



# **LITERATURE**

## **ATAR course examination 2018**

### **Marking Key**

Marking keys are an explicit statement about what the examining panel expect of candidates when they respond to particular examination items. They help ensure a consistent interpretation of the criteria that guide the awarding of marks.

## Section One: Response – Close reading

30% (25 Marks)

Description	Marks
<b>Reading/s of text</b>	
The response presents:	
a creative, coherent and informed reading/s using appropriate reading strategies and/or reading practices.	7
a perceptive and coherent reading/s using appropriate reading strategies and/or practices.	6
an informed reading using mostly appropriate reading strategies and/or practices.	5
a general reading that makes some use of appropriate reading strategies and/or practices.	4
an inconsistent reading imposing reading strategies and/or practices inappropriately.	3
a vague reading with little use of reading strategies.	2
a limited reading showing little understanding of the text.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Close textual analysis</b>	
The response uses:	
close textual analysis of language, text examples and/or generic conventions and reference to cultural contexts where appropriate throughout the response to develop and support the reading/s.	6
close textual analysis of language, text examples and/or generic conventions and reference to cultural contexts where appropriate throughout most of the response to support the reading/s.	5
some close textual analysis of language, text examples, and/or generic conventions with some reference to cultural contexts where appropriate to largely develop the reading/s.	4
some textual analysis of relevant examples from the text that generally develop the reading/s.	3
little text analysis of examples that do not always develop a reading.	2
limited evidence to support a reading.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology</b>	
The response shows:	
a sophisticated and comprehensive use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology suited to the reading.	6
a comprehensive use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology appropriate to the reading.	5
a consistent use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology mostly related to the reading.	4
some use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology mostly related to the reading.	3
infrequent use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology not always appropriate to the reading.	2
limited and/or inaccurate use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Expression of ideas</b>	
The response expresses ideas:	
in controlled language and style, logical argument and structure.	6
in coherent language and style, argument and structure.	5
in a purposeful and mostly methodical argument.	4
In a largely clear way, but not always coherently structured.	3
in a disjointed style, characterised by unclear language use.	2
that are difficult to follow because of unclear language use and lack of structure.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

## Section Two: Extended response

70% (30 + 30 marks)

Description	Marks
<b>Engagement with the question</b>	
The response demonstrates:	
a sophisticated and critical engagement with all parts of the question.	6
a comprehensive and detailed engagement with all parts of the question.	5
a purposeful engagement with all parts of the question.	4
a general engagement with most parts of the question.	3
a limited or simplistic engagement with the question.	2
little or no engagement with the question.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Course concepts</b>	
The response shows:	
a sophisticated understanding and application of course concepts.	6
a well-informed understanding and application of course concepts.	5
a sound understanding and some application of course concepts.	4
a general understanding and application of course concepts.	3
a vague understanding of course concepts.	2
limited understanding of course concepts.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Use of evidence</b>	
The response uses:	
pertinent text references and/or generic conventions and reference to cultural contexts where appropriate throughout to develop and support the answer.	6
appropriate text references and/or generic conventions and reference to cultural contexts where appropriate throughout most of the response to support the answer.	5
some appropriate text references, and/or generic conventions with some reference to cultural contexts where appropriate to largely develop the answer.	4
some relevant text references that generally support the answer.	3
few text references that support the answer.	2
limited evidence to support the answer.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology</b>	
The response shows:	
a sophisticated and comprehensive use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology suited to the answer.	6
a comprehensive use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology appropriate to the answer.	5
a consistent use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology mostly related to the answer.	4
some use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology mostly related to the answer.	3
infrequent use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology not always appropriate to the answer.	2
limited and/or inaccurate use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Expression of ideas</b>	
The response expresses ideas:	
in controlled language and style, logical argument and structure.	6
in coherent language and style, argument and structure.	5
in a purposeful and mostly methodical argument.	4
In a largely clear way, but not always coherently structured.	3
in a disjointed style, characterised by unclear language use.	2
that are difficult to follow because of unclear language use and lack of structure.	1
no evidence of this criterion.	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

**Section One: Response – Close reading****30% (25 Marks)**

The focus in this section should be on the candidate's comprehension and close reading of the selected literary text. Suggested readings of texts are not restrictive; some candidates may present close readings which focus on the ideas conveyed and explored in the text, the application of a reading practice such as a gender or psychological reading, or a more eclectic approach which might incorporate more than one appropriate close reading strategy. Some candidates may produce close readings that are individual or unexpected. Candidates should be rewarded for a close attention to the text, and an analysis of the text based on generic conventions and language use pertaining to prose, drama and/or poetry.

**Content**

The key criteria in assessing content are in meeting the targeted requirements of the question which is to demonstrate a close reading.

