns on her laptop and connects to Kahoot! The teacher then provides the learners with a link and code to access the specific Kahoot! vocabulary game created for this lesson.</p>	<p>Activity 1: Vocabulary</p> <p>Learners take out and get their devices ready. They then follow the prompts that are projected on screen until they are connected to Kahoot! They play a vocabulary game, during which they race against time and their peers.</p>	<p>Automated assessment</p> <p>Kahoot! automatically assesses learners' performance and the best three learners' names are projected on screen. This only serves to act as healthy competition as learners generally want to do better than their peers. The stakes are also not very high for this activity.</p>	<p>Kahoot!</p> <p>Learners' cell phones and teacher's laptop</p>	<p>Speaking and reading</p>	<p>Communication and collaboration</p>

The vocabulary incorporates various levels of difficulty to accommodate all learners with regard to Bloom's taxonomy. The vocabulary to be tested in the Kahoot! activity include: culpable, homicide, intention, murder, accused, plead, crime, revolver, mitigating, frightened, defendant, prosecutor, responsible, council, assessor, guilty party, not guilty, court custody, sentence and mercy.

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>Teacher acts as facilitator</p> <p>The teacher instructs the learners to first read an excerpt from the novel, <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i> by Alan Paton (see Paton, 1948:65-66), after which they must write a diary entry of 80-100 words. This entry must be written from the perspective of Absalom Kumalo who has killed a white man and who must now choose whether to plead guilty or not guilty. Absalom's feelings about the murder are not made known in the novel and so learners will have to use their imagination to accomplish this task. Learners must</p>	<p>Activity 2: Diary entry</p> <p>Learners read the excerpt on page 65-66 in the novel, <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i> by Alan Paton.</p> <p>Learners must especially focus on the headline of the newspaper which state, "Murder in Parkwold. Well-known city engineer shot dead. Assailants thought to be natives" (Paton, 1948:65-</p>	<p>Teacher assesses by using the same rubric to be used for the assessment of the SMART task.</p>	<p>The novel, <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i>.</p> <p>Learners may also use prior notes for the diary entry, as well as their scripts.</p>	<p>Writing and reading</p>	<p>Creativity and critical thinking</p>

incorporate their thoughts and feelings into the entry.	66). Learners will then write a diary entry as instructed.				
Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>Teacher acts as facilitator.</p> <p>The teacher initiates a class discussion by presenting learners with two opposing views on Absalom's trial. On the one hand it may be argued that the law is unjust when the mitigating circumstances in Absalom's case are overlooked. However, on the other hand, it may be debated that the law is just, and that Absalom's sentence is fair, since he killed a person.</p> <p>The teacher will refer learners to Chapter 11 of the novel to refresh their memories on the trial.</p>	<p>Activity 3: Part 1 - class discussion</p> <p>Learners are guided into a class discussion on Absalom's trial and the fairness of its outcome.</p> <p>Learners are expected to take note of valuable ideas and write them down in their scripts.</p>	Teacher guides the class discussion.	Peers who act as more knowledgeable others, scripts and the novel, <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i> by Alan Paton.	Speaking, writing, reading and listening.	Communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>Teacher acts as facilitator.</p> <p>Following the class discussion, learners are divided into groups for the debate. The size of the groups depends on the unique class circumstances. Learners are asked which view they accept and then to argue from that point of view against the opposing team.</p> <p><u>Teaching moment:</u> Before learners commence with the SMART task there is a teachable moment as the teacher can explicitly instruct learners on the importance of being technologically savvy in the 21st century.</p>	<p>Activity 3: Part 2 – debate</p> <p>Learners will divide into groups in preparation for the debate that is to follow.</p> <p>During this activity learners must also take notes in their scripts so as to streamline their thoughts in the debate.</p>	<p>Teacher observes the debate.</p>	<p>Peers who act as more knowledgeable others, scripts and the novel, <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i> by Alan Paton.</p>	<p>Speaking, writing, reading and listening.</p>	<p>Communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.</p>

Following the three learner activities, the teacher should present the SMART task as already discussed.

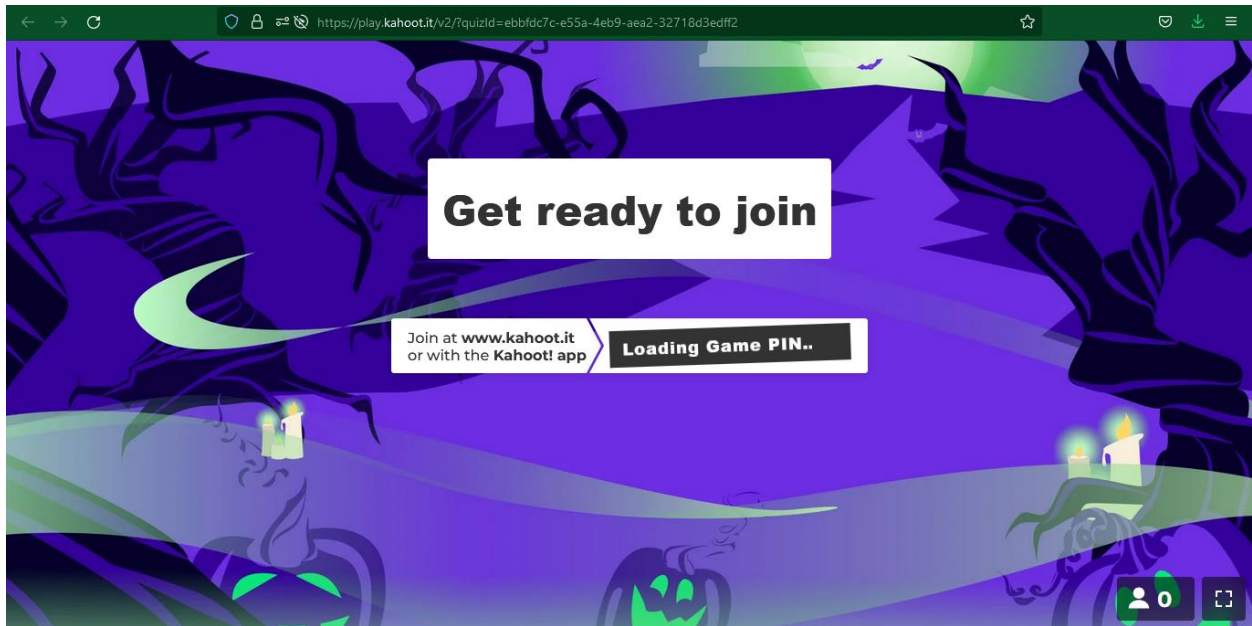
4.10.1.1 Printable resources that accompany the lesson on justice in *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton

In this section I have compiled, for the sake of convenience, all the worksheets for the lesson on justice in *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton.

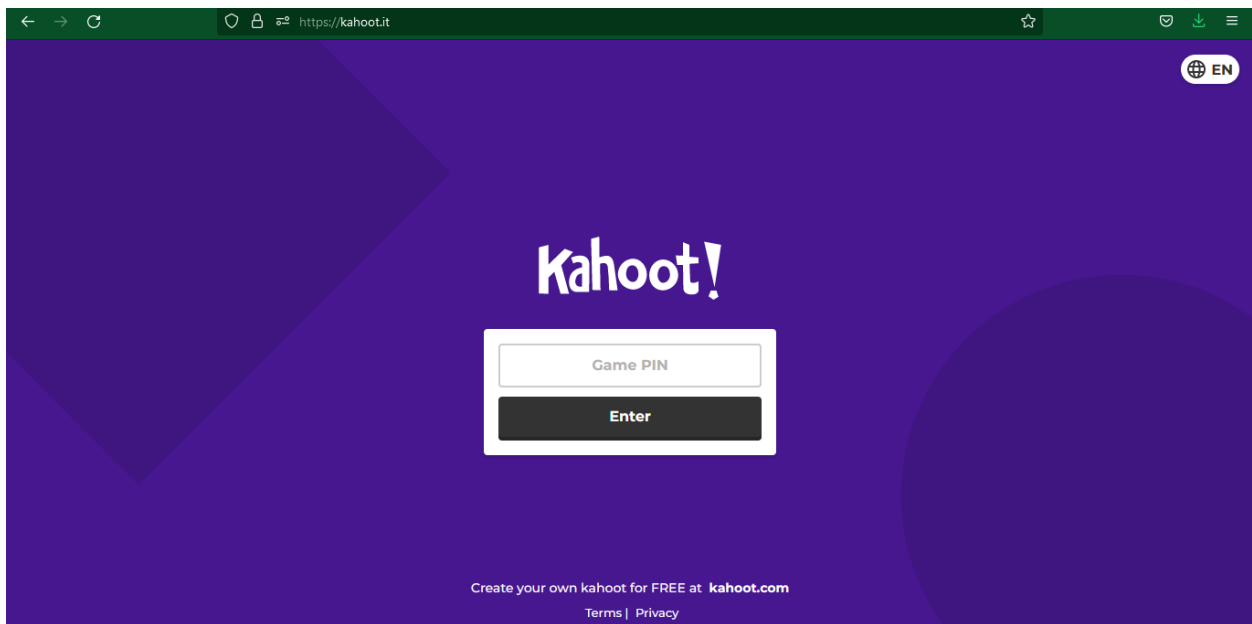
For the introductory section of the lesson learners may be shown a clip from the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYUyrl64lol&t=4920s> The teacher only needs to show the learners the video from the 1 hour 18-minute mark, up to two minutes later.

The first learner activity is concerned with the recall of information and so deals with the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy. The purpose of this first activity, aside from testing learners' vocabulary, is to get them excited about the lesson. It also prepares them for the SMART task. Learner activity 1, the Kahoot! activity for the suggested lesson on justice in *Cry, the Beloved Country*, can be accessed here: <https://create.kahoot.it/share/justice-in-cry-the-beloved-country/ebbfdc7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edff2>

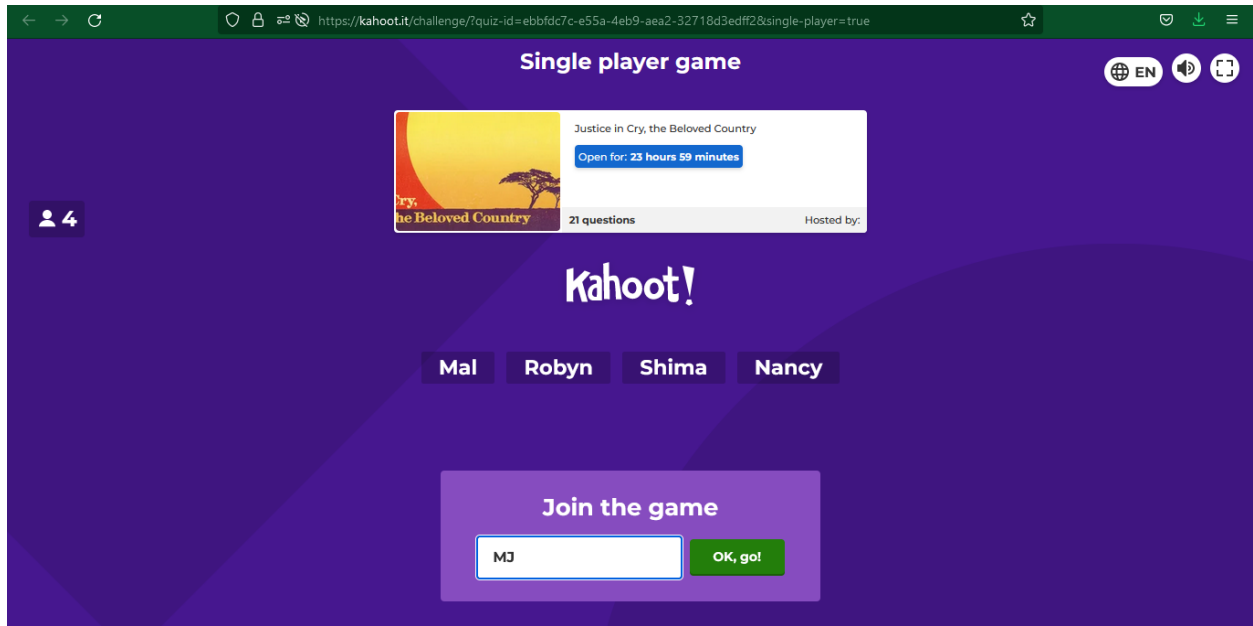
Screenshots of the Kahoot! activity are included here for the reader's perusal. The following image is what the teacher will project onto the whiteboard, after having assigned the activity to the learners.



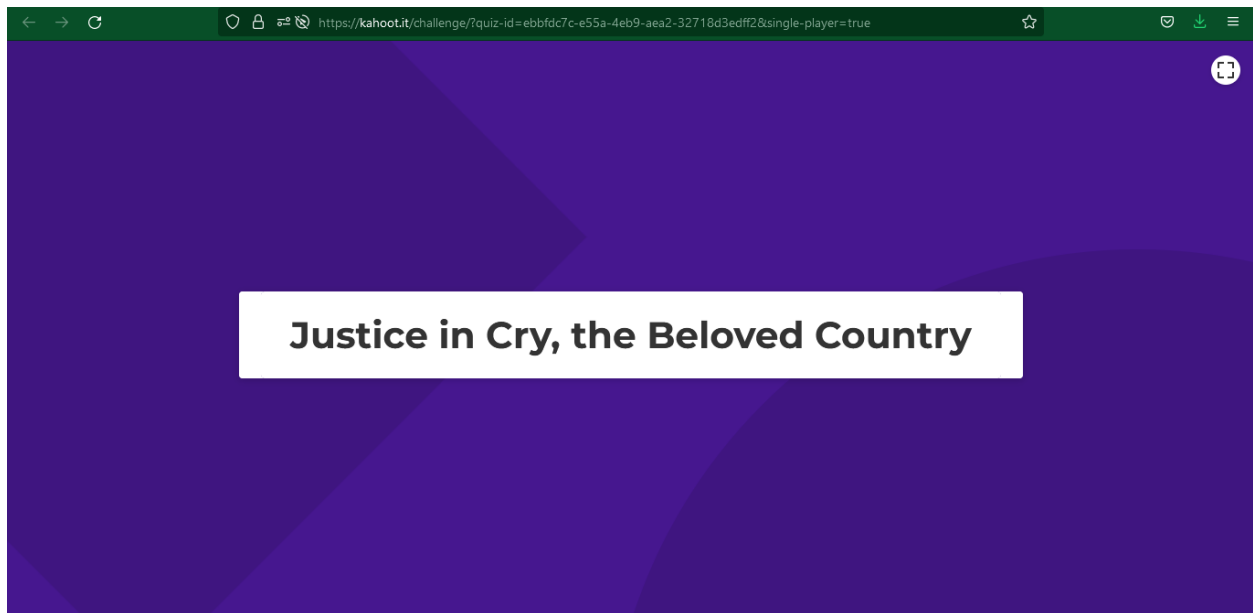
Learners will then use the provided game pin to log into the specific Kahoot! activity.



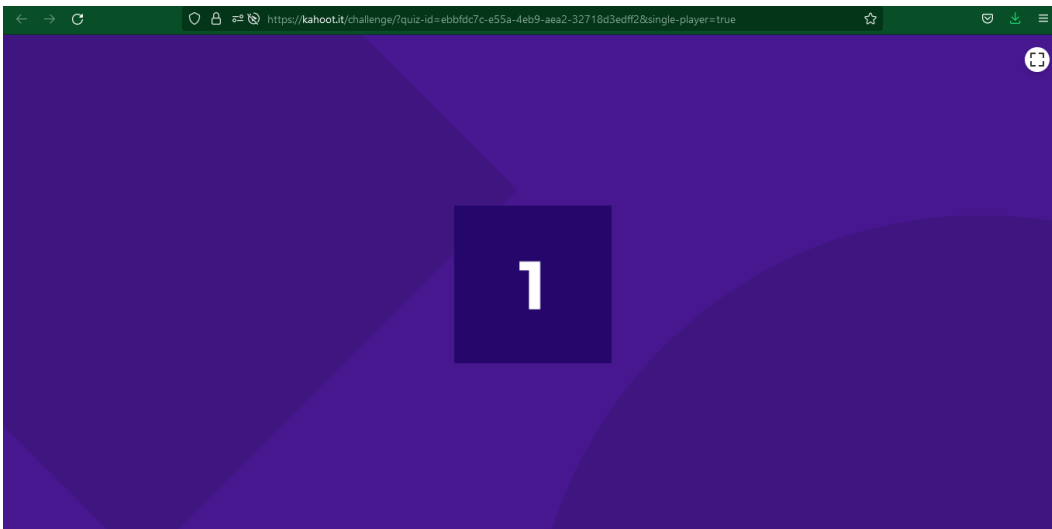
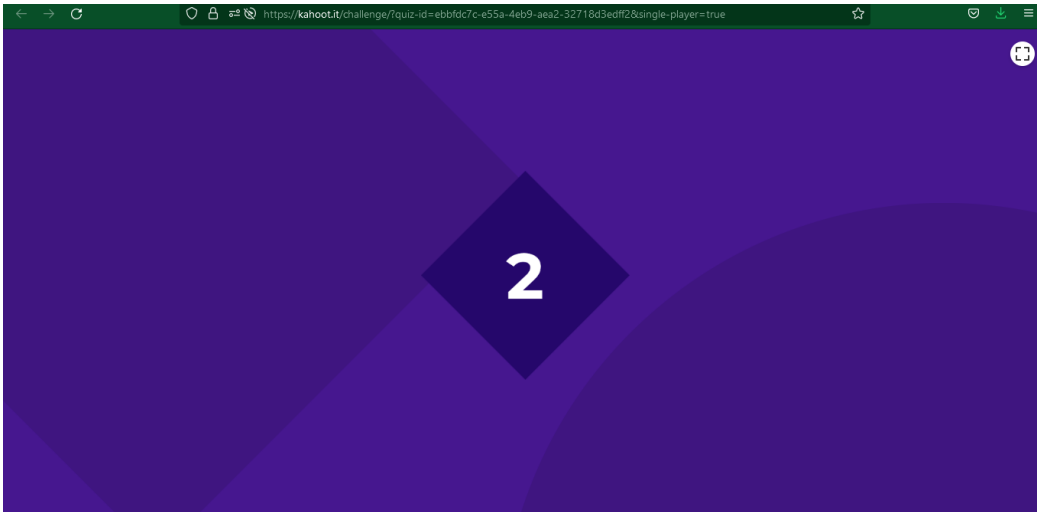
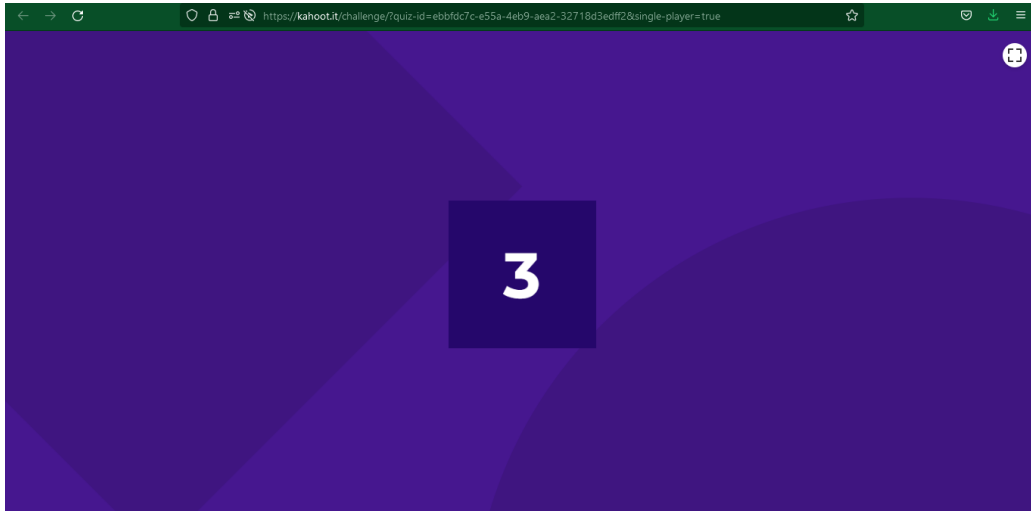
Once learners have entered their game pin, they will be redirected to the following screen where they are required to enter their name for the duration of the game.



