

English

Queensland Comparable Assessment Tasks (QCATs) 2012

The Wahs of Wonder

Student booklet

9



Given name:

Family name:

School:

Setting the scene

Australia is a country of migrants. Approximately 44 per cent of Australians are either born overseas or have at least one foreign-born parent.

The migrant experience has been explored in Australian literature in a variety of ways through a range of texts including prose, images, novels and media. Australians can connect with the universal themes of the migrant experience explored in these texts, such as belonging, isolation, hope and change.

Shaun Tan is an Australian writer whose graphic novel *The Arrival* tells the migrant story through a series of wordless images. It is a story about somebody leaving their home to find a new life in an unseen country.

The image opposite is called “The Suitcase” and is taken from *The Arrival*.

Your teacher will lead a discussion about this image. Examine the image and consider these questions:

- What story is being told in this image?
- What human emotions are conveyed in this image?
- How are these emotions conveyed in this image?
- How does this image convey the migrant experience?

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Texts p. 8 Extract, Pung, Alice, 2007, "A sacrifice shouldered, a loyalty pledged beyond words", *The Age*.

Images p. 3 Illustration, Tan, Shaun, 2006, "The Suitcase", *The Arrival*, Hachette, Sydney; p. 4 Webpage, Pung, Alice, 2012, <<http://alicepung.com/blog>>.

All other images © QSA.

“The Suitcase” from *The Arrival*



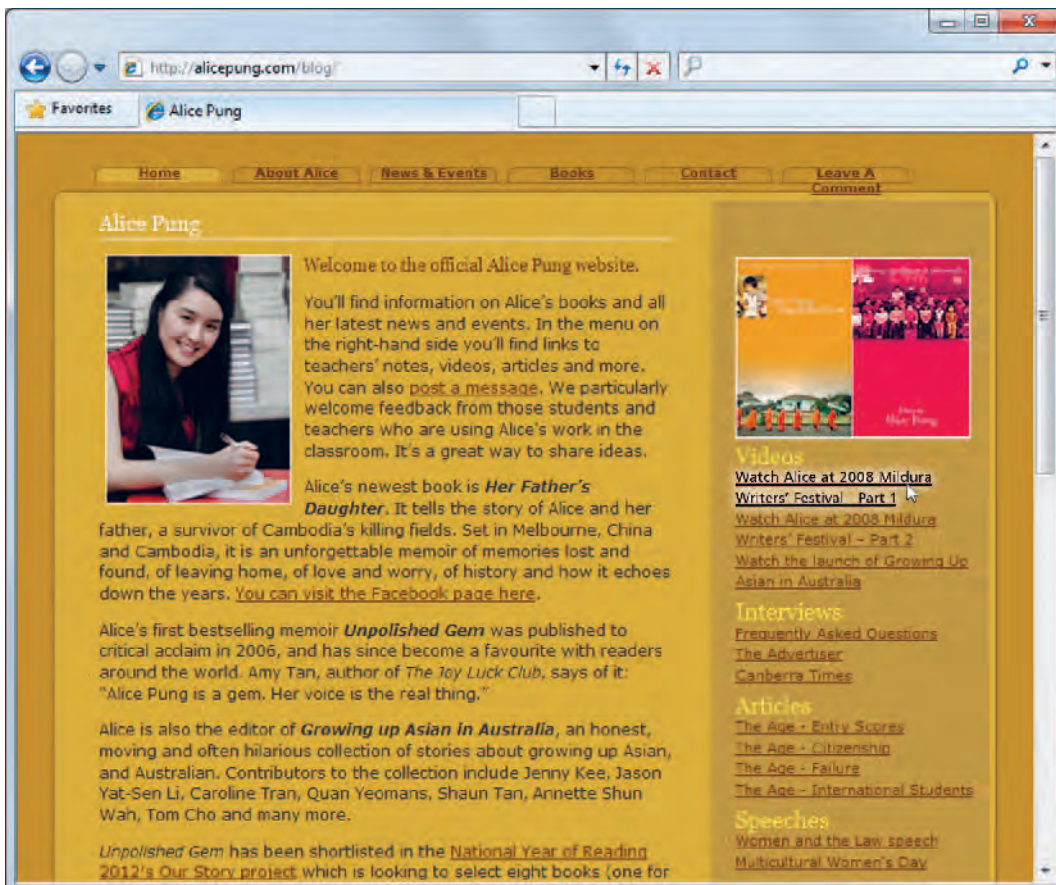
Writers use a range of language features to create their own literary style and to appeal to the reader, such as:

- humour (e.g. parody, irony, exaggeration)
- similes
- metaphors
- allusion
- wordplay
- juxtaposition (contrast).

