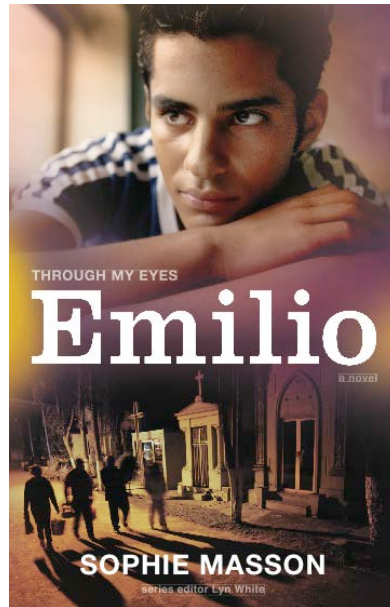


Teaching and Learning Guide

Through My Eyes Book Four



Emilio Sophie Masson

ISBN 9781743312476

Recommended for ages 11-14 years

**The style and structure of these Teaching and Learning Guides was created by Lyn White,
Series Creator and Editor for Through My Eyes.**

Lyn White and Heather Zubek wrote the specific content of this *Emilio* Guide

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The Guide contains numerous links to online resources so we recommend wherever possible you view it on screen. A digital copy is available on the Through My Eyes website www.throughmyeyesbooks.com.au

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Advisory note

There are students in our Australian schools for whom the themes and events depicted in *Emilio* will be very familiar and all too real. Such students may well have fled similar conflicts and experienced displacement and trauma. It is important that teachers read the text before sharing it with their class, monitor student reactions and respond appropriately. Although the Mexican drug war is the background setting for this text, there are no explicit references to illegal drug use or the trafficking of such drugs in the story of Emilio.

1. Guide overview

This teaching and learning guide is part of a sequence of guides prepared for each book in the Through My Eyes series. Each guide presents a range of learning experiences for units of work that promote the development of the knowledge, skills and behaviours designed to extend students' understanding of themselves and the human experience, empowering them to become active global citizens.

This comprehensive guide is designed for teachers to use selectively according to their school's curriculum and student needs. Given the guide's numerous links to online resources, the guide is best used as a digital document. (Web links provided in these notes were current at the time of publication of *Emilio*.)

2. Introduction to *Emilio*

Emilio is a gripping, suspenseful text that gives readers insight into the rich, vibrant and complex culture of Mexico and the ongoing conflict between rival drug cartels that has scarred the country for several decades. Although fictitious, *Emilio* represents the experiences of many Mexican families whose lives have been deeply traumatised by the widespread violence that characterises this unique civil war that now engulfs most of the country. It is an inspiring story with a multiplicity of strong relevant themes and a dynamic heart-rending plot that unfolds in a city with a 'sinister rumble in the background'.

Emilio is a compelling, endearing protagonist, whose courage and resilience are inspiring. Readers will appreciate and connect with the vulnerability of Emilio and his family as their ordinary lives are caught up in a world of fear, insecurity and extreme danger. Sophie Masson has skillfully crafted and balanced a story that deals with a harrowing topic, so that readers are not overwhelmed, but are empowered by the power of individuals to bring hope and healing to their fragile world. *Emilio* is perfect for the study of such issues as children and war, culture, family, loyalty, trust and hope.

3. Synopsis

Thirteen-year-old junior high school student Emilio Garcia Lopez lives with his mother Gloria Garcia Lopez, who owns a successful travel business, in a middle-class suburb of Mexico City. The story begins on an ordinary school day when, after arriving home, Emilio is surprised by a knock on the door of his apartment. Juanita Torres, his twenty-year old cousin who is a junior officer in the Mexico City police, and Raúl Castro, an officer with the Federal Police of Mexico, arrive to inform Emilio that unidentified criminals have kidnapped his mother from a hotel car park. A recent press article about his mother's new venture with Holiday South, an American travel agency, is believed to have given the gang the impression that Señora Mendoza Lopez is a lucrative target and an easy source of funds for their criminal activity.

Shocked by this revelation, Emilio has little time to recover, as an envelope arrives from the kidnappers. Juanita is to act as liaison with the family and Emilio must go and stay with his mother's sister's family, which includes his young cousin Luz.

Raúl Castro believes Gloria Lopez's kidnapping is linked to the terrible drug war that has claimed more than 60 000 lives in Mexico and shows no signs of letting up. Alda Jiménez, a young woman from the notorious city of Juárez, is the appointed negotiator and poses as one of the family's Nicaraguan cousins. The first message from the kidnappers arrives with a photo of Emilio's mother clearly traumatised and with signs of abuse. Emilio feels helpless and overwhelmed as stories of other kidnap ordeals and merciless drug cartel practices whirl in his mind. The kidnappers demand the impossible sum of nine million pesos for the safe release of Gloria Juan Garcia Lopez, Emilio's grandfather, offers to help even though his relationship with Gloria had become quite strained following Emilio's father's death in a car accident three years ago.

Isabel Mendoza Torres, Emilio's aunty, assumes the role of spokesperson for the family and with Alda's assistance, responds to the kidnappers' messages that appear all too infrequently in a designated email account. The days wear on and on, and negotiations with the kidnappers move ever so slowly. Despite Tia Isabel's best efforts to distract Emilio with amazing food and the passionate denunciation by Tio Vicente, Emilio's colourful boisterous uncle, Emilio becomes increasingly restive and anxious. In an effort to feel useful, Emilio and Luz research the drug war on the Internet but soon regret this decision as their minds fill with dreadful images and statistics about the escalating kidnapping rates across Mexico.

A glimmer of hope appears when Emilio and Luz suggest a clue to the identity of the kidnappers. His mother may have deliberately torn off the enamel medal of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which she always wore around her neck, to alert them to the fact that the kidnappers may have been dressed as nuns. While Castro follows this lead, the kidnappers email a message in the form of a handwritten letter from Gloria. Emilio is puzzled by the unusual phrase his mother uses: 'Think of my own little heart ...' The message also includes a demand to contact Señor Sellers, the Holiday South agent, in an effort to secure the ransom.

Emilio and his family endure further rounds of waiting as the Americans deliberate about their willingness to become involved and the investigation grinds along at a painful pace. Emilio is not allowed to attend school and he feels increasingly isolated from his friends whose lives have remained so normal and unchanged.

Finally Alda instructs Tia Isabel to inform the kidnappers that the money has been raised with the help of the Americans. The carefully worded message also requests a phone interview with Gloria. Luckily the kidnappers agree but to everyone's surprise and horror, Emilio is to be the one to collect the pay-as-you-go phone that will be used for the interview. Emilio, dressed according to the kidnapper's instructions, must be at the Chapel of the Indians at LaVilla de Guadalupe at fifteen minutes to midday that very day to collect the phone. Although Emilio is incredibly scared, he is also determined to do this for his mother.

Emilio, armed with a surveillance device concealed behind a belt buckle and carrying his backpack, travels in a taxi to La Villa, a sacred site crowded with thousands of pilgrims and foreign tourists, but he is three minutes late. He anxiously scans the crowds and after purchasing a medal from a scrawny, string-haired girl selling near the chapel, Emilio finds himself picking up items that have dropped from the girl's bag. As the clock announces one o'clock, Emilio is overcome with feelings of failure. He gathers his backpack to leave but suddenly realises the girl had surreptitiously placed the phone in his bag. Emilio tries desperately to find the girl, but must return to the taxi and be content to provide a description of the girl to Castro so an identikit can be built.

Emilio requests the taxi driver make a quick detour to his apartment on the way home from the police station. Still confused by his mother's reference to him as 'my little heart', Emilio collects the box that contained his mother's heart brooch. It is Alda who realises the connection between the brooch and Gloria's message – the brooch was purchased from a shop called Flor de las Joyas, Flower of Jewels. Juan Andrés Medina, el Capitán, a gang leader associated with the infamous Sinaloa drug cartel, has a young, violent female accomplice called Flor de la Noche – Flower of the Night. Castro believes el Capitán has orchestrated the kidnapping from his prison cell.

Emilio is determined to let his mother know he received her clue and so during the long-awaited phone interview with his mother Emilio says to his mother, 'My heart for you always, Mamá'. But a new demand causes further concern for the family as the kidnappers request Holiday South shares in a Veracruz hotel. How are the Americans going to give the impression that they are fulfilling the demands?

The suspense builds as Emilio and his distraught family wait anxiously for the next email that will give instructions as to how the ransom is to be delivered in exchange for his mother's safe return. An unexpected source of help comes from the young girl Emilio had met at La Villa. The family priest, Padre Benitez identifies the girl as a twelve-year-old orphan named Evita Delgado. Subsequently Castro's team picks up

Evita who had been badly beaten outside a city nightclub and is in hospital. He suggests Tia Isabel try to speak with her but Emilio hurriedly suggests he be the one to accompany his aunt on this mission.

As Emilio and Evita watch cartoons on his iPhone, Evita begins to trust Emilio and agrees to identify the man, known as Esposito, who paid her to plant the phone in Emilio's bag at La Villa. An unexpected wave of sympathy for this destitute girl washes over Emilio who determines to help Evita when he can.

The author has chosen a most dramatic, spine-chilling occasion for the climax of the story: Dia de los Muertos, or 'Day of the Dead', when families gather to remember deceased family and friends. Emilio and his family move apprehensively through the candle-lit San Gregorio cemetery at midnight according to the kidnappers' final instructions. Gloria will be released if they deposit the ransom money and share documents at the grave of Maria Hinojosa.

In the concluding chapters Emilio's courage is rewarded as the family finally receives confirmation from the kidnappers that their ransom has been accepted and a parcel arrives containing a key and a note that leads them to the abandoned building where Gloria is being held. Although unconscious and in poor shape, Gloria is safe and after a few days of keeping a tense vigil over his mother, Emilio is able to speak to her. Esposito and his accomplice, Flor de la Noche, are arrested and part of the ransom money is returned, Evita finds understanding in an orphanage and Medina ends his life as he lived it – in violence.

Emilio and his mother return to their apartment, and soon after Emilio returns to school, his family celebrate with a huge party. As Emilio revels in the normality and safety that has returned to his life, he is pleasantly surprised when Evita arrives with Padre Benitez and Alda to join the festivities.

