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Tasmanian Certificate of Education

ENGLISH COMMUNICATIONS

Senior Secondary

Subject Code: ENC315115

External Assessment

2015

Time: Three hours

On the basis of your performance in this examination, the examiners will provide results on each of the following criteria taken from the course statement:

- Criterion 1** Use accurate and effective language.
- Criterion 2** Create oral, multimodal and written texts.
- Criterion 3** Explain how texts, as social constructs, represent ideas and issues.
- Criterion 4** Explain how language is used to position audiences.
- Criterion 5** Articulate a reasoned personal position in response to texts.

Pages: 24
Questions: 9

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CANDIDATE INSTRUCTIONS

You **MUST** make sure that your responses to the questions in this examination paper will show your achievement in the criteria being assessed.

There are **THREE** sections in this paper. You must answer **ONE** question from each of these sections answering the question that relates to the module studied.

Section A – Ideas and Issues

Answer **ONE** question from this section.

Section B – Texts and Contexts

Answer **ONE** question from this section

Section C – Ideas and Issues

Answer **ONE** question from this section

Answer each question in a separate answer booklet. Clearly indicate the question answered on the front of the booklet.

Candidates are reminded that poor handwriting, spelling and expression may lead to lower ratings.

All written responses must be in English.

SECTION A – IDEAS AND ISSUES

Answer **ONE** question from this section.

Refer to **at least TWO TEXTS** from the **prescribed** list to support your answer. Other texts may be referred to as appropriate.

Use a separate answer booklet for this section.

This section assesses **Criterion 1, 2 and 3.**

IMAGINING AUSTRALIA

Question 1

How have distinct national characteristics been shaped by past events?

Address this question through a comparison of **at least TWO TEXTS** from the prescribed list by analysing the ideas and issues represented in the module **Imagining Australia**. Other texts from this module may be referred to as appropriate.

TELLING TRUTHS

Question 2

How do past events determine authorised versions of what is considered to be true?

Address this question through a comparison of **at least TWO TEXTS** from the prescribed list by analysing the ideas and issues represented in the module **Telling Truths**. Other texts from this module may be referred to as appropriate.

BELONGING

Question 3

How do shared past events define communities?

Address this question through a comparison of **at least TWO TEXTS** from the prescribed list by analysing the ideas and issues represented in the module **Belonging**. Other texts from this module may be referred to as appropriate.

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SECTION B – TEXTS AND CONTEXTS

Answer **ONE** question from this section.

Refer to at least **TWO TEXTS** from the **module(s)** you have studied this year to support your answer as well as the stimulus provided.

Use a separate answer booklet for this section.

This section assesses **Criterion 1, 2 and 4.**

<p>Question 4 – SPORTS REPORTING</p>

Read the extract from the article by Dean Jones published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 20 January 2013, and answer the question that follows:

Cricket World Cup 2015: Time for Bangladesh to show they belong at top level

Weather permitting, Bangladesh will play a white-hot Australian team on a bouncy Gabba pitch on Saturday.

If so, we are about to find out where Bangladesh are at. They will be under the microscope and will need to be very competitive and stand up to the Australians.

The ICC will have its report card ready to see how this Bangladesh cricket team is developing as a country playing one-day internationals.

Over the past few years, the ICC* has been under enormous pressure from fans, media and other countries to protect Test standards. We all know that the game needs to develop around the world, but at what cost? The ICC must protect the standards of Test cricket and World Cup cricket.

Already there is a notion from the ICC that the next World Cup will be played among 10 teams. The ICC has eradicated the chuckers, now it is time to go after the countries who are not playing at the standards that the ICC desires.

Let's stop beating around the bush and be honest. Zimbabwe and Bangladesh have not been up to Test standard over the past few years. Obviously these countries have had many problems to deal with. But Bangladesh has a population of nearly 160 million, with cricket and soccer as the most popular sports, and needs to lift its game.

Bangladesh first played a one-day international in March 1986, and joined the ICC as a full member (with Test status) in November 2000. Outside of playing Zimbabwe, Bangladesh have played 74 Tests, lost 64 and won two against a weakened, strike-torn West Indies. The one-day team's record is a little better against the other full-member teams, losing 166 and winning 27.

