

ENGLISH Stage 6

Journeys

**Stimulus Booklet for the Area of Study
HSC 2006–2007**

Introduction

This stimulus booklet offers various points of view from which the Area of Study *The Journey*, for students in the English (Standard), English (Advanced) and English (ESL) courses, may be introduced. The texts in the booklet provide different examples of the concept of the journey. These texts are intended as stimulus for responding to and composing a variety of texts relating to the Area of Study.

The texts in this booklet provide students with opportunities to explore, assess, analyse and experiment with:

- meaning conveyed, shaped, interpreted and reflected in and through texts
- ways in which texts are responded to and composed
- ways in which perspectives may affect meaning and interpretation
- connections between and among texts
- how texts are influenced by other texts and contexts.

This booklet is a prescribed text. In the HSC examination students may be asked to refer to at least one text that they have selected from the stimulus booklet.

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

by Robert Frost

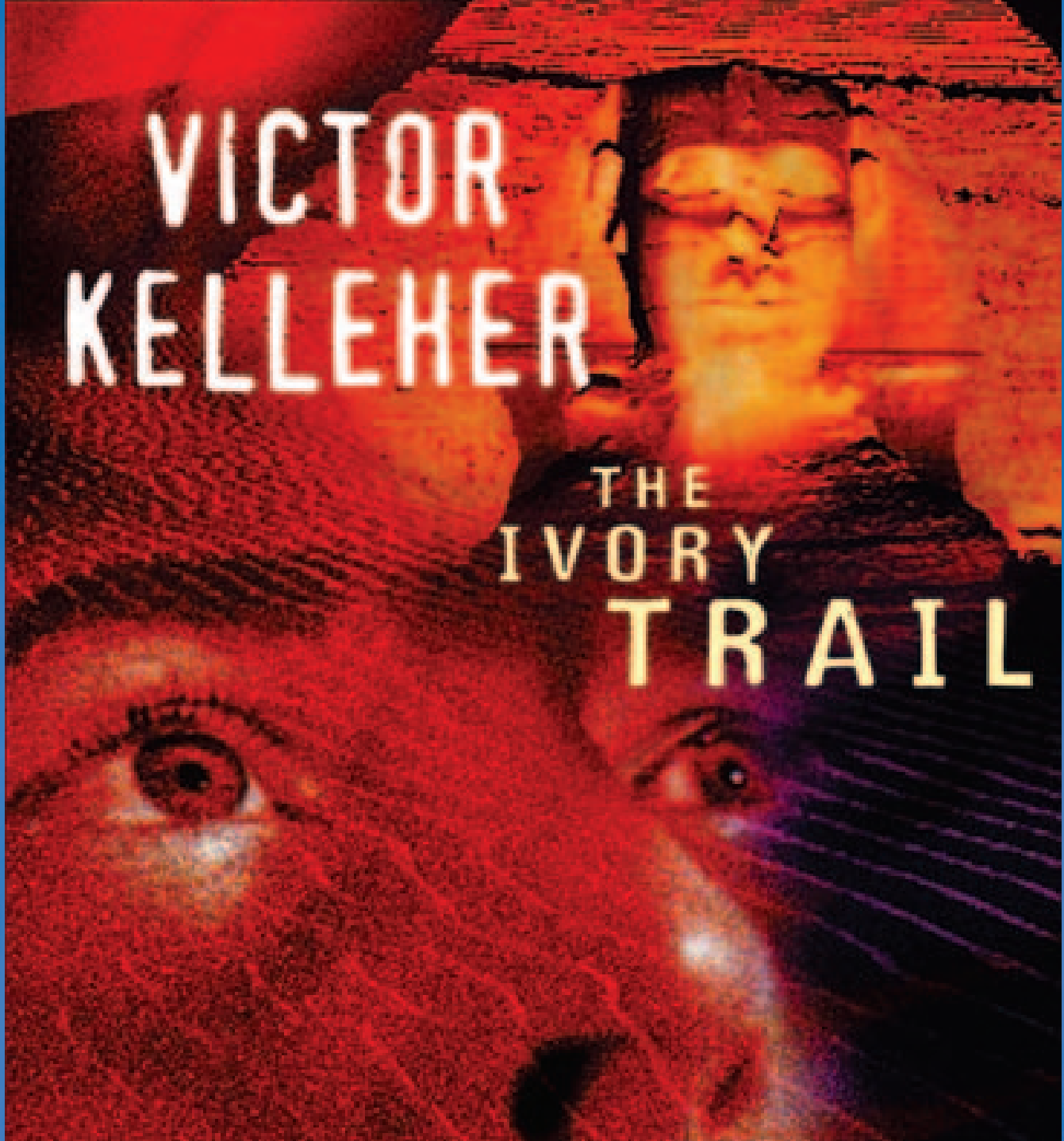


Not all journeys have an ending



VICTOR
KELLEHER

THE
IVORY
TRAIL



The Wind in the Willows

By Kenneth Grahame

He led the way to the stable-yard accordingly, the Rat following with a most mistrustful expression; and there, drawn out of the coach house into the open, they saw a gipsy caravan, shining with newness, painted a canary-yellow picked out with green, and red wheels.

