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ECL762 - Teaching English Senior Years

Assessment Task 1: The art of teaching students to engage with, read, explore, analyse & respond to complex texts

2451 words - Reflection

CIRCE (2018)

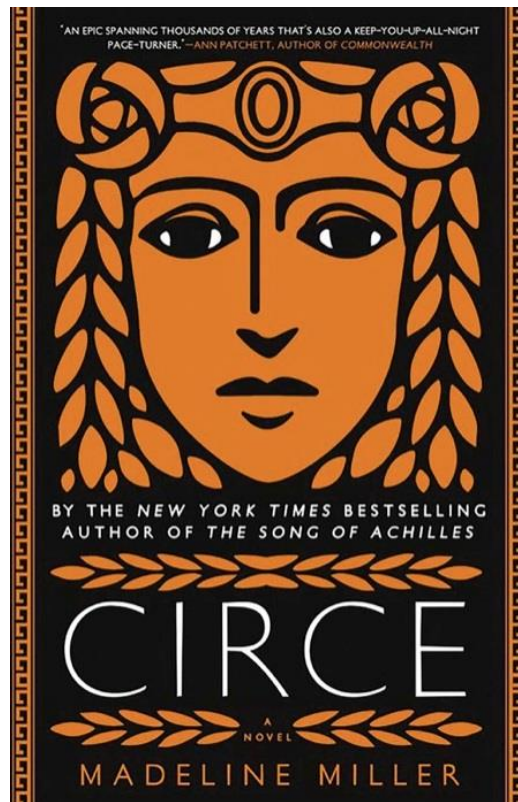
by Madeline Miller

BSSS English T · Unit: Representations Through Texts

The unit: We will explore how the mythological figure Circe is represented across texts, with **emphasis on Madeline Miller's adaptation** of the myth, and how language, structure and perspective construct ideas about power, gender, voice and agency.

Expectations: You will analyse representations, test interpretations against evidence, compare versions of the same figure, and create your own representation of an established character.

Unit 2 focus (BSSS English T): Analyse the representation of ideas, attitudes and voices in texts. Consider how texts represent the world and human experience. Examine how language and structural choices shape perspectives. Create your own texts and reflect on the choices you make as a writer.



Madeline Miller, Circe (2018)

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Activity 0: *Circe* (2018) Journal

Purpose: Begin a personal, ongoing collection that will grow across the whole unit.

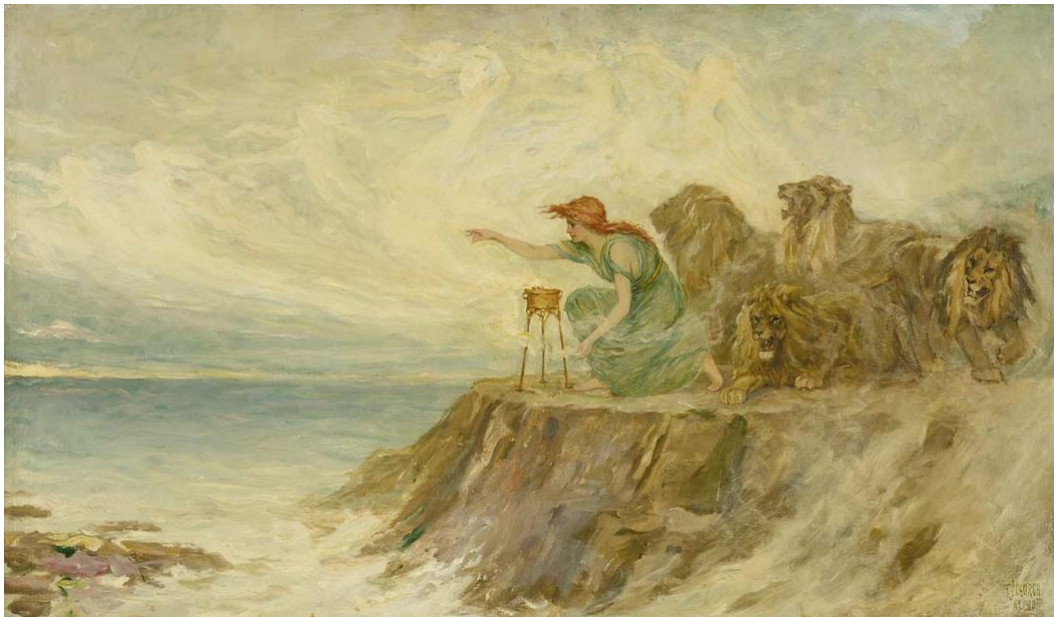
What goes in the Journal

- Quotations that stay with you
- Images, patterns or connections you notice
- Any questions you'd like to find the answer to
- Literary devices or techniques you might want to imitate later
- Short creative experiments
- Things you disagree with or find surprising
- Evidence, hot takes, revised interpretations and reflections from the activities we'll do in class

This Journal is the place where you will plan for and record your work from Activity 1 (close reading), Activity 2 (comparing three *Circes*), Activity 3 (Hot Takes), Activity 4 (Evidence Hunt), the creative composition and the final analytical essay.

