

2.2 Common Module: *Texts and Human Experiences*

Texts and Human Experiences is a module common to Advanced and Standard courses and some students in the English Studies course, so it is an important foundation. The choice of texts is the same across the three courses. Paper 1 Section II (the extended response questions for the HSC examination) is the same across the three courses, though Paper 1 Section I of the HSC Examination (the short answers to different unseen texts) will have a different selection of readings and different questions to answer. See Part 1 for the examination details.

What it's about

Human experiences are both individual and group. They can be common to people from different places and times or they can be very different. That is why there can be a paradox: we see ourselves as separate human beings and yet all identify as being human beings. We talk about universal human experience – what unites us – and yet we can also reject the idea of universality when we celebrate the achievements of individuals. But even individuality can be based on shared beliefs and assumptions about what it means to be human. We celebrate these achievements through stories and the texts we share. Texts are a vehicle to represent human experiences through language, which is why we need to be able to find the language features to understand how the meaning of humanity and human experiences is conveyed or represented. The module says students need to *make increasingly informed judgements about how aspects of these texts, for example context, purpose, structure, stylistic and grammatical features, and form shape meaning*. This means you need to understand and be able to talk about the ways all parts of a text work together to capture our human experiences.

Texts are where we find these paradoxical ideas captured, with some texts celebrating individuality and others saying it's better to be united. When we study texts in this module we look for what the text is saying about humanity: What does the text value? Is it the individual or the collective experiences? How do our experiences affect us emotionally? What human qualities do we find in texts? What motivates us? We also need to ask: How does the composer use language to convey this meaning? How does the style, structure and grammar of the text speak to us about human experiences? What is the composer's purpose in telling us this story in the context in which it is produced and consumed? ('Produced' refers to when it was composed and 'consumed' refers to when it is being read.)

Activity

- List five beliefs about humans that you think everyone believes in.
- Write a belief you have about humans that may not be common to everyone.

What you need to do

See Part 1 for the HSC requirements for this module. Apart from the HSC, each school will have different assessments – but the assessment rules are the same. The module has to be assessed in a school task that must include a related text; however, you won't need a related text for the HSC examination.

Related texts are supposed to be selected by the student to accompany their study of the module. The module states that students *select one related text and draw from personal experience to make connections between themselves, the world of the text and their wider world*.

In other words, you choose a text that you like and that you understand but it has to be related to the module. You need to be able to discuss the additional text in relation to the class text. It doesn't have to be about the same human experience as your class text: it could be a contrast. The way you deal with the two texts will depend on the assessment task that you have to complete. The related text will not be needed in the HSC examination.

Texts include films such as documentaries, short films and feature films; digital texts such as webpages, games and blogs; podcasts and many other forms in different modes and media.

Finding a related text is urgent – leaving this to the last minute can delay assessment and thinking time.

You can start with:

- What you already know – think about what you've studied read, viewed, listened to or encountered in past classes or on your own and what it says about human experiences; will it work with the class text?
- What is in the prescribed text? Find a text to match or contrast with this.

- What form you like – if you like film then use film, but make sure you know how to discuss film. If you don't understand how to write about the film techniques, then avoid film.
- If you have a long text for class study then it may be best to choose a short text as the related text.

Activity

- Describe your personal experience.
- Describe your wider world.
- Describe the world of your related text.
- What connects these three worlds?

2.3 Module A: *Textual Conversations*

Module A is a comparative module that is specific to Advanced students. It will be tested in Paper 2 of the HSC examination which usually requires an extended response, offering a position on the texts, supported by evidence in the texts.

What it's about

This module is based on an understanding of intertextuality. Intertextuality is the network of relationships formed around and between texts. Many texts bounce off other texts or remind us of each other. This changes the reading experience as we apply what we understand about one text to another. We might read a book in one way, but when we read it against another text we find our original perspective of the text altered. Everything we encounter is considered against what we already know: the 'new' is in conversation with the 'old', revealing ideas across different contexts.

