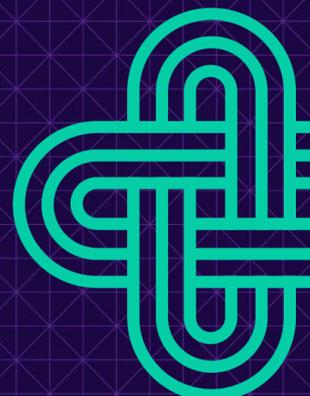


tūturu.



English 90852

1.8 Connections
across texts



Choices and Consequences

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Introduction

For teachers

This is a unit of work which supports internal assessment for English Achievement Standard 90852: Explain significant connection(s) across texts, using supporting evidence. After introducing the key concepts, Kendrick Lamar's song 'Swimming Pool' is used as a starting point for discussion and as a model for gathering opinions and evidence. This approach could be used on the other texts included with the unit, and on the student-selected text which is required for this standard. Taught this way, the unit is self-contained or stand-alone.

However, while the unit can be offered independent of other teaching and learning, it also demonstrates how work towards this standard can be integrated into a year-long programme with the theme 'Choices'. Within this theme, students develop an understanding of 'how to discern truthful information from deceptive or unhealthy alcohol messages'.

To that end, each of the texts is approached in different contexts: the film Perks of Being a Wallflower as part of a film study (working towards AS 90850: Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s), using supporting evidence), the poem 'The Deer' as practice for AS 90851: Show understanding of significant aspects of unfamiliar written text(s) through close reading, using supporting evidence, and the 'Ghost Chips' ad as a model for AS 90854: Form personal responses to independently read texts, supported by evidence. The unit also contains ideas or starters for formal and creative writing opportunities.

Learning how to critically analyse messages from media enables young people to better discern truthful information from unhealthy or deceptive messages. Becoming proficient in this skill can disrupt the flow of idealized messages about alcohol. It has been shown to increase their ability to identify correct information to make decisions, reduce their interest in alcohol-branded merchandise, and is associated with reduced substance use.

Ensure that discussions about alcohol drinking behaviours are not sensationalised or normalised. Wherever possible, the message that not drinking alcohol is the safest option for children and young people under 18 years should be reinforced. Be aware of your school's policy or procedures around disclosure, intervention, and where to go for support.

Tūturu has training on how to facilitate safe classroom discussions that use alcohol or other drugs as a learning context.

Curriculum values that underpin this task

Key competencies that are foregrounded

Key English understanding

Excellence
Community & participation
Respect

Thinking – using creative, critical, metacognitive and reflective processes, drawing on personal knowledge and intuitions, challenging assumptions and perceptions

Using language, symbols, and texts – interpreting language and symbols, using ICT, recognising

Relating to others – listen actively, recognise different points of view, negotiate, share ideas, being able to take different roles in different situations. how choices of language and symbol affect people's understanding and responses.

Participating and contributing – being actively involved in communities - balancing rights, roles and responsibilities, and having a sense of belonging and the confidence to participate within new contexts.

That the creators of different texts can use language techniques to share similar messages which have an impact on an audience: in this case, messages about the choices and consequences of using and abusing alcohol.

Through this understanding, the unit aims to have an impact on how young people discern truthful information from deceptive or unhealthy alcohol messages.

Achievement objectives

Listening, Reading and Viewing Processes and Strategies

Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies purposefully and confidently to identify, form, and express increasingly sophisticated ideas to:

- ▶ Show a developed understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.
- ▶ Show a developed understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.
- ▶ Show a developed understanding of a range of structures.

Speaking, writing, and presenting Processes and Strategies

Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies purposefully and confidently to identify, form, and express increasingly sophisticated ideas to:

- ▶ Select, develop, and communicate connected ideas on the topic of choices.
- ▶ Select and use a range of language features appropriately to share thinking about connections between texts.
- ▶ Organise response to connections, using a range of appropriate, effective structures.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- ▶ recognises, understands, and considers the connections between oral, written, and visual language on the theme of 'Choices'
 - ▶ thinks critically about texts and how the makers portray teenagers' choices about alcohol with understanding and confidence
 - ▶ identifies particular points of view within texts and recognises that texts can position a reader
 - ▶ makes connections by interpreting ideas within and between texts from a range of contexts
 - ▶ creates a text presenting their thinking which integrates sources of information and uses processing strategies
 - ▶ develops and communicates comprehensive ideas, information, and understandings
-

Thinking about the topic

Choices

Teacher Notes

A productive approach would be for students to form opinions and make notes/diagrams/brainstorms on their own first. These notes could form the basis for small group and then class discussion.)

