

STUDENT NUMBER

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ABBOTSLEIGH

2025 HSC TRIAL EXAMINATION

English Advanced

Paper 1 – Texts and Human Experiences

General Instructions

- Reading time – 10 minutes
- Working time – 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Write using black pen
- Attempt every question
- The Stimulus Booklet is separate to this paper
- Write your student number as indicated

Total marks: 40

Section I – 20 marks

Attempt Questions 1 – 5

Allow about 45 minutes for this section

Section II – 20 marks

Attempt Question 6

Allow about 45 minutes for this section

SECTION I

20 marks

Attempt Questions 1–5

Allow about 45 minutes for this section

Read the texts in the Stimulus Booklet carefully and then answer the questions in the spaces provided. These spaces provide guidance for the expected length of responses.

Your answers will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of human experiences in texts
 - analyse, explain and assess the ways human experiences are represented in texts
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Question 1 (3 marks)

Text 1 – Discursive article

How does the composer use contrast to present an unexpected perspective of connection? **3**

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Section I continues on page 3

Question 2 (3 marks)

Text 2 – Magazine cover

How does the text challenge the reader to consider the experience of the nannies? **3**

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Section I continues on page 4

Question 3 (4 marks)

Text 3 – Poem

Explore how language is used to represent the speaker's relationship with the natural environment.

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Section I continues on page 5

Question 4 (4 marks)

Text 4 – Prose fiction extract

Analyse how the composer represents the au pair's feelings of discomfort.

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Section I continues on pages 6 and 7

Question 5 (6 marks)

Text 5 AND Text 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4 – Memoir AND EITHER Discursive OR Magazine cover OR Poem OR Prose fiction extract

Compare how composers provide insight into the way humans connect with places and people.

In your response, refer to Text 5 **AND EITHER** Text 1 **OR** 2 **OR** 3 **OR** 4.

6

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End of Section I

SECTION II

20 marks

Attempt Question 6

Allow about 45 minutes for this section.

Answer the question in the writing booklets. Write your student number at the top of each booklet used. Extra writing booklets are available.

Your answer will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of human experiences in texts
 - analyse, explain and assess the ways human experiences are represented in texts
 - organise, develop and express ideas using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context
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Question 6 (20 marks)

Discuss how the composer of your prescribed text makes connections between the audience and the complex lives of others within the play.

The prescribed texts are listed on pages 9-10.

Question 6 (continued)

The prescribed texts are:

• Prose Fiction

- Anthony Doerr, *All the Light We Cannot See*
- Amanda Lohrey, *Vertigo*
- George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*
- Favel Parrett, *Past the Shallows*

• Poetry

- Rosemary Dobson, *Rosemary Dobson Collected*

The prescribed poems are:

- Young Girl at a Window
- Over the Hill
- Summer's End
- The Conversation
- Cock Crow
- Amy Caroline
- Canberra Morning

- Kenneth Slessor, *Selected Poems*

The prescribed poems are:

- Wild Grapes
- Gulliver
- Out of Time
- Vesper-Song of the Reverend Samuel Marsden
- William Street
- Beach Burial

• Drama

- Jane Harrison, *Rainbow's End*, from *Vivienne Cleven et al., Contemporary Indigenous Plays*
- Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*

- **Shakespearean Drama**

- William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*

- **Nonfiction**

- Tim Winton, *The Boy Behind the Curtain*

- Havoc: A Life in Accidents
 - Betsy
 - Twice on Sundays
 - The Wait and the Flow
 - In the Shadow of the Hospital
 - The Demon Shark
 - Barefoot in the Temple of Art

- Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb, *I am Malala*

- **Film**

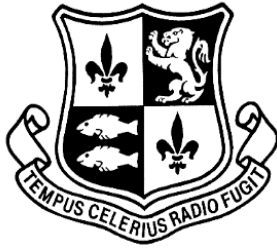
- Stephen Daldry, *Billy Elliot*

- **Media**

- Ivan O'Mahoney

- *Go Back to Where You Came From*
 - Series 1: Episodes 1, 2 and 3
 - and
 - *The Response*
 - Lucy Walker, Waste Land

End of Section II



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2025 HSC TRIAL EXAMINATION

English Advanced

Paper 1 – Texts and Human Experiences

STIMULUS BOOKLET

Section I

- **Text One** – Discursive article.....p.2
- **Text Two** – Magazine cover.....p.3
- **Text Three** – Poem.....p.4
- **Text Four** – Prose extract.....p.5
- **Text Five** – Memoir extract.....p.6

Text 1 – Discursive article

Misery Loves Company

It's wedding season in the US, which means that a lot of money will be spent on venues, decorations, flowers, appetisers, alcohol, photographers, and gifts. Toasts will be made, champagne-induced laughter will drown out small talk, and middle-aged bodies will take over the dance floor, shaking off anxieties induced by this chaotic world. Third cousins will reconnect over vats of pasta. Instagram reels will be created, gossip will be spread, and, after midnight, all of Cinderella's horses will turn back into mice and sink into large beds, their ears still ringing with party music.

