



Student booklet

Gaps and silences in text

Year 9	English
Name	

You will expand or add a section to fill in gaps and silences in the novel, *Looking for Alibrandi*.

You will:

- choose a topic and complete the planning tool
- draft and edit a section that fills in gaps and silences
- use peer feedback to write a final draft
- reflect on your response.

Due date:

Setting the scene

The author, Melina Marchetta has just written the novel *Looking for Alibrandi*. She sent it away to her editor, who has returned it with the following note:

Fantastic work, Melina! Your insight into the nature of teenagers and the dilemmas they face (multicultural or otherwise!) is sure to strike a chord with your readers. There are just a couple of spots where I think you need to fill in the occasional gap or silence in the text. I have marked them in the manuscript.

Cheers,

Gale

What you need to do

Section 1. Filling in the gaps and silences

1. Select **one** of the **six** following choices to fill in a gap or silence in the text. Each choice has associated planning tools to help you write your response.

Hint: You should select the choice you feel most comfortable with. Choose something that you can relate to because of your own experiences and understandings.

2. Draft your new section for the novel, using the information you have written on the planning tool.
3. Get and use peer feedback to create your final draft. Use the Editing checklist on page 10.

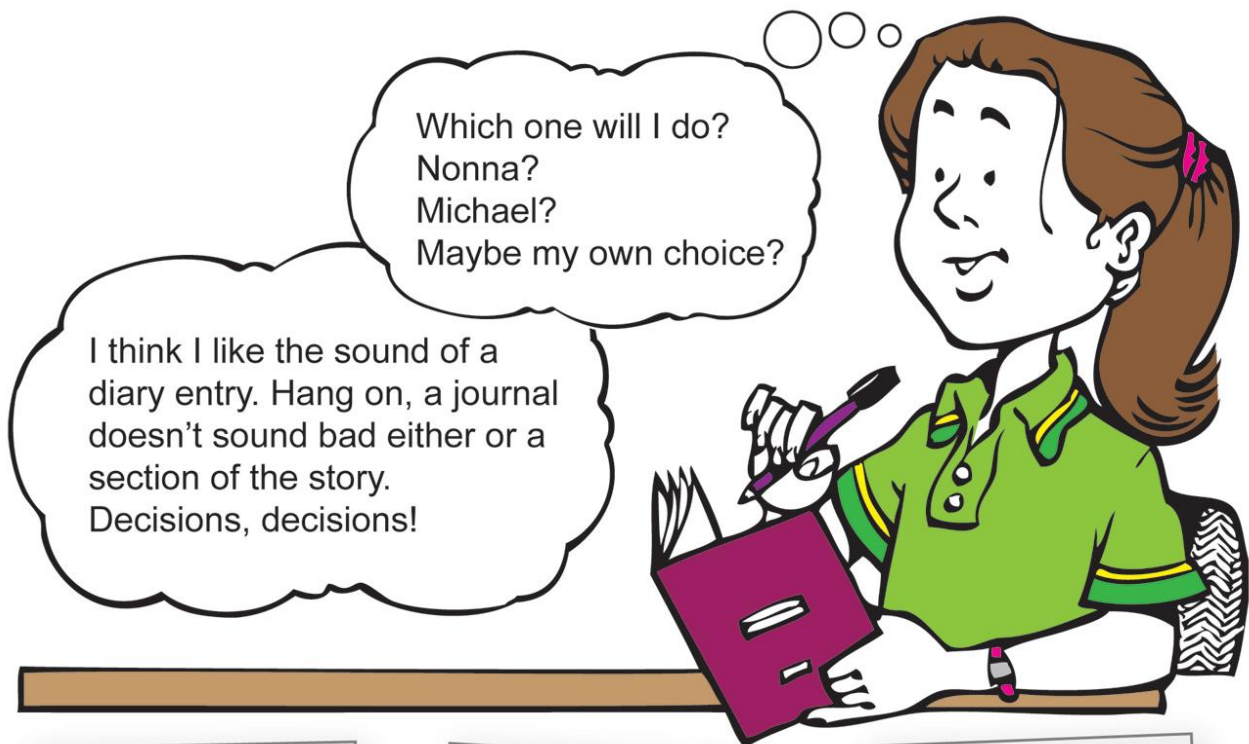
Section 2. Reflection

4. Completing your Reflection will help you to choose the appropriate place in the novel to insert your new section.

Remember

Your response must read as if Melina Marchetta had written it herself. You will need to:

- understand what motivated Melina Marchetta to write this novel in the first place
- compose an event that is plausible and linked to previous action. (This means that your narrative composition must fit in with the plot as it is developing in the story and make sense.)
- be familiar with Melina Marchetta's writing style so that your words fit well (i.e. use of a personal tone, active voice, appropriate vocabulary and similar types of sentences and paragraphs)
- demonstrate understanding of the novel's characters and what motivates them. (What are their personalities like, and how would they react in different circumstances?)
- demonstrate an understanding of the plot.