'There you are!' cried the Toad, straddling and expanding himself. 'There's real life for you, embodied in that little cart. The open road, the dusty highway, the heath, the common, the hedgerows, the rolling downs! Camps, villages, towns, cities! Here today, up and off to somewhere else tomorrow! Travel, change, interest, excitement! The whole world before you, and a horizon that's always changing! And mind, this is the very finest cart of its sort that was ever built, without any exception. Come inside and look at the arrangements. Planned 'em all myself, I did!'

The Mole was tremendously interested and excited, and followed him eagerly up the steps and into the interior of the caravan. The Rat only snorted and thrust his hands deep into his pockets, remaining where he was.

It was indeed very compact and comfortable. Little sleeping-bunks – a little table that folded up against the wall – a cooking-stove, lockers, bookshelves, a bird-cage with a bird in it; and pots, pans, jugs and kettles of every size and variety.

'All complete' said the Toad triumphantly, pulling open a locker. 'You see – biscuits, potted lobster, sardines – everything you can possibly want. Soda-water here – baccy there – letter-paper, bacon, jam, cards and dominoes – you'll find,' he continued, as they descended the steps again, 'you'll find that nothing whatever has been forgotten, when we make our start this afternoon.'

'I beg your pardon,' said the Rat slowly, as he chewed a straw, 'but did I overhear you say something about "*we*", and "*start*", and "*this afternoon*"?''

'Now, you dear good old Ratty,' said Toad, imploringly, 'don't begin talking in that stiff and sniffy sort of way, because you know you've *got* to come. I can't possibly manage without you, so please consider it settled, and don't argue – it's the one thing I can't stand. You surely don't mean to stick to your dull fusty old river all your life, and just live in a hole in a bank, and *boat*? I want to show you the world! I'm going to make an *animal* of you, my boy!'

'I don't care,' said the Rat, doggedly. 'I'm not coming, and that's flat. And I *am* going to stick to my old river, *and* live in a hole, *and* boat, as I've always done. And what's more, Mole's going to stick to me and do as I do, aren't you, Mole?'

Journey to the Interior

by Margaret Atwood

There are similarities
I notice: that the hills
which the eyes make flat as a wall, welded
together, open as I move
to let me through; become
endless as prairies; that the trees
grow spindly, have their roots
often in swamps; that this is a poor country;
that a cliff is not known
as rough except by hand, and is
therefore inaccessible. Mostly
that travel is not the easy going
from point to point, a dotted
line on a map, location
plotted on a square surface
but that I move surrounded by a tangle
of branches, a net of air and alternate
light and dark, at all times;
that there are no destinations apart from this.

There are differences
of course: the lack of reliable charts;
more important, the distraction of small details:
your shoe among the brambles under the chair

where it shouldn't be; lucent
white mushrooms and a paring knife
on the kitchen table; a sentence
crossing my path, sodden as a fallen log
I'm sure I passed yesterday
(have I been
walking in circles again?)

but mostly the danger:
many have been here, but only
some have returned safely.

A compass is useless; also
trying to take directions
from the movements of the sun,
which are erratic;
and words here are as pointless
as calling in a vacant wilderness.

Whatever I do I must
keep my head. I know
it is easier for me to lose my way
forever here, than in other landscapes

BLOOD

Blood on the Tracks

by Renay Walker

The road metaphor is significant in many ways. It cuts across the divide between nature and culture, and points to a path which has been laid down, mapped out and directed. It suggests the possibility of movement from one place to another, and implies that the passage of time can move in either direction. The availability of an open road intersects with the problem of a life at a crossroad, where the route (not) taken may simultaneously render something in/inaccessible. Freedom of motion and predetermined movement run parallel to each other, and intersect accordingly. The road metaphor acts as a sign post to its own significations, carrying us along by enabling a way as such.

