The Chief Examiner is pleased to present the 2013 report on behalf of the assessment panel and the marking team. This is a summative report for the final year of accreditation of this subject, ENS315109. However, the report includes significant generic advice that is applicable to any study of English at this level. It is recommended that the generic advice be heeded for the purposes of other English subjects.

THE EXAMINATION

General remarks

The following remarks necessitate some repetition of report comments from previous years. All reports of 2004 - 2013 are available to students and teachers at http://www.tqa.tas.gov.au/23647.

Most candidates clearly defined the focus of their responses in well-structured introductory paragraphs using the focus statement and the language used in the question to alert the reader to their deconstruction and understanding of the layers of meaning in their chosen texts. The weaker responses often appeared to be pre-prepared with little attempt to address the focus statement / question, or students introduced an analysis that was not then developed.

Time management is an issue and students should be aware that editing and proof reading determines the quality of their response. Those who planned before they started writing are to be commended.

SECTION A – CORE QUESTIONS

Question 1 - Changing Historical Contexts

1a) Love Poetry

Students were asked to discuss how at least two poems ‘tend to enable rather than disempower’, and to discuss the influence of different cultural and historical contexts.

Students who agreed with the statement highlighted how their poems’ subject matter focused on freedom and choice, living in the moment, rights for equality, the potential for happiness, and humanism (devotion to an individual rather than to a higher society). There were arguments to highlight the disempowering aspects of love in terms of commitment and obligation.

Contextual evidence often featured too much biographical information without connection to the poem or question.

Students were rated highly for clever and insightful comparisons and contrasts between poems. Good interpretation and reference to contextual information needs to be supported by appropriate textual evidence and some discussion of poetic technique. This needs to be related to the question. Good responses seamlessly integrated poetic evidence into their discussion.
Students must observe paragraphing conventions when completing exam responses. Some students neglected to separate responses into paragraphs, resulting in page long ‘paragraphs’.

1b)  **Loss Poetry**

Poems discussed were ‘On My First Son’, ‘At Castle Boterel’, ‘Disabled’, ‘Stop all the Clocks’, ‘Daddy’, ‘Last of his Tribe’. There were few answers to this question.

The question demanded that candidates address the idea that ‘Loss reminds people that they once had something of value’. Some answers, whilst very thorough examinations of the idea of loss, tended to focus on consolation for loss rather than the idea in the quotation. The answers were evenly divided between discussing two or three poems.

The best answers compared and contrasted the poems and their contexts to create their argument rather than treating them as separate entities. They also focused contextual detail on the poems themselves rather than supplying it as general information.

Several of the answers had detailed readings of one poem and its context but only cursory discussion of the second poem.

1c)  **Journey Poetry**

This question suited some poems over other poems as the journeys depicted in some of the poems are not necessarily rewarding. Some of the poems are not about journeys made alone so students were required to disagree with the thesis statement or to argue that journeys can result in individual fulfilment, despite having been undertaken as part of a group.

There were some strong responses in which students cleverly worded their answers to ensure that they addressed the question, particularly with regard to ‘Ulysses’, ‘The Journey of the Magi’ and ‘Crossing the Red Sea’. Those students who attempted ‘The Sanctuary’ were generally not as successful, possibly because the journey explored in this poem is not a rewarding one.

The better answers demonstrated a sound understanding of the poems and referred to all sections and many lines from the these, revealing a close knowledge of the ideas. The strongest responses were able to support statements using many quotations from the poems.

There were some strong responses that demonstrated a sound understanding of the cultural and historical contexts in which the poems were created. These students were able to integrate a discussion of these contexts into their exploration of ideas, matching particular sections or lines from the poems to the discussion of context. Weaker answers tended to separate out context from ideas thus failing to show the influence of context on the poets’ ideas.

