

# Good Answers

ATAR English 2024

Based on the 2023 ATAR English Examination



# Good Answers

## ATAR English Units 3 & 4

2024

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English Teachers Association  
Western Australia



## 2024 Good Answers English

*Good Answers* books are produced by the English Teachers Association of Western Australia.

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# Foreword

*Good Answers* guides are produced by the English Teachers Association of Western Australia. ETAWA is the professional association for English teachers in WA and works to help teachers improve their professional skills and knowledge through conferences, seminars and publications, including examination papers and online resources.

The sample responses in this book have been chosen from candidate responses to the 2023 English ATAR course examination. The purpose of this collection and accompanying activities is to provide teachers and students with a range of responses, which together exemplify ways for students to improve their performance in the external ATAR English course examination.

The scripts reproduced in this publication were written under English ATAR examination conditions and may contain faults in written language conventions and general argument development that should not feature in responses prepared outside of examination conditions. Candidate scripts have been reproduced as accurately as possible. Minor editing of misspellings or grammatical errors may have taken place in the rare instance that a sentence was otherwise unintelligible.

It should be noted that this publication is not designed to be used as a textbook in the traditional sense; rather, it should be read **primarily as an examination preparation guide**. The Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus, which directly informs the coursework and assessments in all schools, along with the Examination Brief contained within it, should remain the primary document that students refer to in their preparation for the examination.

The texts referred to throughout this guide for illustrative purposes have been selected on the basis of their diversity or their potential as exemplars. Not all texts referenced will be regarded as accessible or appropriate for study within particular classroom contexts or as suitable for some candidates. Every effort has been made to include a broad range of both the 'tried and true' texts, as evidenced in past examination responses, as well as more recently produced texts that indicate a capacity for analysis. Texts that relate to the three cross-curriculum priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia and sustainability have also been favoured when possible. The variety of texts suitable for study in the ATAR English course is virtually endless; not all of them can be included in this guide.

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# Introduction

## Welcome!

*Good Answers 2024* contains candidate responses to questions from the Comprehending, Responding and Composing sections of the 2023 English ATAR course examination. It also contains information and activities to assist you in preparing for this year's examination.

*Good Answers* provides a wide range of responses to help you recognise that there is no single 'right' answer to any question. While there are undoubtedly certain structures, features and characteristics of responses which markers are looking for, so too do markers reward the individual expression, style, perspective and voice of each student.

The following points, however, are essential criteria for all candidates to consider when answering any question:

- *engage* critically with the question
- *organise* and *sustain* a cohesive and articulate discussion, argument, explanation, interpretation, narrative or perspective
- *substantiate* your discussion, argument or point of view by referring to texts or examples, where required
- *express* your own ideas clearly.

This book is called *Good Answers*, not *The Best Answers* or *Perfect Answers*; samples are selected from these available scripts because they serve to illustrate points from which you can learn. It is critical that you carefully read the annotations provided by markers in order to identify aspects that were rewarded as well as flawed areas for which possible improvements have been suggested.

It is recommended that ATAR students devote at least three to four hours a week for study of English, which is in addition to completing required assessments. *Good Answers 2024* can be used as a tool to guide this study and practice.

## The 2024 English ATAR course examination

In 2024 there will be one English ATAR course examination. It will examine the essential content of the course, as described in Units 3 and 4 of the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus.

The English ATAR course examination includes three sections: Comprehending, Responding and Composing. You should already have a good understanding of these three exam sections, the Examination Brief, the types of questions in each section and how much time is recommended for each section. Later this year, all schools will receive the official cover and inside cover of the 2024 English ATAR course examination, outlining how many questions will be in each section of the paper, how much each is worth and how much recommended time to spend on each section – this saves you valuable time reading the same information in the exam.

When considering what to study, it is very important to realise that texts are not an end in themselves. That is, the meaning you have made from any one text is not as important as your understanding of how and why you made that meaning. The texts you study are vehicles to help develop your understanding of how language works and how to use it effectively. In a nutshell: subject English is not text-based. It is based on concepts and skills.

While you cannot know the exact wording of the questions, the examination structure is not a mystery – you will have to discuss texts in detail and you will have to demonstrate your comprehending, analytical and composing skills. It is clear that the greater engagement you have with a wide range of texts, the more likely you are to demonstrate a broad and deep understanding of the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus, the concepts it covers and its examinable content. Indeed, the syllabus on which the exam is based is the most important text to know thoroughly, given that exam writers use it to construct the examination.

The English ATAR course examination at the end of Year 12 will assess how well you have developed the understandings and skills required by Units 3 and 4 in the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus, which build on the content covered in Units 1 and 2. Several focal aspects of each of these units are likely to be combined within one question, particularly in the Responding section. It is not possible to examine every single aspect of the course in just three hours. Naturally, a particular examination paper can only include questions about some aspects of the syllabus. That's why it's so important that you are familiar with the syllabus in its entirety and that you practise refining your skills, knowledge and understandings, along with your adaptability.

The English ATAR Examination Design Brief appears in the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus. It is a guide that dictates how the exam must be structured. It is essential that you familiarise yourself with it closely, so you know exactly what to expect and how to manage your time efficiently. You can refer to the Exam Brief via the copy of the syllabus provided by your school or download it via the SCSA webpage at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au>.



## Preparing for the examination

There are a variety of ways to ensure that you are thoroughly prepared for the English ATAR course examination. Some of these ways include the following:

- **Familiarise yourself with every aspect of the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus.** This includes becoming familiar with the metalanguage and subject-specific vocabulary you should be using.
- **Experiment with writing in a variety of forms for different purposes and audiences.** You do not always need to write full-length responses. Sometimes time constraints will mean that a plan, a thesis statement, an introduction, a plot overview and so on will still allow you to think carefully about a question and demonstrate your understanding of it.
- **Each time you study a new concept, spend time thinking and writing about it.** Don't move on until you have mastered the concept successfully, even if this involves asking your teacher for clarification, checking your understanding with other students or locating further explanations through independent research.
- **Read the work of your peers.** Try to read peer models that you aspire to. In this way, you are able to apply your understandings of what works successfully to your own responses.
- **Know what to expect by reading numerous sample or previous English ATAR course examinations.** Try to identify patterns between them and note how they fulfil the Examination Brief.
- **Practise responding to these sample or past examinations under a range of conditions.** This includes with unlimited time and access to your notes and computer, as well as under strictly timed conditions.
- **Edit, edit, edit!** Constantly rework your responses once they have been marked and returned to you. Make the suggested corrections and improvements before resubmitting them for extra feedback. This process can be repeated many times.
- **Form small study groups and discussion forums with your peers.** Get together over a coffee once a week and have a conversation about your studies in ATAR English.
- **Stay positive.** Avoid getting absorbed in any negative talk or thoughts in the lead-up to the exam. Approach it with the positivity that comes from preparation and practice.
- **Never attempt to memorise and reproduce a previously submitted or pre-written response.** Rather, work on applying your skills and knowledge to the widest range of questions possible within the syllabus framework. Spontaneous answers have a better voice and generally score more highly.

# The Comprehending Section

## General observations

The Comprehending section is primarily concerned with your ability to deconstruct existing written, visual and/or multimodal texts. Your main aims in this section should be threefold:

- to demonstrate an understanding of the texts' main ideas
- to demonstrate an understanding of the texts' construction
- to compose a clear, succinct response.

The Comprehending section contains **two unseen texts**, where one text is a written text and the second text may be a written, visual or multimodal text. These texts can be of almost any type, excluding drama and poetry texts. Therefore, you should be familiar with the ways in which written and visual language modes and features work, so that you can apply your understanding to any text.

There will be **two questions**, in which one question can require comparison between Section One texts. You must answer **both questions**, which are equally weighted. Your answers must be in the form of a short answer, specifically a concise response of approximately **200–300 words**.

The Comprehending section is worth **30%** of your total English ATAR examination mark and it is recommended that you spend **60 minutes** on this section.

The Comprehending section may require you to read or interpret a text:

- for its meanings: the representations or interpretations of particular groups, ideas, themes and issues
- for its genre: its use of generic conventions, similarities with or differences to other texts of the same genre
- for its perspectives: viewpoints, values, attitudes or ideas
- for its construction: the use of structural, language or stylistic features and/or patterns particular to its mode
- for its effects: its impacts on audience response, its purpose/s and/or function/s
- for its relationships: the connection between different Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus concepts such as voice and perspective or content and structure, the interplay of visual and written elements, the most/least influential features of the text
- using a compare and/or contrast approach applied to any of the previous points.

The above list does not include references to all Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus concepts. You may be required to address others or any of the above in combination with each other.



## Time management in the Comprehending section

The two responses in this section should take, on average, about 30 minutes each to complete if you adhere to the recommendation of 60 minutes in total. This includes planning time. It is recommended that you spend about five minutes reading, annotating, thinking about and planning for each question in the Comprehending section, allowing you approximately 25 minutes to write and proofread each response.

### Advice for reading the texts

- Read each question carefully.
- Use the reading time to skim each text, getting a feel for its general content.
- Read the provided contextual information to help with your understanding.
- You may wish to refer to the Acknowledgements at the back of the exam for further publication information, although this is not essential to answer the questions.
- Once working time begins, re-read each text carefully, this time annotating it with the question you are required to answer in mind.
- Any extra reading time you have in the initial ten minutes provided at the start of the exam can be used for re-reading and considering the Comprehending section texts.
- Plans should consist of just a few words per response and can be written around the question itself and can include graphic markers such as arrows or Venn diagrams.
- Plan when you need to aim to finish each question in advance of starting to write – you should know this before you even enter the examination venue. In saying this, try not to get too obsessive about time. Make sure you are not spending too much time on one question at the expense of another.

### Advice for writing clearly and succinctly

- Writing succinctly – that is, explaining yourself clearly in as few words as necessary – is the best time management strategy there is. Getting to the point quickly, using precisely nuanced language, employing metalanguage and avoiding unnecessary words in your expression can all add up to valuable time saved.
- Avoid sentences that merely repeat the question or repeat the contextual information already provided to all candidates; every sentence needs to add value.
- Remember to get straight to answering the question. There is no room for ‘padding out’ your response with general statements like you might include in a Responding section analytical essay or including points that do not directly relate to the text/s or contribute meaningfully to answering the question.
- Writing succinctly takes a great deal of skill and practice. It is important that you carefully plan your response in order to select the most important details to discuss.

## Considering Question 1

Analyse how Text 1 uses features of its genre to promote the film.

### Interpreting the question

The question asks candidates to analyse the text's use of features of genre in order to promote the film. To analyse means to identify components in the text and the relationship between them. Additionally, candidates should look to draw out the relationship and consider the implications of this. For this question, it means identifying the features of the text and considering the relationship between these features. The implication being that the features of the genre will operate to promote the film so when analysing the image, candidates should make this connection. The word 'promote' suggests a deliberate attempt to engage an audience in watching the film. Candidates might analyse how the text's construction can incite interest or engagement.

Genre is a core concept in the English ATAR syllabus. Genre, according to the ATAR English course glossary, is 'used to distinguish texts on the basis of their subject matter, and form and structure'. Examples of genre of subject matter include; fantasy, crime, romance and examples of genre of form and structure include; poetry, novel, short story. Therefore, Text One's form and structure is a promotional film poster but it can also be categorised as a fairy tale, folk tale, fantasy, gothic or war genre text, which is the genre of subject matter. Candidates who are able to identify both the genre of subject matter and the genre of form, and how they operate together to promote the film, will demonstrate a strong understanding of the course concepts.

The 'how' of the question may include exploring the generic features of subject matter. Candidates might look at the inclusion of marionettes, gargoyle creatures and the fairy. They may also comment on the interaction between humans and supernatural or mystical creatures as forming a key component of the fantasy genre. Additional features of genre present include the gothic setting, the illustration style as well as the inclusion of elements of war. Candidates should then look to analyse features of the subject of form including, but not limited to, the title of the film, the inclusion of the director's name, the ornate framing, composition and mis-en-scene. The term 'adaptation' is a key concept in the English ATAR course syllabus. Candidates are encouraged to analyse how Text 1 is an adaptation of the 1883 Italian novel *The Adventures of Pinocchio* and draw on prior knowledge of previous versions of the film including the Disney versions. When applying this to the promotion of this version, candidates should look to the fresh approach of this version and the blend of genres.

### Advice from teachers

- Comprehend each part of the question. For example, some candidates may inadvertently discuss genre without considering how this links to the promotion of the film. All aspects of the question are crucial.
- This is a complex and detailed image. Take time to explore every part of the text before formulating a response.



## Question 1: Sample response one

The strength of this response lies in its vocabulary and understanding of genre and promotion. There is a sophisticated knowledge of terminology associated with genre. Another strength of this response is the depth of analysis. The candidate chooses to only focus on the three central characters in the image. In doing so, the candidate can delve deeply into the construction of these characters. This is a lesson for candidates. It is not necessary to reference every single aspect of the text. Successful responses will focus on key aspects of the text allowing them to be analysed and comprehended in depth. The recommended word length for each response is 200–300 words. This response is long at 572 words. To improve, this response could be more concise, deleting unnecessary words and focusing on not repeating.

Through the use of visual codes such as composition, body language and facial expression, the film poster deftly utilises elements of fantasy horror animated film such as eldritch horror and *mis en scene* in order to evoke a feeling of unsettlement and elicit interest in fans of the genre to view the film.

The film poster follows a visual hierarchy in its arrangement of its central characters, which immediately alerts viewers as to the nature of the relationship between characters – one that is based on manipulation and power – creating a sense of perturbation and in turn interest in the film being advertised. The woodcarver, Gepetto, is the central point of the composition and is rendered in higher contrast than the background foregrounding him as the central figure in the film's narrative. This creates interest, as historically and traditionally, Pinocchio is the iconic titular character of the story which follows his character arc, so by subverting viewer expectations by placing so much emphasis on Gepetto, curiosity is elicited in potential film audiences and the poster suggests additional depth and subtext that lies beyond the scope of the traditional tale. Pinocchio, meanwhile, looks every bit the puppet he is portrayed as with blatantly mechanical features – being crafted entirely of wood – and is a crude caricature of humanity, his hands being held up by Gepetto hence his importance, humanity and thereby autonomy is largely diminished. However at the top of the visual hierarchy is a feminine eldritch creature, incorporating aspects of fantasy and horror. She manipulates Gepetto much as the woodcarver manipulates his puppet, her hands resting imposingly on Gepetto's shoulders. Hence, through this manipulation of composition and body language, it is clear she has some sort of authority over Gepetto, perhaps in a Faustian deal of sorts – whatever the case, it is evidence she is a supernatural being, a common creature of fantasy horror films which creates curiosity and interest in potential film goers for the unknown.

The film poster additionally utilises facial expression and juxtaposition in order to evoke a feeling of dread and a mood of terror that horror film

The thesis statement addresses the question by identifying genre, elements of genre and a link to promotion of the film. It is 53 words and could be more succinct.

A very long topic sentence. Simplify and aim to get straight to the point.

Candidate demonstrates a sound understanding of visual metalanguage and incorporates it seamlessly.

Here, the candidate addresses the question by highlighting how the poster creates interest.

Here, they demonstrate an understanding of adaptation and how adapted versions of traditional tales intrigue audiences.

The candidate spends quite a bit of time breaking down the hierarchy. This could be much more succinct.

The first two sentences could be combined and shortened.

posters tend to elicit. Horror film posters often feature the protagonist with a facial expression that conveys fear. Here, Gepetto's facial expression is mixed in ambiguity, which his facial features contorted in a way that suggests discomfort and fear in his circumstances, a common feature of horror films that contributes to an underlying current of tension and anxiety. Hence filmgoers can expect to experience this tense, uncomfortable atmosphere throughout the film. Pinocchio's lack of humanity is again emphasised by his unnatural features – blank, black beady eyes devoid of any realistic human detail such as a distinct iris, pupil and eye white, staring into nothingness. This adds a sense of uncanniness to his depiction and hence to the poster's overall mood, emphasising fantasy horror elements such as non-human protagonists and insentient objects gaining sentience creating an uncomfortable mood that evokes a feeling of disturbance and curiosity in the film, hence increasing engagement with it. Finally, the fantasy being has a facial expression that depicts a sense of serene detachment from the mortal world and is devoid of any emotion or sentiment; this is furthered by her incandescent, white eyes in contrast to Pinocchio's blank, pitch black gaze. The juxtaposition of angelic features (the large, feathered wings unfurled) and her gaunt body further create unsettlement, and hence an interest in avid fans of fantasy horror films.

Sound understanding of the uncanny, a feature of gothic horror. This genre is common for director Guillermo Del Toro. Having an understanding of this director's work could strengthen their analysis.

This is a very long sentence. Be succinct and to the point.

The candidate ties back to the question in the final sentence, referencing both the genre and how this promotes the film to a specific audience.

### Activity: Reduce sample response one

Sample Response One, whilst very insightful, is over 500 words. The recommended length is 200–300 words.

Rewrite the response to a maximum of 300 words. The thesis statement has been done for you:

*Through the use of visual codes as well as elements of the fantasy and eldritch horror film genre, a feeling of unsettlement is constructed, eliciting interest in fans of the genre to view the film.*



## Activity: Practise annotating an image

The table below can be used to support your thinking about what might be important to annotate.

### 'What' you see:

The subject matter of the image, the people, animals or objects in the image and the 'story' they tell or their meaning.

### 'How' you see it:

The symbolic and technical aspects of construction and how they shape overall meaning.

E.g.	Camera shot
Objects/props	Focus
Symbols	Composition
Characters/subjects/people	Foreground and background
Clothing/costume	Line and shape
Setting/place	Salience
Body language	Framing
Facial expression	Rule of thirds
Gaze	Juxtaposition
Proximity	Leading lines
Words/phrases	Typography
Camera angle	Texture

You can locate images from past English ATAR WACE examinations to complete practice annotating images. Alternatively, you can use any images you can find. Try to practise with a range of types of images including still photographs, film posters, advertisements, book covers, stills from films etc. Follow the steps below:

**Step One:** Choose an image.

**Step Two:** Put a 5-10 minute timer on.

**Step Three:** Annotate everything you see (subject matter/content) and how you see it (symbolic/technical).

**Step Four:** When the timer is up, determine the following:

- The purpose of the text (*hint: this is largely associated with the text type*)
- The mood/atmosphere of the text
- Ideas communicated through the visual elements
- How you respond to the image.

This is an easy activity that can take 10 minutes. Repeat this daily or weekly with a range of image types. A regular hint for success in the Comprehension section of the examination is to read often and varied. The same can be said for reading visual images.

Use this activity regularly throughout the year to improve your reading of visual texts as well as your ability to read and comprehend quickly.

# Question 1: Sample response two

This 298-word response is succinct while utilising sophisticated vocabulary. A strength of this response is the analysis of techniques. The candidate describes what they see, then explains the effect and finishes with linking to the genre. This ensures all elements of the question are addressed. The candidate demonstrates a strong understanding of adaptation referencing the original tale and explaining the promotional impact of this version as a revisionist text. This is an example of writing a one paragraph response that is succinct. There is no one way to construct a comprehending response.

Text 1 uses supernatural, anthropomorphised characters, ominous mood and a surreal setting that is typical of the fantasy genre to promote a modern, revisionist film adaptation that brings to life the traditionally treasured tale of Pinocchio.

In the central vertical third of the film poster is three salient figures, with a wooden puppet, Pinocchio, in the foreground, a short old man behind him, a winged, tall, ominous creature in the background acting as a frame to the other figures. These characters have been stylised such that the proportion of the characters are distorted imbuing them with the sense that they are not of the real world. Functioning as a feature of the fantasy genre, the supernatural salient characters promote the fantasy elements of the film, however, the more extreme stylisation of the characters suggest this film will incorporate more atypical, fantastical aspects that are not traditionally within the 1883 novel. Furthermore, the dark tones in the foreground coupled by the chaotic compositions where anthropomorphised characters and unusual objects like planes and a church that creep around the edges of the poster create an ominous, mysterious atmosphere. Conventional of the fantasy genre, the feature of an ominous, supernatural mood and surreal setting promotes audience expectations that the film will be action-packed with surprising elements. The absurd combination of different characters, from marionettes to monkeys to nuclear zombie-like figures also promotes the fantasy film as one that takes a contemporary, revisionist approach to a classic story of Pinocchio. Through adhering to the ominous setting and surreal characters of the fantasy genre, the film poster sets itself up to promote the magic and captivating twists of the film adaptation of Pinocchio providing audiences with the comfort of traditional characters whilst also engaging them with a new, modern take on the tale.

A clear and concise thesis statement that clearly addresses all aspects of the question.

It is important to describe what you see; however, this first sentence could benefit from further editing.

The candidate delves into how the features of the genre promote the film by exploring atypical elements.

The exploration of promotional aspects is not repetitive. The candidate adds another layer exploring how the poster promotes action-packed and surprising elements.

The candidate provides a concluding sentence. This isn't always necessary. Don't include a concluding sentence if it simply repeats your thesis statement.



## Question 1: Sample response three

The candidate explores the gothic and war elements of the image. There is more than one genre at play in Text 1 including fairy/folk-tale, fantasy, Gothic and war. Sophisticated responses might look at the blend of genre which the candidate successfully achieves in this response.

Text 1's varied use of multimodality, such as the slender typography, symbolism and foregrounding appeals to viewers familiar with the fantasy genre to promote the film Pinocchio.

Text 1 depicts a marionette propped up by an older man with mythical creatures surrounding them, such as an angel, a monkey with hyperbolic features and other marionettes which appear to show signs of life. This is backdropped with the words 'Pinocchio' written in Gothic typography, echoed similarly at the bottom of the text reading "Guillermo Del Toro." The use of the Gothic typography with thin curved lines that outline the letters immediately indicate to readers that the film is beyond the realm of our reality, ensnaring them in a fantastical world beyond our contemporary society. By transporting readers into another world, the text materialises the fantasy genre depicted in the text, which engages viewers with a familiar sense of folk fantasy. However, the text is littered with copious symbolic references to a war happening externally, as seen in the gas masks and aircraft at the bottom right corner of the image. This is supplemented by bombs and other explosive shaped objects suspended in mid-air by thread, which connects with viewers intimately familiar with the fantasy and war genre. By symbolically representing the threat of world destruction in the background of the text, juxtaposed with the fantastical creatures in the foreground, Text 1 allows readers to infer that the tale of Pinocchio is adapted to a context of our contemporary understanding of war while fusing elements of fantasy in the folkloric tale. This is supported by the dominant elements foregrounded in the text, which depict what appears to be Pinocchio operated by Gepetto, who is steered by the omnipresent angel behind him. The use of salient elements in Text 1 clues viewers into the heart of the story which could be inferred by viewers as the capricious and controlling relationship between father and son whilst dealing with the perils of eerie mythical creatures and war backdropped in contrast. In viewing Text 1 as a promotional work of the classic tale of Pinocchio, coupled with the macabre imagery of warfare occurring in the background, Text 1 promotes the film as a fantasy coming of age story through the multimodal elements of typography, symbolism and foregrounding.

A concise thesis statement; however, it doesn't add much to the question.

The candidate methodically approaches their analysis describing what they see, the effect and then linking to genre and promotion.

The candidate highlights their understanding of blending genre referencing the Gothic typography.

Here the candidate expands their understanding of genre detailing the features of the war genre present in the image.

A strength of this response is the connection between audience and promotion. A film poster aims to target a specific audience and this response details an adapted version for a contemporary audience.

**Activity: Create your own thesis statement**

Rewrite the below thesis statement to provide a more specific answer to the question particularly surrounding the promotion of the film.

Text 1's varied use of multimodality, such as the slender typography, symbolism and foregrounding appeals to viewers familiar with the fantasy genre to promote the film Pinocchio.

**Activity: Add genre to your toolbox**

Genre is a key component of the ATAR English course. Question 1 requires candidates to understand key conventions of two genres, the fantasy/fairy tale genre and the film poster genre. Create a bank of genre conventions. You can use the following table to help. It is not exhaustive but is a good start.

Genre of subject matter	Typical conventions	Example texts
Romance		<u>Me Before You</u>
Comedy		
Fantasy	Non-human creatures A journey or quest Whimsical atmosphere	
Fairy tale		
Science fiction		
Crime		
Horror		
Coming of age		<u>Jasper Jones</u> <u>To Kill a Mockingbird</u>

Genre of form (specifically for visual texts)	Typical conventions	Purpose
Film poster		Provide information about the film To target a specific audience
Advertisement		
Film still		
Book cover		
Photograph		



## Considering Question 2

Explain **three** ways the character Ned is constructed in Text 2.

### Interpreting the question

This question primarily requires a focus on how the characterisation of a central character in the text, named Ned, is constructed. The command word 'explain' involves making the relationships between different aspects of the text clearly evident and providing justification as to how and why these aspects work together.

This question requires close analysis of characterisation, which is a distinctive generic feature of imaginative, narrative texts such as Text 2. When considering characterisation, candidates might consider elements of explicit characterisation in the narrator's description of dialogue or actions. They may also discuss elements of indirect characterisation inferring details from the setting, symbolism, other character's reactions, as well as narrative point of view.

This question requires candidates to explain three ways the character is constructed. Candidates could consider how Ned is a thoughtful and sensitive character aware of others which is communicated through the narration. The exposition where the setting is established through Ned's dream reveals his desires whilst also creating a sense of fear or foreboding about sailing or drowning. Candidates might also explain Ned's strong work ethic, his determination but also his introverted, stoic or even secretive personality. The explanation should focus on how the candidate interpreted these qualities. They might reference the use of dialogue, appearance, interactions, thoughts and narrative point of view as to how they interpreted Ned's character.

### Advice from teachers

- Stronger responses will consider both the elements of characterisation and the traits or ideas about the character that are generated from these elements. Some candidates may inadvertently discuss one or the other. It is important to make a connection between the two.
- Be discerning in choice of evidence. Not every part of the text will be necessary for a sound interpretation. For example, the text is set during World War Two and candidates may read Ned as patriotic or helping the troops. This isn't a strong reading. Read the extract more than once and ensure you have comprehended the character before writing.

# Question 2: Sample response one

This 264-word response is tight and succinct whilst demonstrating comprehension of the character Ned. The candidate demonstrates knowledge of metalanguage associated with an imaginative text by analysing imagery, the character's interactions and dialogue. The response demonstrates understanding of traits associated with the character in addition to how those traits have been conveyed to the reader.

In text 2, Ned is constructed with a strong desire for freedom through the cumulation of imagery around owning a boat. Furthermore, he is also constructed as careful and quiet as he interacts with others, and hardworking through the dialogue of others.

Ned's "boat thirst" is conveyed as he fantasised about owning a boat through the tactile imagery of "the wind whipping the salt off his nose" and the description of the "freedom" and "hidden places he would discover." This characterises Ned with a love for boats which is juxtaposed against the initial description of boats being "torn apart" and "hammered against the rocks." This brutal imagery that would deter most people from wanting to own a boat seems to fuel Ned's desire. Hence, constructing him with a need for adrenaline and adventure.

The contrast between Ned and Jackbird's degree of impulse control constructs Ned as careful and thoughtful. Jackbird is described as "restless" and to be metaphorically "vibrating" whereas Ned "wavered" and is complacent when making the decision to accept a lift. Thus, constructing him as mature for his age in comparison to Jackbird.

Finally, Ned is constructed as hardworking and diligent through the dialogue of Jackbird's father regarding Ned's "work ethic" and how the father "hopes it will rub off on" his son. Again, the contrast between the characterisation of these characters emphasises Ned's hard working demeanour. Thus demonstrating his dedication to selling rabbit pelts during World War 2 and constructing him as goal-driven and determined to achieve his goal of owning a boat which he believes is becoming "closer" to reality.

A succinct and clear thesis statement addressing all parts of the question providing both traits of the character in addition to elements of construction.

The candidate gets straight into the analysis of evidence.

The candidate structures the response effectively focussing on a new trait and element of characterisation in each paragraph.

Exploring how other characters are constructed, such as Jackbird, can provide an interesting contrast and aid in revealing Ned's personality.

The candidate seamlessly incorporates evidence from the text into their response.



## Question 2: Sample response two

A sophisticated and varied vocabulary allows this candidate to demonstrate a nuanced and interesting understanding of Ned as a character. The candidate has a strong understanding of metalanguage referring to metonym, contrast, interactions, symbolism and connotation. At 373 words, this is a lengthy response and there are opportunities for the candidate to be more concise. When breaking up a quote, using an ellipsis is appropriate as a useful tool to ensure your quotes are brief and you are only including what is necessary for your argument.

*Connotative language, contrast and symbolism in Text 2 constructs Ned to be a reserved but fiercely ambitious character.*

Connotative language is used to represent Ned as a reserved and quiet character. In Text 2, Ned is leaving the farm until he meets Jackbird and his father, upon which he "hesitated", "waver[ing]" despite the fact that he would "reveal his skins to Jackbird." The connotation with the word "hesitate" indicates to readers that although Jackbird and Ned know each other casually, he is resistant to showing Jackbird "his skins", which acts as a metonym for himself. By reserving, before revealing his "[overflowing] furs", the author characterises Ned as a private person who is unwilling to show others more than he has to. Contrast is implemented in the use of character interaction in Text 2 to reinforce Ned's sheltered personality. Jackbird converses with Ned over his business of selling skins. While Jackbird is shown to be "restless" and "vibrating", Ned, by contrast, "made his face flat", reserving himself in his interactions with Jackbird. This contrast reflects onto both Jackbird and Ned, showing how the former is garrulous and open while the latter is more restrained in his interactions. However, this is contrasted against his fierce ambition of a boat, which symbolically represents his itch to break away from his past life.

Text 2 begins with a dream of a "jagged reef" his "orchardist...father wouldn't [dare] venture." However, Ned's "river dreams" sailed with him in his "fantasies" as the "boat thirst ...thick in his blood." In the establishing paragraphs of Text 2, the ambition of desiring a boat is emphasised in the boat and water symbolism in words like "thirst", "floating... river dreams" which is contrasted by his 'orchardist father.' As orchards reside on land, but Ned's fantasies in water, Text 2 allows the reader to infer Ned's passion and ambition for the boat, a symbol that separates him from his "orchardist" life. Viewed in conjunction with the business of selling skins, one can infer that Ned is an ambitious but reserved character who is set on owning a boat. Thus, connotative language, contrast and symbolism characterises Ned as one who is fiercely driven by his dreams despite being insulated from others.

The opening sentence is short, simple and to the point.

The candidate provides the character trait and element of character construction in the topic sentence.

Interesting use of metonym to suggest an action being reflective of something much deeper in Ned – that he himself is reserved and private.

Excellent vocabulary of 'garrulous' and 'restrained' to provide a nuanced understanding of the two characters.

Frequent and specific quotations from the text provides evidence to support the candidate's argument.

Fluid explanation of how setting can provide information about character.

This is an example of a concluding sentence that adds depth to the response rather than being repetitive.

**Activity: Archetypes**

Creators of texts will often rely on archetypal characters. These archetypes exist because they fulfil psychological, cultural and narrative functions. They are recurring, universally recognised patterns that serve various purposes including representing universal human experiences and resonating psychologically with audiences. They provide symbolic language and narrative structures that resonate across cultures and time periods and help us understand the complexities of the human experience.

To help you understand how characters are constructed, the key part of Question 2, it would be helpful to have an understanding of archetypal characters and the common traits. Then you can apply this to the texts you read and consider whether characters conform to or challenge our expectations of these archetypes and why.

Research the following archetypes. What are the traditional traits of this character? What are some examples in literature and film?

The hero	The villain	The lover	The shadow
The mentor	The explorer	The everyman	The caregiver
The magician	The innocent	The trickster	The rebel

**Hint: Be succinct**

It is recommended that candidates spend 30 minutes on each question in the Comprehending section and the recommended word limit is 250-300 words. Practise constructing responses by typing and stop when you get to 300. If you haven't finished, go back and refine.



## Question 2: Sample response three

A unique reading of the text. This candidate takes an alternate approach as a reading practice. This is a reminder that there is no one right way to read a text as long as you can support your argument with evidence and it is believable. The candidate provides a gendered reading of Ned, exploring how he is characterised to challenge traditional notions of masculinity particularly during the early years of Australia, during World War Two.

Through the use of setting, third person limited narration and dialogue, the protagonist Ned is characterised as an individualistic and nonconformist to the societal expectations of young men in early Australia.

