

2012 HSC English (Standard) and English (Advanced) Paper 1 — Area of Study ‘Sample Answers’

When examination committees develop questions for the examination, they may write ‘sample answers’ or, in the case of some questions, ‘answers could include’. The committees do this to ensure that the questions will effectively assess students’ knowledge and skills.

This material is also provided to the Supervisor of Marking, to give some guidance about the nature and scope of the responses the committee expected students would produce. How sample answers are used at marking centres varies. Sample answers may be used extensively and even modified at the marking centre OR they may be considered only briefly at the beginning of marking. In a few cases, the sample answers may not be used at all at marking.

The Board publishes this information to assist in understanding how the marking guidelines were implemented.

The ‘sample answers’ or similar advice contained in this document are not intended to be exemplary or even complete answers or responses. As they are part of the examination committee’s ‘working document’, they may contain typographical errors, omissions, or only some of the possible correct answers.

Section I

Question 1 (a)

Answers could include:

The visual text:

- Offers a variety of perspectives on belonging and not belonging in context of family.
- Images in frames are a stylised and symbolic representation of memories of family and childhood connections – body language, framing, symbolic objects and colour construct a nostalgic representation of belonging. Layout of juxtaposed images highlights the shifting nature of an individual's feelings of belonging/not belonging.
- Grouping of images suggests belonging to groups and places and the links between the various elements of childhood experiences and relationships.
- Divisions created by the framing foreshadows/depicts the potential for the innocence of childhood to be altered and relationships to be disturbed and fractured.
- Framing renders some of the people and objects isolated, incomplete and decontextualised – suggesting disconnection and alienation.
- Juxtaposition of connection and disconnection within the larger frames and symbolism of white (innocence, purity) contrasting with the maroon/red (suffering, pain, blood) conveys the shifting/tenuous nature of belonging.

The written text:

- Initially describes two sisters growing up – familial links through shared play, 'side by side', sense of belonging to a family and community, shared dolls' house symbolises connection between the girls.
- States that even 'inseparable bonds' can be shattered. Grace is left isolated and facing challenging times.
- Tone shifts to create sense of foreboding – sinister nature of the world beyond the close family ties – 'dark and mesmerising' – ruptures the sense of belonging.
- Sudden shift signalled through use of 'But'.
- Notes the disjunction between childhood belonging and the complexity of adult experiences of belonging/not belonging.

Question 1 (b)***Answers could include:***

- The closeness of the relationship and the sense of belonging are represented by the physicality of the hug and the length of the embrace. The father's hug is reciprocated by the child.
- The relationship is one of confidence and ease. The hug demonstrates complete acceptance and unity and the desire to sustain the closeness of the relationship.
- The father's action is a demonstration of his love – the impetus for the action is defined in negatives – 'not hugging the child out of ...'. Guilt, regret, sadness do not bring about the hug.
- The hug does not emerge from a time/event of crisis although implicit in the father's action is his awareness that time will bring changes to the relationship and the future will inevitably bring sadness and conflict. Future events will challenge the unity and harmony of the relationship and the lines foreshadow this.

Question 1 (c)***Answers could include:***

- The extract recalls the author's childhood experiences during which she tries to discover her family origins. The relationship with her grandfather offers her a link with her past.
- Listing of names emphasises her sense of not belonging – disruption in her lineage, absent factor in her sense of identity.
- The extract describes the transitions that occur in the author's attitudes and outlines the measures she has taken in her search – library research, conversations and questions.
- Use of first-person narrative personalises the search – her story, her research, her sense of connection/disconnection. The mood is introspective and reflective.
- The use of rhetorical questions enacts Brand's uncertainty and yearning for answers that will affirm her connection with the past, her place in the world.
- The passage of time and her grandfather's inability to answer the key questions lead to a gulf, a rupture in her family, history, geography and sense of belonging.
- Metaphors
 - of distance/space used to describe the estrangement she experiences. Brand's desire to forge connections has ironically damaged a close relationship with her grandfather.
 - of Geology/Natural Sciences for example: tear/fault line/rupture/fissure emphasise the author's strong feelings of alienation during her search. The rupture in the personal relationship with her grandfather parallels the broader historical rupture. The repetition of 'rupture' emphasises the distance between herself and her grandfather and also the historical disconnection from her ancestors.
 - Door of No Return – symbolises the barriers the author experiences in her search for her name, history, identity and sense of belonging.
 - 'creation place' - the site of belonging or not belonging – the illusory source of understanding.

Question 1 (d)***Answers could include:***

- The extract depicts the author's return to his home town after a period of absence. The intensity of the assault on the senses is recreated. Descriptive language and sensory imagery is used to enact the author's initial sense of alienation/disorientation – 'hissing and rumbling', 'tired and listless', 'shuffling of hasty feet'.
- Series of metaphors and similes evoke the chaos and noise, particularly of the cars that dominate the streetscape. For example: 'metal beast', 'canyon of the street', 'like a wasp closing in', 'tempest of vehicles'.
- Intensity of the experience also developed by the complexity of the sentence structure, for example the use of listing and accumulation. For example: 'There had been many cars... last night, and now I found myself, limp in a foul humour, on a traffic island, and I...'
- The traffic island is a recurring motif – it suggests the author's physical and emotional disconnection from the city environment.
- Noise and disquiet of the initial, confronting experiences are juxtaposed with the lyrical sounds of the musician. The music provided by the young man becomes a 'medium... of transformation' and the author's mood shifts and a sense of belonging to Berlin is restored.
- A series of metaphors, similes and sensory images (for example: water, hummingbird, lark) create the transformative nature of the experience.
- Water operates as a recurring motif and invokes the notion of purification/cleansing/rejuvenation/life-giving force – 'like skeins of spray from a waterfall or high fountain'.

Question 1 (e)***Answers could include:***

- Text effectively depicts how feelings of belonging and not belonging may be modified over time.
- Text invites us to consider how feelings of belonging may shift/change dramatically in a moment of time or may evolve over an extended period of time.
- Text represents the effects of time in distinctive ways: through the combination of visual and written text, through poetry, through first-person narrative reflection, and through the first-person recounting of an intense experience.
- Each text can be considered on a literal level and also in terms of its treatment of archetypal and/or metaphorical dimensions of the effects of time on feelings of belonging and not belonging.
- Justification for choice of text may include: evokes an emotional response from the reader; resonates with the reader's world; taps into common experiences of individuals in society; the author's artistic achievement; author's ability to render complex ideas in a creative, thought-provoking way; exploration of shared human experience.