This year, I've got three weddings in my family, and I am skipping them all. To be fair, my niece is having an 'intimate' wedding, which I am grateful not to be invited to. My nephew is skipping the big party in lieu of a down payment for a house. As for my brother, I went to his first wedding, where I learned that the minutes I will get to spend with him won't justify the exorbitant airline ticket price. There won't be time for a meaningful connection in that celebratory space.

But there's also a philosophical reason for skipping out on weddings. The Spanish philosopher Miguel de Unamuno believed that joyful occasions just don't encourage deep connection. Joy is the emotion to choose if you want levity, fun, silliness – a good time. Even Unamuno had to admit that "bodies are united by pleasure." But if you're after early morning heart-to-hearts, soul conspiracy, and blood brotherhood, joy isn't the strongest player on the bench. Upbeat feelings will insulate you from anyone who might spoil your fun. The last thing you want when you've got your mojo is a wet blanket trying to make eye contact. When we're up, we turn our heads away from the misery that lies beneath.

But when we're down, Unamuno found, the gig is up. "Souls are united by pain," he wrote in *The Tragic Sense of Life*. Misery is muscular. It's willing to admit that suffering is **ubiquitous**. And when we are sad, it can be comforting to be in the presence of a person who has lowered their mask. Shared sorrow is why groups exist, and why a person might feel that they can be emotionally honest there. In Unamuno's eyes, sorrow draws us into a cocoon – a mortar of suffering, he called it – away from the blinding sunshine of toxic positivity.

Calling up sadness in the clutch is a risky move because, in many societies it's seen as a burden we shouldn't lay on our loved ones. Many of us were taught to hide our emotional and physical pain as an act of love for others. So, whether it's hiding a diagnosis from a parent, or not disclosing a worry, sadness, or fear to a best friend, we have become experts at 'protecting' one another. Our self-sacrifice is motivated by care: since we think that sharing pain causes pain, we keep secrets in the name of love. But what if Unamuno is right? What if communion comes from compassion, and compassion from suffering? If we continue to see sadness as a burden, then we'll smile through the pain and abandon the shared road of compassion.

So, if the goal is deep connection, we can start looking for it in the neglected corners of our lives. We'll find each other in the cobwebs, in the dark, and at funerals.

**ubiquitous: existing or being everywhere, especially at the same time*

MARIANNA ALESSANDRI

Text 2 – Magazine cover



Text 3 – Poem

A Country Childhood

Near old Dunkeld bluestones in the faulted **Grampians**
where **corellas** dipped and looped, you stood shoulder
high in scratchy heather and picked blue tinsel lilies,

golden moth orchids and green correas, parrot peas –
wildflowers with crimped petals studding the ground
in a tumble of splintered stars. But remember, too,

the sweetish stink of flesh gone bad, how wind ruined
silver banksia, crows gulped steaming guts torn from
inside a rabbit's belly and spilled from beaks as they flew

off, trailing **crinoline**. And how a solemn faced
child stood in dusky purple leaves below a yellow
wreath of wattle, a gun held slackly along one arm.

This evening, as you watch the scarlet maple
bleed out on the lawn, you count them: the time
you fought off dogs hellbent on ripping crimson

chasms in the fox's cloud-soft throat; and returned
a shallow-mouthed trout from a hook into the brown
liquid soul that was its river; and scared wild ducks

off the lake before the gunmen came, laughter inside
their slaughter leaking into dawn; and freed a furry
hunter, long legs unfurled inside a window screen;

and all the bees; and the bogong moth – velvet as cob-
webs on lips – sifted from water for summer's breath
to dry drenched wings; and countless birds retrieved

like the bird that dropped down dead, when, aged ten,
you raised the **.22**, steadied your sights on that knot
of feather and little bones, and cleanly took the shot.

