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Write your **student number** in the boxes above.

Letter

History: Australian History

Question and Answer Book

VCE Examination – Tuesday 11 November 2025

- Reading time is **15 minutes**: 11.45 am to 12 noon
- Writing time is **2 hours**: 12 noon to 2.00 pm

Materials supplied

- Question and Answer Book of 28 pages
- Sources Book for Section A

Instructions

- Use the additional space at the end of this book if you need extra space to complete an answer.

Students are **not** permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

Contents	pages
Section A (2 of 4 questions, 50 marks)	3–19
Section B (1 of 4 questions, 20 marks)	20–24
Assessment criteria for Section B	27

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Section A

Instructions

- Answer **two** of the following questions in the spaces provided.
 - Write your responses in English.
-

Historical investigation	pages
Question 1 – From custodianship to the Anthropocene (60 000 BCE–2010)	4–7
Question 2 – Creating a nation (1834–2008)	8–11
Question 3 – Power and resistance (1788–1998)	12–15
Question 4 – War and upheaval (1909–1992)	16–19

Section B

Instructions

- Write an essay on **one** of the following questions in the space provided.
 - Write your response in English.
 - Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 27.
-

Question 1 (20 marks)

From custodianship to the Anthropocene (60 000 BCE–2010)

‘The natural environment of Australia has primarily been seen as a resource to be extracted or exploited for profit.’

Discuss with reference to the periods 60 000 BCE–1901 and 1950–2010.

OR

Question 2 (20 marks)

Creating a nation (1834–2008)

‘Immigration benefitted Australian society more than it did the migrants.’

Discuss with reference to the periods 1834–1913 and 1945–2008.

OR

Question 3 (20 marks)

Power and resistance (1788–1998)

‘Changes to power and authority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have mainly been achieved through the court system and legislation.’

Discuss with reference to the periods 1788–1913 and 1957–1998.

OR

Question 4 (20 marks)

War and upheaval (1909–1992)

‘The experiences and the commemoration of returned Australian soldiers have largely been positive.’

Discuss with reference to the periods 1909–1950 and 1950–1992.

Assessment criteria for Section B

The essay in Section B will be assessed against the following criteria:

- construction of a coherent and relevant historical argument that addresses the specific demands of the essay question
 - demonstration of historical knowledge that is accurate and appropriate for the essay question
 - application of historical thinking concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change, and/or historical significance
 - use of sources as evidence to support a historical argument, including a range of primary sources, perspectives and historical interpretations
-

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History: Australian History

Sources Book

VCE Examination – Tuesday 11 November 2025

Contents	pages
From custodianship to the Anthropocene (60 000 BCE–2010) _____	2–3
Creating a nation (1834–2008) _____	4–5
Power and resistance (1788–1998) _____	6–8
War and upheaval (1909–1992) _____	9–11