When composers *reimagine* or *reframe* a text, they invite us to reconsider the previous text or to see the new text through the old. Composers might connect through a *motif* or *allusion* or innovate by playing with language. Sometimes the change is about changing from one form to another – going from book to film for example – but the texts in this module offer a lot more than just changing the form. These texts speak to each other. By placing the ideas, characters, or even the authors of past texts into a new context, the recent composer is

challenging us to find new meaning either in the present world or in the text being reimagined. The conversation is around context but not just the context of the text but the context of the reader. The module challenges us to ask: How does the contextual knowledge (personal, social, cultural and historical) brought by individual readers to the text influence their own perspective and shape their own compositions? How has each text shaped new meaning in the other?

What you need to do

This module will be tested in schools with different forms of class assessment and in the HSC examination (and the Trials if your school runs a Trial HSC Examination).

The focus in this module is about what connects the texts in conversation. You need to:

- Know both texts but focus on connecting elements and not on everything to do with each text. Constructing a table to compare features from each text might help.
- Practise writing thesis statements that are comparative.
- Know how to write comparatively.

Activity

- Read the practice essays in Part 6. List all the comparative phrases and sentence structures.
- Practise writing sentences comparing the two texts starting with the following: *Despite...; While ...; Alternatively ...; On the other hand...; Similarly ...*

2.4 Module B: Critical Study

Module B should be very familiar: close and critical study focusing on a single text is something that is regularly taught in secondary school. In this module only one text will be studied but there may be an additional *The Craft of Writing* text included – see the Module C explanation that follows.

What it's about

Critical study is where we dig deep into a single text. Most of the texts selected for this module are texts that have made an impact in some way. This is a very intensive study, requiring a thorough engagement with the skills of analysis and critical thinking. The text is regarded critically as we search to see not just what it is that makes this text work but why the text is important. It's like applying a *lens* to magnify the ideas but what you find is that different lenses change the way we see the text. The word *lens* in this context means approaching the text from a different perspective, perhaps focusing on gender, race or power relations in the text. Perhaps you want to explore the psychology of the text and understand what motivates the characters. Perhaps you need to look at the author's context and how this influences meaning. All these approaches, and many others, are valid.

One of the words often applied to this module is *textual integrity*. What this means is the way every part of the text fits together to create a whole text with a unified idea. Characters, settings and even the main ideas can change as the text progresses from the introduction to the end but there has to be a reason or motivation that connects all the parts of the text. The language devices, words, structure, grammar of the sentences all direct us to and support the theme, the main idea.

The module also uses the words *significance* and *distinctive qualities*. *Significance* refers to what it is that makes the text important which can include language or ideas. Some composers employ language in ways that stand out aesthetically and have a 'wow!' factor. Significant ideas centre on the experiences that are shared in the text. The common module *Texts and Human Experiences* be seen as a foundational to all the modules, especially this one, as all texts share an aspect of human experience, so transfer your thinking and apply the

question: what is significant about the human experience shared in this text? How does the *construction, content and language* support your interpretation?

In the case of poetry, you may think that because you are studying lots of single poems, poetry is treated differently, with each poem acting as a text, but the poems work together to illustrate the poet's beliefs. So, even though you only want to focus on a couple of poems in depth in an essay, make sure you know the whole suite of poems and how they each build meaning to convey the author's purpose.

What you need to do

There will be different forms of class assessment depending on your school. The HSC examination will require an extended personal response, usually analytical and your school may run trials offering a sample HSC experience (but this is not compulsory).

Critical study is often difficult because, unlike the other modules directing you to a specific focus, you cannot guess what will be in the examination. Studying the whole text and many aspects of the text is a big requirement.

For this module you need to:

- Understand the different possible themes and ideas that the text is conveying
- Know how the individual parts support the whole
- Know the features of form and how these affect meaning
- Identify the features of style and be able to discuss the language in relation to the whole text
- Know the context only in so far as it affects the textual meaning
- Consider the impact of audience and the composer's purpose.

Activity

- List as many themes as you can identify in your text and then write five of these as thesis statements.
 - Link themes to language features.
 - Collect five quotes or scenes for each theme.

