

# English & Literature Extension 2020 v1.1

IA1 high-level annotated sample response

July 2018

## Extended response — reading and defence (20%)

This sample has been compiled by the QCAA to assist and support teachers to match evidence in student responses to the characteristics described in the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG).

### Assessment objectives

This assessment technique is used to determine student achievement in the following objectives:

1. demonstrate understanding of the selected complex literary text in order to develop a valid interpretation in the reading
2. demonstrate understanding of relevant aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the selected complex literary text and then explore this theorised reading in the defence
3. demonstrate understanding of the relationships within relevant aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to develop an exploration of the reading of the selected complex literary text
4. apply appropriate aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate an interpretation of the complex literary text in the reading and to develop a theorised examination of this reading in the defence
5. analyse, in the reading, how the genre, structure and textual features of the selected complex literary text support a valid interpretation
6. use appropriate patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions
7. use textual features to create a theorised, extended analytical response for an academic audience
8. evaluate, in the defence, those aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text
9. evaluate, in the defence, the reading of the selected complex literary text, making explicit the aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that underpins it
10. synthesise analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence.

# Instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG)

## Criterion: Understanding and analysis of literary texts

### Assessment objectives

1. demonstrate understanding of the selected complex literary text to develop a valid interpretation in the reading
5. analyse, in the reading, how the genre, structure and textual features of the selected complex literary text support a valid interpretation

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>discerning understanding of the selected complex literary text to develop a discriminating interpretation in the reading</u></li><li>• <u>discerning analysis, in the reading, of the genre, structure and textual features of the selected complex literary text in order to support a discriminating interpretation.</u></li></ul>	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• effective understanding of the selected complex literary text to develop an informed interpretation in the reading</li><li>• effective analysis, in the reading, of the genre, structure and textual features of the selected complex literary text in order to support an informed interpretation.</li></ul>	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• adequate understanding of the selected complex literary text to develop a valid interpretation in the reading</li><li>• adequate analysis, in the reading, of the genre, structure and textual features of the selected complex literary text in order to support a valid interpretation.</li></ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• superficial understanding of the selected complex literary text to develop a rudimentary interpretation in the reading</li><li>• superficial analysis, in the reading, of how the genre, structure and textual features of the selected complex literary text support an interpretation.</li></ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• uneven understanding of the selected complex literary text, resulting in a fragmented interpretation in the reading</li><li>• uneven analysis, in the reading, of how the genre, structure and textual features of the selected complex literary text support an interpretation.</li></ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.</li></ul>	0

## Criterion: Understanding and application of theories

### Assessment objectives

2. demonstrate understanding of relevant aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the selected complex literary text and then explore this theorised reading in the defence
3. demonstrate understanding of the relationships within relevant aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to develop an exploration of the reading of the selected complex literary text
4. apply appropriate aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate an interpretation of the complex literary text in the reading and to develop a theorised examination of this reading in the defence

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discerning understanding of relevant aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the selected complex literary text and then systematically explore this theorised reading in the defence</li> <li>discerning understanding of the relationships within relevant aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to develop a systematic exploration of the reading of the selected complex literary text</li> <li>discerning application of appropriate aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate an interpretation of the complex literary text in the reading and to develop a theorised examination of this reading in the defence.</li> </ul>	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>effective understanding of relevant aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the selected complex literary text and then systematically explore this theorised reading in the defence</li> <li>effective understanding of the relationships within relevant aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to develop a systematic exploration of the reading of the selected complex literary text</li> <li>effective application of appropriate aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate an interpretation of the complex literary text in the reading and to develop a theorised examination of this reading in the defence.</li> </ul>	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adequate understanding of relevant aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the selected complex literary text and then explore this theorised reading in the defence</li> <li>adequate understanding of the relationships within relevant aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to explore the reading of the selected complex literary text</li> <li>adequate application of appropriate aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate an interpretation of the complex literary text in the reading and to develop a theorised examination of this reading in the defence.</li> </ul>	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>superficial understanding of aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the selected complex literary text and then explain this reading in a simplistic manner in the defence</li> <li>superficial understanding of the relationships within aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to develop a simplistic explanation of the reading of the selected complex literary text</li> <li>superficial application of aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach in order to develop an interpretation of the complex literary text in the reading and then explain this reading in a simplistic manner in the defence.</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uneven understanding of aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach, resulting in a disjointed reading of the selected complex literary text and a partial explanation of this reading in the defence</li> <li>uneven understanding of the relationships within aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach</li> <li>uneven application of aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach, resulting in a disjointed interpretation of the selected complex literary text and a partial explanation of this reading in the defence.</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.</li> </ul>	0