Some students only discussed the influence of the poets’ personal contexts and failed to widen their answers to a discussion of the historical and cultural contexts of composition. For example, some who discussed ‘Ulysses’ mentioned only the death of Tennyson’s friend Arthur Hallam as a factor that influenced the ideas of the poem, especially the importance of ‘living life to the lees’. Stronger responses using this poem also referred to Britain’s expansion as an empire during the 1800s and
evidenced an appreciation for the efforts of single heroes, and for the Romantic ideal that emphasised the importance of the individual over society.

Only one student discussed more than two poems, but this response to all three poems was detailed and discussed the ideas and contexts in which the poems were created successfully.

Study of ‘Journey of the Magi’ should include learning that one *magus* is speaking in ‘Journey of the Magi’. ‘Magi’ is the plural form of *magus*.

**Question 2 – Paired Text Study**

Texts discussed were *Sophie Scholl* with *Schindler’s List or Antigone or Bombshells or Hamlet*; *The Great Gatsby* with *Gattaca or Slumdog Millionaire or American Beauty*; *The Kite Runner* with *Romulus My Father or Othello*; *Blade Runner* with *Brave New World*; *St Joan* with *Elizabeth*; *Hamlet* with *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*; *Emma* with *Clueless*; and one script with *Tess* on its own. Discussing only one text for a paired-text question compromises the student’s ratings because the question is not fully addressed.

The best answers directly identified a common issue and discussed both the similarities and differences in the treatment of it. They also achieved an equal balance in their discussion of the two texts. The best answers also acknowledged that historical and cultural context could be of setting or production.

In discussions of *The Great Gatsby* and *American Beauty*, a significant number of students referred to the American Dream but did not define it in any way, while others misunderstood either its origins or Fitzgerald’s and Mendes’ critiques of it.

The weakest answers did not achieve a balance in their discussion of the two texts and / or found it difficult to address the question, particularly ‘the treatment of a common issue’.

A significant number of students have serious problems with the spelling of characters’ names, such as, but not only, Colonel Fitts and Carolyn Burnham. These spellings should be learned, because even though the exam is recognised as a draft it is expected that students know the key names of composers, characters and settings. Other inaccuracies about the texts included references to plays as novels, dates of publication / production, and titles.

While it is acceptable to refer to the gaps and silences in texts, it is very difficult to focus an entire essay on an issue that only appears in one text as it denies the student the chance to write a balanced discussion of both texts.

**Question 3 – Single Text Study**

Popular texts were *The Great Gatsby*, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, *Hamlet*, *The Kite Runner*, *Sophie Scholl*, and *Brave New World*.

The majority of students sought to present a discussion that addressed the central concerns of selected texts. Stronger students identified key ideas and issues in their texts and examined these using insightful and relevant examples. They integrated context and ideas in their response to address the stance they had taken on the question. Students are reminded that the question sought explanation of the
prevailing ideas and events in the narrative that connect the society of the author to the responder; personal response was not invited. Many students had difficulty addressing the ‘responder’ aspect of this question. Those who identified the responder and their society allowed themselves and the marker a much clearer focus in their answer. The responder could be the contemporary reader/viewer and/or the reader/viewer of the time of production.

Unfortunately, a number of students spent so much time discussing the relevance of the ideas and concerns to contemporary responders that they left little time to adequately discuss the context of the setting or time of production. Conversely, some students addressed the context of the texts and the responders in such detail that they left little time to fully address Criterion 1. A number of students obviously struggled to address the question as they made only cursory reference to it or none at all and simply discussed the ideas and concerns of the text. This seriously limits their chance of achieving best possible ratings.

The handwriting of a few students was so difficult to read that it made it hard to fully appreciate the nuances of their use of language. A significant number of students have serious problems with the spelling of key words, the names of characters and settings. Where possible, these should be learned, even though the exam is recognised as a draft.

Stronger candidates realised that this question presented a number of possibilities; that the society of the responder could indeed be the audience of the writing context such as the Elizabethan audience of *Hamlet* in the time that it was written, or the twenty first century audience responding today to a text such as *Hamlet*. Similarly, some candidates showed how texts could be didactic, introducing responders in any era to the issues present in the composer’s society. All such responses were relevant to the quotation and the question.

