



Analysing characters

Sample responses



9

English

Queensland Comparable
Assessment Tasks
(QCATs) 2010

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C Sample: Response 1

Guide to making judgments — Year 9 English

Name

Focus: Interpret how language elements and textual features can position an audience to view characters and ideas in a particular way.

Knowledge and understanding	Interpreting texts	Knowledge and understanding Constructing texts
Uses comprehension strategies to identify evidence in the text and to make inferences about the characters and setting. Uses passive voice to change the subject and focus in a sentence. Questions 1–6	Interprets and analyses how language elements and textual features position an audience to view characters and ideas in a particular way. Questions 7–9	Manipulates language elements (figurative language, adjectives, adverbs, punctuation, spelling) and textual features (active voice, third-person narrative) to construct a text that develops a character's point of view. Question 10
◀ Draws insightful conclusions about the characters using valid examples and clear explanations. Rewrites a sentence using passive voice to change subject and focus.	◀ Justifies how the writer's choice of subject matter and either vocabulary or clause construction position an audience to view characters in a particular way. Well-justified explanation of how a theme or message is developed through the characters. ◀ Identifies how a theme or message is explored through the characters.	◀ Uses evocative language to develop Dale's character through the deliberate sequencing of images and ideas that are cohesive in structure.
◀ Selects valid examples from the text including figurative language, and supports explanations about characters.	◀ Identifies how language choices and/or subject matter position an audience to view characters in a particular way. Identifies how an idea is explored through the characters.	◀ Develops characters through speech, and descriptions of actions, thoughts or feelings. Maintains active voice and third-person narrative. Well-controlled use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
◀ Chooses some relevant examples from the text including a simile and/or metaphor. Makes generalisations about characters.	◀ Makes generalisations about the language choices or subject matter in the text. Describes an idea explored through the characters.	◀ Uses descriptive language to explore Dale's point of view. Maintains active voice, and controls grammar, punctuation and spelling. Structure is evident.
◀ Lists examples from the text.	◀ Restates messages from the text.	◀ Develops characters using descriptive language, actions, speech or thoughts and feelings. Lapses in structure, grammar, punctuation or spelling intrude but do not detract from meaning. ◀ Recounts events.

Selects mostly relevant examples except "black, brown and white faces". Selects valid examples of a metaphor but not a simile. Supports explanations about characters. Rewrites a sentence using passive voice.

Identifies how subject matter and some language choices can position an audience to view characters in a particular way, but doesn't commit to one character in their responses as required. Identifies how ideas are explored through the character of Miss Wilson.

Explores Dale's character using thoughts and feelings. Structure and control of language is evident.

Overall grade

This response demonstrates a high level of achievement in Knowledge and understanding and a sound level of achievement in Interpreting texts and Constructing texts. The focus of this QCAT is on Interpreting texts and Constructing texts. On balance, it is judged to be a C.

Reading for meaning

1. List evidence from the text that shows this story is set in the Australian bush.

- 'Black, brown and white faces' - multiculturalism
- 'listening to the bush'
- "tank stand"
- "Smoko"

2. Identify a metaphor and a simile from the text that help to create tone, mood or atmosphere.

Simile: 'Her eyes are really blue, like see-through blue'

Metaphor: 'some dropping to the floor in a tiny rain-shower'

3. Describe Miss Wilson, using evidence from the text.

"Hair is neat and brown" - she is prim and proper

"loves sound of chalk on the board" - is an old-fashioned teacher

"believes what she does is good" - is confident and believes she is the best teacher.

4. Paragraph 2 states that Miss Wilson "believes what she does is good". Give two other examples from the text that explain why she believes she is a good teacher.

"Miss Wilson loves to teach" - you usually like things you are good at

"We'll make a scholar out of you yet, Dale Murphy"

"In her mind, children are clean blackboards and she is the white chalk filling the empty space with knowledge"

5. How do Miss Wilson and Dale view each other? Explain your answer.

Dale views Miss Wilson as a confident, old teacher who tries hard to make sure the students do well. Miss Wilson views Dale as a mischievous boy who gets into trouble, but believes he is a smart boy who doesn't apply himself well.

