

“Don’t sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them.”- Madame C. J. Walker

Rationale: This resource package has been developed to support teachers and students in Years 11 and 12 General English. The assessments included are not designed to be summative assessments but can be adapted to become summative. If students find the assessments too hard, they are encouraged to do their own research and seek clarification from their teacher.

Note: Students will need access to Netflix to be able to complete this unit of work.

Curriculum Links:

Year 11 General English Unit 1	Year 12 General English Unit 3
<p>Use strategies and skills for comprehending texts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relating texts to personal life and other texts • Posing and answering questions that clarify meaning and promote deeper understanding of the text. 	<p>Use strategies and skills for comprehending texts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguishing different perspectives about the main ideas in texts • Identifying facts, opinions, supporting evidence and bias • Understanding the way attitudes and values are presented
<p>Consider the ways in which texts communicate ideas, attitudes and values, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How social, community and workplace texts are constructed for particular purposes, audiences and contexts • The ways text structures and written language features are used to communicate information and influence audiences • How written and visual language features shape audience response • The use of narrative techniques, for example, characterisation and narrative point of view. 	<p>Consider how different perspectives and values are presented in texts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationships between context, purpose and audience in literary, everyday and workplace texts • the use of narrative techniques, for example, characterisation and narrative point of view.
<p>Create a range of texts by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures and using accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar • Using text structures and language features to communicate ideas and information in a range of mediums and digital technologies 	<p>Use information for specific purposes and contexts by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorising and integrating ideas and evidence about specific issues.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using strategies for planning, recording sources of information and proofreading. 	
<p>Unit 2</p>	<p>Create a range of texts by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using appropriate vocabulary, spelling and sentence structures Selecting text structures, language features and visual techniques to communicate and present ideas and information for different contexts and purposes Using strategies for planning, drafting, revising, editing and proofreading, and appropriate referencing.
<p>Use strategies and skills for comprehending texts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making inferences from content, text structures and language features Summarising ideas and information presented in texts Identifying similarities and differences between own response to texts and responses of others. 	<p>Unit 4</p>
<p>Consider the ways in which context, purpose and audience influence meaning, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ways in which ideas, values and supporting details are presented in social, community and workplace texts 	<p>Use strategies and skills for comprehending texts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysing issues and ideas in texts and explaining perspectives and implications Discuss the way ideas and information are presented in texts.
<p>Create a range of texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using appropriate vocabulary, sentence structures, accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar Selecting text structures, including introductions and conclusions, paragraphs, topic sentences, connectives, and logical sequencing of ideas and events to communicate ideas in written texts Planning, organising, drafting and presenting information or arguments for particular purposes and audiences. 	<p>Consider how attitudes and assumptions are presented in texts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how some perspectives are privileged while others are marginalised or silenced.
	<p>Create a range of texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using appropriate vocabulary, spelling and sentence structures integrating text structures, language features and visual techniques to engage and persuade audiences, for example, creating a multimedia advertising campaign, presenting a slideshow presentation, writing and

	illustrating a picture book and recording a radio talkback program.
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Learning Sequence:

Students have two options here: Watch all four episodes in one go and answer the questions after or watch one episode at a time and answer the following questions. Try including evidence from the episode to support your answers.

Episode 1 – ‘The Fight of the Century’, directed by Kasi Lemmons.

1. What are your first impressions of Sarah Breedlove? How is she represented? (What is she wearing, what is she doing, who is she with? What do these things say about her?)
2. What is the boxing ring a metaphor for? (Metaphor is the use of one person/object/thing to symbolise something else. For example, my brother is the black sheep of the family.) Do you think the metaphor is effective? Why/why not?
3. What characters do you like in this episode? What makes you like them?
4. What characters do you dislike in this episode? What makes you dislike them?
5. What is the episode saying about skin colour?
6. How has music been used in this episode to represent the story? That is, what do you think the purpose of the music is considering the story is set in early 1900s, but the music is from the 21st century.
7. Have a listen to each of these songs as featured in episode one. What do you notice about the artists and names of the songs? What do you think they might represent or symbolise?
 - *Offence* – Little Simz (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOjyGr01VZ4>)
 - *It's Been A Long Time* – Lady Wray (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73lxqsdDcSo>)
 - *Seven Nation Army* – Kimberly Nichole (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WocctayREPg>)
 - *Creator* – Santigold (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJkWoAhSiZ4>)
8. Do you think Sarah stole from Addie?
9. What does Addie mean when she says, “the likes of you”?
10. What do you think is the purpose of the black-and-white images of women with fancy hair?
11. How does CJ support Sarah in her hair product making venture? Do you think they are a good couple? Why/why not?
12. Emasculating means to make someone (generally a male) feel less masculine. Do you think Sarah emasculates CJ? Why/why not?