Strong candidates writing on *The Great Gatsby* highlighted Fitzgerald’s resistant reading of the Jazz Age and the initial negative response of his own society to his text on publication. Such responses emphasised that responders sometimes find it easier to connect to the issues of the era in hindsight, pointing out the relevance to twenty first century society of rampant consumerism, moral and spiritual decay and the lack of social mobility.

Some students interpreted the question statement to mean that the responder was the reader of the time in which the text was written. This was frequently the way students writing about *The Great Gatsby, Tess...* and *Brave New World* understood the statement. Others wrote about the 1920s, 1890s or 1930s responder, and the 21st century student, as both being ‘the responder’. Both interpretations were acceptable, although those students who wrote about the responder being both the readers of the time as well as the readers of today wrote in greater depth. However, this did tempt some to talk in terms of ‘we’ and ‘us’. There sometimes seemed to be an equal balance of discussion of the ideas and concerns of the text as an illustration of the connection to the context in which the text creator lived.

The longer answers demonstrated a deeper understanding of the text and context. However, although this was not always the case, particularly where the student’s answer comprised much retelling. A significant number of students referred to the American Dream but did not define it in any way, while others misunderstood either its origins or Fitzgerald’s critique of it. However, some successfully linked materialism of the 1920s with today and the way young women value clothes, parties, alcohol and jewellery. Some better answers linked the superficiality of the celebrity world today to the world of the parties of Gatsby. The best answers used numerous relevant quotations and examples to support and illustrate the discussion of the ideas and issues.
Strong candidates who wrote on *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days*, examined Marc Rothemund’s purpose in making the film: to promote awareness that there were German civilians who were prepared to stand true to their conscience when it was extremely dangerous to do so, therefore highlighting issues such as moral integrity, the banality of evil and freedom of speech that connect all three contexts of 2005, 2013 and 1943 Nazi Germany.

Strong responses on *Hamlet* highlighted that Shakespeare used the setting of medieval Denmark to raise issues in his own Elizabethan society. Those candidates who chose to examine Elizabethan responders, examined the controversial issues of the day that are revealed through the characters and their actions in the play such as the Divine Right of Kings, the complexity of religious faith and belief in the afterlife, suicide, madness, and the idea of questioning stemming from Humanism and Protestant thinking. Some responses connected the ideas of uncertainty of an afterlife, and of the meaning of existence, to similar concerns in the twenty first century. Other students argued that there were no connections between the issues explored by Shakespeare and the twenty first century society of the responder, a difficult position to support given the complex psychological issues explored in the play that still resonate with today’s readers.

Those students writing on Kesey’s text connected the issues of freedom and oppression explored in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* to the writing context: the political situation in America in the 1950s and the Red scare. Insightful responses also highlighted the continuing relevance of such concerns to the society of the twenty first century.

The weaker candidates clearly struggled with the term ‘responder’ in the question and in some cases this led to the use of the personal pronoun in their scripts. These scripts typically lacked attention to close reading, contained generalisations and did not address the complexity of the issues presented in their chosen texts. These scripts also showed a lack of understanding of texts as constructs and wrote on characters in past tense as if they were real people. A minority of students ignored the question altogether and wrote a pre-prepared answer. The ‘criterion 3 dump’ is still featuring in the weaker responses and many students are still not underlining text titles. Length of answer often correlated to quality. Some students wasted time detailing references such as page numbers, editions and dates, providing bibliographies at the end of their scripts, all of which are not necessary for exam answers.

Many students are still writing about characters as though they are real people rather than constructs.

On the whole, candidate responses on film were weaker than those on print texts as they lacked embedded quotations and detail on character. It was not enough to state something about viewers’ understanding how difficult it was to stand up to Nazi power in the light of Sophie’s context. Detailed examples of characters such as Else and Mohr needed to be included, who, through their actions and words, show just how easy it was to hand over one’s conscience during Nazi Germany.

