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Trial Examination 2017

# VCE English (EAL) Units 3&4

Written Examination

## Task Booklet

Reading time: 15 minutes

Writing time: 3 hours

### Instructions

A question and answer booklet is provided with this task booklet.  
Refer to instructions on the front cover of the question and answer booklet.  
You may keep this task booklet.

**Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.**

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## SECTION B – ANALYTICAL INTERPRETATION OF A TEXT

### *All About Eve* directed by Joseph L Mankiewicz

- i. ‘It is not Eve, but Margo who presents the greatest threat to Margo’s personal relationships.’  
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. ‘*All About Eve* endorses a conservative view of gender.’  
Discuss.

### *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai University* by Katherine Boo

- i. “Here, in the thriving western suburbs of the Indian financial capital, three thousand people had packed into, or on top of, 335 huts.”  
‘Despite the huge population inhabiting Mumbai, the text explores loneliness and isolation.’  
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. “Doing waste work that many Indians found contemptible, Abdul had lifted his large family above subsistence.”  
‘The individuals in Boo’s text show how human beings can be ingenious in the face of extreme hardship.’  
Discuss.

### *Black Diggers* by Tom Wright

- i. ‘Equal risk does not mean equal rights’  
Are the indigenous men in the text treated fairly?

OR

- ii. “If you’d told me I’d be ... on someone’s beach I would never have believed it.”  
How do the characters in the play break boundaries?

### *Bombshells* by Joanna Murray-Smith

- i. ‘Murray-Smith says in *Bombshells* that the women are “imploding under the weight of so many competing roles”.’  
Discuss.

OR

- ii. Discuss how Murray-Smith uses humour in her characters to reveal the competing roles of the women in *Bombshells*.

### *Burial Rites* by Hannah Kent

- i. ‘The use of multiple narrators in *Burial Rites* helps to highlight the novel’s message about the ambiguous nature of truth.’  
Discuss.

OR

- ii. To what extent do the hardships of rural life bring the characters of *Burial Rites* together?

**Cloudstreet by Tim Winton**

- i. ‘Winton’s novel demonstrates that community is required to overcome hardship.’  
To what extent do you agree?

**OR**

- ii. “Except no one believes anymore: the disappointment has been too much.”  
‘All the characters in *Cloudstreet* are united by the inability to accept their fate.’  
Discuss.

**Frankenstein by Mary Shelley**

- i. ‘Shelley’s novel highlights the corrupt nature of human society.’  
Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. “It was a dreary night in November, that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils.”  
‘Victor Frankenstein’s character shows that unrestricted knowledge is dangerous.’  
To what extent do you agree?

***I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb**

- i. ‘Malala’s memoir demonstrates that individuals cannot make change alone.’  
Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. ‘*I am Malala* shows that bystanders are as much to blame as perpetrators.’  
Do you agree?

***I for Isobel* by Amy Witting**

- i. “You built a wall around yourself and too late found yourself walled in.”  
To what extent does Isobel transcend her early limitations?

**OR**

- ii. “You had so little choice in what you did.”  
To what extent does *I for Isobel* suggest that people can exercise choice in their lives?

***Invictus* directed by Clint Eastwood**

- i. ‘Reconciliation can only be achieved when all involved are ready to overcome their own prejudices.’  
Discuss

**OR**

- ii. ‘*Invictus* is about the unwavering strength of the human spirit.’  
Discuss

***Island: Collected Stories* by Alistair MacLeod**

- i. ‘MacLeod’s stories demonstrate that memories of the past are determined by the present.’  
Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. ‘The descriptions of the environment in *Island: Collected Stories* reflect the feelings and emotions of its characters.’  
Discuss.

***Joyful Strains: Making Australia Home* by Kent MacCarter and Ali Lemer (eds)**

- i. ‘*Joyful Strains* suggests that the idea of ‘home’ has more to do with people than with place.’  
Do you agree?

**OR**

- ii. ‘The stories in *Joyful Strains* show the different ways people respond to being seen as an outsider.’  
Discuss.

