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Units 3 and 4 English and ESL

Practice Exam Question Booklet

Duration: 15 minutes reading time, 3 hours writing time

Structure of book:

Section	Number of questions	Number of questions to be answered	Number of marks
A	20	1	20
B	4	1	20
C	1	1	20
Total			60

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers and rulers.
- 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:

- This question and answer booklet of 10 pages.

Instructions:

- You must complete all three sections of the examination.
- All answers must be written in English.
- You must not write on two film texts in the examination.

Section A – Text Response (Reading and Responding)

Instructions

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 in the box on the first line of the script book 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.

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

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

Text List

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. <i>A Christmas Carol</i> | Charles Dickens |
| 2. <i>A Farewell to Arms</i> | Ernest Hemingway |
| 3. <i>A Human Pattern – Selected Poems</i> | Judith Wright |
| 4. <i>Bypass: the story of a road</i> | Michael McGirr |
| 5. <i>Cosi</i> | Louis Nowra |
| 6. <i>Dear America – Letters Home from Vietnam</i> | Bernard Edelman |
| 7. <i>Dreams from My Father</i> | Barack Obama |
| 8. <i>Cat's Eye</i> | Margaret Atwood |
| 9. <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i> | Jhumpa Lahiri |
| 10. <i>Life of Pi</i> | Yann Martel |
| 11. <i>Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?</i> | Raymond Carver |
| 12. <i>On the Waterfront</i> | Elia Kazan |
| 13. <i>Ransom</i> | David Malouf |
| 14. <i>Henry IV- Part I</i> | William Shakespeare |
| 15. <i>The War Poems</i> | Wilfred Owen |
| 16. <i>The Old Man Who Read Love Stories</i> | Rold de Heer |
| 17. <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> | Mohsin Hamid |
| 18. <i>Things We Didn't See Coming</i> | Steven Amsterdam |
| 19. <i>Twelve Angry Men</i> | Reginald Rose |
| 20. <i>Year of Wonders</i> | Geraldine Brooks |

1. A Christmas Carol

- i. "I hope to live to be another man from what I was."
Who or what enables Scrooge's transformation in *A Christmas Carol*?

OR

- ii. 'Despite the name of the novella, *A Christmas Carol* is about charity no matter the season.'
Do you agree?

2. A Farewell to Arms

- i. '*A Farewell to Arms* is in essence an anti-war novel.'
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. 'Hemingway's characters are simplistic in nature and motivations in *A Farewell to Arms*.'
To what extent do you agree?

3. A Human Pattern – Selected Poems

- i. 'Wright's poetry attempts to give a voice to those that suffer in silence.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'The collection *A Human Pattern* is distinctly Australian and speaks to the Australian way of life.'
To what extent do you agree?

4. Bypass: the story of a road

- i. 'McGirr's tale gives real meaning to the saying "it's the journey that's important, not the destination".'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. '*Bypass: the story of a road* is about people, not places.'
Do you agree?

5. Così

- i. '*Così* shows the different ways people can choose to evade reality.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. What is the significance of the play within a play structure of *Così*?

6. Dear America – Letters Home from Vietnam

- i. “It’s a beautiful country, but I hate it!”

How does the physical landscape shape the experience of the writers of *Dear America – Letters Home from Vietnam*?

OR

- ii. ‘*Dear America – Letters Home from Vietnam* gives a perspective on war beyond the history books.’

Discuss.

7. Dreams from My Father

- i. ‘*Dreams from My Father* shows how people don’t always live up to the stories that are told about them.’

Do you agree?

OR

- ii. ‘*Dreams from My Father* is unique as a political biography because of the narrative structure and use of dialogue.’

Discuss.

8. Cat’s Eye

- i. “We have been shark to one another, but also lifeboat.”

‘*Cat’s Eye* reveals the contradictions that lie within relationships’

Do you agree?

OR

- ii. ‘The timespan of the novel means that the reader follows not only Elaine’s life, but the changing landscape of Toronto.’

Discuss.

9. Interpreter of Maladies

- i. “Because we’re never going to see each other, ever again.”

‘There is no sense of permanence in Lahiri’s stories.’

To what extent do you agree?

OR

- ii. ‘Lahiri describes characters and scenes in meticulous detail.’

For what purpose and to what ends is this specificity used?

10. Life of Pi

- i. How does faith influence Pi’s perception of the world around him?

OR

- ii. “Since it makes no factual difference to you and you can’t prove the question either way, which story do you prefer?”

‘There is no firm truth in *Life of Pi*.’

To what extent do you agree?

11. Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?

- i. 'The simplicity of Carver's depictions add to the emotional intensity of the collection.'
To what extent does Carver's writing style impact on the interpretation of the text?