Stats prove the Bangladeshi bowlers have been doing their job, but their top four batsmen simply haven't. Bangladesh's under-19 World Cup campaigns have not been much better. Over the past four World Cups, they have finished eighth, ninth, seventh and ninth.

The real problem for me is the culture and attitude of the board and its players. The Bangladeshis need to play more four-day cricket. Sadly, it seems that the BCB* is frightened to play first-class cricket against other associate or first-class teams for a fear of failure and the loss of their Test status. Herein lies the problem. How can any of these gifted Bangladeshi cricketers improve and be competitive if they don't play in a structured first-class system or just don't play any four-day cricket?

Question 4 continues.

Question 4 (continued)

Sadly for me, many of the players seem to have the attitude that playing for their country is good enough for them. Winning matches doesn't seem a priority. They seem to be happy with a nice 50 or a three-wicket haul. If the Bangladeshi players looked at the Australian and South African fitness levels they would be embarrassed. The players must realise, if they want to earn the big bucks with Indian Premier League, Big Bash and Caribbean Premier League contracts, they need to play well for their country first and need to find a winning culture within the playing group.

I know I haven't painted a pretty picture for Bangladesh, but I firmly believe they do have a future. They have some great talent, but it needs to be harvested properly. I just feel the board needs to forget about its own agendas and conflicts of interest and worry about the future of the game.

Their whole style of cricket needs a complete overhaul. The Bangladeshi fans are among the most passionate in the world and deserve a lot more than what they are getting. They had a win over Afghanistan this week, but Afghanistan already have one win over Bangladesh – and just look at how competitive the Afghans are when you consider what they have gone through over the past seven or eight years. Maybe Afghanistan are more likely to win Test-match status than Bangladesh are to keep it.

On Saturday we will see how the Bangladesh batsmen cope with the Australian pace attack on a bouncy, greenish Gabba pitch. The helmets, arm guards and chest guards will be out in force. We will see how good their fielding and fitness is. We are going to find out how much playing for their country means to them. Surely the players must realise that if they do not put up a reasonable fight in this World Cup, there might not be a tomorrow.

*ICC – International Cricket Council

*BCB – Bangladesh Cricket Board

Question

How have the language features and the representation of social/cultural values in *Sports Reporting* been used to position the audience in the extract from Dean Jones' article and in **at least TWO TEXTS** studied this year?

Section B continues.

<p>Question 5 – CRIME FICTION</p>
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Read the extract from Australian crime writer Peter Cotton's novel *Dead Cat Bounce* and answer the question that follows:

Prologue

A federal election campaign is thrown into chaos when a popular government minister goes missing and then turns up dead on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin.

With Detective Darren Glass and the Australian Federal Police on the case, the investigation into the minister's murder quickly becomes entangled in a game of high-stakes politics. And all the while, the body count mounts.

Glass's suspects include some of the most powerful people in the land. With the nation in shock and wanting answers fast, Glass has to negotiate a murky world of shifting allegiances, half-truths, and finger pointing, where everyone has a motive for murder.

And no one is safe - not even the prime minister. As Election Day nears, Glass risks everything for a breakthrough in the case, and his life is soon hanging by a thread. But if he thought he'd hit rock bottom, he was wrong ...

Channel Four Live Cam: Wednesday 31 July, 11.15am

Hello again, Jean Acheson with the Live Cam, recapping the news that the search for Environment Minister Susan Wright appears to be over with the discovery of a body here by Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin early this morning.

Mrs Wright disappeared on Sunday night after a party in her office. In the two days since, millions of Australians have been affected by one of the biggest manhunts ever conducted in this country. And now this.

A major police operation is underway around the lake below me, and while we've had no official word yet as to the identity of the body down there, everything points to it being Mrs Wright. For a start, journalists monitoring police communications earlier this morning say officers in the first patrol car to attend the scene repeatedly used the minister's name when referring to the deceased. Also, the senior policeman who led the search to find Mrs Wright has now taken charge of things here. And most tellingly, Prime Minister Lansdowne cancelled all campaign engagements in Brisbane this morning, and his jet touched down in Canberra just minutes ago.

