

ENGLISH STAGE 6

Changing

Stimulus Booklet for Areas of Study
HSC 2001 and 2002



Benjamin Duterrau, *The Conciliation*, 1840



Geoff Parr, *The National Picture*, 1985

Sky-high

It's the washing line I remember first, silver skeletal arms throwing long, summer afternoon shadows on the lawn. Other details come back, piece by piece, slowly filling in the gaps. There was an almond tree in the corner, and a small nectarine tree, hung with hard, bird-bitten fruit. Other foliage; a bush with little red berries, a struggling sapling, surround the patchy lawn like spectators. But the best climbing tree in the backyard stood proud on a small mound of concrete, a basket of faded clothes pegs adorning its trunk and generally festooned with socks and knickers and shirts like coloured flags in a secret code.

Today, however, it is bare. Smooth, sweat-damp hands fiercely grip the sun warmed metal and I get a foot up on the handle, grubby toes curling tenaciously. From there it's only a deft swing of the leg and I can pull myself up to my perch above the yard.

I bask in the sun in my exalted position, almost sky-high, feeling as frilly and nearly as pink as the bathers I am wearing. I can see the almond tree in its shady corner next to the incinerator and our attempted vegie patch; its boughs stretch out to me beseechingly. Beyond that, there is the splintery wooden fence and a triangle of the garden next-door, dry and dusty. Three little boys live there; I have stood on the fence and talked to them, even been in their house once. It was full of Mary and Jesus miniatures and they had flat, coloured-glass animal shapes made from kits hanging in their windows.

Their garden doesn't have any lawn or flowers, only vegetables. That's all they eat, I think. Next to the house, Dad is building a bungalow. It is for my Opa who has come to live with us. He showed me once the huge, blue, metal trunk where he keeps leather and tools for making belts, talking quietly with his soft, Dutch voice.

My thoughts return to my original plan, the ultimate conquest of the washing line. I edge out along one skeletal arm, then, from a sitting position I swing upside-down. The washing line creaks into movement, slowly turning and I feel the air flow around my outstretched arms and playfully tousle my hair. The earth spins below me. I am flying.

It's an older, more age-warped washing line I reach up to now. My hands, beginning to accumulate the line-etched story of life in scars and wrinkles, easily touch the sagging wires. Where I was once the curious onlooker, I now write my own semaphore secrets in colourful t-shirts and mismatched socks. Impulsively, I close my hand around one of the spotted metallic arms. The inclination is still there, a small pilot light burning somewhere inside, but it is unlikely the washing line could support me this time. There are too many things tying me to the ground.

By Hannah Robert
(Aged 18)

Sturt's Dreaming

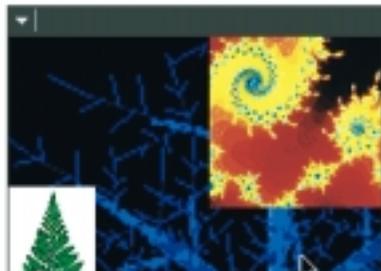
Captain Charles Sturt (Charlotte called him ...
"Charlie dear")
efficient explorer –
projecting a topographical dream
on this mysterious and unknown land;
marshalling his officers and steadfast men,
sheep on the hoof, provisions piled on drays
and, drawn by patient pairs
of plodding bullocks,
a splendid wooden painted boat
all set to launch
on an inland sea, already coolly lapping
in Sturt's mind.

Iron-shod wheels plough deep in hot red sand,
rattle and jar over wicked gibber plains.
Aborigines, immersed in their own dreaming,
watch this ancestral canoe
toil up the sliding sides of dunes
bobble, insect-like, through spinifex,
on its way to a legendary ocean
charted only
by the false trigonometry of birds.

