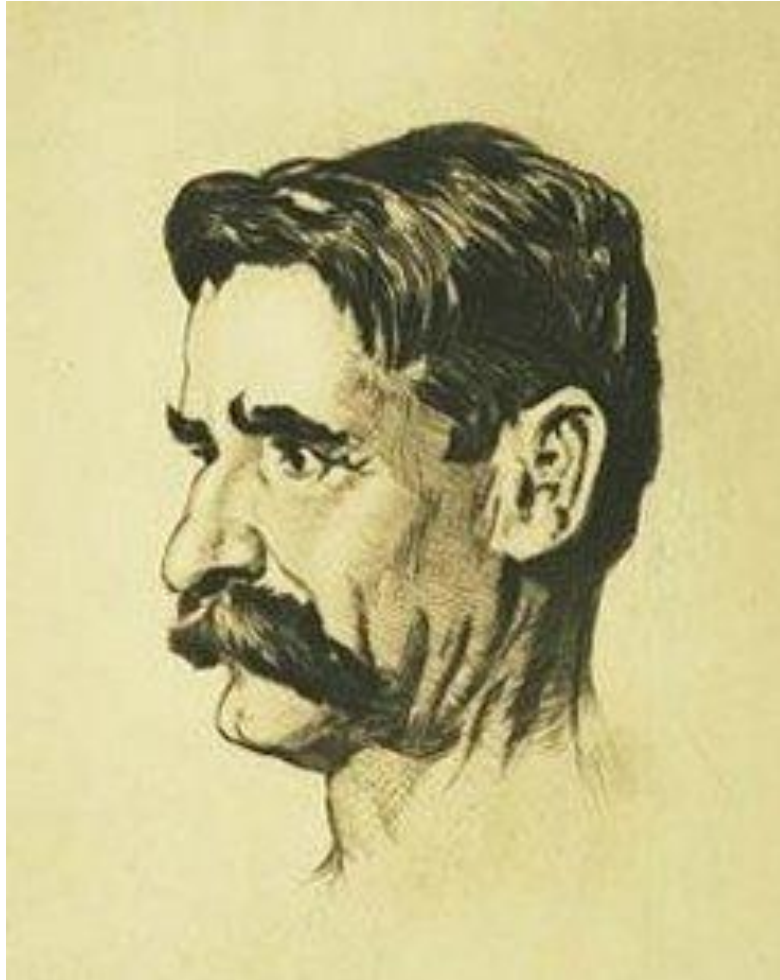


Distinctively Visual



Henry Lawson Short Stories

Past HSC Questions for Distinctively Visual

2013

How does the use of the distinctively visual emphasise the ways that individuals respond to significant aspects of life?

In your response, make detailed reference to your prescribed text and ONE other related text of your own choosing.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What significant aspects of life will need to be discussed? Daily life? Relationships? Interaction with the landscape for profit and livelihood but also mental stability? Identity? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What individuals will I use? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the individual respond? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How is this response represented and emphasised through language techniques that portray this response in visual ways? |

2012

Interesting views on society are conveyed by the distinctively visual.

Explore how this is achieved in your prescribed text and ONE other related text of your own choosing.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What message about society is the composer communicating in their text? Diversity of individuals makes up a society? Society can be unforgiving or warm? Society stifles independence and freedom? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What characters and situations will I use to explore these ideas? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What language techniques are used to communicate these ideas in visual ways? |

2011

In what ways are people and their experiences brought to life through the distinctively visual?

In your response, make detailed reference to your prescribed text and at least ONE other related text of your own choosing.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What experiences are being explored in the text? Loneliness and hardship? Single parenting? The birth of heroism? The lack of control and choice and the presence of fate? The loss of hope? The consequences of being different? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the composer bring these ideas to life through techniques? |

