

VCE 2012 English Trial Examination

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SECTION A – Text response**Instructions for Section A**

Section A requires students to complete **one analytical/expository** piece of writing in response to **one** topic (either **i.** or **ii.**) on **one** selected text.

Indicate in the box on the first line of the script book whether you are answering **i.** or **ii.**

In your response you must develop a sustained discussion of **one** selected text from the text list below.

Your response must be supported by close reference to and analysis of the selected text.

For collections of poetry or short stories, you may choose to write on several poems or short stories, or one or two in very close detail, depending on what you think is appropriate.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on the back of this book.

Section A is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

If you write on a film text in Section A, you must **not** write on a film text in Section B.

Text list

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-------|------------------------|
| 1. | <i>A Christmas Carol</i> | ..... | Charles Dickens |
| 2. | <i>A Farewell to Arms</i> | ..... | Ernest Hemingway |
| 3. | <i>A Human Pattern – Selected Poems</i> | ..... | Judith Wright |
| 4. | <i>Bypass – the Story of a Road</i> | ..... | Michael McGirr |
| 5. | <i>Cat’s Eye</i> | ..... | Margaret Atwood |
| 6. | <i>Cosi</i> | ..... | Louis Nowra |
| 7. | <i>Dear America – Letters from Vietnam</i> | ..... | Bernard Edelman |
| 8. | <i>Dreams from My Father</i> | ..... | Barack Obama |
| 9. | <i>Henry IV, Part I</i> | ..... | William Shakespeare |
| 10. | <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i> | ..... | Jhumpa Lahiri |
| 11. | <i>Life of Pi</i> | ..... | Yann Martel |
| 12. | <i>On the Waterfront</i> | ..... | Director: Elia Kazan |
| 13. | <i>Ransom</i> | ..... | David Malouf |
| 14. | <i>The Old Man Who Read Love Stories</i> | ..... | Director: Rolf de Heer |
| 15. | <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> | ..... | Mohsin Hamid |
| 16. | <i>The War Poems</i> | ..... | Wilfred Owen |
| 17. | <i>Things We Didn’t See Coming</i> | ..... | Steven Amsterdam |
| 18. | <i>Twelve Angry Men</i> | ..... | Reginald Rose |
| 19. | <i>Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?</i> | ..... | Raymond Carver |
| 20. | <i>Year of Wonders</i> | ..... | Geraldine Brooks |

SECTION A**1. *A Christmas Carol***

- i. 'None of Dickens' characters in *A Christmas Carol* are realistic, but they do have easily recognisable personality traits to make them believable.'

How believable do you find the characters?

OR

- ii. "Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years it was a splendid laugh."

'Humour is a central aspect of the novel *A Christmas Carol*.'

Discuss.

2. *A Farewell to Arms*

- i. "He was a legitimate hero who bored everyone he met"

Hemingway's novel does not present anyone as either a hero or a coward.

Is this how you see the characters in *A Farewell to Arms*?

OR

- ii. "Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near"

'Throughout the novel there is a constant reminder that time is running out.'

Discuss.

3. *A Human Pattern: Selected Poems*

- i. "The song is gone"

'Judith Wright's poetry laments what she feels has been lost.'

To what extent is this true?

OR

- ii. "Human eyes impose a human pattern"

'Judith Wright's poetry is preoccupied with understanding contradictory aspects of experience.'

Discuss.

4. *Bypass – the story of a road*

- i. 'McGirr uses the story of a road to reflect upon Australian identity.'

Discuss.

OR

- ii. To what extent is *Bypass* primarily a love story?

5. *Cat's Eye*

- i. “She knows the rituals, she knows how we’re supposed to be behaving ...”
‘Atwood shows that girls are conditioned to behave cruelly to one another.’
To what extent is this true?

OR

- ii. ‘*Cat's Eye* explores how our perception of the world is not always accurate.’
Discuss.

6. *Cosi*

- i. “Cosi gave me something to think about, something to do.”
‘*Cosi* suggests that people need to have their attention focussed on something other than themselves to be content.’
To what extent is this true?