4. Author Information and Motivation

Sophie Masson was born in Indonesia to French parents but moved to Australia at the age of five. Her family couldn't really decide where to live, so for most of her childhood, Sophie travelled back and forth between Australia and France. This experience of seesawing between two worlds inspired the young writer in the many stories she would write in the future.

With over 50 novels published in Australia and overseas, Sophie Masson is one of Australia's most prolific writers. Her books are generally written for young adults and children but Sophie has also published books for adults, mainly in the fantasy genre. Not content with writing under her own name, Sophie has also written several novels under the pseudonyms of Isabelle Merlin and Jenna Austen.

Sophie Masson's books have won awards including the Patricia Wrightson Prize for children's fiction in the NSW Premier's Literary Awards (2011, for *The Hunt for Ned Kelly*) and the Young Adult category of the 2002 Aurealis Awards for Science Fiction and Fantasy (for *The Hand of Glory*).

In 2010, Sophie was awarded a six-month residency at the Keesing Studio in Paris by the Literature Board of the Australia Council.

Sophie Masson comments about writing *Emilio*:

I knew a fair bit about Mexico and the drug wars because my son Xavier had had several lengthy stays in Mexico and it was through him I first became aware of the scale of the problems there. I had started reading a lot about the issue quite a long time before I even started to write Emilio.

Even though I already knew quite a bit of the background, I still had to do quite a lot of research, because the drug war is a constantly changing thing. I had to be constantly referring to news reports, but also research on such things as how kidnappings are carried out there, how the police function, and also the flavour and texture of Mexican life.

This is a strange war in many ways as on the surface things can seem really normal. There's an incredible 'joie de vivre' in Mexico, but underneath is this sinister war that touches every part of the population in some way.

The voice of Emilio was there from the start. He is a boy both strong and vulnerable, who wants so hard to be the man of the family but who is still so young and fragile. Emilio struggles with his fear and anger but also shows great courage. He and his whole family were very vivid to me from the start, maybe because I come from a Latin culture myself!

I want the readers of Emilio to come away with an understanding of what it's like to be caught up in a situation over which you have no control, and you're helpless. I want them to understand how people can act with great cruelty and ruthlessness, but realise that what keeps you together are courage and patience and love.

I'm not sure that young readers can really do anything to help the victims of the drug war, but for adults, I want them to basically understand that drug taking in countries such as the US and Australia is what fuels the drug war in Mexico. It fuels the hideous violence, and the criminal cartels challenging - and sometimes corrupting - the Mexican government. This isn't just a Mexican problem; in fact the Mexicans are the victims of a worldwide phenomenon.

5. UNICEF

A portion of the proceeds (up to \$5000) from sales of this series will be donated to UNICEF. UNICEF works in over 190 countries to promote and protect the rights of children. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, clean water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and HIV.

All of UNICEF's work is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The most internationally recognised treaty on the planet, the CRC sets out the basic rights of children and the obligations of governments to fulfill those rights. UNICEF's mission is to make sure that the rights of children all over the world are protected and that people under the age of 18 are given special care and protection. We draw attention to the duties of governments, families, communities and individuals to respect those rights and support them in doing so.

UNICEF's approach is to use low-cost, highly effective solutions that work dramatically to improve children's lives. UNICEF is funded by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

UNICEF is non-political and provides aid to children on a non-discriminatory basis based on need and has no religious, racial or political affiliations.

UNICEF is active in all of the countries represented in the series and links have been provided in this guide to some of their excellent resources that support the suggested teaching and learning activities. To learn more about UNICEF's work and school programs go to <http://www.unicef.org.au>.

6. Curriculum Use

6.1 Australian Curriculum

This guide is designed for use with upper primary and lower secondary students in years 5 - 8 of the Australian Curriculum. *Emilio* is a unique literary text that has:

... personal, cultural, social and aesthetic value... and ha(s) potential for enriching the lives of students, expanding the scope of their experience. (Content structure, literature, Australian Curriculum: English)

Emilio can be studied as a class text or used as a literary focus for Inquiry Learning and integrated studies units. *Emilio*, like the other titles in the Through My Eyes series, is also extremely suitable for use in Literature circles. The Primary English Teaching Association of Australia (PETAA) provides a useful introduction to this reading strategy at http://issuu.com/petaa/docs/pen_140.

Some excellent practical suggestions on strategy implementation are available at:

<http://www.abcteach.com/search.php?q=literature+circle> and

<http://www.litcircles.org/Overview/overview.html>

The primary focus of the teaching and learning activities is engagement with the English learning area with its three interrelated strands:

Language: knowing about the English language

Literature: understanding, appreciating, responding to, analysing and creating literature

Literacy: expanding the repertoire of English usage

The selection of teaching and learning activities has been guided by Year level Content descriptions for the following Strands and sub-strands:

Language	Literature	Literacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language for interaction ▪ Text structure and organisation ▪ Expressing and developing ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Literature and context ▪ Responding to literature ▪ Examining literature ▪ Creating literature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Texts in context ▪ Interacting with others ▪ Interpreting, analysing and evaluating ▪ Creating texts

This guide highlights both receptive and productive modes of English language learning. Students are involved in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts.

The unique cultural setting and multiplicity of contemporary global themes presented in *Emilio* have strong relevance for the development of the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the following General Capabilities, particularly through the use of Inquiry Learning:

- Intercultural understanding
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical understanding
- Critical and creative thinking
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capability

The opportunity to explore country and place, people, identity and culture ensures the relevance of this text for inclusion in the Geography and History learning areas of the Australian Curriculum:

Recognise and explain differing viewpoints about the world, cultures, individual people and concerns represented in texts (ACELT1807)

The concept of place develops students' curiosity and wonder about the diversity of the world's places, peoples, cultures and environments (Australian Curriculum: Geography, Rationale)

The Foundation – Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Geography aims to ensure that students develop:

- *a sense of wonder, curiosity and respect about places, people, cultures and environments throughout the world*
- *as informed, responsible and active citizens who can contribute to the development of an environmentally and economically sustainable, and socially just world.*

(Australian Curriculum: Geography, Aims)

This series will also support the English curriculum and its relation to history ‘Literature, with its emphasis on studying texts from a range of historical and cultural contexts helps students understand the perspectives and contributions from people around the world and both the past and present’ (ACARA, 2010, p14).

6.2 AusVELS

Teachers of AusVELS will appreciate the compatibility of this guide with the Physical, Personal and Social Learning and the Interdisciplinary Learning strands and in particular, its relevance to the following Domains:

Civics and Citizenship

They (the students) consider human rights and social justice issues at local, national and global levels. (Civics and Citizenship, Overview, AusVELS: Physical, Personal and Social Learning)

Interpersonal development

They (the students) participate in activities which enable them to identify the differing values and beliefs held by individuals in local, national and global contexts and reflect on the impact these may have on relationships. (Learning focus Level 7, AusVELS: Interpersonal development)

Information and Communications Technology

As students work towards the achievement of Level 8 standards in Information and Communications Technology, they learn to use a variety of ICT tools and techniques to assist with filtering, classifying, representing, describing and organising ideas, concepts and issues. (Level 8 Information and Communications Technology, Learning focus, AusVELS)

Activities in this guide also support the focuses of the threads within the sub-strands of Literature and context, Responding to literature, Examining literature and Creating literature:

Thinking Processes

At Level 6, students use a broad range of thinking processes and tools, and reflect on and evaluate their effectiveness. They articulate their thinking processes. They document changes in their ideas and beliefs over time. (Thinking Processes, Standards, Level 6 AusVELS)

<http://ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/>

6.3 Global Education

These Teaching and Learning activities support exploration of key themes in Global Education including:

- Identity and cultural diversity
- Social justice and human rights
- Peace building and conflict resolution
- Civics and citizenship
- Values education
- Interdependence and globalisation

For more information on Global Education see: www.globaleducation.edu.au

6.4 International Baccalaureate

Schools adopting the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary and Middle Years Programmes will find *Emilio* a valuable literary resource for the exploration of the six-transdisciplinary themes of global significance, having particular relevance to Human Rights and Peace and Conflict units of study.

The study of *Emilio* as a contemporary literary text, supports inquiry learning in the IB Primary Years Programme of International-Mindedness with particular relevance to the following key subject areas:

- Who we are
- Where we are in Place and Time
- How we express ourselves
- How we organise ourselves
- Sharing the Planet

The focus of this guide supports the IB Middle Years Programme that fosters the development of intercultural understanding and global engagement.

7. Background Information for Teachers

7.1 Mexico

Emilio is set in the sprawling city of Mexico City, the capital and largest city of Mexico. With an outer population of over 21 million people, Mexico City is the country's most important political, educational, cultural and financial centre.

Mexico is bordered by the United States of America in the north and by the Pacific Ocean on the south and west. Guatemala, Belize and the Caribbean Sea border the country on the southeast and the Gulf of Mexico lies at the east. With an estimated population of over 113 million people, Mexico is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world.

Ancient Mexico is said to have produced five major civilisations: the Olmec, Maya, Teotihuacan, Toltec and Aztecs. It wasn't until 1519 that the country was conquered and colonised by Spain infusing these native civilisations with Western European culture. For over three centuries Mexico was part of the Spanish Empire leaving the country speaking Spanish and observing Roman Catholicism.

After a great struggle, Mexico declared independence from Spain in 1810. Over 30 years later in 1846, the Mexican-American War broke out resulting in Mexico giving up half of its territory to the United States.

Mexico has one of the world's largest economies; it is the world's tenth-largest oil producer and the world's largest silver producer. Electronics is also a major growth industry. Over the last decade Mexico has grown to become the sixth largest electronic producer in the world after China and Japan. Mexico is the second largest exporter of electronics to the United States exporting over \$7 billion worth each year.

Languages

The national language of Mexico is Spanish and the country is the largest Spanish speaking country in the world. (<http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/1270-did-you-know-sixty-two-indigenous-languages-still-spoken-in-mexico>) The country is also home to a large number of indigenous languages including Nahuatl, Yukatek Maya, Mixtec and Zapotec. These indigenous languages are also recognised as national languages alongside Spanish due to their historic origins (The Spanish Language Today, Miranda Stewart) (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html> Mexico - Languages)

There are over 143 native languages in Mexico with 60 of them at risk of extinction. One language, Ayapenaco, is spoken only by two elderly men and even they aren't on speaking terms after having a quarrel! Kiliwa, another indigenous language, is spoken by 36 people. Many of the native languages are undergoing rapid change due to migration and economic factors pushing speakers to speak Spanish.