Task: Consider the following questions

- ▶ What are some of the choices teenagers have to make?
- ▶ Discuss a choice you've made, and what happened as a consequence.
- ▶ Discuss a choice someone else has made that affected you. How did it affect you? How did you respond?
- ▶ How do our feelings, beliefs or emotions influence our choices?
- ▶ How do people around us influence our choices?
- ▶ What makes a choice good? What happens when we make a good choice?
- ▶ What makes a choice bad? What happens when we make a bad choice?
- ▶ How can other people's choices affect us positively or negatively?

Teenagers and Alcohol

Task: Reflect, Discuss and Report

In groups, discuss and reflect on one of the following articles. Report back to the class.

Think about the following questions:

- ▶ Briefly summarise the content of the article. What was the key message?
- ▶ Did the article interest you? Why/why not?
- ▶ How does the article reflect/relate to your own experience as a teenager? Is it accurate? How does your experience differ?

Texts

The Truth about Alcohol (Foundation for a Drug Free World)

Teens drinking to get smashed (Pearson, 2014)

NZ's binge drinking culture 'hurts teens' (Redmond, 2015)

New study confirms New Zealand's 'ladette' problem drinkers (Maude, 2017)

Andy Towers: New Zealand doesn't have a culture of youth drinking (Towers, 2017)

AS 90852:

Explain significant connection(s) across texts, using supporting evidence.

Teaching Notes

- ▶ The achievement standard requires the student to make connections between texts and: their own views, experience and understanding and/or other texts.
- ▶ Hand out task, go through and discuss
- ▶ Set up milestones and deadlines

Text One

Swimming Pool

Song, 2012. Singer: Kendrick Lamar
Lens: Connections

Teacher Notes

For this initial text, a discussion based approach, similar to the 'Choices' discussions in the Introduction, will encourage students to think broadly, deeply and critically.

From this discussion, students should choose their own questions for the connections study. It is perfectly appropriate if they use the discussion questions below, as long as they individually apply them to further texts. Students may choose to make notes in a table, as shown.

There are some useful analyses of the song available on-line:

What "Swimming Pools (Drank)" Was Trying To Say (Ortega, 2015)

Swimming Pools Drank Lyrics: Meaning Behind The Kendrick Lamar Classic (Leung, 2016)

Note: The original has some swearing. However, there are no-swearing versions (search for Swimming Pools (Clean)' available.

Task: Questions for discussion

- ▶ Who drinks alcohol in this text?
- ▶ When and how do they drink?
- ▶ Why do they drink?
- ▶ What are the consequences of drinking alcohol?
- ▶ What viewpoint does the maker of the text have about alcohol?
- ▶ What do I learn about drinking alcohol from this text?

| Question | My thoughts | Evidence from text (how do I know?) |
|---|-------------|--|
| Who drinks alcohol in this text? | | |
| When and how do they drink? | | |
| Why do they drink? | | |
| What are the consequences of drinking alcohol? | | |
| What viewpoint does the maker of the text have about alcohol? | | |
| What do I learn about drinking alcohol from this text? | | |

Task: Note taking: TableWriting Opportunities

1. Write a reflection on the song: does it reflect what you've seen in your community? Is it similar or different to your experience? Explain.
2. Do you think where you've grown up in has influenced the person you are? How/why?
3. Write about a time, event or experience that you think sums up (is typical of) young people in your community.
4. Write about a decision that has been influenced by others. (This could be real or made up.)