Markers will not consider any preliminary or planning notes made by a candidate as part of a candidate's response.

**Close textual analysis**

It is important for candidates to demonstrate a close analysis of the text and in doing so, to consider language, examples from the text and/or generic conventions and reference to cultural context. These elements of text and/or context need to support the reading/readings of the text.

**Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology**

Candidates are to be rewarded for a sophisticated and comprehensive use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology. In doing so, candidates are to use linguistic terminology such as metaphor, stylistic terminology such as narrative approaches and intertextuality, and critical terminology such as identity and ideology.

**Expression**

Marks are specifically allocated for expression in the areas of:

- argumentation
- structure
- language use and style.

Markers, however, do need to take into account the fact that an examination script is a first draft written under time pressure.

**Question One****Text A****Themes and ideas**

- The Australian play, *The Family*, represents the harsh realities of a family struggling to come to terms with accusations that the father is a former police sergeant facing allegations of corruption. The passage relies on performance aspects and candidates' successful readings of this passage might identify some of these.
- Candidates may identify that the play explores broad social issues such as potential police corruption and the nature of family tensions. These tensions are created through character movements, such as Emma's playing of music and shuffling of papers and dialogue, particularly dialogue between the sisters. This is shown in the opening of the play where Sarah, the young police officer, enters the family home with a comment about security of the family home and a retort from Emma in 'An offence, officer?' Candidates may illustrate the importance of dialogue in drama and the ways it serves to construct characters through interaction between characters. Ideas about resentment in families, which may go beyond typical family relationships, are highlighted in this dialogue. In this respect, candidates may draw attention to what is not said.
- Candidates may explain how the play explores emotional distress and how the play puts a spotlight on the differing ways individuals can respond to that distress – the father is a serial watcher of television dramas and films, the mother retreats from the house, the police officer daughter is missing for periods of time and Emma, the music student, withdraws into her music. Through these forms of characterisation, the play draws attention to the differing human responses at times of emotional distress and what this indicates about the human experience. Ultimately, the passage explores how the divergent ways the characters respond to emotional distress can lead to alienation.
- The play also explores the awkward nature of generational change within families and how authority can shift from one generation to the next. The play explores the nature of legality and illegality – tensions between authority and family roles.
- Candidates might also comment on how the play explores the importance of reputation which is reflected in Barbara's recounting of silence at the tennis and her concern that nobody has called to inquire about Frank.
- The play brings Australian family and suburban life to the stage and normalises the fact that beneath a typical family can lie tensions and resentments and conflicts. Candidates might read the play in terms of its representation of Australian society and the tensions it represents. In this sense, candidates might focus upon the underlying tensions within Australian society, issues of authority and autonomy and the sometimes awkward boundaries between legality and illegality.
- Candidates might also consider the nature of identity that is represented in the play. In particular, the play explores the fragile nature of identity, as reflected in Frank's withdrawal from the world into the world of film and television dramas, when his public identity as police sergeant is undermined. Additionally, we see the constructed nature of identity as the daughter Sarah assumes an identity of authority within her family home. This public nature of identity is also highlighted in Emma's emerging identity as a musician.

**Language and generic conventions**

- Successful candidates may identify that the play uses onstage objects to create an Australian suburban setting, to create a sense of nostalgia and to represent the tensions that exist within this Australia family.
- Successful candidates might recognise the importance of stage setting such that a sense of nostalgia for the past is created through '... piles of memorabilia ...' such as old newspapers, boxes of old photographs and police records.
- The passage highlights how play scripts may be adapted to the intentions of director and others involved to be naturalistic or symbolic and thereby drawing attention to the interpretative nature of the theatre. Strong responses may identify an understanding of the differing forms of the theatre and discuss the extent to which the play, as represented by the passage, may be performed in a naturalistic or symbolic form. Strong responses may reflect a knowledge of both. The naturalistic setting is reflected in the objects on the stage and more symbolic theatre style is reflected in the use of the 'large neon-lit blue circle'.
- The stage setting and particularly the use of objects helps to create an atmosphere of clutter and disorder which is reflective of the emotional uncertainty facing the characters.
- Candidates might highlight the importance of music in this passage as a way to underscore the action and to highlight the very different personalities within the family and their differing ways of dealing with emotionally difficult situations. The play opens with this contrast and tension on the stage as Emma practices her cello whilst her father watches a video with remote control in hand. This contrast also puts a spotlight on the very different personalities to be found within a family. The intermittent playing of music, and Emma's withdrawal into the world of music, also serves to place family tensions on the stage.
- Candidates may comment on the symbolic importance of the uniform as Frank, a police sergeant under suspicion, sits at home watching videos and is not seen in his uniform, and his daughter Sarah, a younger member of the police force, enters the family home in an officer's uniform. The presence of the uniform in this setting highlights the somewhat transient nature of authority.