('Sixty Languages at Risk of Extinction in Mexico—Can They Be Kept Alive?' article at <http://news.nationalgeographic.com.au/news/2014/04/140410-mexico-languages-speaking-cultures-world-zapotec/>)

KEY FACTS

United Mexican States or Mexico

Land: 1 943 945 sq km. The terrain consists of high, rugged mountains, low coastal plains, high plateaus and desert.

Capital: Mexico City

People: Population 120 286 655 (2014)

Age Structure: 0-14 years 27.9%

15-24 years 18.1%

25-54 years 40.4%

55-64 years 6.6%

65+ 6.9%

Median Age: 27.3 years

Life Expectancy at Birth: 75.43 years

Literacy Rate: 93.5% of population aged 15 + can read and write

Female 92.3%

Male 94.8%

School Life Expectancy: Female 13 years

Male 13 years

Population below poverty line: 52.3%

Religion: 82.7% Roman Catholic, 5 % Evangelical Churches, 1.6% Pentecostal, 1.4% Jehovah's Witness

Main Languages: 92.7% Spanish only, 5.7% Spanish and indigenous languages, 0.8% indigenous only

Government: Federal republic

Currency: Mexican pesos

Source: www.cia.gov: The World Fact Book – Mexico

www.worldbank.org - Overview of recent news reports

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/mexico> - For an overview of the country and breaking news

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Mexico.html> - For a good overview of Mexico, the country and its culture

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-18095241> - Mexico Profile

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/twocities/mexico/> - For children learning about Mexico City

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1205074.stm - Country profile

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/countries/mexico.html> - Great overview for children

<http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0930069.html> - All about children living in Mexico

<http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mexico.html> - UNICEF's work in Mexico

Mexico (New True Books: Geography), by Elaine Landau, Scholastic, 2008 - A good overview of Mexico and its traditions written specifically for young students



Map from the CIA World FactBook

7.2 Mexico City

With a population in the city proper of over 9 million people, Mexico City is Mexico's largest city.

Originally the city was built on an island on Lake Texcoco by the Aztecs in 1325. It was completely destroyed during a siege in 1521 and then redesigned and rebuilt to the Spanish urban standards. The city was officially named Mexico City in 1585. During this time several churches were built, many of which can still be seen today.

The Mexico City Cathedral is the largest and oldest cathedral in the Americas and the seat of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Mexico. Located in Downtown Mexico City the cathedral was built by Spaniards over the ruins of the main Aztec Temple.

As the city lies within a valley and its people rely so heavily on cars, Mexico City suffers a great deal from air pollution. The government implemented a program called *Hoy No Circula*, meaning No-Drive Days restricting the number of cars being used on each day of the working week. In 1991 the air quality of Mexico City was declared a public health risk for 355 days of the year. Today the air quality has improved but it remains monitored and when pollutants reach critical levels factories are closed and school hours are modified.

Food

Mexican cuisine is closely tied with the country's culture, social structure and traditions. The food enjoyed by people in Mexico is a fusion of indigenous cooking with Spanish influences. Chillies, beans and corn are at the heart of the country's food culture with animal products such as meat and poultry being introduced later by the Europeans.

Corn is eaten fresh or dried and ground into dough. The most common form of dough in Mexico is of course the tortilla, a thin, round pancake. The traditional tortilla accompanies most meals but when tortillas are filled with meat or other ingredients they are called *tacos* or *quesadillas*, popular in central Mexico.

Chilli peppers provide Mexican food with the strong seasoning it is famous for. Chilli peppers are even added to fresh fruit or sweets for flavour as well as to the many sauces used.

The main meal of the day in Mexico is known as 'comida' or 'meal' in Spanish. Comida is generally served between two and four in the afternoon and consists of three or four courses. It begins with a soup - usually chicken broth - with pasta, followed by meat with salsa on the side accompanied by beans and tortillas. The evening meal is generally leftovers from the comida or just sweet rolls, coffee and milk.

A discussion of the type of food in Mexico and its importance in cultural traditions can be found at:

<http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/Mexico.html>

Day of the Dead

Day of the Dead or *Día de los Muertos* blends Indigenous beliefs with Roman Catholic traditions. During this national holiday families attend Mass then visit the graves of their loved ones to clean and decorate them with flowers and candles. Rather than being a day to be sad and morbid, the Day of the Dead is a festive and colourful time when families believe that the spirits of their loved ones will return to Earth for the one day of the year to be with them. It is believed that the spirits of babies and children who have died arrive on October 31st at midnight, spend the day with their families and then leave. Adults arrive the following day.

Families prepare special foods during the Day of the Dead and arrange these foods on an altar built in the home. The belief is that the spirits eat the 'essence' of the foods and when they depart the food is shared with family and friends. Other specialised food includes the bread of the dead, *muertos*, and special sugar skulls with the spirit's name inscribed on the top. Cardboard skeletons, tissue-paper decorations and incense are all placed on the graves of the loved ones alongside the flower of the dead, marigolds. The intent is for families to encourage the souls of their loved ones to visit their graves.

An overview of celebrations for Day of the Dead can be found at:

http://gomexico.about.com/od/festivalsholidays/p/day_of_the_dead.htm

Religion

Mexico has no official religion but with the arrival and colonisation of the Spanish, the country's indigenous population accepted Roman Catholicism but continued to observe some of their older beliefs. The most important icon of Mexican national culture is the Virgin of Guadalupe, known as the "mother" of all Mexicans. Her image was used in the struggle for independence against the Spanish.

The story of the Virgin of Guadalupe

On the morning of December 9 1531, a young man, Juan Diego, saw an apparition of a young girl on a hill near Mexico City. The girl, who Juan recognised as the Virgin Mary, asked that a church be built on the hill in her honour. When Juan told the Archbishop of the girl's request, the Archbishop asked for a sign to prove the Virgin's identity. The Virgin is said to have healed Juan's uncle and made flowers to bloom on the hill. The Virgin is said to have collected the roses and placed them in the cloak that Juan was wearing. When the flowers were shown to the Archbishop, an image of the Virgin Mary was imprinted on the cloak. This image is now on display in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. The shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe is the most visited Catholic pilgrimage destination in the world. Over 6.1 million pilgrims visited the Basilica of Guadalupe over two days to commemorate the anniversary of the apparition in 2009.

Mexico's most significant religious rituals are determined by the Catholic calendar. The most important festival of the year is Easter when the re-enactment of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on Good Friday is held in various regions throughout the country. The re-enactment in Iztapalapa in Mexico City is the most popular with over 100 000 people in attendance.

7.3 Mexican Drug War

(Although the Mexican drug war is the background setting for this text, there are no explicit references to illegal drug use or the trafficking of such drugs in the story of Emilio.)

Mexico is the world's second-largest cultivator of the opium poppy, from which heroin is manufactured. The country's marijuana and cocaine production is increasing, as is the production and distribution of ecstasy and methamphetamine.

The journey from opium to heroin:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/heroin/transform/>

Mexico has long been used as 'thoroughfare' for drugs destined for the American market. During the prohibition era, it was Mexico that supplied alcohol to the US and from towards the end of the 1960s the country has been a major supplier and trafficker of drugs. There is an ongoing armed conflict amongst rival drug cartels, the government and civilian groups in Mexico. Drug cartels are criminal organisations whose primary purpose is to control drug trafficking operations.

Since 2006, the drug war in Mexico has claimed up to 100 000 lives. The battle is between rival drug cartels fighting to control the drug trade as well as with the Mexican government as they try to dismantle the cartels. The drug trade within Mexico is estimated to be worth up to \$US33 billion each year.

(<http://www.news.com.au/world/the-brutal-world-of-mexicos-drug-war/story-fndir2ev-1226837017327> The Brutal World of Mexico's Drug War.)

Northern Mexico continues to be the region worst affected by drug-related violence. Guerrero on the Pacific coast and central Morelos have now joined the list of the most violent states as the drug cartels extend their influence. (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2011/dec/07/mexico-drugs-war-timeline-interactive> Major events in the war against drugs in Mexico.)

Overview of Mexico's drug cartels:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/mexico-s-cartels-behind-the-drug-war-1.2549149>

Kidnapping

During the first 11 months of 2013, there were 1583 kidnappings reported to Mexican police, four times the number in 2007. Experts believe the actual number of kidnappings is close to 105 000.

During the 1990s kidnappers targeted the multi-millionaires but today it's the local professional or small business owner who is suffering. Americans or Europeans are rarely taken, as kidnappers know that any incident involving a foreigner would attract unwanted media attention.

During 2012 and 2013, the Mexican security forces arrested the leaders of a major drug cartel. In an attempt to make the money they used to earn through drug trafficking, the more lowly members of this cartel then formed independent gangs of kidnappers and began to target the local Mexican population for ransom money. This development has made Mexico one of the world's most kidnap-prone countries in the world. (<http://world.time.com/2014/01/17/mexico-drug-war-kidnapping/> Mexico's Drug War Leads to Kidnappings, Vigilante Violence).

A look at how local families are affected by kidnapping:

<http://www.takepart.com/article/2014/03/31/kidnapping-mexico>

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/latin-america/250-or-you-die-kidnapping-goes-mass-market-mexico-n80751>

Ciudad Juárez

Commonly referred to by locals as Juárez, Ciudad Juárez is a city in the Mexican state of Chihuahua. In the recent past Juárez has been known as the most violent place on Earth with the city's murder rate being the highest in the world (<http://www.texasobserver.org/the-deadliest-place-in-mexico/> The Deadliest Place in Mexico). Turf wars between rival drug cartels have led to increasingly brutal violence since 2007. Drug violence, government corruption and poverty all led to the city being in a state of total disorder.

(http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2010/05/21/ciudad_jurez_mexico_the_worlds_most_dangerous_place.html: Ciudad Juarez, Mexico: The World's Most Dangerous Place?).

8. Student Activities

8.1 Examining the Cover and Extra Text Features

- Describe Emilio's physical appearance and facial expression: How do you think he is feeling? Why?
- Look at the image below the title. Why was this image chosen? What do you think the people are doing in the image? What atmosphere does this image create? What does the filmic image suggest?