6. This sentence from the text uses active voice. Rewrite the sentence using passive voice to change the subject and focus of the sentence.

Miss Wilson guards the playground during smoko and lunchtime, watching to make sure no one escapes.

The playground is guarded by Miss Wilson during smoko and lunchtime, watched to make sure no one escapes

Interpreting texts

7. Who does the text favour: Dale or Miss Wilson? Dale

Justify your answer using evidence from the text.

The text favours Dale as it portrays Miss Wilson as a strict teacher who saw and heard everything Dale did, "I have eyes in the back of my head" (Miss Wilson). It also favours Dale as it does not describe how Miss Wilson is feeling, whereas the second last paragraph describes Dale's urgency to leave the classroom which gives the feeling that he does not enjoy school.

8. Identify a theme or message explored in the text. Explain how this theme is explored through the characters.

Theme/message: Dictatorship/leadership and confidence.

Explanation: Throughout this story, Miss Wilson is portrayed as a strong, powerful and confident teacher. She is also rather strict as she claims she has "eyes on the back of her head". In order for Dale to escape the classroom, he must outsmart the teacher, outsmart the leader of the classroom.

9. Explain how the writer makes deliberate language choices to develop the relationship between the reader and Dale. Consider subject matter, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. Use examples from the text to support your explanation.

Most students like Dale, that is, they would rather be out enjoying themselves in the playground or outside than being stuck in a classroom. The use of vocabulary and descriptions gives us a picture of the personalities of both Dale and Miss Wilson. The picture we get of Miss Wilson is a strong and confident teacher so she is easily relatable to the teachers that the audience may encounter. The use of simile, such as "blue like see-through blue" enhances the description of the characters and furthers our perception of the characters.

C Sample: Response 1

This passage from the text may help get you started:

Dale's head is aching with frustration ... He just wants to get out of the classroom. He lifts his face and the smell of the Dry season is very clear in his nostrils. *Gotta go, but how?* He pretends to listen and take notes about the discussion while he thinks about how to get out of the school yard without being seen. What excuse can he make for being gone for the rest of the day? He'll have to get Lizzie's help with that! His eyes are slitted and his forehead wrinkles with concentration. He watches everyone as they talk and pretends to write down their ideas.

He looks down at the blank piece of paper next to his work, and starts to list the pros and cons of writing a note to Lizzie about getting help to leave. The cons overtook the list, mainly because of Miss Wilson. He can just tell that she will find out somehow, and Dale was really not in the mood for listening to Miss Wilson rant on.

Dale was a smart boy. He got good grades, played in top sporting teams, but just didn't seem to make many friends. School for him was the same routine every day; go, work, go home. But Dale was over that, he just wanted to go home.

While Dale kept pretending to do his work, he looked up at Miss Wilson. The way she sat so straight in her chair, and looked so naturally interested in being here made Dale even more annoyed about being here. He couldn't understand how anyone would want to be here. The bell went, and with that Dale stood and walked out, willing

to be free.

Even at lunch Dale couldn't seem to get away. Everywhere he looked, Miss Wilson was there. She seemed to follow him, but maybe this was because she was worried about him. He seemed to be alone, and he was.

C Sample: Response 2

Guide to making judgments — Year 9 English

Name

Focus: Interpret how language elements and textual features can position an audience to view characters and ideas in a particular way.

