

Educator's Lesson Plan and Notes

The educator's lesson plan has been designed to accompany the microsite resource, *little red comma: A Story, or History, Perhaps?* and *Chinatown, I*.

Class (Level and Stream)	Lower Secondary
Subject	Language & Literature
Unit & Topic	Exploring Social History and Urban Development in Singapore Literature
Prior Knowledge (Context of Lesson):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should have listened to the respective poems on the <i>little red comma</i> microsite at least once • Students should have awareness of the practice of annotation • Students should have knowledge of basic essay writing skills such as writing a topic sentence, making a claim with supporting evidence
Lesson Objectives: Aligned with learning Outcome/s from the 2019 Literature in English syllabus (p. 22)	By the end of the lesson, students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and articulate the main themes in the text by making connections between literary texts and their knowledge of self, the world, and other readers • independently regulate their reading as they encounter unfamiliar elements of theme by allowing for meaning to unfold using the gamified audio experience • consider the ways in which texts explore sociocultural practices, beliefs and values in relation to the human condition, especially with the themes of social history and urban development
	For extension activity (Exploring Mood and Atmosphere): By the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and describe mood and atmosphere in their given poem • Create their own interpretation of the poem's mood and atmosphere by using the sound effects in the gamified audio experience on the microsite (with an option for making their own voice recording) • Critically reflect on their creative choices of sound effects in the gamified audio experience



Brief Overview of Lesson (1hr 40 min to 2hr 10mins) Lesson 1 of 2 (50 - 65 mins)		
1	5 mins	Settle down, Access Check & Lesson Objectives
2	5 - 10 mins	Activity 1A: Text-to-self Connections Think-Pair-Share or Whole-class Discussion
3	5 - 10 mins	Activity 1B: Understanding Theme Read-aloud + Teacher Explanation
4	15 mins	Activity 2: First and second reading of the poem First reading: What is clear? What is confusing? Second reading: Annotating for connections to theme
5	20 - 25 mins	Activity 3: Text-to-world Connections Watch video + Record observations + Discussion
Lesson 2 of 2 (50 - 65 mins)		
1	10 mins	Review of Themes
2	10 mins	Teacher to provide time for student responses to Question a)
3	10 - 15 mins	Teacher to provide time to take responses to Question a) at whole-class level *Consider bilingual bonus
4	10 mins	Teacher to provide time for student responses to Question b)
5	10 mins	Teacher to provide time to take responses to Question b) at whole-class level

Extension Activity Lesson (45 - 60 mins): Exploring Mood and Atmosphere		
1	10 - 15 mins	Part 1: Identifying mood and atmosphere
2	15 - 20 mins	Part 2: Create your own mood and atmosphere! Option for Part 2: Create your own voice recording!
3	15 - 20 mins	Part 3: Critical reflection on your creation
4	5 mins	Teacher debrief on mood and atmosphere, connections of sound effects to one's reading of poetry.

LESSON OUTLINE

Lesson 1 of 2 (50 - 65 mins)		
Time / Duration	Activity	Materials Required / Notes (if any)
5 mins	<p>Settle down, Access Check & Lesson Objectives</p> <p>Teacher to ensure access to <i>little red comma</i> microsite is consistent for all students, with at least 1 working device per pair.</p> <p>Teacher to give out Handout 1: Text-to-self Connections & Understanding Theme to students.</p> <p>**NOTE: Teacher can choose to assign students into different groups to engage with both poems, or choose to work with just a single poem for this lesson.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices • Earpieces (at least 1 set per pair of students) • Student Handout 1: Activity 1A Text-to-self connections Activity 1B Understanding Themes
5- 10 mins	<p>Activity 1A: Text-to-self Connections</p> <p>Teacher to conduct think-pair-share or whole-class discussions on the following two questions to elicit personal connections on the themes of social history and urban development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is one place in Singapore that holds significant memories for you/your family that is now drastically changed / replaced / removed altogether? 2. What is one aspect of this place and its memories for your/your family which risks being forgotten if there were no records of them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 1: Activity 1A Text-to-self connections
5 - 10 mins	<p>ACTIVITY 1B: Understanding Themes</p> <p>Teacher to read aloud, or get student volunteers to read aloud the four paragraphs that explain the two themes of social history and urban development.</p> <p>Teacher to ask clarifying questions with the class to check understanding of the theme.</p> <p>Teacher to share with class that in their later writing exercises, students can refer to this handout to use helping words and phrases to craft their thematic interpretations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 1: Activity 1B Understanding Themes