- Discuss the colour scheme selected for the cover. Describe the colours chosen and the reason behind these choices.
- Brainstorm ideas about possible countries, settings, significance of cemetery and themes.
- How does the cover make you feel?
- Read the blurb on the back cover and highlight key words and phrases e.g. Mexico, kidnapped, drug gang, ransom

Invite students to locate the words on the cover that highlight the narrative nature of the text: fiction, story, a novel.

Emilio is an example of the contemporary realistic fiction genre.

Discuss:

- What is realistic fiction?
- What other books of this genre have you read?
- What is their specific appeal?

Note: Although editorial style includes explanation in the text of the Spanish words used, students' attention should be drawn to the glossary at the back of the novel

8.2 Finding out about Mexico and Mexico City

Using Google maps (or Google Earth on a tablet device):

- Locate Mexico then Mexico City and Ciudad Juárez.
- View Mexico in relation to the United States, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Australia.
- Look at the terrain and satellite views to gain a sense of the diversity of the country.
- See how populous the cities are.

8.2.1 Physical and Cultural landscapes

A good introduction to the reading of *Emilio* would be a comparison of the Physical and Cultural landscapes of Mexico and Australia. Discuss with the class the definition of each term reminding the students that the Cultural Landscape includes the human imprint on a country. The World Heritage Committee defines the Cultural landscape as 'cultural properties [that] represent the combined works of nature and of man.'

- Locate images of Mexico for display at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/mx>
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/96/mexico/>.
- Have the students study each image and complete a T Chart (<http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/resources-gallery/resource-gallery-templates.html>).

The students are to write what they observe about the PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE in one column and the CULTURAL LANDSCAPE in the next column. They are then to write down any clues they have about the location of the images. At the end of the activity the location of the images can be found on a map and displayed using a large map of Mexico.

For a blackline master of a map template of Mexico visit:

https://www.teachervision.com/tv/printables/0876289456_99.pdf

For an overview of Mexico City, the mega city:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nwsj4Q08Go>

For a brief overview on life in Mexico City watch:

<http://www.history.com/topics/mexico>

For excellent resources on Mexico, its culture, geography and people visit:

<http://www.allaboutmexico.com/cultureAndHistory.html>

8.2.2 Making a Comparison

- Using a Venn Diagram compare the climate in Mexico City with your own city. What are the key differences? A Venn Diagram blackline master for this activity can be found on http://www.abcteach.com/fre/v/venn_mexicoclimate01.pdf

8.2.3 Classroom/Library Display

- Mount a large map of Mexico marking the main centres mentioned in the text. Collect a selection of photographs to display on the map from the sites below:
http://travel.nationalgeographic.com.au/travel/countries/mexico-photos/#/chitzen-itza-mexico_6833_600x450.jpg
<http://www.mexconnect.com/regions?type=Gallery>
- Alternatively create a class Pinterest board that can be added to as students engage with the text.

Information about Pinterest is available at:

<http://www.bbcactive.com/BBCActiveIdeasandResources/UsingPinterestforEducation.aspx>

Note: Teachers need to use discretion when students use Google Images to search for information on the drug wars in Mexico.

8.3 Inquiry Learning

'The students are both problem posers and problem solvers within inquiry learning. Inquiry Learning encourages learners to examine the complexity of the world and form concepts and generalisations instead of being told simple answers to complex problems.' (Jeni Wilson and Kath Murdoch: resource PDF based on Jeni Wilson and Lesley Wing Jan: Focus on Inquiry (2nd ed): A practical approach to curriculum planning. Education Services Australia, 2009)

- *Bright Ideas* (<http://slav.global2.vic.edu.au>) provides an excellent guide to developing effective research strategies in the classroom.
- The Digital Information Fluency Model provides key guiding questions to enhance student Internet research. Information about the model can be found at: <http://21cif.com/>.
- This site also links to wizard tools assisting students to become more critical researchers.

Further information on guiding student's Internet research can be found in *Literacy in the Middle Years: learning from collaborative classroom research*, by Anne-Marie Morgan. Teachers and students create age-appropriate inquiry questions and trails for group research.

Presenting research findings

Use a range of software, including word processing programs to confidently create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts. (ACELY1728)

- *PowerPoint*, *Keynote* or *Prezi* (<http://prezi.com>) can be used to create visual texts to share research with a group or class.
- *Educlipper* can help students and teachers to bring together their own uploaded resources and material from the web onto subject boards. <http://slav.global2.vic.edu.au/2013/07/16/educlippe/#.UuOaMWR9Jjc>
- *Padlet* lets students create walls collating links, text and pictures. <http://padlet.com/>
- *Scoop.it!* is a fun content curation platform that helps students both collect information on their research topic and create an online magazine. <http://www.scoop.it/t/what-is-scoop-it>.

8.3.1 Conflict in Mexico

Consider Sophie Masson's comments on the drug war in the Author's note:

'It is both a conflict between rival cartels/gangs battling for supremacy, and a war between the major cartels and the Mexican government forces.'

- Research: why did Mexico become such a centre for drug cartel violence? Consider internal and external factors that continue to characterise this complex war and explore the relationships between the major cartels.
- Students could refer to: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-10681249> .

Note: The 'More on this story' section of this site is not suitable for younger students and teachers should exercise discretion with older students.

- Students could view: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLlrbAZv9Do>.
- Invite students to make comparisons between the Mexican drug war and the civil war in Afghanistan. In what ways are they similar?

OLDER STUDENTS:

- Mexican and United States security forces captured the notorious Joaquín Guzmán Loera, 'El Chapo' in February 2014. Why was Guzmán one of the world's most elusive and wanted drug lords? Students could refer to:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/25/opinion/the-capture-of-chapo-guzman.html>

Personalities

- Marisol Valles Garcia. Why is her story so incredible? Students could refer to:
<http://www.thestar.com/news/world/article/1132506--mexico-s-messenger-angels-amid-the-drug-war-violence?bn=1> and *The Age* newspaper article 'Mexico's 20-year-old police chief takes charge' <http://www.theage.com.au/world/mexicos-20yearold-police-chief-takes-charge-20101021-16vxv.html>.
- The Messenger Angels of Ciudad Juárez. What motivates these young people to risk their lives? Students could refer to:
<http://www.borderlandbeat.com/2011/11/messenger-angels-spread-message-of.html>.

Ciudad Juárez

- Alda Jiménez, the appointed negotiator in Gloria's kidnapping case, comes from Ciudad Juárez. Why does this city have the reputation of being the one of the most violent cities

in the world? Students could refer to:

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/307021/Juarez>.

OLDER STUDENTS:

- What other border cities are being affected by cartel activity? Students could refer to: <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2014/04/30/spotlight-mexican-drug-war-focuses-on-state-along-us-mexico-border/>.

Religion in Mexico and the drug war

Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion.

- What role has religion played in the drug war?

OLDER STUDENTS:

- Consider the influence of both the Virgin of Guadalupe and the rise of the cult of Sante Merte on the drug cartels. Students can find information on this topic at: <http://nbclatino.com/2012/12/31/la-santa-muerte-cult-sees-major-growth-in-mexican-border-town/>.

8.3.2 Mexico City

Emilio lives in a middle-class suburb of Mexico City.

- In what ways is Emilio's city different to your Australian city? Students can refer to: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/twocities/mexico/>
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/mexico/mexico-city>.

8.3.3 Schools in Mexico

Emilio attends a public junior high school known as *la escuela secundaria* where students aged 12-15 years complete years 7-9 of their secondary schooling,

- What are the most distinctive features of Emilio's school experience? Students can view: <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/monarch/jr/DayLifeStudentA.html>
<http://www.inside-mexico.com/queonda.htm>
- How is UNICEF improving education for Indigenous Mexican children? Students can find this information at: http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mexico_62078.html.

8.3.4 Mexican food

Emilio and his friends enjoy tacos and tortillas.

- Although these foods are available in Australia do they represent traditional Mexican cuisine? How is Emilio's daily diet different from our own? Students could refer to:
<http://mexicanfood.about.com/od/resources/u/traditionaldishes.htm>
<http://www.mexicanfoodnames.com/mexican-dishes/>

8.3.5 Mexican music

Mariachi bands are a feature of the Mexican music scene.

- Students could listen to the most famous bands: <http://www.mtviggy.com/lists/7-mariachi-bands-you-need-to-know-now/>.

8.3.6 Mexican folklore

- Students could refer to: <http://www.mexico-insights.com/judysblog/category/mexican-folklore-legends-superstitions.aspx>.

8.3.7 Festivals

Before his mother's kidnapping, Emilio had always looked forward to celebrating Day of the Dead, one of Mexico's most famous festivals. It is celebrated on October 31st, the same day as many Western countries celebrate Halloween.

- What features do both festivals share? Students could refer to: <http://www.inside-mexico.com/featuredead.htm>.

Exploring the Day of the Dead

- Students can use the following template to colour a sugar skull for Day of the Dead displays. The skull template also comes with great ideas for decoration from the *Modern Art 4 Kids Blog* on <http://modernart4kids.blogspot.com.au/>.
- Colour the skull and embellish with glitter or puffy paint.
- Glue rhinestones or sequins.
- Create coloured tissue paper and glue onto the top of the skull.
- Copy template onto cardboard, cut it out and glue onto popsicle stick
https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/1zWZKuCsnVODpoTYaHD-G6OYIR3f_0yxaSZEHLrDo58/edit?pli=1.

- Create Day of the Dead Paper Plate Masks
<http://scrumdillydo.blogspot.com.au/2010/10/make-paper-plate-calaveras-masks.html>.
- For a useful interactive online research activity visit
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/media/dia-de-los-muertos/?ar_a=1.
- If it is appropriate, have students create an *ofrenda* or altar for the classroom or an individual one for a loved one who has passed away. This website has a variety of ideas available including a simple altar made from a sweet tin.
<http://www.craftychica.com/site/2007/11/dia-de-los-muertos-craft-all-about-shrines/>.

Excellent teachers' pack filled with information and activities for the Day of the Dead:

http://archive.azcentral.com/ent/dead/teachers/teacherpacket_edited.pdf.

