

***Power and Chaos***  
by Paula Boock  
and  
***Mall Rats***  
by Ken Catran

A teacher's resource  
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This resource is designed to be used with Year 9-11 English classes. It links with the following English Curriculum Strands and Achievement Objectives at levels five and six:

- **Written Language: Reading:**
  - Personal Reading
  - Close Reading
- **Written Language: Writing:**
  - Creative Writing
  - Expressive/Personal Writing
  - Formal Writing
- **Oral Language: speaking and listening**
  - Interpersonal speaking
  - Interpersonal listening
- **Visual Language: presenting and viewing**
- **Language Process:**
  - exploring language
  - thinking critically
  - processing information

There are three sections to this resource: Sections One and Two focus on the individual novel; Section Three focuses on the ideas presented in both novels.

## Part One: Power and Chaos

by Paula Boock

### Reading Comprehension:

After you have read the novel, work through these questions which will check that you have understood the key events and ideas of the story. The questions are organised chronologically.

1. Why weren't Martin and his family worried about the virus at start of the novel?
2. What reasons does Martin give for not wanting to go with Bray to school?
3. List the reasons why the day described in Chapter Two was a strange one for Martin.
4. Explain why Leila (Martin's mother) told him to turn off the news (pg 20).
5. What happens to Troy's father?
6. What is Clancy's view of the virus and why does this enrage Leila?
7. What warning does Clancy give Mack (Martin's father)?
8. Briefly describe what happens to Martin and his family in Chapter Five.
9. Why don't Mack and Bray want Leila at the basketball game?
10. Why was the motorway so busy?
11. What animals do Martin and Trudi say they want to come back as? Why?
12. What happens to Leila at the basketball game?
13. What important message does Leila tell Martin?
14. Why was the dance with Trudi "one of the last happy moments" for Martin?
15. What spoils it? How does Martin 'deal with it'?
16. Why doesn't Martin like Callum?
17. What happens between Trudi and Martin?
18. Why is Bray angry with Martin?
19. What do the tribe of 'Brotherhood' take and how does it make Martin feel?
20. What does Martin discover?
21. In what ways has the hospital changed?
22. What does Leila tell Martin to do?
23. What happens to Mack?
24. Who is the 'woman' that comes to Martin's house in Chapter Eleven?
25. What is happening to Martin's eyes and what is his explanation for it?
26. How does Martin escape the police pursuit?
27. What does he say to the man in the apartment building and why?
28. Describe Martin's last conversation with his teacher.

### Characterisation

1. Describe the character of **Martin** at:
  - the start of the story
  - the end of the story
2. Describe the changes which have occurred and list the things which caused these changes?
3. Describe the relationship between **Martin and Bray** at:
  - the start of the story
  - the end of the story
4. What changes have occurred and what has caused these changes?
5. For each of the following:

Leila            Mack            Troy            Trudi            Ebony            Clancy

- Write a short description of the person.
- Explain what is the significance of the person to the development of the story.
- Describe the relationship between the character and Martin. Include whether there are changes in the relationship and/or whether Martin learns important information from his relationship with the character.
- Either draw or cut out a picture from a magazine which you believe best represents the character.

## Style

*Power and Chaos* is written in an interesting way because:

- the first person narration is limited to Martin's point of view;
- it makes us think;
- it has some very descriptive passages;
- it is set in the near future
- each chapter ends at an exciting moment;
- the narrator (Martin) warns us at the very beginning that the story does not have a happy ending.
- Paula Boock makes the story personal by getting the narrator to speak directly to the reader.

Choose **three** of the above and in about one paragraph for each statement, explain, giving details and examples from the story, how it is true for the novel.

### Extension activities:

1. Decipher Jarvell's coded message from pg 21.
2. Find three examples of foreshadowing in the story and explain the importance/significance of this foreshadowing. (Hint: you will have to read the novel again.)
3. Look closely at pg 116 and answer the following:
  - a) Explain the effect of the use of repetition in this passage.
  - b) Why does Martin believe he had been living a pitiful life?
  - c) Explain the effect of the questioning.
  - d) In your own words, explain the meaning of the sentence "*The government, the state, the trappings of order, it was like a house of cards; one flick and it had toppled and collapsed into itself.*"

### 4. Word Bank:

Find the word listed below and use a dictionary to find the definitions:

- |                      |                          |                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| a) rapport pg 14     | b) annihilated pg 16     | c) evade pg 35       |
| d) obnoxious pg 37   | e) anarchists pg 41      | f) grotesque pg 64   |
| g) profound pg 64    | h) surreptitiously pg 65 | i) sycophantic pg 72 |
| k) immune pg 75      | l) susceptible pg 75     | m) optimist pg 76    |
| n) surreal pg 77     | o) incredulous pg 77     | p) vehement pg 82    |
| q) cliched pg 85     | r) martyr pg 88          | s) emblazoned pg 97  |
| t) concoctions pg 97 | u) vacillations pg 102   | v) decimated pg 124  |

5. For ten of the above, write a sentence of your own using the new word.

## Themes

1. Write your own definition for the following words:

**Power**

**Chaos**

**Tribe**

2. Then, write down the dictionary definition for each word.
3. Either on your own, in pairs or in a small group, display your definitions. You can use magazine pictures, words, symbols, illustrations, collage.
4. Below are a list of quotations from the novel. For each of the following quotations explain:
  - who is speaking and what the character(s) means;
  - what is happening for the character(s) at that moment;
  - the importance/significance of the statement;
  - your personal response to the statement.

*"Imagine that. Halfway across the world as a small child, no parents, or anything from your past life that makes sense, to start a new life in a country where people can't even speak your language." pg 11*

*"The thing you have to realise about society at that time is that sport was everything. Because there wasn't any real danger, weren't any real enemies or wars going on, people vented all those basic instincts on sport" pg 13*

*"It's just a virus, that's all. Nature's way of getting rid of the old and weak." pg 40*

*"God. Religion. Death. What was there, after you died? .... We were all healthy and strong, and with Mum being a doctor and Dad an engineer, we had a fairly practical approach to things. Pull 'em apart, fix 'em, put 'em back together. If it isn't fixable, chuck it out, and move on. Not a philosophy that helps much when you're facing a plague." pg 52*

*"One is a pest; a million is a plague." pg 71*

*"The future is yours. There will be no adults. You have to prepare yourself for that." pg 76*

*"Nature had turned against us." pg 91*

*"Do not be afraid of the new!...There is no reason to fear. All will happen as it is meant to happen...This is our destiny. We are the Chosen. And the Chosen will inherit the earth!" pg 99*

*"...I was going to learn from her. To be smart, to get hard. Not to trust anyone." pg 113*

*"The anger inside me was terrible, but wonderful." pg 115*

*"School. A fascinating place when you look at it - really look. An attempt to create order out of disorder, to control those who don't wish to be controlled." pg 121*

*"I stood. It was easy, so easy suddenly, to do what the Dions and the Troys and the Brotherhood and the school principal and the President had been doing all along - scaring people." pg 123*

*"Power. It has come to me out of the chaos like a gift." pg 124*

## **Part Two: Mall Rats**

by Ken Catran

### Reading Comprehension:

After you have read the novel, work through these questions which will check that you have understood the key events and ideas of the story. The questions are organised chronologically.

1. Who is Henry?
2. What is a hoppie?
3. What does Tai-San mean when she says "yesterday and tomorrow"?
4. Briefly describe Mr Boyd as Bray remembers him.
5. Why does Bray think about him?
6. How does Bray outsmart the Hornet?
7. What is the 'rule' about the motorway?
8. What does Bray see that makes him stop? What does he think it means?
9. Why doesn't Bray go into his house?
10. Describe what Bray finds in Mr Boyd's house.
11. How does Bray get caught by Red Leader's tribe?
12. Who rescues Bray? Why?
13. Why did Amber burn the building?
14. Who helps her? Why is this significant?
15. How do they escape from the dogs?
16. Amber says Locos are like dogs. From reading this chapter, write down the ways they are similar.
17. On pg 52 Jack says you couldn't "always go into a house" Why is this?
18. What happens to Jack when he is caught?
19. What does he discover?
20. Why was the name Sir Bob Brown significant to Jack?
21. Briefly describe how Jack escapes.
22. Describe Angela and the relationship Ryan has with her.
23. How does Paul end up on his own?
24. Why were things disappearing from Paul's pack?
25. How does Paul meet up with Salene?
26. What happened to Lex's parents?
27. Why doesn't Lex like seagulls?
28. Explain why Lex is so impressed with Laurence.
29. How does Candice save Lex's life?
30. What happens to those at Base Camp?
31. Explain the importance of tartare sauce and tinned salmon to Dal.
32. Describe the relationship between Dal and Amber.
33. What happens to Tai-San's family?
34. Briefly describe the three visions Tai-San has and what each means?
35. Describe Prism.

