



# LITERATURE

## ATAR course examination 2020

### Marking key

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

## Section One: Response – Close reading

30% (25 Marks)

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

## Section Two: Extended response

70% (30 + 30 marks)

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

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

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

**Content**

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

**Close textual analysis**

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

**Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology**

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

**Expression**

Marks are specifically allocated for expression in the areas of:

- argumentation
- structure
- language use and style.

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

**Question One**

**Text A: extract from *The Luminaries*, by Eleanor Catton.**

**Reading/s of the text**

The response presents a reading of the text using appropriate and relevant reading practices or strategies.

- There is a strong sense of isolation throughout the text, both in the landscape and in the way that the characters are constructed. However, this isolation is represented in a sympathetic, even reverent way, rather than as a negative experience.
- Candidates might develop an understanding of the text through an eco-critical lens, focusing on the references to and representations of the natural environment. The environment is portrayed as beautiful, mystical and mythical, and constructs the humans as distanced observers.
- While some students might attempt to make meaning from the text by framing their reading using a gendered reading practice, perhaps with a focus on the gender 'issue' of the women's and men's quarters, the passage lends itself more to a discussion of the equal footing these two characters appear to be on – both seem young and somewhat disconnected from the others on the journey. They speak to each other largely as equals, enjoying the moment in which they have found themselves.
- There is a sense of wonder and significance centred on 'place', as well as on the process of discovery of something new.
- Candidates may read the characters as being children or youthful and discuss the sense of joy and freedom with which this is associated.
- Candidates might make a post-colonial reading of the text and make reference to the lack of inclusion of Maori culture in the extract. The characters are journeying from afar to New Zealand and could be viewed as representative of colonisers coming to a supposedly untouched, uninhabited world, focused only on their own view of the landscape with scant regard for the views of those who already live there.

**Close textual analysis**

The response uses close textual analysis of language, examples and/or generic conventions and reference to relevant cultural contexts to develop and support the reading.

- The shoreline of Otago that Anna first sees is described in terms of the landscape rather than of built-up areas. Indeed, 'the city of Dunedin was not yet visible' suggesting that what the character sees and enjoys is devoid of human interference. 'Anna's first impression was of a lonely throat of water, a clear sky, and a rugged land untouched by human hand or industry.'
- The characters are isolated, seemingly of their own desire: Anna wakes and dresses quietly so as not to disturb the other women, and she is surprised to find anyone else when she comes up on deck.
- The passage ends with the boy asking Anna not to wake anyone else to share in their experience, "Don't". The short imperative sentence works to construct the isolation as welcomed, an important part of the enjoyment of the moment.

- Anna's isolation is contrasted by the 'rancorous' calls of the birds, described as 'a strange cacophony'. There is a sense that the isolation Anna experiences is a psychological one rather than physical; it is noted that she has been in the company of the women on the ship, and the boy in the company of the men, for many weeks. They are living alongside many people but still feel disconnected.
- The natural environment is constructed as strikingly beautiful with the use of sensory imagery throughout the extract. Visual imagery is constructed through colour, 'mottled cliffs', 'hills became blue, and then purple ... and of yellow light over the water, and lending an orange tint to the rocks ...'; aural imagery is used to describe the 'rancorous call' and the 'strange cacophony' of the birds. The environment is described in tangible ways, giving it power and importance throughout the extract.
- The discussion of birds draws on mythical ideas of the animals. The boy suggests that albatrosses are 'truly mythical' creatures, conveying a sense of majesty and awe that is reinforced through the descriptions of their appearance. He also notes ravens and doves, which some students might connect to other literary and mythological texts. Students might discuss the symbolism of birds, particularly in relation to the way the boy describes them as being particularly lucky and almost other-worldly.
- Birds as archetypal symbols of freedom relate to the freedom of the characters who seek new lives and adventures, and also their separation from the others on board the ship. The passivity of Anna's journey aboard the ship, in comparison to the activity and clamour of the birds could be seen to further this representation.
- References to the birds as 'mythical' and 'omens' forming the boy's description of the birds reveals the childlike propensity to perceive more than the physical.
- Anna questions whether the boy is 'making an overture of friendship' with the word 'overture' perhaps putting this into a somewhat negative light. She describes him as 'eccentric' and there is little in the way of physical description of either character. In this way, candidates might discuss the lack of importance of gender in the text, or perhaps the greater significance of their journey or situation to their relationship.

