Study Guide

ATAR English Units 3 & 4

Based on the 2018 WACE Examination

ETAWA

English Teachers Association
Western Australia

Foreword

This Study Guide was published to support students and teachers who are working remotely as a result of COVID-19. The full *Good Answers ATAR English 2020* will be published and available to purchase in Term 2, as usual.

The views and opinions expressed in this book are those of the ETAWA. They are not necessarily the views of the School Curriculum & Standards Authority.

The first part of this guide contains general advice on studying ATAR English and preparing for your examinations. The second part deconstructs the 2018 WACE ATAR English examination. Both sections include activities to assist you in your revision.

We would like to wish you every success for your continuing studies in these challenging circumstances.

This publication may be distributed to students and teachers of English in 2020.

This Study Guide is produced by the English Teachers Association of Western Australia.

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Introduction

Preparing for the exam

There are a variety of ways to ensure that you are thoroughly prepared for the exam. Some of these include the following:

- **Familiarise yourself with every aspect of the syllabus.** This document will be provided to you by your teacher at the beginning of the year, but digital versions are also accessible through the SCSA website (scsa.wa.edu.au). Examination questions draw exclusively on the syllabus, so if you know it well there should be no nasty surprises.
- **Experiment with writing in a variety of forms for different purposes and audiences.** You do not always need to write full-length responses. Sometimes time constraints will mean that a plan, a thesis statement, an introduction, a plot overview and so on will still allow you to think carefully about a question and demonstrate your understanding of it.
- **Practise using the required metalanguage (language used to describe language) with reference to your studied texts.** The subject-specific vocabulary you should be using is included throughout the syllabus and clearly identified in its glossary. Examples of how to use each glossary term in context is included on pages 57 of *Good Answers*.
- **Each time you study a new concept, spend time thinking and writing about it.** Don't move on until you have mastered the concept successfully, even if this involves asking your teacher for clarification, checking your understanding with other students or locating further explanations through independent research.
- **Read and edit the work of your peers.** Try to recognise peer models that you aspire to, as well as those that require improvement. In this way, you are able to apply your understandings of what works successfully (or what doesn't) to your own responses.
- **Know what to expect by reading numerous sample or previous exams.** Try to identify patterns between them and note how they fulfil the Examination Brief.
- **Practise responding to these sample or past examinations under a range of conditions.** This includes with unlimited time and access to your notes and computer, as well as under strictly timed conditions.
- **Edit, edit, edit!** Constantly rework your responses once they have been marked and returned to you. Make the suggested corrections and improvements before resubmitting them for extra feedback. This process can be repeated many times.
- **Form small study groups and discussion forums with your peers.** This will provide the opportunity to test each other's understanding and invite conversation about your studies in ATAR English – keep it motivational, productive and focused.
- **Stay positive.** Avoid getting absorbed in any negative talk or thoughts in the lead-up to the exam. Approach it with the positivity that comes from preparation and practice.
- **Never attempt to memorise and reproduce a previously submitted or pre-written response**. The same question will never be repeated in the WACE Examination. Rather, work on adapting your skills and knowledge to the widest range of questions possible within the syllabus framework. Test your adaptability by writing thesis statements for different concept combinations. Create your own or work from previous examinations.

Wider independent reading and viewing

The benefits of regular independent reading on writing outcomes are well known and documented. Reading for pleasure can:

- enhance imagination
- promote self-awareness and empathy
- improve vocabulary, grammar, spelling and written expression
- provide insights into different cultures, experiences and perspectives
- allow a sense of escapism into another world
- assist you to disconnect from social media and the pressures of study
- improve general knowledge
- introduce you to a greater range of text types and the ways different texts work.

Reading independently for pleasure – that is, texts of your own choosing, at your own pace – will likely result in significant improvements to your writing and understanding in the areas listed above. If you've never experienced the joy of reading a great book, we hope that your study of the ATAR English course will change that! Think of the best movie you've ever seen. Now multiply the impact it made on you and the duration of that impact several times over and you may come close to estimating the true power of a fabulous novel. At the very least, try to add some quiet reading to your regular night-time routine, if you are not already doing this. Attempt to select texts from a range of genres that you perceive as slightly challenging but also of genuine interest.

Viewing a range of feature films, short films, television programs and documentaries will consolidate your understanding of the visual texts you analyse within the classroom context. The important point is that you must do so actively, consciously and critically, rather than mindlessly and with little afterthought.

Activity: Sourcing good reads

If you don't know where to start in selecting a book to read for pleasure, visit your school or local community library and chat to a librarian about their recommendations. Don't hesitate to ask for advice from English teachers either, most of whom love to talk books! You could set up a school or social media group to offer suggestions and reviews to each other, or even join social network sites such as Goodreads, Scribd, Booktopia and Bookperks.

Examinations in the ATAR English course

The ATAR English examination includes three sections: Comprehending, Responding and Composing. By this stage of Year 12, you should have a good understanding of these three exam sections, the Examination Brief, the types of questions in each section and how much time is recommended to spend on each section

When considering what to study and how to do well in the English exam, it is very important to realise that texts are not an end in themselves. That is, the meaning you have made from any one text is not as important as your understanding of how and why you made that meaning. The texts you study are vehicles to help develop your understanding of how language works and how to use it effectively. In a nutshell: the English course is not text-based. It is based on concepts and skills.

While you cannot know the exact wording of the questions, the examination structure is not a mystery – you will have to discuss texts in detail and you will have to demonstrate your comprehension, analytical and composing skills. It is clear that the greater engagement you have with a wide range of texts, the more likely you are to demonstrate a broad and deep understanding of the syllabus, the concepts it covers and its examinable content. Indeed, the syllabus on which the exam is based is the most important text to know thoroughly, given that exam writers use it to construct the examination.

The ATAR English Examination Design Brief appears in the syllabus. It is a guide that dictates how the exam must be structured. It is essential that you familiarise yourself with it closely, so you know exactly what to expect and how to manage your time efficiently. You can refer to the Exam Brief via the copy of the syllabus provided by your school or download it via the SCSA webpage at https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au.

Revising the Syllabus

Although you should familiarise yourself with the full syllabus document throughout the duration of your studies, there are some sections which you should focus on more thoroughly. This includes the 'Unit Description' for both Units 3 and 4, reproduced below:

Unit 3

Students explore representations of themes, issues, ideas and concepts through a comparison of texts. *They analyse and compare the relationships between language, genre and contexts, comparing texts within and/or across different genres and modes. Students recognise and analyse the conventions of genre in texts and consider how those conventions may assist interpretation. Students compare and evaluate the effect of different media, forms and modes on the structure of texts and how audiences respond to them. Understanding of these concepts is demonstrated through the creation of imaginative, interpretive, persuasive and analytical responses.*

Unit 4

Students examine different interpretations and perspectives to develop further their knowledge and analysis of purpose and style. *They challenge perspectives, values and attitudes in texts, developing and testing their own interpretations through debate and argument. Through close study of texts, students explore relationships between content and structure, voice and perspective and the text and context. This provides the opportunity for students to extend their experience of language and of texts and explore their ideas through their own reading and viewing. Students demonstrate understanding of the texts studied through creation of imaginative, interpretive, persuasive and analytical responses.*

2017 School Curriculum and Standards Authority

Organising framework

Content descriptions in each unit in the English ATAR course are grouped under an organising framework consisting of:

- *texts in contexts*
- *language and textual analysis*
- *engaging and responding*
- *creating texts*
- *reflecting.*

Activity: Understanding the syllabus terminology

As you read the unit content for both Units 3 and 4, highlight significant words and write down their meaning. Note down any gaps in your understanding and work through the Revising the Syllabus section concentrating on these concepts. Repeat this definition activity to measure the knowledge you have gained and identify further areas needing attention.

Types of texts

The syllabus glossary classifies texts according to the following categories, although it is important to understand that distinctions between these groupings are not strictly fixed and therefore texts can sometimes be regarded as belonging to more than one 'type':

- ***Analytical Texts:*** *Texts whose primary purpose is to identify, examine and draw conclusions about the elements or components that make up other texts. Analytical texts develop an argument or consider or advance an interpretation (e.g. commentaries, essays in criticism, reflective or discursive responses and reviews).*

- ***Imaginative Texts:*** *Texts whose primary purpose is to entertain or provoke thought through their imaginative use of literary elements. They are recognised by their form, style and artistic or aesthetic value (e.g. novels, traditional tales, poetry, stories, plays, fiction for young adults and children, picture books and multimodal texts such as film).*

- ***Interpretive Texts:*** *Texts whose primary purpose is to explain and interpret personalities, events, ideas, representations or concepts (e.g. autobiographies, biographies, media feature articles, documentary films and other non-fiction texts).*

- ***Persuasive Texts:*** *Texts whose primary purpose is to put forward a point of view and persuade a reader, viewer or listener (e.g. advertising, debates and arguments).*

The syllabus also groups texts according to both literary and non-literary forms including:

- fiction texts (novels, short stories, fables, plays, poems, song lyrics, films etc.)
- non-fiction texts (biographies, essays, speeches, news reports, documentaries etc.)
- media texts (newspaper/magazine articles, editorials, websites, advertisements etc.)
- everyday texts (blogs, films, tv programs, comic books, computer games, manuals etc.).

Activity: Categorising texts

Categorise the texts you have studied according to each of the types and forms listed above.

Representations

The easiest way to remember what the word 'representation' means is to understand that it literally means to 're-present' or to present again.

Text creators re-present places, people, events, ideas, issues or subjects for particular purposes and audiences. They are influenced by the broader context from within which they write or create and the specific context that shapes the representations – the context of culture and the context of situation respectively. This suggests that these representations are only ever versions or interpretations of the real world. This applies equally to fiction and non-fiction texts. Representations of people, events, issues or subjects are constructed through the use of conventions, techniques and language or stylistic features.

By actively identifying how a text represents various aspects of the world, readers and viewers are then able to recognise that these representations are simply constructions and they should not necessarily be accepted as truthful or accurate. In fact, some of the best analysis comes from questioning or critiquing representations that you may argue are out-dated, clichéd or erroneous.

When analysing the representations in texts, start by asking yourself the following questions:

- What is the representation exactly?
- How is this representation constructed?
- What are the contextual influences of the representation?
- What purposes does this representation serve?

For example, the issue of climate change can be represented very differently for different purposes, audiences and contexts:

- *Representation 1:* climate change is the greatest environmental threat facing humanity today. While it can be a natural phenomenon, the contemporary incident of climate change is a direct result of human intervention, with industrialisation, over-population and poor environmental stewardship directly impacting on the extent and pace of climate change.

- *Representation 2:* climate change is a significant economic problem for the Western world. As the impact of climate change threatens agricultural industries and influences fiscal policies regarding the energy industry, such as the shift towards more expensive renewable energy and carbon pricing schemes, Western economies are suffering.

- *Representation 3:* climate change is a natural phenomenon. Whether the world is even experiencing climate change currently is a matter of scientific dispute. Historically, climate has always oscillated between periods of global warming and cooling; human intervention is minimal at most. Left-wing politics and environmental groups are misrepresenting climate data for their own political agendas.

Activity: Contextual influences on representation

Select three of your studied texts to complete the table underneath using the focus questions listed on the previous page:

Text title	Representations			Contextual influences on representation
	People	Ideas	Issues	

The Unit 3 description identifies representation as a key feature of the syllabus, as indicated by the following extract from its opening sentence:

> *Students explore representations of themes, issues, ideas and concepts through a comparison of texts.*

Although the concept of 'representation' should be understood in a general sense so that you are able to apply it to the analysis of many different aspects of a text, it is worth noting that the excerpt from the syllabus above does identify 'themes, issues, ideas and concepts' as the main focus. These terms are dealt with in more detail on the following pages, but you may like to practise your skills by completing the following activity first.

Activity: Representations in your studied texts

Select two studied texts and create a mind map like the one suggested above, identifying and comparing the representations of labelled aspects and the techniques used to construct these representations. This activity lends itself to comparisons of representations that reflect different contexts. For example, consider the differing portrayal of family dynamics and relationships in the two short stories, 'Flight' by Doris Lessing and 'Your Shoes' by Michele Roberts, or the perspectives related to war represented in Rupert Brooke's 1915 sonnet 'The Soldier' compared to Wilfred Owen's 'Dulce et Decorum est'.
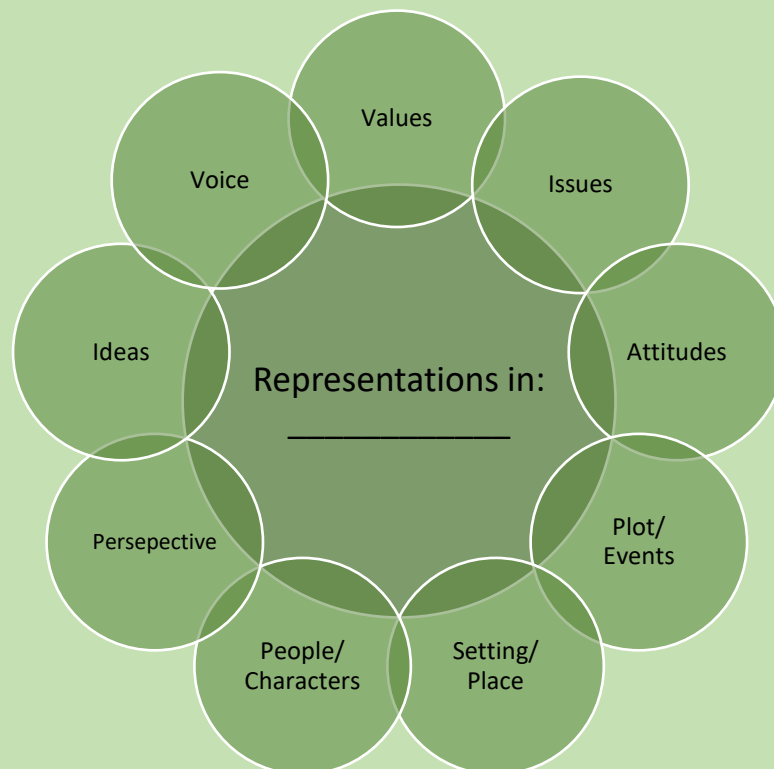
Values

Voice

Issues

Ideas

Representations in:
_____

Attitudes

Persepective

Plot/
Events

People/
Characters

Setting/
Place

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Show how relationships between people and animals are represented differently in Text 2 and Text 3. (2017 WACE Exam)

2. (Responding) Explore how the patterns of language or structure are used to represent a complex idea in at least one text. (2016 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Compose an interpretive text to represent an encounter with a person who taught you something about yourself. (2018 WACE Exam)

Themes, issues, ideas and concepts

Although similar, the terms 'themes', 'issues', 'ideas' and 'concepts' differ slightly from each other. Let's start by revising the syllabus glossary definitions (italicised) below:

Themes: *An idea, concern or argument in a text, a recurring element (for example, the subject of a text may be love and its theme could be how love involves sacrifice). A text may have more than one theme.* Themes can sometimes be simplistically expressed using a single abstract noun, such as 'grief', 'loss' or 'power' and so on, but further elaboration is needed to identify the theme adequately.

Issues: *Matters of personal or public concern that are in dispute; things which directly or indirectly affect a person or members of a society and are considered to be problems.* For example, an issue explored within a text may be the exploitation of animals.

Ideas: *In this course the word has an open meaning and can be interpreted as understandings, thoughts, notions, opinions, views or beliefs.* If you can identify what specific comments are being made in a text then you may be on the right track to articulating its various ideas. Ideas are the most specific unit of meaning.

Concepts: *An abstract idea.* All of the syllabus concepts listed in this section as headings are abstract in nature because they have no physical referent and they need to be visualised. Let's consider some commonly studied texts to highlight the differences between these terms:

Text Title	Themes	Issues	Ideas
Into the Wild (feature film)	Solitude versus intimacy; reckless risk-taking versus stability and conformity; social expectations at odds with personal aspirations; materialism versus spirituality; man versus nature	The social effects of placing value on materialistic possessions and financial wealth; the struggle for acceptance and personal enlightenment within an unforgiving and unfair world; respect for the power of nature and human connection	Human connection and a degree of conformity are necessary for human survival; the natural world is more powerful than the human species; risk-taking at the expense of stability is ignorant and naïve
'Nosedive' (episode from Black Mirror television series)	Self-identity versus public persona; the shaping of reputation; social expectations and peer pressure; the values of individuality and acceptance; the power of social media in manipulating sense of self	Increasing dependence on social media and technology; the reliability of social media representations, particularly in light of the emergence of "click farms" to artificially generate 'likes', 'followers', star ratings etc.; threats to privacy and truth	Some humans place too much value on their social media profile; reputations can be built or destroyed on the back of social media representations; over-reliance on social media and technology is distorting expectations

Ideology

Although not included in the syllabus glossary, it is important to grasp the concept of 'ideology' and understand how it relates to ideas. Shared ideas amongst a group, community, society or culture can be referred to as an ideology. Ideologies are a framework or system of ideas and practices based on shared beliefs, values and attitudes. They are often attributed to religious, political, social or economic theories and end in the 'ism' suffix. Examples include commun*ism*, femin*ism*, multicultural*ism*, consumer*ism*, tribal*ism*, imperial*ism*, rac*ism*, individual*ism*, sex*ism*, environmental*ism*, national*ism*, Eurocentr*ism*, etc. Not all ideologies end with 'ism', as in the case of democracy and free-market economics. Ideologies can also be expressed in terms of common public opinions or views shared within a society. Ideologies evolve and change over time and vary between different cultural contexts – gender ideology proves both of these points effectively.

Ideologies significantly influence both the construction and interpretation of a text. Dominant ideologies reflected in texts are often invisible to audiences as they are naturalised, whereas alternative ideologies are more easily identifiable. Ideological understanding is important to textual analysis because it helps us to identify the values and attitudes that texts are underpinned by, as well as assist our understanding of why we interpret texts in particular ways. The following questions can be considered when reflecting on the construction of the texts you have studied:

- Which ideologies are challenged and which are naturalised?

- How do ideologies influence the text's construction and interpretation?

- What are the specific shared ideas that constitute this ideology?

Activity: Analysing challenges to ideology

Examine the impact and motivations behind the 'viral' status of the #MeToo campaign popularised in late 2017 or the topical nature of the Gillette advertisement released in early 2019. Compose a thesis based on how ideologies contributed to the controversy these social responses have generated.

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Analyse how the snake is created to reveal an idea in Text 2. (2017 WACE Exam)

2. (Responding) Explore how the patterns of language or structure are used to represent a complex idea in at least one text. (2016 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Create an imaginative text that uses narrative voice in order to capture the significance of a contemporary issue.

Comparison

The Unit 3 and 4 descriptions provide vital clues about possible exam questions. For example, the description for Unit 3 uses the word 'compare' a number of times to signal your need to examine how various texts construct 'themes, issues, ideas and concepts'.

The widely accepted definition for a 'comparison' is a consideration predominantly of the similarities, but which may also include the differences, between two or more things – in this case, two or more texts. Alternatively, the word 'contrast' is concerned only with identifying elements of difference. You may be required to focus on particular aspects of texts when producing a compare and/or contrast response. These could include (but are not limited to) comparing:

- the techniques, conventions or language features used in two or more texts
- the themes, issues, ideas or concepts in two or more texts
- the reader, viewer or audience response to two or more texts
- contexts of culture or contexts of situation between two or more texts
- the stylistic features of two or more texts
- the text structure of two or more texts
- the genre of two or more texts
- the representations in two or more texts
- the perspectives offered in two or more texts
- the purposes of two or more texts.

When producing a comparative response, it is important that you include compare and contrast terminology very specifically. Observe the compare/contrast words and phrases listed below and complete the related activity:

Likewise	*Similarly*	*In contrast*	*Comparable to*	*On the contrary*
In the same way	*However*	*Unlike*	*Conversely*	*Equally*
As with	*Rather*	*On the other hand*	*Just as*	*Alternatively*

Text 1 Differences | Text 1 & 2 Similarities | Text 2 Differences
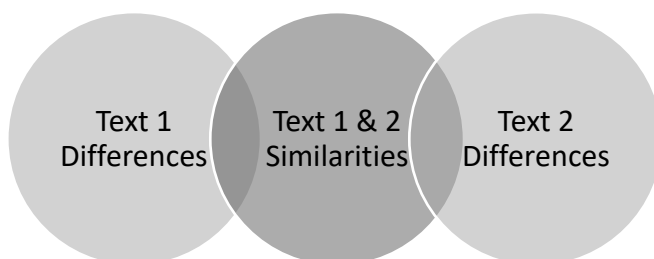
Hint: Venn diagrams

You may find it helpful to draw a Venn diagram to assist you in the planning process when approaching compare and/or contrast questions, as illustrated on the left.

Structure

In terms of structuring your comparative writing, your approach will depend on the exam section, the focus of the question itself and the texts you select or are directed to discuss. Approaches A, B and C detailed below are more appropriate for Comprehending Section responses, while Approaches D, E and F are better suited to the Responding Section.

A: Overview Method (Short Answer)

One paragraph: A few points of similarity and/or difference between two texts

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B: Alternating Method (Short Answer)

Paragraph 1: Similarities between texts
Paragraph 2: Differences between texts

C: Sequential Method (Short Answer)

Paragraph 1: 1st point of sim/diff
Paragraph 2: 2nd point of sim/diff

D: Block Method (Essay)

Introduction
Paragraph 1: Text 1, point 1
Paragraph 2: Text 1, point 2
Paragraph 3: Text 2, point 1 sim/diff to Text 1
Paragraph 4: Text 2, point 2 sim/diff to Text 1
Conclusion

E: Alternating Method (Essay)

Introduction
Paragraph 1: Text 1, 1st point of sim/diff
Paragraph 2: Text 2, 1st point of sim/diff
Paragraph 3: Text 1, 2nd point of sim/diff
Paragraph 4: Text 2, 2nd point of sim/diff
Conclusion

F: Combined Method (Essay)

Introduction
Each paragraph: Compares a single point of similarity or difference between two texts.
Conclusion

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Compare how the settings of Text 1 and Text 2 are constructed.

2. (Responding) Compare how two texts of different genres respond to the concerns of the same time period. (2018 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Create two different persuasive texts that promote contrasting perspectives related to a contemporary issue.

Genre

Most students understand genre in terms of types or categories of texts. Within the ATAR English course, genre is considered in two ways. It may refer to broad categories of texts such as 'feature film' or 'novel'; known as *genre of form and structure*. Genre may also be considered in terms of narrower subcategories, such as dystopia, romance or fantasy fiction; the *genre of subject matter*. You are asked to consider how such 'genres' have evolved, been transformed, adapted and changed over time and between texts. The manner in which generic conventions have been adhered to, challenged, manipulated or subverted, and the expectations of genre that audiences develop, should also be understood. Consider:

Genre of form and structure

- How a text's genre has been appropriated or adapted into a different genre, as in the case of novels such as *Fahrenheit 451, The Hate You Give* and *Boy Erased,* which have all been transformed into films or television series released in late 2018.

- General shifts, trends and new forms of genre, such as Indigenous futurism, interactive fiction and cli-fi. This point could also entail the changing modes and mediums related to certain genres based on the emergence of electronic forms of communication, such as fanfiction, blogs, podcasts, and interactive graphic novels.

- The way that every text could really be considered a 'reworking' of genre, although some lend themselves more easily to analysis if they include unique approaches to traditional generic conventions, as in the case of George Saunders' experimental narrative *Lincoln in the Bardo* which incorporates extracts from historical sources.

- The way that technological elements have impacted on changes to genre, as in the case of online interactive documentaries such as *The Block: Stories from a Meeting Place* or films such as *Bandersnatch* which allows its Netflix viewers to interact with the narrative and alter the non-linear plot at various intervals based on their decisions.

Genre of subject matter

- The reworking of an existing text to create an updated, contemporary version to reflect societal changes or ideological shifts, as in the case of Angela Carter's retelling of fairy tales in *The Bloody Chamber* short story collection.

- How a text's genre reflects contextual influences in style and content, as in *Unforgiven* by Clint Eastwood, *Sweet Country* by Warwick Thornton and *The Sisters Brothers* by Jacques Audiard*,* which are all adaptations of the Western genre.

- The effect of blending different genres into a hybrid, as in *Blakwork* by Alison Whittaker which is part memoir, fiction, journalism and poetry, or *Sleepwalk With Me* by Mike Birbiglia which combines stand-up comedy, feature film and memoir elements.

- The effects of challenging the audience's expectations of genre by adapting its features in unconventional ways, such as the absence of a narrator or focaliser together with the predominant use of reconstructions in the 2015 documentary *Servant or Slave.*

Activity: Traditional versus contemporary versions of genre

Based on the following example, complete the table below using some of your studied texts.

Genre	Traditional use of generic conventions and examples	The ways genre has been transformed, adapted, changed etc.
Film Noir	Dark themes of betrayal, paranoia, confusion, anxiety, fear of a threat, mystery; high-contrast lighting, low-lit sets, overuse of smoke and shadow, gritty urban settings, submissive or seductive femme fatales, perpetuation of patriarchal and/or misogynistic ideologies; cynical, criminal and violent anti-heroes; dark and pessimistic denouements (e.g. *The Maltese Falcon, Dark Passage, Double Indemnity, Fear in the Night, Kiss Me Deadly*)	Subversions or inversions of traditional gender expectations; atypical protagonists; lack of dialogue or voice-over narration; post-feminist influences; experimentation with blending of other conventional movie tropes such as science and dystopian fiction; updated visual styles and soundtracks (e.g. *Nightcrawler, Brick, Veronica Mars, Mulholland Drive, Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang, Gone Baby Gone, The Last Seduction, Sin City*)

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Explain how the genre of Text 1 contributes to the interpretation that readers make of its main ideas.

2. (Responding) Explain how at least one text manipulates the conventions of genre for a particular purpose and context. (2017 ATAR Exam)

3. (Composing) Create an imaginative text in a particular genre but with an atypical setting. (2018 ATAR Exam)

Context

The most important aspect of the glossary definition of 'context' is included in its description as: *the environment in which a text is responded to or created.* This is often referred to as the context of reception and the context of production, respectively. Context is further defined in the syllabus in two closely connected ways:

- *the general social, historical and cultural conditions in which a text is responded to and created (context of culture)*

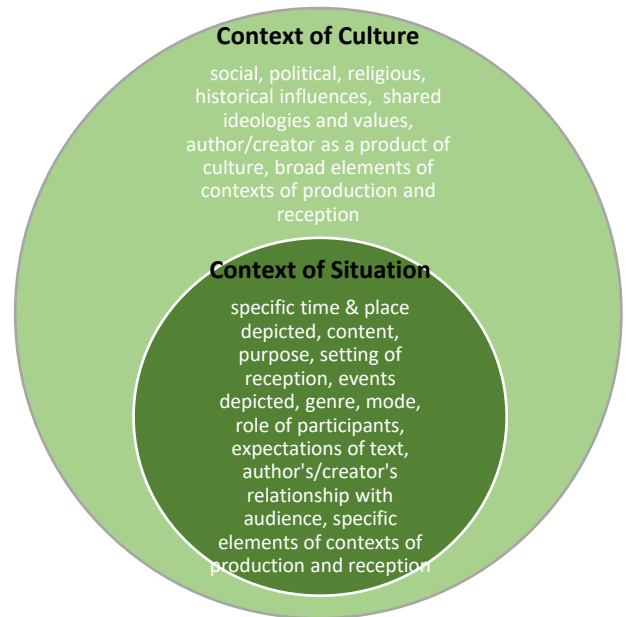- *the specific features of its immediate environment (context of situation).*

The 'context of situation' is embedded within the context of culture; it is simply a particular instance of the 'context of culture' at work, in much the same way that the weather is an instance of the climate. Identifying the context of situation involves examining the text through a magnified lens which focuses on its specific details, while the context of culture requires analysis of broader, more encompassing influences on the text from a greater distance. The situational context could entail the circumstances responded to, the situation portrayed in the text or even the situation in which the text is interpreted. Many factors can be considered aspects of both situational and cultural context; they are not easily distinguishable, given that the former is a magnified, concentrated version of the latter.

	Context of culture	Context of situation
Description of type of context	Social, political, historical and religious context; background, influences and values of creator; ideologies at the time of production and reception; shared meanings and assumptions; broad system of communication	The specific environment or event in which meanings are shared; the time, place and purpose of the event; subject matter; mode of delivery; relational aspects between sender and receiver of the text or participants; genre expectations
Example: **IQ2 racism debate of** **Oct 27, 2015; speech by Stan Grant**	Australian, Westernised, contemporary multicultural, context (late 2015) but responding to the ongoing impact of colonisation and other historical events; modern Aus. values of equality, dignity, respect and education promoted by public and political policy; dominant Aus. ideologies challenged as polarising due to racist attitudes that still underpin common assumptions and misconceptions, as reflected by media portrayals; delivered months prior to revelations about the abuse and mistreatment of boys in NT detention	Stan Grant,, a highly regarded Indigenous journalist; affirmative side of topic 'Racism is Destroying the Australian Dream' at Sydney Hall, IQ2 (event invites speakers to debate issues of public importance) to an audience of 100; debate held by Ethics Centre, Oct. 27 2015; filmed by ABC; broadcast nationally; published online a week before Australia Day; 'viral' viewing on Facebook and YouTube; delivered following the Adam Goodes booing scandal; impromptu rather than planned speech; personal, impassioned tone; spoken mode influenced by storytelling of grandfather

Activity: Exploring context

Select a text that you have studied and answer the questions listed below. Then reproduce the table on the previous page or the diagram to the right, adding a few dot points related to the text's context of culture and context of situation.

- What were some of the likely influences on the creator of the text? What may have motivated them to create the text? What is the likely purpose of the text? What themes, issues or ideas are related to the context surrounding the text's creation?
- Who is the probable intended audience of the text? Is this audience different to you? How do the contextual variables affect different audience interpretations?
- What are some of the political, social, cultural, historical and religious influences on the creation of the text and its possible interpretations?
- Does the setting reflect context, as in the case of *Mississippi Burning* which is set in 1964 in the midst of the American Civil Rights movement, or is the setting distinguishable from the context, as in Miller's use of a 1692 setting to reflect his 1950's context in *The Crucible*?

