

# Vertigo by Amanda Lohrey

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Context

**About the author:** Amanda Frances Lillian Lohrey is a writer and novelist from the North East Coast of Tasmania. Following her studies at the University of Tasmania she accepted a scholarship at the University of Cambridge. From 1988 to 1994 she lectured in Writing and Textual studies at the University of Technology. Since 2002 she has held the position of lecturer in the School of English, Media Studies and Art History at the University of Queensland. She is the author of acclaimed novels *Camille's Bread*, *Vertigo* and *The Morality of Gentlemen*, as well as the award-winning short story collection *Reading Madame Bovary*. She has also written two Quarterly Essays: *Groundswell* and *Voting For Jesus*. In 2012 she was awarded the Patrick White Literary Award.

**About the novella:** After living through a very bad bush fire on the north east coast of Tasmania, Lohrey remembered Henry Lawson's short story 'Bushfire'. She wondered: if she were to write the story today what she would change. What would be different about the Australian experience today? She realised the difference was that Lawson's territory was now full of city people who'd made a sea change. Lawson's 'Bush Fire' is a classic 'Romeo and Juliet' story about the daughter of a wealthy squatter, and the son of a selector. If you go into a country town today, the crucial economic and political tensions are not between the squatter and the selectors. They are very often between the sea changers and the 'white shoe brigade', according to resort developers. Next Lohrey went back to read DH Lawrence's *Kangaroo*, which has some of the best known descriptions of the Australian landscape. A longtime admirer of Lorraine Biggs, whose landscape painting captures exactly the quality Lawrence talks about, Lohrey asked Biggs if she would be willing to collaborate. Originally Lohrey intended to write a short story, in the same way Henry Lawson wrote his *Bush Fire*, however it grew into a novella. The novella makes reference to the Promised Land, which was promised to Abraham in the bible. The history of the Jewish people begins with Abraham, and the story of Abraham begins when God tells him to leave his homeland, promising Abraham and his descendants a new home in the land of Canaan, now known as Israel. Jews were exiled from the land of Israel by the Romans in 135 C.E., after they were defeated in a three-year war, and Jews did not have any control over the land again until 1948 C.E. There is ongoing fighting between the Palestinians and the Israelis over the establishment of an independent Palestinian State alongside the State of Israel. The Fighting mainly occurs in Gaza and West Bank, which are heavily occupied by Palestinians.

### Purpose

Lohrey's novella explores how living close to nature changes the idea of nature as being separate from the individual, to an appreciation of what connects us to our identity through belonging within the ecological environment. *Vertigo* portrays how extreme weather patterns impact upon our relationships with each other.

### Audience

The audience is given a detailed understanding of life in a coastal rural town. The changes which occur are reflective of many people's experience of moving from the city to the bush.

## KEY TERM

**Dead Sea Scrolls** The Dead Sea Scrolls are a collection of almost a thousand different texts discovered between 1946 and 1956 in eleven caves in the immediate vicinity of the ancient settlement at Khirbet Qumran in the West Bank, a landlocked area, where Jerusalem is located. The texts are of great historical, religious, and linguistic significance because they include the third oldest known surviving manuscripts of works later included in the Hebrew Bible canon.

## HOW DOES HUMAN EXPERIENCES RELATE TO VERTIGO?

The images of drought, fire, grief, loss, war and love are key elements throughout this novella that relate to common human experiences that have lasting and profound effects on our well-being and an understanding of the self and others. How these elements are imagined and re-imagined in the context of a changing environment raises significant questions for society today, given that the world is in a constant state of global flux.

### The human experience of the ecological environment

Lohrey asks the reader to consider the ecological, political and social environment as in no way separate from the society of humans, but rather intrinsically connected to everyone, human and non-human alike. This is expressed through the imagery of the boy. He occupies Luke's and Anna's imagination. The boy is the unexpressed grief, and the un-acknowledged potential for connection. In other words the boy is the in-betweenness of something felt (imagined)

but not yet real. The next morning after they first move into the house, Anna looks around for the boy. She is conscious of not expecting him to be there every morning as she fears she will 'break the spell', suggesting that he is not real, but in her imagination. She clings to her perception of him as she is afraid of letting him go. When they first move into the house, the boy is unsettled by the noises. Through imagery of the boy wandering up and down, Lohrey shows his distress, but also that he finds comfort eventually by joining his mother in bed. Anna tries to settle the boy as she pulls the white sheet over him, kisses his blonde curls and strokes the 'delicate hollow between his shoulder-blades' until he is becalmed. It is at this stage, that the boy represents Anna's own fears as she comes to terms with her own transitional experiences.

It is the weather that prompts Luke and Anna to move to the coast. Lohrey creates an image of the crisis point for Luke and Anna as they sit in bed with Anna 'wheezing and sucking in gasps of Ventolin' from her inhaler as they both breathe in 'mould and damp', while the rain is 'hurtling outside'. The claustrophobia they feel is enhanced by the description of Anna slumping back against a wall 'deflated and diminished'. This prompts Luke to make the decision and when he puts the proposal to Anna, she agrees. However, it is more than just the weather, as Anna, like her husband, feels the 'falling away of her youthful élan' (confidence and vivacity). Therefore Lohrey represents their migration to the coast as a metaphor for transitioning into a new stage of life.

The claustrophobic images of the city are contrasted with images of freedom outside of the city. This can be seen in how Luke and Anna feel free again once 'out on the open road' when driving to find a place to move to. The further they go, the more the world 'expanded into a mysterious limbo' which was 'waiting to be filled', thereby suggesting endless possibilities and a sense of openness toward what might come. It is in this openness that the boy first appears in the novella as he only appears when there is peace and calm. His appearances in their apartment were erratic and unpredictable, however, out on the open road, he is described as being like any other child on a journey to unknown places with an 'inquiring look on his face'. His presence would also have encouraged Luke and Anna to stick to their plan of moving as they are delighted to have him in their company.

In the new house, Luke and Anna are part of the natural landscape. This is shown through the imagery of their first night there, where Anna and Luke lie on the mattress on the floor in each other's arms and look up at the moon 'swollen with radiance' through an unclad window. Sound imagery crafted through the simile of the possums that 'hissed and snarled like devils', brings the scene alive. Anna is delighted by their 'riffs of such comic malevolence'. In addition, gardening gives Luke and Anna joy as they find 'pleasure in the rhythmic physical movements' of activities such as raking leaves, bringing them 'mindless contentment'. It is in this environment that the boy appears. Neither Anna nor Luke look each other in the eye as the 'weighty joy of it would be too much'. Lohrey illustrates the fear they both experience of breaking the fantasy they cradle between them about the boy. The weight in the joy is a reference to their inability to accept that he is not actually with them and therefore shows the sense of loss they must both feel.

