

VCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

2017 Units 3&4 Practice Paper 2

ANSWER GUIDE

Section A – Short Answer Questions

Text 1 (15 marks)

1. Identify one example of phonological patterning in Text 1 and discuss its function. 1 mark

“One law respects us all, one law protects us all” (lines 11-12).

Rhyme is used to emphasise the idea that all members of the community are equal in the eyes of the law.

Consonance - the repetition of the syllable ‘-ects’ builds a close link between the two concepts, “respects” and “protects” for the listener.

2. Comment on the effect of the contrast between the phrases “the ability to be yourself” (line 8) and “we’re all Victorian” (line 30). 2 marks

Antithesis: aims to show that Victorians can be individuals with the right to free speech (“the ability to be yourself” - line 8) and also members of a larger community (“we’re all Victorian” - line 30) that works together to create harmony.

3. What is the effect of colloquial Australian language in Text 1? Provide 2 examples with line numbers. 2 marks

Lexicon/semantics - Colloquialisms, Australian idioms

“We all do our bit” (line 4)

“Having a go” (line 20)

“Giving others a fair go” (line 21)

Colloquial phrases underscore that this advertisement, and its message, are aimed at an Australian audience. The idioms used are widely identified around the world as uniquely Australian. In appealing to the Victorian public it is appropriate to use language associated with Australian identity.

4. What is the effect of emphatic stress in the text? Provide 2 examples with line numbers. 3 marks

Words are stressed for listening/dramatic effect, especially verbs emphasising activities that involve the whole community, e.g., “live” line 18, “work” line 19, “play” line 22, “get [together]” line 23.

Emphasis is placed on “all” in lines 30 and 31 to underscore the key message of inclusivity and collective responsibility.

Emphasis is placed on “proud” (lines 6, 34), which is the key word in the advertising slogan “Victorian. And proud of it.”.

5. Analyse how parallelism is used to support the social purpose/s of Text 1. Provide 2 examples with line numbers. 3 marks

By repeating grammatical structures the message takes on a rhythmic song-like style, often used in advertising for emphasis and clarity.

One law respects us all, one law protects us all (lines 13-14)

“We live together” (line 18)

“We work together” (line 19)

“We play together” (line 22)

“We get together” (line 23)

6. What are the functions of four of the following discourse features in Text 1? Provide examples of each feature, with a line reference. 4 marks

- a) Standard Australian English
- b) Verb tense
- c) Repetition
- d) Pronouns
- e) intonation
- f) listing

- a) Standard Australian English, standard syntax for accessibility by a wide audience.
- b) Present tense, e.g., “we are all Victorian” – emphasising that this is the current situation, that the goals of inclusivity have already been achieved and are the status quo. It’s the sorts of lives we are able to live, and are living in the present, as Victorians that should make us proud, eg lines 7 – 12.
- c) Repetition of key idea “proud of it” (lines 6, 34) for emphasis and to reflect the slogan of the campaign.
- d) Pronouns “we” – inclusive, diverse; “you” – generic, includes all, Inclusive of everyone listening; addresses the audience directly and aims to involve listeners and to persuade them about the message.
- e) Listing, e.g., “Any street, in any city, in any town” (lines 15-17) to impress upon listeners that harmony and diversity are to be found all over the state, in all areas.
- f) Intonation – continuing intonation and some HRT to signal that the speaker is continuing to speak. Very short pauses for dramatic effect and to create impact for the words that follow, e.g., lines 15-16 “in any city, in any town”.

Section B — Analytical Commentary

Text 2 (30 marks)

This email from Joy to her nephew Paul has the social purpose of affirming arrangements made between them earlier in the day, “We’ll bring all her stuff ...” (lines 4-5). She seeks to extend the arrangement by asking him to let Millie “have that back room to herself” (line 6) as well as organizing a way to remove Paul’s furniture from her house, either by talking it to the St Vincent de Paul’s charity (line 18) or returning it to Paul (lines 19 -20). Joy expresses her appreciation and thanks for Paul’s help, both this time “It’s great ...” (line 4), and on many other occasions when he “put up with [her]... and help[ed her]” (lines 24-25).

Paul has to be able to infer a great deal to make the text coherent because his aunt assumes that it is not necessary to provide much contextualizing information. This feature of the discourse makes it more like ‘spoken text’ than ‘written text’. For instance, Joy names individual people and animals e.g., Grizzler (line 7), Cyril (line 11), the Rylah’s (line 11), and refers to places and situations e.g., “that back room” (line 6),

“bunked up with Daphne” (line 9), “Especially with her leg like it is” (line 9), “a struggle” (line 22) without providing any explanation for Paul. However, she does tell Paul the identity of “Regina, my next door neighbor” (line 17), recognizing that he needs this information to make more sense of her statement. Another feature that is like spoken text is the repeated use of coordinating conjunctions e.g., “and” (e.g., lines 8, 11, 16), “so” (lines 5, 15, 18) and “but” (e.g., lines 7, 15). These conjunctions are part of relatively simple syntax of independent clauses e.g., “I’ll let you know about the cat asap” (line 3), and “you are an [angel]... me”(line 24).