OR

- ii. ‘*Cosi* endorses the view that “happy is the man who calmly takes life as he finds it”.’
Do you agree?

7. *Dear America – Letters from Vietnam*

- i. ‘The collection of letters present American soldiers in the Vietnam War as victims.’
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. “We Gotta Get Out of This Place”
‘The letters chart the soldiers’ changing attitudes to the war being fought.’
Discuss.

8. *Dreams of My Father*

- i. “Truth is usually the best corrective.”
‘*Dreams of My Father* explores the importance of finding the truth.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. ‘Obama’s involvement with politics seems to be motivated by self-interest as much as it is motivated by concern for other people.’
Do you agree?

9. *Henry IV, Part I*

- i. '*Henry IV, Part I* does not explicitly direct the audience to prefer either Falstaff or Hotspur's attitude to honour.'

To what extent is this true?

OR

- ii. "... banish plump Jack, and banish all the world."

'Despite his many negative qualities, Falstaff is the most appealing character in the play.'

Do you agree?

10. *Interpreter of Maladies*

- i. To what extent are Lahiri's characters shaped by factors other than their culture and upbringing?

OR

- ii. 'The reader is positioned to view the characters in Lahiri's stories differently to how the characters view themselves and each other.'

Discuss.

11. *Life of Pi*

- i. '*Life of Pi* shows the importance of ritual, routine and habits.'

Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'Pi alters his beliefs and attitudes to suit his circumstances.'

Is this how you see Pi?

12. *On the Waterfront*

- i. Does *On the Waterfront* offer any hope that things can change for the longshoremen?

OR

- ii. "I coulda been somebody, instead of a bum, which is what I am"

'*On the Waterfront* shows the importance of self-respect.'

Discuss.

13. Ransom

- i. "... we have done nothing, all of us, but weep and sit stunned with grief."
'Ransom suggests that there is no glory in war, only grief.'
To what extent is this true?

OR

- ii. 'Ransom is concerned with how its characters discover their humanity.'
Discuss.

14. The Old Man Who Read Love Stories

- i. "... he possessed the antidote against the poison of old age – he could read."
'Antonio Bolivar reads love stories and he also reads the world he inhabits.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'The relationship Rolf de Heer's characters have with their environment shapes how the audience responds to them.'
To what extent is this true?

15. The Reluctant Fundamentalist

- i. "I am confident of the truth of my words."
'The reader finds it difficult to accept Changez's version of the truth.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. To what extent does the novel show Changez is justified in his attitudes to the West?

16. The War Poems

- i. "Drooping tongues from jaws that slob their relish,
Baring teeth that leer like skulls' teeth wicked"
'Wilfred Owen's poetry evokes the obscene horrors of war.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'Owen's poems show resentment towards the generals and those at home who encourage war in the name of patriotism.'
Discuss.

17. *Things We Didn't See Coming*

- i. “This is an era of violence.”
‘Amsterdam shows that times of crisis can bring out the worst in people.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. ‘The narrator’s need to find connection with other people is even stronger than his instinct to survive.’
Do you agree?

18. *Twelve Angry Men*

- i. “It now becomes your duty to try and separate the facts from the fancy.”
‘It may not be possible to separate “the facts from the fancy”, but it is important to try.’
To what extent is this true in *Twelve Angry Men*?

OR

- ii. ‘The judge asks the jury “to deliberate honestly and thoughtfully”.’
How does Reginald Rose show that this is not always as easy to do as it seems?

19. *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*

- i. ‘Carver’s stories are preoccupied with the failure of individuals to communicate with those who surround them.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. “How should a man act, given these circumstances?”
‘Carver’s stories are concerned with people who feel anguish and insecurity.’
Discuss.

20. *Year of Wonders*

- i. ‘*Year of Wonders* shows that people will modify their own behaviour and will encourage others to do likewise for the sake of the common good.’
To what extent is this true?

OR

- ii. ‘Brooks presents religion as a negative force borne of ignorance in *Year of Wonders*.’
Do you agree?

END OF SECTION A

SECTION B – Writing in Context**Instructions for Section B**

Section B requires students to complete an extended written response.