Choice 1

Nonna Katia

explains: In the role of Nonna Katia, explain to another character in the novel how your "Nonna Patrol" works and why you do this.

Choice 2

Confrontation:

What did Michael Andretti say to Ron Bishop? Write a piece to fill in this silence in the text after Josie breaks Carly's nose.

Choice 3

Christina and Josie:

As Christina, write a journal entry in which you explain why you think that Josie faces a better world for women than you or Nonna did.

Choice 4

Michael's realisation:

Write a series of three journal entries detailing Michael's reactions to his first encounter with Josie, his thoughts when he was called to her school, and an entry following one of their outings together.

Choice 5

Josie's letter to

John Barton:

Write the letter that you think Josie would have written, detailing her feelings and fears.

Choice 6

Your own thoughts:

You may consult with your teacher if you have another option in mind.

Section 1. Filling in the gaps and silences

Choose **one** of the following **six** choices to write about. Complete the corresponding planning tools as accurately, and with as much detail as you can, so they are useful when you start drafting your new section.

Choice 1. Nonna Katia explains

In the role of Nonna Katia, explain to another character in the novel how your “Nonna Patrol” works and why you do this.

This planning matrix will help you plan your work.

Questions for consideration	Your response showing understanding
1. Who is Nonna Katia?	
2. What is your relationship like with Josie?	
3. What is the “Nonna Patrol”?	
4. Do you believe everything you hear about Josie? Explain.	
5. Why do you keep such close tabs on your granddaughter?	
6. Do you understand how Josie feels about your Nonna Patrol? If so, then why do you persist with it?	
7. How does your Nonna Patrol work with Christina?	
8. Is it worth the grief it causes with the two people you love most in the world?	

Choice 2. Confrontation

What did Michael Andretti say to Ron Bishop? Write a piece to fill in this silence in the text after Josie breaks Carly's nose.

These two men are in a room separate to where Josie and Carly are. They are discussing what happened, who is to blame and what should happen?

Questions for consideration	Your response showing understanding
1. Ron Bishop	was thinking: • •
	was saying: • •
Michael Andretti	was thinking: • •
	was saying: • •
2. What was the outcome of the conversation?	
3. Were the two parties happy with the outcome or were one or both parties annoyed?	

Choice 3. Christina and Josie

As Christina, write a journal entry in which you explain why you think that Josie faces a better world for women than you or Nonna did.

This is an opportunity for an important character in the novel to have a say. The reader reads a lot about her but Christina herself has very little dialogue.

Questions for consideration	Your response showing understanding
1. What was the world like when you became a teenage mother?	
2. Was your family supportive of your predicament? Why, or why not?	
3. What social changes have occurred since you fell pregnant as a teenager?	
4. According to you, how would these changes affect Josie's life?	
5. Do you feel that you have had fairness in your life? Why, or why not?	
6. Which world would you rather live in, the one you experienced in the past or the future in Josie's world? Why?	

Choice 4. Michael's realisation

Write a series of three journal entries detailing Michael's reactions to his first encounter with Josie, his thoughts when he was called to her school, and an entry following one of their outings together (e.g. coffee and pizza).