**Reading practices**

- Candidates might also consider the nature of identity that is represented in the play. In particular, the play explores the fragile nature of identity, as reflected in Frank's withdrawal from the world into the world of film and television dramas, when his public identity as police sergeant is undermined. Additionally, we see the constructed nature of identity as the daughter Sarah assumes an identity of authority within her family home. This public nature of identity is also highlighted in Emma's emerging identity as a musician.
- The passage may be interpreted from a gender perspective in the contrasts between the three female characters. Generational change in terms of gender is represented in the contrast between Barbara's role as primary care giver and the vulnerability she experiences when allegations are made against Frank. The daughters reflect a growing independence for women in society as both establish identities that are shaped in part by their professions. Both young women do place importance on family and tensions between the sisters are indicative of this.
- Candidates may also interpret the passage in terms of intertextual links and look to plays that place a spotlight on Australian society and family, such as the work of David Williamson. The focus on underlying family tensions is also reflective of Harold Pinter's work. Candidates might also consider the similarities between this play and some contemporary Australia tele-drama with its focus on family life and the intersection between family life, the law and authority.

**Text B****Themes and ideas**

- The text appears to both critique and reinforce a number of commonly held assumptions about life in small Australian towns; for example,
  - it reinforces the idea that small towns can be closed-minded and ‘backward’  
*... it's easy to get things wrong in this town ...*
  - it draws on the sense that ‘everyone knows everyone’ often associated with small town life – the persona is unable to walk around town and participate in intimate activities like having their legs waxed without running into many people they know. In some ways this lack of anonymity seems like an invasion while in others it provides welcome comfort to the persona *... like they were letting everyone know/to catch me, because inside I was falling*
  - it challenges the assumptions made about people who live in small towns as being nosy or overbearing *... they just want to say hello/and merry christmas ...*
- There is ambiguity regarding the relationship between poet and persona, the persona’s gender and race. It is tempting to read the persona as representing Meg Mooney who lives in Alice Springs. To then assume that the poem is autobiographical is to deny the form and power of poetry to make transformations. As such, the persona can just as readily be read as male, and evidence justifying the conclusion that the persona is aboriginal can be refuted by evidence that the persona is white. What is to be made of this marvellous ambiguity is the notion that race and gender are interchangeable and therefore, immaterial: they are of no matter. Instead, regardless of race or gender, it is the interrelationships of people in the town with the persona that lead to wonderful ideas about familiarity and the offering of friendship and support as the experience of everyday life in a country town environment.
- The poem begins and ends with inner grief and turmoil, bookending the relating of what is otherwise a rather mundane walk through the town. This could be read as highlighting the way that we often hide our true feelings from others, putting on a façade of normalcy when with others. Candidates might also suggest the way that emotional distress can sometimes be dealt with but can then reappear unexpectedly.
- The poem ends with the persona acknowledging the importance of ‘her’ town and its inhabitants in providing ‘her’ with support and comfort. In this way, the reader is invited to evaluate how a sense of place can play an important role in our emotional well-being.

**Language and generic conventions**

- The poem uses punctuation sparingly, creating a flow reminiscent of the persona’s walk through the town and the stream of consciousness that the reader is invited into.
- the lack of punctuation, particularly at the end of the poem, heightens the emotional turmoil felt by the persona, such as the sense of *falling* that they feel. The structural strength of the punctuation is missing and hence readers are invited to experience some of the same lack of structure and strength that the persona does.
- the use of colloquial language invites the reader to connect with the persona and their experience. They suggest they are *not up to much chat* and mention ubiquitous experiences like seeing their *teacher friends ... waving from the lawn*, experiences easily shared by the reader. Referring to *whitefellas* and using the name *Tjakamarra* could be read as connecting the persona to the town’s Indigenous community. These elements of the poem could be equally read as excluding the reader, suggesting that these are ‘my people, not yours’, or as providing a way to include the reader in the particulars of living in this town.