The Journal **cannot** be digital.

All work in this unit will be hand-written except for the revised creative assignment, unless specified otherwise in your Access Plan/ILP **OR** if agreed with the teacher and/or your student advisor.



Frederick S. Church's Circe (1910)

Activity 1: Diagnostic assessment – Close Reading of Madeline Miller’s *Circe* (2018)

Purpose: Explain how authorial choices construct Circe’s voice and power.

Step 0: Listen

- Listen while the passage is read aloud once.
- Note down any words, images, sounds or sensations that stick out to you.
- Form pairs and share your first impressions.



*John William Waterhouse,
Circe Offering the Cup to
Ulysses (1891)*

Step 1: Read

Now read the provided excerpt carefully and do the following:

Underline	language revealing Circe’s voice
Circle	language connected to power, control or vulnerability
Box	any literary devices you find
?	something you’re unsure about

Step 2: Build ONE argument

Evidence (quotes from the excerpt)	Authorial choice (e.g. literary device)	What it suggests about character or plot	Effect on the audience

Step 3: Present your argument

Fill in the blanks:

Miller presents Circe as _____ by using _____ to

suggest _____. This can be found in

“_____” and

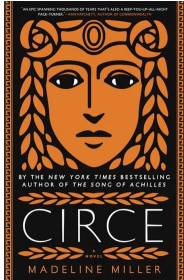
invites the reader to _____.

Activity 2: Formative Assessment - Three Circes (2 x 50 minutes lessons)

Goal: Compare how Circe is portrayed across three depictions, and analyse how each author made choices about voice, representation and meaning.

For each depiction, **underline or annotate** key words, phrases or moments that show how Circe is portrayed vs. Odysseus/the sailors. Use different coloured pens or highlighters for Circe and for the men.

Use the blank column to record the key words/phrases you underline or annotate, and brief notes on what they suggest about **gender, power, agency or voice**.

The three texts:	Key words / notes:
1. Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> Book 10 (Samuel Butler translation from Project Gutenberg) Extract provided. 	Note: Ulysses and Odysseus are the Roman and Greek names for the same character.
2. Christopher Nolan, <i>The Odyssey</i> (2026) Circe sequence (Samantha Morton) Film clip sourced from ClickView (available on request). 	
3. Madeline Miller, <i>Circe</i> First meeting with Odysseus (Chapters 15–16) Photocopied pages from the book provided for highlighting. 	

Comparison table

Focus	Homer (Butler)	Nolan (2026)	Miller
Appearance / setting			
Voice			
Power / agency			
Relationships with men			
Gender			
Magic / witchcraft			
Overall impression			

Things to consider

- Whose voice do we read/hear? Who controls the narrative?
- Is Circe primarily a threat, a host, a victim, a lover, a survivor, or something more complex?
- How is the transformation of the men achieved and how does it change your perception of Circe?
- What remains continuous across the three versions, and what changes most significantly?

Synthesis

The most significant way Miller reimagines Circe is...

Extender (optional)

Does Miller escape older gender constructions, or reconstruct some of them in a contemporary form?
Ground your answer in the three depictions.

Activity 3: Circe 'Hot Takes' Challenge (2x50 lessons)

GROUP WORK



Purpose: Generate, defend and challenge interpretations of gender and representation **before** testing them against textual evidence.

A hot take must be DEBATABLE + TEXT-BASED + ABOUT REPRESENTATION

Step 1: Choose a focus as a group

POWER · GENDER · IDENTITY · VIOLENCE · TRANSFORMATION · VOICE / SILENCE ·
MORTALITY VS DIVINITY ·

Tip:

Avoid simplistic takes such as “men have power / women are victims”.

