

English

2017 Senior External Examination: Assessment report

Statistics

Year	Number of candidates	Level of achievement				
		VHA	HA	SA	LA	VLA
2017	63	3	18	27	13	2
2016	59	2	11	28	15	3
2015	59	4	10	33	9	3
2014	67	3	14	30	15	5
2013	79	0	7	45	23	4

General comments

The 2017 *English Senior External Examination* was based on the *English Senior External Syllabus 2004*. The examination consisted of two papers of equal weighting. Both papers were assessed holistically, using the three criteria of the syllabus:

- *Criterion 1: Knowledge and control of texts in their contexts*
- *Criterion 2: Knowledge and control of textual features*
- *Criterion 3: Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts.*

While all three criteria were present on each task-specific criteria and standards sheet, not all aspects of the three criteria were present in each task. The aspects of each criterion were selected and derived according to task demands. All tasks were contextualised for candidates in terms of purpose and audience.

Candidates who responded effectively to the questions were prepared to think flexibly and use their knowledge of the texts, or the theme in the case of Paper 2 Part A, and the required genre to develop their responses. Candidates who recounted learned information, regardless of its relevance to the questions, submitted less effective responses and performed poorly in Criterion 1 and Criterion 3.

Candidates are encouraged to engage in self-assessment of their written work. They should respond to each piece of writing by demonstrating their knowledge of discourse, genre, register and textual features.

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.

Candidates are encouraged to:

- discriminate in the selection of subject matter used in responses
- exploit the conventions of genres for particular purposes
- develop and extend ideas throughout their responses by analysing and evaluating the texts they have studied
- respond to the demands placed on them through the roles and relationships adopted when responding to particular questions
- employ appropriate tone and tenor
- construct responses that are consistent with the actions and words of selected characters
- make their work responsive to the nuances and demands of the tasks provided.

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 are encouraged 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
- integrate and synthesise direct evidence within responses for the purpose of analysis
- be fluent with the language of the syllabus (specifically the terms from the glossary)
- use paragraphs
- allocate time to perform a careful proofread.

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 are encouraged to:

- make choices that invite readers to take up intended positions
- analyse how readers are invited to take up positions
- evaluate representations
- shape representations
- analyse and evaluate the evidence provided in texts
- make purposeful choices that invite readers to take up positions about texts
- identify the positions readers take in response to texts and explain how these readings are produced
- consider cultural assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes
- synthesise evidence and use this evidence to respond to the tasks
- make deliberate language choices when shaping and evaluating character representations.

Resources and required texts

Candidates are required to study a range of texts to prepare for the examination, specifically:

- expository texts, e.g. analytical, persuasive, reflective, argumentative, satirical
- two to four prose texts, including at least one novel and one work of non-fiction, such as a biography/autobiography, memoir or substantial expository or analytical text
- one to two drama texts (in most cases one Shakespearean play), e.g. scripted drama, television and film scripts
- media texts, e.g. CDs, internet, films, documentaries, television programs. Candidates should specialise in one medium for the purposes of the examination, i.e. one medium selected from either print (including newspapers and/or magazines), radio, television or advertising (both print and electronic)
- 10–12 poems, including a range of poetic forms selected from lyric, narrative and dramatic poetry across cultures and time.

Candidate responses

The following pages contain sample essay responses that met the A standard as defined in 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

Tick the topic you have chosen: 1A ☐ 1B ☒

Title of the play: HAMLET

Author of the play: WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Respond according to the task requirements.

Dear Horatio,

I am writing this ^{letter} to you in haste and Osric will bring it to you. I know that you are anxious for me so I want to explain why I am not taking your advice: "If there is any thing you dislike in the duel with Laertes, don't do it" Oh, what a true and noble friend you are - a rare gem in poisoned Denmark! I know that you would leap to make excuses for me, but regardless of the disquiet I feel, I am ^{resolutely} determined to go through with this friendly duel. What harm can come from it? I thought ^{it is true that} mine uncle's treachery is writ large upon it with his extravagant wager.

So much has happened since you first brought me the news that the ghost of my noble father walked upon the battlements. How the truth it revealed about my murderous, traitorous uncle has upturned my life. Oh how far hence seem our joyful, peace-filled days at Wittenberg, with our poetry, music, ancient histories and philosophical dissertations! How ill prepared

they leave me for the task of avenging my beloved King and father!