The Perks of Being a Wallflower

Film, 2012. Director: Stephen Chbosky
Lens: Film Study

Teacher Notes: Synopsis

Fifteen year old Charlie (Logan Lerman) is a withdrawn and shy, but also very observant and a deep thinker. He has begun high school and is having problems connecting with people until he is befriended by two seniors. With the help of Sam (Emma Watson) and her stepbrother Patrick (Ezra Miller), Charlie begins to come out of his shell, but still has difficulty dealing with traumatic events in his past.

The film, based on the book of the same name by Stephen Chbosky, is essentially a coming of age story, following Charlie's growth in maturity and understanding of his own circumstances and those of his friends and family. An important idea in the film is that of choices and their consequences.

Coming of Age

Pre-viewing Task:

Consider the following questions

(Note for teachers: approach could be as above.)

- ▶ What should the role of parents and family be, in helping teenagers become adults?
- ▶ What should the role of friends be, as teenagers become adults?
- ▶ Should there be rules for teenagers? Who should set the rules? Who should enforce them? How?

After watching

Coming of Age task:

Consider the following definitions of coming of age texts. Which apply to the film? How?

- ▶ A text that “typically features a young protagonist—either male or female—who undergoes a troubled search for an adult identity by process of trials, experiences, and revelations.”
<https://literacle.com/literary-themes-coming-of-age/>
- ▶ a coming-of-age novel may be devoted entirely to the crises of late adolescence involving courtship, sexual initiation, separation from parents, and choice of vocation or spouse.
<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095626688>
- ▶ coming-of-age stories typically trace the protagonist's growth from a self-absorbed, immature individual into an expansive, mature human being concerned with the welfare of others, and his/her place in the world scheme.
http://www2.nkfust.edu.tw/~emchen/CLit/Realistic_fiction_characteristics.htm
- ▶ These [texts] typically deal with the formative years of a character or their spiritual growth and education. <http://www.storyboardthat.com/articles/e/bildungsroman-novels>
- ▶ Experiencing a moment of epiphany in which childhood is set aside; Taking responsibility for oneself and one's personal choices. <https://www.verywell.com/what-does-coming-of-age-mean-3288528>

Choices Task:

Close reading of key scenes

Note to teacher: One way choice is explored in the film is through the portrayal of drugs and alcohol use and abuse. Teaching of the skills required for close reading should be scaffolded: Key terms should be introduced and their use modelled.

There is a thorough and useful guide by Helaina Coote, 'Through the Lens,' on English Online (<http://englishonline.tki.org.nz/English-Online/Planning-for-my-students-needs/Teacher-Resource-Exchange/Level-3>) There are also many guides on youtube (for example here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFUKRTFhoiA>) One approach might be to model the first minute or two of the first scene, and then allocate aspects of the scene to groups (mise-en-scene, cinematography and post-production, for example).

Each group is responsible for collecting and analysing evidence, and then sharing it in a teacher-led class discussion.

Teaching points

Scene 1

- ▶ 'Snapshots' of party show alcohol, drugs – Charlie is out of place.
- ▶ Charlie is awkward and tactless 'But he's a popular kid.'
- ▶ Signifiers of other teenagers indicate they're 'outsider' cool – earrings, haircuts of girls
- ▶ He's not aware that the brownies contain marijuana, but those around him are. (Question: did they 'look after him' as they were instructed to do by Patrick?)
- ▶ Tilt up then down, and blurring of focus, to indicate passage of time and altered mental state.
- ▶ Other teenagers are amused by his comments but also like his wit – he feels like he belongs
- ▶ Sam looks after him. Her annoyance with her friends indicates she's a positive character.
- ▶ Drugs make him open up with secrets he's kept – his friend killing himself. This makes Sam and Patrick feel sympathetic and want to look after him.
- ▶ After revealing his loneliness, he's 'officially' included in the group: "We didn't think there was anyone cool left to meet," "Welcome to the island of misfit toys."

Task: Critical thinking/discussion

How is the marijuana presented in this scene?

What are the positive outcomes of eating the brownies? The negative?