## Criterion: Evaluation and synthesis

### Assessment objectives

8. evaluate, in the defence, those aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text
9. evaluate, in the defence, the reading of the selected complex literary text, making explicit the aspects of the theoretical approach that underpin it
10. synthesise analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discerning evaluation, in the defence, of those aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text</li> <li>• discerning evaluation, in the defence, of the reading of the selected complex literary text, making explicit the aspects of the theoretical approach that underpin it</li> <li>• discerning synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence.</li> </ul>	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective evaluation, in the defence, of those aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text</li> <li>• effective evaluation, in the defence, of the reading of the selected complex literary text, making explicit the aspects of the theoretical approach that underpin it</li> <li>• effective synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence.</li> </ul>	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequate evaluation, in the defence, of those aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text</li> <li>• adequate evaluation, in the defence, of the reading of the selected complex literary text, making explicit the aspects of the theoretical approach that underpin it</li> <li>• adequate synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence.</li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• superficial evaluation, in the defence, of those aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text</li> <li>• superficial evaluation, in the defence, of the reading of the selected complex literary text, explaining the aspects of the theoretical approach that underpin it</li> <li>• superficial synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with some supporting evidence.</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uneven evaluation, in the defence, of those aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text</li> <li>• uneven evaluation, in the defence, of the reading of the selected complex literary text, identifying some aspects of the theoretical approach that underpin it</li> <li>• uneven synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with some supporting evidence.</li> </ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.</li> </ul>	0

## Criterion: Controlling textual features and conventions

### Assessment objectives

6. use appropriate patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions
7. use textual features to create a theorised, extended analytical response for an academic audience

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>discerning use of appropriate patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions</li><li>discerning use of textual features to create a theorised, extended analytical response for an academic audience.</li></ul>	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>effective use of appropriate patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions</li><li>effective use of textual features to create a theorised, extended analytical response for an academic audience.</li></ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>suitable use of appropriate patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions</li><li>suitable use of textual features to create a theorised, extended analytical response for an academic audience.</li></ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>uneven use of patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology</li><li>uneven use of textual features to create a response for an audience.</li></ul>	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.</li></ul>	0

# Task

## Task

### Context

In the first area of study of this unit, Readings and defences, you have explored different theoretical approaches to meaning-making, focusing on the interpretive strategies and reading practices associated with the reader-centred and author-centred theoretical approaches. You have studied how to apply these approaches to literary texts to produce individual readings, and learned how to produce a defence to support your readings.

The reading you produce in response to this task will be published in the journal *Reading Australian Film*, which has an audience of adult readers who are conversant with and interested in film, including the one you have chosen as your focal text. The defence you produce is written for your teacher as primary audience.

### Task

#### Part 1: Reading

Select a film text directed by a recognised auteur and apply either a reader-centred approach or an author-centred approach to produce a reading of the film.

#### Part 2: Defence

Analyse the reading you have produced, applying and evaluating aspects and strategies of the theoretical approach and explaining how the theoretical approach used has allowed you to make meaning of the text in particular ways.

## Sample response

Criterion	Allocated marks	Marks awarded
<b>Understanding and analysis of literary texts</b> Assessment objectives 1,5	5	5
<b>Understanding and application of theories</b> Assessment objectives 2,3,4	6	6
<b>Evaluation and synthesis</b> Assessment objectives 8,9,10	5	5
<b>Controlling textual features and conventions</b> Assessment objectives 6,7	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

The annotations show the match to the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) performance-level descriptors.