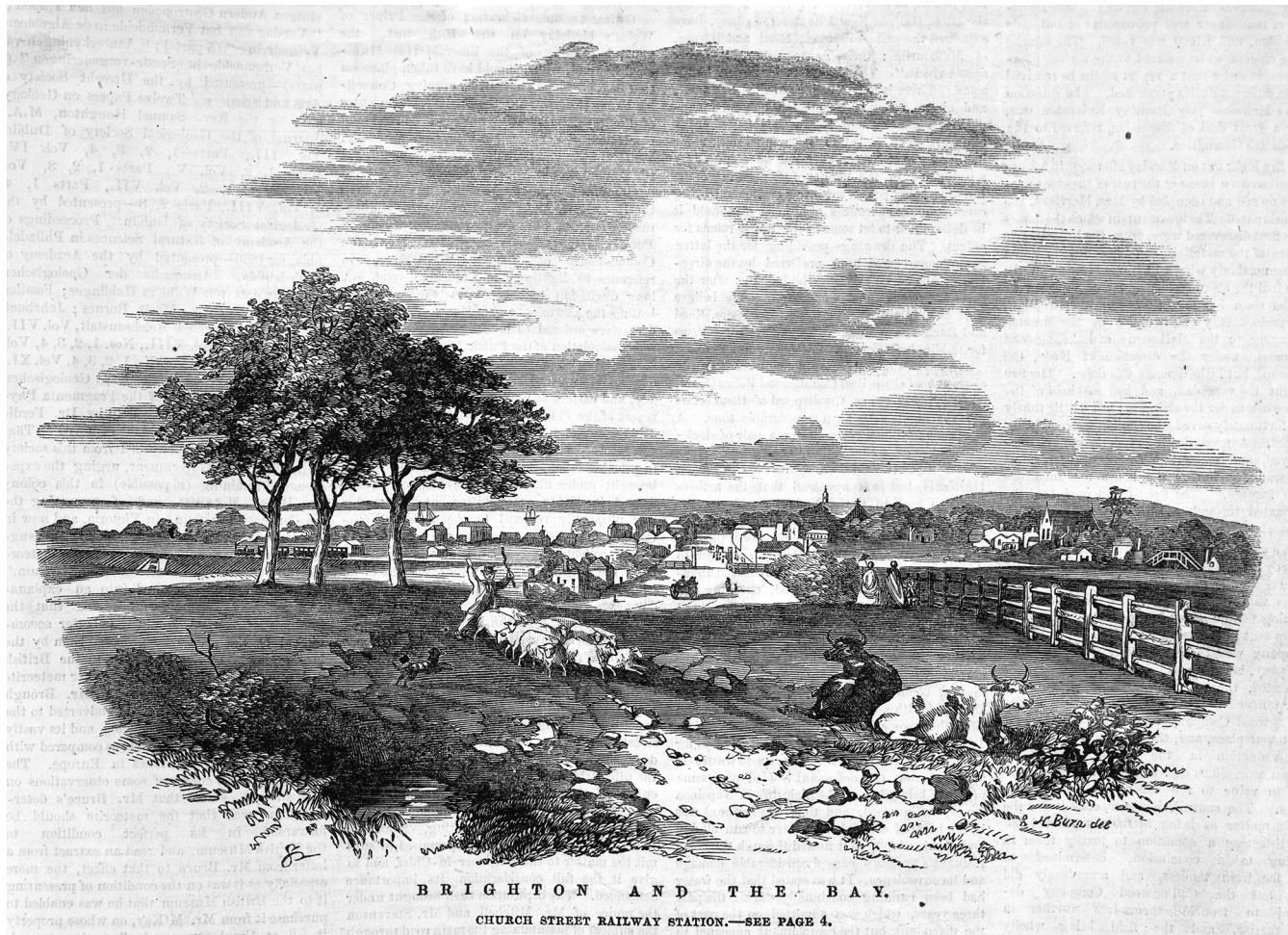
You may keep this Sources Book.

From custodianship to the Anthropocene (60 000 BCE–2010)

Sources 1–4 relate to Question 1.

Source 1

An engraving, produced in 1862, depicting Melbourne's Church Street Railway Station, looking towards Port Phillip Bay



Source: S Calvert, *Brighton and the Bay*, engraving, 1862, State Library Victoria

Source 2

A historian's interpretation of the significance of the Dreaming

The Dreaming has two rules: obey the Law, and leave the world as you found it ... In most other societies an urge for change is so entrenched¹ as to be thought natural ... [It is not] clear that people entirely succeeded in leaving the world as they found it, but they dedicated their lives to conserving what they inherited, and within the perception of living generations generally they succeeded.

...

Since creator ancestors made all the land, no land can be wilderness ... Every hill, plain, rock and tree is alive with story and imagery, and filled with presences².

Source: B Gammage, *The Biggest Estate on Earth: How Aborigines made Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2012, pp. 124 and 130

¹**entrenched** – firmly established and not likely to change

²**presences** – something that exists but is not seen

Source 3

An interpretation by climate scientists and historians of why Earth has entered the Anthropocene

Climate change has brought into sharp focus the capability of contemporary human civilization to influence the environment at the scale of the Earth as a single, evolving planetary system. Following the discovery of the ozone hole over Antarctica, with its undeniably anthropogenic¹ cause, the realization that the emission of large quantities of a colourless, odourless gas such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) can affect the energy balance at the Earth's surface has reinforced the concern that human activity can adversely² affect the broad range of ecosystem services that support human (and other) life ... In addition to the carbon cycle, humans are ... likely driving the sixth major extinction event in Earth history. Taken together, these trends are strong evidence that humankind ... now rivals some of the great forces of Nature in its impact on the functioning of the Earth system.

Source: W Steffen, J Grinevald, P Crutzen and J McNeill, 'The Anthropocene: conceptual and historical perspectives', *Philosophical Transactions of The Royal Society*, 369, 2011, pp. 842 and 843

¹**anthropogenic** – originating in human activity

²**adversely** – harmfully or negatively

Source 4

A newspaper report describing the first Clean Up Sydney Harbour Day, which involved 40 000 participants, and grew into Clean Up Australia Day in the following year

They turned out in droves¹ around Sydney Harbour — mums, dads, kids and couples ... all carrying bags for rubbish.

Robin and Peter Hirst, of Mosman in Sydney's north, volunteered because of the "disgraceful" state of the local beaches.

"You should be able to run along the beach without having to wear shoes," said Mrs Hirst. "We've found broken glass, cans, cigarette butts, plastic rubbish."

...

Volunteers turned out early. By 11am, the official start time, 120 tonnes² of rubbish had been collected at 140 sites around the harbour.

...

Yachtsman Ian Kiernan, who instigated³ the clean-up, said the disposal of rubbish, particularly packaging, was a world-wide problem.

Source: 'A dirty day out at the beach', *The Canberra Times*, 9 January 1989, p. 3

¹**droves** – a large number of people gathering for the same purpose

²**tonnes** – one tonne is equal to 1000 kilograms

³**instigated** – established, set in motion

Creating a nation (1834–2008)

Sources 5–8 relate to Question 2.

Source 5

A watercolour painting depicting John Alloo's Chinese restaurant on Main Road in Ballarat, produced in 1855



Source: ST Gill, *John Alloo's Chinese Restaurant, Main Road, Ballarat, 1855*, watercolour, 25 × 36 cm, National Museum of Australia

Source 6

A historian's perspective on the implementation of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (White Australia policy)

The White Australia policy was a declaration by those who had come to Australia from Britain, and by their descendants born in Australia, that they intended to hold the continent for British Australians against the world. In particular, they intended to hold it against the likely alternatives: an Australia of mixed cultures and races, with the possibility of a Chinese majority if the doors were left open, or an Australia dominated by one of the other European empires. The cultural differences that must result from the first of these alternatives, they believed, would not be compatible with a functioning democracy based on universal suffrage, and the second was simply intolerable.

Source: D Kemp, *A Free Country: Australians' search for Utopia*, The Miegunyah Press, Carlton, 2019, p. 473

Source 7

A speech by Senator Gareth Evans, then-Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, in 1988 on the passing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948

The Universal Declaration [of Human Rights] was the first, and remains the most important, international human-rights instrument to proclaim¹ fundamental human rights, and to allocate to human rights a prominent place on the international agenda.

...

In my speech at the United Nations two months ago, I recalled the prominent role in the adoption of the Universal Declaration played by an even more obsessive predecessor² of mine, Herbert Vere Evatt. Evatt was way ahead of his time in his clear perception of the need to establish a body³ of international law to protect the human rights of individuals. He recognised that human rights concerned above all individuals facing fear, intimidation or threats to their life — all of them in dire need of help and protection — and the victims of human-rights violations were the proper concern of all governments and the international community acting together.

Source: G Evans, speech, in 'Declaration of Human Rights: 40 years on', *Australian Foreign Affairs Record*, no. 12, vol. 59, December 1988, pp. 517 and 518

¹**proclaim** – announce the establishment of

²**predecessor** – a person who has previously occupied a position or office

³**body** – collection

Source 8

A perspective on the treatment of asylum seekers and boat people in 2004

A full judicial inquiry into the so called “children overboard” affair must now be conducted after the next election, regardless of which party forms government.

Revelations¹ on Monday morning confirm the view ... about the manufactured crisis of boat arrivals since 2001, that the Australian public deserve a full, frank² and independent judicial inquiry.

Over recent years there have been a succession of inquiries that have revealed disturbing facts and information about our treatment of boat people and asylum seekers generally.

...

Since the Tampa incident many Australians have become increasingly concerned with the government’s policies regarding asylum seekers. These policies have and continue to cause massive and unnecessary trauma.

An inquiry would help ensure that if boats start to come again, we will get our responses right. But importantly, the critical healing process for the victims of the Government’s policies requires that we uncover the truth about the events of recent years.

Source: H Glenn, ‘Full and independent inquiry into “Kids Overboard” vital’, *Torres News*, 18–24 August 2004, p. 28

¹**revelations** – previously unknown facts

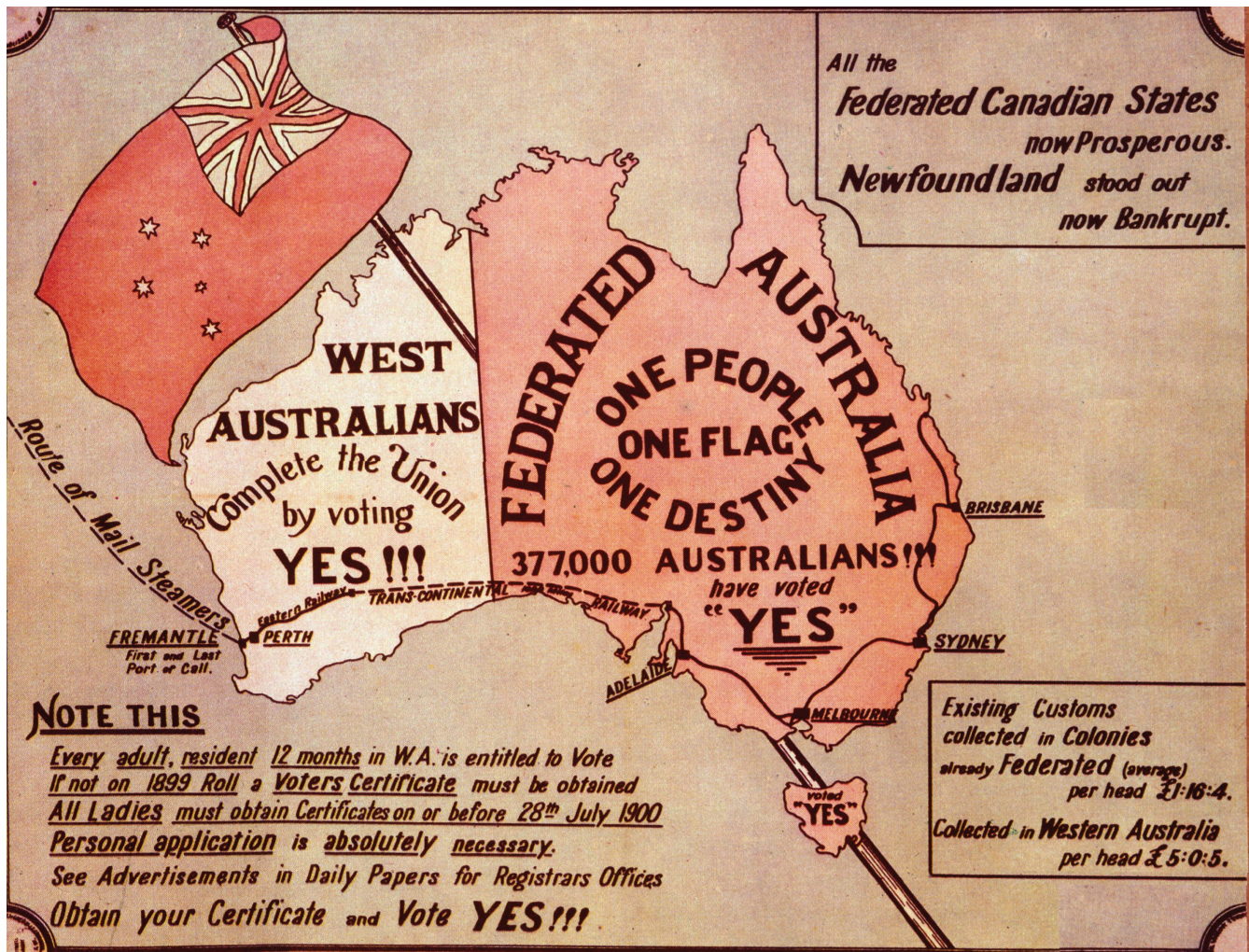
²**frank** – open, honest and direct

Power and resistance (1788–1998)

Sources 9–12 relate to Question 3.

Source 9

An advertisement demanding a decision from Western Australians regarding their vote to join the Australian federation



Source: 'West Australians Complete the Union by Voting Yes', picture, 1900, National Library of Australia, <nla.gov.au/nla.obj-137005405>

Newfoundland was a British colony in Canada.

The unbroken line from Perth to south-western Australia reads 'Eastern Railway' and the broken line that continues to Adelaide reads 'TRANS-CONTINENTAL RAILWAY'.

Source 10

A historian's interpretation of the Harvester Judgement and the establishment of the basic wage

Higgins determined that [a fair and reasonable] wage should be sufficient to maintain a man as a 'human being in a civilized community'; furthermore ... it must provide for the needs of a family. He therefore used household budgets to work out the cost of housing, clothing, food, transport, books ... for a family of five, and declared this a minimum wage for an unskilled male labourer ... the principles of Higgins' Harvester judgement became a fundamental feature of national life. Wages were to be determined not by bargaining but by an independent arbitrator¹. They were to be based not on profits or productivity but human need. They were premised on the male breadwinner², with men's wages sufficient to support a family ... Women contested the dual standard for the next sixty years.

Source: S Macintyre, *A Concise History of Australia*, 2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, 2004, p. 151

¹**arbitrator** – judge

²**breadwinner** – the main person earning money to support a family

Source 11

A historian's interpretation of the developments and achievements of Aboriginal nationalism

Indigenous rights ... had become a powerful force in politicising Aboriginal people and binding disparate¹ groups into a national movement. An Aboriginal flag ... was raised all over the country. The fight ... emboldened² Aboriginal people and gave them confidence through a shared sense of injustice ... [Historian] Russell McGregor has termed this an Aboriginal nationalism.

People across the country marched, occupied sites, formed committees and petitioned parliaments ... Appeals were made to the United Nations from 1970 onwards ...

Aboriginal people forged links with groups overseas, which deepened their justifications for Indigenous rights and developed emerging ideas of Aboriginal sovereignty ... Indigenous global networks emerged in the 1970s and ideas were exchanged to improve Indigenous lives worldwide.

Source: R Broome, *Aboriginal Australians*, 5th edition, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2019, p. 245

¹**disparate** – fundamentally different and incomparable

²**emboldened** – encouraged

Source 12

A perspective on the oppression experienced by gay and lesbian people in the early 1970s

Homosexuals encounter oppression of three kinds: persecution, discrimination and tolerance ...

The gayworld¹ ... is constantly harassed by police. Homosexuals learn the places to be avoided because they are commonly visited by the vice squad² ...

...

... Indeed anyone in a position where he/she is likely to be suspected a homosexual can expect rough police treatment. I was once stopped and searched ... by two policemen because they saw me walking with a friend ...

...

