

# Supporting students in the English as an Additional Language IA1

## Examination — analytical written response

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This assessment allows you to demonstrate your skills in writing analytically.

### Purpose

Your task is to:

write an analytical text in response to a 'seen' question

which demonstrates your ability to analyse the representations of issues, ideas and attitudes

in two different texts.

### General advice

1. The focus of the IA1 is **analytical writing**. To prepare for this, you will need to:
  - make sure you have read, understood and analysed **both** texts
  - developed your understanding, and made notes, on the representation (the issue, idea or attitude that is indicated in the task).
2. As you prepare your response, ensure that you:
  - develop a **thesis** which clearly outlines your interpretation of the task
  - develop more than one argument in support of your thesis
  - choose evidence from **both** texts in support of your thesis
    - direct evidence: quotations taken directly from the text, e.g. words, phrases or sentences; prose or dialogue
    - indirect evidence: evidence from the text which is summarised in your own words; your analysis of
      - concepts, identities, times, places
      - cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs
      - aesthetic features, stylistic devices
  - sustain your analysis and **synthesise** your arguments in order to fully answer the question.

3. You should assume that your audience has a deep understanding of the two study texts. This means that your analysis should move beyond superficial argument and delve into the complexities of those texts.

## Key definitions

Use these definitions to further guide your understanding of the task.<sup>1</sup>

- **Analyse:** examine or consider something to explain and interpret it, for the purpose of finding meaning or relationships and identifying patterns, similarities and differences
- **Attitude:** position, disposition, or manner with regard to a person or thing<sup>2</sup>
- **Cultural assumptions:** ideas, beliefs or attitudes about such things as gender, religion, ethnicity, youth, age, disability, sexuality, social class and work that are taken for granted as being part of the fabric of the social practices of a particular culture; cultural assumptions underpin texts and can be used to position audiences
- **Idea:** a thought, conception, or notion<sup>3</sup>
- **Issue:** a point in question or dispute<sup>4</sup>
- **Representation:** textual constructions that give shape to ways of thinking about or acting in the world
- **Synthesise:** combine different parts or elements (e.g. information, ideas, components) into a whole, in order to create new understanding
- **Thesis:** a proposition laid down or stated, especially one to be discussed and proved<sup>5</sup>

## Key advice: Assessment objectives

Exploring the assessment objectives gives you a checklist for what this task requires and allows you to better understand how your work will be assessed.

Assessment objectives	What you need to do
1, 2, 9, 10	<p>Write an essay which is clearly <b>analytical</b>, as well as being formal and objective, in terms of structure, style, and language use.</p> <p>The syllabus defines an analytical essay as follows:<sup>6</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>central purpose</b> of the analytical essay is to inform the reader of an interpretation of two literary texts.</li> <li>• This analysis is written in a <b>formal tone</b>, includes relevant literary terminology and follows appropriate academic conventions.</li> <li>• The <b>audience</b> of an analytical essay is an educated reader familiar with the literary text being discussed.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, these key definitions are found in Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2019, *English as an Additional Language General Senior Syllabus 2019 v1.4*, QCAA, Brisbane, pp. 53–72, [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/syllabuses/snr\\_english\\_add\\_lang\\_19\\_syll.pdf](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/senior-qce/syllabuses/snr_english_add_lang_19_syll.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Macmillan Publishers Australia, 2023, Macquarie Dictionary, [www.macquariedictionary.com.au](http://www.macquariedictionary.com.au).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> *English as an Additional Language General Senior Syllabus 2019 v1.4*, p. 16.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An analytical essay is structured around a <b>thesis</b>, which is a statement of the central argument of an essay. The thesis presents an interpretation of the literary texts.</li> <li>• The thesis is supported by <b>arguments</b> and substantiated by relevant <b>evidence</b>, in the form of discussion, exploration and examination of a literary text.</li> <li>• As the focus of an analytical essay is an interpretation of a literary text, the majority of supporting evidence comprises <b>references</b> to this text.</li> </ul>
3, 6, 7	Develop <b>your thesis</b> , arguments, and <b>evidence</b> , and <b>synthesise</b> these in response to the task.
4	Ensure that you are analysing the <b>cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs</b> that underpin the two texts.
5	Ensure that you are analysing the effects, on readers, of the <b>aesthetic features and stylistic devices</b> in the two texts.
8	Plan a <b>cohesive</b> response which is derived from a <b>thesis</b> and evolves into a linked set of <b>arguments</b> with <b>evidence and explanation</b> .
11	Ensure that written features, such as spelling and punctuation, are <b>accurate</b> , and used as a way of <b>enhancing the organisation and readership</b> of your essay.

## Key advice: Assessment conditions

Understanding the conditions for this examination will help you to plan, develop and complete your response.

### One week's notice of task

Carefully consider your planning process and allow time to:

- fully investigate the requirements of the question or task
- develop your own thesis in response to the question or task
- develop your arguments in support of your thesis
- re-examine the two texts and look for evidence in support of your arguments
- develop clear topic sentences for those arguments
- draft explanations which support your arguments and evidence
- draft an introduction and/or conclusion for your essay response as a way of finalising your organisation and subject matter
- re-read your draft, ensuring that your work is formal, objective and directed
- enhance the textual features (e.g. language and sentence structure choices) that are present in your analytical writing.