As you can testify, Horatio, my way was shown clear before me when the players acted out the murderous poisoning of a King. The play indeed caught the conscience of the false King and caused him to flee. Yet still I have not acted! I, the peaceable scholar, think too precisely on things; a thought, which when quaff'd is but one part wisdom and ever three parts coward. So I have constantly found myself ^{leapt} and bound around with crippling procrastination - and my good and noble father is still unavenged.

But, Horatio, things changed when mine uncle sent me on the ambassador-mission to England in the company of my childhood friend-knaves, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, whom I trusted as adders fang'd. Good fortune had it that I, with ^{high suspicion,} had ^{made} arrangements with my sailor friends - how often we had sailed together to Wittenberg! - and set them to play at being pirates! There is a providence, Horatio, for as I told thee, one night at sea my spirit was stirred and restless. I crept into the chamber of my false friends and extracted their documents. Imagine my horror and rage as I held in my hand the written command of my uncle ordaining my most instant death. That bloody bawdy villainous, lecherous
2 murderer!

But providence watches over all for in my purse was my fathers signet ring with the Royal Seal of Denmark. So, in words fair and lofty, re-wrote I the commission ordering the present deaths of Rozencrantz and Guildenstern.

Then, Horatio, at that moment, holding my own death in my hands, I sat for a long time looking Death, full in the face. He comes for us all - we saw that today in the grave yard. Oh, many the time I have wished with deepest longing to end my own life but God has set his ^{Canon} cannons against it. And further, conscience makes cowards of us all for who knows what awaits us in Eternity. But Death will come - there is a divine providence in the fall of a sparrow ^{so} Death must wait on the Divine timing. But if it is not now, it will come. It was as if the west wind swept my mind free of pale thoughts and procrastination. A new determination reigned there and so now I am resolute. The readiness is all.

I will defy misgivings and duel with Laertes, then straight on to what ever comes. I will take revenge on mine uncle who has killed my King and father, stained my mother and stolen my Kinship. He is but a cutpurse of the Empire and rule. Would I not be damn'd, Horatio, to let this canker of our nature come to further evil.

I go now to meet Laertes. Join me as
quickly as you can. If ill comes upon
me, I commission you to relate my
cause aright.

May God be with you, Horatio.
You are in the core of my heart,
Aye in my heart of hearts.

Hamlet.

Paper One Part B

Question 2 — Novel: Persuasive/reflective response to literature suitable for a public audience

Tick the topic you have chosen: 2A ☒ 2B ☐

Title of the novel: The Great Gatsby.

Author of the novel: F Scott Fitzgerald.

Respond according to the task requirements.

It can sometimes seem, in these days, that there is a rush for material wealth and a ^{sad} sliding decline in moral and spiritual values. This often brings to my mind the classic ^{American} novel of F Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby, published almost one hundred years ago. The Jazz Age, the 1920's, has much in common with our own — its message is a ^{warning} finger writing on the wall of our times. Fitzgerald invites readers to see that the great American Dream of prosperity and a bright future can be corrupted and end in disaster if it is not sought with integrity ^{and spiritual values}. He demonstrates this by tracing the course of the dreams held by three groups of characters: firstly, the eponymous character, Jay Gatsby; secondly, Tom and Daisy Buchanan, and finally George and Myrtle Wilson.

Fitzgerald uses the protagonist of his novel, Jay Gatsby, to show how the great American Dream can end in disaster. The original American Dream was of religious freedom and prosperity through hard work and equality for all. 'James Gatz', (as he was then)

"son of unsuccessful and shiftless farm people" steps out on the path of his dream as a boy, following a self improvement schedule. His father later said of him: "Jimmy would have gone far... he would have helped build up the nation". This is ironic because, unfortunately, at seventeen, Jay Gatz reinterprets himself as Jay Gatsby, with the aid of the bootlegging millionaire, Dan Cody, and later, with the equally corrupt Meyer Wolfsheimer. As an army officer, Jay Gatsby's dream crystallises into love of Daisy Fay, a rich girl from Louisville. Finding her already married to Tom Buchanan, after the war, he sets himself to amass a fortune by dubious means. When Nick, the intradiegetic narrator, warns Gatsby that one cannot repeat the past, he is shocked - sure that money can achieve all things - crying, "Why, of course you can." But Gatsby's dream is doomed. It crashes against the selfishness and carelessness of the Buchanans. Yet, though Nick despises everything that Gatsby stands for, "You're better than the whole damn bunch of them." Nick tells Gatsby. Nick recognizes in him an invincible hope, a romantic readiness and sees that his dream was incorruptible. Gatsby, heroic and generous to the last, ^{in effect,} gives his life for his dream.