Henry Lawson

1867-1922

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Lawson

Henry Lawson was born 17 June 1867 in a town on the Grenfell goldfields of New South Wales. His father was Niels Hertzberg Larsen, a Norwegian-born miner from Tromøya near Arendal. Niels Larsen went to sea at 21 and arrived in Melbourne in 1855 to join the gold rush, along with partner William Henry John Slee. Lawson's parents met at the goldfields of Pipeclay (now Eurunderee New South Wales). Niels and Louisa Albury (1848–1920) married on 7 July 1866 when he was 32 and she 18. On Henry's birth, the family surname was Anglicised and Niels became Peter Lawson. The newly married couple were to have an unhappy marriage. Louisa, after family-raising, took a significant part in women's movements, and edited a women's paper called The Dawn (published May 1888 to July 1905). She also published her son's first volume, and around 1904 brought out a volume of her own, *Dert and Do*, a simple story of 18,000 words. In 1905 she collected and published her own verses, *The Lonely Crossing and other Poems*. Louisa likely had a strong influence on her son's literary work in its earliest days. Peter Lawson's grave (with headstone) is in the little private cemetery at Hartley Vale, New South Wales, a few minutes' walk behind what was Collitt's Inn.

Lawson attended school at Eurunderee from 2 October 1876 but suffered an ear infection at around this time. It left him with partial deafness and by the age of fourteen he had lost his hearing entirely. However, his master John Tierney was kind and did all he could for Lawson, who was quite shy. Lawson later attended a Catholic school at Mudgee, New South Wales around 8 km away; the master there, Mr Kevan, would teach Lawson about poetry. Lawson was a keen reader of Dickens and Marryat and novels such as Robbery under Arms and For the Term of his Natural Life; an aunt had also given him a volume by Bret Harte. Reading became a major source of his education because, due to his deafness, he had trouble learning in the classroom.

In 1883, after working on building jobs with his father in the Blue Mountains, Lawson joined his mother in Sydney at her request. Louisa was then living with Henry's sister and brother. At this time, Lawson was working during the day and studying at night for his matriculation in the hopes of receiving a university education. However, he failed his exams. At around 20 years of age Lawson went to the eye and ear hospital in Melbourne but nothing could be done for his deafness.

In 1896, Lawson married Bertha Bredt Jr., daughter of Bertha Bredt, the prominent socialist. The marriage was ill-advised due to Lawson's alcohol addiction. They had two children, son Jim (Joseph) and daughter Bertha. However, the marriage ended very unhappily.

Importance of Lawson

- One of the first Australian writers to capture the voice of Australia within the framework of emerging nationalism. British depictions of Australia were not satisfactory and Lawson used the vernacular and experiences of the Australian bush people to connect to his audiences.
- Lawson wrote for *The Bulletin* and his stories appealed to the values of Australians, particularly males; values of mateship, egalitarianism and socialism were evident.
- Lawson contributed to the formation of a distinctly Australian identity but also challenged aspects of it as distinctly male.

Consider the values Australians still feel connected to today. All of these values and stereotypes are still present today and are often used to define the Australian identity.

- Aussie Battler _____
- Underdog _____
- Stoicism in the face of adversity _____
- Larrikin _____
- Egalitarianism _____
- Mateship _____
- Lack of pretension _____
- Self-deprecating humour _____



For a glossary of language techniques useful in this module visit:

<http://www.etawa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Halls-Language-Technique-glossary-NFP.pdf>

The Drover's Wife



1. How is the landscape and the woman similar to the representations depicted in Lawson's story?

Word	Meaning
Shanty	A small, roughly built house usually made of wood
Squatter	A person who settles on land without right or title or payment of rent
Gaunt	Extremely thin and bony
Urchin	A mischievous boy; a rascal
Earthen	A floor made of dirt
Blinded	An expletive /swear word of the time
'skeezed'	squeezed
Blanky	A swear word of the time
Extricate	free
Partition	An interior wall
Remnant	Remaining quantity of sheep
Provisions	Supplies of food and other necessities
Fashion-plates	Illustrations showing the latest fashion in clothes
Buggy	A light two-wheeled open carriage
Gin	An abbreviation of Aborigine – only used in reference to female Aborigines
Bullock	A castrated bull
Pleuro-pneumonia	A disease affecting the lungs of cattle
'In the horrors'	A withdrawal process (condition) in people who have developed dependence on alcohol and its characterised by hallucinations and tremors
Sundowner	A homeless man who arrives at sunset so that he cannot be asked to do odd jobs in exchange for a place to stay
Swagman	A wanderer who carries his personal belongings with him in a sack
Prambulator	A pram
Monotony	Wearisome uniformity or lack of variety
'sense of the ridiculous'	The ability to find humour in the seemingly absurd

2. Fill in the table below by commenting on what we learn about the characters and place through Lawson's use of language techniques.

