

YEAR 12 Trial Exam Paper

2016

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Written examination

Sample responses

This book presents:

- high-level sample responses
- mark allocations
- tips for achieving top results

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SECTION A – Short-answer questions

Text 1

Question 1 (2 marks)

Sample response

The speaker uses front focus to create cohesion in lines 1 to 5: ‘When I was sixteen (L1)’, ‘when I was thirty-one’ (L3), ‘now I’m sixty-one’ (L5). The placement of an adverbial clause before each main clause draws attention to the passing of time as well as the connection between time and the change in the speaker’s attitude.

Other answers might refer to:

- front focus of subordinate clauses and/or adverbials (rather than adverbial clause as per the above sample).

Mark allocation: 2 marks

- 1 mark for correctly identifying the front focus created by an adverbial/subordinate clause
- 1 mark for correctly identifying that the front focus creates or reinforces the connection between the passing of time and the speaker’s attitude

Text 2

Question 2 (4 marks)

Sample response

JW meets the face needs of the Prime Minister in two ways. On line 35, she meets a positive face need by expressing her gratitude for the award ('thank you'). This demonstrates her appreciation for the recognition she has received. She also meets the Prime Minister's negative face needs by using the institutional title 'Mr Prime Minister' (L35) rather than his name. This demonstrates her respect for his position of power and acknowledges that he is present in his role as the country's leader.

Other answers might refer to:

- JW complimenting the other award nominees, stating that they are 'amazing, inspiring individuals' and that she is 'honoured' to be among them (L36–37). This meets their positive face needs because she is including them with herself in a group of worthy individuals and praising their contribution to Australian society.
- JW thanking those who have contributed to her award: her husband, family and friends and the GIVIT volunteers (L62–64). This is a positive politeness strategy because she is praising their efforts and expressing appreciation for their role in her success.

Mark allocation: 4 marks

This question should be marked holistically, using the guide below.

- 4 marks: The response demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the topic and is supported by relevant examples/evidence from the text. Metalanguage is used appropriately and effectively. Features of written discourse are consistently used.
- 2 to 3 marks: The response demonstrates a sound knowledge of the topic and is supported by some examples/evidence from the text. The metalanguage used is relevant. Features of written discourse are mostly evident.
- 0 to 1 mark: The response demonstrates a limited knowledge of the topic and contains few examples from the text. The use of metalanguage is limited or absent. Few features of written discourse are evident.

Note: For full marks, you must include at least two correct examples (with line numbers) of politeness strategies, along with clear discussion of positive or negative politeness strategies. Marks should only be awarded for answers that relate to Text 2. Any part of the response that refers to Text 1 should be disregarded.



Tip

- *Remember that every individual has both positive and negative face needs. Positive face needs refer to being liked, respected and included, while negative face needs refer to being autonomous, having hierarchies acknowledged and being able to act without imposition from others.*

Texts 1 & 2**Question 3** (2 marks)**Sample response**

The function of both texts is for the recipients of the Australian of the Year awards to accept their award and to offer thanks. However, both texts share a broader social purpose of communicating the speaker's ideological stance. In Text 1, Jackie French shares her belief that encouraging children to read can lead to a better, more humane society. In Text 2, Juliette Wright communicates the value she places on giving to create a fairer Australia.

Other answers might refer to:

- the transactional nature of giving thanks for an award
- the contemporary Australian context and the cultural attitudes embodied by the speakers. You might also refer to a persuasive social purpose, in which the speaker is attempting to encourage her audience to align with her attitudes and beliefs.

Mark allocation: 2 marks

- 1 mark for correctly identifying the immediate function of the texts
- 1 mark for correctly identifying the broader social purpose of the texts

Question 4 (3 marks)

Sample response

- JF uses pauses to slow the tempo of her speech. By slowing the tempo, JF emphasises the words ‘it (.) is (.) worth it. (..)’ (L10). Further emphasis is created by adopting a slower pace for ‘<L we will change L>’ (L34).
- JW uses stress to draw attention to the statistics she is citing: ‘two and a half million’ (L51) and ‘one in six’ (L57). She also uses stress to draw attention to the determiners that make the speech more inclusive: ‘every Australian’ (L39) and ‘all Aussie kids’ (L59).