### **Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology**

The response uses language, stylistic and critical terminology and concepts suited to the reading.

- The text is rich in imagery, particularly visual and aural imagery. The natural environment is described and constructed in much richer and fuller ways than the human characters, suggestive of their respective places in the world.
- Consideration of the bildungsroman genre could be made given the protagonist's possible age and the symbolism of the journey she is on, which is prompted by her 'first glimpse of New Zealand' at 'dawn'.
- Intertextual links with Romantic texts could be made as the text can be seen to foreground the beauty and power of the natural world and the way characters find solace in this. The use of elongated syntax and descriptive style lend importance and wonder to the sense of place established.
- Students might make intertextual links to specific texts such as Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* or Poe's *The Raven* in discussing the importance of birds in the text. Students who are able to understand the way that these references deepen or enrich their understanding of the text should be rewarded over those who merely mention the texts.

**Expression of ideas**

The response expresses ideas clearly and cohesively in order to logically present the reading.

- In presenting their reading, candidates should adhere to the conventions of Standard Australian English, avoiding errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar to the extent possible in an examination situation.
- Candidates should not be penalised arbitrarily by counting errors. Instead, the standard of written expression should be considered in light of the effectiveness of the expression. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and deficiencies of structure which detract from meaning or ease of reading should be considered less favourably than those which are simply transcription errors.
- When considering expression of ideas, the fluency and voice of the candidate should be considered. A sense of ease or confidence in their writing should be rewarded.
- The structure of a response should be considered with regard to the logical presentation of ideas. However, there is no requirement that a candidate must adhere to a rigid, pre-determined essay structure. Responses which are somewhat more free-flowing might still be considered favourably, with consideration to the appropriateness of the style and the way in which the response is communicated to the reader.

**Text B: Jennifer Harrison's 'The Woman Who Almost Made It To The Moon'.****Reading/s of the text**

The response presents a reading of the text using appropriate and relevant reading practices or strategies.

- For copyright reasons this text cannot be reproduced in the online version of this document.
- There are a number of interesting oppositions being conveyed in the poem. The persona seems both disappointed and nostalgic; bitter but accepting; the tests are torturous but 'nothing'; and the technological with the human.
- A gendered reading might foreground ideas relating to the oppositions between humility and aspiration, freedom and entrapment, the natural and the manmade, and the scientific and the emotional which are all suggestive of the complexity of the speaker's experience as a woman in a traditionally male realm.
- Candidates may discuss the way the text reflects and critiques attitudes which set different parameters of success for men and women.

**Close textual analysis**

The response uses close textual analysis of language, examples and/or generic conventions and reference to relevant cultural contexts to develop and support the reading.

- The title is of significance in this text: 'almost' is the defining adverb here. The 'woman' is effectively described by what she hasn't done rather than what she has.
- The poem begins with 'I wanted' but ends with 'I was told'. There is a suggestion of a removal of agency here and a suggestion that what the persona wants is not what she actually receives.
- The persona notes both abstract and concrete reasons why it would make sense to send women into space: 'the Russians were training women' therefore NASA couldn't let their opponents do something they weren't. On a more practical level, and perhaps belying the stereotype of the emotional woman (which might be suggested to be reinforced by the opening stanza) the persona notes that 'cost per pound' it would be cheaper to send a woman into space rather than a man.
- The structure of the poem could be seen to mirror the way that the testing made the women feel: the feelings of vertigo and nausea of being spun around at high speeds or having water injected into one's ear. The lack of punctuation could also be considered to be a representation of the lack of clear reasoning given to the women for their not making it into the program, or to the physical feelings induced by the training.
- Some students might suggest that the structure and punctuation suggest a stream-of-consciousness, perhaps akin to the thoughts that might go through one's head if left in 'the isolation chamber ... [for] so many unbroken hours'.
- The persona describes awful physical reactions and gruelling tests but does not do so in a particularly negative way. She suggests that what we might think of as 'torture' was 'nothing then'. There is a sense of both disappointment but also nostalgia through the poem.



- The ending of the poem 'I was told I was top of the class and still my wings were token' strongly suggests the gender bias within male-dominated fields such as aeronautics. Astute students might discuss this alongside the implicit power given to a female persona able to 'tell her story' and be given a voice through this text.

### **Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology**

The response uses language, stylistic and critical terminology and concepts suited to the reading.