Quote	What techniques are used to communicate a message about person and/or place?
<p><i>The bush consists of stunted, rotten native apple trees.</i></p> <p>No undergrowth. Nothing to relieve the eye.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monotonous, barren, unwelcoming, minimalistic
<p>Nineteen miles to the nearest sign of civilisation – a shanty on the main road.</p> <p>His wife and children are left here alone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolation, loneliness, vulnerability
<p>Gaunt, sun-browned bushwoman</p> <p>Four ragged, dried-up looking children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardship, poverty, naturalistic/realistic

3. The Drover's Wife has been represented as a heroine and Lawson brings her to life using a number of techniques. She is represented as a strong, resourceful woman who immediately takes action yet still insists on proper manners despite the harsh and unforgiving environment. She is depicted as an ordinary woman responding to extraordinary circumstances in an admirable, no-nonsense/matter-of-fact manner.

For each of the following quotes, explain how language is used to represent the woman and her experiences.

- a) She... 'dashes from the kitchen, snatches her baby from the ground, holds it on her left hip, and reaches for a stick.'

- **Action verbs**

- b) The drover's wife **makes** the children stand together near the dog-house while she watches for the snake.

- **Imperative actions and contrast**

c) She has an eye on the corner, and a green sapling club laid in readiness on the dresser by her side, together with her sewing basket and a copy of the Young Ladies Journal.

- **Contrast and symbolism**

d) His mother asks him how many times she has told him not to swear.

- **Clichéd action or response**

e) As a girl she built the usual castles in the air; but all her girlish aspirations have long been dead.

- **Allusion to fairytales**

f) One of her children died while she was here alone. She rode nineteen miles for assistance, carrying the dead child.

g) She put on an old pair of her husband's trousers and beat out the flames with a green bough, till great drops of sooty perspiration stood out on her forehead and ran in streaks down her blackened arms.

- **Anecdotes and flashback and body language**

h) The fire would have mastered her but for four excited bushmen arrived in the nick of time.

- **Colloquial language and connotative words**

i) She stood for hours in the drenching downpour, and dug an overflow gutter to save the dam across the creek. But she could not save it. There are things that a bushwoman cannot do...She cried then.

- **Alliterative phrases and short sentences**

j) She also fought... (pluero-pneumonia)...Again, she fought a mad bullock... She made bullets and fired at him through cracks in the slabs with an old shotgun. He was dead in the morning. She also fights the crows...Her plan of campaign is very original.

- **Repetition and cumulative actions**

k) The woman experiences numerous threats from masculine outsiders. Her femininity makes her vulnerable but her attitude makes her heroic.

She got a batten from the sofa, loosened the dog, and confronted the stranger...'

l) ...on Sunday afternoon she dresses herself, tidies the children, smartens up baby , and goes for a lonely walk along the bush-track...

m) But this bushwoman is used to the loneliness of it. As a girl-wife she hated it, but now she would feel strange away from it.

n) The woman was hurt by being exploited by a 'stray blackfellow' who had built her a hollow wood-heap, especially after she had rewarded him. Nevertheless she has a 'keen sense of the ridiculous' and laughs when she pokes herself in the eye as her handkerchief had holes in it.

o) Woman and dog work together to remove the menace from their home. 'Thud, thud comes the woman's club on the ground...She lifts the mangled reptile ...carries it to the fire, and throws it in...'

p) She lays her hand on the dog's head, and all the fierce, angry light dies out of his yellow eyes.'

q) Re Tommy: 'And she hugs him to her worn-out breast and kisses him; and they sit thus together whilst the sickly daylight breaks over the bush.'

Throughout the story we are being given snapshots of the obstacles the wife faced and the outcome at times was not always successful; however, the flashbacks and anecdotes serve to build the capacity of the woman to handle the threat that frames the narrative, the snake. She has been through uncertainty and danger before so she has the qualities that may continue to sustain her family. Lawson uses flashbacks in the long moments of waiting to create a realistic image of boredom combined with alertness. There must be moments of extended waiting to intensify and dramatise the action when it does occur to keep the reader invested in the world of the drover's life and her experiences.

What values does the drover's wife represent? Is she distinctively Australian in this representation?