- While the poem is broken into stanzas, the use of enjambment makes this seem arbitrary. This could be read as a reflection of the way that we tend to have particular expectations and assumptions which are often challenged by our lived experiences – we expect life to follow a particular ‘recipe’ but it rarely does. Candidates might also suggest that the breaks between stanzas mirror a journey down a street, with the stanza breaks reminiscent of crossing roads as we walk.
- The persona tells the reader that he/she ... *felt like I was in a car smash* ... There is ambiguity in this; the persona seems to be suggesting the event that has caused their distress (an accident involving their son) but this could also be read as a metaphor for the way the persona feels emotionally ... *I felt like I was in a car smash for weeks* ...
- The use of the pronoun in the title *My Town* distances the reader from the sense of place that the persona creates in their musings; we are invited to observe their connection to the town rather than participate in it. The use of *My* in the title conveys ownership, significance and perhaps an exclusion of others and also suggests a sense of belonging and perhaps affection.
- Candidates who are able to note the nuance of the way the persona interacts with the people of the town should be rewarded. Often common assumptions are noted in a subtle way, as though to suggest a misconception, in order for the persona to challenge these ways of thinking ... *if I didn't know them, I might think* ... and ... *shouts often confuse me like this* ...

### Reading practices

- Being an Australian text invites the reader to connect the poem to their own personal experiences as an Australian or of living in Australia. Some readers will be able to consider their own experiences of living in a small town in making meaning of this poem. Others who have not experienced this might draw on common (mis)conceptions we have of regional, rural and remote Australian towns.
- The poem draws on the mundane to highlight intense inner turmoil. The persona's walk through the town elicits many interactions which appear superficial but which are in fact very important to the persona. A psychoanalytical reading of the poem is certainly possible.
- The poem could be read from a gendered position, considering the female experience. This requires candidates to make assumptions that the persona is indeed female – though it is not clear in the poem, several aspects of the poem would support this assumption. However, candidates should be careful not to read the poet and the persona as the same entity.
- Some candidates may consider the aesthetic elements of the poem to discuss the ways that poetry can connect us with others on a deeply emotional level. The invitation to ‘walk with’ the persona as they remember the way they felt at the time, especially the final stanza ... *thinking/they don't know but it's like they do* ... can elicit strong emotional responses and highlight the role of poetry in doing so.



**Text C****Themes and ideas**

- The text appears to challenge progress and our reliance on technology for control or protection. The passage uses technological detail and stereotypes to develop a dichotomy between the man-made world and the natural world; with the man-made urban world being associated with power and control through technology and physical and emotion distance. The natural world is presented as being powerful also, but very different. It is associated with feminine energy and the elements – wind, rain, fire and water.
- The idea that loneliness is a consequence of relying on progressive technology and the inability to connect with nature and the feminine is introduced in the male narrator's attraction to the distant female swimmer below him.
- Candidates may explore the romantic theme of unrequited love that is suggested with the distant female swimmer. The man is obviously attracted but cannot join her due to his neuroses and fears.
- The passage also presents the idea that the man's life is about to change. The control and order that the main character has created, through hierarchy and technological innovation, is about to be challenged.

**Language and generic conventions**

- The passage is the exposition to the novel and this might provide candidates with a genre based schema for the organisation of their reading, i.e. focusing on narrative technique, the setting, the characters and the possible themes being foreshadowed. Candidates might also choose to focus on character contrasts, the construction of setting and the representations of nature and man-made elements in the text. The semi-ironic tone of the passage could also be noted.
- Candidates might comment on the provocative and suggestive title.
- The passage creates a strong sense of place and character through appeals to the senses, particularly the sense of sight. Candidates may also comment on the strong time order signalled in the syntax and the focus on shape and spatial relationships. Candidates should also notice the dichotomy between the male and female characters through the use of colour, similes linking the woman to an Olympian and to a rare tropical bird and the man-made environment as being toxic to her – 'the pool an unnatural blue'.
- The focus on spatial relationships, 'above', 'below', 'ahead', 'at' and 'standing at the point of the house where the thick panes of glass meet', creates verisimilitude but also denotes the power structures and relationships. The use of irony and deflation, 'prisoner of his own making' and 'life cancelled', also indicates that things are about to change.
- A sense of intimacy and a familiarity with the anonymous main character is established through the use of the third person limited narration and the repetition of the pronoun 'He' to start sentences .
- The narrative voice is in itself controlling and directive, suggesting that the text could be a social commentary.

**Reading practices**

- A gendered reading could focus on the main character's power and fear of loss of control, the sense of domination denoted by the view, looking out over the city and down upon the woman swimming. The scene is set in the United States of America. The dichotomy of man and nature is depicted in his relationship to nature and his physical reactions to the world around him. The woman's sexuality and sensuality is depicted in the red costume, her

grace and her ability to swim naturally. The dichotomy of feminine and masculine roles is established with the woman being linked to nature and man to artifice and control.

- Other readings might explore generic features of prose such as the function of the exposition to introduce the themes, characters and conflicts of the novel. The sense of foreboding is established with the repetition of motifs such as the smoky sky, the smoke signals, fog and change.
- The paradoxical and unnamed main character, seeming master of his environment but also prisoner of a man made world. Some may mention that there are science fiction elements in the text: the electronic wave, the mechanical sounds of the house; the machines in the house taking on a life of their own and the juxtaposition between the man-made and the natural world.