## Characterisation

For each of the following:

Tai-San, Bray, Amber, Jack, Ryan, Paul, Dal, Lex

- Write a short description of the person.
- Write a short account of how they came to be a Mall Rat.
- What important information does Tai-San (and the reader) learn from the stories.
- Either draw or cut out a picture from a magazine which you believe best represents the character.

## Style

*Mall Rats* is written in an interesting way because:

- a number of characters tell the story;
- it makes us think;
- it is set in the near future;
- the stories are linked by the point of view of one character;
- there are many cross-overs of events and people within the stories

Choose **three** of the above and in about one paragraph for each statement, explain, giving details and examples from the story, how it is true for the novel.

## Themes

1. Write your own definition for the following words:

**Survival**

**Chronicles**

**Choice**

2. Then, write down the dictionary definition for each word.

3. Either on your own, in pairs or in a small group, display your definitions. You can use magazine pictures, words, symbols, illustrations, collage.

4. Below are a list of quotations from the novel. For each of the following quotations explain:

- who is speaking and what the character(s) means;
- what is happening for the character(s) at that moment;
- the importance/significance of the statement;
- your personal response to the statement.

*"We are at the beginning of a new world. A people without a history are a people forgotten."*  
pg 8

*That was something to hold onto while we learned about the new world. Where the dogs became smarter and we learned different rules. Where tomorrow is still dark."* pg 45

*"We have to know how we all changed. And what made us change."* pg 47

*"Like some people anticipated the virus. Like they knew where it came from. Or where it was made. And even in a very short time, prepared for it because they considered themselves too important to die."* pg 56

*"We had worked hard because working hard got you places, except if someone else was there first. If that someone had more power and bucks."* pg 57

*"You have to be different, and maybe we can be different and live together. But only if we forget about the old world that Christopher wanted to hang on to. And Jocinda, wanting revenge."* pg 61

*"Hey Ryan, memories just slow you down,"* pg 68

*"But (he explained) the virus had thrown up new groups. Leaders, like him. Warriors, like me."* pg 88

*"...that was nature, culling out the weak. the strong must survive without dependants."* pg 92

"He is troubled and dark, she thought. Nothing has gone right for him and he needs to find a place. He needs to know that sometimes giving way show strength. And it takes courage." pg 101

"When people get tired of violence and war, then they will need something. We are just a tiny seed in a great wilderness but we can grow to great size and power." pg 125

## Part Three: Dual Study

### Written Language: Writing

#### 1. Creative Writing:

- a) Re-write the fight on page 86 *Power and Chaos* from Bray's point of view. How does this change your perception of Martin?
- b) Write a different ending to *Power and Chaos*.
- c) Write an epilogue for *Mall Rats*.
- d) Write a short story about a character who must survive something dangerous.

#### 2. Expressive/Personal Writing:

- a) Imagine you are Martin. Write a letter to Leila explain how you felt about what happened to the family.
- b) Write a letter to the author Paula Boock and/or Ken Catran saying what you think of the novels. They can be contacted at c/- Random House, 18 Poland Road, Glenfield, Auckland, New Zealand

#### 3. Formal Writing:

- a) Write a formal book review for one or both novels. Include comments on the language used, the treatment of the topics and the appropriateness of the novel for teenagers.
- b) Write an article, for a school newspaper, on the virus.
- c) Write a formal essay on one of the ideas presented in the statements in the theme sections.

### Visual Language:

#### Static Images

A static image is an image that does not move. When you create a static image you need to consider these questions:

- why do you want to make this static image? (the purpose);
- what do you want to say? (the message);
- who do you want to say it to? (the audience);
- and, how will you get it across? (techniques).

The last question is divided into two sections:

**The visual techniques**, for example:

colour      dominant image      layout      symbol  
 contrast      lettering

**And language techniques**, for example:

alliteration    rhyme      pun      cliché      hyperbole    simile  
 listing      imperatives    jargon      rhetorical question    metaphor

A static image is successful if it achieves its purpose.

### TASK ONE:

Look at the front cover of *Power and Chaos* or *Mall Rats*.

- 1) What is its **purpose**?
- 2) What is the **message**?
- 3) Who is the image aimed at? (the **audience**)
- 4) What visual techniques are used to get the reader's attention?
- 5) How effective is the cover? Give reasons for your answer.

### TASK TWO:

Design your own front cover for one or both of the books.

### TASK THREE

For each of the tribes listed below, create a poster which clearly shows their particular 'uniform' and briefly describe their belief system.

