NESA NUMBER:

FORT STREET HIGH SCHOOL

2026 TRIAL HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE 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
- A Stimulus Booklet is provided separately
- Write your NESA Number at the top of this page and the writing booklet for Section II

Total Marks: 40

Section I - 20 marks (pages 2-7)

- Attempt Questions 1-5
- Allow about 45 minutes for this section

Section II – 20 marks (page 8)

- 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 on pages 3-7 of the Stimulus Booklet carefully and then answer the questions below in the lined spaces provided. These spaces provide guidance for the expected length of the responses.

In your answer you 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 – Image

How does Gonsalves represent the experience of dreaming in the image?

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If you need additional space to answer Question 1, use the lines below.

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Question 2 (3 marks)

Text 2 — Prose Fiction Extract

How does Desai shape the reader's understanding of contrasting experiences of family life?

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If you need additional space to answer Question 2, use the lines below.

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Question 3 (4 marks)

Text 3 – Poem

How does Araluen represent the relationship between exhaustion and disconnection?

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If you need additional space to answer Question 3, use the lines below.

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Question 4 (4 marks)

Text 4 — Reflective Essay

Analyse how Popova ignites new ideas about creativity and rest.

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If you need additional space to answer Question 3, use the lines below.

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Question 5 (6 marks)

Compare how any TWO of the stimulus texts invite the audience to consider new perspectives.

If you need additional space to answer Question 5, use the lines on the following page.

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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 Booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

In your answer you 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)

How does Rosemary Dobson use the features of poetry to challenge our assumptions about human motivations?
In your response, make close reference to your prescribed text.

OR

How does William Shakespeare use the features of drama to challenge our assumptions about human motivations?
In your response, make close reference to your prescribed text.

End of Section II

END OF PAPER 1

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English Advanced

Paper 1 – Texts and Human Experiences

Stimulus booklet for Section I and List of prescribed texts for Section II

Section I Page/s

- Text 1 Image 3
- Text 2 Prose Fiction Extract 4
- Text 3 Poem 5
- Text 4 Reflective Nonfiction Essay 6

Section II

- List of prescribed texts 7

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Section I

Text One – Image



— *The Weaving of a Spring Dream* by Rob Gonsalves

Text Two – Prose fiction extract

Extract from *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*

Sampath Chawla, with spider-like legs and arms, thin and worried-looking, lay awake under a fan, which thrashed and swung above him, making as much noise as a gale, although Sampath could feel only the faintest tremor of an air current playing about his toes.

All around him, his family lay and snored: his father, mother, grandmother and his younger sister, Pinky, swathed in quantities of flowered organza*. Rrrrr. Rrrr. Phurt Wheeeeee. Rrrrr. What a racket! Sampath listened to each hostile inhalation. Even in sleep, he thought, disgusted, his family showed themselves incapable of pleasant displays of consideration. Self-indulgent as always, they worked their way noisily through their dreams, keeping Sampath, meanwhile, awake and tossing. Even his mother, whom he loved most of all, had forgotten him in sleep.

He kicked a foot up into the air with impatience. 'Sshh-hhh, he said out loud, but it was a poor, sad sound and they took no notice. Wheeeeeeeee. Rrrrr. Rrrrrr. It was too bad they were not rich enough for everyone to have their own room and their own fan. However, Sampath decided, for his own sake, it would be best to suppress his irritation. His family might be unable to respect the holy silence with which sleep should be imbued, but he would not lose his.

Sampath got up from under this dangerous appliance and lay on the floor, spreading his arms and legs and fingers as far apart as he could, so that not a single part of his sweaty, uncomfortable body would touch another. He lay flat like that and opened his mouth wide to facilitate the easy intake of air and, he hoped, the quick arrival of dreams. As soon as he had thus arranged himself, however, the power failed and the fan slowed to a standstill. Instead of dissipating into some blissful, cloudy realm, Sampath's concentration sharpened like a knife at all the places where his bones pressed against the hard floor. Once again, despite himself, he became conscious of the snores of his family who loomed alarmingly above him now he was on the ground, their hips rising like mountains far too high to climb.

How did they expect him to rest as they roared and vibrated like giants? As they sent their snores all the way to the top of the ceiling? Back and forth so the disturbing qualities of each sound accumulated and weighed on Sampath like a grinding stone?