Episode 2: ‘Bootstraps’, directed by Kasi Lemmons.

1. This episode starts with dancers tapdancing. Briefly research the history of tapdancing and explain why you think this form of dancing has been included in the show.
2. Why do the investors direct their questions at CJ instead of Sarah? What does this say about the gender roles of the time?

3. Have a listen to each of these songs as featured in episode two. What do you notice about the artists and names of the songs? What do you think they might represent or symbolise?
 - *Woman* – Diana Gordon (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=coWJlb_3LWQ)
 - *Oprah* – Rapsody feat. Leikeli47 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTriB5MabS8>)
 - *L'oreille Est Hardie* – Stan Laferrière (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_t7rArIRzk)
 - *On II U* – Alex Isley (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLRkcwftWzA>)
 - *Rise Up* – The Freedom Affair (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u44_Z8fDfs)
 - *Woman* – Andreyana Triana (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9zeNq5QYg4>)
4. Do you think Sarah is being fair to CJ when it comes to the business? Why/why not?
5. Why do you think there are references to the 'plantations'? What are they and why are they important to the time this series is set (early 1900s)?
6. Why do you think the creator of the show included the attack on Sarah by the mortician?
7. During the scene where Sarah, John and CJ are talking about the Booker T Washington convention, CJ says he will go to the convention and speak on Sarah's behalf, but she won't let him. However, she expects CJ to speak to John when he doesn't do as she wishes. How does this power dynamic affect their relationship? How does Sarah expect CJ to be both her employee and her husband? How do you think that makes CJ?
8. Booker T Washington refers to Jim Crow. What was Jim Crow? (This website will help: <https://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/what.htm>)
9. What does Booker T Washington refer to when he says, "We can be separate and equal"? Use the website above to help you understand the context of this comment.
10. Sarah consistently talks about the importance of supporting women, but she shuns many of the women trying to support her. Do you think this is a good idea? Why/why not?
11. This episode introduces the love interests for CJ and Leila (Sarah's daughter). Why do you think these were included? What does it say about the characters involved?
12. Why do you think Washington won't endorse Sarah? And why might Sarah be surprised by his lack of endorsement?

Episode 3: 'The Walker Girl', directed by DeMane Davis.

1. Who was the Gibson Girl? What does she say about American beauty? That is, what colour is she and what does she look like? How do you think that makes non-white people feel?
2. What are the differences between the Gibson Girl and the Walker Girl? Why aren't they more different?
3. Have a listen to each of these songs as featured in episode three. What do you notice about the artists and names of the songs? What do you think they might represent or symbolise?
 - *Nature of a Sista'* – Queen Latifah (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GMjZCtOijl>)
 - *Harlem Shake* – Baauer (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qVOLHCHf-pE>) – **Have a look at the history of this song where the original Harlem Shake came from.**

- *Goodtimes Rag* – Harry Engleman (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nZXKBhJeeg>)
 - *Little Girl New* – Kimberly Nichole (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbsjbrlOXR4>)
 - *Drive* – Raiche (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6g2MDcVyag>)
4. Why doesn't Sarah like the Walker Girl? What does she represent to her?
 5. The inclusion of Addie Monroe talking to her mother serves what purpose? How does it position you to respond to her? Do you like her more or feel sorry for her? Why?
 6. Do you feel sorry for CJ? Why/why not? How does the TV show position you to respond to him?
 7. Why does Sarah consistently reference Rockefeller? Who was he and why might she look up to him?
 8. How are you positioned to respond to CJ when he walks in on the investor meeting drunk?
 9. The story of John betraying Madam CJ Walker doesn't really add much to the suspense of the narrative. Do you agree with that statement? Use evidence from the episodes to support your answer.
 10. Do you think Sarah's daughter, Leila, is fair to her mother? Why/why not?
 11. Does Sarah make the right decision to leave CJ?

Episode 4: 'A Credit to the Race' Directed by DeMane Davis

1. The episode starts with a brief history of the life of Madam CJ Walker so far. What's the purpose of this?
2. Sarah starts having flashbacks to her childhood. Why do you think these have been included? What purpose do they serve and how does this relate to the history of the African American?
3. Have a listen to each of these songs as featured in episode one. What do you notice about the artists and names of the songs? What do you think they might represent or symbolise?
 - *Altitude* – Tiana Major9 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0YKiVoM9nc>)
 - *Special Night Tonight* – Gregg Allen & Larry Tuttle (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nBdJ4Mprlk>)
 - *Who I Am* – LATASHÁ (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWO00c5i9Eg>)
4. This episode is called 'A Credit to the Race'. What do you think is meant by that title? Do you think it's offensive? Why/why not?
5. Historically, Leila wasn't lesbian or bi-sexual. Why do you think this has been included in the show? Do you think it's effective?
6. When Ransom's cousin, Sweetness, gets lynched, what does that do to add to the story of Madam CJ Walker? Why do you think this was included?
7. When Addie and Sarah talk after the funeral, the music changes to a light, high piano tune. How does that impact the mood of the scene?
8. What do you think of the ending of the TV series? Do you think it does a good job at showing the story of Madam CJ Walker? Why/why not?