Other resources include: <http://latino.si.edu/DayoftheDead/>

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/galleries/dotd> (Slide show of Day of the Dead celebrations)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzaZidVrebA> (An overview of the customs of the Day of the Dead celebrations)

Other festivals that students may like to research can be found at:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/mexico/travel-tips-and-articles/76587>.

9. Literature

Strategies to enhance reading of the text include:

- Creating written or digital journals, reader's notebooks, video diaries or a class blog that record student reflections and comments. Entries could also be uploaded to a class or school website.
- Creating cumulative story maps: Younger students can combine text and visual features.
- Stop and Think Aloud and Responding to Questions:
http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/worksamples/Year_5_English_Portfolio_Satisfactorily.pdf.
- Students read a text extract, write down personal thoughts and questions to answer and then respond to their questions using text evidence.
- Making connections: Give students frequent opportunities to make connections between Emilio and their own lives (text-to-self), a comparison text (text-to-text) and current world events and issues (text-to-world)
- Model and encourage the making of inferences from the text by attending to narrative clues and implied meanings.

- Recognise and explore the potential of this text to change students' thinking and perception.

9.1 Reading Aloud

Students develop a rich language base and come to understand the power of words by listening to stories, reading stories, and responding to stories through a variety of engagement activities.

For tips on reading aloud to older students and for its benefits:

<http://www.learner.org/workshops/tml/workshop7/teaching2.html>.

- One way to engage older students in a story is to 'tease' them with snippets of language. There are certain sections of *Emilio* that are perfect to engage the less reluctant readers and to use as springboards for discussion.
- Have a RALFF Performance (Read ALoud For Fun).
Students choose their favourite text and practice reading aloud.
- Coordinate a concert of readers for other classes, for a school Open Day or as a Children's Book Week event.

There are numerous sections in *Emilio* which are suitable for reading aloud, including:
From the beginning of the text:

Chapter 1:

'They'd had the TV on in the background, not paying much notice to it, but now an item of news flashed onto the screen and they fell silent ... spread its tentacles into even the safest district.' (p.3)

'Emilio finally left his friends at around five and headed home ... Beside her was a tall man in the black uniform of the Policia Federal, the Federal Police of Mexico.' (p.4)

Chapter 2:

'I'm sorry, I'm so sorry, Emilio,' Juanita began, her voice breaking a little ... 'It's my mother's,' he choked.' (p.5-7)

From later in the text:

Chapter 19:

'Do you know what date it is the day after tomorrow, Milo?'then they'd have that on their conscience. Nobody said it, but everyone thought it' (p.119-120)

Chapter 23:

'When Emilio first saw his mother lying unconscious in the hospital bed...What if she doesn't get better?' (p.151)

Chapter 24:

'They'd gone together, just the three of them...It would do very well.' (p.160)

9.2 Literature and Context

Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts. (ACELT1608)

Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1619)

Read Chapter One. Readers immediately enter Emilio's world, which is suddenly turned upside-down. Early insight is given into the key literary pillars of the story: conflict, culture and identity.

- Discuss how the author transports the reader to Mexico City in the first few pages of Chapter One.
- What images suggest the setting and culture?
- What is your initial reaction to the story?
- Create a Y-chart graphic organiser: Looks like, feels like, sounds like. A BLM template is available at <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/reources-gallery/resource-gallery-templates.html>.
- Invite students to list words and phrases in this chapter (and subsequent chapters) that indicate setting, evidence of conflict, and clues to character identities.
- Create a table or a Wordcloud. For information on how to create a Wordcloud visit: <http://www.edudemic.com/9-word-cloud-generators-that-arent-wordle>
<http://slav.global2.vic.edu.au/2013/07/17/create-word-clouds-and-analyse-text-with-textal/#.UuO7P2R9LCQ>
<http://slav.global2.vic.edu.au/2010/08/30/whitefriars/#.UuO7XWR9LCQ>

- **Create a Venn diagram** of the issues Emilio is facing in Chapter One: death of his father, family responsibilities, peer pressure and the drug war. Do any of them overlap? A BLM template is available at <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/resources-gallery/resource-gallery-templates.html>.
- How will it end? Have students write down their plot predictions after reading the first chapter. Each student encloses their predictions in a sealed envelope and reveals them after finishing the text.

9.3 Responding to the text

Responding to literature:

Students learn to identify personal ideas, experiences and opinions about literary texts and discuss them with others. They learn how to recognise areas of agreement and difference, and how to develop and refine their interpretations through discussion and argument. (Content Structure, The Australian Curriculum: English, ACARA)

Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions (ACELY1709)

Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view (ACELT1620)

Recognise and explain differing viewpoints about the world, cultures, individual people and concerns represented in texts (ACELT1807)

9.3.1 Discussion Points

The following chapter breakdown and suggested discussion points may be useful in guiding students' initial responses to *Emilio*.

Chapter One

Introduces the reader to Emilio and his life in Mexico City, a life of a typical teenager enjoying school and his friends. The issue of the drug war is just a segment on television at this stage.

Discussion Points:

- Why does the author introduce the story in this way? How is Emilio's life different to yours?

Chapters Two to Four

Emilio's mother is kidnapped and these chapters deal with the kidnap itself and people's reactions.

Discussion Points:

- People seem to be scared of helping the police with their investigations. Why do you think this is so?
- The more wealthy citizens hire bodyguards and have security. How would this affect the average citizen in the city?
- Discuss the different types of personal security arrangements that are described in Chapters Two and Three.
- Why do you think the Federal Police cannot be involved in the ransom negotiations?

Chapters Five to Seven

In these chapters the reader learns more of Emilio's family and the reason behind the kidnapping of his mother.

Discussion Points:

- Discuss how food and faith are important to Emilio's family at this time.
- Why do you think Emilio's grandfather demanded that Emilio's father be buried in the family plot away from his wife and child?
- Why would the kidnappers send a photo of the person holding the day's newspaper? Why is this important?
- Why do you think Emilio's mother was kidnapped?
- The Mexican culture places great importance on family. How do you think this sense of loyalty translates to the members of drug cartels?
- 'When you live in an atmosphere like that, nothing is normal' Alda is discussing the difficulties of living in a violent environment. Discuss what she means by 'nothing is normal'.
- Discuss how Emilio feels during the kidnapping negotiations given the fact that he is just a teenager yet head of his household.

Chapters Eight to Eleven

During these chapters the reader learns more about what it's like to live in Mexico City and the strategies that police use to combat kidnappings.

Discussion Points:

- In Chapter Eight Emilio reflects on how normal it is for citizens to drive through red lights at night for fear of car jacking. This is his 'normal'. How different is our 'normal' to Emilio's?
- Discuss the reason behind the police keeping the news of Gloria's kidnapping a secret.
- How are the Americans viewed during these chapters? Do you feel this is a true description?
- Discuss how gang members pledge their loyalty to their gang.

Chapters Twelve to Seventeen

These chapters look at the culture of the gangs and the negotiations that continue for Gloria's release.

Discussion Points:

- Discuss the issue of the 'narco-Saint'. Should someone like Malverde be revered as a saint? How is he like our own Ned Kelly?
- Discuss why the parents of Emilio's friends forbid them from visiting.
- Chapter Thirteen describes a typical street scene in Mexico City. How is this different to a typical city street in Australia?
- What would make a young girl live on the streets of such a dangerous city?
- Why would drug cartels use street kids in their negotiations?
- In Chapter Fifteen, one of Emilio's neighbours describes how in the olden days, there was a code of honour amongst the members of the drug cartel. Would this have made for a safer environment? Why has this code changed?
- Chapter Seventeen discusses how foreigners are rarely kidnapped in Mexico. Why do you think this is so?
- Does Alda not being 'emotionally involved' in the kidnap make her a better or worse negotiator?
- Chapter Seventeen describes how the 'lieutenants' of the drug cartels are housed in luxury when they are in prison. Why do you think this is so?

Chapters Eighteen to Twenty-Two

These chapters describe the frustration that Emilio and his family feel at waiting for news from the kidnapers.

Discussion Points:

- Emilio used his savings to buy a phone for Evita. Why did he do this? Would you have done a similar thing?
- Chapters Twenty-One and Twenty-Two describe the Day of the Dead festival in the streets and in the cemetery. Discuss how the author uses the festival to add tension to the story.

Chapters Twenty-Three to Twenty-Five

The final chapters reveal how Emilio and his family are reunited with Gloria and how many kidnappings don't have a happy ending.

Discussion Points:

- Why do you think the kidnappers drugged Gloria for her release?
- The kidnap had shown the cruelty and vicious greed of some people but also the kindness and courage of others (p.64). Discuss how this is true and describe some instances from the text.
- Emilio insisted on seeing the photographs of the kidnappers. Why would he want to do this? Would you have done the same thing?

9.3.2 Creative Responses to *Emilio*

Graphic Novel

- Write and draw a summary of the book as a graphic novel or comic book.
- List the important characters, setting(s), and events from the book that you want to include in the story.
- Write out the story that you want to tell. Be sure to use plenty of dialogue.
- Draw the pictures to illustrate your story.

Journaling

- Write Emilio's journal, including daily entries of significant developments in the kidnapping case and his own feelings and reflections as revealed in the text.

Book soundtracks

- <http://info.booktrackclassroom.com/teachers>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTxeJre1Lis>

Book trailers

- <http://titus321.global2.vic.edu.au/2011/09/05/book-trailers-with-year-seven/>

For further creative responses to literature visit the Centre for Youth Literature's Inside a Dog website at: <http://www.insideadog.com.au/teachers/creative-responses>

9.4 Analysing and Responding – Themes

Students learn how ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts are drawn from and shaped by different historical, social and cultural contexts.

(Literature and Context, Content Structure, Australian Curriculum: English)

Create imaginative, informative and persuasive texts that raise issues, report events and advance opinions, using deliberate language and textual choices and including digital elements as appropriate. (ACELT1736)

Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions. (ACELY1709)

Students employ critical and creative thinking through discussions, the close analysis of texts and through the creation of their own written, visual and multimodal texts that require logic, imagination and innovation. Students use creative thinking when they imagine possibilities, plan, explore and create ideas and texts (General capabilities, Critical and creative thinking, Organisation, Australian Curriculum: English)

9.4.1 Children and War

UNICEF sources suggest that in the past decade an estimated 20 million children have been forced to flee their homes because of conflict, two million have died and at least six million have been seriously injured in armed conflict. More than one million children have been orphaned or separated from their own families.