Other answers might refer to:

- fast pace in relation to surrounding talk (L7 ‘>A failure is not an option A<’) to minimise attention to these sections and focus the audience on the statement that follows.
- JF’s use of stress to draw attention to words with positive connotations: ‘intelligent’ (L14), ‘fulfilling’ (L29), ‘friendship’ (L30), ‘change’ (L34) and ‘extraordinary’ (L34). JW also uses this strategy: ‘honoured’ (L36).
- JF’s use of stress and intonation to reinforce the parallelism/syntactic pattern in L14–17: ‘If you want intelligent children\ give them a book\ If you want more intelligent children/ give them more books/’.

Mark allocation: 3 marks

- 1 mark for two correct examples of different prosodic features
- 1 mark per explanation of the effect of the identified prosodic feature (up to 2 marks)
- 0 marks for answers that simply identify two prosodic features with no explanation

Note:

- Responses that contain evidence from just one of the two texts can still receive full marks.
- You must refer to two different prosodic features to receive full marks (e.g. two examples of stress with discussion of their effect would only receive 2 marks).
- There is no evidence relating to pitch or volume in this transcript so answers relating to these elements cannot be substantiated.



Tips

- When asked to discuss prosodic features, remember that your options are pitch, stress, volume, tempo and intonation. Pauses are not of themselves a prosodic feature. If you wish to discuss pauses, you **must** explain how they contribute to the tempo of the discourse.
- While you are not expected to include every transcription symbol in the examples you quote, you should include any symbol that is relevant to the question being answered. In this instance, that includes tempo: <L L>, >A A<, (.), (..); pitch and intonation: /, \, . ; and stress.

Question 5 (4 marks)**Sample response**

In Text 1, JF uses a metaphor to refer to her age as ‘the afternoon tea of life’ (L26) before going on to explain what she believes ‘we afternoon tea-ers need to teach children’ (L27–28). Here, the metaphor highlights the experience and wisdom that senior Australians can offer by creating a semantic connection between ageing and the meal cycle of a single day. The metaphor suggests that because JF has already enjoyed the day’s earlier meals, she is in a position to give advice to those who have yet to experience any of them. In this way, JF is able to establish herself as an authority whose beliefs about encouraging children to read should be adopted by her audience.

In Text 2, JW uses a metaphor to refer to the act of giving as building ‘a bridge between the Haves and the Have Nots’ (L49). This metaphor encourages the audience to see giving as a process of building something tangible or concrete. The image of the bridge creates a sense that two divided communities can be connected by the constructive actions of the audience, thus encouraging them to agree with JW’s ideology regarding the importance of giving.

Other answers might refer to:

- the way the metaphor in Text 1 acts as a euphemism to make ageing seem more pleasant or attractive
- the additional metaphor in Text 2 of the ‘poverty line’ (L52) as being a physical barrier dividing those who live in poverty from those who do not
- the connection between the metaphors and other social purposes, such as those identified in the Q3 sample response.

Mark allocation: 4 marks

This question should be marked holistically, using the guide below.

- 4 marks: The response demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the topic and is supported by relevant examples/evidence from the text. Metalanguage is used appropriately and effectively. Features of written discourse are consistently used.
- 2 to 3 marks: The response demonstrates a sound knowledge of the topic and is supported by some examples/evidence from the text. The metalanguage used is relevant. Features of written discourse are mostly evident.
- 0 to 1 mark: The response demonstrates a limited knowledge of the topic and contains few examples from the text. The use of metalanguage is limited or absent. Few features of written discourse are evident.

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SECTION B – Analytical commentary

Text 3

Question 6 (30 marks)

Sample response

The feature article ‘Men in Aprons’, published in *Broadsheet Melbourne*, explores a family history of hospitality clothing production in Melbourne. The text is primarily informative but also functions as entertainment for an audience of readers interested in Melbourne’s history and culture. There is a persuasive element to the text, in which the local product is compared favourably with mass-produced items from overseas. The text is mostly formal, as demonstrated by its adherence to Standard English conventions and the writer’s deliberate use of stylistic features. The high degree of coherence and cohesion achieved in the text is further evidence of the planning and editing involved in producing the article. However, the inclusion of spoken elements in the form of interview dialogue and the occasional use of colloquialisms reduces the overall degree of formality in the text.