The phrasing of 'an individualistic and nonconformist' requires editing. However, there is a unique reading provided.

In the opening of Text 2, the setting of the reef is vividly described as a dangerous place for boating. Arnott narrating that "many ships had been...subsequently torn apart as waves hammered them against the rocks." Although these violent and mystical stories are typically exhilarating and appeal to men have an innate sense to conquer, these visions only "sail alongside him in his fantasies." Rather, Ned's affection lies in the river's "simple pleasures" such as "the wind whipping", "freedom", and "hidden places", which seem more subdued and emotional, rather than physical.

There is confusion between the author and the narrator. The author is not necessarily the narrator of an imaginative text.

The candidate provides an original reading of Ned's love of sailing looking at his emotional connection with the river.

While not the dominant reading, as arguably having 'boat thirst' is traditionally masculine, the candidate justifies their reading.

Furthermore, third person limited narration also reveals Ned's inner psyche and the emotional turbulence he feels. After dreaming of boating, Arnott narrates how "the boat thirst was still thick in his blood." This metaphor reveals Ned's visceral desire and passion he feels, which is unconventional for men who may have compulsive desires like battle and violence especially in wartime. However, Ned does not express this longing, and his characteristic hesitancy is narrated in how "Ned hesitated" and "Ned wavered." This is unlike the assertiveness in traditional masculinity, seen in Jackbird who freely expresses his thoughts inconsiderately.

This argument regarding social expectations requires more clarification. What is the social expectation when it comes to money? What does society value? Which society?

Finally, the inclusion of dialogue in Text 2 between Ned and Jackbird also reveals his non-conformity to the social expectations put on young men. After Ned refuses to disclose how he will spend his money Jackbird taunts him replying "Bullshit." He then enumerated a list of stereotypical items to buy, such as "new fishing gear, new hooks, new bike...new rifle." This cumulation contrasts with Ned's short reply of "I was thinking a boat." Ned's disregard for all these other pursuits reveals his fixation and personal passion for boating, regardless of what society values.

The candidate utilises transition markers like 'furthermore' and 'finally' to assist in structuring their response. This is one way to ensure a clear and ordered response.

### Activity: Be the teacher - annotate and edit this sample response

The below sample response is 366 words. Follow the steps below in order to assess how this candidate has approached the question.

**Step one:** Read the sample response.

**Step two:** Write down three areas of strength for the response and write down two areas for improvement.

Then, follow the step below in order to create a more succinct response to the question.

**Step three:** Read the response for a second time and edit sentences which appear to be convoluted or make unnecessary points that don't directly connect with the question.

By exploring the dialogue, third person point of view and Ned's actions within the text, he is characterised as a shy yet pragmatic individual who cautiously works towards his ambitions despite his disadvantageous circumstances amidst World War 2.

One of the most integral aspects of the text is the fact that it is told through a third person, limited point of view. This narration hence enables the reader to understand Ned's train of thoughts as we are given insights into his pragmatic and financially-driven thoughts. This narration's effect can be seen in the line where Ned contemplates the potential outcomes of agreeing to Jackbird offering him a ride. We are put directly into Ned's shoes as he recounts how on one hand, "going would reveal his skins to Jackbird while on the other hand he could potentially save a 'days' worth of hunting." Hence through this narration, Ned's thoughts almost seems mechanical and focussed on his goal, characterising him as a resourceful individual.

Additionally, Ned's actions throughout the text construct him as a cautious person who always carefully weighs out his options for the optimum result. In many instances the text illustrates Ned's calculated tendencies mentioning that "Ned hesitated", "Ned wavered" and how "he stacked the skins in a dark corner out of the sun's reach" so they wouldn't get damaged. All of Ned's actions are showcased as being planned meticulously, constructing him further as a pragmatic person trying to reach his goals of buying a boat.

Thirdly, Ned's little snippets of dialogue help to characterise him as a shy individual, unwilling to give up much information about his personal ambitions unless it will support him in any way. Ned's only dialogue within the text is very short and truncated, as he answers his friend's questions only replying "a bit" and "I didn't say that" which portrays his shy nature. His final short dialogue of "I was thinking a boat" is the only information he gives up about his future ambitions which not only further captures him as a closed off individual, but also characterises him as someone willing to work hard for his dreams as he remains hopeful for the future, despite his hard situation.



## Activity: Complete the sample responses

The following extracts have been taken from additional sample responses. Your task is to complete them.

### 1. Complete the thesis statement:

*In Text 2, Ned is constructed through dialogue, tactile imagery and voice as....*

Find three examples from the text that construct Ned.

Technique	Example from the text	Effect
Tactile imagery		
Voice		
Dialogue		

### 2. Complete the analysis by labelling the element of characterisation and explaining the effect.

*Ned's driven and motivated nature is symbolised by how 'the furs [were] overflowing from [his] bag'...*

### 3. Complete the analysis by including a quote, labelling the element of characterisation and explaining the effect.

*Moreover, Arnott's use of language patterns construct Ned as an adventurous character through his desire to escape...*

## Comprehending Section - critique your own work with a handy checklist

✓	Did you annotate the question?
	Did you annotate the text, including the contextual information?
	Did you plan your response?
	Does your thesis statement clearly address the question?
	Have you integrated your evidence and provided more than one example?
	Have you analysed your examples in connection to the question?
	Have you concisely written 200-300 words?

# The Responding Section

## General observations

The Responding section can be intimidating, but if approached correctly, it can be your best friend in the exam. Some candidates look forward to the Responding section, excited for the chance to showcase their essay-writing skills and their understanding of the texts they have spent the year analysing. The truth is, this section can work for you, rather than against you. Your aims in this section should be to:

- demonstrate your ability to thoroughly analyse, discuss, critique or compare your studied texts against a range of syllabus concepts
- construct a detailed yet succinct analytical essay in response to your chosen question which features a logical and sustained argument supported by textual evidence
- justify your analysis or interpretation of your chosen texts with clarity and fluency through the use of appropriate written expression and varied vocabulary.

The Responding section contains **six questions**, but you are required to carefully select just **one** to answer. It is weighted at **40%** of your total exam mark, reflecting the idea that this section affords you the advantage of referring to texts you have spent the year preparing. It is worth pointing out that although it is weighted at 40%, it is suggested you dedicate **one hour** to this section. Be prepared for a wide range of command terms in the questions of this section; expect questions that require you to compare, analyse, discuss, explain or evaluate.

This is the part of the exam you have the most control over and the concepts tested here are ones you should be very familiar with. The emphasis is on the term *concept*; you can guarantee that the prominent concepts that underpin the content of the Year 12 English ATAR course – such as genre, perspective, voice, language and context – will appear. However, you should expect complexity and depth in the ways they are presented. Questions in this section may require you to:

- identify how texts adhere to, manipulate or transform generic conventions to appeal to an audience or to represent a context
- compare the impact of language, stylistic and structural features used in texts
- consider how ideas, voices and perspectives are constructed for particular purposes, audiences or contexts
- examine how your unique response to a text is formed, reinforced or challenged by its construction, along with your context.

Keep in mind that the list above is not intended to be an exhaustive 'cheat sheet'; it should serve as a reminder that the concepts tested here are ones you have been immersed in all year. This is your chance to really showcase your knowledge of the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus through its application to your studied texts.



## Considering Question 3

Compare the openings of **two** texts of the same genre by analysing their language or stylistic choices.

### Interpreting the question

To successfully address this question, candidates are required to demonstrate how the openings of two texts of the same genre are similar and/or different because of choices in language or stylistic features. 'Compare' is defined in the Glossary of words in the formulation of questions as 'Show how things are similar or different.' Similarities, differences or both should be explicitly identified and explored throughout the response. The English ATAR course syllabus glossary defines 'Language features' as 'the features of language that support meaning (for example, sentence structure, noun group/phrase, vocabulary, punctuation, figurative language, framing, camera angles).' 'Stylistic choices' is defined as 'The selection of stylistic features to achieve a particular effect,' with examples of 'Stylistic features' being, 'lexical choice, syntax, narrative point of view, voice, structure, language patterns and language features, both written and visual.' As language features can be included in stylistic choices, it is acceptable to discuss both.

The same genre may be considered in terms of subject matter (e.g. fantasy, western) or form (e.g. feature film, novel). The focus of the comparison should be on how the use of language features or stylistic choices might be similar and/or different between the openings. Stronger candidates might discuss how genre impacts the use of language or stylistic features and why these choices have been made. Candidates might explain how the openings of two texts from the same context of production can share stylistic similarities. For example, the use of the sublime and gothic imagery in poetry written during the Romantic era. Discussions of differences might focus on how conventions have changed or been adapted over time, or the impact of different contexts of production on language or stylistic choices. For example, the development of cinematography and computer-generated imagery used in contemporary science fiction feature films compared to earlier texts of the same genre.

Emphasis should remain on the 'opening' of the texts, and not the texts as a whole. The construction of a comparative approach will play an important role in addressing this question. Although both texts' openings do not need to be discussed equally, sufficient detail about both is required to develop an effective comparison.

### Advice from teachers

- As the focus of this question is on the openings of texts, consideration of the function of this structural feature might be included.
- Discussions of language features and stylistic choices aren't limited to written texts; visual and multimodal texts may also be considered.
- Although language features may be discussed as part of stylistic choices these terms are not interchangeable, and candidates should aim to be explicit in identifying the focus for their response.

### Question 3: Sample response one

This comparison presents not only excellent understanding of the chosen texts and genre but nicely incorporates discussion of a range of other important syllabus concepts, such as the influence of contextual factors and social movements on the development of genres over time. The focus is clearly kept on the openings of the texts and is supported by identifying the role of this structural feature in establishing the focus of the story. However, the conclusion appears rushed and incomplete and includes points not really developed in the body paragraphs.

Conventions of genre shift and adapt over time to reflect changing societal mores. Often, the key elements of a generic text are indicated in the exposition of the text, which establishes the facets of a genre's archetypal tone and structure. The Gothic genre was born from purely abstract beginnings, emerging from horror stories set in Regency-era England. Over time, the Gothic genre crossed geographic and cultural boundaries, with a notable sub-genre being the Australian genre, characterised by its vulnerable female protagonists, supernatural elements and spiritual connection to the land, born from the collective fear of the natural environment by white settlers after the establishment of Australia as a penal colony in the 1800s. This representation has affected many forms, such as filmic in the widely canonised 1995 film *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (here after *Picnic*), which tells the tale of four girls who mysteriously went missing after entering the titular Hanging Rock. This genre is also at play in the 2011 short story 'Rush' written by Amanda Curtin and published in a Western Australian anthology series *Inherited*. 'Rush' tells the story of two girls whose Leavers trip takes a macabre turn upon an unexpected detour in a ghost town. By comparing the expositions of both *Picnic* and 'Rush', one can sense both the generic features which unite the texts under the sub-genre whilst also offering a glimpse at the evolution of the genre and its representation of complex social dynamics over time.

Before delving into the nature of the Australian Gothic genre, it is vital to have a rudimentary understanding of the origins of the Gothic genre. Authors like Edgar Allen Poe, Emily Dickinson, Ann Radcliffe and Charles Dickens spearheaded the Gothic movement as horror tales shifted over time to preside in what is more commonly attributed to the Gothic genre, such as its vulnerable protagonists, supernatural or fantastical elements and a dilapidated or ramshackled building. These elements would later become the standard for traditional Gothic works, and elements of these Gothic tropes would later carry on in works by Australian

Gothic writers. The success Australian Gothic found with its audience translated into a desire to see the written works brought to life, which led to the creation of the 1975 film *Picnic*, adapted after the novel

The first sentence immediately links to key concepts in the question. Also, the opening of the text is identified as the focus, through the use of the synonym 'exposition'.

Great understanding of genre is reinforced by explaining how it has developed over time.

The text is clearly identified and the year it was released, but the director should also be named.

Nice detail in the introduction to develop a thesis clearly linked to the question, which outlines both similarities and differences between the two texts.

The development of the gothic genre over time is outlined in some detail. This underpins the discussion about points of comparison offered.



written by Joan Lindsay. Picnic's use of Australian Gothic tropes, namely, vulnerable female protagonists, supernatural occurrences and mythical and spiritual connections to the land, similarly categorise the genre, and can be seen in the opening of the film. The film opens with low-angle shots of the eponymous Hanging Rock, accompanied by the haunting sound of panpipes, which establishes a corporeal connection between nature and man. We are then treated with a montage of girls preparing to embark on their school excursion. They are shown singing a childish song amongst themselves in their dormitory before embarking on their excursion. By establishing the girls' youthful naivete, along with the presumed premise of their mysterious disappearance, Picnic exploits the girls' codified vulnerability by nebulously implying an ominous fate. This is further ambiguated by the establishing shots of the rock with both low-angle and panning shots, which presents the rock as a giant immovable force in nature whose supernatural connection is implying in the accompaniment of the aforementioned panpipes. The jarring cut to the school after the establishment of the rock in the opening credits is accompanied by weird, unnatural objects lurking in the background, like clothes, and the school's clock is shown to be stationary in the establishing shot of the film. By indicating to viewers that something unnatural is happening in the backdrop of the film's opening credits, the film cleverly foreshadows the flurry of macabre and eerily supernatural elements that follows the exposition. When viewed with a modern lens, it can be said that the presence of the girls and the school, which is made up of white English girls, the film is contrasting the nature of transgression and upheaval of the indigenous peoples who lived there before the disruption of white settlers. Thus, Picnic establishes key elements of the Australian Gothic genre through its conventional application of generic features to echo Australian Gothic's sinister tales.

Although Picnic is a canonised work in the modern Australian context, due to its distance between its representation of female characters and their stereotypically submissive representation, modern viewers may find the representation of Australian Gothic as antiquated. 'Rush' thus serves as a subversion for those who have an understanding of the Australian Gothic genre while appealing to modern sensibilities. To begin with, 'Rush' begins the tale in media res, which immediately disorients readers who are familiar with the conventional storytelling found in Picnic and other works of Gothic in general. The subversion of expectations toys with the viewer's sense and immediately places the reader in a mode of shock. Additionally, 'Rush' establishes its female characters with agency, watching as the protagonists Melanie and Sandra venture into "unknown bushland" whilst they enter a town with "mounds as high as anthills" as they "disrespect the legacy of the

Relevant generic conventions are identified in relation to the opening of the text and supported with a discussion of visual language techniques used in their construction. This is enhanced by some nice examples of sophisticated vocabulary.

The discussion here not only demonstrates understanding of the construction of the opening, but also the role of this structural feature in establishing the story and its key features.

Linking sentences outline how this text uses generic features in a 'conventional' way, summing up the main points in the paragraph and setting up the contrast offered in the next paragraph.

A point of difference between texts is presented in the topic sentence in order to build the comparison.

Once again, the discussion of generic conventions is supported by identifying elements of their construction.

The role of the audience in making meaning is included in references to the 'subversion of expectations.'

Evidence, in the form of quotations, is incorporated smoothly into sentences.

dead". By allowing the protagonists to roam freely and by themselves, 'Rush' is echoing the modern interpretation and representation of women as independent spirits and free thinkers in works like Thelma and Louise. By drawing inspiration from modern works, 'Rush' appeals to modern sensibilities and breathes new life into the Australian Gothic genre. However, the establishing scene in the present day reveals that Sandra is trapped underneath a gold mine and Melanie is dead – in fact, murdered – as we find Sandra ensnared into the control of a supernatural force. She finds herself surrounded by 'atonal whispers' and 'Oriental lilt', which alluded to the mistreatment of Asians at the height of the gold rush. In turn, similar to the interpretation found in Picnic, we may view this as a form of revenge by the spiritual presence of those wronged before by white colonisers and settlers in modern Australia, and the often invisible repercussions faced by them in modern society. As is found in both Picnic and 'Rush', the act of feminine transgression is often highlighted and exploited in these texts, and when viewed in context with similar cases, such as the rape and murder of Jill Meagher, these works are eerily prescient. Thus, by adapting the tropes mythologised in works of Australian Gothic into a modern lens, 'Rush' is able to establish a far more gruesome and crude yet faithful representation of the Australian Gothic genre that is reflective of social mores today.

Both Picnic and 'Rush' posit about the acts of transgression by both colonisers and their modern counterparts and depict harrowing and sinister repercussions in the openings of their texts. In viewing their openings more broadly, we are able to frame them through the lens of colonisation, and the dangers of nonchalant impudence.

Comparison is implied through the discussion of the impact of modern texts, audiences and their expectations.

Explicit comparison is highlighted through the use of the comparative phrase 'in turn'.

An interesting point about the gruesomeness of the modern text, but more explanation and evidence would strengthen it.

The conclusion appears a little rushed and incomplete, suggesting there may have been issues with time management.



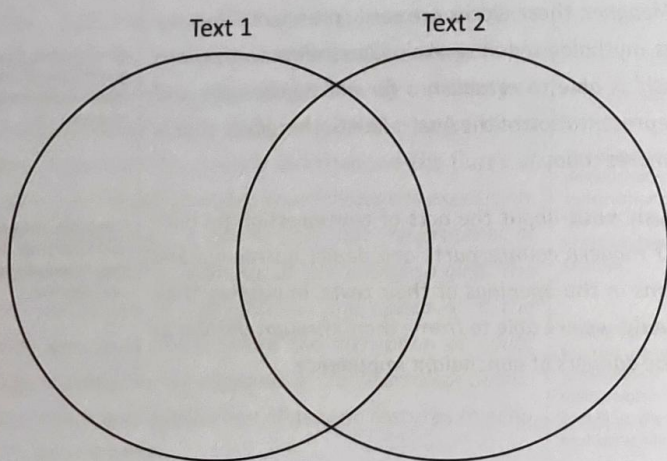
## Activity: Developing comparisons

The ability to compare texts is an important skill that is promoted throughout the English ATAR course syllabus. The process of comparison allows you to make insightful connections between the texts you have studied, demonstrating your ability to analyse and reflect on complex ideas. In the Glossary of key words in the formulation of questions (available at [scsa.wa.edu.au](http://scsa.wa.edu.au)), the command word 'compare' is defined as to *show how things are similar and different*.

Re-read the previous sample response. As you read, highlight any points of comparison the candidate makes and reflect on the following questions:

- How many points of comparison does the candidate make? Could this be improved upon?
- What essay structure does the candidate use? Does this allow for detailed comparison?
- Does the candidate use comparative language (e.g., 'similarly', 'both', 'in comparison')?

Then, use the Venn diagram below as a template to help you illustrate the similarities and differences between two of your studied texts.



Connections between texts, both similarities and differences, may be highlighted through the use of vocabulary that draws attention to the comparison or contrast being discussed.

Following is a list of terms and phrases that could be used to build your vocabulary when constructing comparisons. In your own notes try and add three examples of your own.

- Similarly
- Likewise
- In the same way
- Conversely
- Nevertheless

1. Highlight where such terms have been used in the sample responses to Question 3.
2. Find four examples of points of comparison that could be enhanced by including such terms, two that outline a similarity and two that outline a difference. Rewrite them using terms from the list.

### Question 3: Sample response two

In addressing the question, this response demonstrates understanding of the importance of context in shaping genre. The focus remains on stylistic features and the openings of the two chosen texts. The comparison is developed more explicitly around the differences in the texts, with the similarities in their genre being more implied. Points of both similarities and differences may have been strengthened with specific reference to generic conventions used in their construction.

The caper heist genre is one that was conceived due to its abundant stylistic differences to regular heists. However, when looking at texts such as Ocean's 11 (2002) and The Unusual Suspects (2021), it's clear that they both place an abundant amount of importance on the opening section of their productions. Ocean's 11 is a staple of the genre; directed by Steven Soderbergh, the eighty-five million dollar production features a star studded cast featuring the likes of Brad Pitt, George Clooney, and Julia Roberts. When Danny Ocean (played by Clooney) is released from prison, he is immediately looking for trouble as he assembles a team of specialists to rob three of the biggest casinos in Vegas simultaneously just because they are owned by his arch nemesis Terry Benedict (played by Andy Garcia). On the other hand, The Unusual Suspects is a contemporary take on the heist genre produced by Jessica Redenbach. Featuring prominent Australian/Filipino actors Miranda Otto, Lena Cruz, and Aina Dumlaog, the small-scale SBS mini series with a budget of approximately five hundred thousand dollars was shot during COVID. When comparing the openings of both texts, a stark difference can be spotted in the duration of the openings with The Unusual Suspects consuming two entire fifty minute episodes before the caper heist itself; Ocean's 11 begins the heist within the first hour of the film. Stylistically, gender roles and cast diversity are areas of major differentiation along with the clear disconnect in language choices. These observations can be attributed to the difference in context of production.

The language choices made in both productions are polar opposites due to the twenty year gap in time of production and the place of production with Australia Culture being so different to American Culture. Merely in the opening of Ocean's 11; the scene with Mr Ocean answering questions in a prisoner's outfit; his use of American slang is made clear. "Shorty left me once. I don't think she'll do it again" features colloquial language in the term "Shorty" in referring to a woman (namely, Tess). Even in the music choices; the introduction scene to Vegas features American music that reads "...satisfy me baby..." voiced by a male. The popularisation of the term "baby" in reference to romantic partners from a male point of view also very inherently American. Meanwhile, in The Unusual Suspects, a stark contrast can be observed with Sara's

Although the opening sentences attempt to engage with the question, they are a little underdeveloped.

Clear knowledge of chosen texts, along with relevant contextual factors, is demonstrated in the detail here.

This is an interesting point that, unfortunately, isn't explored in the body of the essay.

Points of difference tend to be the focus of the comparison. The similarity in the genres could be unpacked more.

Topic sentence is explicit in identifying the differences between the texts.

Although relevant evidence is provided, in the form of the lyrics, the detail is a little general. Identifying the song and singer would strengthen the point about the significance of contextual factors.



abundant use of Aussie slang from the very opening of the series. Her repetition of the word "bloody" when she breaks down due to her financial situation in episode two makes it abundantly clear that she is strongly influenced by Aussie culture. A slight similarity to Ocean's 11 can be observed through Evie as she speaks fluent American-English when she isn't speaking Tagalog; her accent is quite strong. This is heavily emphasised in the opening of the series especially when she meets with all the other fellow nannies in her neighbourhood.

Stylistically, it's clear that the treatment of gender roles is quite different in both texts. Within the opening phase itself, Ocean's 11 comes off as quite sexist and misogynistic as various scenes contain portrayals of naked women in the form of statues. These are made abundantly clear despite slightly blurred out in the scene where they go to Reuben's mansion to negotiate as well as the team meeting property. Despite never explicitly highlighted, they are always a secondary focus in the background throughout the opening of Ocean's 11. The lack of female involvement in the cast is also abundantly obvious with Tess not even introduced as a part of the heist team in the opening as she is merely objectified as a trophy for competition between Danny and Terry. Even Charmaine; a woman portrayed as a stripper who was used by the heist team to lap dance for a guard at the casino in exchange for an identification card isn't introduced as a notable member of the cast in the opening. On the contrary, in The Unusual Suspects, a majority of all notable cast members are female. Hence, they are all introduced within the opening section of the series in episode one. The teamwork dynamic between Sara and Evie in the beginning is especially important to place emphasis on this role reversal compared to traditional heist films like Ocean's 11; it places a stylistic emphasis on the female empowerment we expect contextually as the audience in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Stylistically, racial diversity in the casting for both productions has only slight overlap in that both productions feature at least one Asian character in the main cast. While The Unusual Suspects doesn't feature any African-American characters, the roles of African-American characters play in Ocean's 11 is very insignificant, disposable, and mostly finished within the opening of the film. Basher simply uses a pinch to shut down the electricity while Frank is a worker at the casino that gives the main character's minor insights in the opening. What's notable is the racial hierarchy created due to the mistreatment of Yen; an Asian character playing an aerobist role in the film. Danny is reluctant to add him to the team from the onset of the film and when the assembled team is discussing plans, his dialogue doesn't have any subtitles despite being Cantonese. Although the other members understand his dialogue, his expression is clearly undervalued. Meanwhile, in The Unusual Suspects four main Filipino

Further analysis and explanation of the evidence would enable the candidate to prove their point more effectively.

Some phrases are a little colloquial.

Identification of 'the team meeting property' could be strengthened with reference to generic conventions and visual language features used in its construction.

There is a tendency to rely on evidence and description at the expense of analysis and explanation in relation to the thesis, that the texts differ due to their contrasting contexts.

This topic sentence identifies both a similarity and difference in the casting of the texts.

characters are introduced to us along with Caucasian characters; Evie, Amy, Roxanne, and Gigi. Unlike the Caucasian dominated casting in *Ocean's 11*, all characters expect Gig have significant involvement in the opening of the series whether it be socially or even regarding power dynamics. Despite Evie and Amy being depicted as labourers, Roxanne is immediately shown in a position of power as she runs her makeup business alongside her wealthy husband Jordan. Stylistically, this results in a discrepancy in the treatment and portrayal of non-Caucasian characters in the opening of both productions.

While the context of production and reception are starkly different between the Steven Soderbergh directed *Ocean's 11* (2002) and the Jessica Redenbach produced *The Unusual Suspects* (2021), their stylistic differences as well as language choice differences are accentuated from the very beginning. Despite being based on the same genre (caper heists), very few similarities can be observed in areas such as racial diversity, gender roles, and language choices. It begs the question: how will caper heist productions open from here on out?

Similarities and differences in stylistic features are explicitly identified.

The conclusion reiterates the importance the role of context can play on the construction of texts of the same genre. Both similarities and differences are summarised.

**Hint: Keep a genre 'logbook'**

As 'genre' is a core component of both Units 3 and 4 in the course syllabus, it is important to develop a thorough knowledge of different genres and their generic conventions. Throughout the year, investigate different genres and record in a 'logbook' the characteristics or conventions that are most common in these genres. Take note of the texts you read, view or listen to across the year and how they might fit into these different categories. Pay close attention to how these texts might conform, subvert, blend or transform the use of generic conventions and why.



## Activity: Identifying language and stylistic features

Question 3 asks you to focus on language or stylistic choices used in the openings of two texts of the same genre. The ATAR English course syllabus glossary offers the following definitions:

<b>Conventions</b>	<i>Conventions can be the techniques, features or elements that belong to a genre. In order to belong to a particular genre, a text should adhere to, abide by or follow the conventions of that genre.</i>
<b>Language features</b>	<i>The features of language that support meaning (for example, sentence structure, noun group/phrase, vocabulary, punctuation, figurative language, framing, camera angles). Choices in language features and text structures together define a type of text and shape its meaning.</i>
<b>Stylistic features</b>	<i>The ways in which aspects of texts are arranged and how they affect meaning. Examples of stylistic features are lexical choice, syntax, narrative point of view, voice, structure, language patterns and language features, both written and visual.</i>

In order to develop your knowledge of these important concepts, copy and complete the table below using studied texts. A partial example that focuses on the opening of a text is provided.

Text: *Fahrenheit 451* (Ray Bradbury)

Genre: Dystopian novel

Opening Chapter

Generic Conventions	Stylistic Features	Language Features
Censorship and lack of freedom of information.	Language pattern; motif - fire and burning of books. E.g. 'It was a pleasure to burn.'	Use of third person limited privileges the inner monologue of Montag, which articulates his discomfort when he meets Clarisse. E.g. Inner monologue - 'Of course I'm happy. What does she think? I'm not?' he asked the quiet room.' Symbolism. <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> represents temperature at which paper burns. E.g. 'With his symbolic helmet numbered 451.'
Protagonist begins to question their society.		Figurative language. Similes and metaphors to describe Clarisse and how she made Montag feel. E.g. 'She was like the eager watcher of a marionette show'; 'How immense a figure she was on the stage before him.'

## Considering Question 4

Show how your knowledge of a text's context shaped your understanding of a perspective it communicated.

### Interpreting the question

In addressing this question, candidates are expected to explain their understanding of a perspective communicated in a text and articulate how this understanding was informed by knowledge of the text's context. In the Glossary of key words in the formulation of questions 'Show' is defined as 'Give information; illustrate.' Therefore, an illustration of the impact of contextual knowledge in shaping understanding of perspectives is required. Use of personal voice and pronouns are invited, particularly with the repetition of the personal pronoun 'your' within the question.

'Context' is defined in the English ATAR course syllabus glossary as 'The environment in which a text is responded to or created. Context can include the general social, historical and cultural conditions in which a text is responded to and created (the context of culture) or the specific features of its immediate environment (context of situation).' Candidates may discuss one or more types of context, including those implicit in the syllabus definition like the author's biographical context, the context of reception or personal context. The focus should remain on the role of the candidate's knowledge of these contextual factors in shaping their understanding of a perspective presented in the text. In this instance, 'context' is not to be confused with setting/s within the text itself. The syllabus definition locates context outside of a text.

In the English ATAR course syllabus glossary, 'Perspective' is defined as 'A position from which things may be viewed or considered. People may have different perspectives on events or issues due to (for example) their age, gender, social position and beliefs and values. A perspective is more than an opinion; it is a viewpoint informed by one or more contexts.' Candidates should aim to show engagement with this definition by making explicit links between understanding of context and perspective. For example, identifying links between knowledge of the Black Lives Matter movement and understanding of the perspective that America is unsafe in Childish Gambino's 'This is America'.

Texts often present a number of perspectives, including alternate and opposing viewpoints. Whilst a discussion of a perspective is required, this may not necessarily be one promoted or foregrounded by the text. A valid approach could include consideration of a marginalised perspective. The focus must remain on developing the links between candidate's understanding of the perspective and how this understanding was shaped by knowledge of relevant contextual factors.

### Advice from teachers

- As this question invites a personal response, a discussion of how your contextual knowledge was developed could be included to support points and demonstrate engagement with the text and its context.
- Again, don't confuse setting and context. While the setting of a text may reflect its context, candidates must clearly distinguish between these concepts.



## Question 4: Sample response one

This candidate demonstrates a very good understanding of a range of contextual factors and presents these through sophisticated vocabulary and expression. The candidate's understanding of the feminist perspective communicated in the text is explored in some detail. However, further engagement with the question could have been demonstrated through the development of a more personal voice throughout the whole response.

An awareness of contextual factors surrounding a text's provenance often works to enhance one's understanding of a perspective communicated within the text. Charlotte Perkin Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper' is a prime example of such, with the contextual factors of the short story's production being the patriarchal society of the USA in the late 19th century, of which Gilman herself suffered at the hands of in her battle with post-partum depression. This knowledge of the circumstances under which the gothic novella was written has shaped my understanding of the perspective criticising the unequal treatment of women in institutions like marriage and in the medical field alike. The text comprises of a series of journal entries by Jane, a woman prescribed the infamous, isolating "rest treatment" for her "nervous depression", which only works to worsen her condition and lead to her descent into madness as she grows obsessed with the "grotesque" yellow wallpaper of her confines. In understanding the author's personal context that parallels Jane's, one's understanding of 'The Yellow Wallpaper' as communicating the feminist perspective reprimanding the maltreatment of women by different institutions (as represented by Jane's husband, John) is developed.

The candidate clearly and concisely identifies relevant contextual factors and links these to their own understanding of the text.

Although still addressing the question, the final lines of the introduction shift from the use of the personal pronoun 'my' to 'one's understanding.'

The explanation of important contextual factors in some detail works to demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of them.

Although a clear link is developed between contextual knowledge and understanding of the perspective, the candidate's personal voice is lacking.

A fundamental aspect of the text's context that has worked to shape my reading of the text's early feminist criticisms of 19th century society comes from the information that Gilman herself underwent the "rest treatment", pioneered by Dr Weir Mitchell, who is mentioned by name in the text. The treatment consisted of an isolation from broader society with restriction on social interaction and most notably; intellectual stimulation, with an emphasis on physical rest. These rules are identical to those imposed upon the central character and first-person narrator in the text by her physician husband, who controls almost all aspects of her life, from what she should think about to where she sleeps, who she sees, and what "phosphates and phosphites" she consumes. In Gilman's real life, the ban on "working" as a writer along with the other restrictive elements of the approach culminated in an eventual breakdown in which she fled her husband and children in search of liberty from the monotonous treatment that only worsened her discontent and mental illness. Understanding the author's experience has amplified the perspective towards such treatments as unjust and ineffective, based unfairly on historical misconceptions surrounding hysteria being innate to the female biology.



