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Characteristics of good responses

Criterion 1 — Knowledge and control of texts in their contexts

Success in this criterion is achieved when candidates show an awareness of how meanings in texts are shaped by purpose, cultural context and social situation. Discrimination in the selection of subject matter is the key aspect of this criterion. Candidates were rewarded for demonstrating their ability to:

- exploit the conventions of genres for particular purposes
- substantiate analysis with well-balanced evidence
- analyse texts, ideas and issues
- respond to the demands placed on them through the roles and relationships adopted when responding to particular questions.

Criterion 2 — Knowledge and control of textual features

Success in this criterion is achieved when candidates show an awareness of appropriateness of textual features for purpose, genre and register. Candidates were rewarded for demonstrating their ability to:

- logically and cohesively organise and arrange ideas
- control spelling, punctuation and paragraphing
- use clause and sentence structures for effect
- maintain grammatical accuracy
- use a wide range of vocabulary including figurative uses.
Criterion 3 — Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts

Success in this criterion is achieved when candidates show an awareness of the ways in which texts are selectively constructed and read. Candidates were rewarded for demonstrating their ability to:

- make choices that invite the reader to take up intended positions
- analyse how readers are invited to take up positions
- evaluate representations
- shape representations
- examine how cultural assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes underpin texts.

Common weaknesses

Criterion 1 — Knowledge and control of texts in their contexts

Lack of awareness of the demands of the genre:

- Roles and relationships
- Subject matter
- Purpose and intent.

Candidates are reminded of the need to provide analysis and evaluation of texts, as opposed to simply providing a synopsis or overview of the text. This was particularly noticeable in those questions requiring responses to the drama, novel and non-fiction texts. Deficiencies in this area frequently impacted upon the result given for Criterion 3.

While most candidates were able to reveal some knowledge of the poems (though not always understanding) they were not consistent in making these relevant to the question. Mention of the number of lines and/or stanzas a poem has or what rhyme scheme is used is only relevant when used to respond in some way to the specific demands of the question.

Criterion 2 — Knowledge and control of textual features

- Errors in basic punctuation were evident in most responses. The (mis)use of the apostrophe was frequently evident. Very few candidates demonstrated the ability to correctly punctuate direct speech or the titles of texts.
- Candidates are strongly encouraged to plan their responses paying particular attention to cohesion.
- The construction of paragraphs as a means by which to organise ideas proved to be problematic.
- Flaws in sentence structuring were evident in many instances. Fragments and run-on sentences were used frequently.
- The role of the introduction in analytical expository responses is of particular importance. Establishing a clear main idea at the start will assist in the organisation of ideas across the rest of a response. Phrases such as “This essay will …” are redundant in this genre.
- Candidates are reminded of the importance of editing their work.
Criterion 3 — Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts

- Many candidates were able to identify the invited readings of texts and the representations within texts, however, very few were able to analyse the means by which texts achieve these readings. While the analytical expository responses were the most obvious places for this to occur, all responses required this type of analysis in order to demonstrate the ability to invite readers to take up positions.

- Few candidates demonstrated the ability to employ those terms identified in the subject notice published in March. Fluency in the use of such terms will go a long way towards experiencing success in this criterion.

- By simply providing a synopsis of the texts used — which proved to be a very common error — candidates deprived themselves of opportunities to showcase their understanding of most of the elements of this criterion.

Sample responses

The responses below were selected from those scripts that met the A or B standard as defined by the assessment criteria. They have been reproduced exactly as written and therefore include any spelling or grammatical errors made by candidates.

Paper One Part A

Question 1: Drama — imaginative response to literature

Topic chosen: 1A — Macbeth by William Shakespeare

The Mind of Macbeth: An Interior Monologue

Blood will have blood, they say. Oh, the horrible truth that lies beneath those words … A snake filled from the tail to fang with venom of grim reality. Young Siward lies dead before me, the once noble thane of Glamis, as he is the latest victim of my bloodied blade, the dagger that becomes tempered and sharpened in the tears of the fallen.

This journey of mine, this blasted voyage of damnation, all started when those wretched witches greeted myself and Banquo one horrible day. Greeted with a prophecy of current standing, a future Thaneship and the eventual crown, even at such a wonderous moment, the disturbance begun then and there. The darkest ambition in my heart was sparked, and then everything unfolded. I murdered my king, my best friend Banquo and the family of my once-was kinsman, Macduff. Now, the consequences of my actions march forward, armed with sword and shield — the English army, led by Malcolm and Macduff, surges forward, breaking the defences of my castle. Even one of the witches’ protective prophecies — that I will not be harmed until Birnam wood moves to Dunsinane Hill — was broken by their blasted charge.

To get my hands on the throne and retain it, I’ve acted out a horrible series of deeds, each to its own consequences. But of all those murdered, one cries out from beyond, letting the injustice that befell him be known to all. Banquo, throughout your life as a soldier, you fought beside me and so did I to you. Yet, despite that, I threw away all honour I had and sent the daggers of the night to dispose of you. For what … My paranoia? My wish for my own lineage of kings, against the very prophecies that gave me my crown? Only now, in the face of inevitable death, do I see just how foolish my actions have been, how I could have done things so much better. You even tried to
save me from this damnation, Banquo … You warned me against those prophecies. Yet, only now do I heed your warnings. What a fool I’ve been … But there’s no turning back now.

Those black-clad devil-spawned hags! I’ve been played for a fool. They knew what would happen all along. Even my own desires didn’t direct me. No, they did, the puppeteer’s strings dangling off their bony fingers have directed everything I’ve done. Their foul orchestration began the moment that they spilled their shadowy words into my ear, my ambition was theirs! Perhaps they are to blame for all the chaos that has befallen myself and this land. That seems to be my own delusion of innocence, however. A soldier’s job is to protect his land and king from outside forces, yet I crumbled before three decrepit old hags. Perhaps I’m not the great warrior I took pride in being. Not only did I fail in my duty to protect my king, but I facilitated his downfall!

I hear footsteps … More of the English, no doubt, or perhaps even Macduff … I’ve lost everything, my kinsmen and my honour, my wife and my King, even my best friend. If nothing else, then I’ll die in a blaze of glory. Come, world! This poor player is ready for his final act!

**Topic chosen: 1A — Macbeth by William Shakespeare**

“If ’twere done, when ’tis done then ’twere well,” but how could such a deed yield no consequences. Duncan’s death has spurred murder after bloody murder and now I am responsible for yet another slain soul. The body of Young Siward lies strewn before me, a look of audacious contempt forever fixed upon his face. The prophetic words which have lead me thus far are now instilling the murkiest clouds of doubt through my once clear mind. I have seen with mine own eyes Birnam Wood approaching Dunsinane, the very sight that those weird sisters said would signal my untimely demise. I have been carried on the wings of hope and “have almost forgot the taste of [fear]”.

Right now, ten-thousand English soldiers make their unimpeded way across this great land of Inverness. I am almost glad that my beloved wife is not here to see this blemish on our treasured Scottish soil. Life was sweet until we tried to sip the nectar of unearned rewards, but my wife is not to blame. She wished only to prick the sides of my vaulting ambition, and claim what those witches said was rightfully mine. But the image of that dagger piercing Duncan’s silver skin, and his golden blood oozing from his chest was too much for her tortured soul. A stronger woman I have not known but guilt is unrelentless and did not rest till it took her soul. With Duncan’s death she relinquished her womanhood and with it, her mind.

