

VCE English

Written examination – End of year

Introduction

The VCE English examination is to be prepared according to the following examination specifications and criteria. The examination is designed to assess the key knowledge and key skills which underpin the outcomes for Unit 3 and Unit 4 (*VCE English/English as an Additional Language Study Design*). The sample examination provides an indication of the type and range of questions teachers and students can expect on the VCE English examination. Teachers should refer to the *VCE English/English as an Additional Language Study Design* for all information about areas of study, outcomes and advice to teachers.

Teachers should refer to the 'Examination' section of the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* and to the *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* for further advice.

Examination specifications

Overall conditions

The examination will be sat at a time and date to be set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

There will be 15 minutes reading time and 3 hours writing time.

VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.

The examination will be marked by a panel appointed by the VCAA.

The examination will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

Content

All key knowledge and key skills in Unit 3 Outcomes 1, 2 and 3, and Unit 4 Outcomes 1 and 2 are assessable. Each student response in each section of the examination will be assessed against the examination criteria for that section.

Approved materials and equipment

An English and/or bilingual printed dictionary is allowed in the examination.

Format

The examination will be in a task book. Students will write their responses in an answer book. Students are not permitted to write on more than one selected multimodal text in the examination. The examination will consist of three sections.

Section A – Text response (Reading and responding)

Section A will be worth one-third of the total marks. Students will be required to write one extended response to one of the two texts selected for study from the English/EAL Text list 1 published in the *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* for Units 3 and 4 Outcome 1 for the year in question.

There will be two topics for each of the 20 selected texts for Outcome 1. Each topic will enable and require students to address the full range of key knowledge and key skills. The choice between topics will enable students

to develop their sustained discussion from an initial focus on one of the following aspects of key knowledge for Units 3 and 4 Outcome 1:

- the ideas, characters and themes constructed by the author/director and presented in the selected text; or
- the way the author/director uses structures, features and conventions to construct meaning; or
- the ways in which authors/directors express or imply a point of view and values; or
- the ways in which readers' interpretations of text differ and why

All topics will require students' responses to address the full range of key knowledge and skills, and to be supported by detailed analysis and reference to the selected text.

Section B – Writing in Context (Creating and presenting)

Section B will be worth one-third of the total marks. Students will be required to select **one** of the four Contexts set by the VCAA for the year of the examination. The task in each Context will require students to write an extended response, exploring ideas and using detail from at least one text selected from the English/EAL Text list 2 published in the *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* for the year of the examination for Outcome 2. Students will be required to base their writing on unseen stimulus material or prompts associated with the ideas and/or arguments suggested by the four texts set for each Context.

Section C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)

Section C will be worth one-third of the total marks. Section C will require students to write an extended piece of prose, analysing the use of written and visual language in the unseen text(s). Section C will be based on written and visual stimulus material. The task in this section will be compulsory.

Examination assessment criteria

The examination will address all the criteria. Student responses will be examined against each criterion.

Section A – Text response (Reading and responding)

- detailed knowledge and understanding of the selected text, demonstrated appropriately in response to the topic
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective discussion in response to the task
- controlled use of expressive and effective language appropriate to the task

Section B – Writing in Context (Creating and presenting)

- understanding and effective exploration of the ideas and/or arguments relevant to the prompt/stimulus material
- effective use of detail and ideas drawn from the selected text as appropriate to the task
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective structure in response to the task, showing an understanding of the relationship between purpose, form, language and audience
- controlled use of language appropriate to the purpose, form and audience

Section C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)

- understanding of the ideas and points of view presented
- analysis of ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view and to persuade readers
- controlled and effective use of language appropriate to the task

Advice

Examinations will be prepared according to the examination specifications above during the accreditation period for VCE English. Each examination will conform to these specifications and will test the key knowledge and skills.

Section A – Text response

Students must indicate the text and topic on which their response is based.

Section B – Writing in Context

Students must indicate the Context they studied, together with the title of the selected text which is the main focus for their response. Other texts may be referred to in their piece of writing, but students must clearly indicate the title of their main text.

Students may write the response in an expository, persuasive or imaginative style of writing. Students must use the prompt/stimulus material as the basis for the ideas and/or arguments in their writing, and they must draw directly from the ideas and/or arguments in the selected text or texts they studied for the Context.

Section C – Analysis of language use

Students analyse the use of written and visual language in the presentation of a point(s) of view in a text or texts. Brief background information will enable students to locate their analysis in the context of the issue being discussed.