**Section Two: Extended response****70% (30 marks each)**

The focus in this section should be on analytical and critical thinking skills in relation to the candidates' capacity to engage with the chosen question and apply syllabus knowledge to address the question with supporting text references. High marks are to be awarded for answers that engage with all aspects of the question. Answers should be marked on the quality of their content. Higher marks should be given to responses that are a developed argument, that sustain a point of view, and use relevant and accurate evidence from texts to support points made.

- A key criterion in assessing content is engagement with the question rather than the reproduction of memorised information. It is important that candidates address all aspects of a question.
- The questions examine candidates' knowledge of syllabus concepts. Answers should be assessed according to the extent to which their comments about texts are used to support arguments in relation to the question
- Higher marks should be awarded to candidates whose responses demonstrate skilful inclusion of textual interpretation, analytical comments, comparison, contrast, reflection, evaluation, or any other skills required by the chosen question in order to demonstrate knowledge of syllabus content.
- Answers may make use of personal experiences, values and responses to support or explain arguments.
- It is important that the majority of the answer refers to at least one text from the prescribed text lists. Other texts referred to must be clearly identified.

**Demonstration of course concepts**

It is important that candidates demonstrate a detailed understanding of syllabus concepts as applied to the primary text(s) used to support the answer the question. In particular, understanding of course concepts that are the key words of the question is to be demonstrated through supporting text references.

**Use of evidence**

It is important for candidates to use evidence from the text and/or cultural context to support the arguments they make. It is important that the use of supporting evidence and examples are strategic in that they support particular readings of the text and points made by the candidate, rather than unselected text detail and summary being provided for its own sake.

**Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology**

Candidates are to be rewarded for a sophisticated and comprehensive use of linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology. In doing so, candidates are to use linguistic terminology such as *metaphor*, stylistic terminology such as *narrative approaches* and *intertextuality*, and critical terminology such as *identity* and *ideology*.

**Expression**

Marks are specifically allocated for expression in the areas of:

- argumentation
- structure
- language use and style.

Markers, however, do need to take into account the fact that an examination script is a first draft written under time pressure.

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**Question 2****(30 marks)**

Discuss how the manipulation of language in at least **one** text allows experience to be represented in intense and compressed ways.

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- In responding to this question, candidates can demonstrate an understanding of ‘the power of language’ to represent ideas, events and people in particular ways, the impact of the use of literary conventions and stylistic techniques, the way language can be used to shed light on new ideas (Unit 3) and that specific literary elements and forms shape meaning (Unit 4).
- Successful candidates will address all aspects of the question and show the explicit relationship between the crafting of language and the representation of experience as both compressed and intense.
- Candidates may take a broad approach to language to include language literary concepts such as figurative language, techniques such as symbolism and the use of dialogue. To be successful however, they will need to show an understanding of the language concepts being discussed as figurative language to include specific elements such as symbolism, metaphor or imagery.
- To do well, candidates will need to show an understanding of the language concept in depth and how it can be used as a strategy or tool for the representation and communication of experience. Candidates are to be rewarded for using specific examples from their chosen text(s) and explaining the strategies that have been used.
- The important aspect of the approach to language is that it is manipulated, and in that sense, language is used for specific purposes. Candidates need to explain the notion of experience in a specific manner and may discuss experience as a personal experience, a social and cultural experience, an imaginary experience or an intellectual experience.
- The terms ‘intense’ and ‘compressed’ are designed to provide a vehicle for describing and analysing a text’s ways of representing an experience. ‘Intense’ may be considered as capturing a heightened emotional experience, personal and emotional conflict. A ‘compressed’ representation may refer to strategies such as foregrounding experience and allowing a particular experience to be shown within a short timeframe and in a complex way. For example, candidates might write about the ways Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali uses an extended metaphor in ‘Nightfall in Soweto’ to represent the experiences of the vulnerable in Soweto at the height of apartheid. Through the intense experience of the unknown hunter at a particular point in time, that is nightfall, the poem is able to capture a broader experience of fear, vulnerability and intimidation.

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**Question 3****(30 marks)**

How has the work of an Australian writer shaped your understanding of Australian national identity?