I cannot help but to throw the blame to those weird sisters. I have not taken their words in jest but they have lead me to an impossible crossroad; whether to put faith in the truths which have held strong time and time again, or to succumb to my own logic and see the mortal conflict I am presented with. Birnam Wood is fast approaching but I have also been told that no man born of earthly measures can harm me, so the two ill omens now sit together disharmoniously. Perhaps it is because of this second truth that such a selfish flame was lit inside me and my poor queen was left to her own devices. If I could have shown more compassion, more care for the consequences we were both inflicted with she might still be here now, but she is in a better place awaiting judgment. Am I to also join her before my time?

The decision whether to face what could surely bring about my downfall is now pressing down against me, with the weight of time behind it. Only a man that is not of woman born can harm me, and no such man exists! What confusion clouds my judgment, I should not have let those witches equivocate as they did when I quaffed that vile concoction. Or perhaps I have not understood the convoluted disposition of their speech. But their is not enough time to dwell on these thoughts. I am a brave man and will not ‘play the Roman fool, and die on mine own sword.’ I will curb my lavish spirit till victory falls my way!
Topic chosen: 1A — Macbeth by William Shakespeare

If my dearest partner in greatness were still that to me, would I be here now? I am alone in spirit and in arms, and can barely voice my anger at those who are not loyal to me. It seems so long ago when I lost my loyalty to my King, to my closest friend, and slowly to my wife. Ambition took noble Duncan from me, fear took Banquo, and only moments ago guilt, with its thick-coming fancies took the life of my Lady. But I would not have betrayed them, if those witches had not betrayed me!

The weird sisters’ prophecies seemed a blessing. If only I had listened to Banquo, and not trusted truths from such imperfect speakers. I cannot justify my actions in response to their supernatural words, only explain them to myself. Their supernatural soliciting spoke to the ringing depths of my heart. They awakened sleeping desires in me that I had never felt, never realised. They were desires I knew my Lady would share, and want to act upon. If I had not, in my single-minded state, told Lady Macbeth of the glorious prophecies the weird sisters gave to me, Duncan would live still. Even so, the witches enkindled a burning desire in me that I fear would never have left.

Out of love, devotion and pure passion, she taunted me to commit Duncan’s murder. If she had not poured her spirits into my ear, I would still dine with Duncan as Thane of Glamis and Cawdor. Even as I tore through Duncan’s silver skin, I could hear my wife promising me glory and protecting me from guilt. Those words were but brief.

Our marriage then faded along with the strength of her mind. If only I had realised the impact the death of our infant had on my wife. It made her milk sour, and her grasp on murder simple. And I could no longer bear to look at her. The woman symbolised times when I was weak and needed empty words to succeed. Perhaps she rightfully earned her untimely death. But if so, does the death of my own virtue threaten me with mortality?

O! The witches and their trickery! They promised me life against the odds, then they brewed the odds against me. Their prophecies taunt me as Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane. But my trust in their words cannot waver. Who is none of woman born? No man! I do not crave composition, nor will I play the Roman fool and die upon my own sword. If my dearest lady were still the serpent she was, she would enjoy the deliciousness of my charmed life.

I cannot regret the powers of fate the witches bestowed unto me, nor will I regret the moments of fierce exhilaration that brought Lady Macbeth and I closer, before she fell apart. And though Birnam Wood creeps up on me, I look down from my castle and laugh at their ignorance of the words which armour me. Swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn when brandish’d by a man that’s of a woman born!

Paper One Part B

Question 2: Novel — persuasive/reflective response to literature

Topic chosen: 2B — Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Classic literature has a place in all of our lives — from secondary school classrooms to the home library of the “all-knowing” reader. But an all-knowing writer, such as William Golding in his controversial Lord of the Flies, gives us something a lot of the classics don’t. It offers us philosophy, it provokes thought as to the boundaries of morality, and it has some fluently disturbing prose. The first publication of Lord of the Flies was 55 years ago, and today it haunts us with a very present relevance. In it, Golding hypothesises that the essence of man is evil and destructive, and invites the reader to understand this morbid ideology.
Golding demonstrates this theory in his novel where dozens of British boys are stranded on an island after their plane crash lands. Fittingly, the flight was evacuating the children from a world at war. After they get over the thrill of independence, the boys realise they must perform duties and maintain a signal fire if they stand any chance of being rescued. A boy named Ralph is elected chief of the boys, who range from five to twelve years old, and with a horn-sounding conch, the boys set up a small democracy. This is the basis of Golding’s allegory. As Ralph’s rival, Jack, emerges, the boys are caught between the conflicting forces these two leaders create. Jack offers “the brilliant world of hunting, fierce exhilaration and skill” whereas Ralph’s democracy is seen as “the world of longing and baffled common sense”. As the democracy fails, Golding implies that the natural state of man is like Jack’s tribe – violent, evil and destructive.

The boys on the island eventually succumb to sadistic savagery. Golding describes the hunting of a pig to whom the boys were “wedded to in lust” graphically on both a physical and an emotional level. Golding’s morbid ideology, that man is inherently evil, manifests in the boys. This is the belief that underpins the allegory, and the one which is privileged in Lord of the Flies.

While most of us would consider democracy, and goodness the values of society, this is not as straightforward as it sounds. There are patterns in the novel that are reflected in our world. Strong leadership, competitiveness and power drives the success of Jack’s tribe, as it would the success of many corporate and political leaders. However, a reader could read the failure of Ralph’s democracy as due to a lack of maturity and limited democratic experience.

The obvious and strong evil vs. good theme in the novel is an interesting one. Golding’s hypothesis relates to the philosophies of Friedrich Nietzsche in his Genealogy of Morality. Nietzsche suggests that morals as we know them are derived from Judae – Christian times, and that the natural state of man, without these preconceived notions of good and evil, is inherently more violent and destructive. As with Lord of the Flies, Golding provides the reader with similarly thought-provoking and deeply-rooted philosophical themes, which are relevant to contemporary society.

Classic literature, like William Golding’s Lord of the Flies, offer us representations of humanity which are essential in coming to terms with it, and ourselves. Although in some parts of the modern world, studying the classics seems outdated, they provide different understandings of the same modern world, whether we agree with them or not.

**Topic chosen: 2C — The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald**

1 Beachside road  
MOUNT GRAVATT 4122  
27/10/2009  
The Editor  
The Courier Mail  
P.O Box 123  
BRISBANE 4000  

Dear Editor,

I feel compelled to write to you today to discuss my concerns surrounding a fiction novel I have recently read and an aspect of an invited reading that the book portrays. The novel in question is ‘The Great Gatsby’ by F. Scott Fitzgerald. ‘The Great Gatsby’, written in the 1920’s, focuses on the Jazz Age and in particular the corruption of the American Dream. I wish to bring to the attention of the readers of the Courier Mail, the dangers of the American Dream and the immoral behaviour it equates to.

‘The Great Gatsby’ tells the story of the main protagonist, Mr Jay Gatsby, and his passion for the American Dream resulting in a careless affair with Daisy Buchanan, who represents old money, class and traditions. Fitzgerald illustrates Gatsby’s passionate endeavours for the American
Dream, his gains of wealth and status, in order to achieve the love of his life, Daisy. This dream is short-lived for Gatsby, and his attempts to ‘fix everything to how it was before’ were unrealistic and unattainable from the beginning, due to the shallow and selfish values of old money resulting in Daisy always choosing the security of her status and wealth over the adventure of romance.