Relationships

People or Animals	How do the quotes and language techniques reinforce the characterisation of the drover's wife and the type of relationship she has with other characters?
<p>Tommy</p> <p>Stop there, mother! I'll have him. Stand back!</p> <p>Shut up, you little -!</p> <p>Mother! Listen to them little possums. I'd like to screw their blanky necks.'</p> <p>The eldest boy wakes up, seizes his stick, and tries to get out of bed, but his mother forces him back with a grip of iron.</p> <p>Mother, I won't never go drovin'; blast me if I do!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masculinity, innocence, gender roles
<p>Alligator</p> <p>...big, black yellow-eyed dog-of-all-breeds</p> <p>Alligator lies at full length on the floor, with his eyes turned towards the partition.</p> <p>He is afraid of nothing...He will tackle a bullock as readily as he will tackle a flea.</p> <p>Alligator attacks the wife when he thought she was a 'black man'- ...continued to hang on to the moleskins until choked off by Tommy...</p> <p>The dog lies still, and the woman sits as one fascinated.</p>	
<p>Husband</p> <p>The drought of 18- ruined him.</p> <p>He is careless, but a good enough husband.</p> <p>They are used to being apart, or at least she is.</p> <p>She is used to being left alone.</p>	

When he had money he took her to the city several times...

Symbolism

- The snake is not the only antagonist in this woman's life but it is the current one. The presence of the snake acts as a catalyst for exploring the multiple hardships this woman and her family have endured. The snake is a biblical allusion which represents temptation and encourages Eve to taste the forbidden fruit and 'destroy' her paradise in the Garden of Eden. The fact that she kills the snake subverts the Biblical storyline and instead we see the drover's wife as a woman of discipline and control, unlike the traditional Eve. She remains in her 'paradise' although, ironically, it is not the typical lush representation of the Garden of Eden.
 - *He shakes the snake as though he felt the original curse in common with mankind.*
- The use of weather and night symbolism – thunderstorms- creates a visual of darkness and claustrophobia. At the beginning of the narrative, the 'thunderstorm is coming.' As the woman proceeds to wait the snake out, the weather description is elevated to 'The thunder rolls, and the rain comes down in torrents'. The night and the thunderstorm serve to represent the internal turmoil and fear of the woman and provide a means for her to draw out the difficult experiences she faced alone. As the narrative proceeds to daylight, the woman's anecdotes are more amusing and less soul-destroying – cat crying when she does and poking her eyes with her handkerchief full of holes. When we are told it is near morning, Lawson writes 'The rain has cleared off', implying the danger is still present but not as intense because in daylight the family are more empowered to deal with the menace of the snake. The adjective of 'sickly' in 'sickly daylight' in the concluding lines of the narrative implies that whilst the family is safe as symbolised through the illumination of daylight, their environment is not a nourishing one to exist in as evident by the connotative use of the word 'sickly'.

Textual Construction

Features of the Short Story	What happens and how does this invite the audience to visualise the characters, relationships and events?
<i>Orientation</i>	<i>Lawson describes the world for the reader and enables them to picture the monotony and ordinariness that pervades the world of the drover's wife. He must now colour this world with some action to break the bleak depiction and maintain reader interest and imagination.</i>
<i>Complication</i>	

<p><i>Series of events: building the characterisation of the protagonist by referring to a series of complications in the woman's world. Immediate complication is contrasted with past complications to maintain reader interest and inspire visualisation of the character.</i></p>	
<p><i>Resolution</i></p>	

Using the notes you made on *The Drover's Wife*, answer the following question.

Question: Explore how composers use the distinctively visual to portray the complexity of humans.

The Character of the Bush Undertaker

For each of the following quotes, analyse the use of language and how it helps the audience to interpret the personality, values and attitude of the bush undertaker:

1. The man is referred to as 'old', 'hatter', soliloquiser and shepherd. How do these terms create a specific image about his character?

2. 'I'll take a pick and shovel an' root up that old blackfellow'...in about half-an-hour he bottomed on payable dirt.

3. When he had raked up all the bones, he amused himself by putting them together on the grass and speculating as to whether they had belonged to black or white...

4. The undertaker comes across the body of a man: 'Me luck's in for the day and no mistake!' He picked up a stick and tapped the body on the shoulder; the flesh sounded like leather...the shrivelled eyes seemed to peer up at him from under the blackened wrists. He stepped back involuntarily, but, recovering himself, leant on his stick and took in all the ghastly details.'

