

Year 12 English Practice Exam – V1

Section A – Text Response (Reading and Responding)

Instructions

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 on one or two in very close detail, depending on what you think is appropriate. 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.

Medea by Euripides

- i. 'The real tragedy of Medea is that none of the characters are capable of changing their attitudes or behaviour in order to resolve conflict.' Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'Jason, like Medea, is an admirable yet selfish individual.' Discuss

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote

- i. 'It is the idea of the "American Dream" and being self-sufficient that leads to Perry and Dick's ultimate downfall.' Discuss.

OR

- ii. "Sometimes you gotta feel sorry for Perry. He must be one of the most alone people there ever was." Do you agree?

Section B – Reading and Comparing

Instructions

Section B requires students to write a comparative analysis of a selected pair of texts in response to one topic (either i. or ii.) on one pair of texts. Your response should analyse how the two texts present ideas and/or issues, and should be supported by close reference to both texts in the pair. If you write on a multimodal text in Section A, you must not write on a text pair that includes a multimodal text in Section B.

In your script book, indicate which text pair you have chosen to write on and whether you are answering i. or ii. Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on the last page of this book. Section B is worth one-third of the total marks for the examination.

Pair 2 *Invictus* directed by Clint Eastwood and *Ransom* by David Malouf

- i. Compare the ways in which *Invictus* and *Ransom* explore the importance of strong and effective leadership.

OR

- ii. "Times change. We need to change, too." (*Invictus*). Compare the ways in which the characters in these texts are affected by changing circumstances.

Section C – Analysis of Language Use

Instructions

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 *Nitty Gritty of the Inner City* and then complete the task below. Write your analysis as a coherently structured piece of prose.

Background Information:

The following appeared as a blog post for an online journal called ‘New Horizons’ that deals with urban life and culture.

Author Liz Bates is a part-time contributor who recently moved to a small country town.

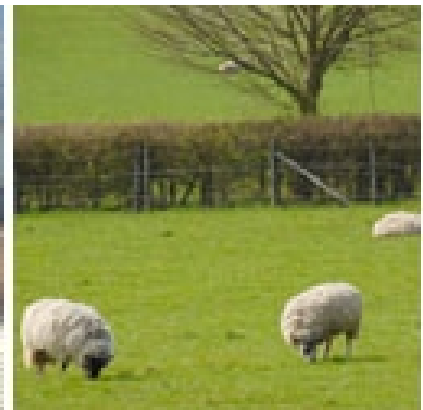
Nitty Gritty of the Inner City by Liz Bates

Would you rather be a city slicker, or a country bumpkin? That seems to be our only choice nowadays. With urban sprawl quickly becoming more industrialised and widespread, people searching for clean country air and wide open plains are retreating further and further away from civilisation.

So is the sea change worthwhile?

I know the typical idea of city-life involves smog, car horns and impoliteness, but I can't say I've experienced all that much.

Having lived in the inner city for over 10 years, I found it surprisingly peaceful. Perhaps not as quiet as an empty paddock, but still... peaceful.



I'm not one to thrive on the hustle-and-bustle, and I've always found the city to be incredibly accepting of my solitary and minimalist lifestyle. I'm a recognisable regular at several of my favourite shops, I have a beautifully maintained city park as a backyard that I never have to mow, and it felt like I had an entire world within a five minute walk from my apartment.

The city is full of surprises. One of my favourite activities was to wander around and gaze up in awe at architectural brilliance or at the way a sunset reflects off 50 storeys of plexiglass and black marble.

Nowadays, any direction I walk in is simply more open, empty space.

I realise that's the appeal for some, but I can't help but imagine all the wonderful things that could occupy that space. Country living is simply wasted potential.

In this era of globalisation and interconnectivity, it is not surprising that some folk might want to escape such a scary new millennium, but how can one reject the manifold beauty of a city? It's the difference between a magnificent painting that challenges and inspires you, full of whatever you chose to see, and a blank canvas claiming to be giving your eyes a "much-needed break

from seeing”.

However, there is something to be said for the safety of the countryside, isn't there? Aren't country folk so much more trustworthy and polite? I suppose there's some truth to this, but 'city-slickers' are by no means the opposite.

We're resourceful, after all (especially when it comes to a creative use of space in a cramped apartment.) Admittedly my home doesn't have the advantage of space that I might have in a cottage or farmhouse, but my proximity to, well, everything, means I don't need all my junk crammed into one area. Most of my time is spent at a variety of venues: museums, libraries, bars, shops; why would anyone want to condense this experience?

And despite the stereotype of a grim businessman too busy to stop for anyone, city dwellers regularly band together and help one another.

Last year, I was taking my grandmother out on a shopping expedition when she had a minor heart attack. Within 30 seconds, several people rushed to my side, including two who were trained in first aid. An ambulance arrived within minutes, and I have no doubt her life wouldn't have been saved if not for the efficiency of the city network and its residents.

In the event something does go wrong, I know I'd rather have the safety net of my friends and neighbours being close by than have to wait hours for any assistance.

There's a lot to be said for the occasional quiet days when even I tire of the bright lights and loud noise, but living in the city is not about a place, it's about an ideal world where everything works like clockwork gears; one where mutual dependency ensures not only a happy, healthy lifestyle, but also one that reaffirms your belief in the good of people.

There may be traffic jams clogging up the gear churning ever so often, but for every traffic jam I can remember, what comes to mind first is that nice lady in the sedan taking her kids to school who let me merge even though she was running late. Or the pedestrian who ran across the street instead of walked because he felt bad about holding up so much traffic.

Or the kindness of strangers that stopped to help a young woman and her grandmother, for no other reason than it was the right thing to do.

We city-slickers are thick as thieves and I for one am glad to be home.

