

at the start may help you to organise your ideas and avoid the need for such excessive editing.

- Avoid the temptation to memorise an in-class assessment to use in the examination. It is very obvious when this has been done as the response will not engage with the question.
- Poor handwriting can cost you marks. It is your responsibility to write clearly and legibly. Excessive use of asterisks to other locations in your examination booklet, and writing which travels up and across margins, is difficult for your marker to read and follow.

Advice for teachers

- Broad terminology continues to be used in favour of more specific, meaningful terms (e.g., stage directions, rather than proxemics, soundscape, lighting, costume, gesture, and so on). It is worth considering ways students can be encouraged to learn and apply metalanguage to enhance their response and showcase their understanding.
- Encourage students not to memorise essay openings or generic quotes from articles and critiques. Instead, help them to understand how to structure a response and to address questions authentically.
- Work with students to understand the contexts of their texts beyond superficial and stereotypical judgements of gender, race, and class. Help students to see the nuance in their texts, to read between the lines, and to look for the ways that characters represent a range of experience that does not fit into one narrow view.
- Spend time using previous examinations to break down keywords and phrases with students, and to consider how they might (or might not) work with the texts your class has studied. In doing so, remind students that they will need to take this sort of active approach in the examination – not all questions will suit their studied texts.
- Ensure you are giving your students frequent and regular opportunities to handwrite, and provide them with honest feedback about it. They should be reminded that it is not in their interests to ignore the importance of writing legibly. Students whose handwriting is poor or difficult to read need to be assisted to improve it so that their examination responses can be read with ease.
- Consider auditing the texts used in your Literature courses. Responses drawing on less frequently studied texts often stand out and provide students with an opportunity to address questions in interesting and innovative ways.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Response - Close reading (25 Marks)

Significantly fewer candidates chose the Prose fiction text (Text B) in the examination. However, performance was similar across all three genres. Often candidates described what they saw in the text's construction but did not go on to articulate 'so what?' Answers often lacked application of a clear lens, and that analysis of texts and their construction appeared to be deteriorating. While it is reiterated that candidates did not necessarily need to apply 'named' reading lenses (e.g., ecocritical, Marxist, feminist), they did need to be clear as to how the text shapes their understanding or the meaning they derive (e.g., through the use of generic conventions; through subverting reader expectations of a genre; by alluding to or making direct reference to other texts; etc.). Furthermore, candidates needed to respond to the text itself and avoid investing heavily in the very limited contextual information they received. The examination has been deliberate in providing only basic contextual information for some years now. This information is given for biographical purposes only and candidates should not expect to be able to use it to substantively shape their responses.

Text A (Drama) attempted by 512 candidates	Mean 16.53 (/25)	Max 25	Min 0
<i>Reading/s of text</i>	Mean 4.48 (/7)	Max 7	Min 0
<i>Close textual analysis</i>	Mean 3.99 (/6)	Max 6	Min 0
<i>Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology</i>	Mean 3.83 (/6)	Max 6	Min 0
<i>Expression of ideas</i>	Mean 4.22 (/6)	Max 6	Min 6

Many responses for the Drama text were comprehensive and convincing. Candidates generally constructed readings of the text focused on ideas of war and gender. Candidates used mostly appropriate drama terminology and drew on relevant contextual understandings of war throughout history, and particularly Australia's experience of war. Candidates needed to apply a gender/feminist reading strategy rather than read for gender expectations. Many candidates discussed how the text should have constructed NURSE or the young girls differently rather than exploring the actual textual representations based on contextual gender roles and ideologies of the time the text is set or produced in. Stronger candidates discussed how each group introduced represented a different perspective on war.

Text B (Prose fiction) attempted by 390 candidates

	Mean 15.77(/25)	Max 25	Min 0
<i>Reading/s of text</i>	Mean 4.29 (/7)	Max 7	Min 0
<i>Close textual analysis</i>	Mean 3.86 (/6)	Max 6	Min 0
<i>Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology</i>	Mean 3.43 (/6)	Max 6	Min 0
<i>Expression of ideas</i>	Mean 4.19 (/6)	Max 6	Min 6

Responses to the Prose fiction text were wide-ranging in their understanding of the plot, from insightful and interesting, to those that seemed to rely on superficial application of ideas about 'toxic masculinity'. Many candidates focused on the man Margot encounters being 'tattooed' and made many worrying assumptions. Considering the proliferation and wide-spread acceptance of tattooing today, it was somewhat surprising that so many candidates leapt to this reading. Nuanced readings, including that the man was a student of The Arts, and that he had endured the discomfort of travelling on un-airconditioned public transport (compared to Margot's more comfortable journey) to be at a performance which Margot admits to not even knowing the name of, appear to have been missed by many. The hopefulness at the end of the extract was also missed by many candidates. Candidates needed to more explicitly deal with the generic features of the Prose Fiction text.

Text C (Poetry) attempted by 583 candidates	Mean 15.93(/25)	Max 25	Min 0
<i>Reading/s of text</i>	Mean 4.29 (/7)	Max 7	Min 0
<i>Close textual analysis</i>	Mean 3.82 (/6)	Max 6	Min 0
<i>Linguistic, stylistic and critical terminology</i>	Mean 3.66 (/6)	Max 6	Min 0
<i>Expression of ideas</i>	Mean 4.15 (/6)	Max 6	Min 6

Responses to the Poetry text demonstrated knowledge of an impressive range of poetry devices and language features. Many responses focused on a 'humanist reading', which was well-suited to the poem. This should have focused on human reason, human ambition, human goals, and human capacity; however, responses tended to focus on retell of the runner's thoughts and attitudes in each part of the poem with limited humanist lens and discourse applied. Misuse of the term 'persona' for the runner (rather than the correct 'subject') was widespread.

Section Two: Extended response (30 Marks)

As noted in previous course examination reports, it is crucial that candidates avoid the use of prepared answers in the Literature examination. Despite ongoing discussion of this issue, the problem does not appear to be abating and markers frequently comment on responses which, while beautifully written, did not engage with the paper in front of them.

Frequently, candidates appeared to forget or ignore key parts of the question they were answering. Additionally, simply tacking a keyword onto the final sentence of the answer was not enough to really engage with the question. A key discriminator for this section was an ability to unpack the entire question and select suitable texts and pertinent evidence to support their arguments. Candidates needed to develop more confidence in discussing personal responses to questions requiring or inviting it (Questions 2, 6 and 7 in this year's paper).