- The gaps and spaces within the typography can be seen as representative of her dizzying experience, both physically and emotionally. The gaps could also be read as the disparities between her aspiration and her experience, her dreams and her reality. The physical spaces on the page could be read as representative of 'outer space' where the persona desires to be, or perhaps the ideological space between her dreams and what her society will allow her to achieve.
- Structural devices are used throughout the text to communicate meaning, such as the paradoxical enjambment of 'unbroken/hours' to reflect the speaker's internal confusion and conflict of being able to overcome the challenging physical tests but not the ideological barriers which restrained her.
- Specific language choices are employed to highlight the speaker's lack of control of her situation as she is 'spun around' and 'floated'.
- Comment could be made on the irony created between the concrete technological advances that allow us to travel to space amid the antiquated notions pertaining to gender which mean the speaker's wings are only 'token'.

### **Expression of ideas**

The response expresses ideas clearly and cohesively in order to logically present the reading.

- In presenting their reading, candidates should adhere to the conventions of Standard Australian English, avoiding errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar to the extent possible in an examination situation.
- Candidates should not be penalised arbitrarily by counting errors. Instead, the standard of written expression should be considered in light of the effectiveness of the expression. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and deficiencies of structure which detract from meaning or ease of reading should be considered less favourably than those which are simply transcription errors.
- When considering expression of ideas, the fluency and voice of the candidate should be considered. A sense of ease or confidence in their writing should be rewarded.
- The structure of a response should be considered with regard to the logical presentation of ideas. However, there is no requirement that a candidate must adhere to a rigid, pre-determined essay structure. Responses which are somewhat more free-flowing might still be considered favourably, with consideration to the appropriateness of the style and the way in which the response is communicated to the reader.

**Text C: extract from *Journey of Asylum – Waiting* by Catherine Simmonds and members of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Melbourne.**

### **Reading/s of the text**

The response presents a reading of the text using appropriate and relevant reading practices or strategies.

- The text foregrounds the experience of asylum seekers and gives them a voice, literally in terms of the characters speaking directly to the audience, as well as in the way that the text has been constructed in consultation and collaboration with asylum seekers in the community. Candidates might comment on the way that literature can become a way for marginalised groups to speak to a society that often silences them.
- The text is situated in a contemporary discourse, presenting the powerful and the powerless in our own society. By framing the audience as part of the trial proceedings, the text suggests that we evaluate our own participation in the marginalisation of powerless groups of people.
- The text presents the marginalised as highly aware of their oppression and lack of agency. HAYDER speaks directly to the audience, telling us “I’m sick of telling my story” and that he “[doesn’t] want to play.” In doing so, the text suggests that asylum seekers and other marginalised groups are constantly forced to ‘tell their story’ without result, forced to participate in a ‘game’ that they cannot win.
- The text draws on powerful stage directions with significant meaning being conveyed by the silent group of PROTAGONISTS miming in Scene 1. This further reinforces the voicelessness of the marginalised while also giving the audience the opportunity to interpret the actions using the cultural knowledge they possess as members of a society which could be considered to have treated this group of people poorly.
- The naming of the TRIBUNAL MAN might lend itself to readings of masculine power. The only other voiced character in this extract is also male. However, while HAYDER demonstrates a degree of power by subverting his role in the proceedings by ostensibly refusing to participate, his power is in rebellion while TRIBUNAL MAN’s power is absolute.

### **Close textual analysis**

The response uses close textual analysis of language, examples and/or generic conventions and reference to relevant cultural contexts to develop and support the reading.

- Throughout the extract, the audience is forced to, in small measure, experience some of the voicelessness of the asylum seeker. TRIBUNAL MAN asks us questions but gives no time to respond; HAYDER speaks at us rather than with us.
- However, the audience is also placed in the position of being complicit with the powerful: we are positioned in front of TRIBUNAL MAN’s ‘high podium’ and therefore view the PROTAGONISTS as though we are judges also; when TRIBUNAL MAN announces “I don’t believe you”, the voice comes from the same area as the audience are seated; HAYDER is telling us that he doesn’t want to talk anymore and that he will not participate in the proceedings.
- The positioning of the audience as being hemmed-in by TRIBUNAL MAN behind, the PROTAGONISTS in front (and often moving towards us), and multimedia props around, could be assumed to be confronting and claustrophobic. This invites the audience to feel uneasy and confined.