... One can be refused a job, of course, without the real reason being stated ... many men are refused promotion because they lack a respectable family image ... many women because they seem "too masculine" ...

...

The most common form of oppression ... tends to be neither outright persecution or discrimination but rather [a] patronizing³ tolerance ... The difference between tolerance and acceptance is very considerable, for tolerance is a [gift] extended by the superior to the inferior.

Source: D Altman, *Homosexual: Oppression and liberation*, Angus and Robertson Pty Ltd, Sydney, 1972, pp. 33, 35–36, 38

¹**the gayworld** – the gay community

²**vice squad** – police division dedicated to stopping certain crimes, including those related to sex and sexuality

³**patronizing** – appearing to be kind with the intention of remaining superior

War and upheaval (1909–1992)

Sources 13–16 relate to Question 4.

Source 13

The packaging of an Australian jigsaw puzzle titled 'President F D Roosevelt – Prime Minister John Curtin – United for Victory', produced circa 1942



Source: 'President F D Roosevelt – Prime Minister John Curtin – United for Victory', jigsaw packing envelope, John Sands Pty Ltd, c. 1942, Australian War Memorial Collection

Source 14

A historian's interpretation of the Curtin government's decision to extend the boundaries in which Australian conscripts could serve

[In] 1942 the issue which had divided Australia in 1916 and 1917 re-emerged: conscription for overseas service ...

There had been calls for conscription for overseas service from very early in [World War II]. By 1942 the Australian army was made up of two parts — the volunteer A.I.F. (Australian Imperial Force), who could be sent to fight anywhere; and the conscripted A.M.F. (Australian Military Force¹) which could be compelled² to serve only on Australian territory. But in 1939 ... the *Defence Act* had been amended to include parts of New Guinea ... [In] 1942 Prime Minister Curtin decided that a single army was needed, and that it must be able to be sent beyond New Guinea. To achieve this, the *Defence Act* would need to be amended ...

...

... [In] January 1943 Curtin was authorised by his party to ... make the appropriate amendment to the *Defence Act* ...

Source: R Lewis, *A Nation at War: The Australian Home Front in the Second World War. Documents & Commentary*, Longman Cheshire Pty Limited, Melbourne, 1985, pp. 112–114

¹**Australian Military Force** – also referred to as the Citizen Military Force

²**compelled** – forced

Source 15

A historical interpretation of Australia's involvement in the war in the Indo-Malayan region during the 1950s

[The] Malayan Emergency was declared ... in response to the murder of three estate managers ... by guerrillas¹ of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), which had determined² on the violent overthrow of the British colonial government ...

...

Australian involvement in the Emergency began ... in response to a request from the British government ...

...

Australian ground forces arrived in Malaya in October 1955 to form part of the Australian contribution to ... deter external communist aggression ...

...

Confrontation, or *Konfrontasi* in Indonesian, was a small undeclared war ... through which President Sukarno of Indonesia sought to destabilise³ and ultimately destroy the new Federation of Malaysia ...

...

... The Australian government was extremely wary of involving its troops in conflict with Indonesia ... [due to the] border that Indonesia shared with Papua New Guinea.

Source: P Dennis, J Grey, E Morris and R Prior, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 2008, pp. 152, 345 and 347

¹**guerrillas** – members of a small, independent group taking part in irregular fighting, usually against larger regular forces

²**determined** – decided

³**destabilise** – to cause unrest

Source 16

A Victorian Aboriginal man's perspective on his time in the armed forces, following his summons for National Service under the *National Service Act 1951*

... No one ... called me ... Choc or Darkie ... the great thing about our group was that, even though we all came from totally different backgrounds, once in uniform we were all the same ...

[W]earing the uniform filled me with pride and self-esteem ... I thought that I had been well equipped for the rest of my life ... I would never have to answer to anybody about colour, background or indeed anything again.

Source: J Beaumont and A Cadzow (eds), *Serving our Country: Indigenous Australians, War, Defence and Citizenship*, NewSouth Publishing, Sydney, 2018, p. 202

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