use of the
Fitzgerald's characters, Tom and Daisy Buchanan, invites readers to see that the

American Dream does not always bring ^{the} happiness and peace it promises. Tom Buchanan, rich with 'old money' is an arrogant, hulking brute of a man. He is manifestly unfaithful to Daisy and abusive to his mistress, Myrtle Wilson. Fitzgerald foregrounds the Buchanans' bankruptcy of happiness and peace. They 'drifted restlessly... wherever people played polo and were rich together.' Fitzgerald invites readers to see the aimlessness ^{& spiritual poverty} of the Jazz Age when Daisy asks, "what shall we do with ourselves this afternoon, and the day after that, and the next thirty years." Principally, Fitzgerald represents the carelessness of the age. "They were careless people, Tom and Daisy, smashing up people and things then retreating back into their money or their carelessness or what ever it was that kept them together, leaving other people to clean up the mess."

Fitzgerald's ^{portrayal of} the Wilsons invites readers to see the disasters inherent in the Dream gone wrong. George Wilson hopes to gain wealth through buying Tom's car while Myrtle Wilson aspires to marry Tom and so gain his social standing and wealth. Both are casualties of the carelessness of the Buchanans. Myrtle is left "smashed up ^(recklessness) on the side of the road ^(dead)".

The invited reading of The Great Gatsby has great value in pointing out the pitfalls inherent in the search for material wealth without having accompanying integrity and spiritual values. Fitzgerald skillfully achieves this invited reading.

the portrayal of
through his characters Jay Gatsby, the Buchanans
and the Wilsons. It is a valuable lesson
which we would all do well to ponder deeply
in our current age.

Question 3 — Nonfiction prose: Persuasive/reflective response to literature suitable for the mass media or for speaking and/or presenting to an audience, specific or general

Tick the topic you have chosen: 3A ☒ 3B ☐

Complete the following:

Either

Full-length text

Title: MY PLACE

Author/s: Sally Morgan

or

Short texts

Text 1 title:

Author/s:

Publication/source: Date (if known):

Text 2 title:

Author/s:

Publication/source: Date (if known):

Text 3 title:

Author/s:

Publication/source: Date (if known):

Text 4 title:

Author/s:

Publication/source: Date (if known):

Text 5 title:

Author/s:

Publication/source: Date (if known):

Respond according to the task requirements.

← Good morning. Welcome to our monthly Billagat Book Club meeting. Today I would like to open our discussion by presenting the Australian award-winning classic, My Place, by Sally Morgan, which was published by Freemantle Press exactly thirty years ago. In particular, I will be evaluating the ^{PR} [representation of a relationship: the relationship between Sally Morgan and her mother, Gladys Corunna. This relationship is represented effectively and skillfully through the theme of Morgan's search for truth: as a child; on a spiritual and emotional journey back to Corunna Downs Station; and finally with Gladys coming to terms with her personal truth through the retelling of her own story.

The initial representation of ^{the relationship of} Morgan with her mother, Gladys, glows out from the autobiographical first section of the book. Morgan describes their warm family life, sprinkling humor ^{throughout} like shining diamonds among the difficulties and poverty. Gladys relies on her first child, Morgan, taking her to the hospital to forestall any arguments with Bill, Gladys's husband. After Bill's death, Morgan effectively prevents Gladys from considering remarriage - an easy task as 'family' was a strong value for them both. When asking her mother about their origins, Morgan receives the reply, "Tell them you're Indian." It is not until she is twenty-one that Gladys is brought by Morgan to

admit that this, ironically, was "a little white lie." It was then that Morgan decided to write a book about the family, much to Gladys' horror. This situation effectively shows their different attitudes to truth. Morgan is a trail blazer for truth but Gladys, from her own childhood ^{experiences,} has a fear of it. The truth about the family's aboriginality could mean that her children would be taken away from her even as she had been taken from her mother, Daisy, at a very early age under the 1936 Native Registration Act.