The text’s adherence to Standard Australian English conventions contributes to its overall formality. Such conventions include the use of capital letters to begin sentences (L5 ‘He’s got ...’) and to indicate proper nouns (‘AA Chef’s Wear Direct’ L15). The writer also uses full stops to end sentences (‘... be a cutter.’ L5), quotation marks and commas to separate direct speech from description (‘“watching Batman,” he says’ L9), and internal punctuation such as colons and commas to separate words and phrases (‘September, 1912’ L6 and ‘lineage: Brian’s ...’ L5). The use of such standard conventions is appropriate to the text’s setting within a media publication and establishes the authority of both the writer (Tim Grey) and the publication (*Broadsheet Melbourne*).

The use of stylistic features from multiple subsystems further contributes to the formality of the text while supporting its informative and persuasive functions. In L7 parallelism is used to describe the setting and establish a sense of the family’s traditions: ‘these same shears at this same high table in the same ivy-coloured Northcote shop’. The repetition of the determiner-adjective-noun-preposition pattern reinforces the sense of a routine that has occurred over many years. This is further established through the use of listing (L17 ‘designing, cutting and sewing’) to describe the Ray family’s activities. The frequent lexical choices from the field of clothing design also reinforces the professional expertise of the Ray family: ‘cutter’ L5, ‘shears’ L7, ‘fabric’ L11, ‘jackets’ L23, ‘trousers’ L23, and ‘toques’ L23. The use of sense relations, particularly positive and negative connotations, supports the persuasive function of the text by making the Rays’ products seem more appealing than those of their competitors. The writer describes the Rays as being Melbourne’s ‘foremost local suppliers’ L16 and contrasts their product with items produced through ‘offshore manufacturing’ L24–25 and ‘imported in bulk’ L25–26. Through these modifiers, the writer shows an understanding of the contemporary Australian cultural context in which local, high quality and personalised items are seen as a desirable luxury while mass-produced and imported goods are seen as inferior. The use of modifiers with positive connotations appears throughout the text, including ‘custom aprons’, ‘uniquely tailored’ L28 and ‘made by hand’ L35. The writer also lists clients, including ‘Top Paddock’ L18, ‘Chin Chin’ L18 and ‘Taxi Kitchen’ L18. Readers of *Broadsheet* would be aware of the prestigious reputation of these restaurants and would therefore infer that AA Chef’s Wear Direct is well established within the industry. Finally, the simile used to describe Brian’s shears as ‘slicing through a wad of linen like water’ L46 reinforces the quality of both the workmanship and the tools used in the business.

The text’s considerable planning and editing is evident in the level of coherence and cohesion achieved. The formatting of the headline ‘Men in Aprons’ L1 in a larger, bold font establishes the topic of the text and the consistency of this topic throughout the article supports its coherence. The

sequencing of information from headline (L1) to byline ('By Tim Grey' L2), dateline ('10 September 2015' L2), subheading ('The Ray family ... history' L3–4) and main body ('Brian was born ... road has' L5–50) demonstrates both the underlying logic of the text and its adherence to newspaper conventions. Coherence is further created through the use of hyperlinks that allow the reader to navigate to further information about the businesses mentioned in the text ('[Chin Chin](#)' L18, '[Taxi Kitchen](#)' L18 and '[chefsweardirect.com.au](#)' L51). Cohesion is established through hyponymy ('fabric' L11, 'leather' L38 and 'linen' L46) and lexical repetition ('cut' L13, 33, 40, 42, 47). The writer relies heavily on front focus to signal his movements between the past and present of the Rays' business, thus ensuring the text is cohesive: 'And his father before him' L6–7, 'But despite the history' L8, 'These days' L15, 'In recent years' L37, 'When Geoffrey Ray opened ...' L48, and 'Eighty-five years later ...' L49.