Fitzgerald tells his story through the narrator, Nick Carraway, who due to his father’s advice ‘whenever you feel like criticising anybody – just remember that some people haven’t had the same advantages that you’ve had’, he is able to reserve all judgements and provides the reader with an honest and trustworthy view on the events. Fitzgerald achieves his invited reading by displaying particular events and actions of the wealthy and upper class such as the extravagant parties and lavish possessions and highlighting the reckless and careless behaviour these people are sometimes subject to. The Buchanan’s (old money) are shown with their traditional and classy house and furnishing but demonstrate their boredom with their wealthy line “what will we do this afternoon, and the day after that, and the next thirty years?” Next is Jordan Baker, a professional, well known golfer who is regularly rumoured to cheat and who displays her reckless behaviour, through her driving, to Nick.

My concerns regarding this invited reading, are the unrealistic expectations it implies onto readers and the extravagant lifestyles portrayed in the novel which are in fact false and lifeless. The way the parties are described in Gatsby’s ‘blue gardens’ where the “men and girls” go to have their affairs is an immoral way of life. I am concerned that after reading this novel, readers will be inclined to pursue this unrealistic dream to achieve the wealth, status and careless, immoral behaviour that wealth equates to.

In conclusion, I hope that after reading my letter, you, the readers, have a better understanding of the corruption of the American Dream, the unrealistic expectations and the empty lives of the wealthy as represented in ‘The Great Gatsby’!

**Topic chosen: 2C — The Lord of the Flies by William Golding**

To: The Editor  
The Courier Mail  
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you in relation to a topic which has been the focus of debate in your publication of late. After studying the novel closely, I feel there is a resistant reading to the text which may be more practical and logical than the reading invited by the text.

“The Lord of the Flies” is a classic piece of literature which is about a group of young boys who are involved in a plane crash and are left stranded on a desolate island, free from adult supervision. The plot follows these boys as they fall from grace. When they arrive on the island, they are civilised and well-mannered but as the struggle for power and lack of direction escalates, they split into two groups. One of which a group of mostly younger boys who hunt pigs and play games, and the other: a group of boys who cling on to the democracy symbolised by the conch shell and await their rescue. The hunters eventually turn to savages who wear tribal face paint and impale the heads of swine on sharpened sticks.

Golding’s invited reading suggests that the reason these children turn to savagery is that all of mankind possesses inherent evil. He goes about achieving this reading through events in the book. Examples of this include the murder of Simon, a member of the democratic group. Simon is used as a tool for Golding to express his invited reading. The events include all the boys being out on the beach dancing around a big fire. When Simon comes to join the group, the others hear him rustling in the bush, think he is a beast and violently murder him. For me, this is not an
example of the evil in mankind but can be explained in a more conventional manner. It is a natural fact that children are scared of the dark and the unknown. Due to this, it is likely that the boys acted in a state of overwhelming fear of a beast being on the island and did what they saw as necessary to protect themselves. Had there been supervision and order amongst these kids, it is more than likely that Simon would not have been killed.

Another means of forcing the invited reading is the premise that the hunters formed to carry out their acts of sexual gratification. This is communicated subtly through the use of imagery and is expressed primarily through Roger, who is a hunter. I read the book in no such way and feel that the author’s ideology about the pessimism about humanity is worthy of being challenged. As I see it, the breakdown of society on the island was a direct result of the character’s immaturity, lack of experience for looking after themselves and, many events in the novel are attributed to the fear they would be feeling. This breakdown is communicated when the conch shell (which represents order, justice and democracy) is smashed.

Thus, to conclude the way the author wishes his text to be interpreted is far-fetched and merely an expression of how pessimistic he is towards humanity. Furthermore, the parts of the plot used to decorate and rhetoricate the invited reading can be fully justifiable as being the result of the boy’s immaturity, lack of supervision and lack of experience in governing themselves.

Yours faithfully,
Will Goldbloom

Question 3: Non-fiction prose — persuasive/reflective response suitable for the mass media or for speaking and/or presenting to an audience, specific or general

Topic chosen: 3A — My Place by Sally Morgan

Dear Readers,

I am writing today to address some of the concerns surrounding my non-fiction text ‘My Place’. I wish to clarify my motivations for writing the book and the subject matter it contains. Hopefully after reading my statement, you, the readers, will have a greater understanding of the representation on the illtreatment of Aborigines throughout Australian history.

My motivations for writing ‘My Place’ were sparked by the realisation that my grandmother was “black, black, black” and that we were infact “boongs, you know Aboriginal” unlike what my mother had told us we were; “Tell them you’re Indian.” I wanted to, initially, provide my immediate family with the truth about our heritage and to hopefully create a sense of belonging. After speaking to my Uncle Arthur and hearing his story, I was persuaded to write for a larger audience and to give people an insight into the illtreatments and abuse of Aborigines through re-telling the stories of my great Uncle Arthur, my mother and finally my grandmother.

I chose to start with my own tale of events from my childhood and early adulthood highlighting the criticisms and difficulties I faced through-out school from teachers and friends. I used humour, almost unintentionally, through the retelling of these events to display to readers how humour is a part of Aboriginal culture and we often use this technique to deal with difficult and often sad situations. I moved into the biography of Arthur Corunna next, as he was the first to share his story. Arthur’s story tells of the how he was taken from his home on Corunna Downs and sent to the mission to be educated. Arthur tells of the harsh beatings he was subject to; “I had blood running down my thighs” while at the mission, and upon leaving the mission, the hard work and lack of pay he was subject to while working “I never did see that five bob a year”. Despite all this Arthur persisted with his many employers and eventually bought his own farm and became a successful businessman. Arthurs story provides a strong representation of the resilient and proud
nature of Aborigines. No one can say the black fella didn’t do his share of work. They made it (pastoral industry) what it is today.

I moved on through my mother’s biography and onto my grandmother, Daisy’s. Daisy had the most powerful story to tell, and by keeping the language of her story in its natural form (slang and colloquial language) I feel I was able to engage readers with the raw emotion that Nan portrayed in her story. Daisy’s story tells of how she was also taken from her home and forced to work, unpaid, for the Drake-Brockmans. Nan spoke about, although not in detail, of the rape she was subject to an how it was considered a privelage to be wanted by a white man. She tells of how she was not able to keep Gladys within the house that she had to be sent to Parkerville where she was only allowed to visit a few times a year. Nan’s descriptions of how she was made to feel, I believe, have the most affect on the book “I was a beast in the field…a dirty old black fella.” I carefully chose the particular events to highlight the mistreatment of Aborigines.

It has recently been brought to my attention that some readers feel that I am asking for sympathy or an apology for the mistreatment of my family. This is not the case. My reason’s for writing ‘My Place’ was purely one of information gathering and to provide an understanding of the illtreatments of Aborigines and how despite all that, they still remain a proud and resilient race.

In conclusion, I hope that now you have read my statement you have a greater understanding of the harsh treatments that Aborigines were subject to and the effects this had on them as a race. Hopefully my motivations for writing this book are now also clear so that you are able to make a better informed decision on the representations portrayed in my non-fiction text ‘My Place’.

Regards,

Sally Morgan

Topic chosen: 3B — Unpolished Gem by Alice Pung

I recently found myself immersed in Chinese–Australian culture and family life in Alice Pung’s vivid memoir Unpolished Gem. Between the lines of her witty and distinctive prose are serious and moving issues of Australian multiculturalism. In exploring Pung’s accounts and interpretations of Asian-Australians, the reader is confronted with the migrant experience of her family, and their struggle to bridge the cultural gap between themselves and the wider Australian community. Although Pung’s memoir is generally effective in enlightening the reader of Asian-Australian life, the memoir might also establish racially-based stereotypes which are not necessarily representative of Chinese-Australians.