CHAPTER 1

The environment minister lay on her side in the mud. Her head rested in the crook of her left elbow, her slits of eyes almost closed, and her mouth half open. It might have been fatigue after the hours I'd spent in the tent with her body that morning, or maybe the halogen lights were playing tricks on my eyes, but, as I stared at Susan Wright's mouth, ticking off an urgent to-do list in my head, her lips suddenly began to quiver a bit. I stretched my eyes, trying to adjust them to the light. Then her mouth started trembling at the edges, and, in that instant, Wright looked to have come alive somehow. I swung away, slapped my cheeks hard with both hands, and when I looked back, was relieved to see she was nothing but dead again.

Question 5 continues.

Question 5 (continued)

It was time to let the body contractors have her - they were lined up outside on the access path, waiting to go to work. I was about to call them in, but for some reason I suppressed the impulse, and instead lowered myself down for one last look at her.

In life, Susan Wright had been a political celebrity - one of Australia's best-known faces. And while she seemed to pop up on the box every other night, only the most cynical punters were sick of the sight of her, if the polls measuring personal approval were to be believed. Her appeal went beyond the sparkle in her eyes and her high cheekbones. She seemed like a warm and caring person, and she was obviously smart and on top of her game - all of which inspired confidence. 'A safe pair of hands', the commentators liked to say about her. And now she was dead.

As I gazed at her face, I knew that if we didn't resolve this case in double-quick time, the outside pressure on us would become immense.

I tried to dislodge this thought by focusing on the big patch of lividity* that spanned the right-hand side of Wright's face, from just below her eye socket down to the line of her chin. That lividity had had everyone in the team talking throughout the morning. It had a cherry-red edge to it - a classic sign of carbon monoxide poisoning, and something that most of us associated with stationary cars and suicide. The thing was, apart from the lividity, everything else about this case pointed to murder.

*Lividity – the pooling of blood or localised rupturing of cells

Question

How have the language features and the representation of social/cultural values in *Crime Fiction* been used to position the audience in the extract from *Dead Cat Bounce* and in **at least TWO TEXTS** studied this year?

Section B continues.

Question 6 – DOCUMENTARY FILM

Read the extract from the transcript from Douglas Rushkoff’s documentary *Generation Like* and answer the question that follows:

CORRESPONDENT – Douglas Rushkoff	PRODUCED BY – Frank Koughan, Douglas Rushkoff
WRITTEN BY – Frank Koughan, Douglas Rushkoff	

NARRATOR: Tonight on Frontline

[Sound effects of beeping]

[Music with fast drum beat plays throughout, unifying the scenes]

[Close ups of smartphones being used]

[Pan across a group of teenagers from a range of racial backgrounds sitting around at kitchen table]

[Cut to images of teenagers speaking from inside a frame as if in a yearbook]

TEENAGE GIRL (*pushing her hair off her face*): “It’s all about getting likes”

ANOTHER TEENAGE GIRL (with nose pierced): “You want to be liked.”

[Montage of teenagers, face cut together. A teenage girl, an African American teenage boy, an Asian American teenage girl. Their statements are edited together]: “I like” “I like” “I like” “I like”

NARRATOR: “The power of like.”

[Zoom in on the Facebook like graphic symbol, a blue and white thumbs up and the word “like”]

[Cut to an image of a computer screen open to Tumblr]

[Cut to the screen full of like and dislike images with thumbs up or down]

MALE VOICE FROM AN INTERVIEW: “Companies know how to turn likes into money”

[Cut to clip from viral video of an African American boy jumping into an icy puddle]

NARRATOR: “Kids who are liked.”

[Close up of Facebook cover page. A collage of photos of the same teenage girl]

VOICEOVER FROM TEENAGE GIRL: “I put it on my Instagram and I was so happy

[Cut to head and shoulders shot of an Asian American teenage girl]: “I started getting views.” (*She flicks her fringe out of her face*) “...which I didn’t think was going to happen.”