Assessments

NOTE: These assessments are designed to be formative but can be developed further to become summative. However, they should not as summative in their current format.

1. In episode 3 ('The Walker Girl'), CJ wants to create a poster girl for the Madam CJ Walker brand. Choose a brand you know well or do some research on a brand you want to know more about and create a poster girl/boy/other (object). What would they look like and why? You can draw, paint or make a collage of them. Things to keep in mind:
 - a. What do they look like (hair, skin colour, makeup, costume etc.)?
 - b. What props do they have and what might they symbolise? (In the episode, the proposed Walker Girl is on a bicycle to represent the brand moving forward and being innovative).
 - c. What colours will you use and why? Or will it be in black and white? What difference will it make to the overall look and mood of the poster?
2. There has been criticism that the TV series doesn't stay true to the real story of Madam CJ Walker. What is your opinion of this? Do you think it matters? Why/Why not? Make sure you reference the series in your answer. The below reviews might be helpful in developing your understanding of the story.
Write a short (1 – 2 pages) opinion piece about your opinion of the TV series. Things to keep in mind:
 - Why do you think the story was good/bad? Do you agree with some of the reviews that the story was too inaccurate?
 - How true was the TV series to the real story of Madam CJ Walker? Does it matter? Why/why not?
 - How was contemporary music used in the series to make the story more modern? Do you think it was effective?

Here are some interesting reviews of the series:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0Zoggu4BdU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSSyv6POCwo>

<https://www.vogue.com/article/self-made-madam-cj-walker-netflix-kasi-lemmons-interview>

<http://theconversation.com/netflixs-self-made-miniseries-about-madam-c-j-walker-leaves-out-the-mark-she-made-through-generosity-132848>

<https://www.aaihs.org/look-good-do-good-madam-c-j-walker-and-rihannas-beauty-politics/>

3. Pick one of the main characters in the TV series and answer the following questions:
 - a. What is his/her name?
 - b. Who is part of his/her family?
 - c. What role does he/she play in the story? Hero/villain?
 - d. What socio-economic class does he/she belong to? How do you know? What kind of costumes does he/she wear? Does he/she use slang? How does slang relate to class?
 - e. How does he/she interact with other characters in the show? Is he/she nice or mean? What do you think that says about the character?
4. Attitudes can be defined as "a settled way of thinking or feeling about something" (Oxford Dictionary, 2020). Some words that you can use to describe an attitude include, critical, impressed, considered, apathetic, sympathetic, empathetic, cautious,

reminiscent, nostalgic, unimpressed, annoyed. What do you think the attitude towards African Americans is in this TV series? How do you know? What is Sarah's attitude towards hard work? What is CJ's attitude towards hard work? And how about Leila?

5. This story is set in the early 1900s. How is this evident in the costumes and set designs? How does this context (the early 1900s) influence the story? (Think about how African Americans were treated, the differences between genders and what each could do, what was socially acceptable to do). Write a short (1 page) explanation of how the context influenced the stylistic choices (costumes, makeup, set, hair, but also the music).
6. One of the producers of the show is basketball superstar LeBron James who has his own production company. Why do you think LeBron James wanted to be part of this project? Write a short (1 page) explanation of why he chose to be part of this TV series.
7. If you had to create a product that you think would sell, what would it be and why? Create a short PowerPoint presentation that sells your idea for a new product. Your PowerPoint should include answers to the following questions:
 - a. What is your product?
 - b. Who is your target audience and why?
 - c. How does your target help your target audience?
 - d. Why would your target audience want to purchase your product?
 - e. How will you market your product? Social media? Magazines? TV? What would your advertising campaign look like?
 - f. What barriers might there be to produce your product? Would you have to ask for funding and who might you ask to support your business?
8. This TV series looks at the story of Madam CJ Walker mainly from her perspective with a little insight into the other characters. Imagine if the story was told from someone else's perspective. Write a short story using a scene from the series but from another character's perspective. What to consider:
 - a. Whose perspective are you writing from?
 - b. How does his/her version of the truth (the events depicted) differ from that in the series?
 - c. Is the character marginalised or silenced in the story? How much of his/hers voice do we get to hear?
 - d. What is the character's relationship to Sarah? How will that influence the way the story is told?
 - e. When will the story start? At the beginning or when the character first meets Sarah? Will your story include flashbacks for example?
 - f. Keep your story to a brief event in the series and focus your writing on building suspense and tension through thoughts instead of action.