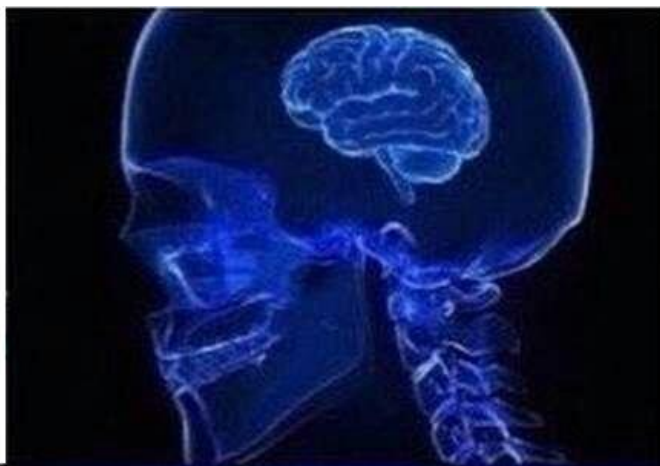
Step 2:

Fill the table on the next page.

Miller presents

as

_____.



This is significant because

_____.

Why this take is important:

_____.



Although some readers may argue

_____.

we think

_____.



This can be evidenced in:

_____.

_____.



Step 3: Final hot take

Write your hot take as a thesis. One representative of your group will then share it with the rest of the class and write it on the board.

Step 4: Listen to the other groups’ hot takes and then discuss your challenge within your group.

Remember to be civil and respectful.

- We respectfully challenge this because...
- Interesting take, however, another interpretation could be...
- We understand what you’re saying, but there is another moment that says something different...
- We agree partly, but...

Step 5:

Plan how you’ll defend your hot take to the other groups.

- We think this because...
- A moment that supports us is...
- This is important because Miller is suggesting...
- Why this interpretation feels relevant nowadays...

Step 6: Challenge time!

Each group nominates the Challenger who presents a counterargument to each of the other hot takes.

Step 7: Class vote

Most original	Most defensible	Most debatable
		

Activity 4: Evidence Hunt / Prove It



Leah Mariani, *Circe & Odysseus* (2021-2023)

Purpose: Test the following claims against the novel. Some claims will not hold under scrutiny, think of how you could revise them according to the actual textual evidence.

Topic	Evidence for or against	Theme / key idea	Literary device / authorial choice	Effect / meaning
In Miller's telling, Circe's magic comes to her easily and naturally; she does not have to struggle or practise to master it.				
Even when Miller rewrites Circe as complex and powerful, older gendered expectations about female danger still survive in this adaptation.				
Circe's sense of self is formed more by rejection and isolation than by divine inheritance.				

Miller's first-person narration gives Circe a voice that the older versions deliberately withheld.				
Miller presents Circe as finding lasting fulfilment primarily through her relationship with Odysseus.				

Continue your *Circe* Journal

- Write the above claims as paragraphs on your journal, following the structure provided in Activity

1, Step 3:

Miller presents Circe as ____ by using ____ to suggest _____. This can be found in “_____” and invites the reader to _____.

- Extender (optional):** Write the paragraphs without using the scaffold.