- Candidates might comment on the desire for some members of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Melbourne, who co-wrote this text, to remain nameless. This could be interpreted as a rebellion against the convention of stating the author of a text or as an act of empowerment by grouping themselves together as one. Conversely, this could be read as a response of fear, as not wanting to identify themselves as being a part of writing a text which could be seen to harm their chances of being granted asylum in Australia.
- The introductory contextual notes on the text indicate that the text itself is the result of many voices coming together and being heard in order to build something. This could be read as contrasting the experiences of the asylum seekers in the play who are voiceless and isolated.
- Candidates might make links to issues of asylum seekers in current media and in the public's consciousness. Some might suggest that those in power often seem to act in callous and uncaring ways, ignoring the lived experience of those seeking refuge in favour of whether someone's paper application meets arbitrary criteria.

### **Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology**

The response uses language, stylistic and critical terminology and concepts suited to the reading.

- The play 'breaks the 4th wall' to situate the audience within the drama itself, heightening our sense of being an active participant in the treatment and judgement of the PROTAGONISTS.
- The naming of the asylum seekers as PROTAGONISTS is significant in developing irony in the text; throughout the extract, they attempt to drive the narrative by showing us their experiences but are continually shut down by the words, actions and positioning of TRIBUNAL MAN.
- The explicit description of the group of characters as PROTAGONISTS could be viewed as unconventional. We are not usually told which characters are the protagonists. Instead, it is usually determined by the audience's own judgement. The script does not label any characters as specifically ANTAGONISTS but candidates might consider the way that the naming of one group as protagonists sets us up to assume that the other characters, such as TRIBUNAL MAN, will be the antagonists by default and thereby the audience as well, given their implied alliance with him.
- The frequent use of wordless action on the stage is important in constructing the PROTAGONISTS as voiceless. However, their use of mime is also significant in showing the audience that their experiences are visceral and tangible: what they have undergone is not something that can be effectively conveyed through words or text on a Permanent Residency application.
- The mimed action of the PROTAGONISTS could be interpreted in a number of ways which all represent the varied experiences of asylum seekers which we may not understand or know about. That these actions are exhibited while they 'move in unison toward the audience' could be read as confronting the audience with the often hidden or under-reported experiences of the asylum seeker.

### **Expression of ideas:**

The response expresses ideas clearly and cohesively in order to logically present the reading.

- In presenting their reading, candidates should adhere to the conventions of Standard Australian English, avoiding errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar to the extent possible in an examination situation.

- Candidates should not be penalised arbitrarily by counting errors. Instead, the standard of written expression should be considered in light of the effectiveness of the expression. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and deficiencies of structure which detract from meaning or ease of reading should be considered less favourably than those which are simply transcription errors.
- When considering expression of ideas, the fluency and voice of the candidate should be considered. A sense of ease or confidence in their writing should be rewarded.
- The structure of a response should be considered with regard to the logical presentation of ideas. However, there is no requirement that a candidate must adhere to a rigid, pre-determined essay structure. Responses which are somewhat more free-flowing might still be considered favourably, with consideration to the appropriateness of the style and the way in which the response is communicated to the reader.

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

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

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

**Demonstration of course concepts**

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

**Use of evidence**

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

**Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology**

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

**Expression**

Marks are specifically allocated for expression in the areas of:

- argumentation
- structure
- language use and style.

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

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

Explain how an awareness of key allusions to other texts has enriched your understanding of the meaning of one or more texts.

- In answering this question, candidates are to articulate how their level of awareness of allusions to other texts has influenced their understanding of their studied text.
- Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of allusions as intertextual references, for example, quotes, characters, settings, and events from other texts. These references have a level of meaning beyond the superficial, asking readers to transfer and apply their understandings from one text to another.
- Candidates should consider what constitutes a key allusion. Such key allusions could form a significant part of the text, be necessary to develop the dominant reading, or otherwise be an integral element of the text. The allusion should not just be a simple reference to another text.
- In answering this question, candidates should discuss what constitutes an enriched understanding and address how their own understanding of the studied text has been enhanced, deepened or developed via intertextual reading practices.
- Candidates should discuss the text's meaning when developing their response, and clearly articulate how the meaning made in the text was influenced by their intertextual reading practice.
- Candidates might draw upon a text which uses allusion to create a pastiche or parody of other texts.
- In Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, an awareness of the key allusions to *Hamlet* could be considered to enrich one's understanding of the text's representation of fate and inevitability as the eponymous characters' fate seems to be sealed by the key allusion which comes in the form of the title and a knowledge of their death as referred to in such an off-hand manner in Shakespeare's text.
- In Eliot's '*The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*', recognition of allusions, and more broadly the role of protagonist and minor characters, to *Hamlet* supplement one's understanding of the speaker's alienation as he doubts his role as the protagonist in his own tragedy.
- In Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, an awareness of the intertextual relationship with *Jane Eyre* could deepen a reader's feminist and post-colonial response as the text gives voice to the female Creole character silenced in Bronte's text.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** how reading intertextually helps readers to understand and critique representations.