Pung’s Unpolished Gem introduces the reader to her father, who establishes himself as a metra-vision franchisee. Her mother is an outworker whose relationship with Alice is turbulent and affecting. Early on, the reader is exposed to familial tensions which are created between Alice, her mother and her grandmother, who is at one point described as a “strong-jawed communist”. Her family and the Asian-Australian community she explores seem to confirm wider-community perceptions of Asian-Australians. Pung’s view of her community can be seen as somewhat caricature like – “to us there was no such thing as talky, cheap knick knacks.” To this criticism, Alice Pung has responded that her memoir “tells it like it was for me and my family.”

The harrowing past of Alice’s parents as refugees from Cambodia, and migrants from Vietnam, is largely left untouched. Pung’s choice to marginalise this is completely justified – Unpolished Gem is a memoir of her life and Cambodia is a foreign country to her. Pol Pot still hovers over sections of it though, without ever being really explored. Her grandmother thanks “Father Government (of Australia)” for taking them in when “Motherland China” abandoned them and “that angry teenage orphan Cambodia” left them to find for themselves.

The humour in Unpolished Gem is what really makes it work. Pung describes her infant self with “a clump of black hair plastered to her head like a Beatle circa the 60’s.” Often, the witty
descriptions have a bittersweet aftertaste: “I was Chinese Ronald McDonald minus the happy times.”

Pung’s humour makes serious issues in her novel, her depression and the struggle of her family to be successful, read well and seem even more personal. At points, descriptions of her family can seem inappropriate because of the intensity of their situation. In response to this, Alice has explained that she spoke with her family about Unpolished Gem’s content before its publication.

Alice is often trapped between conflicting forces in the memoir. Between her mother and grandmother, between Australian culture and Chinese beliefs and values. In her signature voice she remarks: “Australians all let us rejoice for we are young and free. Not held tight in the clutches of the village gossip, or the narrow-eyed matchmaker.” She makes powerful observations like these about the gap between Australian and Chinese culture. For readers who are not familiar with Chinese culture, Pung’s representation is a general one and isn’t an accurate one for all Asian-Australians.

Unpolished Gem is the memoir of Alice Pung and it explores not only her life, but the society and cultures which influence it. Pung uses humour and appeals to a wide audience with. Although her representation of Chinese culture is general and not necessarily representative of all Asian-Australians, it is effective in providing insight into her own culture, and therefore very relevant to Australian readers.

Topic chosen: 3B — The Diary of Ann(e) Frank by Ann Frank

Hello and Welcome to this weeks meeting tonight we will be discussing ‘The Diary of Ann Frank’

Written by a teenage girl during world war two, this book brings to life the struggles, both external and internal, of living in such violent times

Trapped in an annex and unable to move around during the day, Ann Frank spends most of her time writing in her diary. When the family Von moves in, followed by another man, Ann retreats even further into her writing. In one scene Ann stands at the only window in the attic, watching a mother and daughter walk happily down the street and wonders why she can’t do the same. The main protagonist in this novel is the silence and the time Ann has to wonder these things without ever getting an answer.

This book covers a range of themes including confusion, about puberty, fear of capture or death, love between Ann and her father and hate between her and her mother and finally what I believe to be the definitive theme of this book; hope.

The story of Ann Frank is ostensibly a story of hope personified by a fourteen year old girl. Her father also lends her strength through his silent, dignified compassion and his encouragement of her writing.

Ann Frank also personifies the quiet resilience of an entire nation, allow me to explain, when she runs out of paper Ann begins to write on toilet paper, on the walls and on anything else that she can find to hold a word she simply will not stop.

Also Ann allows herself to dream of a bright future despite her dim present. She truly believes that the Allies will arrive in time and rescue them and everything will be fine, even as the bombs shake the building and even as her loudest screams are drowned out by the blasts.

Hope, ladies and gentlemen is the power of this book and I hope you will read and enjoy it

Thank you
Paper Two Part A

Question 1: Imaginative and reflective writing

Topic chosen: 1A

Race to Hope

I stand in the middle of the road, surrounded by shaded faces and bright flashes of light. I can feel my bike placed between my legs, feel the sweat drip down my back. I tighten the strap of my helmet, and re-velcro the straps on my gloves. I look around for her, one last time before it begins. Relief sweeps over me as my eyes settle on those clear blue eyes, the bright smile telling me that I can do this. I give a quick nod before turning my attention back to the road ahead.

The noises are deafening, people yelling, cheering or barking orders, the sound of a thumping base pounds out of the speakers nearby, kids laughing and playing, unaware of what is at stake. I take a deep breath and drown all the noise out, suddenly all is quiet, except for the steady beat of my heart.

Boom-Boom, boom-boom, boom-boom .. I focus on my breathing, in and out, in and out .. it can't be long now.

I lift myself up into my seat, one foot balancing my bike, just as I hear the screech of the whistle! Suddenly the noise is back, loud as ever, my feet are up on the pedals, legs pumping to pick up speed. A sharp pain suddenly strikes my right hip, damnit, not now! I think of the metal in my side that replaced my shattered hip all but five years ago. I surge on, clenching my teeth to distract me from the pain. My mind goes back to her face, and the final words she spoke before giving me an encouraging push towards the white line “once you choose hope, anything's possible.”

Hope. The one feeling I had been without so long. I think of her face again. Hope. I must do this. For me. For her. I push my legs harder, feel the wind blow past my face and down my back. Harder and harder again. I focus on the rider in front, legs pumping like mine. I see a break and I go for the overtake. Boom-boom, boom-boom, boom-boom ...

I slowly nudge in front of him, and then another, and another. I watch the crowd turn into colourful blur’s, wooshing past my vision, feel the breeze on my face strengthen. Then another and another. I can see the lead, he’s twelve riders in front.

Hope. I think of her again.

My legs push harder. Sweat runs down the side of my face, down my arms, down my legs. My legs, my hip.. there’s no pain in my hip!

A surge of adrenaline and excitement pours through my veins.

I push my legs harder and harder. I’m only five from the front now. The noise seems to have gotten louder, I hear people calling my name louder and louder! More excitement, more adrenaline, I start to feel the burn in my legs. But I can’t stop now!

Third now, two more riders to go. Legs move faster and faster, I lift myself out of the seat, heart racing, legs pumping …

Second now, the cheering get louder. I can see the finish line ahead, I can hear the whizz of my tyres, can sense the glory of the finish line.

My legs are heavy, my lungs are burning. I can’t give up! I must have hope! I use the last ounce of energy I have. I must beat this guy! My front tyre comes even with his, I can smell his fear as he glances over his shoulder. I can do this! Legs push harder, heart beats faster. Suddenly we're even. My head is level with his.
Hope.
The finish line is only 200m ahead. I can see the line of photographers and officials lining up take the winning shot.

Faster! Harder!!
Suddenly I’m blinded by a bright flash! I can’t see! I come to a stop, jump off my bike. Blink my eyes once, twice, three times. I can now see the blurred images, hear the drowning screams in my ear’s, feel the overwhelming embrace of my family and friends. I take one look around, see that I’m over the finish line, then I see her running towards me, those bright blue eyes of hope, yelling “You did it!!”

Topic chosen: 1A

Pastor Renfield stood silently in the old stone doorway, his facial expression a mixture of curiosity and contentedness. The girl had been there for almost two hours and in that time had not once looked up or uttered even a single word. She just sat there with her fingers intertwined beneath her chin and her long brunnette hair flowing across one side of her face.

