



NSW Education Standards Authority

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Centre Number

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Student Number

**2019** HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

# English Advanced

## Paper 1 – Texts and Human Experiences

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**General****Instructions**

- Reading time – 10 minutes
- Working time – 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Write using black pen
- A Stimulus Booklet is provided at the back of this paper
- Write your Centre Number and Student Number at the top of this page and page 5

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**Total marks:**  
40**Section I – 20 marks** (pages 2–8)

- Attempt Questions 1–5
- Allow about 45 minutes for this section

**Section II – 20 marks** (pages 9–13)

- Attempt ONE question from Questions 6(a)–6(n)
- Allow about 45 minutes for this section

**Section I**

**20 marks**

**Attempt Questions 1–5**

**Allow about 45 minutes for this section**

Read the texts on pages 2–7 of the Stimulus Booklet carefully and then answer the questions in the spaces provided. These spaces provide guidance for the expected length of response.

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Your answers will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of human experiences in texts
  - analyse, explain and assess the ways human experiences are represented in texts
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**Question 1 (3 marks)**

**Text 1 — Poem**

Explain how *Boomerangs in a Thunderstorm* represents an intense moment.

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**2019** HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

# English Advanced

## Paper 1 – Texts and Human Experiences

### Stimulus Booklet

	Pages
<b>Section I</b>	
• Text 1 – Poem .....	2
• Text 2 – Prose fiction extract .....	3–4
• Text 3 – Prose fiction extract .....	5
• Text 4 – Feature article .....	6–7



## Section I

### Text 1 — Poem

#### **Boomerangs in a Thunderstorm**

*For Uncle Steve*

The clouds are so low that I imagine a puffy hand, reaching out and sending a boomerang off-course. But here we are, like it should be, an uncle and his nephew, throwing boomerangs, tuning the wind. Thunder cracking. Whooping shapes dance across the overcast sky. My lungs are full of the spirits of rain, and it is not long before we are both soaked, riding the storm. Our boomerangs scale the breeze ... you should always throw a 'returning' boomerang into the wind ... like a sail. On the summit of the sacred owl mountain, *Coot-tha Dreaming*, throwing boomerangs in a thunderstorm.

*The unsettled leaf  
spirals to a soaked ground,  
rain disguised tears*

SAMUEL WAGAN WATSON

## Text 2 — Prose fiction extract

Dorahy submits to this pull of fate.

He packs a small bag, noting how one's needs in age lie in inverse ratio to the expansion of the soul.

He hopes. He boards a lumbering coastal vessel that rocks him out of his capital and, after a sea-shaken slumber, wakes after the third night to a sugarville morning of hard blue and yellow north of the tropic. From the salty deck he observes the wide reaches of blue bay water as the boat enters his destiny. Coastal scrub has thinned out its scraggy imprecision and has become the scaggier, scrubbier buildings of a town he has not entered for twenty years, which yet, as he watches the houses grow larger with approach, fills him with a nauseating nostalgia.

He has kept apart as far as possible from the other passengers all the week, but now, as they join him along the railing, he feels obliged to share the excitement and the chatter. Hands point. Voices cry out. The boat noses its rusty way from harbour to river and river docks.

There are only two others disembarking and he hopes to avoid them, knowing the town is full of pubs. Their reason for return is the same as his and already, conscious of his ambitions for solitariness, he wonders why he has come. His elderly legs wobble on this Friday morning gangplank but they are the same legs that strolled through this town twenty years before, and he marvels that he is experiencing grief when, he supposes, rage would be the better thing. Turning his back firmly on the river and the docks, he walks steadily up the slope past the warehouses and enters the town.

The streets are busy with horses and big drays\*. There are people on bicycles bumping along the rough roads. Groggy from all this, he stands uncertain in sunlight, his bag at his feet. One should never go back. He decides this with vehemence and wonders then is he thinking of the psychic mistake of it or his own lack of charity. One does go back, he knows, again and again. One should forgive places as much as people.

This place has much to be forgiven it.

Terrible to sense the valetudinarian\*\*\* legs tentative along the footpath. But up here everyone saunters. He is relieved he does not look remarkable. It is a refusal to fight the heat which already is dealing him blow upon blow; rather a yielding to it. Already steam is rising from the baking township and its slow river. Already there is sweat along his hairline, the saddened back of his neck, trickling between his breasts.

Text 2 continues on page 4

Text 2 (continued)

He feels reluctant to face his hotel yet, knowing its drabness already, the tired pots of fern, the bar-stink, the narrow bedroom with its spotted mirror. He walks on one hundred, two hundred yards and finds a tea-shop sluicing out the evening before. Rinsing the last strains of it, a thin girl has been doing penance with mop and bucket. She couldn't care less about this elderly man with his thin face and thinner voice demanding tea. She isn't forgiving anybody, refuses the credit of his smile, while slinging her bile across one table surface after the other with a rancid grey rag.