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

Reflect on the way in which at least one literary text has resonated deeply with you because of your own cultural assumptions, social position and/or gender.

- This question requires a personal response, asking candidates to 'reflect'. The use of first person in their response is expected and encouraged. Those writing in the third person should not be arbitrarily penalised if their response still takes a personal stance.
- Candidates should make clear how the text indeed 'resonated deeply' with them. This should not be a simple matter of enjoying the text or making meaning from it. Resonating deeply implies a level of significance which should be clear in their response.
- Candidates should also articulate what the cultural assumptions, social position and/or gender they identify with or experience when answering this question. It is important to remember that students often work from a position of naivety or youthful ignorance when interpreting texts and therefore their understanding of these things might be somewhat superficial.
- Candidates might reflect on how reading a text such as Nick Enright's *Blackrock* from the perspective of a young woman, particularly given current events and movements such as #metoo and high-profile sexual harassment cases, might be particularly harrowing and relevant to them. Similarly, the depiction of the victimisation of Katharina in Boll's *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* might resonate deeply in terms of the way an independent, sexually assertive woman can be demonised by the media.
- Candidates might reflect on the way that a text has resonated with them in a negative way, perhaps causing them particular anger or disappointment. For example, a male student might object to the depiction of men as cruel and misogynistic in Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and reflect on how texts like this could be seen to reinforce mistrust and distance between men and women.
- The poems of Samuel Wagan Watson might be reflected upon by candidates who could consider the way that their cultural assumptions about the past and present treatment of Indigenous Australians have been challenged or reinforced, thereby resonating deeply with them as Australians or as people with other heritage, or indeed as Indigenous people themselves.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** the influence of the reader's context, cultural assumptions, social position and gender.

**Unit 4:** the ways in which the expectations and values of audiences shape readings of texts and perceptions of their significance; and how the social, cultural and historical spaces in which texts are produced and read mediate readings

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

Drawing on at least one text, explore how literature can be considered important in acknowledging a nation's past and/or hopes for the future.

- In addressing this question, candidates will need to demonstrate an understanding of the context of production of their studied text. A degree of knowledge of the past or present of the relevant nation is required to be able to engage deeply with this question.
- Strong responses will be able to situate their text in a particular historical period (which may be the present) and demonstrate how the text serves to highlight issues, events, or ideologies that were or are relevant.
- Candidates should do more than simply make connections between the plot, setting, characters, or subject matter of a text and an historical period. Rather, they should articulate how the text encourages readers to understand and acknowledge the past, or to see potential change and improvement in the future.
- Works of poets such as Heaney and Wagan Watson, who often reference and reflect on past events of their homelands, would be pertinent to draw upon in responding to this question.
- Novels such as Gail Jones' *Sorry* or Kate Grenville's *The Secret River* might be discussed in terms of highlighting the way that an acknowledgement of our own personal past is important in moving forward, making the connection to the theme of the importance of witness and ownership of past wrongs in enabling national reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.
- Candidates might discuss the way that a text can act as an historical document, allowing the reader to view the past as it was seen by its contemporaries. By reading these texts today, we are given the opportunity to reflect on mistakes we wish not to repeat, or to understand how we have arrived at our current ways of thinking. Texts such as Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* or Ibsen's realist dramas would be examples useful in this approach.
- Candidates may reflect on the way that literature which holds up a mirror to a nation's past can be uncomfortable to view, particularly when we can see that there has been a lack of progress to change ways of thinking or behaving, such as the case in Kaufman's *The Laramie Project* or Davis' *No Sugar*.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** the ways in which representations of the past allow a nation or culture to recognise itself.

**Unit 4:** how literature represents and/or reflects cultural change and difference



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

Consider how at least one literary text has shifted or confirmed your ideas about important issues present in 21st century Australia.