<p>10 mins</p>	<p>ACTIVITY 2: First and second reading of the poem</p> <p>Teacher to give out Handout 2: English Translation of Poems to students.</p> <p><u>First reading: What is clear? What is confusing?</u></p> <p>Teacher to play audio recording of either one or both poems, depending on selection.</p> <p>Teacher to instruct students to use Handout 2 to complete the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the stanzas which you feel you can visualise and make sense of, which you find somewhat vivid and clear about. Mark them with a 😊. 2. At the same time, identify the stanzas which you feel you cannot visualise or make sense of, which you find either confusing or unsure about. Mark them with a ☹️. <p><u>Second reading: Annotating for Connections to Theme</u></p> <p>Teacher to instruct students to refer to Handout 1 and the short write-up on the two themes of social history and urban development. Students are to make annotations in accordance with the theme.</p> <p>Teacher to either do a guided annotation with students on the visualiser/projector, or a single annotation within small groups, depending on preference of teacher-led instruction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Student Handout 2: English Translation of Poems
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<p>20 mins</p>	<p><u>ACTIVITY 3: Text-to-world Connections</u></p> <p>Teacher to give out Handout 3: Text-to-world Connections.</p> <p>Teachers provide students links for the respective videos for each poem to view.</p> <p><i><u>A Story, or History, Perhaps?</u></i> How have Singapore's coastlines changed over the years? Lost waterfronts CNA documentary, starting from [37:22] to [46:45].</p>  <p><u>Chinatown, I</u> Up Your Alley: Singapore's Chinatown and its hidden gems from [00:00] to [07:54].</p>  <p>Students will take up to 10 minutes to watch the respective videos.</p> <p>Students will then have 15 minutes to record their observations in Handout 3, discuss in pairs, groups or whole-class level at teacher's discretion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices • Earpieces (at least 1 set per pair of students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 2: English Translation of Poems • Student Handout 3: Text-to-world connections <p>Digital links: See left.</p>
<p>5 mins</p>	<p>Step 3: Re-view your original reading of the poem</p> <p>Teachers to replay the audio recording of the poem, and to instruct students to re-view their original marking of the poem.</p> <p>It is hoped that the text-to-world connections will help students become more attuned and clear about each/either poem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 1: English Translation of Poems • Student Handout 2: Text-to-world connections

Lesson 2 of 2 (50 - 60 mins)		
10 mins	<p>Activity 3: Making Thematic Connections</p> <p>Teacher to give out Handout 4: Making Thematic Connections.</p> <p>Teacher to spend 5 minutes reviewing briefly what the theme of 'social history' and 'urban development' means using the text on Handout 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 1: English Translation of Poems • Student Handout 4: Making Thematic Connections
10 mins	<p>Teacher to instruct students to spend 10 minutes answering question a) of the respective poems.</p> <p>E.g.</p> <p><i>A Story, or History, Perhaps?</i></p> <p>a. How would you interpret the poet's attitude/s about forgotten histories of the East Coast in the poem? Identify 1-2 pieces of evidence from the poem to support this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 4: Making Thematic Connections
10 min	<p>Teacher to take 10 minutes reviewing responses to question a) of the respective poems.</p> <p>Teacher to advise students to formulate answers at word, phrase or sentence level, according to ability.</p> <p>Bilingual bonus: Teacher to provide option for students with bilingual capabilities to offer nuanced readings of the different meanings of particular words and phrases between the Malay/Chinese original and the English translation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 4: Making Thematic Connections
10 min	<p>Teacher to instruct students to spend 10 minutes answering question b) of the respective poems.</p> <p>Teacher to advise students to formulate answers in 1 sentence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 4: Making Thematic Connections
10 min	<p><i>A Story, or History, Perhaps?</i></p> <p>b. What does the poet's attitude then suggest about the theme of social history and/or urban development in Singapore?</p> <p>Teacher to take 10 minutes reviewing responses to question b) of the respective poems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 4: Making Thematic Connections