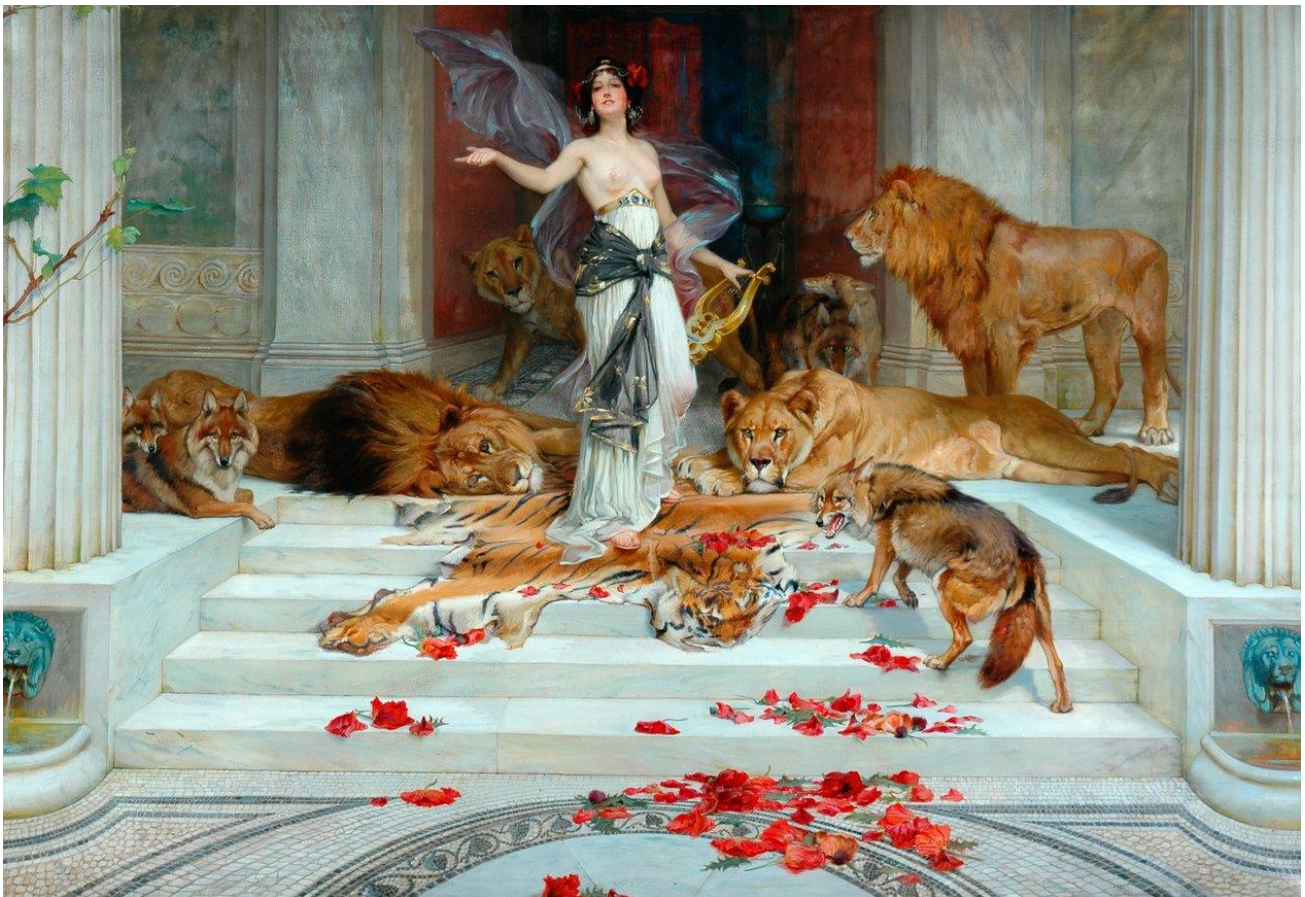
Activity 5: Same Event, Different Story

Purpose: Explore how POV and perspective change meaning by adapting *Circe* characters to a contemporary setting and narrating the same event from different viewpoints.

Step 1: Agree on the shared event as a group and which characters you'll be

Example: A confrontation between friends at a party during which a secret is revealed.

Write down the most important details that must remain the same in everyone's version of the story:



Wright Barker, *Circe* c.1889

Step 2: Create your character, individually

Character	Modern context	What they want	What they need	What they omit	Attitude to others	Voice / language

Step 3: Write

Write 300–400 words in your **Journal** from your character's perspective. Think about what your character would notice (or fail to notice), omit, emphasise and judge. They should behave similarly to how they do in *Circe*.

Step 4: Compare with your group and reflect

1. What changed between the different perspectives even though the event stayed the same?
2. How does this relate to how Miller decided to tell the story from Circe's perspective?

1. _____

2. _____

Activity 6: Summative assessment - Creative Composition

Purpose: Independently apply learning about voice, representation and perspective in an original creative composition.

Creative brief

Reimagine a **familiar story, myth, legend, or well-known non-fictional** event from the perspective of a character whose voice is secondary, overlooked or absent. Create a new perspective without changing the main events of the original plot. If you choose a non-fictional event, you must do research first.

Negotiate your choice of text with your teacher.

OR

Choose from the following list, if you're stuck:

- The Odyssey
- Cinderella
- Hamlet
- Romeo and Juliet
- The legend of King Arthur
- Greek/Roman/Norse mythology (choose a particular story)
- Titanic (1997)
- The first Moon landing
- Julius Caesar's assassination



Dillon, Julie, "Illustration of Circe", 2025.

Stage A: Planning

Original story / event	
Chosen narrator	
Why this perspective?	
Target audience	
Purpose / intention	
What to be careful with / avoid	

Stage B: Pre-writing

Are you ready? Tick as you go.