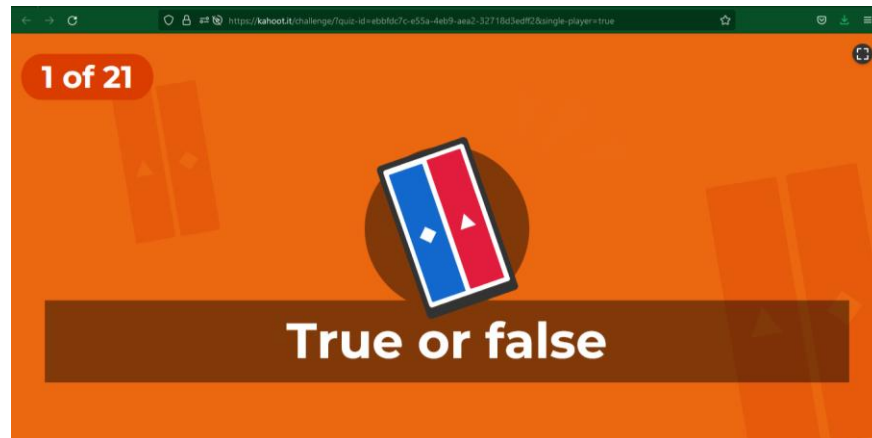
The game will then begin by showcasing the title of the activity.



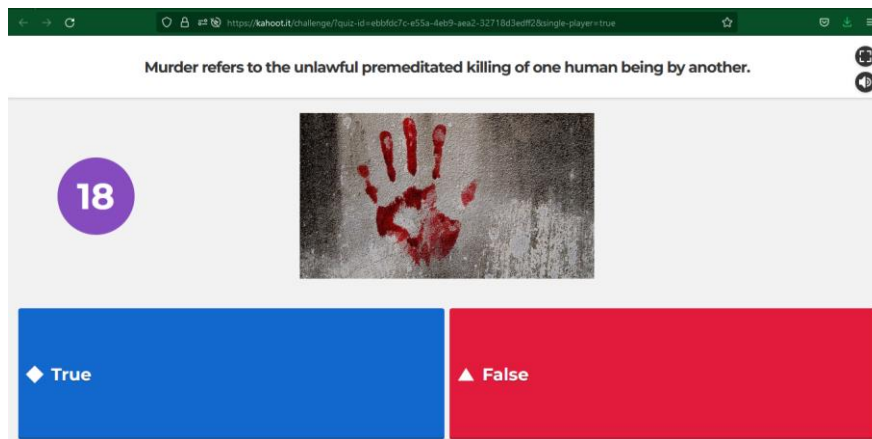
The game then builds excitement among the learners as it counts down to the start of the activity.



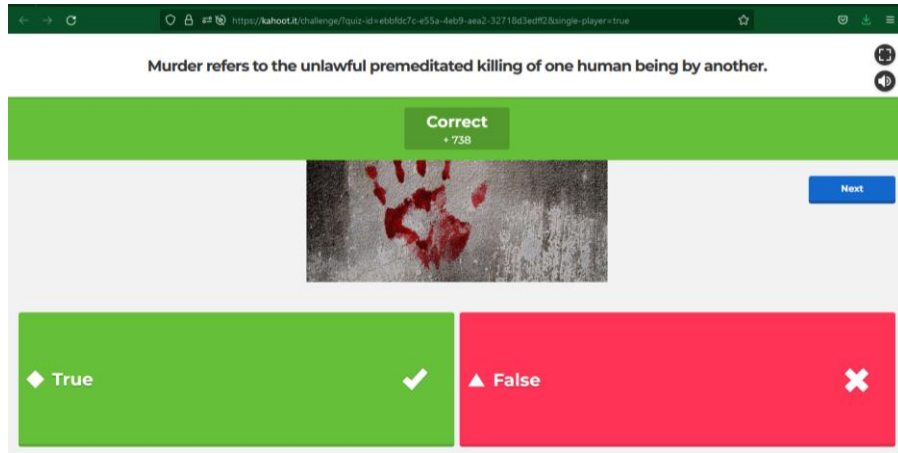
Learners are then informed about what type of question awaits them, as can be seen from the following image. Moreover, learners can see the number of questions they can expect in the top left corner.



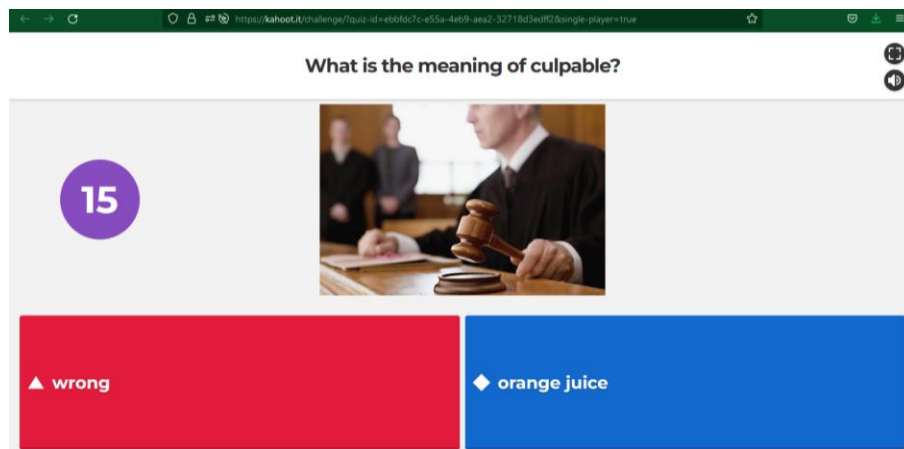
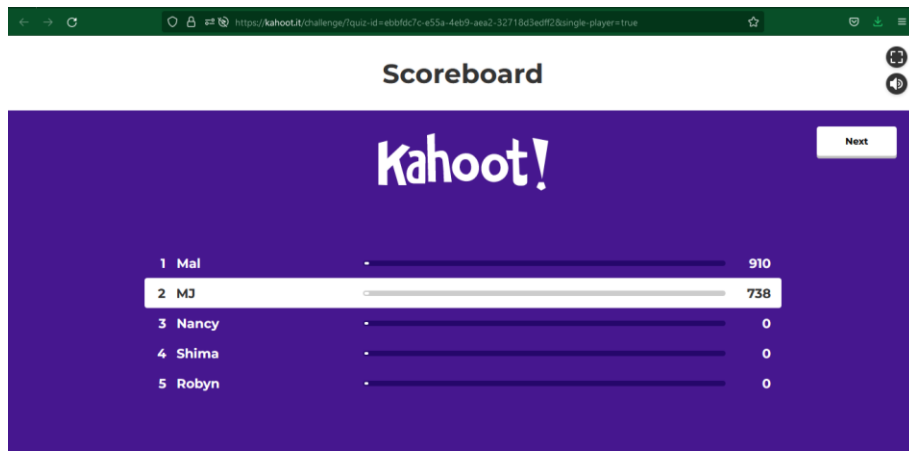
Learners will then be presented with the question and will be required to answer it within a certain amount of time, again, as can be seen in the top left corner.



If learners answer correctly, it is immediately indicated as such and accompanied by a score. These scores are also influenced by how fast a learner responds to the question.



The scores accumulated after each round of questions are displayed on a score board after every question. This enhances learner participation as they generally want to do better than their peers.




← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🔍 🌟 📄 📄

https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=eb06d7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-3271b63edff2&single-player=true

Homicide refers to...

👤 🔊

20



▲ the killing of a person with intent to cause death or serious injury	◆ the destroying of homes
● the accidental killing of someone	■ saving someone


← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🔍 🌟 📄 📄

https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=eb06d7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-3271b63edff2&single-player=true

An aim or plan which is deliberately executed is...

👤 🔊

18



▲ a bull's eye	◆ a random way to accomplish something
● a goal	■ an intention


← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🔍 🌟 📄 📄

https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=eb06d7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-3271b63edff2&single-player=true

Accused...

👤 🔊



20



▲ a person who can leave the dinner table	◆ a popular tv series from 2010-2012
● is the synonym of acquitted	■ a person or group of people who are charged with or on trial for a crime.

← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🗄️ https://kahoot.it/challenge/?quiz-id=e55a-4eb9-aea2-3271bd3edff2&single-player=true 🌟 📄 ⌵ ☰

Scoreboard

Kahoot!

Next

1	MJ	4508
2	Robyn	3844
3	Mal	2005
4	Shima	1792
5	Nancy	1599

← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🗄️ https://kahoot.it/challenge/?quiz-id=e55a-4eb9-aea2-3271bd3edff2&single-player=true 🌟 📄 ⌵ ☰

In Cry, the Beloved Country, Absalom pleaded not guilty




20





◆ True


▲ False

← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🗄️ https://kahoot.it/challenge/?quiz-id=e55a-4eb9-aea2-3271bd3edff2&single-player=true 🌟 📄 ⌵ ☰

The crime as planned by Pafuri, Matthew and Absalom in Cry, the Beloved Country is to...

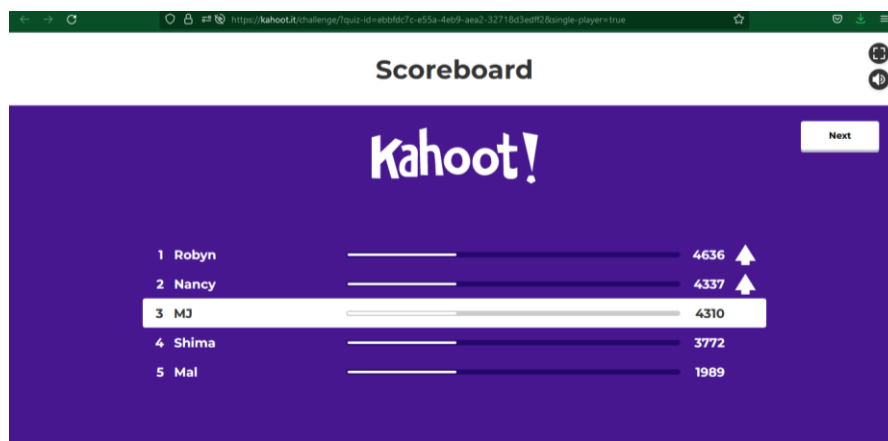
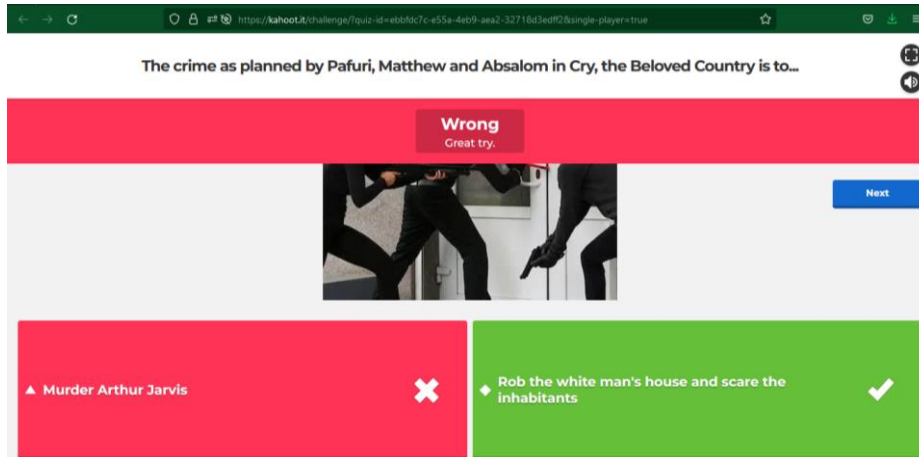
7



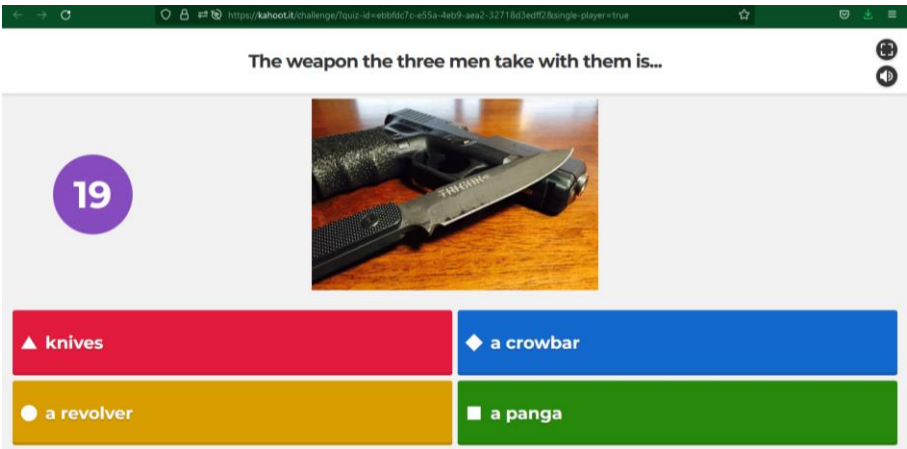
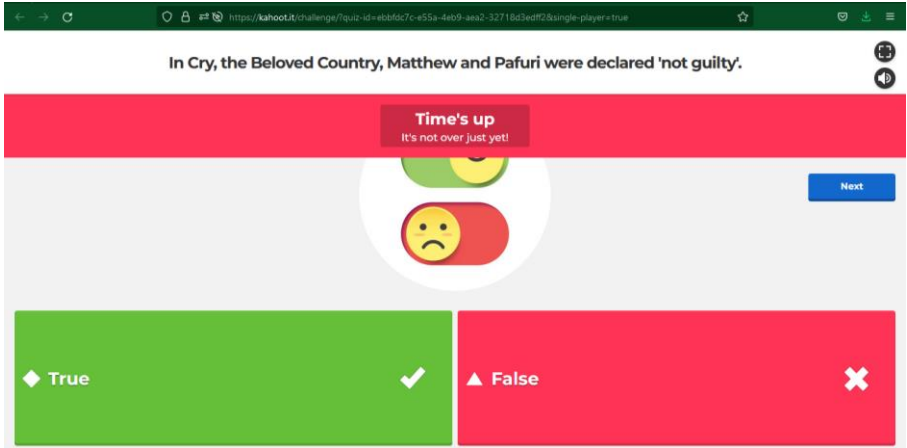
▲ Murder Arthur Jarvis

◆ Rob the white man's house and scare the inhabitants

If a learner answers incorrectly, the learner receives immediate feedback, along with the correct answer. Unfortunately, incorrect answers affect the scoreboard. Fortunately, the application encourages learners to continue trying with phrases such as “great try”.




Learners can also run out of time; in which case their lack of response will be considered as an incorrect answer and they will lose points. However, the application remains uplifting with phrases such as “it’s not over just yet!”.



https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=eb66d7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3ed9f2&single-player=true

Absalom's circumstances are mitigating because...

20



he has a pregnant girlfriend
 he is young

his future is destroyed due to white men's fear and selfishness
 it is OK to kill someone out of fear

https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=eb66d7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3ed9f2&single-player=true

Absalom is frightened when he sees Arthur Jarvis

20



True
 False


When learners answer correctly multiple times in a row, they can build up an “answer streak”, as can be seen in the following picture. Positive reinforcement such as this only serves to further encourage learner participation.

https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=eb66d7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3ed9f2&single-player=true

Absalom is frightened when he sees Arthur Jarvis

Answer streak 5
+ 959

Next



True ✓
 False ✗

← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🗑️ <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebb6c7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edf2?single-player=true> ☆ 📄 🗑️ ☰

In a criminal case, the person accused of the crime is called a...

20




▲ Defender

◆ Defendant

← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🗑️ <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebb6c7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edf2?single-player=true> ☆ 📄 🗑️ ☰

In a criminal case the prosecutor is a person who conducts...

20




▲ legal proceedings AGAINST accused persons on behalf of the State

◆ legal proceedings FOR accused persons on behalf of the State

← → ↻ 🔒 📄 🗑️ <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebb6c7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edf2?single-player=true> ☆ 📄 🗑️ ☰

Responsibility refers to an obligation to do something.

20




◆ True

▲ False

← → ↻ 🔒 🗄️ <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebbf0c7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edff2&single-player=true> ☆ 🗄️ ☰

Council refers to

20



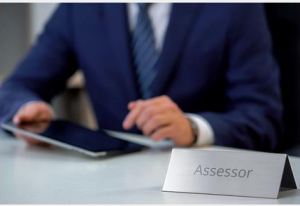
▲ advice or help

◆ an advisory group or meeting

← → ↻ 🔒 🗄️ <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebbf0c7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edff2&single-player=true> ☆ 🗄️ ☰

In Cry, the Beloved Country, an assessor is...

20



▲ an aggressive person


◆ your teacher

● an assistant to a judge

← → ↻ 🔒 🗄️ <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebbf0c7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edff2&single-player=true> ☆ 🗄️ ☰

The persons responsible for the crime are called the guilty party.

20




◆ True

▲ False

← → ↻ 🔒 🔍 <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebbfd7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edf2&single-player=true> ☆ 📄 ⌵ ☰

Court custody is a synonym for imprisonment. 🗣️ 🎧

20




◆ True ▲ False

← → ↻ 🔒 🔍 <https://kahoot.it/challenge/quiz-id=ebbfd7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edf2&single-player=true> ☆ 📄 ⌵ ☰

'Sentence' in the court of law refers to... 🗣️ 🎧

20



▲ the punishment for a crime committed ◆ a subject, verb and object arranged in a certain order

● the words spoken by everyone

The faster a learner answers, and naturally when they answer correctly, the higher they climb on the scoreboard.

← → ↻ 🔒 🔍 https://kahoot.it/challenge/?quiz-id=ebbfd7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edff2&single-player=true ☆ 📄 📄

Scoreboard

Kahoot!


Next

1 MJ	16142
2 Shima	10680
3 Robyn	9250
4 Mal	8416
5 Nancy	7982

← → ↻ 🔒 🔍 https://kahoot.it/challenge/?quiz-id=ebbfd7c-e55a-4eb9-aea2-32718d3edff2&single-player=true ☆ 📄 📄

Mercy is...

20

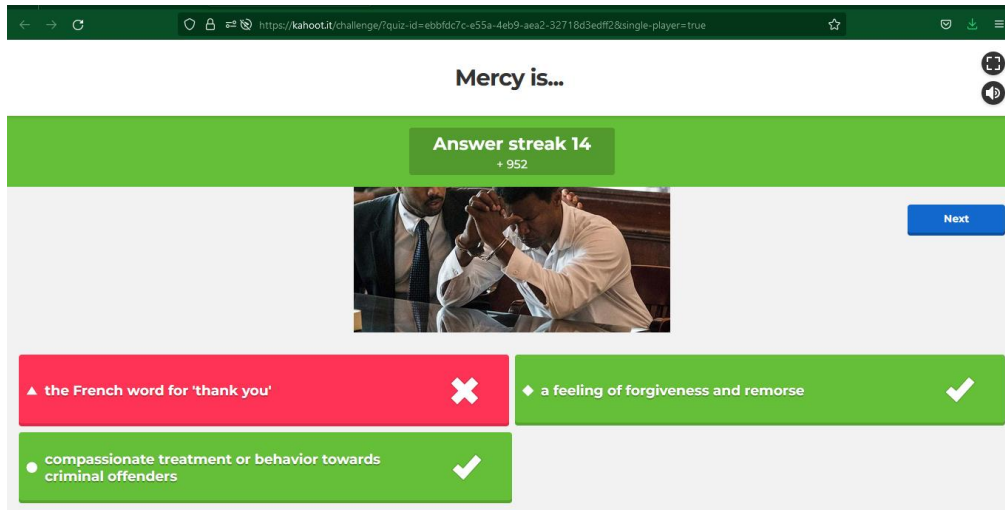


▲ the French word for 'thank you'

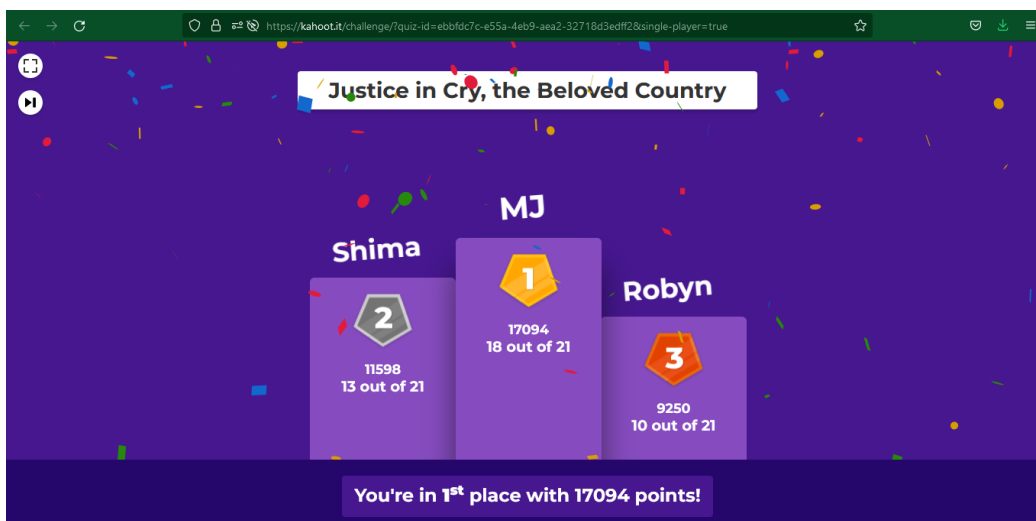
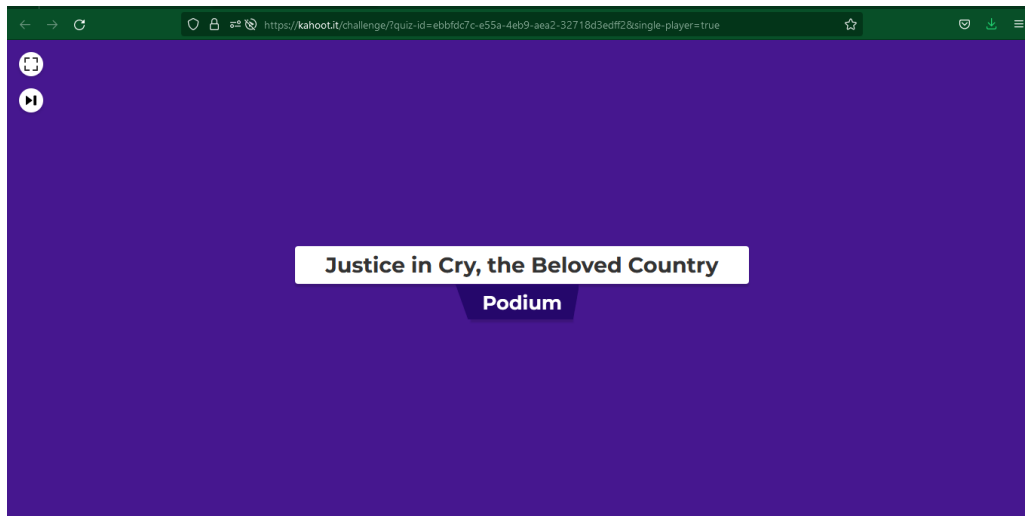
◆ a feeling of forgiveness and remorse

● compassionate treatment or behavior towards criminal offenders

The Kahoot! application also allows for multiple correct answers where learners would not be penalised if they choose one or the other.