The misogynistic zeitgeist that underpinned the social norms and treatment of women in the late 1800's is one that furthers the understanding of the feminist perspective presented in 'The Yellow Wallpaper' (1892). The dynamic between Jane and John in their marriage and the overt power imbalance is one that serves as a representation of many of their peers at the time, as confirmed by legislature of the time. At the time of the text's production, women were heavily restricted in their political and economic rights, being solely dependent on their male counterparts and assigned domestic, maternal roles. In marriage, a woman is essentially owned by her husband, who were free to treat (or rather mistreat) their wives without fear of punishment. This can clearly be observed in the text, with Jane's failure to adopt a nurturing motherly role making her "a comparative burden", and her husband dictating her livelihood, dismissing her requests to change rooms and meet with family, instead belittling and infantilising his adult wife. John repeatedly calls Jane various juvenile pet names like "little girl", and "little goose", ignoring her concerns for her worsening condition by saying "She shall be as sick as she pleases." Jane's growing resentment towards John's treatment of her as inferior aligns with contextual factors of the novel and further communicates the idea that women were maltreated during the time by various institutions that consumed them.

The growing feminist movement of the time in which 'The Yellow Wallpaper' was written assists in shaping one's understanding of the perspective conveyed. The last 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century is well known for growing calls for women's rights in the western world, like via the Suffragette movement and the women's Temperance movement. This, along with Gilman's own familial ties to key feminist individuals accounts for the feminist perspective offered in the novella. This perspective is apparent in the final entries of the text in which the narrator enters a state of psychosis, believing she is a woman in the wallpaper who has escaped her confines. This resolution indicates her will for freedom at any cost, trading her sanity for liberty from John's authoritative rule. These themes closely align with growing calls for emancipation, abortion and other rights for women during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and shape the distinct, critical voice of the text.

'The Yellow Wallpaper' by Charlotte Perkins Gilman largely parallels the hardships faced by the author as a woman in the late 1800's in a male dominated world, mainly differing in that Gilman managed to preserve her sanity whereas Jane descended into madness. My knowledge of the nature of 19<sup>th</sup> century America with regards to gender roles and practices, as well as Gilman's life more specifically have contributed to my understanding of the critical feminist perspective toward marriage, psychology and women's rights in general, each of the following corresponding with aspects of the text's context.

Nice vocabulary is used to outline knowledge of the social norms that were influential during the text's context of production.

Evidence, in the form of a range of quotations, is incorporated nicely into their sentences in order to support the point.

A more explicit link to the thesis would strengthen the conclusion of this paragraph, and the overall cohesion of the response.

Although this paragraph presents relevant links to the question, it is a little underdeveloped and lacks the detail of previous points about knowledge of contextual factors and the impact of these on an understanding of the feminist perspective.

The conclusion offers a brief summary of the main thesis presented throughout the response and the use of the personal pronoun 'my' reinforces engagement with the question.



## Activity: Developing links between context and perspective

Question 4 invites you to consider that your knowledge of a text's context might help to inform your understanding of a perspective communicated. One or more contextual factors can shape or influence perspective, including the context of culture (general social, historical and cultural conditions) and/or the context of situation (the specific features of the immediate environment).

Use the following table to assist in developing links between context and perspective in your own studied texts.

Text: <i>The Australian Dream</i> (Stan Grant)		
Genre: Persuasive speech, debate		
Perspective: Stan Grant, an Aboriginal Australian journalist and activist		
Contextual Factors	Perspective/s	Evidence
<b>Context of Culture</b> Australia, 2016. Controversy surrounding the treatment of Adam Goodes.	Shameful treatment of footballer caused nation to reflect on racism.	'In the winter of 2015, Australia turned to face itself.'
Discrepancies between health and incarceration rates of First Nations people and non-Aboriginal population.	First Nations people are still suffering from impacts of history and inequities.	'We die ten years younger than average Australians and we are far from free.'
<b>Context of Situation</b> Grant's biographical factors.	During his lifetime, First Nations people have not received equal rights.	'In 1963 when I was born, I was counted among the flora and fauna, not among the citizens of this country.'
Grant's family background and relationships.	The strength of our ancestors helps to shape who we are.	'I've done well because of who has come before me.'

Question 4 : Sample response two

The thesis developed throughout this response shows good understanding of how one text may offer a range of perspectives and be influenced by a range of contextual factors, and explores the impact of these on the candidate's own understanding. The use of personal voice demonstrates nice engagement with the text and raises ideas around how readings may develop and evolve. Some identification of the candidate's own values would support the points about how they responded with aversion to perspectives that didn't align with their own beliefs.

A famous photographer once said that the "lens we choose transform what we see". However, perhaps it is more accurate that the knowledge of our environment will transform what we see. From Jim Crow, to civil rights, to Black Lives Matter, African Americans have long had their suffering and experiences overlooked. As such, our socially progressive societies now promote and encourage Black artists to freely communicate their perspectives in protest music videos. However, society had conditioned us to passively receive and accept Black protest music as an infallible version of truth – with little regard or resistance for fear of being 'cancelled'. Produced by Spike Lee in 1989, Public Enemy's 'Fight the Power' became an anthemic, legendary protest song that empowered Black people to voice their frustrations and acrimony at society's lack of change. However, 'Fight the Power' remains deeply divisive and I also challenged and questioned its Black, post-civil-rights-era perspective that Black people must use aggression and subvert white institutions to achieve equality. This was upon learning of 'Fight's' authorial context and its context of production. Although I resist parts of 'Fight's' iconoclastic perspective, my knowledge of other events in 'Fight's' context of production have also shaped me to empathise with its perspective.

In 'Fight the Power', it communicates the iconoclastic perspective of Chuck D (a Public Enemy bandmate) that Black people should tear down and replace existing American institutions with their own. However, upon my knowledge of Chuck D's affiliation and endorsement of Farrakhan, a Black supremacist, I now question this perspective for its extremism and radicalism. 'Fight's' iconoclasm is promoted in the text's rebellious and acrimonious voice, where rappers Chuck D and Flava Flav eponymously declare "Fight the power, we've got to fight the powers that be". 'Fight' fully embraces the Black, disenfranchised perspective by adopting an Afrocentric rather than Eurocentric lens. This is seen in the stage setting's dominant colour scheme of red, green and black. Although one may assume this to be a celebration of Black identity, my knowledge of Chuck D's Black supremacist sympathies, and the entitlement of his album 'Fear of a Black Planet' make me feel wary and concerned if 'Fight' is simply using the oppressive white

A contemporary issue and associated ideas are outlined and form the foundation for the discussion of perspective.

Use of the personal pronoun 'I' demonstrates engagement with the text and the question. This is enhanced by the discussion of the reading process and how understanding and response shifted upon learning about context. Also, they acknowledge how different contextual factors led to different responses.

Topic sentence shows understanding of the text, but could be strengthened by detailing the focus of the paragraph more explicitly.

Some nice use of sophisticated vocabulary to describe contemporary issues, which are relevant to context.

The candidate's personal response is not only clearly identified, but also explained with nice links to the reading process and the development of knowledge.



nationalists to support their agenda. Additionally, Chuck D raps "Most of my heroes don't appear on no stamps...Nothing but rednecks for 400 years if you look back." This perspective is also furthered by the prominence of many placards in dense a protest crowd which show portraits of Black icons like MLK, Jackie Robinson and Rosa Parks. Thus, this reveals 'Fight's' perspective that in order to achieve genuine recognition, Black Americans must first deride white icons and create a pantheon of their own. This is also seen in Chuck D's pejorative and derogatory derision of pop icons like Elvis Presley and John Wayne, who are called "straight up racist suckers". However, because of my knowledge of Chuck D's radical Afrocentric alignments, I respond adversely to 'Fight's' perspective.

Furthermore, 'Fight' also communicates the perspective of frustrated, disillusioned Black Americans that they must resort to more aggressive means to effect change. This is promoted through the emphasis of Malcolm X and the Black Panther Party (BPP) who were known for advocating militancy during the largely pacifist civil rights movement. However, because of my knowledge of Malcolm X's promotion of violence and his espoused mantra "by any means necessary", I once again resist 'Fight's' perspective. A foreboding and large portrait of Malcolm X is hung onto the central stage, which is accompanied with multiple set actors who are dressed in all-black military garb with the iconic BPP beret. A symbol of defiance and rebellion, multiple people are shown pumping the Black Power salute in the air, popularised from the 1968 Olympics. Additionally, the lyrics also allude to violence like 'Swingin while I'm singing' a reference to the relatively peaceful 1963 March on Washington. Although I initially viewed 'Fight's' perspective as reasonable, my knowledge of Spike Lee's intention for the song to be "defiant", "angry" and a "call to arms" has influenced me to be highly sceptical of 'Fight' for the gangsterism and aggression it promotes.

Contrastingly, my understanding of the historical context of 'Fight' has also shaped me to feel empathy and acknowledge a truth in 'Fight's' disgruntled perspective. Another viewpoint of Fight is that the reality of their lived experience and suffering has been denied to them for far too long, especially African Americans living in the "hood" and "ghettos" who face severe discrimination. This is shown in 'Fight's' marginalisation of Martin Luther King, which is unexpected as he was an influential forefather of civil rights. His imagery appears briefly in a short mid-shot of his placard among the crowd. Because of my awareness of MLK's pacifism, I understand that 'Fight' has purposely diminished the magnanimous approach of MLK as they are frustrated and have lost faith if peace and harmonious reconciliation is effective. Chuck D also makes allusion to "Don't worry be happy was a number one hit". This is a reference to Bobby McFerrin's (a Black singer) song,

Points are supported with some nice detail about how the perspective is constructed through the inclusion of portraits.

Clear link to the influence of contextual knowledge on personal response is developed. This may have been supported by the candidate identifying the role of their own values in causing their aversion.

The use of the conjunction at the start of the paragraph works to build the argument about the different perspectives represented.

Again, there is nice detail about how personal response was shaped by knowledge of context that could be further developed by consideration of the candidate's own values and beliefs.

Thorough knowledge of both the text and important contextual factors is demonstrated.

Recognition of the multifaceted nature of responses and readers' interactions with texts is built throughout the argument and highlighted through terms such as 'contrastingly.'

The candidate shows understanding of not just the context of the text itself, but also relevant contextual factors related to the representation of ideas in the text.

which presents a blissful and romantic representation of Black human experience. Because of my knowledge of this song, I can sympathise and relate to 'Fight's' enraged perspective more as their authentic stories and suffering have long been silenced and diminished by the romanticisation of their lives in popular media.

Thus, my greater understanding of 'Fight the Power's' authorial context and its context of production has shaped me to both oppose and view its iconoclastic Afrocentric perspective as radical and harmful but also feel great empathy. Thus, by having an expanded and burgeoned knowledge of a text's contextual environment and its influences, this can significantly change the way we perceive its viewpoints – even paradoxically affirming and opposing it. Ironically, Public Enemy once said "Don't Believe the Hype" – an exhortation to its audience to critically assess and acclaim what they saw before endorsing it.

The argument centred around the reading process and the impact this has on understanding is reiterated here.

The point about empathy could be strengthened by some unpacking of how the candidate was able to relate.

The conclusion sums up the overall contention of the response: that texts can contain multiple perspectives and audiences may understand these in different ways depending on their own contextual understanding.

**Hint: Create flashcards to help you learn the syllabus glossary terms**

It is imperative that you learn and understand the terms that appear in your syllabus glossary, as these will form the basis of your exam questions. A good study hint is to create flashcards in order to assist you in learning the terms and their definitions, but to also use them as a way to consider how they apply to your studied texts. Try and create some study questions that relate to a glossary term and then consider how you could apply these to your studied texts. For example:

SIDE A: Term and definition	SIDE B: Study questions linked to the term
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>The environment in which a text is responded to or created. Context can include the general social, historical and cultural conditions in which a text is responded to and created (the context of culture) or the specific features of its immediate environment (context of situation). The term is also used to refer to the wording surrounding an unfamiliar word that a reader or listener uses to understand its meaning.</p>	<p><b>Context: Study questions</b></p> <p><b>Production:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who is the author of your text?</li><li>• When and where was the text published?</li><li>• What are some significant factors related to context of culture or situation that may have influenced the creation of the text?</li></ul> <p><b>Reception:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is your own context of culture or situation?</li><li>• How might that affect the way you have made meaning from your studied text?</li></ul>



## Activity: Considering 'a text's context'

Candidates often correlate setting with context. While texts may represent a particular context through their settings, candidates must clearly distinguish between these concepts. The syllabus definition clearly locates context outside of the text.

Therefore, when studying a text, careful consideration should be given to the factors that might shape the production of a text or the circumstances surrounding the construction of the text. Likewise, it is equally important to consider the factors that might shape the reception of a text or the circumstances surrounding the audience, which might affect how they read or interpret a text. As part of considering the multiple contexts that shape the production and reception of a text you might consider:

- **Context of situation:** the personal context of the creator or the audience, the time and place of production and reception as well as the immediate events surrounding the production or reception of the text.
- **Context of culture:** the socio-cultural, historical, political and geographical contexts, ideological or religious influences surrounding the production and the reception of the text, as well as the literary genre of the text itself.

Use the table below as a template to review and compare the context of production and the context of reception of a text you have studied. Look at the example overleaf as a guide to completing the table.

Text:		
Genre:		
	Context of production	Context of reception
Context of situation		
Context of culture		

**Text:** *Exit West* (2017) by Mohsin Hamid

**Genre:** Migrant literature, romance, magic realism

	Context of production	Context of reception
Context of situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Author Mohsin Hamid was born in Pakistan, but completed his university education in America.</li> <li>• He is the author of other texts such as <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> (2007), which follows a Pakistani man's experiences living in America before and after 9/11.</li> <li>• <i>Exit West</i> (2017) centres on the experiences of couple, Nadia and Saeed, as they flee their country due to civil war. Their country of origin is never named, but the war and destruction that causes them to flee is very similar to the conflict of the Syrian Civil War, which began in 2011. The devastation and destruction of this civil war has forced vast numbers of Syrians to flee their country and seek asylum in many countries across the globe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am a female, Australian reader who has British immigrant parents. My parents emigrated to Australia seeking better employment opportunities. From what I have researched, my own personal experiences and childhood are different to that of the author, Mohsin Hamid.</li> <li>• I read <i>Exit West</i> in 2021, four years after its publication. Issues like the global refugee crisis and the impacts of war are still evident today and therefore these issues still resonate. It also resonates because I value human rights and this allows me to understand the plight of refugees and migrants seeking a better life. I live in Australia, where the government has a tough stance on border control and place asylum seekers in off-shore detention. I disagree with this policy. I am aware that this issue in Australia is controversial.</li> </ul>
Context of culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the time of publication in 2017 (and prior to this date), the world was facing a global refugee crisis. The UNHCR reported that an unprecedented 65 million people had been displaced by war and persecution at the end of 2015. That year, Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia produced half of the world's refugees.</li> <li>• One million refugees and migrants had arrived in Europe that year, some undertaking perilous journeys in order to seek safety. This global refugee crisis also saw the rise in anti-refugee rhetoric, violence and xenophobia.</li> <li>• Some countries closed their borders in order to prevent an influx of refugees and migrants into their countries.</li> <li>• In 2015, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, said of communities/families who welcomed refugees in host countries, 'these ordinary people see refugees not as beggars, competitors for jobs, or terrorists – but as people like you or me whose lives have been disrupted by war.'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The topic of refugees and asylum seekers has been extensively debated by our two major political parties in Australia for decades.</li> <li>• Anti-refugee rhetoric has been a feature of Australian politics in the past and currently.</li> <li>• Slogans like 'Stop the Boats' have been part of political campaigns advertised to the Australian population, as well as around the world.</li> <li>• In 2019, Scott Morrison announced a plan to cap refugee migrants at 18 750 per year. In 2020, our intake was down 30% due to the global pandemic.</li> <li>• We currently do not face civil war in Australia. Australia is a stable nation, free of conflict and citizens live a peaceful life.</li> </ul>



## Considering Question 5

Explore the effects on your interpretation when a text was transformed into another genre or medium.

### Interpreting the question

This question requires candidates to identify how their reading and understanding of a text was affected when that text was changed into another genre or medium. The verb 'Explore' is defined in the Glossary of key words in the formulation of questions as 'Investigate, search for or evaluate.' A valid approach is to produce an evaluation of the significance of the text's transformation on understanding. The use of the personal pronoun 'your' invites a personal voice, allowing candidates to construct an evaluation of their preferred version of the text, or their preferred reading. However, there is no requirement to construct a comparison between the two texts.

Candidates may argue that the impact of the transformation on their interpretation was subtle or that it was significant. 'Transformed' must involve a change in the text from one form into a different genre or medium. Therefore, two distinct texts should be identified and not simply one hybrid text or a text which blends genres. Genre could be considered in terms of subject matter, such as a fairytale transformed into a short story (e.g. Angela Carter's adaptation of 'Little Red Riding Hood' into 'The Company of Wolves'), or form, such as a novel being transformed into a feature film (e.g. Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games*). The English ATAR course syllabus glossary defines 'medium' as 'The means or channel of communication such as the spoken word, print, graphics, electronic/digital forms (for example, the medium of television, the medium of newspapers and the medium of radio).' Based on this definition, a valid approach could be to discuss the impact of the transformation of a feature film into a television series (e.g. *The War of the Worlds* directed by Craig Viveiros) or the adaptation of a print expository text into a documentary (like Tony Krawitz's *The Tall Man*, from Chloe Hooper's written text of the same name).

An explanation of 'interpretation' should consider the meaning or reading made by the candidate, with a focus on how this was influenced by the transformation of the original text into a different genre or medium. Exploration of the impact of these changes on understanding, with specific links to elements of genre or media, should be included.

### Advice from teachers

- Development of a personal voice will allow candidates to show engagement with the meaning making process, which is a focus of this question.
- Aim to demonstrate clear understanding of important syllabus concepts, like genre and medium, by explicitly identifying and explaining relevant features.
- A key term like 'transformed' should be unpacked in some detail. It could be explained in terms of how the original text was developed, evolved, adapted or subverted.

# Question 5: Sample response one

This response demonstrates great understanding of how the transformation of a traditional short story into a revisionist feature film can impact our interpretation. In outlining how the new text subverts traditional representations, the candidate has included nice detail about how these representations are constructed. Although personal pronouns have been utilised, more development of personal voice throughout the response would have demonstrated greater engagement with this aspect of the question.

The Drover's Wife (2021) by Leah Purcell is a modern adaptation of the familiar colonial story by Henry Lawson. Starting first as a play, then a novel and finally a film, the powerful alternative narrative by Purcell has undoubtedly secured its place as one of Australia's most significant and successful revisionist texts. The Western-style film has several familiar colonial stylistic features and tropes, such as an isolated and foreboding setting and mysterious "outcast" characters. However Purcell artfully replaces the simple comedic elements of Lawson's short story with a carefully woven drama about a mixed bushwoman's discovery of her indigenous heritage and her struggle as a woman in an aggressive, lawless and patriarchal frontier society. This transformation in turn explores several important and confronting topics regarding the oppression and misrepresentation of indigenous people in society, as well as the violence and misogyny rampant yet ignored by traditional colonial stories. While Lawson famously "ignored indigenous characters (unless) it was to accuse them of being cheats and scoundrels" (Pascoe), Purcell foregrounds the struggles and prejudice suffered by indigenous people through her creation of aboriginal protagonists Molly Johnson and Yakada. Furthermore the film also influences my perspective on the familiar archetype of the "heroic" masculine "battler" trope present in colonial and western stories such as "Ned Kelly" and "Santa Fe Trail," as Purcell's crude and violent portrayal of the drovers positions the white colonists in a very negative light.

The construction of Molly Johnson as tough and stoic in the face of adversity is consistent with Lawson's original construction of the drover's wife. However her character's complexity and depth subverts the simplistic protagonists in traditional colonial texts, and as an indigenous woman her character denounces the erasure of indigenous people and women in many colonial and traditional western texts. Her domineering and powerful presence is established in the opening shot, where she is filmed predominately through a low camera angle with the mise-en-scene of a rifle in her hands. The panning shot emphasises her emotionless, stony facial expression and her confident wide stance. She's quick to act in the threat of danger, reacting to Yakada initially with "I'll shoot you where you stand and bury you where you fall."

The opening sentences demonstrate great engagement with the text and the question.

Some sophisticated vocabulary is employed to outline the key points to be explored in the response. The focus remains on the impact of the transformation of the original text into a more contemporary story.

Although there is reference to 'my perspective', the development of a personal voice is lacking.

Terms such as 'subverts' demonstrate consideration of the impact of the transformation of the text, with a focus on the representation of the female protagonist.

Good inclusion of metalanguage to identify visual language features used in the construction of the protagonist.



However as the narrative progresses Purcell reveals a vulnerable and fragile side to her inconsistent with the one-dimensional protagonists in colonial stories. Purcell creates dramatic flashbacks where Molly is shown being beaten by her husband, in these scenes the camera focuses on her bloody, sore face and terrified facial expression. This creates the sense that Molly's overt intimidating persona is likely a "façade" to make her feel in control during her months alone and her vulnerable position in life. This contrast is further built upon in scenes where Molly is shown interacting with her children tenderly, embracing them to say goodbye and the heart stirring scene of her rocking her still born baby. The dichotomy between these personalities creates a realistic character complexity which is often absent within traditional colonial texts which favour simple characterisation. This encourages me to gain a more nuanced interpretation of the conflict Purcell portrays, as her characters feel more real to me than Lawson's.

Excellent understanding of the construction of the protagonist, which is nicely linked to the impact of this construction on the interpretation of the transformed text. This is reinforced by the comparison to the more simplistic construction of the original character.

The construction of Yakada as a suspicious fugitive is consistent in many Australian western texts such as "Ned Kelly", however Purcell's characterisation of him as a gentle and caring father figure subverts antagonistic representations of Aboriginal men in colonial fiction. In an effective transposition between human and animal Purcell replaces the snake in Lawson's story with Yakada, a wrongfully convicted indigenous runaway. Our first impression of Yakada is negative, as he's shown on wanted posters around Everton and wears a thick iron collar as he had escaped jail. However my interpretation drastically changes as the narrative progresses. Yakada is revealed to be wise and caring and plays a father figure to Danny, teaching him how to throw a spear and how being a man "is more than what you wear on your feet, it's about how you treat others." Acting as a positive influence to Danny who's real father is often absent and abusive, and teaches him toxic masculine traits rather than positive ones ("is that like the whore woman Dad likes to bring"). Yakada is also characterised as emotionally intelligent and deeply nonviolent, getting kicked out of his tribe as he refused to go with them for "payback" against the colonists which attacked them. Yakada is overtly the only character in the film which understands the harm of violence even "justified violence." The construction of Yakada a wise and kindhearted aboriginal man wrongfully accused by the others, encourages me to interrogate the tokenistic and antagonistic representation of Aboriginal people in colonial texts.

The argument that the revisionist text subverts representations offered in the original is furthered here by focusing on a different representation.

The quotation in brackets is a little confusing and lacks relevant contextual detail.

Personal pronouns are used when identifying interpretation. However, personal voice could be further developed through consideration of values and context.

Purcell's cinematography and editing denounces the traditional "man vs nature" conflict in colonial texts. While Lawson's story focused on the environment and isolation as being the bushwoman's main struggle, Purcell subverts this by portraying the environment as deeply peaceful and serene. She does this through beautiful long panning shots of the snowy mountains and macro shots of native flora and fauna. She edits

these peaceful clips in between intense scenes of violence and rape, to foreground the idea that danger in the narrative comes from the people's aggression and intolerance rather than nature itself. This is an idea used in many revisionist texts such as The Secret River (2005) in order to add complexity to colonial narratives, and subvert the idea that colonists needed to "tame" nature to survive.

The Drover's Wife ultimately positions me to see Lawson's original story in a different light. My interpretation of the characters being presented becomes more critical and nuanced especially in the light of his extremely racist portrayals of indigenous people.

This paragraph and the conclusion appear rushed and incomplete, although there is still an obvious attempt to explain how the candidate's interpretation of the text was influenced by its transformation.

#### **Hint: Prepare plot summaries of your studied texts**

It is important in the exam to provide an examiner with a clear synopsis or plot summary of your studied text in the introduction of your response. In doing so, you provide the examiner with key information that assists them in understanding your discussion points. These summaries are useful to an examiner who may not have read or viewed your studied text – it allows them to place your ideas into a context. Preparing a summary of your text will save you time in the exam. Think about preparing one to two sentence summaries for each of your studied texts like the example below:

The dystopian narrative, The Handmaid's Tale (1985) by Margaret Atwood explores the plight of a first person female narrator, Offred, within the totalitarian theocracy of Gilead, which has deprived women of freedom primarily because of their ability to reproduce.

An effective summary will identify: title, author, genre, time of production, key character/s or subject/s, central conflict/s or concern/s and a setting or location.



## Activity: Considering the effect when texts are transformed

When a text is transformed into a different genre or medium, your interpretation might be impacted. Although the transformed text may be inspired by a text that you are already familiar with, it is new and consists of different generic conventions and features. These will impact your reading and understanding, as will the links that you make with the original text.

It is important that you are able to articulate your interpretation of the different texts that you study throughout the year. Therefore, consider how the transformation of one text into a different genre or medium impacts on your understanding by copying the table below and completing it with texts of your choice.

Original Text	Interpretation	Transformed Text	Interpretation
Title: <i>The Boat</i> (Nam Le) Genre: Short Story Medium: Print book		Title: <i>The Boat</i> (Matt Huynh) Genre: Interactive Graphic Novel Medium: Website	
<b>Written language features</b> , such as descriptive and figurative language, used to describe the storm (e.g. 'The storm came on quickly'; 'Wind screamed through the hatch.')	Sensory imagery represents the conditions on the boat and creates understanding of the danger and fear that result from such journeys.	The storm is represented through written, visual and audio modes. The sounds of the waves and thunder are heard, the movement of the images is unsettling and uncomfortable.	The enhanced sensory imagery increases a feeling of empathy for those on the boat. This aids in understanding the sense of danger and lack of control that result from such journeys.
<b>Third person point of view</b> (limited), follows the character of Mai.	Allows audience to be aware of her feelings for other characters. Her grief for her father and her willingness to take care of Truong show the impact of war and its aftermath on individuals.	Although there are some changes in characterisation, the point of view is the same.	As in the original, following Mai's story allows for insight into the impact on an individual.
<b>The ending</b> includes the death of Truong and an extended sentence describing his body being thrown overboard '...as far behind the boat as possible so he would be out of sight when the sharks attacked.'	The loss of life of an innocent child in such horrific circumstances represents how dangerous such journeys are, reinforcing how desperate people become when they need to flee their homes.	The events in the ending are similar. However, a visual language pattern is created as the panels that show the body entering the water are the same as previous images which show other bodies entering the water.  Side stories are added. These include more details about the contextual factors that led to people fleeing Vietnam. Archival photographs are included of real people and places from the time period.	By repeating the images of the bodies descending into the water, the text demonstrates how dangerous such journeys are and reinforces the number of lives that are lost in such a horrific way.  This added detail helps to fill gaps in knowledge about the relevant historical context and understanding of why people sought asylum after the Vietnam War.

## Question 5: Sample response two

This candidate constructs a discussion that centres on the transformation of the same story into a different medium, from a written script to a multimodal performance. The focus of the response remains on how their interpretation of the text is impacted by this transformation and the development of performance features. There are some minor issues with paragraph structure and some detail included in the introduction and conclusion detract from the overall cohesion of the response.

In a society that prides itself in multiculturalism and egalitarian values, we must not forget the brutal unjust histories that still shape our society today. Tom Wright sophisticatedly depicts the deplorable war truths of Aboriginal soldiers in his dramatic scripts and play (first performed 2014), Blade Diggers. Through the adaption of a dramatic script to a play, this allows me to have a more empathetic understanding of the oppression Aboriginal soldiers faced, loss of identity and struggles of coping with war trauma.

Wright explores the idea of how Aboriginal soldiers had to give up their identity to be accepted in a patriarchal society through the use of Brechtian devices and stylistic features. This didactic approach positions me to have a deeper understanding of the racism shaped by the societal hierarchy during World War 1. The opening scene with "Sounds of Australia" and wildlife audio was juxtaposed with sudden harsh audio cues, flash strobe lighting. "Gunfire. Screaming. Confusion." The use of olfactory imagery and listing in the script allows me to understand the confusion and shock Aboriginal soldiers would of felt during the massacre. Moreover, in the performance actors use sticks for guns as they rush on stage. This unconventional theatre device allows me to look at the play critically, providing an alienation effect that identities were stripped away as a result of colonisation. As I reflect on my contemporary Western lifestyle and understand the privileged post millennial world I live in, but also understand how the massacre of Aboriginal soldiers isn't recognised enough. Moreover, the ideal of Aboriginal soldiers relinquishing names to be enlisted because they're not "white enough" is explored. When Ern, Bertie and Nigel enlist in the script they're initially rejected due to having a "strong aborigine appearance" and "no white parentage." Additionally, with the belittling language the white soldiers also use formal medical jargon which is contrasted with the Aboriginal soldiers' colloquial language "G'day" and "I reckon nineteen". This contrast in language between white soldiers and Aboriginal Australians illustrates the ideology of white superiority. And the Aboriginal soldiers being accepted after they have "white enough" names, illustrates that they're only accepted if they're of a particular race. In the performance Wright utilises uplifting, Western carnival-like music and distant proxemics to highlight the division

Although the introduction outlines the text choices and overall understanding, it would be strengthened with more detail to outline the thesis and key points of discussion. This would enhance the response's cohesion.

Understanding is clearly identified and linked to the adaptation of the original text to a performance.

Some minor issues with expression and vocabulary choice.

Nice links between interpretation and personal context are offered to support points, and show understanding of how readers make meaning.

While good understanding of important elements of the texts is demonstrated, the focus of the paragraph could be more considered. It tends to jump from one point to another, detracting from the cohesiveness of the argument.

Elements of performance are explicitly identified.



between the two groups. This positions me to respond empathetically towards the belittling treatment of Aboriginal Australians, as I have a deeper understanding, that they were experiments of patriotism. Overall, the transition from a script to a performance enhance a more empathetic and reflective response on the mistreatment of Aboriginal soldiers and how it affects society today.

Black Diggers effectively depicts the idea that no matter how hard Aboriginal soldiers tried to fit in they were always seen as 'inferior' and subhuman. Wright demonstrates this through the character Nigel, who is constantly belittled and dehumanised, allowing me to empathise with his character. In the opening scene the settler and Boundary rider are contemplating a death over a baby, Nigel. In the script they use an authoritarian tone and zoomorphic language, describing Nigel as "the beast in question" and derogatory naming "picaninny." The use of pejorative language that is condemned today in post millennial society allows me to respond with outrage of the disrespect to Nigel. This effect is amplified in the performance as Nigel is represented as a pillow, the use of unconventional props allows me to view the play with a didactic approach. As it allows me to understand the deeper message, that the injustices are still unrecognised today and paying respect is necessary to understand the war truths. This invites me to question the stereotypical heroic ANZAC war myth. Additionally, after Nigel is saved from the Taxidermist due to being an "unusual specimen," he later is positioned sitting in the museum with a pleading tone, simple diction and a child-like voice asking questions about his history, "where am I from?", "how are we related?". Which the Taxidermist responds with vague answers, this positions me to understand how not only was Aboriginal Australians' perception of self erased but also their history, to denote their position in society, to be viewed as "inferior". When this scene is adapted into a performance, elements of clinical blue lighting and the proxemics of actors, Nigel sitting down near the lesser evolved exhibits/apes and the Taxidermist standing next to the more evolved one. This symbolism acts as a visual indication of the systemic racial hierarchy. Allowing me to have a better understanding of how Nigel was deemed inferior and a relic in evolution. The idea of racial prejudice is effectively conveyed in the script and play, with the performance allowing me to have a more empathetic response and positions me to reflect on the education around World War 1 not recognising the injustices.

Furthermore, Wright explores the idea of memory and forgetting in the script and performance. Highlighting how memory can be so unbearable it's impossible to move on, and also to recognise the war truths. Through the use of language features to Brechtian devices in the performance, it allows me to have a connection with the pain that Aboriginal soldiers would of felt and their loss of hope.

This point first identifies a response, feeling empathy, in order to explain the impact of the transformation and how it led to greater understanding.