**SECTION B - APPLIED QUESTIONS**

**Question 4**

‘Life is a matter of choice not chance.’ Is it? The choices we have and/or the chances we acquire are associated with the arguments for free will, agency, fate and determinism intrinsic to many characters within the set texts. The question prompt invited either agreement or disagreement with the statement,
or an acceptance of both views. Arguably, one may lead to the other: we may have choice but life presents us with a limited number of choices that may already be predetermined. Some responses argued that the choices available are contingent upon the type of society the characters inhabit. Most responses reasoned that actions lead to moral consequences; what values guide author / character choices and an exploration of the narrative outcome. Essentially the question asked students to consider when, how and why we have or have not control over our lives.

Some prescribed texts / application texts that were compared and contrasted:

- how and why Sophie Scholl / Antigone chose martyrdom over oppression; why choose civil disobedience?
- a consideration of Hamlet’s excess of choices and his contemplation of who or what ‘shapes our ends’;
- cross-examination of the choices made by Amir in The Kite Runner;
- control of identity for Ashima, Ashoke, Gogol in The Namesake.
- choice and destiny for Salim and Jamal - thematic concerns evident in Slumdog Millionaire;
- how and why the replicants ask the big questions about choices and chance, life and death, and life ‘expectancy’ in Blade Runner,
- Vincent’s determination to challenge the controlling ideology in Gattaca and Sam Bell’s existential dilemma in Moon: how they escape the entrapment in their worlds, leading to larger thematic ideas of master/slave interaction.
- Gatsby’s chances / choices made by / for him; for Myrtle and daisy.

Many responses focused on the choices that characters made and explained how these affected their lives but not all students addressed the notion of “chance”. Texts such as Slumdog Millionaire and Tess of the D’Urbervilles were well suited to the question as the composers have much to say about the influence of destiny and fate on people’s lives.

Other responses interpreted life as being more about making choices than falling victim to circumstance and this was regarded as a valid interpretation of the statement. On some occasions these responses veered towards becoming retellings rather than analyses. It is important that students use the key words of the question to avoid answers sounding like a retelling of the plot.

Many students achieved a successful balance between Criterion 1 and Criterion 9; however, the wording of the question possibly led some students to express their opinion rather than to clarify their own attitudes and values. Students were required to explore their “view” of the statement but were expected to be familiar with the requirements of this criterion.

Criterion 1 anticipates that students’ evaluate/analyse/discuss the question, and apply the prompt to their text/s. Prepared essays and reproduced class essay questions are conspicuous. Examiners use the A/B/C/D marking tool (at http://www.tqa.tas.gov.au/23647) to assess text authority, precision and accuracy, relevant text evidence, engagement and understanding, and complexity of argument. The
responses ranged from very engaging and complex through to basic re-telling of the plot (to be avoided).

Some students omitted / avoided the criterion 9 requirement. It is vital to discuss how the text changed your perspectives, challenged your views and made you contemplate the world in a different way. Arguably, most composers construct protagonists to represent the need for freedom of choice within inequitable, corrupt or repressive societies. To this end, the best responses reflected on consideration of consequence with regard to rebelliousness, self-sacrifice, altruism, complacency or accountability, freedom, honour, conscience and integrity, loyalty and justice and so on. Part of the personal response could include a personal view on the composers’ reasons for structuring the text in a way that appeals to readers’ values/attitudes - this includes you. The better responses used students’ own cultural knowledge to relate to the text.

**Question 5**

Answers to this question were generally pleasing. It was interesting to see the different approaches to this question. Some students analysed two texts composed in the past and then reflected on how the ideas explored in these are different from or similar to their own 21st century attitudes and values. Some compared a text composed in the past to a modern text, then reflected on their own attitudes and values. Others examined how people can grow from their past experiences and become “different” from their former selves. Finally, one or two students discussed how, in texts such as *Ulysses* and *The Kite Runner*, characters’ past lives are different from their lives in the present. All of these interpretations were accepted and seen as valid.

The requirement to answer on two texts left some candidates struggling to address criterion one sufficiently. Most candidates had understandings linked to criterion 9 which they were able to bring to bear on the given quotation, showing solid exam preparation. Weaker candidates ignored the question to some degree or even completely.

