

Essential English 2025 v1.3

IA4 A-standard annotated sample response

April 2026

Extended response — written response

This sample has been compiled by the QCAA to assist teachers in developing assessment and matching evidence in student responses to the characteristics described in the instrument-specific standards.

This response was developed by a student exiting Essential English in 2025. The instrument-specific standards have been updated to reflect the revised wording of objectives 1, 3, 4 and 6 in the 2025 syllabus.

Instrument-specific standards (ISS)

| Knowledge application | Organisation and development | Textual features | Grade |
|--|--|---|----------|
| The student response has the following characteristics: | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective construction of representations of an identity, place, event and/or concept in a written response to achieve purpose/s effective use of opinions and/or ideas to influence meaning about an aspect of an Australian popular culture text in a written response to achieve purpose/s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective use of genre, integrating media where appropriate control of the role of the writer to influence audiences to accept perspectives about an aspect of an Australian popular culture text purposeful selection and sequencing of relevant subject matter, using written cohesive devices to construct a coherent response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> controlled choice of language informed by an understanding of purpose, audience and context consistent use of written language features to achieve purpose/s | A |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriate construction of representations of an identity, place, event and/or concept in a written response to achieve purpose/s appropriate use of opinions and/or ideas to influence meaning about an aspect of an Australian popular culture text in a written response to achieve purpose/s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriate use of genre, using media where appropriate some control of the role of the writer to influence audiences to accept perspectives about an aspect of an Australian popular culture text appropriate selection and sequencing of relevant subject matter using written cohesive devices to construct a coherent response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appropriate choice of language informed by an understanding of purpose, audience and context appropriate use of written language features to achieve purpose/s | B |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uneven construction of representations of an identity, place, event and/or concept in a written response to achieve purpose/s uneven use of opinions and/or ideas to influence meaning about an aspect of an Australian popular culture text in a written response to achieve purpose/s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use of genre, including media where appropriate use of the role of the writer to influence audiences to accept perspectives about an aspect of an Australian popular culture text in the main, relevant subject matter selected and sequenced using written cohesive devices to construct a coherent response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in the main, appropriate choice of language informed by an understanding of purpose, audience and context in the main, use of written language features to achieve purpose/s | C |

| Knowledge application | Organisation and development | Textual features | Grade |
|--|---|---|----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • narrow construction of representations of identities, places, events and/or concepts in a written response • narrow use of opinions and/or ideas in a written response. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uneven use of genre • some establishment of a relationship with an audience • some relevant subject matter selected and unevenly sequenced using some cohesive devices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inconsistent choice of language with some demonstration of understanding of purpose, audience and context • some use of written language features, with frequent lapses. | D |
| The student response does not match any of the descriptors above. | The student response does not match any of the descriptors above. | The student response does not match any of the descriptors above. | E |

Context

In this unit, we explore a range of contemporary Australian popular culture texts, which include autobiographies and creative non-fiction.

Task

Write a series of diary entries (2–3) from the perspective of a character from *A Long Way Home* by Saroo Brierley.

In your 2–3 diary entries:

- reflect that person’s opinions and/or ideas, including your **own interpretation** of them
- select an event and/or place that resonated with you (this enables you to describe them authentically as you weave your own interpretations of this character into your diary entries)
- draw upon that person’s personal experiences.

In your 2–3 diary entries, influence audiences to accept your views and help them understand why you feel the way you do.

Sample response

| Criterion | Result |
|--|--------|
| Knowledge application Assessment objective/s 3, 4 | A |
| Organisation and development Assessment objective/s 1, 2, 6, 7 | |
| Textual features Assessment objective/s 8, 9 | |

The annotations show the match to the instrument-specific standards.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Effective construction of representations of an identity, place, event and/or concept in a written response to achieve purpose/s</p> <p>Effective use of opinions and/or ideas to influence meaning</p> <p>Effective use of genre</p> <p>Control of the role of the writer to influence audiences to accept perspectives of an aspect of an Australian popular culture text</p> <p>Purposeful selection and sequencing of relevant subject matter to construct a coherent series of diary entries</p> <p>Controlled choice of language informed by purpose, audience and context</p> <p>Consistent use of written language features</p> | <div> <p><u>Entry 1: Sue the night after adopting Saroo.</u></p> <p>22nd of May 1987</p> <p>I was so... anxious, but also excited. Today, me and John adopted a beautiful young boy named Saroo from Calcutta. While waiting in the airport, me and John didn't know what to expect. I mean, we didn't know a thing about Saroo. Well, beyond his height, weight and age, anyway. We didn't know about his past, we didn't know his trauma, we didn't know... Saroo.</p> <p>It felt like we were waiting for an eternity in that stuffy airport before we met him. I didn't know what to do with myself, my nervous feelings were like a heavy blanket, smothering my thoughts. It was only when I first saw Saroo walk through those doors at the airport, it didn't matter that I didn't know all of that, all I knew was I would love this child like he was my own.</p> <p>In that moment, all those uneasy feelings weighing down on me just melted away. John handed him the cute little Koala stuffy that we got for him, it's hard to tell the difference between the two. They are both such little cuties.</p> <p>On the way home, he was so... captivated by his new surroundings, watching as other cars go by, or at the suburban houses we pass. I'm guessing Hobarts coast is very different from the center of Calcutta. Even as we both walked through the house, everything was so new to him, the living room, the kitchen, the TV, even the view of the Harbor. That vision that I had as a little girl was true.</p> <p>This is where I'm meant to be.</p> <p>I'm meant to be there for this child... Saroo.</p> </div> <div> <p><u>Entry 2: Sue the night after adopting Mantosh</u></p> <p>25th June 1991</p> <p>I just knew that this time would be different. I just remember that before John and I adopted Saroo, I was so overwhelmed. The thought that I would be a mother to this child that's already had a past and probably a family.</p> <p>I learnt to get over that though. Meeting Saroo taught me that.</p> <p>I just couldn't really imagine that we would all be back here in the airport together like this. I remember Saroo being so excited to meet his new brother, he even made his new brother Mantosh a little drawing of our new family. What a cutie pie.</p> <p>Well...this was different. I really thought that this time would be easier, I cannot believe that I ever thought that. I should have known that it wouldn't be the same as adopting Saroo. Mantosh, much like Saroo, had a past that I would never know about. I really thought I would be over that, but I can't help but wonder and worry.</p> <p>When we took Mantosh home, it was like a raging storm had just entered our home. I don't know what to do. He wouldn't stop crying and screaming. John kept trying to calm him down, but he was so overwhelmed. Eventually he calmed down a bit. I just took him into my arms, sat down, and let him cry until he fell asleep. John and I thought that maybe this was all just a lot for him, and he was probably fussy about the flight.</p> <p>I feel horrible, because I don't know what to do to help him. I don't know what he needs or what made him react like this. I have a feeling that whatever happened to Mantosh in the past must be darker than Saroo's.</p> <p>Later that night, the weight of the whole day just hit me, and I couldn't hold back my tears, and I had a breakdown. I tried my best not to wake everyone up, but Saroo always knows when I'm sad. He came over to me, in his cute little teddy bear pjs, and for the first time I knew that this is where I'm meant to be. He wiped my tears away and hugged me. Saroo... you're such a thoughtful boy. I don't know what I did to deserve him.</p> </div> |
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