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Exploring Mood and Atmosphere (45 - 60 mins)		
10 - 15 mins	<p>Exploring Mood and Atmosphere</p> <p>Teacher to instruct students to use individual Personal Learning Devices, or to share among a pair.</p> <p>Teacher to distribute Handout 5: Exploring Mood and Atmosphere</p> <p><u>Part 1: Identifying mood and atmosphere</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read your assigned poem once more without music. What mood and atmosphere do you notice the poet is trying to convey or emphasise? b. Use 2 to 3 words from the list of suggested words for mood and atmosphere in the Handout 5 as a guide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Learning Devices • Earpieces (at least 1 set per pair of students) • Student Handout 5: Exploring Mood and Atmosphere
15 - 20 mins	<p>Part 2 assumes that students are only using the playback of sound effects, and NOT doing the actual voice-recording.</p> <p>Also, see Option for Part 2 for voice recording.</p> <p><u>Part 2: Create your own mood and atmosphere!</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Using the respective microsite, playback the poem 2 to 3 times, and experiment with the wheel of sound effects. Select at least 1 or more sounds, before deciding on your preferred combination. b. Referring to the list of helping adjectives describing mood and atmosphere below, select 2 to 3 words to describe the mood and atmosphere you wish to evoke. c. Lastly, what aspect of the poem did you want to emphasise with your choices? <p><u>Option for Part 2: Create your own voice recording!</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Using a microphone from the computer/laptop/headphones/earpieces, add your own voice recording of the poem. ii. In the playback, add your combination of sound effects. iii. Generate the track, and upload it on a platform you share with your class (e.g. SLS or Google Classroom etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Learning Devices • Earpieces (at least 1 set per pair of students) • Student Handout 5: Exploring Mood and Atmosphere

<p>15 - 20 mins</p>	<p>Teacher takes 5 to 10 minutes for students to generate responses in the handout, or in small-group discussion.</p> <p>Teacher takes 5 to 10 minutes to take students' responses at whole-class level.</p> <p><u>Part 3: Critical reflection on your creation</u></p> <p>With your combination of sounds, answer the following questions in your handout:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Was there a sound effect you chose to serve as a constant background track? What did you want to emphasise with it? b. Was there a sound effect you chose to start or stop at a specific point of the poem? What did you want to emphasise with it? c. What other sound effects or sound bites not included in the audio experience would you add? Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Learning Devices • Earpieces (at least 1 set per pair of students) • Student Handout 5: Exploring Mood and Atmosphere
<p>5 mins</p>	<p>Teacher to close the lesson by debriefing students about mood and atmosphere, and how they can continue to be more sensitive to its portrayal, how they might imagine an audio track or sound effects in the background when they read poems in future.</p>	

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<p>5 mins</p>	<p>Teacher to close the lesson by debriefing students about mood and atmosphere, and how they can continue to be more sensitive to its portrayal, how they might imagine an audio track or sound effects in the background when they read poems in future.</p>	

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Handout 1

ACTIVITY 1A: Text-to-self Connections

1. What is one place in Singapore that holds significant memories for you/your family that is now drastically changed / replaced / removed altogether?