Despite its formal features, there are some elements of informal language in the discourse. The writer relies heavily on quoting dialogue selected from his interview with Brian Ray (L9–10, L13–14, L28–31, L35–36, L39, L44–45, L50). This reporting of language initially created in spoken mode lessens the overall formality by adopting a more conversational register, particularly in the sections where Brian reflects on his childhood ('When I was just a kid, about five, I was watching Batman ...' L9–10) or his shears ('These you could cut with all day' L47). The use of colloquialisms by the writer also lessens the formality of the text. He uses the shortening 'hospo' in L17 to indicate knowledge of hospitality slang, as well as describing the Rays as 'the guys' on L33. Grey also uses the idiom 'had a blue' L20 to describe the fight Geoffrey had with his boss. While such colloquial language reduces the formality of the text, it is appropriate for the setting of an entertainment newspaper and the fields of hospitality and design. Despite these informal aspects, the features of coherence and cohesion, adherence to Standard English and deliberate use of stylistic features all contribute to a mostly formal text that is appropriate for a newspaper article.



Tips

- *In this section, you are expected to produce a detailed discourse analysis. It is important to avoid a simple labelling exercise where features are identified using metalanguage; you must aim to make sound connections between the language features you identify and aspects of the social purpose(s), context(s) and register(s) of the text.*
- *Remember to explore several aspects of situational context: mode, field, setting, audience/relationship between participants, and function. Where relevant to the text, you should also look to engage in a discussion of cultural context and/or the identity or identities constructed in the text.*
- *It is important that you address the text as a whole, rather than focusing on just one section (e.g. only discussing the first and final paragraphs of a written text).*
- *It is also important that you respond thoughtfully to the text in front of you, rather than reading with a checklist of features to discuss. For example, in some texts a discussion of how the writer or speaker achieves coherence and cohesion will be relevant. In other texts there will be other features that should take precedence over such material.*
- *While there is no specific structure for Section B, if you arrange your response according to subsystem you can occasionally limit your opportunities for discussion. However you structure your response, it should be well organised and in paragraphs. Subheadings may be appropriate to help organise some responses and you will not be penalised if you use them effectively.*
- *Your first paragraph should include an identification of the text, social purpose(s), register (including the degree of formality) and any relevant elements of situational and/or cultural context that you will be discussing. No conclusion paragraph is required, but you should nevertheless aim to give the piece a sense of completion.*
- *Aim to be aware of a range of possible organisational strategies before sitting the exam so that you can be flexible in your approach and respond in the most effective way to the exam text.*

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SECTION C – Essay

Question 7 (30 marks)

This topic requires you to consider the relationship between language use and cultural or ethnic identity. This should include an exploration of the role of migrant ethnolects and Aboriginal Englishes but might also be broadened to include a discussion of Australian national identity and how it is constructed through language. While passing reference might be made to other sources of language variation (such as geographic or social influences), the focus of the response should be on the importance of language in expressing cultural beliefs, values and attitudes. When discussing specific language varieties, you must be able to move beyond listing features typical of a cultural variety. You must also be able to connect these features to cultural practices and the subconscious and deliberate construction of specific identities. An exploration of how language is used to uphold or challenge cultural stereotypes would also be relevant, but is not necessarily required. Discussions of social stereotypes, such as those that relate to socioeconomic status, are not relevant to this topic.

The stimulus material may point you towards an exploration of:

- code-switching as a means to deliberately identify with discrete cultural groups and the wider Australian community
- code-switching as a way of expressing culturally significant concepts
- the connection between culture, language variation and social purpose
- the relationship between culture, language variation and situational context
- social attitudes towards and assumptions about those whose language is influenced by culture
- the cultural values, beliefs and practices communicated by informal Australian language features
- the way the features and social purposes of migrant ethnolects change across generations.

Question 8 (30 marks)

This topic requires you to explore how language innovation occurs, with a particular focus on the use of language in informal contexts. That said, the question asks you ‘to what extent’ you agree with the premise, so that introducing formal contexts as a further relevant source of linguistic innovation is a possible approach. To score highly, you should move beyond giving examples of language innovation in informal settings and attempt to explain the relationship between such contexts and informal language. You could consider why such language is necessary by linking to specific social purposes or you could consider the processes through which language innovation occurs.

