CONTEXT STUDY
CREATING AND PRESENTING OUTCOME

TEXTS:

GROWING UP ASIAN IN AUSTRALIA – A. PUNG (ED)

THEME:
IDENTITY & BELONGING
SOME OF THE CENTRAL IDEAS BEHIND THE CONTEXT OF IDENTITY & BELONGING ARE:

1. Nature or nurture: what makes us who we are?
   - Are we the product of our upbringing, or do our inherited traits – our DNA – determine the sort of person we become?
   
   http://www.illiteratewithdrawal.com/2008/02/nature-vs-nurture-twin-studies/
   (Study of identical twins raised apart)

2. Defining ourselves through others: the paradox of belonging
   - Belonging actively gives us a set of recognisable attitudes and values that we can adopt as our own. But do we have to give up our individuality?

"Nothing of me is original. I am the combined effort of everyone I've ever known." – Chuck Palahniuk
CENTRAL IDEAS CONT’D

3. The cost of belonging – must we sacrifice ourselves?
   - What must we give up to belong? Is it possible to be an individual and also be part of a larger group? Consider the inherent tensions in the meanings of “individual” and “belonging”

4. Challenging and developing our identity
   - To what extent is our identity given to us through outside influences: family, culture, race, education, work, friends, etc? What else influences the development of our identity?

   No man is an island, entire of itself; every man
   Is a piece of the continent, a part of the main . . .
   . . . Any man’s death diminishes me
   Because I am involved in mankind. John Donne, poet, 1572-1631
CENTRAL IDEAS CONT’D

5. Choosing not to belong

- Who doesn’t belong in our society? Why? What happens to those who choose not to belong?
- Is it that some people can’t fit in, or deliberately choose not to?
- What factors help us to develop a sense of belonging?

“My identity might begin with the fact of my race, but it didn't, couldn't end there. At least that's what I would choose to believe." – Barack Obama
WORDS FOR BELONGING & INDIVIDUALITY

The following “belonging” words are useful for your writing:
Fellowship, membership, community, fraternity, association, comradeship, companionship, camaraderie, familiarity, intimacy, mateship, togetherness, social circle, compatibility, conformity, cordiality, acceptability, expectations

Words related to individuality:
Personality, uniqueness, character, distinctive features, mannerisms, traits, attributes, differences, selfhood, psyche, spirit, idiosyncrasies, qualities, achievements, eccentricities, quirks, peculiarities
WORDS FOR A LACK OF BELONGING AND ALIENATION

Use the following in your writing:

Disconnection, disintegration, dissolution, withdrawal, split, detachment, isolation, seclusion, avoidance, separateness, breach, rift, split, severance, segregation, displacement, disjointing, dislocation, breakdown, rupture, fracture, partition, alienation, loner, foreigner, nonconformist, misfit
SOME KEY THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

The following questions will inform the essay question that you will complete for your Outcome for the Identity and Belonging Context. You will need to demonstrate in your writing that, through reading and viewing the texts as well as discussing and analysing the concepts involved, you have a good understanding of these key concepts.

1. WHAT MAKES AN INDIVIDUAL?
2. WHAT FACTORS SHAPE AND/OR INFLUENCE A SENSE OF SELF?
3. IS IDENTITY FIXED, OR IS IT SUBJECT TO CHANGE?
4. WHAT SACRIFICES, IF ANY, DOES THE INDIVIDUAL MAKE IN ORDER TO BELONG?
5. WHAT HAPPENS TO INDIVIDUALS WHO STRUGGLE TO FIND A SENSE OF BELONGING?
REFLECTIVE WRITING

- What are your earliest memories?

- If you had to describe yourself in a paragraph, what would you write?

- What groups (family, social, work, school, sport, etc) do you belong to?

- What is your identity made up of?