2.5 Module C: *The Craft of Writing*

This module is very different to the other modules because it can stand alone or it can be integrated into the other modules – it depends on your school program. It should not be regarded as just supporting other modules. The course includes texts but these are not necessarily going to appear in any exam. It does, however, have an important status as there is a specific section on the examination on this module and the school assessment for this module is a minimum 25% of the school mark. As you will see in the HSC examinations section of this book, the questions are very wide and focus more on skill development, but sometimes the questions ask you to refer to the modules you have studied – your choice or specified.

What it's about

Module C *The Craft of Writing* fits neatly with the Year 11 common module *Reading to Write* because they both focus on the special relationship between reading and writing. Module C is about strengthening and extending your *knowledge, skills and confidence as accomplished writers*. The texts you analyse include two prescribed Module C texts, texts from your own wide reading, texts from the past and contemporary periods and any texts you are studying in the other modules. You use these texts as examples to develop your own cohesive writing style for specific audiences and purposes. You need to be aware of the features of different forms and experiment with *various figurative, rhetorical and linguistic devices*, for example *allusion, imagery, narrative voice, characterisation, and tone*.

What you need to do

There will be class assessment for this module that may also be tested in an HSC Trial Examination. There is a specific question in the HSC Paper 2 on Module C, but this is a very different style of question to what you may be used to and may have two parts. It may be imaginative but it may also be discursive, persuasive, reflective or even informative. Look at the section on writing for more information.

This module requires you to:

- Write constantly in different forms
- Reflect constantly on your writing and what you do

- Set goals for writing and work towards them
- Become conscious of the style and identifying features of other writers
- Experiment with your own writing and try different things.

Activity

- Rate yourself as a writer and explain why you rated yourself this way.
- Reflect on what you learned in Year 11 about writing and what you need to learn.
- What is the best thing you have ever written in any subject? Explain why it was so good. Do not refer to the mark as the only justification but instead explain what was in the writing.

Part 3: Advice on writing

Writing in different forms

In this chapter, we will explore the types of writing required for the HSC examination papers. Before reading this section, look at Part 1 on the HSC examination and the types of questions that are asked.

This chapter will consider:

- How to write short answers (Paper 1 Section I)
- Analytical writing (usually essays) for extended responses on prescribed texts (Paper 1 Section II, and Paper 2 Sections I and II – Modules A and B)
- Writing styles required for Module C: *The Craft of Writing* (Paper 2 Section III), including imaginative, persuasive, informative, discursive and reflective writing.

It is recommended that you read this chapter before moving on to the sample responses, and that you return to this chapter whenever you are writing.

3.1 Short-answer questions

Try CTQE

In order to answer the Section I questions more accurately, you may want to remember the acronym CTQE. These are the essential ingredients of your short text-based answer:

- **Concept** – What idea or notion about human experiences is the question asking you to foreground? You must specifically address this in your answer rather than writing generally about the concept.
- **Textual evidence** – Carefully choose textual evidence that will support your idea about the human experience referred to in the question. You may want to name the language/visual feature in the evidence but it's more important to understand how the technique works to support meaning.
- **Quote** – Where possible, quote directly from the text to support the idea and the aspects of human experience you are discussing.

- **Effect** – What meaning is made by the composer's choice of the language/visual feature? How might it affect a responder? How does it communicate your ideas? Make sure your explanation of the textual evidence links directly to the notion of human experience referred to in the question.

These ingredients do not necessarily need to appear in the order listed here, as long as they are embedded somewhere in your answer.

Activity

Look at the extract below and highlight the various components of the answer using different colours, e.g. C = yellow, T = blue, Q = green, E = orange. You could do this with a study buddy and compare and discuss the reasons for your colour coding.

Sample question

How does the poet capture the human experience of learning about the world around you?