<p><b>Understanding and application of theories [6]</b> discerning understanding of relevant aspects of the author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the film</p> <p><b>Understanding and analysis of literary texts [5]</b> discerning understanding of the selected film to develop a discriminating interpretation in the reading that sets up an exploration of masculinity</p> <p><b>Controlling textual features and</b></p>	<h2>O Captain! My Captain!</h2> <p>██████████ explores how Australian auteur Peter Weir's masterpiece <i>Dead Poets Society</i> introduced the emotional male role model to the most stubbornly anti-expressive culture of men on the planet - Aussie Blokes.</p> <p>"We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for." (<i>Dead Poets Society</i>, 1989)</p> <p>This excerpt from the instantly classic film, <i>Dead Poets Society</i>, is spoken to a classroom of adolescent boys in 1950s America, by their adored English teacher, a middle-aged man. This is not perplexing to a 21st century audience with a historical awareness of poetry as a male pursuit. <u>What is surprising, however, is that this film was released in 1989, the work of "arguably the most important director in Australia" (Bliss, 1999), a man who grew up surrounded by cultural expectations that discouraged emotional expression in men (Tribute Entertainment Media Group, 2014).</u></p> <p><u>Peter Weir is known for his focus on emotion in his films, which often show young male characters experiencing "grief, confusion, or spiritual awakenings" intensified by Weir's unique ability to "evoke hallucinatory, dream-like states" (Sutherland, 2005). <i>Gallipoli</i> (1981), a national treasure of Australian cinema, explores the sentimental side of Australian mateship, rarely acknowledged by a culture that glorifies mainly physical greatness and humour in men. <i>Dead Poets Society</i> addresses the issue of masculinity more directly, dealing with the struggle between conservative intellectualism and the re-emergence of expressive emotional masculinity in America in the 1950s. Both films demonstrate Weir's preference to take film-making "risks" rather than "follow a winning formula" (ibid). Weir has an ability to effectively transport his audience to cultures and eras that conflict and challenge their own values, with a transcendence that he describes as "wakeful dreaming" (Bliss, 1999), contributing to the highly emotive and often inspirational nature of his work.</u></p> <p>As a film that deals with the universal issue of the pressures of conformity, <i>Dead Poets Society</i> is "often cited by viewers as one of the most inspirational films of all time" (Manzoor, 2011). <u>In Welton Academy, a suffocatingly conformist all-boys preparatory college, Weir creates an exaggerated symbol of the supposedly practical nature of men, and all the conservatism and narrow-mindedness of 1950s American society</u> (Bramann, 2004). <u>The central adolescent characters contrast their setting with an</u></p>
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#### conventions [4]

discerning use of textual features to create a theorised, extended analytical response for an academic audience

#### Understanding and analysis of literary texts [5]

discerning analysis, in the reading, of the genre, structure and textual features of the selected film in order to support a discriminating interpretation

#### Understanding and application of theories [6]

discerning understanding of relevant aspects of the author-centred theoretical approach in order to generate a reading of the film that focuses on a discussion of masculinity and provides a strong basis for demonstrating discerning understanding of a contemporary author-centred approach

#### Evaluation and synthesis [5]

discerning synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence

authenticity of youthful wildness that could only be captured by a director who had experienced a boys' boarding school, and the English teacher they worship is the polar opposite of an acceptably practical, level-headed male role model.

The tension between Mr Keating's unorthodox teaching methods and the sterile institution erupts spectacularly in a climactic ending typical of Weir's films. The scene demonstrates Weir's ingenious use of music to embody concepts and entities, made famous by *Picnic At Hanging Rock* (1975), as the traditional bagpipe music played throughout the film grows louder as more and more students band together in an epic act of defiance against their principal and the entire institution. Close up shots of highly emotive facial expressions convey the deep bond between the teacher and his class, while the red face of the principal is shot from between boys' legs as they boldly step onto their desks. A self-doubting reclusive character named Todd Anderson is bravely the first to salute his hero, addressing him with the Whitman poetry reference "O Captain, my Captain", and providing Weir's signature resolution of character development. This heavily emotional scene, possessing Weir's distinct style of almost dream-like wish fulfilment, allows the film to exit on the inspiring adulatory note for which it is celebrated.