At the end of the game, learners are presented with a winners' podium.



The resources of the second learner activity follow here.

Name and surname: _____

Date: _____

Read the excerpt below and write a diary entry of 80-100 words where you pretend to be Absalom, from *Cry, the Beloved Country*, who is experiencing inner conflict about whether to plead guilty or not guilty. The entry must be focused on Absalom's thoughts and feelings.

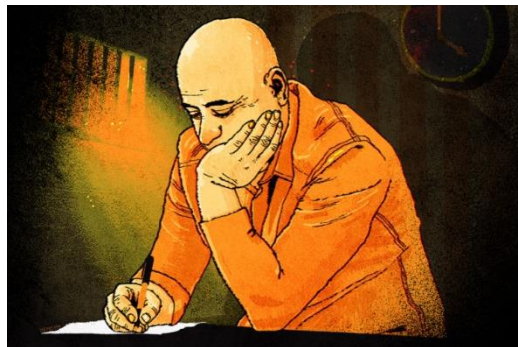
MURDER IN PARKWOLD. WELL-KNOWN CITY ENGINEER SHOT DEAD. ASSAILANTS THOUGHT TO BE NATIVES.

8 October 1946

At 1.30 p.m. today, Mr Arthur Jarvis, of Plantation Road, Parkwold, was shot dead in his house by an intruder, thought to be a native. It appears that Mrs Jarvis and her two children were away for a short holiday, and that Mr Jarvis had telephoned his partners to say that he would be staying at home with a slight cold. It would seem that a native, probably with two accomplices, entered through the kitchen, thinking no doubt that there would be no one in the house. The native servant in the kitchen was knocked unconscious, and it would appear that Mr Jarvis heard the disturbance and came down to investigate. He was shot dead at short range in the passageway leading from the stairs into the kitchen. There were no signs of any struggle.

Excerpt adapted from *Cry, the Beloved Country*, chapter 11: page 65-66.

Note: your teacher will assess the diary entry, using the same rubric that will be used for the final assessment of this lesson. The rubric follows here.



<https://howardleague.org/our-work/transform-prisons/prison-diaries/>

Criteria	Exceptional 13-15	Skilful 10-12	Moderate 7-9	Elementary 4-6	Inadequate 0-3
<p>CONTENT, PLANNING & FORMAT Response and ideas; Organisation of ideas for planning; Purpose, audience, features/ conventions and context 15 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outstanding response beyond normal expectations - Intelligent and mature ideas - Extensive knowledge of feature of the type of text - Writing maintains focus - Coherence in content and ideas - Highly elaborated and all details support the topic - Appropriate and accurate format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very good response demonstrating good knowledge of features of the type of text - Maintains focus – no digressions - Coherent in content and ideas, very well elaborated and details support topic - Appropriate format with minor inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate response demonstrating knowledge of features of the type of text - Not completely focused – some digressions - Reasonably coherent in content and ideas - Some details support the topic - Generally appropriate format but with some inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic response demonstrating some knowledge of features of the type of text - Some focus but writing digresses - Not always coherent in content and ideas - Few details support the topic - Has vaguely applied necessary rules of format - Some critical oversights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response reveals no knowledge of features of the type of text - Meaning is obscured with major digressions - Not coherent in content and ideas - Very few details support the topic - Has not applied necessary rules of format
	9-10	7-8	5-6	3-4	0-2
<p>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING Tone, register, style, purpose/effect, audience and context; Language use and conventions; Word choice; Punctuation and spelling 10 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Virtually error-free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary very appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Generally grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Very good vocabulary - Mostly free of errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Some grammatical errors - Adequate vocabulary - Errors do not impede meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Inaccurate grammar with numerous errors - Limited vocabulary - Meaning obscured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary do not correspond to purpose, audience and context - Error-ridden and confused - Vocabulary not suitable for purpose - Meaning seriously impaired

The first part of learner activity 3 requires no worksheet since the teacher will merely guide the learners in discussion. However, I do include some suggested points for discussion to guide the teacher. I also include brief possible responses to some of the questions so the teacher can continue to guide the learners.

- Initiate the discussion by presenting the learners with a pertinent question. Examples include:
 - How do you feel about the outcome of the trial?
 - Is it fair that Absalom is sentenced to death? Substantiate your answer.
 - Is it fair that Matthew and Pafuri are released? Substantiate your answer.
 - In which ways can the law be considered just?
 - In which ways can the law be considered unjust?

Note: open-ended questions encourage critical thinking, therefore, I do not provide possible answers for the pertinent questions as these should be the learners' own responses. I do, however, provide possible answers to the questions that follow here as the teacher can use these to guide the learners in preparing them for the debate that is to follow.

- How may laypersons interpret the fact that Matthew Kumalo and Johannes Pafuri were found to be not guilty?

The outcome of the trial is significant as it suggests that the law cannot always address the full complexity of a situation. It is true that Absalom kills Arthur and thus must be punished, however, Matthew and Pafuri were present during the crime and must also be sentenced – even if only with breaking and entering. Moreover, considering the circumstances of the time, such as institutionalised poverty, which drove natives to commit crime and considering the judge's declaration of white men's part in the destruction of the tribes that left them in dire situations, giving rise to drastic measures such as theft, perhaps a kinder punishment may have sufficed. Additionally, why is Absalom charged with murder and not culpable homicide when he did not mean to kill Arthur? Aside from all this, the law's effectiveness and fairness are further questioned when the lesser crime of Matthew and Pafuri is overlooked for the sake of pursuing the transgressor of the greater crime. Is all crime then not punishable?

- How can evidence affect the outcome of a trial?
Evidence can be the determining factor in a trial as it can incriminate or exonerate the accused.
- Is evidence always trustworthy?
Evidence is not always legitimate as it can be planted, tampered with or human errors can occur during the processing of evidence. Additionally, eyewitness testimony can be false, whether deliberately or simply because we are human and prone to error.
- How often do you think the accused in courtroom trials may be wrongfully convicted?
Learners provide their own answers to enhance critical thinking. Learners may also be encouraged to go and do their own research on the matter. For interest's sake I include here that the research shows defendants are often wrongfully convicted. Many factors, such as "anxiety, stress, reconstructive memory, [and] weapon focus", affect an eyewitness' testimony and often leads to the reproduction of false information (McLeod, 2018).
- What is your opinion about the death sentence? Is it acceptable or inhumane?
Learners provide their own answers to enhance critical thinking. Possible answers may include: the death sentence is acceptable – when a person takes a life, his life must also be taken. An eye for eye. On the other hand, the death sentence is in sharp contrast with the basic human right to live free of torture or harm (Jones, 2020). However, how is it fair to protect someone on the ground of having the right to live when that person violated someone else's right to live?
- How do you feel about Pafuri's reaction when he is released? Remember he "looks about as though he would say, this is right, this is just, what has been done" (Paton, 1948:174).
Learners provide their own answers. Answers may include: frustrated, annoyed, angry, helpless or vengeful. The teacher can ask the learners to explain why they feel the way they do about injustice.

It is important that the class discussion be guided well and that all learners participate, or at the very least pay attention when peers speak so they can learn from one another and enhance their critical thinking. The class discussion will, in a manner of speaking, act as a brainstorming session for the class debate that is to follow. The following worksheet can be given to learners to help them organise their thoughts for the second part of the third

activity: the debate. Learners will divide into groups and will be instructed to think of possible arguments and counterarguments. After having organised their thoughts, learners will commence with the debate.

Name and surname: _____

Date: _____

Use the following sheet to briefly organise your thoughts in preparation for the debate.

Debate topic: Fairness of the law in <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i> .	
Take a stand. Do you think the law was just or unjust in <i>Cry, the Beloved Country</i> ?	
Opening statement:	
Argument:	Supporting statements:
Anticipated counter argument:	

Argument:	Supporting statements:
Anticipated counter argument:	
Argument:	Supporting statements:
Anticipated counter argument:	
Closing argument:	

SMART TASK: Justice in *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton

Name and surname: _____

Date: _____

Envision yourself as a disgruntled audience member who has witnessed the trial of Absalom Kumalo and his two associates. You are dissatisfied that Absalom received the death sentence, while his two associates were found to be not guilty, even though they were also at the scene of the crime. Create a blog post of 180-200 words by using Google's Site application, where you express your views on:

1. Absalom's sentence
2. The acquittal of Absalom's associates
3. The Judge's words before he delivers their sentences
4. The law's effectiveness in serving its purpose
5. Mitigating circumstances that should have been considered

You must plan prior to publishing the final blog post. You may make use of miMind, Padlet, or Google Docs to plan. Submit a link with your planning to your teacher in Google Classroom. Remember to consult Chapter 11, on page 168 of your novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, by Alan Paton prior to completing the assignment. Your blog will be assessed by the teacher, using a rubric. Submission is due in three days' time to provide room for any technical issues that you may experience.

The rubric that will be used to assess the task is also provided to you.



<https://www.searchenginejournal.com/business-benefits-of-blogging/377747/>

Criteria	Exceptional 13-15	Skilful 10-12	Moderate 7-9	Elementary 4-6	Inadequate 0-3
<p>CONTENT, PLANNING & FORMAT</p> <p>Response and ideas; Organisation of ideas for planning; Purpose, audience, features/ conventions and context</p> <p>15 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outstanding response beyond normal expectations - Intelligent and mature ideas - Extensive knowledge of feature of the type of text - Writing maintains focus - Coherence in content and ideas - Highly elaborated and all details support the topic - Appropriate and accurate format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very good response demonstrating good knowledge of features of the type of text - Maintains focus – no digressions - Coherent in content and ideas, very well elaborated and details support topic - Appropriate format with minor inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate response demonstrating knowledge of features of the type of text - Not completely focused – some digressions - Reasonably coherent in content and ideas - Some details support the topic - Generally appropriate format but with some inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic response demonstrating some knowledge of features of the type of text - Some focus but writing digresses - Not always coherent in content and ideas - Few details support the topic - Has vaguely applied necessary rules of format - Some critical oversights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response reveals no knowledge of features of the type of text - Meaning is obscured with major digressions - Not coherent in content and ideas - Very few details support the topic - Has not applied necessary rules of format
<p>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING</p> <p>Tone, register, style, purpose/effect, audience and context; Language use and conventions; Word choice; Punctuation and spelling</p> <p>10 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Virtually error-free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary very appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Generally grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Very good vocabulary - Mostly free of errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Some grammatical errors - Adequate vocabulary - Errors do not impede meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Inaccurate grammar with numerous errors - Limited vocabulary - Meaning obscured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary do not correspond to purpose, audience and context - Error-ridden and confused - Vocabulary not suitable for purpose - Meaning seriously impaired

I also include an excerpt from the novel, *Cry the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton (1948:168-174), that learners should consult prior to completing the SMART task.

THE PEOPLE STAND when the great Judge comes into the Court, they stand more solemnly today, for this is the day of the judgement. The Judge sits, and then his two assessors, and then the people; and the three accused are brought from the place under the Court.

I have given long thought and consideration to this case, says the Judge, and so have my assessors. We have listened carefully to all the evidence that has been brought forward, and have discussed it and tested it piece by piece.

And the interpreter interprets into Zulu what the Judge has said:

The accused Absalom Kumalo has not sought to deny his guilt. The defence has chosen to put the accused in the witness-box, where he has told straightforwardly and simply the story of how he shot the late Arthur Jarvis in his house at Parkwold. He has maintained further that it was not his intention to kill or even to shoot, that the weapon was brought to intimidate the servant Richard Mpiring, that he supposed the murdered man to have been elsewhere. With this evidence we must later deal, but part of it is of the gravest importance in determining the guilt of the second and third accused. The first accused states that the plan was put forward by the third accused Johannes Pafuri, and that Pafuri struck the blow that rendered unconscious the servant Mpiring. In this he is supported by Mpiring himself, who says that he recognized Pafuri by the twitching of the eyes above the mask. It is further true that he picked out Pafuri from among ten men similarly disguised, more than one of whom suffered from a tic similar to that suffered by Pafuri. But the defence has pointed out that these tics were similar and not identical, that it was difficult to find even a few men of similar build with any tic at all, and that Pafuri was well-known to Mpiring. The defence has argued that the identification would have been valid only if all ten men had been of similar build and had suffered from identical tics. We cannot accept this argument in its entirety, because it would seem to lead to the conclusion that identification is only valid when all the subjects are identical. But the partial validity of the argument is clear; a marked characteristic like a tic can lead as easily to wrong identification as to correct identification, especially when the lower half of the face is concealed. It must be accepted that identification depends on the recognition of a pattern, of a whole, and that it becomes uncertain when the pattern is partially concealed. In fact it becomes dangerous, because it would obviously be possible to conceal the unlike features, and to reveal only the like. Two people with similar scars, shall we say, are more easily confused one with the other when the area surrounding the scar is revealed, and the

rest concealed. It would appear therefore that Mpiring's identification of his assailant is not of itself sufficient proof that Pafuri was that man.

It must further be borne in mind that, although the first accused, Absalom Kumalo, stated that Pafuri was present, and that he had assaulted Mpiring, he made this statement only after the Police had questioned him as to the whereabouts of Pafuri. Did it then first occur to him to implicate Pafuri? Or was there a pre-existing connection between Pafuri and the murder? Counsel for the first accused has argued that Absalom Kumalo had been in a continuous state of fear for some days, and that once he had been arrested, no matter what name or names had been submitted to him, he would have confessed what was so heavily burdening his mind, and that it was this state of mind that led to the confession, and not the mention of Pafuri's name. Indeed his own account of his fearful state lends colour to that supposition. But one cannot exclude the possibility that he seized upon Pafuri's name, and said that Pafuri was one of the three, not wishing to be alone on so grave a charge. Why however should he not give the names of his real confederates, for there seems no reason to doubt Mpiring's evidence that three men came into the kitchen? He has given a straightforward account of his own actions. Why should he then implicate two innocent men and conceal the names of two guilty men?

One must also bear in mind the strange coincidence that what is argued to be a wrong identification led to the apprehension of an associate who immediately confessed.

There is a further difficulty in this perplexing case. Neither of the other accused, nor the woman Baby Mkize, denies that all four were present at 79 Twenty-third Avenue, Alexandra, on the night following the murder. Was this again a chance meeting that caused the first accused to name both the second and third accused as his confederates? Or was it indeed the kind of meeting that he claims it to be? Was the murder discussed at this meeting? The woman Baby Mkize is a most unsatisfactory witness, and while the prosecution, and the Counsel for the defence of the first accused, demonstrated this most clearly, neither was able to produce that conclusive proof that the murder had been discussed. This woman at first lied to the Police, telling them that she had not seen the first accused for a year. She was a confused, contradictory, and frightened witness, but was this fear and its resulting confusion caused by mere presence in a Court, or by knowledge of other crimes to which she had been a party, or by the guilty knowledge that the murder was in fact discussed? That does not seem to us to have been clearly established.

The prosecution has made much of the previous association of the three accused, and indeed has made out so strong a case that further investigation is called for into the nature of that association. But previous association, even of a criminal nature, is not in itself a proof of association in the grave crime of which these three persons stand accused.

After long and thoughtful consideration, my assessors and I have come to the conclusion that the guilt of the second and third accused is not established, and they will be accordingly discharged. But I have no doubt that their previous criminal association will be exhaustively investigated.

There is a sigh in the Court. One act of this drama is over. The accused Absalom Kumalo makes no sign. He does not even look at the two who are now free. But Pafuri looks about as though he would say, this is right, this is just, what has been done.

There remains the case against the first accused. His confession has been thoroughly investigated, and where it could be tested, it has been found to be true. There seems no reason to suppose that an innocent person is confessing the commission of a crime that he did not in fact commit. His learned Counsel pleads that he should not suffer the extreme penalty, argues that he is shocked and overwhelmed and stricken by his act, commends him for his truthful and straightforward confession, draws attention to his youth and to the disastrous effect of a great and wicked city on the character of a simple tribal boy. He has dealt profoundly with the disaster that has overwhelmed our native tribal society, and has argued cogently the case of our own complicity in this disaster. But even if it be true that we have, out of fear and selfishness and thoughtlessness, wrought a destruction that we have done little to repair, even if it be true that we should be ashamed of it and do something more courageous and forthright than we are doing, there is nevertheless a law, and it is one of the most monumental achievements of this defective society that it has made a law, and has set judges to administer it, and has freed those judges from any obligation whatsoever but to administer the law. But a Judge may not trifle with the Law because the society is defective. If the law is the law of a society that some feel to be unjust, it is the law and the society that must be changed. In the meantime there is an existing law that must be administered, and it is the sacred duty of a Judge to administer it. And the fact that he is left free to administer it must be counted as righteousness in a society that may in other respects not be righteous. I am not suggesting of course that the learned Counsel for the defence for a moment contemplated that the law should not be administered. I am only pointing out that a Judge

cannot, must not, dare not allow the existing defects of society to influence him to do anything but administer the law.

Under the law a man is held responsible for his deeds, except under certain circumstances which no one has suggested here to obtain. It is not for a judge otherwise to decide in how far human beings are in truth responsible; under the law they are fully responsible. Nor is it for a judge to show mercy. A higher authority, in this case the Governor-General-in-Council, may be merciful, but that is a matter for that authority. What are the facts of this case? This young man goes to a house with the intention to break in and steal. He takes with him a loaded revolver. He maintains that this was for the purpose of intimidation. Why then must it be loaded? He maintains that it was not his intention to kill. Yet one of his accomplices cruelly struck down the native servant, and one must suppose that the servant might easily have been killed. He states himself that the weapon was an iron bar, and there is surely no more cruel, no more dangerous way to do such a deed. In this plan he concurred, and when the Court questioned him, he said that he had made no protest against the taking of this murderous and dangerous weapon. It is true that the victim was a black man, and there is a school of thought which would regard such an offence as less serious when the victim is black. But no Court of Justice could countenance such a view.

The most important point to consider here is the accused's repeated assertion that he had no intention to kill, that the coming of the white man was unexpected, and that he fired the revolver out of panic and fear. If the Court could accept this as truth, then the Court must find that the accused did not commit murder.

What again are the facts of the case? How can one suppose otherwise than that here were three murderous and dangerous young men? It is true that they did not go to the house with the express intention of killing a man. But it is true that they took with them weapons the use of which might well result in the death of any man who interfered with the carrying out of their unlawful purpose.