Locos, Nomads, Mall Rats, Demon Dogs, Hornets, Hellcats

or

Create a new tribe. Design the 'look' it will have, its belief system and its code. Describe the types of people who would fit into this tribe.

## Drama

Drama and role-play can be a useful way of looking at some of the ideas and characters in a story, helping us to better understand some of the issues.

**In a small group:** Stage one of the following and perform to the rest of the class:

- When Martin passes the note to Trudi pg 70 *Power and Chaos*
- Martin's confrontation with Bray at the dance pg 86 - 89 *Power and Chaos*
- Jack's confrontation with Christopher pg 53 - 57 *Mall Rats*
- The card game pg 93 - 97 *Mall Rats*
- Or, select your own.

**In pairs:** Re-work one of the following and perform to the rest of the class:

- Martin and Bray's conversation pg 94 - 96 *Power and Chaos*
- Martin's final argument with 'Peanut' pg 123 - 124 *Power and Chaos*
- Amber and Ebony's escape from the dogs pg 34 - 45 *Mall Rats*
- Or, select your own.
- Write your own short play dealing with some of the issues presented in the novels.

Remember to keep the staging simple and the performances real.

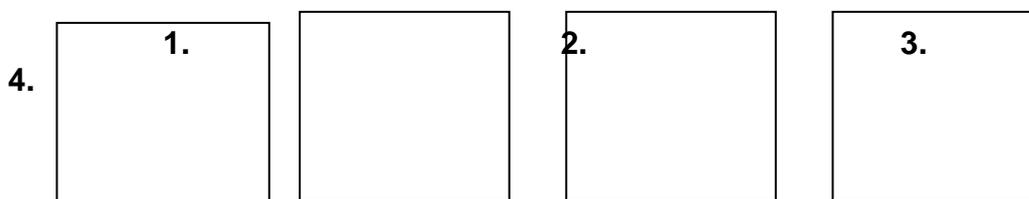
## Film/Video

Making a video or film of your own scripted version of a scene from the novel also enables you to understand the characters in a deeper way and search for techniques and special effects to enhance the message of the story.

Ensure you are familiar with the following terms:

- shot
- jump cut
- extreme close-up
- long (wide) shot
- high-angle shot
- tilt
- point of view shot
- voice-over
- cut
- close-up
- medium shot
- low-angle shot
- pan
- zoom
- FX (special effects)
- frame

- Prepare a story-board from a scene in one of the novels



shot \_\_\_\_\_

dialogue \_\_\_\_\_

FX \_\_\_\_\_

music/sound \_\_\_\_\_

- Filming

When you have finalised your story-board with the list of shots, dialogue, any special effects and music, you are ready to film it.

- Rehearse the whole thing two or three times until your group is satisfied with the piece.
- Set up the first shot; practise again.
- Shoot your first shot.
- Continue this way until you have completed the whole sequence.

- Editing

If you don't have a editing suite at your school, you can still easily do the same thing by using two video recorders. Transfer the shots you like from the tape you filmed with, to another tape. Using the audio dub control you can add sound effects, music or voice over.

### Extension:

Watch an episode of **The Tribe**. Look carefully how setting, costume, lighting and sound are used to convey the idea of a new society. Listen carefully to the dialogue and think about how what each character says either strengthens characterisation,

moves the story along and/or emphasises the theme or the main idea of the programme.

Look at the website for The Tribe [www.tribeworld.com](http://www.tribeworld.com) and consider how a whole new world and new systems have been created in this story. Read more about the characters from these novels and what has happened to them.

## Extra Activities

### Research:

The following ideas are mentioned in the novels:

- The Black Plague
- Armageddon
- An Epidemic
- Police State
- A Vaccine
- Genesis
- Code of Honour
- Cryogenics
- Chronicles
- Cannibalism
- Slavery

Using an encyclopaedia, find out what each of these mean and, in a 250 word essay, explain why they are a good choice of words for the ideas presented in *Power and Chaos* and *Mall Rats*.

### Essay Topics

1. Describe the setting of one of the novels and explain, using detailed examples and explanations, why this setting is important to the story.
2. Describe an important moment in one of the novels and explain the significance of that moment to those characters involved and to the rest of the story.
3. Explain how and why the beginning or end of the novel is effective.
4. Describe a problem a character has and how he or she tried to overcome the problem.
5. Explain, giving detailed reasons and explanations, why the title of the novel is appropriate for the story.
6. Describe a relationship one important character has with another. Why is this relationship important?
7. Explain, using detailed examples and explanations why other teenagers should read this novel.