



Exploring Senior Cycle Texts

Mustang directed by Deniz Gamze Ergüven

Mustang directed by Deniz Gamze Ergüven is a drama included as part of the Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2025, 2026 & 2027. It may be used as part of the Comparative.



Image courtesy of
IMDB



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Getting Started with
Guide for this Text](#)

Please note:

- The following tasks might be completed over a series of lessons.
- You may like to adapt and adjust the tasks to suit your context.
- *Mustang* covers themes which could be considered sensitive or controversial. You may wish to consult with our READY Framework to support you in your study.

Before you read... (Teacher Guidance)

1. Anticipation Statements

Give students the following statements. They must mark each one as Agree / Disagree / Not sure, and be ready to explain their reasoning. After watching the clip, they'll revisit their answers.

- A wedding is always a cause for celebration.
- It's normal for people to hide how they really feel at a big event.
- Alcohol is sometimes used to cope with feelings people can't express openly.
- You can tell what someone is feeling just by observing their body language.

2. Vocabulary Builder

Introduce key words or phrases students might encounter or find useful when discussing the clip. Have students match each word to its definition and/or use it in a sentence.

Oppression, autonomy, conformity, patriarchy, subtext, symbolism

3. Still Image Prediction

Show students a still image from the wedding scene (or any scene). Ask students to discuss what they can infer from the image and what it might suggest about the film. Ask how they might connect the vocabulary from the previous activity.



Image courtesy of *Rotten Tomatoes*



Reflect and Respond (Teacher Guidance)

The following question may be based on the extract included or form part of your extended study of the novel.

1. Short Story

Instruct pupils to write a short story about a character watching someone they love go through something they can't talk about.

Encourage them to explore the silent tension, confusion, or helplessness of the observer. Their story may be set during a celebration, a family event, or an ordinary day, but something unspoken should lie beneath the surface.

2. Discursive Essay

Give pupils the prompt: *Young people should have the right to choose their own path, no matter what tradition expects.*

Have them write a discursive essay in which they explore arguments for and against this statement. They should consider issues like cultural expectation, family values, personal freedom, and identity.

3. Speech

Give pupils the prompt: *Let's stop pretending everything is fine just because it looks fine.*

Have them write the text of a speech for a youth event or school assembly about emotional honesty, mental health, and how we often hide real struggles behind smiles.

4. Article

Have pupils write an article for a teen magazine or blog exploring why difficult topics, like unhappiness, pressure, or family conflict often go unspoken. They should begin with the headline: *We never talked about it.*

5. Film Review

If students have watched the entire film, they should write a film review of *Mustang* aimed at a teenage audience, focusing on:

- What the film is about (without full spoilers)
- Its emotional impact
- Visual and cinematic techniques
- Key themes and performances
- Why it's worth watching / what it teaches us

6. Comparative Connections

If students are studying a comparative text, they can begin making text-to-text connections based on:

- Theme of control/freedom
- Relationships within families
- Role of women / coming of age
- Rebellion or escape

Direct pupils to create a comparison chart or Venn diagram linking *Mustang* to another text.