The wording of the question possibly led some students to express their opinion rather than to clarify their own attitudes and values. Students were expected to be familiar with the requirements of criterion 9.

**Question 6**

Popular texts were *The Great Gatsby, Tess of the d’Urbervilles, Hamlet, The Kite Runner, Sophie Scholl, Brave New World* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.*

Most students attempted to respond in an essay format. Writing on ‘at least two texts’ often compromised the richness and detail of discussion in these scripts.

Students could either agree with or contest the assertion; however, the majority of scripts did not present sound evidence from the text for their particular stance. Due to the instruction to ‘construct a text which explores your view of the statement’ many students attempted to give intellectual responses only, overusing expressions such as ‘I think’, without reflecting on the impact of the text and the quotation on their values and attitudes. Students need to be aware that even if Section B questions do not specifically refer to ideas, attitudes and values, it is necessary to address all three as demanded by
question 9. Unfortunately, it was clear that some students had not prepared a second text and had included a paragraph at the end of the essay only to address the second text.

Many students resorted to plot summaries rather than using plot as scaffolding to present their ideas attitudes and values in relation to the quotation and the text. Stronger answers refuted the assertion, using texts such as Sophie Scholl to show that hope can be manifest in the concern for the greater good or, in Sophie’s case, the survival of an idea. Weaker candidates writing on this film tended to associate death of characters with loss of hope.

Simplistic statements marred potentially sound answers, reflecting students’ lack of understanding that texts are constructs. Stronger responses acknowledged the influence of their own context on their interpretation of text.

It is evident that students are still finding it very difficult to achieve an even balance between critical engagement and their own ideas, attitudes and values. The use of quotations embedded in sentences, and evidence of close reading, is still just as important in Section B as in Section A; however, the majority of students did not demonstrate this in their writing.

Question 7

A report for question 7 is not available.

Question 8

The apparent simplicity of this question attracted many candidates. In fact, although the wording of the question was very straightforward, some students did struggle to define characters’ motivation accurately as revenge, particularly where they had obviously made their choice of question based on its apparent simplicity, without really considering how relevant the question was to their text. In many ways, the requirement to discuss the theme of revenge proved more limiting than some candidates had anticipated.

A broad range of texts was used to address this question. Some of the common titles included Hamlet, Othello, Antigone, Sophie Scholl, Elizabeth, The Great Gatsby and Tess of the D’Urbervilles; there were many strong essays written in response to these texts. Some less common inclusions were The Kite Runner, Blade Runner, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, Brave New World, Bombshells and Slumdog Millionaire; some of the least successful responses were written in relation to the texts in this second group.

The best answers acknowledged that it was possible to read characters and their motivations in more than one way and went on to justify their own reading based on their understanding of their own culture’s attitudes and values as well as personal attitudes and values. The concept of revenge and the complex moral issues it raises gave a great deal of scope for interpretation and helped to reveal the broad range of student capability clearly; in this sense, this was a strong question.

Weaker answers used expressions such as ‘I believe’ and ‘in my opinion’ as their key means of addressing criterion 9. Often there were a number of assertions made, with little attention to an exposition of ideas and beliefs and values. Some weaker candidates were able to discuss one character
adequately but struggled both to find a second instance where the ideas applied as clearly and also to make any comparative link between the two characters; thus the requirement to discuss two characters did help to clarify the quality of the responses. Many weaker answers seemed formulaic and prepared.

Weaker candidates sometimes found it difficult to sustain a consistent position in their reflection when they tried to integrate it throughout the response; they would sometimes contradict their own position as stated in the introduction and/or conclusion at various points in the body.

There is a tendency for some candidates to assume that using ‘I think’ or ‘I believe’ as a prefix to a comment makes anything that follows reflective. Often, the comment is actually analytical and the use of these phrases only serves to make the judgement sound tentative.