In your Journal:

- ☐ Make a list: five things your narrator notices and five things they don't.
- ☐ Write what your narrator wants, fears and may be hiding from the audience.
- ☐ Reveal your narrator's feelings towards the other characters.
- ☐ Identify what the narrator's perspective will reveal about the original story without changing its main events.
- ☐ Write five lines in your narrator's voice.

Stage C: In-Class Creative Writing Assessment (2 in-class sessions)

Day 1 - Begin your composition: Establish the narrator's voice, perspective and relationship to the familiar events.

Day 2 - Continue and complete your draft: Develop the central tension and ending.

Both drafting sessions will take place in class. Bring your journal and planning materials to each lesson.

Stage D: Peer-assessment

Work in groups of TWO or THREE. Read every group member's completed draft and give each person at least TWO specific pieces of constructive feedback. **The completion and quality of the feedback you give form part of this assessment.**

Feedback 1 - Effective choice: Identify a successful choice involving voice, perspective, language or structure and explain why it works.

Feedback 2 - Actionable suggestion: Recommend an improvement and explain how it could strengthen the story.

Record and submit the feedback you give. Write respectfully, refer to specific parts of the draft and ensure that your feedback is constructive.

Peer 1 name: _____

Feedback 1

Feedback 2

Peer 2 name (if working in a group of three): _____

Feedback 1

Feedback 2

Stage E: Take-Home Editing

Take your draft and peer feedback home. Edit and proofread your story, then bring the revised TYPED version back to class along with your peer feedback so you can explain the decisions you made.

Stage F: Annotations + Commentary

Annotations

Highlight or underline FIVE literary devices or authorial choices related to perspective, voice, audience, purpose or form. Number each annotation for reference.

Commentary Part 1: Literary devices / Authorial choice

For each numbered annotation, explain what you chose and how it helps construct meaning for the audience.

Annotation 1

Annotation 2

Annotation 3

Annotation 4

Annotation 5

Commentary Part 2: Revision changes

Identify at least TWO changes you made after receiving peer feedback. Explain what you changed, why you changed it and how the revision improved your composition.

Change 1

Change 2

Activity 7: Summative Assessment – Analytical Essay

Purpose: Compose an analytical response that argues how representation, voice and perspective construct meaning across the Circe texts, using the full writing cycle.

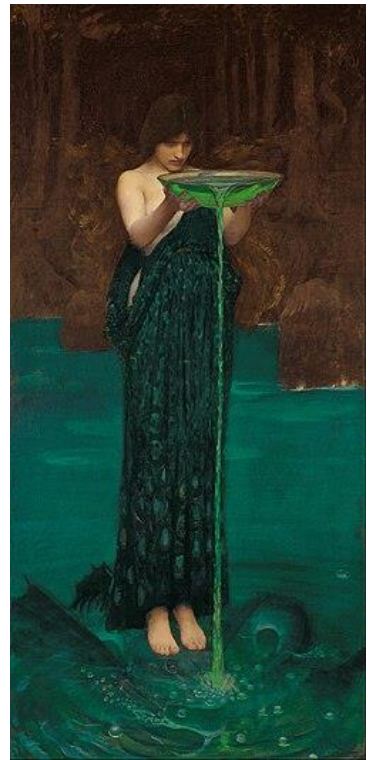
Analytical brief

Write a formal analytical essay (800–1000 words) that answers one of the following questions:

A. Does Miller escape older gender constructions of Circe, or reconstruct some of them in a contemporary form? Ground your argument in **at least two** of the three depictions studied.

B. How does changing the narrator or point-of-view change the meaning of Circe's story? Compare Miller's first-person narration with at least one other text studied in class.

C. A prompt negotiated with your teacher from your Hot Takes or Evidence Hunt work.



Audience, purpose, register, intention (APRI)

- **Audience:** Peers and English teachers (e.g. a contribution to a senior English journal such as *Idiom*)
- **Purpose:** To explain, argue and present a defensible interpretation of representation, voice and perspective.
- **Register / form:** Formal literary analysis. Academic but accessible language.
- **Intention:** To persuade the reader that your analysis of the texts is well-supported and important.

Stage A: Starting points

- ☐ Choose your prompt (A, B or negotiated).
- ☐ Write a working thesis in one or two sentences.
- ☐ Identify the two or three depictions (Homer, Nolan, Miller) you will draw on most heavily.
- ☐ Revisit your Hot Takes and Evidence Hunt notes: which claims could be relevant to your thesis? Which could you revise or discard?

Working thesis

Stage B: Pre-writing

This stage is for building the argument before you write your essay. Do **not** plan rigid paragraph formulas.