Victorian Certificate of Education
Year

ENGLISH
Written examination

Day Date

Reading time: *.*.* ** to *.*.* ** (15 minutes)

Writing time: *.*.* ** to *.*.* ** (3 hours)

TASK BOOK

<i>Section</i>	<i>Number of questions</i>	<i>Number of questions to be answered</i>	<i>Marks</i>
A – Text response	20	1	20
B – Writing in Context	4	1	20
C – Analysis of language use	1	1	20
			Total 60

- Students are to write in blue or black pen.
- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, rulers and an English and/or bilingual printed dictionary.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or white out liquid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

Materials supplied

- Task book of 12 pages, including **Examination assessment criteria** on page 12.
- One answer book.

Instructions

- Write your student number and name on the front cover of the answer book.
- Complete each of the following in the answer book.
 - Section A: Text response
 - Section B: Writing in Context
 - Section C: Analysis of language use
- Each section should be completed in the correct part of the answer book.
- All written responses must be in English.
- If you write on a multimodal text in Section A, you must not write on a multimodal text in Section B.
- You may ask the supervisor for extra answer books.

At the end of the task

- Enclose any extra answer books inside the front cover of the first answer book.
- You may keep this task book.

Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

SECTION A – Text response**Instructions for Section A**

Section A requires students to complete **one analytical/expository** piece of writing in response to **one** topic (either **i.** or **ii.**) on **one** selected text.

Indicate the text selected and whether you are answering **i.** or **ii.**

In your response, you must develop a sustained discussion of **one** selected text from the Text list below.

Your response must be supported by close reference to and analysis of the selected text.

For collections of poetry or short stories, you may choose to write on several poems or short stories, or on one or two in very close detail, depending on what you think is appropriate.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on page 12 of this book.

If you write on a multimodal text in Section A, you must **not** write on a multimodal text in Section B.

Section A is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Text list

1. *A Man for all Seasons* Robert Bolt
2. *Citizen Kane* Director: Orson Welles
3. *Collected Stories* Beverley Farmer
4. *Don't Start Me Talking: Lyrics 1984–2004* Paul Kelly
5. *Generals Die in Bed* Charles Yale Harrison
6. *Great Short Works* Edgar Allan Poe
7. *Hard Times* Charles Dickens
8. *Home* Larissa Behrendt
9. *Inheritance* Hannie Rayson
10. *Into Thin Air* Jon Krakauer
11. *In the Lake of the Woods* Tim O'Brien
12. *Look Both Ways* Director: Sarah Watt
13. *Maestro* Peter Goldsworthy
14. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* George Orwell
15. *Of Love and Shadows* Isabel Allende
16. *Richard III* William Shakespeare
17. *Romulus, My Father* Raimond Gaita
18. *Selected Poems* Kenneth Slessor
19. *Sky Burial* Xinran
20. *The Kite Runner* Khaled Hosseini

SECTION A**1. *A Man for all Seasons***

- i. ‘Sir Thomas More is not the only “man for all seasons” in the play.’
To what extent do you agree?

OR

- ii. How does the use of the Common Man influence our understanding of this play?

2. *Citizen Kane*

- i. Leland said of Kane: “He didn’t believe in anything except Charlie Kane. He never had a conviction in his life”.
Do you agree with this view of Kane?

OR

- ii. ‘The way *Citizen Kane* tells the story of Kane’s life leaves viewers with more questions than answers.’
Discuss.

3. *Collected Stories*

- i. ‘Characters in Farmer’s stories show resilience as they come to terms with change.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. ‘A strong sense of place is central to the characters in Farmer’s stories.’
Discuss.

4. *Don’t Start Me Talking: Lyrics 1984–2004*

- i. ‘Paul Kelly’s lyrics show that companionship and a sense of belonging are essential for a life of contentment.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. How do Paul Kelly’s lyrics convey a strong sense of nostalgia for an idealised past?

5. *Generals Die in Bed*

- i. ‘This text demonstrates that individuals in dangerous situations are protected more by their rank than by their courage.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. “We have learned who our enemies are – the lice, some of our officers, and Death.”
‘In war, there are many enemies but no true friends.’
Discuss.

6. Great Short Works

- i. 'Poe's characters are dominated by feelings of guilt and fear.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'In his stories, Poe creates a nightmarish world inhabited by characters in turmoil.'
Discuss.

7. Hard Times

- i. At the end of the novel, Tom says to Louisa: "You have regularly given me up. You never cared for me".
Discuss Tom and Louisa's relationship.

OR

- ii. How does *Hard Times* explore the idea that there may be more to life than just facts?

