

Coming-of-Age Literature Research Proposal

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The aim of this project is to design a BA module with a primary focus on coming-of-age themes. I will prepare set resources for lecturers, creating a case for the importance of this literary area. Utilising a global perspective, I will run a sample seminar for the English Department at the University of York to demonstrate my design as both academic and practical. Ultimately, I will evaluate my findings, pitching an article on the need for more university courses on coming-of-age literature to an outlet such as *The Times Higher Education*.

The primary research will consist of two main parts. Firstly, I will observe the teaching of literature in schools, reflecting on how youth receive and converse with authors of this genre. This will ensure that I acquire an adequate understanding of the readers and the muses of the genre, adapting an educational lens to my research. I will then present my findings at a conference relating to the teaching sector, like *Shard Futures*. Secondly, I will use these findings to select literary works that would be suitable for a university module focusing on this genre, contacting faculty members for guidance on module design. These steps will ensure the creation of a well-informed module which engages with all forms of literature whilst focusing on the coming-of-age themes, improving the quality of its studies. Consequently, my module will engage with established key concepts, fitting swiftly with pre-existing literary teachings.

The chosen texts will cover a large scope of literature as well as media. I will include films and music as supporting material to the primary texts. Due to a focus on accessibility, with an aim to engage with a wide range of people in my workshops. For the literary texts studied, I will include authors from many diverse backgrounds. This will consist of texts written by female writers, engaging with feminist theories, LGBTQ+ writings as well as texts by ethnic minorities. I will cover text by minorities which are often overlooked, such as transgender women of colour, indigenous writers, and non-Eurocentric perceptions of people of colour.

In my research, I have found young adult literature classes in some US colleges and similar programmes in European universities, showing that coming-of-age themes are being considered within academic circles in some areas. Having the opportunity to take part in a leadership expedition overseas will widen my research into understanding why this level of teaching is accepted in some areas, yet is consistently overlooked in the UK. This will enable the module to efficiently participate in the Culture and Communication research theme of the University.

This project will yield a well-developed and researched step in closing the gap between what is widely considered to be academic literature and coming-of-age literature, to the point where they will be finally considered one and the same. Not only is this crucial for the development of literary studies, expanding their circles, but it will also help young people feel respected, which is a crucial step in their prosperity and success.