5. After realising the corpse is his friend 'Brummy': 'I tole yer so, Brummy,' he said impressively, addressing the corpse...I allers sed as how it 'ud end , an' now yer kin see fur y'self.'

6. ...I expect I'll have t' fix yer up for the last time an' make yer decent, for 'twon't do t' leave yer a-lyin' out here like a dead sheep.'

7. The undertaker finds some strips of bark and begins to fashion it into a makeshift stretcher for the body. He lifts the corpse: 'Come on, Brummy,' he said, in a softer tone than usual, "yer ain't as bad as yer might be...I spect it was the rum as preserved yer.'

8. 'I can't afford a new shirt jist yet;...seein' it's Brummy, I'll jist borrow a couple more strips and sew'em on agen when I git home.'

9. He lifts the corpse and carries the bag of bones: 'I ain't a-spendin' sech a dull Christmas arter all'...

10. I wonder who got yer last cheque?

11. ...the old man dumped the corpse against the wall, wrong end up...consequently that individual fell forward and struck him a violent blow on the shoulder with the iron toes of his blucher boots...He sprang a good yard, instinctively hitching up his moleskins in preparation for flight...

12. The shepherd was not prepared for the awful scrutiny that gleamed on him from those empty sockets; his nerves received a shock...'Now look a-here, Brummy', said he, shaking his finger severely at the delinquent, 'I don't want to pick a row with yer...but if yer starts playin' any of yer jumpt-up pranktical jokes on me, and a-scarin' of me...

13. ...just as he was about to lift the draught to his lips, heard a peculiar rustling sound overhead, and put the pot down on the table with a slam that spilled some of the precious liquor.

14. After watching for about an hour, he saw a black object coming over the ridge-pole. He grabbed his gun and fired. The thing disappeared. He ran round to the other side of the hut, and there was a great, black goanna in violent convulsions on the ground.

15. 'Theer oughter be somethin' sed,' muttered the old man; 'tain't right to put 'im under like a dog. There oughter be some sort o' sarmin.'

16. He removed his hat, placed it carefully on the grass, held his hands out from his sides and a little to the front, drew a long deep breath, and said with a solemnity that greatly disturbed Five Bob, 'Hashes ter hashes, dus ter dus, Brummy, - an' – an' in hopes of a great an' gerlorious rassaraction!'

17. ...passed his hand wearily over his forehead – but only as one who was tired and felt the heat...

Relationships

Characters	How does Lawson's language serve to reinforce the nature of relationships?
Dog – Five Bob	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...dusty sheepdog rose wearily...and looked <i>inquiringly</i> at his master • 'Fetch'em back,' he said <i>confidently</i>. • This speech was accompanied by a gesture evidently intelligible, for the dog retired as though he understood English. • Dinner proceeded very quietly, except when the carver paused to ask the dog how some tasty morsel went with him, and Five Bob's tail declared that it went very well indeed. • ...the strangest part of it being that Five Bob wouldn't touch the reptile, but <i>slunk off</i> with his tail down when ordered to 'sick'em'. 	

- **Five Bob whimpered**, and the old shepherd, though used to being weird and dismal, **as one living alone in the bush** must necessarily be, felt the icy breath of fear at his heart.

Brummy

- ...he espied an object which he at first thought was the blackened carcass of a sheep...
- The old man caught sight of a black bottle in the grass, close beside the corpse.
- Yer don't smell none too sweet, Brummy. It must 'a' been jist about the middle of shearin' when yer pegged out.
- 'I never rightly knowed Brummy's religion...'

Landscape and inhabitants

- ...broiling Christmas day
- Slab-and-bark hut
- Barren creek
- ...a great greasy black goanna clambered up a sapling from under his feet and looked fightable.'
- ...dried to a mummy by the intense heat of the western summer.
- The goanna continues to trail the bush undertaker in a predatory and territorial manner, the pervasive threat that lingers around the frame of the narrative much like the snake in *The Drover's Wife*. 'Shoo! Theer's another black gohanner – theer must be a flock on'em.'
- ...saw another goanna gliding off sideways, with its long, snaky neck turned towards him.
- As there was no one by whom he could send a message to the station, and the old man dared not leave the sheep and go himself, he determined to bury the body the next afternoon, reflecting that the authorities could disinter it for inquest if they pleased.
- ...none of them their pianer-fingered parsons is a-goin' ter take the trouble ter travel out inter this God-forgotten part to hold service over him, seein' as how his last cheque's blued.'
- And the sun sank again on the Australian bush – the nurse and tutor of eccentric minds, the home of the weird, and of much that is different from things in other lands.