1. Evidence selection

Select 6–8 high-value quotations from your Evidence Hunt and Circe Journal. For each, note:

- the authorial choice (language, structure, perspective, voice, silence, etc.)
- the effect or meaning it creates

Quotations	Authorial choice	Effect/Meaning

2. Mentor moves

Read the short mentor analytical paragraphs supplied by your teacher. Highlight where they:

- open a claim without a formulaic topic sentence
- weave evidence into the flow of the argument
- develop interpretation instead of just identifying features

3. Copycat writing

Choose one mentor sentence whose structure helps you say something you've been struggling to express. Imitate its pattern with your own ideas in your Journal.

4. Argument sequence

Sketch a loose sequence of ideas freely. Ask yourself and then write in your journal:

- Where will your arguments add some tension or complicate?
- Where in your essay might you acknowledge a different interpretation from yours?
- How will the final argument leave the reader with a clear sense of your overall meaning?

5. Opening move (pair work)

Draft the first 4–6 lines of the essay in class, in your journal. Exchange journals with your peer and give each other feedback. Revise your opening lines with the feedback from your peer.

Feedback from (peer's name) _____

Stage C: Writing

The essay will be done in class with the provided writing paper.

You are writing a rhetorical piece. Make well-informed claims, back them with evidence and interpret your findings in the order that best serves your argument. There are no required number of paragraphs and no formulaic order of “topic sentence - evidence - analysis - link”.

Ask for feedback from a peer or the teacher **at least once** while drafting.

Check with your peers/teacher

What is working in my argument?	Where does my evidence need more interpretation?	One useful tip

Stage D: Post-writing

- ☐ Revise at least one section in response to peer/teacher feedback. Name the change you made and why.
- ☐ Read a substantial section aloud to check rhythm, clarity and the movement of the argument.
- ☐ Polish expression and accuracy.
- ☐ Submit the final essay with a short writer's commentary (120–150 words).

Writer's commentary

Explain two choices you made about perspective, voice, structure, audience or form, and the effect you intended. Then note one revision you made after feedback and why it improved the piece.

Positionality Statement

I write this assignment from Phillip, on Ngunnawal and Ngambri Country in the region called Canberra. I acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people as traditional custodians of this land, and I pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging. I come to this work as an immigrant. I arrived in this country with a different language, a different education system and a different set of stories, and I have had to learn what it means to belong somewhere new. That experience shapes how I think about the unit that follows. Circe tells the story of a woman who rebuilds a voice and a home from the margins of someone else's narrative, and I recognise something of my own position in that. Still, I want to keep that experience separate from the histories of dispossession that First Nations students and communities in Australia carry, since the two are not the same thing and I want to be careful not to blur them together.

Text Selection

I have chosen *Circe* by Madeline Miller (2018) as the primary text for this unit. The assignment requires a contemporary text published within the last ten years, so the set text is Miller's novel, not Homer. *Circe* retells material from Homer's *Odyssey* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the first person, from the perspective of the witch who is usually reduced to an obstacle in someone else's hero's journey. Miller published it in 2018, so it meets the ten-year rule, and it is not already on an existing BSSS text list, which the brief allows.

Circe meets the text selection principles set out in the ACT BSSS English Course Framework (2021), which calls for texts drawn from a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, in a range of forms and from a variety of contexts, including popular culture and different cultures. It has literary merit. Miller's prose is controlled and the novel has been widely read and discussed since 2018, so it can sustain close study. It stands as an example of form too, since it blends the structure and register of epic with the interiority of the novel, and that gives students two literary traditions to think with side by side. The novel raises challenging ideas about gender, power, motherhood, exile and agency, and about what it means to be caught inside someone else's story, and those ideas stay open right through to the end. Those ideas stay open, which is what intensive study needs.

Circe also suits a diverse cohort, including EAL/D students. Many students are already familiar with classical mythology through popular media such as the Percy Jackson novels, Marvel films, and Christopher Nolan's *The Odyssey* (2026). Because of this prior knowledge, *Circe* provides an accessible entry point into literary analysis and does not require prior fluency in classical literature. Miller is not an Australian author, and the BSSS Framework's cross curriculum priorities call for attention to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, so that's a real limitation of the text on its own. To work with that, I built comparison with other retellings and other cultural traditions of storytelling into the unit, so *Circe* sits alongside other stories instead of standing in as a universal one. I chose this text because I know it well and can teach it with confidence.