Alice Pung is an Australian writer who conveys the emotion of the migrant experience in her work in an entertaining way. She was born and grew up in Melbourne. She writes about her family's integration into Australian society and her personal journey between cultures.

Watch Alice's speech from the 2008 Mildura Writers' Festival Part 1 at <http://alicepung.com/blog> and consider these questions:

- What is revealed in this speech about Alice?
- How does Alice engage with her audience?
- What is the effect of Alice's literary style?



In this assessment, you will:

- read a passage from a memoir that explores the migrant experience
- identify and evaluate the use of language features to create particular effects
- evaluate different representations of the migrant experience and make comparisons with different texts by the same writer
- create a memoir to explore a new experience in your life.

Listening

Listen while your teacher reads a passage from Alice's memoir, *Unpolished Gem*.

In this passage Alice gives an account of her family's arrival in Melbourne, when they were in awe of everything. This extract is taken from the beginning of the memoir, when Alice's mother, father, grandmother and aunty explore their new home of Melbourne. In this passage Alice's mother is eight months pregnant with Alice.

As you listen:

- **visualise** what is happening in the text
- **consider** the feelings of the characters
- **listen** for the language features used by the writer
- **consider** the literary style of the writer
- **think** about your emotional response to the passage.

Interpreting texts

Read the stimulus text and answer the questions.

1. Identify two of the “wahs” that Alice’s family encounter.

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2. List two examples from the text that show life was difficult for Alice’s family before arriving in Australia.

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3. Why has the writer deliberately misspelt the word **scared** in the last paragraph?

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4. (a) Identify a simile used in the third paragraph of the text.

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(b) What is the effect of using this simile?

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5. (a) The word **sweetness** is a play on words. What is the effect of using the word **sweetness** in the second paragraph?

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(b) Explain why every journey is described in the last sentence as “one small step for Australians, but one giant leap for the Wah-sers.”

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6. Explain the **difference** between how Alice’s father and Alice’s mother feel about their new life in Australia.

Support your explanation with evidence from the text.

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7. Explain how the writer uses **humour** to describe her family’s experience.

Use one example from the text to support your explanation.

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Comparing texts

Read the following extract from a newspaper commentary written by Alice in 2007.

A sacrifice shouldered, a loyalty pledged beyond words

September 30, 2007

Alice Pung believes her mother to be more than worthy of Australian citizenship, although she would not be able to pass tomorrow's test.

MY MOTHER comes from Cambodia. The Cambodian government closed down all the Chinese schools when Mum was in grade 2. So my mother has difficulty even reading and writing in her first language.

There is no doubt that my mother would like to become a citizen if, according to the *Becoming an Australian Citizen* book, "it is the final and most important step in the migration journey". This book, which contains all the answers to pass the test, declares that citizenship "gives you the opportunity to call yourself an Australian", and asserts that a true Australian undertakes a "shared sacrifice for the common good".

I think my parents have a fair idea of what a shared sacrifice for the common good means. They worked all the time when I was growing up. My father started a small watch shop and, as his business grew, he was able to give more jobs to more people. My mother worked from home, Aussie-battler-style, in the back shed.

It was always lonely for my mother. When she was 40, she took up English classes. But having only a primary education in Cambodia, and being isolated in the shed all those years, she was too shy to speak to anyone. She felt alienated from us because we could read *The Age* but she couldn't even read street signs or have a conversation in English.

Yet to pass the written citizenship test, my mother would be expected to read a 46-page book. A government officer at the test centre might be able to provide assistance by reading out the questions and possible answers. But this assistance is available to my mother only if she has completed at least 400 hours of tuition under the Adult Migrant English Program. Outworkers don't have 400 hours to spare.

I was lucky enough to be born here. I would be accepted as one of the educated, professional migrant Australians of which the country can be proud, while my mother would be regarded as a foreign outcast. As an Australian, I am not sure I could ever be proud of citizenship on such terms.

(*The Age*, 2007)

8. What is the **tone** of this newspaper commentary written by Alice Pung?

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9. **Compare** how migrant experiences are conveyed in both texts by answering the following question.

How does the writer create **different** representations of the migrant experience? Use examples from both texts to support your answer.



Consider subject matter and language features.