Sample answer

In this poem, Atwood expresses the importance of learning about the world, which she imparts in the tender tone of a parent to a child. Atwood uses second person in, "You begin this way:/ this is your hand / this is your eye .../ This is your mouth" to convey the importance of knowing about yourself before you move into the world. The importance of individuals understanding the reality of conflict, hardship and destruction in the wider world are conveyed through vivid colour imagery in, "You are right to smudge it that way/ with red and then/ the orange: the world burns." Atwood ends the poem with tender, tactile imagery, suggesting that it is important for individuals to be gently guided to appreciate the beauty and complexity of the world: "This is your hand, these are my hands, this is the world."

3.1.1 Extended short-answer questions

Extended answers comparing two or more texts can look like a miniature essay or extended paragraph. A well-structured response stands out. Include the following:

Introduction

- Topic sentence with idea about human experiences that goes across both texts
- Name the texts and composers if known

Body

- Examples with techniques named if you can
- Explanations of the way human experiences are portrayed in the examples (and in relation to the question, which may specify a specific experience which links the texts thematically)

Conclusion

- Tie the points up

Advice

- The danger with this section is that you may fall into recount and just describe what is happening in each text. Make sure you relate your ideas to *Texts and Human Experiences*.
- Know the features of each form so you can compare them (for example, words like *orientation* – *climax* and *resolution* for stories; *vectors*, *eye line*, *tilt up*, *demand*, *low angle* for visual texts, and so on for any type of text).

Go to Part 4 for samples of extended short answers to questions.

3.2 Analytical writing (Paper 1 Section II Modules A and B)

The majority of questions in the HSC examination require analytical essays so it is important to know how to frame an analytical response.

What makes HSC English essays distinctive?

The good news about writing essays is that they are structured in a logical manner. Following the correct structure will help you to construct an effective argument.

Remember that your HSC examination essays will be:

- Written in timed conditions
- Responding to an unseen question
- Requiring you to respond to prescribed texts
- Based on the particular connections between your set text, the question and a key concept indicated in the module.

The fact that your essays are timed means that, while it may be tempting to compose and memorise vast amounts of information, ultimately you will need to be able to construct *concise* and *focused* arguments. Memorising an entire essay is *not* appropriate preparation for this examination, though you may wish to develop drafts in response to different questions as a way of learning to adapt your points to suit different arguments. Being faced with an unseen question means that you will need to shape your whole argument – not just the introduction and conclusion – to deal with the demands of the examination.

Remember that you already know the specific aspects of your texts you will need to discuss and their relationship to the key concept in the module. This means you can approach your texts in a focused manner, rather than concentrating on closely studying every aspect of each text. This is immensely helpful, as what you really need to know is the specific way each text represents, illustrates, envisages and depicts the set concept. HSC essays have particular requirements, so it is important to know what they are before you begin to prepare for the examination.

A note on textual evidence

This is an area that is too often overlooked. Good arguments can be held back by poor supporting evidence. This usually happens when the student doesn't know the text well enough to be able to think of the best evidence to answer the examination question. Don't go into the examination room with a vague idea about what happens in the text and a handful of quotations you are determined to fit to any question. You need to know all your texts well enough that you can quickly and easily think of the best evidence to fit your points to directly answer the question. You also need to know the specific requirement of the module so that your learning anticipates the kinds of questions that will arise. The best way to know your texts well is to read or view them several times and not to depend on a study guide. If it is a film, then make sure you own a copy.

Writing in the exam

Writing an exam essay needs a different approach to a class assessment essay composed with lots of time. A good introduction in an exam gives a strong foundation for the essay to follow and shows that the student is responding to the question.

Hints for writing

Introduction

Of course, the most important thing when completing an examination essay is to respond properly to the set question. To do this, you need to practise:

- Integrating the ideas of the question into your introduction
- Using synonyms for the words in examination questions. Including similar words in your responses will demonstrate your understanding of the question
- Writing topic sentences that allow you to develop arguments to answer the question.

Body

When composing an extended response in 40 minutes, it is wise to spend a short period of time (no more than 5 minutes) brainstorming the topics you plan to use in your essay. You should come into an examination with:

- A knowledge of specific quotations from your texts, including an understanding of the themes to which your quotes relate

- An understanding of specific events from the texts which relate to the concept you are studying

- Practice in how to adapt your ideas to suit the requirements of different questions.