In your writing, you must draw on ideas suggested by **one** of the following **four** Contexts.

Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text that you have studied for this Context and be based on the ideas in the prompt.

Your response may be an expository, persuasive or imaginative piece of writing.

If you write on a selected film text in Section A, you must **not** write on a selected film text in Section B.

Section B is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out at the end of this book.

Context 1 – The imaginative landscape

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------|--------------------------|
| 1. | <i>Tirra Lirra by the River</i> | ..... | Jessica Anderson |
| 2. | <i>Peripheral Light – Selected and New Poems</i> | ..... | John Kinsella |
| 3. | <i>Island</i> | ..... | Alistair MacLeod |
| 4. | <i>One Night the Moon</i> | ..... | Director: Rachel Perkins |

Prompt

‘A familiar landscape can provide us with a sense of peace.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that a familiar landscape can provide us with a sense of peace.

OR

Context 2 – Whose reality?

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| 5. | <i>Spies</i> | ..... | Michael Frayn |
| 6. | <i>The Lot: In Words</i> | ..... | Michael Leunig |
| 7. | <i>The Player</i> | ..... | Director: Robert Altman |
| 8. | <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> | ..... | Tennessee Williams |

Prompt

‘Our assumptions dictate the way we perceive the world.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that our assumptions dictate the way we perceive the world.

OR

Context 3 – Encountering conflict

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|
| 9. | <i>The Quiet American</i> | ..... | Graham Greene |
| 10. | <i>The Crucible</i> | ..... | Arthur Miller |
| 11. | <i>Paradise Road</i> | ..... | Director: Bruce Beresford |
| 12. | <i>The Rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif</i> | ..... | R. Hillman & N. Mazari |

Prompt

‘Conflict results from a struggle to maintain or gain power.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that conflict results from a struggle to maintain or gain power.

OR

Context 4 – Exploring issues of identity and belonging

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 13. | <i>Sometimes Gladness</i> | ..... | Bruce Dawe |
| 14. | <i>The Members of the Wedding</i> | ..... | Carson McCullers |
| 15. | <i>Growing Up Asian in Australia</i> | ..... | Alice Pung |
| 16. | <i>Skin</i> | ..... | Director: Anthony Fabian |

Prompt

‘Sometimes there are advantages to being an independent outsider from the group.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that sometimes there are advantages to being an independent outsider from the group.

END OF SECTION B

SECTION C – Analysis of language use**Instructions for Section C**

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read the opinion piece *We're still debating uniforms* and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis as a coherently constructed piece of prose.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on the back of this book.

TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of *We're still debating uniforms*?

Background information

Some Victorian schools have changed their uniform policy so that female students are required to wear pants rather than skirts and dresses. The decision was prompted by a current affairs program which argued that some school uniforms sexualized teenagers because they were too revealing. The issue later resulted in a wider public debate about the perennial issue of whether schools should insist upon school uniform.

The opinion piece written by John Tashty appeared on the blog site of the online newspaper called Agenda. The online journal's stated aim is to stimulate debate about current affairs. Readers are invited to post their comments.

Agenda:



John Tashty's previous blog posts are here

This blog charts the big issues around Australia - Agenda's aim is to stimulate debate about current affairs, and readers are invited to post their comments

We're still debating uniforms!

• **1:38PM** Saturday Mar 31, 2012 1,604 online now [Comments 197](#)



The struggle between principals and students over what is worn in schools is perpetual and almost certainly pointless. Students have hitched up their skirts and pulled out their shirts since time immemorial.

The latest campaign is for female students to wear skirtless uniforms, with many Victorian schools considering making their girls wear pants. "Unfortunately, despite sending some girls home to change, requiring others to wear a school-owned skirt for the day, we still had some girls coming to school in inappropriate skirts," explained Andrew Wurkum, Principal of Chokum High School. "I have introduced a pants-only policy, which will enable my staff to focus their time on providing students with the best education possible."