8. Home

- i. 'It is impossible for the characters in this novel to escape the influence of the past.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. "I watch her [Granny] and imagine that the landscape must sing to her with memories – joyful and secret, sinister and sacred."
Discuss the significance of place in this text.

9. Inheritance

- i. '*Inheritance* shows that people are motivated more by greed and pride than by love and loyalty.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. "We all got trapped into doing things we didn't want to do."
Are the characters 'trapped' ?

10. Into Thin Air

- i. "The Everest climb had rocked my life to its core."
'*Into Thin Air* shows that extreme conditions provoke extreme responses.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'Krakauer uses a range of storytelling strategies to record his understanding of the events on Mt Everest, but his account is still a deeply personal one.'
Discuss.

11. *In the Lake of the Woods*

- i. ‘John Wade’s overwhelming need for love drives him towards acts of desperation, deceit and violence.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. How does this text suggest that there may be more than one explanation for what happened at the Lake of the Woods?

12. *Look Both Ways*

- i. ‘In *Look Both Ways*, features such as silence and noise are used to emphasise how life can change so quickly.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. ‘*Look Both Ways* shows characters in crisis who are dealing with real and imagined fears.’
Discuss.

13. *Maestro*

- i. At the end of the novel Paul says: “Keller was bad for me, the worst possible teacher”.
Do you agree with Paul?

OR

- ii. ‘Despite the often light-hearted tone of *Maestro*, there is an underlying sadness.’
Discuss.

14. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

- i. ‘Fear destroys Winston’s spirit.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. “The past was erased ... the lie became the truth.”
Why is the refusal to record the past accurately so important in the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*?

15. *Of Love and Shadows*

- i. ‘Irene and Francisco are from very different backgrounds but they love each other.’
Discuss.

OR

- ii. At the end of the novel, Irene and Francisco are forced to leave the country.
Does the reader see this as a triumph or a defeat?

16. *Richard III*

- i. 'The play shows Richard in such a way that it is impossible for an audience to feel any sympathy for him.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'Richard asserts his determination "to prove a villain".'
Does he succeed?

17. *Romulus, My Father*

- i. 'The friendship between Romulus and Hora had more influence on Raimond's life than the absence of his mother.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'For the people in *Romulus, My Father*, work is central in building strength of character.'
Discuss.

18. *Selected Poems*

- i. 'Slessor presents his view of life through the profusion of detail in his poetry.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. "And memory, the flood that does not flow."
How does Slessor use memory to show his understanding of the world?

19. *Sky Burial*

- i. '*Sky Burial* shows us that the only way to deal with cultural differences is by compromise.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'Wen's journey in search of her husband leads her to unexpected understandings about herself and life.'
Discuss.

20. *The Kite Runner*

- i. "A boy who won't stand up for himself becomes a man who can't stand up to anything."
Is this true of Amir?

OR

- ii. How does *The Kite Runner* deal with the issue of whether people are motivated more by self-interest than by honour?

SECTION B – Writing in Context**Instructions for Section B**

Section B requires students to complete an extended written response.

Indicate the Context and the main text drawn upon in the answer book.

In your writing, you must draw on ideas suggested by **one** of the **four** Contexts.

Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text that you have studied for this Context and be based on the ideas in the prompt.

Your response may be an expository, persuasive or imaginative piece of writing.

If you write on a multimodal text in Section A, you must **not** write on a multimodal text in Section B.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on page 12 of this book.

Section B is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Context 1 – The imaginative landscape

Fly Away Peter David Malouf
Island..... Alistair MacLeod
Jindabyne Director: Ray Lawrence
The Poetry of Robert Frost Robert Frost

Prompt

‘The place in which we live strongly influences how we make sense of the world.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘the place in which we live strongly influences how we make sense of the world’**.

OR

Context 2 – Whose reality?

A Streetcar Named Desire Tennessee Williams
Enduring Love..... Ian McEwan
Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind..... Director: Michel Gondry
The Shark Net..... Robert Drewe

Prompt

‘What people remember shapes their understanding of themselves and their world.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘what people remember shapes their understanding of themselves and their world’**.

OR

Context 3 – Encountering conflict

Omagh..... Director: Pete Travis

The Crucible..... Arthur Miller

The Line Arch and Martin Flanagan

The Secret River Kate Grenville

Prompt

‘Why conflict happens is less important than how it affects people.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘why conflict happens is less important than how it affects people’**.

OR

Context 4 – Exploring issues of identity and belonging

Bombshells Joanna Murray-Smith

Sometimes Gladness..... Bruce Dawe

The Catcher in the Rye..... J D Salinger

Witness Director: Peter Weir

Prompt

‘Sometimes it is hard to balance belonging to a group with keeping one’s individual identity.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘sometimes it is hard to balance belonging to a group with keeping one’s individual identity’**.