However, the popular romanticised, anti-conformist reading of the film, while recognisably Weiran, is just one possible interpretation of a film heavy with social commentary that the individual viewer could decipher in a range of ways. Many criticise Weir's use of orthodox character types and predictable "accentuat[ion of] the obvious" (Travers, 1989).

Despite these criticisms, Weir creates in Mr Keating the admirable, emotional role model that Australian culture ignores, overcoming pressures on Australian directors to work within themes and genres that are tokenistic of Australian film. While masculinity in Australia has its roots in such legends as convicts and the ANZACs, *Dead Poets Society* deals with the revival of emotional masculinity that gave birth to the 1960s; the return to the worship of men like Thoreau and Whitman, from a time when poetry was considered dominantly masculine in America (Sutherland, 2005; Armengol, 2013 p.74). Weir's rejection of physical masculinity is what distinguishes him as an internationally acclaimed auteur amongst less diverse Australian directors.

Peter Weir's uniquely sentimental film-making style has allowed him to branch off from the Australian film-making of *Gallipoli* (1981) and *Picnic At Hanging Rock* (1975) and take on greater challenges, allowing viewers to step into the surreal worlds he so intricately creates. In *Dead Poets Society* he has crafted both a thought-provoking take on emotional masculinity and a beautiful message that has resonated across cultures and is hailed by many as one of the most inspiring films of all time.

## The Depths of *Dead Poets*



## *A defence of my author-centred reading of Peter Weir's masterpiece*

### **Evaluation and synthesis [5]**

discerning synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence

### **Evaluation and synthesis [5]**

discerning evaluation, in the defence, of those aspects of the author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text

### **Controlling textual features and conventions [4]**

discerning use of appropriate patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions

### **Understanding and application of theories [6]**

discerning understanding of the relationships within relevant aspects of the author-centred theoretical approach in order to develop a systematic exploration of the reading of the selected complex literary text

My reading emphasises Weir's cultural flexibility in drawing on themes of emotional masculinity in contrast to Australia's idea of physical, practical manhood. This observation draws heavily on Booth's concept of "implied author" (Booth, 1961 p.71). Contrary to Poulet's theories of text as preservation of the author's identity and activated by the reader, Booth argues that a kind of "second self", a mere version of the author is deduced in the act of reading (Poulet, 1969 p.61). This imagined author provides distance between the actual author and the reader, as the persona projected by the text is usually distinctly different from that of the author in reality (Booth, 1961 p.70).

In relation to *Dead Poets Society*, the implied author is an American male who likely had a conservative upbringing in the late 50s, with a penchant for poetry. In my reading I remark upon the authenticity of the film's portrayal of the boyish camaraderie between characters, giving the impression of "a director who had experienced a boys' boarding school". Peter Weir's true identity, as an Australian who grew up in a 50s society that worshipped athletes over artists, is utterly undetectable in the film. This distinction allows viewers to appreciate and interpret their own meaning from the film in itself without the obstruction of exterior knowledge of its true author and their intended meaning (Makaryk, 2000 p.260).

However, elements of my reading refer to Weir's distinct style as an auteur with great emphasis on the effects of film-making devices and the director's likely intention, veering from Booth's "implied author" and inching towards Poulet's historic 'Author-God' identity (Barthes, 1977 p.4) (Poulet, 1969 p.59). In discussing the closing scene of the film, I observe the repetitive use of "traditional bagpipe music" at significant moments to "embody concepts and entities", in this case used to symbolise the fall of conformity. This assumption of the effect the director intended for the music suggests a near committal of "intentional fallacy", a term devised to explain the flaw in attempts to "derive the standard of criticism from the psychological causes of the [text]... end(ing) in biography and relativism" (Wimsatt & Beardsely, 1946 p.21). Because the author has no control over the readings made of their text, any claims of knowing Weir's artistic intentions in *Dead Poets Society* for certain are invalid. Despite this, my acknowledgement of the "range of ways" of interpreting "a film heavy with social commentary" allows me to remark upon Weir's cinematic style and its effects while evading the intentional fallacy.