- In responding to this question candidates should make strong connections between ideas portrayed within their studied texts and those of 21st Century Australia. Candidates should be aware of what issues of importance are happening in Australia today and how they are being viewed and addressed.
- The response should be framed as a personal discussion given the keywords of 'your ideas'. Responses which take a broader view, discussing the way more general attitudes and values in society have changed, would not be fully engaging with this question. Candidates should be clear when identifying issues, noting whether they are personal or public and be prepared to state their own ideas regarding such issues.
- Candidates are invited to explore texts that are not necessarily Australian as well as those that are. These may offer very different perspectives compared to those of contemporary Australians. The presentation of perspectives or experiences outside of the experience of 21st century Australian readers could provide us with an opportunity to re-evaluate our own attitudes and values as relevant to issues present in our own time and place.
- Candidates could consider texts such as Isabelle Allende's *Eva Luna*, which present various perspectives regarding dysfunctional family within society. These are relevant to issues of family (dis)harmony in 21st Century Australia which might influence our own attitudes or responses.
- The manner of presentation of an issue could be considered. The very style, structure and language of a text might be confronting and expose an issue in a particular way such as in Euripedes' *Medea*. The issue of family violence is horrific and Medea's visual ascension to the heavens leaves viewers with unanswered questions regarding how we should judge her. Reflecting on such questions could prompt readers to consider their judgements on this subject.
- Candidates could consider more subtle representation of ideas about issues. Much poetry is contemplative and suggestive, raising varied ideas regarding an issue without being obvious – Seamus Heaney, Sylvia Plath, Maya Anagelou and Mary Oliver are some who do this. Others, such as Samuel Wagan Watson and Gwen Harwood are much more explicit in their representation of important issues such as Indigenous acknowledgement, reconciliation, and land rights.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** How readers are influenced to respond to their own and others' cultural experiences.

**Unit 4:** The ways in which ideological perspectives are conveyed through texts drawn from other times and cultures, and how these perspectives may be reviewed by a contemporary Australian audience.

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

Discuss the way in which literature is a cultural expression of ideas anchored firmly in a social and historical context.

- In responding to this question, candidates should demonstrate a strong understanding of culture and what it contributes to literary texts. Candidates should support the notion of contextual influence on a text through this knowledge.
- Strong responses might explore the notion of change and how contemporary readings can alter meaning and reader response. A modern context could be referenced to illustrate a difference in understanding from that of the original audience.
- The term 'social' invites readings (such as class and gendered readings) which may differ according to 'historical' context. A discussion of both social and historical context, and their interplay, is valued in addressing this question.
- There is wide scope for choosing relevant texts to address this question. Candidates might choose texts written in the distant past, such as Shakespeare's or Euripides' plays, and comment on how these texts often present issues in ways that are less palatable now but which are reflective of the ways of thinking and behaving of their times. Conversely, candidates might choose modern texts which are responsive to current issues and events, discussing the ways that these ideas are presented to a literary audience for their evaluation and reflection.
- Candidates could explore a particular genre and how it embodies specific conventions which embody a particular ideology, time or place. The plays of Brecht do this by expressing ideas on stage in the round and challenging traditional dramatic structures. Eliot's poetry employs a Modernist style of poetic expression that completely disrupted traditional form, use of imagery and subject matter, in order to comment on social issues and ideologies of his time.
- Similarly, the selection of particular structure, language, syntax and symbols may be reflective of a particular context, such as in Boll's *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* or the works of the Romantic poets.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** The power of language to represent ideas, events and people in particular ways, understanding that language is a cultural medium and that its meanings may vary according to context.

**Unit 4:** The ways in which the expectations and values of audiences shape readings of texts and perceptions of their significance; and how the social, cultural and historical spaces in which texts are produced and read mediate readings.

## Question 7

(30 marks)

Explain how at least one text has used different voices to explore a variety of attitudes toward marginalised groups.

- In developing their response to this question, candidates will need to define what they mean when referring to 'voices'. This might be different points of view, personas, or characters.
- 'Marginalised groups' can be read quite broadly, though candidates should be clear about what makes this group marginalised. Simply suggesting that women in general are marginalised would be less favourable than discussing the way that women in a particular context could be considered as such.
- The instruction to explore 'a variety of attitudes' can be read to refer to 'more than one'. Stronger responses will likely be able to demonstrate that texts often present many more, often conflicting, attitudes towards issues and groups. However, candidates who refer to only two different attitudes should not be arbitrarily penalised. Instead, the quality of the response should be considered.
- The attitudes towards marginalised groups may be an explicit part of the narrative, such as the way that women are categorised and viewed in Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, or it might be implicit in the text, such as the ideologies that marginalise African American people as represented in Morrison's *Beloved*.
- Candidates might draw on a range of poems to demonstrate the use of 'different voices' such as the way that Harwood uses pseudonyms such as Francis Geyer and Miriam Stone to explore the way that marginalised groups such as migrants and women in 1960s Australia were treated in society.
- Kaufmann's *The Laramie Project* might be discussed in terms of the way that many different characters are presented on stage to explore attitudes towards homosexuality.
- Shifts in narrative perspectives, such as in Astley's *It's Raining In Mango*, Ondaatje's *The English Patient* and D'Aguiar's *The Longest Memory* could be discussed to highlight a variety of attitudes towards a group across time.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** How representations vary according to the discourse. Different groups of people use different terms to represent their ideas about the world and these different discourses (ways of thinking and speaking) offer particular representations of the world.