The concluding sentence sums up the overall argument, but the focus of the paragraph is a little unclear.

While the topic sentence demonstrates understanding of ideas in the texts, more explicit links to the question could be outlined.

Not only is the candidate's understanding of the text identified, but also how it has been developed and 'amplified' due to the transformation from one medium to another.

The candidate clearly links their understanding to relevant elements of construction.

Some issues with structural features related to sentences and paragraphing impact on cohesion.

In the script Bertie's voice changes from being optimistic to "fight for a better world" to being traumatised. Bertie's PTSD is shown by the metaphor of him "star(ing) into space", "eyes aware but body still." The loss of hope and his inability to move on, positions me to understand the emotional toll of war. This is reinforced through performance elements, with sombre music, and the actor gazing beyond the audience. This allows me to have a deeper understanding of the mental impact of extreme trauma, and recognise Aboriginal soldiers' sacrifices. Moreover, the character Ern suggests that no matter how hard you suppress the memory of trauma the "truths" will always rise to the surface. This idea is illustrated through symbolism of the Iran Harvest in Ern's long monologue. Stating the strong modality pieces of shrapnel "must come out." Which implies that memories from the past must be acknowledged. In the play, the actor employs high paced and a dramatic tone, along with variation in syntax to allow audiences of today to recognise the often hidden war truths. Overall, Wright's didactic approach positions me to understand how Aboriginal soldiers' sacrifices aren't acknowledge enough by the wider society. And through the understanding of not only physical and emotional toll of war, I responds empathetically to those whose stories are unacknowledged.

Overall, through the adaption of a script to a play of Black Diggers, it positioned me to respond more empathetically to Aboriginal soldiers' stories and treatment as sub-human. The transition to a performance with dramatic unconventional theatre elements allowed me to have a deeper understanding of Wright's didactic purpose. That Aboriginal soldiers are fighting a bigger, internal war than World War One. As a non-Aboriginal Australian in a contemporary society I understand how the hidden truths should be told in order to understand these racial inequalities that are still prevalent today.

This point about feeling empathy could be unpacked in more detail, to explain how the candidate felt they could relate.

The effects of the transformation are clearly identified through the use of vocabulary such as 'reinforced' and 'deeper understanding.'

An argument that is built around how an empathetic response led to a greater understanding is summarised. However, an outline of main points is lacking and impacts on the cohesion of the argument overall.



## Activity: Distinguishing between mode, medium and genre

Within the ATAR English course syllabus there are three main concepts used to categorise texts; mode, medium and genre. Each have features that you should be able to distinguish. Find the definitions of each term in the syllabus glossary and write them in the spaces below.

You can access the glossary here: [https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/1088943/English\\_ATAR\\_Year\\_12\\_Syllabus\\_for\\_teaching\\_from\\_January\\_2024.PDF](https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1088943/English_ATAR_Year_12_Syllabus_for_teaching_from_January_2024.PDF)

Mode	
Medium	
Genre	

You should be able to identify which categories apply to your studied texts. Copy the table below and complete it with details about your studied texts in order to develop appropriate metalanguage.

Text details	Mode	Medium	Genre	Textual features
<u>Long Way Down</u> , 2017, Jason Reynolds	Written Visual	Print book	Graphic novel	Images, colours, symbolism, language patterns
<u>Elvis</u> , 2022, Baz Luhrmann	Auditory Visual	Cinema Television streaming services	Feature film Musical biopic	Film language, non-diegetic/diegetic sounds, narrative conventions
<u>The Road</u> , 2006, Cormac McCarthy	Written	Print book	Prose novel Post-apocalyptic	Narrative conventions, language features, stylistic choices
<u>The Shark Net</u> , 2000, Robert Drewe	Written	Print book	Memoir	Language features, selection of detail, structural features, author's voice

## Considering Question 6

Discuss how a text engages with issues or ideas significant within its context.

### Interpreting the question

To address this question, candidates need to consider the interrelationship between texts and contexts through an exploration of the issues or ideas presented in a text. 'Issues' are defined in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary as 'Matters of personal or public concern that are in dispute; things which directly or indirectly affect a person or members of a society and are considered to be problems.' Whereas, 'Ideas' are defined as possessing 'an open meaning and can be interpreted as understandings, thoughts, notions, opinions, views or beliefs.' There is not a requirement to discuss both ideas and issues, however candidates may do so if multiple ideas relate to a particular issue. Another acceptable approach is to focus on a variety of concerns or disputes within one single issue.

The context of the text should be explicitly identified and outlined. 'Context' is defined in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary as 'The environment in which a text is responded to or created. Context can include the general social, historical and cultural conditions in which a text is responded to and created (the context of culture) or the specific features of its immediate environment (context of situation).' A text's context may be considered in a variety of ways, such as its social context, historical context or the creator's biographical context. A text's setting may represent a particular context, and discussion of this context is valid when the different concepts are clearly distinguished. 'Context' is distinctly located outside of the text in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary, whereas setting is a generic convention used in the construction of the text. For example, the setting of Craig Silvey's *Jasper Jones* is a small town in Western Australia in the 1960s, but the context of production is early 2000s in Western Australia. The difference between these should be identified.

Justification of the significance of the issue or idea within the text's context should be provided. 'Significant' may be explained as worthy of attention, noteworthy or meaningful. The verb 'engages' is an open term, which highlights the fact that texts are not mirrors of the world but are shaped by their contexts. It allows consideration of how a text may reproduce, thematise, subvert, adapt or otherwise represent a significant issue or idea.

### Advice from teachers

- Ideas and issues are not interchangeable terms, so ensure that you are demonstrating your understanding of these important syllabus concepts in relation to your studied texts.
- Endeavour to situate the issue or idea clearly within the chosen context in order to build the links between them.
- As texts are studied throughout the year, build your knowledge of important relevant contextual factors.



## Question 6: Sample response one

Through sophisticated vocabulary and expression, this candidate has been able to construct a discussion that addresses all aspects of the question in an articulate manner. Clear engagement with relevant contextual factors is demonstrated throughout. This is supported by great knowledge and understanding of the chosen text. When discussing significance today, a touch more unpacking of contemporary Australian ideologies could have been considered as this tended to be more implied than explicit.

With the 21<sup>st</sup> century Australian context, our understanding of Aboriginal issues are often shaped by the polarised political debates in media and the simplified representations of Indigenous people in historical Western Literature. These binary portrayals fail to capture the nuance of Australian colonisation and the richness of Indigenous culture, stifling the Aboriginal community's ability to overcome systemic disadvantage. In her 2021 novel *Homecoming*, Noongar woman and professor Elfie Shiosaki shatters the one-dimensional depictions of Indigenous issues to reveal the trauma, defiance and dignity Indigenous Australians hold as human beings navigating a hostile colonial landscape. Created within a 21<sup>st</sup> century post-colonial context where the Closing the Gap Strategy and 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum sparked conversation about how to mend current socioeconomic disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians, Shiosaki engages with current Indigenous issues through a humanising perspective. Rather than the cold, dense facts found in the National Australian Archive and Western historical accounts, Shiosaki pieces together fragments of recorded conversations, archival documents, poetry and prose to emotionally immerse readers into complex, heart-wrenching stories spanning four generations of Noongar people. Not only that, Shiosaki uses unconventional layout to amplify the authentic voices of her ancestors. It is through the structural manipulation of text and humanising descriptions that Shiosake engages with significant Aboriginal issues, condemning the historical representations of Indigenous people in the archive whilst also serving as a celebration of what stories have survived today.

Shiosaki structurally manipulates text layout to engage with Aboriginal issues in a more authentic manner, shedding light on the intergenerational trauma Indigenous people still must navigate today within the 21<sup>st</sup> century Australian context. When Olive Harris, Shiosaki's great grandmother introduces herself, she says "I was born in Perth," but rather than stopping here, the sentence continues after a small, physical gap to state "somewhere". This empty space defies traditional British conventions of dialogue, thus engaging with Indigenous voices in a unique way. The blank space disrupts the flow of reading, making the reader not only hear the sadness in Olive's voice but also reflect

Engaging and relevant opening sentences develop links to the question immediately. Sophisticated vocabulary has been utilised to demonstrate understanding of context and representations.

Nice detail about important contemporary contextual factors is offered.

By including terms such as 'condemning' the candidate not only develops links between context and issues, but also considers the role of texts in influencing understanding of our world.

The detail in the topic sentence outlines the main point to be developed in the paragraph, and engages with all key parts of the question.

The inclusion of evidence, in the form of two separated quotations, reflects the manipulation of structural features found in the original text and strengthens the point through the pause.

on the words left unsaid. Through structurally manipulating text layout Shiosake therefore engages with the gaping holes in Indigenous history, an issue which remains significant within the post-colonial Australian context. Furthermore, Harris explains that "I did not know when I was born/ so in a way/ I'm not eighty four/ see?", each clause being separated on a new line and the rhetorical question "see?" is isolated in the centre of the page. The large gaps between words is Shiosaki's way of imbuing immediacy into the dialogue of Harris as she struggles to reflect her broken history. Within the 21<sup>st</sup> century context where the imperialist myth of "peaceful settlement" still perpetuates through the attitudes of many non-Indigenous. Shiosaki engages with Aboriginal issues in a humanising way, giving her ancestors presence through the blank spaces she constructs. This structural manipulation acts as a gateway for us to "see" the fractured histories of Indigenous Australians, a significant issue we must be informed about if we are to reconcile with First Nations People.

In a contemporary Australian context where Indigenous voices are often politicised as either objects of pity or sources of shame, Shiosaki engages with Aboriginal issues through unveiling the unspoken self determination of Indigenous people. The sheer defiance and love for children that vibrates through these pages humanises the Indigenous community as people who just want to find their way back home. In the novel, letters by Edward Harris, Olive's father, to A.O. Neville, the man responsible for assimilation policies have been written such that Edward's resistant voice is amplified. Shiosaki omits the formal language of a letter, instead emphasising particular accusatory phrases such as "I have never found you sympathetic", "how one-sided and biased you are" and "you have never missed an opportunity to hurt me". Through these harsh sentences and repetition of the accusatory pronoun "you" Shiosaki illuminates the defiant voices of Indigenous people that have historically been silenced. This functions as a way of engaging with Australian history, highlighting the misrepresentation of Indigenous voices in Western historical accounts and revealing the dignity they hold as human beings. This is reinforced when Shiosaki places "I am their father" in the centre of the page, serving as a condemnation towards colonial Australian context where we still don't recognise Indigenous people as "fathers". Through the archived letters of Edward Harris, Shiosaki engages with the issue of misrepresentation in colonial literature, emphasising the humanity of Indigenous people we must embrace in a 21<sup>st</sup> century Australian context.

Shiosaki does not only rely on the voices of her Noongar ancestors to engage with Indigenous issues but also incorporates her own poetry and dignified descriptions to comment on the current 21<sup>st</sup> century Australian archive that does not encapsulate the dignity of Indigenous

The candidate refers to the significance of the issue in the contemporary context of Australia today. This point could be supported a little more with some links to values and ideologies.

Use of some lovely expression and sophisticated vocabulary enables the candidate to clearly articulate their argument.

Paragraph concludes with a strong link to our context to prove significance today. Again, it may be strengthened with a more explicit link between reconciliation and modern Australia's ideological beliefs.

Thorough knowledge of the text is demonstrated. Quotations are incorporated seamlessly to develop and support points.

Once again, the paragraph concludes with explicit links to key words in the question.



people. In her poem 'Lost in Archive' Shiosaki describes the archive as a "cold unfeeling place" and a "sea of remembering or forgetting" using the poignant connotations of "cold" "unfeeling" and the metaphor of a "sea" to suggest the vastness and numbness of Indigenous records in Western Literature. This figurative language enables Shiosaki to engage with the issues within historical literature, pointing out the dehumanising, alienating perspective it still perpetuates in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Australian context. Instead, Shiosaki reveals humanising stories such as one where her grandmother's friends called her "Venus in her swimsuit", adding that "Venus is the Roman Goddess of love, beauty – and victory". The elegant diction of "love", "beauty" and "goddess" paint a dignified picture of Indigenous women, one not seen in the victimised portrayals of media. Through revealing these simple stories where Indigenous people are the victors and heroes, Shiosaki engages with the dehumanising representations of Indigenous people, an issue that still affects the Aboriginal community's ability to break free from disadvantage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Australian context.

Elfie Shiosaki's 2021 novel Homecoming serves to engage with the 21<sup>st</sup> century Australian context of dehumanising social stigmas and persistent socioeconomic disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians. However, rather than merely displaying all the facts and events of colonisation, Shiosaki imbues greater immediacy, authenticity and dignity to the voices of her Indigenous ancestors. Through structural manipulation of layout, poetry and defiant letters, Shiosaki creates a compelling, critical yet hopeful message towards Australians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: we still have a long journey ahead of us if we want to reconcile with Indigenous people and live in a world where non-Indigenous and Indigenous communities celebrate their humanity together. With the 2023 Voice to Parliament referendum failing, Homecoming begs us to continue interrogating the archive and questioning our colonial regime, ultimately acting as a significant piece of progressive literature in the Australian canon of history.

What is meant by 'poignant connotations' could be unpacked and explained a little more here.

The reference to 'figurative language' could be strengthened by identifying specific examples offered in evidence (e.g. the use of personification).

A little repetitive here. Compared to other paragraphs, the depth of analysis in this final paragraph is less developed.

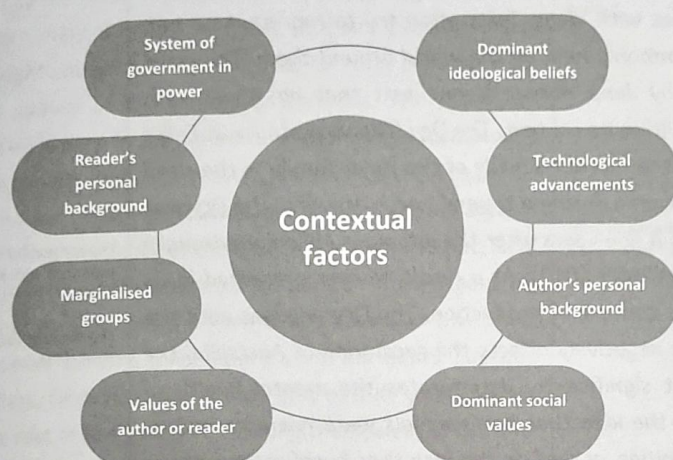
Detail about how the author engages with the issues is reinforced here.

The conclusion concisely sums up the main points developed through the response and ends with a sense of immediacy to explain the significance of the issue in a contemporary Australian context.

## Activity: Mapping out context

Context is defined in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary as 'The environment in which a text is responded to or created. Context can include the general social, historical and cultural conditions in which a text is responded to and created (the context of culture) or the specific features of its immediate environment (context of situation).'

The mind map below represents some contextual factors that you might note down when considering context of production and/or reception. Copy a similar mindmap into your notes and apply these factors to a text you have studied. You might add other contextual factors that have not been included.



In the space below, identify and note down the multiple contextual factors addressed in Sample Response One and Two. You might categorise them in a similar way as above.



## Question 6: Sample response two

A strength of this response is how cohesive it is in detailing its argument. Structural features are used effectively to outline and reinforce thesis points from the introduction and throughout the whole response. Very good knowledge of a range of relevant contextual factors is demonstrated. The candidate also shows good understanding of the role of the author in manipulating elements of construction for effect. Significance of the idea in a contemporary context is identified but could be more of a focus to strengthen engagement with this critical part of the question.

The context surrounding a text during its production is significant in how a text engages with ideas. Texts often try to represent certain ideas that are commonly held by the world around them. The novel The Dry (2016) by Jane Harper is one text that has dealt with significant ideas within its context. The Dry follows protagonist Falk's investigation into the murder-suicide of the Haler family in the rural community of Kiewarra during a time of harsh drought. The Dry was published in 2016, a few years after the infamous Millenium drought affected Australia (2003-2010). As a result, Harper presented ideas that reflected this context of production. The Dry engages with the idea that drought negatively affects the rural land of Australia, the idea that drought significantly deteriorates the mental health of rural Australians, the idea that homosexuals were not accepted by close knit communities, as well as the idea that bushfires are major natural disasters that are highly destructive. These accurately reflect the context of production in 2016 and has been achieved by language features such as metaphors.

The Dry has engaged with the idea that drought negatively affects the rural land of Australia, which was an idea highly prevalent following the disastrous affects of the Millenium Drought from 2003-2010. In 2003, 48 out of 58 municipalities in Victoria were declared in drought. It was a serious threat that affected the majority of Australians. Harper worked as a journalist during this time and investigated the effects on these rural towns. She used Kiewarra as a microcosm for all rural communities. In an interview, Harper states that "the town itself is an amalgamation of the many rural communities visited." Therefore, she has aimed to represent Kiewarra in the text as a place that has been hit hard by the drought, with land that is dry and desolate. She describes the once flowing riverbed as "nothing more than a dusty scar in the land." This metaphor "dusty scar" portrays the river as a sign of an injury to accurately reflect the context of production. During this time, The Murray Darling Basin faced growing acidification affects due to the drought and became void of water. Harper continues to describe this river using adjectives such as 'long and barren' to effectively highlight the effects of the drought, as well as similes such as when she

The context is clearly identified and explained with some detail.

The focus of each paragraph is outlined nicely in thesis points.

Although the thesis points have been developed nicely, the concluding line is a little general in its reference to the use of language features to represent the ideas.

Topic sentence concisely outlines the focus for the paragraph, effectively integrating key terms from the question. The description of prevalence explains the significance of the idea.

Detailed knowledge of a range of relevant contextual factors is demonstrated through the descriptions offered.

Analysis of a range of language features is incorporated, with some nice links to the context of the drought.

exclaims that "along the banks, gnarled grey tree roots were exposed like cobwebs." Her language explicitly describes the river as dry and dusty to purposefully engage with the context with which she is writing in. Thus, she engages with the idea that the drought has negatively affected the rural land.

Furthermore, The Dry engages with the idea that drought heavily deteriorates the mental health of rural communities, and it brings forth mental health issues. At the time the novel was created, the number of suicides per 100,000 people was 80% higher in rural areas compared to urban areas (2016). This highlights the devastating effects of the drought on the mental health of those that are predominately affected. The drought caused an economic loss for rural communities, that made their quality of living majorly decrease. The Millennium Drought caused a 46% drop in the agricultural economy, which mainly affected the rural townspeople. As a result, Harper has tried to mimic this in her novel and has engaged with this idea through the dialogue of the townspeople. When the death of the Hadler family comes out, local police officer Clyde brushes the death off "as another farmer gone off the rails." He speaks as if suicide is a normal occurrence in this town, and as the readers we become taken aback at its normality. Lifetime friend of the Hadlers, Gretchen, also speaks of it as if it's usual, saying "he did what (the rest of the town) can't bring themselves to do." She conveys how the whole town is affected negatively by the drought, and portrays the idea that suicide is a thought that has crossed all people's minds. Additionally, Harper has utilised the outburst of emotion from protagonist Falk to emphasise this idea. When Falk first enters his childhood town after being gone for over ten years, he visits the river he used to play in with his friends. At this point in the novel, the audience believes Falk is an emotionless character, as Harper specifically represented him this way, in order for the one moment of emotion to be truly significant and important. As he walks in the bed of the once flowing, full river, Falk becomes shocked. Harper states that "alone in that monstrous wound, Falk put his face in his hands and just once screamed himself." This effectively engages with this affect on mental health due to this purposeful juxtaposition between outburst of emotion and the normally emotionless display by Falk. Thus Harper purposefully engages with the idea that drought severely deteriorates the mental health of rural Australians, which was reflective of the production's context.

The Dry additionally actively engages with the idea that homosexuals were not accepted by rural close-knit communities, due to the parochial attitudes they held during the time period. This time period saw the coming out of homosexuals, as people stood together to publicly express their feelings. However, due to the close-minded attitudes of the

This concluding sentence links well to the main focus of the paragraph, although it could be expanded a little more on the significance of the idea discussed.

Conjunctions, such as 'thus' and 'furthermore' work as structural devices to build cohesion through the response.

Use of evidence, in the form of statistics, supports the argument about the significance of the ideas in the context.

Points about engagement are developed clearly around the argument that the author has engaged with, and manipulated, a range of elements of construction in order to represent the ideas.

Evidence and explanation shows good understanding of a range of narrative conventions, such as characterisation.

Some sophisticated vocabulary and use of adverbs like 'additionally' enable the candidate to develop a cohesive argument with nice clarity.



rural communities, they were not actively accepted and were shunned and marginalised. Thus, Harper has specifically utilised the character of Jamie Sullivan, a red herring in the investigation, to accurately reflect the ideas on homosexuality. Harper has constructed Sullivan as a gay man with a boyfriend, whom he keeps hidden, to effectively achieve this idea. Sullivan is a red herring in the story, as he lies about his alibi so as to not reveal his homosexuality. When being questioned, Sullivan is caught with a "fine sheen of sweat" on his upper lip and is seen "swivelling his eyes" nervously. He believes that being revealed as a homosexual in a town like this is "worse than being fingered for triple murder." Harper utilises this visual imagery to present Sullivan as nervous. Sullivan knows that the town will not accept him for what he is due to this being a "radical" new idea that will make a major change to the life of the community. Thus, Harper accurately engages with the idea that homosexuals were not accepted by rural communities in this context of the decade of the 2010s.

Finally, Harper has purposely engaged with the idea that bushfires are a major natural disaster that is destructive. The threat of bushfires is ingrained into the psyche of all Australians. Nearly all Australians will have been near a bushfire in this life and it is a scary thought as it can reap mass destruction, especially in a dry area. In 2009, the Black Saturday bushfires were one of the most deadly and disastrous bushfires. 173 people died, over one million domestic and wild animals were lost, and 450, 000 hectares of land were burnt. Harper has conveyed the destruction of bushfires in the novel during the climax scene. Revealed murderer, Scott Whitlam is cornered into the dry forest by Falk and his partner, Raco. However, they are stopped dead in their tracks when he reveals a lighter, a weapon "a thousand times worse than a gun." This threat is a deadly one, one that can heavily affect the entire town and nearby ones. Whitlam "flicks the lighter open and the flame dances dazzling white against the dull bushland". The lighter poses a major threat, and Harper uses it as a symbol of mass destruction, a symbol that all Australians can recognise. Falk describes it as the "stuff of nightmares." This results in the climax of the novel and tensions run high as we understand the impact the lighter can bring, due to Harper's use of symbolism and visual imagery. The metaphor compares the lighter to "nightmares" emphasising the impact even more. As a result, Harper actively engages with the context by presenting the idea that bushfires are a major threat to the land and people.

Jane Harper has actively engaged with ideas that are significant with The Dry's context. The Dry was published following the Millenium Drought and thus presents the ideas that drought negatively affects the rural land, as well as the idea that drought severely deteriorates

The use of the term 'red herring' shows understanding of generic conventions related to subject matter.

Evidence, in the form of short quotations, is smoothly incorporated into sentences to support points.

Interesting detail about the role of bushfires in contemporary Australia demonstrates nice engagement with relevant contextual factors.

Candidate links both narrative conventions and language features to the representation of ideas that are relevant in an Australian context.

The candidate explicitly explains how the author engages with the idea. A little more consideration of its significance would strengthen and sum up the main points presented in the paragraph.

mental health. The Millenium Drought also caused many bushfires, and so it similarly presents the idea that bushfires are a deadly natural disaster. The Dry also was produced in a time where change was not welcomed, as a result, the idea that homosexuals were not accepted in rural communities was presented. Harper has achieved this through many language features, including symbolism and metaphors. She makes us truly understand the time period she wrote in.

The conclusion clearly summarises the main points that have been presented throughout the response. Use of key terms from the question signpost how important understandings have been demonstrated.

Activity: Distinguishing between ideas and issues

Although there may be links between the important syllabus concepts of ideas and issues, these terms are not interchangeable. A variety of ideas may be related to an issue, but they should not be discussed as though they are the same thing. You should aim to show awareness of the distinct features that each concept possesses. These become clear when considering the definitions found in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary. As part of your study familiarise yourself with these terms.

Question 6 requires you to identify ideas or issues which are significant to the context of a text. Highlight the ideas or issues that are presented in each of the sample responses. You will find that one focuses on ideas and the other on issues.

Then, use a copy of the table below to explore ideas and issues in your own texts, the links between them, and their links to contextual factors. Look to the example below as a guide.

Text: *The Complete MAUS* (Art Spiegelman, 1986)

Genre: Graphic Novel

Contextual factors	Issues	Ideas
Spiegelman's parents were victims of The Holocaust.	Generational trauma	Spiegelman and his father have a strained relationship.  Spiegelman suffers mental health issues, partly due to the distance between himself and his father.
1980s America	The impact of war	People who survive war and trauma are often impacted by survivor's guilt long after the events.



## Considering Question 7

Critically appraise how the conventions used in **one** text influence audience responses.

### Interpreting the question

To successfully address this question, candidates must demonstrate engagement with the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus point, 'Analyse and critically appraise how the conventions of texts influence responses, including: the role of the audience in making meaning.' The Glossary of key words in the formulation of questions defines 'Critically' as 'Add a degree or level of accuracy depth, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to analyse/evaluate.' As an appraisal requires an evaluation or judgement, candidates should aim to present an informed judgement about the effect of conventions on audience responses.

'Conventions' is defined in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary as 'An accepted practice that has developed over time and is generally used and understood...Conventions can be techniques, features or elements that belong to a genre.' Generic conventions relating to subject matter (e.g. science fiction, fantasy), form (e.g. novel, documentary), or both, could be the focus. Candidates need to show understanding of the conventions of their selected text, and clearly explain the role these play in influencing audience responses. For example, the impact of the dystopian conventions of excessive authoritarian control and loss of humanity in Margaret Atwood's novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, on making a contemporary audience respond with discomfort and fear.

Identification of a specific audience will strengthen the appraisal, as contextual factors could be considered when explaining responses to the conventions. 'Influence' may be understood as having an impact or effect on audience responses. There are a number of valid ways to discuss audience response, including, emotional, intellectual, behavioural or critical reactions to the conventions. A range of responses may be identified. Discussion of interpretations could be included in order to explain a response, or responses, however the focus must remain on critically appraising how the response, or responses, are influenced by the conventions used in the selected text.

### Advice from teachers

- In this question, 'conventions' is used as quite an open term. Attention must remain on how these influence responses, rather than the ideas or issues.
- Explicitly defining and explaining a selected audience will enable you to support points about how their responses were influenced.
- As an appraisal requires some form of judgement, valid arguments could be that the use of conventions was highly significant, minimally significant or some extent in between in influencing audience responses.



## Question 7: Sample response one

This response develops an appraisal around the argument that feature films are able to effectively engage modern audiences through the subversion and manipulation of a range of generic conventions. Understanding of the chosen genres of gothic and film noir is demonstrated in nice detail, focusing on the genre of subject matter. The audience is identified as young adults. This could be narrowed down more and explained in some detail, such as what is unique about this audience.

It is inevitable that all texts are judged by what has been done before; torn apart and compared to the past. As time wears on, young adult audiences, especially, become increasingly saturated with experiences of generic titles. Not all texts accept such a fate so easily however. Alex Garland's *Ex Machina* (2015) is a hybrid text that blends gothic, film noir and science-fiction into a film that epitomises subversion, defying audience expectations. It follows Caleb as he wins a trip to the estate of Nathan, the CEO of the search engine company he works for. There he is introduced to Ava, a convincingly sentient AI, and asked to conclude her consciousness. At first sure of their differences, as the film progresses, Caleb finds diminishing confidence in his definition of what it means to be human, as Ava displays increasing human-likeness and Nathan's cruelty surfaces. *Ex Machina* deftly weaves gothic and film noir genre conventions into a sci-fi story, prompting young adult audiences to view the classic genres as applicable to the contemporary and relevant to today's times.

The initial setting of *Ex Machina* is contrary to the typical gothic and film noir settings. A remote, futuristic house cushioned by lush greenery dominates the exposition. Wide, long and bird eye-view shots capture the pristine natural scenery that Nathan's estate encompasses. Greenery is often entirely removed from the backgrounds of gothic and film noir settings, quickly disarming the judgement of young adults, ensuring they are not quick to dismiss the movie as just another generic title. The awe and wonder of the grand beauty of nature, then soon fades fast as the underground lab bunker, which most of the film takes place in, is revealed. Although also not physically similar to the typical, the atmosphere the setting exudes replicates the gothic and film noir genres. The bunker is a maze of corridors and doors, and this windowless constrictive space evokes gothic claustrophobia. The frequent lockdowns drown the rooms in red light, a coloured twist on the expressive lighting of film noir, and the dim lighting and shadows that proliferate exude the well-known sinister and mysterious atmosphere. *Ex Machina* is thus able to captivate young adult audiences in the jarring contrasting yet similar settings compared to the generic settings. Through defying first impressions and building gothic and film noir atmospheres from the far-fetched, *Ex Machina* is a

The candidate clearly identifies an audience and attempts to outline an argument. However, there are some issues with expression.

There are some nice uses of sophisticated vocabulary and expression as they engage with the specifics of their chosen text. A good understanding of concepts is shown.

Minor issues with expression suggest a need to proofread and edit.

There is an implicit evaluation of the conventions within the phrase 'deftly weaves.' This is linked with the identification of an intellectual response.

Effective use of visual language features to develop points about the construction of the generic conventions.

Clear links to a specific audience are developed.

Knowledge of the generic conventions of the subject matter is clearly shown through discussion of 'typical' settings and atmosphere, along with the lighting.

This link to the audience would be enhanced by identifying what is unique about young adults that would make them respond in this manner (e.g. values and beliefs).



prime example of how the genres of gothic and film noir can be applied to the contemporary, in an era where films are increasingly set in the present of a futuristically inclined time and space.

The character of Ava is able to fulfil the gothic and film noir character tropes in another coy fashion that subverts expectations. Ava is a cyborg, and this renders audience members' ability to pinpoint her tropes. After all, film noir applies them to humans and gothic extends them to monsters. However, cyborgs, being a recent invention, have had no place in genres of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, Ava fully embodies the 'damsel in distress' trope, she is locked up by Nathan, the gothic tyrannical villain, who refers to her as a "rat in a maze". To the surprise of the young adult audience, this innocent image is the toppled and its polar opposite emerges – the femme fatale. She played Nathan's game who wanted to see if she could use 'sympathy' and other human traits to win Caleb over. Nathan dangled freedom through Caleb in front of Ava, and she did so, seducing and manipulating Caleb's affections for her to make him betray Nathan and open an escape routed for her. Ava succeeds, outsmarting Nathan and exceeding his expectations – Nathan thought he had control over her. At the end of the film, the power dynamic that existed between oppressor and oppressed is overturned through Nathan's poetic death at the hands of Ava. To the young adult audience, which has a generally higher proportion of progressive-thinking individuals and feminists, Ava's character and plight can be seen as a symbol of the circumstances of women in society. Ava is objectified by Nathan, who sees her as a tool to feed his god complex evidenced when he tells Caleb, who sees Ava's body before 'Ava'. This struggle being displayed resonates with audience members. Moreover, Ava not conforming to the 'damsel in distress' trope is therapeutic. Ava is capable of cruelty, and her humanity comes before her gender. Many texts often box female characters as decorative partners of male characters and without autonomy, reliant on 'heroes' to save them. Ava's escape being through her own strength and killing Nathan further cements her and women's status as equal to men. Ex Machina's detailed construction of Ava strikes a chord with female empowerment much young adults follow, and its inclusion through gothic and film noir emphatically proves that the classic genres do not necessarily have to conform to outdated ideology and so the genres are still relevant today.

The generic plots of gothic and film noir prevail in Ex Machina, however, they are shrouded by the premise of new and exciting technology. The gothic revenge and escape plot is enacted through Ava's triumph over Nathan and her manipulation of Caleb. Film noir's hapless fall guy that becomes corrupted is demonstrated in Caleb. Caleb is initially awkward and weak, dominated by Nathan. However, he falls for Ava and becomes

Identifying the text as a 'prime example' offers an appraisal, as required by the question.

Although there is some clumsy expression, the topic sentence does identify important generic conventions.

Clear understanding of the genre is developed.

Quote is integrated smoothly into sentence.