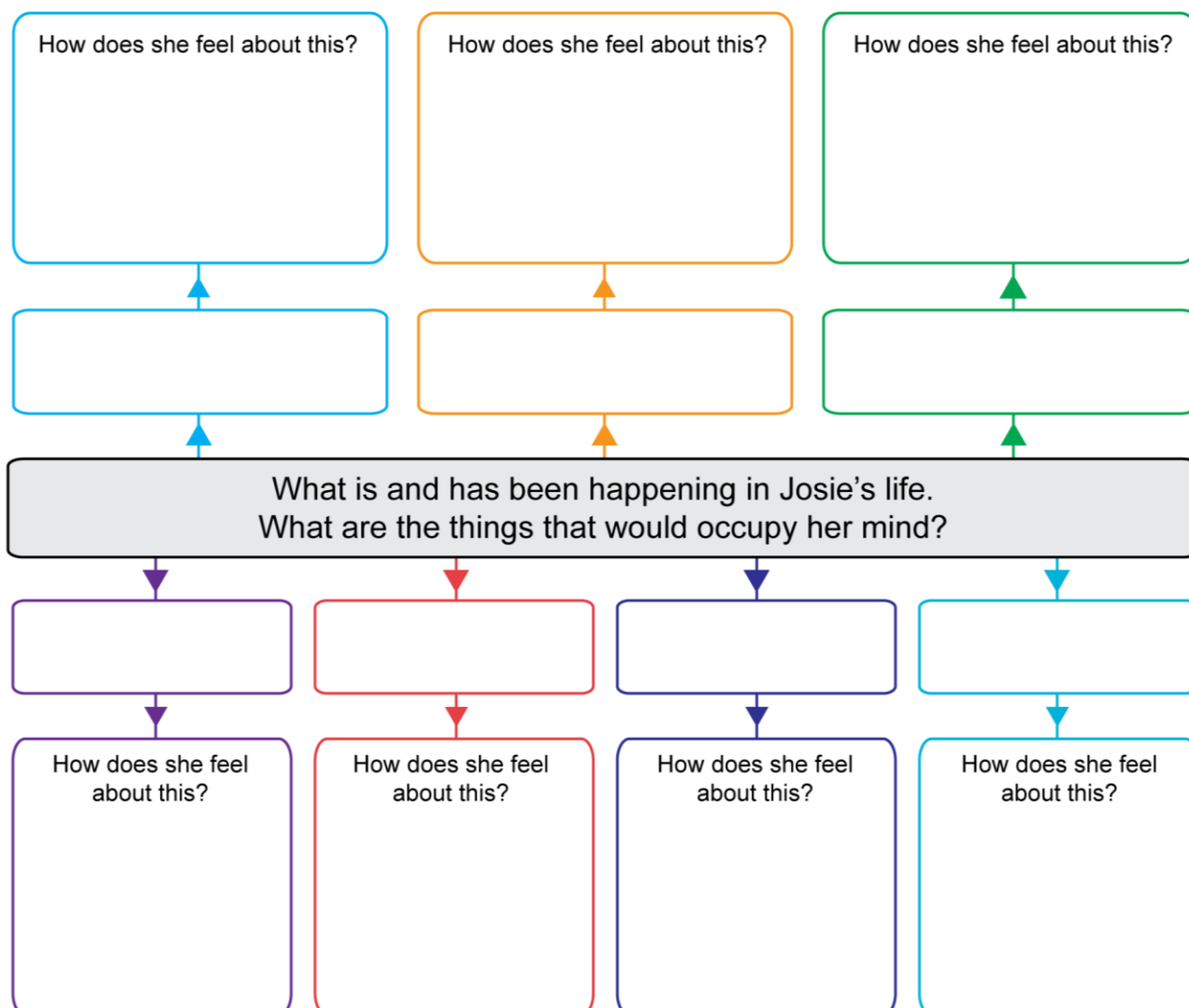
How did Michael feel? What was he thinking?

After Michael's first encounter with Josie ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • •
When he was called to her school (before, during and after) ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • •
After one of their outings together ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • • •

Choice 5. Josie's letter to John Barton

Write the letter that you think Josie would have written, detailing her feelings and fears.

Remember what has been happening in the lives of these characters before you start to write Josie's letter. Use the diagram below to think about the things that would go into her letter.



What are Josie's hopes and fears for the future?

-
-
-

What type of language would she use in a personal letter to a friend?

- ☐ formal
- ☐ informal

Choice 6. Your own thoughts

Consult with your teacher on this choice. Make sure you choose something that gives you enough material to develop into a new section.

Your planning tools will depend on the topic you choose. You could:

- draw a graphic organiser that tables your thoughts into a workable order.
- brainstorm your ideas, and then put your ideas into the order you want to deal with them. Some of the ideas you first brainstorm you may decide to throw out.
- brainstorm your ideas, and then write them onto adhesive Post-it notes. You can easily put them into a workable order by moving them around.

This planning table may help you, depending on the text-type you have chosen to use.

Essay structure	Organising points
Introduction	
Body of essay	
Conclusion	

Editing checklist

Once you have drafted your new section, use the Editing checklist to check your work. Make any necessary changes, then workshop your new section with your peers. You will use this feedback (where suitable) to write your final draft.

Tick each question in the checklist as you complete it.

Read your work critically, then ask yourself ...		yes		no	
		self	peers	self	peers
1. Have you composed a section that is plausible and linked to the previous action? (This means that your composition must fit in with the plot as it is and make sense.)					
2. Do you know where the composition you have written will fit into the novel?					
3. Have you demonstrated an understanding of the characters and what motivates them?					
4. Have you written in the same or similar style to Melina Marchetta so that your composition will not sound out of place?	Used a personal tone				
	Active/passive voice used appropriately				
	Appropriate vocabulary				
	Similar types of sentences and paragraphs				
5. Does your composition have a clear and concise main idea?					
6. Is the main point of each paragraph clear?					
7. Is each point clearly and adequately supported with sufficient details?					
8. Is each paragraph clearly related to the main idea of the essay?					
9. Does each paragraph develop logically from the previous one?					
10. Are there clear transitions from one paragraph to the next?					

Section 2. Reflection

Think about the assessment you have just completed. Then, respond to the following questions.

Your response should be a minimum length of 200 words.

1. Where would be the most appropriate part of the novel to place your composition? Why?
2. Do you feel that your composition enhances or detracts from the plot and development of characters in this novel? Explain.