[Cut to footage from a Pepsi advertisement. A woman drinks from a Pepsi can. A close up on a pepsi logo]

NARRATOR: And the advertising machine spinning likes into gold.

[Montage flashes of teenage faces from a range of racial groups, in a range of fashions. All smiling at the camera]

VOICEOVER A WOMAN FROM AN INTERVIEW SPEAKS: “Your consumer is your marketer.”

[Footage of a screen scrolling down, selecting from an online shop. Cut to screenshot of a twitter feed]

VOICEOVER A MAN FROM AN INTERVIEW SPEAKS: “This is the biggest transformation we have had in our lifetime”

[Close up of a screenshot on which ‘unfollow’ is clicked to become ‘follow’]

NARRATOR: “Author Douglas Rushkoff examines the culture of like.”

[Montage of images of Douglas Rushkoff walking down a busy street and speaking in various locations]

AFRICAN AMERICAN MAN SPEAKS TO CAMERA: “A million people took an action to say: ‘Yes - I like that piece of content, that piece of content speaks to me.’ (He gestures, giving a thumbs up) That’s profound.”

Question 6 continues.

Question 6 (continued)

NARRATOR: “The fame.”

[Cut to shot of boy skating]

[Cut to interview with **SKATING BOY**]: “They need to worry less about their followers and start worrying about the money.”

NARRATOR: “The fortune.”

[Cut to shot of graph titled ‘why Twitter’s stock is skyrocketing’]

[Montage of Facebook pages]

[Cut to medium shot of **A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN**]: “If they can reach a network of their friends, their peer networks and be your own evangelist.” [CAMERA ZOOMS INTO A CLOSER SHOT] “They can sell your product for you.”

[Cut to a shot of a young couple taking a selfie.]

[Cut to a group of young people, all looking at their own Smartphone screens.]

NARRATOR: “And what it all means for the way we interact with each other.”

[Close up of boy smiling]

[Cut to medium shot of teenage boy holding a magazine with a picture of Harry Styles]

[Cut to medium shot of a teenage girl in black glasses and a flannel shirt. She texts on her phone while she balances a laptop]

NARRATOR: “Tonight on Frontline: Generation Like.”

[Cut to medium shot of **MIDDLE AGED WOMAN WITH LONG GREY HAIR**. There is a blackboard and author Douglas Rushkoff in the frame]: “The PTA put together this event tonight because, you know, as parents, we’re all going through the digital revolution with our kids. We have Douglas Rushkoff, who’s a writer and lecturer—

DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF [*voice-over*] I’ve been speaking at events like this for more than 20 years now.

[Footage of parents at PTA meeting. They are middle aged. They look concerned]

PARENT: My sister has two Twitter accounts— [Rushkoff’s voiceover continues, cutting off the woman speaking]

DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF: I’ve written books and taught classes about this stuff, so people turn to me for answers.

[Cut to head and shoulders shot of Douglas Rushkoff nodding]

MIDDLE AGED WOMAN: What do you do in the case of extreme bullying?

[Cut to and fade into a father]: “My son plays a game. It’s called Starcraft.”

[Cut to and fade into a woman shot from behind addressing a question to Douglas Rushkoff on stage]

“How much does that show up in tracking?”

DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF: [on camera] I don’t think it’s going to affect the kid’s job for the rest of their lives.

[*voice-over interrupting his answer*] But lately, I’ve been wondering. Are we all asking the wrong questions when we focus on the technology itself, rather than what’s behind it?

[Footage of parents at PTA meeting speaking, asking questions, listening]

[Cut to shot of Douglas Rushkoff on stage, speaking to the PTA meeting] “Kids are spending more and more of their time in digital spaces that they don’t have even a basic understanding of what they are, where they tilted, what are they for. [Handheld camera moves close to him as he speaks]: “The problem, as I see it, is what are companies doing to our kids through technology.”

[Soft electronic keyboard music]

[Cut to images of parents listening. They frown as Rushkoff’s voiceover continues]: “and how can they and we be made more aware?”

[Cut to interior of lounge room. A teenage girl sits with a laptop.]

RUSHKOFF’S voiceover continues: “Technology is here to stay, and it’s changing all of our lives, especially those of our kids.”