Some more detailed explanation of the factors that influence a younger audience's response is presented.

This paragraph, like the previous, concludes with reference to an appraisal and judgement, linking to the question.

This topic sentence would benefit from the inclusion of more specific detail about the main point to be covered in the paragraph.

influenced to betray Nathan and lock him in the underground bunker. These two narratives arise from the sci-fi 'what-if?' premise: What if a convincingly sentient AI was created? The simple combination of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian era's gothic and film noir that defined the 1940s that draws suspense and does not let the predictable plots prevail persuades young adult viewers that the classic genres have not been exhausted yet. Ex Machina masterfully proves itself as an original text that utilises the gothic and film noir genres that still have plenty to offer, a convincing show to young adult audiences that the classic genres are still strong and not to be avoided.

Through settings, characters and plots, Ex Machina uses gothic and film noir conventions in its sci-fi story to promote to young adult audiences that these genres can be twisted with the contemporary, and have their place in the present. The juxtaposition the settings deftly weave new greenery and old atmospheres to disarm assumptions; Ava's feminist characterisation garners support; and the gothic and film noir predictable plots embellished with sci-fi elements to become unpredictable showcase all that the classic genres can change and offer. All texts are judged by what has been done before, and so genre can often be a barrier to enjoyment. However, there are plenty of cases where they serve as foundations to elevate texts to new heights instead.

There are elements of this paragraph that are a confusing and not as developed as previous points, suggesting there may have been time management issues.

The adverb 'masterfully' reinforces the appraisal offered throughout.

The key points that have been presented throughout body paragraphs are outlined.

The concluding sentences offer a good summary of the main premise of the thesis, leaving a clear impression on the reader.

### Hint: Write your own exam questions

Transform the syllabus dot points into exam style questions. Take a syllabus dot point and use it to write your own question, remembering that your exam questions usually contain the following key word types: command words, concept words, condition words and critical words.

#### Syllabus Point:

#### Compare and contrast distinctive features of genres by:

- analysing the techniques and conventions used in different genres, media and modes
- considering how the conventions of genres can be challenged, manipulated or subverted
- examining how genres and their conventions have changed and been adapted over time.

#### Example Questions:

1. Analyse how at least one text you have studied manipulates the conventions of genre in order to challenge the expectations of an audience.
2. Compare how two texts you have studied illustrate how a particular genre has been adapted over time.



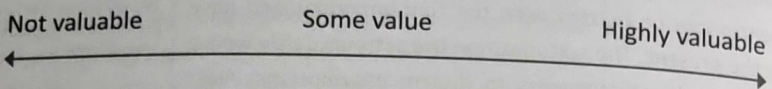
### Activity: Making judgements

An appraisal requires some form of judgement or evaluation. Question 7 asks you to present a judgement about the influence of conventions on audience responses.

As a critical appraisal is required, the judgements must be informed by sound knowledge of the text and its features. 'Critically analyse/evaluate' is defined in the Glossary of key words in the formulation of questions as 'Add a degree or level of accuracy depth, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to analyse/evaluate.'

For each of the sample responses:

1. Decide and mark where the appraisal of how conventions influence audience responses would fit on the following scale:



- Find two pieces of evidence to support each of your judgements, consider how each piece demonstrates 'critical' appraisal.
- Consider the question in relation to a text that you have studied and decide where it would fit on the scale.
- Write an introduction in response to Question 7, based on the judgement that you made above. When outlining your thesis statement and supporting points, develop the detail necessary to construct an informed and 'critical' appraisal.

**Hint: Write concisely**

Although you are expected to write with some depth in the Responding section, you will not be rewarded for writing everything that you know about a text, an issue and/or a context. The detail should be built into how you demonstrate understanding of the syllabus concepts in relation to the question.

As you practice and develop your essay writing skills throughout the year, always edit your work, or work with a peer, to ensure that every detail supports your thesis and contributes to your argument. One way this could be done is by highlighting your work in different colours. For example, a colour for thesis and topic sentences, a colour for evidence, a colour for explanation that clearly links to the question, and a colour for detail that doesn't explicitly address the question. This should give you a visual representation of where your focus is in your essay writing.

## Question 7: Sample response two

By focusing on contrasting audiences and responses, this appraisal demonstrates understanding of the importance of contextual factors in shaping response. This is linked well to the conventions of the documentary genre, the focus here being on genre in relation to form rather than subject matter as in the previous response. Some issues with conventions of writing, like incorporation of quotations and the use of apostrophes for possession, do detract from overall cohesion and clarity.

The Bolsheviks seizure of power in 1917, and the various methods of consolidation implemented by historical figures to retain that power, culminated in the rise of a one party, totalitarian driven state ruled by communist bodies. Gabe Polsky's documentary *The Red Army*, is a captivating hybrid blend of both historical and sporting genres, following a Russian ice hockey team as it paves its way to success during a deeply conservative period of communist rule. Often, western perspectives view this period in the USSR as oppressive and extremely neglectful to the "freedom of the individual"; a value heavily centralised in the groundwork of the Western world. However, Polsky's documentary can, and is received contrastingly depending on the respective audience of reception. The documentary conventions Polsky employs range from archival footage, voice overs and foreshadowing music, and work to construct a positive representation of the Soviet approach to ice hockey as extremely collectivistic and collaborative in nature; a representation that further hints at the socialist value system. This representation that such conventions construct about the USSR during this period, influence a deeply positive, patriotic response from Russian viewers; however these conventions influence and ultimately manifest a distrustfully cynical response from Western audiences, specifically American viewers in which the conventions work to critique culturally.

Documentary conventions can be seen as the indispensable influencers of the varying responses to Polsky's *The Red Army*. The Red Army team is constructed in a highly collectivist, socialist light; displaying the outward values of community, care and collaboration. Archival training footage of the players rolling "insync" (voice over) in unison constructs the team as intrinsically together; bringing the claim heard in an earlier voice over that they were a "S man unit" to literal terms. This scene is foreshadowed by jaunty, upbeat music intended to imbue a childlike, likable impression upon the audience to expose the team's fun and friendly nature. Russian viewers would be influenced in generating a positive response to this scene as it validates the benefits of "togetherness" and socialist values, and it also likely reminds them of their favourite childhood sport in a favourable, nostalgic manner. However, the mass media now against "evil Russians" and "the red

Important contextual factors have been outlined in some detail, supported by reference to perspectives.

Focus on genre of form is clear in the identification of the generic conventions that will be the focus of the appraisal.

An interesting approach, with the thesis built around the ideological differences between two distinct audiences.

Topic sentence offers an explicit appraisal of the influence of the conventions as 'indispensable'.

Consideration of the role of values in shaping audience response is presented.

Incorporation of quotation needs some attention. The use of brackets interrupts the flow of the sentence.

Quite sophisticated language included here.



scare" brought about by the onslaught of the Cold War; manifest Westerner response to these conventions as highly deceptive, and misleading in nature; leading to a rejection of the truths portrayed and an adoption of cynicism to the realities of the "Soviet approach". Hence, such conventions influence a Western response to the film as highly negative, as it portrays everything they know and believe as converse from the truth.

A later scene depicting a myriad of documentary conventions further the aforementioned audience responses; increasing the Russian viewers' sentiment of patriotism imbuing a greater sense of resentment and distrust within Western viewers. Archival training images of the Russian team; happy and smiling with receptive body language is shown in a sequence of black and white images. Foregrounded by traditional, Russian folk music, this particular scene greatly appeals to emotive pathos of Russian people; as not only does it illuminate the beauty of socialist values of togetherness and "the soviet symphony" (voice over coach), but older viewers are encouraged to reflect on a time in their life when socialism was more ripe than it is today. The traditional Russian folk music is a convention that only increased the Russian viewers patriotic sentiment. Western viewers responses of cynicism and distrust compel them to further their rejection of this documentary. Images and music that construct the teams style in a positive, collaborative light subvert typically predisposed beliefs surrounding Russians; depicted for decades as the antagonist in nearly every heroic tale.

Conventions incorporated that depict the Red Army teams strategising tactics and intricate techniques, further construct Soviet ice hockey in a positive, multifaceted light; a representation that ultimately extends to that of the Russian socialist system. These conventions compel Russian audiences sense of pride for the intricacies of not only their team but their country, however, manifests a dissatisfied and cynical response from Western, specifically American viewers. Archival footage of players encircled around a chess board, accompanied by various political figures, exposes just how invested the Russians were into the game. It exposes the fact that the Russians were willing to go to any lengths (such as studying chess) in order to utilise the most tactile and superior techniques in their play. The chess board works as a motif that represents how for the Russians, ice hockey was not just a sport, but a mental mind game.

This representation is furthered through construction of the American team as bruteful, antagonistic villains who only desire to "clobber their Russian pretenders" (coach voice over). This inversion of the Cold War stereotype depicts the Americans as one dimensional figures, who

There is a lack of clarity here as the source of the quotations is not identified.

A value judgement about 'the truth' is offered here. More explanation of the factors that shaped it could have strengthened the point about the importance of context. Are these the beliefs of the candidate?

Although the topic sentence addresses the question it would benefit from more explicitly identifying the focus of the paragraph.

A range of relevant evidence is presented in the body of the paragraph. However, more explicit links to the thesis would strengthen the argument by making it more cohesive.

Some issues with mechanics of writing are shown in the lack of apostrophes for possession where needed (e.g. team's, audience's).

Insightful point about how texts can reflect, and often reinforce, important ideas in society.

The paragraph ends quite abruptly, possibly suggesting the need for some proofreading.

are "so simple" and can offer no strategic play when juxtaposed to the intricacies of the Russians. This scene manifests a total rejection from Western viewers, as not only does archival footage present the Russians as intricate and tactile (does not align with preexisting beliefs), but voice overs describing the US team negatively portray the values and attitudes associated with Americans; ultimately influencing their disdainful response of cynicism and rejection of Polsky's views. A Russian audience would rather acknowledge and accept this depiction; as the chess board scene footage likely evidences what this audience already believes about Russian play and culture; that it is extremely intricate and tactful in nature, hence reaffirms their beliefs and manifest a positive response.

Polsky's inclusion of a variety of complex documentary conventions in this film The Red Army consists of archival footage, foreshadowing music, voice overs and archival images. These conventions influence audiences responses varyingly; as the conventions combine to construct a positive depiction of Soviet ice hockey and socialist culture, hence compelling a positive response from Russian audiences, and a deeply cynical response from Western viewers. Tactile omissions and marginalisations further these dual responses and create a passionate sense of patriotism from both audiences (regardless of positive or disdainful). Ultimately, Polsky's documentary poses ongoing relevance to all humanity, as it emphasises the importance of socialist values such as family, collaboration and care, that of which is a significant part of life and is essentially intrinsic to the human experience.

Combining this paragraph with the previous one would aid in the construction of a more cohesive argument as both deal with the same point and are supported with evidence from the same scene.

Concluding lines in this paragraph offer an appraisal of the importance of the conventions, although more implicit than in previous paragraphs.

Demonstrates good understanding of the conventions relevant to the genre of documentary, supported with some analysis.

The reference to omissions and marginalisations is interesting but hasn't really been outlined in the body of the essay.

Concluding sentences present an appraisal of the text as a whole, which assists in supporting the thesis developed throughout.



## Considering Question 8

Analyse how the use of voice or narrative point of view affected the representation of attitudes in **one** text.

### Interpreting the question

In addressing this question, candidates are expected to illustrate how the representation of attitudes in a chosen text is affected by either voice or narrative point of view. 'Analyse' is defined in the Glossary of key words in the formulation of questions as 'Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications.' This requires some deconstruction of the text, with a focus on the impact of voice or narrative point of view in the representation of attitudes. The use of the condition word 'or' means that there is no requirement to discuss both voice and narrative point of view.

'Voice' is defined in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary as, 'the distinct personality of a piece of writing. Voice can be created through the use of syntax, punctuation, vocabulary choices, persona and dialogue. Texts often contain "multiple voices."' Analysis of voice could include discussion of its construction through elements such as characterisation, tone and language patterns, and stylistic features like syntax, punctuation and dialogue. A valid approach includes consideration of the construction of voice in non-literary texts, such as multimodal or spoken texts. Multiple voices may also be discussed. Candidates must articulate how the construction of the selected voice, or voices, impacts on the way attitudes are represented.

The ATAR English course syllabus glossary defines 'Narrative point of view' as 'The ways in which a narrator may be related to the story. For example, the narrator might take the role of first or third person, omniscient or restricted in knowledge of events, reliable or unreliable in interpreting what happens.' Candidates should explicitly identify the narrative point of view, and critically analyse the relationship between it and the representation of attitudes.

To address 'representation', understanding of how texts are constructions of reality that are shaped using features like voice and narrative point of view needs to be shown. Rather than simply identifying the attitudes, candidates should aim to engage with this notion of representation. 'Attitudes' are defined in the ATAR English course syllabus glossary as 'An outlook or a specific feeling about something. Our values underlie our attitudes.' Analysis of more than one attitude is required due to the use of the plural form. 'Affects' should be interpreted as impact or influence, so the focus must be on presenting a detailed analysis of the construction of voice or narrative point of view and how this impacts on the representation of attitudes within the text.

### Advice from teachers

- Although attitudes are influenced by values, this question does not require a discussion of these values.
- The focus must remain on how attitudes are represented in the text, and not the effect of voice or narrative point of view on audience attitudes.



## Question 8: Sample response one

A strength of this response is the way it addresses the command to analyse, through its deconstruction and discussion of a range of language features used in the construction of voice. The argument that the text presents an overall attitude towards contemporary issues is developed cohesively throughout. Some points in relation to the author's endorsement of attitude could be unpacked in a little more detail.

Texts use the construction of voices of its characters to represent multiple perspectives to reflect on the attitudes and the context. This notion is reflected exactly in Rupture, a detective novel published in 2009 by Simon Lelic. Rupture follows the lucid investigation of a school shooting at a high school in contemporary London, representing the slow destruction of man's emotional wellbeing, examining the responsibility of a community in pushing him towards violence. This novel also reflects on multiple anxieties of people in Western democracies, notably the growing fears about the rise of bullying and concern about the responsiveness of social institutions when addressing instances of bullying. Lelic does this through the construction of a righteous, passionate voice of heroine Lucia, the key detective of the case, to represent a humanist perspective that seeks to promote the welfare of humanity. While the arrogant and egocentric voice of Mr Travis, the principal of the school, portrays an elitist perspective that believes some individuals exert greater influence over others. In addition, Lelic used Director Cole, the director of the police force, and his dismissive voice to convey the individualist perspective that values individual interests over the state of a social group. The perspectives created from the characters' voices, which has resulted from the characterisation through their speech and actions, ultimately work to highlight the accusatory and critical attitude towards the inaction of social institutions and the way they treat the vulnerable with disregard.

Through the characterisation of Lucia May, the key detective in charge of the investigation of the case, her passionate voice has been constructed, promoting the humanist perspective that promotes welfare of humanity, which reflects on Lelic's critical attitude towards the inaction of institutions. The attitude is shaped by the growing fears about the rising prevalence of bullying in the UK. Towards the end of the novel, Lucia meets with Elliot Sampson's parents, whose son was a victim of bullying, eventually suiciding from this, encouraging them to take legal action against the school, which their daughter still attends, for failing to address significant instances of bullying. She pleads "I'm asking you to create such a stink that the school has to do something." She uses emotive language, such as the word "protect" in her desperate plea to appeal to Elliot's parents' desire to shelter and safeguard their

The introduction includes some nice contextual detail, which shows understanding of the text and assists in developing the focus for the argument.

Explicitly addresses the question by developing links between specific voices and perspectives.

Understanding of the constructed nature of texts is shown in the reference to the role of the author.

The thesis is centred around a discussion of both perspectives and attitudes, and how the overall attitude is represented through the construction of voice. This is outlined quite concisely here.

The topic sentence presents nice links between narrative conventions, voice and perspective, which are then developed with details about relevant contextual factors.

The argument narrows down from narrative conventions to an explanation of a range of language features used in their construction. This aids in addressing the command word to 'analyse'.



family from injustices. The repeated imperative of "I'm asking you" reveals Lucia's push for others to be a voice for the injustices flourishing within the school system. The idiom "create such a stink" further implies that for social action to occur, individuals must be vocal and proactive when they see human rights evaded or discrimination. As such, Lucia's characterisation as advocating for social action to be taken to stop several instances of bullying from occurring in schools depicts Lucia as upholding the humanist perspective that has at its core belief mitigating the suffering of mankind. Lelic's endorsement of Lucia's character suggests her righteous and optimistic voice, which shapes Lelic's critical attitude towards the willingness of institutions, when addressing injustices, reflecting his own immediate context of living in 2009 in the UK, in a culture that was growing to question the role of institutions in condoning bullying. Thus, the passionate, righteous voice of Lucia, constructed through the characterisation of her speech has the purpose of enabling Lelic to convey his frustrated attitude towards institutional inaction, further encouraging contemporary readers to question the fairness of our society.

Furthermore, Mr Travis, the school's principal, is constructed to have an arrogant and ignorant voice, through his characterisation and portrayal of his elitist perspective that has the belief that some individuals hold greater influence and authority over others. Through this, Lelic's condemnatory attitude towards the way social institutions refuse to protect their vulnerable is revealed, which can be read as a reflection of the societal anxieties of Western democracies, whose key ideological system is built on neoliberalism, one that has exacerbated social inequalities by promoting social competition. When Lucia approaches Mr Travis to reveal her findings, Mr Travis seems disinterested, which prompts Lucia to ask "Am I boring you?" to which Travis replies "Frankly my dear, yes, you are. I find your arguments moralistic and naïve. I find your very presence a distraction from matters far more worthy of my attention." The use of adjectives, such as "moralistic" and "naïve" to describe Lucia's opinions, all of which have negative connotations with inferiority and inexperience suggests his lack of regard for Lucia and the arrogant, egoistic tone in his voice towards Lucia. His description of Lucia's concerns and ideas as a mere "distraction" showcases how, for Mr Travis, this case is simply a small insignificant interruption in his role as an institutional leader, portraying him as holding the elitist beliefs that some individuals, such as himself, hold more authority and power over others, such as Lucia and others within his institution. This unpleasant, self-centred representation of Mr Travis serves as a conduit to condemn his character and the elitist perspective and constructs his arrogant and ignorant voice towards events around him. This reflects an accusatory attitude towards the selfish way people in

Interesting and valid detail about the author's endorsement of the character's voice, but this could be explained a little more by considering how this character is represented in a more positive manner than others.

The concluding sentences sum up the main point of the paragraph. Some reference to the language features that are discussed could aid in building cohesion even further.

Effective use of cohesive ties to build the overall argument.

Use of sophisticated vocabulary assists in the development of a clear argument which links the author's attitudes to the construction of voice and perspective; this is nicely supported with references to valid contextual factors.

Again, analysis of a range of language features is developed to explain how voice is constructed.

Lovely expression and vocabulary assist in developing clarity and reinforce the argument about the role of the author in constructing a text that represents their attitude.



power refuse to protect the vulnerable, providing a scathing critique of the value Western democracies place on individualism and privilege, particularly in the UK in 2009. Thus, the egocentric representation of Mr Travis constructs his arrogant and ignorant voice which allows for the revelation of Lelic's critical attitude towards the way institutions don't protect their vulnerable and internalise the normalised ideologies of the western world.

Likewise, the director of the police force in charge of the investigation of the case, Director Cole, is constructed to have a dismissive and apathetic voice, through his use of insulting lexical chain and tricolon in his speech, which highlights that he holds an individualistic perspective that values individuals over society, demonstrating the critical attitude Lelic holds towards the way institutional bodies treat their vulnerable with disregard, suggesting more action should be taken by these governing bodies. This perspective and attitude similarly reflect the cultural anxieties about the rising prevalence of bullying and ignorance from schools, reflecting a time when external investigations on institutional corruption were gaining momentum. When Director Cole discusses the case with Lucia, he refers to Samuel, the perpetrator as "He was a whacko. A nutcase. Depressed. Schizophrenic. Abused. I don't care." Director Cole's lexical chain of insulting personality traits to describe Samuel demonstrate his narrow minded understanding of the case and ignorance towards the complex social factors that contributed to Samuel's mental unravelling. His detached "I don't care" further constructs his dismissive and apathetic voice, which reveals his indifference towards addressing any complexities, highlighting how Cole favours personal gain to achieving social justice. Moreover, when Cole reprimands Lucia for her investment in the case, he tells her "all the rest – the accusations, the recriminations, the lessons f\*\*\*\* learnt – leave that to the politicians." The tricolon of "accusations, recriminations, lessons learnt" groups all the complex societal injustices underpinning violent crime and justice together. This shows how Cole believes the police force is not responsible for addressing any complexities, even though they have a moral and ethical obligation to do so, which showcases Cole's ignorant and indifferent voice. This characterises Cole as individualist and self-centred, allowing readers to reject Cole's individualistic perspective and agree with Lelic's accusatory attitude towards the egocentric beliefs of social institutions that have arisen as a response to the dominant ideology of neoliberalism, which exacerbated inequality. Thus, a dismissive and apathetic voice of Cole reveals the text's condemnatory attitude towards the way institutions treat people in need of their help with disregard, prompting more action to be taken to ensure justice.

Use of cohesive ties, like 'thus' and 'likewise', work to strengthen the overall argument.

While this topic sentence offers a more specific outline of the language features that will be discussed, there are some issues with structural features. Both sentences and the overall paragraph are a little too long.

Repetition of details in quotations detract from the flow of expression and are unnecessary.

Sophisticated vocabulary is used to build a point about the overall attitude that is represented.



Lelic has constructed multiple voices in Rupture through the characterisation of the speech and actions of the characters to represent certain perspectives, such as how Lucia's humanist perspective that aims to mitigate human suffering had been used to convey her righteous, passionate voice, or the way Mr Travis' arrogant, egocentric voice has resulted from his elitist perspective, or the use of Director Cole and his individualist representation to illustrate his apathetic, uncaring voice. The portrayal of these voices work together to highlight a critical, accusatory attitude towards the way institutional bodies dismiss concerns around bullying, emphasising how the western ideology of neoliberalism has resulted in a society of injustice. As a result, taking Rupture, as an example, it is clear that the depiction of a multitude of voices in a text allows for the revelation of attitudes that closely reflect the text's context, providing the reader with invaluable information about the text's context of production.

Links between the voices are summarised well in order to develop the argument that these represent the author's attitude towards contemporary issues.

Nice concluding statement, which considers the wider implications of the concepts and ideas explored throughout the response.

**Activity: Articulating responses**

A variety of factors will influence an audience's responses to a text, including the conventions used in its construction. It is useful for you to consider different responses that an audience, including yourself, may have.

These may include the following:

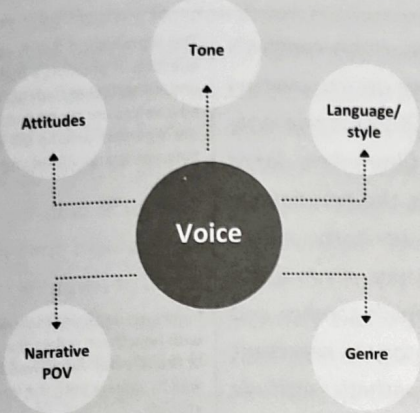
- Emotional response: An emotional response includes how you felt in relation to the text or how you reacted to its representations and subject matter.
- Intellectual response: An intellectual response will be more evaluative or academic. It may take the form of thinking about, reflecting on or considering a text's representations and construction.
- Behavioural response: A behavioural response involves a change in behaviour as a reaction to the representations and construction of a text.

Below is an example of reader responses to a short story. Copy the template and complete it by considering your own responses to studied texts.

'The Story of an Hour' (Kate Chopin, 1894)		
Emotional response and influencing factors	Intellectual response and influencing factors	Behavioural response and influencing factors
Surprise and discomfort at the twist in the ending of the plot. The fact that the protagonist dies so suddenly is unexpected.	Increased understanding of the importance of individual voice and agency. This is influenced by the joy the protagonist feels as she understands her new freedoms, despite her grief at the death of her husband.	Willingness to speak up and challenge traditional gender roles and expectations, due to the representation of the damage to individuals who had to conform in this setting.

Activity: Construction of voice

Question 8 requires discussion of links between the construction of voice and the representation of attitudes in a studied text. Voice is influenced by several interrelated factors, namely narrative point of view, language choices, style, tone and genre. Each of these aspects contributes to the construction of voice in a text. A voice or multiple voices in a text can convey specific 'Attitudes' defined as 'an outlook or a specific feeling about something. Our values underlie our attitudes.'



**Hint:**  
Like most syllabus concepts, voice is strongly influenced by other key concepts. Discussion of voice may also require discussion of perspective, persona, context and so on. The interconnectedness of English concepts cannot be overstated.

Complete a diagram similar to the one above using your own studied texts. Note down points related to how elements like genre, narrative point of view, language/style and tone construct voice and represent attitudes. Remember, when referencing visual, multimodal or spoken texts you might consider how filmic and spoken language features assists in constructing voice.

You might use the wordbank below in order to help you with vocabulary to identify voice in a text:

comical	conversational	formal	causal	authoritative	convincing
nostalgic	informal	outraged	urgent	philosophical	humorous
incredulous	melancholic	sombre	serious	earnest	academic
impatient	frustrated	aggressive	accepting	knowledgeable	passive
hopeful	peaceful	sarcastic	laconic	curt	accusatory
disgusted	apathetic	relaxed	energetic	sensual	oppressive



## Question 8: Sample response two

Like Response One, this analysis doesn't simply identify voices but considers how these can be either privileged or marginalised due to elements of construction used by the creator. This assists in demonstrating thorough understanding of a range of important syllabus concepts. The structure of their body paragraph could be further developed so that these are more concise and cohesive in developing links between evidence and explanations. In some instances, the detail in descriptions detracts from the focus of the argument.

*In a world where borders become barriers and compassion contends with politics, refugees must defy the odds and forge an unwavering spirit to pursue a safe place they can call home. Flee (2021), is primarily an animated documentary, directed by Danish filmmaker, Jonas Rasmussen. This captivating documentary unearths the emotionally gripping journey of gay refugee Amin, as he flees his war-torn country of Afghanistan, unveiling a profound journey of resilience, survival and his desperate search for a safe place to belong. Amin's sombre and reflective voice has been privileged in this documentary to represent Amin and the director's compassionate and empathetic attitude towards the mistreatment of refugees with Flee. Conversely, the mercenary and malicious voices of the human traffickers and Russian police are marginalised in the text to represent their hostile and corrupt attitudes towards refugees depicted within the documentary, through film and documentary conventions.*

*Amin's sombre and reflective voice is illustrated throughout the documentary as he takes viewers into his animated memories of fleeing as a child, representing his compassionate and empathetic attitude towards refugees. His voice is informed by his refugee perspective that refugees are more deserving of greater consideration towards their human rights through policy reforms and a change in previous societal attitudes. This is also informed by his cultural context that him and his family were forced to flee after the Soviet-Afghan War in late 1982, informing his empathetic attitudes towards refugees. The documentary begins with Rasmussen recording Amin, which has all been animated to protect his identity, as Amin lies on a traditionally Afghan rug, explaining in a deflated tone that 'it's still hard to talk about,' suggesting that the traumas endured by him still have a great impact on his mental health today. This is further suggested as a tear falls from his eyes, suggesting that this unconventional therapeutic style of interview will act as a cathartic emotional release for him. The scene then seamlessly transitions into Amin's childhood memories through an abstract 2D style of animation, using simple poster crayon sketches to convey a childish naivety, as Amin skipped carelessly through the streets of Kabul. This scene is accompanied by the extra diegetic music, 'Take on Me' by Aha, which Rasmussen has used to*

This introduction clearly addresses the question. It presents a higher level of understanding as it identifies not just how voices are represented but builds the argument around the contrast between marginalised and privileged voices.

Voices are explicitly identified, along with how these reflect the attitudes of the director. Adjectives are used well to explain both the voice and the attitude.

The elements of construction that are going to form the basis for the argument are only identified in a general manner.

This topic sentence specifically links to the key words in the question, outlining points well. Outlining the elements of construction would strengthen the focus of the paragraph even more.

Some nice detail about contextual factors is included to support the argument that the construction of the voices is shaped by the creator's attitudes.

Explanation is presented in quite a lot of descriptive detail. The argument would be better supported through concise links being developed between specific elements of construction and the representation of voice.



show the freedom and liberated nature of Amin's life "before the war was fought in Kabul." This serene and joyous mood is then contrasted by interspersed archival footage, reminding viewers that this is not just an animation, but rather someone's real life and personal horrific experiences as blood spews from dead bodies. Amin's reflective voice is showcased as he explains in a disheartened tone that he 'had to leave as fast as his family could' and that he was in 'danger', addressing misconceptions that refugees flee out of choice that the western media and people like Pauline Hanson promote, debating that we are at risk of being "swamped by Muslims." This affects the representation of the attitudes promoted in the text to be empathetic as the audience are reminded of the true horrors associated with fleeing. Additionally, in a realistic 2D style of animation which uses tone-on-tone chiaroscuro charcoal sketches of faceless figure and hunched bodies, accompanied by the diegetic moans and cries of refugees being trafficked inside a shipping container, to create an uncomfortable scene, Amin's sombre voice shines through as he desperately explains that, "when you flee as a child...it takes time to learn to trust people." This creates an empathetic and compassionate attitude for the text as he explains the traumas associated with fleeing, which is furthered by Rasmussen's comment that it is a "humanitarian crisis" that needs to be addressed in order to maintain the rights of those forced into unimaginable circumstances, allowing the text to represent his and Amin's shared compassionate and empathetic attitudes towards fleeing through this sombre and reflective voice.

Moreover, the human traffickers' mercenary and callous voices create a marginalised hostile attitude towards refugees, in which the audience disagrees with. This voice is informed by the traffickers social context that after the Soviet-Afghan War, millions of refugees were desperate to flee to other countries, creating an opportunity for some to exploit and abuse the rights of these desperate refugees for monetary gain. This influences their abusive perspectives that they can exploit vulnerable refugees for a "pay check." In the scene where Amin is being trafficked through an ominous and unforgiving forest, a well-built and powerful human trafficker in power used curt and dismissive sentences such as "she's holding us up," "why not shoot her in the head?", "I'll do it, it's easy", emphasising that this group has no regard for the value of life and is rather interested in personal gain than the safety or rights of the refugees. This creates the mercenary and callous voice which represents their hostile attitudes towards refugees, which the audience finds controversial as it contrasts the empathetic attitudes promoted in the text.

Similarly, the Russian Police have a corrupt and malicious voice to create their uncaring and exploitative attitudes towards refugees.

Some issues with punctuation and expression. For example, if quotation marks are used, some context and identification of the speaker should be included.

Some clear links to key aspects of the question are presented.

Nice detail about the text is included, demonstrating good understanding of it, as well as relevant issues and context.

Clear attempt to link the paragraph back to the question by identifying how specific attitudes are represented by a 'sombre and reflective voice.'

Although a conjunction aids the cohesion of the overall argument, there are some issues with clumsy expression at the start of this paragraph.

Once again, important contextual factors are identified and described in some detail to support the argument.

Although there is nice detail about the construction of the voices of the traffickers, points could be strengthened with more detail about film conventions. For example, how these are used to construct the forest as 'ominous and unforgiving.'

Again, this concluding sentence clearly links to the thesis and summarises the main point presented in the paragraph.

Use of the conjunction 'Similarly' helps to develop a more cohesive argument by explicitly building on the previous point.



This voice is informed by their abusive and mercenary perspective that refugees can be taken advantage of for personal gain, informed by the cultural context that after the collapse of communism in Russia, the country experienced an economic recession, inviting authoritative figures to take advantage of Afghans seeking refuge. In a scene where a McDonald's is opening, the Russian police are lurking ominously within the shadows in the background, suggesting their covert operations are done illegally. Their malicious voice is presented as the police restrain Amin and his brother, stating that "(they) were greedy" as they "didn't have any money" in a displeased tone. The police then themselves callously mentioned that another Afghan refugee "didn't have any money either" and that she "could pay (them) in another way". This shows the exploitative operations of the police for personal gain and the horrific treatment of refugees, representing their hostile attitudes towards refugees, that the audience is ashamed by, sharing Amin's attitude of compassion towards those who flee and have their rights abused.