The representation of the mother and daughter is skillfully and sensitively built up through the journey to Corunna Downs Station. Part of the unique structure of My Place is the insertion of three autobiographies of Morgan's relatives, each telling his or her own story in an individual way. After Arthur has told his compelling and, at times, distressing story, Morgan decides to visit Corunna Downs Station and is accompanied by Gladys. By this stage of the book Morgan leads the way so her relationship with her mother shifts and changes. Gladys, having for the first time found family – back several generations through the living memory of the Aboriginal people. "Thank god you're so stubborn, Sally," she exclaims. She felt that had only been half alive and now rejoiced in the feeling of belonging and having found her 'own place'. The relationship between mother and daughter is further deepened by a strangely shared dream in which these ancestors visit, bringing comfort.

when Gladys reveals the truth about her life. ~~The~~ relationship was ^{their}

The relationship between Morgan and her mother is beautifully portrayed. ~~The~~ relationship was totally cemented as Gladys, encouraged by Morgan, finds courage to face painful memories. Gladys lays bare her heart and tells her story of loneliness, insecurity and separation from her own mother in the Aboriginal Mission ^{home}. She astonishes Morgan who has had no idea that Gladys had been in a home. Gladys relates what it was like to live with the damaged war veteran ^{veteran} Bill, sharing his story also. She tells her story with love for her family shining through it, with a gentle humour and with deep spirituality. To Morgan and Gladys grew very close through this retelling. Gladys herself received a release from the fear that had kept her prisoner all of her life.

The growing, ever-strengthening relationship between Sally Morgan and her mother, Gladys Coronna is represented with great skill and effectiveness in My Place. Morgan's relentless search for truth drives both the story-line of this non-fiction work and the growing relationship between herself and her mother Gladys. Morgan sensitively represents this through relating her own childhood experiences with her mother, through their shared spiritual, emotional and identity seeking journey to the Coronna Downs Station Area and finally through enabling Gladys to find courage to relate her own truth and to find peace and a sense of belonging among her own people. I hope

you will find My Place as rewarding as I have!
Thank you!

Paper Two Part A

Question 1 — Imaginative and reflective writing

Tick the topic you have chosen: 1A ☐ 1B ☒

Respond according to the task requirements.

Title:

The Sydney Conference of my international organisation was drawing to a close. We were relaxed as we finalised decisions and future meeting dates, most of us already packed for an early departure the following morning. I was joking about lost luggage when called to the phone. My heart went cold as the crackling, far-away voice shouted, "Rosa is dying. Can you come immediately? Rosa is dying!"

Rosa was a young, vibrant leader in our Peruvian branch. It was almost impossible to think of her even being ill for a day, but now she was deep in a coma. Her very life was feared for and if she survived, which doctors thought unlikely, the lack of oxygen at the time of her collapse could leave her as a vegetable.

I was due back in a heart-breaking township in South Africa and my thoughts, which had already preceded me there among the beautiful Zulu Natal people, were abruptly pulled back. My position in the organisation meant that Rosa was my responsibility. Behind the worry and sorrow I felt for her dangerous state of health, loomed a decision — a decision which only I could make. Should I follow my first impulse, drop everything

and rush to Peru. It would be ^{very} expensive and take about forty-eight hours ^{to get there}. Would she still be alive when I arrived? Would my poor Spanish make me a useless bystander?

The urgency of the situation made my thoughts wooden and slow. I felt as if the ground of my normal life had fallen away on all sides, leaving me on a narrow ledge of indecision. The other needs of my work clamored urgently. Just as the highly sensible solution – that the situation would be best handled by phone and email – was beginning to set in concrete, a line I had recently read, penetrated my rapidly pulsing thoughts.

"Everyone is a mix of the good and the bad decisions that they make."

I stopped still, repeating the words again. What was a good or a bad decision? Hind-sight makes a good judge, but for the here and now? What was the good decision that would become part of the future me? ... or even part of our future organisation? What was the most important thing here? A vision of a still, pale as death Rosa and her bereft little group of associates rose before my eyes... and my decision was made.

A frenzy of activity ensued, and finally I was on the first plane of the long-journey. A tall thin figure in a dark cloak accompanied me all the way, leaning close at intervals to whisper, "She will be dead by

the time you get there!" My heart sank lower than my shoes when the two weeping women met me at the airport. Our painfully slow ^{conversation} conversation revealed, however, that Rosa was still alive but time was running out for her. She had shown more of the hoped for improvements and her thread of life was reliant totally on machines.