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- In responding to this question, candidates should demonstrate their understanding of the literary concepts relating to the way that representations of culture support or challenge ideologies (Unit 3); the ways in which authors represent Australian culture, place and identity both to Australians and the wider world (Unit 3); how we are influenced to respond to cultural experiences (Unit 3); and how the social, cultural and historical spaces in which texts are produced and read mediate readings (Unit 4).
- In addressing this question, it is essential that candidates choose an Australian writer.
- Candidates may consider ‘the work’ of an author to be an individual text, several texts, or the author’s entire body of work more broadly. Irrespective of their choice, it is important that candidates draw on specific examples to support their response.
- Candidates will need to articulate their understanding of ‘Australian national identity’ in order to effectively answer this question. They should be rewarded for making a detailed and clear exploration of this identity rather than making superficial and stereotypical statements about what being an Australian means. Strong responses will identify that national identity can be multifaceted and subject to change over time, and that it can be constructed and contested in the work of a writer.
- The use of ‘your understanding’ in the question invites a personal response. However, candidates may legitimately choose to discuss this concept in a more distanced way.
- In responding to this question, candidates need to make clear connections to the text/s that they are drawing on and how this has influenced their understanding. They might suggest that an author’s work has challenged their understandings, or reinforced it. They may consider how their previous understanding has been built upon by studying a particular author’s work/s.
  - for example, they might consider the way that the presentation of the Indigenous perspective in Jack Davis’s *No Sugar* has challenged their understanding of, or their stance on the importance of the debate surrounding the date and celebration of Australia Day.
  - candidates may explore the structure of Tim Winton’s *Cloudstreet* or the short stories contained in *The Turning*, looking at the way that they valorise and highlight the experiences of ‘battlers’ while mythologising and in many ways silencing those of Indigenous Australians. Candidates may also consider Winton’s non-fictional writings.
  - a consideration of the oeuvre of Judith Wright could encourage readers to explore their assumptions about the importance of the environment to Australian national identity, highlighting her role as an activist in this area.

**Question 4****(30 marks)**

Reflect upon the ways your connection to a text has been influenced by aspects of your own identity.

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- In responding to this question, candidates should demonstrate their understandings of concepts such as the way readers are influenced to respond to their own and others' cultural experiences (Unit 3); the influence of the reader's context, cultural assumptions, social position and/or gender (Unit 3); the ways in which the expectations and values of audiences shape readings of texts and perceptions of their significance (Unit 4); and how specific literary elements and forms shape meaning and influence responses (Unit 4).
- This question requires a personal response. It is expected that candidates will write from a personal perspective using first person. Responses which are reflective in nature should be rewarded as showing recognition of the cue to use a reflective form of writing.
- To fully engage with this question, candidates need to make clear links between aspects of their own identity and their chosen texts. They may do so by drawing on aspects of their cultural heritage, ethnicity or race, gender, place in society (for example, as a young person), and so on. Candidates need to elucidate how they identify themselves in this way in order to address the question.
- Candidates may explore their connection to a text by drawing on one aspect of their identity, or many. However, those who are able to communicate their understanding of the fluidity of identity should be rewarded.
- Candidates who are able to grapple with a discussion of what a 'connection' is should be rewarded more highly in the *Engagement with the Question* criterion than those who do not. A connection which is discussed in broad, superficial ways such as 'liking' or 'enjoying' a text should not score as highly in this area as one which is able to consider a connection in a more personal, meaningful manner.
- The question could be legitimately addressed in the negative by a candidate who suggests that their connection was hindered by aspects of their own identity. For example, a candidate who identifies as part of a particular community may find that a text marginalised or silenced them and hence they felt that they were unable to develop a close connection to it.
- Candidates must support their response with relevant examples from their chosen text. Links between their identity and their response to particular aspects of the text should be made. Candidates who refer to the text only in broad terms will not be rewarded highly in the *Use of Evidence* criterion.

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**Question 5****(30 marks)**

Explore how the writing of a text can be interpreted as an act of rebellion and/or empowerment.

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- In responding to this question, candidates should demonstrate their understandings of concepts such as the power of language to represent ideas, events and people in particular ways (Unit 3); the ways in which ideological perspectives are conveyed through texts drawn from other times and cultures (Unit 4); and how literary texts may be used to 'naturalise' particular ways of thinking, to serve the purposes of powerful groups while marginalising the views of others (Unit 4).
- Responses to this question might draw on texts which explore the role and experience of the writer in a fictional sense, such as *The Handmaid's Tale* or 'Burning Sappho', or they might consider how the very writing of a text could be seen as rebellious and/or empowering, such as the works of Oscar Wilde or Maya Angelou. *No Sugar* could be explored in this way, the play being an act of rebellion against the dominant colonial ideologies of the time of its setting and the use of Indigenous languages giving empowerment to the disenfranchised. Candidates might consider the act of writing as a symbol or in a quite literal way.
- If candidates choose to approach this question using an author as the text, they must articulate relevant and detailed understanding of the way that their writing demonstrated a rebellious and/or empowering experience. They may also use examples from specific texts written by the author to support their discussion.
- Candidates must clearly discuss what makes an act of writing rebellious and/or empowering. To do so, they will need to be able to demonstrate their understanding of how a group or individual has been constrained or marginalised in some way. For example, Offred's writing in *The Handmaid's Tale* and Winston's writing in *1984* serve to give the groups they represent a voice that has been withdrawn from them via neologism and equivocation, as well as the more obvious ban on the written word. The choice of some writers to publish under their traditional or non-conformist names (e.g. Oodgeroo of the Noonucal, e. e. cummings) can make comment on the way that they have been marginalised through ingrained social constructs or attitudes.