[Cut to close up of fingers typing on a keyboard.]

[Cut to close up of teenage girl reading the screen]

Question 6 continues.

Question 6 (continued)

RUSHKOFF’S voiceover continues: “But how? What do these web sites and apps really allow teens to do?
[Cut to medium shot of the same teenage girl, who texts as she continues to balance her laptop on her knees.]
[Montage of screens which show Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, Youtube]

RUSHKOFF’S voiceover continues: “What is it they ask in return? And are kids aware of any of this?”
[Fast cutting of close-up shots of screens which say “Like” “Share” “Living” “Basic Information” “Terms”]
[Fade to medium shot of people walking on city street at night. A young Asian man takes a photo with his Smartphone.]

Question

How have the language features and the representation of social/cultural values in *Documentary Film* been used to position the audience in the extract from *Generation Like* and in **at least TWO TEXTS** studied this year?

SECTION C – IDEAS AND ISSUES

Answer **ONE** question from this section.

Refer **ONLY** to the stimulus provided in your answer.

Use a separate answer booklet for this section.

This section assesses **Criterion 1, 2 and 5.**

<p>Question 7 – IMAGINING AUSTRALIA</p>
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Read the following extract from an opinion article written by Bruce Haigh for *The Drum* and answer the question which follows.

If we were ever the lucky country, we aren't now

We have become a nation of individuals with a sense of entitlement, and are prone to narcissism, jingoism* and chauvinism*. What's more, there's no political leadership of any colour to turn this around.*

Brace yourselves: things are not going to get better in Australia, at least not for some time. It is to do with our collective moral fibre - or lack of it - as exhibited by our politicians, public servants, captains of business and industry, senior military officers and the media. And the reason is selfishness, greed and immaturity.

The last budget, roundly condemned and rejected by all but the top end of town, was a poorly disguised attack on low-income Australians and those on welfare. Talk of Joe Hockey introducing a “moderate” budget is an admission that Tony Abbott’s scorched earth policy has failed. To compound matters, no real alternative vision has been offered to voters, either by the Coalition or Labor.

The collapse of Australia’s mining exports will see the economy decline in the absence of other revenue streams developing to overcome the shortfall. Australia is moving into recession and there is nothing the Reserve Bank can do about it, armed with only the crude instrument of adjustments to the interest rate. Insufficient provision was made for the future by the populist Howard government.

The same lack of forethought and planning has given rise to the current crisis in health care and education. Enter any Medicare office in a major centre and witness the confusion and anger. Talk to the staff to see how services and payments are being reduced. It is nonsense to argue a case that costs are spiralling out of control compared to 10 years ago. Together the costs have risen along with the population and proportion of aged people needing care.

The problem lies with a revenue base that is not keeping pace with the needs of the community. Cutting spending on health, education and research will not solve budgetary problems; it will only create further difficulties. Paranoid politicians and public servants should/must consider cutting defence funding, ideologically driven and exorbitant expenditure of keeping Australia free of the contagion of refugees arriving by boat, and the continued subsidy of wealthy elitist private schools.

The national debate about the use and conservation of water and best use of productive land is absent. The National Party should be leading this debate but it is devoid and bereft of ideas and policies to the point that it has seemingly welcomed coal seam gas mining. Its interest has focused on the chauvinistic concern of seeking a register of foreign ownership, which is irrelevant when laws do not exist to govern and protect the sustainable use of land.

Question 7 continues.

Question 7 (continued)

There is no leadership toward empowering Aboriginal people. There has been no examination of the decline in social infrastructure that sees even the smallest country town affected by the ravages of ice, leading to dislocation and brutal acts of violence. We and our leadership seem incapable of coming to grips with child abuse, whether by institutions, government or dysfunctional families and predatory individuals.

Church leaders have failed to provide ethical or moral leadership, apparently more concerned with protecting their flock than with helping to support what should be our sectarian democracy.

Myths have been woven to hide our weaknesses, to boost our low self-esteem, to overcome our national inferiority complex. These myths have become self-defeating in light of the need to honestly face our shortcomings and renew ourselves and our leadership. The myth of the Anzac is just that, and not something to build or sustain a nation on.