I found Rosa, as white as her sheets, captive to a multiple of tubes and cables. She looked already dead! I stifled my panic and mustered my meager store of Spanish, telling her how good it was to see her and bringing greetings from all those who loved her from around the world. Rosa stirred, becoming a little agitated. A nurse quickly took my place and I left the intensive care unit in a daze, to join the group of friends camped on the corridor.

Amazingly, our vigil of waiting was rewarded. A change came. Rosa's heart took up its work again, and each day ^{there was} a new piece of news to send around the world. "Her eyes have opened!" "Today she wrote in my note book" ^{one week later} on Christmas day, she left the ICU for a private ward, able to say a few words about a mysterious journey into other realms. I got lost in the city while out buying ice cream to celebrate!

Looking back on my life, I recognize ^{the} many bad and many foolish decisions that I have made. However,

Since that Peruvian experience, decisions have become a little easier. Perhaps it is due to recalling Rosa telling me of the upsurge of joy and energy she experienced on hearing my so easily recognisable terrible Spanish. And I am so grateful for that particular decision!

Paper Two Part B

Question 2 — Media: Analytical exposition

Respond according to the task requirements.

Title of document: DOCUMENTARY : THE LAST MAN HANGED

Media is a master in the arena of shaping public opinion and the well-constructed documentary is one of its virtuoso players. A documentary simultaneously entertains and educates, while positioning its viewers to accept its message. The documentary, The Last Man Hanged, (1993) chronicles the events surrounding the controversial 1967 hanging of Ronald Joseph Ryan. Its director, Lewis Fitz-gerald, presents a strong anti-capital punishment message generally in a balanced way. He achieves a parity of persuasive objectivity by questioning Ryan's guilt in a balanced way, by equating Ryan to a type of 'every-man', and finally by relying on the facts surrounding a hanging, using re-enactments. Some bias is, however, evident in the documentary.

Fitzgerald presents the question of Ryan's guilt in a balanced way. One of the exceptional features of The Last Man Hanged is the piece-to-camera interviews conducted with those who were involved in the events surrounding Ryan's execution. While all speak positively about Ryan — "Ron was a marvellous father", the wife. "I could see straight away he was exceptional," the gaol governor — most firmly believe that Ryan did shoot Prison Officer Hodson, though unpremeditatedly. To balance this, Fitzgerald presents

evidence that Ryan may have been innocent. The evidence includes archival documents showing Ryan's 'small time' criminal record, missing evidence, discrepancies in witnesses accounts, the significant timing of a prison warden's suicide, and a visual graphic demonstrating that the bullet which shot Hodson came from an elevated position. [The Documentary could have been more balanced with the inclusion of a family member of Officer Hodson and perhaps Ryan's criminal record was understated.] A statement from the obviously distressed gaol governor underlines the importance of the aspect of guilt, "If they get it wrong, it is a terrible thing. You can't get a man back".

Fitz-gerald presents the ^{view} issue of anti-capital punishment in an objective way, by portraying Ryan as a type of 'everyman'. The documentary's title The Last Man Hanged indicates this, as also does the fact that the interviewees are referred to only in their role: the wife, the psychologist, the reporter, the priest---. The words of Keith Wiley, a reporter who witnessed Ryan's hanging, are used at the beginning of the documentary, "Was he really so very different from me? He lived and breathed. He had a family he loved." Ryan is presented with the obvious flaws of his criminal activity, along side his difficulties and poverty growing up, his care of his aged mother and love for his family. The documentary shows that a person can see the error of his or her ways and change for

the bitter. Capital punishment curtails that possibility. As Ryan wrote to the Anti hanging Committee, "God never denies us hope or another chance. Why should our earthly judges?" Religious symbolism is woven into the documentary. By a subtle parallel, it goes a step further by coupling the newly-converted Ryan to the Crucified Christ, who is pictured on Ryan's cell with the words of Christ to Judas the betrayer, "What thou doest, do quickly." The 'Betrayer' is the State - the State in the person of Premier Bolte. Here some bias enters in as Bolte is silenced. He is ^{only} quoted indirectly albeit by eminent persons - the judge and the priest. Also in the archival photos he is represented as clownish.