The law on this point has been stated by a great South African judge. "An intention to kill," he says, "is an essential element in murder; but its existence may be inferred from the relevant circumstances. And the question is whether on the facts here proved an inference of that nature was rightly drawn. Such an intent is not confined to cases where there is a definite purpose to kill; it is also present in cases where the object is to inflict grievous bodily harm, calculated to cause death regardless of whether death results or not."

Are we to suppose that in this small room, where in this short and tragic space of time an innocent black man is cruelly struck down and an innocent white man is shot dead, that there was no intention to inflict grievous bodily harm of this kind should the terrible need for it arise? I cannot bring myself to entertain such a supposition.

They are silent in the Court. And the Judge too is silent. There is no sound there. No one coughs or moves or sighs. The Judge speaks:

This Court finds you guilty, Absalom Kumalo, of the murder of Arthur Trevelyan Jarvis at his residence in Parkwold, on the afternoon of the eighth day of October, 1946. And this Court finds you, Matthew Kumalo, and Johannes Pafuri, not guilty, and you are accordingly discharged.

So these two go down the stairs into the place that is under the ground, and leave the other alone. He looks at them going, perhaps he is thinking, now it is I alone.

The Judge speaks again. On what grounds, he asks, can this Court make any recommendation to mercy? I have given this long and serious thought, and I cannot find any extenuating circumstances. This is a young man, but he has reached the age of manhood. He goes to a house with two companions, and they take with them two dangerous weapons, either of which can encompass the death of a man. These two weapons are used, one with serious, the other with fatal results. This Court has a solemn duty to protect society against the murderous attacks of dangerous men, whether they be old or young, and to show clearly that it will punish fitly such offenders. Therefore, I can make no recommendation to mercy.

The Judge speaks to the boy.

- Have you anything to say, he asks, before I pronounce sentence?

- I have only this to say, that I killed this man, but I did not mean to kill him, only I was afraid.

They are silent in the Court, but for all that a white man calls out in a loud voice for silence. Kumalo puts his face in his hands, he has heard what it means. Jarvis sits stern and erect. The young white man looks before him and frowns fiercely. The girl sits like the child she is, her eyes are fixed on the Judge, not on her lover.

I sentence you, Absalom Kumalo, to be returned to custody, and to be hanged by the neck until you are dead. And may the Lord have mercy upon your soul.

The Judge rises, and the people rise. But not all is silent. The guilty one falls to the floor, crying and sobbing. And there is a woman wailing, and an old man crying, Tixo, Tixo . No one calls for silence, though the Judge is not quite gone. For who can stop the heart from breaking?

They come out of the Court, the white on one side, the black on the other, according to the custom. But the young white man breaks the custom, and he and Msimangu help the old and broken man, one on each side of him. It is not often that such a custom is broken. It is only when there is a deep experience that such a custom is broken. The young man's brow is set, and he looks fiercely before him. That is partly because it is a deep experience, and partly because of the custom that is being broken. For such a thing is not lightly done.

Excerpt from *Cry, the Beloved Country*, chapter 11: page 168-174.

4.10.2 Example speaking lesson plan based on the theme of survival as found in the novel, *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

Even though we are no longer required to hunt for food, create our own shelters or evade predators (Stockton, 2019; Mentor, 2020) since the 21st century allows us the privilege of modern conveniences (Tirman, 2022), the theme of survival is still universally relevant. In the 21st century, soft skills are considered survival skills (Hansen, 2019; Pratley, 2019; Joynes *et al.*, 2019:12). However, the ability to use technology is just as crucial for survival in the 21st century (Schofield, 2013). Regardless of the comfort that comes with modern-day living, we must not allow technology to negate basic, or primitive, survival skills such as finding food, making a fire, building shelter and signalling for help, since disasters can still strike (MacWelch, 2020; Laing, 2021). Pi's situation in *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, is a good example of disaster striking. Pi, a normal child and teenager, experiences bullying, changing schools and parents who teach him life lessons. However, when Pi and his family move away from Pondicherry to Canada via a cargo ship, disaster strikes and Pi is shipwrecked. Similarly, disaster struck the world in 2019 when the novel COVID-19 virus was discovered late in 2019 in China and became more prominent early in 2020 throughout the rest of the world (CDC, 2021). All individuals are affected by the virus and so everyone is fighting for survival, whether for physical survival in overcoming the virus or just to make ends meet since the aftermath of the virus has left many jobless (Banco, 2022).

The elements needed for survival mainly depend on the situation. For instance, a plane crash victim's needs will differ from the needs of a shipwrecked person (McKay & McKay, 2021; Guillerm, 2021). Likewise, victims of the COVID-19 pandemic require specific survival skills. The victims of the COVID-19 pandemic do not necessarily only refer to persons who have contracted the virus, but to all who were affected by it – and all, worldwide, have been affected by this virus whether directly or indirectly (Chriscaden, 2020; UNESCO, 2020b; Bundervoet & Davalos, 2021). For the purpose of this discussion, victims of the COVID-19 pandemic will refer to those who lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic as well as those who were forced to transition over to online schooling, even though most South Africans do not have access to technology (Mathew & Pandya, 2020:6138; Cassette & Botsane, 2020; Collaborative on Health and the Environment, 2022). These victims require certain 'tools' to survive their circumstances – soft skills. I accentuate here that even though soft skills have been lacking for a long time, it is now especially important that they be developed and enhanced since the pandemic only served to expediate the deterioration of soft skills when officials had employed online schooling. Online schooling is not damaging to soft skills, though the incorrect use or over-use of technology can be harmful to the development of soft skills. Fortunately, the novel, *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, provides fertile ground to discuss the theme of survival both in terms of primitive and modern survival skills. As a result,

soft skills can be explicitly taught by using *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel as foundation for the lesson. Though it is rare that South African learners will face extreme situations where their lives are in imminent danger such as Pi's when he is trapped on a life boat with a tiger, our learners do face difficulties of their own, such as poor socio-economic circumstances that directly affect their future (SAMHSA, 2017; Chen *et al.*, 2018). Not only do poor socio-economic situations delineate a lack of technology at home but also poor living conditions such as no running water or electricity, which is mostly the case in rural areas in South Africa (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019:1). Consequently, learners can benefit from the teaching of primitive and modern survival skills. The theme of survival thus allows an opportunity for collaboration between the English teacher and the Science teacher, who can teach learners soft skills to help them in the modern world and basic survival skills that can combat poor socio-economic circumstances respectively. A collaboration between teachers will model to the learners that soft skills are in fact relevant. However, considering that the four Cs are crucial to our survival in the 21st century, especially in the aftermath of COVID-19, and considering the predicament the protagonist in *Life of Pi* faces, survival skills feature explicitly in the following lesson. As with any lesson, prior knowledge must be activated and so pertinent questions may be employed. Pertinent questions for a lesson on survival may include:

1. Why do you think it is important to know how to survive in the 21st century?
2. How would you describe a life-threatening event in the 21st century?
3. If you somehow knew that you would encounter a life-threatening event, how would you prepare for it?
4. How do you think a traumatic event may affect you and others in your community?

These pertinent questions may allow learners to place themselves in the context of the novel, *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel. The focus of the lesson is on Pi being shipwrecked and fighting for survival. Moreover, attention is drawn to the two versions of Pi's story – the animal version and the human version. The pertinent questions directly relate to the theme of survival. Once learners' prior knowledge is activated, they need to be explicitly introduced to the topic of the lesson which, in this case, is survival. This may be done by showing learners a clip from *Life of Pi* where Pi recounts his experience as a castaway. In the clip, the investigators do not believe the animal version of Pi's story as it sounds too fantastical and so Pi provides them with a human version of the story. Following the introduction, the first learner activity may be provided.

I prefer that the first learner activity be about vocabulary as it allows learners to prepare for and understand the lesson content. Thus, for the first activity of this lesson I suggest a crossword puzzle on survival-related concepts, which teachers can generate online. Vocabulary, as found in the crossword, may aid learners in producing ideas for the activities that are to follow later in

the lesson. The four Cs may be included here together with other primitive survival concepts such as purifying water. These concepts may guide learners, and thus act as scaffolding for the second learner activity. Moreover, crossword puzzles can improve communication, critical thinking and creativity (Saran & Kumar, 2015; Anggraeni & Sole, 2020), especially if learners work together. Upon completion of the crossword, learners will have the key words of the lesson along with the definitions to their disposal to aid them with the rest of the lesson. Learners' communication skills and creativity may be developed with such an activity. The first activity is an individual activity. The second, however, entails groupwork.

For the second activity, learners are required to work in groups of four. Learners are referred to Chapter 99, where Pi recounts his experience of the ship sinking to two insurance investigators. The teacher draws learners' attention to page 301 where the one investigator notices similarities between the animal and human version of Pi's stories. For the second learner activity to be feasible, each learner in the group must assume the role of one of the human characters in Pi's story: Pi, his mother, the sailor or the cook. Learners are then expected to place themselves in the shoes of the chosen characters and think about what they would have done differently to ensure their survival. Since Pi survives, the learner who assumes this role must make different decisions so that he may be better able to live with the choices he makes. In the novel, Pi must live with how his actions may have led to his mother's death, in effect meaning that Pi became a murderer to survive. Each learner must contribute information to a mind map, which they create on Padlet. If learners do not have access to Padlet they can simply work together in a group and make mind maps in their books. All this information is used in the third learner activity, where collaboration among learners is important. Before learners commence with this activity, the teacher must explicitly teach learners about the four Cs and its importance, not only in a dire situation but also in the 21st century, and learners must then incorporate this into their answer. Thus, learners are forced to engage with the text intensively to determine what the survivors have at their disposal. Perhaps they may have used something other than the sailor's amputated leg as bait. Additionally, for example, instead of fighting against one another and ultimately killing one another, Pi and the cook may have communicated their frustrations with each other and collaborated so more people may have survived the shipwreck, instead of just Pi. Having to employ the four Cs in their answers, learners are forced to engage with soft skills and so their skills may be developed and enhanced. The third activity for this lesson is also a group activity.

The third learner activity is a roleplay where learners must act out how they would have handled the scene on the lifeboat differently. Learners are required to use information from Chapter 99, where Pi briefly describes the events that occurred out at sea. A role play of this nature will enable the teacher to assess learners' ability to think critically and creatively. Moreover, learners'

communication skills can be assessed and lastly, their ability to collaborate. Thus, with this activity, teachers can clearly assess whether learners paid attention to the four Cs. Should the English teacher manage to engage the Science teacher to teach the learners some basic survival skills, as mentioned earlier, learners can incorporate basic survival skills into the literature lesson. This contributes creativity and critical thinking in the presentation of their roleplay. The third learner activity is followed by the SMART task.

The suggested SMART task requires learners to showcase critical thinking skills as they are expected to present a prepared speech in which they pretend to be investigative reporters who evaluate and interpret the two versions of Pi's tale - the animal and the human version. Aside from having knowledge of the text, learners must show insight into the novel, as well as a good understanding of persons who have undergone trauma in their life. The latter will require learners to do some research and so they must know how to synthesise information they find online, especially since it is so readily available in the 21st century. Which version learners find to be true is beside the point, as the focus is on arguments and the ability of learners to communicate their point of view in clear and meaningful language. Learners must be warned against plagiarism as it remains a serious transgression (Azher, 2014:13; Cioruta & Coman, 2020). The teacher will guide the learners during instruction and state that victims of trauma tend to develop coping mechanisms, which is why there is some doubt surrounding the validity of the animal version of Pi's recount of events. Additionally, male adult Bengal tigers are extremely dangerous (Chamberlain, 2008; Kelly *et al.*, 2020; Cursino, 2022) and so Pi's chances of surviving while being stranded with such a creature in a confined space is unlikely. The presentation of the speech may be conducted in class, or if teachers should prefer, it can be submitted to the teacher in Google Classroom with a link to a compressed video. Learners can use HandBrake so suppress their videos. Though presentations in class can be time-consuming, I suggest teachers listen to the speeches in class as videos often deprive learners of the opportunity to communicate their ideas to a live audience. Presenting their speeches in class in front of their peers will allow learners to further develop their communication skills and above all, their confidence. This will be an individual activity that the teacher will assess against a rubric. The lesson is also tabulated for convenience, starting with the SMART task, as the backward design is used here as well.

SMART task

By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to:

Present a prepared speech in which they evaluate and interpret the two versions of Pi's tale.

Instruction: Pretend you are an investigative reporter who came to hear of Pi's incredible survival story. However, you are sceptical about the animal version of events and so you set out to investigate and interpret the two versions of Pi's retelling of his time at sea. Your speech must be approximately 4 to 5 minutes long and must include at least 3 substantial arguments supported by legitimate sources. Express your views surrounding:

1. Pi's sanity having been lost at sea for such a long time
2. Coping mechanisms of trauma victims
3. The likelihood of surviving a shared confined space with an adult Bengal tiger
4. Pi's reaction to the insurance investigators
5. Which version do you believe is the better story - the animal or the human version and why?

Follow the writing process by creating a mind map and rough draft, editing it and finally proofreading your speech. You may look at the collaborative mind map that your group created on Padlet to inform your speech, though this is an individual activity. Your speech requires research – take Chapter 99 into account as well as the behaviour of trauma victims when you evaluate which version is the better story. Present your speech of approximately 4 to 5 minutes to the class. Your teacher will assess your speech against a rubric.

The rubric used to assess the task is the assessment rubric for prepared speech for HL as provided by the Department of Education in the examination guidelines (DBE, 2021d).

Criteria	Exceptional 10-8	Skilful 7-6	Moderate 5-4	Elementary 3-2	Inadequate 1-0
Research skills Planning and organisation of content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convincing evidence that a wide range of interesting and relevant sources have been consulted; new and interesting facts and examples included - Thoroughly planned according to task, audience, context and format - Striking introduction which immediately grasps audience attention - Brilliant development of ideas and argument - Content reflects outstanding creativity, originality and mature insight - Skilful ending, ideas meticulously drawn together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good evidence that a wide range of interesting and relevant sources have been consulted; Interesting facts and examples included - Well planned according to task, audience, context and format - Good and appropriate introduction which arouses interest - Good, and sustained development of ideas and argument - Content reflects creativity originality and some insight - Good conclusion, ideas drawn together well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfactory evidence that relevant sources have been consulted; some new and interesting facts and examples included - Satisfactory planning according to task, audience, context and format - Reasonably good introduction which still arouses interest - Good development of argument which can be followed easily - Content fairly original, but not always creative and insight sometimes lacking - Reasonably good ending, but sometimes lacks cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little evidence that relevant sources were used; some facts or examples included - Evidence of some planning according to task, audience, context and format - Imperfect introduction which arouses some interest - Partial development of ideas and argument, problems with cohesion - Content shows little originality, but not always creative and lacks insight - Flawed conclusion, lacks cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very little evidence of use of sources; few facts or examples included - Limited planning according to task, audience, context and format - Slight evidence of introduction, barely arouses interest - Some arguments can be followed, but most are inconsistent / can barely be followed - Content is unoriginal and lacks creativity or insight - Hardly any evidence of a conclusion
Use of language, tone, speaking and presentation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural delivery, a fluent, skilled and animated presenter - Clearly audible, excellent articulation - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language outstanding, functional and convincing - Confident delivery with very little use of notes - Appropriate style and register - Thorough, mature vocabulary and creative language use - Outstanding language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Exceptional awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Excellent and thoughtful choice and presentation of visual/other aids, fully integrated into the speech to contribute effectively to the success of the presentation (where used) - Audience reaction overwhelmingly positive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good presenter, a generally fluent, skilled and animated presenter - Audible, good articulation - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language largely functional and convincing - Notes used effectively - Appropriate style and register - Good vocabulary and creative language use - Good language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Good awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Good and appropriate choice and use of visual / other aids successfully integrated into the speech to contribute effectively to the success of the presentation (where used) - Audience interest sustained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reasonably fluent presenter, but sometimes shows hesitation - Mostly clear articulation and audibility - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language reasonably convincing - Some dependency on notes but still good contact with the audience - Style and register mostly appropriate - Reasonably mature vocabulary and creative language use - Reasonable language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Reasonable awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Visual/other aids are mostly relevant to the topic and contribute to the success of the presentation (where used) - Most members of the audience follow with interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes fluent, but presentation often flawed - Some clear articulation and audibility - Adequate eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language but not entirely convincing - Use of notes often detracts from presentation - Style and register rarely appropriate - Adequate vocabulary and language use - Some language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Some awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Visual / other aids poorly used, not always totally appropriate (where used) - Mixed reaction from the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacks fluency, hesitant, lacks expression - Articulation not clear and hardly audible - Very little eye contact / facial expressions / body language - Dependent on notes - Mostly inappropriate style and register - Limited vocabulary and language use - Struggles to manipulate language in order to evoke audience response - Seldom aware of language, especially on sensitive issues - Use of aids clumsy and not functional (where used) - Lack of audience interest shown

Teaching strategies, learner activities, assessment and resources

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>Teacher observes</p> <p>The teacher hands each learner a computer-generated crossword puzzle and instructs them to complete it individually.</p>	<p>Activity 1: Vocabulary</p> <p>Learners receive the handout and complete the crossword puzzle.</p>	<p>Peer assessment</p> <p>When learners peer assess each other's work, it allows them to learn from more knowledgeable others, all the while enhancing their collaboration skills.</p>	<p>Crossword puzzle, worksheet and dictionaries.</p>	<p>Reading and writing.</p>	<p>Critical thinking and collaboration.</p>

The vocabulary incorporates various levels of difficulty to accommodate all learners with regard to Bloom's taxonomy and the various cognitive levels. The vocabulary to be tested in the crossword puzzle activity include: castaway, Bengal tiger, hallucination, coping mechanism, dehydration, Richard Parker, thirsty, hungry, survival, fishing, faith, pray, scared, forlorn, energy, sunlight, wit, calm, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, communication, physical fitness, mental fitness, imagination, logic, rations, wilderness, shipwrecked and lizard brain.

The purpose of this learner activity is not only to activate learners' prior knowledge and to get them excited about the lesson but it is also about preparing them for the content that they will encounter in the rest of the lesson.

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>Teacher acts as facilitator.</p> <p>The teacher instructs the learners to divide into groups. Next, the teacher instructs the learners to read Chapter 99 in their groups, and to pay special attention to page 301 where the one insurance investigator highlights similarities between the animal- and the human version of Pi's stories. The teacher shares with learners that considering the similarities, there is a possibility that either story may be true. However, since most of the novel deals with the animal version, the human version is not discussed in detail. Therefore, learners are required to employ critical thinking in their groups by assuming the</p>	<p>Activity 2: Survival of the fittest.</p> <p>Learners will read Chapter 99 and pay special attention to page 301. Following this the group members will decide who will assume which role.</p> <p>Learners must then think about how the animal counterparts of these characters acted while lost at sea.</p> <p>Learners are to determine a new course of action for each character and so</p>	<p>Teacher informally assesses the Padlet with the aim of verifying whether all group members are participating.</p>	<p>The novel, <i>Life of Pi</i> by Yann Martel, specifically page 301. Learners also have available to them textbooks from other subjects such as Physical and Life Sciences. Moreover, learners can make use of the internet.</p>	<p>Reading, speaking, listening and writing.</p>	<p>Creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration.</p>

role of one of the human characters in Pi's story: Pi, his mother, the sailor or the cook.

The teacher instructs learners to place themselves in the shoes of their chosen character. Learners are to think about how they would have handled the situation adrift at sea differently to ensure their survival.

The different approaches learners would take must be notated in a collaborative mind map created on Padlet.

Teaching moment: Considering that the theme of the lesson is survival, an explicit teaching moment may be incorporated here where teachers can discuss with learners the necessity of soft skills, not only in a life-threatening situation like Pi's but also in the 21st century, and learners must then incorporate this into their answer.

ultimately rewrite the story so that they all survive.

Soft skills, such as communication, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking must feature in the learners' altered versions of the story. Learners may do some additional research on basic survival skills.

Finally, learners will indicate these changes on a collaborative mind map that they have created on the e-learning tool, Padlet.

The link to the mind map can be shared with the teacher for her/him to see if everyone is participating.

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>Teacher acts as assessor.</p> <p>For the third learner activity, the teacher instructs the class that they are now going to use the information they have accumulated on the Padlet to enact what they would have done to keep all four characters alive.</p> <p>Thus, learners remain in their groups from the previous activity and work together to recreate the scene on the lifeboat so everyone survives.</p> <p>The teacher then instructs the learners that the scene must be well-prepared and performed in front of the class in three days' time. The duration of the performance must be no longer than five minutes.</p>	<p>Activity 3: Roleplay</p> <p>Learners stay in their groups, rewrite the scene on the lifeboat and perform it to the class in three days' time.</p>	<p>Teacher assesses the roleplay with a rubric.</p>	<p>Notes from Padlet.</p>	<p>Reading, writing and speaking.</p>	<p>Communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.</p>

Following the three learner activities, the teacher will provide the SMART task as already discussed.