OR

- ii. 'Carver's collection reveals the secret thoughts and secret fears of suburban America.'
Do you agree?

12. On the Waterfront

- i. "Shouldn't everybody care about everybody else?"
'The characters of *On the Waterfront* are motivated by selfishness and greed.'
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. 'For all the focus on those with power, *On the Waterfront* is really about the powerless.'
To what extent do you agree?

13. Ransom

- i. For all its focus on the immortals, *Ransom* is really about those who face mortality.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. "His heart softened by fellow feeling, since he too was a father."
'It is paternal love that unites the men of *Ransom*.'
Do you agree?

14. Henry IV- Part I

- i. What is the significance of low status characters in *Henry IV- Part I*?

OR

- ii. In what ways and to what ends does Shakespeare use symmetry in *Henry IV- Part I*?

15. The War Poems (Wilfred Owen)

- i. Does Owen's poetry offer a complete account of the realities of warfare?

OR

- ii. 'Owen's poetry speaks to the deep fraternal bond that it built between men in times of conflict.'
Do you agree?

16. The Old Man Who Read Love Stories

- i. 'Through the life of Antonio, *The Old Man Who Read Love Stories* suggests that happiness can stem from choosing unconventional paths.'
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. 'The film portrays the ability of love to overcome adversity.'
To what extent do you agree?

17. The Reluctant Fundamentalist

- i. 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist suggests that there are many different kinds of loss.'
Discuss.

OR

- ii. 'For all of the focus on Changez's story, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* is really about silence.'
Do you agree?

18. Things We Didn't See Coming

- i. 'The relationships of *Things We Didn't See Coming* are based on the need to survive, not love.'
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. 'Amsterdam's portrayal of the future is bleak.'
To what extent do you agree?

19. Twelve Angry Men

- i. What comment does *Twelve Angry Men* make about democracy?

OR

- ii. 'Twelve Angry Men suggests that it is easy to influence, but impossible to alter people's prejudices.'
Do you agree?

20. Year of Wonders

- i. 'Year of Wonders suggests that in times of crisis it is more important than ever for people to hold on to traditional values.'
Do you agree?

OR

- ii. "These times, they do make monsters of us all..."
'The actions of the villagers of Eyam highlight the motivational power of fear in *Year of Wonders*.'
Discuss.

Section B – Writing in Context (Creating and Presenting)

Instructions

Section B requires students to complete an extended written response.

In your writing, you must draw on ideas suggested by **one** of the following 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 selected film text in Section A, you must **not** write on a selected film text in Section B.

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

Context 1 – The Imaginative Landscape

1. *Island*
2. *One Night the Moon*
3. *Tirra Lirra by the River*
4. *Peripheral Light- Selected and New Poems*

Alistair MacLeod
Director: Rachel Perkins
Jessica Anderson
John Kinsella

Prompt

‘There is much more to human interaction with landscape than what can be physically experienced.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative, or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from at least one selected text for this Context and explore the idea that ‘there is much more to human interaction with landscape than what can be physically experienced’.

OR

Context 2 – Whose Reality?

1. *A Streetcar Named Desire*
2. *Spies*
3. *The Player*
4. *The Lot: In Words*

Tennessee Williams
Michael Frayn
Director: Robert Altman
Michael Leunig

Prompt

‘Subverting reality is easier than accepting it.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative, or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from at least one selected text for this Context and explore the idea that ‘subverting reality is easier than accepting it’.

OR

Context 3 – Encountering Conflict

1. *Paradise Road*
2. *The Crucible*
3. *The Rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif*
4. *The Quiet American*

Director: Bruce Beresford
Arthur Miller
R. Hillman and N. Mazari
Graham Greene

Prompt

‘Conflict can only be resolved by dispelling ignorance.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative, or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from at least one selected text for this Context and explore the idea that ‘conflict can only be resolved by dispelling ignorance’.

OR

Context 4 – Exploring Issues of Identity and Belonging

1. *Growing Up Asian in Australia*
2. *Sometimes Gladness*
3. *The Member of the Wedding*
4. *Skin*

Alice Pung
Bruce Dawe
Carson McCullers
Director: Anthony Fabian

Prompt

‘The community we are a part of plays a role in establishing how we see ourselves.’

Task

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative, or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from at least one selected text for this Context and explore the idea that ‘the community we are a part of plays a role in establishing how we see ourselves’.

Section C – Analysis of Language Use

Instructions

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

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

Read the opinion piece *The Greatest Tragedy of All* and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis as a coherently structured piece of prose.

Task

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of *The Greatest Tragedy of All*?