But he tries.

'It's twenty years,' he volunteers, 'since I've been here.' (Where are the banners, the bunting ...)

She deals savagely with the counter and crashes the glass jars of sweets to one side.

'Lucky you,' she says.

THEA ASTLEY  
Extract from *A Kindness Cup*

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* drays	<i>horse-drawn carts</i>
** valetudinarian	<i>weak, feeble</i>

**End of Text 2**

### Text 3 — Prose fiction extract

#### Lines, Planes and Bodies

I often dreamed of watching without being seen. Of spying. Of being the perfect observer. Like that camera obscura\* I once made out of a shoebox. It photographed for me a part of the world through a black closed space with a microscopic pupil through which light sneaks inside. I was training.

The best place for this kind of training is Holland where people, convinced of their utter innocence, do not use curtains. After dusk the windows turn into little stages on which actors act out their evenings. Sequences of images bathed in yellow, warm light are the individual acts of the same production entitled 'Life'. Dutch painting. Moving lives.

Here at the door appears a man, in his hand he has a tray, he puts it on the table; two children and a woman sit down around it. They take their time eating, in silence, because the audio in this theatre doesn't work. Then they move to the couch, watch a glowing screen attentively, but for me, standing on the street, it isn't clear what has absorbed them so – I only see flickers, flutterings of light, tiny pictures, too brief and distant to be intelligible. Someone's face, a mouth moving intensely, a landscape, another face ... Some say that this is a boring play and that nothing happens in it. But I like it – for example the movement of a foot playing unconsciously with a slipper, or the whole astonishing act of yawning. Or a hand that seeks upon a plush surface a remote control and – having found it – is calmed, withers.

Standing off to one side. Seeing only the world in fragments, there won't be any other one. Moments, crumbs, fleeting configurations – no sooner have they come into existence than they fall to pieces. Life? There's no such thing; I see lines, planes\*\* and bodies, and their transformations in time. Time, meanwhile, seems a simple instrument for the measurement of tiny changes, a school ruler with a simplified scale – it's just three points: was, is and will be.

OLGA TOKARCZUK  
Extract from *Flights*

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\* camera obscura      *a darkened box for projecting an image*  
\*\* planes              *flat surfaces*

## i'm bored, therefore i am

It's one of the most fundamental human impulses, but boredom is becoming an increasingly endangered species. What's truly at stake in the war against being bored?

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*It was a warm and intoxicating summer in 1986 when Christopher Knight, a 20-year-old from the small town of Waltham, Massachusetts, decided to leave home for good. Armed only with a backpack of clothes and a thin nylon tent, Knight drove a hire car deep into the woods, left the keys in the centre console and then seemingly walked right out of existence, no note, no warning, no trace. His family and everyone who knew him assumed he was dead.*

Until, that is, the morning of April 4, 2013, when the same Christopher Knight was caught stealing food from a nearby house. When asked why his speech was slurred, Knight explained that the officer who arrested him was the first person he'd spoken to in 27 years. For that entire time he had simply been alone in the forest, a solitary adventurer discovering what mysteries lay on the other side of boredom. "I lost my identity," Knight would later tell the journalist Michael Finkel. "With no audience, no one to perform for, I was just there. There was no need to define myself; I became irrelevant. The moon was the minute hand, the seasons the hour hand. I didn't even have a name. I never felt lonely. To put it romantically: I was completely free."

There was a time when experiences like Knight's were, if not commonplace, at least not unheard-of. A time when people felt the pull of boredom and leaned into it, in the hope they'd emerge on the other side. The 2010s

are not that time. We are, to put it mildly, at an interesting point in our relationship with ennui\*. "We're certainly less bored than all the people who came before us, just because we have so many options presented to us day after day," says Mary Mann, author of *Yawn: Adventures in Boredom*. "To paraphrase the philosopher Bertrand Russell, while we might find ourselves in the position of being bored less often, we are far more scared of it."

Our new post-boredom society is not merely an academic concern. For as long as people have roamed the earth they have been infected and animated by a sense of boredom. That uneasy stirring, the glimmers of anxiety and creeping lassitude\*\* – these are the symptoms of a distinctly human phenomenon, an impulse that has led us out of the caves and into the gleaming megacities of the 21st century. While other animals can exhibit a sense of boredom, it is only humans who transform it into change, exploration, creativity and violence ...

Of course, overstimulation can produce its own listlessness, one that manifests in epidemic rates of anxiety and depression. "Boredom is a challenge," Mann says, and being challenged is often good for us. "But we're in a transition now. Watch people communicating and you'll see the focus they direct to their phones, or the instant, almost violent frustration when their Wi-Fi isn't working. We have so much anxiety when stimulation is lost for even a second. It's scary."