However, through biblical imagery, Lohrey contrasts the pleasures of the Worley's cultivating their own patch of land with the ecological issues facing not only Garra Nalla, but the entire planet. Lohrey shows that 'this is not Eden' as she describes the drought country behind the coast in the dry sclerophyll forest on the hills. In the pastures cleared for grazing sheep between the hamlet and the forest, the land is 'dried out and dun-coloured' due to seven years of drought. The repetition of 'seven years of drought' is enhanced by the metaphor of the drought as a curse, as it has 'begun to sound biblical'. Although they hear it does occasionally rain, but not as much as it used to, the locals feel they are being punished somehow as the mist they see over the 'low peaks on the horizon' does not amount to anything.

As Anna comes to understand her relationship with the landscape and how she fits into it, she also begins to understand the value of letting go. As she becomes disillusioned with her husband, and sees the land falling away from her, she wonders what's the point of 'this dance where they whirl together in an endless circle, locked in the illusion they are going somewhere'. She recognises that the land she occupies is so vast, and she and her husband so small, that they could disappear and 'nothing would change'. It is this thought that brings on vertigo, a 'dizzying sense of disorientation, as if she is about to fall', but when she falls she will be weightless. She ponders if it is perhaps the boy's absence that leads to feelings of loss and anxiety, and so without him Anna experiences symptoms of vertigo, of being unbalanced. However, she also recognises that 'something is dying', 'leaching away', not only from her, but from Luke as well.

Lohrey uses metaphor to illustrate the impact weather has on our lives. In the city the weather is just a backdrop to the plot of the character's lives. In Garra Nalla it is an immediate and tangible event, which has a profound effect on Anna. She is unable to cope with the constant wind, which howls through the settlement. Anna reflects on the difference between the city and the bush. Living in the city, to some degree the weather is something that is managed. This is a distinct contrast to life in the bush, where a drought can be devastating, as people have no control over when the rain comes and when it does not. However, although happy to be back in the city when she retreats there to get out of the wind, she soon becomes claustrophobic and misses her rural home. In particular she seems to miss the 'she-oaks with their wispy canopies that seem to hum and vibrate in the heat'. She blames Luke as she struggles with her feelings of displacement, as now she does not 'feel at home anywhere'. Using a simile, Lohrey compares her sense of not belonging in either place with a 'migratory bird that has lost its bearings'. It is Anna's longing to see the boy that ultimately sends her back to the country as she realises that he will not appear in the city. She begins to panic when it seems she may be 'losing her power to summon him', illustrating that she is finally letting go, despite her resistance.

The commercialisation of the town is shown through changes at the old squatter's mansion on the other side of the

highway from Garra Nalla. Metaphorically it is an image of colonisation as it looks like a colonial fortification. Gil tells the Worley's that it has recently been bought by the consortium of businesses who plan to develop the site. The new owners are juxtaposed with the old squatting family, the McKinnons, who used to live there—as the McKinnons 'knew how to get along with everybody', but the new owners have no interest in mixing with the locals as they turn up, have their parties and leave. Indicating a sense of history, the land was fortified to keep the bushrangers out and the blacks from stealing sheep. Later Gil is incensed when he discovers the consortium plans to begin work on a 'vast tree plantation'. Lohrey highlights the implications of the development in order to show how unsustainable development pollutes the natural environment. This is shown through imagery of the land scoured with bulldozers and the spray trucks with their 'pale green tanks of poison' and the men in 'fluorescent orange jackets' with their 'rods of pesticide'. As Gil elucidates, the pesticide used will eventually make its way into the lagoon and Garra Nulla will be 'surrounded on three sides by a toxic geometry of straight lies', which would ultimately be an 'insult to Nature'. The situation would make the drought situation even worse than it already is.

As they settle into living on the coast, the Worley's come to understand what it means to live on the 'rim of the driest continent'. Through imagery Lohrey describes the landscape as being a 'land of empty rivers' throughout most of the year, and sometimes for decades. It is through Luke and Anna experiencing this that they come to understand these 'lines on a map', as they are now 'part of it', just as every Australian is affected by the changes in the ecology due to climate change. This is further developed through the imagery of the lagoon as a muddied stream as the river that feeds it has also run dry. The personification of the river feeding the lagoon highlights the role of humans in creating this situation. By juxtaposing the sub-tropical downpours of the city, which created the 'smell of mould in their apartment', with the drought conditions of Garra Nulla, Lohrey illustrates how the environment significantly affects our well-being. The landscape has permeated Luke and Anna as the dryness has become part of their skin and hair and their whole body. They now long to feel the 'moisture in the air, of dampness against your cheek' that they once took for granted. Their ability to adapt to these circumstances is shown through Luke deftly fitting a filtration system under the sink to counteract the smell of the water tank. Anna notes with surprise how much more practical Luke is than she imagined, suggesting that with motivation people can adapt to a more simple lifestyle. This is contrasted with the home of the Watt's family who built an energy-efficient house with 'sun walls and solar panels' before 'such things were talked about', reminding us that renewable energy sources have been around long before they became mainstream.

Lohrey uses figurative language to describe both the beauty and danger the bushfire represents. The simile of the smoke cloud 'expanding, seeping' into the sky 'like a release of octopus ink', suggests the smoke is ominous and encroaching. Lohrey uses evocative words like 'billowing' to show how the smoke is slowly occupying the sky, thereby suggesting the threat of danger to the Worley's house and Garra Nulla. The imagery is further developed as the smoke begins to 'blanket the landscape like winter fog', portraying the spread of the fire and the increasing threat. Continuing the imagery of Luke and Anna being part of the landscape they occupy, Lohrey situates them in the natural environment. As the bushfires increase in strength, they cannot escape the thick and acrid haze in the garden, nor can they see clearly as Gil's bungalow below them can only be seen in contours. By the afternoon, the house is stifling, and nothing can be done about it. The ceiling fans give little relief from the heat and their clammy discomfort. Later still it is impossible for them to see anything as the smoke is very thick. When the flames finally come, they are described metaphorically as 'zig-zagging lines of flickering orange'. Lohrey compares the flames to the 'lighted streets of cities'. Despite the danger the flames pose, it has a strange beauty to it, as all nature does. Anna and Luke are enthralled as they watch the mountain range burn. In the middle of the night, Anna gets up and checks on the 'red glow in the hills', reflecting that she has not seen the boy for weeks. She wonders where he is. She gets a sick feeling as she imagines that he may have decided to leave them. Despite the impending danger of the fire, Anna, writes to her sister that she and Luke feel calm. However, later she is seized by fear as she realises that the fire could destroy the house, indicating that not only does Anna feel a sense of belonging at their homestead at Garra Nulla, but that she is also willing to protect it.