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**Question 6****(30 marks)**

Discuss how the aesthetic qualities of at least **one** text have been used to support and/or challenge ideologies.

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- In responding to this question, candidates can demonstrate an understanding of how representations of culture support or challenge various ideologies, representations may challenge popular ways of thinking and in doing so, reshape values, attitudes and beliefs, the ways in which language, structural and stylistic choice communicate values and attitudes (Unit 3) and how the ideas represented in a text are just one possible way of thinking about the world and may reflect a particular set of values and attitudes (Unit 4).
- Candidates need to demonstrate a clear understanding of 'aesthetic qualities' (a sense of beauty or an appreciation of artistic expression) by providing a clear identification of those qualities in their chosen text/s. 'For example, some poems might be aesthetically pleasing because of their sound, rhyme and rhythm and those poems might or might not be intellectually pleasing as well, depending on the meaning readers take from them. If we appreciate the way a text has been put together, for example, its language, its style, its tone, its use or adaptation of generic conventions etc., then we are possibly focusing on the aesthetic qualities of the text.' (Syllabus glossary).
- Candidates need a sound understanding of ideology as a system of beliefs and values and have an understanding that ideologies are not naturally occurring within society and can be supported and/or challenged at any one point in time.
- Importantly, candidates need to identify and explain that ideologies are represented and supported and challenged by the use of literary techniques that are aesthetically pleasing. For example, candidates may consider how the Romantic poets, such as Keats and poems such as 'To Autumn' use the aesthetic qualities of language and particularly sensory imagery to represent and promote a respect and valorisation of nature which also challenges emerging capitalist and industrialist ideologies.



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**Question 7****(30 marks)**

How does reading intertextually allow readers to appreciate particular representations of human imperfection?

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- In responding to this question, candidates should articulate experiences of reading and their ways of thinking about the world (Unit 3); demonstrate their understanding of how reading intertextually helps readers to understand and critique representation (Unit 3); the ways in which language, structural and stylistic choices communicate values and shed new light on familiar ideas (Unit 3); how texts in different literary forms, media or traditions are similar or different (Unit 4); and how writers may blend and borrow conventions from other genres to appeal to particular audiences (Unit 4).
- Candidates need to address the key terms *intertextually*, *appreciate*, *representations* and *human imperfection* in articulating their response.
- Candidates could address the question from their personal perspective or from a more distanced perspective. The word 'appreciates' could be affective, a personal response.
- The concept of human imperfection is fundamental to the question and candidates need to identify particular imperfections as they are explored in literary texts. The eternal tropes of the human condition such as jealousy, ambition, hubris, revenge, vulnerability and quest for love are represented in the text list, along with more specific imperfections such as the inability to make decisions, cultural hubris, racism, narcissism, or lack of assertiveness to escape abusive situations or the inability to have faith.
- Candidates could explain their ability to appreciate human imperfection in terms of understanding or identifying with the condition. Candidates who can make effective links, explain the connections and make specific reference to key scenes in the text will be able to engage with this question.
- Intertextual references can be in relation to texts with similar or contrasting treatments, representations, themes and tropes, generic elements borrowed or blended, and well as between older texts and those contemporary to the reader. Candidates might refer effectively to film, but the majority of their answer needs to be with the primary texts listed in the prescribed text lists. For example a reading of *The Poisonwood Bible* could resonate more powerfully after reading *Heart of Darkness* and viewing *Mr Pip*. The elements of the quest journey, the retrospective narration, themes around knowledge and experience, the concepts of colonial critique, post modernism and post colonialism, and the representations of native people's suffering could be referenced in terms of the reader's developing understanding of human imperfection. Alternatively, the candidate may focus on quite disparate texts which share particular discourses, symbolic or even archetypal elements which have been borrowed or reimagined, for example indecisive heroes such as Hamlet and Prufrock.

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**Question 8****(30 marks)**

Consider the way at least **one** poem has employed poetic conventions to explore an issue of significant cultural change or difference.