Unit of Work: Circe

Activity 0: The Handwritten Circe Journal

The Circe Journal serves as a commonplace book, where students can collect quotations, images, questions, half formed interpretations and experiments with language. The journal makes writing part of thinking, and that draws on Griffiths' idea of the commonplace book as a space where reading, writing, thinking and learning happen together, and on Howie's argument for understanding writing through practice and composing behaviour.

I made the journal mostly handwritten because my mentor teacher flagged declining handwriting fluency as a concern on placement, so regular journalling folds that practice back into English work. A physical journal also avoids generative AI to steal the reading, interpreting and drafting the unit is built around. The expectation stays flexible too, so students with an IEP, an Access Plan or a negotiated adjustment can work in an alternative mode.

Activity 1: Close Reading and Initial Argument

Students hear a passage of Miller's language read aloud first and they notice things, the rhythm, the imagery, the sound, the shifts in feeling, before any technique spotting starts. Ellis' work on slow pedagogy backs up this slower start, since it makes room for the sensory side of reading before students turn it into analysis. Only after that does the activity move into close annotation and a Build One Argument task. Reid's use of syntactic modelling helps here too, so students try on a sophisticated pattern of literary reasoning through sentence scaffolds before they can manage that reasoning on their own. I keep the structure heavy early on, and I plan to strip it away later as students get more control.

Activity 2: Three Circes

Three Circes keeps Miller's 2018 novel as the main text and brings in short comparative extracts from Homer and from Christopher Nolan's 2026 adaptation of *The Odyssey* (Samantha Morton as Circe). The activity compares voice, agency, gender and power across the three versions. Little and Charles' (2024) work on gender and representation supports treating popular visual culture as a resource here. Treating popular visual culture as a resource activates what Bacalja (2018) identifies as students' existing cultural and multimodal capital, and Creely's (2019) idea of transtextuality frames these versions as part of an ongoing chain of adaptation, each one feeding into the next. Evans' argument against treating canonical works as museum pieces helps reposition Homer in this activity, since it stays important without needing to stay untouchable. The activity also complicates a feminist progress narrative, the kind where a liberated modern Circe simply replaces an oppressive ancient one, and that opens space for the relational, postfeminist reading of gender that Little and Charles develop.

Activity 3: Hot Takes

Students work in groups to build a provocative, defensible claim about the novel, touching on gender, power, violence, motherhood or agency. Boomer's idea of productive interruption, what he calls itchiness, explains why I chose a competitive format for this, since students need to meet interpretations that unsettle an easy reading and push them to reconsider what they thought they knew. Mercer's work on collaborative talk matters here too, because students build meaning together and lean less on the teacher's judgement to tell them if they're right. They practise building a claim, anticipating pushback and defending a reading out loud, and then they carry that same practice into written prose.

The unit uses memes and other visual internet forms because students already know how they work. Reid (1984) and Dowsett (2026) describe the classroom as a workshop where students take texts apart and rebuild them. Bacalja (2018) and Stahl and Dale (2024) show that students bring gaming and cultural knowledge into class, and that knowledge helps them make links across texts. Hedstrom (2015) argues that short digital forms are useful for practising rhetoric, audience and purpose. Ellis (2015) connects play with lower anxiety and more experimentation. Creely (2019) calls these student-led practices third spaces. The point is that students make and remake the texts themselves.

Activity 4: Evidence Hunt

This activity shifts the question from what do we think to can the text sustain what we think. Students test propositions through a structured evidence table, and some claims fall apart once they get tested against Miller's actual language. Giovanelli's criticism of comprehension practices that funnel students toward a predetermined teacher reading is important, since the table gives structure but leaves the outcome open. Once students get a feel for connecting evidence, choice and interpretation, their discoveries move across into the Journal. The visible scaffold gives way to the personal commonplace book practice at that point, so the scaffolding stays temporary and it doesn't harden into permanent dependence.

Activity 5: Same Event, Different Story

Groups relocate characters from Circe into a contemporary setting and settle on one event that every character experiences, and then each student narrates that same event from a different character's perspective. Pope's work on textual intervention frames rewriting as interpretation in its own right, since changing who controls the narration redistributes agency across the group. Derewianka's mode continuum supports oral rehearsal before the writing starts, through strategies like Advance and Detail. This is useful for EAL/D learners especially, since students build meaning through contextualised talk first and only then move into the more demanding, decontextualised work of writing alone.