Context of Culture

social, political, religious, historical influences, shared ideologies and values, author/creator as a product of culture, broad elements of contexts of production and reception

Context of Situation

specific time & place depicted, content, purpose, setting of reception, events depicted, genre, mode, role of participants, expectations of text, author's/creator's relationship with audience, specific elements of contexts of production and reception

It is also important to consider the context of reception; that is, how the contexts of culture and situation operate in the experiencing of a text by its readers or audience. The way that you respond to a text as an individual is heavily shaped by your personal context and the circumstances in which you experience a text. Your understanding of and response to a feature film is considerably different when viewed in a cinema as opposed to your English classroom, and your response would differ significantly from that of your teacher because of differences in age, gender, experience and so on.

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Discuss the role of your personal context in interpreting Text 1.

2. (Responding) Account for the differences in the way two texts use generic conventions by considering their contexts. (2016 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) In a form of your choice, create a text that reveals a part of [a] person's history. (2018 WACE Exam)

Interpretations

'Interpretations' can be defined simply as the meanings made from texts. Due to the broad range of contextual factors that can influence a text's interpretation, these meanings can be widely varied and even conflicting. The process of understanding how meaning is made from a text involves careful consideration of the many aspects that contribute to a particular interpretation. Some influences on the various interpretations of the same text may include:

- personal context of the readers, viewers or audience

- expectations of the genre or text type, previous experiences and predictions

- the purpose and function of the text

- cultural, political, religious or psychological factors impacting on both the producer of the text and its audience

- individual values and attitudes

- the construction of the text, including its use of structural, language, generic and stylistic features

- the themes, ideas, issues and concepts explored in the text

- the inclusions, omissions, emphases and marginalisations in a text.

Activity: Exploring alternate interpretations

Research a text you have studied by reading a variety of reviews and analyses. Compile a list of different interpretations and meanings and compare them to identify points of consensus or disagreement. This works well with open-ended, ambiguous texts such as *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, *The Other Side of the World* by Stephanie Bishop, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, *The Natural Way of Things* by Charlotte Wood and *Broken Flowers* by Jim Jarmusch.

Readings

The syllabus identifies 'interpretation' as the result of *reading*, which is explained as *the process of making meaning of a text*. The glossary definition continues to explain that *this process draws on a repertoire of social, cultural and cognitive resources. Reading occurs in different ways, for different purposes, in a variety of public and domestic settings. Reading is therefore a cultural, economic, ideological, political and psychological act.*

In more simple terms, reading for meaning in texts and the subsequent interpretations of them is very much dependent on a range of transecting influences. It is little wonder that interpretations of a particular text can be so widely varied; they are as numerous and individual as the people that read them!
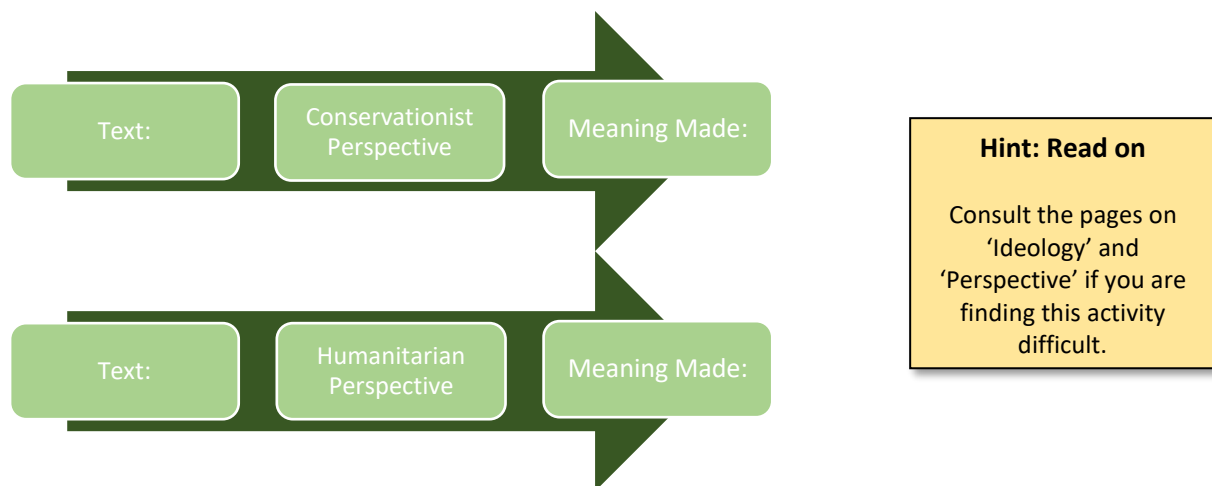
One way of understanding how different interpretations can be made from the same text is to first accept that there is no one 'right' or 'correct' meaning. That doesn't mean a candidate can produce a successful response just by arguing whatever they like though; whatever

meaning is made has to be adequately justified and supported with textual evidence. Regardless of whether the marker shares the interpretation or meaning made, a confident, convincing, high-achieving response is entirely possible as long as it is substantiated. Texts chosen for study or for the examination will always be thoroughly rich and multilayered in meaning, thereby inviting a variety of thoughtfully considered interpretations and responses.

Another useful strategy for grasping how the interpretation or meaning made from a text can vary significantly is to deliberately adopt different ideological perspectives as a lens through which the text is read. In this way, you will be able to see how the same text can generate different meanings, depending on who is reading it. Keep in mind that personal context and perspective will always influence the meaning of any text you encounter, so adopting a different 'persona' will assist you to consider different perspectives.

Activity: Considering alternate readings

Select two of your studied texts to apply to the diagrams below. Consider how these perspectives affect the meaning of the text or extracts from the texts.

| Text: | Conservationist Perspective | Meaning Made: |

Hint: Read on

Consult the pages on 'Ideology' and 'Perspective' if you are finding this activity difficult.

| Text: | Humanitarian Perspective | Meaning Made: |

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) How does the multimodality of Text 3 influence your interpretation of it? (2018 WACE Exam)

2. (Responding) Discuss the way in which your understanding of context has influenced your interpretation of the perspectives in at least one text. (2017 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Create a persuasive text that encourages readers to accept a particular interpretation of a controversial social trend or event.

Perspectives

The glossary defines 'perspective' as *a position from which things may be viewed or considered… A perspective is more than an opinion; it is a viewpoint informed by one or more contexts.* Perspective is a tricky concept to understand. Essentially, it can be considered as the viewpoint represented in the text, and the contextual factors which have shaped that viewpoint. It is the position taken by a text, character, speaker and so on in its representation of the world. It is important to realise, though, that a text may offer multiple perspectives or a perspective that is informed by several positions.

Similarly, you will develop your own perspectives regarding, for example, texts you study in this course. Your views on these texts will be informed by many factors, such as your personal context, your experience of learning about that text, wider social ideologies influencing your reading and your understanding of the construction of the text itself. Combined, this constitutes your perspective.

Ultimately, perspective refers to the lens through which we experience the world represented in the text, inextricably linked with contextual and other factors which shape that lens. Such factors include broad ideological influences, specific cultural or social contexts, particular personal contexts and experiences, as well as other texts, events and situations. For example, consider the recent decision of the World Surfing League to offer its male and female competitors equal prize money from 2019, making it the first US-based global sporting league to offer gender pay parity. The viewpoint of the league is that female surfing athletes offer an equally significant commitment to their sport and skill level as their male counterparts. This viewpoint was informed by the wider contemporary ideological movement towards pay parity and therefore deemed entirely appropriate in light of the contributions women have historically made to the sport, increasing numbers of women in surfing leadership roles and the fight for gender equality more generally in society, particularly around the issue of the gender pay gap. Altogether, the table below represents the World Surfing League's perspective on the issue.

Whose perspective	Perspective/ Viewpoint	Contextual influences shaping perspective
World Surfing League	Introducing equal prize money for male and female competitors is necessary to address the gender pay gap and the need to overcome gender stereotypes in sport; the decision for pay equality reflects the organisation's progressive philosophy and responds to a wider movement which recognises the need to acknowledge female athletes as equally deserving as men	• the wider ideological movement towards gender equality and pay parity • debate about inconsistent treatment of females in sports which have been traditionally male-dominated • a desire to increase viewership and fan engagement • increasing numbers of women in surfing leadership positions • increasing numbers of female recreational surfers • social attitudes towards inclusivity and sensitivity

Of equal importance is an understanding that perspective and narrative point of view, which the former is often confused with, are entirely different concepts. 'Perspective' is concerned more with *why* and *how* a viewpoint is developed while 'narrative point of view' refers to *how this perspective is communicated* to audiences in narrative texts. Other terms frequently confused with perspective include 'attitudes' and 'opinions'. While perspective may refer to the position from which a view is formed, it is not simply the view or opinion itself.

- When identifying or analysing perspective/s, you may find it useful to start by asking:

  - Whose perspective is provided or emphasised in the text?

  - Does this perspective work to represent a larger group in society or shared ideology?

  - Why is this perspective given? What is the effect of offering this perspective?

  - What effect does the perspective have on shaping the representations in the text, the values and attitudes endorsed and/or critiqued and the effects on the audience?

  - Are multiple perspectives offered in the text?

  - What contextual influences shape the perspective offered by the speaker? How do these contextual factors contribute to their position?

Consider the following example of perspective in a text:

Text	Whose perspective is emphasised?	What group or ideology does this perspective represent?	Why? Purpose of documenting this perspective? Its effect?
***Growing up Aboriginal in Australia* edited by Anita Heiss**	The contemporary Aboriginal perspective (varied – numerous contributors)	Group of contemporary Aboriginal perspectives grounded in the impacts of colonisation and discrimination but also paradoxically concerned with challenging stereotypes, highlighting successes and perseverance and thus showcasing diversity within the broader group	Purpose: to expose the diversity of Aboriginal experiences; to challenge dominant beliefs of passive acquiescence to white control; to provide insight and give voice to the consequences of assimilation and development of personal identity Effects: educate, inform, challenge, provoke empathy, foster reconciliation and respect

Topical issues often generate multiple perspectives. For example, Terry Barnes' feature article 'The Morality of Mandatory Detention' explores several perspectives related to the offshore processing of asylum seekers. Its publication on the 27th of August 2016 responded to heated public debate on the issue which continues to this day. Some of the perspectives included in the text include those of the author himself, who admits to deliberately avoiding thinking about the detainees on Manus and Nauru, Peter van Onselen who vehemently opposes this view and the Greens Senator Hanson-Young, who Barnes claims would support the view that 'all detained asylum-seekers are allowed into Australia without question'. The text highlights perspectives which are clearly at odds with each other.

Activity: Thinking about multiple perspectives

Describe three different possible perspectives related to the following issue:

Issue	Perspectives
Cutting of Sunday penalty rates	1. Weekday retail worker
	2. Small business owner
	3. Student with weekend job

Multiple perspectives can also be promoted in fictional texts, such as in *Run Lola Run* directed by Tom Tykwer or *All the Light We Cannot See* written by Anthony Doerr, but usually only one will be dominant. The dominant perspective does not necessarily need to be presented using first person point of view in a narrative or the viewpoint of a text's producer in a non-fiction text; it can be evident in any text, based on the degree to which one perspective is emphasised over others. Perspective can also be represented literally as a physical position from which things can be viewed, evident in texts like the film *Dunkirk* which portrays the World War II evacuation from three perspectives: land, air and sea.

The influence of context on perspective

Contextual influences on the perspectives offered in texts are many and varied, including:

- the influences of age, gender, religion, ethnicity and race on the perspective
- the cultural or situational contextual influences, including dominant ideologies or specific circumstances which shape the text
- the setting of the text which may influence the perspective, including determining the particular physical perspective or angle an event may be viewed from
- the social, cultural and personal identity of the perspective's owner (e.g. a mother, a refugee, a child, a student, a business owner, a war veteran etc.)
- the background, personal values and attitudes and experiences of the perspective's owner which shape their view the world and specific events that occur within it.

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first and third questions and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Explain how the perspective of Text 1 has been constructed using at least two narrative conventions.

2. (Responding) Explore how different perspectives on a controversy have been represented in at least one text. (2018 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Inspired by this image, compose two brief interpretive texts that represent different perspectives. (2017 WACE Exam)

Purpose

The types of texts in the syllabus glossary are grouped according to their purpose and are defined in the following ways:

Analytical Texts: *Texts whose primary purpose is to identify, examine and draw conclusions about the elements or components that make up other texts.*

Imaginative Texts: *Texts whose primary purpose is to entertain or provoke thought through their imaginative use of literary elements.*

Interpretive Texts: *Texts whose primary purpose is to explain and interpret personalities, events, ideas, representations or concepts.*

Persuasive Texts: *Texts whose primary purpose is to put forward a point of view and persuade a reader, viewer or listener.*

'Purpose' essentially refers to the main function (or intended function) of a text or the motivation behind its creation. Texts often serve multiple purposes but sometimes one particularly obvious reason for the text's development may be identifiable. These possible purposes include:

- to entertain
- to persuade
- to analyse
- to challenge
- to subvert
- to educate
- to inform
- to instruct
- to advise
- to satirise
- to support.

Activity: Identifying purposes of texts

Add some extra possible purposes of the texts you have studied to the list above. Now match all of these possible purposes of texts to the four types listed. Remember that often a text will serve multiple purposes.

Then group these purposes according to their similarities. This will help you identify the purposes of your studied texts with more nuance. For example, to argue, persuade or challenge.

The main purposes of a text can be identified by analysing the following aspects:

- the generic form of the text and its language, structural and stylistic features
- the effect of features or techniques used in the construction of the text
- contextual research surrounding the influences on the creator of the text
- your personal response to the text, both on first impression and after closer analysis
- the text's main themes, ideas, issues and concepts
- reviews and critical analyses of the text from a range of sources
- interview transcripts, comments or first-hand explanations by the text's creator
- the perceived function of the text or the perceived reason/s for its creation.

Activity: Identifying the purposes of studied texts

Reproduce the following table using your own texts as an example of each text type according to its primary purpose. Please note that a text may fulfil multiple purposes.

Analytical e.g. commentaries, essays in criticism, reflective essays, reviews etc.	Imaginative e.g. novels, poetry, plays, graphic novels, feature films etc.	Interpretive e.g. biographies autobiographies, documentary feature articles etc.	Persuasive e.g. advertisements, debates, speeches, arguments, discussions etc.
Close to Home by Alice Pung (essay collection)	*Ex Machina* by Alex Garland (feature film)	'This is America' by Childish Gambino (music video)	'Breathe and Push' by Valarie Kaur (persuasive speech)
'A Golden Age for Dystopian Fiction' by Jill Lepore (article)	*Between Us* by Clare Atkins (novel)	*You Daughters of Freedom* by Clare Wright (biography)	*Dick Smith's Population Puzzle* (ABC Documentary)
'The Man who Never Grew Up: The life and legacy of Roald Dahl' by Anwen Crawford (essay)	*Taboo* by Kim Scott (novel)	*The Tall Man: Death and Life on Palm Island* by Chloe Hooper (book)	'Man versus Earth' by Prince EA (short film)

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Analyse how the purpose of Text 1 is evident in its elements of construction.

2. (Responding) Compare how two texts have been constructed for similar purposes, but through different genres. (2017 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) *'I don't think you quite understand the ramifications of this decision.'* Incorporate this statement into a persuasive text for a resistant audience. (2018 WACE Exam)

Style

The style of a text is determined by the choice of particular stylistic features, defined in the syllabus as:

The ways in which aspects of texts (such as words, sentences, images) are arranged and how they affect meaning. Style can distinguish the work of individual authors (for example, Jennings' stories, Lawson's poems), as well as the work of a particular period (for example, Elizabethan drama, nineteenth-century novels), or of a particular genre or type of text (for example, recipes, scientific articles, play-by-play commentary). Examples of stylistic features are narrative viewpoint, structure of stanza, juxtaposition, nominalisation, alliteration, metaphor and lexical choice.

Activity: Identifying stylistic features in texts

Using the definition above, complete the following table. You should substitute your own texts in place of these examples if necessary:

Creator, period or genre	Specific examples	Stylistic features
Individual author	Tim Winton (e.g. *The Shepherd's Hut, Island Home, The Turning, Cloudstreet,*)	Lyrical prose, occasional 2nd person P.O.V., colloquial and figurative language, varied syntax, highly descriptive focus on setting
Individual author	Archie Weller (e.g. 'Herbie', 'Stolen Car', 'Fish and Chips', *Going Home*)	
Individual director	Peter Weir (e.g. *The Truman Show, Dead Poet's Society, Picnic at Hanging Rock*)	
Individual director	Michael Moore (e.g. *Fahrenheit 11/9, Where to Invade Next, Capitalism: A Love Story*)	
Period	Post-Colonialism (e.g. *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* by Thomas Keneally)	
Period	Post-Modernism (e.g. *The Well* by Elizabeth Jolley, *Maus* by Art Spiegelman)	

Activity: Analysing stylistic features in a studied print text

Conduct a detailed analysis of the style of one of your studied print texts by completing the following diagram, including providing definitions for each of the specified stylistic features.
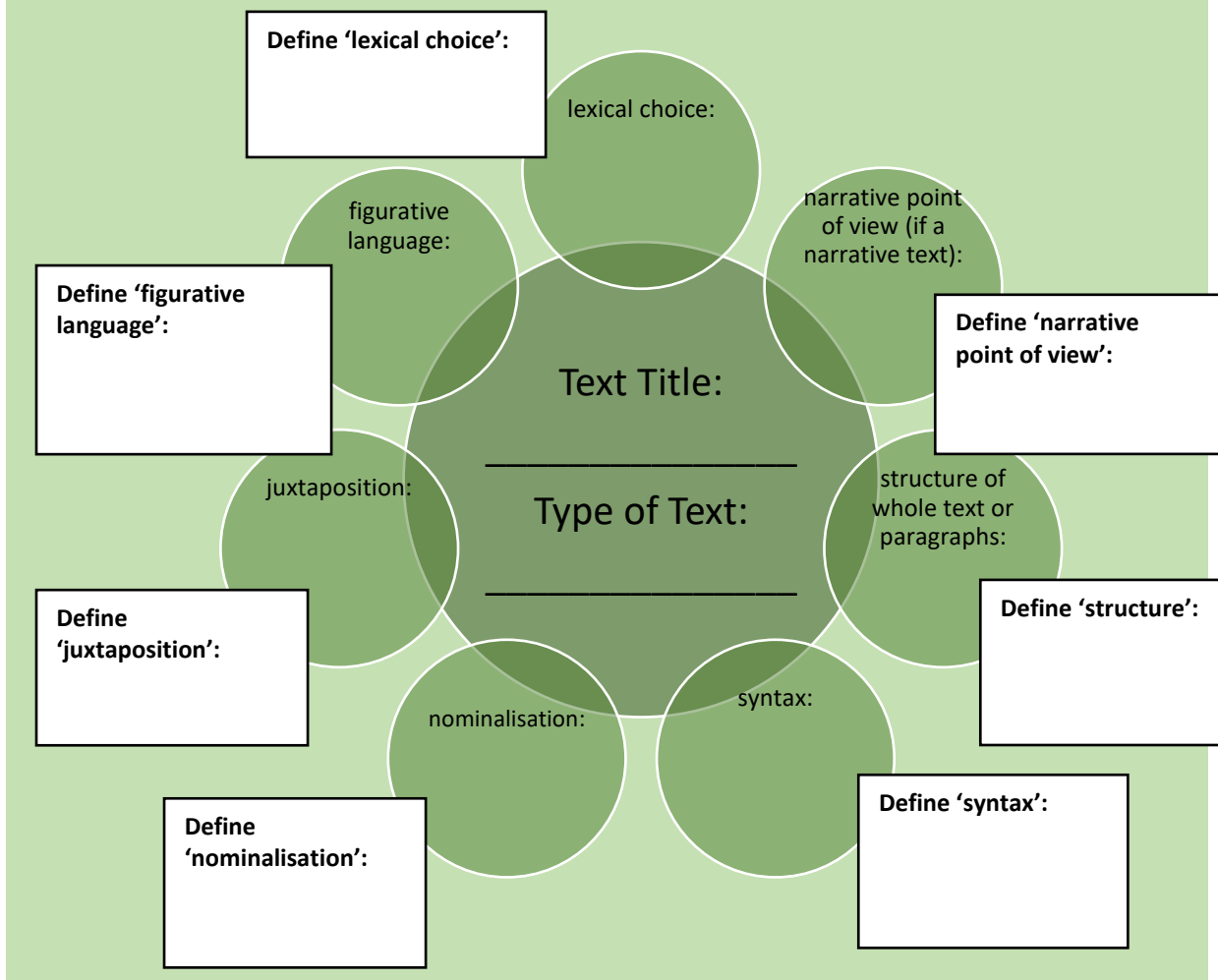
Define 'lexical choice':

lexical choice:

narrative point of view (if a narrative text):

Define 'narrative point of view':

figurative language:

Define 'figurative language':

Text Title:

_____

Type of Text:

_____

juxtaposition:

structure of whole text or paragraphs:

Define 'structure':

Define 'juxtaposition':

nominalisation:

syntax:

Define 'syntax':

Define 'nominalisation':

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first and third questions and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Compare the effect of the stylistic features employed in Text 1 with Text 2.

2. (Responding) Examine how the stylistic choices made by the creators of at least two texts you have studied provoked an empathetic response from you.

3. (Composing) Respond to the image below by creating a text that employs stylistic features to challenge or surprise an audience. (2016 WACE Exam)

Values

'Values' can be thought of as principles of significant importance or worth. At various times in our lives, depending on our personal development and circumstances, we may value principles such as friendship, financial wealth, education, independence or romantic love. In the texts we study, values can be explicitly stated but are more often implied; we can't always clearly detect their presence. This is particularly true when the values being endorsed or supported in a text are the same as ours – they are 'naturalised', so that we almost don't know they're there. In fact, we tend to empathise with and like a character if they share our own values and we generally perceive those with opposing values as antagonists.

The following questions are useful in helping you to identify the values underpinning texts:

- Who gets criticised and who gets endorsed? By whom? Why?

- Who are we encouraged to feel sorry for or empathise with and why?

- What values are given verbal support by characters/people? Do their actions support their words? Are those values rewarded?

- Does there appear to be a hierarchy of values at play? Which values are more highly regarded over others?

- Are there characters/people outside the main storyline that seem to comment on the actions of others?

- What happens to members of minority groups such as the homeless or Indigenous Australians?

- How are the members of minority groups represented? Are they shown to be different or similar? Are they stereotyped?

- At whom are we asked to laugh? Is that laughter affectionate, ironic or sarcastic?

- What is the tone of the text? What makes us decide to take it seriously/light-heartedly?

Values lay at the core of who we are; they are closely linked to identity and who we are as individuals, societies, communities and cultures. Here are some examples of how to write about values:

- In *Affluenza*, authors Clive Hamilton and Richard Denniss argue that Western society is characterised by overconsumption because of the dominance of *values* such as material possessions and financial wealth.

- In the documentary *Change My Race*, focaliser Anna Choy explores the damaging effects of valuing only a narrow version of beauty based on Western standards, which has contributed to an alarming rise in the rate of de-racialisation surgery which eradicates 'racial' features.

It is important to consider the values of different subjects in a text, how the text works to reveal these and what values are appealed to in readers or viewers.

Activity: Identifying values in studied texts

Consider the following example and use the blank sections for your own studied texts:

Text	Author's Implied Values	Character's Implied Values	Values you Share
The Secret River	Kate Grenville: equality, respect, education	William Thornhill: justice, security, land ownership, family	

Activity: Ranking your values

Below is an extensive list of values. Select ten of them and then rank them according to what you value the most to the least. Now try to add some more values to the list and identify which of these are promoted in the texts you have studied.

safety, equality, independence, trust, fame, wealth, freedom, honour, acceptance, fun, tradition, adventure, affection, beauty, academia, health, ambition, wisdom, celebrity, courtesy, family, loyalty, modesty, popularity, pride, equity, diversity, strength, courage, youth, imagination, humility, respect, patriotism, creativity, order, mateship, fertility, material possessions, adventure, faith, organisation, love

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first question and two of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Discuss how the author of Text 1 endorses particular values while challenging others.

2. (Responding) Show how at least one text reveals that the values of individuals are shaped by their circumstances. (2018 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Create an imaginative response that exposes the way that a character's values can change as the result of challenging events.

Attitudes

'Attitudes' is another nebulous term in the English syllabus. One way of grasping the concept of attitudes is to think of them as opinions or viewpoints. For example, in *I am Malala*, by Christina Lamb and Malala Yousafzai, the attitude (or opinion) that females should be entitled to an education is expressed very clearly through the representation of events and the perspective offered. Attitudes are based on our values; in this case, Yousafzai obviously values such principles as gender equality and education. These values have informed her defiant attitude in response to being denied the chance to pursue her academic potential due to the oppressive Taliban control of her native Pakistan.

Another way of thinking about attitudes is as a particular tone, reaction, disposition or feeling toward the subject matter. In *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw, Eliza Doolittle demonstrates a proud, defiant attitude towards classist prejudices based on her values of independence and self-improvement. The protagonist's actions and behaviours expressed these attitudes, just as they do for all of us.

It is important to understand that just because a text represents particular attitudes, the creator of the text doesn't necessarily support these themselves. In fact, sometimes characters, people or ideas may be represented in a negative way to emphasise their failings or invite criticism of their values and attitudes. Consider the following supporting examples:

- The destructive childhood actions of Amir in *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini are based on the character's condescending attitude of social superiority, not the author's.

- In *Gran Torino*, the initially ignorant and racist attitude of Walt Kowalski toward his Vietnamese neighbours is juxtaposed with his later, more accepting and enlightened attitude towards them. This characterisation serves to reveal the director's own concerns about some of the enduring racist attitudes which emerged in the US, post-Vietnam War.

Activity: Identifying conflicting attitudes in studied texts

Try to identify an example of a text that you have studied where a character or person is represented as endorsing an attitude towards a particular subject that opposes the attitude of the text's creator. Now write a thesis or summary statement based on the models above.

Activity: Identifying precise attitudes

Although many candidates can easily identify if an attitude expressed in a text is 'positive' or 'negative', these terms are really far too vague to offer sufficient analysis. Select some of the specific terms below and decide whether they can be deemed positive, negative or neutral:

> *apathetic, contemptuous, jovial, critical, bitter, sincere, concerned, urgent, solemn, indifferent, defiant, optimistic, selfish, irresponsible, caring, sceptical, condescending, ambitious, considerate, mature, determined, hopeful, regretful, insincere, thoughtless*

The decisions you made are really based on a value judgement, guided by what principles you feel are important. Now write a list of values which underpin these attitudes.

Tone

You may have noticed that many of the words used to describe attitudes can also be used to describe the tone of a text. This is essentially because tone articulates the attitudes the text's creator expresses towards their subject matter. Here are some examples of the possible ways to simultaneously write about a creator's attitudes and the tone of their text:

- Helen Garner, writer of *Killing Daniel,* conveys an affronted and disgusted tone and an outraged, furious attitude towards Paul Aiton due to his lack of remorse for his crime. This tone and attitude is emphasised through Garner's vivid description of his brutish character.

- The attitude of David Suzuki toward the threat of climate change is clearly one of fear and alarm, evidenced in many of his texts including *The Sacred Balance* and his 2006 autobiography.

- Andrew Morgan's disdainful, contemptuous attitude towards global capitalism, particularly reflected through the fast fashion industry and its exploitation of low-wage workers in developing countries, is expressed in *The True Cost* through various interviews with factory owners, garment workers and environmentalists.

- Tim Winton's *Island Home* develops a nostalgic, reverential tone in order to reflect the author's proud and respectful attitude toward the history and conservation of the natural Australian landscape.

- The bleak and despairing tone that Susan Abulhawa creates is used to express her attitude of condemnation against the futility of religious and ethnic conflict in *Mornings in Jenin*.

Although values and attitudes are closely related, they are different concepts so it's important that you don't treat them as one and the same. To provide a fairly simplistic, but arguably familiar analogy, parents sometimes reprimand their teenagers for expressing a defiant, dismissive attitude when they are asked to clean their room before heading out to a party. In that moment, perhaps the teenager values their social life more than a clean bedroom, which conflicts with the parents' value of a tidy house. In the same manner, the creators of texts reveal their own attitudes toward others, ideas, behaviours and so on, because of their values. The values are the foundation upon which the attitudes are formed.

> **Practice Questions:**
>
> Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:
>
> 1. (Comprehending) Explain how an attitude towards mining is expressed through the use of a specific textual feature. (2016 WACE Exam)
>
> 2. (Responding) Discuss how your attitudes influence your response to the way a controversy is represented in at least one text. (2017 WACE Exam)
>
> 3. (Composing) Create a persuasive text that challenges a dominant attitude related to the role of technology in society.

Voice

The syllabus glossary distinguishes between authorial voice and narrative voice. Regardless of whether analysing the author's voice (authorial voice) in a fiction or non-fiction text or the narrative voice within fiction texts, references to 'voice' should demonstrate an understanding of the persona, role, character or tone adopted by the author in constructing their text. Voice establishes the 'sound' of the story or writing and refers to the 'speaker' or sense of personality evident. The construction of voice is crucial in: achieving a writer's purpose, appealing to a specific target audience, reflecting or resisting a particular context and shaping the response of readers. Therefore, voice is one of the most significant aspects of construction, both when writing your own responses and analysing the work of others.
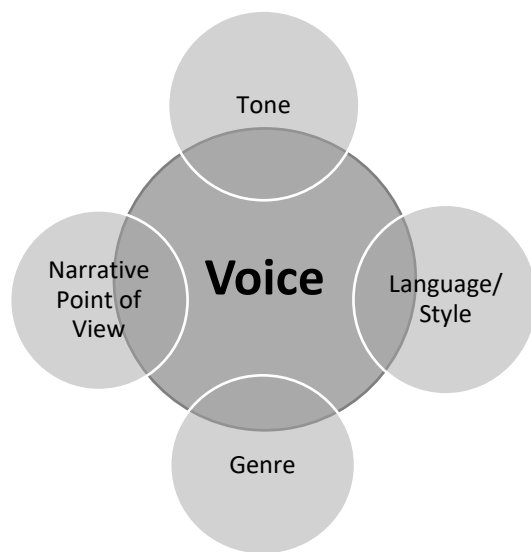
Hint: Voice is complex!