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- In responding to this question, candidates should demonstrate their understandings of the way that literature represents and/or reflects cultural change and difference (Unit 4); how specific literary elements and forms shape meaning and influence responses. Genres may have social, ideological and aesthetic functions (Unit 4); and, how genre, conventions and language contribute to interpretations of texts. Choice of language is related to ideological and aesthetic considerations (Unit 4).
- In answering the question, candidates need to articulate what makes the cultural change or difference *significant*. However, given the youth of the candidates, it should be acknowledged that ideas of 'significance' may be somewhat superficial or naïve, and the response not unduly penalised for this.
- Candidates should consider 'cultural change' as occurring over time, as opposed to focusing on the treatment of a particular issue, event or moment. However, ideas of 'difference' may be considered in a comparative way, potentially considering how an idea, issue or event is constructed as being experienced from varying perspectives.
- In responding, candidates should engage with the idea that the poem does *explore* an issue of cultural change or difference. This implies that there is a level of ambiguity or uncertainty in the handling of the issue within the text, and that the poet may leave the reader to draw their own conclusions or to have their assumptions challenged. Candidates who can discuss this competently in their response should be rewarded.
- In responding to this question, students should demonstrate their awareness of the features particular to the poetry genre by focusing on conventions which are specific to this text type. For example, broad ideas of 'language' which could apply to any genre should be considered less favourably than specific poetic conventions.

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**Question 9****(30 marks)**

Discuss how narrative techniques have created a sense of place in at least **one** prose fiction text.

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- In responding to this question, candidates should demonstrate their understanding of the impact of the use of literary conventions and stylistic techniques (Unit 3); understand the ways in which representations of the past allow a nation or culture to recognise itself (Unit 3); how specific literary elements and forms shape meaning and influence responses (Unit 4); how genre, conventions and language contribute to interpretation of ideas. Choice of language is related to ideological and aesthetic considerations (Unit 4); and ways in which the expectations and values of audiences shape readings of texts and perceptions of their significance and how the social, cultural and historical spaces in which texts are produced and read mediate readings (Unit 4).
- The question requires that candidates address the term 'narrative techniques' and the concept of a 'sense of place' in articulating their response.
- Candidates should be able to refer to prose fiction elements such as the narrative point of view, tone, language, discourse and/or the sequencing of the narration to discuss how and why a 'sense of place' is created.
- The term 'sense of place' does not simply refer to the setting of the novel in terms of time, location, place or context, but can also refer to the way that readers are positioned to respond to the particular place or setting and the characters' interactions with that place. Place could also be interpreted as public political space or private and intimate, or both. For example the almost reverential and aesthetically pleasing descriptions of the aquifer in the short stories contained within *The Turning* serve to create moments in time and verisimilitude but also powerfully position readers to sympathise with eco-spiritual ideologies.
- Effective answers will address the word 'created' and will exemplify their response by making informed and analytical reference to the language and conventions of the text in discussing the way that a sense of place is created and conveyed.
- Candidates might also evaluate the function or purpose of the representation of the place.

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**Question 10****(30 marks)**

Show how the interaction of a small group of characters in at least **one** drama text can be used to draw attention to significant social issues.

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- In responding to this question, candidates may demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between language and representations of culture and identity; the impact of the use of literary convention and stylistic techniques (Unit 3).
- It is important that candidates clarify how they are using the term 'social issues' and how they are defining 'significant' social issues. Importantly, candidates need to identify social issues and this needs to be explained in terms of a particular time and place.
- Candidates also need to explain what is meant by significance and might consider significant in terms of social change, disruption to society and long term consequences or impact.
- The question encourages candidates to focus on characterisation and particular processes by which interactions between characters can draw attention to particular ideas and issues within a play. In doing so, candidates should explain the interaction between characters in terms of dramatic conventions such as dialogue, voice and movement.
- Interaction between characters needs to be articulated and may take the form of dialogue, song and physical forms such as movement and dance. Candidates may refer to contemporary plays such as *Waltzing the Willara* and *Merry Go Round by the Sea* to illustrate that dance and movement can draw attention to social issues. Candidates might explain, for example, how the dance of *Waltzing the Willara* highlights the racial and social divisions in Australia.
- Candidates may also draw attention to particular events within a play such as entrances and exits and the specific interactions created. For example, candidates may refer to the ways the interaction between the characters of *A Streetcar Named Desire* draw attention to issues of violence and isolation that were social issues in 1950s America and remain significant social issues today.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Question 1

#### General remarks on Question One

##### Text A

Excerpt from: Shearer, J. (1995). *The family*. Sydney: Currency Press, pp. 13–16.

##### Text B

Mooney, M. (2012). My town [Poem]. In Tranter, J. (Ed.). *The best Australian poems 2012*. Melbourne: Black Inc., pp.79–80.

##### Text C

Excerpt from: Homes, A. (2006). *This book will save your life*. London: Granta Books, pp. 1–2.

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