UNICEF Australia's *Children, Conflict, War and Education Kit* and

<http://teachunicef.org/explore/topic/armed-conflict> are excellent resources for examining this theme in the school setting.

9.4.2 The Effects of the War in Mexico on the child characters

Emilio's world becomes a dangerous and insecure place. Emilio lives with fear and the constant threat of violence and danger to his mother, himself and his extended family. Through Emilio's eyes, we glimpse the brutal world of the drug cartels, the corruption of government agencies and the plight of the innocent victims that are caught up in a war that continues to engulf the country. Emilio and his school friends knew that:

'the underground war that raged in his country – the killings, the gun battles, the disappearances, the kidnappings – had always been a sinister rumble in the background.' (p. 43)

'His skin felt clammy as he remembered that story on the news, the bag of severed heads that had been left in the street not many kilometers from where they were right now. The drug cartels were merciless. Hideously cruel. Capable of anything. If his mother was in such hands then what were her chances.' (p. 29)

Evita is a young orphan alone on the streets of Mexico. She is easy prey for the ruthless drug cartels and their merciless gangs. Tens of thousands of orphans like Evita are being used as lookouts, thieves, messengers; some even become hardened criminals recruited to commit violent crimes for the cartels. In 2009, an estimated 1000 children were killed in crossfire as criminal groups targeted families connected to the drug war.

'Tens of thousands of children had been orphaned by the violence, and boys and girls as young as ten had turned into hardened criminals who killed without a shred of pity.' (p. 44)

- Research how war is impacting the daily lives of children in Mexico. Students could refer to the following site: http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/mexican-drug-cartels-targeting-and-killing-children/2011/04/07/AFwkFb9C_story.html.
- Students can view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Xk5rvyo25w>.
- Students could also read: 'Travels with Teddy' by Deborah Ellis in *Reaching Out Messages of Hope* (ed.) Mariah Kennedy p. 50.

OLDER STUDENTS

- Older students could read a young mother's account of raising her family in the violent city of Juárez, Mexico in 'From Fear to Hope: 'Raising Our Children in the World's Most Violent City' by Fito Avitia in *That Mad Game: Growing Up in a WarZone* (ed.) J.L.Powers.

Jigsaw strategy

The MyRead site describes this strategy at <http://www.myread.org/organisation.htm#jigsaw>.

After reading chapters 1-7 divide the class into three groups to find instances in the text that detail the effects of the conflict on the child characters and their individual responses:

Emilio, Luz, and Evita. A grid similar to the following can be used to record findings:

Characters	Areas effected	Details	Chapter references
Emilio	Home Education Security Family Friendships	Emilio left his home, school, friends and neighborhood following his mother's	Ch 1-5

		kidnapping.	
Luz	Education Security Family	Luz was unable to attend school, felt threatened and worried about her aunty's life.	Ch 1 -7
Evita	Education Security Home Survival Family' Friendships Food Protection	Evita is an orphan and a thief who lives on the streets, working for criminals in order to survive.	Ch 13, 18 19 and 25

Presentation of group findings

- Use PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi or Padlet.
- Use Diamond ranking <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/resources-gallery/resource-gallery-templates.html>.
- Write an I AM poem
http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson391/i-am-poem.pdf.
- Write a persuasive text about the character they feel has been most affected by the conflict.
- Write an information text on UNICEF's work in protecting children from child labour.
- Students create an advertisement explaining the effect of war on children. For steps on creating a storyboard for the advertisement visit <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/activities/childrenofwar/studentsection3.html>.
- Make comparisons with other texts about children and urban conflicts such as such as *Naveed: Through My Eyes* by John Heffernan and *Amina: Through My Eyes* by J.L. Powers.

9.4.3 Rights of Children

Children's rights are severely affected by war and conflict. The specific themes in *Emilio* that highlight the rights of children are safety, education, child labour, trafficking. Exploring and examining the rights of children will enable students to better appreciate the characters' lives in *Emilio*.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly is the most widely accepted human rights treaty in history. In simple terms it states that every child has:

- the right to a childhood, which includes protection from harm and exploitation
- the right to be educated, including all girls and boys completing primary school

- the right to be healthy through access to clean water, nutritious food and medical care
- the right to be treated fairly, including having laws and practices changed that are unfair on children
- the right to be heard on issues that affect them, and have these views considered by those with the power to make decisions.

UNICEF estimates there are 158 million children between the ages of five and fourteen who are involved in child labour, one in six of the world's children. Over 64 million women aged 20–24 years are married or in union before the age of 18 as a result of arranged or forced marriages and approximately 300,000 children are involved in conflicts, many as child soldiers.

<http://www.childinfo.org/>

<http://www.unicef.org/emerg/files/childsoldiers.pdf>

UNICEF Australia has produced an excellent middle school unit on the Rights of Children and their photo essays are a wonderful way to introduce the topic of children's rights. Child-friendly versions of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) can be used as a starting point for exploration of this theme.

<http://www.unicef.org.au/Discover/Issues-facing-children/Convention-on-the-Rights-of-the-Child/Child-Rights.aspx>

<http://www.unicef.org.au/downloads/Education/Photo-stories/What-are-rights.aspx>

<http://www.unicef.org.au/Educational-Resources/Parents-Teachers-Educators/Parents/Talk-to-your-children-about-rights-and-responsibilities.aspx>

Other UNICEF resources can be found at <http://www.unicef.org.au/educational-Resources>.

Everyone - We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures published in association with Amnesty International is another excellent resource for this topic.

Global Education's website has a very helpful teaching and learning unit on the global issue of human rights:

<http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/global-issues/gi-human-rights.html>.

- Watch YouTube clip: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9_lvXFEyJo.
- What are rights? What are the rights of children in the 21st century?
- Students use sticky notes to jot down responses to these questions using just one or two words and add to class chart. Alternatively, this may be done with IWB tools. Compare the resulting list with UNICEF's child-friendly version of the rights of children.
- Students visually rank the rights of children using a visual ranking tool found at <http://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/education/k12/thinking-tools/visual-ranking.html>.
- Read UNICEF publication: *A life like mine: How children live around the world* and discuss similarities and differences between how children's rights are being met around the world.

- Students create persuasive posters for one of the rights from their list using forceful language and symbolism. See examples on UNICEF site: <http://pinterest.com/unicefaustralia/posters-and-infographics/>.
- Students write a reflective text on how they could make the world a fairer, safer place for children.
- Register your school for the UNICEF DAY FOR CHILDREN.

Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements for defined audiences and purposes, making appropriate choices for modality and emphasis (ACELY1710)

- Using digital media software such as Comic Life and iMovie create a cartoon or short film about child rights. UNICEF's photoessays could be used as a model www.unicef.org/photoessays/30048.html. Consider audience: young children, teaching staff, school council.
- Using GarageBand or Audacity, students create a podcast using audio files, images and movies that summarise their learning about child rights and upload to a suitable podcast site. Look at podcast in education resources on FUSE <http://www.poducateme.com>.
- Prepare an oral speech: What does it mean to be a global citizen?

Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content, including multimodal elements, to reflect a diversity of viewpoints (ACELY1731)

The conflict in Mexico violated several rights of Emilio and Evita. A summary of some of these violations and suggested text evidence is presented in the following table:

Character	CRC Rights violated	Text evidence
Emilio Evita	Every child has the right to an education that respects and develops their personality and abilities to their full potential.	'Once the weekend is over,' said Tia Isabel, 'we must tell your teachers what is going on and why you can't go to classes for the next while.' (p. 69)
Evita	Every child has the right to survive and develop through access to good health care, nutritious food and clean water.	'She certainly looked like someone who slept rough and someone who didn't eat enough either. I've never had to wonder where my next meal was coming from or where I was going to sleep at night'. (p. 80)

Emilio Evita	Every child has the right to feel safe, live in a safe environment and be protected from neglect or abuse.	<p><i>'But his feelings changed when he first glimpsed her ...She looked awful. There was a bandage around her head, she had a big black eye and cuts and bruises on her face and skinny arms. 'Poor child,' breathed Tia Isabel. 'The people who beat her—'</i></p> <p><i>'they'd say they were within their rights. After all, she's a thief.'</i> (p. 122)</p> <p><i>'He was in fact very nervous. What if the kidnappers realised he was wired up? What if they had been lying when they said they wouldn't harm him?'</i> (p. 77)</p>
Emilio Evita	Every child has the right to relax, play and meet with other children, to feel safe and have their rights respected.	<p><i>'Just for a little while he wanted to pretend he was just visiting his aunt and uncle for Saturday lunch and in the afternoon he'd meet up with his friends and they'd hang out ...'</i> (p. 45)</p> <p><i>'... a scrawny, stringy-haired girl a little younger than Emilio, who was timidly trying to sell an assortment of very cheap medals and badly printed holy cards out of a plastic bag.'</i> (p. 79)</p>

- Suggest and present the CRC rights that are under threat for Emilio and the rights that have been denied to Evita and many children like her who are trapped in the drug war.
- Search the text for factors that have caused this situation and the effect it is having on the character. Use Microsoft Word or Pages to create a digital poster using symbols and text that visually represent the character's lack of rights.
- With a partner discuss ways in which the selected character's rights situation could be improved within the context of the text and argue for their feasibility. Present your argument to the class using multimodal elements and digital tools.
- What do you think are the most important rights for Emilio, Luz and Evita?
- Using UNICEF photostories as a model, invite students to create a photostory for one of the characters that shows the major areas of their life that are compromised.
- Use a Venn Diagram to show the disparity in rights between yourself and one of the characters in the text. A BLM template is available at:
<http://www.fuelthebrain.com/Printable/detail.php?ID=41>.
- Design a questionnaire to survey your class on what rights they consider to be the most important for Emilio and Evita as representatives of children living in conflict zones.
- Interviews: Have students interview each other about child rights: Which rights are the most important to the interviewee? Create visual representations of the findings using a digital tablet.

9.4.4 Courage and Resilience

Reflect on ideas and opinions about characters, settings and events in literary texts, identifying areas of agreement and difference with others and justifying a point of view. (ACELT1620)

The courageous characters in Emilio live in constant fear and uncertainty with the daily realisation that they are at the mercy of callous, brutal men and women who would not hesitate to end Gloria's life if their demands are not met. Despite their desperate situation, Emilio, Luz, Tia Isabel and Tia Vicente, individually and as a family, show great courage and resilience. Emilio's mother also remains resolute throughout her gruelling ordeal.