Lohrey slowly develops the threat of the fire to the point of intensity, illustrating the slow but damaging effect of climate change. It does not happen quickly, but builds up over time. Through meticulous imagery and figurative language, Lohrey clearly demonstrates this. When the Worley's play tennis with the Watt's, using a metaphor, Lohrey describes how a light ash 'rains on their skin' and settles in the 'creases of their clothes'. They ingest the soot as the grit leaves a 'bitter coating on their teeth', highlighting that the bushfire has become a part of them. The winds are metaphorised as rising in intensity to a roar, as the 'throttling, metallic sound' plays on Anna's nerves, even spooking Luke. The fire becomes more intense as other elements such as the wind play their part. However, illustrating how quickly things can change, Lohrey describes how a spot fire takes hold, and trees begin 'exploding into fire-bombs', while 'small black embers' are 'swirling and gliding on anarchic currents of air'. Thinking they've seen the worst of it, Anna and Luke are surprised by the 'monstrous cloud of smoke' coming from the north. Lohrey describes the fire as 'incandescent and alive', visually representing the flames as 'orange flecks and glimmers and golden corona' suggesting that the very air is alight, highlighting the powerful effect of the fire. It appears inescapable. Anna and Luke do escape the fire, however, as they are saved when a fire truck accidentally stumbles on their house when the fire fighters were trying to escape from the front of the fire. In an image of community, Luke and Anna join the other locals, who have also escaped from their homes. It is here in the safety of the community that the boy returns to her and snuggles with her as she sleeps.

## The human experience of recovering from loss and grief

Lohrey represents the boy's appearance and disappearance as a symbol of the amount of joy or stress experienced within the Worley family. In the early days of their move to Garra Nalla, the boy's appearance is something Anna does not want to take for granted. His being there is a valued part of life, in the same way as nature is something to be valued. Life at this point is idyllic with strolls on the beach and bird watching on the veranda. However, as the weather changes, Anna's reliance on the boy appearing becomes pronounced. When Luke's father, Ken, arrives the boy is not seen. Ken is described as a man who has 'never been at home in the outdoors' and so he feels out of place in the country. Luke senses his judgments yet he does not want to get into an argument with his father over why he 'wasted' his law degree and where he is going in his life, thereby representing his patriarchal criticism of Luke's choice to live in Garra Nalla. His father is abrasive and the only way Luke can cope is through sharing a drink of scotch to calm the situation. His father is a direct contrast to Luke who focuses on living simply, rather than 'whether his superannuation is adequate' or not. Luke is aghast at his father's inability to name it, meaning the death of their child, rather calling it 'other business', but neither can Luke bring himself to speak directly of the tragedy. Therefore, Luke's father reflects his own inability to express grief and loss. However, in Luke's case the natural environment inspires him to soften. This is shown through Luke's reflection, as he watches the 'spray foam up from the blowhole', that his father must have experienced pain when he lost his grandchild, especially as he does not have any others. Luke shows insight into his father's world as he realises his father is an 'old-fashioned man' who 'took responsibility for everything around him', as he felt a 'duty to protect the weak', something he was unable to do for his own grandson.

The boy represents the imagined space between Anna's and Luke's perspectives. He holds the two opposing positions—that of being overwhelmed by weather, situations and events and that of maintaining a sense of distance and distraction from the immediacy of the situation created, thereby representing an inability to connect with difficulties. The boy therefore is neither of these positions; he represents balance. He literally represents the possibility to inhabit the space between denial and sentimentality. Due to his own grief, Luke maintains his distance from Anna, which annoys her greatly. His observation of bird life begins with an overwhelming, powerful connection to a bird in the front yard. While he wants to give the bird a name, he also realises that by naming it, he changes the immediacy of the experience. Luke wants to live in the moment. However, due to his unexpressed grief for the boy, the past and present remain unresolved. A disconnection therefore exists, and starts to become evident within the relationship between Anna and Luke.

However, through Luke's connection to nature, healing is able to occur. One afternoon, Luke discovers a bird that looks like an owl in the garden of their home. The bird does not fly away as expected, but looks back at him with the 'utmost composure' and when he looks it in the eyes, it stares straight back at him. The imagery of the exchange between Luke and the bird highlights the 'soundless exchange of energy' he experiences. It is through the natural environment that he begins to feel a sense of peace as there is no time. Luke undergoes an awakening, as he recognises that time is an endless look of return, a return to this moment' and he experiences a sense of presence. It is his 'coming home', which for Luke is the 'silent space of euphoric emptiness'. This makes him 'mindlessly happy'. He wishes that the boy could have been there with him to have seen the bird, but he knows he has no control over the boy's presence, just as he has no control over his own feelings of grief. This takes its toll in its own way. The dead bird that Luke finds in the house after the fire turns out to be a common wattlebird, the bird he experienced the 'exchange of energy' with, therefore illustrating why he was so distraught at finding it. However this angers Anna as she feels it is inappropriate for him to be so distraught over 'this one bird!' when so much more has happened. But for Luke the bird symbolises a final letting go of his son. The fact that this bird is common also represents the many other people who have experienced loss, in particular the loss of a child, through the destruction of fire. Luke's acknowledgement and acceptance leads the way out of his pain.

Through the characterisation of Anna and Luke and their relationship, Lohrey explores the impact of change on an individual's sense of self. Luke comes to realise that his loss of youthful vitality is about his own changing self. He compares himself to the guys from the chopper that land on the headlands. He realises that even though they were only a few years younger than him, they make him feel old as he is no longer as spirited as they are. He no longer shares their 'cocky invincibility', which he may never have had, or he has lost during his transition to his thirties. He starts to reflect on his choice of moving to the country and that perhaps that choice was not about his relationship with Anna. Later it is revealed that one of the men is off to Afghanistan, and Luke reflects that nothing would induce him to put his life in danger, except perhaps his son.