In order to understand the ways arguments can be presented you need to look closely at the sample essays in Parts 5 and 6.

Textual Conversations: A block or integrated response?

When you are discussing more than one text, it is important to consider the different ways this can be done. Focusing on ideas is important but in an examination it is sometimes easier to take one text at a time. If you look at samples from the HSC, you will see that this is not marked down if it is well done.

At the simplest level, the different organisations of essay are:

Integrated essay	Blocked essay
Introduction	Introduction
Idea 1: Balancing Text 1/Text 2	Text 1 – Prescribed text (idea 1)
Idea 2: Balancing Text 1/Text 2	Text 2 – Related text (idea 1) Start with linking sentence to previous paragraph
Idea 3: Balancing Text 1/Text 2	Text 1 – Prescribed text (idea 2)
Conclusion	Text 2 – Related text (idea 2) Start with linking sentence to previous paragraph
	Conclusion

Even at the simplest level, the introduction and conclusion need to be clearly connecting both texts to an idea.

Recommended**Introduction**

MUST connect all ideas under a common thesis – otherwise you are writing two separate exam answers. This connection can be a contrast, e.g. *‘Even though both texts deal with the ... the first text is ... while the second text is more about ...’*

- Respond directly to the question
- Name the texts to be discussed
- Maybe hint at what will happen in each paragraph in the order it will happen
- Don't give specific detail or example yet.

Body paragraphs**Can alternate between texts while still connecting**

Even with separate paragraphs on each text it is possible to establish connections within the paragraph body – a brief strategic comment on the other text will show that you are thinking creatively. This can happen in the topic sentence that set up an immediate comparison – e.g. ‘Text 2 offers an alternative perspective to text 1 showing ...’ or it can happen in the body of the paragraph.

Conclusion**MUST sum up and connect the arguments for both texts****Writing good sentences: The DIAS way****From Description to Interpretation to Analysis to Synthesis**

Analysis is not the same as description – it requires a much higher level of thinking and shows you are going beyond the subject matter to draw conclusions about the ideas in texts. A good response will still use description when necessary but this must lead to the higher order approaches of interpretation, analysis and synthesis.

- **Description** is simply telling the reader what the text is about. It is a recount or plot summary or just describing a section closely.
- **Interpretation** means that you explain words and ideas. You apply some skills from your understanding.

- **Analysis** means that you go outside the text and search for ideas and meanings that link different parts of the text with values and beliefs in society. You are trying to work out the reasons for the composer's choices of language.
- **Synthesis** is the most difficult level of thinking, as it requires you to start linking ideas from different parts of the text/s and go outside the text/s to find connections. Synthesis builds on analysis, making links between different texts or linking ideas within a text.

Look at examples of these four ways of writing:

Description	Gow's play <i>Away</i> begins and ends with scenes from two Shakespearean plays, one comedy and one tragedy.
Interpretation	Through including both comic and tragic scenes from Shakespearean plays, Gow creates a sense of atmosphere and alludes to the simultaneously humorous and sobering nature of the characters' lives.
Analysis	The composer's choice of a scene from <i>King Lear</i> simultaneously foreshadows Tom's tragic demise and reminds the audience of the potential for healing through acceptance.
Synthesis	The intertextual references in <i>Away</i> create a pastiche of allusions, which allow Gow to subtly explore the characters' quest in a changing and divisive society.

Activity

- Look at the sentences in a response you have written and see if you Describe, Interpret, Analyse or Synthesise. Try to develop your writing into analysis and synthesis wherever possible.

Editing your writing

- After you finish, go back and edit your work. Make sure that you read every word carefully. When you edit, you are checking that:
- the work is logical and flows consistently

- you have answered the question
- you haven't left out anything important
- you haven't put in irrelevant material
- the sentences in every paragraph are linked to a main idea
- every sentence makes sense
- spelling is correct
- punctuation and grammar are correct.

Using connectives

Connectives help you to write a fluent response where ideas are effectively linked.