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Creating a text

In *Unpolished Gem*, Alice uses humour to convey her family's experiences of being in a new country.

Create a memoir that explores a new experience to appeal to an audience. It could be the experience of a new school, moving to a new location or joining a new team.

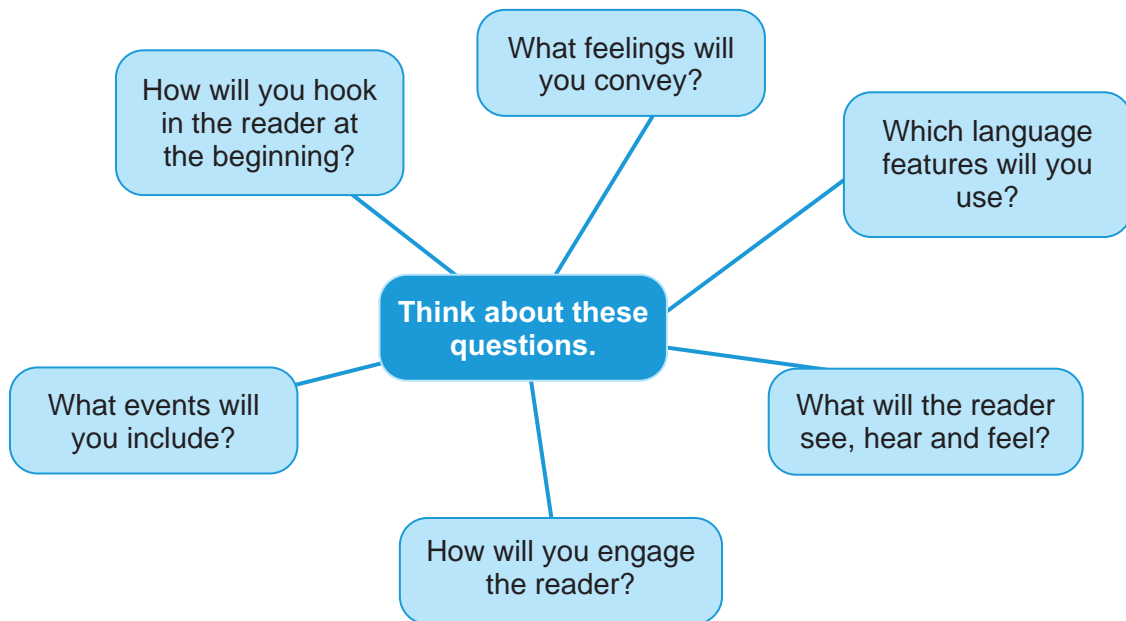
You need to:

- convey your feelings about the experience of being new
- use vocabulary choices for effect
- create your own literary style.

Use one or more of the following language features:

- humour (e.g. parody, irony, exaggeration)
- similes
- metaphors
- allusion
- wordplay
- juxtaposition (contrast).

Planning



Use this space to plan your ideas. (There is extra working space on page 15 if needed.)

A Memoir



Write about 300 to 350 words.

10. Use your planning to create a memoir that explores a new experience to appeal to an audience. It could be the experience of a new school, moving to a new location or joining a new team.

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Extra working space

Guide to making judgments — Year 9 English

Student name

Focus: To evaluate the effects of language features in texts and create a memoir that explores a new experience.

Receptive modes (Reading and viewing)	Productive modes (Writing and creating)
Uses comprehension strategies to interpret representations of the migrant experience in different texts and evaluate how language features are used to create particular effects. Questions 1–9	Manipulates ideas and language features (humorous devices, similes, metaphors, juxtaposition, allusion) to create a memoir that explores a new experience to appeal to an audience. Question 10
Justifies explanations; compares how different representations are created using language features; explains the effects of language features including humour.	A Creates own literary style through the deliberate sequencing of ideas and uses language features for effect.
Connects examples from the texts to support explanations; compares representations in texts using examples.	B Selects and sequences ideas; uses language features to explore a new experience and appeal to an audience.
Uses relevant examples from the text to respond to questions; identifies language features used and some of their effects; identifies different representations in the texts.	C Organises ideas; makes vocabulary choices and/or uses a selection of language features to describe a new experience; conveys feelings and/or actions; considers audience.
Lists examples from the text to respond to questions; describes an effect of language features used; interprets literal meanings of ideas.	D Uses ideas and makes vocabulary choices to recount a new experience; lapses in punctuation, grammar and spelling detract but do not intrude on meaning.
Restates ideas from the text.	E

Feedback: