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OUTSTANDING SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Scholarship 2025 English

Time allowed: Three hours
Total score: 24

ANSWER BOOKLET

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

You should write THREE essays in this booklet, one from each section in Question Booklet 93001Q.

Begin each essay on a new page. Write the section, and the number of your chosen statements in Sections B and C, at the top of the page.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–24 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in the margins (///). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

SECTION A: CLOSE READING OF UNFAMILIAR TEXTS

Write an essay comparing the writers' treatment of nature in Text A and Text B.

PLANNING

B *I* U     

ANSWER

Write your answer to **Section A** in the box below.

B *I* U     

Nature is a language all of its own. It works to bring a tangible recognition to the duality of beauty and destruction. Text A, *From One Whale Singing* written by Keri Hulme, is a short story which follows the journey of a marine animal, treating nature as a ethereal landscape with the ability to harbour and sustain life. Text B, a lyrical poem titled *Women Love Me, Fish Fear Me* written by Hamel Jordan, works to reveal how the writer treats nature as apart of his identity, leaning into his admiration for fishing. Both work in unison to create a space where nature and humans are both critiqued and admired.

Text A, *From One Whale Singing*, utilises the technique of emotive language to build a strong visual representation of the surrounding world. Diction such as "single brilliances", "calling dream", and "sweet night air", work simultaneously to build the foundations of a poetic, appreciative tone. Through this intentional diction and attached connotations, we witness how the author find's peace within connection with nature, and yearns to uncover other hidden treasures such as the beaches shore. Text B, *Women Love Me, Fish Fear Me*, juxtaposes Text A's admiration of the environment to take a more shameless, humorous stance. The listing of "Life's too short to eat bowfin, or that minced pollock they batter...or the dolphins that get swept up in tuna nets" holds a conversational connotation, allowing the reader to feel as if the author is speaking directly to them. This is further reinforced by the line, "I bet he tastes amazing with vinegar. I'm sorry. The wife is making us go vegetarian." Additionally, both Text A and Text B use the idea of a dream scape to further reinforce their treatments of nature. Text A states inside an extended metaphor "she could see colours known only from dreams...that was both alien and familiar". Through the use of the word "dreams", we witness how the author believes that nature is a gift which can determine our view on reality. This is additionally shown through the metaphorical line "A strange visit, but it enabled her to put images of her own to the calling dream", placing nature as a influential force to drive ambitious tendencies. However, Text B's use of a dream scape describes his calling to eat a character from a movie "The Shape of Water", through the line "I often dream of the creature from The Shape of Water". This conveys how the writer treats nature as a place to bring to life his most deepest fantasies, finding solace within natures ability to create wondrous things. Text A works tirelessly to bring a poetic viewpoint on a piece of nature they feel as though is a place sculpted from their dreams, whilst Text B uses humour and conversational techniques to demonstrate that his identity and family are interwoven within the movements of the tides.

Symbolism is used to convey the writers treatment of nature within their respective pieces. Both Text A and Text B rely on something non-human to convey their outlooks on nature. Text A works with the inner-psychological workings of a marine animal, allowing for the writer to expose how they hold deep respect for nature cyclical nature, by taking one of nature creations and using it as a vehicle for their thoughts and desires. We see this reflected through the uncommon syntax of "Green light: it brings up the memories that are bone deep in her, written in her very cells". The words "written in her very cells" reveals the authors great appreciation for natures creations, reinforcing the previous claim. Text B relies on the non-human object of a boat. Through the beginning of the poem to the end, the writer describes personal anecdotes such as "just me my rod and my net and my two large sons, roughhousing in the dinky". Each anecdote we witness it being told from within the confines of a boat. A boat keeps people afloat upon the deep and cavernous terrain of the ocean surface, suggesting that nature is apart of the authors identity, and how they view their life. To strengthen this claim, the author goes so far as to suggest divine connection with nature through his line, "I don't know if God exists, but if he does I know where he'd spend his Sunday mornings". This further reinforces how the author feels completely engulfed by the way of nature, through the extended metaphor of fishing, as implied through the "Sunday Mornings".

Text B uses ocean symbolism through the metaphor "I emerged from a sea of good men", revealing how the writer treats nature as a catalyst for his beginning, acknowledging the influential forces of the sea and how it works to connect him back to his family. The conversational line of "I move through life with a bucket of bait in one hand and a beer in the other, all smiles and salt breath", suggests how the writer has allowed nature to become intertwined with his very being, that his essence is completely moored to the ways of the environment and ocean. Ocean symbolism is also found within Text A. Hurried and short syntax such as "A high burst of dolphins sonics. The school was returning...She slows, buoyant in the water" reveals the authors appreciation of the world around them. The highly descriptive diction, such as "high burst of dolphin sonics", conveys just how deeply and clear the author views the ocean and the beaches shore. Text A also alludes to instinct, in the denouement of the short story through the line "The long siren calls urge her south. She begins to surge upward to the sweet night air". The use of animalistic instinct speaks to the authors treatment of nature as being apart of their soul. The use of this theme, paired with the idea of a journey, allows the reader to fully comprehend that the author treats nature as a influential force that drives them to keep moving forward, despite how rocky the current currants are.

Taken together, Text A and Text B work simultaneously to grant the readers two perspectives on the surrounding nature. Text A works to showcase a poetic, mesmerised perspective upon the ocean through the vehicle of a marine animal. Through this we begin to understand how serious and connected the author feels to the waters she describes. Text B however offers a more conversational, masculine description on how their identity is shaped by their dingy, and the waters it sits upon. We are placed within the confines of his own story, relating to the audience through the use of conversational diction, humorous quips, and metaphorical language thus revealing that he treats nature like a home away from home.

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SECTION B: RESPONDING TO LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

Write an essay in response to ONE of the statements below. Use the statement as the focus for an in-depth discussion of an appropriate text or texts.

Note: No content or quotations used in your answer to this section should be repeated in Section C.

STATEMENTS (Choose ONE)

- ☐ Poetry lies in an inaccessible marshland; there are no pathways, no signposts.
- ☐ Truth in film is sometimes clearest when slightly out of focus.
- ☐ The greatest and most beautiful stories in the history of humanity are works of non-fiction.
- ☐ In any novel, the experience of the masses is behind the single voice.
- ☐ Interactive texts open a new domain for persuasion; they realise a new form of rhetoric.
- ☐ Short stories hand you the pieces and what you build is up to you.
- ☐ Shakespeare was not a deep thinker or a great psychologist or a subtle philosopher. What he was, was a very great poet.
- ☐ In a television series, the story is not as important as the way that it is told.
- ☒ "In plays, the truth is rarely pure and never simple." (paraphrasing Oscar Wilde)

PLANNING

B I U ☰ ☷ ↶ ↷ 🔍

ANSWER

Write your answer to **Section B** in the box below.

Write your answer to **Section B** in the box below.

B I U     

Shakespeare enduring relevance lies within his unflinching exploration of the human experience, exploring the depths of jealousy, ambition, and moral ambiguity which continues to define the overall human condition. Shakespeare wrote *Othello* during the time of English imperialism and religious divide. These conditions fostered feelings of both fascination and fear around the idea of an outsider, speaking to the truth of moral corruption within the human race. For a truth to be pure, it needs to be clean, untouched, and free from evil forces. However, *Othello* poignantly demonstrates how proper truths are interwoven with evil intentions, and malicious tendencies. The main antagonist, *Iago*, works tirelessly throughout the play to bring to life the downfall of his grandiloquent Venetian army general, Othello. Through his relentless calamitous acts, we journey through an obstinate terrain of hidden truths, which work to plunge the audience into a pit of revelations surrounding who we are as a human race, and what happens when a uncontrollable evil forces tackles us with lies. Through *Othello*, we are confronted with complex, and plagued truths which reveal the emotional warfare which lies dormant within us all.

The truth of deception is ridden with pockets of evil, proving the audience with a complex cautionary tale of rampant poison within our society. The world class Shakespearean critic, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, described Iago as "motivelessly malignant", revealing his evil nature. Iago's biblical inversion, "I am not what I am" aims to subvert God's word of "I am what I am" from the scriptures of Exodus, 3.14. Through this, we witness how Iago stands in opposition to God, reflecting his devilish nature. This is further reinforced by Janus, the two-headed God Iago invokes within Act 1. This conveys Iago's multi-faceted persona which allows him to be successful within his monstrous task. Through Iago's malicious behaviours, the heavy truth of deception is forced upon the audience. We are made to contemplate the idea of appearance versus reality, and how who perceive as truth worthy, may be hiding behind a carefully crafted facade. This is further reinforced by the title Iago holds within the army. Iago is Othello's ancient, which is a position of utmost trust, and loyalty. A tangible recognition of Othello's unwavering trust of Iago. We also see this conveyed through Othello, as well as the other characters, through their lines of "honest Iago". Overall, we as an audience are subjugated to the messy, and malignant truth of deception. We are asked to analyse our close circle with a critical lens, to ensure that are most trust confidants are not obscured behind the corrosive effects of evil.

Iago works within the plot to unravel the heavy truth of manipulation, and its disastrous effects on a malleable human psyche. The most effective way to describe Iago is through a meta-theatrical lens. Iago is a pseudo-dramatist, taking the role of a stage director, and viewing his counterparts as actors within his own narrative. This is further reinforced by the word 'play' being repeated throughout Iago's Act 2 soliloquies. This is seen in the lines "I play the villain?" and "play the God with his weak functions". To play means to act. To put on a show. To make-believe. Through this lens, we see the reasoning behind the characters complacency within Iago's narrative, and the fulfilment of Iago's affinity for garnering control over all. Through this the truth of lies within humanity is placed on display, and how people will take on a manipulative role within something life, to gain a dominant footing within society. Othello acts as our vehicle, to witness the abilities of rampant manipulation on a extremely malleable human mind. Othello, a black man of high rank within the Venetian army, is subjected to racial prejudice from the primarily white society from which he lives. These racial remarks are only heightened by his union with a noble white women, Desdemona. Othello's insecurities are interwoven into his very core, portraying themselves throughout the play as deep-seated emotional scars. Iago preys upon Othello's need for a sustainable, strong intimate relationship, exclaiming, "I am your own now", and "you know I love thee." These lines are reflective of a marriage vow, suggesting how Iago intends to uphold the ephemeral nature of intimacy, and stay by Othello's side until 'death do them part.' Through this, Othello relies on Iago for a connection he feels he cannot create with Desdemona. However, we as an audience are exposed to the proper truth through dramatic irony, where Iago states "I will follow him (Othello), until I serve my turn upon him." Through Iago's manipulation, and Othello's complacency, we as an audience as exposed to the harsh truth of outlook, and how we have to be cautious over how much influence we other others to have over our perception of the truth. We are asked to journey through life with a lens of what we believe is morally correct, right, and wrong, or our ends may be as tragic and deserving as both Iago and Othello's.

Unlike the traditional villains we witness lurking between the pages of typical literature, Iago has no distinct motive. A.C Bradley, a world-renowned Shakespearean critic once stated, "nowhere is evil shown with such mastery than in the character of Iago". Throughout the play, we observe the oscillation between motives displayed through Iago's behaviours. In the beginning, we are led to believe that Iago is motivated through his hatred for Cassio, for taking over the lieutenant position he desire. However, we are then proven wrong, as when Cassio's downfall is engendered, Iago continues on with his plan. Next we are under the assumption that Iago wants to destroy Othello due to sexual paranoia, as he believes Othello "hath leapt into (his) office", suggesting a sexually charged affair with his wife, Emilia. Yet, after Iago simple states "I hate the Moor", alluding to immense racial prejudice. This is a terrifying truth, devoid of any pure attributes, as we are shown that evil is completely unmoored from motives. The truth alone that individuals will act without moral justification changes our entire perspective on life, and the people we hold connections with. Othello, a once grandiloquent man, becomes a shell of the individual he once lived as, through the evil actions of the Machiavellian, Iago. As per the Elizabethan Chain of Being, Othello is reduced to an animalist state, or as described in the books, "bestial state". We see this reflected through Othello's complete juxtaposition of speech. Inside Act 1, Othello declares his love for Desdemona through his exclamation, "she loved me for the dangers I have passed, and I loved that she did pity them," is completely paralleled by the exclamation, "I will tear her (Desdemona) to pieces," as witness in the last Act and the stage director where Othello "smothers Desdemona" to death. Through this poignant juxtaposition, the audience is asked to sit within the confines of a brilliantly crafted truth, revealing how chaos ensues when evil has no reasoning. We witness the psychological warfare of a man trying to make sense of his life, whilst subconsciously battling against the corrosive effects of malicious intents. We are provided with a powerful truth that pivots our understanding of humanity, replacing our ignorant lens with one of wisdom, and cautionary advice.

