

# VCE Literature

## 2017–2020

### Written examination – End of year

#### Examination specifications

##### Overall conditions

The examination will be sat at a time and date to be set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.

There will be 15 minutes reading time and 2 hours writing time.

The examination will be marked by a panel appointed by the VCAA.

The examination will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

##### Content

The *VCE Literature Study Design 2017–2020* (Units 3 and 4) is the document for the development of the examination. All outcomes in Units 3 and 4 will be examined.

All of the key knowledge and skills that underpin the outcomes in Units 3 and 4 are examinable.

##### Format

The examination will be in the form of a task book. Students will write their responses in a general answer book.

Students must write on two texts, each from a different category (e.g. novels, plays, short stories, other literature, poetry), studied during the year. The texts and categories will be listed in the task book and will match the VCE Literature Text List for the year in question. Students who write on two texts from the same category will receive a score of zero for one of their responses.

The examination will consist of two sections.

##### Section A – Literary perspectives

Students will be required to complete **one** piece of writing on one text from the VCE Literature Text List for the year in question, in response to the topic set. There will be one topic for each of the 30 texts.

The selected text must be used as the basis for the response to the topic. Students will be required to produce an interpretation of the text using one literary perspective to inform their view. The response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria specified below.

Section A will be worth 20 marks.

## Section B – Close analysis

Students will be required to write a sustained interpretation of **one** text from the VCE Literature Text List for the year in question, drawing on a detailed analysis of **two or more** of three set passages.

**Two or more** of the set passages must be used as the basis of a discussion about the selected text. The set passages will be of sufficient length for students to engage with them and to allow students to fulfil the assessment criteria.

The set passages will be presented in the order in which they appear in the original text, but their original page numbers will not be given. For collections of short stories, the title of the story from which each passage is selected will be provided. This will also apply to other text types, such as collections of essays and poetry.

Section B will be worth 20 marks.

The total marks for the examination will be 40.

## Criteria

Section A will be assessed against the following criteria:

- development of an informed, relevant and plausible interpretation of the text
- understanding and analysis of the text, demonstrated through the use of textual evidence
- analysis and evaluation of the views and values foregrounded in the topic and underlying one literary perspective of the text, and awareness of how these views and values relate to the text
- expressive, fluent and coherent use of language and development of ideas

Section B will be assessed against the following criteria:

- understanding of the text, demonstrated in a relevant and plausible interpretation
- ability to write expressively and coherently to present an interpretation
- understanding of how views and values may be suggested in the text
- analysis of how key passages and/or moments in the text contribute to an interpretation
- analysis of the features of the text and how they contribute to an interpretation
- analysis and close reading of textual details to support a coherent and detailed interpretation of the text

## Approved materials and equipment

Pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers

## Relevant references

The following publications should be referred to in relation to the VCE Literature examination:

- *VCE Literature Study Design 2017–2020* (Units 3 and 4)
- *VCE Literature – Advice for teachers 2017–2020* (includes assessment advice)
- VCE Literature Text List (published annually)
- *VCAA Bulletin*

## Advice

During the 2017–2020 accreditation period for VCE Literature, examinations will be prepared according to the examination specifications above. Each examination will conform to these specifications and will test a representative sample of the key knowledge and skills from all outcomes in Units 3 and 4.

Students should use command/task words, other instructional information within questions and corresponding mark allocations to guide their responses.

A separate document containing a sample examination has been published on the 'Literature – Exams and Examination Reports' page on the VCAA website.

The sample examination provides an indication of the format of the examination, and the types of questions teachers and students can expect until the current accreditation period is over.

The sample examination has been developed using selected texts from the 2013 VCE Literature Text List and the 2014 VCE Literature Text List.

The VCAA does not provide answers to sample examinations.

Further advice is provided below.

## Section A

The text is at the centre of the task in this section and students must demonstrate an active engagement with both the text and the topic. The topic will present a particular view of the text. In their response to the topic, students should develop an interpretation of the text that is supported by analysis and takes other viewpoints into consideration.

Responses must refer to one literary perspective of the student's choosing. The perspective should be an extended, informed and substantiated view of the text and may include reviews, peer-reviewed articles and transcripts of speeches. The perspective can be, but need not be, based on theory, for example, a feminist or post-colonial reading. Students may, but are not required to, refer to particular pieces of literary criticism, for example, a journal article or review, or discuss a more general view held by a particular person or group of people/school of thought.

There are many ways of looking at a text and teachers are advised to discuss alternative viewpoints when they are studying a text with their students. Students need to develop the ability to form their own view of the text aided by thorough analysis and knowledge of it, and considering some critical readings. Additionally, they need to be able to support their interpretations when responding to the topic.

Students will benefit from acquiring a thorough understanding of a particular literary perspective and considering the ways in which the perspective is relevant to an interpretation of a text.

## Section B

An understanding and interpretation of the text that develops from detailed work with the set passages is central to addressing the assessment criteria. Students must work closely with the language of the text, as this ability is central to the task.

Past examination reports, which contain sample answers, provide good examples of how students could use the set passages in their responses.

Students may choose the extent to which they refer to each passage in their response. They are not required to refer equally to each passage.