Scene 2

- ▶ Transition from last scene – receives the wafer at Catholic mass- through similar framing and composition (not quite matched cuts). Suggestion by director that religion is like drugs? (Karl Marx's "opium for the people")
- ▶ Sam looks after him again. Again, he opens up with Sam. Sees the night sky.
- ▶ However, when he returns to the party he's separate from the others, distanced.
- ▶ At the moment of the new year, he's on his own as others celebrate, and has flashbacks to his aunt, wanders outside and is found lying in the snow.
- ▶ At first, it seems that the drugs have had a positive effect and that, like in the first scene, are linked to the idea of being true about yourself and open with others.
- ▶ However, this time they also lead to the uncontrolled accessing of previous pain, and a lack of self-awareness and self-help which leads to endangering yourself.

Task: Consensus Discussion

Evaluate and rank the following statements

Statements

1. The film maker glamorises drug use.
2. The film maker makes it clear that drug use is not a good idea.
3. The film maker suggests it is good to escape your problems by using drugs.
4. The film makers suggest that using drugs will help people to lower their inhibitions.
5. The film makers suggest that drugs make you less able to take care of yourself.
6. The film makers show us that drugs mask problems, not help them.

Teaching Notes

The statements are provided as a focus and starting point for a consensus discussion. Essentially, this means that students, through discussion, arrive at a shared understanding and opinion. Students should:

- ▶ On their own, rank the statements from least to most true (it is important that there is no discussion at this stage)
- ▶ In groups (ideally groups across friend groups and social barriers - perhaps predetermined by the teacher), compare rankings and arrive at a common ranking for the group. Rules: no voting, no leader. Only persuasion and discussion can be used. The film should be used by students to provide evidence for their views. The teacher should intervene to re-direct if a group needs help.
- ▶ If it seems profitable, the groups can be re-formed and a new set of discussions take place.
- ▶ After group discussions have run their course, a class discussion could take place, with spokespeople for each group presenting their rankings, with reasons.

Writing Opportunities

Teaching Notes

Any of the following pieces could be submitted as work for AS 90053: Produce formal writing. The speeches could also be used as the basis for assessing AS 90857: Construct and deliver an oral text.

Opinion Writing

Using material, thinking and ideas generated by the consensus discussion, students write a formal response. This could be:

- An opinion piece written in the form of an editorial
- A persuasive speech
- One speaker's debate speech
- An essay

Practice essay

Note: This is practice for the external examination for AS 90850: Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s), using supporting evidence. Students should learn and practice how to adapt class material for a variety of questions, so that they are responsive to the questions in the exam, rather than using pre-learnt material. This is in accordance with the comments from examiners' Assessment Reports. For example, these comments from the 2015 report:

“Some candidates are still relying on regurgitating previously written and rote-learned essays. Although it is good practice to use previous examination questions to prepare for the examination, candidates must be aware that the questions change every year. In 2015, the omission of a straight ‘theme’ question highlighted that many students were ill-prepared for this possibility, and they tended to write their pre-learned theme question as is, without adapting it in any way, which meant that they did not achieve. It is therefore essential that students are able to answer the question as it is asked in the examination, which often requires them to adapt to small changes in styles of questioning across all three papers. Effective answers saw candidates shape studied material into responses tailored directly to the questions. This explicit linking often saw candidates move to the higher grades. Rote learned essays that make no attempt to answer the question do not meet the standard required to achieve.”

The approach might be to work on planning first, by modelling a plan for one essay, then planning in groups for another, then individually for a third.

Suitable questions from past papers include:

-
- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 2016 | Describe one important moment in the text. Explain how that moment changed at least one important relationship or character, supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features. Describe one key moment that helped to prepare you for another moment in the text. Explain how the first moment prepared you for the second, supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features. |
| 2015 | Describe at least one important character in the text(s). Explain how the character changes throughout the text(s), supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features. Describe at least one important setting in the text(s). Explain how the setting helped you to understand at least one idea, supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features. Note: “Setting” may refer to physical places as well as social and historical contexts |
| 2014 | Describe at least ONE important idea the director / creator developed throughout the text(s). Explain how this idea helped you to understand an important message for teenagers, supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features. Describe at least ONE character or individual in the text(s) that helped you to understand an important message. Explain how the character or individual helped you to understand the message, supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features |
| 2013 | Describe at least ONE event that was a turning point in the text(s). Explain why the turning point was important in the text(s), supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features. Describe at least ONE change that happened in the text(s). Explain how the change helped you understand one or more key ideas in the text(s), supporting your points with visual and / or oral language features. |