However Anna does not cope as well as Luke in the new environment. She complains about the relentlessness of the wind. Her resistance to the environment and therefore the healing properties it embodies is highlighted by the imagery of her discovering the black snake when she was looking for a sheet that blew off the line. She stumbles, backing away from it, and grazes her elbow. Unlike Luke, who embraces the connection he feels for nature, Anna is startled by the fact that when she leant down so low she 'somehow entered into the snake's zone...' The use of ellipsis implies the possibility of a transformation, considering the metaphor of shedding the old and becoming new that snakes represent as they shed their skin. However, at this time Anna is afraid as she is not yet ready to release her attachment to the past.

The bushfire metaphorically represents transformation for Anna's and Luke's relationship with themselves and each other. Living on the coast with the support of Gil, the Worley's have felt themselves outside the bushfire danger zone,

therefore Gil represents a faulty sense of optimism, as no family is immune from the effects of a bushfire once in full force. It is not until the Worley's almost lose their lives and everything they own, that they realise the place the boy has held for them. It is in the ashes of the fire with their loss, that Luke can finally grieve the loss of the boy. The fire acts as a catalyst for change in their relationship, giving them both the ability to move forward and integrate what the boy represents. Through her dream after the fire, Anna is able to symbolically let go of her son. In the dream, the boy stands in the open doorway of the garden before the fire. He waves goodbye, but before she can wave back he dissolves into the light, metaphorically leaving this world. When she wakes, Anna cries 'silent tears that stream down her cheeks', illustrating that she is willing to let go of her son, despite the heartbreaking sadness she feels. At the community gathering in late December, Anna sees the boy and knows she is ready for him to leave as she 'raises her arm in soft salute' thanking the boy for staying with them while they healed and learned to let go. It is at this time that the black swans return to the lagoon, suggesting a restoration and a return to peace, as well as a new beginning. This is shown metaphorically by Anna throwing her pill packet in the bin, suggesting that she is ready to try for another baby.

## The experience of war

The war, like the drought, is being considered in the context of environment. Lohrey asks the reader to re-imagine the political environment, in the same way that Anna experiences the weather, not as a backdrop, but as a real experience of everyday life. Luke is curious about the past, in an attempt to resolve the present. The boy represents a sense of innocence at play, while remaining in contact with the surrounding world. Living intimately with the ecological environment has meant that Anna is in the process of reimagining her life and her relationship to the environment. This includes the Afghanistan war. The positioning is simple: Luke is reading Sir Frederick Treves' account of his pilgrimage in Palestine. Anna is watching BBC and CNN news, which make her feel 'connected to the outside world'. In one of these reports, a soldier appeals on camera for "those guys in Washington" to do "one day of my rotation," declaring that if they did, he will willingly "serve another fifteen-months". His dialogue is juxtaposed with imagery of the Iraq war—an upended burning tank, 'bodies splayed on the road' and 'billowing smoke'. Giving an insight into the people of Iraq, an image of an old Iraqi woman 'clutching her walking frame and wailing' is given as American soldiers drag a dead civilian onto her terrace, away from snipers, and try to revive the body.

Description of the footage continues as the camera moves to another man who complains there is 'never enough down time'. The quaver in his voice emphasises his turmoil: he is in a "permanent state of heightened alertness, like permanent, like we're never off..." Bringing the reality back to her world, Anna looks down at the boy, expressing her gratitude that at least he will 'never have to be a soldier'. The war is also brought home when they realise that Gil's grandson has been sent to Afghanistan as a commando doing 'long range reconnaissance'. Luke is puzzled as to why Gil wouldn't mention it, but he comes to understand that there are some things that are difficult to talk about as the talk of his grandson reminds him of the boy. The black swan that is found electrocuted after having flown into the wires is a metaphor for the soldiers in the Afghanistan war, who are killed via unnatural means, such as war. Reflecting images of soldiers dying in war, the black swan is described as a deflated sight with its 'twisted black carcass', 'slash of white feather down its middle' and its 'broken neck'.

## Activity

How do you relate human experiences to *Vertigo*?

## TEXT STRUCTURE AND SUMMARY

The novella, as a short novel, is written using the omniscient narrator, whereby the responder is given an insight into the thoughts and values of the central characters, Anna and Luke. The novella is separated into three parts, with no chapter titles.

### PART I

In the city Luke does not notice the birds, except for one he cannot identify. Anna is diagnosed with asthma and the city no longer looks glamorous to her. They decide to leave the city. On the weekends they visit different rural towns. The boy accompanies them. They take a wrong turn and end up in Garra Nalla, a small coastal town. Their new home at Garra Nalla feels like it has been waiting for them. On the first night the boy could not sleep. Finally he nestles beside Anna. In the morning Anna expects the boy to be there, however she does not want to take anything for granted. They sit on the veranda. In early March they prepare a garden, while the boy plays. So joyous is the experience, Anna and Luke cannot look each other in the eyes. A prolonged drought continues. They put buckets in the shower to catch the water. Gilbert Riley drops in for coffee and a natter. A bird returns Luke's gaze and a current passes between them. He would like the boy to see the bird and the bird to see the boy. He has no control over the boy who comes and goes as he pleases. Anna buys a yellow canoe for Luke's birthday. They glide across the still black waters. Sometimes the boy comes with them. Luke has a series of recurring dreams in which he swims beneath the sunlit surface like a water baby and the boy is swimming alongside him.

### PART II

Luke checks the water tank. The water level is the same. They knew about the drought before they moved, but then it

was just a weather report. On a stroll beside the lagoon they meet Alan and Bette Watts. During a game of tennis, a helicopter lands in a nearby field. Alan and Luke approach the helicopter. One of the crew is off to Afghanistan in a month. Luke's father, Ken, comes to stay. He criticises the town for not having many facilities, creating a sense that he is also critical of Luke for moving there. Anna observes that since Ken arrived the boy has not been seen. The wind blows and still there is no spring rain. The trees begin to get a crisp look about them. Black Cockatoos clutter on the she-oaks and Gil tells Anna their arrival is a portent of rain. The rain does not come and the winds persist for another forty one days and nights. All night doors slam, and the house rattles. Anna is not able to sleep. Luke's sleep is unaffected. His detachment to Anna's sleepless night infuriates her. The continuous wind blows the linen off the clothes line. Anna surprises a snake coiled in the sheet.