Connectives are essential for creating logic, order and a sense of flow in your argument. They have many purposes, including contrast, additional points, reasons, alternatives and similarities. Even a small word like 'also' is important when developing an argument, as it shows that the statement being made is adding information to the previous statement. Contrast can be established with phrases such as 'in contrast to' or 'on the other hand'.

Activity

When reading the sample responses take note of the variety of connectives that are used. You may want to construct lists to use.

3.2.1 Common problems in essay writing and how to fix them

Problem	Solution
Using a pre-memorised essay in examination conditions to respond to an unseen question	While it may be tempting to do this, it will be obvious to the examiner that you have not engaged with the question. Practise writing as much as possible to as any different questions as you can find before the examination so you develop versatility and confidence. <i>Look</i> at the question and use reading time in your examinations to consider how you can link it to what you know about the text. Underline the key words in the question and think of as many similar words as possible to use in your response. You may find that this also leads you to think about ways of approaching the topic.
'Topping and tailing'	To 'top and tail' means to link your prepared response to the question in the opening and then the conclusion and ignore the question in the body of the writing. It's obvious and it means that you haven't written a well-structured response because it is forced into the shape of the question. Knowing your text in detail, practising regularly and answering lots of different questions are ways to avoid the problem of prepared responses.
Retelling the plot instead of focusing on specific examples	Starting with a strong topic sentence that focuses on an idea is a good way to avoid recounting in your response. A good model to follow is: <i>Argument</i> → <i>Elaboration</i> → <i>Examples with Techniques</i> → <i>Links</i> If you need to focus on an aspect of the plot, ask yourself: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the link to the set question or the concept? • Are there detailed examples that I can use to justify mentioning this part of the plot?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would using a quotation from the text help to prove the point I wish to discuss? • What do I need to elaborate on to provide concrete evidence?
Vague and general topic sentences and linking statements	<p>Responding to a variety of practice questions will help you to consider how to make your topic sentences more specific.</p> <p>Some things to consider including in your topic sentences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the composer's purpose in exploring a particular theme or idea in the text? • What specific aspect of the concept is addressed in this text? • Is there a technique that is used in an interesting manner to explore a key idea? • Is there an abstract word that captures the idea?
Not answering the question	<p>Many students do not develop a sustained argument that answers the question in an authentic way. This often occurs when students launch into their essays without planning their response.</p> <p>The best way to avoid this is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take some time to really consider the key words of the question • develop a thesis statement that directly addresses those key words • at the end of each paragraph go back to the set question and make sure you have answered it. <p>You will be penalised if you do not directly address the question throughout your essay, so take care with your thesis, topic sentences, choices of textual evidence and the way you explain your textual evidence to support your argument.</p>

Timing, e.g. not being able to complete an essay in the set time	<p>Practice is the best option for this but there are other strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you see time has reached 5 minutes before the end of the time allocated for your essay, finish your paragraph and then write a conclusion. • Move on to the next essay but if time is left over, come back, do what you need and then add a comment to the marker where the extra information is needed: <i>see next page for extra paragraph</i>. • That way you have completed your essay so you won't lose marks for structure but you have the option of going back if time permits. • See essay length points below for more help on this.
What's the right length for an essay?	<p>It's difficult to write as much as you may like in examination essays so you need to be strategic and choose the most important and relevant information. You also need to consider what length you are able to physically write in 40 minutes.</p> <p>The essays in this book are around 1000 words long. Anything more than this creates time management problems. Aim for 750 as the minimum as this allows you to develop enough of an argument.</p> <p>In the case of part questions divide the length to match the number of marks allocated. If marks are 5 and 15 then 1000 words would be divided accordingly into 250 words and 750 words.</p>
Using the wrong bibliographic conventions	<p>Titles of texts follow specific conventions and it is a good idea to follow these in the examination as it creates a good impression of your knowledge.</p> <p>You can't use italics in handwritten exam papers so you need to know the conventions for handwritten texts. Titles are often underlined but quotation marks are used for the small texts which are part of complete texts.</p>

3.3 Paper 2, Section III

Textual forms in Module C: *The Craft of Writing*

This module encourages an approach to writing that recognises the importance of reading rich and rewarding texts to gain stimulating ideas and inspiration for composing a variety of texts. It builds on the foundations of the *Reading to Write* course in Year 11. Module C emphasises the importance of engaging in the process of writing through discussions, experiencing a variety of texts and drafting responses through experimenting with different ideas, styles and textual forms. A consideration of the purpose of each text and of its intended audience is also crucial to the craft of writing.