Are we really a nation of volunteers? I doubt it. We have become a nation of individuals with a sense of entitlement leading to ever increasing levels of corruption. We are prone to narcissism, jingoism and chauvinism.

Bruce Haigh is a political commentator and retired diplomat.

*narcissism – extreme selfishness

*jingoism – extreme patriotism

*chauvinism – excessive or prejudiced support for one's own cause group

Question

From your study of the **Imagining Australia** module, how does this text and language challenge or support your own ideas, attitudes and values?

Section C continues.

<p>Question 8 – TELLING TRUTHS</p>

Read the following extract from an opinion article written by Jeff Sparrow for *The Drum* and answer the question which follows.

Google seeks a higher truth, but will struggle to get it

Google has outlined a method to rank search results by factual accuracy, but if the hope is to dispel mistruths in political and social debates it's unlikely to work. In fact, it could contribute more to the problem, writes Jeff Sparrow.

Researchers at Google have outlined a new method of ranking search results on the basis of the factual accuracy of content.

A new paper by the search giant's scientists suggests that the number of incorrect facts on a particular page could be tallied, using that as a proxy for trustworthiness. In theory, popular but unreliable sites would then drop down the listings so that your results would be dominated by sources you could trust.

Not surprisingly, the concept has not been universally acclaimed. As one writer put it: "The idea raises concerns as to how exactly the fact checking would take place, and whether it would impact controversial or alternative stances on various issues, which could be a blow to freedom of speech and diversity of opinions online."

It should be noted that, at this stage, we're simply discussing an idea, one that may or may not be implemented. Furthermore, Google already ranks your results (that's what a search engine does) using an algorithm that's notoriously opaque* and that changes all the time. We shouldn't necessarily assume that a new system would make a big difference.

Nevertheless, the motivation behind the research is interesting in and of itself.

As I've noted elsewhere, over the last decade we've seen a proliferation of services dedicated to fact checking: during the last federal election, for instance, Australians could choose between no fewer than four units devoted to assessing the truth or otherwise of politicians' claims.

The new enthusiasm for fact checking originated in the US and seems to have been driven by a liberal revulsion at the falsehoods and spin peddled by the Bush administration, particularly in respect of the Iraq war when much of the quality media (the *New York Times* is a good example) repeated, and even amplified, false claims about weapons of mass destruction. To guard against what the comedian Stephen Colbert called "truthiness" (a claim that feels right in your gut but that may bear no relationship to reality), many American media outlets launched projects that rated the veracity of political claims and then publicised the results.

That seems to be where Google's coming from.

The difficulty with the liberal idea about using hard facts to dispel conspiracy theories is that there's no evidence it actually works. On the contrary, studies performed by the University of Michigan in 2005 and 2006 revealed that people exposed to corrected information in news stories did not change their minds. Indeed, they often became, if anything, more convinced of their earlier, wrong, beliefs.

Question 8 continues.

Question 8 (continued)

It's not that people are stupid. It's that facts become meaningful in political or social debates because of the context in which they're embedded and the assumptions that make them relevant. Conspiracy theories might involve the dissemination of bizarre and fanciful claims. But that doesn't mean that such thinking arises from bad information. Rather, the conspiratorial mindset arises as an attempt to organise a world that no longer seems to make sense, with empirical* evidence shaped to fit accordingly.

Google's a corporation, not a public service. It might have become sufficiently ubiquitous* to coin a verb ("let me Google that for you") but, at the end of the day, the search engine exists to make money for its shareholders, not to help you out. If Google decides to implement the new ranking system, it will do so for its own reasons, which may or may not coincide with offering an improved service for users. We can't vote on how Google amends its search algorithms - indeed, its decisions are closely guarded commercial confidences. We're simply stuck with whatever its executives decide.

It's not surprising, then, if people feel powerless - nor if, in their powerlessness, they turn to wacky ideas that explain everything away through a grand conspiracy.

Which is not to say that truth doesn't matter. Of course it does. But truth and power go together - and at the moment many people feel that they have precious little of either.

