***Determining the global issue***

A global issue incorporates the following three properties:

* It has significance on a wide/large scale.
* It is transnational.
* Its impact is felt in everyday local contexts.

Students may look to one or more of the following fields of inquiry for guidance on how to decide on a global issue to focus their orals on. These topics are not exhaustive and are intended as helpful starting points for students to generate ideas and derive a more specific global issue on which to base their individual oral. It should also be noted that there is the potential for significant overlap between the areas.

**Culture, identity and community**

Students might focus on the way in which texts explore aspects of family, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender and sexuality, and the way these impact on individuals and societies. They might also focus on issues concerning migration, colonialism and nationalism.

**Beliefs, values and education**

Students might focus on the way in which texts explore the beliefs and values nurtured in particular societies and the ways they shape individuals, communities and educational systems. They might also explore the tensions that arise when there are conflicts of beliefs and values, and ethics.

**Politics, power and justice**

Students might focus on the ways in which texts explore aspects of rights and responsibilities, the workings and structures of governments and institutions. They might also investigate hierarchies of power, the distribution of wealth and resources, the limits of justice and the law, equality and inequality, human rights and peace and conflict.

**Art, creativity and the imagination**

Students might focus on the ways in which texts explore aspects of aesthetic inspiration, creation, craft, and beauty. They might also focus on the shaping and challenging of perceptions through art, and the function, value and effects of art in society.

**Science, technology and the environment**

Students might focus on the ways in which texts explore the relationship between humans and the environment and the implications of technology and media for society. They might also consider the idea of scientific development and progress.

***Selecting the global issue***

In selecting the global issue for their oral, students must be careful not simply to select from the broad fields of inquiry above, but to determine a specific issue for discussion that can be reasonably explored in a 10-minute oral. The global issue chosen for consideration should be significant on a wide scale, be transnational in nature, and be an issue that has an impact felt in every day local contexts. The issue should be clearly evidenced in the extracts or texts chosen.

For example, within the field of culture, identity and community, the theme of gender in itself might be unsuitably broad for an individual oral. A student interested in this theme might explore instead how gender bias manifests itself in different contexts; how this can be evidenced in many ways in texts of different sorts; how different authorial choices will determine what is meant by gender bias; whether bias should be viewed positively or negatively, allowing the students to evaluate the writer’s choices and the impact they might have on the different readers’ or viewers’ understanding.

***Determining the Topic***

The chosen topic should enable a broad literary or linguistic focus for the essay. In achieving this, the course’s seven central concepts may be a helpful starting point for students in generating or determining a topic for the essay. While students do not have to trace their essay back to one of the seven concepts and the assessment criteria do not require it, working with one of the seven concepts will allow students to begin thinking about their topic as they refine their ideas and arguments. The seven concepts are briefly discussed here in relation to the assignment:

Identity

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of identity of a particular character or group of characters in the text, or on the way in which the text relates to the identity of the writer.

Culture

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of the culture of a particular place, institution or group of people, or on the way in which the text itself relates to a particular culture.

Creativity

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of individual or collective creativity, or lack of creativity, within the text, or on the way in which the text represents the creativity of the writer.

Communication

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of acts of communication, or failures in

communication, in the text, or on the way in which the text itself represents an act of communication.

Transformation

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of transformation or transformative acts in

the text, or on the way in which the text itself is a transformative act either of other texts through intertextual reference to them or of reality by means of a transformative effect on the reader’s identity, relationships, goals, values, and beliefs.

Perspective

The student might be interested in an aspect of the representation of a particular perspective or perspectives

within the text, or on the way in which the text represents the writer’s perspective.

Representation

The student might be interested in an aspect of the way in which the text represents different themes, attitudes and concepts, or in the extent to which language and literature can actually represent reality.