It is important to note that the questions in this section may or may not ask you to use your short prescribed texts as the stimulus or inspiration for a piece of writing. The question may even refer to other modules as the craft of writing is regarded as underpinning the course. The question may have two parts with the same or different value (worth 20 marks in total).

The form of writing could be open and left for you to choose – for example, *write a discursive, imaginative or persuasive piece* – or it could be specified. In two-part questions, you may be required to respond in different types of writing – for example, you may be asked to write a piece of imaginative writing and then a reflection or justification explaining the process of composing your imaginative writing or even an analytical piece assessing your own writing. To answer this section well, you will need to understand the features and devices used in imaginative, discursive, persuasive, informative and reflective texts. Each of these forms will be dealt with in this section.

In summary, you could be asked to:

- Choose the form you want to write in: **imaginative, discursive, persuasive, informative or reflective**
- Write in a specified form
- Write in more than one form
- Write in two parts with two different forms
- Write a complete text or an incomplete partial text (prequel, sequel, point of tension etc.)
- Connect your writing to any module text

In other words:

“Part of text” in The Complete Text

“Poem title” in The Poetry Book

“News article” in The Newspaper

“Episode title” in The Series

“Short story” in the Short Story Book

Double or single quotation marks?

There is a mistaken perception that we use double and single quotation marks for different functions. The rule is that you use one or the other consistently and that when you use quotation marks within quotation marks you use the opposite. That means that dialogue, titles, quotations, and emphasised words all use the same quotation marks. Go to ‘Using quotation Marks’ (University of Melbourne Services)

Handwriting is difficult to read

This is a matter of practice. Indecipherable handwriting can make it difficult for a marker. You will need to handwrite as much as possible for homework. Slow down the writing and then build it up – writing too quickly is usually too messy.

Test yourself by trying to read your own writing. If you can’t read it then chances are the marker can’t, so work on developing a better writing style.

Note: This book uses single quotation marks and italics for titles BUT the sample essays will imitate handwriting conventions and use underlines where italics may have been issued for titles and double quotation marks as these are easier to see in handwriting.

- Connect your writing to texts in *The Craft of Writing*
- Connect your writing generally to skills you have learnt
- Respond to a stimulus such as a visual text or quotation
- Respond to a stimulus and connect this with a theme from a text you have studied
- Use a specific stylistic feature that you learnt about in a class text from any module
- Choose a stylistic feature to display in your writing
- Reflect on a stylistic feature you have used
- Explain your use of a stylistic feature
- Connect a stylistic feature you have used with the text it came from
- Describe and justify how your prescribed text/s from Module C have enabled you to become a more effective writer
- Use a particular character, persona or speaker from your prescribed Module C text as the basis for a piece of writing.

This list is not exhaustive. You should expect that the examination will require you to know the features of different forms and to write one to two forms, respond to an unseen text and connect your writing to your learning in any module. You should devote equal time to learning to write in all the different forms which could appear in this section of the examination.

The marks will add up to 20 but will not necessarily be distributed equally between the two parts of the section: for example, they could be divided evenly between an imaginative (10 marks) and an analytical (10 marks) piece of writing, or you could be asked to compose a short reflective or persuasive response (5 marks) to explain a longer imaginative response (15 marks).

The length of the answer should reflect the division of marks: if you write 1000 words then 5 marks would be 250 words and 15 marks would be 750 words; if you usually write 800 words then 5 marks is worth 200 words and 15 is worth 600 words. The examination is intended to avoid the possibility of using a pre-prepared response. It is essential that you practise responding to a variety of unseen questions within timed conditions.