The stimulus material may point you towards a discussion of:

- the concept of standardisation and how it can impede innovative processes
- the need for innovation in formal situations (e.g. when using terms of address) – Stimulus A can be connected to negative-need politeness and the way innovation is required to address negative face needs that change along with social expectations or behaviour
- the role of technology, particularly social networking and entertainment media, in prompting language innovation
- the way language innovation often occurs in informal contexts before being more widely adopted and finally used in formal situations (such as the use of *mansplain* in the Australian Parliament in 2015)
- the need for language innovation to keep up with changing social practices and attitudes
- the role of taboo topics such as death, war or social class in language innovation, as a source of formal euphemism or informal dysphemism
- innovation through word creation processes, such as the ironic combination of colloquial lexemes and formal suffixes.

Question 9 (30 marks)

This topic requires you to explore the complexities of linguistic politeness and the influence of face needs over language use. High-scoring responses will show an awareness of both positive and negative face needs and how they can lead to social harmony, rather than focusing on just one ‘side’ of face needs. You should also consider the ways in which failing to attend to face needs can cause discord. Examples should be drawn from contemporary Australian practice and reflect on what is considered ‘polite’ within this cultural context. Inclusion of historical examples may be relevant if used as the basis of a discussion about changing expectations or linguistic practices within Australian society.

The stimulus material may point you towards a discussion of:

- the role of political correctness in attempting to address the negative face needs of individuals and groups, particularly those groups affected by a ‘hierarchy of difference’, such as physical or mental disability
- the use of euphemism to address negative face needs and the concept of the ‘euphemism treadmill’ (the idea that terms once considered acceptable become tainted with negative connotations and must eventually be replaced)
- the use of dysphemisms as a positive politeness strategy to signal high solidarity or intimacy
- the significance of cultural context (the attitudes, values and beliefs of both the participants in a discourse and the wider community) in determining ‘acceptable’ linguistic behaviour
- the way expectations about politeness differ between cultures
- the way power influences linguistic practice – Stimulus C might also prompt you to move beyond power and consider the other two elements of social relationships, solidarity and social distance
- the way formal linguistic behaviour (such as negative politeness strategies) can be formally taught while informal behaviour (such as positive politeness strategies) can be adopted through group or social influence.



Tips

- *Your essay must have a clear contention, which is established in the introduction, as well as several main body paragraphs and a conclusion.*
- *Your main body should be structured around arguments or discussion points. Do not use the stimulus items to structure your main body (i.e. a different stimulus quote as the subject for each paragraph).*
- *In this section, you have an opportunity to draw from a wide range of linguistic concepts for discussion; however, it is important that you show both a breadth and depth of knowledge of the course.*
- *Generalised discussion is not rewarded; you must support your ideas with specific metalanguage terms and relevant evidence.*
- *It is important that you focus on understanding the nuances of the topic and select appropriate linguistic evidence for your analysis. Avoid providing pre-prepared responses to broad areas of study (e.g. an 'identity' or a 'public language' essay). Instead, deal in detail with the wording and implications of the specific topic. Pre-prepared or generic responses are easily detected and not well rewarded.*
- *You are required to use at least one of the provided stimulus items to inform your response. It is important to remember that the stimulus must be interpreted with the topic in mind. Ask yourself: How can this information contribute to my understanding of the key topic ideas?*
- *While you are welcome to use more than one piece of stimulus, avoid using every stimulus quote. Doing so usually results in scattered and superficial responses that do not sufficiently demonstrate your knowledge and understanding. Try to engage with the underlying ideas presented by the stimulus, rather than simply quoting extracts from it. If you encounter stimuli that appear to overlap, consider how each item reinforces or challenges the ideas in the other. Synthesise the information and be selective.*
- *You should include recent and relevant examples of language use to support your discussion. Creativity and currency in examples is always preferable to using unoriginal or dated evidence.*
- *You will be rewarded for including relevant evidence of wider academic reading. This might come in the form of quotes from experts or by referring to linguistic research.*

END OF SAMPLE RESPONSES