**Imperatives (recurring) and Recommendations**

- Students are strongly advised to read the reports for 2004 – 2013 for advice about what is expected in general terms of students at this level of study. Examiners continue to be very concerned at the extent of poor expression, poor spelling, inaccurate syntax, inaccurate punctuation, poor paragraphing, poor structure, and inaccurate title / quotation procedure. It may be that a degree of these errors can be attributed to the exam / draft answer setting. However, there remains a very real need for students to evidence their competency in managing their use of English at this level of study.

- Learn and practise formal essay structure

- Practise time management. Do ‘practice exams’ at home against the clock. Acquire self-knowledge about capabilities for managing the exam time frame

- Avoid using prepared answers

- Provide textual evidence for each point discussed

- Write in black or blue pen; do not use pencil.

**THE INDEPENDENT STUDY**

**General Remarks**

The A-Range folios clearly and incisively understand the content and construction of the texts studied. They demonstrated an authentic engagement, by the student, with the issues presented in the text and their links with contemporary society. The best scripts identified some sort of shift in ideas, either personally or contextually, that was tracked thoroughly through their examination of the texts. The students who applied a methodical approach to adhering to the requirements of the Independent Study were able to communicate their understanding with precision and clarity. An authentic curiosity which lead to a particular line of inquiry often resulted in an intelligent exploration of the ideas and values identified in the texts.
Sophisticated language use implies a relatively wide vocabulary and a degree of grammatical facility. It is not, however, demonstrated by a scattering of obscure synonyms from an online thesaurus; nor is it characterised by self-consciously complex grammatical structures – the best writers do not continually remind readers of the effort involved in the writing process. A student’s primary aim must be to express ideas clearly and fluently so that the writer’s voice is consistently heard.

Focus ‘questions’ framed as statements tend to invite discussion that is much too broad and that precludes close textual analysis.

Quite a number of studies did not appear to have been edited as they contained many minor errors in both sentence structure and punctuation. It is expected that these studies are ‘reworked, polished finished’ (TQA Folio Guidelines 2013, pg 6) products and therefore students who do not do this are limiting their achievement. A significant number of students consistently misused semi colons and colons.

Context Statement

Many context statements mentioned or presented background to the rest of the work. The best context statements were methodical in structure and approach and demonstrated an authentic personal engagement with the ideas, values and attitudes presented in the texts as well as the construction of the texts. These studies were carefully planned, drafted and edited to a high standard.

A student’s choice of focus question is crucial. The best questions are clear and concise and allow the student to address both aspects of criterion 9: critical engagement and reflective voice. Often the more complicated questions do not clearly articulate the student’s intentions and also hinder the development of a logical and complete discussion. Candidates are reminded to put considerable effort into wording their questions. The weaker responses continue to be those where the candidates have not written themselves into the question. Some questions lend themselves to assessment of criterion 5, text structures and features, which is clearly not assessed. One such question that did not address criterion 9 but focussed on criterion 5, was an analysis of the gothic conventions of Wuthering Heights.

Although most students have successfully used the context statement to explain their choices and focus, some are still doing themselves a real disservice by not preparing and editing them to as high a standard as the rest of their Study. Inadequate explanation, poor drafting and little editing of the context statement seriously detracts from the overall study.

The successful context statement enables the marker to appreciate the student’s interest in the text and their intentions in the study through the discussion of their focus question.

Weaker statements continue to include unnecessary detail about abandoned texts and inappropriate lengthy descriptions about reasons for choice of text. They often did not address criterion 9. Too many candidates appear still to be rushing their context statements, perhaps seeing them as less important than the other two components. As such, there was often a discrepancy between the written expression and formatting of the context statement and that of the remainder of the folio.

Candidates must ensure that context statements are edited to the same standard as their analytical and creative pieces. Because the context statement is often being prepared last, it is sometimes poorly edited.
As the most personal of the three pieces, the context statement presents a temptation for some students to abandon the careful judgement filters they employ in the formal essay. It is very easy to fall into the trap of making sweeping, unsubstantiated comments about texts, minority groups or even entire cultures while describing the development of a personal focus for study.