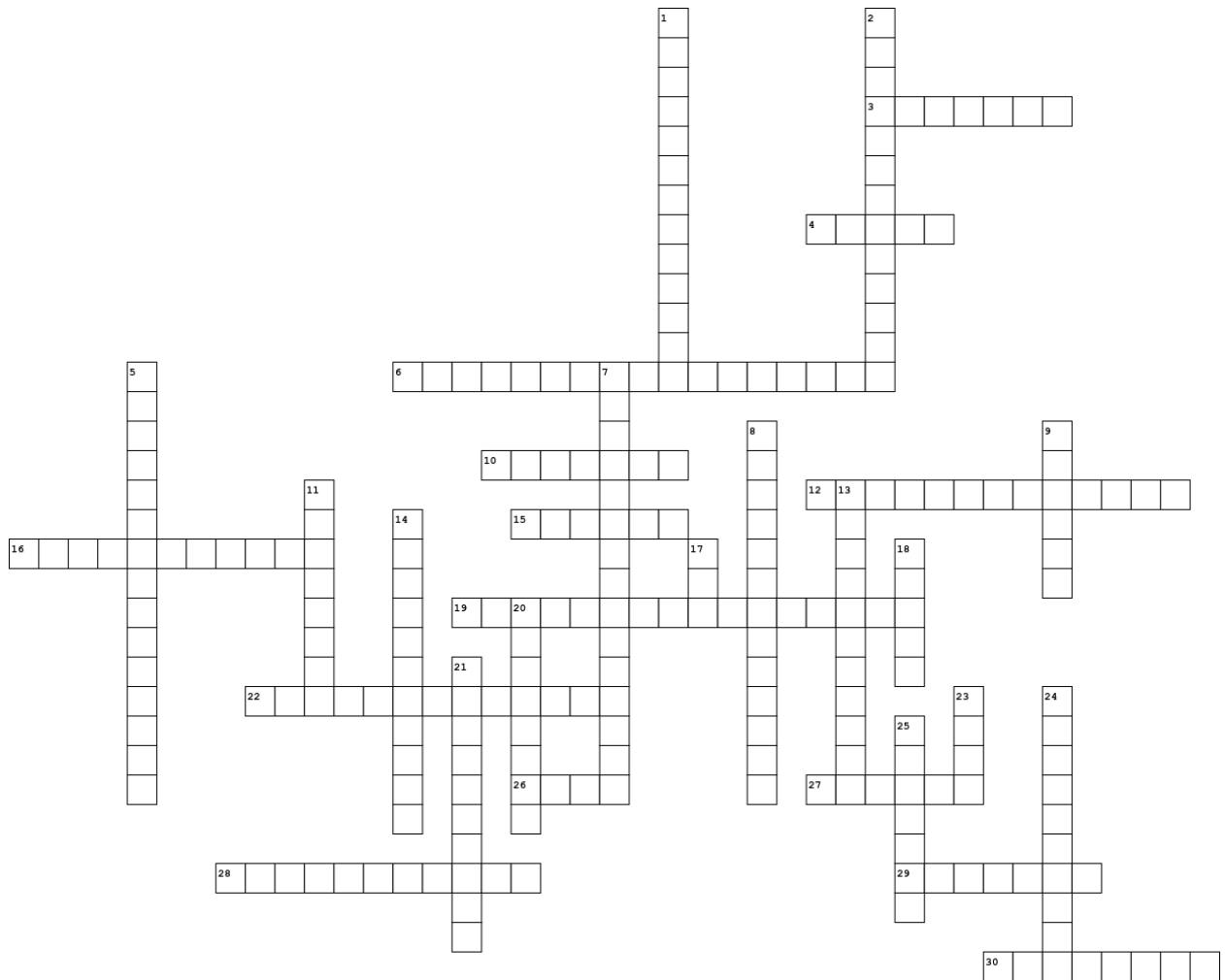
4.10.2.1 Printable resources that accompany the lesson on survival in Life of Pi by Yann Martel.

In this section I have compiled, for the sake of convenience, all the worksheets for the lesson on survival in *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel.

For the introduction, learners may be shown a clip from the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lezaNVMwAA4>

I made use of the online crossword puzzle generator, Crossword Labs, to create the first learner activity. It can be found at <https://crosswordlabs.com/view/survival-in-life-of-pi> However, it also follows here.

Survival in *Life of Pi*



Across

- 4. The phenomenon where you hear, see, smell, taste or feel things that appear to be real but only exist in your mind.
- 5. Reason.
- 6. The capacity for inventive thought and quick understanding; keen intelligence.

Down

- 1. A physical state caused by not consuming enough fluids.
- 2. The sharing of a message.
- 3. Having complete trust or confidence in someone or something.

8. Not civilisation.
12. Abandoned.
13. The synonym of ravenous.
15. Strong and lean.
19. An essential emotion to have in an emergency event.
22. An adaptation to environmental stress that is based on conscious or unconscious choice.
25. The substance that must be conserved in an emergency event.
26. Relating to or involving the use of imagination or original ideas in order to create something.
28. The synonym of in need of something to drink.
29. To address God or a god with adoration, confession, supplication, or thanksgiving.
30. Natural elements that affect a person's chance of survival.
7. The part of the human body where basic survival motivations reside.
9. The sport of catching food with a rod.
10. Known to target nearby predators such as leopards and wolves when prey is scarce.
11. The ability to question everything and to not accept anything at face value.
14. A fixed daily allowance of food.
16. The state or fact of continuing to live or exist, typically in spite of an accident, ordeal, or difficult circumstances.
17. The ability to think clearly and to make decisions efficiently.
18. Group work.
20. Synonym of frightened.
21. A form of escapism.
23. An innate, typically fixed pattern of behaviour in animals in response to certain stimuli.
24. The name of the animal who is anthropomorphised in the novel.
27. A person who has been shipwrecked and stranded in an isolated place.

Across

4. The phenomenon where here you hear, see, smell, taste or feel things that appear to be real but only exist in your mind. **Hallucination** ✓
5. Reason. **Logic** ✓
6. The capacity for inventive thought and quick understanding; keen intelligence. **Wit** ✓
8. Not civilisation. **Wilderness** ✓
12. Abandoned. **Forlorn** ✓
13. The synonym of ravenous. **Hungry** ✓
15. Strong and lean. **Physically fit** ✓
19. An essential emotion to have in an emergency event. **Calm** ✓
22. An adaptation to environmental stress that is based on conscious or unconscious choice. **Coping mechanism** ✓
25. The substance that must be conserved in an emergency event. **Energy** ✓
26. Relating to or involving the use of imagination or original ideas in order to create something. **Creativity** ✓

Down

1. A physical state caused by not consuming enough fluids. **Dehydration** ✓
2. The carrying over of a message. **Communication** ✓
3. Having complete trust or confidence in someone or something. **Faith** ✓
7. The part of the human body where provide basic survival motivations reside. **Lizard brain** ✓
9. The sport of catching food with a rod. **Fishing** ✓
10. Known to target nearby predators such as leopards and wolves when prey is scarce. **Bengal tiger** ✓
11. The ability to question everything and to not accept anything at face value. **Critical thinking** ✓
14. A fixed daily allowance of food. **Rations** ✓
16. The state or fact of continuing to live or exist, typically in spite of an accident, ordeal, or difficult circumstances. **Survival** ✓

28. The synonym of in need of something to drink. **Thirsty** ✓

29. To address God or a god with adoration, confession, supplication, or thanksgiving. **Pray** ✓

30. Natural elements that affect a person's chance of survival. **Weather conditions** ✓

17. The ability to think clearly and to make decisions efficiently. **Mental fitness** ✓

18. Group work. **Collaboration** ✓

20. Synonym of frightened. **Scared** ✓

21. A form of escapism. **Imagination** ✓

23. An innate, typically fixed pattern of behaviour in animals in response to certain stimuli. **Instinct** ✓

24. The name of the animal who is anthropomorphised. **Richard Parker** ✓

27. A person who has been shipwrecked and stranded in an isolated place. **Castaway** ✓

Instructions:

1. Read the excerpt below from page 301 as found in the novel *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel.

Mr Chiba: "What a horrible story."

[Long silence]

Mr Okamoto: "Both the zebra and the Taiwanese sailor broke a leg, did you notice that?"

"No, I didn't."

"And the hyena bit off the zebra's leg just as the cook cut off the sailor's."

"Ohhh, Okamoto-san, you see a lot."

"The blind Frenchman they met in the other lifeboat – didn't he admit to killing a man and a woman?"

"Yes, he did."

"The cook killed the sailor and his mother."

"Very impressive."

"His stories match."

"So the Taiwanese sailor is the zebra, his mother is the orang-utan, the cook is... the hyena – which means he's the tiger!"

"Yes. The tiger killed the hyena – and the blind Frenchman – just as he killed the cook."

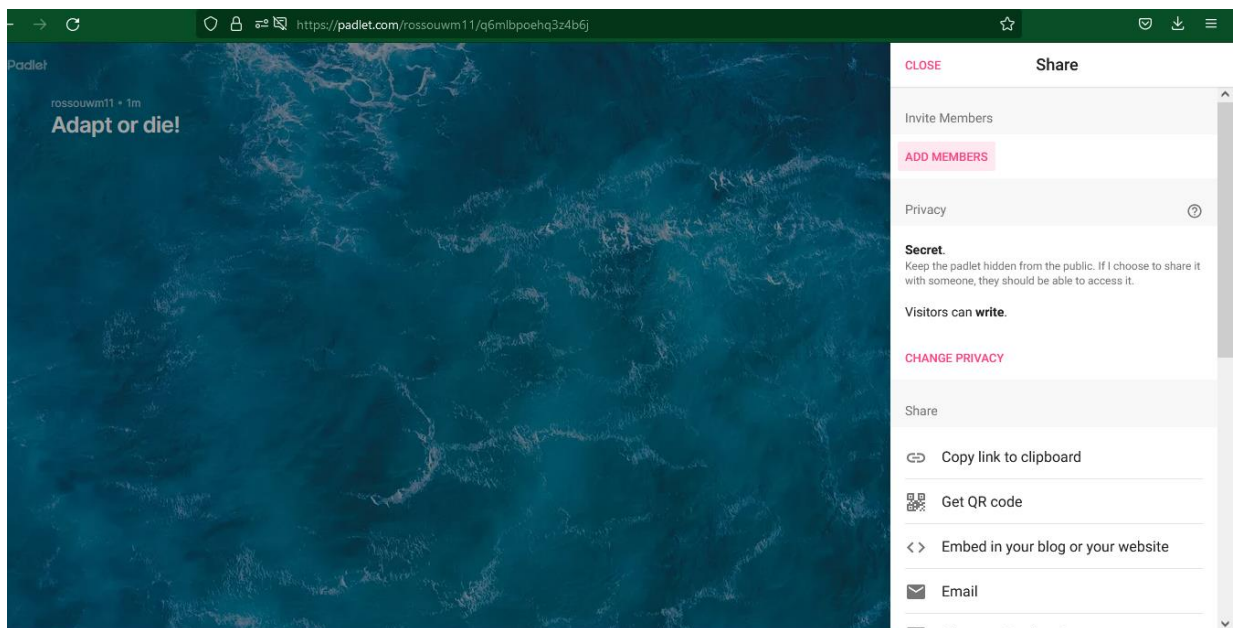
Extract from *Life of Pi*, chapter 99, page 301.

2. Considering the strong similarities between the animal version of Pi's story and the human version, there is a strong possibility that either version may be true.
3. However, for the purpose of this assignment, let us assume the human version is true. Divide into groups of four and assign a character to each of the group members. Indicate your decision below:

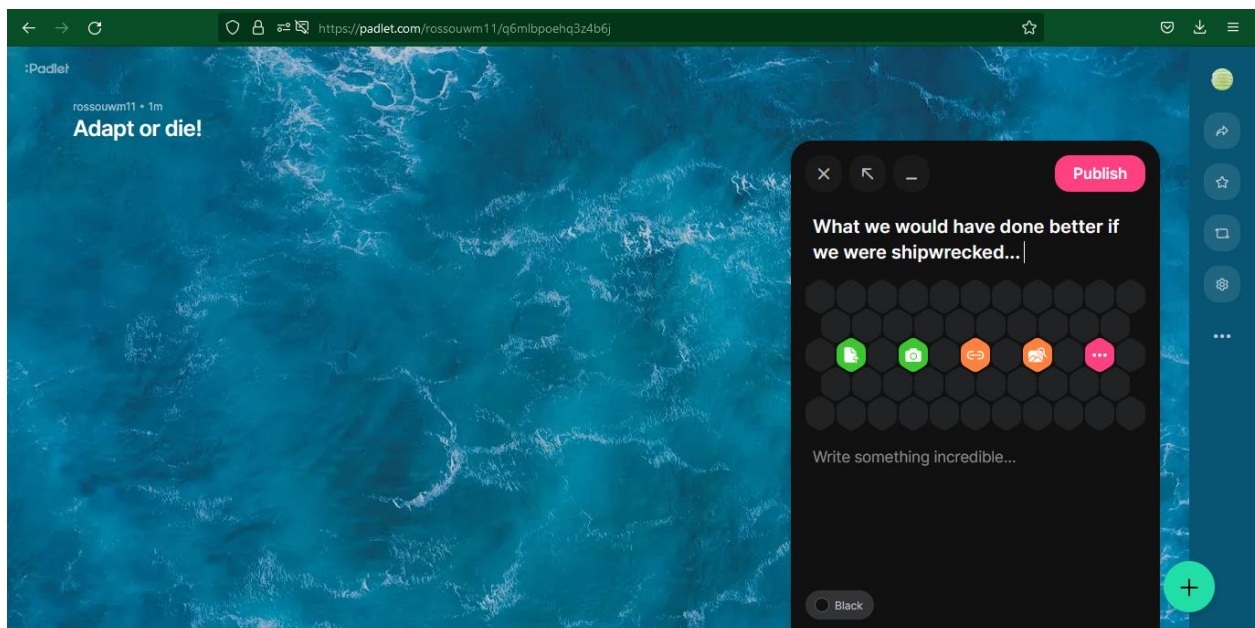
Character from the novel:	Learners' names and surnames:
Pi (tiger):	
Pi's mother (orang-utan):	
The sailor (zebra):	
The cook (hyena):	

4. Unfortunately, all but Pi dies in the novel. If you were these characters, how would you do things differently to not only survive but also keep your moral values?
5. Create a mind map on Padlet where you indicate how you would have handled being stranded on a lifeboat differently to these characters. Keep in mind what your teacher had told you about the importance of soft skills and incorporate it into your response.
6. Each member of the group must contribute to the mind map.
7. Once you are satisfied with your response, send your teacher a link to the Padlet so that he/she may assess it.

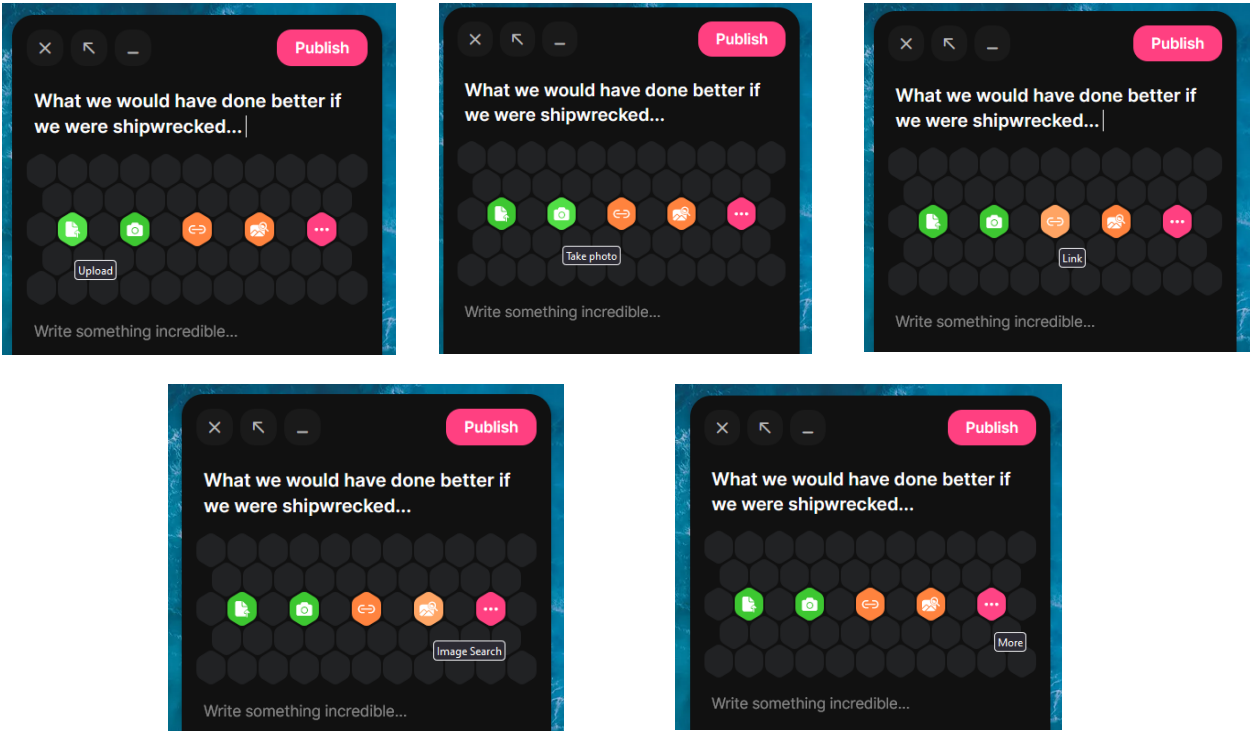
I include here for convenience's sake screenshots of the Padlet e-learning platform and how it might look once learners get started. Firstly, learners will have to sign up for Padlet and log in. It is suggested that an appointed group leader creates the Padlet. Once logged in, the group leader is required to choose the option of creating a new Padlet. The learner will then be able to choose a layout, background and title. Once that is done, the leader can share the Padlet with the members of his group so they can collaborate.



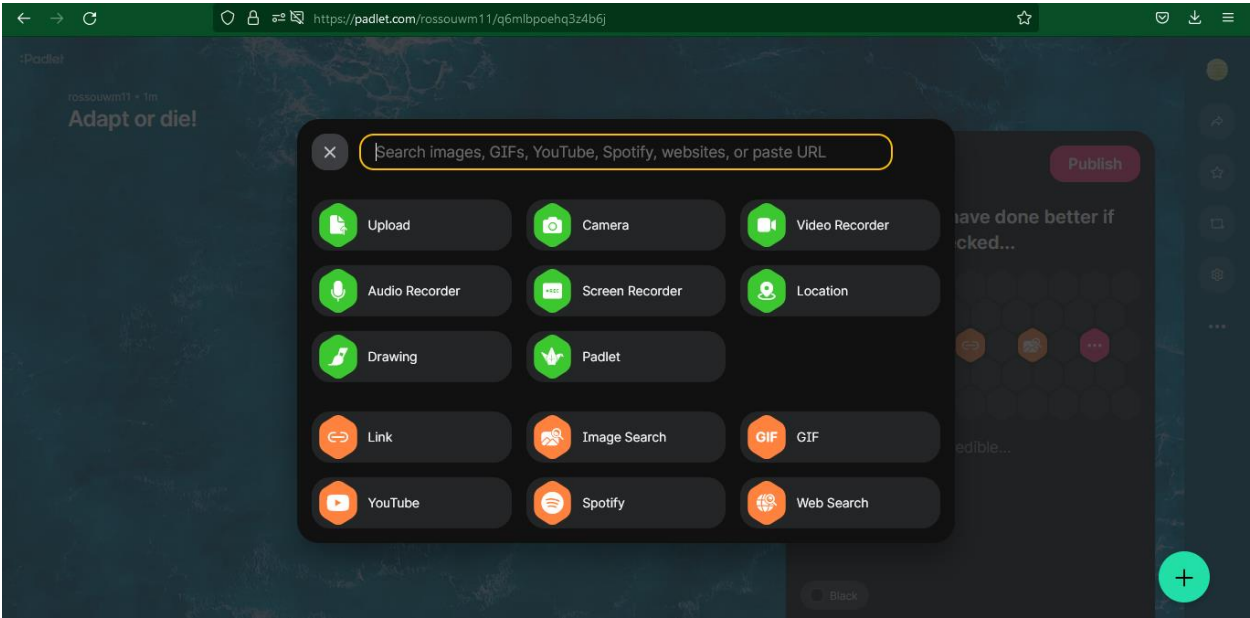
Learners can then proceed to adding information to the Padlet by clicking on the + at the bottom right corner.