The class may consider places that are specific to one's family, e.g. a relative's home, a previous home one moved out of, a neighbourhood building/area that has been affected by major construction works (e.g. new MRT lines; North-South highway). Teachers may raise places such as Sungei Road Wet Market and the colourful HDBs at Rochor which were recently demolished. Teachers may ask students if their parents spoke of any such places they missed.

2. What is one aspect of this place and its memories for you/your family which risks being forgotten if there were no records of them?

The class may consider how this place holds memories specific to one's family, and connections to video/photo archiving. The class may also consider storytelling and oral records as means of preserving memories of a place no longer present.

Handout 2:

Some possible annotations for certain stanzas include:

<u><i>A Story, or History, Perhaps?</i></u>	<u><i>Chinatown, I</i></u>
<p>Stanza 1 and entirety of Stanza 4 + 5: <i>how the "sandy strip of land [...] recording history that has been submerged for so long"</i></p> <p>Teacher to pay attention to the phrase "submerged for so long": how these memories and ways of life risk being lost, forgotten and unknown to future generations.</p>	<p>Stanza 5: <i>"as we talk and talk / [...] the ears of dialects / are aging too"</i></p> <p>Stanza 6: <i>"will there be a day / when only one language is used to order [...]"</i></p> <p>Similarly, teachers can attend to how these memories and ways of life in <u>language and dialects</u> risk being lost, forgotten and unknown to future generations.</p>
<p>Stanzas 2 and 3: <i>"Unfading, I remember this fisherman's beach / that's absent in the mind of Marine Parade Road's generation"</i></p>	<p>Stanza 7 and 8: <i>"after some time even the most ungainly HDB flats have taken root here no longer the public's public housing they even charge for the scenery"</i></p>

<p><i>“Here, I ruminate on the preceding environment/ what’s said to have caressed the panorama of the past”</i></p> <p>Teacher to pay attention to how the speaker “remember[s]” and “ruminate[s]”, concerned about the different memories of the spaces now changed due to urban development.</p>	<p>Teacher can share how the “charging for the scenery” likely refers to Pinnacle@Duxton where public has to pay \$6/entry.</p> <p>Teacher can share how urban development has diluted the sense of a community spirit in Chinatown.</p> <p>Teacher can share how Stanza 8 points to how the history of Chinatown will merely be a footnote, forgotten by future generations, not a living understanding.</p>
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Handout 3:

After watching the video, note down your responses to the following questions:

1. Social history can be defined as an area of history that focuses on the lived experiences of people and the interaction of different groups in society, rather than important political events.

From the sharings by the interviewees, what is one example of social history that you were **surprised or intrigued** to hear about? Why were you struck by this example?

<p><i>How have Singapore's coastlines changed over the years? Lost waterfronts CNA documentary</i> starting from [37:22] to [46:45]</p>	<p><i>Up Your Alley: Singapore's Chinatown and its hidden gems</i> from [00:00] to [07:54].</p>
<p>[37:45] to [38:10] The dancing of foxtrot etc, the three piece bands playing songs from 1930s, 1940s with clients such as British soldiers at Bedok Corner</p>	<p>[02:20] to [03:35] Knowing who is behind the murals in Chinatown, and how they are based on the painter’s actual home by Yew Chong</p>
<p>[39:35] to [42:24] In the 1930s, the small group of Japanese fishers from Okinawa (before WWII) and their use of teamwork and technology, how ice was a new technology, how they dived into coral reefs far outside Singapore with a parent ship.</p> <p>Also how these Japanese fishermen’s catch led to increase in kuning, tenggiri, parang and delah (which made its way in our national diet as part of fishballs/fishcakes). We don’t usually think of the Japanese as living in Singapore before WWII.</p>	<p>[03:45] to [04:05] Yew Chong’s clarification of the mix-up between Sago Street (Street of the Dead) and Sago Lane.</p> <p>[04:16] to [04:25] Yew Chong’s sharing how his home was demolished to merely become a carpark.</p>
<p>[43:20] to [43:35] How the Japanese ended up being part of the</p>	<p>[05:15] to [05:45] The free-roaming chickens in Chinatown and how</p>

land reclamation projects in the 1960s.	they remind the older generation of kampung life.
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2. Is there something the poet wrote in his poem that you feel is similar to what you have watched or felt?