Using at least SIX of the above quotes, write a paragraph about how Lawson uses language to help the reader visualise the experiences of those in the bush.

Storyboard the plot of *The Loaded Dog* below.

The men decide to blow up the waterhole.		

2. What is the purpose of this story/yarn?

3. Define the term 'larrikin' which is considered to be a distinctly Australian character type. How do the characters in this narrative fit this stereotype?

Word	Meaning
Sinking a shaft	Mining
Vicinity	area
Tallow	The fatty tissue of sheep or cattle, usually melted down to make candles – makes things waterproof
Chaffing	Mocking, ridicule
Elaborate	Sophisticated and intricate
Formidable	Dreadful and fearsome
Billy	A metal can strung over a campfire and used for boiling tea
The 'claim'	The designated area being mined was known as a claim
The 'scrub'	Thick bushland
Treacle	Golden syrup
Frolic	play
Foller	Phonetic spelling used by Lawson to capture the way people often said the word 'follow'
Sapling	A young tree
Lark	A slang expression meaning jokes
Sardonically	Irreverently, mockingly
Feebly	Weakly, unconvincingly
Shanty	A small, roughly built house usually made of wood
Wash-house	A laundry
Mongrel	A dog of mixed breed
Amiability	Friendliness
Lanky	Tall and thin, awkward

Definitions from Into English

Characters

Dave Regan

Dave got an idea.

'Why not blow the fish up in the big waterhole with a cartridge?

Dave's schemes were elaborate...

Andy Page

Andy would fish for three hours at a stretch if encouraged by a 'nibble' or a 'bite' now and then...

He made a cartridge about three times the size of those they used in the rock. (95)

Andy usually put Dave's theories into practice if they were practicable, or bore the blame for failure and the chaffing of his mates if they weren't. (95)

Jim Bently

Jim Bently, by the way, wasn't interested in their 'damned silliness'.

How has Lawson used **contrast and other techniques** to help emphasise the reader's visualisation of characters? Hint: whilst they are 'mates' there is diversity and it is in diversity that the reader can visualise the individual.

Landscape and its Dangers or Limitations

Creek

There was plenty of fish in the creek, fresh-water bream, cod, cat-fish, and tailers.

...but now it was winter, and these fish wouldn't bite. (94)

There was the cat-fish, with spikes growing out of the sides of its head, and if you'd got pricked you'd know it, as Dave said.

Dave scooped one out with his hand and got pricked, and he knew it too; his arm swelled, and the pain throbbed up into his shoulder...

Andy took off his boots, tucked up his trousers, and went into a hole one day to stir up the mud with his feet, and he knew it.

How does Lawson depict the dangers of the landscape in this narrative? How are they different or similar to the landscape in *The Drover's Wife* or *The Bush Undertaker*?

Team Tommy vs Team Mongrel

Lawson contrasts the two types of dogs by using a range of techniques to position the audience to like one and dislike the other. Consider how our values are being appealed to by the distinctively visual.