Students, understandably, resent not being able to choose how they dress because they feel it interferes with their ability to express their individuality, and it is difficult to argue that students have no reason to feel annoyed at being told they have to wear particular clothes and to cut their hair in particular ways. One student blogged: 'Choosing what you want to wear is a fundamental human right'.

Debates over uniform are a never-ending distraction for teachers, parents and students. Uniforms were introduced at charity schools during the 16th Century in England to instil discipline, and that, roughly, is where the debate remains today. The army also assumes the link between uniform and discipline. Yet, even the Australian army gets to have a choice these days, as was shown when they rejected a new pink uniform which had been designed to improve camouflage in the desert. This uniform cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to research and develop, and amazingly, soldiers were still allowed to reject it on the dubious grounds that they felt pink was effeminate. Now if such a ludicrous dismissal of uniform can come from a trained army, why would anyone expect school students to have to respect their school's choice of clothing? It's not as if a school can claim their uniform could save lives in the way the army uniform could.

Uniform policies are defended with arguments ranging from health and safety, to their being a legitimate response to teenage girls being vulnerable in an increasingly sexualised world. It is often argued that uniform is a social leveler, an egalitarian means to reduce competitive dressing. However, one kid in uniform can still assess the parental income of another kid in uniform in a blink of an eye, and children still get bullied because of their appearance, even when dressed in uniform.

In 2011, an academic study indicated that schools with strict uniform policies showed higher attendance rates, though uniform may not have been the only factor, so the study could make no conclusive link between uniform and academic success. In fact, its overall conclusion stated: "We find little evidence that uniforms have lasting impacts on learning or discipline."

So why do Australian Principals insist upon uniform despite the lack of educational benefit? Tseñlon, a social psychologist specialising in visual appearance, says the devotion to uniform reflects "a general etiquette towards children" defined by power, control and a lack of trust. Tseñlon argues that rules such as making girls wear pants are not created to protect vulnerable students; instead these rules are created to satisfy adults who are uncomfortable with expressions of teenage sexuality. And those who hope that moving girls into pants is the solution for student versus school battles over uniforms will be sadly disappointed. Such experiments in the UK have caused Principals to blacklist some brands of pants because they were considered too tight and revealing.

It is ironic that in 1981 the newspapers were engaged in another uniform debate, this time about whether female students should have the right to wear pants instead of skirts at school. So we return to the same point: the struggle between principals and students over what is worn in schools is perpetual and almost certainly pointless.

However, the implications of this struggle are not pointless. The uniform debate encompasses many larger issues than simply what children should wear to school. It touches on issues of school improvement, freedom of expression and wider cultural debates. And if you are not committed to an opinion on uniform either way, perhaps a few extra points might help to clarify your viewpoint:

'*Uniform*' from the Greek meaning 'one form' suggests that there is no difference between people. Certainly, the Cultural Revolution in China ended up with everyone wearing blue boiler suits to emphasise sameness. If this a vision for society that you admire, perhaps uniform is for you. Alternatively, if people don't wear uniforms, it doesn't instantly mean offensive T-shirt slogans coupled with more revealing clothing for girls and scruffiness for boys. Everyday students wear uniforms in a way that is scruffier than the way they wear their clothes at the weekend, and a school uniform skirt can be amongst the shortest worn by anyone. So, what do you think?

END OF SECTION C

Examination Assessment Criteria

The examination will address all the criteria. All student responses will be assessed against each criterion.

The extent to which the response is characterised by:

Section A – Text response (Reading and responding)

- detailed knowledge and understanding of the selected text, demonstrated appropriately in response to the topic
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective discussion in response to the task
- controlled use of expressive and effective language appropriate to the task

Section B – Writing in Context (Creating and presenting)

- understanding and effective exploration of the ideas, and/or arguments relevant to the prompt/stimulus material
- effective use of detail and ideas drawn from the selected text as appropriate to the task
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective structure in response to the task, showing an understanding of the relationship between purpose, form, language and audience
- controlled use of language appropriate to the purpose, form and audience

Section C – Language analysis (Using language to persuade)

- understanding of the ideas and points of view presented
- analysis of ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view and to persuade readers
- controlled and effective use of language appropriate to the task

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