# THE SCHOOL FOR EXCELLENCE (TSFX)

## VCE ENGLISH UNITS 3 & 4

### WRITTEN EXAMINATION 2018

**Reading Time:** 15 minutes  
**Writing Time:** 3 hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Number:</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## TASK BOOK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Number of Questions</th>
<th>Number of Questions to be Answered</th>
<th>Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A – Analytical interpretation of a text</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B – Comparative analysis of texts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C – Argument and persuasive writing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Students are to write in blue or black pen.
- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners, rulers and an English and/or bilingual printed dictionary.
- Students are **NOT** permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or correction fluid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

### Materials Supplied

- Task book of 14 pages, including assessment criteria on page 14

### Instructions

- Write your **student number** in the space provided above on this page.
- If you choose to write on a multimodal text in Section A, you must not write on a text pair that includes a multimodal text in Section B.
- All written responses must be in English.

Students are **NOT** permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.
**SECTION A – ANALYTICAL INTERPRETATION OF A TEXT**

**Instructions for Section A**

Section A requires students to write an analytical interpretation of a selected text in response to one topic (either i. or ii.) on one text.

Your response should be supported by close reference to the selected text.

If your selected text is a collection of poetry or short stories, you may write on several poems or stories, or on at least two in close detail.

If you choose to write on a multimodal text in Section A, you must not write on a text pair that includes a multimodal text in Section B.

In the answer book, indicate which text you have chosen to write on and whether you have chosen to answer i. or ii.

Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 14 of this book.

Section A is worth one-third of the total marks for the examination.

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**Text List**

1. *After Darkness* ................................................................. Christine Piper
2. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* ............... Katherine Boo
3. *Burial Rites* ...................................................................... Hannah Kent
4. *Extinction* ........................................................................ Hannie Rayson
5. *Frankenstein* ..................................................................... Mary Shelley
6. *I for Isobel* ......................................................................... Amy Witting
7. *In Cold Blood* .................................................................... Truman Capote
8. *Island: Collected Stories* .................................................. Alistair MacLeod
9. *Like a House on Fire* .......................................................... Cate Kennedy
10. *Measure for Measure* ....................................................... William Shakespeare
11. *Medea* .............................................................................. William Shakespeare
12. *Old/New World: New & Selected Poems* ......................... Peter Skrzynecki
13. *Persepolis* ........................................................................ Jonathon Cape
14. *Rear Window* .................................................................... directed by Alfred Hitchcock
15. *Selected Poems* ............................................................... John Donne
16. *Stories we Tell* ............................................................... Directed by Sarah Polley
17. *The Golden Age* ............................................................... Joan London
18. *The Left Hand of Darkness* ............................................... Ursula Le Guin
19. *The Lieutenant* ............................................................... Kate Grenville
20. *The White Tiger* .............................................................. Aravind Adiga
1. *After Darkness* by Christine Piper
   
i. In ‘After Darkness’ culture is at the centre of all conflict. Discuss.

   OR

   ii. ‘My silence had been weak’ (p294.) Ibaraki’s crisis on conscience and naïve nature make his actions excusable. Discuss.

2. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by Katherine Boo
   
i. ‘How does Boo convey the human dramas of the world of Mumbai?’

   OR

   ii. ‘There is a sense of optimism in the novel despite the plight of the inhabitants of the slum’. Is this an accurate assessment of Boo’s novel?

3. *Burial Rites* by Hannah Kent
   
i. ‘Burial Rites demonstrates the importance in maintaining hope and belief in times of hardship.’
   Discuss.

   OR

   ii. ‘Through Agnes’ story, the characters in Burial Rites come to learn a great deal about themselves and their society.’
   Do you agree?

4. *Extinction* by Hannie Rayson
   
i. ‘In spite of their faults, the characters in Extinction demonstrate moral courage when necessary’. Do you agree?

   OR

   ii. ‘Rayson’s play suggests that idealism will always lose out to realism’. Discuss

5. *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
   
i. “In other studies you go as far as others have gone before you... but in a scientific pursuit there is continual food for discovery and wonder.”
   What is the text’s message about the pursuit of knowledge?

   OR

   ii. Despite Victor Frankenstein’s repugnance at what he has made, the monster is truly created in his own image. Do you agree?
6. *I for Isobel* by Amy Witting
   
i. ‘It was well established that Isobel was a liar.’ How does Isobel come to believe that she is a liar and what are the consequences?

   OR

   ii. To what extent do the characters in *I for Isobel* demonstrate the consequences of emotional abuse?

7. *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote
   
i. ‘In Cold Blood is more about two dysfunctional characters than it is about the senseless murder of a decent family’? Discuss

   OR

   ii. ‘Capote’s minute examination of the characters and events in his novel is essential to the reader’s understanding of how this event happened’? Do you agree?

8. *Island: Collected Stories* by Alistair MacLeod
   
i. “MacLeod’s stories are bleak, leaving us with a particularly pessimistic view of the human condition.” To what extent do you agree?

   OR

   ii. “In *Island*, the men and women seem to inhabit such different worlds and perform such different roles.” Discuss.

9. *Like a House on Fire* by Cate Kennedy
   
i. Kennedy’s stories present personal conviction as the only way to cope with hardship. Do you agree?

   OR

   ii. Kennedy utilises literary techniques such as perspective and style to evoke sympathy for her characters. Discuss.

10. *Measure for Measure* by William Shakespeare
    
i. “I hold you as a thing enskied and sainted.”
   ‘Isabella might seem virtuous and admirable, but even she is not without her flaws.’ Do you agree?

    OR

   ii. “…but my brother justice I have found so severe.”
   Does Vienna’s legal system achieve justice at any stage in *Measure for Measure*?
11. *Medea* by Euripides
   
i. How does Euripides use the Chorus in ‘Medea’.