The platform allows for various functions such as uploading information, taking a photo, adding links, searching for images online and more.



Learners are presented with a magnitude of options when they click on the “more” option.



A work in progress might look something like this:

← → ↻ https://padlet.com/rossouwm11/q6mlbpohq3z4b6j ☆ 📌 📄 ⋮

:Padlet

rossouwm11 • 1m

Adapt or die!

```
graph TD; A[What we would have done better if we were shipwrecked...] --> B[Pi's mother]; A --> C[Pi]; A --> D[Cook]; A --> E[The sailor]; A --> F[TEAM WORK]; G[How to Survive if You Get Lost at Sea] --> A;
```

Pi's mother
I would not have lost my temper with the cook, a murderer, and have shouted at him. Instead, I would...

Pi
I survived but not without sacrificing my humanity. In order to save it I would have rather communicated with the cook and not...

What we would have done better if we were shipwrecked...

Cook
I did EVERYTHING necessary to survive. However, I might have been more...

How to Survive if You Get Lost at Sea

The sailor
I would have...

TEAM WORK
We would have shared responsibilities such as...

+

Survival in *Life of Pi* – Roleplay

Name and Surname: _____

Date: _____

Group members' names and surnames:

1	
2	
3	
4	

Instructions:

1. Remain in your groups as you were for the Padlet activity and enact the altered scene where all the characters survive being shipwrecked, to your peers.
2. Every learner in the group must contribute to the roleplay and must have at least three speaking turns.
3. The duration of the presentation should be no longer than five minutes in total.
4. Each learner will be assessed separately via the rubric below. The success of the group will depend on individual accountability

Note: the importance of soft skills must be evident in your roleplay.



<https://business.tutsplus.com/tutorials/role-play-scenarios-for-business-conversations--cms-40746>

Criteria	Exceptional	Skilful	Moderate	Elementary	Inadequate
	10-8	7-6	5-4	3-2	1-0
Research skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convincing evidence that a wide range of interesting and relevant sources have been consulted; new and interesting facts and examples included - Thoroughly planned according to task, audience, context and format - Striking introduction which immediately grasps audience attention - Brilliant development of ideas and argument - Content reflects outstanding creativity, originality and mature insight - Skilful ending, ideas meticulously drawn together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good evidence that a wide range of interesting and relevant sources have been consulted; Interesting facts and examples included - Well planned according to task, audience, context and format - Good and appropriate introduction which arouses interest - Good, and sustained development of ideas and argument - Content reflects creativity originality and some insight - Good conclusion, ideas drawn together well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfactory evidence that relevant sources have been consulted; some new and interesting facts and examples included - Satisfactory planning according to task, audience, context and format - Reasonably good introduction which still arouses interest - Good development of argument which can be followed easily - Content fairly original, but not always creative and insight sometimes lacking - Reasonably good ending, but sometimes lacks cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little evidence that relevant sources were used; some facts or examples included - Evidence of some planning according to task, audience, context and format - Imperfect introduction which arouses some interest - Partial development of ideas and argument, problems with cohesion - Content shows little originality, but not always creative and lacks insight - Flawed conclusion, lacks cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very little evidence of use of sources; few facts or examples included - Limited planning according to task, audience, context and format - Slight evidence of introduction, barely arouses interest - Some arguments can be followed, but most are inconsistent / can barely be followed - Content is unoriginal and lacks creativity or insight - Hardly any evidence of a conclusion
Planning and organisation of content					
Use of language, tone, speaking and presentation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural delivery, a fluent, skilled and animated presenter - Clearly audible, excellent articulation - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language outstanding, functional and convincing - Confident delivery with very little use of notes - Appropriate style and register - Thorough, mature vocabulary and creative language use - Outstanding language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Exceptional awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Excellent and thoughtful choice and presentation of visual/other aids, fully integrated into the speech to contribute effectively to the success of the presentation (where used) - Audience reaction overwhelmingly positive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good presenter, a generally fluent, skilled and animated presenter - Audible, good articulation - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language largely functional and convincing - Notes used effectively - Appropriate style and register - Good vocabulary and creative language use - Good language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Good awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Good and appropriate choice and use of visual / other aids successfully integrated into the speech to contribute effectively to the success of the presentation (where used) - Audience interest sustained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reasonably fluent presenter, but sometimes shows hesitation - Mostly clear articulation and audibility - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language reasonably convincing - Some dependency on notes but still good contact with the audience - Style and register mostly appropriate - Reasonably mature vocabulary and creative language use - Reasonable language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Reasonable awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Visual/other aids are mostly relevant to the topic and contribute to the success of the presentation (where used) - Most members of the audience follow with interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes fluent, but presentation often flawed - Some clear articulation and audibility - Adequate eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language but not entirely convincing - Use of notes often detracts from presentation - Style and register rarely appropriate - Adequate vocabulary and language use - Some language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Some awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Visual / other aids poorly used, not always totally appropriate (where used) - Mixed reaction from the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacks fluency, hesitant, lacks expression - Articulation not clear and hardly audible - Very little eye contact / facial expressions / body language - Dependent on notes - Mostly inappropriate style and register - Limited vocabulary and language use - Struggles to manipulate language in order to evoke audience response - Seldom aware of language, especially on sensitive issues - Use of aids clumsy and not functional (where used) - Lack of audience interest shown

SMART TASK: Survival in *Life of Pi*

Name and surname: _____ Date: _____

Envision yourself as being an investigative reporter who came to hear of Pi's incredible survival story. Amazing as his story may sound – you are sceptical about the animal version of events and so you set out to investigate. Your investigation yields evidence that the animal version is most likely Pi's way of coping with the trauma he had undergone. Prepare a speech for a press conference where you evaluate and interpret the two versions of Pi's story.

Instructions:

1. Plan your speech using the writing process (mind map, rough draft, edit, final). Clearly indicate your planning by crossing it out.
2. Take Chapter 99, page 301 into account when planning your speech, as well as the behaviour of trauma victims.
3. Your speech must include at least three supporting arguments with legitimate sources.
4. Your speech must be approximately four to five minutes long. Pay attention to:
 - Pi's sanity having been lost at sea for such a long time
 - Coping mechanisms of trauma victims
 - The likelihood of surviving a shared confined space with an adult Bengal tiger
 - Pi's reaction to the insurance investigators
 - Which version do you believe is true – the animal- or the human version and why?
5. Refer to the rubric that will be used to assess your unprepared speech.

Remember:

1. Your introduction must be striking.
2. Make use of tone, voice projection, eye contact, proper posture and gestures.
3. Use appropriate and effective vocabulary and language structures.
4. End with a strong and clear conclusion.
5. Be confident!

Criteria	Exceptional	Skilful	Moderate	Elementary	Inadequate
	10-8	7-6	5-4	3-2	1-0
Research skills Planning and organisation of content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convincing evidence that a wide range of interesting and relevant sources have been consulted; new and interesting facts and examples included - Thoroughly planned according to task, audience, context and format - Striking introduction which immediately grasps audience attention - Brilliant development of ideas and argument - Content reflects outstanding creativity, originality and mature insight - Skilful ending, ideas meticulously drawn together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good evidence that a wide range of interesting and relevant sources have been consulted; Interesting facts and examples included - Well planned according to task, audience, context and format - Good and appropriate introduction which arouses interest - Good, and sustained development of ideas and argument - Content reflects creativity originality and some insight - Good conclusion, ideas drawn together well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfactory evidence that relevant sources have been consulted; some new and interesting facts and examples included - Satisfactory planning according to task, audience, context and format - Reasonably good introduction which still arouses interest - Good development of argument which can be followed easily - Content fairly original, but not always creative and insight sometimes lacking - Reasonably good ending, but sometimes lacks cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little evidence that relevant sources were used; some facts or examples included - Evidence of some planning according to task, audience, context and format - Imperfect introduction which arouses some interest - Partial development of ideas and argument, problems with cohesion - Content shows little originality, but not always creative and lacks insight - Flawed conclusion, lacks cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very little evidence of use of sources; few facts or examples included - Limited planning according to task, audience, context and format - Slight evidence of introduction, barely arouses interest - Some arguments can be followed, but most are inconsistent / can barely be followed - Content is unoriginal and lacks creativity or insight - Hardly any evidence of a conclusion
Use of language, tone, speaking and presentation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural delivery, a fluent, skilled and animated presenter - Clearly audible, excellent articulation - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language outstanding, functional and convincing - Confident delivery with very little use of notes - Appropriate style and register - Thorough, mature vocabulary and creative language use - Outstanding language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Exceptional awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Excellent and thoughtful choice and presentation of visual/other aids, fully integrated into the speech to contribute effectively to the success of the presentation (where used) - Audience reaction overwhelmingly positive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good presenter, a generally fluent, skilled and animated presenter - Audible, good articulation - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language largely functional and convincing - Notes used effectively - Appropriate style and register - Good vocabulary and creative language use - Good language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Good awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Good and appropriate choice and use of visual / other aids successfully integrated into the speech to contribute effectively to the success of the presentation (where used) - Audience interest sustained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reasonably fluent presenter, but sometimes shows hesitation - Mostly clear articulation and audibility - Eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language reasonably convincing - Some dependency on notes but still good contact with the audience - Style and register mostly appropriate - Reasonably mature vocabulary and creative language use - Reasonable language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Reasonable awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Visual/other aids are mostly relevant to the topic and contribute to the success of the presentation (where used) - Most members of the audience follow with interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes fluent, but presentation often flawed - Some clear articulation and audibility - Adequate eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and body language but not entirely convincing - Use of notes often detracts from presentation - Style and register rarely appropriate - Adequate vocabulary and language use - Some language manipulation in order to evoke audience response - Some awareness of language, especially on sensitive issues - Visual / other aids poorly used, not always totally appropriate (where used) - Mixed reaction from the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacks fluency, hesitant, lacks expression - Articulation not clear and hardly audible - Very little eye contact / facial expressions / body language - Dependent on notes - Mostly inappropriate style and register - Limited vocabulary and language use - Struggles to manipulate language in order to evoke audience response - Seldom aware of language, especially on sensitive issues - Use of aids clumsy and not functional (where used) - Lack of audience interest shown

4.10.3 Example poetry lesson based on the theme of the power of words as found in the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni

The example lesson follows after this discussion later in the dissertation. Often, learners do not enjoy the prospect of a poetry lesson (Stein, 2010:188). Learners tend to dislike poetry because they view it as outdated, too exclusive, boring and incomprehensible (Roach, 2016). Perhaps a better explanation for why learners do not like poetry is that they feel “it’s intimidating, they don’t get it [and] it makes them feel stupid” (Hussey, 2017). Naturally, no one would enjoy something that makes them doubt their intellect. Another and more concerning reason why learners do not like poetry is that “we teach them to hate it” (Stein, 2010:188). Of course, this is not intentional, but in our fervent attempts to show learners the beauty of poetry by forcing them to see what we see, we do more harm than good. Fortunately, the correct teaching of poetry, not poems as stated in the CAPS document (DBE, 2011:12), offers a magnitude of learning benefits such as improved SWRL skills and the ability to better express oneself (Syed & Wahas, 2020:189). Considering the lack of soft skills, it comes as no surprise that learners struggle to express themselves, especially in the literature paper as stated in the diagnostic report of the National Senior Certificate for 2020 (DBE, 2020:37). Thus, the biggest problem with learners’ performance where poetry is concerned is that learners often do not understand it and those who do, do not know how to express themselves.

Lexis is the building blocks of a language and “limited lexical knowledge can lead learners to frustration and demotivation” (Caro & Mendingueta, 2017:205). It is for this reason that I emphasise, once more, the importance of vocabulary. Additionally, completely incomprehensible input cannot yield feasible output (Foster-Marks, 2021). This relates to Krashen’s theory on second language acquisition, which states that learners are cable of acquiring the meaning of unknown words if it is slightly “beyond [their] current level of competence” and if those words are presented to them in context (Krashen, 1982). However, if learners do not understand the instruction found in a literature lesson, or the poem for that matter, how are they to express themselves? Thus, I advocate that teachers mainly act as facilitators where poetry is concerned and that they do not simply provide learners with information but allow them to engage with the poem – this allowance will also enhance critical thinking. Based on this, I provide a suggested lesson plan for the teaching of poetry by using *Poem* by Barolong Seboni as an example.

The prominent theme of the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni, is communication. More specifically, the poem focuses on the power of words. Communication, as has now been established, is crucial in the 21st century. However, the way in which we communicate matters and not only influences our relations with others but also important aspects of our lives, such as

securing a job interview, maintaining a pleasant work environment and generally fitting into society (Kendre, 2021). Unkind words can be very harmful to these aspects in a person's life. This is, in essence, what the poem, *Poem*, advocates – that we need to be kinder with what we say, and if we cannot, we should remain quiet. As with the previous example lessons, this lesson will also begin with the teacher presenting the learners with pertinent questions. These may include:

1. How do you use words and actions to express your emotions?
2. How do you feel when someone gives you a compliment?
3. Why do you get upset when people are unkind to you?
4. Why do you think we need to know how to properly communicate with one another?
5. How would you respond to someone who is rude to you?

These pertinent questions will enhance learners' critical thinking skills and allow them to think about how they communicate with others in different situations. Not every lesson has to be introduced using technology. Learners may be introduced to the poem with the teacher simply reading the poem out loud. However, as with the other example lessons, I suggest having the first learner activity deal with vocabulary. However, for a poetry lesson, I prefer a more "old-fashioned", pen-and-paper approach. Thus, for the first learner activity, learners can be asked to read the poem on their own to see if they can gauge what the poem is about. This does not have to be in detail. Learners must just pay attention to the obvious in the poem. For instance, if the poem mentions "words", "sharp", "icy" and "corrode", learners must be able to deduce that the poem is about words that are unpleasant, and not for instance about romance, since romance is not mentioned anywhere in the poem. This can be done to establish the setting and the context of the poem, which will further influence learners' understanding of the poem. Learners will be requested to read the poem for a second time, this time with a highlighter in their hand so they can identify any vocabulary they do not understand. Learners must make a list of these words and find their meanings. Before learners reach for a dictionary or try and find the word on Google, the teacher may instruct the learners to try and figure out whether the word is a positive or negative word. This will force learners to engage with the text and to find clues in the context of the poem as to what the definition may be. It is crucial that learners must not be spoon-fed where poetry is concerned. The second learner activity still deals with vocabulary but instead of focusing on the denotative meanings of the words in the poem, it pays attention to the connotative and figurative meanings of the words that learners may deem problematic.

For the second learner activity, the class is asked to provide the connotative meaning of a few selected words, since poetry is very often not focused on the literal meaning but rather on the figurative. Additionally, learners will have to be able to identify certain poetic devices such as

alliteration and assonance, personification, metaphors and similes, as well as rhyme. Technology, such as MentiMeter or Kahoot!, may be incorporated in this second activity. Both these applications allow the teacher to present learners with questions. Learners' responses can be visible to the entire class. I prefer Kahoot!, so that is the application I use in this example lesson for the second learner activity. Once learners are presented with words from the poem to which they must make a connotation, they will see that it is quite normal to have different responses to and interpretations for terminology that is used figuratively in a poem. However, the ability to identify poetic devices is something that must be studied and practised. The second learner activity is followed by the third, where learners are expected to analyse the poem in pairs.

I find that continuous engagement with the poem allows learners to better understand it. Poetry is not difficult though, it is intricate with many layers, much like our emotions, and the more learners read the poem, the more information they discover from the poem. Thus, for the third learner activity learners have to read and re-read the poem to analyse it. The teacher acts as a facilitator throughout this process and guides the learners with certain steps they can follow when it comes to analysing poetry. These steps are outlined in the next section along with the other printable resources. The reason I suggest learners analyse the poem themselves, as opposed to the teacher analysing the poem for them, is that more learners are then forced to participate, to communicate, collaborate and to think critically and creatively. The teacher should, however, consolidate the learners' analysis with their own by means of a class discussion so that any uncertainties may be cleared up. I reiterate here, for the sake of emphasising, that poetry must not be torn apart line by line as it is often destructive to any creativity that may have come from the analysis. I do, however, suggest a preliminary discussion on all the terminology learners may find difficult in a poem, as it is often these misunderstood words that hamper their understanding of the poem as a whole. Considering that poetry is usually very creative and the teaching method suggested here, learners will be well prepared for the final activity, the SMART task.

I suggest that learners use Canva to create a poster for the SMART task with which they convey the message of the poem after having analysed and discussed it. This activity will allow learners to express themselves in a creative way as they have to incorporate and explain imagery and other poetic devices from the poem into their poster. Learners will not be able to accomplish this if they do not employ their imagination and think critically about the poem. The poster is assessed by the teacher using a rubric for shorter transactional texts and if the posters are quite good, it may even have real-life application as they can be put up across the school in an attempt to curb bullying. For this example lesson plan, the lesson is also tabulated and starts with the SMART task in adherence to the backward design of lesson planning.

SMART task

By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to:

Create a poster in which they convey the message of the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni.

Instruction: create a poster based on your analysis of the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni. Your poster must:

- be A3
- be visually attractive
- contain at least 4 images
- successfully convey the message of the poem

Your poster must include a representation as well as explanation of at least two of the following:

1. Imagery
2. Simile
3. Metaphor
4. Alliteration

Follow the writing process by creating a mind map and rough draft, editing it and finally proofreading the content of your poster. Incorporate your analysis of the poem into your poster. The poster is due in three days after having received the assignment. Your teacher will assess your poster using a rubric.

Criteria	Exceptional 13-15	Skilful 10-12	Moderate 7-9	Elementary 4-6	Inadequate 0-3
<p>CONTENT, PLANNING & FORMAT</p> <p>Response and ideas; Organisation of ideas for planning; Purpose, audience, features/ conventions and context</p> <p>15 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outstanding response beyond normal expectations - Intelligent and mature ideas - Extensive knowledge of feature of the type of text - Writing maintains focus - Coherence in content and ideas - Highly elaborated and all details support the topic - Appropriate and accurate format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very good response demonstrating good knowledge of features of the type of text - Maintains focus – no digressions - Coherent in content and ideas, very well elaborated and details support topic - Appropriate format with minor inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate response demonstrating knowledge of features of the type of text - Not completely focused – some digressions - Reasonably coherent in content and ideas - Some details support the topic - Generally appropriate format but with some inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic response demonstrating some knowledge of features of the type of text - Some focus but writing digresses - Not always coherent in content and ideas - Few details support the topic - Has vaguely applied necessary rules of format - Some critical oversights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response reveals no knowledge of features of the type of text - Meaning is obscured with major digressions - Not coherent in content and ideas - Very few details support the topic - Has not applied necessary rules of format
<p>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING</p> <p>Tone, register, style, purpose/effect, audience and context; Language use and conventions; Word choice; Punctuation and spelling</p> <p>10 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Virtually error-free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary very appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Generally grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Very good vocabulary - Mostly free of errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Some grammatical errors - Adequate vocabulary - Errors do not impede meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Inaccurate grammar with numerous errors - Limited vocabulary - Meaning obscured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary do not correspond to purpose, audience and context - Error-ridden and confused - Vocabulary not suitable for purpose - Meaning seriously impaired

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>The teacher acts as facilitator.</p> <p>The teacher reads the poem to the learners to introduce them to it. The teacher then instructs the learners to read the poem on their own to see whether they can ascertain what the poem is about. This may be discussed briefly.</p> <p>Following this, the teacher asks learners to read the poem again, this time with the aim of identifying words that they do not understand. Learners are instructed to highlight these words so they can determine their meaning later.</p> <p>After reading, the learners make a list of the words they do not understand and set out to find their meanings. This can be done by using a dictionary or simply by Googling the terms.</p>	<p>Activity 1: vocabulary denotation</p> <p>Learners listen to the poem, read the poem in an attempt to determine what it is about, read the poem again and identify vocabulary that they do not understand.</p> <p>Learners then commence to find the meanings of these words.</p>	<p>Teacher initiates the lesson by reading the poem to the learners and then observes the rest of the activity.</p>	<p><i>Poem</i> by Barolong Seboni, dictionaries and Google.</p>	<p>Listening, Reading and writing.</p>	<p>Communication and critical thinking.</p>

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>The teacher acts as administrator</p> <p><u>Teaching moment:</u></p> <p>The teacher may take a moment to discuss with learners the importance of being able to express themselves and to do so appropriately and responsibly, especially since they are about to embark on their journey into the grown-up world. There are various ways to express oneself. Whichever method is preferred, the expression of emotion is usually figurative and not literal.</p> <p>The teacher selects certain words from the poem and asks learners to make connotations to the words. This activity is done via the e-learning platform, Kahoot! and so learners are asked to log in and enter the code to participate.</p>	<p>Activity 2: Vocabulary connotation</p> <p>Learners listen to what the teacher has to say about the importance of expressing emotion in an appropriate and responsible manner.</p> <p>Learners the log into Kahoot!, enter the game code and complete the activity regarding connotations.</p>	<p>Teacher observes the lesson.</p>	<p><i>Poem</i> by Barolong Seboni, cell phones, Kahoot!</p>	<p>Listening and reading.</p>	<p>Critical thinking and creativity.</p>

Teaching strategies	Learner activities	Assessment	Resources	Language skill SWRL being developed	Soft skills being developed
<p>The teacher acts as facilitator</p> <p>The teacher provides the learners with a handout on the most popular poetic devices. Learners are to study them, to be able to identify them.</p> <p>The teacher instructs learners to analyse the poem on their own by using the guidelines provided.</p> <p>Learners are required to make notes of their findings.</p>	<p>Activity 2: Vocabulary connotation</p> <p>Learners receive and study the list of poetic devices.</p> <p>Learners attempt to analyse the poem on their own by using the guidelines they have received.</p> <p>Learners make notes of what they discover.</p>	<p>Teacher observes the lesson and intervenes only when necessary.</p>	<p><i>Poem</i> by Barolong Seboni and notes.</p>	<p>Reading and writing.</p>	<p>Critical thinking and creativity.</p>

Following the three learner activities, the teacher gives the SMART task as already discussed.