Anna and Luke stop communicating, and the canoe lies idle under the veranda. In the city the weather was a backdrop to the plot of their life. In the country the weather is the plot. Anna lies awake hoping for rain. Luke is reading about Sir Fredericks' journey to the Middle East. Anna is watching CNN. On the screen a black soldier is weeping. He asks that one guy from Washington come and do one day of his rotation. Anna looks at the boy who is playing on the rug. November, the wind continues and still no rain. The bush animals start wandering into the settlement looking for water. Luke senses that Anna is in need of a break. They go to Sydney and look after a friend's place. Luke is critical about all aspects of the city. He leaves early. Anna is relieved to see him go. In the city there is no sign of the boy. She decides to give Garra Nalla another year and plant some casuarinas. Gil comes over and informs Anna and Luke that in the middle of a drought, the council has approved a tree plantation. The chemicals are toxic and the lagoon will be drained of water. Anna is distraught. Luke soon loses interest in the subject, and the boy, loyal to his father, skitters away to the veranda. Anna spirals in panic. She feels like she is living with a stranger. The thought brings on a rush of vertigo. She thinks perhaps it is to do with the boy, for it feels like he has abandoned them.

### PART III

Anna and Luke plant the she-oaks. Anna sees smoke billowing up behind the hills. In the morning, they sniff the air and look out at a rug of pale grey smoke covering the landscape. Luke checks the temperature gauge. It is early morning and already thirty four degrees. Luke is concerned that Anna could have an asthma attack. She checks her nebuliser. By noon the house is stifling. The temperature continues to rise, to thirty nine degrees. In the evening, they watch from the attic. A flickering orange light crosses the night sky. They haven't seen the boy in weeks. Anna fears he is gone forever. Luke makes a list of precautions. By nine they have already filled the bath and placed in it wet towels, set plastic buckets, cleared debris from around the house and cleared the guttering. The power is cut. It occurs to them that they will not be able to pump water. A big swell breaks, forming a mix of salt and smoke in the air. Gil seems unperturbed: fire has never made it to the settlement. Luke reads Sir Frederick Treves' account of his pilgrimage in Palestine by candlelight. Anna begins to panic about the threat of losing her home. The intensity of the fire increases. Anna and Luke go to the headland to join the townspeople. They watch a spotfire take hold in the south. Anna and Luke rush home to their home, which is on fire. A red fire truck accidentally stumbles onto their property as the driver was trying to get away from the front of the fire. Anna and Luke are taken to a church to be with other townspeople who have fled their homes. When they eventually go home, Anna and Luke are astonished that their home has been saved by the sweater. Anna reflects on giving birth to a still-born baby. Anna and Luke finally grieve for the loss of their son. The community get together to support each other after the fire. Anna says goodbye to the boy.

## CHARACTERS

**Luke Worley:** He works at home as an editor. After leaving the city he enjoys bird watching and connecting with nature. The level of his grief over losing his baby son, is only truly realised in the ashes of the bush fire.

**Anna Worley:** She is diagnosed with asthma. She loves her new house, but is affected by the constant winds, lack of rain, and searing heat. She is not sure if she wants to continue living in Garra Nalla. She struggles with the loss of her baby son.

**Boy:** Anna and Luke's still born child, who still exists in their imagination. He is a comfort to both of them and a shared joy. Anna becomes anxious when he is absent for any length of time.

**Gilbert Reilly:** He is the next door neighbour at Garra Nalla. He is friendly to newcomers, and is a source of local knowledge. His grandson is in Afghanistan, but he does not talk about this to Anna and Luke. He is optimistic that the fire will not touch the settlement.

**Bette Watts:** She works as a nurse. She is energetic and practical as well as a competitive kayaker. She lives an alternative life style. Her wardrobe consists of shorts and thongs. She plays tennis with Luke and Anna and has two children.

**Allan Watts:** He works as a Math teacher, lives an alternative life and is mostly seen in shorts and thongs. He collects rustic hardware, plays tennis and has two children.

### Activity

Create and fill in the table by writing your ideas about what each character quote tells you about the character/s and human experiences. The first one has been completed as an example.

Character quote	What the quote tells you about the character and human experiences
'For days she felt weepy and vulnerable, as if she were no longer the person she thought she was, or had willed herself to be.'	Anna is undergoing a process of transformation. Lohrey visually represents this change through images of Anna's emotional state: she is teary and vulnerable as her sense of self is no longer what she thought it was.
'Good old Ken; always the optimist.'	
'The boy can look like an angel, polished in the sun, but today he is a bush urchin ...'	
'Striated Pardalote. It says here they're migratory birds who travel south in spring to breed and fly away in winter.'	
'[In response to Bette asking Anna if she will ever start a family] First we have to decide where home is.'	
'This is our Promised Land, he thinks, and we are here to stay.'	
'...some once vivid hue in the inner landscape of her consciousness is beginning to fade.'	
'The noise of the wind is infernal ...'	
'I knew you were indestructible.'	

## SETTING

Although the main setting is Garra Nalla, it is contrasted to the city. A description of the setting is outlined below.

**City:** Lohrey creates unappealing imagery of the city, which is dense and noisy, due to the close proximity of neighbours and constant movement of people. The Worley's live in a damp apartment. Anna works from a room in the apartment that overlooks a fire escape. Luke works from a space in a warehouse he rents. The claustrophobia of the city is described through the metaphor of the 'smoggy curtain across the built-up sky'. It is described as a place where they were not earthed.

**Garra Nalla:** It can barely be defined as a town, with its eighty houses, nestled amongst 'grey-green casuarinas and shaggy old banksias laden with masses of black seed cobs'. The approach to Garra Nalla is picturesque: an avenue lined with pink, gold and orange flowering gums. She-oaks are scattered among the houses. The road into town runs alongside a narrow brown river. Beyond the river is a wide lagoon. On the other side of the sand hills is a long white beach. Lohrey uses a simile to describe Anna's thoughts of how the entrance to Garra Nulla was almost too picturesque as a comparison is made between the view and a 'crudely painted postcard'. Further imagery describes the 'rocky foreshore of tea trees and boobialla' which 'shields the fibro and timber houses along an unsealed road'. The lack of letter-boxes and street lights creates an image of a quiet life, while demonstrating the place is in direct contrast to the city they have come from.

**Old squatter's mansion:** This is on the other side of the highway from Garra Nalla set amidst the yellow grassland. The mansion is built of stone.

