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Centre Number

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Student Number

NSW Education Standards Authority

2021 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 at the back of this paper
- Write your Centre Number and Student Number at the top of this page and page 5

Total marks:
40

Section I – 20 marks (pages 2–8)

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

Section II – 20 marks (pages 9–11)

- 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 2–7 of the Stimulus Booklet carefully and then answer the questions in the spaces provided. These spaces provide guidance for the expected length of response.

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
-

Question 1 (3 marks)

Text 1 — Nonfiction extract

Explain how Daniel Gray uses language to invite the reader to share his experiences.

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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 — Poem

How effectively does the use of imagery convey a human experience?

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Question 3 (4 marks)

Text 3 — Prose fiction extract

How does Ocean Vuong represent the relationship between the characters?

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Question 4 (4 marks)

Text 4 — Nonfiction extract

Analyse how Didem Caia uses literary devices to reflect on her experience.

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Question 5 (6 marks)

Text 5 — Prose fiction extract

Evaluate Anne Enright's use of narrative voice in shaping the character of Katherine O'Dell.

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Question 5 continues on page 8



Question 5 (continued)

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If you need additional space to answer Question 5 use the lines below.

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End of Question 5

English Advanced
Paper 1 — Texts and Human Experiences

Section II

20 marks

Attempt Question 6

Allow about 45 minutes for this section

Answer the question in the Section II Writing Booklet. 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
-

Question 6 (20 marks)

Analyse how your prescribed text represents the ways individuals respond to the challenges they face.

In your response, make reference to your prescribed text.

The prescribed texts are listed on pages 10 and 11.

Please turn over

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*

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*

Section II prescribed texts continue on page 11

Section II prescribed texts (continued)

- **Nonfiction**
 - Tim Winton, *The Boy Behind the Curtain*
The prescribed chapters are:
 - * *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*
The prescribed episodes are:
 - * *Series 1: Episodes 1, 2 and 3*
and
 - * *The Response*
 - Lucy Walker, *Waste Land*

End of paper



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English Advanced

Paper 1 – Texts and Human Experiences

Stimulus Booklet

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Text 1 — Nonfiction extract

New books find their way to us via a number of routes. Most obvious is bricks-and-mortar store browsing. There we are, in a shop, reading the back cover, brushing fingers over embossed titles, handling and patting, appreciating the book as an object. We can tickle spines and open up to brush pages, and – if no one's looking – devour their smell. If everything chimes then the book is placed in a wrestler's headlock, claimed as a joey kangaroo in its mother's pouch. Chances are that it will soon have siblings – our eyes are bigger than our bedside tables.

Or perhaps a new book may be fostered from a library or foisted* upon you by a friend who insists you will appreciate it. On the way home, blurbs are again consumed, and other furnishings idly absorbed – the review quote and the About the Author, the writer dedication and the font declaration.

Then there is that saintly thud of an online order plummeting from the letterbox, or the luscious scrape of cardboard on floor as, on returning home, you push the front door against the package. To buy online leaves you blind in comparison with bookshop scrutiny, but the gamble is surely worth the prize of feverishly setting about unwrapping the parcel. We are Charlie Bucket unwrapping a Wonka Bar, and there is a golden-ticket feeling every time.

By whichever route a book finds us, in our hands we now hold, we hope, a future escape.

DANIEL GRAY

Extract from *Scribbles in the Margins*

* foisted *imposed*

Text 2 — Poem

**For B, at Plaza Blanca, New Mexico*,
having known each other three days.**

*Here, you said, this is a piece of quartz.
Take it, and close your hand around it.*

The rock was heavy for something so small. Its rough
edges pressed my outline, changed my shape in a small way.

I turned it over. I closed my hand around it.
The rock made me think of difficult work

like lowering yourself into a bath. The quartz made me think
of the enormous past, a vast plateau, on which the present moment holds still—

full and complete. I looked around. We were wrapped in the loose embrace
of the ground, and the bare trees, and the low-slung clouds. The rock

is ancient. The white formations of *Plaza Blanca* are ancient, as sleep is ancient—
and our young lives are winks in a deep night, wrinkles

on a long green sea. The sea is more alien than the moon to that white place. You
smiled. You smiled as if to say *we are two odd birds, aren't we?*

I unclosed my hand
and the quartz bloomed there—

CHARLOTTE GUEST

* Plaza Blanca, New Mexico

*'Plaza Blanca' translates from the Spanish as 'the white place'.
It is a region that is famous for large white limestone formations.*

Text 3 — Prose fiction extract

With Lan, one of my tasks was to take a pair of tweezers and pluck, one by one, the grey hairs from her head. “The snow in my hair,” she explained, “it makes my head itch. Will you pluck my itchy hairs, Little Dog? The snow is rooting into me.” She slid a pair of tweezers between my fingers, “Make Grandma young today, okay?” she said real quiet, grinning.

For this work I was paid in stories. After positioning her head under the window’s light, I would kneel on a pillow behind her, the tweezers ready in my grip. She would start to talk, her tone dropping an octave, drifting deep into a narrative. Mostly, as was her way, she rambled, the tales cycling one after another. They spiraled out from her mind only to return the next week with the same introduction: “Now this one, Little Dog, this one will really take you out. You ready? Are you even interested in what I’m saying? Good. Because I never lie.” A familiar story would follow, punctuated with the same dramatic pauses and inflections during moments of suspense or crucial turns. I’d mouth along with the sentences, as if watching a film for the umpteenth time—a movie made by Lan’s words and animated by my imagination. In this way, we collaborated.