Overall, Amin and Rasmussen's compassionate and empathetic attitudes are privileged in the documentary through Amin's reflective and sombre voice. Whilst the human traffickers and Russian Police's hostile attitudes are marginalised through their mercenary and abusive voices. In this documentary, we are called to understand that the plight of refugees is not just a fleeting headline, but rather a narrative shared by millions. It reminds us that behind every refugee statistic is a story of resilience, survival and unyielding determination, evoking empathy within myself to advocate for changes for refugees within policies both within my country and around the world.

Outlining important contextual factors demonstrates understanding of how such factors influence values and attitudes.

This point lacks the same level of development found in other paragraphs, possibly suggesting some issues with time management.

Although there is great understanding of issues and context shown, the conclusion would be strengthened with more of a focus on an explicit and concise summary of the main points presented throughout the response.

#### **Hint: Understand your command words**

Each command word used in the examination questions requires you to focus your response in a certain manner. Definitions for each of these can be found in the Glossary of key words used in the formulation of questions.

Alter the command words used in a range of questions and write thesis statements for each so that you become more familiar with the differences between them. You could start with the questions from this year. For example, Question 6:

*Discuss* how a text engages with issues or ideas significant within its context.

*Analyse* how a text engages with issues or ideas significant within its context.

*Evaluate* how a text engages with issues or ideas significant within its context.



Activity: Construction of narrative point of view

The ATAR English course syllabus glossary defines narrative point of view as ‘The ways in which a narrator may be related to the story. For example, the narrator might take the role of first or third person, omniscient or restricted in knowledge of events, reliable or unreliable in interpreting what happens. Texts can have multiple narrative points of view.’

Match the following types of narrative point of view to the correct explanation.

First person	The narrator has access to all of the characters’ viewpoints and moves between different characters and settings throughout the narrative.
Third person limited	The narrator is a character within the story, who speaks directly to the audience through the use of first person pronouns (e.g. I, me).
Third person omniscient	The narrative follows one character, with an outside narrator having access to their perspective but not that of others.

As with other important syllabus concepts, when discussing narrative point of view consideration of elements of construction and their impact should be included. This is particularly the case when analysis is required. Analyse is defined in the Glossary of key words used in the formulation of questions as ‘Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications.’

The following outlines the relationship between narrative point of view and the representation of attitudes in a short story. Copy the table and complete with your own studied texts.

Text: ‘The Lottery’ (Shirley Jackson, 1948)		
Narrative point of view	Elements of construction	Attitudes represented
Third person omniscient point of view	Descriptions of actions include commentary to show this is an accepted practice. ‘The children assembled first, of course.’ Simple syntax and lexical choice construct a detached tone. ‘The children had stones already.’	People in this society value the traditions and conventions of the lottery without question. All members of the community conform to the ritual, as though it is the natural way to act.



## Responding Section - critique your own work with a handy checklist

Use the checklist below as a way to critique and edit your own practice responses as well as review your own processes and strategies when tackling the Responding section of the exam. Spaces have been left in each criteria for you to add your own checks to the list.

Engagement with the question	Did I break down the key words and concepts of the question for my own understanding before attempting to write a response?	
	Do I engage with the key words and concepts of the question consistently throughout my response?	✓
	Have I followed the directives of the question, including taking note of the command words or any conditional words to provide nuance in my response?	
	Have I shown a deeper understanding of the concepts of the question through a thorough discussion rather than a surface level approach?	
	Do I use synonyms for the key words of the question in order to show my understanding?	
	Have I selected an appropriate text/s, or used appropriate sections from a text in order to explore the concepts of the question?	
Textual knowledge & evidence	Do I demonstrate my text knowledge by using examples and evidence that support the question?	
	Are my examples detailed and introduced or explained with sufficient context for clarity?	
	Do I reference examples across a whole text rather than just taking examples from only one section of a text?	
	Are the explanations of my text ultimately clear to an examiner who may not have read or viewed my text?	
Essay structure, expression & vocabulary	Does my introduction clearly address the key components of the question?	
	Do I introduce my text clearly by providing: title, author/director/creator, year of publication, genre and text summary?	
	Do I have structured paragraphs that each contain a key topic or key point that addresses and explores the question?	
	Is my writing fluent and grammatically correct, incorporating direct quotations or evidence seamlessly within my sentences?	
	Do I use sophisticated vocabulary and appropriate metalanguage from the course syllabus?	

# The Composing Section

## General observations

The Composing section of the English ATAR course examination is primarily concerned with your ability to meet the requirements of your chosen question through writing a text that could be read in a real-life situation. While transporting yourself out of the examination room and into an imagined situation for writing your response is a challenging task, the authenticity you can muster will determine your success. The real-life situation you are imagining needs to have the three key ingredients of context, audience and purpose – in other words, an intended purpose, targeted to an identifiable audience and with an implied context in mind.

The Composing section examines how well you control or manipulate generic conventions to create a sustained imaginative, interpretive or persuasive text. In short, for this section you will *construct* a text, whereas the other sections are focused on your ability to *deconstruct* texts.

The objectives of the Composing section are to assess your ability to:

- create an original text for a specific context, audience and purpose
- make language and stylistic choices befitting the context, audience and purpose
- experiment with structure and language features related to specific genres.

## What does it mean to compose?

It is worthwhile considering what the word 'compose' means literally. It means *to write or create a work of art*. Therefore, the Composing section requires you to select from a set of creative tools – such as language, structural, generic and stylistic features – that you have been honing and shaping throughout the year, to create an effective and engaging text.

## The syllabus informs the questions

A common misconception about the Composing section is that it is simply creative writing. While your creativity will flow in this section, it needs to be channelled through the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus concepts. Although the questions give you the freedom to showcase your writing ability, they will also be anchored to the syllabus; therefore, your familiarity with it can make a big difference. The more acquainted you are with the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus, the less likely you are to encounter a concept that you struggle to effectively and authentically write about in the English ATAR course examination. Even if the question doesn't explicitly invite you to discuss a course concept, you can still choose to do so. Ultimately, the English ATAR course examination is assessing your understanding of the syllabus, so choosing to write on key content can add further value to your response.



## Considering Question 9

Craft an interpretive text for a specific audience with the title 'What Makes Me Happy Now.'

### Interpreting the question

To successfully engage with this question, candidates must craft an interpretive text which is targeted towards a specific audience.

A discriminating factor is how candidates incorporate and interpret the title, 'What Makes Me Happy Now', and justify it thematically throughout their response, without seeming cliché or predictable. The word 'now' invites candidates to draw inspiration from present-day contextual factors. For example, candidates may provide an interpretation of a recent issue or event and explore how this has contributed towards a person's feelings of happiness and contentedness. The pronoun 'me' invites candidates to use a personal voice. Choosing an interpretive form where a first person point of view is commonly used, such as autobiographical excerpts, speeches, open letters and reflective essays would be appropriate for this prompt. The verb 'craft' requires candidates to carefully select generic conventions, or manipulate them, to provoke their intended audience.

As the prompt requires you to appeal to a specific audience, candidates need to consider the group or individuals they are addressing, and how they can indicate this within their composition. Consistently acknowledging your audience throughout your response will help you to engage with this aspect of the prompt. Stronger responses will demonstrate an understanding of context, through appealing to the expectations and perspectives of their audience. For example, a feature article posted as a hyperlink within a Reddit thread, will be targeted towards individuals engaging with the thread, and interested in the topic or issue being discussed. Being clear about your chosen audience will support you to effectively utilise an authentic and personal voice, and to adequately engage with this prompt.

When incorporating generic conventions of a text type, aim to be creative and purposeful. For example, candidates could craft a transcript of a Podcast, incorporating the prompt as the episode title: 'What Makes Me Happy Now'. When composing this type of text, you could incorporate links to appropriate websites, segments with headings, audio cues, interview scripts or a live comment feed. The more detailed, accurate and purposeful you can be when attempting to replicate features of a text type, the more intriguing and engaging your text will be.

### Advice from teachers

- Candidates must consider how they will sustain a perspective and select an appropriate text type which is targeted towards a specific group or individual.
- Candidates must use the quote as the title of their text, and frame their response accordingly. Candidates who incorporate this title and interpret it in a unique or interesting way will be rewarded for their ingenuity.
- It is important to plan your response before you begin writing, to ensure that you are including content which is helping you to engage with the prompt.

## Question 9: Sample response one

This candidate opted to compose a satirical music review of Childish Gambino's 'This Is America' from the unusual perspective of a BBC classical music critic. This response engages with the prompt in multiple ways, and is an interesting, funny and engaging response. The candidate's frequent utilisation of allusions to classical works, demonstrates their exhaustive knowledge of the subject, giving them credibility. Moreover, the response has an unwavering appeal due to the accurate, and mocking adoption of a conservative critic, who has been inspired to reform their attitudes and embrace a genre of music outside of their frame of reference.

BBC Classical Music Magazine

Home | Classical News | The Proms | Classic FM

Home > Reviews > Choral and Instrumental > Childish Gambino

WHAT MAKES ME HAPPY NOW: Classical Music Review of C Gambino's  
This is America (2018)

About the Author

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Recommended for you:

WA Mozart Marriage of Figaro Review

G Mahler: Which of the 9 Symphonies is the best?

J Sibelius: Finlandia – a magical celebration of nationalism.

Violence, guns, mass murders, drugs and sex: a jovial celebration of Black pride and identity in 21<sup>st</sup> century America [*italicised*]

[Image of 'This is America' scene of Childish Gambino dancing and rioting in background]

It is an exceptionally rare experience when a piece of music can move you to tears of joy. Perhaps it is the euphoric elation of the climactic final movement of Mahler's 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony, or the solemn darkness of Verdi's Requiem, or the triumphant finale of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto. But it is a rare thing – very, very rare. Like a jewel which glistens on the precipice of a mountaintop.

But moved was I when I first heard the dramatic, moving and emotional masterpiece that is 'This is America'. Of course, this is atypical to what I usually embark on – it was not symphonic, not a chamber work, and

Signposting within the title and references to links and channels guides the audience to interpret the mode of a critical review and the intended audience.

The short biographical details of the author are imperative, as they set up the absurdity of having a classical music expert analyse a song which is vastly different.

Accurate inclusion of infamous classical pieces further exemplify the candidates in-depth understanding of the musical genre.

Simile and hyperbole are utilised to provoke the audience.



certainly not the elegance of a Wagnerian operatic work. And yet my dabbling in "hip hop" (whatever it is they call it) has proven to me to be a supreme success.

### **An Electric Carousel of Musical Joy**

[image of Childish Gambino striking Jim Crow caricatured pose in 'This Is America']

Although my, and our unfamiliarity with this "hip hop" music may have been challenging, it was not a hindrance. Rather, I think it was an eye-opener.

I was splendidly amazed at the numerous musical styles Gambino incorporates – take the quasi-calyпсо opening. While we hear a soft and relaxing strumming of guitar, there is a choral amalgamation of soul, funk and hallucinogenic pop. What's more is that there is some incredible dancing from Gambino – his movements and strange contortions are far greater than those in Stravinsky's ballet Rite of Spring.

So I was quite taken aback when Gambino pulls a gun out of his rear pocket and then shoots the guitarist in the head. I know what you all must be thinking. What? How horrible? How could Gambino thin the piece's timbre by removing the guitarist melody? Well, perhaps it is Gambino's way of varying musical motifs, just like Berlioz did in his *Symphonie fantastique*.

After some consideration and deliberation, I thought – why not? Perhaps the splurting of red blood enhances tone colour which may otherwise be absent. And what a marvellous, unconventional percussive effect – the shot of a gun! Although I was initially disorientated by it, I've grown to feel enamoured towards it – think Mahler's incorporation of hammers in his sixth symphony.

### **Refined and Balanced Choreography**

As aforementioned, Gambino displays and flaunts some highly expert and nuanced dancing. Although there are riots, fires and murderous chaos occurring in the background, his heightened level of concentration is fabulous. His energetic, impulsive movements like the *Gwara gwara* make me want to dance for joy! While only an inkling, I feel as if I am slowly gravitating towards this "Black hip-hop thing" more than Tchaikovsky's infusive *Swan Lake*!

Subheadings are utilised effectively, and references to images from the music video demonstrate the candidate's knowledge of both primary and secondary texts.

Choice of diction, "splendidly amazed" ... "strange contortions" ... "far greater" ... all provide a formal tone, which strengthens the construction of an authentic voice.

Drawing a parallel between the controversies of Stravinsky's work and Gambino's is astute.

Rhetorical questions engage the conservative audience and help to challenge their preconceived notions of the hip hop genre.

Allusions to Mahler's sixth symphony and the specificity of percussive timbres work to generate authorial credibility.

Returning to the choreography and drawing a parallel between Gambino's movements and traditional dance, and then claiming this is more appealing than *Swan Lake*, makes for a humorous argument.

However, there are numerous criticisms one can propound here. Firstly, the rioting and screaming in the background seems to muffle and thus hinders the overall audio quality. This is a huge shame as it would otherwise have made for a great motion.

Another point of interest – I still can't comprehend why Gambino has to use a semi-automatic gun and massacre the lovely gospel choir. They produced such a pleasant, resonant sound and it was upsetting that was not carried through.

### Addressing Some Ridiculous Rumours

As in the Classical music fandom, there are bound to be intrusive, buffoonish commentators who having no taste in music decide to enter the arena. There is a despicable theory that 'This is America' is somehow a satirical work to expose America's internalised racism and the commodification of Black figures. What heresy! This ought to be decried for it would even make Beethoven tremble in his grave.

### Conclusion

After having exposed myself to a new avenue and journey in the musical realm, I have come to adore such pieces as 'This is America'. Its artistic, musical and interpretive semiotics are pristine and dare I say – close to perfection. However, there are some mysteries which I just cannot see to be resolved. For that reason, I have awarded 'This is America' with 4 out of 5 stars. Next week, be sure to stay inclined to my next review on Public Enemy's 'Fight the Power'.

Recommended for you:

'Brilliant', 'mesmerising' and 'spectacular': what our reviewers think of Donald Trump's YMCA dancing.

The candidate adheres to the generic conventions of a critical review through commenting not only on what was commendable, but also on what was lacking i.e. on poor sound quality and technical issues.

Rather than critiquing the violence, the critic decides to focus on the cessation of the singing. Using oxymoronic language "massacre ... lovely" strengthens the absurdity of the analysis.

Acknowledging and disregarding the dominant viewpoint and meaning of the song further strengthens the response as one aiming to provide an alternative narrative.

Strong ending incorporating expectations of the genre through including a final review.

Referencing Public Enemy as a future review further consolidates the purpose of the text: to portray a classical music critic who has had somewhat of an epiphany towards hip hop.



## Activity: Deconstructing a question

Most questions will require you to address three components, which you can easily identify using the following categories:

The **'What'**: If you were a builder, you would consider this the 'house' you are building. It is the concept or the idea which should form the basis of your text. *Think... What is the question asking me to create?*

The **'How'**: If you were a builder, you would think of this as the tools and equipment you are going to need to design the house. *Think... How am I going to build my text?*

The **'Conditions'**: Think of these as the budget for your house and the conditions you have been given to work with. It may ask you to place your text in a particular world, or for a certain reason. *Think... Has the question told me to do something specific?*

Consider these three components with Question 9 of the Composing section. You might also follow this process with deconstructing questions from past examinations.

Craft an interpretive text for a specific audience with the title 'What Makes Me Happy Now.'

**What?**

Complete this sentence starter: "This question is asking me to..." Then, have a go at rephrasing the question in a sentence or two.

**How?**

Make a list of five different textual features, generic conventions and/or language features that you might employ.

**Conditions**

The condition within this prompt is that you must incorporate the title. Create a brainstorm where you interpret the title in various ways. Experiment with changing the genre, the perspective, the voice and the context of reception.

### Hint: A planning checklist

✓	Read the question and underline key words. Rewrite the question in your own words or write down what you are going to attempt to do.
	Create a dot point plan – beginning, middle and end.
	Create a title, and signpost your text to ensure the marker understands your mode and audience.

## Question 9: Sample response two

This candidate has decided to write a personal blog which is aimed at young adults. They have adopted an introspective and informal tone, aiming to generate empathy and understanding towards those who experience the struggle to find fulfilment. A creative approach in the form of manipulating grammar for purpose and effect, as well as utilising stream of consciousness and repetition, further consolidates the candidate's introspective appeal. Addressing minor errors and integrating more multimodal features would have strengthened this response.

What Makes Me Happy Now: a blog, for young adults, just like me.

What makes me happy now. Notice the lack of a question mark? I think that it is very symbolic, symbolic of how when in school, we have a singular focus, a singular drive, some one motivation that destroys the question mark at the end of that sentence, because we know. All we want is to have a memorable highschool experience, so much so, that it renders the unsurity of happiness, or the idea that we are unsure of our own happiness, completely pointless.

POINTLESS.

Though, our definition of "memorable highschool experience" probably changed quite alot – from finding friends in year 7 to passing all classes in year 8 to the inevitable 'I – need – to – be – cool' attitude of years 9 and 10, and then back to the passing classes in our last final years. There was no room in all the crying, stressing, kissing, celebrating, failing, falling, lying, jumping, for me to ask myself "what makes me happy?" and thus the lack of a questionmark and a grammatically incorrect sentence.

But then eventually, no – suddenly – But then suddenly you're graduating, and at the end of the day it doesn't really matter if you're leaving with a useable ATAR or no WACE in your hands, but we're all left to wonder "What makes me happy now?" and the questionmark now makes its dreaded, life changing appearance.

UNSURETY

All alone, we are left to deal with what seems like the loss of an entire life. You don't know what makes you happy. You don't know.

Honestly speaking, this revelation sent me spiralling. And I mean, so much so that I had me doing stupidly invalid buzzfeed quizzes at 2:54am, and sometimes even 3:45am, because there was no school the next day and therefore no need for me to sleep, or even get up in the morning.

The use of question marks as a metaphor, as well as the misuse of the term 'unsurity', unsettles a younger audience through challenging expectations.

There are some minor errors that do not detract from the overall execution of this paragraph. The candidate outlines a journey through highschool and the associated tropes.

An informal sense of immediacy is included to showcase the candidate's attempt to convey an authentic piece which evolves as it is written.

The subtitles and the capitalisation support the response and guide the reader to consider the struggle to accept change once school is completed.



## The REALISATION.

That I actually didn't even know myself. I was defined, but not in an each-famous-artist-has-their-distinct-style-of-art, but in a

School – work- home

Eat – study – sleep [written in a circular direction]

Kind of pattern. So, I thought about what makes me me. Family was the first thing that came to mind, but even then, all my family members view me differently, as if I'm some sort of symbol in a film, left up to deliberation, or the time of day on different hemispheres. My mum, I think, sees me as a mirror. (Not the type on your school bathroom, not that my school had any because we were poor AF), but the type of mirror on your bedroom wall, that you cry at, smile at, the one that forces yourself to look yourself in the eye in the false adage that the answer to your happiness lies somewhere there.

What makes me happy now?

My father looks at me like I am the reason he exists, which is just so much pressure to put on a 17-year old who feels like she was going to break any second. He is the epitome of sacrifice, but sometimes, on a random tuesday, his red, blue and yellow spills out on to the coffee table and paints it purple, orange and green, showing me all the previous reasons he existed. If I am the alter, he is the lamb.

So, what makes me happy now? So, what makes me happy now? So, what makes me happy now? So, what makes me happy now? So, what makes me happy now? So, what makes me happy now? So, what makes me hap-

If the repeated question is any indication, I feel like the next couple of years of my life will revolve around the one thing. Because as much as I hated and loved school, it took all of me and there's no doubt that there's plenty of you who are also as hollow as a cracked used egg. We think too much, we ruminate, we replay and retell and obsess, sometimes more than English teachers analyse the colour red in a novel, maybe. But I know that soon enough, that same life-changing questionmark will become an exciting one, as we start life.

LIFE.

The writing of the text in a circular direction on the page is a smart use of multimodal elements which emphasise the challenging and monotonous cycle of school.

Commenting on both parents in a critical way is an accurate portrayal of teenage angst.

Repetition is used in an effective way, emphasising the pressure and anxiety felt.

Inclusive language encourages the audience to find solidarity within the collective adolescent struggle.

A hopeful and open ending is used to promote a positive and inspiring outlook.

## Activity: Identifying components of prompts

Below is an example of breaking down a question into three parts. Notice in this prompt, the 'how' part of the question is not explicitly stated. This means the candidate must decide how they will engage a particular audience.

Question	What	How	Conditions
Craft an interpretive text for a particular audience with the title 'What Makes Me Happy Now'.	Interpretive text...	X	... for a particular audience... ...with the title 'What Makes Me Happy Now' ...

Use the table below to practise deconstructing questions. Some of the table has been completed for you. Once you have completed the table, try writing your own composing prompt.

Question	What	How	Conditions
Compose an interpretive text which is inspired by this image [image depicts an older person standing on a train while younger people sit in the priority seating].	Interpretive text		Inspired by the image
Craft a biographical text which uses language patterns in an interesting way.			
Construct a text of your choice which incorporates personal voice to engage a resistant audience.		Personal voice	
Draft an ending to an interpretive text which incorporates rhetorical devices to generate empathy.			Generate empathy
Encourage reader engagement through creating an interpretive text which uses imagery to exemplify an experience or event.			
Incorporate the following quotation 'It's better to be loved by a few, than trying to be liked by everyone', within an interpretive text which aims to satirize teenagers.			
Your own prompt:			



## Considering Question 10

Compose a persuasive text that sustains a viewpoint suggested by the image below.

### Interpreting the question

Question 10 invites candidates to compose a persuasive text which sustains a 'viewpoint'. This 'viewpoint' must be related to the image provided. The command verb 'compose' means that a skilful construction of a text is expected, in line with the purpose and audience of the response. The term 'viewpoint' is strongly related to a perspective. Throughout your composition, you are expected to sustain a position on how something is viewed or considered. 'Sustains' suggests that a consistent viewpoint should be communicated, and candidates should consider how they structure their text to ensure that this is foregrounded.

Although the prompt requires candidates to express a viewpoint, this does not mean that multiple viewpoints cannot be presented. The word 'suggested' is a flexible term, inviting candidates to formulate an interpretation of the image, ensuring it complements a viewpoint. It is advisable to take a firm stance on an issue or topic, to ensure you are clearly communicating a sustained viewpoint, with the aim of persuading a particular audience. Persuasive text types may include (but are not limited to) debates, arguments, discussions, essays and articles.

Certain viewpoints that candidates can derive from this image are more predictable than others. These may include the relationship between artificial intelligence and humankind, how social media may be used to combat social isolation and strengthen friendships and community ties, or the idea that the rapid progression of technology has undermined the value of human workmanship. Alternative viewpoints are also valid, and encouraged, and candidates are permitted to consider every detail within the image when drawing inspiration.

The way the image is fragmented could be interpreted as a split screen, a broken mirror, or a wired fence or wall. An example of a response could be a transcript of a confidential WebEx meeting involving a prison security guard, urging government officials to address a series of issues pertaining to the wellbeing of incarcerated youth. Stronger responses are generally the candidates who offer interesting and insightful interpretations, while simultaneously managing to engage with all elements of the prompt.

### Advice from teachers

- A common issue with persuasive responses is when candidates adhere to a structure which is overly formulaic. Aim to manipulate sentence and paragraph structure to create an authentic response.
- Many candidates default to a serious tone or impassioned arguments when creating persuasive texts. Humour and wit are powerful persuasive techniques, and when utilised effectively, can be incredibly impactful.
- Being confident enough to discern between a viewpoint and a perspective may cause candidates to avoid this question. It is important to become familiar with the Year 12 English ATAR course syllabus definitions, to ensure you can unpack terms within examination questions without trepidation, and understand which terms are similar or interchangeable.

## Question 10: Sample response one

This candidate has opted to explore a positive stance on artificial intelligence and advocate for the acceptance and integration of technology into many aspects of global society. The viewpoint sustained is credible and clear, and offers a broad insight into the value of technology within a progressive world, through employing a multitude of persuasive language features. To improve, the candidate may have considered restructuring certain paragraphs to enhance clarity and purpose. Furthermore, consideration of employing a variety of structural elements commonly adopted within news articles, and signposting the mode, would have strengthened this text.

### Hand in Hand

Humans and technology alike must work together to better the world.  
FRANCESCA OKEKE reports why we must accept the place of technology in our world.

Perhaps one of the most common, the most human fears is the fear of the unknown. We have seen this fear permeate almost every aspect of society since the beginning of time. Xenophobia, racism, sexism, all forms of prejudice at its core is truly a fear of what we do not know, what we do not understand. However, time and time again we observe how limiting, how ineffective, how ignorant these fears are. The same can be said for technology. Since the 1990s, society has been characterised by vitriolic debate regarding the place of technology in society. We must lay these disagreements to rest. It is undeniable that whether you are young or old, man or woman, that you benefit from technology in one way or another. As a young Australian student myself, I can list countless times whereby technology has been an unbelievable aid to me, and I am absolutely confident that you have your own stories. Whether you are an adamant subscriber to the belief that technology is incredible or you wish that it would all suddenly disappear, you must accept the permanent and unchanging place of technology in our society. However, it is up to you, whether you let it help you reach your full potential.

The recent uprise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has caused complete social upheaval. There have been countless articles and news debates which have been constructed to terrify viewers of its presence. Contrary to popular belief the recent rise in AI could completely transform the arts. In fact, it very well could provide the opportunity for another Renaissance. How many times have you sat at your desk, whether it be for school or work, with your head in your hands wondering why you are trying? Completely and utterly exhausted of the repetitive nature of your work day? The system of living we have created for ourselves is destructive both mentally and physically and

The title directly links to the image, signalling that a pro AI viewpoint will be explored within the text. High modality is utilised to enhance the agenda.

Opening the text with a global statement about uncertainty and fear appeals to readers who consider the human condition.

This paragraph is quite long, and may have benefitted from spacing (after 'rest') and headings to frame their argument more clearly.

Placing the responsibility on the reader and directly communicating with the audience is effective.

Hyperbole and emotive language are used to highlight a sense of urgency about the topic.

Comparing AI to the Renaissance is an effective juxtaposition.

Rhetorical questions are used to involve the audience.



the use of AI is our opportunity to change it. Instead of having humans complete monotonous work that characterises our life with banalities, this work could be done by AI. With this spare time more individuals could transcend the white collar world into the stimulating world of the arts. One thing AI cannot quite mimic is the passion and devotion and perfectly imperfect constructions of art. This provides security to those who move into the arts as the representation of the human experiences so often encapsulated by the arts can only ever truly be done by humans. We have an opportunity to place emphasis on the arts. To celebrate the creativity and imagination that is inherent within human life. To put aside the notion that work consists of repetitive, unfulfilling tasks. In an on-campus study conducted by the University of St Andrews in 2019 1 in 7 students undertaking a degree in STEM was reported to have only chosen their major for money and job security. To put in plainly, this isn't what we were made for. We are supposed to work to live. We are not supposed to live to work. You would never tell a young child that their dream of becoming a writer is fantastical, unfounded and a waste of time, yet somewhere along the way we have begun telling ourselves that, and it is perhaps one of the most depressing things. Walking hand – in – hand with AI is perhaps one of the surest ways that we may be able to connect with our desire for the arts.

The facilitation of discourse and education that is a direct result of technology is another significant reason that we must cooperate with its presence in society. The globalisation of ideas and the ability to connect with individuals from all different walks of life is undeniably an incredible feature of technology we must celebrate. Many individuals are too quick to discard the value of social media in society. Social media allows its users to create connections and instantaneously communicate with both regular citizens like themselves as well as professionals in all different types of fields. The opportunity for education and the expansion of an individual's mindset is immense. \* See further down the page. The opportunity to create virtual communities with people similar to us, that have had the same life experiences as us and the fact that so many people are willing to engage in such a practice speaks volumes about the success and effectiveness it has in facilitating a sense of belonging; a crucial facet of maintaining good mental health. \*[For example, in the recent conflict between Palestine and Israel we have been able to have access to thousands upon thousands of educational and informative videos from both experts in geopolitics and citizens to gain a holistic understanding of the conflict which provides a foundation for conducting our own research. It is this type of the intelligent and thoughtful use of technology and social media which makes it such an integral part of education and society as a

Alliteration of 'white collar world' is used to validate and promote the more elusive world of the arts.

There are a few minor spelling errors but they do not detract from overall fluency.

Incorporating a study is effective in supporting the idea that the creative arts may benefit from further investment in AI.

Appealing to the emotions of the reader through engaging with the idea of childhood dreams is effective.

Inclusive language and an uplifting tone are used to inspire readers to embrace the viewpoint being offered.

Some editing and restructuring was done by the candidate to reframe the paragraph. However, the writing is somewhat convoluted.

Social media as a dominant news source is an interesting argument, although the counterpoint of misinformation may have been addressed to strengthen the candidate's assertions.



whole. In the same study conducted by the University of St Andrews in 2019, 73% of students were reported to utilise social media as their primary informant of world events and news.]

Ultimately, the integration of technology into our society is of utmost importance when maintaining our humanity. We have reached a point in our history whereby technology is to the modern world as the brain is to our human body. One will not function without the other. We must adapt to this newfound way of life. We must embrace the changing nature of our world. We must support the place of technology in our society. Technology is truly limitless. As will our opportunities as human beings be if we can capitalise on this incredible opportunity.

Utilising the same study twice was an interesting choice. A different appeal could have been used.

Repetition and a call to arms have been adopted effectively to drive home the argument.

### Activity: Make your writing appealing

Appealing to your readership or audience within a persuasive text requires you to use various rhetorical approaches. Individuals respond to viewpoints which are presented to them in different ways, ranging from an apathetic response to an emboldened one.

Think: while one person may favour an intellectual and factual approach to be persuaded, others may need to feel empathy, guilt, worry or fury, to care or invest. Similarly, some people will not resonate with a topic being discussed unless they believe the text and the author have credibility. Furthermore, it may need to align with their values, or make them question what is important.

A combination of these approaches (pathos, ethos and logos) will help you to construct a convincing argument.

Compose a 20-minute response which utilises at least five of the persuasive language features provided in the list, with the aim of appealing to the pathos, ethos and logos of your audience. Possible viewpoints to explore include:

- AI is having an insidious impact on the music industry.
- AI can provide profound support to elderly people.
- Chatbots should be treated with caution.

Alliteration

Repetition

Colloquial language

Emotive language

Rhetorical questions

Statistics

Facts

Evidence

Personal anecdote

High modality

Inclusive language

Figurative language  
(Metaphor,  
personification,  
hyperbole, simile...)

Polysyndeton

Allusion

Pun

Sarcasm

Call to arms



## Question 10: Sample response two

The strength of this candidate's response lies in their ability to explore a nuanced interpretation of the AI debate. Advocating for the utilisation of AI as a study aid, and promoting the values of education and progress, enhances the quality of this composition. Furthermore, the candidate demonstrates a clear understanding of mode, audience and purpose, as well as fluency in expression and a sound grasp of persuasive language features to engage their readership.

### AI is a Student's Best Friend

Opinion Article published online in Teen Vogue (Australia)

Article by Maya Clark Published November 2023.

Whilst teachers wage a war against AI in the classroom, students are finding AI to be a bridge to higher scores and better understanding.

AI is the hot button issue of 2023. There's a growing debate surrounding its potential (and ethicality) that's only going to continue as we move forward, but students like myself are excited for the possibilities.

Countless versions such as BingAi, Notion AI, CSK5 and most famously ChatGPT have been popping up in discussions across the country, most notably in the classroom. Whilst teachers tear their hair out in exasperation, some students brag about entire essays written by AI that they're handing in to be marked. It's clear neither of these reactions are commendable, but AI is a tool that needs to be integrated into classroom learning.

AI is capable of many things: summarising website pages, rewording paragraphs, and blurting out assignment drafts. As a student who struggles to understand science and math, ChatGPT has become my unpaid ATAR tutor over the course of this year. Don't understand the difference between sympatric and allopatric speciation? Just chuck it in the AI prompt bar and let ChatGPT simplify all that complicated jargon for you! It's all the best parts of tutoring, without any of the social interaction or "Oh my God, are they judging me?" I bet they'll think I'm so stupid if I ask that..." internal self-doubt monologues.