She looked peaceful, but in Paster Renfield’s experience no-one prayed for two hours unless they were deeply troubled about something. The urge to walk over and talk to the girl nagged at him, he would otherwise like to speak with her parents but she seemed to have come in alone, which was something else that baited Renfields interest. The girl couldn’t have been any older than eight and what eight year old dresses up to go to a church alone and pray with such pious devotion? Renfield had barely seen this kind of devout silence in those who served the church, let alone an eight year old girl he had never seen before.

Finally he could stand it no more and he walked down the corridor to the girl “For what to you pray, my child?” he asked in a low soothing tone of voice that he had spent years perfecting. The girl answered in one word “Daddy”. Renfield felt a lump rise in the back of his throat. “Please let him be alive” he thought, and sent off a little prayer of his own. Renfield was in the middle of wondering if he should ask another question when the girl solved his problem for him. She dropped her hands and turned to look up him, it was all Renfield could do not to gasp, this girl had the deepest green eyes he had ever seen. “Daddy’s over-seas fighting the badmen” she said in a tone that reminded Renfield of every sad song he’d ever heard.

He realized with a start that she was waiting for him to say something. “Your father is doing what he must out of love for you” he said, instantly surprised by the anger he saw behind her green eyes. At that moment there was nothing Renfield hoped and prayed for more than for this girls father to return and he felt that this hope would not go unanswered.

The girl rose slowly and gracefully to her feet and without looking at him began to walk down the hallway.

Suddenly Renfield had to know. “What’s your name child” he called out the girl stopped and turned to face him. “Hope” she said. Yes, Renfield thought, yes of course it is.

Topic chosen: 1B

A Dead Soldier’s Hope
Thank you for coming. Some of you may know me as Marcus, Ronald’s supervisor in the medical corps. Today, I speak not of our departed friend as his boss, but rather, a collegue, for this man has done for us more than anyone could imagine.

In this world, there’s lots of violence. Lots of bloodshed. Even in times of peace, we teeter on the brink of war. Our dearest friend, Ronald, knew this, and he wanted to make a difference. Change things. Strike at the black heart of the depravity that sinks its claws into the world. He didn’t
become a medical soldier simply because he wanted to fix wounds. No, he was as warlike as anyone else. He armed us with hope. Powerful shell of happiness, grenades that went up in explosions of loved life. He wanted to help people so they could become better, so they could see hope, so they too could work towards a peaceful world.

I remember the first battle Ronald was sent to … Reinforcements at Del’rim, in the middle east, to defend a besieged barracks. Everyone was glum… grim, even.

They looked sick of it all, ready to turn around and shoot themselves unless nothing short of a miracle occurred. And that it did. I saw him go around the encampment, holding a device foreign to a soldier. See, this strange machine could be ingested to make you feel better, so the soldiers found out. The device felt soft, spongey….crunchy, even, and tasted like chocolate. That damned cake boosted morale ‘till we were fit to burst, and as a result, we won the battle. This man single-handedly reminded us of the pleasures of life and pumped us full of 10,000 calories of hope.

Mind you, he wasn’t just a morale figure. No, Ronald had at least 150 soldiers with lives in his debt. Ronald even lost his left-hand pinky to a stray bullet, saving a soldiers life – how he convinced them to let him go back into the field minus a finger, I’ll never know. That incident got him the Antiseptic Cross, a high honour in the medical corps. Couldn’t have gone to a more deserving guy.

I suppose if Ronald had a flaw, it’d be that he worked a bit too hard. Even though his brain was never tired, we had to step in and stop his body from breaking down due to overworking more than a few times. Working alongside this man has shown to me the most wonderful example of a human being that I could possibly imagine.

I didn’t see much of Ronald’s domestic life, but what I did see didn’t shock me; a lovely wife and two bouncing, lively children. Having dinner with him and his delightful family, it became clear that this hope for humanity that he brought to the battlefield wasn’t restricted to such a place… No, it was everpresent, an aura of excellence that surrounded him, engulfing all those who befriended him.

Ronald’s passing on the field of battle is sad and unfortunate, however, we in the medical core will make sure his legacy of hope is carried on throughout our lives, and the lives of our children, and the lives of our children’s children. It is our goal that one day, just maybe, Ronald’s goal for this world will be fulfilled. To abolish war … An honourable ambition for a soldier.

**Topic chosen: 1C**

**Words on Working**

A brilliant writer once said “Many of the great achievements of the world were accomplished by tired and discouraged men and women who kept on working.” Good morning Dr Bell, teachers and year 12 students. My name is — — , and that very quote is one which unfailingly inspires me, and has given me hope when I’ve had none. I am a writer, ex-student, a woman, a mother and a University student. And, as you embark on your final year of high school, I am here today to offer my pearls of wisdom, as small as you might find them.

At the start of year 12, I sat exactly where you do now. I scraped through the work you have, I balanced friends, groups, work and boys as you do. I was tired, and I was discouraged. And one day, I forgot to keep working. I could not see where my English essays and my Maths tests were taking me. In fact, I never finished high school. Just before my 17th birthday, I was hospitalised with depression and an eating disorder.

I often wonder if my life would be much different if I had just kept on working. But for me, I was so overworked, my body and my mind were lost in translation. They no longer worked together, let alone work towards a dream I hardly had. It took me years to realise what it all meant, what I had gained through a slow and painful recovery. I learned that you must never lose sight of that one
thing that drives you. You must never lose the picture in your mind of the place you want to be, the work you want to do, the things that will make you happy.

Henry David Thoreau once wrote “If you have built castles in the air, your work is not lost. That is exactly where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.” It is a fact that on the magnificent journey called Life, you will tire, and you will be discouraged by other people’s success, and your own failures. But remember this, that is how it is meant to be. Without failure, you will have no room to grow. Failure means that you have succeeded in experimenting. And what is the world if there are no new thoughts, new words, new developments? Without failure, there is no progress. And without persistence and hope there cannot be failure, and there cannot be success.

I have been a fiction writer for 15 years. I’ve written stories upon stories, articles, reports, speeches, books. In my mind, I always had the picture of my life how I wanted it to be. I wanted to be published, I wanted my own family. I wanted my PhD, I wanted to own a house, I wanted to be known. And every day I knew this, and no matter how many times my manuscript was rejected, my relationships failed, and I struggled to make ends meet, I never lost sight of that picture. Last year, it was framed. I got my first novel published, I had my first daughter, I am doing my PhD part time. It sounds magical and simple. Know this: it wasn’t! It took 14 years of work, and a quote I read daily to fuel my hope, my success.

But how to keep working, without becoming overworked? How to be content in the long road to personal success? How to balance everything you work towards? Listen to that picture, listen to the world around you, and never underestimate hope. It is the glimmer of “what if?” that raises its beautiful head in empty moments. And it will guide you through the tired times. Good luck, I hope that with these humble offerings of advice, your picture will be framed.

Paper Two Part B

Question 2: Media

Topic chosen: 2A

“Many Aussie Women Lack Manners” (The Courier-Mail, 22 April 2009) is a highly critical opinion piece. Throughout this article, the author focusses on the manners of the “modern woman”. It is clear what the invited reading is and it is therefore interesting to examine how the author treats the subject of manners. The author clearly paints an image of modern women in a negative light and employs various textual devices which work to support the invited reading.