Text 4 continues on page 7

Text 4 (continued)

It's humbling to think of how unrecognisable the world of today must be to the one that Christopher Knight departed three decades ago. It's a world that has indulged and exaggerated all those aspects of society he once fled: the press of humanity, the ever-accelerating need to stimulate and to share our drive for novelty with others. "There isn't nearly enough nothing in the world anymore," he told Finkel. "What I miss most is somewhere between quiet and solitude. What I miss most is stillness."

Living in the wilderness and stealing food to survive is one way to find a little stillness. But going full-Robinson Crusoe isn't the only solution. Perhaps we need only ask ourselves what we have lost in our haste to drive boredom from our lives, and what we might gain by inviting just a bit of it back in. To turn again to Bertrand Russell: "A generation that cannot endure boredom will be a generation of little men ... of men in whom every vital impulse slowly withers as though they were cut flowers in a vase."

LUKE RYAN

Edited extract from *i'm bored, therefore i am*

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- \* ennui      *a feeling of weariness and dissatisfaction: boredom*  
\*\* lassitude      *a state of physical or mental weariness*

**End of Text 4**

## English Advanced

### Paper 1 – Texts and Human Experiences

#### Section II

20 marks

Attempt ONE question from Questions 6 (a)–6 (n)

Allow about 45 minutes for this section

Answer the question in the Section II Writing Booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

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Your answer will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of human experiences in texts
  - analyse, explain and assess the ways human experiences are represented in texts
  - organise, develop and express ideas using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context
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#### Question 6 (20 marks)

##### Prose Fiction

- (a) **Anthony Doerr, *All the Light We Cannot See***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *All the Light We Cannot See* invite you to reconsider your understanding of courage?

OR

- (b) **Amanda Lohrey, *Vertigo***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *Vertigo* invite you to reconsider your understanding of resilience?

OR

- (c) **George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* invite you to reconsider your understanding of loneliness?

OR

Question 6 continues on page 10

Question 6 (continued)

(d) **Favel Parrett, *Past the Shallows***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *Past the Shallows* invite you to reconsider your understanding of loss?

OR

**Poetry**

(e) **Rosemary Dobson, *Rosemary Dobson Collected***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in Dobson's poetry invite you to reconsider your understanding of ageing?

The prescribed poems are:

- \* *Young Girl at a Window*
- \* *Over the Hill*
- \* *Summer's End*
- \* *The Conversation*
- \* *Cock Crow*
- \* *Amy Caroline*
- \* *Canberra Morning*

OR

(f) **Kenneth Slessor, *Selected Poems***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in Slessor's poetry invite you to reconsider your understanding of struggle?

The prescribed poems are:

- \* *Wild Grapes*
- \* *Gulliver*
- \* *Out of Time*
- \* *Vesper-Song of the Reverend Samuel Marsden*
- \* *William Street*
- \* *Beach Burial*

OR

**Question 6 continues on page 11**



Question 6 (continued)

**Drama**

- (g) **Jane Harrison, *Rainbow's End*, from Vivienne Cleven et al., *Contemporary Indigenous Plays***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *Rainbow's End* invite you to reconsider your understanding of acceptance?

**OR**

- (h) **Arthur Miller, *The Crucible***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *The Crucible* invite you to reconsider your understanding of love?

**OR**

**Shakespearean Drama**

- (i) **William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *The Merchant of Venice* invite you to reconsider your understanding of deception?

**OR**

**Question 6 continues on page 12**

Question 6 (continued)

**Nonfiction**

(j) **Tim Winton, *The Boy Behind the Curtain***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *The Boy Behind the Curtain* invite you to reconsider your understanding of independence?

The prescribed chapters are:

- \* *Havoc: A Life in Accidents*
- \* *Betsy*
- \* *Twice on Sundays*
- \* *The Wait and the Flow*
- \* *In the Shadow of the Hospital*
- \* *The Demon Shark*
- \* *Barefoot in the Temple of Art*

**OR**

(k) **Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb, *I am Malala***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *I am Malala* invite you to reconsider your understanding of strength?

**OR**

**Film**

(l) **Stephen Daldry, *Billy Elliot***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *Billy Elliot* invite you to reconsider your understanding of commitment?

**OR**

**Question 6 continues on page 13**

Question 6 (continued)

**Media**

(m) **Ivan O'Mahoney, *Go Back to Where You Came From***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *Go Back to Where You Came From* invite you to reconsider your understanding of fear?

The prescribed episodes are:

- \* *Series 1: Episodes 1, 2 and 3*
- and
- \* *The Response*

**OR**

(n) **Lucy Walker, *Waste Land***

To what extent does the exploration of human experience in *Waste Land* invite you to reconsider your understanding of power?

**End of paper**