4.10.3.1 Printable resources that accompany the lesson on the power of words in *Poem* by Barolong Seboni

The worksheets for the example poetry lesson follows here.

Activity 1: Vocabulary in *Poem* by Barolong Seboni

Name and Surname: _____

Date: _____

1. Familiarise yourself with the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni, by reading it. Try to determine what the poem is about. Do not overthink, but write down the thoughts that come to mind while you are reading in the box below.

We do not need
these jagged words
that dig a trench between us
each time they are uttered

those epithets
sharp like spokes
that pierce the heart when spoken

5

there is no room in my cup
for these acidic words of sarcasm
that corrode my sensitivity

10

these cold and icy terms tossed
to deaden the heart
venomous words
from your serpentine tongue
that infect the feeling...

15

Let us speak, love
in gentler tones
timid as the lamb
is soft
woolly words
worn to stand strong against the
cold-bitterness of the world.

20

Better still
let us search in our speech
for words deep as the soul is still
that will spell our thoughts
in the silence of our smiles.

25

Activity 1: Vocabulary in *Poem* by Barolong Seboni

Name and Surname: _____ MEMO _____

Date: _____

1. Familiarise yourself with the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni, by reading it. Try to determine what the poem is about. Do not overthink, but write down the thoughts that come to mind while you are reading in the box below.

We do not need
these jagged words
that dig a trench between us
each time they are uttered

those epithets 5
sharp like spokes
that pierce the heart when spoken

there is no room in my cup
for these acidic words of sarcasm
that corrode my sensitivity 10

these cold and icy terms tossed
to deaden the heart
venomous words
from your serpentine tongue
that infect the feeling... 15

Let us speak, love
in gentler tones
timid as the lamb
is soft
woolly words 20
worn to stand strong against the
cold-bitterness of the world.

Better still
let us search in our speech
for words deep as the soul is still 25
that will spell our thoughts
in the silence of our smiles.

Trench – war

to deaden – to kill

Speak love – be kind

Jagged words – edgy, harmful words

Words have power!

Acidic – dangerous

silence of our smiles – if you cannot say anything nice, be quiet

Corrode – destroy

Cold & icy – no warmth or love.

2. Now, read the poem again and highlight all the words you do not understand.
3. List the words you did not understand here and find their meanings. You can use a dictionary or Google.

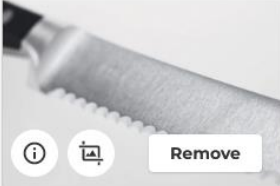
Word	Definition
Jaggered	Not a real English word. Very similar to jagged which refers to a thing with rough or sharp pointy edges.
Trench	Ditch in the ground, usually used by soldiers.
Uttered	To say, to speak, to express.
Epithet	Description of something.
Spokes	The rods on a wheel, such as a bicycle
Acidic	Sharp, tart, sour or bitter taste. Can also refer to a chemical that eats away at anything it touches.
Corrode	When iron rusts.
Serpentine	Snakelike.

Learner activity 2, the Kahoot! activity for the suggested poetry lesson can be accessed here:

<https://create.kahoot.it/creator/a2353db7-1c76-4fe9-8d25-c209cdf0713d>

Considering that I have already explained the workings of Kahoot! I only include screenshots of the questions here for convenience.


What idea do you connect to the word "jaggered"?



Remove

▲ He is dancing like Mick Jagger	◆ Rough
● Sharp	■ Edgy

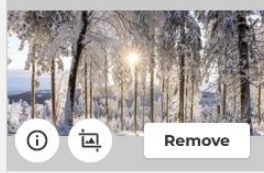
The word "cup" reminds me of...



Remove

▲ alcohol	◆ my cup is overflowing - the Biblical reference
● my life's journey	■ I need to drink more water

The connotative meaning of the words cold and icy is...



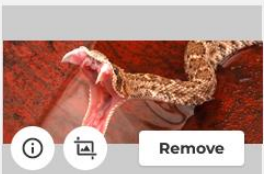
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> emotionless	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> happy	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> passionless	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> harsh	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Acidic words of sarcasm provides the reader with a feeling of...



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> dread	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> pain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> fear	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> science	<input type="checkbox"/>

The word "venomous" brings to mind...



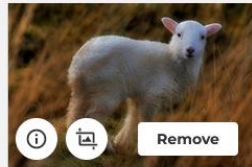
<input type="checkbox"/> a bunny	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> danger	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> a snake	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

"pierce the heart" makes me feel...



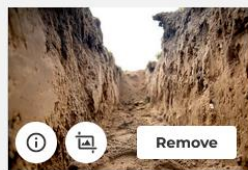
<input type="checkbox"/> safe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Betrayed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> as if I am in extreme physical pain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> disliked

"timid as the lamb" brings to mind...



<input type="checkbox"/> wild goose chases	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> peace
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the allusion of the Jesus being kind to those who do not deserve it	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> tranquility

What feeling do you connect with the word "trench"?



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claustrophobic	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunshine and roses
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dark and alone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No hope

"wooly words" brings to mind the feeling of...



warm, fuzzy words that do not hurt

comfort and peace

being cold and alone

softness

Activity 3: List of poetic devices as adapted from Gosher and Pannall (2016:192-205).

Study the following simplified poetic devices to help you in analysing poetry.

1. **Alliteration:** the repetition of consonant sounds. E.g., She sings softly.
2. **Assonance:** the repetition of vowel sounds.
3. **Allusion:** the reference within one text to another text where the second text's idea is drawn into the first.
4. **Atmosphere:** the mood or feeling that a text evokes within a reader.
5. **Connotation:** the idea or feeling the reader connects to a certain word or phrase.
6. **Diction:** choice of words.
7. **Denotation:** the literal meaning of a word.
8. **Enjambment:** a run-on-line, where ideas continue from the one line to the next without being hindered by punctuation.
9. **Free verse:** a poem with no rhyme scheme.
10. **Hyperbole:** when something is exaggerated for emphasis. E.g., he is so hungry he can eat an elephant.
11. **Imagery:** the image that comes to mind when reading a descriptive piece of work.
12. **Irony:** when the opposite of what is actually meant is being said.
13. **Metaphor:** a direct comparison between two things without using the words 'like' or 'as'.
E.g., there is light at the end of the tunnel, she is his sun, he is a pig etc.
14. **Mood:** the feeling that is evoked within the reader upon reading the text.
15. **Onomatopoeia:** words that mimic sounds.
16. **Oxymoron:** the placing together of two words that are seemingly the opposite of one another. E.g., bittersweet, deafening silence, freezer burn, sweet misery etc.
17. **Personification:** where an inanimate or non-human object is given human qualities.
18. **Sonnet:** a poem that has 14 lines, 3 quatrains and a rhyming couplet.
19. **Pun:** a deliberate play of words which is often seen as being humorous.
20. **Sarcasm:** a witty, but often insulting comment, where the opposite of what is meant is said.
21. **Setting:** refers to the time and place in which the poem takes place.
22. **Simile:** an indirect comparison between two things using the words 'like' or 'as'
23. **Synecdoche:** when reference is made to a part of something but the entirety of that something is meant. E.g., The *suits* are very busy today – what is actually meant is that the businessmen in the suits are very busy.
24. **Theme:** the idea that reoccurs throughout the text.
25. **Tone:** the feeling the poet wants to evoke within the reader upon reading the text.

Activity 3: Analyse the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni

Name and Surname: _____

Date: _____

Follow the steps below and analyse the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Seboni.

Step 1:

Read the poem and write down what the poem is about. Do not overthink!

Step 2:

Read the poem again and identify vocabulary you do not understand.

Step 3:

Make a list of poetic devices. Read the poem again and identify the poetic devices on your list.

Step 4:

What is the meaning of the poem according to you? Consider the context of the poem.

Step 5:

Distinguish between the literal and figurative meaning of the poem.

- Poems are often written to highlight the figurative meaning, therefore, step 3 is important!

Step 6:

Read the poem again and answer the questions.

Step 7:

Always stay calm and substantiate your answers!

Any literature test, paper or assignment requires a lot of reading. *Lazy learners do badly. Do not be lazy and make sure to really engage with the texts!*



https://favpng.com/png_view/animation-detective-cartoon-drawing-png/fjw6AKw9

Use the space around the poem to make notes.

We do not need
these jagged words
that dig a trench between us
each time they are uttered

those epithets 5
sharp like spokes
that pierce the heart when spoken

there is no room in my cup
for these acidic words of sarcasm
that corrode my sensitivity 10

these cold and icy terms tossed
to deaden the heart
venomous words
from your serpentine tongue
that infect the feeling... 15

Let us speak, love
in gentler tones
timid as the lamb
is soft
woolly words 20
worn to stand strong against the
cold-bitterness of the world.

Better still
let us search in our speech
for words deep as the soul is still 25
that will spell our thoughts
in the silence of our smiles.

SMART TASK: The power of words in *Poem* by Barolong Sebani

Name and surname: _____

Date: _____

Instructions:

1. Create a poster based on your analysis of the poem, *Poem* by Barolong Sebani.
2. Your poster must:
 - be A3
 - be visually attractive
 - contain at least 4 images
 - successfully convey the message of the poem
3. Your poster must include a representation as well as explanation of at least two of the following:
 - Imagery
 - Simile
 - Metaphor
 - Alliteration
4. Follow the writing process by creating a mind map and rough draft, editing it and finally proofreading the content of your poster.
5. Incorporate your analysis of the poem into your poster.
6. The poster is due within three days after having received the assignment.
7. View the rubric that will be used to assess your poster.



<https://mymodernmet.com/summer-crafts/>

Criteria	Exceptional 13-15	Skilful 10-12	Moderate 7-9	Elementary 4-6	Inadequate 0-3
<p>CONTENT, PLANNING & FORMAT</p> <p>Response and ideas; Organisation of ideas for planning; Purpose, audience, features/ conventions and context</p> <p>15 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outstanding response beyond normal expectations - Intelligent and mature ideas - Extensive knowledge of feature of the type of text - Writing maintains focus - Coherence in content and ideas - Highly elaborated and all details support the topic - Appropriate and accurate format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very good response demonstrating good knowledge of features of the type of text - Maintains focus – no digressions - Coherent in content and ideas, very well elaborated and details support topic - Appropriate format with minor inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequate response demonstrating knowledge of features of the type of text - Not completely focused – some digressions - Reasonably coherent in content and ideas - Some details support the topic - Generally appropriate format but with some inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic response demonstrating some knowledge of features of the type of text - Some focus but writing digresses - Not always coherent in content and ideas - Few details support the topic - Has vaguely applied necessary rules of format - Some critical oversights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Response reveals no knowledge of features of the type of text - Meaning is obscured with major digressions - Not coherent in content and ideas - Very few details support the topic - Has not applied necessary rules of format
<p>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING</p> <p>Tone, register, style, purpose/effect, audience and context; Language use and conventions; Word choice; Punctuation and spelling</p> <p>10 MARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Virtually error-free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary very appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Generally grammatically accurate and well-constructed - Very good vocabulary - Mostly free of errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Some grammatical errors - Adequate vocabulary - Errors do not impede meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context - Inaccurate grammar with numerous errors - Limited vocabulary - Meaning obscured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tone, register, style and vocabulary do not correspond to purpose, audience and context - Error-ridden and confused - Vocabulary not suitable for purpose - Meaning seriously impaired

4.10 Summary

Chapter 4 offers a detailed analysis of the chosen texts and example lessons that may be used to enhance learners' soft skills. Firstly, the CAPS document was analysed to gauge the general aims in the EFAL CAPS, languages in the EFAL CAPS, language teaching approaches in the EFAL CAPS and the rationale for teaching the language skills in the HL CAPS. This was followed by an analysis of the novels, *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton and *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel. Next, the two poems were discussed, firstly *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings, followed by *Poem* by Barolong Seboni. The rationale for including the discussion is to guide the teachers in understanding the example lesson later on. This is followed by a discussion of technology in the classroom, along with various teaching strategies and e-learning platforms. Chapter 4 concluded with suggested lesson plans that may enhance the soft skills of Grade 12 HL and EFAL learners, along with printable resources for each lesson.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 offers some reflections on the study, particularly with respect to prescribed literature as a vehicle for the enhancement of 21st century soft skills of English language learners. The chapter presents the findings related to the primary as well as secondary research questions that informed this study. These questions included: Which soft skills are addressed in literature that can be of value to Grade 12 learners in the 21st century? To what extent can literature be used to fulfil the requirements of the CAPS document with reference to the development of holistic individuals? How can literature be taught in the technologically-driven classroom in the 21st century? I also provide a brief overview of the limitations I encountered while conducting the research. Additionally, I indicate further implications that may result from this study and how this study may contribute to the existing body of research on literature teaching.

5.2 Findings on how the use of prescribed literature for Grade 12 EFAL and HL learners in the South African context can enhance the soft skills needed for the 21st century.

The focal point of this study was to determine how prescribed literature can enhance the soft skills that Grade 12 EFAL and HL learners need for the 21st century. This research question was informed by the literature review, which indicated that there is a lack of soft skills among high school and university graduates (Arum & Roksa, 2011:61; Soufi & See, 2019:141). The diagnostic reports on the National Senior Certificate examinations for 2018 to 2021 clearly highlight that the lack of soft skills among matriculants is a tangible problem (DBE, 2018; DBE, 2019; DBE, 2020 & DBE, 2021). Consequently, the “skills gap”, referring to instances where there is a disparity between the skills desired by employers and the perceived skills of newly graduated, job-seeking, matriculants, is a reality. Although it is not a new problem, the lack of soft skills has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced individuals to drastically change their way of life. The most notable change is that many activities have moved to an online platform, which automatically hindered in-person communication and collaboration. The pandemic posed a unique set of problems that pushed people to think critically and creatively. However, most sectors went into survival mode during these unprecedented times, concentrating on basics such as health and the protection of the economy. Given these circumstances, the arts and humanities were neglected. The effects of the pandemic and the resulting increase in the “skills gap” with respect to soft skills, is not only relevant to the individual but also to the global economy and the current educational system now that we seem to have regained some sense of normalcy.

The economy requires individuals who can contribute to its cause, who can earn a profit, and that will not be possible when employees do not possess the necessary skills. In the 21st century, both hard and soft skills are needed, but soft skills have long been neglected. Now, the realisation is dawning that the economy will be better off if schools advocate the teaching of STEAMiE, instead of just STEM or even STEAM. The abilities to be innovative and entrepreneurial are especially important now that we are recovering from a COVID-19 induced economic recession (Rogoff, 2020a). Nonetheless, the focus of this study was not on innovation or entrepreneurship, but on the arts and humanities, particularly, the teaching of literature in English and how it can enhance Grade 12 HL and FAL learners' soft skills. Literature on this topic maintains that the teaching of literature can very likely enhance soft skills. However, it cannot be assumed that learners possess soft skills just because they have literature as a subject. A lack of mindfulness of the soft skills that can be learned during exposure to literature is just as unfavourable as not possessing soft skills at all (Altariva, 2019). Thus, I turned my attention to *which* soft skills can be developed by using literature as a medium of delivery.

5.3 Which soft skills are addressed in literature that can be of value to Grade 12 learners in the 21st century?

All manner of soft skills is addressed in literature. Before I continue the discussion on the valuable soft skills found in literature, I would like to take a moment and emphasise that literature in itself is valuable. The reading of literature can have a transformative effect on learners (Sawyer & Mclean Davies, 2021:105) and allows them to explore various topics in a safe way, simply by reading. Moreover, literature provides learners with genuine material from the 'outside world', exposes them to different cultures, improves their linguistic skills and enhances personal growth (Hişmanoğlu, 2005:54). It is noteworthy that there is a direct correlation between soft skills and human emotion (Levasseur, 2013:566); literature provides ample opportunity to complex human emotions, in turn developing soft skills. However, the scope of this study does not allow an exploration of all soft skills apparent in literature, so this study focused on four specific soft skills. These are creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. I chose to focus on these 4 Cs since all other soft skills can be sub-categorised into one of these categories. For instance, the ability to control one's anger can be seen as a sub-set of critical thinking as it supposes that one can predict what may result from an outburst with a superior in a work environment. The thesis suggests that the four soft skills initially identified as core needed to be expanded to incorporate, overtly and not as a subset, the notion of compassion as a key soft skill. The next section briefly revisits the 4 Cs here and how they can be of value to Grade 12 learners in the 21st century.

5.3.1 Creativity

Reading awakens the imagination, and the imaginary is often linked to creativity. Therefore, literature can enhance learners' ability to be creative as they imagine themselves in different characters' shoes merely by reading about them, especially when the narrative is in the first person. It helps learners to develop sympathy and empathy as they think about someone other than themselves. Additionally, learners' creativity is enhanced when they successfully envision what they are reading based on the descriptions given by the author or poet. Considering that literature often deals with real-life issues, learners may see creative ways in which to deal with certain situations by following a character's example from literature. Creativity is a crucial skill to have in the 21st century as it allows individuals to find solutions to novel problems. It contributes to divergent thinking and it allows individuals to be flexible in an ever-changing, fast-paced environment. One of the most important attributes of being creative is that it allows learners to express themselves in an appropriate and responsible way. Thus, when learners engage with a controversial issue in literature, they learn to express themselves fully without being offensive or insulting to anyone. The ability to be expressive without being insulting to others is important in a time when there are still tensions among individuals of different races and cultural groups. Additionally, at times, characters act in ways that learners may not agree with, which can enhance learners' ability to think critically.

5.3.2 Critical thinking

Critical thinking is put to use when something does not make sense and it is often initiated by the question, 'why?'. When learners do not agree with what characters do, for instance, they may ask why the character is responding in that way. Critical thinking enables learners to question, analyse and evaluate certain phenomena until a logical conclusion is reached. Creativity and critical thinking work hand-in-hand where problem solving is concerned. Creativity is needed to come up with original ideas to unprecedented problems, while critical thinking is employed to criticise whether the suggested solution is feasible (Bryant, 2017). Not only can critical thinking be used to judge whether new solutions may work but it can also be used to predict possible problems with current practices. As such critical thinking is a worthwhile skill to have in the 21st century. However, it would be useless when problems do arise and individuals are incapable of properly communicating a possible solution.

5.3.3 Communication

The ability to communicate effectively in the 21st century is imperative to being a successful, contributing member of society, especially in the South African context where there are eleven

official languages and numerous different cultures. Fortunately, literature enhances learners' communication skills as they are exposed to various contexts and vocabulary in texts. Learners can learn from characters what kind of responses would result in anger, which reactions elicit fear and which spoken words are perceived as being kind. Communication is a vital skill to have in the 21st century, specifically in a place of work where interactions are common. Good communication skills are needed to stay in good standing with superiors, to share and acquire knowledge, to contribute to meetings and to socialise. Communication is a crucial building block of collaboration, which in itself is a vital skill to have in the 21st century.

5.3.4 Collaboration

Without collaboration the probability of individuals being creative, thinking critically and communicating decreases as our actions are often informed by others. Collaboration, according to its most basic definition, refers to teamwork. Learners can view examples from literature to see how different characters interact and work together to solve the conundrums they face; learners may take aspects of such an example and apply it to their own unique circumstances. Alternatively, learners may work in groups to make sense of a text, such as a poem, which learners often feel is difficult. It is important to allow learners the opportunity to work together since co-construction of knowledge is necessary for the development of the soft skills instead of spoon-feeding or dissecting texts for learners (Doecke & Mead, 2018:251). Practically, in a 21st century work environment, collaboration is imperative to being considered as part of the work environment. Additionally, collaboration allows for the combination of various skills, which heightens the probability of finding solutions to common and novel problems. However, if the lack of soft skills persists and learners continue to show an inability to apply these skills, the future of the economy and of education is dire.