<p>The dog –Tommy Innocent ‘Villain’</p>	<p>They had a big, black, young retriever dog – or rather an overgrown pup, a big, foolish, -four-footed mate, who was always slobbering round them and lashing their legs with his heavy tail that swung around like a stock-whip.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adjectives, emotive words, verbs, simile, characterisation</i> <p>He seemed to take life, the world, his two-legged mates, and his own instinct as a huge joke. He’d retrieve anything...They had a cat that died in hot weather, and Andy threw it a good distance away in the scrub; and early one morning the dog found the cat, after it had been dead a week or so, and carried it back to camp, and laid it just inside the tent-flaps, where it could best make its presence known when the mates should rise and begin to sniff suspiciously in the sickly smothering atmosphere of the summer sunrise. (96)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anecdote, alliterative phrases, black humour, sense of theatre, anthropomorphism</i> <p>He watched Andy with great interest all the morning making the cartridge...</p>
<p>Mongrel Cattle Dog – The Archetypal Villain</p>	<p>...vicious yellow mongrel cattle- dog sulking and nursing his nastiness- a sneaking, fighting, thieving canine, whom neighbours had tried for years to shoot or poison.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Listing, emotive words, clinical description</i> <p>...the yellow dog caught him and nipped him.</p> <p>The yellow dog followed him to the fence and then ran back to see what he had dropped.</p> <p>They kept at a respectable distance round the nasty yellow dog, for it was dangerous to go near him...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adjectives, other character’s body language</i> <p>He sniffed at the cartridge twice, and was just taking a third cautious sniff when – It was very good blasting powder...and the cartridge had been excellently well made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hanging sentence, understatement</i> <p>When the smoke and dust cleared away, the remains of the nasty yellow dog were lying against the paling fence of the yard looking as if it had been kicked into a fire by a horse and afterwards rolled in the dust under a barrow, and finally thrown against the fence from a distance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cinematic images, exaggeration/hyperbole, similes</i>

Dave...made a dive and a grab for the dog, caught him by the tail, and as he swung around snatched the cartridge out of his mouth and flung it as far as he could; the dog immediately bounded after it and retrieved it. (97)

Jim swung to a sapling and went up it like a native bear...The dog laid the cartridge, as carefully as if it was a kitten, at the foot of the sapling, and capered and leaped and whooped joyously round under Jim. The fuse sounded as if it was going a mile a minute. Jim tried to climb higher and the sapling bent and cracked.

Dave was desperate...rushed into the bar...My dog! He gasped...the blanky retriever – he's got a live cartridge in his mouth.'

The retriever...now stood smiling in the doorway...the cartridge still in his mouth and the fuse spluttering. They burst out of that bar. Tommy bounded first after one and then after another, for, being a young dog, he tried to make friends with everybody.

Bushmen say that the kitchen jumped off its piles and on again.

Dave decided to apologise later on, 'when things had settled a bit'... (100)

After reading the action sequence, find examples of these techniques and explain their effect on the reader.

Technique	Example and effect
Suspense	
Hyphen	
Short sentence	
Simile	
Action verbs	
Colloquialisms or idiomatic expressions	

In a Dry Season

1. What is a sketch? What other of Lawson's story uses this sketch style?

2. What narrative voice is used? How and why does it differ from Lawson's other stories?

3. Is Lawson presenting a romanticised image of the bush? Explain your answer.

Word	Meaning
Railway towns	Small towns established as a result of constructing the railway line and populated by those who worked on the railways
Public House	Pub
Ungroomed hacks	Informal expression meaning 'hackney coach drivers'
Sundowner	A homeless man who arrives at sunset so that he cannot be asked to do odd jobs in exchange for a place to stay
Half-obliterated	Almost destroyed
Humpy	A house/dwelling similar to a shanty
Fettler's tent	A fettler was a railway worker- these workers would camp in tents along the railway line
Slop sac suits	Slop was a slang expression for ready-made clothing and 'sac' was coarsely woven material. A slop-sac suit is made of coarse linen which can be store-bought
Bereavement	To be desolate or alone, especially by death
Macquarie	Macquarie River- an inland river running from Macquarie Vale to Bathurst
Royal Alfred	A large, heavy swag which included a tent (indicates the person collected items obsessively)
Nevertire	A small, one pub railway town - very dry country with much saltbush
Byrock	A small railway town further north than Nevertire
Hailed	Called out to
Black tracker	An Aboriginal man employed by the government to track run-away Aboriginal children
Bourke	Larger centre and status as a major river port but there are no train stations within walking distance of Bourke
Brink	edge
Bush liar	A person not originally from the bush, an imposter who tries to impress

Word	Meaning
Bush larrikin	A person giving to comical or outlandish behaviour
Quid	A British pound - quid was a term used by city dwellers so the bush liar is revealed to be from the city.
Three or four sheds	Shearing sheds – the bush liar is in the country shearing sheep
Super	The man in charge of the shearing shed
Offering him pens	A pen of sheep ... for shearing
Scrapper	A slang term for a boxer/fighter
The father of a biding	Rhyming slang meaning 'gave him a hiding' – beat his opponent in a boxing match
Took the liar down	An expression meaning to verbally put him down
Snaky	Irritable or spiteful

Definitions from Into English

Representations of the Landscape

For each of the following quotes, explain the effect of the highlighted words through technique analysis:

1. **Draw** a wire fence and a few ragged gums, and **add some scattered sheep** running away from the train. Then **you'll** have the bush all along the New South Wales Western line from Bathurst on.