Jeff Sparrow is the editor of Overland literary journal and the author of Killing: Misadventures in Violence.

*opaque – not transparent or translucent; hard to understand

*empirical – derived from or guided by experience or experiment

*ubiquitous – existing or being everywhere

Question

From your study of the **Telling Truths** module, how does this text and language challenge or support your own ideas, attitudes and values?

Section C continues.

<p>Question 9 – BELONGING</p>

Read the following extract from an opinion article written by Nathan Rees for *The Drum* and answer the question which follows.

Struggle Street: Western Sydney has many more stories of hardship like this

I've been a resident of Western Sydney almost all my life. I can categorically state that there are many more people dealing with even greater levels of chaos and hardship than shown on this SBS documentary, writes Nathan Rees.

For those who came in late, *Struggle Street* claims to be a documentary about life in Mt Druitt in Western Sydney. To me, and others I've spoken to, the depictions of each of the subjects was positive. There will be those viewers who choose not to engage with the human element of each subject, preferring instead to smear and sneer. That is their right, and no doubt they'll go back to watching *Big Brother*, *Housewives* or similar.

I've been a resident of Western Sydney almost all my life, and served as member of Parliament for a Western Sydney seat for eight years. I can categorically state that there are many individuals and families who deal with much greater levels of chaos, financial hardship and dysfunction than we saw in episode one.

Ashley and Peta [the subjects of the documentary] are clearly people of good heart. Financially straitened* through the loss of a job, multiple health issues and a large brood, they battle on regardless. The relationship between Ashley and his brain-injured (motorcycle accident) son is clearly one of love and devotion. Similarly, Ashley and Peta's relationship has grown despite the hardships faced. The friendship of Tony, and their shared resourcefulness, brightens the horizon for Ashley and clearly demonstrates the positive effects of good social networks.

In a similar vein, Bailee's friendship with Erin has been especially important in helping her get [her] life back on track. Bailee has endured things no person her age should have had to go through, and is valiantly trying to rebuild a relationship with her mother. When contemplating a return to school, she remarks on the immaturity of the other students - only the hardest of hearts would not concede that society, to date, has failed Bailee.

Her friend, Erin, fell pregnant at 15. She now wants to be a counsellor, and help people make better choices than she did - and she's offered Bailee a bed and support. Erin is articulate, passionate and caring - she should be cheered in her endeavours.

Through the couch surfing, stop-start relationships and fractious* dealings with loved ones, Ivanka's role as the community worker at Graceades is pivotal. The drop in centre provides a permanent meeting place and, critically, a point of engagement for those at risk of slipping into criminal dysfunctionality. These centres provide an essential service; gently nurturing relationships with attendees and guiding them to services, or away from trouble.

Question 9 continues.

Question 9 (continued)

With no apparent support network such as this, William appears to be doing pretty well mentally. He's sleeping rough, but managing to get through each day. Deliberately optimistic, he has a level of self awareness and perspicacity* that belies his predicament. He provides, for me, the two most poignant moments of episode one. In short, he says that he chooses to keep moving forward, ignore the anger and pain, because if he goes down that path he knows he'll end up in jail. And finally, we see this proud, clever and resourceful man crumble.

Why? Because his son, who he hasn't seen for 13 years, rings him on Father's Day and say he loves him; another reminder of just how critical relationships are to our resilience.

For the youngsters, Erin and Bailee, their choices and limited options are in the very recent past. Amid a sea of drama, good schooling is one of the only ways to break cycles of dysfunction. A well-funded public school system breeds resilience, provides normalcy, and gives young people the tools to map an alternate life plan.

It will be interesting to see if any of the State or Federal Government support agencies act on what aired.

Nathan Rees was the State Member for Toongabbie in Western Sydney for eight years, and NSW Premier 2008-09. He is now CEO of the Public Education Foundation.

*fractious – irritable and quarrelsome; difficult to control; unruly

*straitened – to experience difficulties, especially financial ones

*perspicacity – the quality of having a ready insight into things

Question

From your study of the **Belonging** module, how does this text and language challenge or support your own ideas, attitudes and values?

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