SECTION C – Analysis of language use**Instructions for Section C**

Section C requires students to analyse the use of written and visual language.

Read the material on page 11 and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis as a coherently structured piece of prose.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on page 12 of this book.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

TASK

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of *Chickens Range Free*?

Background information

This opinion piece, with the accompanying photograph, was published on a website and on the Opinion page of a Melbourne newspaper.

It was written in response to a recent incident in a Melbourne suburb during which hundreds of chickens were illegally released from cages on a truck.

The truck was on its way from a poultry farm to a meat-processing factory.

The police said that some of the chickens were run over by passing traffic and others disappeared into nearby backyards and parkland.

Onlookers saw two people leaving the scene, but only one person has been apprehended so far. The farmer has declared that he would sue the culprits, whether or not they are charged in the courts.

Opinion *January, 2009*

Chickens Range Free

Drawing attention to the rights of oppressed animals expands our understanding of the rights of humans as well, writes Jo Smith

Last week a truck was intercepted by activists and hundreds of chickens were given their freedom. I wasn't involved in the liberation, but as a member of Australians for Animal Rights (AAR) I understand completely why the action was taken. Direct action is the only way to bring the public's attention to the dire plight of the oppressed animals on this planet. Some people may think that liberating a truckload of chickens is too drastic a measure, but I think the activists risked life and limb for a noble cause. It is important for *someone* to stand up for the rights of animals.

Since the incident, the local media have fallen over themselves to give air time to critics of the action. A man who was walking his dog nearby at the time of the incident reportedly said: 'It's a wonder someone wasn't hurt. These activists have a lot to answer for'. A talk-back radio presenter began his show the next morning by sneering: 'Fancy a free-range chicken?'. He went on to refer to the action as 'nonsense', the activists as 'idiotic . . . clowns' and 'anti-social hippies and bludgers', and to whip up his listeners into a frenzy of support for the 'poor farmer'.

However, we Australians for Animal Rights believe that all animals deserve to be free to lead natural lives. We believe, as humans, we are not only doing the



animals an injustice when we mistreat them, but that we are also doing ourselves an injustice. We have over-populated the planet and drastically decreased the numbers of animal species. We treat so-called 'farm animals' in abominably cruel ways, to provide cheap food when we could afford to pay more. When humans condone abusing other species for self-serving purposes, surely it is but a short step to condoning widespread human rights abuses? It is little wonder that compassionate people resort to extreme action.

Too many people have a simplistic human-centred view of the world. We must reform this attitude to our fellow inhabitants of the earth, our furred and feathered friends. Animals have the same rights as we do to breathe fresh, clean air and to live in comfortable, healthy conditions.

AAR does not believe it is 'antisocial' to liberate animals from inhumane conditions. Being trapped in cages only 450 square centimetres in size, unable to move, and without proper ventilation are inhumane

conditions. Chickens are possibly the most abused animals on the face of the earth, treated so badly that if the public knew the details of how they lived and died, few would go on eating them.

The philosopher Jeremy Bentham once said, 'The question is not, can they reason? Nor, can they talk? But, *can they suffer?*'. If only more people would realise that animals, as sentient beings like us, have rights that should be respected, then perhaps humans would become more humane in their treatment of one another – that is, we would better understand human rights!

Until a humane alternative to keeping hens in inhumane conditions can be found, an action which frees caged chickens is justified, no matter what damage may have been caused. Because animal rights is such an important issue, breaking the law to free those poor creatures last week was justified. In this case, the end definitely justified the means!

Jo Smith is a freelance writer and publicity officer for Australians for Animal Rights.

Examination assessment criteria

The examination will address all the criteria. Student responses will be assessed against each criterion.

Section A – Text response

- detailed knowledge and understanding of the selected text, demonstrated appropriately in response to the topic
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective discussion in response to the task
- controlled use of expressive and effective language appropriate to the task

Section B – Writing in Context

- understanding and effective exploration of the ideas, and/or arguments relevant to the prompt/stimulus material
- effective use of detail and ideas drawn from the selected text as appropriate to the task
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective structure in response to the task, showing an understanding of the relationship between purpose, form, language and audience
- controlled use of language appropriate to the purpose, form and audience

Section C – Language analysis

- understanding of the ideas and points of view presented
- analysis of ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view and to persuade readers
- controlled and effective use of language appropriate to the task

END OF TASK BOOK