The Last Man Hung demonstrates its objectivity most strongly by relying on verifiable facts about the action of the hanging itself. Using forceful repetition and re-enactments, the shocking and gruesome spectacle of a hanging invites viewers to look long and hard at its brutal reality. The re-enactments are filmed in a harsh, cold blue light and are supported by hauntingly sad Irish music and macabre rattling melodies with a deep anxiety building base. At the moment of the hanging, all music stops, an almost shocking contrast which leaves the audience only with the horrific sound of the rope creaking under the weight of the body, and of the voice of the priest reciting the prayers. As a prison officer said, "It is all very well

to be brave from a far, and say "Hang him!" but when you are close and see all the preparations - it's chilling, cold and heartless.

The Last Man Hanged is generally presented in an objective way, through questioning Ryan's guilt; through considering Ryan to be similar to any one of us, a type of 'everyman'; and by using the verifiable facts about hanging itself. While there is some bias evident in the documentary, its strong message is mainly balanced, as it delivers its compelling call to totally abolish capital punishment forever in Australia.

- Thorough analysis that is related to the topic.
- Some errors - not serious.

Question 3 — Poetry: Analytical exposition

Tick the topic you have chosen: 3A ☐ 3B ☒

Complete the following if you are responding to Topic 3B.

Title: Up the Wall

Poet: Bruce Dawe

Title: The Mitchells

Poet: Les Murray

Respond according to the task requirements.

Poetry is that miracle of word economy which encapsulates a whole living, emotion-evoking world — all within a few stanzas. Two poems which display this 'miracle' in a wonderful way are "Up the Wall" by Bruce Dawe and "The Mitchells" by Les Murray. Interestingly, both are modern-day sonnets though they contain 'worlds' of differing natures. Both poems ^{create} give a representation of a relationship.

Bruce Dawe's "Up the Wall" represents the relationship of a husband and wife. The wife's 'world' is foregrounded in the poem's title 'Up the Wall', a metaphor for the desperate feeling that the woman has — that she is being driven mad ^{by her} closed environment with the loud children. Dawe uses many poetic devices to show the woman's isolation and desperation. The run-on lines underline the fact that,

"No week-end comes to mark off my week
From any other — ..."

The beginning of the first line, "The kettle's plain song" could lead a reader to think of a calming,

healing cup of tea but that thought is shattered by
 the dramatic contrast of the line's ending "rises
 to a shriek", and so the tone is set for the octave
 of the sonnet. The regular rhyming scheme echoes
 the building tension, which like the simile "like
 the horizon," closes in. The din of the children
 metaphorically carving the mind, with deep
 damage done, brings the woman to vocalise her
 dismay and despair in the quatrain. The
 repetition, "She says, She says," hammers home
 her desperation and highlights her isolation.
 The couplet completely turns the coin: life from
 the husband's perspective. He, by way of
 contrast, has 'friends' 'They laugh'. The matter
 is dismissed. Dase mad^o the couplet to
 show forth^o the lack of communication - 'she says',
 but he doesn't hear - and understanding in
 this relationship. Very different is the
 relationship portrayed in "The Mitchells".

Leo Murray writes his sonnet as a divided octave
 followed by a divided sextet, in what seems to
 be ordinary speech - and the Australian speech
 in this context shines out as something very lovely^o.
 The octave paints the peaceful picture of the two
 men, touchingly humble in the bush setting, boiling
 water "in a prune tin". The onomatopoeic hum of the
 bees on 'their shift' ties nature to the work of the two
 men. The sextet moves into an imaginary →

with the ^{way} humour inherent in it, "Yes, Like trying to
 farm the road."

[Such is the gently ^{sure}, like the speaker of the poem, are eager to know who these men are.
compelling nature of the poem that

* Conservation between the watcher and the two men. * Their relationship is represented in the curious way that both men identify themselves in the same way, as if harking back to a far off Scottish Clan where membership is of more importance than individuality. "Nearly everything they say is ritual," again gives the sense of belonging to something bigger. The poem portrays their relationship as one of ^{settled} contentment, with an underlying understated importance. The last line "Sometimes the scene is an avenue" opens the poem to encompass not just these ^{two} working Australian men, but perhaps all, country and city alike. Indeed, power poles are raised throughout our wide land.

The two poems "Up the Wall" by Bruce Dawe and "The Mitchells" by Les Murray both foreground relationships but in very different settings. Both poets skillfully use poetic devices to express the characteristics of the particular relationships. Though very different, both are wonderful, thought provoking poems.

Nature is privileged by the affectionate naming of the white bursaria blossom (Christmas bush) and the "noon of wattle", giving a beautiful visual image of 'unthinning mists of white' and golden w.

• very thorough analysis and evaluation!