Activity 6: Creative Composition

Students choose a familiar story, myth or event and rebuild it through a marginal or overlooked perspective, and they can negotiate the choice of text with me if they want to move outside a short suggested list. A planning stage asks each student to set their own audience, purpose and intention for the piece before drafting starts, so those decisions belong to the student and not to a shared template, and they carry that thinking about audience, purpose and the writer's relationship to the subject all the way through drafting. Graves and Wyse's writing workshop tradition supports treating voice and ownership as central to learning to write, and students move through a staged process of peer feedback, take home editing and annotation before a piece counts as finished, and that responds to Kohn's critique of assessment practices that push students to focus so hard on ticking criteria that they stop taking risks. Peers give each other two pieces of feedback, one on a choice that already works and one on a change worth trying, and both go into the folder alongside the final piece. A final two part commentary asks students to explain two choices about voice, perspective or form and to name one change they made after feedback and why it helped, so the finished piece only makes up part of what gets assessed and the thinking behind it counts too.

Activity 7: Analytical Composition

The final essay moves past the rigid paragraph structure I used as a scaffold back in Activity 1. The writing process mirrors the recursive cycle of the creative task, starting points, pre-writing, drafting and post-writing, and students draw on their Journal and their Evidence Hunt table to develop and revise a position. I frame the audience for this essay as peers and English teachers, the kind of reader a piece in a journal like *Idiom* might reach, and I ask students to hold that audience in mind alongside a clear purpose, to argue a defensible interpretation of the text, and a register that stays formal without losing accessibility. That framing gives the formal register they reach for a real reason to exist, instead of just sitting there as decoration. Critiques of formulaic analytical writing from Marshall, Gibbons and Gardner are relevant here, since paragraph formulas can feel safe at first, but once they become the whole definition of analytical writing, they risk reducing an argument down to the mechanical completion of a structure. Locke and Frawley argue that teachers should write alongside students, so I plan to model an imperfect paragraph and revise it in front of the class, mistakes and all. Myhill and Jones support addressing grammar and syntax rhetorically too, tied to what a student is actually arguing, so it works as part of the argument and not just a separate correctness drill.

Assessment and Engagement

Assessment moves in clear stages across the unit. Activity 1 works as a diagnostic, so I get an early read on where each student sits with close reading before anything counts toward a grade. Activity 2 sits as formative, and so do the Hot Takes defence in Activity 3, the Evidence Hunt table in Activity 4 and the oral rehearsal in Activity 5, and none of these carry high stakes on their own, they build toward the two summative pieces that sit at the end, the creative reconstruction with its two part commentary from Activity 6 and the analytical essay from Activity 7. That order means students get feedback on their thinking well before the marks that matter most land. Choice builds engagement too, which text, which perspective, which claim to defend, and so does play, through Hot Takes and Three Circles, along with treating popular culture and classical text as equally worth taking seriously. Evans, Boomer and the multimodality readings all point in the same direction.

Reflection

When I designed this unit, I thought a lot about what it means to teach inside the strictures of Year 11 and 12, where a real exam and a real ATAR sit at the end of the process irrespective of how much I want students to fall in love with a text. The tension between formula and thinking runs through the unit. TEEL and PEEL paragraphs exist because they work as scaffolds, but Marshall, Gibbons and Gardner's critique stayed with me while I planned, because a formula that never gets removed stops working as a scaffold and starts acting as the ceiling on what students think analytical writing is allowed to look like.

My mentor teacher flagged declining handwriting fluency as a concern on placement, which is why I made the Journal handwritten. That looked like a practical problem at first, but the more I sat with it alongside the current conversation about generative AI in English classrooms, the more it turned into a pedagogical decision and not just a nostalgic one. A physical record of a student's thinking is harder for AI to produce. It keeps the reading and interpreting work with the student. It does not turn the classroom into a surveillance system, and it does not pretend AI is absent.

Non-engagement is the other issue I kept circling back to. It is easy to blame students for caring little about classical material, but Evans' point about canonical texts as museum pieces pushed me to look

harder at how I use Homer in the unit. Homer is only there for comparison. The set text is Miller's *Circe* (2018). Boomer's idea of productive itchiness gave me a better answer than just making the classroom fun. If students meet a claim worth arguing about, the engagement comes from the thinking.

I think I will grow my artistry as a teacher by staying willing to write and rewrite in front of students, the way Locke and Frawley describe, and showing an imperfect paragraph instead of only ever handing over a polished exemplar. That is uncomfortable because it means looking unfinished in front of the class. Students need to see drafting and failed claims as normal, so I have to do that work myself instead of only asking them to do it.

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