As I plucked, the blank walls around us did not so much fill with fantastical landscapes as open into them, the plaster disintegrating to reveal the past behind it. Scenes from the war, mythologies of manlike monkeys, of ancient ghost catchers from the hills of Da Lat* who were paid in jugs of rice wine, who traveled through villages with packs of wild dogs and spells written on palm leaves to dispel evil spirits.

OCEAN VUONG

Extract from *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*

* Da Lat *a city in Vietnam*

Text 4 — Nonfiction extract

I was hiking. A familiar path in the Otway ranges. The mist had set in. I sometimes drift into a kind of mental autopilot when hiking here because I've experienced it so often. This particular time, however, I found myself looking up into an unfamiliar area about half an hour in, not knowing exactly where I was. It was a simple mistake, I hadn't been paying enough attention to where I was going, and consequently I veered off the path. When I glanced up and realised the woods did not look as I was expecting them to I felt a rush of exhilaration. The woods became instantaneously new ... My sense memory was momentarily destabilised, and the resulting experience was a reminder of how the familiar can suddenly appear as new. I'd walked here many times before, and the scent of hung-over raindrops, the sound of gravel, touch of leaves, tree trunks and the sight of falling sunshine diamonds, had picture booked their way into my mind's eye. But in this moment that eye was suddenly and unexpectedly awakened to a new way of seeing ...

I've left out a step. Before I experienced the release of being disoriented, before I surrendered to it, I felt intensely frustrated. I experienced the rigidity of my own consciousness, how instinctively resistant I was to something unexpected. Something was happening in this swirl of frustration; I wasn't on autopilot any more. I was out of my comfort zone, and I had to *participate* in that instant, participate in making meaning of my surroundings in order to understand where I was. My mind had been disrupted. I looked up, I looked around, and I felt as if a force was enabling me to *see* the woods, not just look at them. I experienced an instantaneous transformation of consciousness; a blip in which the latent* enchantment of the everyday world manifested vividly, even if just for a fleeting moment. The woods were the stage, I was the audience, and I experienced the great creative tension of the theatre: severed from my filter of expectation, I temporarily experienced the transformation of my own reality.

DIDEM CAIA

Extract from *New Writing. New Consciousness. New Culture.*

* latent

present but not visible

Text 5 — Prose fiction extract

People ask me, 'What was she like?' and I try to figure out if they mean as a normal person: what was she like in her slippers, eating toast and marmalade, or what was she like as a mother, or what she was like as an actress – we did not use the word star. Mostly though, they mean what was she like before she went crazy, as though their own mother might turn overnight, like a bottle of milk left out of the fridge. Or they might, themselves, be secretly askew.

Something happens as they talk to me. I am used to it now. It works in them slowly; a growing wonder, as though recognising an old flame after many years.

'You have her eyes,' they say.

People loved her. Strangers, I mean. I saw them looking at her and nodding, though they failed to hear a single word she said.

And, yes, I have her eyes. At least, I have the same colour eyes as my mother; a hazel that, in her case, people liked to call green ...

So all right. Here she is, Katherine O'Dell making her breakfast, requiring her breakfast from the fridge and the cupboards, some of which delight her and some of which let her down. Where is it, where is it, here it is! Yes! The marmalade. The sun is coming through the window, the smoke from her cigarette rises and twists in an elegant, double-strand. What can I say? When she ate toast and marmalade she was like anyone else eating toast and marmalade, though the line between lip and skin, whatever that is called, is very precise, even when you are not seeing it on a cinema screen, twelve feet long.

So, here she is, eating toast. She works fast. She holds the slice of toast to her mouth, bites and chews, then bites again. Swallows. She does this maybe three or four times, sets the thing back on the plate. She takes it up for one more bite: leaves it down. After which, there is a little tug of love which the toast loses; a little wavy-over thing she does with her hand, a shimmy of rejection or desire. No, she will not have any more toast.

She picks up the phone receiver and dials. Everything was 'marvellous!' when she was on this phone; a beige thing on the kitchen wall with a long clapped-out curly cord that you had to duck under as she paced and smoked, saying 'marvellous!' while giving me the wink, indicating her coffee, or a glass of wine that was out of reach, with a pointed finger and a rolling hand.

'Just marvellous,' she might say.

Text 5 continues on page 7

Text 5 (continued)

Or she talks to me, a girl of eight or nine sitting at the table in a pink cotton dress brought back from America. She involves the dog who waits under the table, like a dog in the movies, for scraps and crumbs. Mostly she speaks to the ceiling, at the place where it meets the wall. Her eyes rove along this line as though looking for ideas up there, or for justice. Yes, that is what she wants. She tucks her face down quickly to light another cigarette. She exhales.

The toast is now fully ignored. The toast is dead to her now. The chair is pushed back, the cigarette stubbed out on the actual plate. After which she gets up and walks away. Someone else will dispose of all that. Because I think I mentioned that my mother was a star. Not just on screen or on the stage, but at the breakfast table also, my mother Katherine O'Dell was a star.

ANNE ENRIGHT
Extract from *Actress*

End of Text 5