### Activity

Look at the following explanation reflecting one setting in the text. The purpose of the setting is to create an atmosphere. Identify what these settings reflect about the mood of the text, and what they tell the reader about human experiences.

## Modelled response

Setting: the headland

Mood and representation of human experiences:

From the 'grassy windswept headland' the Worley's can see Rittler's Point, a rocky outcrop, in the north and the settlement of Garra Nulla in the south. On the headland stood three Norfolk pines, which illustrate the colonial origins of the town as they stand looming above Luke and Anna like sentinels. The simile suggests the invasive presence of colonisation, and prepares the reader for the upcoming threat to the town from developers. It is here, on the headland that the three of them are 'gazing out to sea'. It is an image of a peaceful family on a family outing, and suggests that the family are in tune with nature and therefore whole. Through a metaphor of the water spray as a 'curtain of white water' drenching them in spray' Lohrey expresses the delight the family experience as they watch the sea. Through imagery of the boy hunching his shoulders and waiting for the spray to fall, as he 'shrieked with delight' and ran 'up and down on the spot with excitement', Lohrey further strengthens the unity of the family.

Setting: the Worley's weatherboard homestead from the Federation era

Mood and representation of human experiences: .....

Setting: the old squatter's mansion

Mood and representation of human experiences: .....

## LANGUAGE FORMS AND FEATURES

### Symbolism

Lohrey represents Luke's interest in birds as a symbol of his growing awareness of the living world around him. Luke's growing interest in the wild birdlife is contrasted with his lack of interest in it when he was growing up 'on the edge of the city'. Now that he has moved to the coast, his interest has increased substantially. Lohrey creates an imagery of the birds in the city and compares this to the birds on the coast. In the city, there are of course birds, but there is also 'too much urban jazz in the air' with the sound of the jets roaring and the 'manic whine of sirens' or the 'thumping bass line of a neighbour's latest dance-music craze'. Through the descriptive language clear images of congestion in the city are created. Lohrey develops the imagery further through the 'mournful bird cry' that wakes Luke in the early hours of the morning, suggesting a sense of loneliness and sadness that comes with living in the city. When Luke asks his friends and parents if they can identify the bird, they're also unable to, suggesting that the sadness and loneliness that people experience in the city is universal. There is little escape from it.

As an observer, rather than an active participant in nature, Luke is mesmerized by the bird-life. Through the imagery of the birds, the responder is able to appreciate the significance they play in the landscape as we are given time to observe them, the vivid descriptions bringing alive their familiar qualities. For example, Luke marvels at the black cormorants that perch beside the lagoon, the 'lusty pelicans' on the sandbanks and the 'opportunistic Pacific gulls cruising the shoreline' for something to eat with little effort required. The two small birds that Luke sees near the back door feeding on the river wattles are symbolic of Luke's healing journey. At first he is unable to identify them. He attempts to understand these birds by labelling them. This can be seen in how he looks the birds up in Simpson and Day's Field Guide to the Birds of Australia. He goes to great lengths to identify them as he writes down their markings—'pale green chest', 'yellowish head with little white stripes', 'black stripes in the edges of its wings' and a dark grey beak. Later that day, Anna identifies the birds as Striated Pardalote, which are 'migratory birds who travel south in spring to breed and fly away in winter'. Therefore Lohrey metaphorises Luke and Anna as the Striated Pardalote birds as they have moved away from their city in order to recover from the pain of losing their child so that they can try again, which they eventually resolve to do at the end of the story. The discovery of the birds also symbolises their new beginnings as they become more aware of the natural world and how they are part of it.

The black swans symbolise nature and the impact of human intervention on their survival. From the headland, the Worley's are able to see the colony of black swans on the lagoon in the north west corner. Furthest away from the ocean, the swans are in a part of the lagoon that was 'both deep and still', alluding to their peaceful presence and the depth of their character. On one occasion, when Luke approached one of the swans it 'paddled furiously' across the water away from him, revealing a 'flash of white tail feather'. Its majesty is shown through the simile of it 'soaring into the sky like a phallic arrowhead', suggesting that it is powerful. Later, Gil reveals that he observed the consortium overseers shooting at the swans. When they were confronted by Gil, they dismissed him saying they had a permit because the swans were eating the turnips used for stock feed. Alarmed that someone could be injured, Gil calls the police, who put a stop to it. The imagery of the swans being killed illustrates how the natural world has been disrespected in the past, and still is, by those wishing to use the land for their own benefit. The history of ravaging the land is further illustrated by Gil's anecdote about how his mother used to make swan pie and how they used to collect the eggs for the best scrambled eggs. The destruction of the black swans is a forewarning for the destruction of their habitat if the consortium is allowed to plant the blue-gums and use pesticide, thereby

affecting the water supply in the lagoon. This would eventually turn the lagoon into a 'bloody mudflat', thereby eradicating the swan's habitat.

### Activity

Find other examples of symbolism in the text and explain how they represent human experiences. Try to refer to language forms and features when explaining the effect of symbolism.

### Modelled response

Symbolism: Luke's wool sweater

How it represents human experiences:

Symbolically, Luke's wool sweater saves the house from catching alight, as the wool ensures that the ember that enters the room smoulders, without blazing. Luke had left the jumper on the bed, unable to bear the thought that it might come to harm and because it 'reminded him of too much of other damage'. The jumper was symbolic for him of their baby's death as he wore the jumper on the day that their child passed away. It therefore not only saves the house, but brings Luke and Anna together as their house surviving symbolically allows them to continue on and raise a family in the home they have made for each other. This is portrayed through the imagery of them embracing in the 'doorway of their home'.

Symbolism: black cockatoos

How it relates to human experiences: .....

Symbolism: planting of the she-oaks

How it represents human experiences: .....