Knowledge and understanding	Interpreting texts	Knowledge and understanding Constructing texts	
<p>Uses comprehension strategies to identify evidence in the text and to make inferences about the characters and setting.</p> <p>Uses passive voice to change the subject and focus in a sentence.</p> <p>Questions 1–6</p>	<p>Interprets and analyses how language elements and textual features position an audience to view characters and ideas in a particular way.</p> <p>Questions 7–9</p>	<p>Manipulates language elements (figurative language, adjectives, adverbs, punctuation, spelling) and textual features (active voice, third-person narrative) to construct a text that develops a character's point of view.</p> <p>Question 10</p>	
<p>◀ Draws insightful conclusions about the characters using valid examples and clear explanations. Rewrites a sentence using passive voice to change subject and focus.</p>	<p>◀ Justifies how the writer's choice of subject matter and either vocabulary or clause construction position an audience to view characters in a particular way. Well-justified explanation of how a theme or message is developed through the characters.</p>	<p>◀ Uses evocative language to develop Dale's character through the deliberate sequencing of images and ideas that are cohesive in structure.</p>	A
<p>◀ Selects valid examples from the text including figurative language, and supports explanations about characters.</p>	<p>◀ Identifies how a theme or message is explored through the characters.</p>	<p>◀ Develops characters through speech, and descriptions of actions, thoughts or feelings. Maintains active voice and third-person narrative. Well-controlled use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.</p>	B
<p>◀ Chooses some relevant examples from the text including a simile and/or metaphor. Makes generalisations about characters.</p>	<p>◀ Identifies how language choices and/or subject matter position an audience to view characters in a particular way. Identifies how an idea is explored through the characters.</p>	<p>◀ Uses descriptive language to explore Dale's point of view. Maintains active voice, and controls grammar, punctuation and spelling. Structure is evident.</p>	C
<p>◀ Lists examples from the text.</p>	<p>◀ Makes generalisations about the language choices or subject matter in the text. Describes an idea explored through the characters.</p>	<p>◀ Develops characters using descriptive language, actions, speech or thoughts and feelings. Lapses in structure, grammar, punctuation or spelling intrude but do not detract from meaning.</p>	D
	<p>◀ Restates messages from the text.</p>	<p>◀ Recounts events.</p>	E
<p>Selects relevant examples except "black, brown and white faces". Selects a valid example of a metaphor. Makes generalisations about the characters.</p>	<p>Identifies that the subject matter can position an audience to favour Miss Wilson and that informal language is used to develop the relationship between the student reader and Dale.</p> <p>Describes how an idea is explored in the text.</p>	<p>Develops Dale's character using some descriptive language, actions, thoughts and feelings. Lapses in structure impact on the development of the response.</p>	

Overall grade

This response demonstrates a sound level of achievement across all assessable elements. On balance, it is judged to be a C.

Reading for meaning

1. List evidence from the text that shows this story is set in the Australian bush.

- "their little black, brown and white faces concentrating hard on their books"
- "Miss Wilson guards the playground during smoko"
- "She doesn't believe, as Mavis does, in the value of listening to the bush"
- "He lifts his face and smells of the Dry Season"

2. Identify a metaphor and a simile from the text that help to create tone, mood or atmosphere.

Simile: *his eyes are slitted and his forehead wrinkles with concentration*

Metaphor: *dropping to the floor in a tiny rain shower*

3. Describe Miss Wilson, using evidence from the text.

Miss Wilson is a true believer in education and teaching. She is described as "eyes are really blue" and "hair neat and brown"

4. Paragraph 2 states that Miss Wilson "believes what she does is good". Give two other examples from the text that explain why she believes she is a good teacher.

"Miss Wilson believes that all knowledge can be written down and learnt in the classroom"
"Her heart fills with pride"

5. How do Miss Wilson and Dale view each other? Explain your answer.

Miss Wilson and Dale view each other as having different methods as to how you learn and live your life. This is shown when it is said "She doesn't believe, as Mavis does, in the value of listening to the bush." Dale wants to be outside. Miss Wilson values being in a classroom

6. This sentence from the text uses active voice. Rewrite the sentence using passive voice to change the subject and focus of the sentence.

Miss Wilson guards the playground during smoko and lunchtime, watching to make sure no one escapes.

No one escapes during smoko and lunchtime because Mrs Wilson is always guarding the playground

Interpreting texts

7. Who does the text favour: Dale or Miss Wilson? *Miss Wilson*

Justify your answer using evidence from the text.

I believe that although the text maybe talking about what Dale wants to do, it favours Miss Wilson. I believe this because the text positions the reader to feel Miss Wilson's position and yearns to teach. Evidence from the text including "She believes what she does is good" and "Her heart fills with pride." The of course her passion is shown at the end of the paragraph like.