To conclude, *Othello* has worked throughout the generations, to provide modern-day society with truths which humanity has hidden under its deceitful web. Truths, in order to enact change of a perspective, need to be confronting. They need to provide the audience with a motivation to change, and a reason to question the complex world around us. Shakespeare, through the use of Iago and his evil actions, provided us with a play which explains the depths of deception, manipulation, and evil unmoored from motives. Throughout the play we are asked to excavate the proper truth from a wreckage of recollections, devoid of any simplistic, or pure attributes, to be able to witness the human condition through a lens that is profoundly detailed.

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SECTION C: EXPLORING ISSUES IN LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

Write an essay in response to ONE of the statements below. Use the statement as the focus for an in-depth discussion of a **range of texts**.

Note: No content or quotations used in your answer to this section should be repeated in Section B.

STATEMENTS (Choose ONE)

- ☐ Good writing is knowing what belongs. Bad writing is everything else.
- ☐ Literature turns the ordinary into something we finally see truly.
- ☐ "One of writing's greatest magics is to allow us to slide outside the trap of time." (David Taylor)
- ☐ The twin purposes of literature are to make sense of pain and to fathom the sources of joy.
- ☐ "One writes out of one thing only – one's own experience." (James Baldwin)
- ☐ Literature can give us a glimpse of another culture's patterns of thinking.
- ☒ Ideas travel further than the pages that first held them.

PLANNING

B *I* U

ANSWER

Write your answer to **Section C** in the box below.

B *I* U

Well-written texts and esteemed authors find an avenue to propelled their ideas of the world onto their audience. They find depth within the simplistic, rummaging around within the shallows to grasp a hold of the truths humanity hides within its darkest corners. Literature rarely depicts love as simple. Instead it exposes its contradictions: a force that both sustains and destroys, consoles and torments, liberates and constricts. Ideas of love, loss and grief journey through classical literature to educate humanity on what it

means to truly be human inside a society where love and passion define the careful outline of who we are. Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and *Remembrance*, as well as Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, showcase love as never entirely neutral. Catherine and Heathcliff's devotion reveals the idea of love as a dissolution of identity. Bronte's speaker inside *Remembrance* exposes love as grief sharpened by time, and Mrs Bennet inside *Pride and Prejudice* conveys love as a social transaction. All three texts have withstood the test of time to become powerful cautionary tale, exposing the harsh ideas of the overall human experience, and modern-day society. Together, these three texts offer not just a singular motto, but a spectrum of ideas that linger far after the last page is turned, revealing how love is continually reshaped by society, mortality, influential universal forces and the recognition of our own cosmic insignificance.

The idea of human passion and grief is what defines the human condition, and the overall human collective consciousness. Inside *Wuthering Heights*, Catherine's confession, "it would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now, so he shall never know how much I love him", exposes the harsh idea that passion collides with class. Although she insists, "he is more myself than I am", conveying how Catherine has allowed propriety and passion to fracture her sense of identity. This exposes the harsh truth of contortion, providing the readers with the lingering idea of obsessive love, and how we lose a piece of ourselves in pursuit of it. This mirrors Mrs Bennet's obsession, "it was the business of her life to get her daughters married", reducing love to a economic survival, leading to an unfulfilling life of worry and anxiety. Mrs Bennet acts as a powerful allegory for the universal female experience and ideals of her time, highlighting the idea of how marriage, a union of love, has the potential to be warped by humanities forces, deeming it somewhat insignificant. Yet in *Remembrance*, the idea of human passion and grief is place against a much larger horizon, "severed by times all-severing wave." Through this, Bronte illustrates how human grief is not personal, but cosmic. An impersonal force which dwarfs individual passion, and creates the inevitable effect of over-whelming, debilitating grief. This is further reinforced by the iambic pentameter that the elegy reads in. This rhythm is reflective of a funeral procession, symbolising the march of a coffin and the inevitability of larger forces diminishing our mere humanistic traits. Taken together, these three texts reveal the lingering idea of how human passion appears fragile when placed against forces which exceed the self, whether that be social, cosmic, or the infinite sweep of time, therefore warning humans about where we place and express our love.

The extremity of Heathcliff's grief, "I cannot live without my life, I cannot live without my soul!", illustrates Bronte's idea of passion as annihilation, exposing the harsh truth of humanity and intimacy. This line is a powerful sentiment to the tumultuous relationship Catherine and Heathcliff shared, which was as tempestuous as the Moors they inhabited. The two shared an inseparable bond, but were constantly at odds. This ambivalence permeates throughout the novel, leading to the tragic downfall of both of their psychological states. Heathcliff's plea following Catherine's death, "You said I killed you, haunt me then! Take any form...only do not leave me in this abyss where I cannot find you!", transforms the idea of love into a refusal of death's boundaries. This is an addictive comfort Heathcliff indulges in to deal with the death of his lover, speaking to the universal human experience of denial, and loves ability to cloud our perspectives. In *Remembrance*, by contrast, the speaker concedes to their indifference to the universe. The speakers beloved is "cold in the dreary grave, with deep snow piled above thee." The vivid imagery of the snow and earth are symbolic of natures continuation despite individual sorrow, underscoring the speakers insignificance to the environments scale. The idea of love and its small forces links back to the poignant idea of humans, and our own cosmic insignificance. Our mere human emotions are transformed from all-consuming, to insubordinate due to the expansive size of the universe and its forces, therefore speaking to the poignant feeling of vulnerability within humanity. Austen replays this vulnerability in satirical form through Mrs Bennet's dramatic exclamation, "You have no compassion for my nerves!". This claim is absurd, yet reflects the idea of how individuals will inflate their anxieties within systems, such as social, domestic, or cosmic, which remain entirely indifferent. All three texts reveal the precariousness of human passion and grief when placed against structure that will always outlast it, portraying the idea of insubordination within humanity, and the inevitability failure under the rule of natures powers.

Through Bronte and Austen's ideas, we witness influential forces diminishing our human endeavours. Even time cannot contain love. In *Remembrance*, the speaker admits, "I vainly endure these heavy changes", signalling the idea of how memory both preserves and torments the human psyche, allowing us to ponder the idea of grief, and how it is nothing but love persisting against harsh forces. Catherine Earnshaw's paradox within *Wuthering Heights*, to marry Edgar whilst declaring "I am Heathcliff!", demonstrates the same irreconcilable spilt between passion and circumstance. Austen re-frames this instability through Miss Bennets sigh, "If I were as rich as Mr Darcy I should not mind how proud I was", revealing the idea of how humanity has transformed desire into transaction, exposing how love will always be conquered by something bigger than itself, reflecting Austen's ideologies surrounding love and connection. This is also shown through Bronte's Yorkshire Parsonage landscapes, and Austen's drawing rooms, revealing how love will inevitably be trumped by forces which exceed our abilities. Together, these three texts offer an insight into the idea of outside forces, and how we as humans will always succumb to their influential and powerful natures.

To conclude, to live a satisfying and fulfilling life, humans feed off of intimacy, as connections is what drive us forward. *Wuthering Heights* and *Remembrance*, written by Emily Bronte, alongside Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* epitomise these ideas, creating their pieces into a vehicle for hidden ideas to linger within our modern day humanity. Human passion is only but grief sharpened by the intimacy humans crave, which reveals how our love is built on cracked foundations. Therefore, both Bronte and Austen urge us to become cautious of external forces, and their ability to make the human race succumb to their powerful ways.

Outstanding Scholarship

Subject: English

Standard: 93001

Total score: 20

Q	Score	Marker commentary
1	06	This response is a comprehensive analysis of both Texts A and B. A judicious use of evidence is selected, for example references to the ocean's symbolism. The response sees how the texts work together while appreciating the contrasts. The response needed to have tighter control for a higher grade.
2	07	This response chose to focus the drama question using Shakespeare, which is a valid choice. It addressed the statement throughout, never losing sight of it. Throughout this response a good understanding of the world of Shakespeare and Shakespeare's craft was demonstrated. Iago was the vehicle for the argument and it was supported with secondary sources.
3	07	A careful argument with a judicious selection and range of texts used to craft the argument. The references are interwoven, leading to a structured and coherent response. There was an excellent synthesis of the ideas and the text. The statement could be argued to be embedded rather than overtly stated however, despite this, it is still a powerful response.