Deer Hit

Poem, 2001. Poet: John Loomis (Loomis)

Lens: Unfamiliar Text

Teaching Notes

This poem concerns a young man (17 years old) who, while driving drunk, hits a deer. In his dazed and drunk state, he picks up the badly injured deer and puts it on a back seat before driving home. The father acts humanely and kills the deer when he sees the extent of its injuries. The last stanza suggests that the series of bad decisions that led to the deer's death at his father's hand will be typical of how the son operates: that this is partly, but not wholly, explained by his youth and drunkenness.

Key ideas:

Bad decisions/choices: what leads to them (alcohol, inexperience, and the two combined) and what the consequences are.

The question of whether the teenager does actually accept responsibility for his actions

Task 1: Understanding the poem

- ▶ Where has the teenager in the poem been? Why is he out late?
- ▶ What is wrong with the teenager at the start of the poem?
- ▶ What happens when he sees the herd of deer?
- ▶ How do you think he feels when the deer bites him?
- ▶ What is the father's reaction when the son gets home? (Is he angry? Worried? Some other emotion?) Why?
- ▶ What does the father do with the concrete block? Why do you think the poet doesn't tell us?
- ▶ What do you think the last two lines of the poem mean? Why?

Task 2: Language Features

For each language feature, find at least two examples. There are blank rows for you to add other language techniques that you find.

| Language Technique | Example One | Example Two |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sense detail | | |
| Point of view | | |
| Simile and/or metaphor | | |
| Vivid verbs | | |
| Line breaks | | |
| Syntax | | |

Using your examples from above, explain how Jon Loomis uses these and other language features to help you understand:

- ▶ The teenager's feelings and responses and how they change during the poem
- ▶ The father's reaction to what his son has done
- ▶ The writer's attitude to the events of the poem

Writing opportunities

1. Use the structure of the first two lines of the poem to begin a poem, which could mimic the syntax and/or aim for vivid place and detail:
 You're thirteen and op-shopped clothed
 Wearing your brother's shoes to school
 OR
 You're ten and crouched at the kitchen door
 Your baby brother a limp doll, Dad breathing for him,
 Mum's knuckles white on the phone.
2. Write about a teenager who has made a bad decision (this might be real or imagined)
3. Use any line from the poem as a starter/heading for your own writing

'Ghost Chips' advertisement

Lens: Personal Reading

Teaching notes

A good way to introduce students to the requirements of AS 90854: Form personal responses to independently read texts, supported by evidence is for the teacher to model a response to a text. That is, the teacher creates their own response, which becomes an exemplar for students to follow. The teacher should model 'voice' as well – that is, the response should be genuine, reflecting actual opinions and thinking. It can be a good idea to create this response in front of the students, so they can see the process of developing the ideas and checking against the task to see if the response meets the requirements. It's also possible to model responses other than written ones – for example, the teacher could record a spoken response on a phone and then upload it into the class's shared digital space.

Songs or moving images work well for this process, since they're easy to access and engage the class. Students' first personal response can be for the same text type (e.g. here, they could find and respond to another anti-drink-driving ad).

Task: Personal Response

Select from the following questions as a starting point for your personal response to a text you have chosen.

1. Choose at least one of the following words, or use another that describes your reaction to the text.

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Happy | shocked | disgusted | optimistic | grateful |
| annoyed | impressed | frustrated | sad | satisfied |
| delighted | amused | irritated | worried | relieved |
| dismayed | angry | hopeful | excited | |

2. Explain why you felt this way. Remember to include evidence/examples from the text to support your explanation, and to explain how/why this evidence is relevant.
3. What does this text make you think about, or remind you of? (A personal experience or memory? Something you've read or heard? An local, national or global event?) Why and how?

Teacher response example

I was very impressed when I first saw the ‘ghost chips’ ad, because it seems to capture the feeling of being at a party and being a bit drunk, when you’re a teenager. I can’t really tell, because I’m too old, whether it is truly realistic and represents some teenagers, but it certainly feels like it does. The costumes (like beanies and casual checked shirts) convinced me, and the atmosphere, created by the music’s beat and the close ups of dazed faces and laughter, made the feeling of drunkenness real.