A prominent author-centred reading practice in my reading is Foucault's "author functions", involving "the manner in which a text apparently points to [the author] who is outside and precedes it" (Foucault, 1977 p.125). This theory addresses the way an author's name can be used to indicate the quality, genre and features of a text; referred to as valuation, classification and

### **Evaluation and synthesis [5]**

discerning evaluation, in the defence, of those aspects of the author-centred theoretical approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text

discerning evaluation, in the defence, of the reading of the selected complex literary text, making explicit the aspects of the theoretical approach that underpin it

### **Understanding and application of theories [6]**

discerning application of appropriate aspects of the author-centred theoretical approach to develop a theorised examination of the reading in the defence

### **Evaluation and synthesis [5]**

discerning synthesis of analysis of the selected complex literary text, the applied theoretical approach and resultant interpretation with supporting evidence

### **Controlling textual features and conventions [4]**

attribution respectively (ibid). The third author function, being attribution, is the most relevant to my reading, due to my referral to "typically Weir" film-making techniques at various points throughout my interpretation. These devices include highly emotive and climactic endings, parallels and resolution of character development and "Weir's distinct style of almost dream-like wish fulfilment". The identification of the signature features of a Peter Weir film attributes these techniques to his name, thus fulfilling Foucault's third author function.

Classification, Foucault's second reading function, is similarly prominent in my reading. *Dead Poets Society* is noted to be consistent with themes and settings frequently seen in Weir's films. My reading draws heavily on the notion of Weir as a director whose films often deal with "cultures and eras that conflict and challenge... values". This is a classification of Weir films as set typically in past decades, and within cultural contexts usually foreign to Weir and/or his audience. *Dead Poets Society's* construction of admirable men as emotional and creatively expressive is acknowledged in my reading as a "rejection of [the] physical masculinity" championed by Australian culture. Weir's films challenge the limitations placed on Australian directors to "work within [tokenistic] themes and genres", and the recognition of this ongoing pattern within my reading directly utilises the author function of classification. Additionally, the thoughtful message behind *Dead Poets Society* is also classified as 'Weiran', with the work of the auteur described as "highly emotive and often inspirational".

Foucault's first author function of valuation is also evident to a lesser extent in my reading. The use of intertextuality to explain Weir's significance as an auteur, such as Bliss' description of him as "arguably the most important director in Australia", creates an understanding of his name as a stamp of quality without any direct evidence from *Dead Poets Society* (ibid).

In spite of the emphasis placed on the role of the auteur in my author-centred reading of the film, an essential balance is maintained between investigating the relationship between author and text and acknowledging the validity of all readings of *Dead Poets Society*, a film "heavy with social commentary that the individual viewer could decipher in a range of ways". Weir invites audiences to dive into the vastness and fluidity of the many possible meanings and messages behind his great creation.

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discerning use of appropriate patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions

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#### Reading and defence

This sample has been selected as the reading and the defence work seamlessly together in a discerning academic response that synthesises analysis of the film and evaluation of the author-centred reading practices used in the reading.

The reading demonstrates a discerning understanding of the selected film and how to apply relevant aspects of a contemporary author-centred theoretical approach to develop an interpretation that is then systematically explored in the defence. The discussion of masculinity in the reading allows for demonstration of a discerning, implicit understanding of an author-centred approach that is made explicit in the defence.

In the defence discussion and evaluation of the work of Booth, Poulet and Wimsatt and Beardsley is expertly integrated and demonstrates a discerning understanding of relationships amongst relevant aspects of the author-centred approach and how these underpin the reading.