The incapacity to demonstrate soft skills such as the 4 Cs in the 21st century is problematic considering the fast-paced and information-driven environment in which we find ourselves. The expeditious environment of the 21st century often produces novel issues that require the ability to think creatively and critically to solve them. The deliberate process of thinking about a situation proves to be a useful skill in the 21st century as all is not always as it seems. The abundance of information in the 21st century (Katz, 2005a:44) requires individuals to be vigilant in their observations and processing of information. Analysis, evaluation and questioning (Bialik *et al.* 2015:7) aid critical thinking in this regard. Consequently, creativity is used to arrive at logical solutions to a problem. However, our capacity to be creative and think critically are often limited and so we rely on others to assist us as we collaborate. Collaboration among individuals is valuable in that it broadens the possibilities of the solutions to a problem, which is directly

influenced by the individuality of each member contributing. Moreover, collaboration can be valuable in that it increases awareness about differences between people, but it promotes how these differences may be used to their advantage rather than disadvantage.

5.4 To which extent can literature be used to fulfil the requirements of the CAPS document in terms of the development of holistic individuals?

Literature can be used to its full extent when the aim is to develop holistic individuals. In answer to the question of the extent to which literature can be used to fulfil the requirements of the CAPS documents, I refer readers to the lessons plans as provided in Chapter 4, along with the brief discussion that follows here.

A marriage between a focus on soft skills in literature and the requirements of the CAPS document can result in the development of holistically developed learners. The main aim of the CAPS documents for both HL and EFAL (DBE, 2011:9) may be described as a desire to develop well-rounded learners who can meaningfully contribute to society, both locally and globally (DBE, 2011:4; Balistreri *et al.*, 2012:10), at any given time. Coincidentally, this underlines the definition of a holistically developed individual – someone who is well-balanced in life, who can contribute to a workplace, the greater community as well as the global market; it is someone who possesses intellectual, physical and emotional capabilities in near equal measure. Virtually all the other aims of the CAPS document are built on the premise of developing holistic learners. However, for the purpose of developing learners that emerge from the education system as holistic individuals, I shortly revisit the requirements stated in the CAPS documents for both HL and EFAL.

Learners are expected to think critically and creatively, to work well on their own, and to be efficient and responsible in group settings (DBE, 2011:5). This aim may be achieved through the teaching of literature. As stated before, reading activates learners' imagination, which is directly linked to creativity. Through descriptive language, readers are often enticed to conjure up images in their mind. For instance, through Yann Martel's descriptive use of language, learners should be able to imagine Pi alone at night, on a raft with a tiger, lost at sea, with a thunderstorm raging around them. The earth being personified in *Cry, the Beloved Country*, should enable learners to imagine the earth being "torn away like flesh" (Paton, 1948:3). Moreover, the reading of literature evokes critical thinking and contributes to collaborative practices when learners do not understand a text and try to make sense of it together.

Activities that entail groupwork are often conducive to an individual's sense of responsibility, because if they fail, their group might fail. I reiterate here, for emphasis, that effective group work relies on five factors: reliability on one another, a sense of individual responsibility, positive and

encouraging in-person communication, the ability to socialise and to process information as a group (Johnson & Johnson, 2014:843; Johnson & Johnson, 2018:8). Moreover, learners must not only be able to identify relevant information, especially in this digital era where information is available in abundance, they must also be able to process this information effectively by collecting, analysing, organising and judging information based on its validity (DBE, 2011:5). This is mainly achieved through the teaching of STEM competencies. However, when literature is taught by incorporating technology, learners are also provided with an opportunity to engage with technology. Additionally, living in the 21st century, learners must be well-versed in the use of various technological applications and in the sciences (DBE, 2011:5). The teaching of texts such as *Life of Pi* may enhance learners' knowledge of the sciences when the English teacher and Natural Sciences teacher can agree to collaborate and provide learners with lessons that are interdisciplinary and relevant. However, using technology haphazardly can be detrimental to the progress and success of teaching and learning. As such, learners must show a sense of responsibility and respect for others and for their surroundings (DBE, 2011:5).

The implication is that learners must not only be aware of their own actions but also of how their actions may influence others – a selflessness must be developed, an ability to place oneself into someone else's shoes, i.e., the ability to think critically must be cultivated. Should this requirement be met, learners are then expected to show a deeper understanding for the workings of not only their own society, but also the global environment (DBE, 2011:5). Literature exposes learners to different cultures, environments and personality types, which can assist in achieving the goal set out in the CAPS. Lastly, learners must realise that everything is interrelated and nothing exists in isolation (DBE, 2011:5). The ripple-effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is a good example of how one situation affects another and of how problems cannot be solved in isolation (DBE, 2011:5) without taking other contexts into consideration. However, this is also evident in literature where the characters and the plot are influenced by different factors.

Both novels analysed for this study illustrated that events are more often than not interrelated and should not be seen as isolated incidents. In *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Kumalo's entire journey to Johannesburg is influenced by people's actions, such as his son's crime, his brother's betrayal of the familial values and his interaction with Jarvis. Additionally, in *Life of Pi*, Pi is influenced by his peers who bully him. He is sacrificed by the other sailors to save themselves, and most notably, Pi's biggest problem, him being lost at sea with an adult Bengal tiger, influences his actions the most. Literature can be fully exploited to develop holistic learners from the education system since literature often touches on themes that are widely relevant to humanity such as emancipation, justice, religion, loss of innocence and survival. Other prominent themes include good versus evil, love and identity (Fleming, 2020). Once learners are drawn into a habit of reading literature, their

chances of becoming life-long learners improves drastically (Santoli & Wagner, 2004:65). This in turn improves their ability to be flexible and adaptable in an ever-changing environment, both of which are extensions to creativity and critical thinking. However, as stated before in this study, the *proper* teaching of literature is the key to guide learners towards succeeding in their learning endeavours. It must be considered that we live in the 21st century where technology is often a big part of our lives and cannot be ignored. Thus, I reviewed how literature can be taught by incorporating technology.

5.5 How can literature be taught in the technologically-driven classroom in the 21st century?

Literature can be taught in the technologically-driven classroom in the 21st century by using technology as a supplement to literature teaching, instead of a replacement. Technology is also not meant to replace teachers, but rather to strengthen their repertoire of teaching tools. Based on the literature review there is a magnitude of ways in which literature can be taught using technology. I only referred to a few examples of educational technologies in this study – I offer a briefer reminder – though it is important to note that these are only a drop in the bucket. Aside from basic technologies such as cell phones and laptops, there are numerous applications and e-learning platforms that can be incorporated into lesson plans. However, it is crucial that educators find a balance between the use of technology in classrooms, where lessons are often learner-centred, and ‘old-fashioned’ teaching practices pertaining to pen and paper methods, where the lesson was often teacher-centred (Muganga & Ssenkusu, 2019:16). The biggest concern with using technology is arguably that not all learners have equal exposure to technology growing up (Chandrasoma & Chu, 2016:36), especially in the South African context where the injustices of the past “Bantu” education system and economic inequalities are still evident in places (Bauer, 2022). Thus, not all learners are equally proficient with the use of technology. However, the focus of this study was not on the use of technology but rather on the teaching of literature to develop soft skills in Grade 12 HL and EFAL learners, irrespective of their status where technology is concerned.

I must emphasise here, that if technology is available in a classroom and it is not used for whatever reason, that it is detrimental to learners’ success in the 21st century (DBE, 2011:5). However, the unavailability of technologies must similarly not prevent the teaching of literature. I refer readers once more to the lesson plans in Chapter 4 where I provided non-technological alternatives for the proposed activities where technology was suggested. Nonetheless, where technology is available, it is advised that it be used to comply with the requirements as set out in the CAPS documents. Technology without human input is nothing (Kolchenko, 2018:249). For

technology to work correctly, a person must programme it to execute the function for which it was created. Humans must step in to deal with technical difficulties when technology malfunctions and humans are needed to train others in the use of these technologies (Kolchenko, 2018:249). Thus, technology cannot replace teachers; what it can do, however, is to make menial tasks, such as dealing with vocabulary, more interesting for both teachers and learners. Perhaps the greatest benefit of technology in the classroom is that it allows time in class to deal with higher order activities, such as the discussion of literature.

The flipped classroom approach may be incorporated when the aim is to teach literature using technology. The flipped classroom approach, as the name suggests, is when the activities that would normally have been done in class is done at home and vice versa (Ofgang, 2021). Learners can use technology to prepare the content knowledge and lower cognitive level work at home so classroom time can be used for higher cognitive level activities, such as applying the information they have prepared (Chandio *et al.*, 2016:205). Learners can also, for instance, start analysing a poem, or evaluate a scenario in a novel or create a product to illustrate what they had learnt from the literature in class as opposed to doing it at home where the teacher cannot act as facilitator. Additionally, technology may be used to provide learners better access to various resources, especially where authenticity is concerned (Bonkowski, 2017). The flipped classroom approach can also be employed here, for instance by having learners watch instructional videos at home.

Learners can also use technology to find real-life examples of concepts they encounter in literature. For example, learners may use technology to do research on adult Bengal tigers to determine whether it is possible that Pi, from *Life of Pi*, could have survived being stranded, lost at sea, with such an animal. Additionally, as a supplement, technology may be used to aid the learners in their imaginings of what they read, i.e., learners may read a text and then be visually stimulated by watching a video or film about the text. In this way, learners can also employ critical thinking when they analyse why certain features in the video are different to what they imagined. Consequently, literature can be taught in agreement with technology by following a balanced approach between the two. I refer again to the suggested lesson plans as provided in Chapter 4. I briefly recap the activities of each lesson and highlight how technology was incorporated without over-powering the lesson.

In the example writing lesson with the theme of justice in the novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, I suggested that technology be used three times across the entirety of the lesson, while the remaining three activities are paper-based. This creates balance. Technology is in the introduction to the lesson where the teacher shows the learners a video clip. Technology is used again in the first learner activity where Kahoot! is used to expose learners to the vocabulary they

can expect in the lesson. Lastly, the SMART task, for this lesson, is centred on technology where learners are expected to create a real-life blog using Google Sites. The learners must also plan the task online and can choose between using miMind, Padlet or Google Docs. At first glance, it may seem as if technology overpowers this lesson, but this lesson requires a fair share of paper-based activities to be completed as well as in-person discussions to take place, which balances the use of technology. Activities 2 and 3 do not make use of technology. In Activity 2, learners are required to write an 'old-fashioned' diary entry to be followed by activity three. Activity 3 is divided into two parts, both of which do not require technology. In Part 1, learners are expected to participate in a class discussion, which is followed by note-taking, leading to Part 2 of the activity: the debate. In each case where technology is used, it is used purposefully, whether to strengthen the lesson or to prepare learners for what they may find after school. A brief outline of the second example lesson follows.

Like the previous lesson, the example speaking lesson based on the theme of survival in *Life of Pi*, starts with a video clip and moves on to a vocabulary activity as the first learner activity. The balanced approach is perhaps better illustrated here. Technology was used to create the first learner activity, a crossword puzzle, but learners are required to fill it out by hand, without using technology to aid them. The next activity includes the use of the novel as well as technology. Learners must refer to their text and then adjust the information to follow the instructions by working on Padlet, an online e-learning platform. A balanced approach between the teaching of literature and the use of technology is demonstrated in the third learner activity. In the third learner activity, learners must refer to their texts and they may use the notes on Padlet to ultimately present the class with a role play where they illustrate how they would have survived if they were the characters in the novel. Lastly, the SMART task for this lesson is mostly non-technological, as learners are required to present a prepared speech. However, a prepared speech, per definition, must include some research. Therefore, learners can also make use of technology in this last activity when they do some research on the Internet. The example poetry lesson does not contain many uses of technology because, as I said earlier, poetry requires learners to truly *engage* with the text and an over-use of technology may be detrimental to that cause.

The poetry lesson is introduced to the learners by the teacher simply reading the poem out loud. This is followed by a vocabulary activity. However, with the aim being for learners to engage with the poem, I suggested that they read the poem themselves and highlight words they do not comprehend. Learners are then asked to list these words and find their meanings. In this regard technology may be used in the form of online dictionaries. The use of technology is suggested for the second activity though, where Kahoot! or MentiMeter may be used to determine what connotations learners attach to certain words in the poem. Poetry is often not meant to be taken

literally, but rather figuratively, and so the connotations and other figurative speech in the poem must be explored. The third learner activity is void of the use of technology. In my experience, learners simply do not know the basic terms used in poetry. As a way to prevent this issue, I suggested learners analyse the poem on their own with the help of a list of steps to be followed as well as a list of poetic devices provided to them. However, technology may be employed again in the SMART task where learners are asked to create a poster. Teachers can decide whether they want a hand-made poster or a poster made by using an online platform such as Canva. Regardless, in each of these lessons, technology is used as support – it does not replace the teacher or allow learners to sit back and relax. In each of these lessons, learners' active participation is required, whether technology is incorporated or not. The use of technology should not be avoided where available, since we live in a modern era where an understanding of such things is advisable. However, we must not lose touch with what makes us human – our soft skills. Unfortunately, humanity is flawed at times and this brings me to the next point of discussion: the limitations of the study.

5.6 Limitations of the study

Research in education does not come without limitations, limitations here referring to “weaknesses within a research design that may influence outcomes and conclusions of the research” (Ross & Zaidi, 2019:261). I provide a full and truthful list of limitations that may have hampered the outcome of this study.

This study experienced the following shortcomings and challenges:

1. The sample of texts did not include all prescribed literature for Grade 12 HL and EFAL learners.
2. All the chosen texts are written by male writers.
3. The scope of the dissertation did not allow for a full exploration of themes or soft skills.
4. Discussions centred on HL and EFAL learners while second additional language learners were not included in the scope.
5. This study was executed through document analysis, which means human participants were not included.

The first limitation pertains to the sample of this study. Given the limited scope of the study, only two prescribed novels and two prescribed poems were selected from the prescribed literature for Grade 12 HL and EFAL learners. Considering that I had a specific aim in mind, I used purposive sampling and selected texts that would be best suited to offer evidence of my argument that prescribed literature can act as a vehicle for the enhancement of 21st century soft skills of English

language learners. The other genres, such as drama and short stories, were not included, partly because the scope does not allow for it, and because I opted for texts where there are prominent themes and practical possibilities for the development and enhancement of soft skills.

The second limitation I encountered in this research study was that all the chosen texts, except for the CAPS documents, were exclusively written by male writers. This limits the study in that no female perspective is found in the chosen texts. Additionally, there are only male protagonists, which may impede on the interest of female readers. However, once learners have mastered the skill of thinking creatively and critically, female readers may be able to place themselves in the shoes of the protagonist, even if he is male. A teacher can also use this fact to start an open conversation in class on the topic.

The next, and third limitation was that the scope of the study did not allow for a proper investigation of how all manner of themes can contribute to developing *all* soft skills. There are simply too many themes and too many soft skills to account for here. I attempted to overcome this limitation by choosing texts with themes that are relevant to the 21st century, such as surviving threatening circumstances. Additionally, upon closer examination, it became clear to me that the 4 Cs can be described as main categories where soft skills are concerned, seeing that all other soft skills extend from either creativity, critical thinking, collaboration or communication.

The fourth limitation is disconcerting considering the South African context. The discussions of this dissertation pertained to HL and EFAL learners, while second additional language (SAL) learners were not considered at all. Though literature prescribed to SAL learners can also be used as a vehicle to enhance soft skills in learners, there is a language barrier that has to be taken into account. Consideration of this important factor falls outside of the scope of this study and outside of my expertise.

The fifth and last limitation is that this research included no human participants. The views of teachers and learners are absent from this study. In future studies, the views of these two parties may provide valuable insights into how the prescribed texts are perceived by learners, what challenges teachers face, whether both teachers and learner believe technology contributes to or detracts from the teaching and learning process, and lastly whether the example lesson plans would have been practical in various classroom settings and whether it would have been serviceable to develop soft skills in learners. These perceptions could be gauged from interviews, focus group discussions and classroom observations. These limitations provide opportunity for further study.

5.7 Implications for further study

Considering the limited scope of this study, there is merit to investigate the matter of prescribed literature as a vehicle to enhance 21st century soft skills further. Further studies may do well to include and explore more genres. Moreover, the input of human participants may enrich research in this field significantly. Future research may also include the perceptions of people in the workforce on what is expected of graduates in different trades and professions in order to be successful in the 21st century. Another avenue that may be worth researching is how the CAPS documents may be revised to better enable the development of soft skills in the English classroom. The improper teaching of literature due to time constraints and pressure from stakeholders, should be addressed. The possibility of Literature in English as a stand-alone subject is also worth exploring.

5.8 Contribution of the study

I have made the case that prescribed literature may be used, even in a technologically-driven 21st century, to develop soft skills in Grade 12 HL and EFAL learners. To illustrate this, I have provided three example literature lessons that incorporate technology. The first lesson pertains to the prescribed novel, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, for HL learners, the second is a lesson on *Life of Pi*, which is the prescribed novel for EFAL learners, and the last lesson is on the prescribed poem, *Poem*, for EFAL learners. These lessons are merely suggestions and may be adjusted to suit each unique situation.

5.9 Final reflections

The proper teaching of prescribed literature for Grade 12 HL and EFAL learners in a South African context provides fertile ground for the development of the soft skills needed for the 21st century. The novels, *Cry, the beloved country*, by Alan Paton and, *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel, adhere to the criteria that must be considered when choosing a text (Van der Walt & Evans, 2019:193) that engages learners. The same is true for the two poems, *somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond* by ee cummings and *Poem* by Barolong Seboni. This engagement activates learners' imaginations and leads to them pondering the texts. Consequently, creativity is employed to envisage the text, while critical thinking is used to question the text. Any disparities between the text and learners' own ideas or views lead to communication with peers or more knowledgeable others, and this in turn may result in collaboration. These effects of reading literature directly relate to the aims as set out in the CAPS document and as such, learners will be ready to partake in society as holistically developed individuals.

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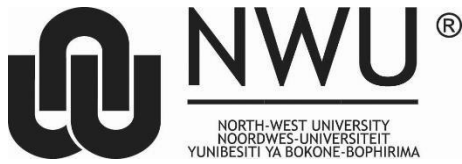
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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222

Fax: 018 299-4910

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Senate Committee for Research Ethics

Tel: 018 299-4849

Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Education Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EduREC)** on 24 February 2022, the Education Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SCRE) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Prescribed literature as a vehicle for the enhancement of 21st Century soft skills of English language learners

Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Dr S Romylos

Student / Team: MJ Rossouw (MEd student - 27233235) Ethics number:

N	W	U	-	0	0	2	5	2	-	2	2	-	A	2
Institution			Study Number					Year		Status				

Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

Application Type: Single study

Commencement date: 24/02/2022

Risk:

No Risk

Expiry date: 24/02/2023

Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- *The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the ES-REC:*
 - *annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and*
 - *without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.*
- *The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the ES-REC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.*
- *Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.*
- *The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.*
- *In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRC and ES-REC reserves the right to:*

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- *request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;*
- *to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process; – withdraw or postpone approval if:*
 - *any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;*
 - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the ES-REC or that information has been false or misrepresented;*
 - *submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or*
 - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*

The ES-REC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the ES-REC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof Jako Olivier
Chairperson NWU Education Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

Current details: (22351930) M:\DSS1\8533\Monitoring and Reporting Cluster\Ethics\Certificates\Templates\Research Ethics Approval Letters\9.1.5.4.1 ES-REC Ethical Approval Letter.docm
5 December 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

APPENDIX B: DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING



3 Kirk Street, Haenertsburg, 0730
cumlaudelanguage@gmail.com

Christien Terblanche
SATI accredited
073 250 8101

Im-Elze Venter
SATI accredited
083 327 9001

Elizene Terblanche
PHD (Lang)
073 211 5218

DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

I, **Christien Terblanche**, hereby declare that I edited the text titled:
**Prescribed literature as a vehicle for the enhancement of 21st Century
soft skills of English language learners**

for Mariana Rossouw for the purpose of submission as a postgraduate
study for examination. Suggestions were indicated in track changes and
application was left to the author. The language editor did not view a final
version.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christien Terblanche".

CME Terblanche

Cum Laude Language Practitioners (CC)

South African Translators Institute accr nr: 1001066

Full member of the Professional Editors Guild

APPENDIX C: TURNITIN SUMMARY

13060341:Final_Mariana_Rossouw_M.Ed_.docx

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