Background Information

The opinion piece *The Greatest Tragedy of All* was published in the Winter addition of a Melbourne quarterly art journal on the 4th of June, 2012. The piece was in response to a Melbourne Theatre Company report on dwindling attendance numbers during the 2011 season.

The Greatest Tragedy of All

Giles Whittaker

I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.

-Oscar Wilde

Few art forms have seen such a profound decline in public attention as that of theatre. Nowadays the theatre is considered “elitist” and school plays see bigger audience turn outs than professional productions. Some say that there is no harm in letting theatre die naturally, that progress has allowed films to take their place in society. But the truth is that if stage art dies the human race will have lost something more important than we ever realised.

I remember the first time I went to the theatre. I was eleven years-old and my mother, an English teacher, took me to see *Hamlet* at the Melbourne Theatre Company. At such a young age I could hardly comprehend the complexities of Shakespeare’s work, but I was deeply moved by the passion in the performers and I knew then and there that theatre would become my life’s work.

Through the years I have been an actor, writer, director and now a critic. Never before have I been so discouraged as when I behold the distinct disinterest of the younger generation in the dramatic arts. *Hamlet*, which affected me so deeply as a youth, has been transformed into no less than 13 film adaptations. I don’t hate film, and I don’t disagree with plays being turned into movies, but when the screen removes all interest in the stage, boundaries have been crossed.

Theatre is important for so many reasons. Part of being human is having the capacity to reflect on our history. So much of our culture stems from traditional theatre, from the Greek tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, to the Elizabethan plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare. We can barely comprehend how much of what we understand and value in the world is related to this lengthy relationship between humanity and theatre. Where we are today as a species is inextricably linked with our engagement with this art form throughout civilised culture.

Film is also deeply entrenched in our history and culture, although for a significantly shorter period than theatre. I don’t dispute that art on the screen serves a purpose, but I do question if much of what we see today can be considered art. Regardless, cinema will remain central to modern culture. But this should not mean the destruction of theatre, which has served as not only entertainment, but as a mirror which can be held up to society by the hands of a great master of prose.

Cinematic adaptations of plays are another issue. In theory the transformation from stage to screen is a smart one; it allows for things only previously hinted at to be animated or edited in, and it captures the interest of a generation of square-eyed children in a way that theatre could not. That said, the idea of “showing” rather than “telling”, as modern film does, removes so much meaning from a play. By taking away the need to describe things that the audience cannot see, the power of imagination is stolen from viewers. Editing enables film directors to correct mistakes and gives actors the chance to repeat poor performances, but in turn we lose the power of understanding that this performer’s soul is wholly invested in this singular performance.

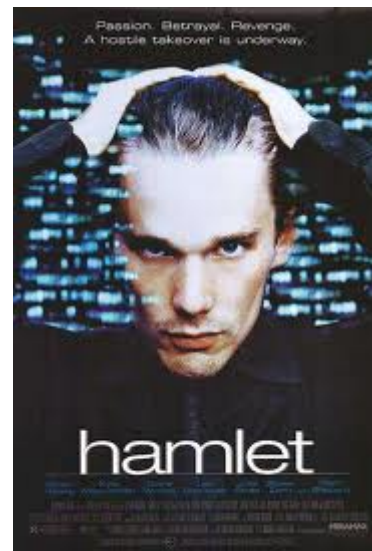
Many of these adaptations have worked. With the right director and actors who understand the theatre, a play can be beautifully transformed. But when things go wrong, they reflect badly on not only the film, but the play as well, making a mockery of an already wounded art form. This was best articulated for me in the 2000 Almereyda adaptation of *Hamlet*, where heart throb Ethan Hawke turns the Prince of

Denmark into a snivelling, spoilt film student. Most recently, Julie Taymor took it upon herself to transform Shakespeare's masterpiece *The Tempest* into a heavily stylized animation-fest featuring Russel Brand, no less. The Bard must be rolling over in his grave.

I believe there is a future where theatre and film can coexist, but we have deviated from that course. If we are to truly embrace our humanity we must not only look forward, but back, to our lengthy and complex relationship with stage performances. I think the answer to the dilemma of dwindling audience numbers lies somewhere in between embracing the art form and understanding that we live in a changed world. Film often changes too much, but adaptations that remain on the stage can be wonderful celebrations of a merge between the new and the old. The theatre community must answer to this call from the generation of today for something new and exciting. Let us not shy away, but instead endeavour to bring the world of theatre to a whole new audience.



Doing it right: Kenneth Branagh's film adaptation of Hamlet shows his passion for Shakespeare



Doing it wrong: Ethan Hawke as a "modern" Hamlet



The way forward: The Melbourne University Shakespeare Company perform an adaptation of Hamlet set in a Rocky Horror Picture Show inspired Psychiatric Hospital.

End of Booklet