Many other features contribute to the conversational register of this written discourse. For instance, the emoticons help Joy to construct the identity of the person she mentions - the smiley face with cowboy hat in line 1 is an affectionate reference to Paul, the scary mask (line 10) mocks Joy’s reference to her own bossiness, the face crying with laughter (line 13) gives ironic emphasis to Joy’s comment about Cyril, and the angel emoticon (line 24) is a rebus for the lexeme ‘angel’, the label for Paul which Joy uses to signify his generosity and kindness to her. The five hearts (line 26) suggest her great affection for him. When she uses this non-verbal language, Joy reflects her humor and playfulness, and her ease with her nephew.

Similarly, the text includes relatively informal lexis such as “asap” (line 3), “ok” (line 4), “thingy” (line 14), “bossy” (lines 10, 24), the non-Standard spelling of “sooo” (line 21), the inclusion of vocal effects such as “hahaha” (lines 10 and 20) and “aaargh” (line 9), the non-standard use of an upper case font in “ESPECIALLY” (line 9) and “HAVE” (line 18) for emphasis, use of ellipsis e.g., “ [It was] Lovely to see you today” (line 1), “I’d be much happier thinking [that] Millie was’ (line 8), “but I can see [that] it’ll be a real space-saver” (line 15) “[We will do that] Only if you want us to” (line 20), the clipping “Melb” for Melbourne, and frequent contractions, e.g., “I’ll” (line 3), “I’m” (line 10), “Anyone’d” (line 13).

Compared to most of the discourse, lines 22-23 are relatively formal. The double negative structure used in line 23, “you have not been without” is a circumlocutionary expression meaning ‘you have had’ which, together with the euphemisms “struggle” (line 22) and “problem” (line 23), suggests that Joy is touching on sensitive matters here. The double form of negation (litotes) “have not been without your problems” adds to the formality of the text.

Joy enhances Paul’s positive face and indicates how much she likes him and appreciates him, e.g., “Lovely to see you” (line 1), “you are an [angel] ” (line 24). She also challenges Paul’s negative face by imposing upon him, e.g., “The only thing you could do... Could you...” (lines 6-7), and by her repeated use of the vocative “darling”. The repetition of modal verb “could” softens the force of her request by avoiding an imperative and using a question. She twice acknowledges that she imposes on his negative face “I know I’m bossy” (line 10) and “I know I’m selfish and bossy” (line 24). In the process she threatens her own positive face because of her self-criticism. She challenges her husband’s negative face when she suggests that she will persuade him to take the “thingy” (line 14) after she has “work[ed] on him to get him to agree” (line 15-16).

Joy’s email reflects the close relationship she shares with Paul, who she depends on for emotional and practical support. Her figurative reference to Paul’s “shoulder to cry on” (line 25) indicates that she confides in him a lot, sharing her feelings of sadness and disappointment with him.

Section C – Essay (30 Marks)

8. If you can't read, write and speak standard Australian English you're not a true Aussie. Do you agree?

The statement suggests that Standard Australian English, and the ability to use relatively formal language, is a necessary part of any Australian's language repertoire.

- Standard Australian English has overt prestige. It is a different variety from the many non-standard varieties that exist in Australia, including ethnolects and Aboriginal Englishes.
- "a true Aussie" could be many things given the plurality of Australian society, or the stereotypical character that people often associate with Australian identity.

Stimulus a.

The new citizenship test proposes to exclude residents from full citizenship if they cannot reach a mandated level of English. The government argues that this level of English is needed for full participation in the Australian community.

Stimulus b.

The letter is in reaction to the proposed citizenship test. It is pointing out that many Australian born people do not have strong control over standard English. The stance of the letter writer is that overseas-born applicants for citizenship who can take part in conversation with 'confidence and competence (rather than correctness)' should be treated the same as people who have citizenship because they were born in Australia.

Stimulus c.

"The Australian larrikin" represents the stereotypical "true Australian" who, the writer laments, is being driven to extinction by the demands for polite language, and inoffensive behaviour.

Stimulus d.

The visual from the "Real Australians Say Welcome" campaign features images of people who appear unlike Anglo Celtic Australians. The images assert that these people too are 'real Australians' and this points to the long history of immigration in this country. The different images show the diversity of the Australian community and suggests that many Australians- or their parents or grandparents- have first languages that are not English.

Students could include discussion about the following:

Notions of Australian identity can be problematic, and stereotypical rather than accurate.

Usually what is put forward of someone representing the typical Australian is more outdated stereotype than accurate. This stereotype consists of rural men with Anglo Celtic ethnicities using broad Australian accents using the slang of older generations such as 'bonzer', 'you beauty' and 'strewth'. The results of the 2016 census challenged many of these assumptions about Australianness.

A person who expresses herself using standard English in Australia constructs and reflects a particular identity. However, this person is likely to have a broad language repertoire and be able to use a range of varieties of English as she moves through different language communities in her daily life. Depending on

her context, the individual will adapt and modify her lexis, pronunciation and syntax in order to construct and reflect an identity that she judges appropriate for her purposes and context.