### Length (800–1000 words)

- Ensure that your planning allows you to write a completed essay, with
  - an introduction which provides your thesis (in response to the task) and outlines, in summary form, each of your arguments

- the body of the essay: each argument developed, with evidence, to prove your thesis
- a conclusion which reinforces your thesis and reminds the reader of your arguments.
- Aim to as get close to 1000 words as possible, as a way of maximising your opportunities for analysis.

## Quotations (200 words)

- Find and use ‘best example’ quotations from the study texts that can be used to support and strengthen your arguments, as direct and/or indirect evidence.
- Remember that your 200 words can only be quotations from the study texts; you cannot bring essay notes or complete drafts into the examination.

## Examination timing (2 hours and 15 minutes)

- Take time at the start of your examination to write out your essay plan, highlighting
  - your thesis
  - key points and/or your topic sentences in support of that thesis
  - a summary of each of your arguments
  - a summary of the evidence that you will use in support of those arguments.
- Write your response.
- Take time to edit your response, looking for
  - a clear thesis
  - a logically ordered structure of argument, evidence, and explanation
  - an analytical style of writing.
- Take time towards the end of your exam to proofread your response, ensuring that
  - it is free from error
  - you have constructed a completed essay of between 800–1000 words, understanding that quotations **are** included as part of that word count.

## Writing analytically

The following excerpts are from a student’s analytical response to the IA1. The student was asked to analyse the concept of wealth in two texts, *The Great Gatsby*, an American novel by F Scott Fitzgerald, and *Park Avenue: Money, Power and the American Dream*, a film documentary directed by Alex Gibney.

### Analytical response

Excerpt 1: Introduction	Language/textual features
<p>Money is a universally recognised tool that symbolises power and status in society, however, <u>excessive wealth can quickly lead to corruption and the disintegration of moral values</u>. F. Scott Fitzgerald’s generational masterpiece ‘<u>The Great Gatsby</u>’ reveals the detrimental essence of humanity in the Roaring Twenties through the narration of the</p>	<p><u>Organisation and development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the thesis is clearly stated in the early part of the introduction</li> <li>• the titles of both texts, and their links to the thesis, are included</li> </ul>

interactions among the characters. Correspondingly, director Alex Gibney’s documentary ‘Park Avenue: Money, Power and the American Dream’ explores the sinister side of America’s wealthiest figures in pursuit of more money and political power. Both texts ultimately prove the contention that extreme affluence creates vast class segregation and drives people into complete moral decay. They achieve this through the successful manipulation of settings and film techniques to chronicle the abhorrent nature of humanity.

- the writer sets up the body of the essay by indicating that they will be analysing specific elements of the texts: settings and film techniques

**Textual features**

- the writer uses language which is formal and sophisticated

**Excerpt 2: Body paragraph**

Similarly, director Alex Gibney also presents the vast class segregation in the documentary, ‘Park Avenue’. In the opening scene, Gibney immediately establishes the clear distinction between the rich and the poor through the emphatic and distinct music in the background. Gibney commences the documentary with quick shots of an extremely wealthy neighbourhood in Manhattan with grand orchestral music resounding in the background to highlight the opulent and luxurious lifestyle of the upper class, immediately positioning the audience to recognise the prosperity enjoyed by the extremely wealthy people. As the camera switches to a neighbourhood suffering from extreme poverty, South Bronx, the music changes into soft and obscure music paired with police and ambulance sirens to summarise the harsh conditions in South Bronx. This change in background music evidently contrasted the conditions of splendour in Manhattan as opposed to the miserable conditions in South Bronx, hence presenting the vast segregation caused by the immense difference in wealth.

**Language/textual features**

**Textual features**

- cohesive ties are used to link to the previous paragraph

**Knowledge application**

- the topic of the body paragraph is clearly established: the film-maker’s use of music to distinguish between rich and poor people
- evidence in support of this topic is provided
- the evidence is explained, linking back to the writer’s thesis and providing analysis to support and strengthen that thesis
- this pattern is repeated in the second half of the paragraph

**Excerpt 3: Conclusion**

Both the novel ‘The Great Gatsby’ and the documentary ‘Park Avenue: Money, Power and the American Dream’ chronicle the corruptive and detrimental powers of excessive wealth. The author F. Scott Fitzgerald utilises settings and characterisation while director Alex Gibney uses his immaculate edit of the documentary to convey the message that extreme affluence creates vast class segregation and drives people into complete moral decay. Despite using different techniques and being created almost one hundred years apart, the matters discussed by both texts highly corroborate, implying the fact that the corruptive and destructive power of excessive wealth is still lurking in modern society.

**Language/textual features**

**Organisation and development**

- the texts are cited, and the thesis restated, in the opening line of the conclusion

**Knowledge application**

- the key argument is reiterated

**Textual features**

- the writer uses formal language and sophisticated syntax, such as complex sentences

## More information

If you would like more information, please visit the QCAA website [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/english/english-as-an-additional-language/syllabus](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/english/english-as-an-additional-language/syllabus). Alternatively, email the English and Language learning area at [eal@qcaa.qld.edu.au](mailto:eal@qcaa.qld.edu.au).



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