It is important to pay attention to the assessment criteria published by NESA, as these will give you a guide to focus on for your preparation and revision. You will note that the criteria for this section emphasise *language* as the main element you will be assessed on. This means you should think carefully about your selection of words, your use of figurative language techniques where appropriate, and your narrative voice and tone.

In the left-hand column, you will see the criteria for Module C as published in the 2019 specimen examination questions. The right-hand column gives some interpretation of what is needed.

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:	So you need to focus on:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft language to address the demands of the question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the specific demands of the question in your choices of words and phrases • The ideas that the question conveys • How language, context and the features of text types combine to respond to the question
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use language appropriate to audience, purpose and form to shape meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making choices which enable you to clearly and effectively communicate your ideas • Considering the purpose of your response and the chosen form (to entertain, persuade or inform) and ensuring that this is reflected in your decisions

HSC markers use a marking sheet (like your school assessment sheets) explaining how these criteria fit into different marks, but this is not available publicly until after the examination marking is completed. The marking sheets often include the specific demands of set questions, which should remain unseen until the examination.

How can I prepare for this section?

The key skill required in Module C is the ability to compose a response that meets the demands of an unseen question in timed conditions. You will need to study your prescribed texts closely in relation to the module but you also need to consider the craft of writing as you

study texts from other modules. All texts have many pathways into their meaning: making sure you follow the pathway dictated by the module means you focus your study.

Some potential ways to approach your texts:

- Write an imaginative response from the perspective of one of the characters.
- Use the setting of a class text as the basis for a piece of imaginative writing.
- Copy the style of sections of the class text so you gain insight into the craft of the individual writers.
- Write a reflective piece on how the study of the text has affected your own beliefs about writing.
- Read the class text carefully, noting decisions made about voice, tone and perspective. Write a short analytical piece evaluating the effectiveness of the composer's decisions.
- Identify an issue from the class text and write discursive 'for' and 'against' paragraphs exploring polarised opinions on the issue. Each paragraph should cover one side of the issue and argue against the points raised in the other paragraph.
- Read widely. Look at different styles of writing, read about the process of writing, and consider different visual images. Brainstorm ideas about how you could use the different texts you encounter as inspiration for your writing. You may wish to develop a few main imaginative plots or ideas in your head. When you look at new texts, consider how these ideas will need to be adapted to suit the focus, purpose and themes raised in the texts. You will quickly realise that you need to develop the skills required to be flexible and adaptable in your writing, adjusting ideas or coming up with new ideas to suit the demands of a potentially unpredictable examination question.
- Time management is the key to success in this section. Allocate yourself 40 minutes or less to write a practice response to this section. This will help you to focus and will teach you to improvise.

Writing choices: Imaginative, discursive or persuasive piece of writing?

Some examination questions will give options for writing, inviting you to choose between imaginative, discursive persuasive (and possibly informative).

Examples of such questions from the NESAs sample papers are:

Sample Question – Advanced Paper 2 Section III, NESAs

Guard your roving thoughts with a jealous care, for speech is but the dealer of thoughts, and every fool can plainly read in your words what is the hour of your thoughts.

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Use this warning as a stimulus for a piece of persuasive, discursive or imaginative writing that expresses your perspective about a significant concern or idea that you have engaged with in ONE of your prescribed texts from Module A, B or C.

Sample Question – Standard Paper 2 Section III, NESAs

A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on.

Sir Winston Churchill

Use ONE of the lines above as a stimulus for the opening of an imaginative, discursive or persuasive piece of writing. In your piece of writing incorporate at least ONE example of figurative language that you have learned about through your study of the prescribed texts for Module C.

If you were to respond to one of these questions, what are your options? You could choose to respond with:

- A persuasive text arguing a case
- A reflective text offering a more personal considered view
- A discursive text, which may be written in either a formal or informal manner, balancing different perspectives.

Note the differences between the three forms of writing: while persuasive texts develop a central argument and expand on it with evidence and examples, discursive texts are more meandering in tone. They aim to enlighten the reader, rather than convince them. Unlike reflective texts, which emanate from personal experiences and tend to discuss processes, discursive texts can examine both sides of the story and tend to be less definitive or conclusive.