Most importantly, AI is accessible to all students with a decent Wi-Fi connection. Sign up and you're good to go! Whilst some versions require monthly payments, most only want to spam your emails with promotional content. It's free, it's quick, it's simple. There are very little barriers to entry unlike most modern tech, in which an instruction manual is more necessary than the product itself.

The use of play on words/idiom clearly announces the viewpoint that will be adopted.

This bi-line indicates target audience and signposts their chosen mode.

'Waging a war' is an alliterative metaphor which emphasises the heated and polarising debate between teachers and students surrounding AI in the classroom.

'Hot button' issue is a metaphor which emphasises the controversy surrounding AI, which compels the reader to invest in the discussion.

First person point of view is utilised effectively, as the candidate develops a credible, personal voice of an ATAR student who has benefitted from using AI as a study tool.

A sense of urgency and high modality with 'needs to be integrated' promotes the viewpoint that AI is beneficial when harnessed properly.

Juxtaposing complex terminology with colloquial language enhances the viewpoint being established, that AI can support students to learn within the classroom.

Utilisation of internal monologue connect with a youthful audience.

Promoting AI as an equitable study tool is an appeal to logos or reason, further persuading teachers and students to see the benefits.

'It's free, it's quick, it's simple' polysyndeton is used for emphasis, to promote AI as a useful tool.

There are issues surrounding students using AI as a way to get out of doing work, rather than using it to improve and advance learning. I too, have felt the itch to just insert my homework tasks into ChatGPT, copy, paste and get back to brain numbing Instagram scrolling. [illustration of a student using ChatGPT on a computer] However, simply claiming AI is resulting in an all-time low of student motivation is an unfair assumption. A study performed by Murdoch University, published in June of this year, reported 17% higher levels of student motivation than 2022, an all time high of 81% of students feeling motivated. This is partially due to the influence of AI. Students who have struggled with direction and starting tasks are able to look to AI for essay plans, assignment templates, and research topic ideas. The hardest step is always the first, yet it's also the most important.

Jacob Auter, Professor of Digital Studies at the University of Melbourne, was quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald stating "This is a new era of human communication... It is not our ability to complete menial tasks that makes us intelligent but rather our ability to use higher order thinking."

Innovation occurs for a reason. Why use a washboard when a washing machine is far more efficient? If we keep to the archaic mindset of "Back in the good old days before AI", we'll never move forward.

Our emotions, our experiences and our ability to analyse with our own thoughtful interpretation can never be replaced with AI. Whilst AI can provide templates and examples, particularly in English and Literature, it could never be a substitute in for a student's actual interpretations and writing. Instead, AI is a tool to help students achieve. A tool to show students new ideas, new diction, and new syntax structure.

~~AI has proved to be an invaluable tool for ATAR students.~~

My best case study for the importance of AI is my own academic journey. Why fear the unknown when we can embrace it? The rapid improvement in my own human biology grade from 62% to 79% after I started using AI to help me study speaks for itself.

To all current and future students, AI is a learning aid like no other. It's the tutor that lives in your pocket. To all teachers, it's an invaluable app. The best lesson you could teach your students is how to use it effectively as a support tool.

My graduation speech is going to thank my parents, friends, teachers, and most notably, ChatGPT.

Acknowledging the counter argument strengthens this candidate's response, helping to persuade resistant readers.

Using research and statistics further appeals to an intellectual audience.

Choice of conjunction 'yet' may be replaced with 'and' for emphasis.

An appeal to a university professor and authority figure is a sage choice. However, the candidate could have provided a short explanation about how AI supports people to engage in higher order thinking.

Employment of rhetorical questions, dialogue and informal language further provokes the audience to embrace AI as synonymous with progress.

The candidate reiterates their argument in plain and direct language: 'AI is a tool to help students achieve.' This engages with the prompt, which calls for a 'sustained' viewpoint.

Omission of this line in favour of a personal anecdote was a crucial decision.

Integrating personal anecdote as evidence to support the overall contention brings credibility to the text, connecting with, and inspiring, a younger audience.

Addressing the audience within the conclusion with direct language, 'you', clarifies that the text is aimed at both students and teachers.

'It's the tutor that lives in your pocket' is an impactful, memorable and creative slogan.

Humour is incorporated at the end as a coda to convey that AI is one of the crucial components of a high functioning support network.



## Activity: Considering multiple viewpoints

One of the strengths of Sample Response Two is the way in which it sustains its own clear and nuanced viewpoint, while also acknowledging and challenging other competing viewpoints. Recreate the table below and use it to research a range of viewpoints in response to each topic provided. Then, consider how you can incorporate these into a 20-minute draft response, using Question 10 as a guideline. Some of the table has been completed for you.

Issue	For	Against	Alternative
Australia Day	Australia Day is a celebration of our country and what it means to be living in the luckiest nation in the world.	Australia Day, or Invasion Day, should be moved to a different date to better include and respect First Nations people and their histories.	Australia Day is an excuse for people to behave like bigots, bogans and bimbos.
Euthanasia			
Crocs	Crocs are a comfortable, durable and versatile shoe, and are endorsed by fashionable celebrity icons.		The resurgence of Crocs as a controversial choice of shoe is directly linked to the shift in mindset caused by the global pandemic.
'Dress up' parties/ cultural appropriation			
Gaming			
J. K. Rowling on transgender issues			
Banning certain hairstyles in schools			

## Considering Question 11

Compose a text in a genre of your choice in which something once lost is found.

### Interpreting the question

To successfully address this question, candidates must utilise the generic conventions or features of a specific genre of form or subject matter, while skilfully exploring the idea of rediscovering something which was lost.

The command verb 'compose' warrants a thoughtful response which is carefully crafted, and reads as a well-executed first draft. When unpacking the term 'genre' candidates must be confident in experimenting with particular text structures and language features relevant to their chosen genre of form or subject matter. Genre is how we categorise groups of texts, which are identifiable due to their subject matter, form and structure. These elements may overlap or operate separately, so it is important to be clear about what you are electing to emphasise. As the prompt states 'genre of your choice', you may compose an interpretive, persuasive or imaginative text.

For example, if constructing a 1990s-2000s television series script, candidates might consider the generic conventions which relate to the form and structure of network television within that time period. Within your composition, you may achieve this through indicating the context of production, through having an ensemble cast and recognisable character tropes, frequent cliffhangers to ensure the audience doesn't change the channel, or appropriate non diegetic sounds such as canned laughter or voice overs.

The noun 'something' invites candidates to think creatively and imaginatively. An object, person, place, feeling or memory could form the basis of an interpretation. A key discriminator for this question is the way in which candidates explore the idea of rediscovering something which has been lost. Candidates who compose responses which are imaginative, innovative and nuanced will inevitably engage their readers and be rewarded.

When selecting your genre, ensure you include signposts to support your reader to identify your chosen form. This will orient and guide your reader.

### Advice from teachers

- Familiarise yourself and experiment with the features of many genres, including hybrid and multimodal texts. Be inspired by texts such as the television series *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, which amalgamated many genres such as teen drama, comedy, romance, horror and fantasy, and challenged audience expectations of a television series within that epoch.
- Remember that mode informs purpose. A transcript of a satirical blog about the struggles young people face today will differ greatly from an informative speech about the same topic.



## Question 11: Sample response one

This candidate chose to write in the genre and form of a personal blog. They have cleverly incorporated the prompt of rediscovering something and have interpreted this through an introspective voice of a young Indian Australian immigrant. The candidate constructs an authentic and personal story of a young person struggling with the shame of suppressing their Indian heritage in order to fit in with their peers, only to later come to a new environment where she feels free to express her cultural identity. The candidate utilises effective imagery to reflect the comfort and security of her Indian home and juxtaposes this against the outside world where she is staunchly aware of her otherness.

### A Journey from Assimilation to Reclamation

A personal blog on medium.com written by a young Indian-Australian author, aimed at other Asian immigrants residing in Western Countries with the hope to inspire.

[medium.com]

[author image] NITYA MALIK | 7 minute read | Personal Blog

In a world that is becoming seemingly interconnected, the idea of cultural assimilation is one that resonates deeply with many individuals, especially teenagers, from diverse backgrounds. As a young Indian individual navigating life in a predominantly Caucasian country, where Western culture and people dominate, and the fear of racial discrimination looms – the journey from assimilation is a profound and transformative experience.

This is my story, tracing transformation from assimilation to authenticity. So, whether you prefer a comforting cup of chai, or perhaps a Tim-Tam if that's more your style, sit back and join me on this journey. My tale is a flavourful blend, a fusion of life experiences that illuminate the splendour of diversity and underscore the significance in embracing my origins, whilst finding solace in my true cultural identity. Much like how the harmonious blend of turmeric, garam masala, chilli powder and cumin in butter chicken combine to form a delicious delicacy, my life too has become a blend of diverse life experiences that shaped me into the distinctive individual I am today.

### PRESSURE TO CONFORM

[image above of girl with bubble of insecure thoughts surrounding her]

I moved to Australia when I was a mere four-years-old, forced to call Karratha my new home. It was a place so remote that it may as well have been another planet. My life exchanged its red fragrant and spicy curries for the bland red dirt of Karratha which was now my everyday scenery. As I began my schooling life, I soon found myself to be the only kid with a splash of colour in a sea of white. People often had a knack

The candidate opens with a clear purpose and audience stated, with an emphasis on personal voice. Signposts are included to replicate mode.

This opening paragraph establishes a tone of sincerity and credibility, through incorporating higher order vocabulary.

Addressing the audience through inclusive language, and juxtaposing Tim Tams and chai to represent Australian and Indian culture, encourages the audience to view culture through the lens of food.

Using curry as a metaphor for diversity further emphasises the idea that food is intrinsically linked to culture and identity.

Subheadings are used as a structural feature to indicate the topic of each post, as well as multimodal elements which adhere to the chosen form.

Personal anecdote is used to portray the experience of being Indian and feeling like an outcast in a rural Australian town.

Using sensory language to contrast Indian food with the 'bland' red dirt of Karratha contributes to the extended metaphor of Indian food being inextricably Indian cultural pride.

for mispronouncing my name and making snide comments about my 'weird' lunches, making me wish that my mum had packed me a plain-old ham and cheese sandwich. In my quest to fit in, I found myself wanting to replicate white culture. I picked up their tastes and their styles, and even their sense of humour – because that's what you do when you are growing up, right? Well, what wasn't normal, and instead extremely harmful, was that I began to hate my Indian heritage. I hated my brown skin, loathed how I always stood out, and despised how everything seemed to be twice as hard for me, just because I was Indian. Other girls would frequently express their desire for darker skin like mine, disliking their own paleness. This only intensified my sense of isolation as I didn't want to be perceived as exotic or different. I just wanted to fit in like everyone else. The only upside was that I was intelligent, which ironically earned me the label of 'nerdy'. It was tough, and there are still days today that I yearn for this sense of normalcy.

### DUAL EXISTENCE

[image of yin-yang symbol]

Surrounded by a circle of exclusively white friends, white colleagues and white teachers, it was no surprise that I found myself swiftly immersed in a world where my own cultural identity began to fade. Outside of the sanctuary of my own home, my friends and peers, whilst well intentioned, didn't quite understand the extent of my Indian heritage. As a result, I adopted a version of myself that mirrored my white counterparts – from eating chicken nuggets to partying to 'white girl' music until 12am. However, upon return to my Indian family and home, the flip would switch and I would seamlessly slip back into my Indian self. Within the familiar walls of our house, Hindi resounded, my mother's beloved Bollywood melodies filled the air, and the delicious aromas of curries enveloped me. It was a place where I was my unapologetically Indian self, savouring each spoonful of rice with satisfaction rather than with shame. Yet, as the years went by, these cultural boundaries began to fade and my 'whiteness' slowly infiltrated even my home life. I began to predominantly converse in English, started resisting the comforting allure of rotis and even pushed my preference of music to be played in the house. My Hindi began to dwindle, to the point where I now struggle to properly converse in it – a poignant reminder of how my cultural assimilation extended far beyond my internal life. I had lost a large proportion of my identity in the act of putting up a white façade which had now consumed me.

### EMBRACING THE FUSION OF CULTURES

[image of map/flight path from Karratha to Perth]

It wasn't until my recent move to Perth, a city booming with diversity, at least in the stark contrast to Karratha, that I experienced a shift in

The way the candidate captures the experience of feeling the pressure to conform to western culture comes across as honest and authentic.

Using anaphora through repeating the word 'white' creates emphasis on white culture dominating her experiences.

Sibilance, 'seamlessly... slip... self', signifies the girl's experiences of duality, contrasting her external life as performative and predominantly westernised, and her domestic world a comforting reflection of her heritage.

The construction of setting through sensory language appeals to the reader, creating a vivid replication of the comforting and inviting sounds and tastes of an Indian household.

The loss of her culture is expressed remorsefully, bringing shades of meaning to the composition through highlighting the struggle to assimilate.

A shift in tone from remorse and regret to hope and acceptance is conveyed through the change of setting.



mindset. For the first time in my life, I was surrounded by a multitude of Asian, a big difference from my limited interactions at the annual Chinese New Year's celebrations. At first, I gravitated towards framing friendships with white people, as that was the norm that I was accustomed to. But as I slowly settled in, I found myself in a diverse group of friends, in which two girls were Indian themselves. I vividly remember excitedly coming home and telling my mum, "Guess what? I have Indian friends now!" It was a weird sensation at first, something I had never experienced before. But as I grew closer with them, I felt a part of my identity resurfacing – a facet of myself that I had believed had been lost forever. Surprisingly enough, my newfound friends weren't steeped in Indian culture. Aside from their names, there was little to signal their Indian heritage. We were all quintessentially Australians. Our conversations consisted of topics that any other sixteen year olds would discuss, such as boyfriends, parties, and life post-graduation. These were topics that anyone, despite their ethnicity, could relate to. What set this experience apart, was that I was finally in an environment where my experiences which had once been seen as abnormal, were now the norm. It was a place where it wasn't peculiar that I had never seen my parents kiss, that I brought rice to school in a little thermos or that I abstained from eating beef. I finally felt like I belonged and felt my façade fading as my true identity resurfaced.

### FINDING THE BALANCE

My experience from assimilation to reclamation was a long and tough journey, but also a quite rewarding experience. Going from feeling like I had lost my cultural identity to learning that I can balance both my Indian heritage and Australian culture was truly essential. Whilst there are days where I still grapple with a feeling of foreignness, being surrounded by friends who have the same experiences as me, immediately suppresses my feelings of isolation. It is important to find the balance without our lives, whilst staying true to ourselves. Sometimes it takes losing a part of ourselves to learn its importance in the first place to allow us to grow into our true selves. It all works out in the end.

Nitya Malik

31/10/2023 | Find more on my socials below!

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'I felt a part of my identity resurfacing' exemplifies the experience of suppressing aspects of one's ethnicity and culture as unsustainable.

The example of bringing rice to school in the thermos as an indication of feeling acceptance without conforming is clever, as previously she explained that she was chastised for this by her peers.

The candidate returns to the idea of reclamation, encouraging and inspiring her audience to embrace their heritage and to seek acceptance.

Activity: Signposting your writing

It is important to signpost your writing clearly to indicate genre/form. This allows your marker to clearly understand your form of writing and how you are engaging with the directives of the question. Below is a table that indicates how you might signpost in some forms of writing. In the blank columns of the table provided, identify some other forms of writing you are familiar with and the signposts you might include in order to demonstrate genre.

Persuasive Speech	Narrative	Open Letter	Feature Article
Indicate who you are as a speaker – create a persona. Do not use your real name. Acknowledge/speak to a specific audience. This needs to be indicated across a speech. Use a variety of rhetorical devices that suit your purpose, audience and context. End with a call to action or pose a solution to a problem.	Use a title that indicates genre or a key event/moment/topic in the narrative. You could even indicate a chapter number to suggest where in the narrative your piece begins. Use clear conventions of narrative writing.	Indicate who the letter is addressed to. Provide a date. Open letters are usually published on various forums i.e., newspapers, websites, blogs etc. Indicate where the letter might be published. Use first person. Provide a sign off.	Indicate a publisher – e.g. The Times, The West Australian, National Geographic (should be suitable for your subject matter). Indicate a date published. Include a by-line. Create a headline. Write a lead paragraph. Use headings or subheadings.
Television Script			

Hint: Language patterns

It is important to consider how you will adopt language patterns when you are composing a persuasive text to give your work a distinctive appeal and to allow you to organise and shape meaning. Consider experimenting with the following language patterns to strengthen your work: repetition of certain phrases and verbs, a call and response pattern, juxtaposing viewpoints and dichotomies, anaphora, extended metaphors, motif, imagery and jargon.



## Question 11: Sample response two

This candidate has elected to compose a memoir about a young girl and her grandfather, set in Australia. The setting of this text draws on real world events and a current political landscape. The tension in this text comes from the way the candidate characterises Becky and her grandfather. As Becky grows up under the care and guidance of her grandfather, naive and acquiescent, she eventually begins to question his conservative world views. This response may have been improved through reconsidering the mode of a memoir, as the excellent utilisation of prose fiction/short story generic conventions may have warranted this choice of text type instead.

### Flames of Courage

A memoir in which a young girl who has lost herself finds courage to gain it back.

### Blank Paper

She was eight. She was sitting in the back with her legs dangling off her booster seat. A book sat in her lap but she was too enthralled by the way her Grandad switched gears as they entered the small country town of Greenbushes. He didn't believe in automatic cars; thought you weren't really driving in one. That this younger generation didn't know what it was like to be in full control of the car. So, Becky wanted to drive a manual too when she was older, even if she wasn't quite sure of the difference.

She lifted her gaze from his weathered and calloused hands, sunspots from the many years working on the fields in the sun, and watched him in the rearview mirror. He was talking to Grandma about someone named Gillard. The witch was disintegrating the nation. She was a dirty liar. Climate change was a hoax and those damn Greenies the architects of this deception. A "Vote for Labor" sign passed them in a red streak. Suddenly, those eyes met hers in the mirror "See that Rebecca? The devil's work," he declared.

Becky nodded vigorously, her brown pigtails bouncing. Labor and Greenies were evil. Climate change wasn't real. Grandad was so smart and knew so much about this politics stuff.

But she didn't know why she should believe this. All she knew was that Grandad was right. Her own opinions were taken from her before she even knew what she had lost. She was a blank canvas and her Grandad with quick brushstrokes filled her page with only one colour. She was malleable metal from the furnace, and under the repetitive cadence of his hammer, she was moulded into the shape he saw fit.

Past tense creates a mood of nostalgia and an atmosphere of vulnerability, through constructing the young person as naive and innocent. The use of pronouns 'she' and 'he', and juxtaposing youth and an older person foreshadows the eventual conflict.

The car functions as a metaphor for the grandad's paternalistic control over Becky.

'Weathered... callous... sunspots' further constructs the grandfather as stringent, hard and unyielding.

Utilisation of dialogue through subjective third person narration reinforces Becky's acquiescent and submissive attitude.

This is a good example of how to imply meaning to a reader, inviting them to interpret the grandad critically.

'Blank canvas... brushstrokes... Malleable metal... repetitive cadence... moulded' all work to construct Becky as a victim of her grandfather's domineering nature.

## Burning Embers

She is sixteen. She is sitting at the table with Grandad at its head. His eyes rest beneath furrowed brows. His shoulders cave inwardly, although he tried to sit straight. His skin is paper thin, stretched taut over bulging veins that lie beneath his skin like snakes hiding in the grass. He looks like one match could set him alight, yet his frail exterior only covers the unyielding boulder that lays in the path of a river.

Becky concentrates on scraping peas onto an upside down fork – she doesn't want another "eat with the pigs" lecture. His voice booms over her concentration, "... Trying to get more power and this weak nation will let them. Why should they get an extra parliament when they can vote like the rest of us?" Becky clenches her fists, the heat of indignation enveloping her. She knows better. But she dares not say her opinion – she lost that ability long ago. Saying her opinion only invites angry lectures and sharp retorts. To him socialism is communism. And they are all evil.

She used to find it endearing. She used to laugh when he would throw plastic water bottles in the fire and say, "take that Greenies." Now when he says, "I bet that's a woman driver," about a car swerving ahead during their manual driving practice, a flame licks up her throat. Now the chuckle is forced.

As he continues his rant during dinner, she makes sure she has the right number of nods. To control the flinch at the n word and slurs. She looks above him to the portrait of Queen Elizabeth II. Her eyes pierce down at her and her seemingly benevolent smile stretched taut. Becky wonders if the crown of expectations ever became too heavy.

The grandfather's clock ticks behind her. She fidgets with her nails. They're painted a pastel blue. Grandad had told her they should be nude to, "accentuate her natural beauty." She takes the chance to scrape them off.

Her demeanour becomes a carefully woven tapestry – a deliberate echo of the girl he had once esteemed. She doesn't want him to paint her the same colour as the communists. To think that she is evil. Ever since she found her own opinions it has been a battle waged within her. A quiet war that grows at her insides. The world says to be yourself, but she can't. She can't find the courage to reveal the fire that is threatening to burn out of control. The fire fuelled by words she dares not speak.

The decision to skip ahead in time indicates Becky's maturation, and her grandfather's dwindling power. Her romanticised view of her grandfather begins to disintegrate, which is symbolised through his ageing physical appearance.

References to recent referendums helps to contextualise this narrative, framing the grandfather as dogmatic and rigid.

Repetition of "she used to..." encourages the reader to consider how viewpoints can alter over time as people become more self-aware.

The Queen, as a symbol, is incorporated in an intriguing way. Becky does not liken her to her grandfather, but rather, relates to the Queen's own experience of feeling burdened by expectation, and having to force smiles to appease everyone.

The specification of nail colour further constructs the grandfather's tyrannical control of Becky.

Using fire as a metaphor creates tension and foreshadows rebirth.



## Bonfire

She will be twenty five. She will be driving her Grandad home in her auto Prias. Her hair will be fire red – just as she had always wanted. Her nails will be black and she won't put a pastel coat over the top when she visits him. She will have found her voice and she will be free. Free to share her views without pouring water on her fire to make them more palatable for him.

She won't hesitate to call him out. She will fight fire with fire. She won't cower and try to redeem herself in his eyes. Instead, after each disagreement, she will arise anew like a phoenix. Now she has found herself, she won't let anyone make her lose it again.

She will let her fire burn. And she won't let anyone put it out.

Prolepsis is utilised as a structural feature to convey Becky's hopeful future, where she is able to find her voice.

The decision to write in future tense leaves the reader questioning whether Becky will ever achieve this.

High modality emphasises that she will eventually find the courage to challenge her grandfather.

The metaphor of a phoenix is used to elaborate on the idea of rebirth and a coming of age narrative.

## Activity: Somebody, wants, but...

When composing imaginative texts, using this simple formula can help to ensure you are writing with a purpose, and with the aim of keeping your readership engaged.

### Somebody, Wants, But... (Then, So).

Using the following table as a prompt, create an opening to a short story using the 'Somebody-Wants-But' formula. As you are crafting an opening, ensure you establish setting, a clear description of the protagonist, and foreshadow the conflict to come. Structurally, you may choose to utilise a linear narrative, or you can opt for a flashback, in media res, or disrupt the chronological order to hook the reader in. Follow the examples below and complete your own version of this table in your notes by adding in other examples of **Somebody, Wants, But... (Then, So)**.

Somebody	Wants	But
Becky - a young girl	... to find her voice	She is afraid of her overbearing grandfather
CEO of a mining company	... to audition for a play	His daughter is getting married
Mother of three young children	... to find a job	Her car won't start
A teenage boy who enjoys volunteering	... to solve a murder	He is having problems with his memory
An elderly man living in an aged care facility	... to go to the beach	He is not allowed to leave the facility

## Considering Question 12

Compose an imaginative text that adapts a traditional tale for a contemporary Australian context.

### Interpreting the question

To successfully respond to this question, candidates must write an imaginative text which transforms a traditional tale. Your response should resonate with a modern Australian context. One way that this can be achieved is through appealing to a modern or present-day Australian audience. A 'traditional tale' to adapt might include a cultural myth or legend, religious stories, fairytales and fables. Alternative interpretations of a 'traditional tale' could include generic plots or clichés; stories which have been repeated over time within popular culture and have become ubiquitous. A trope such as the quintessential 'love triangle' i.e. choosing-between-your-best-friend-and-your-lover would be permissible. Signalling to a recognisable and preexisting narrative will ensure that you are adhering to the demands of 'a traditional tale'. Candidates will be rewarded for nuanced and innovative responses which adapt a tale for an Australian context in an appealing and thought-provoking way.

An 'Australian context' requires candidates to have a strong understanding of context, and to consider social, political and cultural factors which permeate contemporary Australian society. Candidates may consider commenting on traditional Australian values such as mateship and egalitarianism, having a relaxed lifestyle, or even challenging longstanding attitudes such as 'the tall poppy syndrome'. For example, a reinterpretation of 'Romeo and Juliet', which comments on a class divide or racial tensions within Australia would be one possible interpretation. Another approach could be to adapt the Brothers Grimm, such as 'Hansel (Harry) and Gretel (Grace)', a short story which comments on the current housing crisis and youth homelessness. Alternatively, a reimagining of a classic novel such as William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, set on Rottneest Island during COVID lockdowns, may offer an interesting perspective on the Australian value of mateship. Or, a rewrite of the opening chapter of J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* from the point of view of an elderly person living in a retirement village in Busselton, may offer a sympathetic representation of elderly Australians as witty, stoic and formidable.

Taking the universal and broad appeal of a traditional tale and transforming it into a more specific representation of Australia is the key to unlocking the potential of this prompt.

### Advice from teachers

- When planning your response, choose a tale and begin with adjusting just one element (the audience, the themes, the characters or the setting) to suit a contemporary Australian context.
- Ensure that you emphasise a message which is distinctively Australian, and is meaningful to Australian people.
- Alternative approaches to this question may include writing a 'creation story' from the point of view of an unreliable omniscient narrator, a Godlike figure who was given the job of creating Australia. The possibilities are endless.



## Question 12: Sample response one

This candidate has chosen to adapt Little Red Riding Hood into a short story that aims to represent the experiences of a young, British/Bangladeshi migrant on her way to visit her Dida. The strength in this response lies in the candidate's crafting of characters through speech tags and choice of diction, constructing the antagonist as a malevolent and lupine figure. Furthermore, the utilisation of imagery to portray a recognisable Australian and lupine standout feature of this text. Although this response does well to adapt a traditional tale for a contemporary context, it may have benefitted from further consideration as to how the ideas in this piece could resonate with Australian audiences, through further examination of issues like xenophobia and racial discrimination.

### Little Red Riding Hood

A draft blows into the train station, and a woman clad in a carmine shawl shivers in the cold. She – Nadia – is not used to these biting winds that come and go – that play tag-team with a hateful sun and chill of night. The latter comes soon, if the orange cast to what light falls into the station means anything.

Nadia bites her lip and fingers her bag. She hopes she gets home before that. She has her grandmother's medicines, and she's worried about navigating under the cowl of night.

A man to her left, haggard and wild-eyed, groans and thumps his fists against a wall. "When are these b\*ggers getting here, then?" Against her impulses, she agrees to herself. The trains came and went as they pleased – which was slowly. It wasn't much better in England, mind; but she found her feet tapping and her teeth grinding in impatience.

The man's frustration is carried by the small crowd of people around them. Universally tall and dark eyed, they hung about in a thick curtain of business men with briefcases their size and half again; of women with purses filled with work files and football fans with the woeful look of the loser's side. All of them, Nadia muses, a motely group of strangers, unified in their frustrations with Perth's train system.

Eventually, as do mountains erode and spread, the train arrives. It decelerates sullenly, stopping with a sad jerk. Nadia's relieved, but as she looks around she sees her fellows have not lost a dark cast to their eyes. She accustoms a like posture, and stomps into the train carriage.

Music blares from some stray school boy whose lost their headphones and a thick smell of MacDonald's pervades the train's stale air. Her legs ache for rest, but Nadia dares not ask anyone for their chair.

The utilisation of the verbs and adjectives 'biting', 'hateful', 'chill', 'play tag team' and 'bites...' create a sinister atmosphere. This diction has a double meaning and foreshadows the arrival of the wolf/antagonist.

The description of the unknown passenger as 'haggard ... wild-eyed ... groans and thumps ...' constructs him as malicious.

'Teeth grinding in impatience' further emphasises the atmosphere of tension and foreboding, and again, is a pun to draw a parallel between the traditional wolf and the haggard man, who is later named Jack.

A great description of passengers on a train, conveying societal malaise, mundanity and frustration.

The personification of the train further exemplifies the 'sullen' mood of the passengers.

Utilising sensory language, both audio and olfactory, further establishes the setting as a heterogenous group of people.

Her phone rings, a jubilant jingle her sister set for her. She hated the sound, but would never tell Farah that. Nadia grimaces at the sound for another reason, however, and as she thumbs at the phone screen she confirms: her grandmother's calling.

Slipping into the Bangla of her youth, she answers "Where are you?" comes the voice, frantic and fearful. "I don't see you. Are you home?" "No, Dida," Nadia replies, shifting her weight. "I'm almost there. The train was a little delayed." "You should have called!" comes the reprimand, and Nadia winces. "I'm sorry, Dida but —"

"Oi, quiet down, why don't ya?" barks a man beside her in English.

Nadia, blinking, turns to see the haggard man. His beard is grey and rough, like an old wolf's pelt. His eyes are distant, yet hungrily vicious, and his breath stinks of foul spirits. He is leaning toward her, muddy cheeked.

"Aii, are you listening?" Nadia's grandmother cries on the other end. "Yes, yes — please Dida, I'll be a moment," she pleas, voice attaining high pitch.

"Ain't ya hearing me, mate? You speak English?"

Nadia nods eagerly, and as her grandmother shouts questions, hangs up.

"I can speak English," she tells the man. "Sir."

The man draws back, unsatisfied. His lip draws back in a lupine snarl. Still, Nadia thinks he is a little pleased with the 'sir' business. She doesn't imagine he receives much of that.

"Course you can," he says, grinning a sharp-toothed smile. "Why you gotta shout like that?"

Nadia feels herself blush. She stammers out an apology and now the man rests back on his haunches.

"Where are you from, anyway?" he looks her up and down and Nadia holds herself back from squirming under his gaze. "Afghanistan?" She shakes her head. "Britain", she wants to say, but "Bangladesh", is what leaves her mouth.

Alliteration is used to exemplify the way phones ringing often disrupts monotony, which signifies the rising action within the plot.

The speech tag 'barked' again is a clever use of zoomorphism to characterise the antagonist as lupine.

The introduction of the grandmother on the phone is a clever way to implement the original plot. Characterising them as a vulnerable Bangladeshi family also adds layers of meaning and nuance to the story, as it provides a commentary on how they are being racially targeted.

'Lupine snarl' is stated clearly to drive home the parallel between Jack and the original wolf.

Colloquial language and abbreviated language are used to characterise the antagonist as having a callous tone.



He nods to himself. "Thought you don' look right. You know where you're going?"

Nadia hesitates. She's not inclined to spill information, as a general rule, but the light outside the train windows has already fallen dark.

"I'm trying to get to Hawkfoot drive, off Roe Highway," she explains. A lie, but only a little.

He cocks his head. "Coincidence." He bears his crooked teeth in a yellow smile. "So am I. I'll show you the way."

They spoke briefly, or more so, the man continued speaking, as the train moved at an inch worm's pace to their stop. Nadia learnt the man's name was Jack, "After Ol' Cap'n Sparrow, hah!", and that he was a subcontractor for the local building operation. Apparently, it was being extended until the chief's son passed university.

The train comes to a rest at their stop, and Jack ambles out of the train car. He lopes over to the bus map, bounding over the escalator steps with the well timed ease of someone in his domain and began to ramble out the routes to take before Nadia even jostles out of the door. She thanks Jack for his help, and his long-toothed smile sent a glimmer of unease up her shoulder.

She spends the bus ride acutely uncomfortable, a prickling sensation running up her back. With all the time it takes, she's unsure that it even qualifies as a short cut, but she takes the opportunity to check her texts. Seven. From Dida. She is not pleased. Grimacing, Nadia tucks the phone away. Best to deal with that later.

When she lands at Hawkroot, she feels a little bit glad that she lied about her street. She can't shake a feeling of being watched, and every rustle in the bushes makes her heart skip a beat. She crosses the road over to Owlmet turn, and follows the curve as well as she can under the ink-black sky.