8. Identify a theme or message explored in the text. Explain how this theme is explored through the characters.

Theme/message: *Miss Wilson's view of education in the classroom*

Explanation: *Miss Wilson is shown as a strong believer in education being taught in the classroom. Examples in the text include "Anything that distracts the children from the blackboard is bad." "Miss Wilson thinks the way to change the world is to educate children and*

"We'll make a scholar out of you yet, Dale Murphy." All these examples show Miss Wilson putting emphasis on education

9. Explain how the writer makes deliberate language choices to develop the relationship between the reader and Dale. Consider subject matter, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. Use examples from the text to support your explanation.

The writer uses language to develop the relationship between the students and Dale by appealing to the feelings that a student may have experienced. Examples of this being "No matter how quietly Dale whispers or how silently he passes a piece of paper folded and folded to make it small, she'll say, "Dale would you like me to read that note to the class?" and "He pretends to listen and take notes about the discussion while he thinks about how to get out of the school yard." Both of these examples are events that are likely for a student to go through and therefore Dale is relatable to the audience.

C Sample: Response 2

This passage from the text may help get you started:

Dale's head is aching with frustration ... He just wants to get out of the classroom. He lifts his face and the smell of the Dry season is very clear in his nostrils. *Gotta go, but how?* He pretends to listen and take notes about the discussion while he thinks about how to get out of the school yard without being seen. What excuse can he make for being gone for the rest of the day? He'll have to get Lizzie's help with that! His eyes are slitted and his forehead wrinkles with concentration. He watches everyone as they talk and pretends to write down their ideas.

Dale is busting to communicate with Lizzie but under the watchful eyes of Miss Dale, it's nearly impossible. Sometimes he wonders if she does actually have eyes in the back of her head. He notices Lizzie looking right at him, a pained, concentrated expression resembling his own. Dale uses his eyes to move swiftly from Lizzie to the window. In an attempt to demonstrate his idea of getting out the window Dale glanced over at Miss Wilson and saw her writing on the blackboard again. The places where you could tell she had erased previous lessons, mixing in with her newly written words. She was writing something about personal morals and beliefs. For some reason Dale's body filled with anger and resentment because here was Miss Wilson writing about how you should clearly express what you believe in but he was cooped up in a lifeless and boring classroom.

He seethed angrily over the fact he was being told to clearly express his beliefs which to him were learning through the rustle of the leaves in the bush and smell of nature, but he was forced to stay in the

pointless classroom.

Dale resented how Miss Wilson got to demonstrate what she believed in but he wasn't aloud to. The bush was Dale's soothing sanctuary. Sometimes after school he goes to this place in the middle of the bush that not many people know about, and sits on a stump of a fallen down tree. Listening to the birds squawking and the trees rustling in rhythm with the wind blowing. Animals going by their daily routine as if Dale wasn't even there. It was the only time Dale ever felt at complete peace with himself.

Sometimes he would daydream of looking at the fluffy clouds fill the blue sky but if it was sunny he would just close his eyes and feel the warmth of the sun radiate his face. Dale wished he was there right now but instead he was sitting at a desk learning about how he should express his beliefs. Abruptly, Dale snapped back into the classroom and looked over at Lizzie again to see her shaking her head as if to say the window wasn't even an option. She was right, Miss Wilson would be onto us quicker than bees to honey. She never missed a thing and would notice if we were gone.

Extra working space

Although Dale didn't like sitting in class he did like seeing the joyful expressions on Miss Wilson's face as she watched the children copy down her writing of the board or if someone put their hand up. Most of the time it was just a student asking if they could go to the toilet or not but she was happy nevertheless. He respected her even if he didn't agree with her. "Wait, that's it," Dale thought to himself. The toilet was a great idea to get him out of class. But then he realized Miss Wilson would come after him if he was too long.

He watched Lizzie's pained and confused expression change to hopelessness and as if she didn't care anymore. I guess I will be in here until home time he thought to himself as he began daydreaming about the bush and his special spot. Looking down at his paper and occasionally taking notes, he imagined himself with the sun on his face and the birds in the sky.