

2009 HSC English (Standard) and English (Advanced) Paper 1 — Area of Study Sample Answers (Section I)

This document contains 'sample answers', or, in the case of some questions, 'answer may include'. These are developed by the examination committee of the Board of Studies for two purposes. The committee does this:

(a) as part of the development of the examination paper to ensure the questions will effectively assess students' knowledge and skills, and

(b) in order to provide some advice to the Supervisor of Marking about the nature and scope of the responses expected of students.

The 'sample answers' or similar advice, are not intended to be exemplary or even complete responses. They have been reproduced in their original form as part of the examination committee's 'working document'. While the handwritten notes have been typed for legibility, no further editorial change or addition has occurred.

Question 1 (a)

Sample answer/Answers could include:

- visual metaphor of the home/house at the centre, cradled by the hands
- home/house symbolic of place, family, security, safety and nurturing: a community symbolised in the joining of human hands to support the house/home
- • open door of the home/house, symbolic of welcoming: the finger opening the door to the community/home
- many hands combine to support and cradle the house/home
- cradled hands suggests the importance of nurturing of connections: finger is an individual element but is part of a greater whole just as the individual is
- hands as symbols of belonging, acceptance and support
- multi-layered hands building a single supporting structure
- layered hands dominate the visual image specially suggesting that human beings are central to building and sustaining relationships and a sense of 'home'
- metaphor and symbolism of the connected hands – 'lending a hand' as a metaphor for acceptance, support and collaboration
- hands of different ages/generations and races/backgrounds, suggesting the concept of belonging encompasses the need for integration, inter-generational inclusiveness and working together to support and fulfil aspirations to belong
- visual representation of house/home is universally recognisable

Question 1 (b)

Sample answer/Answers could include:

The speaker says 'we never belonged' because

- the family was poor and were never mainstream
- they lived in rented rooms on the peripheries and outskirts at most times
- as a result of their poverty they constructed their own sense of belonging as a family through improvising (vegetables, flowers, trees)
- form subverts conventions of punctuation, structure
- repetition of 'we' – positioning the family as both marginal and poor
- language is 'impoverished' (not highly wrought poetic language)
- repetition of 'never'
- *Looking Back* – evokes a sense of nostalgia – lack of definite structures apart from the four stanzas and line suggests a sense of childhood poverty
- absence of punctuation
- dichotomous 'belonging to family' and 'not belonging' to society
- use of 'we' – identifying a sense of belonging to family
- juxtapositioning of poverty against the attempt to acquire a sense of belonging (planting / vegetables; life / taking root)
- first person employed to evoke a sense of wistfulness and nostalgia

Question 1 (c)

Sample answer/Answers could include:

- Portrays the experiences of a woman as she seeks connection with the landscape
- Use of metaphor and sensory description to capture the inner experience of connecting with the landscape
- Figurative language builds a portrait of the inter-relationship between the woman and the landscape
- Gradual development of the intensity of the experience, moving from descriptions of the physical experience to descriptions of the inner experience and spirituality
- Movement from pessimistic attitude to an enriched, buoyant one, through an embracing of the natural realm
- Creative, dynamic, active immersion in landscape is generative and restorative
- The relationship between the woman and the landscape begins with her seeking solace and moves towards a reciprocity whereby the landscape embraces her. She feels at home, embracing and being embraced by the landscape
- The narrator employs devices such as personification, metaphor, allusion and comparison to evoke a sense of the landscape as an elevated, healing force

Question 1 (d)

Sample answer/Answers could include:

- Structurally, the text emphasises the range of perspectives on the connections between home and belonging through the repetition of a stem 'Home can be . . .' and the inclusion of direct first person perspectives
- Each perspective presents an intimate sense of belonging located in and through home
- The title leads the reader into the substance 'Home: The Heart of the Matter' – interior life of the individual, life-giving, beating heart
- Linking of emotional experience, identity and a sense belonging represented through layering and incremental building of exemplars
- Accumulation of examples of how 'homes are mentally constructed'
- The sense of belonging that comes from home is highly individual yet common
- Non-fiction text with authentic voices are cradled / positioned within the narrator's comments / interpretations
- Diversity of voices / authenticity of perspectives

Question 1 (e)

Sample answer/Answers could include:

- Similarities in all texts in their portrayal of the connection between people and places
- All the texts portray an aspect of home
- People are present in each text and portrayed in relation to their connection to 'home'
- Individuals in each text are representative / symbolic of the individual connection to and disconnection from place(s) and other people
- Each text operates on both a literal and a symbolic / metaphoric level in its portrayal of the connections between people and places
- Each text portrays the connection between people and places as a central component of belonging / not belonging
- Each text is carefully constructed to highlight the connections between people / places through the selection and ordering of description, image, detail . . .
- Each text employs the medium of production to great effect – distills ideas in a highly focused and engaging way
- Strong sense of personal voice emerging through each text – reflecting the concept of belonging as a personal experience
- Differences between texts:
 - Form / medium of production
 - Voice
 - Sense of those who connect and do not connect
 - Texts 1, 3 and 4 portray the connection between people and places as generative, productive and supportive
 - Text 2 portrays the more complex notion of not belonging and wanting to belong through strong but thwarted desire to belong