***Mabo* directed by Rachel Perkins**

- i. “People like us can’t afford to be trouble makers.”  
Do you agree?

**OR**

- ii. ‘The central theme to *Mabo* is love.’  
Discuss.

***Measure for Measure* by William Shakespeare**

- i. “... women are frail too.”  
To what extent does *Measure for Measure* examine the flaws of Isabella?

**OR**

- ii. ‘*Measure for Measure* explores the conflict between the public self and the private self.’  
Discuss.

***Medea* by Euripides**

- i. ‘It is her own pride which is Medea’s chief torment.’  
Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. “Ah the loves of mortal men! What a boundless source of woe!”  
What perspectives does *Medea* offer on the consequences of love?

**No Sugar by Jack Davis**

- i. 'Devoid of hope, *No Sugar* is Jack Davis' lament for the loss of indigenous autonomy and identity.'

Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. "The native must be helped in spite of himself."

How is the attitude of the 'uncivilised savage' critiqued by Davis in the play?

**Old/New World: New & Selected Poems by Peter Skrzynecki**

- i. "They turned their faces  
from a shore  
none of them could forget".

How does Skrzynecki explore the losses and gains of the migrant experience?

**OR**

- ii. "Time's revenge hardly seems bitter at all"

In what ways does Skrzynecki's poetry explore the passage of time?

**Selected Poems by John Donne**

- i. 'Donne's poems present what is known and familiar as new and exciting.'

Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. "Call us what you will, we are made such by love."

In what ways does Donne explore the transforming power of love?

**Stasiland by Anna Funder**

- i. "Either you are for us or an enemy ..."

"This was perfect dictator-logic: we investigate you therefore you are an enemy."

Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. Funder humanises all the people she interviews, blurring the line between victim and perpetrator.

Discuss.

**The Complete Maus by Art Spiegelman**

- i. 'It is through the imagery of the novel that the true history of Vladek's narrative is explored.'

Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. '*The Complete Maus* is about survival.'

Do you agree?

***The Crucible* by Arthur Miller**

- i. ‘Characters in *The Crucible* lose faith as a result of the crisis they face.’  
Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. ‘It is the isolated nature of Salem which has the greatest impact on the way in which the witch-hunt develops.’  
Do you agree?

***The Golden Age* by Joan London**

- i. “Motherhood had never sat easily with Ida.”  
What perspectives does *The Golden Age* offer on the role of mothers?

**OR**

- ii. “You must have a certain ruthlessness.”  
What is it that enables the characters in *The Golden Age* to survive?

***The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula Le Guin**

- i. ‘While he interacts with several people throughout the text, Genly Ai is ultimately alone.’  
To what extent do you agree?

**OR**

- ii. ‘*The Left Hand of Darkness* is primarily concerned with questions of identity.’  
Discuss.

***The Lieutenant* by Kate Grenville**

- i. ‘In *The Lieutenant*, language is presented as having the power to both unite and divide.’  
Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. “Whether it was because he was stupid or clever, it added up to the same thing: the misery of being out of step with the world.”  
‘*The Lieutenant* is about the difficulty of being different.’  
Discuss.

***The Thing Around Your Neck* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie**

- i. ‘*The Thing Around Your Neck* demonstrates that the stories we tell ourselves can be powerful.’  
Discuss.

**OR**

- ii. To what extent does *The Thing Around Your Neck* suggest that confronting the truth can be painful?

***The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga**

- i. “I am not an original thinker, but I am an original listener.”  
To what extent does Adiga’s novel display the importance of growth within a character and country?

**OR**

- ii. ‘Balram becomes everything he despises.’  
Do you agree?

***This Boy’s Life* by Tobias Wolff**

- i. “We did not feel as if anything we said was a lie.”  
To what extent is Jack’s life complicated by his inability to distinguish between the truth and lies?

**OR**

- ii. ‘*This Boy’s Life* suggests that friendships between boys are both precious and fragile.’  
Discuss.

***Tracks* by Robyn Davidson**

- i. “To be free is to learn, to test yourself constantly, to gamble. It is not safe.”  
‘Davidson suggests that freedom can come at a cost.’  
Do you agree?