Voice is influenced by several inter-related factors, namely narrative point of view, language choices, style, tone and genre. Each of these aspects contributes to the construction of voice in a text.

Like most syllabus concepts, voice is strongly influenced by other key concepts. Discussion of voice may also require discussion of perspective, persona, context and so on. The interconnectedness of English concepts can't really be overstated.
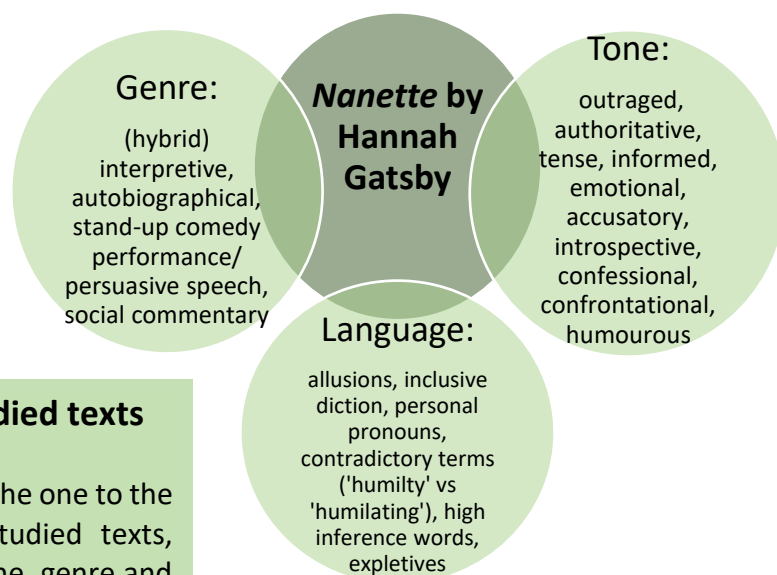
In fiction texts, when trying to accurately identify the voice of a text, it can sometimes be easiest to start by recognising narrative point of view in terms of 'how' the story is narrated. The narrative point of view – which could be first person, second person, third person omniscient or third person limited – will determine the degree of intimacy between narrator and reader and influence the authenticity and effect of the voice. Also consider the choice of character to function as the narrator. Be mindful that *narrative* point of view is only relevant to a discussion of fictional narratives, when there is a deliberate choice to be made about how the story will be communicated.

Additionally, the tone of the text is vitally important in any discussion of voice. As explained on the preceding pages, tone and attitudes can often be described using identical adjectives, such as 'critical', 'patronising', 'sympathetic', 'rebellious' etc. Additional tonal words to describe the voice of a text can include the following:

comical	*conversational*	*formal*	*causal*	*authoritative*	*convincing*	*nostalgic*
informal	*outraged*	*urgent*	*philosophical*	*humorous*	*incredulous*	*melancholic*
sombre	*serious*	*earnest*	*academic*	*impatient*	*frustrated*	*aggressive*	*accepting*
knowledgeable	*passive*	*hopeful*	*peaceful*	*sarcastic*	*laconic*	*curt*	*accusatory*
disgusted	*apathetic*	*relaxed*	*energetic*	*sensual*	*oppressive*	*bleak*

The tone and voice of the text is also largely determined by the style of writing or language used by the author. It may be shaped by the diction, syntax, punctuation, figurative language and other language conventions or stylistic choices. Therefore, in order to successfully explain how a particular tone of voice is created in a text, you are encouraged to select specific examples of language or stylistic features to support your points.

These language and stylistic choices will mostly be appropriate to the genre of the text, thereby working to consolidate the nature of the text's voice. For example, narrative writing is more likely to use figurative language, while an argumentative essay may use a more formal style in order to create a convincing voice. Try to assess whether the voice works harmoniously with the genre or resists the expectations associated with it. It is recommended that you at least attempt to analyse the point of view, tone and language/style and consider genre when examining voice. These features are closely related to each other, as illustrated in the following diagram:

Genre:

(hybrid) interpretive, autobiographical, stand-up comedy performance/ persuasive speech, social commentary

***Nanette* by Hannah Gatsby**

Tone:

outraged, authoritative, tense, informed, emotional, accusatory, introspective, confessional, confrontational, humourous

Language:

allusions, inclusive diction, personal pronouns, contradictory terms ('humilty' vs 'humilating'), high inference words, expletives

Activity: Voice in your studied texts

Complete a diagram similar to the one to the right related to your own studied texts, noting points related to the tone, genre and language which assist in the development of the voice of the text. Point of view only needs identifying if the text is in the form of a narrative.

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:
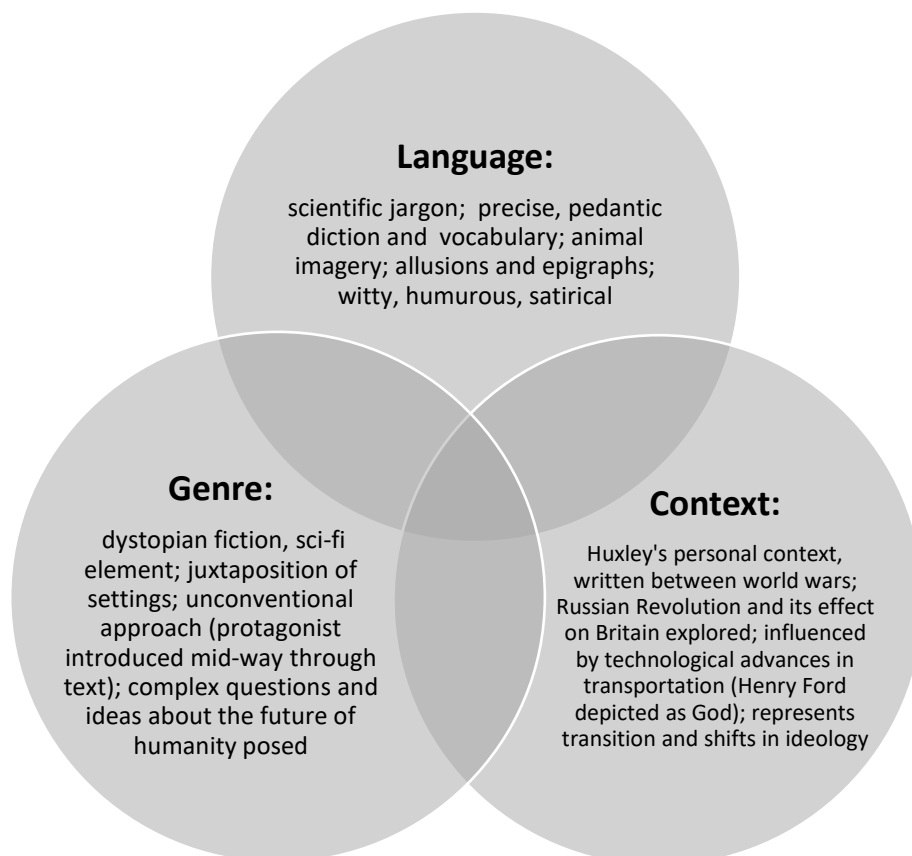
1. (Comprehending) How is the father-son relationship represented through the construction of the narrator's voice? (2018 WACE Exam)

2. (Responding) Discuss how voice has been crafted to reveal an inner or hidden conflict in at least one text. (2018 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Create an imaginative text with a central voice that conveys hope or redemption. (2017 WACE Exam)

Relationship between language, genre and context

When you add the prompt of 'relationship' to key concepts such as language, genre and context, which are explicitly referred to in the Unit Description for Unit 3, you can begin to see what type of questions may be posed by WACE examiners.

The specific relationship between language, genre and context features in the syllabus and therefore should be well understood. These elements are closely related because the genre of a text determines what type of language may be used in it and both personal and broader socio-cultural contextual factors further influence a creator's approach to using language within this genre. For example, an 'expose' style documentary film will likely utilise persuasive forms of visual language in order to convince a particular audience by appealing to certain values and attitudes consistent with their context.

Look at this simple diagram related to the novel *Brave New World* (1932) by Aldous Huxley, which is an additional illustration of how the relationship between genre, language and context works:

Language:

scientific jargon; precise, pedantic diction and vocabulary; animal imagery; allusions and epigraphs; witty, humurous, satirical

Genre:

dystopian fiction, sci-fi element; juxtaposition of settings; unconventional approach (protagonist introduced mid-way through text); complex questions and ideas about the future of humanity posed

Context:

Huxley's personal context, written between world wars; Russian Revolution and its effect on Britain explored; influenced by technological advances in transportation (Henry Ford depicted as God); represents transition and shifts in ideology

The above diagram suggests that Huxley's use of scientific jargon was a direct response to the significant technological and scientific developments of his time and works to fulfil the traditional purpose of dystopian texts: warning readers about a possible future in which humanity is at risk.

Activity: Understanding the relationship between language, genre and context in a studied text

Choose a text that you have been studying in class and, using the diagram below, examine the relationships between language, genre and context. Inside each of the circles, write three or four dot points that give examples of the type of language used in the text, the influences of context on the text and the conventions of the text's genre.

Then write down your thoughts about (a) the relationships between language and genre, (b) the relationships between genre and context, (c) the relationships between context and language, and (d) the relationships between all three.

To make your argument more specific, tease out and try to grasp the relationships linking dot points in and between each circle.

You may find it necessary to rephrase 'relationships between language, genre and context' with other terms or synonyms until you have mastered a solid grasp of this fairly challenging concept.

Selected Text:

Language:

Genre:
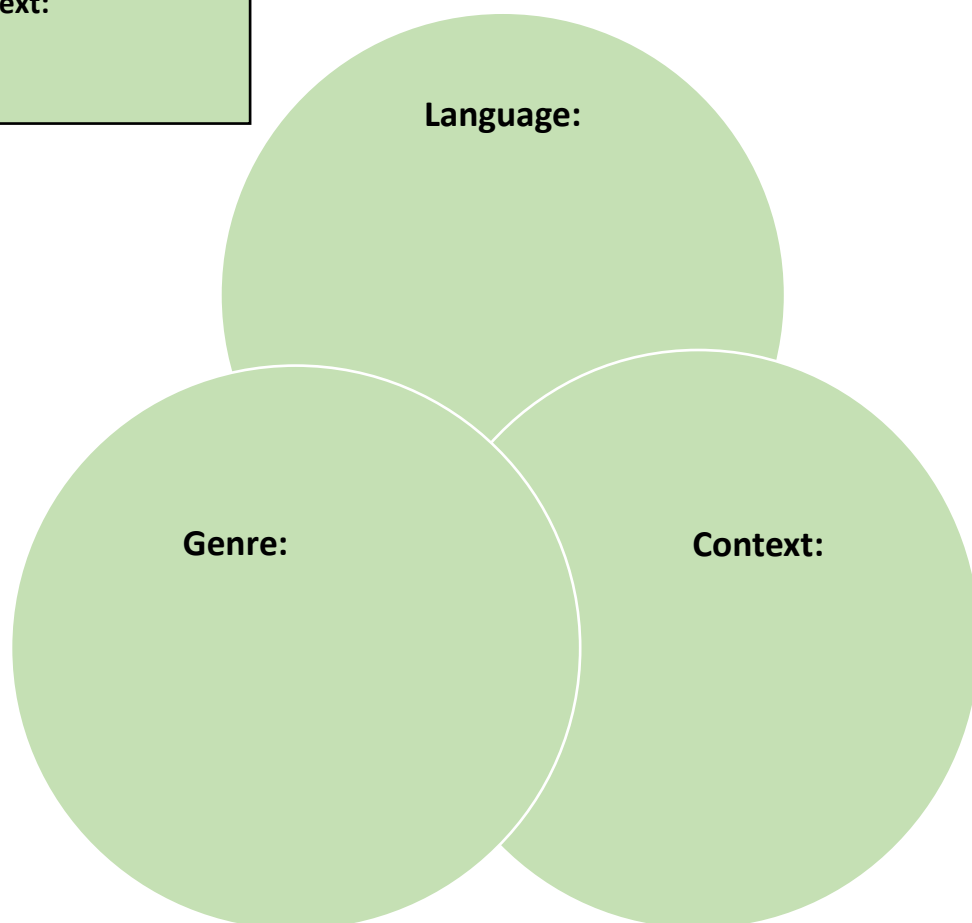
Context:

Consider these questions in relation to the texts you have studied:

- How does the language of the text work to reinforce accepted generic conventions?

- How does the language used in the text reflect the context of when it was produced?

- How are the generic conventions of the text affected by the circumstances surrounding the text's creation?

- How have language features been utilised in order to best reflect the personal, political, social or cultural events occurring at the time the text was made?

- How does the language used in the text work to build an atmosphere in keeping with the text's genre?

- How does the language used in the text construct characters or people as accepting of their immediate surroundings or situational context?

Activity: Wider reading and viewing reflection

Add some of the following texts to your independent reading and viewing practice. Examine the close relationship between written/visual language, genre and the context they reflect:

Educated by Tara Westover (memoir), *The Coves* by David Whish-Wilson (novel), *Hidden Figures* by Theodore Melfi (feature film), *Tell Me I'm Here* by Anne Deveson (memoir).

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected passages for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Compare how the language conventions used in Text 1 and Text 2 relate to their respective genres.

2. (Responding) With reference to at least two texts, evaluate how contextual factors have influenced the conformity to, or transformation of, a particular genre.

3. (Composing) Create an imaginative text that uses generic conventions to examine an issue relevant to a historical context.
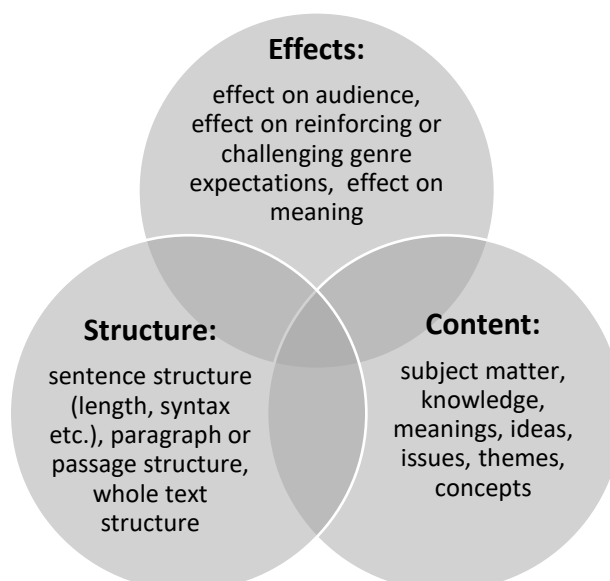
Relationship between content and structure

The choice of content and subject matter dealt with in a text often affects the way that a text is structured. For example, the content of imaginative texts is frequently structured in such a way that it establishes conflict or develops a climax in order to interest and engage readers. The structure of an analytical text may present different points of textual evidence in separate paragraphs in order to validate its thesis, which is normally proposed in the introduction.

Structure and content interrelate so closely because the ordering or sequence of information presented has the power to manipulate the reader or viewer's understandings and responses. Conventional sequences and patterns associated with particular generic structures can be reinforced, subverted or adapted.

Consider the following elements of structure which may apply to particular passages or texts in their entirety

- chronological
- embedded
- framed
- parallel
- in media res
- juxtaposition
- flashback
- circular
- alternating
-

- foreshadowing
- surprises or unexpected twists
- shifts (in setting or point of view)
- repetition
- cause and effect
- compare/contrast
- sequence
- problem and solution
- linear

The relationship between content and structure is illustrated in the diagram below. Together, structure and content can contribute to the overall interpretation of the text or individual sentences or passages.

Effects:
effect on audience, effect on reinforcing or challenging genre expectations, effect on meaning

Structure:
sentence structure (length, syntax etc.), paragraph or passage structure, whole text structure

Content:
subject matter, knowledge, meanings, ideas, issues, themes, concepts

Activity: Analysing the effect of structure

Consider the following examples and then complete the table with your own example:

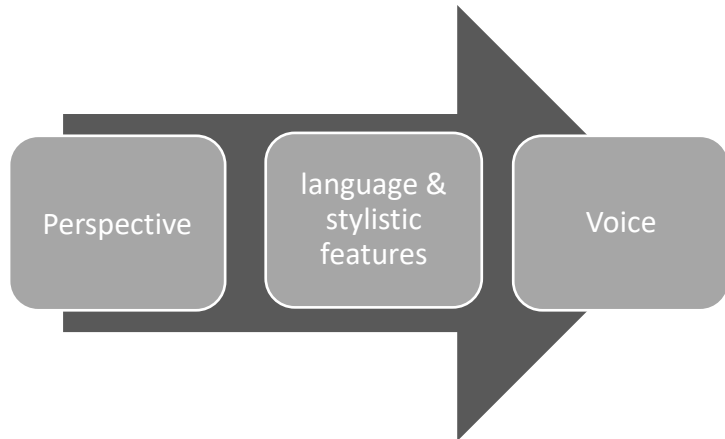| Text	Structural elements	Effect on audience
***The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood**	Novel fragmented and broken into sections to mirror Offred's experiences; consistency and repetition in every second chapter titled 'Night'; manipulation of temporal sequence through flashbacks or recollections and shifts in tense; addition of 'Historical Notes' section which works as an addendum	Understanding and appreciation of the disjointed, confusing nature of Offred's experiences; promotion of shock, curiosity, sympathy and interest through the omission or deliberate non-linear revealing of information and the ambiguous ending
***American Beauty* directed by Sam Mendes**	Narrated using voice-over; part of resolution revealed in exposition; narration comments on/contrasts with images; frequent foreshadowing; focus on several character arcs, not just the protagonist's; cross-cutting between characters; chronological and parallel narratives; double and triple cut-backs	Sense of curiosity and interest piqued by opening revelations; judgement of characters and empathy encouraged through parallel structure; cross-cutting and multiple character arcs; suspense built by frequent foreshadowing

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Discuss how the structural elements of Text 1 affect the way readers interpret the content of the passage.

2. (Responding) How have language or structural innovations been used to unsettle an audience in at least one text? (2018 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Compose an imaginative text that uses structural patterns in order to create an unusual or unexpected effect.
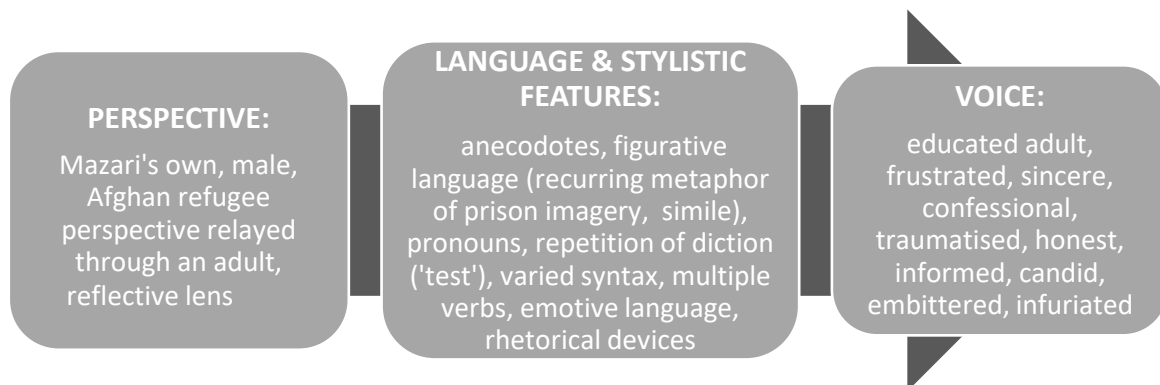
Relationship between voice and perspective

The concepts of voice and perspective are very closely related. This is because voice is a deliberate construction which works as a vehicle to convey the perspective. It offers a sense of the sound of the speaker, revealing both their viewpoint and context which together reveal a perspective. Thus, voice is constructed to reveal a perspective and its associated values and attitudes.

As in the diagram on the right, it can be best to start by deciding whose perspective is being provided. The perspective is not necessarily that of the author or creator; even if it is, it may serve to represent a larger group or ideology in society rather than simply highlighting a personal perspective. That perspective, and the manner in which it is conveyed, will work to shape the resulting sense of voice in the text.

Perspective	language & stylistic features	Voice

Text: *The Rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif* by Najaf Mazari

PERSPECTIVE:

Mazari's own, male, Afghan refugee perspective relayed through an adult, reflective lens

LANGUAGE & STYLISTIC FEATURES:

anecodotes, figurative language (recurring metaphor of prison imagery, simile), pronouns, repetition of diction ('test'), varied syntax, multiple verbs, emotive language, rhetorical devices

VOICE:

educated adult, frustrated, sincere, confessional, traumatised, honest, informed, candid, embittered, infuriated

Text: *No Sugar* by Jack Davis

PERSPECTIVE:

Aboriginal perspective; marginalised, opressed perspective; Jack Davis' perspective; the Millimura family's perspective; subversive perspective

LANGUAGE & STYLISTIC FEATURES:

Noongar and Aboriginal English words and phrases in dialogue; frequent derogatory references to dirtiness, laziness, violence etc. by white characters; colloquialisms and slang

VOICE:

(variable, dependent on characters)

authoritative, controlling, candid, angry, resentful, scornful, mournful, authentic, frustrated, passive

Multiple Voices

Texts can also include multiple voices which highlight different perspectives. The glossary defines the phrase 'multiple voices' in the following way:

> *Voices in texts: As well as an author's voice, texts often contain 'multiple voices'. These are the views, positions, ideas and perspectives of other individuals or groups. It is important to recognise the various voices in a text, how they relate to one another, and how the creator of a text uses these to shape audience response.*

It is important to recognise the distinction between 'voice' and 'multiple voices' in a text; one is not simply the plural form of the other. While 'voice' refers to the authorial or narrative voice in a text and can be explained by an analysis of point of view, language, genre and tone, 'multiple voices' relates more directly to the perspectives provided. In her TED Talk, 'The Danger of a Single Story', novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie expertly explains the importance of including a wide range of perspectives in written and visual texts in order to 'give a voice' to those who are typically silenced or marginalised.

Most narratives will include multiple voices in the form of opposing character perspectives, in order to generate conflict as part of the plot development. The phrase can also be applied more literally to texts which provide different narrators or 'voices' in order to explain events from the perspective of more than one character, as in the case of *The Longest Memory* by Fred D'Aguir and *After the First Death* by Robert Cormier.

Non-fiction texts can also include different voices and perspectives. For example, the inclusion of personal accounts or interviewee perspectives in documentaries such as *Under the Gun*, *Embrace* and *People Like Us* can be regarded as 'multiple voices'. In the written text, 'How an Indigenous Renewable Energy Alliance Aims to Cut Power Costs and Disadvantage' by Dyani Lewis (theguardian.com), many interviewees are provided with the opportunity to 'voice' their perspectives. These include those of Euahlai elder, Ghillar Michael Anderson, the director of 360 Energy group, Michael Anthony, and Murrawarri elder, Fred Hooper. These voices are additional to the authorial voice of the article's writer; therefore, multiple voices are included in the text and these serve to represent multiple perspectives.

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first and third questions and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Discuss the effectiveness of voice in presenting a particular perspective in Text 1.

2. (Responding) Discuss how the multiple voices in a text present a range of perspectives on an issue or theme.

3. (Composing) In a form of your choice, create a distinctive voice to communicate an unexpected perspective with reference to the image below. (2016 WACE Exam)

Relationship between text and context

Any text is inextricably linked to context. Although the syllabus refers only to the broad context of culture and the specific context of situation, the contexts of reception and production remain valid. Context supports the meaning of a text. It is not 'used' in the same way a convention or textual feature might be. Context of culture and situation informs the production of a text and a deep knowledge of these factors will help strengthen your understanding further. Moreover, the context of reception can inform our understanding of a text too. An understanding of the relationship between text and context can be gained by considering the following table:

Context of Production	Context of Reception
Both terms include context of culture (broad socio-cultural and historical influences) and context of situation (specific influences)	
How is the text influenced by the creator's context? Was the creator responding to a particular event, person, group, ideology or development?	How have the contextual influences listed on the left changed since the time the text was created? In what way? Describe the context of reception.
What personal/background experiences have played a part in influencing the representations of themes, issues or ideas in the text?	Is the context in which the text is interpreted in different from that which the author likely intended? In what ways?
What are the political, historical, social, cultural and psychological contextual influences in shaping the context of production?	How does your personal context affect your interpretation of the text? What are some other possible interpretations and what have been the influences on them?

The relationship between context and text should not be underestimated. It could be argued that context not only surrounds and supports the text at all times but also initiates its creation in the first place, as illustrated in the diagrams below:

Context

Text

Context
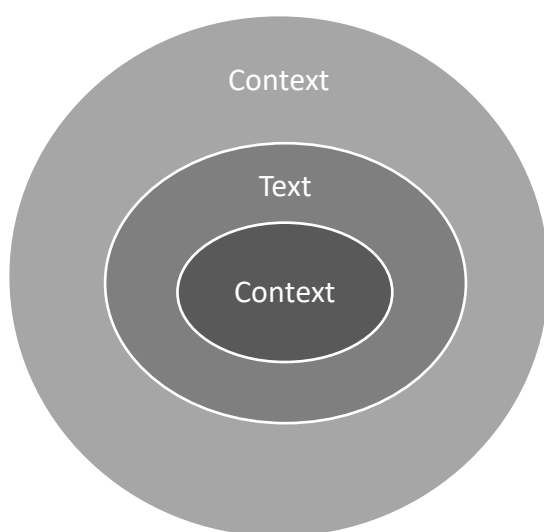
Withdrawal of American troops from Iraq, post-Bush administration, mostly American audience, expectations of war film genre, small budget, low-grossing, Oscar winning 'best picture' 2010, criticised as a misrepresentation due to omissions and reversal of war criticism

The Hurt Locker by Kathryn Bigelow (2009)

Shifting attitudes towards war, screenplay based on accounts of a freelance journalist placed in Iraq in 2004, history of war film and established conventions

It is important to understand elements of your personal context and the way that these factors influence your own understanding of texts. For example, if you are a refugee or even an immigrant yourself, you are likely to interpret a text such as *Exit West,* by Moshin Hamid, quite differently than those who have fewer shared experiences with the characters. It may sound obvious, but some texts resonate more with us than others and sometimes the reason for this is their ability to connect with our personal context. This is not to say that we can only enjoy texts that reflect our own contexts; in fact, some of the most engaging and powerful texts are ones that expose us to experiences far removed from our own. When considering personal context, think about some of the following factors and how these might influence the meaning that you make of a text:

- your age and gender
- your political and/or religious beliefs
- your values, attitudes and opinions
- your education and prior knowledge
- your ambitions and goals
- your background experiences and childhood
- your identity as a student, sibling, son/daughter, friend etc.
- your nationality and/or ethnicity
- the location of your home
- your life experiences and memories.

Activity: Comparing personal context to studied texts

Consider two of your studied texts which may respond to or reveal contexts either different from or quite similar to your own, by completing the table below:

Text	Context	Similarities to your context	Differences from your context

As already established, an understanding of context supports the meaning of a text. Imagine reading *Animal Farm* without an understanding of the Russian Revolution and the Stalinist era – you would really have no idea of the allegorical function of the text and may read it as a wild work of imagination about talking animals! It is likely that you are already examining the contextual influences on the texts you study; this is a crucial part of understanding why and how texts are constructed, as well as how they are interpreted.

Consider the following example of the relationship between text and context, using an example written by Ray Bradbury. Try to finish the table with your own example:

Text	How knowledge of contextual influences shapes meaning
'The Pedestrian' by Ray Bradbury	Understanding of Bradbury's experiences as a writer during the 1950s; his concern at the pace of technological progress including the rise of television; his personal experience of being questioned by police for walking one evening; our understanding and appreciation of the enduring relevance of 'The Pedestrian' which lies in its examination of human nature and shared values including individuality, creativity, human connections and the natural environment; the significance of Bradbury's concerns about the over-reliance on technology at the expense of human relationships and engagement with the world around us

Practice Questions:

Attempt the following sample questions using teacher or self-selected texts for the first question and one of your studied texts for the second:

1. (Comprehending) Explain how your personal context affects your interpretation of one of the ideas in the text.

2. (Responding) Account for the differences in the way two texts use generic conventions by considering their contexts. (2016 WACE Exam)

3. (Composing) Compose an imaginative text that explores a universal theme in a context far removed from your own.

Glossary of terms in context

The syllabus glossary has been used in the following list of sentences to enable candidates to observe how the words can be used 'in context'.

Aesthetic	The **aesthetic** appeal of *The Good Lie* is evident in the film's beautifully executed cinematography depicting flashbacks of the vast Sudanese landscape, which captures the refugees' connection to their former homeland.
Analyse	In order to **analyse** the underlying meaning of the profoundly moving imagery in the short film 'Irregulars', created by Fabio Palmieri, the use of symbolism and metaphor needs to be carefully considered.
Appreciation	An **appreciation** of the multimodal elements of *Bran Nue Day* is possible due to its quirky and unique approach, using dynamic visual and musical elements, while dealing with otherwise serious social, ethical and political issues.
Attitudes	In *Cinderella Man*, Director Ron Howard highlights Braddock's determined, resolute **attitude** towards winning the fight in order to secure financial stability for his family, whose safety and comfort the boxer clearly values.
Audience	Sean Penn challenges the **audience** of *Into the Wild* to recognise the true beauty of the natural environment through its juxtaposition with a consumerist, materialistic lifestyle.
Author	The **author** of any work of fiction may be wise to accept Ernest Hemingway's famous assertion that, 'We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master.'
Context	The historical **context** of *Burial Rites*, written by Australian author Hannah Kent, is captured in a compellingly believable manner which affords readers an insight into an environment infinitely different from their own.
Convention	The analysis of characterisation as a key narrative **convention** in *All the Bird's Singing*, written by Evie Wyld, naturally leads to an evaluation of the role of other **conventions** that contribute to it, such as setting and point of view; indeed, it could be argued that most generic **conventions** are inextricably linked.
Digital technologies	The use of mobile phones or tablets that allow students quick, easy access to research materials have proved to be invaluable **digital technologies** in recent decades.
Digital texts	The interactive journalistic piece titled 'Untangling the Overlapping Conflicts of the Syrian Civil War', published online by *The New York Times* in October 2015, proves that **digital texts** allow readers to develop a solid understanding of complex issues and relationships.
Evaluate	In order to adequately **evaluate** the issues that underpin a text such as *Well-Founded Fear*, directed by Shari Robertson and Michael Camerini, a robust attempt to consider the influence of important contextual factors, such as the Australian asylum seeker and refugee policy, is necessary.