**Unit 4:** How ideas, values and assumptions are conveyed, that is, how the ideas represented in a text are just one possible way of thinking about the world and may reflect a particular set of values and attitudes. Some literary texts reflect the system of attitudes, values, beliefs and assumptions (ideology) of powerful groups. In this way, literary texts may be used to 'naturalise' particular ways of thinking, to serve the purposes of these powerful groups, while marginalising the views of other less powerful groups.

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

Making reference to at least one literary text, discuss how experimentation with language and/or form reflects, or can contribute to, new ways of thinking.

- In answering this question, candidates may refer to both language and form, or language, or form. When discussing language, they might refer to experimentation with style, tone, diction, discourse, imagery, figurative language, and so on. In referring to form they might refer to plot structure, poetic form, chronology, typography, stage directions and so on.
- Candidates should engage with the concept of experimentation and discuss how texts inform new ways of thinking by using textual conventions and language in new or reimagined ways.
- Candidates might consider shifts between recognised literary periods, such as the movement from idealist to realist theatre, or from romanticism to modernism, and how these suggest changes in ways of thinking present in society.
- Candidates might explore how literary texts reflect their context of production and how the form and language of a text is a reflection of ideological norms and changes.
- In the poetry of Eliot, experimentation with form, irregular rhyme and fragmented language reveals the shift to the concerns of alienation and confusion in a changing world.
- Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* experiments with a hesitant and unreliable narrator, as well as a non-linear narrative in order to reflect scepticism of absolute truths.
- Winton's *Cloudstreet* utilises language which incorporates magical realism and experiments with punctuation in its form, which might encourage readers to consider beauty and wonderment in the world around them.
- Ibsen's *A Doll's House* experiments with form by removing the idealist plot resolution. Ibsen also controversially experimented with language by incorporating the realism of everyday colloquialism as well as using contrasting language to highlight the theatrical idealism that exists between Nora and Torvald.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 4:** How specific literary elements and forms shape meaning and influence responses. Genres may have social, ideological and aesthetic functions. Writers may blend and borrow conventions from other genres to appeal to particular audiences.

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

Discuss the way in which a character's journey or evolution in at least one prose text can act as a vehicle for social commentary.

- In answering this question, candidates should focus on one character and the way they transform, or the journey (physical or metaphorical) they undertake. The character might be the protagonist or antagonist. Candidates may discuss more than one character's journey or evolution but in doing so should not lapse into superficiality.
- Candidates might discuss how characterisation can be used for ideological purposes or to challenge or endorse particular social attitudes and values.
- Candidates could consider how the character from a text acts as representation of particular social groups and their ideas.
- Candidates should make reference to how aspects of characterisation such as dialogue, symbolism, actions, relationships and so on are used to construct their character and how these elements are used to reflect their journey or evolution.
- In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow's literal journey to the Inner Station and his experiences in doing so can act as a comment on the reality of imperialism and the colonial imperative.
- In Adiga's *The White Tiger*, Balram's journey from the rural 'darkness' to the urban 'light', and his evolution ascending the caste hierarchy and abandoning conventional morality, can act as a commentary on the social divides which silence the subaltern in modern India.
- Nazneen's evolution from subservience to agency and inexperience to experience in Ali's *Brick Lane* acts as a comment on the repressiveness of patriarchal norms and the empowerment found in voice and freedom.
- The journey of the Price family into the Congo in Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible* serves to critique cultural imperialism and the imposition of Western religion and values in Africa. The evolution of Leah Price from unquestioning loyalty to her father's missionary purpose and her role as dutiful daughter occurs as she develops both her independence, as well her understanding of Congolese culture. Her evolution could be seen as a vehicle for social commentary on the desire for cultural exchange rather than imposition.
- Connie's journey through her family history in Astley's *It's Raining in Mango* acts as a comment on racial oppression as the Laffey family perpetrates and witnesses racial prejudice towards Indigenous Australians. Her journey also serves to comment on the importance of connection to one's ancestors.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** The impact of the use of literary conventions and stylistic techniques.