Analytical Component

The best responses in the analytical section had a focused question to frame the line of inquiry and favoured clarity over sophistication. These responses demonstrated a methodical approach to structure balancing the analytical with the reflective in a smooth and effortless manner. Their ideas were articulated in a clear way, with supporting evidence and personal experiences. A positive feature was that personal anecdotes were rarely used in the A-Range scripts.

Surprisingly, there are still a few students who do not address the reflective aspect of criterion 9. This aspect can not be ignored when it is so clearly explained in both the body of the Folio Guidelines and the Folio Marking Tool of the Appendix, as well as the Criterion itself. The students who do not address this reflective aspect may well have written a beautifully crafted analysis of the text but without any attempt to convey their own ideas, attitudes and values. In this case they are seriously limiting their chances of achieving their potential on this criterion.

The very best of the Analytical Components seamlessly integrate their personal view with their critical engagement with the ideas and issues of the text. These ‘best of the best’ discussions are articulate, original, thoughtful and highly developed.

Inaccuracies are still present in the weaker folios, for example stating that Austen lived in the 18th century. Also, inaccurate and inconsistent spelling of characters’ and composers’ names is still evident.

It is pleasing to see an improvement in referencing this year with both in-text referencing and bibliographies. Weaker candidates only provided brief bibliographies, sometimes neglecting to reference the primary text or to include in-text referencing. A list of URLs is not appropriate. The UTAS referencing page has some very useful guidelines on referencing the primary text.

Reflection is most compelling when it moves smoothly backwards and forwards between a particular idea represented in the text, a broad concept abstracted from this idea, and real-life examples that have clear relevance.

The most successful analytical pieces make liberal use of pertinent quotations and are often able to incorporate shorter quotations – a line, a phrase or even a single key word – into the body of their own sentences, rather than simply using longer quotations to populate the gap between paragraphs.

Many weaker candidates must make a conscious effort to use qualifying language when they are attempting to express judgements about character motivation; they are inclined to either damn or applaud characters’ decisions in very complex circumstances with a sweeping assumption of authority that can be read as both arrogance and naivety.
Imaginative Component

The best responses demonstrated students’ ability to go further than the text and explore ideas in an imaginative and original manner. They used language forms and features effectively and the most interesting were able to weave their creative work around a modern parallel. The aim would be to allow the construction of the piece to mirror the content in some way, achieving a successful creative composition. Those students who chose poetry often did not achieve the depth or precision needed to achieve a strong result.

The best imaginative pieces were very closely linked to the focus of the study and allowed for a different and very convincing perspective on the ideas and issues. These were beautifully crafted with a sophisticated use of language and they were also highly emotive. The stronger creative components immediately engaged the marker with their control of writing techniques; wide vocabularies, believable and unpredictable characters, understanding of pace and interesting ideas and themes explored.

Some of the most compelling creative pieces were those that re-contextualised aspects of plot, characterisation and theme from an older text in a modern Australian setting.

Too many creative components are still not taking further the issues explored in the analytical response, sometimes rewriting a chapter and including the same quotations with an added internal monologue for one of the characters only.

The lower range responses were derived from the text. Some simply re-wrote from another point of view, but few students were able to do this effectively. These pieces included additional chapters/excerpts/scenes, alternative conclusions to events, short stories, and contemporary transformations. The weakest imaginative pieces relied on simplistic retellings under the guise of journal or diary entries.

Weaker creative components were marked by inconsistent use of tense and point of view. When characters from the chosen text were used in the creative they were sometimes unbelievable and inconsistent with their portrayal in the text. Letters to Emily Bronte cannot be written in the 20th and 21st centuries and be replied to by the author.

Weaker candidates tended to perform least well on the creative task; those weaker candidates who did write a modestly successful creative piece often chose to write a first-person narrative from an alternative point of view from that presented in the stimulus text. The weakest point of a weak narrative is frequently the end; a fairly pedestrian story can often create an improved effect if the final paragraph is re-worked to emphasise the link with the issue raised in the focus question.
## Award Distribution

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</tbody>
</table>