The fact that the author portrays the modern women negatively is apparent at first glance of the article. It is suggested that June Dally-Watkins is a “matriarch” of Australian deportment and that modern women are neglecting to adopt the values which this matriarch abides by. In particular, that good manners can be the making of a modern women. Further proof of this thesis is addressed more subtly but can be examined when deconstructing the text.

The invited reading of this piece is likely to be accepted predominantly by older, conservative men and women. Such readers are likely to share similar values, attitudes and beliefs with the author and therefore would be described as reading with the text. Such readers would agree that “Modern women mistakenly seem to believe good manners are not something a modern man holds as an aspiration” and as a result, have sunk in an attempt to “live in a man’s world.”

The author goes about achieving this invited reading by taking advantage of a range of language choices in order to engage readers and position them to see as he does on the topic. The most notable of these includes the use of emotive language throughout the text. Words such as “moody” shop assistant, “slammed” the door in a man’s face, “push(ing men) aside” and being an
“invisible man” all work to exaggerate the author’s cause. Also, the inclusion of appealing to popularity works to better the invited reading. For instance, a reality television show “Ladette to Lady” is a reference to prove the invited reading. However, it is not a credible source as it does not depict all of society but instead uses the worst examples of women’s manners to be exploited in order to gain ratings.

There is a victim discourse which is what the author uses to underpin a rhetorical concession in: “Maybe men are at fault. We are so unaccustomed to this new breed of woman that we don’t know what to do.”

The purpose of this is to suggest that men are trying hard to do the right thing but are being “huffed” at and are seen as “invisible” despite their good intentions. Moreover, modality is used in saying “Good manners … should … make interacting (more) pleasant”. No aspect of this invited reading is challenged in the article as positive input regarding modern women is completely silenced and it appears that for the author, the accounts provided of bad manners of some women is grounds to generalise all women.

Another noticeable textual device is found when examining the examples provided of women’s appalling manners. There are gaps in the text which position readers to assume something that may not have happened. An example of this is “A businessman recently … had a glass door slammed in his face”, after opening it for two women. It is seemingly unknown whether the women intentionally did this or it was an over reaction to an accident.

Thus to conclude, the author of this piece has attempted to prove that modern women have appalling manners through the use of the techniques examined. This is all done in a way as to resonate with readers and challenge them to read with the text and accept what is being offered. When deconstructing the text, it becomes clear that this article is a work of nostalgia and the author is longing to go back to a time when the “niceties” of good etiquette were observed.

**Topic chosen: 2A**

The article “Many Aussie Women Lack Manners”, published in “The Courier-Mail” on April 22, observes the modern cultural phenomenon in which women are allegedly turning their back on politeness and courtesy. The author employs selective writing practices, which position readers to perceive modern women’s behaviour negatively.

The most prominent negative depiction of women found in the article is the many examples of women behaving rudely, followed by men being depicted as the victims of said rudeness. Examples of this can be seen when the author tells of a businessman had a door “slammed in his face” by two professional women. A victim discourse constructed by the author when he uses emotive words such as “slammed”. The author also writes that “Many men are now becoming reluctant to open doors for women because they merely get “huffed at”. This use of words such as “huffed .. accusing .. slammed” further the readers sympathy for men, and resentment of women’s behaviour. It is emotive words coupled with examples of women behaving rudely that construct a negative depiction of women in the article “Many Aussie Women Lack Manners.”

Another tool that under the authors negative portrayal of women is the silencing of women’s opinions on the subject. Women would surely suggest, if given opportunity, that they too value manners and common decency. It can also be assumed that some modern women would question the authors examples as dramatic. They may also feel that the chivalry demonstrated by men in the article could be seen as patronising and outdated. However, none of these opinions are provided to the reader, as only male dominated thought is presented in this opinion piece. This silencing of a woman’s discourse is a deliberate technique, that positions the reader to accept the authors intended message.

Not only does silencing women promote women in a negative light, the authors well developed register also contribute to a negative depiction of women. This is because his/her audience
appreciates and accepts readily, educated opinions. As his/her cultivated register demonstrates to the reader that he/she is intelligent and further validates his/her depiction of women. The author also concedes that maybe “men are at fault”, depicting men in a negative manner. This positions the reader to believe that the article is fair and balanced. By appearing balanced and intelligent, the authors words resonate with the reader of the text, and further negatively portray women as poorly mannered.

It is the silencing of womens opinions, also with the authors intelligent writing and the examples of men as victims of women’s rudeness that construct a negative image of women in the article “Many Aussie Women Lack Manners.” This image further the authors desired message in the article and constructs a negative depiction of women.

**Topic chosen: 2A**

The Courier-Mail, a daily tabloid, published the opinion piece “Many Aussie women lack manners” on April 22, 2009. It offers social commentary regarding the declining standard of manners in modern women, and is critical of their behaviour. Women are represented in a negative light, and the author’s language choices and techniques construct this invited reading.

The Courier-Mail finds readership with conservative, middle-aged and older demographic who would construct the text’s invited reading. Readers from this demographic identify with the author’s world view and thus accept the opinions and examples put forward in the article. The author foregrounds negative images of women, who he believes ‘has sunk in her attempt to “live in a man’s world.”’ The author generalises that modern women, ‘regardless of age, race, status or income’ are ‘socially inep’ and ‘no longer care about politeness.’ The negative images the author uses include examples that women ‘push (men) aside’ and ‘regard footpaths, aisles and malls as theirs alone.’

The author’s use of emotive language heightens the drama of his argument and appeal to the conservative reader, who is persuaded. Women ‘huff’ at men, and ‘accuse’ them for being rude, when they are really being chivalrous. The use of this male victim discourse is a technique which further constructs the invited reading – that women display negative behaviour. The author describes men as “invisible” in a world where they are lost in trying to do their best to respect women.

Any negative behaviour by men is silenced. In an alternative reading, this makes the article seem unbalanced. However, as the dominant invited reading is constructed by a conservative demographic, this silencing is irrelevant to the author’s argument.

It is not fully made clear in “Many Aussie women lack manners” who the ‘modern women’ is. The author describes her as a ‘new breed’, which suggests a generational gap between the author and the subject of his criticism. This is a gap in the text, and the author often slips between using ‘many’ in describing modern women, to implying that all modern women participate in rude behaviour.

The author positions the reader to agree with his argument, and uses other language techniques to do so. He uses modality to express obligation (must, should) which re affirms his authoritative voice. His use of a cultivated register, especially in the article’s final paragraph, with its nominalisation and refined vocabulary (aspiration, indifference) to reinforce the strength and validity of his argument in its invited reading.

Conservative readers are likely to see women as the author does – as uncultured and ill-mannered. This demographic are probably not in favour of significant social change. They will respect the author’s willingness to concede that the modern woman are ‘self-reliant’ and are ‘financially independent’. Readers who accept the text’s invited reading will also admire the author’s rhetorical concession in suggesting that ‘maybe men are at fault.’
The opinion piece “Many Aussie Women lack manners” treats the subject of women’s behaviour in a negative light. The author constructs his invited through language choices which foreground negative images of women, use a victim discourse for men, and make his argument sound balanced and cultivated to a conservative reader.

**Topic chosen: 2A**

“Many Aussie women lack manners”

Positioning readers to see women in a negative light

Published in morning tabloid The Courier-Mail (22 April 2009), “Many Aussie women lack manners” is an opinion piece that foregrounds negative images of women. The ideal reader of this text is positioned by the use of language, examples and silencing.