Right from the beginning of the nightmare of his mother's kidnapping, Emilio is determined to be courageous:

'He must stay strong. If he didn't, then he'd be no use to his mother. And he was determined to be, somehow. He didn't know how. Not yet.' (p. 17)

But Emilio found his voice at last. 'No!' he shouted. 'You read the message. You read what they said. No one else can go. I have to go on my own... 'I have to do this, I do! cried Emilio ... I want to do this for my mother. She needs me.' (p. 73)

Evita returns to the streets after recovering from her beating at the hands of gang members and risks her life to give Emilio further information about Esposito.

- Brainstorm the concepts of courage and resilience. In what ways are they different?
- Use Popplet or a web map to show the main challenges that face Emilio and Evita. Label the connections with the skills they have learnt to survive in their dangerous environment.
- What role does Luz play in keeping Emilio brave and hopeful?
- Is Evita more courageous than Emilio? Use a T-chart to record your ideas. A BLM template is available at: <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/verve/resources/tchart.pdf>.
- Use iDraw or KidsPix to create a scene in which Emilio shows great courage and write about how it made you feel.
- With a partner explore the text to find the strategies Emilio uses to try to remain positive during the interminable period of waiting for his mother's release.
- Invite students to reflect on strategies they would use if they were in Emilio's shoes.
- Use a Consequences chart. A BLM for this activity is available at: http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/verve/resources/consequences_chart.pdf.

- Identify and list the survival strategies that Evita uses that show her resilience.
- **Drama:** Divide class into groups of four. Invite students to develop a sequence of still images, frozen moments, which illustrate a scene from the text that shows a character's courage. Information about this activity is available at:
<http://dramaresource.com/strategies/still-images-a-freeze-frames>.
- Tia Isabel is extremely resourceful and single-minded. She is the go-between for the family and calmly handles the situation. Tia Isabel maintains a sense of normality for her extended family through her cooking and observance of normal family routines.
- Use a web map to show the ways in which Tia Isabel's courage is shown throughout the novel. A BLM template is available at:
<http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/verve/resources/webmap.pdf>.
- Write a recount about an experience in your life where you have been courageous. Share with a partner or the class.
- Consider as a class: At what point in the novel does Emilio show the greatest resilience? Students justify their opinions with text evidence.
- Write an expository text that describes the courage and resilience of your chosen character.
- Emilio and Evita's courage is clearly evidenced by their perilous actions and explicit defiance of their situation, but other characters like Padre Benitez and Alda Jimenéz carry out their roles with a patient and quiet strength.
- Find examples in the text where Padre Benitez and Alda Jimenéz display this quiet courage and strength and suggest reasons for their behaviour.

Analyse and evaluate similarities and differences in texts on similar topics, themes or plots.

(ACELT1614)

- Make text to text comparisons on the theme of courage and resilience using the following books:

Shahana, Rosanne Hawke

Naveed, John Heffernan

No Stars to Wish On, Zana Fraillon

Once, Morris Gleitzman

The Ink Bridge, Neil Grant

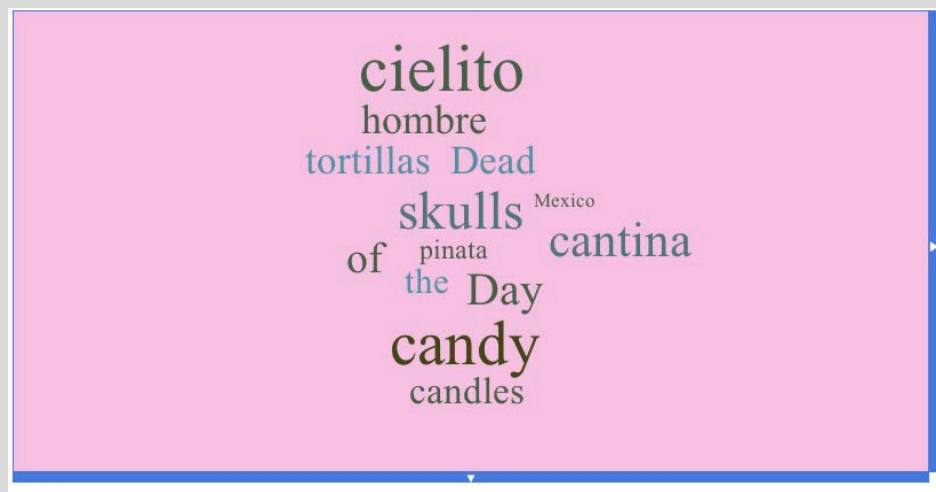
9.4.5 Culture and Family

Students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others (General Capabilities, Intercultural Understanding, Organisation, Australian Curriculum: English)

Emilio's identity is strongly linked to his Mexican culture and his extended family. The urban culture, including customs, attitudes and beliefs of the characters, is clearly and sensitively captured through the use of simple language coloured by ethnic vocabulary and carefully crafted descriptive passages with cultural markers. Although the Mexican culture is quite diverse, the reader is given great insight into the daily life of one Mexican family.

Mexicans feel their familial responsibilities very strongly and create close-knit supportive relationships across generations. The author creates authentic family scenes and conversations as each member of Emilio's family, including his grandfather, whose relationship with his mother has been quite strained, is involved in securing Gloria's release and supporting Emilio.

- Using Think, Pair, Share strategy students identify, list and classify examples of Mexican culture they have discovered in the text.
Create a Word Cloud using key words from your analysis. The Global Education site describes this activity at <http://worditout.com/>.



Identify and explain how choices in language, for example modality, emphasis, repetition and metaphor, influence personal response to different texts (ACELT1615)

- Which cultural elements does the author highlight and how does she suggest their significance within the text? What is the effect of this on your understanding and perception of Mexican culture as portrayed in *Emilio*?
- Use a PMI chart to compare your own culture with Mexican culture as presented in *Emilio*. A BLM template for this is available at:
<http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/verve/resources/pmi.pdf>.

- Write a diary entry: A Day in the Life of Emilio that reflects your understanding of the Mexican culture.

Religion is an important part of Mexican culture and the author has included several references to Emilio's family's observance of Roman Catholicism, suggesting the close links that exists between faith and church and family and community.

'That morning they all went to Mass, and afterwards lit candles for the safe return of Emilio's mother.' p. 67
'Emilio drew himself up to his full height, saying defiantly, 'Then Our Lady will protect me. I'm going to do this. And you can't stop me.' (p. 73)

- What role does religion play in the lives of the following characters: Emilio, Tia Isabel, Tio Vicente?
- Why do you think the kidnappers chose the Chapel of the Indians at La Villa de Guadalupe for the delivery of the clean phone?

OLDER STUDENTS:

- Typically, Mexican households follow a patriarchal structure with the father or oldest male relative having the greatest power.
- Who has the greatest power in Emilio's family? Why do you think the author chose to vary the traditional family structure?
- With a partner create a piece of artwork that conveys the close bonds that exist between Emilio and his family and how they worked together to triumph over the evil that threatened to engulf them.
- Discuss family member roles in your own family with a partner or small group.

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, selecting aspects of subject matter and particular language, visual, and audio features to convey information and ideas (ACELY1725)

Experiment with particular language features drawn from different types of texts, including combinations of language and visual choices to create new texts (ACELT1768)

Evita is an orphan. Her only relation was killed, leaving her to fend for herself.

- Using HotSeating or Questioning in Role strategy, have one student play the role of Evita while other students ask questions that extend student's understanding of Evita's life and her thoughts about her orphan status. This strategy is explained in *Teaching English Language Learners in Mainstream Classes*, Margery Hertzberg.

- Emilio wanted Evita to stay with his family. Complete a PMI chart to explore this suggestion. A BLM template is available at <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/verve/resources/pmi.pdf> .
- Create an imaginative text about Evita being adopted by foster parents and experiencing family life.
- Create and perform a short imaginative script about Emilio's family adopting Evita.
- Families in Mexico enjoy celebrating the many festivals that occur through the year. The story of *Emilio* begins with reference to a party and ends with a party. Consider how your family celebrates important events and share this with members of your class.

9.4.6 Trust and Loyalty

Students develop ethical understanding as they study the issues and dilemmas present in a range of texts and explore how ethical principles affect the behaviour and judgement of characters and those involved in issues and events (General Capabilities, Ethical understanding, Organisation, Australian Curriculum: English)

Emilio effectively explores the themes of trust and loyalty. The main characters participate in a journey of trust throughout the novel. The bonds of trust within Emilio's family are strong, and are only brought into question when Tio Vicente returns from the cantina a little drunk and is challenged by his wife:

'What are you saying, woman? That I cannot be trusted to keep a secret?' (p. 50)

Emilio's mother is in a perilous situation. When Raúl Castro and Alda Jiménez enter Emilio's world, the entire family must extend their circle of trust and loyalty to these strangers. Tio Vicente is suspicious of Alda and her age is a stumbling block to his ability to trust her but in the end the family's trust is rewarded:

'Trust isn't something you give out like sweets from a piñata. The fact is we don't know anything much about you, other than you work for the Federales' (p. 33)

'Thank you, Señor and Señora Torres, for your trust in and kindness to me, taking me into your family when I was such an unwelcome reminder of what was happening.' (p.158-9)

Emilio is aware of the close links between the drug cartel activity and police corruption and so he questions his trust of the Federal policeman:

For when it was all said and done, could they really trust anyone? The papers were full of stories about corrupt police officers. Was Castro really the good man he appeared to be? (p.70)

The involvement of Señor Sellers and Senor Taylor presents yet another situation in which the family must extend their trust and loyalty to strangers. Also, Emilio's family have no choice but to trust the desperate violent 'pendejos' whose ransom demands and treatment of Gloria devastate them.

- Using IWB tools brainstorm the concept of trust and what makes people trustworthy.
- Examine the text and using a KWL chart consider the information Emilio and his family needed to know, wanted to know and learned about Raúl Castro, Alda Jiménez, the Americans, the kidnapers and Evita that helped them to develop the level of trust needed to guide their interactions. A BLM for this is available at:
<http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/kwl.pdf> .
- Write a persuasive text convincing your classmates to trust Raúl Castro's handling of the kidnapping case, given the fact that police corruption is one of the many factors in the Mexican drug war.
- Emilio must also trust himself. Find examples of this in the text and using Scribble Press create a booklet about Emilio's inner journey.