<u><i>A Story, or History, Perhaps?</i></u>	<u><i>Chinatown, I</i></u>
<p>[43:45] to [44:45] The shock and sadness that the interviewees shared upon realising how the land they knew on the East Coast shoreline would be forever changed.</p> <p>This is similar to the speakers' feelings of regret that the stories and histories of the area will be forgotten because of the changes due to urban development.</p>	<p>[00:34] to [01:30] The cobbler's community and also to notice how the presenter communicated with the cobbler in Cantonese.</p> <p>[05:55] to [06:30] 24th floor of Chinatown Complex: how the skyscrapers over the years blocked the sea view and the last remaining sea view of the narrow gap [06:25] instead of the whole horizon of the sea. How urban development really changes the living experience for residents.</p>

Handout 4:

Teachers can draw students' attention to the parts of the poem where the poet's voice and commentary about the changing ways of life are most notable.

A Story, or History, Perhaps?

- a. How would you interpret the poet's attitude/s* about forgotten histories of the East Coast in the poem? Identify 1-2 pieces of evidence from the poem to support this.

***Attitude:** This refers to the poet's perspective and feelings about an issue.

poet's attitude/s	1-2 pieces of evidence
The poet is critical of urban development and how it reduces the value of the social history of the East Coast.	Stanza 4 "Here, where the earth is crumbling and sinking / its story is becoming worthless / like an epoch bringing about change / that excites vile instincts"
The poet laments how there are few people who would appreciate the value of social history. / The poet laments how the social history of the East Coast will likely be forgotten if no one pays attention to it.	Stanza 5 "Here lies a sandy strip of land forming the shore then / uncovered with recordings of past and present narratives / that will be buried forever / unless someone appreciates the value of culture."

- b. What does the poet's attitude then suggest about the theme of social history and/or urban development in Singapore?

The poet is critical of how urban development has directly caused the erasure of social histories, especially in the East Coast area. The poet sees himself as one of few Singaporeans who still care about preserving the memories, culture and knowledge about past ways of life.

The poet also suggests that urban development has led to a generation who is unaware of social histories in Singapore, and how there is little hope that this lack of awareness will change, since the changes in the urban environment are so permanent.

Chinatown, I

- a. How would you interpret the poet's attitude/s* towards the various Chinese dialects and cultures in the poem *Chinatown, I*? Identify 1-2 pieces of evidence from the poem to support this.

Poet's attitude/s	1-2 pieces of evidence
The poet worries that the loss of the various dialects may happen in the near future, when Mandarin (or English) becomes the only known	Stanza 7: "will there be a day / when only one language is used to order [...]"

language to Chinese Singaporeans.	
The poet expresses how even though his old home is no longer physically present, his memories of the place show how the emotional memories remain present in his heart.	Last 2 stanzas of the poem

b. What does the poet's attitude then suggest about the theme of social history and/or urban development in Singapore?

The poet suggests that urban development has brought about significant changes to Singaporeans, disrupting people's lives in terms of the places they live, and the social interactions they have. However, Singaporeans still manage to fondly remember their ways of living and growing up, even though the physical spaces have completely changed.

At the same time, the poet is concerned that urban development will erase and erode the social histories of earlier generations, be it in physical spaces, or in how languages and dialects die out, such that future generations may have little knowledge or awareness of their rich past.

Suggested Answers for Extension Activity:

Part 1: Identifying mood and atmosphere

Teachers can attend to how there may be shifts in mood, how there may be an ambivalent set of moods between positive and negative ones occurring throughout the poem.