2. The railway town consists of a **public house and a general store, with a square tank and a schoolhouse on piles in the nearer distance.**

3. The Railway stores seem to exist only in the **shadow of the pub...**

4. By way of **variety**, the artist **might make** a watercolour- sketch of a fettler's tent on the line, with a billy hanging over the fire in front...

5. We crossed the Macquarie – **a narrow, muddy gutter** ...

6. The least horrible spot in the bush, in a dry season, is where the bush isn't – where it has been cleared away and a **green crop is trying to grow**.

7. **Death** is about the only **cheerful** thing in the bush.

8. Somebody said to me, '**Yer wanter go out back**, young man, if **yer wanter** to see the country. **Yer wanter** get away from the line.' **I don't wanter; I've been there**.

Representations of People and Society

Lawson is not interested in individualising characters but instead works on stereotyping the types of characters that one may see in the country. He provides a snapshot of types by focusing primarily on the 'costume/clothing' to provide the reader with a distinctively visual impression of the characters. Whilst the landscape is uniform and monotonous, the character types are diverse and create a level of interest on this train journey. Lawson uses minimalistic language to highlight the simplicity of the bush landscape and the individuals who inhabit it.

1) The Distinguished Bushman

- Slop sac suits, red faces, and old-fashioned flat-brimmed hats...and here and there a hat with three inches of crape round the crown... **Listing and object description**
- I notice that when a bushman puts crape round his hat he generally leaves it there til the hat wears out, or another friend dies. **Symbolism**
- This outward sign of bereavement usually has a jolly red face underneath it. **Contrast**

a) *Using the language techniques mentioned above, explain what conclusions the reader can draw about the type of person being 'sketched'.*

2) The Sundowner

- He carried a Royal Alfred, and had a billy in one hand and a stick in the other. **Listing and object description**
- Suddenly he slipped his swag, dropped his billy, and ran forward, boldly flourishing the stick. I thought that he was mad, and was about to attack the train, but he wasn't; he was only killing a snake. **Action verbs and connotative word**
- I didn't have time to see whether he cooked the snake or not – perhaps he only thought of Adam. **Biblical allusion**

a) *Using the language techniques mentioned above, explain what conclusions the reader can draw about the type of person being 'sketched'.*

3) The Shearers

- They dress like the unemployed, but differ from that body in their looks of independence. **Simile**
- ...hailed Bill, and Jim, and Tom, and asked how those individuals were getting on. **Verb**

a) *Using the language techniques mentioned above, explain what conclusions the reader can draw about the type of person being 'sketched'.*

4) The Unemployed

- Often a member of the unemployed starts cheerfully out, with a letter from the Government Bureau in his pocket...He travels for a night and day without a bite to eat, and, on arrival, he finds that the station is eighty or a hundred miles away. **Contrast**
- God forgive our social system! **Exclamation and tone**

a) *Using the language techniques mentioned above, explain what conclusions the reader can draw about the type of person being 'sketched' and their society.*

5) The Bush Liar

- ...we met the bush liar in all his glory. **Sarcasm**
- He was dressed like – like a bush larrikin. **Simile**
- He had been to a ball where some blank had 'touched' his blanky overcoat. The overcoat had a cheque for ten 'quid' in the pocket. He didn't seem to feel the loss much. **Colloquialism**
- He had learned butchering in a day. **Hyberbole**
- At the last station...he gave the super the father of a hiding. **Tone**
- He worked with a man who shore 400 sheep in nine hours.
- ...a quiet-looking bushman in a corner of the carriage ...opened his mouth and took the liar down in about three minutes. **Humour**

a) *Using the language techniques mentioned above, explain what conclusions the reader can draw about the type of person being 'sketched'.*

Do you think the train journey was a positive or negative experience for the narrator? Explain.

Write your own description of a train journey based on your experiences of travel. Be descriptive and allow your audience to visualise the world you are attempting to create.