Figurative language	The strong use of **figurative language** in Ray Bradbury's short story 'All Summer in a Day', such as the frequent inclusion of metaphors, similes and personification, works to present a bleak, disturbing setting for the story's heartbreaking climax.
Form; forms of texts	The **forms** that can be considered 'literary texts', such as novels, poetry, short stories, plays and fiction, generally differ in their more flexible shape and structure than media **forms of texts**, such as newspaper articles, websites and editorials.
Genre	**Genre** can refer to broad, general classifications of texts, such as poetry, novels and biographies. The **genre** of a text can also be categorised further and more specifically using more traditional terms such as romance, science fiction and fantasy. It is important to note that new **genres** are emerging constantly, such as Nordic noir, cli-fi, new weird and Indigenous realism.
Hybrid texts	As a **hybrid text**, *Fatherland* by Robert Harris is an interesting example that reads simultaneously as a dystopian, speculative fiction and an alternate history novel with elements of a murder mystery. Additionally, it includes mixed media components in the form of illustrations, maps and genuine artefacts such as memos and letters.
Ideas	The **idea** that the elderly are often dismissed, ignored or treated as totally incompetent is cleverly detailed in Helen Garner's article 'The Insults of Age'.
Idiom	Let's not beat around the bush and have you barking up the wrong tree – if identifying the five examples of **idiom** in this explanation is a piece of cake then you're obviously on the ball. If not, keep your chin up – you may need to work on your understanding that an **idiom** is a non-literal saying or expression, often unique to a particular social group or country.
Interpretation	The ambiguous endings of texts such as *No Country for Old Men*, directed by the Coen brothers, or *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, encourage viewers or readers to develop their own **interpretation** of the resolutions.
Issues	The **issues** carefully examined in William F. Ruddiman's non-fiction text, *Plows, Plagues and Petroleum: How Humans Took Control of Climate* centre on climate change and its potential negative effects on the future of humanity.
Language features	A range of **language features** such as lengthy sentences, repetition of the conjunction 'and', typography and digressions in thought, typical of 'stream of consciousness' writing, shape the meaning of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by allowing readers access to the unique thought processes of a young boy suffering from what has been widely interpreted as Asperger syndrome or high-functioning autism.
Language patterns	Noel Pearson's 'Hope Vale' speech incorporates a number of **language patterns** in order to engage audiences and create a persuasive argument, such as tri-colon, anaphora, repetition of pronouns and a number of medium length sentences interspersed intermittently with short, punchy sentences.

Literary texts	The artistic value of **literary texts**, such as novels, poetry, short stories, plays, non-fiction and multimodal texts, lies in their enduring or artistic value, their personal, social, cultural and aesthetic appeal and their potential for enriching students' scope of experience.
Media texts	The construction of **media texts** such as advertisements, television programs, websites, newspaper articles and magazine articles differ from literary texts in that they often involve numerous people in their construction and are usually shaped by the technology used in their production.
Medium	The **medium** of television has seen a rise in the delivery of a number of hybrid texts, such as 'comedy vérité' (e.g. *The Office*), 'gastrotravel' (e.g. *A Taste of Travel*) and 'docusoaps' (e.g. *Airport, Cops*), that combine elements of different traditional genres.
Metalanguage	When analysing any text, it is important to try and use the correct **metalanguage**, such as all of the terms contained in this glossary and specific, language-related terminology, including words such as mise-en-scène, symbolism, setting, sentence, conjunction etc.
Mode	Matt Ottley's 2007 multimodal text, *Requiem for a Beast*, is a unique text in that it adds to the reading and viewing **modes** typically associated with graphic novels by including a musical score to engage the listening **mode** as well.
Mood	The ominous, foreboding and atmospheric **mood** created in Jane Campian's *The Piano* is the result of the film using distinctly evocative imagery to suggest the protagonist's relationship with the natural environment.
Multimodal text	*Maus* functions as a sophisticated, complex **multimodal text** as it requires critical engagement with both visual and written modes which equally contribute to its meaning.
Narrative	A **narrative** is basically a story that can be embedded in a variety of forms or texts such as a novel, short story, poem or feature film and will likely include a deliberate attempt to manipulate **narrative** conventions such as setting, characterisation, point of view etc.
Narrative point of view	The predominantly limited third person **narrative point of view** used in *Fly Away Peter* by David Malouf chronicles the life of Jim Sadler with a particular focus on themes such as the brutality of war, the continuity of life and the role of self-perception in shaping identity.
Personification	In William Wordsworth's poem 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud', **personification** is used in the description of both daffodils 'dancing in the breeze' and the waves 'beside them dance', thereby giving both daffodils and waves human characteristics.
Perspective(s)	Tim Minchin's 2013 UWA Address highlights his personal **perspective** in regard to how one's future should be approached by offering nine life-lessons to assist graduating students. By contrast, *Gran Torino* is representative of the prejudiced, white, male **perspective** of Walt Kowalski coming to terms with cultural diversity in 20th century America.

Point of view	The **point of view** expressed by the filmmakers of *The Cove* is clearly that dolphins are being brutally and unlawfully hunted at the hands of the Japanese.
Prose	**Prose** is simply any form of spoken or written language that is not drama or poetry (the latter of which adheres to a metric structure) which can be analysed for its construction, quality and effect.
Reading	**Reading** a text, whether written or visual, requires an attempt to comprehend and make meaning from it; **reading** can be very individual or dependent on contextual factors.
Readings	**Dominant reading:** The most popular, **dominant reading** of the classic fairy tale *Cinderella* is that it stands as an optimistic, romantic love story in which love conquers all. **Alternative readings:** An **alternative**, Marxist **reading** that focuses on the gaps and silences in the text might explore the character of Cinderella. She could be interpreted as a symbolic representative of the exploited lower class, reduced to domestic servitude and engaged in a battle to overcome her oppressed role in society. **Resistant reading:** A **resistant reading** which challenges or questions the assumptions underlying the text results in the interpretation of the narrative as a pessimistic warning that men only value the physical appearance of females based on first impressions and little else.
Representation	The **representation** of genetic determinism as a destructive ideology in *Gattaca* works to highlight important aspects of social control relevant to the future of science.
Rhetoric	The considerable power of effective **rhetoric** is emphasised in the feature film *The Great Debaters* which seeks to highlight how the discourse of an argument can affect considerable change in people's values and attitudes.
Rhetorical devices	The interesting use of **rhetorical devices**, such as epithets, anecdotes, anaphora and 'us and them' terminology, rather than wholly inclusive diction, in Paul Keating's influential Redfern Park speech of 1992 contribute to its enduring impact; it is now regarded as one of the most significant Australian speeches of all time and the first from a Prime Minister to publicly acknowledge colonialism in contributing to Indigenous challenges.
Short answer response	In the Comprehending Section of the Year 12 ATAR English WACE examination, candidates are required to produce three succinct **short answer responses** of 200–300 words each.
Stylistic choices	The **stylistic choices** made by Jonathan Safran Foer in *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, such as the narrative viewpoint of the nine-year-old protagonist, the unusual and widely varied sentence structure, incorrectly formatted dialogue and a range of graphic elements, work together to achieve particular effects, such as irritation, cynicism or empathy.
Stylistic features	The work of Henry Lawson, who is often regarded as one of the most prolific and popular Australian colonial writers, can often be recognised for its **stylistic features** such as brief sentences, direct language and sparse use of

	adjectives, all of which contribute to the laconic, authentic sense of realism in his stories and poems.
Synthesise	In order to **synthesise** the meaning of a text in its entirety, you will need to combine your interpretation of its various parts into a concise and coherent summary.
Text structure	The **text structure** of an analytical essay, which includes introductory and concluding paragraphs, body paragraphs, topic sentences, a thesis and points introduced before being supported with textual evidence, works together with formal, academic language features to shape meaning.
Theme	The common **themes** examined in written or visual texts include such examples as displacement, empowerment, man against nature, overcoming fear, the power of words and the will to survive.
Tone	The **tone** of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* is predominantly bleak, despairing, grim, sombre and hopeless.
Types of texts (analytical, imaginative, interpretive, persuasive)	David Marr's **analytical text**, 'The Art of Biography' (December 2016), explores the role of biographers and their relationship with their subjects. As an **imaginative text**, *Good Will Hunting* draws on some of the real class and social divisions in society in its inspiring, moving and sometimes humorous fictional story. Mark Baker's **interpretative text**, *The Fiftieth Gate*, tells of the power of memory through an exploration of his Jewish parents' recollections of their experiences during the Holocaust. The 'We Love Our Lamb' advertisements, released just prior to Australia Day annually, are **persuasive texts** that often generate considerable controversy due to their representations of Australian identity.
Visual elements	The **visual elements** in the short film adaptation of Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing*, such as composition, framing, symbolism and social distance, enhance its themes of alienation, acceptance and belonging.
Voice/Voices in texts (see also Narrative point of view and Tone)	The passionate, purposeful, candid and educated **authorial voice** used by Stan Grant in *Talking to My Country* is shaped by both his personal experiences and extensive knowledge of Aboriginal affairs. Despite Holden Caulfield's sarcastic, suspicious and ultimately unreliable first person **narrative voice**, his character continues to resonate with both adolescents and adults alike, even decades after the first publication of J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.
Voices in texts	*True Blue? On Being Australian*, a collection of written and visual texts edited by Peter Goldworthy, incorporates **multiple voices** in order to provide a range of views, positions, ideas and perspectives related to the Australian national identity.

The Comprehending Section

General observations

The Comprehending Section is primarily concerned with your ability to deconstruct existing written, visual and/or multimodal texts. Your main aims in this section should be threefold:

- to demonstrate an understanding of the texts' main ideas
- to demonstrate an understanding of the texts' construction
- to compose a clear, succinct response.

The Comprehending Section contains **two or three unseen texts**, including both written and still images. One or more may be multimodal (combining written and visual elements, in this case). These texts can be of almost any type, excluding drama and poetry texts. Therefore, you should be familiar with the ways in which written and visual language modes work, so that you can apply that understanding to any text.

There will be **three questions**, one of which may ask you to compare two of the texts. You must answer **all three questions**, which are equally weighted. Your answers must be in the form of a short answer; a concise response of between **200–300 words**.

Comprehending is worth **30%** of your total exam mark and it is recommended that you spend **one hour** on this section.

The Comprehending Section may require you to read or interpret a text:

- for its meanings: the representations of particular groups, ideas, themes and issues
- for is genre: its use of generic conventions, similarities with or differences to other texts of the same genre
- for its perspectives: viewpoints, values, attitudes or ideologies
- for its construction: the use of structural, language or stylistic features and/or patterns, particular to its mode
- for its effects: its impacts on audience response, its purpose/s and/or function/s
- for its relationships: the connection between different syllabus concepts such as voice and perspective or content and structure, the interplay of visual and written elements, the most/least influential features of the text
- using a compare and/or contrast approach applied to any of the previous points.

The above list does not include references to all syllabus concepts. You may be required to address others or any of the above in combination with each other. Keep in mind the three main criteria in this section, listed at the top of this page.

Types of questions

Depending on the question, your focus may be directed to particular features of the text, even if you would prefer to discuss other aspects of significance. This is because questions are likely to fit into one of the following three categories:

Open questions

These will be 'open' and general in nature. This type of question will require you to identify and comprehend aspects of the text without directing you to specific textual features. For example, *Explain how textual features in Text 1 work to provoke a reaction.* In this question, candidates must decide exactly which aspects of construction to discuss along with how many, in addition to exploring the reaction these aspects provoke.

Partially open questions

These questions may specify one or two aspects that you need to focus on while also encouraging you to select other aspects yourself. For example, *Explain how narrative conventions expose the consequences of bullying in Text 2.* In this question, candidates can freely select which and how many conventions to discuss, but they must be narrative conventions that specifically and directly relate to the theme of bullying and its consequences.

Closed questions

These questions will explicitly name the aspects you must focus on, such as a language or narrative convention, a particular idea etc. For example, *Examine how body language reveals ideas about the distribution of power represented in Text 3.* In this question, candidates can only discuss body language and the power relationship conveyed. They cannot discuss any unrelated points without being penalised.

Each type of question presents its own challenges and advantages for candidates. As always, the bottom line is that you need to answer the questions asked of you on the day; you cannot predict with any certainty exactly what type of questions will be included.

Hint: Know your limits

Most people produce around 250 handwritten words per page, but this can obviously vary quite significantly, depending on handwriting size and spacing, so you need a reliable visual guide to work to. Count the words that you have handwritten on a full A4 sized piece of paper to give you an idea of how many words you personally write. Markers have a very good sense of how much is 'too much'; almost all of the best answers in this section were between a page to a page and a half in length.

Activity: Open, partially open or closed questions

Decide whether the following questions are open, partially open or closed questions. Then identify which aspects of the text have already been decided for you to focus on in your responses and which ones you must select independently.

2016, 2017 and 2018 ATAR English Examination Questions	Type of question (open, partially open or closed)	What choices have been made for you?	Which choices you can make yourself?
Explain how an attitude towards mining is expressed through the use of a specific textual feature.			
Analyse how the snake is created to reveal an idea in Text 2.			
How does the multimodality of Text 3 influence your interpretation of it?			

Text types used

The Exam Brief explains that this section will contain at least one visual text, at least one written text and one or more multimodal texts. In 2018, one of each of these three text types was used. In 2016, two written and one multimodal text were used and in 2017, two written texts and one visual text were used. There are other combinations of texts still possible, according the exam brief.

Hint: Know the brief

There should be no surprises in any section of the exam if you are very familiar with the syllabus. Revisit the Exam Brief and identify any remaining combinations of Comprehending texts that haven't yet been used.

Activity: Design your own exam questions

Write your own Comprehending Section-style questions based on teacher or self-selected text passages that adhere to each question type:

1. **Open question:**

2. **Partially open question:**

3. **Closed question:**

Time management in the Comprehending Section

The three responses in this section should take, on average, about 20 minutes each to complete if you adhere to the recommendation of 60 minutes in total. This includes planning time. It is recommended that you spend about five minutes reading, annotating, thinking about and planning for each question in the Comprehending Section, allowing you approximately 15 minutes to write and proofread each response.

Reading the texts

- Read each question carefully.

- Use the reading time to skim each text, getting a feel for its general content.

- Read the provided contextual information to help with your understanding.

- You may wish to refer to the Acknowledgements at the back of the exam for further publication information, although this is not essential to answer the questions.

- Once working time begins, re-read each text carefully, this time annotating it with the question you are required to answer in mind.

- Any extra reading time you have in the initial ten minutes provided at the start of the exam can be used for re-reading and considering the Comprehending Section texts.

- Plans should consist of just a few words per response, and can be written around the question itself and can include graphic markers such as arrows or Venn diagrams.

- Plan when you need to aim to finish each question in advance of starting to write – you should know this before you even enter the examination venue. In saying this, try not to get too obsessive about time. Make sure you have an accurate watch or refer to the clock at regular intervals to ensure you are not spending too much time on one question at the expense of another.

Writing clearly and succinctly

- Writing succinctly, that is, explaining yourself clearly in as few words as necessary, is the best time management strategy there is. Getting to the point quickly, using precisely nuanced language, employing metalanguage, and avoiding unnecessary words in your expression, can all add up to valuable time saved.

- Avoid sentences that merely repeat the question or paraphrase evidence; every sentence needs to add value.

- Remember to get straight to answering the question; there is no room for 'padding out' your response with general statements or points that do not directly relate to the text/s or contribute meaningfully to answering the question.

- Writing succinctly takes a great deal of skill and practise. It is important that you carefully plan your response in order to select the most important details to discuss.

Activity: Analysing previous work for succinctness

Select three of your previous Comprehending Section responses (you could use your responses from the Year 11 examination or from a more recent assessment task). In each example, highlight:

- any opening sentences that are over-generalised and do not relate to the specific text the question refers to
- any sentence that does not relate directly to the question
- any unnecessary sentences, phrases or words
- any sentences that repeat a point previously made
- any sentences that do not add value to the argument.

Rank your responses from the most succinct to the least and observe if there is any correlation to the marks you received.

Delete unnecessary words your least succinct response. Count the words remaining and if the total falls below 200 then add more analysis, aiming to answer the question as concisely as possible. Once it totals 200–300 words and is as clearly expressed as you can possibly make it, rewrite your response neatly. This should stand as an example of a good Comprehending answer and you could even ask your teacher to provide more feedback on it.

Structuring your response

There is no 'hard and fast' rule or 'right and wrong' number of paragraphs to produce in this section. In fact, the number of paragraphs you produce for each question in this section is possibly the least important aspect of your response in terms of how marks are rewarded; however, it is still imperative that you structure your answer in a clear, logical manner to ensure its cohesion and clarity.

Some candidates choose to provide a brief introduction in the form of a thesis statement. However, conclusions tend to summarise information that is explained more thoroughly in your analytical paragraphs; for these reasons, we strongly advise against producing them at all in this section. Unlike other exam sections, the focus here is on your ability to comprehend texts and their construction, so you simply won't be rewarded for saying the same thing twice – you will actually lose marks for repetition. Additionally, the questions in this section are so specific that a whole concluding paragraph to wrap up an argument is unnecessary.

The number of paragraphs you choose to produce is best guided by the individual texts and the questions themselves. For example, if a question asks you to discuss two ideas or two attitudes represented in a text then this may lend itself to a two-paragraph response dealing with each attitude or idea separately. Similarly, if a question asks you to identify just one main textual feature and its effect then you could produce just one detailed paragraph. Many past responses for this section consisted of one lengthy paragraph. Other candidates, however, chose to write two to three shorter paragraphs that split their response into several aspects. Either approach is fine, so long as you write clearly and succinctly.

Developing comprehension skills

In demonstrating your ability to comprehend or understand a text, you need to be purposeful and active readers. You should read and decode the texts provided with deliberate intent. This intent will be guided by the questions themselves, which are usually very specific in this section. Although you can't know exactly what specific aspects the 2020 Comprehending Section will assess, you can practice your comprehension skills by applying them to written, visual and multimodal texts. Try the following approaches:

Comprehending written texts
- **Word recognition**: word building, recognition of stem words, inferring the meaning of words in the context of a sentence or passage, recognising a word's function.
- **Decoding language and its effects**: understand the connotations of words and figurative language, recognising idioms, expressions and allusions.
- **Summarising**: condense and recap the written text into a briefer, abridged form.
- **Sequencing**: determine a hierarchy of points from most important to least, listing the order that the information is presented in.
- **Inferencing**: reading 'between the lines', identifying gaps and silences.
- **Identifying the main idea**: locating central themes and ideas plus additional ideas.
- **Locating evidence in texts**: recognise supporting evidence and its effect.
- **Drawing conclusions**: develop an argument or thesis about the text/s.
- **Comparing and contrasting**: recognise points of similarity and/or difference within texts, comparing and/or contrasting a text with one or more others.
- **Distinguishing between fact and opinion**: identify rhetorical and persuasive devices.
- **Connecting information to a knowledge base**: make connections with prior knowledge, understanding and expectations of genre, recognition of generic conventions.

Comprehending visual and multimodal texts

As above, in addition to:
- **Recognising different meanings**: literal, inferential and evaluative meanings, understanding ambiguity, drawing a conclusion, offering an interpretation.
- **Analysing visual language**: angles, framing, proximity, gaze, facial expression, lighting.
- **Analysing written text**: titles, headings, captions, relationships with visual language.
- **Recognising typographical features**: font size and type, effect of these aspects.
- **Decoding composition**: layout of information, placement and arrangement of various features, relationship between different aspects, emphasis of certain aspects.
- **Decoding images, symbols, icons**: understanding symbolism.

> **Hint: Strategise**
>
> Your teachers will likely introduce you to a range of close reading strategies to develop your comprehension skills but that you can also practise independently. Strategies could include: concept webs, T-charts, listing, Venn diagrams, ITEC charts, K-W-L charts, annotating, transforming, categorising, translating and so on.

Considering Question 1

Analyse how Text 1 works to convey an idea about human nature.

Interpreting the question

The word 'analyse' in the question required candidates to identify and explain the way that specific visual elements in the image worked to create an idea about human nature; that is, they needed to justify the connection made between the visual elements and their interpretation of the text's idea about human nature.

The 'how' of the question may have included explaining the effect of visual elements, such as the subject, body language, framing, shot type and angle, spatial relationships and proximity, mise en scène, leading lines and vectors, inclusions and omissions, salience, and composition. The word 'works' demanded that candidates explain the effect of the elements in conveying the idea. Thus, 'how', 'works' and 'convey' are interrelated and implied a relationship that needed to be discussed together rather than independently.

'Human nature' refers to the general behaviours, feelings and characteristics of humans as a group. The word 'idea' is multifaceted and includes understandings, thoughts, notions, opinions, views or beliefs. Therefore, 'an idea about human nature' could include that humans can be oblivious to their surroundings, humans like to control their immediate environment, humans take pride in their home, humans don't understand the power of the natural world, humans are so concerned with capturing a moment of time through photography that they ignore potential threats to their safety, humans are so used to natural disasters that they barely acknowledge them anymore, or many other possibilities.

Only one idea should have been discussed due to the use of the singular term 'an idea' in the question. Given that this section is concerned with a close reading of texts, a detailed explanation of this one idea will be rewarded for its demonstration of deep comprehension skills. The question required that candidates drill down into and tease out the one idea by considering its various facets or by justifying it with several examples, rather than touch on a range of different points in a fleeting or superficial manner.

Advice from teachers

- It is just as important to carefully read and comprehend the question as it is to read and comprehend the unseen text itself. For example, some candidates may inadvertently discuss 'nature' rather than 'human nature' as this question required.
- Whether students discuss the event depicted as a 'tornado', a 'hurricane', a 'storm' or even a 'fire' doesn't really matter – the idea about human nature remains the same. If in doubt, students may want to refer to the Acknowledgements published on the back of the exam paper which, in this case, offered the correct terminology.
- Candidates are reminded that if they are familiar with an extract or text used in this section of the exam then they should never reveal this or attempt to refer to the text in its entirety or to other sections of it.

Activity: Identifying visual elements

One of the strengths of Sample Response One is the candidate's obvious understanding of compositional elements; that is, the arrangement or placement of visual elements. Below is a list of visual elements that could be discussed when analysing composition. Apply your understanding of them to your own or a teacher-selected still or multimodal image.

Visual element	Role within the overall arrangement (e.g. how/where is this element positioned within the image? Does this element interact with others?)	Implied meaning and effect of this arrangement
foregrounding		
framing		
salience		
proximity		
juxtaposition		
proportion		
vectors		

Considering Question 2

How is the father-son relationship represented through the construction of the narrator's voice?

Interpreting the question

The 'how' of this question needs to relate to the use of voice as a specific textual feature and its role in the representation of the father-son relationship. According to the syllabus definition, 'voice' refers to the nature of the voice in the text projected by the author or the persona, role or character adopted by an author. Due to the autobiographical nature of the text, voice might also be considered in terms of narrative point of view alongside analysis of the nature of the voice.

The exact representation of what type of father-son relationship is represented in the text should be discerned in better responses. For example, the relationship could be interpreted as a close, loving, respectful one which is grounded in a shared history and love of cricket. The dynamic in the relationship appears to have shifted over time so that now the adult son feels protective of his aging father. Of course, different interpretations are possible.

Candidates were required to examine the language, structural, stylistic and/or generic features of the text in the construction of voice. These features may include figurative, emotive or descriptive language, sensory imagery, tone, selection of detail, construction of anecdotes and recollection of memories through recounts. These aspects of construction needed to be connected to the type and role of voice within the text. The voice is one of an adult son, not a child, reflecting on early memories.

The analysis of voice necessarily required candidates to discuss the tone of the voice created and the way that it is revealed. For example, the tone of voice could have been described as nostalgic and reminiscent due to the detailed, sensory recounts of fond memories and stories offered early in the extract to emphasise their significance to the son. The light-hearted nature of the voice shifts to a more compassionate and concerned tone in the latter part of the extract through reference to the recent falls and frailty of the aging father. This subtle change in tone is important in constructing the voice and acknowledgement of it reveals a good grasp of the text's construction.

Advice from teachers

- To just concentrate on 'first person point of view' as the 'how' is simplistic and somewhat obvious – the author has no choice but to use first person point of view in an autobiography.
- Candidates should focus on 'how' the voice is constructed. It's not good enough to just articulate what type of voice or relationship was created.
- It is important to note that 'we' in this extract's context is not an example of inclusive diction; it's a function of first person point of view. Inclusive language is used in persuasive texts as a rhetorical technique to include the audience. Text 2 is not a persuasive text.

Activity: Identifying types of relationships:

It is important to recognise what kinds of relationships are represented in texts: between characters, between different elements – like setting and character – and even between syllabus concepts. This is particularly important, given the word 'relationship' is used numerous times throughout the syllabus. In fact, the term appeared in the Comprehending section in both the 2017 and 2018 English WACE examinations. Relationships can be understood as interactions, connections, links or associations between different aspects.

Consider the following adjectives that could be used to describe a relationship and then try to identify an example of where each of these can be observed in one of your studied texts:

Adjective	Example of this kind of relationship
estranged	No longer close or affectionate to someone, no longer living together, implies the development of hostility or indifference.
intimate	
detached	
close	
symbiotic	
familiar	
amicable	
acrimonious	
harmonious	
adversarial	

Hint: Developing your vocabulary

An extensive vocabulary will really help you to demonstrate that you have comprehended the texts in this section accurately. The best way to develop your vocabulary is through regular wide reading and engaging in conversation. However, there are also some other strategies that you can incorporate into your study program while preparing for the examination. These include:
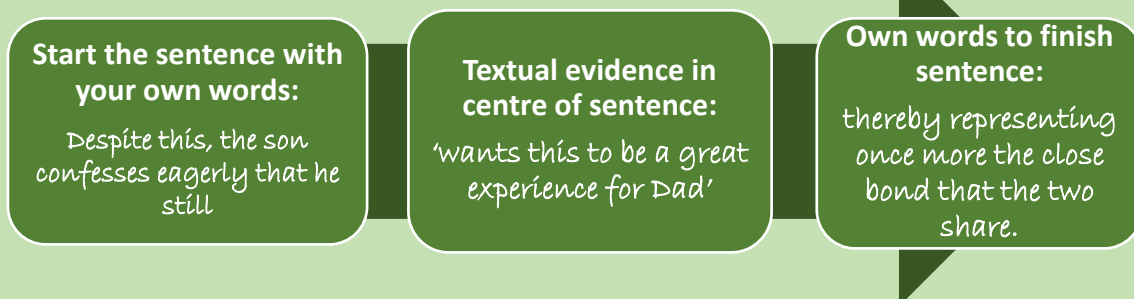
- **Keeping a glossary:** Define any terms that you encounter and are unfamiliar with. Always try to use them accurately within a written sentence.
- **Learn a new word every day:** Try to make these relevant to your English studies or the texts you are reading. Try to use these in conversations as well.
- **Identify overused words:** Observe the words you tend to overuse in your writing and compile a list of synonyms. Start with words like 'shows' and 'said'.
- **Play games:** Popular word games like scrabble or online options like Merriam Webster's Daily Word Game or Crossword will help expand your vocabulary.
- **Apps:** Download some popular apps like *Vocabulary.com*, *PowerVocab* and *Word A Day*.

## Activity: Integrating evidence effectively

The previous response could have been further improved with better integration of textual evidence. Not only should quotes be brief, but they should also be embedded smoothly and naturally into your own writing. Ideally, quotes should be immersed into the centre of your sentences and framed on either side by your own words. They should never be included as stand-alone sentences. Consider the following two effective examples taken from one of the sample responses to Question 2:

1. Despite this, the son confesses eagerly that he still 'wants this to be a great experience for Dad', thereby representing once more the close bond that the two share.

2. His nostalgic tone as he reminisces about his 'favourite footy story', coupled with his focus on imagery of particular details represent a close bond between father and son as although he was not present in such stories, he has clearly heard enough to feel as if he was.

Observe how the candidate has selected several short phrases that are integrated into the middle of their own sentences. Single word quotes are also ideal to use in this section. Note the candidate's approach to sentence structure. Firstly, the candidate begins the sentence with their own words with a view to contextualising the quote to come, then the evidence from the text is included, and finally, the effect of the example in relation to the question is outlined. Examine the visual representation of this approach for the first example listed above:

Start the sentence with your own words: Despite this, the son confesses eagerly that he still	**Textual evidence in centre of sentence:** 'wants this to be a great experience for Dad'	**Own words to finish sentence:** thereby representing once more the close bond that the two share.

Now repeat this process with the second example provided above. Record the candidate's own words used to introduce the evidence at the start of the sentence, the quotes from the text that they include within the middle of their sentence, and then finally, the effect of the examples they have identified to end the sentence.

Own words to start sentence:	**Textual evidence in centre of sentence:**	**Own words to finish sentence:**
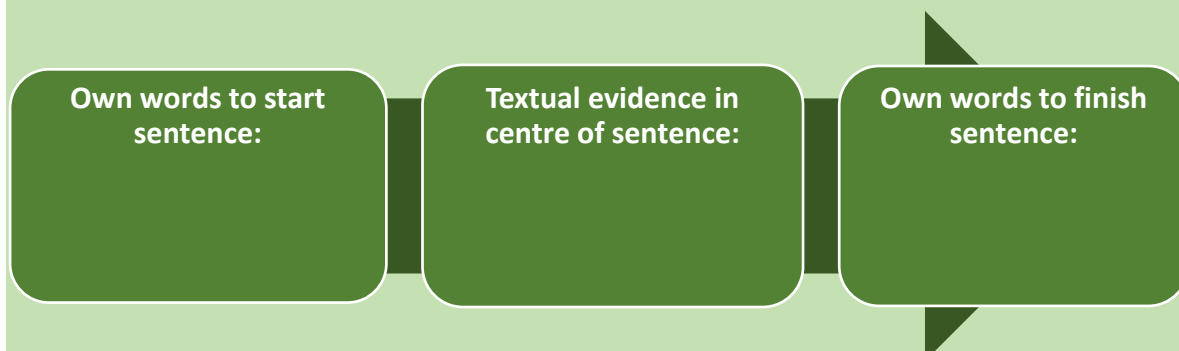
Considering Question 3

How does the multimodality of Text 3 influence your interpretation of it?