Poem:	<i>A Story, or History, Perhaps?</i>	<i>Chinatown, I</i>
2 to 3 words describing mood and atmosphere the poet evokes (not exhaustive)	nostalgic desolate gloomy grim melancholic pensive pessimistic	nostalgic pleasant relaxed sentimental melancholic light-hearted energetic

Part 2: Create your own mood and atmosphere!

Poem:	<i>A Story, or History, Perhaps?</i>	<i>Chinatown, I</i>
a) My preferred combination	Set 1 (only 1 of 2 at a time possible): Dramatic / Filmic Set 2 (only 1 of 3 at a time possible): Beach / Kampong / City Set 3 (multiple at a time possible): Fishing Boats / Seabirds / Painting on Canvas / Radio Glitches / Earth Crumbling	Set 1 (only 1 of 2 at a time possible): Uplifting / Mellow Set 2 (only 1 of 3 at a time possible): By the River / Inside the Shop House / Roadside Hawkers Set 3 (multiple at a time possible): Bullock Carts / Chatters in Dialect / Rowing Boat / Docking Motor Boats / Walls Crumbling
b) Choose 2 to 3 words describing mood and atmosphere you wish to evoke	Accept reasonable responses. Some examples can include: +ve: harmonious; serene mixed: sympathetic; sleepy; sentimental; nostalgic -ve: uneasy; threatening; tense; suspenseful; sombre	Accept reasonable responses. Some examples can include: +ve: welcoming; wistful; serene; dreamy; energetic; jubilant; inviting mixed: sentimental; nostalgic -ve: melancholic; heavy; pensive; uneasy

<p>c) What aspect of the poem did you want to emphasise?</p>	<p>Teachers can accept reasonable answers related to 1) the serene coastline, 2) huge changes in the environment feeling like upheavals, 3) the contrast with present-day city, 4) how the loss of social history deserves to be elevated with dramatic music.</p>	<p>Teachers can accept reasonable answers related to 1) the celebration (uplifting) or 2) loss (mellow) of multiple Chinese cultures; 3) the bustling activity of people making a livelihood; 4) how aspects of the past environment can be recalled through the audio</p>
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Part 3: Critical reflection on your creation

- a. Was there a sound effect you chose to serve as a constant background track? What did you want to emphasise with it?

If students explain they wanted to give the poem a “vibe”, ask students to explain the specificity of the “vibe” they wanted to emphasise. Return their attention to the list of mood words, or an aspect about the theme of social history/urban development.

- a. Was there a sound effect you chose to start or stop at a specific point of the poem? What did you want to emphasise with it?

If students explain they wanted to give the poem a “vibe”, ask students to explain the specificity of the “vibe” they wanted to emphasise. Return their attention to the list of mood words, or an aspect about the theme of social history/urban development.

Starting or stopping a sound effect at a specific point would usually denote drawing attention to something prominent that stood out for them. Ask students which lines they decided to deliberately introduce a sound effect.

Encourage them to think of themselves as editors doing post-production who make decisions about adding music to elevate or heighten particular moods.

Teachers can also discuss how silence can be used to great effect to give emphasis to particular stanzas to speak for themselves by cutting away all the noise to focus on a poignant part of the poem.

- b. What other sound effects or sound bites not included in the audio experience would you add? Why?

Accept any reasonable answer. Ask students if the sounds they are thinking of would correspond to the poem’s setting, mood and atmosphere, or if they wish to deliberately contrast it.

Would they gather new sound effects and sound bites from historical archives, e.g. oral history interviews https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/oral_history_interviews/ OR would they consider going to draw from modern-day audiovisual recordings in Singapore, or even generate their own.

Teachers can probe students to consider if they would seek out the original East Coast coastline at Changi Business Park, or the new East Coast Park. Likewise, students could be prompted to consider where in Chinatown they might consider making new sound recordings.