Bruce Lundgren

Fractal

Views



InterActivity

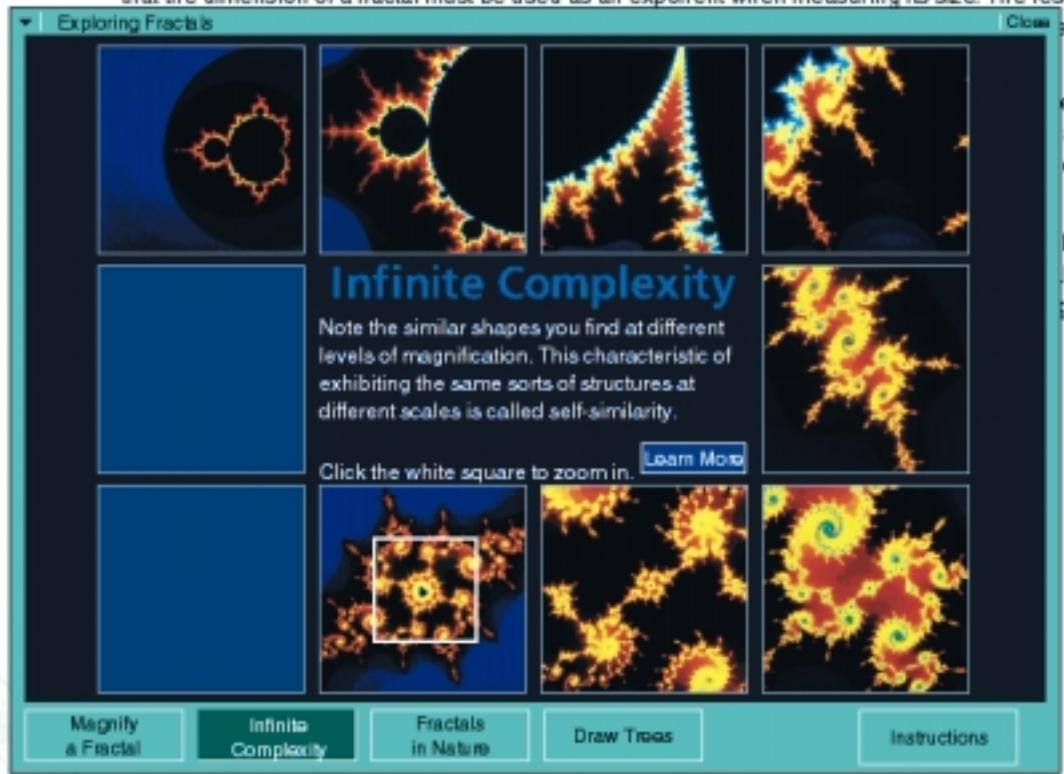
Open

- Exploring Fractals InterActivity
- Construction of a Fractal Snowflake

Fractal, in mathematics, a geometric shape that is complex and detailed in structure at any level of magnification. Often fractals are *self-similar*—that is, they have the property that each small portion of the fractal can be viewed as a reduced-scale replica of the whole. One example of a fractal is the “snowflake” curve constructed by taking an equilateral triangle and repeatedly erecting smaller equilateral triangles on the middle third of the progressively smaller sides. Theoretically, the result would be a figure of finite area but with a perimeter of infinite length, consisting of an infinite number of vertices. In mathematical terms, such a curve cannot be differentiated (see **Calculus**). Many such self-repeating figures can be constructed, and since they first appeared in the 19th century they have been considered as merely bizarre.

A turning point in the study of fractals came with the discovery of fractal geometry by the Polish-born French mathematician **Benoit B. Mandelbrot** in the 1970s. Mandelbrot adopted a much more abstract definition of dimension than that used in Euclidean geometry, stating that the dimension of a fractal must be used as an exponent when measuring its size. The result is that a fractal cannot be treated as

Exploring Fractals



Infinite Complexity

Note the similar shapes you find at different levels of magnification. This characteristic of exhibiting the same sorts of structures at different scales is called self-similarity.

Click the white square to zoom in. [Learn More](#)

Magnify a Fractal Infinite Complexity Fractals in Nature Draw Trees Instructions

at least irregularity, would tend toward infinite aggregates, galaxy clusters, and other phenomena has become a rapidly expanding

Polish-born mathematician Dr. Michael F. ... world images (digitized photographs). The ... ge-based computer applications.

Humans in Their Environment

It is my belief that you can take environment consciousness just a little too far. For example, in the face of the continuing destruction of our rainforest, one activist recently chained himself to a Tasmanian oak. Unfortunately he was felled with the great tree when his protest went unnoticed as his regulation jungle-green overalls successfully camouflaged him against the sub-tropical landscape, his screams unheard above the chainsaws.

To add insult to injury, he was turned into paper pulp and ended up as a minor article on speculative market capitalization on the Dow Jones Slump.

Flacco, *Burnt Offerings*

Acknowledgements

Text 1

Miroslav Holub, 'The Door', *Selected Poems*, trans Ian Milner & George Theiner, Penguin Books, London 1967. © Miroslav Holub 1967. Translation © Penguin Books 1967.

Text 2a

Benjamin Duterrau, *The Conciliation*, 1840, oil on canvas, 121.0 x 170.5 cm, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, purchased 1945.

Text 2b

Geoff Parr, *The National Picture*, 1985, nekk print on canvas, 267.5 x 450.0 cm, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, J W Power bequest, purchased 1985.

Text 3

© Hannah Robert, *Sky-high*, 1994.

Text 4

Bruce Lundgren, 'Sturt's Dreaming', *Journey: A Collection of Poems*, L Wilson (ed), Monash University Press, Melbourne, 1990.

Text 5

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Text 6

Paul Livingston, from *Flacco's Burnt Offerings*, Penguin Books Australia, Ringwood Vic, 1995. Reprinted courtesy of Penguin Books Australia.