Interpreting the question

The 'how' aspect of the question required candidates to discuss the effect of the multimodal features in shaping their personal interpretation. This needed to include discussion of both visual and written features used within the novel cover. Focus on only one mode of communication was not adequate.

'Multimodality' refers to a combination of modes of communication, such as the written and visual modes of this book cover. Responses could have focused on the interaction between these modes in the text rather than dealing with them separately. Students could have discussed such elements as the title, which includes the word 'taxonomy' and the visual representation of the classification system, the connections between the words and images through vectors, the ironic juxtaposition in the concept of ordering the abstract, the ambiguous concept of love, the use of colloquialisms and hand-drawn sketches and so on.

Candidates were invited to discuss their personal interpretation of the text through the word 'your'. Thus, use of personal voice in responses is both appropriate and favoured because it indicates a genuinely reflective attempt to engage with the question meaningfully.

The word 'interpretation' refers to the 'reading' of the text and the subsequent meaning made as a result. A grasp of the way that both the written and visual elements are read together to shape the meaning made is important here. There are many interpretations of the text possible. These could have included such readings of the text as a cover for a novel directed at adolescents, a narrative about the complexity of teenage love, a narrative focusing on a young protagonist experiencing a range of conflicting emotions, a coming-of-age text in which the various highs and lows of romance shape the plot and so on.
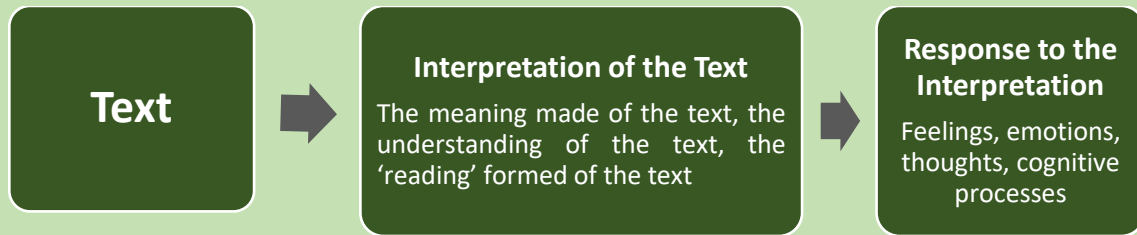
There should be an awareness revealed in responses that the text is the cover for a novel, as explained in the contextual information provided, rather than an informative or analytical text. Both the form and genre of the texts in this section are important and better responses will reflect an understanding of their purpose. For example, candidates could have examined the way the text suggests that the novel could be a type of teenage romance which immediately generates particular expectations, thereby shaping a logical interpretation.

Advice from teachers
- If a word at first seems tricky, like 'multimodality', try to chunk it to recognise its individual components. Multimodality shouldn't be confused with genre 'hybridity'.
- If confused about form or genre, try to use a process of elimination. Think about what the text is *not* so you can decide what it *is*. Text 3 is *not* a poster, an advertisement etc.

Activity: Differences between interpretation and response

'Interpretation' and 'response' are two different things, as illustrated below:

| Text | → | **Interpretation of the Text** The meaning made of the text, the understanding of the text, the 'reading' formed of the text | → | **Response to the Interpretation** Feelings, emotions, thoughts, cognitive processes |

As indicated, a text is firstly interpreted – meaning is made of it – and *then* a response is formed, based on that interpretation. That is, an understanding has to be formulated of the text before a subsequent response to it can be shaped. Question 3 is *only* concerned with the second of these phases in the diagram above: the interpretation. Interpretations can include understandings of certain ideas a text contains, a grasp of its meaning, a reading of the representations that it offers or particular expectations about it.

Using Sample Response One, differentiate between these two processes in the table below by recording the candidate's observations under the corresponding headings:

Interpretation	Response
	calmed

Now practise again, discerning between interpreting and responding to a text using another text. You may like to select one yourself or use one provided by your teacher.

Interpretation	Response

It is important that you answer only the questions you encounter on the day of the exam. These are likely to include different key words and assess different syllabus concepts.

Activity: Distinguishing between modes

Sometimes the modes of communication in a text are easily distinguishable from each other. Other times, this process can be trickier than you think. In text analysis, you need to ask yourself:

- **Is the element for analysis something that you look at or view?** Visual/Viewing mode
- **Is the element for analysis something you read? Is it written?** Written/Reading mode
- **Is the element for analysis something you listen to?** Audio/Auditory mode

Of course, sometimes two or more of these different modes are closely interwoven and each contributes to a text's meaning; hence the term 'multimodality'. In the Comprehending Section of an examination you will not be provided with a text that includes audio elements for obvious reasons, but you are likely study these in the form of films, podcasts, television series etc.

Consider the following textual features and place them in the appropriate columns in the table below. Some may appear in more than one column.

typography	gaze	lighting	font size	spoken dialogue
verbs	title	sketch	volume	bolded font
logo	tagline	proxemics	visual imagery	negative space
soundtrack	subheading	diction	shot duration	pronouns
intonation	mise-en-scene	syntax	diegetic sound	pauses

Visual Mode Viewing process of communication	Written Mode Reading process of communication	Auditory Mode Listening process of communication

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Hint: Referring to quotes

When discussing evidence, avoid frequently overused terms such as 'shows' and instead use alternatives including highlights, emphasises, suggests, implies, evokes, insinuates, intimates, hints, asserts, proposes, indicates, showcases, conveys, connotes and so on.

Activity: Recognising different text types in the Comprehending section.

A number of different texts have been used in the English ATAR examinations. These include the types listed in the left-hand column below. Familiarise yourself with the texts and complete this table by identifying the texts used in each.

Text	Features
short story extract	
essay extract	
promotional poster for tv series	
novel extract	
feature article extract	
still image from feature film	
news photograph	
book cover	

Other text types that might appear include the following. Repeat the activity for these text types.

Text	Features
blog post	
print advertisement	
memoir extract	
editorial	
screenshot of a webpage	

The Responding Section

General observations

The Responding Section can be intimidating, but if approached correctly, it can be your best friend in the exam. Some candidates look forward to the Responding Section, excited for the chance to showcase their essay-writing skills and their understanding of the texts they have spent the year analysing. Others? Not so much. The truth is that this section can work for you, rather than against you. Your aims in this section should be to:

- demonstrate your ability to thoroughly analyse, discuss, critique or compare your studied texts against a range of syllabus concepts
- construct a detailed yet succinct essay in response to your chosen question which features a logical and sustained argument supported by textual evidence
- justify your analysis or interpretation of your chosen texts with clarity and fluency through the use of appropriate written expression and varied vocabulary.

The Responding Section contains **six questions**, but you are required to carefully select just **one** to answer. It is weighted at **40%** of your total exam mark, reflecting the idea that this section affords you the advantage of referring to texts you have spent the year preparing. It is worth pointing out that although it is weighted at 40%, it is suggested you dedicate **one hour** to this section. Be prepared for a wide range of command terms in the questions of this section; expect questions that require you to compare, analyse, discuss or consider.

This is the part of the exam you have the most control over and the concepts tested here are ones you should be very familiar with. The emphasis is on the term *concept*; you can guarantee that the prominent concepts that underpin the content of your course – such as genre, perspectives, language and context—will appear. However, you should expect complexity and depth in the ways they are presented. Questions in this section may require you to:

- identify how texts adhere to, manipulate or innovate generic conventions to appeal to an audience, or to represent a context
- evaluate how similar themes or ideas are treated in texts of different modes, types or genres
- consider how ideas, voices and perspectives are constructed for particular purposes, audiences or contexts
- examine how your unique response to an idea is formed, reinforced or challenged by the construction of a text
- investigate the relationship between texts and contexts; consider how texts represent a particular context, or compare contexts of production and reception
- identify how a text generates empathy or controversy through its construction.

Keep in mind the list above is not intended to be an exhaustive Responding Section 'cheat sheet'; it should serve as a reminder that the concepts tested here are ones you have been immersed in all year. This is your chance to really showcase your knowledge of the syllabus and how it applies to your studied texts.

Question formation

Success in this section of the exam really hinges on your ability to acknowledge and address all parts of your chosen question. When you are feeling pressured and time-poor – as you look around the room and wonder how everyone else has managed to begin furiously writing – it can be tempting to dive straight in. However, the best thing you can do is take a breath and spend a few minutes deconstructing and unpacking the questions.

Once you have decided on a question, stick by it and do it justice, remembering to work with the question as it is presented. However, if you feel it's appropriate, you should have the confidence to formulate a unique essay that argues against the statement in your chosen question. This is an artful skill that demonstrates great flexibility and depth in your understanding and can often yield good results. On the other hand, overlooking parts of the question or misapplying them weakens the foundation of your argument. Be selective and strategic with your question choice. If you are unsure what a term means – such as 'modality' or 'innovative', for instance – take it is as a sign that that particular question isn't for you.

Each question in this section is comprised of four types of key words:

Command words: The verbs that indicate the specific skills you will need to apply to a question. Often placed at the start of a question, words like 'explain', 'discuss', 'analyse', 'compare' and 'show how' are commonly used. Recognising these terms is the first step to success as they are not synonymous; each one is calling for a different skill. For example, 'discussion' invites you to look at a topic from a range of positions, whereas 'show how' requires you to give information about the ways a text has been constructed, supported by deconstruction of textual evidence.

Concept words: The terms from the syllabus that are being tested in a particular question. In some cases, phrases are taken literally from the syllabus, but do not assume this will be the case as concepts can be inferred or implied by the phrasing of a question. For example, the phrases 'shaped by their circumstances' and 'concerns of the same time period' are indirect invitations to address elements of personal, social or cultural contexts.

Condition words: The words that set the conditions or limitations for your response. Questions that direct you to refer to 'at least one text' are leaving you room to refer to others, perhaps briefly (if you feel it is appropriate and will enhance your argument, but it is not essential). Similarly, questions asking you to 'compare two texts' require a comparative structure where you refer to the similarities and differences between texts with a degree of detail. Pay close attention to the subtler conditions in questions. For example, if a question asks you to address texts of 'different modes', it would be incorrect to compare a feature film to an episode of a television series, as they are both multimodal texts.

Critical words: The words in a question that refine your response and challenge you to apply your understanding of syllabus concepts. These terms are most commonly overlooked, yet they are essential determiners of your success. If a question asks you to identify 'a controversy', you must name the issue and clarify why it is controversial; you will not be rewarded for simply repeating the critical words of the question.

Activity: Deconstructing questions

Using the words outlined on the previous page, deconstruct each question from the Responding Section of the 2018 exam in a table in your workbook. Once you have determined the makeup of each question, match the concepts being tested to the syllabus. A sample has been provided for you. You may also find it useful to review the 2017 exam to identify common patterns in the ways in which questions are constructed.

Q. 4	Show how at least one text reveals that the values of individuals are shaped by their circumstances.			
Command words	**Concept words**	**Condition words**	**Critical words**	**Links to the syllabus**
Show how	values, shaped by their circumstances (a reference to context)	at least one text	reveals, individuals	• This question requires candidates to evaluate the relationship between text and context, a focus of both Units 3 and 4. • This question also requires candidates to connect the language, structural and stylistic choices of a text to the values it reveals, which is referenced in Unit 4.

Reflecting on what *has not* been addressed in the six questions of the previous year's Responding Section is just as important as identifying what *has* been covered. This will allow you an insight into concepts that are potentially due to feature in your exam and will sharpen your familiarity with important concepts. Once you have completed the deconstruction activity above, interrogate the 2018 exam against the syllabus and ask yourself the following questions:

- How many times do integral syllabus concepts – such as genre, perspectives, language, voice, purpose and context – appear? Do they feature in multiple questions?
- Are particular synonyms for syllabus terms used? If so, make a note of these 'concept words' and the terms they relate to.
- Which syllabus dot-points did not feature in last year's exam? How does this compare to the 2017 exam? Are there any significant concepts yet to be explored?
- How many questions called for a comparative response? Were any unique 'critical words' used in the questions? Do you know the meanings of these terms?

Hint: Relying on pre-prepared responses is risky

Teachers are wise to the age-old practices of students who try to stretch a pre-prepared essay to fit their chosen question. You may have written a great essay earlier in the year, but that was in response to a different question. Trying to 're-create the magic' may prevent you from addressing your chosen question effectively. A well-tailored answer that addresses the question will fare better than a truly great pre-prepared essay.

Planning an effective response

Questions in this section of the exam are purposefully layered with several syllabus concepts. This is to challenge you to showcase your complex understanding of the texts you have encountered over the year. It is critical you take the time to identify the components of your chosen question and develop a plan to ensure each one is dutifully addressed in your response. Sacrificing a few minutes of your writing time to develop a detailed plan can make a huge difference to the quality and cohesion of your response.

Approaches to plans really vary, and it is a matter of finding a style that works best for you. Some candidates write notes around the actual question on the paper, highlighting key words and developing a checklist of points to cover in their essay. Others prefer to use a page of writing space to prepare a detailed paragraph-by-paragraph plan. Regardless of your strategy, developing a clear plan will ensure that you give all parts of the question the critical attention they demand and identify the most appropriate structure for your argument. Three common planning techniques have been illustrated below in response to Question 6 of the 2018 exam:

Words to focus on: How, different perspectives (shaped by contextual factors), controversy, represented (talk about construction).

Thesis:
- Controversial notion of keeping refugees in detention.
- Chasing Asylum (documentary) represents the perspectives of various groups, such as asylum seekers on Nauru in a sympathetic way through documentary conventions.
- Represents the 'stop the boats' perspective of the Australian government as misguided and in violation of human rights.

BP1 – Perspective of asylum seekers
- Frustrated perspective of asylum seekers, shaped by context, fleeing danger, placed in detention.
- Documentary conventions: mostly phone footage filmed in secret; lingering shots of barbed wire fences; subtitled conversations with asylum seekers

BP2 – Perspective of the Australian government
- Strategically constructed 'stop the boats' perspective represented as cruel and inhumane.
- Documentary conventions: montage of clips showing politicians 'bragging' about their policies; strategic ordering of footage; inclusion of an interview with Malcolm Fraser contrasted with footage of John Howard.
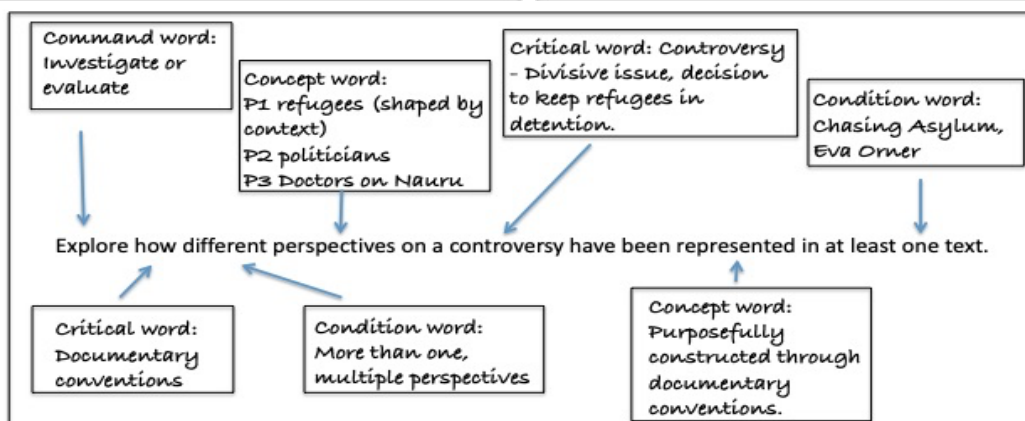
INTRO

Chasing Asylum
- Controversy: Aust. Government's treatment of refugees.
- Perspectives of refugees and perspective of Aust. Politicians represented.
- Documentary conventions.

BP1:   Perspective of refugees

- Shaped by context: fleeing danger, should be supported.
- Sympathetic representation.
- Documentary conventions: mention opening scene.

BP2:   Perspective of Aust. government

- Shaped by context: want to remain in power, be elected.
- Perspective is represented critically; in a judgemental way.
- Documentary conventions: montage, archival footage, Malcolm Fraser.

Command word: Investigate or evaluate

Concept word: P1 refugees (shaped by context) P2 politicians P3 Doctors on Nauru

Critical word: Controversy - Divisive issue, decision to keep refugees in detention.

Condition word: Chasing Asylum, Eva Orner

Explore how different perspectives on a controversy have been represented in at least one text.

Critical word: Documentary conventions

Condition word: More than one, multiple perspectives

Concept word: Purposefully constructed through documentary conventions.

Activity: Developing a planning strategy

Closely compare the plans on the previous page and reflect on the questions below:

- In what ways are the plans different?

- Does each plan effectively show how the response will address the key components of the question?

- What do you think the benefits and limitations of each method are?

- Can you think of alternative ways to construct a plan? How closely do the samples match up with your preferred style?

Next, experiment with planning a response of your own. Set a timer for six minutes and plan a response to a question of your choice. Repeat this exercise for each question of the Responding Section to allow you to strengthen your planning strategy. Placing a time constraint on this exercise will help to replicate the time pressures of the exam room.

Once you have prepared all six plans, extend yourself by generating your own questions and – you guessed it – formulate plans for these as well. Draw on your understanding of deconstructing questions as well as your audit of the syllabus and previous exams to assist you in identifying concepts that have yet to appear in the Responding Section; this could be a wise place to start. Two samples have been provided in the table below:

Command words	Concept words	Condition words	Critical words	Formulated question
Discuss	different interpretations, response	at least one text	extent, resonate	Discuss the extent to which different interpretations of at least one text resonate with your own response.
Examine	genre	at least one text, particular	reveals, progression /change	Examine how at least one text reveals the progression or change of a particular genre over time.

Hint: Know the worth of every text

Students sometimes comment that they studied a 'lucky' text, implying that they made the right decision to revise just one text as it happened to fit perfectly to a question. Taking shortcuts and studying only one or two texts in the hopes they are indeed 'lucky' is a total gamble. Instead, appreciate the value of every text and apply each one to a range of syllabus concepts. Acknowledge how your studied texts manipulate or adhere to generic conventions, make note of their structural features and look at how they operate within both cultural and situational contexts. Make sure you compare texts against one another, noting how they represent perspectives, voices or controversies in varying ways while also appreciating how texts from different modes can explore similar ideas. The lucky text will be the one you confidently decide to use on the day from a range of thoroughly prepared options.

Activity: Planning framework

Use the table below as a framework for planning responses to a range of questions. It would be wise to begin with the questions explored in this section of *Good Answers*, but you could make multiple copies of this framework and use it to plan responses to as many questions as you can gather.

Question: *(Re-write the question in this space.)*

Key components of the question to address: *(Write a brief checklist of the key components of the question in this space; refer back to this checklist as you plan each paragraph.)*

Introduction: *(Write a brief outline of the main points you will cover in your introduction here, including a broad statement and any relevant textual information. Carefully plan your thesis and write it in detail.)*

|	
Body paragraph one:	**Textual evidence to include:**
Body paragraph two:	**Textual evidence to include:**
Body paragraph three: *(At this point you could include a fourth paragraph, if needed.)*	**Textual evidence to include:**

Conclusion:

Writing great introductions

The Responding Section of the exam provides you with an opportunity to showcase your essay-writing skills. It is critically important that you are able to deconstruct your chosen question to determine what your essay must cover, as well as formulate a clear argument that you can sustain in each body paragraph. A well-structured introduction is where the magic happens!

Why do introductions matter?

Think of your introduction as the foundation of your essay. If your introduction is logical, well-worded and focused on the question, it is likely that the rest of your essay will be too. A strong introduction gives its following paragraphs a strong point to link back to and will ensure you remain focused on your thesis (the argument of your essay). Your introduction is also the first impression you make on your marker. A logical introduction that directly addresses the question is a dream come true for them.

How to structure your introduction:

There is no one exact way to structure an introduction that will yield perfect results every time. The structure of an introduction will depend on the unique style of the writer as well as the question being responded to. In a more general sense, introductions often take the shape of an inverted triangle, meaning a progression from broad to specific details:
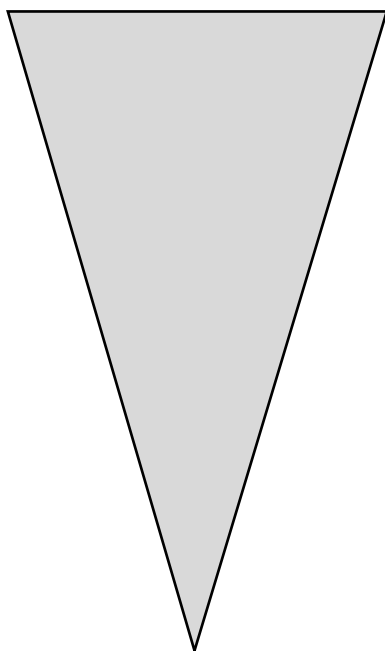
- One to two sentences to broadly engage with the text and the question. Candidates can approach this in a variety of ways, but using some of the key words from the question is a good place to start.

- One to two sentences to introduce the text formally. As this is the first time you will refer to the text, make sure you include the full title, author's name and any important contextual details (such as the year of production). Include a succinct explanation of the plot of the text, making sure you draw attention to details relevant to your chosen question.

- Two to three sentences to develop your thesis and respond directly to the essay question. This is the most important point of your essay as it will determine how closely your essay will address the question. Your thesis must clearly outline your argument.

Activity: Structuring introductions

A sample introduction in response to Question 9 of the 2018 exam has been provided below. Closely review it and, using different colours, highlight the following components:

- a broad statement that addresses the essential key words and concepts of the question
- a brief summary of each text, including important contextual details
- a thesis that responds directly to the essay question
- any direct references to the key words of the question.

> **How have language or structural innovations been used to unsettle an audience in at least one text?**

Texts are often truly memorable when they stir a deep unsettled response in their audience: confronting, challenging or agitating us. In the age of Netflix and 'binge watching', it seems the creators of texts must experiment with new or unconventional innovations to create such a response. This can be clearly seen in the innovative 2018 episode of <u>Black Mirror</u> called 'Bandersnatch', directed by David Slade. Set in the 1980s, the episode follows the decline of Stefan Butler, a computer programmer who sets out to adapt a complex choose-your-own-adventure novel (of the same title) into a game. The episode features significant structural innovations as it pauses at critical moments, requiring the viewer to make on-screen decisions for the characters via their remotes. This innovation is intentionally unsettling, agitating the audience as we agonise over the outcomes of our choices and feel discomforted by the omnipotent power we are given in what is usually a passive television watching experience. By involving the audience in the structure of the plot, 'Bandersnatch' innovatively unsettles and discomforts a contemporary Netflix audience who may be more comfortable passively bingeing television shows.

Next, practice writing an introduction using a plan you previously prepared. Set a timer for eight minutes to help you prepare for the conditions of the exam. After eight minutes, reflect on the following questions:

- Were you able to complete the introduction in the time permitted?
- Have you addressed all of the important terms of the question?
- Have you developed a clear thesis to respond to the essay question?

Using textual evidence

At this point in your revision, you may be warming to the idea that close attention to all aspects of your chosen question and the development of a logical argument are key determiners of your success. Once you have mastered this, the challenge becomes sustaining this through sophisticated use of textual evidence in your body paragraphs.

There are two things to keep in mind when using textual evidence: the first is finding the right evidence to use (particularly when you are relying on memory), and the second is knowing how to incorporate quotes grammatically and succinctly.

Finding the right evidence
As a general rule, short and succinct quotes from texts will be most effective and are more likely to be versatile and malleable to a range of responses. It may be useful to collect quotes and evidence as you study a text, rather than haphazardly memorising right before your exam. You could keep a glossary of quotes, linking stand-out examples to syllabus concepts as you go. Consider the sample below, which refers to the novel *Never Let Me Go*:

Textual evidence	Context/important details to note	Links to the syllabus
'The problem, as I see it, is that you've been told and not told...None of you will be film stars. Your lives are set out for you.'	This is an example of Miss Lucy's dialogue. Her perspective places her at odds with other characters. She does not agree with how the clones are treated.	Reflects the way different values are represented in texts. Miss Lucy's perspective is controversial. Is she unkind for telling the students the truth?

It may seem more straightforward to collect textual evidence from fictional print texts, but it is absolutely necessary to do the same for a wide variety of texts types, modes and genres. Consider the sample below, which refers to the interpretive text *The Tall Man* by Chloe Hooper:

Textual evidence	Context/important details to note	Links to the syllabus
'When the crowd voted, they didn't put their arms straight up, but held them out at a 45-degree angle. It was surreal.'	Hooper uses allusions to Nazism to refer to the meeting of the police union where police officers voted to strike in response to Chris Hurley's trial.	Refers to language patterns and shades of meaning created in texts: Hooper draws on allusions and her first-person point of view to represent the police force critically.

> **Hint: Vocabulary and expression matter!**
>
> A common feature of successful responses is the use of varied and expressive vocabulary. As you study texts, make a synonym and antonym glossary for important words you come across. Refer to the example above for proof of the value of engaging expression.

Incorporating evidence in grammatically correct ways

In structuring your body paragraphs, consider incorporating one 'standout' piece of textual evidence; this example may be slightly longer, or contain several features for you to discuss. You can then support this with shorter, 'clipped' quotes that will further showcase your knowledge. The examples below feature quotes from Craig Silvey's novel *Jasper Jones*:

Through his first-person narration, Charlie critiques the hypocrisy of Corrigan, noting that when Jasper plays football, "the town barrack[s] for him…[yet] are the same ones who might cut their eyes at him should he walk their way a few hours after the game." Based on his innocent perspective and value of tolerance, Charlie despairs at Jasper's unfair typecasting as "a Thief, a Liar, a Thug and a truant."

As the tense of the original quote used in the example above did not grammatically fit the paragraph, small edits were made. It is important that you honour the original quote and use it accurately. If you must make changes to ensure the fluency of your expression, use square brackets (parentheses) to indicate this. Similarly, you can use an ellipsis (…) to shorten an overly lengthy quote to retain the parts that are most relevant to your argument.

Too often, teachers read responses where students have placed a quote in an isolated sentence, without adequate punctuation or explanation. For example:

Charlie characterises himself as a fearful and cowardly character. "See I think it's harder for me to be brave." This quote shows Charlie is not brave and does not have much experience of the world.

The sentences above illustrate the ineffective use of textual evidence. The candidate has placed a quote by itself, without highlighting its significance, in a series of repetitive sentences. The use of the phrase 'this quote shows' is also limiting, as textual evidence more accurately reveals, suggests, demonstrates or communicates ideas. It is more effective to incorporate short phrases or pertinent words from your chosen text into your own sentences. For example:

Silvey communicates Charlie's inner turmoil following his decision to help Jasper "down the dead." He uses grim descriptive language as Charlie asks himself complex questions, wondering "what sort of lousy world is this?"

You can also blend longer quotes or phrases into your own sentences using relative clauses. For example:

As the novel progresses, Charlie transforms and develops a more mature understanding of the corruption and injustice that pervades society, "It's awful, it's mystifying and it's tragic…Her father started it, Laura ended it and now Eliza is fielding the blame."

Considering Question 4

> *Show how at least one text reveals that the values of individuals are shaped by their circumstances.*

Interpreting the question

To successfully address this question, candidates were required to acknowledge the connection between the circumstances or experiences of an individual and their values. The notion of 'values' refers to moral standards of behaviour or understandings of what is important in life. Often identified as abstract nouns (such as freedom, loyalty or honesty), values can be individual, societal or collective. The values of mateship and egalitarianism, for instance, are often attributed to Australian society. As this question required a focus on the values specifically held by individuals, you could consider how their unique values place them at odds with dominant society or reinforce deeply entrenched ways of thinking. It is important to distinguish values from attitudes: these words are often incorrectly used together as a catchall phrase, but do not have the same meaning. Our attitudes are what we think, say and do, and are evidence of our values – the ideals we hold dear or consider crucial.

The phrase 'shaped by their circumstances' is an important discriminator in this question and was an indirect invitation for candidates to consider specific contextual factors. You could consider the personal, social or cultural context of individual characters as well as the time and place a text is set. For example, a soldier fighting in World War II may value bravery and honour as a direct result of their circumstances as a young man in a cultural context that promoted patriotism and the value of fighting for one's country.

Your response is not limited to a discussion of fictional characters in imaginative texts; you could also comment on the values of individuals or groups of 'real-life' people represented in persuasive or interpretive texts, or even the circumstances of the creator of the text itself. Regardless of the approach you take, your response must connect the specific values of individuals to the cultural, social or situational circumstances that helped form them.

Advice from teachers

- It is important to appropriately address the directive 'show' in this question. Avoid simply retelling the plot or identifying the situations characters experience. Consider the language and structural features used to reveal the values of individuals.
- Be thoughtful and considered in your discussion of specific values, keeping in mind that they should be kept separate (to an extent) from attitudes. Avoid blurring these concepts. For instance, it would be incorrect to identify 'racism' as a value upheld by a character, as this is more accurately defined as an attitude: the expression of deeply rooted values.
- This question is an excellent example of the way crucial syllabus concepts, such as context, can be raised in more subtle ways. The phrase 'shaped by their circumstances' could be read as a synonym for context.

Activity: Identifying the values of individuals

Candidates often find it difficult to identify the specific values of characters, falling into the trap of repeatedly referring to 'values and attitudes'. A successful response will take this a step further, using varied language to name and describe each value.

Use the table below as a guide for reflecting on the connection between the values of individuals in the text you have studied and their circumstances. You may find it useful to recreate this table for each text you have studied.