The ideal reader of this text would be an older, conservative male (and to some degree older, conservative females). These readers would agree completely with the discourses that are foregrounded in this text as they have the same reading practises and world views as the author. This conservative group from The Courier-Mail’s key demographic are already of the belief that women are rude, “loud and uncultured” so the author does not need to try exceptionally hard to persuade them.

The first technique the author uses from his catalogue of literacy devices is language. The author uses strong words such as “loud”, “socially inept” and “moody” to position readers to see females in a negative light. Use of emotive and kinesthetic language including “huffed”, “sunk”, “slammed” and “pushed” also invites the readers to think ill of women. Ideal readers are impressed by his cultivated register when foregrounding his moral discourse.

“Good manners displayed by men or women should serve to make interacting with other people a pleasant experience”, and are persuaded by his use of modality.

Not only does the author use language to persuade his ideal reader, he also cites examples of rudeness displayed by women. To depict exactly how the “modern woman” has “sunk in her attempt to live in a “man’s world”” he names circumstances where business women “order” around hotel concierges and “moody shop assistant(s)” who are rude to customers. In particular when the Brisbane businessman “revealed” to this author his anecdote about having women slam a door “in his face”, the ideal readers are convinced that “modern women” only care about themselves and do not hold good manners as an aspiration.

Finally, by silencing important views on this topic, the ideal readers are invited to see women in a negative light. The author intentionally leaves out any women’s views on manners. His rhetorical concession, “maybe men are at fault …” is admired by conservative readers, however in saying this he does not state what modern men may be doing wrong. The author’s silencing of any negative images of men helps to persuade the reader that “invisible” men are being victimised at the hands of these “yobettes” and “ladettes”.

“Many Aussie women lack manners” priviledges a victim discourse and a moral discourse by the use of carefully constructed language, examples that highlight negative images and gaps in the text. “Modern women” would hope that the author would stop writing social scripts designed to boss young women about and put away these weapons of patriarchy.
**Topic chosen: 2B**

Stereotypical representations of being Australian are often developed and reinforced by the media. Several forms of media like print advertisements, feature films and newspaper articles make use of such stereotypes. An advertisement which shows representations, reinforcing stereotypes is the *Australia Day* advertisement.

The *Australia Day* ad employs a variety of techniques to catch the attention of the target audience, and portrays representations that may appeal as being typically Australian. The ad illustrates a man, holding out a checklist with things to do on Australia day. The checklist includes representations of being Australian with things like ‘Listen to the Choirboys’ and ‘Go to a cultural event like the fireworks’, which shows that Australians are social people and like getting together for events. The stereotype of Australians loving their cricket is employed with the checklist option ‘make a disparaging remark about english cricket’, which also exploits the aspect of humour. Humour has also been used along with a typical Australian representation of Australians loving the outdoors and the barbeques through the checklist option ‘overcook a variety of meats on semi-hygienic BBQ’s’. The humour presented in the ad, uses the stereotype of Australians being easy going and people who have the ability to laugh at themselves.

Media in general reinforces these stereotypes by representation in other genres, feature films use stereotypes and representations of being Australian. The much loved character Mick Dundee from the movie ‘Crocodile Dundee’, represents a typical Australian male and stereotypes the larrikinism often associated with the males. Newspaper articles on Australians being stereotyped as sport lovers and beer lovers are often seen. Television advertisements also exploit these stereotypes for audience to advertise their product.

The media repeatedly presents Australian attitudes and beliefs to the audience and gradually turns them into stereotypes. Certain cultural values and assumption often reinforce these stereotypes. The stereotype of Australians loving the outdoors and the beach is often seen and stems from Australian attitude of being beach lovers. Young children are exposed to stereotypes with characters such as ‘Blinky Bill’, which justifies the attitude of Australians towards stereotypical representations.

Media exploits stereotypes to a large degree, even in advertisements for tourism, which are used outside Australia. The audience is positioned to identify with the identity of being Australian and with aspects such as humour, the reader can easily recognize the stereotype employed.

Other stereotypes which are often evident across media are Australians being lovers of nature, which can be seen in ads, illustrating bushland or farms, or that of Australians being rough and ready to face anything as seen in films such as ‘Crocodile Dundee.’

Overall, the *Australia Day* advertisement, sends its message across with much success, by exploiting stereotypes and representations of being Australian, which is a common technique used by the media to persuade the target demographic on various aspects.

**Question 3: Poetry**

**Topic chosen: 3A**

The poem "Last of His Tribe" by Henry Kendall is a text that describes an aboriginal man who is the last surviving member of his tribal group. Henry Kendall invites readers to sympathise with the loss and sadness experienced by this aboriginal man, after his tribe has passed on. This poem contains strong use of poetic technique to express the loss of culture that the last tribe member is experiencing.
This poem contains strong references to aboriginal beliefs and values, however it is the poets language choices that most powerfully demonstrate the loss of culture that the dark haired man is experiencing. Whilst hunting and animal life is observed through the poem, the use of the words "Nullah", "Lubra" and "Uloola" is especially significant. By exploring aboriginal discourse as part of the poems language, Kendall provides perceptions of aboriginal culture that further the sense of loss interpreted by the reader. This use of aboriginal language, coupled with the poets depiction of the corroboree and other aboriginal motifs, powerfully demonstrate to the reader the true loss of culture that the indigenous man has lived through.

Another device that proves most effective in “The Last of His Tribe” is the poets use of repetition, found in the closing of each stanza. In repeating certain elements of the text, Henry Kendall is inviting the reader to feel the true power of the poem.

The poet states lines such as:

“Or think of the loneliness there --

Of the loss and the loneliness there …

With those who will battle no more --

Who will go to the battle nomore.”

This form of repetition directly increases the power and flow of the poem, enabling the reader to fully appreciate Kendall’s intended reading of the text. Another facilitating factor that conveys this poems ideal reading is the authors tendency to compare past and present moments in the life of the aboriginal man. This technique in particular resonates with the reader, as they are able to gain some sense of what has been taken away from the aboriginal protagonist. Henry Kendall contrasts hunting practices in stanza three, with the mans “dreams of the hunts of yore”, in stanza four. This diversion back into history is also exemplified in the nature in which Henry Kendall describes the surroundings of the dark haired man. He depicts an ethereal nature setting of trees, wallabys, salt lakes, rolling hills and tumbling water. However, this image is then described as “desolate”. This implies that the change that the aboriginal man has experienced over time has turned a once beautiful place into “desolate lands”, and is a clear indicator to the reader that since the passing of his tribe this land can no longer be considered beautiful to the aboriginal man. It is historical comparisons such as these which help enforce the invited reading of the poem “The Last of His Tribe”.

It is the poets use of poetic techniques such as language choices, repetition and historical contrasting that make this poem truly powerful. Social dislocation experienced by the aboriginal man underpins this poem, and is communicated well, allowing the reader to feel empathy for the indigenous man in the poem.

**Topic chosen: 3B**

“Shooting the Dogs” by Philip Hodgins and “Last of his Tribe” by Oodgeroo Noonuccal present strong examples of Australian identity through the characters and settings they portray. Hodgins uses a rural setting with a battling Aussie farmer while Noonuccal presents an indigenous Australian to achieve her representation of Australian identity.