She hears a growl behind her, and her blood turns to ice.

She quickens her pace, unsure of what's behind her and decides to call Dida anyway.

Any comfort would be appreciated. As she rings and hears the familiar gasp of her grandmother's voice, she –

"You dirty f\*cker!"

She twirls around and sees Jack, foaming at the mouth, narrow eyed.

The dialogue between Nadia and Jack is a little drawn out and requires some editing to keep the reader engaged.

The Captain Jack Sparrow reference is slightly confusing, alluding to a different traditional tale.

Strong use of verbs to describe the gait of the two characters, including 'ambles' and 'lopes' for Jack, which connotes a lupine movement, and 'bounding' and 'jostles' for Nadia, constructing her as flighty and nervous.

He spits on the ground, swaying. He has a bottle in his hand.

"You fucking lied to me. I thought you would, you pigs always do. I gave you a chance..." he continues to rant, each sentence shorter than the last and filled with more spite.

Nadia grasps her phone to her chest, panicking. "Dida," she begins, tenor rising, "call—"

The man lunged, his hands gripping her sides with a violent spark. Nadia cries out, in shock more than pain.

"Not a word —" flecks are spraying from his mouth. She looks at him for a moment, swears, and kicks out with her foot between his legs.

As he howls, letting go, she takes flight, shouting to her grandmother, where she was to call whatever the equivalent to 999 was.

Yet, deep inside Nadia feels anger overpowering fear.

She's done with this sh\*t.

The climax of the narrative occurs when her fears are realised, and she is under attack.

Choice of diction conveys the malice of Jack; 'foaming ... spit ... flecks spraying ... howls' all convey him as animalistic and beastly.

The abrupt ending is quite metatextual, insinuating that Nadia will not become a victim like Little Red Riding Hood once did. This plot twist helps to reclaim the trope of the damsel in distress, suggesting that Nadia will defend herself and be triumphant.

## Activity: Adapting a traditional tale for an Australian context

Choose one of the following creative writing prompts, then draft a 300-400 word response.

1. Compose a scene between Romeo and Lady Capulet, where you utilise speech tags and language features to construct them as the protagonist and the antagonist. A noteworthy aspect of Sample Response One is the keen and savvy use of speech tags to construct the antagonist as lupine and animalistic.

Traditional Tale	Australian Context	Protagonist	Antagonist	Genre
Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Comments on a class divide within Australia, where Romeo, a teenager living in government housing, falls in love with Juliet, who comes from a more affluent family.	Romeo	Lady Capulet	Novel/ Chapter – Romance

2. Using figurative language and imagery, describe the setting of an ominous Australian setting called 'The Gingerbread House'. Draw inspiration from Sample Response One, whereby the candidate excelled in their description of setting and the way they established a mood of foreboding.

Traditional Tale	Australian Context	Setting	Genre
'Hansel (Harry) and Gretel (Grace)'	Aim to comment on the current housing crisis and inflated cost of living.	'The Gingerbread House' – 2023 – rural setting – Western Australia.	Short Story – Post Apocalyptic



## Question 12: Sample response two

This candidate has elected to transform a 16<sup>th</sup> century Chinese novel, *Journey to the West*, into a short story about a young man seeking the approval of his family. *Journey to the East* adapts the story of 'The Monkey King' for an Australian audience through sustaining a recognisable Australian vernacular, and engaging with themes and ideas about family conflict and 'the tall poppy syndrome'. The strength of this response lies in the candidate's ability to use a first person narrator, 'The Kangaroo King', and construct an authentic, sympathetic and recognisable voice. Additionally, the candidate uses dream sequences, a heroic journey or bildungsroman plot structure, and a hint of magical realism, to construct a narrative which is charming, engaging and illuminating. This text aims to resonate with Australian men, through adopting the trope of 'the sentimental bloke' who challenges traditional male gender roles, as well as championing the resilience of a 'larrikin', who ultimately succeeds and finds happiness.

### Journey to the East

Nan died. Sucks, but we saw it coming. Ripe old age of ninety eight, not bad for a lady who lived off a pack of ciggies and Coles frozen meals, I reckon. Biggest thing for me though is apparently I've been written out of the will. Which is bullshit, out of the twenty odd McKing grandkids I was always her favourite. Uncle Mitch said its cause I "ran off to Perth" or something but that ain't right surely. I was pursuing my career as a zoologist. They all mocked me for it, called me the 'Kangaroo King', a bunch cut ties with me for it. Banished me in a sense. But Nan always supported me and now she's gone and I dunno what to do. I gotta clear my name somehow but I can't afford to fly over to Melbourne, not with my rent going up.

So I made up my mind. I, Randy McKing, Kangaroo King, will make my journey across The Nullabor in my Ford Focus to reclaim my place in the Kingdom of my relatives in Melbourne. Heir to the throne I was and I'm gonna prove it. I called in sick to work, packed my things, loaded the tank and I was off.

6:30am was displayed on my dash as I left Perth. My Aircon was a bit shoddy so only one side worked, blowing my messy red hair across my face like a 2000s popstar. Gradually as I drove the houses disappeared and trees grew in their place. The Perth Hills rose up around me and soon I was on the open road; nothing around for miles. The trees shrunk and replaced themselves with fields of wheat and the sun beat down on my blue car, fading what little paint was left.

As I passed through York, I began to think about what I'd do when I got there. What I'd say to Uncle Mitch. "There's been a mistake! I'm Nan's favourite." Nah. Too whiny. I ain't a pussy.

"Show me the will right now, lemme see for myself."

Adapting an archaic Chinese story and manipulating the title is inventive.

Allusions to the original tale are incorporated. The surname McKing adapts the original 'Monkey King', and 'banished me in a sense...' refers to the plot line of the original tale.

Utilisation of first person narration and colloquial language, 'bullshit'... 'dunno'... 'gotta', construct the authentic voice of a young Australian male, who is unashamedly conversational and informal in tone.

The inclusion of the Ford Focus is humorous, constructing The Kangaroo King as a larrikin. This, juxtaposed against the medieval connotations, brings charm and intrigue to this composition.

Calling in sick to work is also funny, and is a contemporary Australian trope. Emphasis on the journey strengthens the universal appeal of this composition.

Using dialogue to talk to himself and rehearse what he will say also adds humour to this monologue.

Too demanding. This was a delicate situation and I didn't want to blow it. My mind ran endless possibilities of what I could say as the clicks clicked by on the speedo.

The Nullabor is called The Nullabor for a reason. It's god damn boring. Flat fields whipped away as my eyes grew drowsy. 6:30pm. I had been driving for twelve hours now. I needed to stop but there weren't any towns or establishments for another three hours. I had spotted a clear place on the side of the road and pulled over. I extracted my swag from the hood of the car and pitched it down wind from the car's protective form. Setting an alarm, I tried to sleep.

My dreams were vivid and lucid. The stars above whirled into colours. The colours whirled into shapes. Shapes became people. Faces. Events.

Nan was sitting in her rocking chair, knitting and smoking. Us cousins ran around in the yard. Cousin Janine and Cousin Ben threw a call at me. As I fell back I glimpsed Nan scold them.

I fell through the ground to another scene. It was Christmas. The heat was unbearable but the food smelled good. I was sitting in the pool on a floaty. Someone tipped it and I fell. As I was falling I glimpsed Uncle Mitch snicker at me.

I fell into the water and sunk, and kept sinking. Like a stone.

Down.

Down.

Down.

I landed on something hard. It was floorboards. Looking around there was no water, only Nan's old home. A corridor stretched ahead of me and someone called my name.

"Randy! Randy! Randy McKing! Where are you!

The calling morphed into beeping as my alarm went off, pulling me from my sleep. Man I never liked my family.

Getting back in the car I resumed my journey, somewhat confused at my visions. What could they possibly mean?

Night after night across The Nullabor these dreams continued. From each smug roadhouse wherever I slept they followed me like a shark.

'Flat fields whipped away' utilises figurative language to highlight the vastness of the Australian landscape, which is something uniquely Australian.

The inclusion of the term 'swag' further characterises Randy as a classic, Australian bloke, resourceful and unpretentious.

Short, punctuated sentences emphasise the beginning of the dream sequence.

The dream sequence is left open for the reader to interpret, as it aims to reveal events from the past which strengthen Randy's claim that he was the favourite.

Uncle Mitch is characterised as malicious, turning Randy's floaty over, symbolising Mitch's disloyalty and betrayal.

Indentation and repetition of the word 'down' amplifies the experience of falling, further drawing the reader into the meaning of the dream sequence as a symbolic representation of Randy's childhood experiences.



It took me three days to get to Adelaide. It's not much but the swathe of buildings across the landscape provided something of comfort for my weary eyes. I reckon Adelaide has never been regarded with this much admiration before. I called into a motel on the edge of town and sat outside to get some fresh air. I peeled the sweaty hair out of my face and looked up to see a man walking towards me.

He was deathly thin and stank. His hair was falling out and he stumbled as he walked. His skin hung off him like hand-me-down clothes and his eyes were red, clearly high as a kite. Nevertheless, he plonked himself down on the edge of the carpark curb next to me and said;

"Bloody STINKA today ain't it?"

"Yep," I managed to grimace back to him.

"What's ya name mate?" He asked me.

"Randy."

"I don't remember mine." It was like he sobered up in a millisecond. He said it so clearly, so succinctly, and with such sorrow it nearly brought me to tears.

"Why not?" I asked, not sure what else to say.

"Once I had a family," he said. "We bickered. I never felt like I belonged. I travelled away but when my pops died it brought me back. I tried so hard to redeem myself in the eyes of the people who never loved me and to no surprise it never worked. I turned to drugs. It broke me."

He looked me straight in the eyes.

"I'm a broken man Randy McKing. Don't try to be someone you're not. Your Nan is gone. You're banished from the kingdom of heaven. Be the Kangaroo King.

With that the man got up and walked away. He passed behind a tree and vanished.

Quite frankly I was shook. I wracked my brain, trying to remember if I'd seen him before but nothing came to my mind. A complete stranger just told me a mirror of my life and how it ends. I looked at my hands and I questioned what I was doing. Nan wasn't rich. There was nothing really of value she could've left behind. So it wasn't for money.

I guess.

I guess this has all been for glory?

To prove something?

But to who?

Not Uncle Mitch, for sure.

I never really understood why I needed my family. Why did I care so much about proving myself to them when they never cared about me?

As Randy grapples with his past and tries to confront his future, the journey across the Nullarbor functions as a metaphor for his struggle to accept his family's rejection and betrayal.

Including a joke about Adelaide is distinctly Australian in humour.

Introducing a new character, in the form of 'a spiritual guide' resonates with the original tale.

Utilisation of colloquial language constructs the man as a 'fair dinkum' Aussie bloke.

The informal tone of the man alters as he reveals his sad story to Randy. Code switching between informal and formal tones is a distinctively Australian social technique, stemming from 'the tall poppy syndrome'.

Incorporating surrealist and mythological elements into the narrative through dream sequences and oracular characters pays homage to the original tale.

Randy's epiphany is highlighted through rhetorical questions.

This path would break me.

I realised I had not been banished from the kingdom of heaven but rather found it in my home in Perth.

I never picked up the phone from my family again. Never answered their texts. I returned to my work at the Zoo. I continued my studies into Australian Marsupials.

I, Randy McKing, am the Kangaroo King and I don't need to prove anything to anyone.

#### Footnotes:

The story is an adaption of the Chinese mythological tale of the Journey to the West, a collection of stories around the Monkey King trying to return to the Kingdom of Heaven by redeeming himself after he was banished. Journey to the East of course changes this to Randy realising he doesn't need to redeem himself for people who don't care for him. Fighting with relatives about a deceased relative is a common Aussie trope, especially in traditionally white farming families. I believe that this story will resonate with many Australians in the modern context, especially its themes of finding identity and also proving oneself and how that's not always necessary to do. Just 'be yourself' is the message, be the Kangaroo King despite what everyone tells you.

The resolution accentuates the message of self-acceptance, conveying Randy's transformation from angst and suffering to equanimity, clarity and aplomb.

Footnotes clarify the interpretation of the original tale. However, statements like this should not be relied upon. It should be clear how the question has been addressed in the composition.

#### Hint: Timed Conditions

One of the crucial skills you will need to learn is how to execute a good response under timed conditions. There are different ways that you can set yourself up for success; two options are:

1. Put a number of composing prompts into a randomiser app, or into a hat, and choose one at random. Give yourself 12 minutes to write an opening. Do this frequently.
2. Spend time crafting a polished version of a text, and then, aim to handwrite it under timed conditions. Try not to copy the text out, and let yourself make alterations as you go along.



### Activity: Grammar matters

When composing texts, it is important to have a strong grasp of when to utilise commas. Correct punctuation enhances the clarity and fluidity of your response, directing your reader to pause, and take a breath. Commas are used to separate clauses, to create lists, coordinate adjectives, or to introduce direct speech.

Insert commas into the following examples from Sample Response Two.

1	So I made up my mind. I, Randy McKing, Kangaroo King, will make my journey across The Nullabor in my Ford Focus to reclaim my place in the Kingdom of my relatives in Melbourne. Heir to the throne I was and I'm gonna prove it. I called in sick to work, packed my things, loaded the tank and I was off.
2	"Bloody STINKA today ain't it?" "Yep," I managed to grimace back to him. "What's ya name mate?" He asked me.
3	With that the man got up and walked away.
4	I needed to stop but there weren't any towns or establishments for another three hours.
5	Quite frankly I was shook.
6	From each smug roadhouse wherever I slept they followed me like a shark.
7	It's not much but the swathe of buildings across the landscape provided something of comfort for my weary eyes.
8	Man I never liked my family.

## Considering Question 13

Craft the opening of **one** imaginative text and the opening of **one** persuasive text using a similar idea generated from the stimulus below.

### Interpreting the question

Candidates must craft both an imaginative and a persuasive text to be successful in adhering to the demands of this prompt. The texts they compose should be openings. Candidates who write longer texts which go beyond an introductory segment will not gain any advantage. The two texts must engage with a 'similar idea', one that has been derived from the stimulus.

An 'opening' of an imaginative text may include an effective title, exposition, a description of setting, structural features such as in media res or disrupting the chronological order, and a foreshadowing of the rising action or conflict. An 'opening' of a persuasive text must gain the attention of the reader and establish a clear contention and viewpoint, with the purpose of persuading a specific audience. A key discriminator will be the way in which candidates address a similar idea in both texts. Stronger responses may juxtapose their texts to create a thought-provoking examination of an idea. The word 'similar' does not require candidates to use an identical idea across both texts.

When drawing inspiration from this image, candidates may identify ideas which relate to sustainable energy and resources, travelling or adventure, cultural norms and traditions, experiences of serenity, clarity and peacefulness or even the idea of simplicity vs. materialism. A possible approach to this prompt could be to explore the universal idea that individuals require the support of their community, to avoid alienation and rejection. An opening to a short story could introduce a charitable central protagonist: a cyclist who takes great pride in delivering community donated flowers to low-cost funeral homes. Contrastingly, the complementary persuasive text could be a post by an anonymous participant in a community Facebook group, detailing how flowers have been stolen from their front yard. This approach to the prompt would serve the purpose of contrasting individuals as either altruistic or unethical.

Another idea could be to focus on the idea of tribalism and discrimination. Candidates could craft a transcript for the opening of a scene within a dystopian film, where a female voiceover explains how society has been separated into arbitrary ideological factions and recalls the simplicity of her youth where she was free to ride her bicycle across the city. To further examine this idea, the second text could be an introduction from a magazine article, written by an environmentalist, which examines Twitter mobbing, trolling and cancellation culture. Both texts, when read side by side, would aim to promote the importance of democratic values, such as freedom of movement and freedom of speech.

### Advice from teachers

- When tackling this prompt, the key is to illustrate your understanding of text structures. Ensure you utilise paragraphing effectively and carefully consider how you are going to begin and end your paragraph/s for the greatest impact.
- Sophisticated responses will craft two shorter texts of equal integrity which inform each other, leaving a lasting impression on the reader.



Question 13: Sample response one

This candidate has chosen to focus on the similar idea of consumerism across two texts. The imaginative text centres around a woman who sells flowers at a Sunday market in China to earn her living, only to be stymied by a large-scale distributor. The candidate then approached their persuasive response by critiquing society's obsession with consumerism, labelling it as a dubious, 'religious ideal'. The strength of this response lies in the candidate's ability to engage with a similar idea across both texts, and to successfully engage the reader. However, this response would have benefitted from a more robust focus on text structures, to ensure both texts were accurate 'openings'. This could have been achieved through carefully adhering to the generic conventions of expositions and introductions for each text type.

What A Rose is Worth

A narrative exposition.

Watery sun threatened to disappear behind ominous dark clouds. Pedalling between shade and sun, she rode at a slow pace, the weight of roses, daisies, gardenias, lotuses and various other popular assortments weighing heavy on the ground. Doubt had seeped into her mind once again. Failure, rejection, loss, poverty all felt a thousand times heavier than the flowers on her back. The shame of returning home empty-handed had tortured her dreams since the last market.

Driven by fear, she pedalled on. Through puddles of murky water, over mounds of rubbish and dirt that defined these back-streets of China. Sleek black cars whipped by with names she could not read. Tinted windows reflected a pale, skinny woman, with thin hair and faded blue jeans that drooped around her legs. It took a moment to realise that she was staring at herself. A hollow version of what she once was.

The bustle of China's Sunday markets rang in her ears. She slid her bike into one of the few remaining slots, looking well-used and frail like the rest. "No, no, no, this is my stall Auntie, please!" A young, pale-faced girl begged the harsh-looking woman, standing possessively inside the minute tent.

"I find, I keep," she replied, in the broken speech of their class. Fortunately, no one had claimed her stall. Light blue colours danced with yellow stripes all around the covers, attracting attention and admiration that she desperately needed.

About half her roses had survived the journey. With cold, shaky hands, she placed them gently on the table.

"Roses in front," she murmured, repeating her grandmother's words, who had given her this opportunity. Everyone loved roses. They didn't

Oxymoronic language, personification and hyperbole are utilised to convey a dichotomy between the beauty of the flowers and the woman's negative emotions.

Setting is established through creating a stark juxtaposition between affluence ('sleek cars') and poverty ('rubbish ... dirt ... backstreets'), foreshadowing the conflict to come.

Conflict between stallholders emphasises the struggle for survival experienced by the underclass.

A recollection of her grandmother's words highlights the generational poverty experienced by the protagonist.

have to know how far she walked to pick them. They didn't have to know the cost of stealing them. They didn't have to know the redness of her blood that seeps into the petals, as she walks back home.

The screech of expensive tyres on cheap gravel roads made her head snap up, body tense.

"Not you," she thought, "not today."

Polished men in black suits stepped confidently out of the truck. When she looked closer, she saw delicate patterns woven into the fabric. Roses.

The truck doors slip open, revealing hundreds of gorgeous, vibrant, fully blossomed roses. Blood red. Customers turned to gasp at the beauty within this truck, turning their back to the yellow and blue tent. She, herself, had never seen roses so red, or all so perfectly blossomed. She wondered if they too, cut their fingers on the thorns.

### Consumerism as a Religious Ideal

The opening to a TED Talk by Psychology Professor Dylan Lowe.

Viktor Labeau said it best: "We seek our spiritual satisfaction in consumption." This was coming from a man in the 1960s. If only he were around today!

TikTok, Instagram, television, advertisements. The rapid evolution of our technological society has uprooted any remains of morality, as we dive wholly and completely into the religion of consumerism.

Consumerism comes with a variety of definitions, but most broadly it describes a society where status, values, self worth and identity is determined by the purchasing of goods and services. We, as a Western society, have mastered this act. You would think, by now, that we are satisfied. 20 million tonnes of waste is produced by Australian citizens per month, so one may think we have finally tired of our consumerist ideals. However, this is far from the case. McCrindle, in 2020, studied the psychology behind our obsession with material satisfaction. This study found that 56% of consumers lose interest in their goods or services within two days of purchasing. 48 hours. And then we buy again. So starts this perpetual cycle, bringing us not 'spiritual satisfaction' but rather into a state of insatiable greed. I too am a victim to the cycle of consumerism. Just yesterday, I bought myself the iPhone 15, while having a perfectly functional Samsung at home.

Why?

Because the ads, the Instagram, TikTok told me to.

'Polished men in black suits...' characterises them as a symbol of wealth and oppression.

The candidate concludes Text 1 once the conflict has been established, adhering to the conventions of an opening.

Establishing a clear text type through signposting the mode orients the reader.

Introducing the idea of consumerism as a religion causes the reader to draw a parallel between this text and the previous text.

Inclusive language indicates the target audience for the speech, Western society, provoking the audience to consider their own habits of consumption.

Research and statistics are adopted to bolster the contention that western society is overtly materialistic.

Personal anecdote is used to add credibility to the speaker, through acknowledging their own part in the issue.



To truly investigate the psychological effects of consumerism, we must turn to a manufacturing powerhouse, China. Order anything online these days, and you can pretty much guarantee a 'Made in China' label to come with it. But behind China's economic dominance as leading producers in our modern world, the medieval separation of class is materialising once more. As we consume more, we look for cheaper prices, better deals. This comes at a cost, however. China's average wage is approximately 60% lower than the required minimum for Australian workers, over 18 years of age. That is why your new fridge is half the price of the one from the local store. Religion itself is supposed to promote equality and justice, however, the consumerist faith has neglected the poor and vulnerable. Our economy is expanding at a rapid pace, and those who cannot keep up, will not survive.

A critical tone is adopted to scapegoat China's involvement in mass production, alleging that they mistreat their working class.

The utilisation of the adjective 'medieval' is derogatory, conveying the speaker's attitude of disdain towards social structures which are hierarchal and oppressive, promoting democracy as the panacea.

The final sentence draws a strong parallel between the idea in Text 1, and the experiences of the woman, with the idea in Text 2; that the consumerist faith neglects the poor and the vulnerable.

### Activity: Ways to improve your writing

Practising for the Composing section is the best way to really be prepared for it. Try the following strategies to achieve greater success in your exam:

- **Practise writing for a variety of audiences:** Try using a specific form such as a speech or a feature article and rewrite it for different audiences.
- **Reflect on texts for which you were the target audience:** These might include speeches that you have sat through at school or letters explaining situations or procedures for you. Consider how well these texts catered for you. What changes would you make?
- **Practise writing in different forms:** Take a question from the 2022 English ATAR course examination, such as Questions 13 or 14, where candidates could choose what form of genre to write in. Create a situation connected to the quote from Question 11 and use it as a catalyst for writing in at least two different forms.
- **Use your past writing:** Read the feedback from your teachers with a critical eye. Use your journal to practise implementing the suggestions made by your teacher. Rewriting to enhance a former iteration is excellent practice for improving your writing.
- **Practise writing under timed conditions:** Turn on a 60-minute timer, choose a question, plan and write.
- **Create a glossary of words:** Make a record of words you encounter that are unfamiliar or appeal to you. Include a definition for each word and an example of it in a sentence.

## Question 13: Sample response two

This candidate has chosen to focus on the similar idea of bike riding as having a positive impact on individuals and their communities. In tackling quite a complex prompt, with many elements to address, this candidate has chosen to compose an imaginative text which incorporates generic conventions of the dystopian genre to introduce a mysterious cyclist who brought beauty and wonder to a once Utopian society. Their persuasive text focuses on the benefits of riding a bicycle, using a jovial and upbeat tone, personal anecdote and high modality to promote the idea. To improve, this candidate needed to address all elements of the prompt, through ensuring that both texts were strictly openings, without aiming to write complete texts. Furthermore, the second response may have benefitted from rethinking the choice of genre, due to the candidate's decision to utilise an informal tone.

### Chapter 1

#### "He Rode At Night."

They spoke of a man who rode through the streets of the city at night. He would ride on his bicycle around the entire urban area, from the tangerine skies of the setting sun, through the enchanting moonlit yawns of the night, and to the melancholy, tired groans of the golden, rising sun.

Very few ever saw him. He was a ghost of the concrete buildings. A spirit of the streetlights. A wisp in the hustle and bustle of the nighttime city life. Those who were fortunate enough to see him only did from their apartment windows, high up in the clouds. Little children would spot him and yell out to their parents. Some could even liken him to the allure of Santa Claus, with how much children gleamed yellow in jubilation at the prospect of seeing him for the first time.

Although, unlike Santa Claus, he wore remarkably unremarkable clothes. A dark red plaid shirt, jeans that had lost their youthful blue to the sands of time, and a straw hat that cast a foreboding shadow over his face that shrouded his thoughts in a darkness of mystery. Some have even speculated he wore a hospital white face mask. Was it to conceal his identity from the outside world? Was it to keep himself warm in the chilling shocks of the lightless outside? Was it to protect himself from the ghostly germs of the urban jungle around him?

Every morning, the city would wake to find something that alluded to a bike near that area. Tracks from his trusty bicycle dancing along the stretch of a sidewalk. Beautiful orchids planted in parks that breathed life into the suffocating sprawl of asphalt, a graffiti painting as enchanting that even governments would be so cruel as to cover them up. He was the city's treasure. Everyone loved him.

Signposting indicates the opening of a novel.

Assonance is utilised within the opening sentence, which encourages the reader to become absorbed. Personification, alliteration and onomatopoeia are used to construct the city as a living entity.

Metonymy of 'him' constructs the protagonist as mysterious and allusive, encouraging reader engagement through suspense.

What seems to be third person limited narration enhances the allure of the protagonist.

Rhetorical questions are used to provoke the audience and create uncertainty.

The mysterious cyclist is constructed as an enigma, with a benevolent purpose: to bring beauty and life to an otherwise monotonous and despairing city.



But, on one faithful day, he stopped.

Gone were his bike tracks, his bouquet of flowers across the city. His gorgeous murals. No one ever saw him again; not even for a split second. The city mourned. As the men who rode at night disappeared, so did the thriving Utopia of the city. Buildings fell into disrepair, parks laid dead in pitiful seas of depleting brown leaves, and children cried for they no longer had a man on a bike to get excited for. No one in the city had a man on a bike to get excited for.

But what of the man? Why did he stop? Why would he let the city go to ruins? Why would he let my city go to ruins? Many have tried to search for the man, and all have failed. No one has ever succeeded in locating the bike rider and breathing life back into the city.

That's why I'm going to be the first.

#### To Bike or Not to Bike? Not Even a Question!

The Sydney Morning Herald

By Gavin Wu, November 30, 2023.

The summer season is almost upon us here down under! It's the perfect weather to relax, take a dip in the pool, and indulge ourselves in eating a lot of ice cream. A LOT of ice cream.

For me, whenever I hear that it's time to break out the Hawaiian shirt, that usually means one thing: bike riding. I picked bike riding as a hobby two years ago today, and it would be an absolute understatement to say that it hasn't changed my life for the better. And to think that a number of years ago, I couldn't even ride one!

It puzzles me whenever some Australians proudly declare that they can't ride a bike to save their life. Learning to ride a bike is such an essential skill, especially since bikes are universally used in every country from every walk of life. Bikes make transport exponentially easier, as you don't have to cover those great distances on foot, and you don't risk the costs and dangers of driving your car everywhere in this car-centric country we all live in.

There are also huge benefits to bike riding from a fitness and health standpoint. Cycling is one of the most efficient forms of exercise out there, and I am more than prepared to provide a multitude of studies to prove that to all of you. And it's not just an excuse; crucially, biking as a lifestyle can be hugely impactful in bettering your mental health. Just the act of disciplining yourself into a hobby that can have immeasurable

Once the backstory has been established, including character and setting, the candidate disrupts the timeline to bring the reader to the present.

'Parks laid dead in pitiful seas of depleting brown leaves...' enhances the construction of the present setting as Dystopian.

The switch to first person narration functions as a plot twist, or teaser, that the narrator has an active and possibly heroic role within the dystopian world.

Text 2 references Shakespeare within the title as a pun to entice the reader.

A jovial and anticipatory tone is used to draw the reader in.

Informal language is used ('break out the Hawaiian shirt') to position the reader to feel acquainted.

Hyperbole is used to exaggerate the benefits of riding a bike in comparison to public transport.

Appeals to pathos i.e. appealing to the fears and the guilt of the reader promotes the contention that more people should take up bike riding.

Stating that they are more than prepared to provide evidence insinuates that this would hypothetically happen later in the text.

*benefits to your day-to-day life can make you feel extremely happy knowing that you are only doing favours to that amazing body of yours by going out for a breath of fresh air on a bike ride.*

Choice of diction, including 'immeasurable... extremely... amazing...' all work to promote the viewpoint.

*I hope that by the time you finish reading this article, you too will see why it would be foolish and maybe even life threatening to not take up biking as soon as possible. It did me a whole bunch of favours, I see no reason why it wouldn't do you any.*

A call to arms and direct language are used, although as structural/persuasive features, they may be more appropriate to incorporate later within a persuasive text.

### **Hint: Creating your own checklist for a persuasive text**

Use a checklist like the one below to build your arsenal of skills for creating convincing persuasive writing:

- ☐ title and subtitle
- ☐ identifies the audience and context in the exposition
- ☐ a clear sense of voice that is identifiable and sustained
- ☐ a clear conclusion that emphasises the purpose of the text
- ☐ incorporates a call to action
- ☐ supporting points
- ☐ evidence to back up supporting points
- ☐ recognisable language patterns
- ☐ uses a range of language devices with the intention to persuade:

<i>alliteration</i>	<i>repetition</i>	<i>inclusive language</i>	<i>direct address</i>
<i>hyperbole</i>	<i>metaphor</i>	<i>personification</i>	<i>simile</i> <i>anaphora</i>
<i>epistrophe</i>	<i>asyndeton</i>	<i>polysyndeton</i>	<i>rhetorical question</i>



## Activity: Vary your narrative structure

Many imaginative texts follow a similar narrative structure known as Freytag's pyramid, which is a standard plot progression that follows a linear/chronological path. This looks like:

- exposition
- rising tension
- conflict
- climax
- falling tension
- resolution.

However, this is not the only way to structure a narrative. Below is a list of alternate narrative structures accompanied by a brief description. A quick google search will provide you with more detailed explanations of each structure along with examples.

### The hero's journey

The hero's journey follows a series of stages, including: the hero existing in the ordinary world, the call to adventure followed by the refusal of the call, meeting the mentor, crossing the threshold, facing tests, allies and enemies, approach to the inmost cave, the ordeal, the reward, the road back, the resurrection and finally the return with the elixir.

### The story circle

This is a variation on the hero's journey and was developed by *Rick and Morty* co-creator Dan Harmon. This approach follows the protagonist through eight stages. These eight stages are broader than the more specific steps in the hero's journey and can therefore be applied to lots of different stories. The steps for the story circle are: a character is in a zone of comfort, but they want something, then enter an unfamiliar situation, adapt to it, get what they wanted, pay a heavy price for it, then return to their familiar situation, having changed.

### Fichtean Curve

This structure puts the central characters through a series of obstacles in order to achieve their goals. There are multiple crises faced by the characters to keep the reader interested. This narrative structure begins with an inciting incident, then a first, second, third and fourth crisis, followed by a climax and the falling action.

You can also experiment with a range of structural devices to create interest in your writing:

- start in media res
- use a cyclical structure
- utilise motif
- include narratorial commentary
- shift point of view
- use juxtaposition and contrast.

Experiment with different narrative structures and devices. Try and write a narrative, then re-write it again and again, each time varying your approach and adding in new elements.

Composing Section - create your own handy checklist

Create your own checklist below as a way to critique and edit your own practice responses, as well as review your own processes and strategies when tackling the Composing section of the exam. Use the headings in each section as a guide to your checklist. Devise at least four to five criteria in each section that you may need to follow in order to produce a good composing response.

Engagement with the question	E.g. Did I breakdown the key words and concepts of the question for my own understanding before attempting to write a response?	✓
Content and purpose		



## A final word

We hope that the activities, hints and, in particular, the sample responses have given you lots of ideas and a really strong framework for your own revision. This book helps answer the question: 'How do I study for English?' The answer is simple: in addition to the lessons you receive from your teacher, use this book as a guide. Start with the general information and activities to highlight any general gaps in your preparation. Then work with each of the sections, depending on your areas of weakness or need.

Remember, the samples in this book were written by people just like you: people who applied themselves to improving their skills. Your work could be published in this book next year. Good luck with your English studies and in your English ATAR course examination in November.