JO GARDINER

Grampians: an iconic and wild mountain range located in western Victoria, Australia.

corellas: a species of white cockatoo

crinoline: a 19th-century structured petticoat, shaped like a large hoop, worn under a long skirt

.22: a rifle, firearm

Text 4 – Prose extract

Where the Water's Deepest

NB: An au pair, similar to a nanny, is a young person from a foreign country who lives with a host family to provide childcare and light housework in exchange for room, board, and a weekly allowance.

Last winter they travelled north, a three-hour flight to New York City for the long weekend. They stayed in a hotel suite nineteen floors up with a small balcony and a view of Manhattan. That evening the boy's mama dressed up in a loose silk dress and a mink jacket, took her husband's arm and they went out to dinner. The au pair ordered a pizza funghi and Coca-Colas from room-service, played snakes and ladders with the boy. He threw the dice, and they climbed and slithered up and down the board until bedtime. The au pair stayed up, took a hot shower and wrapped herself in the fluffy dressing gown with the hotel crest impressed upon the lapel. She opened the balcony door and from the arm-chair watched the skyline, the evening bleeding into darkness behind the tallest buildings; but she didn't dare go out and look down. Instead she wrote letters home, saying she might not be back for Christmas after all, how she missed the ocean, but they were good to her; she wanted for nothing.

It was late when they got back. She'd dozed off in the chair, but woke to hear them talking in the bedroom. Then the talking stopped and the man went out on to the balcony. Cigar smoke and freezing cold air drifted back into the room. He bolted the balcony doors and came back in and sat on the edge of the couch looking down at her. He smelled of beer and Polo aftershave and the au pair felt the cold off his good wool suit.

'You know what happens if we lose the baby, don't you?' he said. 'We lose the baby, we lose the babysitter. You keep those balcony doors locked, sweetheart, or you'll be taking the first plane home.' He kissed her then, a strange, deliberate kiss, an airport kiss for someone you're glad to see the back of, then got up and went back in to his wife.

When she heard his snores, she rose and stepped out on to the balcony. A weak wind was driving large snowflakes across the air, sifting them into flurries. A December speckled night with the hooting of traffic. Soon it would be Christmas. She gripped the railings and looked down. A snarl of angry yellow taxis clotted the streets below. She imagined falling, imagined how that might feel, to dive down, be lost like that, mean everything for moments only, then be gone. She backed inside and locked the doors.

CLAIRE KEEGAN

Text 5 – Memoir extract

A Different Kind of Power

Arizona was hot, and beautiful, and expensive. While I'd saved up enough money to survive there, I didn't exactly have enough to live independently. I lived in Mesa, about 12 kilometres from campus. Everything was flat, low-rise, with the exception of Camelback Mountain glowing red far off in the distance. The desert landscape was so different from anything I was used to. Most front yards were covered in stone and dotted with succulents: massive yucca spikes and cacti standing taller than me. Backyards were surrounded by tall fences, though I couldn't quite imagine children playing outside. Not in that heat. In some places there were no sidewalks, but that made some sense. No one here walked. Even when I tried, people honked at me, as if warning me that it was a bad idea.

To get to campus, I took two buses. One day, early in the semester, I decided to walk home instead of waiting in the heat for my second bus. When I reached home a few miles later, I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. I looked like a char-grilled red capsicum with googly eyes attached. A few hours after that, the nausea, headache and dizziness of heat stroke kicked in. I never walked to or from that bus stop again.

Classes at ASU (Arizona State University) felt different, too. My American foreign policy professor, for example, was a tall, assertive man, with a barrel chest and a booming voice. He declared that he used the 'Harvard method.' He was unforgiving about missed classes, and he liked to call on students at random, by pointing at them. Answer promptly, and correctly, or lose points. I was never sure if that was what he meant by the Harvard method; all I knew was that I was afraid of it.

One day, as I sat on campus, eating a jam sandwich I had made that morning, the question came into my head: *Why am I here?* I knew why I'd come – for the excitement of being in a different place while still surrounded by an enormous community of church members. And I had got both of these things. I was also making friends. These friends were welcoming, funny, generous and kind. But for all that, I was lonely.

This loneliness was deeper than homesickness. It was about far more than the distance between Arizona and New Zealand, about the change in landscape, or the fact that long-distance phone calls were too expensive to allow me to talk to Mum or Dad often. It was something more fundamental. I'd always believed that there was a reason and purpose to every experience. But as I finished my sandwich and packed up in the blazing red sun to move to my next class, I could not figure out the purpose of this one.

JACINDA ARDERN

End of texts for Section I