“Shooting the Dogs”, a conversational monologue, tells the story of an Aussie farmer who is forced to move ‘into town’ which results in the decision to 'put down' his two farm dogs as “we could not take them with us.” Hodgins invites the readers to see the harsh facts of Australian identity by portraying the message that Australian farmers are sometimes forced to make difficult but practical decisions. This invited reading is achieved through the subject matter and the mood of the poem. Hodgins presents the farmer as the narrator of this poem, as he expresses his regret in making his decision; ‘There wasn’t much else we could do’, and through the strong visual and aural imagery presented in the final stanza; “Each time the gravel slid off the shovel it sounded like something trying to hang on by it’s nails.”
This personification also represents the will to live which reinforces the theme of the poem and the representations of Australian identity. Another key factor of Australian identity is humour which Hodgins utilises through the farmer recalling fond memories of his dogs; “plunging off through the thick paspalum noses up, like speed boats,” and “we’d grimace like the young dog discovering what was in the egg.”

Alternatively, “Last of his Tribe” provides a more serious representation of Australian identity through the protagonist, Willy Mackenzie, a once proud leader, who is now displaced in his own country. “Last of his Tribe” presents many strong representations of the native Australian identity such as “Soft vowelly tongue,” “Boomerang and spear” and “You leader once in the corroboree”. These statements provide strong images of the Aboriginal culture, reinforcing the identity they, as a race, hold within Australia.

Noonuccal illustrates her beliefs that Willie Mackenzie; representing the Aboriginal community, is displaced in their own country through the mood and poetic devices presented in the poem. A melancholy and regretful mood is achieved by the repitition of words such as “All gone, all gone” and “Last of your clan – Last of your tribe” and also through the alliteration in “lonely and lost” and “sudden sting of tears”. These devices reinforce Noonuccal’s melancholy representation of the native Australian’s identity in Australia.

Therefore, aspects of Australian identity heavily feature in “Shooting the dogs” and “Last of his tribe” through the representations of the Aussie farmer and the native Australian and the hardships both these characters face in Australian life.

**Topic chosen: 3B**

Australian identity is often represented by poetry. Poetry shows how beliefs and values are treated in the society and provides a wide aspect on a topic. Two such poems which foreground ‘Australian identity’ are “Drifters” by Bruce Dawe and “Last of his Tribe” by Oodgeroo Noonuccal; these poems show different aspects of identity with comparable features.

“Drifters” is a free verse poem set in the future, which throws light on the topic of suffering faced by Australian fruit pickers. The poem talks about an Australian fruit picking family and captures the reactions of the different members on being asked to move. A discourse of unstability is employed throughout the poem. Special emphasis is placed on the wife who seems to be facing this a lot and has lost all hope, which is understood by the lines “She won’t even ask why they’re leaving this time, or where they are headed for”. The male figure who is absent throughout the poem informs them about their move, and he is inferred as the decision maker of the family. The “bottling set she never unpacked from Grovedale” is used a symbol for time, and represents how frequently the family changes base. By using a conversational tone throughout the poem, Dawe makes the reader see the troubles they are facing, and helps understand the aspect of Australian identity of fruit-pickers which is foregrounded in the text.

The poem privileges, the value of stability and the need to be settled in one place; By representing the plight of the family, the poem shows the reader how hard it is to live a fruit picker’s life and highlights the hardships faced.

“Last of his tribe” on the other hand is a free verse poem, exploiting a discourse of aboriginal suffering and describes Australian identity from the eyes of an aboriginal. Noonuccal in the poem talks about a man named Willie Mackenzie who is the last surviving aboriginal of his tribe and has been put in a Salvation army home. Mackenzie is shown to be very sad away from his tribe and has been referred to as a “displaced person in your own country”. With the example of Mackenzie, Noonuccal has foregrounded Australian identity in a different light, that is one, where aborigines are not treated equally. Mackenzie is shown remembering his past, and thinking about the fact that nothing would ever come back to him. “Change is the law, the new must oust the old”, shows readers that the aborigines have been subdued and have been left without any sense of belonging.
Imagery employed in the lines “think of the gay throng, the happy people”, and repetition of the lines “all gone”, reinforces the idea that Mackenzie will never be the same again. The value privileged in the poem is that of equality for aborigines and recognition of their Australian identity. “Drifters” and “Last of his tribe” both represent different aspects of Australian identity. “Drifters” shows the plight of Australian fruit pickers using a discourse of instability, whereas “Last of his tribe” uses discourse of aboriginal suffering and represents injustice faced by aborigines, but both of these poems send their messages across and represent a combined wide view of Australia.

**Topic chosen: 3B**

**Representations of Australian identity in two poems**

Oodgeroo Noonuccal’s “Last of His Tribe” and “Shooting the Dogs” by Phillip Hodgins are two poems which offer representations of Australian identity. The invited readings of these two poems are constructed by their respective author’s use of poetic devices. Although the aspects of Australian culture they portray contrast each other, they are both emotional portraits of an Australian way of life.

The invited reading of “Last of His Tribe” is that traditional Aboriginal history, culture, language (“soft vowelly tongue”) and a way of life are disappearing as the last old tribal elders die. Unlike Noonuccal’s protest poems, “Last of His Tribe” is an emotional acceptance that “the new must oust the old.” The persona grieves this loss as she meets with an “old Pinnaroo” who symbolises a traditional Australian identity that is “all gone, all gone.” The narrative voice is personal, Noonuccal describes the persona’s interest in the fading way of life, “I asked and you let me hear,” and emotional responses. These are privileged using Noonuccal’s language choices and poetic techniques.

The persona speaks to the old man in second person reflective address, (which gives the poem an intimacy.) The poet employs a combination of imagined times and details of the old man’s life in a eulogy-like manner using ceremonious syntax:

“**You** singer of ancient tribal songs,
**You** leader once in the corroboree,
**You** twice in fierce tribal fights.”

The strongest impact of the poem is in the last six lines where it is revealed to the reader that the old pinnaroo’s name is Willie Mackenzie, and that he lives in a ‘Salvation Army home’. The speaker’s response, a “sudden sting of tears,” evokes similar emotion in the reader. The poet uses a paradox to describe the man’s situation:

“Displaced person in your own country,
Lonely in teeming city crowds”

This signifies the end of an era in Australian history, and the gentle discourse of nostalgia is resonant with the reader, and underpins the poem’s invited reading.

Philip Hodgins’ “Shooting the Dogs” uses a farmers discourse to construct an aspect of Australian identity. The narrative tone is colloquial and uncluttered which supports this discourse. The persona informs the readers that he and his family are moving “into town,” and that “there wasn’t much else (he) could do” but put down his loyal country dogs. This decision reflects the pragmatic, responsible values of a farmer and the reader is invited to respect this part of the Australian identity and empathise with the farmer’s difficult decision. The poignant last lines of the poem:

“Each time the gravel slid off the shovel it sounded like something trying to hang on by its nails”

reveals the persona’s grief at having to put down good country dogs.
The narrative voice of the farmer is essential in inviting the reader to appreciate a particular part of the Australian identity.

The simple, practical tone stands in stark contrast to the last lines of the poem, which personify the will to live. This description of the dogs’ burial evokes an emotional response in the reader, who appreciates the farmer’s respect for life and (his subsequent) grief at having to take it away. Hodgins silences any alternatives in putting the dogs down – the practical farmer accepts it is his responsibility to do the difficult task. The beliefs and values of the farmer are conveyed through his decision, and enlighten the reader of a part of the Australian identity they may not be familiar with.

Two poems which offer representations of the Australian identity are “Last of His Tribe” by Oodgeroo Noonuccal and Philip Hodgins’ “Shooting the Dogs.” The former provides the reader with an emotional reflection on the passing of traditional Aboriginal culture, and grieves the loss of this Australian identity. Hodgins’ poem gives insight into the farming discourse and the values and beliefs which underpin that part of the Australian identity.