### Figurative language

Lohrey masterfully uses figurative language to create images of the various landscapes in the novella and the people that occupy them. For example, through Anna, Lohrey describes the financial burden of living in the city and how the opportunity for home ownership is out of their reach due to rising interest rates. Therefore living in a more affordable location, such as an isolated coastal township, becomes more attractive for the Worley's. Echoing the predicament of many city dwellers, Lohrey illustrates how despite 'so much money around' in the city, Luke and Anna struggled. She illustrates this struggle through the imagery of the apartment they live in with its 'cracked and peeling' paint on the ceiling and the dark rooms created by the 'sombre brown varnish on the woodwork'. Using a metaphor, Lohrey contrasts the situation of Luke and Anna with other urbanites who, at dinner parties, talk about their renovations with the 'air of diplomats renegotiating the Geneva Convention'. Their direct speech and approach to their renovations suggests an air of detachment and a loss of connection with what's important in life. Lohrey contrasts this with a description of Anna, who considered herself a bohemian, a free spirit who was 'serious about the right things and carefree about the rest', suggesting the right things where not the stock market, investments and making more money through renovations on a house. However, Anna becomes 'anxiously acquisitive' about purchasing her own home as she becomes 'secretly ashamed of the shabbiness of her apartment'. Through Anna's 'spiritual impasse' indicated by the realisation of her envy for those who had more than her, Lohrey captures the capitalist impulse of many people in our materialistic society, while offering a way out, which is to resettle in a quieter place, with a slower pace, thereby changing lifestyles, and eventually our way of looking at the world.

Through figurative language Lohrey explores the simplicity of nature. When people come to visit the Worley's they complain that there is nothing there. Using accumulation of the negative through a description of what is not there, such as no shops, hotel, community hall, boat ramp or barbeque area, Lohrey illustrates why the Worley's had chosen the place—it is quiet. Through personifying the landscape as uncultivated and being 'out of time', Lohrey illustrates the opportunity that the landscape provides for all of us, as through the undefined landscape the Worley's are able to 'live, and simply be'. It is in this environment, without the noise and hustle of the city, that they're able to heal and move on from their pain by letting go of the past. On the first night in their new weatherboard homestead, the house is personified as having been 'waiting for them'. The boy happily prowled through the house as they unpacked, suggesting that he is inquisitive. Through sound imagery of the doors squeaking and the floorboards creaking, Lohrey shows how the boy too belongs in the house, with Anna and Luke.

Lohrey also metaphorises the house the Worley's buy in Garra Nulla as their 'kingdom', describing how they reclaimed it after having metaphorically lost it at birth, which suggests the house has always been a part of them. Lohrey juxtaposes how free the Worley's are to 'roam through its many rooms' with the 'boxed-in apartment' they were confined to in the city. Through the juxtaposition, Lohrey explores the longing to occupy a space between two worlds—between a 'cradle of space' and 'firm ground'. She metaphorically describes this 'cradle of space' as a 'dream-like threshold where you are neither in nor out', suggesting the unknown and therefore all the possibilities

that the unknown can open up. However, this can be a scary place, as is indicated by the difficulty that both Luke and Anna experience coming to terms with the loss of their son, and therefore the need to put our feet on solid ground can become very important. Lohrey continues the metaphor through the reference to Anna and Luke being 'earth animals', 'not a bird' as they do not want to 'nest in the sky'. Therefore, they need to let go of the fantasy of the boy, who lives only in their imagination, if they are to metaphorically nest on firm ground and have children together.

Through various images, Lohrey illustrates how Luke and Anna become increasingly grounded. One way they achieve this is through preparing a garden by 'digging into a sandy soil'. What they uncover reveals to them that they're working over a midden, which is a mound of shells and bones indicating human settlement. By physically working with the land, they metaphorically become part of the landscape they occupy, just as every other person who has gone before them has been part of the settlement they now live on. Thereby Lohrey illustrates the flow of life between humans and the landscape. The vegetable garden, with its man-made green shade-cloth and fence palings, shows how man works with the earth using these things to optimise their produce. This can be compared with the developers who seek to exploit the land for financial gain. Despite Anna and Luke recognising the opportunity Garra Nalla has for development, shown by them wondering when they first saw the settlement why it had not already been turned into a resort, they also realise the value in treating the land carefully. They deliberately create a life that is sustainable and gentle on the land. The calluses on their hands provide a contrast to their old life in the city where they had never used a trowel.

Similarly, when Anna buys a weathered yellow canoe as a surprise for Luke, they are symbolically 'gliding across the still black water', like the swans, indicating that they are part of the landscape as they occupy various spaces. Soon after the description of them in the canoe, an image of two black swans is given, juxtaposed with the boy's fright at seeing the swans when he is in the canoe with Anna and Luke. The swans thereby illustrate fear of the unknown, but also the natural environment. In the description of the recurring dream that follows, Luke dreams of a huge tidal wave from the ocean submerging the settlement of Garra Nulla. The water is symbolic of Luke's emotional state as he swims 'beneath the sunlit surface like a water baby' with the boy alongside him. As it is not a nightmare, the sight of the boy is a comfort to Luke as he sees his 'radiant face' with 'small translucent fish darting around his head'. The water is an important insitigator of his process of healing and acceptance for what is, not what was.

### Activity

Find other examples of figurative language in the text and explain how they represent human experiences. Try to refer to language forms and features when explaining the effect of figurative language.

### Modelled response

**Figurative language:** the weather

**How it represents human experiences:** .....

Lohrey metaphorises the weather in order to show the significance it plays in life. She compares the weather in the city, described as a 'painted canvas against which you enact the plot of your life', with the country where the weather becomes the 'plot' of your life. This is shown through their longing for it to rain to release the drought. Through imagery of the 'sound of thunder' there is hope, but this is stifled when the sound fails to deliver on its promise of rain, thereby illustrating how the weather significantly affects their lives. Later when Anna sends an email to her sister in Hong Kong, she expresses the effect the weather has had on her state of mind. She thinks she may not be able to 'stand the drought much longer'. When she expresses her feelings to Luke, he insists on giving it another year, as he understands the weather is part of the life cycle as 'It changes all the time'. But Anna is not coping and she thinks that Luke is choosing to block out reality, with his headphones on listening to music. Through the metaphor of Anna bleeding out into the world, rather than 'drawing the world in around him', as Luke does, Lohrey shows the differing styles of the two characters and their ways of coping with grief. Anna's frustration is further developed through the simile of her feeling like a 'fly caught in an invisible web'.