**Unit 4:** How specific literary elements and forms shape meaning and influence responses. Genres may have social, ideological and aesthetic functions. Writers may blend and borrow conventions from other genres to appeal to particular audiences.

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

Analyse the use of visual and/or auditory elements of drama in representing conflicts that exist beyond the stage. In your response, make reference to at least one drama text.

- The instruction to 'analyse' suggests that candidates need to closely unravel the way that conflict is constructed and represented in drama texts. Responses should not simply focus on describing the conflict which takes place in the text but instead discuss the way that this conflict is built and developed.
- In responding to this question, students might consider dialogue to be an 'auditory element'; however, they should ensure that they are analysing the speech in detail by considering things such as the tone, volume, pace, and so on of such dialogue and not simply what is said.
- Similarly, visual elements might include the interactions between characters though again these should be analysed in detail, paying close attention to the directions of how these interactions are to occur, and not simply describing them.
- The conflicts candidates discuss might be those occurring within the play (but beyond what is directly displayed to us), or they might be those that exist beyond the play itself. For example, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* uses the cacophony of voices of the girls accusing the townsfolk of witchcraft, "I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osburn with the Devil! ... I saw George Jacobs with the Devil! ..." *On their ecstatic cries* THE CURTAIN FALLS to point to the hysterical naming and fear of supposed Soviet collaborators in 1960s America.
- Candidates might discuss the way that unseen conflict can be more confronting than that which is explicitly depicted on stage, such as in Davis' *No Sugar*, where 'Black out. A scream.' is used to imply violence inflicted on Mary and, more widely, the abuse of Indigenous Australians.
- Visual elements might include props, lighting, screens, and character actions; auditory elements might include soundscapes, music, and use of voice.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** The impact of the use of literary conventions and stylist techniques.

**Unit 4:** How specific literary elements and forms shape meaning and influence responses. Genres may have social, ideological and aesthetic functions. Writers may blend and borrow conventions from other genres to appeal to particular audiences.

**Question 11****(30 marks)**

Discuss how the aesthetic appeal of at least one poem you have studied enables it to present confronting ideas to an audience.

- To fully address this question, candidates need to clearly discuss and consider the meaning of aesthetic appeal. This may be in the beauty of language, the effectiveness of a selected poetic form, the selection of detail or the resulting emotional response of the reader. They might explain why they are drawn to a particular poem, discussing what is appealing or satisfying about it.
- The term confronting should also be carefully explained. Candidates should select poetry that does indeed confront and challenge them. The subject matter and underlying ideas of the poem should give them scope to discuss the nature of the confrontation in depth.
- Strong responses will take into account the audience of the text, either as themselves or the more general audience. Candidates should consider how the ideas being presented become palatable, approachable or understandable by this audience due to the aesthetic appeal of the text.
- Candidates could explore the confronting nature of the style of poetry, the selection of detail and arrangement of language. They could consider the structure of poems, unusual formations, difficult syntax, powerful imagery and language choices. e.e. cummings, Emily Dickinson and Samuel Wagan Watson are poets who often employ these features in their works.

Relevant syllabus content:

**Unit 3:** The impact of the use of literary conventions and stylistic techniques

**Unit 4:** How specific literary elements and forms shape meaning and influence responses. Genres may have social, ideological and aesthetic functions. Writers may blend and borrow conventions from other genres to appeal to particular audiences.

**Unit 4:** How genre, conventions and language contribute to interpretations of texts. Choice of language is related to ideological and aesthetic considerations.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Question 1 Text A** Close textual analysis, dot points 1 and 5: Catton, E. (2013). *The luminaries* [Quotes]. Granta Books, pp. 625–627.
- Question 1 Text B** Reading/s of the text, dot point 1: Harrison J. (2018). The woman who almost made it to the moon [Quote]. *The Australian poetry journal*, 8 (1), p. 40.
- Question 1 Text C** Reading/s of the text, dot point 3: Simmonds, C. (2013). Journey of asylum - Waiting [Quotes]. *Staging asylum* (E. Cox, Ed.). Currency Press, pp. 142–145.

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