— KIRAN DESAI

Definition

***organza —** *a thin, plain weave fabric made from silk, polyester, or nylon. It is known for its crisp texture and sheer, transparent appearance.*

Text Three – Poem

An extract from 'Sleep Act One'

You get this way
when you stop sleeping. The world sits
offside just a little when you don't
break from it in years.
It is always light in the city, even in nights
flooded violet with melatonin*, wine in
the bath, a cup of sleepy tea, a few licks of
your lover's seroquel*, ibuprofen* for
the aches, retinol* for the lines, three
days deep sobbing to the wikipedia
entry for pigeons, theatres of hygiene and
fascism in alternating screens, I will never
forgive you if you do not share this video,
a full basket you will never check out,
muting notifications for the groupchat
so you won't stumble on a new grief
to impale your dreams. There is light
but no breeze, there is night but no sleep,
the fire map tells you the place you can't
call home without footnotes has a low
halo of smoke drifting through wattle.
You imagine it blurring stars as
they scatter to the furthest horizon from
your undeserving reach.
We are all slouching towards the bearable
living, turning backs to the violent edge.
You are missing sleep, there is
too much time left, too much
of that vengeful wind, that light that
needs you not to look away.

— EVELYN ARALUEN

Definitions:
***melatonin —** *A hormone naturally produced by the pineal gland in the brain, which helps regulate the sleep-wake cycle. Melatonin is often used as a supplement to assist with sleep disorders or jet lag.*
***ibuprofen** *— A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) commonly used as a pain reliever and to reduce inflammation or fever. In Australia it is commonly known under the brand name, Nurofen.*
***retinol** *— A form of vitamin A used in skincare products. Retinol helps promote cell turnover, improve skin texture, and reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.*

Text Four – Reflective Nonfiction Essay

Excerpt from *Sleep and the Meaning of Life*

One of the most important things I have learned about living is that, in any life of purpose and creative vitality, you must be as religious and disciplined about your sleep as about your work. And yet one of the great self-betrayals of our culture is the way it wears the lack of sleep as a badge of honor on the lapel of the ego of achievement — the cult of productivity gone past the sacrifice of presence, sacrificing even that precious nightly absence of conscious thought and metabolic* urgency necessary to recover, to reset, to recalibrate so that we may begin again, in the deepest sense, in the new day. Trouble sleeping both troubles living and signals a troubled life — because sleep is how most of the body's physical systems recover; because, ever since evolution invented REM* in the bird brain, it has been helping us regulate our negative emotions; because sleep goes beyond the physical, the mental, and the emotional to touch the existential.

No one has written more passionately or more perceptively about that existential dimension of sleep than the Portuguese poet and philosopher Fernando Pessoa (June 13, 1888–November 30, 1935) throughout *The Book of Disquiet** — the posthumously published masterpiece that also gave us Pessoa on how to be a good explorer in the lifelong expedition to yourself, the trouble with love, and how to unself into who you really are.

Pessoa recognises that, more than a biological impediment, all those unsolved disquietudes and subtle estrangements from ourselves that keep the eyelids from closing the curtain on the day are emissaries of our existential angst.

Wrestling with his own, he writes:

"I'm going to life's bed wide awake, unaccompanied and without peace, in the ebb and flow of my confused consciousness, like two tides in the black night where the destinies of nostalgia and desolation meet."

Pessoa discovers in his sleeplessness a strange metaphysical power:

"The clock in the back of the deserted house (everyone's sleeping) slowly lets the clear quadruple sound of four o'clock in the morning fall. I still haven't fallen asleep, and I don't expect to. There's nothing on my mind to keep me from sleeping and no physical pain to prevent me from relaxing, but the dull silence of my strange body just lies there in the darkness, made even more desolate by the feeble moonlight of the street lamps. I'm so sleepy I can't even think, so sleepless I can't feel. Everything around me is the naked, abstract universe, consisting of nocturnal negations. Divided between tired and restless, I succeed in touching — with the awareness of my body — a metaphysical knowledge of the mystery of things."*

— MARIA POPOVA

Definitions
***metabolic —** Relating to metabolism, which is the set of chemical processes that occur within a living organism to maintain life.*
***REM —** Stands for Rapid Eye Movement, a stage of sleep characterised by quick movements of the eyes, vivid dreaming, and high brain activity. REM sleep is important for memory, learning, and mood regulation.*
***existential** — In philosophy, "existential" refers to concerns about human existence, purpose, and freedom.*
****The Book of Disquiet** — A literary work by Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa, published posthumously. It is a collection of fragments, reflections, and poetic prose exploring themes of alienation, introspection, and existential uncertainty.*
***metaphysical** — a branch of philosophy concerned with the fundamental nature of reality, existence, and the universe.*

Section II

The prescribed texts for Section II 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 Poems*

    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, *Rainbows's End*
  - Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*
- **Shakespearean Drama**
  - William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*
- **Nonfiction**
  - Tim Winton, *The Boy Behind the Curtain*
  - Malala Yousafzai and Christine Lamb, *I am Malala*
- **Film**
  - Stephen Daldry, *Billy Elliot*
- **Media**
  - Ivan O'Mahoney, *Go Back to Where You Came From*
  - Lucy Walker, *Waste Land*