**Figurative language:** Anna's still birth

**How it represents human experiences:** .....

**Figurative language:** the fire in the house

**How it represents human experiences:** .....

### Extracts from the Vicar's collection

Luke discovers two trunks belonging to A.E. Henley Esq. (Reverend Henley), who returned to Garra Nalla in the late sixties as the Anglican Vicar of Brockwood. Luke dubs the antique hardbacks 'the Dead Sea Scrolls', making a reference to the numerous texts found in caves, which hold significance for the Hebrew bible. Luke notes that it is

interesting that despite Henley's connection to religion, there is little reference to theology in his collection. Instead they deal with travel writing. Through imagery of the books with their 'marbled endpapers and silk ribbon markers' and 'gothic plates in black and white', Lohrey illustrates their importance and thereby their appeal to Luke. Exotic locations are referred to in the titles of the writings, such as 'A Thousand Miles up the Nile' and 'The English in the West Indies'. Lohrey uses extracts from these imaginary books as a way of illustrating the process of transformation that Luke experiences living in the country. For example, 'The Land That Is Desolate' published in 1913 is a travel diary about a tour through Palestine, by surgeon to His Majesty King Edward VII, 'Sir Frederick Treves, Bart, G.C.V.O., C.B.,LL.D.'. The sheer length of the author's title borders on the absurd, echoing the sometime absurd conditions the Worley's experience, in particular with the weather. The title of the book also could be a symbol of the desolate landscape of Garra Nulla. However, the journey that Luke embarks on is similar to a traveller's tale as the landscape teaches him a great deal about himself, which often occurs for travellers who expose themselves to change.

Luke is inspired to read the book due to the current situation in Gaza, where there are numerous missile strikes due to the conflict between Israel and Palestine over the occupation of the Gaza strip. Luke is surprised by the acerbic and disgruntled writings of the surgeon who embarked on a journey to the 'source of all meaning' after the death of his daughter. Lohrey therefore compares the surgeon's journey to that of Luke's journey as he comes to terms with the loss of his son. Through the extracts, the responder is given an insight into the situation in Israel, described as the Promised Land. The landscape has been ravaged by war, in particular Gaza, so much so that its 'inhabitants have been blotted out, its forests have been recklessly cut down and woods rooted up'. The imagery continues with a description of the diminishing rainfall that has 'dried up the land'. The 'people have been harassed and oppressed until there is little joy in them'. Similarly, a comparison is made between Gaza and the landscape in Garra Nulla. Like Gaza, the land is dried up in Garra Nulla, due to drought, brought on by the effects of climate change. The harassed people of Gaza, are similar to the people in the city and the life Luke and Anna have left behind. The imagery of Garra Nalla as Luke's 'Promised Land' is further developed when Gil playfully suggests they may not return from the city, when they go back to give Anna respite from the wind and the harsh conditions. For Luke, Garra Nalla is his Promised Land and he intends to stay. His desire to defend it is later seen when he and Anna work to save the house from the fire.

### Activity

Find other examples of extracts in the text and explain how they represent human experiences. Try to refer to language forms and features when explaining the effect of the extracts.

### Modelled response

**Extracts:** Sir Fredrick Treves' arrival in Jerusalem

**How it represents human experiences:** .....

In the extract from Sir Fredrick Treves' arrival in Jerusalem, Lohrey compares the attitude of the writer with Luke's father's attitude. Luke can see in his father the same 'skepticism of everything'. Sir Frederick Treves is skeptical of Jerusalem because the Via Dolorosa, where Jesus has been famed to have carried his cross is described as a fraud because the city had been destroyed by Titus. The monuments that Treves sees on his journey, such as the tomb of Lazarus, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, have been constructed for the 'coin of the gullible'.

**Extracts:** the gateway to the city of Damascus

**How it represents human experiences:** .....

**Extracts:** Sir Frederick Treves' account of the city of Damascus

**How it relates to human experiences:** .....

### CRAFTING WRITING STRATEGIES

The following activities will assist you in creating a piece of wiring for Module C: Crafting writing. Each chapter on prescribed texts integrates crafting writing and reflecting on writing – your own and other texts. These strategies can be applied to the prescribed text in this module and any other module.

See Chapter 4: Crafting Writing strategies for more information about crafting writing. In this chapter you will find modelled responses for the different types of writing and reflecting strategies.

### Activity

Choose one or more of the following crafting writing strategies. Before you begin writing, consider how the ideas, characters and form of writing *Vertigo* relate to your own human experiences.

You might like to jot down ideas, draw, paint or discuss your ideas before you begin writing.

1. Fictocritical writing: Choose one character or thing from *Vertigo* and explore your understanding of how this character or thing represents human experiences.
2. Memory writing: In what ways do the characters and what happens to them in *Vertigo* remind you of your own experiences, feelings and/or desires? Choose one of these experiences, feelings and/or desires and free write about the memory it inspires. For example, have you ever had an experience with fire or seen the effects of fire depicted in the media. What thoughts/feelings/sounds/visuals come to mind? Explore these in your writing.
3. Reflexive writing: Comment on *Vertigo* by showing an understanding of how Lohrey has positioned the responder to view the text through genre, language forms and features and ideas and concepts.
4. Talk back to the prescribed text by imaginatively writing a response to your understanding of the texts.

## REFLECTING ON WRITING STRATEGIES

Reflecting on your own process of writing and that of others artists and composers is an important part of writing. Composers are consistently influenced by other composers and texts. You may find that reading a novella like *Vertigo* impacts on not only your understanding of human experiences, but also the ways that writers communicate their ideas through various narrative elements like language, characters, key ideas, genre, structure and form. You can learn a great deal about your own process of writing this way.

Below are some strategies for reflecting on your own process of writing as well as other texts.

See Chapter 4: Crafting Writing strategies for more information about reflecting on writing strategies. In this chapter you will find modelled responses for the different types of writing and reflecting strategies.

### Activity

The following reflection strategies will assist you in gaining a deeper understanding of your own process of writing, but also Lohrey's process of creating *Vertigo*.

1. Brainstorm ways *Vertigo* has inspired your own creative writing in the following ways:
  - the type of language you used:
  - your understanding of the types of human experiences explored:
  - the significance of the types of human experiences explored for yourself as a person and humanity in general:
 Include examples of your own writing to explain your ideas.
2. Using your notes from above, write a short 300-word reflection about how *Vertigo* has inspired your own writing and deepened your understanding of human experiences.
3. What other text/s does *Vertigo* remind you of? Record the title and author and text type. In what ways have these texts reminded you of *Vertigo*?
4. What ideas and concepts explored in *Vertigo* are socially and culturally valuable to you? Are they challenging social and cultural norms or are they re-enforcing them? In what ways?
5. How has your writing challenged or re-enforced social and cultural norms? In what ways is your writing important for you personally and for others?
6. Consider your process of writing. In what ways would you change this for the better? What would you keep the same? What makes you say this?