Text	Individual or character	Values	Circumstances which shape this value
Jasper Jones (novel)	Jasper Jones	Secrecy, loyalty and independence	• Jasper has been in a relationship with Laura, which is taboo in the context of the era in which the novel is set • Jasper has previously experienced prejudice, violence and discrimination from the police. And other townsfolk. • Jasper's mother died when he was young and his father is an alcoholic, circumstances which require him to look after himself.
The Tall Man (interpretive text)	Chloe Hooper (the author)	Justice and fairness	• As a White Australian living in a post-reconciliation society, Chloe Hooper is sensitive to the injustice and inequality Aboriginals face. • An investigative journalist, Chloe Hooper prides herself on fairness and accuracy which allows her to consider the evidence presented in Chris Hurley's trial as proof of his guilt.
Restrepo (documentary)	Sergeant Cortez (an interview subject)	The societal respect and care for soldiers following battle	• Cortez is a returned American soldier who served in the Korengal Valley, one of the most dangerous postings of the Afghanistan War. • He reveals how deeply traumatised he is by his circumstances and how he suffers from nightmares. He wishes there was more support and care for young war veterans.

Activity: Incorporating textual evidence

The following table contains sentences from the previous response that contain errors in the incorporation of textual evidence. Closely analyse each one and re-write them, paying close attention to how their grammatical accuracy and fluency could be improved.

Paragraph	Incorporation of evidence	Re-write
Body paragraph one	"He was only 18...eyes that shone...spirit of restless searching" describes the naïve country adolescent Jonny Moydar, who has embarked on this journey to the city of Perth to begin his tradition to manhood.	The narrator describes Jonny Moydar as being 'only 18', with a naïve demeanour, '[shining] eyes', and an optimistic 'spirit of restless searching' that has yet to be corrupted by Perth – the big city.
Body paragraph two	The police "move in like a pack of hungry dogs" describes the everyday events of the 'downtown' city that the Aboriginal people inhabit, the place where Johnny is first exposed to the unjust system of the urban law and the dehumanised nature of the police, through the use of simile.	
Body paragraph two	"He looked up with his new, dead eyes" is the death of Johnny's spirit, his symbolic eyes reflecting his inner self and the lifelessness of his spirit.	

Considering Question 5

Compare how two texts of different genres respond to the concerns of the same time period.

Interpreting the question

This question required candidates to consider the relationship between the genre of texts and their contexts. The two texts discussed must 'respond to the concerns of the same time period'; that is, they must explore issues, fears or concerns arising from a common context of culture. However, it is essential that the texts belong to distinctly different genres. Candidates must consider how the unique conventions or features of each genre provide a means of responding to contextual concerns through close comparison of their chosen texts.

The ATAR English glossary defines genre as *'categories into which texts are grouped'*. Candidates could refer to texts that are grouped into genres based on their form or structure, or their subject matter. For example, you could compare a short story with a documentary (an example of grouping texts according to form and structure). Alternatively, you could compare a film from the Western genre to a horror. This is an example of grouping texts according to subject matter and their stylistic features.

Once you have distinguished your chosen texts' different genres, you must acknowledge their responses to the concerns of their time period. This is an indirect invitation to discuss elements of cultural context. Your approach to these concerns could be quite varied. You could, for example, consider how two texts represent the move towards industrialisation in the early nineteenth century, or a more specific and acute concern, such as the rise of the #MeToo movement or 'cancel culture' in contemporary society.

You must compare how the creator of each text responds to contextual concerns. This could include identifying similarities and/or differences in the ways the concerns are represented, the perspectives offered or the purposeful construction of the texts. For example, a short story focusing on a character who was inspired by the #MeToo movement to confront a sexual harasser could rely on first person point of view to build an emotional connection between the reader and the protagonist, highlighting the author's sympathetic response to this continued concern in contemporary society. Stronger candidates will discuss these responses in relation to the genre of the text, making purposeful connections between the choice of genre and the nature of the response.

Advice from teachers

- It is essential that candidates not overlook the requirement to 'compare' in this question. Your response must be structured to compare texts from the moment you put pen to paper. Focus on using comparative discourse to improve the fluency of your comparisons.
- Candidates must be specific in addressing how their chosen texts respond to concerns of the same time period. It is not enough to simply identify the time period and its concerns: delve deeper to acknowledge the construction and purpose of each text.

Activity: Formulating a comparative response

The command word *compare* requires you to evaluate the similarities and differences between texts. This type of analysis can take many forms, but could require you to:

- evaluate how texts from different genres represent similar themes, issues or ideas

- consider the extent to which texts from the same genre adhere to, or subvert, expectations

- reflect on how texts from different genres may achieve similar purposes or reflect similar contexts

- consider how techniques and conventions are purposefully used by texts in contrasting genres or modes

- discuss how texts may reveal the progression, change or adaptation of a genre over time

- evaluate the ways texts construct voices to reveal contrasting attitudes towards an issue or idea.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, rather it is an illustration of the varied and intricate ways texts can be compared. A fundamental understanding of how to articulate the similarities and differences between your studied texts is an essential skill in the ATAR English course.

The following activity models for you the process of deconstructing a comparative question and formulating a clear line of comparison. You may find it useful to recreate this for a variety of texts and questions you have encountered this year.

Command Words	Concept Words	Condition Words	Critical Words
Compare how	genres, time period (cultural context), concerns (issues)	two texts	different, same, respond

The example overleaf offers you a comparative model for texts belonging to different structural genres, namely print narrative and feature film. However, this is not the only approach to comparing genres. You could also compare the thematic genres of texts, such as the romance genre and the future fiction genre, or the horror and Western genres.

Hint: Transition markers

Help your comparative essay maintain its structure by using transition markers (linking words) to clearly indicate whether the next point you make is a similarity or difference.

Comparison	Similarly, likewise, in a similar way, in a similar fashion, equally, in the same way, to the same extent, this is mirrored in, also apparent, echoed by, we also see this in
Contrast	On the other hand, this is clearly contrasted in, despite this, in direct opposition to, whereas, on the contrary, contrastingly, this is different to, the same cannot be said for, in a different way

Text: *Never Let Me Go* (print narrative)	**Text:** *Ex Machina* (feature film)
Concerns of the same time period: Although *Never Let Me Go* focuses on clones and *Ex Machina* features robots, both texts fearfully respond to the risks and ethical dilemmas associated with technology that allows the creation of 'artificial' life. This is a prominent concern of the twenty-first century as technology edges us closer to the ability to 'play God'.	
• Told in first-person retrospective narrative point of view from the perspective of Kathy, a clone, who establishes a warm and familiar tone and sense of openness with the reader. • Kathy uses terms specific to the context of the clones, such as 'donating' and 'completion', indicating that cloning is an accepted and normalised part of society. • Drawing is a significant symbol in the text as the clones are instructed to 'donate' their work to Madame's gallery. This is to familiarise them with the process of eventually 'donating' their organs. • A tragic love story between Tommy and Kathy is established through dialogue and her revealing narrative voice, drawing attention to the injustice of the clones not being entitled to live a normal life. The reader is saddened that Kathy must care for Tommy during his final donations, as he 'gives up' on finding a way to escape the fate of a clone. • The use of the romantic tune 'Never Let Me Go' is a significant symbol in the text, reminding the reader that the clones are in fact humans who are vulnerable to human emotion. • Supporting characters are deliberately constructed to reveal contrasting perspectives on the morality and ethics of raising clones for 'donation'. Miss Lucy has a humane perspective, believing the clones are being misinformed and mistreated, whereas Miss Emily is proud of the work she did in creating 'Hailsham' – a place where clones could live a 'decent' childhood in a 'sanctuary' while the rest of society disdained them.	• Ava (an advanced robot) is constructed as human. Her body language is delicate and she speaks with a gentle, flirtatious tone. The boundary between human and robot is blurred by her characterisation. • Ava is kept in a glass cage, connotating a caged animal. Despite this, she appears distinctly human. A close-up of a crack in the glass foreshadows potential danger or distress. • Nathan (Ava's creator) is represented as a menacing technological genius. When he first appears on-screen he is kickboxing and muscular. There are locked doors in his compound that he tells Caleb 'not to worry about'. • Nathan's maid Kyoko remains silent throughout the film, despite the ways he demeans her. It is revealed in the resolution that she is also a robot and is complicit in Ava's escape. • Ava's costume gradually develops over the course of the text as she wears floral and feminine dresses to conceal her circuitry. However, robotic 'swooshing' sounds can still be heard when she moves or gestures. This serves to remind the audience that she is in fact a robot. • Ominous music and glowing red lighting are used to reveal Ava's moments of anger. The same music is repeated as she turns her back on Caleb and walks out of the compound. • The final chilling scene is framed in a long-shot with Caleb frantically banging on the glass of the same cage Ava was once trapped in as she walks boldly towards the camera, revealing her final move to 'outsmart' the men who created her.

Considering Question 6

Explore how different perspectives on a controversy have been represented in at least one text.

Interpreting the question

To address this question, candidates needed to demonstrate their understanding of how texts offer perspectives through the purposeful selection of language features. Your response could explore how your chosen text represents unexpected or alternative perspectives on a controversial issue. You could also identify the multiple perspectives on a controversy operating within your chosen text. An extension of this would be to consider how different perspectives on the same controversy are represented across several texts.

A controversy is a divisive or widely debated issue. For example, the issue of gun control in America is controversial as it sparks frequent and heated debate. A controversy can also be understood as a situation that challenges a dominant ideology; a pregnant woman who smokes is an example, as it challenges a socially-accepted idea or standard of behaviour.

The term 'perspective' refers to the position from which things are viewed and which is shaped and informed by contextual factors. Due to their divisive nature, it is natural that many perspectives will co-exist in response to controversies. Your response must go beyond identifying the perspectives in your chosen text; offer a considered explanation of the contextual factors that underpin them. For example, a homeowner in America might have a pro-gun ownership perspective, shaped by elements of their situational and cultural context as someone who believes in one's right to bear arms to protect one's property. Simultaneously, a grieving mother who lost a child in a mass shooting may have a passionate anti-gun perspective based on her unique situational context.

As this question asks you to consider 'how' perspectives have been represented, you must comment on their deliberate construction through textual features. You could also interpret the word 'how' as an invitation to make evaluations about the representations themselves. A documentary about gun control may purposefully represent a homeowner's pro-gun perspective as misguided by casting their talking head interviews in an ominous shadow. In contrast, the documentarian may present the anti-gun perspective of a grieving mother in a sympathetic way by using sombre music over archival home-video footage of her child blowing out candles on a birthday cake.

Advice from teachers

- This question asks for 'perspectives on a controversy', not controversial perspectives. Misapplying these terms could limit your argument.
- Avoid broadly referring to 'a controversy' in your response. Identify and explore a specific controversy, explaining what makes the issue contentious or problematic.
- Use sophisticated and varied vocabulary when evaluating representations of perspectives. Terms such as 'positive' and 'negative' are unoriginal and vague.

Activity: Identifying the contextual factors which shape perspectives

Many students struggle with the concept of perspective. They correctly identify the viewpoint or attitude of a character or writer but fail to acknowledge the contextual influences which inform this. The student in the previous response aces this, clearly identifying the specific situational factors which shape their perspective on Laura's death.

Use the table below as a model for analysing the perspectives in texts you have studied.

Character	Perspective	Contextual factors which shape this perspective
Sergeant James (*The Hurt Locker*)	• War is an exhilarating escape from the realities of civilian life.	• James is a highly skilled bomb disposal expert who thrives in risky situations. He finds civilian life mundane and confining, longing for combat. • The sergeant is unhappy in his marriage, suggesting it is 'the only thing that nearly killed [him]'.
The Commander (*The Handmaid's Tale*)	• Gilead is an ideal environment for women, simplifying sexual politics and removing love – an 'unnecessary complication'.	• As a man with significant power in Gilead, The Commander is in a position of privilege. He directly benefits from the structure of Gilead, having a wife, a handmaid and making trips to Jezebel's. • It is revealed in the 'Historical Notes' that he was a marketing expert in his 'former life', meaning he has experience in developing persuasive 'brands' and forms of propaganda.
	•	•

Activity: Articulating perspectives

This question requires you to acknowledge the language features or conventions that work to represent the perspectives in texts. It is important that you do not overlook the term *represented,* as it implies that each perspective in the text has been purposefully shaped by the text's creator.

Consider one of your multimodal studied texts, making note of the different perspectives coexisting within the text and the multimodal features used to construct them.

Person	Perspective	Contextual factors that shape this perspective	Multimodal/documentary conventions that work to represent this perspective

The following table illustrates how multiple perspectives on a controversy have been represented in the feature film *The Hurt Locker*. You may notice how varied and nuanced vocabulary is used to qualify each representation. It would be valuable to recreate this table for a range of texts and the controversies they explore.

Controversial idea explored by the text:

The Hurt Locker explores the controversial idea that war is a drug which appeals to young men who are thrill-seekers wishing to escape from reality. The film suggests many soldiers lack a developed understanding of why they are at war. This is controversial because historically, soldiers have been revered and honoured by western society for their valour and patriotism. Instead, the film suggest soldiers must be 'crazy' or 'addicted' to willingly enter the modern battlefield.

Character	Perspective	How this perspective is represented
Sergeant James	• Being in combat is thrilling and provides a reprieve from the realities of family life. • Soldiers must be prepared to put themselves at risk and accept the possibility of death.	• James' perspective is represented disparagingly, implying that he is mentally unwell and addicted to war. • His body language and dialogue on the battlefield conveys his arrogance and sheer love of his work as he swaggers confidently in his heavy body armour. The other soldiers in his unit worry that he will 'get them all killed'. • When he returns home for a short time, cool lighting is used to show his discomfort as he cleans the gutters and tries to pick a box of cereal from an endless aisle in the supermarket while tasteless 'muzak' plays in the background. It is suggested that civilian life is not complex or thrilling enough for him. This is followed by a close-up of his joyful facial expression as he returns to Iraq in the final frame of the film. • His perspective is represented as 'reckless' and selfish as he would rather be at war than at home with his wife and son.
Sergeant Sanborn	• Being a solider is not a reliable career or way of life for young men.	• Sanborn's perspective is represented sympathetically, in direct contrast to James'. Following a traumatic explosion, a mid-shot reveals his tear-stained face as he worries all his efforts on the battlefield will 'count for nothing'. He is certain that he does not want to die at war and wants to make it home to 'have a son'. • His perspective is presented as more rational and heart-wrenching and his desire to 'have a son' mirrors James' life, accentuating how James has the things other soldiers long for, but would rather give them up to be at war.
Specialist Eldridge	• War seems like an appealing concept until you experience it first-hand.	• Eldridge is a young and inexperienced soldier who is carrying the guilt of hesitating in combat, costing him the life of a beloved colleague. He is sensitive and confronted by what he sees and experiences moments of panic. • Seen playing combat-based computer games, Eldridge's perspective is represented sympathetically; he is constructed as 'just a kid' who grew up playing video games and thought he would give the 'real thing a go', only to be deeply scarred by the experience. • He goes out of his way to avoid combat and is often angry and reluctant to accept help. He is furious when James' decisions result in his injury and he is forced to return home, as he worries about how society will treat a 'damaged' young war veteran.

Considering Question 7

Discuss how voice has been crafted to reveal an inner or hidden conflict in at least one text.

Interpreting the question

This question required candidates to consider how voice operates as a carefully crafted feature of texts to create meaning. 'Voice' here refers to the nature of the voice projected in a text by a writer or speaker; the persona, role or character they adopt to communicate with the audience. Candidates could also discuss the construction of narrative voice, which refers to how a narrator is connected to a text. This includes whether the narrator is first- or third-person, and whether they are restricted, unreliable or omniscient in the perspective. Either way, you must ensure you characterise the *nature* of that voice, how it 'sounds' to the reader or listener, or the sense of personality that comes through. It is important to note that voice is an integral element of all texts, not just narratives.

The key word 'crafted' required candidates to analyse the construction of voice in their text. In doing so, you should comment on the language and stylistic features used in its construction and potentially, its development or change throughout the text. This may include evaluating a text's nuanced use of lexical choices or diction, syntax, idiolect, tone, rhythm, register or formality. You could also consider how structural or generic features such as narrative point of view, focalisation, dialogue and voice-over contribute to the construction of the voice.

Your response must connect the crafting of voice in your chosen text to the revelation of an inner or hidden conflict. You must do more than just identify a conflict in the text – responses which explore its inner or hidden nature will be rewarded. Consider what makes it an inner or hidden conflict, and from whom it is being hidden. An individual may be privately struggling with a moral dilemma, or battling a physical or psychological concern, or could also be enduring a trauma from a past event which is slowly being brought to light over the course of the text. The extent to which you consider the revelatory function of the voice is also important. For example, Hannah Gadsby's 2018 interpretive text *Nanette* expertly crafts a fluctuating sense of voice, switching between dry humour and a sombre tone before reaching the climactic and distressed revelation of a deeply traumatic hidden conflict.

Advice from teachers

- It is important that candidates identify and characterise the nature of the voice in their text. Consider, for example, the somewhat naïve and idealistic voice of Charlie Bucktin in *Jasper Jones,* established through his first person narrative point of view. Stronger students might note how Charlie's voice changes and develops as he grapples with his inner conflicts and their revelations.
- Delve deeper than commenting on the tone of voice; look for nuances in the way narrative point of view is used, how dialogue is constructed, the lexical choices of characters or the role of voice-over narration.
- Overlooking critical words, such as 'inner or hidden', will limit the depth of your response. Ensure that you clarify the nature of the conflict revealed by the text.

Activity: Identifying conflicts

You may recall being asked to identify the nature of conflicts – such as character versus character conflicts – in your younger years. They can take many forms and are often unspoken or hidden when a character is at odds with the world around them.

The table below summarises some of the conflicts present in texts. Use this as a template to to keep a running summary of the conflicts present in the texts you have studied.

Text	Conflict	Details
Children of Men (feature film)	character vs self conflict	• Theo is initially presented as a moody alcoholic who never recovered from the death of his son. At first, he helps Kee for his own financial gain. When he realises she is pregnant, Theo fights to put her needs before his own, sacrificing himself for the survival of humankind. Theo must fight his own grief and sense of apathy to support others.
Good Hair (documentary)	minority vs majority conflict	• Chris Rock investigates the obsession with hair relaxing and weaves in African American society. He reaches the conclusion that black people have been conditioned to be ashamed of their natural hair by the dominant ideology that places value on sleek, straight and glossy 'European' hair. He worryingly argues that the cost of expensive hair treatments is adding to the ongoing oppression of African American people.
Ex Machina (feature film)	character vs technology conflict	• Caleb is lured in by advances in technology, causing him to forget Ava is a robot. He forms a close attachment to her and is ultimately punished by technology when she leaves him caged and completely isolated. Caleb learns a grave lesson as he is outsmarted by a robot.

Hint: Resist autopilot responses

Many candidates fall into the trap of repeating the same phrases throughout their essay. Overcoming this will make your response immediately more engaging and detailed. Try to avoid repeating the phrasing of the question as a part of your analysis. In responding to Question 7, for example, resist the temptation to simply state that 'voice has been crafted'. Instead, embellish your analysis with impressive metalanguage and varied vocabulary.

Activity: Discussing voice

Voice is a complex concept because it demands an awareness of the many language features and structures at work to construct it. A detailed overview of this concept can be found on page 38 drawing your attention to the textual features that contribute to voice: tone, narrative point of view, language and stylistic features and genre.

It's also worth considering the way an author is connected to a text. This relates to the recognition of the author's voice, as they may take on a detectable authorial voice, particularly in persuasive or interpretive texts.

There can also be multiple voices within a text. A text may feature various voices, with each offering a unique perspective or representation of an idea. It is also important to consider the relationship between these voices. For example, an author may intentionally construct two characters whose voices are in opposition to represent two perspectives on an issue.

Voices are just as apparent in multimodal texts, such as feature films and documentaries. The creators of multimodal texts rely on language and structural features, as well as generic conventions, to articulate voices. This could be noted in the presence of voice-over narration, the construction and delivery of dialogue and the inclusion of a focaliser.

The table below summarises the voices constructed in a multimodal text. Use this as a template to consider the voices present in the texts you have studied over the year.

Text	Voice (or voices) present in the text	How the voice has been crafted
Chasing Asylum (Documentary)	• critical and frustrated authorial voice constructed to reveal the director's dismay at the Australian government's 'stop the boats' policy • traumatised and depressed voice of asylum seekers in detention on Nauru and Manus Island constructed to highlight the human cost of these policies • angry and despairing voice of doctors and social workers who feel under-resourced	• strategic editing and intentional ordering of information, including the opening scene of a rickety boat bouncing on dangerous waves followed by a montage of politicians claiming they have 'stopped the boats' • inclusion of secretly filmed interviews with asylum seekers who say they are 'wasting their lives' in detention followed by shocking footage of their conditions • talking-head interviews with visibly traumatised doctors who provide anecdotes about the distressing nature of their jobs

Activity: Analysing the construction of voice

Students find it difficult to identify the specific language and structural features that craft voices in texts. This process requires you to pay close attention to the aural components of texts; that is, the things we listen to that allow us to make meaning. Voice can be developed through a range of textual features, including:

- tone, pace, intonation, emphasis and cadence
- the construction of dialogue, and the ways individuals respond to others
- accent, colloquialisms and formality
- lexical choices and syntax
- gaps, pauses and omissions (what individuals decide to leave unspoken)
- the use of narrative point of view or authorial voice.

The table below provides you with a framework for analysing voices in a variety of texts. Each example has been deconstructed to identify the language and structural features at work. You may find it useful to keep a table like this for each text you have studied.

Text	Evidence	Language and structural features crafting the voice
Jasper Jones (novel)	'And there I scowled and sweated, watching this town through our grubby windows. I was so full of sadness and hate.'	The use of first person narrative point of view establishes Charlie's familiar voice, allowing the reader insights into his unspoken and troubled thoughts. Their use of hostile verbs like 'scowled' and 'sweated' establishes his furious voice as he refers to 'this town'. The use of the pronoun 'this' establishes a contemptuous tone, hinting that the narrator is ashamed to be associated with the town.
Never Let Me Go (novel)	'We all know it. We're modelled from trash. Junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps. Convicts maybe, just so long as they aren't psychos.'	Ruth speaks in a blunt and callous tone, revealing her frustration at her position as a clone. She refers to controversial and derogatory nouns, such as 'junkies' and 'winos', identifying herself as 'trash'. Ruth's voice is critical and joyless, speaking matter-of-factly about the social standing of clones.
Farenheit 451 (novel)	'It was a pleasure to burn. It was a special pleasure to see things blackened and changed.'	Montag begins the story with a clipped, independent clause, establishing a straightforward tone. The intonation applied to the word 'changed' reveals his unsettling delight and sheer joy at burning books.
'Shoot' (*Mad Men* episode)	'I realised today that I don't think I want to work anymore. I don't like the idea of you coming home to something whipped up.'	Betty speaks to her husband with a concessional and humbled tone, implying she was wrong in thinking she could restart her career. Her use of the phrase 'whipped up' suggests she feels unable to both work and keep the domestic sphere in perfect condition.

Considering Question 8

Compare how two texts of different modes use textual features to represent a similar idea or theme.

Interpreting the question

This question required candidates to consider how the 'mode' of a text influences the way it represents ideas or themes. As a foundational concept of the syllabus, mode refers to the 'various processes of communication' used by texts to create meaning, such as 'sound, print, image and gesture'. These processes categorise the texts you study into print, visual, aural, spoken and multimodal. As you are required to compare texts from different modes, you could refer to a feature article (a print text) and a still image (a visual text). It would be incorrect to compare a feature film to a documentary as they are both examples of multimodal texts. It is important to distinguish between the modes and genres of texts; these terms are not interchangeable. A novel and a feature film can both belong to the horror genre, for instance, but they rely on different modes of communication.

Once you have identified texts from different modes, your response must compare how they represent a similar idea or theme. A theme can be understood as a central or recurring argument developed by a text, whereas an idea refers to a notion, opinion or belief explored. You could compare two texts that explore the theme of coming-of-age, or the importance of facing your fears. Alternatively, your chosen texts could explore a more specific notion, such as the impact of social media on body image. The use of the phrase 'similar idea or theme' allows you to compare texts that may be similar to an extent, but do not necessarily explore identical ideas.

Your response must acknowledge how a similar theme or idea is represented through the textual features unique to the modes of your chosen texts. Representation refers to the 'way people, events, issues or subjects are presented in a text'. Keep in mind that each text you study offers just one way of thinking about an idea or theme. Most importantly, you must compare how the representations in each text have been strategically constructed. A documentary about the treatment of asylum seekers in Australia may use emotive voice-over narration in conjunction with hand-held footage of decrepit detention centres to offer a critical representation of Australia's current policies. In comparison, a feature article may rely on statistics and interviews with a policy advisor to represent the Australian government in a sympathetic light for putting Australian citizens first.

Advice from teachers

- This question is a pertinent reminder that candidates must be familiar with the terms of the syllabus. The word 'mode' must not be mistaken for 'genre'. As you revise, make sure you can clearly identify the modes your studied texts belong to.
- Strategic planning is essential for success with this question. Ensure you are comparing texts from different modes, and identify the textual features you will compare. Considering the audio-visual features of a film against the written features of a short story allows you to showcase your understanding of modes, for instance.

Activity: Managing modes

Students often find it difficult to distinguish the mode of a text from its genre, but it is important to see these terms as distinct. Mode refers to the way information is communicated to an audience. You may find it useful to keep a running inventory of the ways the texts you encounter over the year can be classified.

A sample for you to follow has been provided here.

Text	Reading	Viewing	Listening	Multimodal	Genre (structural/thematic)
Never Let Me Go	✓				prose narrative/novel romance/dystopian/ speculative fiction
The Complete Maus				✓	graphic novel fictive autobiography
Jasper Jones	✓				prose narrative/novel bildungsroman/ southern gothic/mystery

Activity: Making insightful comparisons

The ability to compare texts is an important skill that is promoted throughout the ATAR English syllabus. The process of comparison allows you to make insightful connections between the texts you have studied, showing your ability to analyse and reflect on complex ideas.

Re-read the previous response. As you are reading, highlight any points of comparison the candidate makes and reflect on the questions below:
- How many points of comparison does the candidate make? Could this be improved upon?
- What essay structure does the candidate use? Does this allow for detailed comparison?
- Does the candidate use comparative language (e.g. similarly, both, in comparison)?

Question 8 requires you to consider how texts from different modes can still manage to represent a similar idea or theme. They may offer contrasting representations but, most significantly, they tackle similar ideas. This is just one form of comparison, proving that similarities can be found in texts that appear to be extreme opposites from the outside. Of course, the process of comparison will also naturally give rise to the differences between texts. The points of difference between texts are nothing to be frightened of; acknowledge them as valuable indicators of each text's unique purpose, genre, mode or context.

Use a Venn diagram as a template to help you illuminate the similarities and differences between two of your studied texts. You may find it useful to re-create this for a range of texts to draw your attention to the idea that comparisons can often be found in the most unlikely of places.

Activity: Deconstructing scenes

Successful responses that focus on multimodal texts (such as documentaries and feature films) often demonstrate an ability to succinctly describe scenes. They rely on descriptive language to recreate the scenes while using appropriate metalanguage. For example:

A persistent threat lingers in The Hurt Locker, *with the director refusing to cut away from the bomb disposal team for lengthy periods of time. These long-shots, often captured from high angles, build tension with each passing second. The soldiers patrol the streets of Iraq suspiciously, with the camera peering at them through bomb-blasted walls and open windows, narrowly framing the shots. As the soldiers observe the bystanders, so too do the viewers. This induces paranoia and suspicion in the viewer, as they question whether every person the camera passes is a potential suicide bomber or an innocent bystander.*

Instead of identifying one or two unrelated language features, conventions or techniques in a paragraph, it is far more effective to consider how a scene functions as a whole. This requires you to explain how multimodal features work together within a scene.

Re-read the previous responses and consider each candidate's use of textual evidence in their body paragraphs. As you read, highlight specific uses of appropriate metalanguage and consider the following questions:

- Which candidate deconstructs scenes from their texts more effectively? Why is this the case?

- If you are unfamiliar with the texts discussed, are you able to visualise the examples deconstructed in each body paragraph?

Use the table below as a guide to assist you in summarising significant scenes from multimodal texts you have studied, making sure you identify how a range of language features are working together.

Scene description	Techniques used to construct the scene
The final scene of Zero Dark Thirty, *as Maya boards a military plane to return to America, having successfully led the mission to kill Osama Bin Laden.*	• *A long shot reveals Maya approaching the aircraft alone. The pilot tells her, 'You must be pretty important, you got the whole plane to yourself.'* • *She silently takes a seat as mournful music stirs. A mid-shot reveals her weeping and all alone. She is tightly framed with netting in the mise en scene, resembling a dark and disfigured American flag.* • *This reveals Maya's isolation and confusion, as she must now decide what to do with the rest of her life. This mirrors the confusion and insecurity felt by American society following this significant event.*

Considering Question 9

How have language or structural innovations been used to unsettle an audience in at least one text?

Interpreting the question

This question called for candidates to appraise how the language and structural features of a text have a significant influence on audience responses. The use of the word 'unsettle' is intentionally broad, allowing you to consider a range of ways a text may elicit a sense of discomfort or uneasiness. An audience may be shocked, confronted, disturbed or even challenged by the innovations in a text, responses achieved through deliberate changes to what is expected from its language or structural features.

You must identify the unique language or structural features working to shape meaning and prompt responses in your chosen text. 'Language features' refers to the specific language a text uses to communicate ideas. This could include the use of figurative language in a poem or the use of camera angles and lighting in a feature film (often referred to as visual language). Similarly, 'structural features' refers to the organisation of a text. The arrangement of chapters in a novel is an example of a structural feature, as is the inclusion of a focaliser in a documentary. You are welcome to refer to elements of both language and structure in your response, but the use of the conjunction 'or' in this question means that you are not strictly required to do so.

The most significant determiner in this question is the word 'innovative', referring to choices in language and structure that are unexpected, stylistically unique, or against convention. Your response must connect the innovative use of language or structural features in your chosen text to the unsettled audience response. For example, an interactive television show that requires the audience to decide the actions of the characters via their remote, could be considered structurally innovative. This innovation would certainly unsettle the audience, causing agitation as the audience is forced to make a range of suspenseful decisions for the characters with unknown outcomes. The ways a text innovatively uses language or structural features to unsettle the audience can be far-reaching. Your response must acknowledge how these innovations work to unsettle a *particular* audience. An innovative horror film may deeply unsettle fans who are weary of the typical conventions of the genre, for instance.