Some topical examples that could be included in this discussion include the Australia Day advertisement about “multicultural Lamb” , the Four n’ Twenty Pie campaign to “Save Aussie Slang”, the maiden speech made by Kelly O’Dwyer reflecting on the multicultural communities that make up the Higgins electorate in Melbourne , the first speeches given by indigenous Australian Members of Parliament which celebrated their Indigenous culture including traditional languages, and Peter Dutton’s rant about immigration on TV .

Subsystems and other metalanguage that can be referred to using the above points include: lexicon, syntax, discourse, semantics, face, overt and covert prestige, context, social purpose, register

9. As long as people continue to express their views in abusive, offensive language, social harmony can never be achieved.

Discuss.

The key terms that need to be considered by the student are: “abusive, offensive language” and “social harmony”. The thrust of the statement is that unless such language is completely wiped out, social harmony is impossible. Clearly such a claim is arguable.

Stimulus a.

Media commentator and ex politician Mark Latham, and others like him, make a practice of breaking taboos and using offensive and abusive language in their public comments on radio and television. Some argue that this behaviour gives publicity to the programs they present and boosts ratings. However, Latham’s comment about the sexuality of the schoolboy caused ‘outrage’ and Latham was sacked by his employer, Sky News. The implication is that public figures can suffer negative consequences from using offensive language and that social harmony is protected because of the strong public reaction against such behaviour.

Stimulus b. Radio presenter Red Symons’ apology indicated that he accepted that he had been racist in his remarks to his guest and that his language had been offensive. This suggests that he had learnt something about causal and inadvertent, unconscious racism, and that in this way social harmony was being fostered.

Stimulus c. This comment suggests that some public figures (“people with power and influence”) have conflicting positions when they discuss free speech. They want to be able to say what they like about minority groups but to be protected against these people “fighting back”.

Stimulus d. The graffitied term “Free speech” has an asterisk, with a footnote: “Conditions apply”. This suggests the paradox behind free speech, that it is an individual’s right in a democratic society and yet it is limited (and not free) because of the rights of other individuals not to be humiliated or intimidated by such things as racial vilification or threats of violence.

Students could include discussion about the following:

There is a tension in a democracy between the rights to freedom of speech and the rights of people to be protected from abusive, offensive language that humiliates or intimidates them. Social attitudes have changed- e.g Australians’ attitudes to marriage equality, and the casual sexism and racism that once might

have been unnoticed are today objected to by many people. This is reflected in changes in language - ways of referring to women, Indigenous people, members of the LGBTQ community and so on.

There is frequent commentary about how to discuss terrorism in the community, and many people fear that irrationally racist attitudes are encouraged by violent activities committed by religious or political extremists who do not represent the members of that community.

There is the need for 'robust debate' about important social issues but this should be done in a 'civil and respectful manner' (stimulus a). Such debates raise the awareness of people and encourage them to reflect on their own and others attitudes and values.

Subsystems and other metalanguage that can be referred to using the above points include: lexicon, discourse, semantics, politeness, face, political correctness, context, social purpose.

10. We speak and write more casually now than ever before, thanks to the pervasive influence of American culture.'

Do you agree?

This topic has two parts-

Do you agree that "We speak and write more casually now than ever before" and

Do you agree that it is "thanks to the pervasive influence of American culture"

or are there other explanations for this change?

Stimulus a.

Stimulus a discusses how context, purpose and audience influence language choice, so that more formal situations demand different language choices from less formal situations.

Stimulus b.

Stimulus b bemoans the 'pervasiveness' of American culture, seen in its popular culture and multinational corporations, and the influence it has had on lexis.

Stimulus c.

This writer seeks to reassure his audience that purists and prescriptivists are wrong to claim that language standards are declining. In fact the opposite is true, he suggests.

Stimulus d

The cartoon shows how language changes over time through use, and the capacity of English words to change classes.

Students could include discussion about the following:

Students should consider to what extent American English 'pervades' Australian society through popular culture and social media and the take-up of Americanisms by young people, sports commentators etc. Australian English has historically absorbed language from many sources other than America.

Examples of casual language that robustly express Australian identity would be relevant such as in *Camel Escapes from Circus in NT* (Lingofile 2017).

Burridge and de Laps in *Living Lingo* note the continuing shift to informality in language use and attribute this to several factors, including the decreasing importance of hierarchy and the effort people make to be inclusive and express solidarity. For instance, consider how advertisers seek to engage and motivate potential customers through the language they use. Media coverage of President Trump and other national leaders' language could also be relevant here.

Students should note that there are times and places where relatively formal language is spoken and written and discuss how context, purpose and audience influence language choice.

Online communication, although often perceived as casual, has its own standards and conventions. The tension between what 'pedants' believe is 'correct' language use, and the dynamic and ever evolving nature of discourse, are relevant for discussion in this topic.

Subsystems and other metalanguage that can be referred to using the above points include: lexis, syntax, semantics, discourse, register, social purpose, situational and cultural contexts.