**OR**

- ii. “I wanted to do the thing on my own without outside interference or help.”  
‘Tracks suggests that the most important lessons in life are learnt on our own.’  
Discuss

## **SECTION C – ARGUMENT AND PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE**

### **Background information**

Cara College is a residential college of a major regional university. In a speech on Open Day to aspiring students, the university's Vice Chancellor emphasises the inclusive nature of the college.



# OPEN DAY

## FREE SPEECH

*Our lives begin to end the day we become silent  
about things that matter.*

*– Martin Luther King, Jr.*



Cara  
College

*Opening slide of speaker's presentation.*

Welcome to Cara College Open Day.

Our residential college right here on campus provides a special place where students have the opportunity to live, study and socialise within the university community. We provide a welcoming and safe transition from school to tertiary studies. We form an inclusive community and this is what leads me to the main topic of my talk to you today.

Have you noticed an increasing tendency in certain areas of the press and the wider society to label almost anyone with a good education as 'one of the elites?' Linked to these labels are insulting comments about 'academics' and 'experts' at almost all levels of education, research, and government.

As potential students here, you may become subject to either personal or collective insults of this nature. The way in which you deal with these insults depends on your own attitude and the support you will receive from this college and, indeed, the university itself. We believe that it is the responsibility of educated people to defend what is right, regardless of pressures from those who condemn what they label 'political correctness'. This term is often used to suggest that people support social justice merely to sound good and not because they truly believe in it.

There is no question that the fine line between freedom of speech and political correctness is difficult to assess. Of course, it is necessary for people to debate social, political and cultural issues but in doing so, it is possible to avoid causing distress to minority groups. For example, in the not-too-distant past, Indigenous Australians were classified according to skin colour and physical features. Surely, we have become a bit more civilised, even though there is still further to go before we can claim an inclusive society has been achieved. So claims of 'political correctness' against academics, historians and plain everyday Australians, who promote equality and fairness, are not a measure of freedom of speech, but instead, of intolerance.

A senior politician recently asserted the right of people to be bigots, but isn't this a 'right' that most of us would reject in favour of our responsibility to be decent human beings? Interestingly, two other politicians who deplore 'political correctness', and claim to uphold free speech, have taken legal action against people they claim to have insulted them!

Free speech does not mean, or should not mean, a licence to insult, deride or undermine people different from our own group, whether in terms of family, nationality, gender, race or religion. For those of you who intend studying here next year, it will become clear early in your courses that years of struggle, resolve, and determination have been spent in protecting our valued freedom of speech

in Australia, while strongly protecting minorities. These efforts have ensured a far greater degree of social inclusion than is the case in many parts of the world.

But WE MUST NOT allow ourselves to believe equality has been achieved, either in academia or the wider community! There is a determined push by some major media organisations to drive a wedge between those they describe as ‘the elites’ and ‘the disadvantaged’. I would argue that some commentators who denigrate ‘elites’ are themselves tertiary educated, sometimes members of parliament, senior executives and so on. This must make them members of the elites! As for ‘the disadvantaged’ who some say are marginalised by the elites, they are often at the forefront of efforts to improve the position of minorities.

What, you might begin to wonder, does this have to do with you? You are at the point of deciding the direction of your future education and career. As a professional, a graduate and expert in your chosen field, you will have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to a fair, free and progressive society. There was a time when being a member of an elite group was considered a cause for admiration, but recently it has become an insult. You can help to change the tactics of divide and conquer politics, where one group is encouraged to deride others under the fake banner of free speech.

Despite my earlier comments, there is no question that people in some sections of our society do feel powerless. But, rather than driving a deeper wedge between them and those more fortunate, it should be our role to close the gaps in opportunity, achievement and life satisfaction for all people. In other words, don’t be afraid to aspire to be one of the elite, but avoid, at all costs, becoming elitist!

I am confident that you all know the difference!



*Closing slide of speaker’s presentation.*

**END OF TASK BOOKLET**