Advice from teachers

- Ensure that you attend to all elements of the question. Overlooking the word 'innovative' will limit your response. If you are uncertain of a term's meaning, the question may not be for you.
- Focus on connecting the innovative use of language or structural features to an unsettled audience response. Move beyond repeating that an audience feels 'unsettled'; use varied synonyms to clarify the nature of the response.
- Avoid simply repeating the term 'audience'; stronger responses will acknowledge that texts target quite specific or particular audiences.

Activity: Articulating more than just a 'response'

At this point, you may have started picking up on common traits that appear in successful responses. One thing they often have in common is their use of varied and nuanced vocabulary. Successful responses go beyond the obvious restating of the question, using synonymous language or eloquent phrasing to make their case.

Use the table below as a guide for keeping track of your responses to the texts you have studied throughout the year. This would be a good opportunity to also take some brief notes about the specific elements of your context that influence your response.

Text	Ways I can describe my response	Contextual factors that shape my response
A Streetcar Named Desire (stage play)	• I am saddened, dismayed and appalled by the way Blanche is destroyed physically and emotionally by the men in the text. • I am sickened and enraged by the construction of Stanley, viewing him as a menacing and immoveable force of the patriarchy.	• As an 18-year old man in 2019, I have been raised under the ideology that violence against women is unacceptable. I am also perceptive to significant developments in the way sexual harassment is regarded in society, with aggressors being publicly shamed. I have many female friends, and I am horrified at the idea they could ever be treated so poorly, and I hope other contemporary men have the same attitude.

Hint: Make a generic conventions checklist

As you study a text, make a checklist of the ways it adheres to, subverts or innovatively experiments with generic conventions. This will save you time when it comes to preparing for exams.

Generic convention	How this convention is used	Textual evidence

Activity: Writing concrete conclusions

If the introduction to your essay is your first opportunity to 'hook' your marker and establish your argument, your conclusion can be just as valuable, serving as the final impression – a reminder to your marker that you were able to 'get the job done'. The successful responses in this section all feature similar conclusions and tend to follow a common format. Take this opportunity to re-read each conclusion and ask yourself:

- Which one do you consider to be the most effective? What makes it so?

- Does each conclusion follow a similar pattern? What 'golden rules' can you identify?

- Does each conclusion return to the key words of the question?

You may find it useful to remember the acronym XYZ to remind them of the broad structure of a conclusion:

E**x**plain your thesis	Use the first 1-2 sentences of your conclusion to re-state your argument, ensuring you incorporate the key words of the question.
Clarify the **Y**	Take the next 2-3 sentences to address *why* the points you raised in your essay are significant. Avoid retelling your entire essay or re-stating your topic sentences – your marker has already read these. Instead, delve deeper: what are the complex or nuanced points of your argument?
End with a **Z**ing	The final 1-2 sentences of your conclusion should aim to leave the marker with a thought-provoking statement – about the text, the question or perhaps even broader society. This will leave your marker with a positive and lasting impression, reminding them that you have thoughtfully considered your chosen question and have formulated original ideas.

Keeping the structure above in mind, go back through each conclusion featured in this section. Use different coloured highlighters to point out the 'XYZ' statements in each one. You could also attempt to write a conclusion for the partial responses offered for Question 9.

Next, consider the conclusion below. Imagine you are marking this work for a student. What comments, annotations and advice would you give them? You might like to add annotations directly to this page, truly taking on the role of the teacher.

The Handmaid's Tale is innovative because it uses many conventions of the dystopian genre well. In writing this novel, Margaret Atwood has used the first-person narrative point of view of Offred as well as colour symbolism in the red dresses the handmaids are forced to wear as well as the dialogue and the resolution and the epigraph to show what a terrible and constricted life the handmaids lead. All these features are used in the novel to show the reader a world that we would definitely not want to live in. Overall, Atwood has used the features of the dystopian genre to unsettle the audience and make us think about things in a deeper way.

Activity: Putting it all together

The responses featured in this guide are considered successful for a variety of reasons: some show an excellent understanding of their chosen text, others really understand the syllabus and can articulate this with clarity. Regardless of their unique strengths, there are common features of success that the writers of each one have picked up on and worked to perfect.

This activity requires you to condense the comments provided on the responses in this section to identify reoccurring traits of success. For each of the criteria below, make a brief note about the commonalities in good responses. Use this as a checklist to help you reflect on your own essay writing.

Aspect of responding	Traits of good answers	Areas to develop in my own responses
Question deconstruction	• Successful answers seem to break the question down into command, concept, condition and critical words. • The key words of the question are repeated (and elaborated on) throughout the response.	• I need to take a few minutes to plan and dissect the question before starting to 'stress write'. • I'm going to practice deconstructing questions using a colour-coding system for the different types of words.
Introductions		
Body paragraphs		
Use of evidence		
Conclusions		
Syllabus concepts		
Vocabulary and written expression		

The Composing Section

General observations

The Composing Section is primarily concerned with your ability to produce a text and shape it for an intended purpose, targeted to an identifiable audience and with an implied context in mind. Awareness of context, audience and purpose is essential for shaping any of the three forms you will be required to construct, namely imaginative, interpretive or persuasive.

The Composing Section examines how well you control or manipulate generic conventions to create a sustained imaginative, interpretive or persuasive text. In short, for this section you will *construct* a text, whereas the other sections are focused on your ability to *deconstruct* texts.

The objectives of the Composing Section are to assess your ability to:

- create an original text for a specific context, audience and purpose

- make language and stylistic choices befitting the context, audience and purpose

- experiment with structure and language features related to specific genres.

What follows will offer you suggestions on how best to approach the Composing Section.

What does it mean to compose?

It is worthwhile considering what the word 'compose' means literally. It means '*to write or create a work of art'.* So, the Composing Section requires you to select from a set of creative tools – such as language, structural, generic and stylistic features – that you have been honing and shaping throughout the year, to create an effective and engaging text.

The syllabus informs the questions

A common misconception about the Composing Section is that it is simply creative writing. Whilst your creativity will flow in this section, you should also be guided by the parameters of the syllabus concepts. Therefore, your familiarity with the syllabus is vital. The more familiar you are with the syllabus the less likely you are to come across a concept that might surprise you. The questions are not randomly created; on the contrary, they are linked tightly to the Year 12 ATAR syllabus.

The 2018 Composing Section required from candidates an intimate understanding of the syllabus, in particular the concepts that underpin the syllabus. So, it will not be a surprise that all of the questions in 2020 will include the syllabus concepts such as perspective, voice etc.

Preparing for the Composing Section

Throughout the year you will be given multiple opportunities, by your teacher, to practise and experiment with the creative tools assessed in the Composing Section. You should take these opportunities to broaden your skills: to try writing in different styles, to rehearse writing from different perspectives or with different voices, as well as to write in different forms and genres. The more opportunities you take to practise with short but focused pieces, the more prepared you will be.

Relying on pre-prepared answers is risky. The possibility of one of your past responses suiting a new question is miniscule. Selecting the best question for you takes some practice, but it is the experience of practising that will ensure that you are able to select a question on the page rather than trying to mould the question to fit one that you might have had success in during the year.

The brevity of the question is deceiving. Therefore, unpacking the question is vital so that you do not misread or overlook an essential word or phrase. Basically, you will need to read thoroughly, giving attention to all details provided. In the 2018 paper, Question 13 required writing with an 'atypical setting'. Without reading carefully, one might read this as a 'typical' setting rather than what was intended by the question: a setting that is, in fact, unusual or unexpected of the genre. Reading a question only once is highly risky, particularly under the pressure of an exam where you might overlook a nuance within the question. Writing creatively does not give you limitless rein; ultimately, you must answer the question.

The sometimes formulaic style of writing needed to write analytical essays has no place in this section. On the contrary, it is in the Composing Section that you get to create ideas and thoughts in an imaginative way, to express emotions and feelings rather than presenting facts and analysis, even if you are writing a persuasive or interpretive text. Facts and analysis are best incorporated in this section with consideration of style. You can explore the views of others, creating personae or immersing yourself in the skin of someone vastly different from yourself. Like all art, it takes practice. This should happen regularly so that when it comes time to selecting the question to best showcase your prowess, you are doing so with experience.

Whilst you can expect to be directed to write either an interpretive, persuasive or imaginative text, you will also be directed to demonstrate language control and awareness of generic and stylistic conventions, amongst other skills. Reading widely with the intention to observe other writing styles is a worthwhile activity. You don't need to read a whole text to pick up patterns other writers might use. Even short bursts of browsing through books in the library can reveal some gems of the craft of writing to you.

> ### Hint: Where do ideas come from?
>
> Value the experiences you already have as a source for your writing. It's better than copying. Look around and observe the characters you come into contact with. Speak to a stranger at a bus stop, use your travel experiences, stop and listen to a busker, use what you know from other courses you study, watch TED talks – breathe in the wealth of opportunities around you for inspiration.

Planning for your response

How well you achieve in the Composing Section is closely linked to the effectiveness of your pre-writing strategies. Even if you are tempted to commence writing immediately, hold off and know that the time you reserve for purposeful planning will pay off.

This vital time allows you to think critically about both the question and your approach to it. Essentially, it is a clear way to plan for a piece of writing and to consider its context, audience and purpose. The way you use this time might vary depending on the form you select to write in.

Like the selection of a question and your familiarity with writing in various text forms, planning takes some practice. The recommendation is to use time to plan in your exam, but you should be planning every time you respond to a Composing Section question throughout the year. By doing so, you will develop a style of planning that best suits you.

There is a common misunderstanding that a 'statement of intent' (or a CAP statement) benefits the markers of your response. The following is a directive from SCSA:

> *It is important to note that it is not a requirement of either the design brief or the marking key for the candidate to provide any 'statement of intent' accompanying a question chosen in Section Three: Composing. Thus any 'statement of intent' will not be considered when marking the answer to a question in this section. Any such 'statement of intent' will be regarded as 'planning' and must be crossed out and/or clearly separated so it is not confused with the answer to the question.*

This tells us that a statement of intent is not required for this part of the examination. However, it does not mean it serves no purpose in your planning, nor does it indicate that planning is not important. Remember that a statement of intent or a CAP statement are for the purposes of your planning only and do not get marked or considered by your markers.

Considering context, audience, purpose and form in your plan

Context

The context of a text is not what appears on the page, but is the factor/s that give the background of how and why you are writing. Where and when will your text (hypothetically speaking) be published or delivered? Under what circumstances is it created?

Audience

In considering your audience, some simple starting points include age, gender and social characteristics. In addition to these details, you may consider the relationship of the audience with the subject. What do they already know about the subject? What is their attitude/opinion towards it? What do they need to be told about the subject? An awareness of your audience will shape other choices, such as the way you select language to appeal to your audience. Remember that you, as the writer, could also be an assumed persona.

Purpose

Your purpose for writing is the first step in guiding what you say and how you say it. So, in your planning time, consider purpose, as it will affect other aspects of your writing such as shaping your response for your selected audience.

Form

While working out your purpose and audience, decide what form will best achieve your purpose. This means thinking about the generic conventions and language features associated with this form. The Composing Section will give you a range of situations, some of which may encourage you to manipulate generic conventions to achieve your purpose and communicate effectively with your audience. Read the question carefully and check whether it prescribes the form to be used.

It is worth mentioning that even though context, audience and purpose are not overtly stipulated within each question, they are in the overriding directive that introduces the Composing Section of the examination: *You are required to demonstrate writing skills by choosing a form of writing appropriate to a specific audience, context and purpose.*

Originality and creativity

The Composing Section is your chance to show off, be creative and demonstrate the ability to express your own, original ideas. Too many candidates attempt to recreate blockbuster films, video games or novels – this is not impressive and is unlikely to fully meet the demands of the exam question. Last year's Summary Examination Report for students highlighted this point specifically. Simply recreating others' texts will not be recognised as imaginative, unless you make an effort to transform or adapt them. What will impress markers is a strong sense of originality and personal voice; writing that offers something new, interesting or refreshing.

Activity: Developing originality and creativity

Try practising writing the same narrative in different styles. That way, you don't have to worry about the content; you are simply focusing on developing the style that you are writing in. Let's take 'Little Red Riding Hood' for example. You can read the story here http://www.dltk-teach.com/rhymes/littlered/story.htm to refresh your memory. Once you are familiar with the tale, rewrite it:

- as a play script, including stage directions
- as a horror story
- as a feature article focusing on the unfolding events or involvement of key characters
- altering the chronology of events in different text types.

The point is to keep writing the same story but each time change the style, add a twist in the narrative, alter the structure or vary the tone. Experiment with your creativity.

Create texts for different purposes, contexts and audiences

Types of texts

In the Composing Section you will be asked to create a sustained imaginative, interpretive or persuasive text. You will have already demonstrated your analytical writing skills in the Responding Section, so such responses are generally not appropriate here. To succeed in the Composing Section, you must have a strong knowledge and understanding of different writing styles and forms, as well as their conventional generic and language features, appropriate to these three broad types of texts.

In 2018, markers read prose narratives, speeches, blogs, articles, personal essays, biographical extracts, song lyrics, excerpts of screenplays and drama scripts. Once you've chosen the form, use its conventions accurately. Thus, it would be unwise to attempt a form you have no practice in. Observance of common recognisable conventions will be rewarded, whereas you will not be rewarded for something that does not resemble a recognisable text type.

Imaginative texts

The syllabus defines imaginative texts as:

> *Texts whose primary purpose is to entertain or provoke thought through their imaginative use of literary elements. They are recognised for their form, style and artistic or aesthetic value. These texts include novels, traditional tales, poetry, stories, plays, fiction for young adults and children, including picture books, and multimodal texts such as film.*

For example:

The morning dawned clear and bright. I lay in bed, luxuriating in the fog of sleep that still clouded my head. Suddenly, a realisation yanked me into full consciousness. No more exams!

I jumped out of bed with adrenaline rushing to my head, making me dizzy. The last WACE exam had been yesterday. The flood of relief was unbelievable, matched only be excitement that, in just a few short hours, me and the crew would be heading to Busso to cut loose, closing the door on school forever and looking ahead to a new chapter of our lives.

Interpretative texts

The syllabus defines interpretive texts as:

> *Texts whose primary purpose is to explain and interpret personalities, events, ideas, representations or concepts. They include autobiography, biography, media feature article, documentary film and other non-fiction texts.*

For example:

The institution of 'Leavers', when graduating Year 12 students depart for places such as Dunsborough and Rottnest to celebrate the end of school, is an increasingly important rite of passage. With many Year 12 students now becoming adults in their final year of schooling, the 18th birthday party is losing its role as the signifier of attaining adulthood. Instead, the Leavers phenomenon has increasingly become the moment at which students feel like they have finally left their adolescence behind.

Persuasive texts

The syllabus defines persuasive texts as:

> *Texts whose primary purpose is to put forward a point of view and persuade a reader, viewer or listener. They form a significant part of modern communication in both print and digital environments. They include advertising, debates, arguments, discussions, polemics, essays and articles.*

For example:

Leavers is supposed to be a celebration of finishing school, but for many students it has devolved into an excuse to get drunk and trash camping grounds. Police in our home town of Dunsborough are finding themselves bracing for the annual onslaught of troublemakers and we, the residents are tired of the tide of loutish behaviour that sees our home overrun by disrespectful youth who fail to see our town as the haven it is. Therefore, as a proud resident of Dunsborough, I appeal to you, our council members, to implement strategies to preserve the allure for the type of visitors we want to welcome.

Forms of writing appropriate to the Composing Section

Choosing the form in which to respond is one of the most important choices you will make in the Composing Section. Four of the five questions in the 2018 examination stipulated a specific text type with the form being left as a choice. Question 13 required candidates to compose an imaginative text. Underneath the umbrella of 'imaginative' you have a number of form choices. You could write a short story, the beginning of a novel, a play script, a fable letter and so on, but you need to make sure that you also craft an atypical setting as well as write in an identifiable genre.

> **Hint: Write what you know!**
>
> Choose a form that you are comfortable with – and that you have practised! You need to be able to manipulate the conventions of the form you choose. If you haven't practised writing this text type, you will find it extremely difficult to 'wing it' on examination day!

Activity: Experimenting with text types

In order for you to make a decision about which text type plays to your strengths, you have to experiment with your writing. One way to do this is to take a single prompt and transfer it into different text types.

Select a major news story that captured people's attention. One example in 2018 was the Thai cave rescue of a young soccer team and their coach. The story galvanised bonds between countries and united the world as we watched the rescue unfold.

This stimulus could be used in many different ways. The first has been done for you. Try writing different text types and forms using either the stimulus suggested about the Thai rescue or select another current news story that could be effectively adapted.

Text type/form of writing	Possible ideas to engage stimulus	Features of the genre/text
Imaginative short story	<u>Setting:</u> Australian airport <u>Situation:</u> Australian caving expert hears about the situation in Thailand, abandons her holiday plans and redirects her travel to assist the rescue	First person point of view Descriptive language Dialogue Title
Imaginative script		
Persuasive speech		
Persuasive feature article		
Interpretive biography		
Interpretive diary entry		

Now take it a step further. Watch the news unfolding throughout the year and select a story that resonates with you. Can you create your own table similar to the one above?

Purpose

'Purpose' can be referred to as the reason why. You need to ask yourself: why am I writing this text? You need to consider your reason for writing the text before you begin. Are you trying to entertain? Educate? Persuade? Antagonise? In the Composing Section, you will be assessed on how well you shape your text to effectively meet your intended purpose/s.

> **Hint: Think outside the box!**
>
> Consider a wide range of purposes:
> - persuade, argue, advise
> - inform, explain describe
> - entertain, imagine, evoke
> - analyse, review, comment
> - reflect, remember, record
> - speculate, explore, consider
> - imitate, parody, satirise

The list of purposes to the left is not exhaustive, but it does indicate the range of purposes for which texts may be written. They have been grouped to suggest where similar language conventions might be used to achieve such purpose/s.

Can you add to this list?

Purpose and form

Perhaps the first decision to be made about composing a piece of creative writing is the form that you will use to fulfil your purpose. Each form has its own flexibilities, restrictions and requirements. Additionally, different forms tend to better suit different purposes, audiences and contexts. For example, a speech might be delivered at a school assembly to persuade students not to litter, just as a speech might be delivered at a wedding to congratulate the bride and groom. There is a link between the extensive range of forms from which to choose and the expression of your purpose.

Some questions will direct you to respond using a specific form, such as a short narrative. Some might imply a particular text type – for example, 'create an imaginative text'. If the question does specify a text type, you must use it.

An interesting point to note about the Composing Section is that some questions ask candidates to focus on particular aspects of form. For example, a question might ask you to write the orientation for a narrative. Another question might ask you to focus on setting, or to produce two different short texts. In the 2018 paper, a directive for one question was to write 'a persuasive text for a resistant audience'. This question required the purpose to be clearly articulated in the form of a persuasive text.

Remember that text types may fulfil more than one purpose. For example, a short story may *entertain* and *comment* on society. An article may *inform* and *persuade,* or a speech may *provoke* and *support*. Successfully adapting your text to fulfil dual purposes requires a higher degree of skill and might be considered more favourably by your markers.

Purpose and structure

Markers often comment that the structure of a candidate's writing does not support the purpose of the piece and that instead, the candidate's ideas are lost amidst a hodgepodge of information that is selected and sequenced poorly – the 'splatter method' of writing. Consider how the sequencing of your ideas can best help achieve your stated or intended purpose:

- If you are writing a memoir, consider whether you might start in the present and use the device of flashback, or begin your text in the past and then flash forward to the present.
- For persuasive texts, think about the cause/effect or problem/solution structure. Also consider the use of repetition and whether to conclude with a call to action.
- In a narrative, consider how you might manipulate the basic structure of exposition, rising action, suspense, climax, resolution and denouement.
- In an argumentative piece, consider the order of your arguments and to whom it is that each will appeal. You might decide to use a deductive approach to the argument rather than inductive, or perhaps you might wish to combine the two.
- In all forms, consider how the paragraphing works to enhance your purpose.

Purpose and content

Of course, *what* you write about is also important. Carefully considering the content of your text doesn't just mean thinking about your overall subject matter, although that is important. It's also about the shaping of your subject matter to suit a particular purpose. You will have studied how writers carefully select some details for inclusion while omitting others; apply that same knowledge to your own writing.

Think about the details which will most likely make your text persuasive, entertaining, successfully argued, analytical and so on. Consider which details are best foregrounded, minimised or left out altogether. Think about the textual and/or anecdotal evidence you might include in support of your ideas.

Purpose and tone

'Tone' identifies the writer's attitude to a subject and consequently supports the text's purpose. Your writing can transmit attitudes through devices such as sentence structure, word choice, punctuation and the formality of language. Be aware that the attitude expressed should always appropriately complement the audience and purpose.

Purpose and audience

Often the audience will help to determine the purpose. Decisions about audience and purpose must be considered, as the choice of one will ultimately affect the other. Consider, for example, if you were writing to daily users of the Internet about Internet censorship, your purpose could be to allay their fears, or it could be to reinforce these fears. In this instance, the purpose is altered whilst the audience remains the same.

Context

Context is a key concept examined in the Composing Section. The syllabus glossary defines context as:

> *The environment in which a text is responded to or treated*. Context can include the general social, historical and cultural condition in which a text is responded to and created (the context of culture) or the specific features of its immediate environment (context of situation).

Context influences both reader and author. From the perspective of the reader, context is a crucial lens through which they make sense of a text. For example, you might understand the dystopian genre of literature more if you understood the historical context in which this genre emerged and grew in popularity.

As an author, understanding context when composing is equally essential. For example, if you wanted to write a feature article that condemned the rise of disaster capitalism, it would be dangerous not to acknowledge the affluence, economy and safety of the society from within which you were writing, particularly when trying to create an authentic voice on the matter. Or, if you wanted to write an editorial or opinion piece on sport in Australia, it would be advantageous to move past generalised ideas of mateship or loyalty to a club or code towards a deeper contextual knowledge that frames, for example, your debate about the cricket ball tampering incident of 2018, or your concerns for the potential of racketeering in tennis.

Your own contextual knowledge is important. What can you do? Self-evaluate! Ask yourself the following questions:

- What contextual knowledge do I have?

- What do I know about the world?

- What is my understanding of recent events, ideas, topics and changes in our world?

- What do I know about entertainment, politics, literature, religion, film, media, technology, music and culture, either now or in the past?

- Can I discuss ideologies that naturalise thinking in my culture, that oppress or marginalise some whilst championing and sustaining others?

- How do Australian cultural values of freedom, equality and diversity play out in our community and country? What do I think about this?

- Do I watch the news? Documentaries? Engage in conversations with others regarding current affairs, topics and events? Read timely articles, editorials, and blogs?

Hint: Know about the world

The more aware you are of your own context and the more self-evaluation you do, the better prepared you will be when it comes to creating credible texts in the Composing Section. Respond to the questions above in your learning journal. If you find that you are struggling to respond, it may mean you need to widen your reading and viewing. As stated many times throughout this guide, wide reading and viewing is integral to your success in this course.

Audience

Audience awareness is often one of the most difficult things for student writers. Being aware of your audience when composing is essential. All texts have an audience, even if, as in the case of a diary, that audience is you. Why would anyone write a text without the intention of it being read by someone?

The syllabus glossary defines audience as:

> *The group of readers, listeners or viewers that the writer, designer, filmmaker or speaker is addressing. Audience includes students in the classroom, an individual, the wider community, review writers, critics and the implied audience.*

The pivotal word in this explanation is *addressing*. On the one hand, it signifies that, as writers, we must craft our compositions to speak to and tackle different audiences. In this way, we need to be 'audience agile'. We need to know how to direct and guide different audiences by the careful selection of different modes and forms of address. Why? Because how one chooses to compose their text is shaped mostly by the audience for whom the text is targeted.

If you were writing a short detective piece for a middle-years audience, you might focus on the adventure and mystery of the crime, rather than the forensic science a story for older readers might focus on. You might choose a first person narrator, young and inexperienced, who leads a band of ill-fitting friends, rather than a jaded detective narrator, struggling with the mental pressures and brutality of his job.

Audience also influences language choice, structure and the evidence we choose to bring into an argument. It influences the shape and scope of what we do as writers. So, in summary, the audience lies at the heart of the entire writing craft.

The most obvious place to begin when considering your audience is their general context: age, sex, cultural background, geographic location, level of education and so on. A more complex consideration of context will be reflected in consideration of your audience's prior knowledge of, and interest in, your subject matter, the values and attitudes they may hold and their expectations of your chosen text type. You could also consider the audience in terms of whether they are friendly and simply need their beliefs reinforced, whether they are apathetic and will need to be convinced that the issue matters, whether they are simply uninformed and hence need to be educated before a proposal is posited to them or whether the audience is hostile and therefore their views must be respected before you are able to shift them though logic and rhetoric.

Hint: Write for an audience you know well!

How are you expected to be able to address an audience you don't understand? In the Composing Section, writing for your teachers is not necessarily a wise choice. Write instead for the discerning audience, the sceptical audience or the optimistic audience. Or the audience who just wants to be entertained. Write for a welcoming audience, for those who want to be educated, for those who hate change.

Activity: Catering for an audience

Imagine you are writing a text addressing a specific issue to different audiences. Consider what argument/s you might focus on to cater for diverse audiences. Decide if they are friendly, apathetic, uniformed or hostile to the issue.

The first example has been filled out for you. Select two other issues relevant to you, change the audience and consider how you could develop an appeal to each audience.

Issue	Audience 1	Audience 2	Audience 3
The stresses of Year 12	Parents: Focus on the family expectations and the way the family can help. They could be ignorant to the stresses	Teachers: Focus on the fact that realistic expectations are more useful from teachers and that hostility is counterproductive. Respect and understanding are more helpful	Teenagers: Focus on the opening of multiple pathways to achieve a goal, on the need to deal with the present rather than the future to create balance. The audience could be apathetic.

The importance of paragraphing and titling

Paragraphing with purpose

Once you begin writing, you will need to employ paragraphing conventions that best suit your chosen form. Markers will look for visible signs of the form you are writing in and paragraphs are a notable signifier of the form. They are an essential structural feature.

Narrative writing has some standard rules about when to paragraph; however, like all rules in writing, they are open to interpretation. If you know the rules, you also know when you might break them for effect.

There are three times when you must start a new paragraph in narrative writing:

- Every time you change time or location, a new paragraph is needed. Whenever your narrative moves forward or backward in time, start a new paragraph.

- When you start a new topic. In narrative writing, this might be moving from describing a setting to representing the feelings of your character. This would require a new paragraph to differentiate the new aspect of your writing.

- When a new character speaks. This is easy to remember if you work on one speaker per paragraph.

In addition to the above rules of paragraphing for narrative writing, you might choose to paragraph for effect. You might wish to emphasise something for dramatic effect and use a paragraph that is a single line or even a single word to achieve this. Look at how the candidate used paragraphing for effect in Sample Response One for Question 12.

Paragraphing for expository writing has some common rules:

- Generally, a paragraph will contain one subject only.

- Paragraphs should not be overly long. Look for logical places to break the paragraph.

Activity: A closer look at paragraphs

Select a 1–2-page example from several different forms that you will be asked to write in. Scrutinise each example and describe the different paragraphing styles.

Identify the form of your extract in the first column of the table on the next page. Fill in the middle column of the table to describe the paragraphing style, noting if they are short, long, single-sentence or a multitude of other possibilities. In the last column, consider how the style of paragraphing contributes to the overall purpose of each respective text.

The first has been done for you.

Form	Paragraphing style	Comment on how the paragraphing affects the purpose
Novel extract	The opening page of *The Hobbit* has a wide variety of paragraphs; length varies from 5 to 25 lines. Some paragraphs focus on setting, others on character.	Long descriptive paragraphs of the comfort and homeliness of the hobbit's abode with its small windows; hints at the hobbit's predilection for adventure. Another long paragraph details what hobbits are, and their ancestry; essential to providing insight into the nature of hobbits.

Why can titles or subtitles be helpful?

A title or a subtitle can enhance your response. They have a privileged position in many forms in which you will write, as it is the first thing read. Take advantage of this privileged position; your title or subtitle can immediately reveal your intentions to your markers.

Titles can give some critical contextual information about genre, subject or even place. An example would be the title used for a short story or a feature article, such as Tim Winton's "Big World" which focuses on two young men as they face life beyond school. In addition, consider how it can also be used effectively if you are writing a speech, a biography, a blog or a letter, amongst other text forms. For example, if you are writing a speech, a title will provide some contextual information that can include the speaker's name, background and even the context of delivery. In truth, good titles are pondered over by writers for a long time. In the recommended one hour for this section of the exam you cannot give the same time to thinking of a title as a writer might. Nonetheless, writing a title assists in establishing important contextual information that ultimately contributes to the meaning made by your markers.

For example, some of J.K. Rowling's chapter titles in the Harry Potter novels – such as 'The Only One He Ever Feared', 'Beyond the Veil' and 'The Forest Again' – all exude a sense of adventure befitting the genre. Likewise, a non-fiction title such as Truman Capote's 'In Cold Blood' and its sub-title 'A True Account of a Multiple Murder and its Consequence' sends a chilling allure to the reader.

Activity: Looking at effective titles

Look at some of the sample responses: Question 11: Sample response two, Question 12: Sample responses one and two and Question 13: Sample response one. In these samples, candidates all used titles/subtitles for effect. Read just the title and the first paragraph of each sample mentioned. Consider how the simplicity of a title can add dimension to your writing.

Now look at the samples that didn't use either a title or a subtitle. Can you create one to suit each of these responses?

Hint: Effective titles

- Imaginative titles:
  Your title should hint at a major theme, idea, character or the content of the narrative, without being too obvious. Plant a seed of suggestion in your reader's mind.

- Persuasive and interpretive titles:
  While there are many forms of this text type, consider the following idea. Start with a short, intriguing main title, followed by a more explanatory subtitle. Essays and articles regularly use this formula. Often the intriguing main title uses puns or alliteration to help engage the reader.

  Look at the titles of the texts you have studied and note how they function.