9.4.7 Hope

A strong recurring theme in *Emilio* is that of hope. It is what sustains the family through their invidious ordeal. It motivates Alda and Padre Benitez as they seek to make a difference in a dark and brutal world where innocent victims are suffering. Señora Lopez is sustained through her ordeal by the hope she places in her family, particularly her sister and her son, to remain strong and negotiate her release.

- Discuss how Sophie Masson has given the reader clues for hope in Emilio's world. Use Popplet to create a mindmap that visually represents these clues.
- How are faith and hope linked in the text?
- Create motivational posters using images from Mexican culture and some inspirational text to promote the hope that children like Evita and Alda's cousin Joaquin will escape their violent worlds.
- Watch the YouTube video: <http://vimeo.com/2482274> to see what is being done to bring hope to Mexican children.
- Create a class mural using art materials that celebrates hope for the people of Mexico.
- Compare Emilio's sense of hope for his country with that of Naveed's and Amina's in the Through My Eyes series of texts.

9.5 Examining Literature

Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example character development and plot tension. (ACELT 1605)

Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses. (ACELT1610)

9.5.1 Voice

Analyse strategies authors use to influence readers (ACELY1801)

Sophie Masson has chosen to write *Emilio* in the close third person. This allows the reader to become intimately involved in the characters' world.

- Choose a short section of the text and rewrite in first person from Emilio's perspective.
- Choose a short section of the text and rewrite it from Luz's point of view.

9.5.2 Plot Development

Emilio has wonderfully engaging, cumulative plot development. The author skillfully builds dramatic tension and great suspense with gripping climactic moments that finally resolve into an ending that brings enormous relief and hope.

- Plot Profile: In groups students decide on six of the most important events in the text and discuss how exciting each of these events was, on a scale of 1 to 10. Create a graph of the levels of excitement, to show how excitement rises and falls in the story.
- In groups examine how the author has built suspense and created tension in the scenes in the table below. Consider how the author has used variation in sentence length, punctuation and dialogue to affect reader response.
- Create a book trailer for *Emilio* showing the main plot events. The Inside a Dog website provides information about booktrailers at <http://www.insideadog.com.au/teachers/book-trailers> .
- Use Sculpting strategy to heighten students' awareness of plot tension: Students work in pairs and student A sculpts student B (who is like a piece of clay) to represent the plot moment showing appropriate body language, gesture, facial expression and body position. Emilio's experience at the Chapel of the Indians at La Villa de Guadalupe in Chapter 13 would suit this strategy.

- Photograph sculptures using iPads and use Keynote to add text and create presentations. An explanation of Sculpting is available in: *Teaching Language Learners in Mainstream Classes*, Margery Hertzberg, an excellent reference for dramatic responses to literature.
- Students use the features of a graphic novel to recreate a chapter of *Emilio*. Information on this activity can be found at http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/worksamples/Year_8_English_Portfolio_Above.pdf.

9.5.3 Characterisation

Compare the ways that language and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of texts. (ACELT1621)

Through close reading and discussion of texts students experience and evaluate a range of personal and social behaviours and perspectives and develop connections and empathy with characters in different social contexts (General Capabilities, Personal and social capability, Organisation, Australian Curriculum: English)

Students create texts for different purposes, selecting language to influence audience response. They make presentations and contribute actively to class and group discussions, using language patterns for effect. When creating and editing texts to create specific effects, they take into account intended purposes and the needs and interests of audiences. They demonstrate understanding of grammar, select vocabulary for effect and use accurate spelling and punctuation. (Year 8 Achievement Standard, Australian Curriculum: English)

The author has created engaging dynamic characters that show credible development throughout the narrative. Emilio is a great character that draws strong empathy from the reader as we share his despair and frustration.

- Choose one of the characters. Create a character web map. A BLM template is available at <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/resources-gallery/resource-gallery-templates.html>.
- Create an Open Minded Portrait for Emilio. An explanation is provided at <http://pdspot.wordpress.com/2011/08/14/open-minded-portraits/>.
- Work in pairs to create Kennings poetry (two-word phrases of several stanzas that describe objects or people):
 - Luz: loving and caring, worried and scared
 - Tia Isobel: strong and focussed, brave and strategic.

- Which character is the most inspiring and why? Prepare a reflective speech on your inspirational character to present to the class.
- Use the HotSeating strategy to learn about the internal conflicts of a chosen character. Information about this strategy is available at <http://dramaresource.com/strategies/hot-seating>.
- Choose a favourite character and in pairs, take turns to interview your character.
- Rewrite an event using another character's point of view.
- Using digital tools, design your own compare and contrast organiser and use it to represent the different character traits of Emilio and Luz. Repeat this activity for yourself and a close family member or classmate.
- Each character experiences both internal and external conflicts. Use digital tools to represent some of these conflicts.
- Write an online journal entry for a character from a chapter or chapters in the story using first person and integrating text detail, including emotions, motives and reflections.
- Write a journal entry for a difficult period in your own life and compare.
- Create a piece of artwork or music that represents your favourite character.
- Locate descriptive passages about el Capitán and Flor de la Noche. Create character portraits for them.

9.5.4 Literary Style

Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of the text (ACELY1711)

Apply increasing knowledge of vocabulary, text structures and language features to understand the content of texts (ACELY1733)

Description

Sophie Masson uses simple prose that is enhanced by vivid description and effective use of dialogue while mood and atmosphere is evoked through interesting vocabulary choices and phrasing.

- Use IWB to examine extracts from the text, looking closely at the descriptive language. Invite students to select a scene from the text and using a Y-chart list distinctive words and phrases, particularly noun phrases and adjectives, that build description. Suitable scenes include: Emilio's experience at the Chapel of the Indians in chapter 13 and Evita in the hospital bed in Chapter 19. Discuss why the author selected these words and what mood they portray. Use this analysis to draw the scene. A Y-chart template is

available at <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/resources-gallery/resource-gallery-templates.html>.

- Descriptive noun groups and interesting verbs can be listed in an image box for categorising description. Headings such as physical images, sound images and emotional images could be used. For more information on this activity see PETAA publication: *A Literature Companion for Teachers* by Lorraine McDonald.

Wonderful mood and atmosphere is created in the scene at the San Gregorio cemetery in chapter 22. The author cleverly juxtaposes sets of antonyms to convey to the reader the sights, sounds and smells of the scene:

'The graveyard on this night was a weird mixture of noise and silence, golden lights alternating with pools of deep shadow, the scent of incense and perfume mingling with an underlying faint earthy mustiness, the warmth of thousands of candles meeting the cold of autumnal midnight.' (p. 138)

- Invite students to write their own short passages that use this literary technique.

Ethnic Language

The author includes several Spanish words in the narrative. Ethnic words are explained both in the text and in the glossary.

- Discuss the author's use of ethnic words and consider the effect it has on the reading of the novel.
- Students complete a PNQ on the use of ethnic language in the text. A PNQ chart BLM is available at: <http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/verve/resources/pnq.pdf>.
- Invite pairs of students to rewrite short sections of a chapter omitting the ethnic words.
- Make comparisons between the original text and the edited sections. What are the main differences in terms of reading fluency, comprehension, reader engagement and appreciation?

Tio Vicente's language is particularly colourful:

'Those bastardos have hurt her,' growled Tio Vincente clenching his fists. (p. 26)

- Find further examples in the text and draw the images they create for the reader

Figurative language: imagery, personification, similes and metaphors

Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives...shape poetry, songs, anthems and odes.
(ACELT1611)

Apply increasing knowledge of vocabulary, text structures and language features to understand the content of texts. **(ACELY1733)**

The author includes imagery, personification and similes to enrich her writing, creating strong visual images of setting, character and emotion. Examples include the following:

The Americans – Sellers a wiry, dark-haired, blue-eyed man in his forties, and Taylor, an older, more suave type, with sleep silver hair and a smart suit ... (p. 94)

It's a stupid idea I know that, but my brain feels like a rat on a wheel and I feel I'm going crazy and I just don't know what to do. (p. 40)

He [Emilio]kept waking up from horrible nightmares, hideous scenarios spooling out like deranged films, and he found it hard to go back to sleep' (p. 60)

He hated the thought, tried to push it away from him, but it kept coming back, like a persistent pop-up ad on a computer screen. (p. 140)

The tables were groaning with food and drink (p. 161)

- Find further examples in the text of the use of these literary devices and discuss how they work to engage the reader and build the drama.
- Create a Figurative Language Chart. A BLM template is available at: <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/4882041/Figurative-Language-Chart>.
- Choose a character such as Alda or Señora Lopez and create similes that describe or convey their emotional response to their personal ordeals.

10. About the Authors of this Guide

Lyn White has been a primary school teacher-librarian and English as an Additional Language teacher for more than twenty years and recently completed postgraduate studies in Editing and Communications at the

University of Melbourne. She is passionate about children's literature, committed to developing life-long reading habits in children and has great expertise in engaging students with quality texts and teachers with quality resources. Lyn is a part-time teacher at Blackburn English Language School and a pre-service supervisor with Deakin University.

Lyn is the Series Creator and Editor for Through My Eyes. Lyn developed the style and structure of these Through My Eyes Teaching and Learning Guides, and prepared the content for this Guide with Heather Zubek.

Heather Zubek has been a primary school teacher, library teacher, freelance writer and storyteller for many years.

Heather believes in the transformative power of story. She believes that one book has the power to help change the world by confronting and enraging its reader without them ever having to leave the safety of their comfort zone. At present Heather is a part-time teacher in the Discovery Centre at Hillcrest Christian College in Melbourne and enjoys playing matchmaker with students and books. She is also a freelance writer specialising in children's literature, travel and community development and is a regular contributor to several local and national magazines and newspapers.

As a committee member for the One World Centre in Perth, Western Australia, Heather spent time creating teacher resources on the topic of Islam.

She has published two teacher resource books through Ready-Ed Publications: *Global Focus: Making a Difference in the World* and *Cultures, Places and Resources in Developing Countries*.

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