Indeed, the narrative of personal identity as both pathway and way making movement can be traced as far back as Homer's *Odyssey* and extends way beyond Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. It recurs across historical place and time, and has found its way into genres as varied as the musical, Western, film *noir* and science fiction. Films as diverse as *The Wizard of Oz* (Victor Fleming, 1937), *They Drive By Night* (Raoul Walsh, 1940), *La Strada* (Federico Fellini, 1954), *The Searchers* (John Ford, 1956), *Mad Max* (George Miller, 1979), *Ulysses' Gaze* (Theo Angelopoulos, 1995), *A Taste of Cherry* (Abbas Kiarostami, 1997), *The Lord of the Rings* (Peter Jackson, 2001) and *Where Eskimos*

Live (Tomasz Wiszniewski, 2002) have all ventured down *that* road in one way or another. The road metaphor is so embedded within an understanding of ourselves that it has even paved the way for its own film genre – that of the Road Movie.

It is easy to mistake Ivan Sen's *Beneath Clouds* for the most rudimentary or literal of road movies. Its deceptively simple narrative surface couldn't be more straightforward. But although it is hardly groundbreaking in terms of style or approach, *Beneath Clouds* nonetheless manages to blaze its own trail within Australian cinema. It is about two teenagers whose paths momentarily cross. Lena (Dannielle Hall) is a light-skinned girl of mixed race who meets up with Vaughn (Damian Pitt), an Aboriginal boy whose origins are more obvious or at least more singular. The title, *Beneath Clouds*, refers to what lies beneath a further reaching sky, and connotes the problem of assimilating or merging distinct movements and boundaries. We encounter our travelers heading for the borders of their respective identities. Whilst *Beneath Clouds* lays bare its own metaphorical status as part of a genre, it underlines the point that there is nothing really straightforward about moving on a road – nor indeed, can there be any going back in a road movie.

ON THE TRACKS

Journeys over Land and Sea

In every age, pioneers pushed beyond their own boundaries to chart new lands and observe exotic plants, animals, and peoples. Their tales of discovery, along with new and better navigational tools, compelled others to pursue the unknown farther from home.

Although nations undertook the great voyages of exploration primarily to expand their territories, scientific and artistic discoveries abounded. Voyagers returned with specimens from the natural world, which scholars cataloged and organized. By the early 1600s, learned societies and mercantile groups launched expeditions solely for scientific and commercial purposes. The specimens they collected and recorded are now housed in natural history museums around the world.

Scientists and artists were essential partners in these expeditions. They collaborated with writers and printers to record and depict the expanding world, producing lavishly illustrated volumes of great beauty. Their work forms an important body of literature of unparalleled value to historians, ecologists, scientists, and many others.

The Smithsonian Libraries collections of travel voyages document the ever-expanding world view of humankind. Among the earliest works are maps, republished in the Renaissance, that were originally prepared for the Greek and Roman geographers/naturalists Ptolemy and Pliny. Star charts, bestiaries, and herbals, often copied from manuscripts or gathered from travelers' stories, contain pictures and descriptions that provide evidence about life in earlier centuries. Other books in the collections express the anxieties of the earliest travelers, who journeyed into the unknown fearful of monsters, savage weather, and plummeting over the edge of the map. More recent works, which range from explorations of the American West to fictional accounts of space travel for children and adults, reveal their authors' wonder at the unusual, whether real or imagined.



Travellers through the centuries have threaded their baser motives of profit and pleasure with a subtler, and sometimes even unconscious, compulsion – the search for the *genii loci*. In the purer realm of travel, which has nothing to do with vacations, humans hope to be moved rather than to move. They seek an external geography that will act on their internal psychology like an irresistible force, so that they will return to the place from which they came blessed and altered.

Shirley Geok-lin Lim, *'The Town Where Time Stands Still'*

Acknowledgements

Text 1

Frost, Robert, 'The Road Not Taken', from 'Mountain Interval', *Selected Poems*, Penguin, London, 1973.

Text 2

Kelleher, Victor, *The Ivory Trail*, cover, Penguin, Melbourne, 2001.

Text 3

Grahame, Kenneth, *The Wind in the Willows*, Puffin Books, London, 1994.

Text 4

Atwood, Margaret, 'Journey to the Interior', *Selected Poetry 1965–1995*, Virago Press, London, 2000.

Text 5

Walker, Renay, 'Blood on the Tracks', from *Metro Magazine*, no. 133, Australian Teachers of Media, St Kilda, Victoria, 2002.

Text 6

'Journeys over Land and Sea', from *Voyages, A Smithsonian Libraries Exhibition*, screenshot reproduced with permission from Smithsonian Institution Libraries, www.sil.si.edu/Exhibitions/Voyages (viewed 12 May 2003).

Text 7

Geok-lin Lim, Shirley, 'The Town Where Time Stands Still' quoted in *The Pillowbook of Dr Jazz*, Trevor Carolan, Random House, Sydney, 1999.