Experiment with generic, structural and language features

Genre

The word 'genre' comes from the French language and literally means a kind or type. The syllabus glossary defines genre as:

> *The categories into which texts are grouped. The term has a complex history within literary theory and is often used to distinguish texts on the basis of their subject matter (for example, detective fiction, romance fiction, science fiction, fantasy fiction), form and structure (for example, poetry, novels, biographies, short stories).*

How we interpret texts is often based on our understanding of conventions specific to a particular genre. Over time, we build up certain expectations about a genre. Writers rely on that, either conforming to or challenging expectations; they may blend, borrow or manipulate conventions from other genres for effect. If a question requires you to write in a particular genre, consider the precise intent of the question. Are you being asked to write in a *genre of subject matter*, such as romance, horror or crime, or might the question be referring to the *genre of form and structure*? Discern which meaning of genre is best suited to the question. A more engaging text might mix genres. For example, a horror narrative might have elements of romance and comedy. In the 2018 exam, Question 13 required students to write in 'a particular genre'. Hence it is wise to be very familiar with generic conventions.

Structure

The structure of a text is an essential aspect of fulfilling genre, particularly in relation to genre of form and structure. There are certain structural aspects of a narrative, for example, the particular sequencing of events that build towards a climax. Persuasive texts, such as speeches, will typically follow quite specific rhetorical structures. While many students regard structures like these simply as templates, structure actually controls the way your ideas are packaged for your audience and thus is a powerful tool for positioning them.

As part of your study, you should explore the conventional structures of various genres of texts, as well as, consider the ways in which texts you studied may have adapted, manipulated, subverted or altered such conventions.

Language features

Similarly, particular genres feature conventional arrays of language features. Think of the typical persuasive language devices you have learned and how they are adapted for use within various persuasive text forms. Or think of the genre of science fiction, or gothic horror. Try to become an expert in a couple of genres, practising your writing and exploring multiple examples. You could browse your library, where the fiction is probably already divided by genre. Go to a different section and simply read a few pages each time you are there, and you will start to recognise some of the patterns in language.

Use language in imaginative and innovative ways

Improving the quality of your writing is an obvious way to improve your results in this section of the exam. Effective writing is that which clearly meets its purpose and is tailored to suit its audience and context. Stylistic writing is that which reveals a sense of personality, flair and originality. This section explores some traits that are common indicators of effective, imaginative and innovative writing.

Style

Developing a consistent style can be quite challenging. In fact, even defining 'style' can be quite hard. Style is the way that any given writer typically writes – the complexity of language, their choice of syntax, tone, language features and so on. They may use dialogue expertly (such as Quentin Tarantino) or be masters of imagery (F. Scott Fitzgerald). Your consistency in your writing style is what the markers are looking for!

A wide vocabulary

Avoiding repetition is important in keeping your writing fresh and engaging. Rather than repeating the same words throughout the body of your text, demonstrate that you have a rich and wide vocabulary. The average high school graduate (very nearly you!) has a vocabulary of about 10 000 words. Most will only use 5000-6000 of them in their writing and speaking. This means we recognise and understand almost twice as many words as we bother to use. Write to impress!

Develop a sense of personal voice

Your use of language should construct a coherent sense of personal voice, a sense of style and personality in your writing. Make your marker believe that there is a thinking, breathing, living human being attached to your pen! If you are writing fiction, the nature of your narrator's voice throughout the story – their tone, style, delivery and diction – all contribute to their character. If you are writing non-fiction, the same applies to constructing the author's (your!) perspective through voice.

Create imagery

Effective writing – whether expository, narrative or otherwise – is most effective when the reader can visualise the situation. Imagery is the descriptive or figurative language that a writer uses to help create pictures or sensations. Create effective descriptions by appealing to the readers' senses by using vivid nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, creating original and evocative figurative language as well as onomatopoeic words to imitate sounds.

Experiment with language devices

Try not to pigeonhole your use of language devices. Try using persuasive devices such as anaphora or repetition in an imaginative text or use poetic language in a persuasive text. Avoid clichés and experiment with interesting metaphors. Don't restrict your writing; be bold!

Layers of meaning

In order to add richness to your writing, you need to add layers to your descriptions. Imagine your text like an onion: as you peel each layer of skin off, underneath is a new layer. Marry your literal descriptions with allusions, analogies or symbols that add richness to your writing through the power of suggestion and connotation.

Syntax for effect

Knowing when to use short, simple sentences and when to use longer complex and compound sentences can also be a key defining feature of effective writing. What points do you want to stand out in your text? Where do you want to create tension? Will your reader get lost in a complex sentence? Short sentences can highlight key points in interpretive and persuasive texts or create dramatic effects in imaginative pieces. Of course, you cannot write your entire response this way; effective writing is about attaining balance in sentence types.

Tone

Developing tone is integral to your success when composing. Tone is the emotion or attitude that the author adopts with regards to, for example, a specific person, place or idea. This attitude – or should we say, tone – is revealed through the writer's choices of language.

Activity: Ways to improve your writing

Practising for the Composing Section is the best way to really be prepared for it. Keeping a journal throughout the year and engaging with as many opportunities to practise writing in different styles, structure and form as you can is well worth the time. In this journal:

- **Practise writing for a variety of audiences:** Try using a specific form such as a speech or a feature article and rewrite it for different audiences.

- **Reflect on texts for which you were the target audience:** These might include speeches that you have sat through at school or letters explaining situations or procedures for you. Consider how well these texts catered to you. What changes would you make?

- **Practise writing in different forms:** Take a question from last year's paper, such as Question 14, where the form stipulated was a choice. Create a history for her or him and use it as a catalyst for writing in at least two different forms.

- **Use your past writing:** Read the feedback from your teachers with a critical eye. Use your journal to practise implementing the suggestions made by your teacher. Rewriting to enhance a former iteration is excellent practice for improve your writing.

- **Collect examples of effective and interesting writing:** No-one is saying you have to do everything from scratch! If you come across a phrase that resonates with you, record it in your journal. Try to incorporate, or at least replicate, these in some of your own experimental writing.

- **Create a glossary of words:** Make a record of words you encounter that are unfamiliar or appeal to you. Include a definition and synonym for each word

Let's break it down…

The following table outlines some possible approaches to writing in the Composing Section. It is not comprehensive; we suggest you add to it!

Text Type	Purpose/s	Audience/s	Form/s	Language Features
Three types of writing	**Possible intended purposes**	**Depends on purpose**	**Possible forms which can apply to any type of writing**	**Typical language features for purpose, audience and form**

Interpretive	• to explain all sides of an argument or issue
	• to inform by examining both sides of an issue
	• to provide a balanced discussion of different views
	• to present the pros and cons so readers can make up their own minds
		• varies according to purpose and form – can be for:
		  • children
		  • young adults
		  • adults
		  • special interest groups (limited appeal)
		  • mainstream audiences (wide appeal)
		  • all newspaper readers
		  • all readers of a specific magazine
		  • literary audiences
			• feature articles for journals, newspapers or magazines
			• letters
			• analytical essays for a specific journal
			• reflective essays for a specific journal
			• news reports
			• biographies
			• autobiographies
			• personal letters
			• speeches
			• submissions
			• scripts: film, play, radio
				• selection of detail
				• sequencing of events, i.e. order in which info. is presented
				• structure of information, i.e. form and presentation
				• use of persona
				• expanding boundaries of factual reporting, e.g. exaggeration, embellishing, expanding
				• anecdotes
				• word choice

Persuasive	• to persuade the reader to agree • to argue and convince that the author's viewpoint is correct • to influence others to agree with viewpoint		• newspaper editorials • letters to the editor • opinion articles • speeches • submissions • narratives such as short stories, fables • scripts: film, play, radio • monologues	• colloquialisms • connotative/emotive language • tone (author's attitude to subject) • use of humour, satire, irony • interpretation of events, facts, opinionative response, versions of reality • use of facts, data, statistics • experts or authority figures • foregrounding • use of repetition and rephrasing • rhetorical structures and devices, questions, evidence • descriptive language • figurative language: imagery, allusions, metaphors, personification
Imaginative	• to entertain • to amuse • to shock • to make the reader think about ideas or issues in new and different ways • to provoke • to move readers emotionally • to stimulate thoughts and feelings		• short stories • scripts: film, play, radio • interviews • exchange of letters • poetry • monologues • dialogue • fables	

Considering Question 10

> *'I don't think you quite understand the ramifications of this decision.'*
> *Incorporate this statement into a persuasive text for a resistant audience.*

Interpreting the question

You may respond in a range of persuasive forms including, but not limited to, speech, argumentative essay, transcript for a podcast, open letter, blog post and feature article. Be mindful to comply with the features of your chosen form and to structure your response according to the conventions of the form.

The statement must be incorporated into your response in its entirety and meaningfully. Consider the context that is implied by this quote: your audience has made a decision, one that you believe they have not fully considered.

The 'decision' is a critical choice that must be made clear. It will steer you towards exposing what the ramifications of it are for your chosen audience. It might be a decision that you are totally opposed to, or you could simply be outlining a challenge to the decision; that is, the ramifications could be positive or negative.

The audience must be resistant to your plea. Their view of your opposition could be anything ranging from hostility to apathy, ignorance or disinterest. Your purpose is to overcome the resistance presented by your audience and move them in some way. You might persuade them to embrace a different stance, concede to the logic of your argument, recognise unforeseen outcomes, adopt a new mindset or acknowledge the absurdity of their decision.

The audience could be explicit or implied. However, your audience and your purpose will complement each other. Identifying the audience clearly, even when it is implied, is important. As with all responses in the Composing Section, markers will reward responses that demonstrate a clear sense of your audience, in this particular question, 'a resistant audience', responses that identify your purpose and responses that manipulate language and persuasive devices to target your chosen audience.

Within your text, you can write as yourself or take on a persona. Candidates will be expected to craft a unique voice that clarifies, to your markers, what it is that makes the audience's decision anathema to you, or your persona. The voice you assume will give a sense of your rejection of the decision, perhaps through tone or other language devices.

Advice from teachers

- Clarifying the audience will help reveal why they are resistant.
- The instruction is to write about a 'decision', not an issue.
- The persona should suit the context of your scenario and be plausible for its intended audience. It would be a stretch of the imagination to accept that a 17 year old from Perth would address American politicians about a decision connected to gun laws.

Activity: Creating plausible personae

Reflect on some major decisions that might have affected you in the past year, or might affect you in the future. It could be a decision that affects you personally, a decision that has been made by your school, your government or your sports club, or any decision that causes you some concern or angst from any context.

Next, consider the people who would be motivated to try to alter or change the decision. It is often wise to use your own context, but you can inhabit other personae; particularly if you have some contextual knowledge that informs their perspective on the decision.

The planning around the first decision has been done. Think of who might be affected by the second decision and complete the other two columns.

Finally consider some decisions that have had an impact on you and complete the rest of the table.

Decision	Possible personae	Possible audience to address
Refusal to vaccinate children	• a parent of a child with a chronic condition • day-care personnel • the Minister for Health • the unvaccinated child as a teenager	• the parent/s who made the decision • a day-care centre making a decision to accept or not accept an unvaccinated child
Reduce or increase the censorship of gaming laws		

Now, in your journals, assume one of the suggested personae and attempt some reasoned arguments as to why the decision will be the catalyst for some kind of ramification.

Activity: A closer look at planning

A candidate used the following plan for their response:

- Love of plastics
- Statistics – then quote
- Personalised statistics
- Impact
- Ways to overcome plastic abuse

1. Write some advice to the candidate about what they could do to make their planning even more effective.

2. Three of the key concepts or terms are not evident in the planning above. Expand the planning to address what is missing, namely 'ramification', 'decision' and 'resistant audience'.

3. Plan your own response to this question based on the decision of some students to participate in the recent school strikes against climate inaction.

Hint: Using motifs effectively

A motif is a repeated image, idea or emotion established within a text. When you are trying to use a motif, you will need to return to the symbol, phrase or mood a number of times throughout your response. However, this does not mean that you pummel your reader with continual references to the concept. Occasional references, employed with some subtlety, will assure that your reader 'gets it'. It may be useful, though, to return to your motif as a final image within your text.

Considering Question 11

Compose an interpretive text to represent an encounter with a person who taught you something about yourself.

Interpreting the question

The requirement to write an interpretive text offers you many forms from which to choose. You could choose a feature article, a transcript from a documentary (or a part thereof), an autobiographical narrative, a diary entry or a discursive essay, amongst other forms.

The word 'encounter' implies a specific incident, a particular moment in time or perhaps even a memory, a recollection or an event. It is definitely not a whole life. In your response you will need to provide some context; perhaps the circumstances of the encounter need to be highlighted. It should not simply be a retelling of an event, but a crafting of the text using typical language features of your chosen form.

Understanding the concept of representation will assist you. The way a significant person is represented is a key to exposing their effect upon you. For example, if the person was a grandparent, there is no single representation of a grandparent. On the contrary, they could be presented in any number of limitless representations such as kindly, strict, judgemental, compassionate or even a combination these traits.

The question asks you to include a lesson learnt from this person, specifically from your encounter with them. How you reveal the lesson could be more or less engaging, depending on the way you structure it. There are several options to consider: do you begin with the lesson, do you reveal it at a pertinent moment within the unfolding of the encounter, or do you imply it? More sophisticated responses will give consideration to effective structure.

You play a significant role in this response, as it is the revelation of what 'you' learned as a result of the encounter. The precise wording of 'you' and 'yourself', coupled with the command to compose an interpretive text, requires a personal reflection. No matter the form you ultimately choose, there must be an autobiographical aspect to it in which you engage with your own experiences. The opportunity to write with a personal perspective provides huge opportunity for you to stamp a unique voice on the writing. Utilise this to benefit your writing and help it stand out.

Advice from teachers

- Using titles or subtitles can help structure your writing and signpost that structure for your marker.
- It might be challenging to write from your own personal perspective, but there are advantages too. Obviously, form is as important for an interpretive text as it is for imaginative or persuasive texts. Give yourself some time to consider your options.
- Give consideration to the way you write; that is, the style. Show rather than tell and incorporate original language conventions to convey the lesson and its effect on you.

Activity: Writing about a significant person in your life

Reflect on someone who has significantly affected you. Consider people from different aspects of your life, perhaps a relative, a friend, a teacher, a sports, dance or art coach, an idol, a chance encounter with a stranger and so on.

The encounter might have produced an epiphany in you, caused you to think or act differently, formed the catalyst for a change in your worldview or behaviour, or even a watershed moment such as a turning point in your life.

Next, complete the table below.

Setting: Where and when did it happen? Consider whether time of day, weather or season had an influence on the encounter	
Character: What was their relationship to you or with one another? What was your state of being at the time – emotionally, physically, intellectually? Was your age significant?	
Conflict: It is likely that the lesson you learnt came from a moment of conflict or even ignorance. To have an effect, it would be important to describe this conflict.	
Resolution: What was the change in you that came from this encounter? Was it life-changing or was it comical? Was it internal or something recognisable by others?	

Now craft your planning into a text that responds to Question 11.

Hint: In autobiographical writing, think of yourself as a character

In autobiographical writing, treat yourself as you would the protagonist in any narrative. Use the tools of characterisation for yourself and the significant person with whom you have had an encounter. Bring them to life using language that shows the central character's actions, appearance, speech and interactions.

Activity: Punctuating dialogue

The commonly adhered to rules of punctuating dialogue are probably the best to use in an examination. Granted, established writers like Cormac McCarthy, Tim Winton and Margaret Atwood all chose to break the rules in some way, but they have experience on their side and are not sitting an examination.

Stick with the conventions such as:

- Keep all punctuation inside the quotation marks.
- Start a new paragraph for each new speaker.
- Ellipses indicate the character's words are trailing off. Write them inside the quotation marks.
    'I guess…' he hesitated.
- Dashes are used to indicate when a character is cut off.
    'After this, you want to –'
    'Go home,' she replied firmly.
- Use a comma to separate the speech tag from the quote the quote.
    'Write with feeling,' she said.
    He said, 'That's how you create impact.'
- Use a capital letter at the beginning of each section of speech, even when it continues after the speech tag.
    'Well,' he said, 'It's over then.'

Now it's your turn.

1. Take a sample of your own writing where you have used dialogue and check that you have adhered to the rules.

2. Try copying some pages from Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* or Tim Winton's *Cloudstreet* and punctuate the dialogue according to conventional rules.

Hint: RUOK?

Sometimes candidates reveal quite personal stories in exam responses, such as in the sample above. Be aware that if a marker feels your response suggests that you are distressed, in danger or involved in something illegal, your paper may be flagged for further review to ensure your safety.

Hint: Take a break

Do you ever feel like you are sitting at your desk, doing your absolute best to focus, but nothing seems to be sinking in? This could be a sign that you need a break. Spend time doing something you love to take your mind off your studies. Be kind to yourself and take a balanced approach; it will make you far more productive when you get back to it.

Considering Question 12

<div style="border:1px solid;">

Craft an imaginative text in which these birds have a symbolic function.

</div>

The image can be found at: http://gallerytheroute.com/project/tugran-yuce/

Interpreting the question

You may respond in a range of imaginative forms including, but not limited to, short stories, drama scripts, film or television screenplays, biographies, autobiographies, memoirs and extracts from a novel. Candidates were expected to clearly demonstrate the conventions of their chosen genre and form.

The stipulation is that 'these birds' have a symbolic function. Thus, the birds must feature significantly and they must be used symbolically. You are restricted to what appear to be seagulls, or another bird that is closely recognisable as one in the image. Try to draw upon the behaviours of these birds, with which you might be familiar. Birds traditionally symbolise both freedom and captivity; however, you are not limited to these interpretations. For example, consider the symbolic potential of the fact that gulls are scavengers, resourceful, rarely intimidated by humans and will readily approach any group of humans in search of food. Remember, you can assign any credible symbolic significance to any aspect of the bird, as long as it is clear within the text. The symbolism of the birds might be reinforced through other aspects of imagery, such as references to flight, the seaside, nests, eggs and so on.

Symbols can be used in a variety of ways; they may establish mood or atmosphere, contribute to characterisation or reveal a theme or idea.

Whilst the birds must feature as a symbol, there is a lot more going on in the image that you might incorporate. You could consider the weather and its implications for the narrative, the child and its body language, or even the setting. These other components seem to evoke a mood that you could use to shape your text with consideration of language, structural, stylistic and generic features.

In order to intentionally create a symbol, you will need to consider the role of the bird within your narrative. This requires some subtlety but, at the same time, it needs to be overt enough to be recognised as a symbol by your markers. If your bird squawks 'I am a symbol' then you are probably being too forceful.

Advice from teachers

- Be specific when you refer to the bird. Name it. There is a vast difference between the symbolic intent one could assign to a hawk compared to a duck.
- Consider how you might employ figurative and sensory language to enhance the form chosen and highlight the symbolism.
- The symbolic nature of the bird must be purposeful, not just recognisable or overt.

Activity: Crafting a symbol

Let's have a look at some collective nouns for various birds. Using this as a starting point, look at how you could to compose a narrative with the respective bird as a catalyst for your plot.

Consider the connotations of different birds. For example, small birds like willy wagtails and sparrows connote quite different things compared to, say, birds of prey like buzzards, eagles and hawks. It would be helpful to select a species you know something about or even do a little research. That way you can capitalise on their natural qualities. Some suggestions have been made, but you can also add your own.

Collective noun	Possible genre	Connotations evoked	Select a setting	Central character/s
A squabble of seagulls	romance	bothersome	beach	young couple
A parliament of owls				
A plump of ducks				
A gaggle of geese				
A murder of magpies				

Now select one of the birds from the table above to compose an imaginative text where birds symbolise an aspect of your protagonist's character, or a theme that you wish to develop.

Hint: Make your symbol work!

Connect a mood, character or event to the symbol. Remember, you must take an essential element of the symbol and let it reveal an aspect of the mood, character or event.

The placement of the symbol within the narrative will be significant. Is it at the beginning, sprinkled throughout or even at the end? The choice is yours to make.

Activity: Establishing mood

Question 12 required a symbol be used; often the establishment of mood goes hand in hand with incorporating the symbol. The mood evoked in one response may be one of exuberance and excitement. The character may be nervous about facing new challenges and is bustling with newly found confidence by the end. So, the mood changes. Another response may offer a markedly contrasting mood – a mood of loss and loneliness that pervades the whole response, with flashbacks of occasional joy.

Your diction, or word choice, is integral to the establishment of mood in your writing. Consider the language you may use if you are trying to create a peaceful mood, compared to that of a harried or impatient mood.

A good way to practise establishing mood is by explaining the same setting in a different way, trying to evoke a different mood each time. Look at the samples below and see if your can do the same by describing your bedroom.

Sample 1:
The house stood there on its structures, untouched and unlived in. The grass was long and unkempt. The wooden swing that was once so loved hung silently in the breeze. The features of the house slumped in the blaze of the afternoon sun. The heat of summer was oppressive.

Sample 2:
The house stood proudly on its structures, the peppermint trees shading the wide veranda as the sun blazed munificently on the wooden panels the owner had so carefully crafted, all those years ago. The swing that was once, and still is, so loved, danced in the breeze.

Sample 3:
The house glowered on its structures, looming above the overgrown garden. Peppermint trees, stripped of their leaves, scratched at the clouded sky. The sun, sickly in the late dusk, seemed to be hiding. The swing, once so loved, creaked back and forth slowly in the deepening gloom.

Can you see how the diction has been altered to establish the mood of the writing?

Now try writing one yourself about your bedroom.

Hint: Sensory details work

As humans, we experience the world through our five senses. It should seem obvious, then, to employ the senses in your descriptive writing. References to sights, sounds, sensations, smells – even taste, sometimes – can help bring your constructed world alive.

Considering Question 13

> *Create an imaginative text in a particular genre but with an atypical setting.*

Interpreting the question

You may respond to this question in a range of imaginative forms; however, this question limits you to a genre with setting. Therefore, it is genre of subject matter that is needed. You could create a short story, a novel extract or a play.

It is imperative that you use the features of your chosen genre, such as Western, romance or crime. However, the narrative must occur within a setting not normally associated with this genre, for example, a Western story that is set in space. You will not be meeting the requirements of the question if you do not create an atypical setting. 'Atypical' means unusual, uncommon or anomalous. Consider your reader's expectations of your chosen genre. Whilst you don't have to conform entirely, your composition must be a recognisable example of the genre.

Your challenge is placing your narrative in a setting that subverts the expectations of the genre; it needs to be atypical or unexpected. Some of the activities discussed in the front material of this section would be helpful here, such as using a fairy tale like 'Little Red Riding Hood' and relocating the story to an atypical setting. Consider the number of ways you could mix up genre and setting to create an interesting narrative cocktail: a fantasy genre set in a hospital, a horror genre set in the light of a summer day in a classroom, a crime fiction in a supermarket or a science fiction narrative set in Kings Park.

Whilst the combinations are limitless, simply creating madcap connections between genre and setting will not be rewarded. You still need to consider the effects, the ideas and the responses resulting from your choice of atypical setting.

As with all responses in the Composing Section, markers will reward responses that demonstrate a clear sense of audience and purpose, and those that develop and sustain a consistent voice, tone and style.

Advice from teachers

- Read the questions carefully. The examination is thoroughly proofread so do not assume any word is an error. In this question, the word 'atypical' was intentional and not a typographical error. If you are not familiar with the term, choose another question.
- Any central character inhabiting your narrative should be constructed to fit with the genre or setting. Consider the processes of characterisation carefully, including tone and voice.
- A humorous take on playing with genre in an atypical setting could work well for this question.

Activity: Writing to create setting with sensory imagery

'Imagery' is the descriptive or figurative language that a writer uses to help create images or atmosphere in the mind of the reader. Often, a writer will achieve this by using sensory imagery, foregrounding details that appeal to our five senses.

The following language and stylistic devices can be used to evoke sensory impressions.

In the table below, write a short paragraph describing a specific setting while trying to evoke a particular sense. Read the hint at the bottom of the page for an example.

Sense	Your descriptive paragraph
Sight (visual imagery)	
Hearing (auditory imagery is the mental representation of sound)	
Taste (gustatory imagery illustrates and recreates taste – usually of food, but it could be of other things)	
Touch (tactile imagery appeals to the sense of touch using attributes such as hardness, softness or hot/cold sensations)	
Smell (olfactory imagery summons up smells to the reader)	
Temperature (thermal imagery attributes sensations about temperatures and weather)	
Movement (kinaesthetic imagery illustrates the sensation of movement)	

Hint: Use a combination of senses

Read this example that effectively combines a number of senses so that the reader is immediately immersed into the world of scent, sound and sight:

I arrived with the wind of the minstrels. A blistering July day, abounding with the aroma of freshly baked doughnuts, jam oozing between sticky fingers and butter dripping down corncobs on skewers, yellow as the sun that was hidden in its winter slumber.

Considering Question 14

In a form of your choice, create a text that reveals a part of this person's history.

The image can be found at: https://flickr.com/photos/16536699@N07/8484483839/

Interpreting the question

This question gives you the freedom to choose your form, so you have the possibility to compose an imaginative, persuasive or interpretive text, or even a combination of these text types. You could reveal a part of this person's history in terms of a personal event, or it could be related to a historical event. Some examples could be a feature article about the elderly, an obituary for a once-famous actress or a speech to celebrate a milestone.

Unlike Question 10, where you are required to use the provided quote in its entirety, the image here does not have to be specifically referred to; it is simply a prompt to spark inspiration. However, you do need some connection to it. Spend time exploring the stimulus before you begin planning. It might be that you engage with an element of the person's apparel, such as the hat or glasses, the physical appearance, such as the weathered, aged appearance or wrinkled skin, the facial expression or the piercing gaze. This would be best crafted with the tools of characterisation.

Like all questions in the examination, the precise wording must be adhered to. When the question asks you to compose 'a part' of the person's history, it is not asking for their whole life. In many ways, the requirement to focus on a point in time, an incident or even a moment of this person's life, affords you the time to compose thoughtfully with the tools befitting your chosen form or genre. It is a signpost to not become entangled in writing a plot-driven narrative where multiple things happen to your central character.

The figure in the image does not necessarily have to be the central voice although, of course, she could be. The central voice could be of a persona who is a participant in, or an observer of, the history revealed about the figure. The focus of the question is simply that she is the subject matter in the text.

You should imbue the figure's historical moment with a clear sense of audience and purpose. Consider why you are divulging their history. Some examples could be an obituary, which purposefully explains a part of a life, a speech to give an award for an achievement, or a letter concerning a major aspect of someone's life. For each of the examples, an obvious connection is evoked between the purpose and audience.

Advice from teachers

- If you want to set the woman within a specific historical landscape, make sure that you know about that period of history.
- The image does not have to evoke a dark revelation, although it could. Just because the image is of an elderly person doesn't mean they have survived adversity.
- Be careful with first person voices. The subject is elderly, so a youthful voice for her wouldn't work unless it was something like an old diary entry she had written.

Activity: Placing your character within a context

Whilst it is possible to situate the person in the photograph within a historical period, the 'history' of the question refers to their personal history. Thus, it could be a moment from their personal life, a tragedy they endured or witnessed, a joyous moment they experienced, an anecdote from their family history or, of course, a historical event.

Try to think of something out of the ordinary.

Ponder some moments that this person could have lived through and consider the person in the image's role within that context. Are they the subject of the story or are they a relative, friend, or onlooker? Could you construct a story from their perspective or would you write from the perspective of someone with a connection to the subject?

Take one of the examples from the list below or use your own. Flesh out this person and reveal a part of their history in a form of your choice.

You could extend this and use the same context from a different perspective, the same event in a different text form or genre.

Experiment!

Choose from one of the following:

- DNA testing has reunited this person with a separated twin

- a witness to the fall of the Berlin Wall

- he or she was responsible for the discovery of a medical cure, or was even a living participant in a medical trial

- the first person to circumnavigate the globe

- an asylum seeker

- an elderly person packing up their home to move.

Hint: It's all in the detail…

Incorporating specific details into your writing can help provide context for your character. How the details are described will be crucial in positioning the reader to understand the central character's experiences.

In each of the examples above, there could be an evocative object, artefact or place which has had a significant role in the character's history, such as a piece of the Berlin Wall, a medical report, a memento or a photo. Perhaps these are aspects you could build upon.

Activity: Writing using a historical context

Sometimes it is possible to use your own knowledge from other subjects or personal knowledge to bring a sense of authenticity to your writing. You might have knowledge from studying past significant moments in history, or even recent significant events. Your knowledge might come from your wider reading and viewing, your studies or from people you have encountered. Use your knowledge to your advantage!

Plan a response to Question 14 using a moment in history, past or present, that you have some knowledge of. Brainstorm ideas by considering the people who might have existed in that moment. Consider the impact that such a historical moment might have had in changing someone's life, whether that be taking them in a different direction, altering their values and attitudes, bringing two people together or revealing a truth about society or human nature.

Hint: Accentuate the positives!

Many candidates write quite bleak or dark narratives in the WACE exam, often based on historical events they have learned about. While this can be an obvious way of developing narrative conflict or exploring meaningful themes, the same results can be achieved in more positive circumstances. Keep in mind that even events as terrible as World War I brought us stories of hope, courage, resilience, love, redemption and even joy.

Developing a narrative along these lines may just make your response stand out from the pack!

Activity: Planning your revision

Based on the activities and advice you have explored in this edition of *Good Answers*, compile a list of areas you need to focus on in revising your own texts and their applications to syllabus concepts. In addition, note the skills that you need to rehearse, such as comprehending an unseen passage, writing under timed conditions, planning your essay, writing succinctly and so on. As you address each focus area, tick it as 'completed' on your list.

Focus area	What I need to do	Where I can get assistance	✓

A final word

The English WACE exam at the end of Year 12 will not be easy. The task of sitting for three hours thinking, planning, writing and editing is difficult. We understand that many of you will have trepidations, doubts and fears about what it might hold.

The exam will always be challenging. But if you develop a regular, consistent, committed and sustained study regime, you will be well prepared by the day of the exam. This book is an ideal companion on your journey for the remainder of the year. By completing the activities in this book and reading and writing often, we hope you realise that you can succeed in this subject.

Most of all, your English teachers want to instil in you a joy of the English language. We want you to find an interest in the world around you and think critically about it. We want you to question society and peoples' ideas, opinions, attitudes and so on. We want to make you independent thinkers!

We wish you well in your preparation for, and in the 'doing' of, the 2020 English WACE exam.