I like the way the main character thinks the problem through and weighs up whether he should say something: “I should say something, but I’m afraid I’ll look dumb in front of Monique”. Again, this impressed me because it showed a knowledge of the audience - I think teenagers could relate to this– in fact, I can relate to it too – how what we feel like we ought to do is often in conflict with what we want others to think about us

I was particularly impressed by how the ad’s makers used humour to get their message across. For example, the lines “you know I can’t grab your ghost chips”, which is funny because he’s arguing with a ghost, and “ I’ve been internalising a really complicated situation in my head”, which sounds like the over-complicated way someone who’d been drinking would think. It ‘sold’ the message lightly, rather than hammering it home. I think this is more likely to appeal to teenagers.

The ad appealed to me as an adult even though it’s aimed at teenagers. I think that the response to the ad shows me that it works for teenager as well: as NZ On Screen says, “This 2011 anti-drink driving ad campaign became a Kiwi pop cultural phenomenon, spawning countless parodies, memes, t-shirts and over a million YouTube views; phrases from the ad entered the vernacular (“you know I can’t grab your ghost chips”) (NZ on Screen). Even in my age group, people are using those sayings. I hope this means that the message is getting across as well. It does seem to me that teenagers are far more aware about the risks of alcohol and driving drunk, and far more careful of their friends, than when I was a teenager. If I’m right, that’s great. I do like how these ads are aimed at all kinds of people – each one has a different target audience, which is good. However, as I’ve said, the best ones (like this ad) appeal to everyone.

Writing opportunities

1. Write the script for a ‘responsible drinking’ ad that would appeal to your friends, class or community.
2. Write a review of this ad: rate it and explain the rating. Be sure to include your opinion of whether it’s effective and why
3. Prepare a debating speech affirming or negating the moot: This House would ban all forms of alcohol advertising.

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Deer Hit

Jon Loomis

You're seventeen and tunnel-vision drunk,
swerving your father's Fairlane wagon home

at 3:00 a.m. Two-lane road, all curves
and dips—dark woods, a stream, a patchy acre

of teazle and grass. You don't see the deer
till they turn their heads—road full of eyeballs,

small moons glowing. You crank the wheel,
stamp both feet on the brake, skid and jolt

into the ditch. Glitter and crunch of broken glass
in your lap, deer hair drifting like dust. Your chin

and shirt are soaked—one eye half-observed
by the cocked bridge of your nose. The car

still running, its lights angled up at the trees.
You get out. The deer lies on its side.

A doe, spinning itself around
in a frantic circle, front legs scrambling,

back legs paralyzed, dead. Making a sound—
again and again this terrible bleat.

You watch for a while. It tires, lies still.
And here's what you do: pick the deer up

like a bride. Wrestle it into the back of the car—
the seat folded down. Somehow, you steer

the wagon out of the ditch and head home,
night rushing in through the broken window,

headlight dangling, side-mirror gone.
Your nose throbs, something stabs

in your side. The deer breathing behind you,
shallow and fast. A stoplight, you're almost home

and the deer scrambles to life, its long head
appears like a ghost in the rearview mirror

and bites you, its teeth clamp down on your shoulder
and maybe you scream, you struggle and flail

till the deer, exhausted, lets go and lies down.

Your father's waiting up, watching tv.
He's had a few drinks and he's angry.

Christ, he says, when you let yourself in.
It's Night of the Living Dead. You tell him

some of what happened: the dark road,
the deer you couldn't avoid. Outside, he circles

the car. Jesus, he says. A long silence.
Son of a bitch, looking in. He opens the tailgate,

drags the quivering deer out by a leg.
What can you tell him—you weren't thinking,

you'd injured your head? You wanted to fix
what you'd broken—restore the beautiful body,

color of wet straw, color of oak leaves in winter?
The deer shudders and bleats in the driveway.

Your father walks to the toolshed,
comes back lugging a concrete block.

Some things stay with you. Dumping the body
deep in the woods, like a gangster. The dent

in your nose. All your life, the trail of ruin you leave.