   OR

   ii. ‘The fundamental problem Medea faces is that she lives in a patriarchal society.’ Discuss.

12. *Old/New World: New & Selected Poems* by Peter Skrzynecki
   
i. Peter Skrzynecki’s *Old/New World* demonstrates that a connection to place is central to our sense of belonging. Do you agree?

   OR

   ii. It is the autobiographical nature of Peter Skrzynecki’s poetry that makes it so engaging. Discuss

13. *Persepolis* by Jonathon Cape
   
i. ‘The graphic novel is an effective means of capturing Sarat’s transition from childhood to adult in *Persepolis*. Discuss

   OR

   ii. “I had learnt that you should always shout louder than your aggressor”. Is Satrapi successful in making her voice heard in *Persepolis*?

14. *Rear Window* directed by Alfred Hitchcock
   
i. In *Rear Window* Lisa asks Jeffries, “You don’t think either one of us could ever change?” To what extent are these two characters transformed by the events of the film?

   OR

   ii. *Rear Window* is structured around acts of looking. How does Hitchcock use cinematography in the film to explore the theme of voyeurism?

15. *Selected Poems* by John Donne
   
i. ‘Whilst a product of its time, Donne’s poetry nonetheless speaks to what is most human in all of us.’ Discuss.

   OR

   ii. ‘In Donne’s poetry women are merely objects of desire.’ To what extent do you agree?
16. *Stories we Tell* directed by Sarah Polley

i. “The crucial function of art is to tell the truth.” To what extent does Sarah Polley’s use of actors and re-enactments undermine the truth of *Stories We Tell*?

OR

ii. *Stories We Tell* presents multiple perspectives on Diane Polley but ultimately the film is Sarah Polley’s story. Discuss.

17. *The Golden Age* by Joan London

i. “I have to find myself, a place where I can breathe. That’s where poetry lives. In the oldest part of us”. ‘The Golden Age’ is about self-discovery’. Discuss.

OR


18. *The Left Hand of Darkness* by Ursula Le Guin

i. The Left Hand of Darkness is an epistolary novel, constituted by a collection of accounts and diaries, how does this structure affect the reliability of the narrator?

OR

ii. “No, I don’t mean love, when I say patriotism. I mean fear. The fear of the other. And its expressions are political, not poetical: hate, rivalry, aggression.” The Left Hand of Darkness features many references to expansion and colonialism. Discuss what statement Le Guin is making on these concepts.

19. *The Lieutenant* by Kate Grenville

i. *The Lieutenant* suggests that duty and obligation are more important than truth. To what extent do you agree?

OR

ii. “…it was brought home to Rooke that mere words, could have the power of life and death’. How does Grenville explore the power of language?

20. *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga

i. How does Adiga’s use of humour to comment on social issues in *The White Tiger*? Discuss

OR

ii. Balman questions: “Why do all the poor live amid such filth, such ugliness?” To what extent is choice a possibility in the lives of the characters in *The White Tiger*?
SECTION B – COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEXTS

Instructions for Section B

Section B requires students to write a comparative analysis of a selected pair of texts in response to one topic (either i. or ii.) on one pair of texts.

Your response should analyse how the two texts present ideas and/or issues, and should be supported by close reference to both texts in the pair.

If you choose to write on a multimodal text in Section A, you must not write on a text pair that includes a multimodal text in Section B.

In the answer book, indicate which text pair you have chosen to write on and whether you have chosen to answer i. or ii.

Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 14 of this book.

Section B is worth one-third of the total marks for the examination.

Pair 1  Tracks by Robyn Davidson and Into the Wild directed by Sean Penn

i.  “…I had rediscovered people in my past and come to terms with my feelings towards them. I had learnt what love was.” (Tracks)
    “…Happiness only real when shared” (Into the Wild)

    Compare the way in both texts the experience of isolation compels the protagonist to reconsider their relationships with others.

    OR

ii.  Compare how, in both Tracks and Into the Wild, the confrontation with death leads to self-discovery.

Pair 2  Invictus directed by Clint Eastwood and Ransom by David Malouf

i.  “Times change, we need to change as well.” (Invictus)
    “Yes, yes, he thinks, all this I know is unprecedented. But so is his plan.” (Ransom)

    Compare how the texts show that the greatest leaders are those who are able to challenge convention.

    OR

ii.  ‘Courage can take many different forms.’
    Compare how the two texts explore this idea.
Pair 3  *Stasiland* by Anna Funder and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell

i. ‘Rebellion is impossible when one doesn’t know who one can trust’. Compare how this idea is demonstrated in these texts.

OR

ii. “In the GDR people were required to acknowledge an assortment of fictions as fact” (Stasiland)

Compare how the thoughts of the people are controlled in Stasiland and Nineteen Eighty-Four.

Pair 4  *Joyful Strains: Making Australia Home* by Kent MacCarter and Ali Lemer (eds), and *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri

i. “[Ashima felt] overwhelmed by the thought of the move she is about to make, to the city that was once home and is now in its own way foreign.”

“For the first time I acknowledged the shortcomings of place polygamy and felt the loneliness of living in that narrow stretch of No Man’s Land, able to participate in the activities of polarised cultures but unable to belong to either.”

Joyful Strains and The Namesake explore how belonging is achieved when individuals have multiple places to call home. Discuss.

OR

ii. The migrant experience is not static – individuals respond in different ways based on a number of factors. Discuss with reference to The Namesake and Joyful Strains.

Pair 5  *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller and *Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague* by Geraldine Brooks

i. “There are wheels within wheels in this village, and fires within fires.” (*The Crucible*)

“What in the name of God have you done here?” (*Year of Wonders*)

Compare the ways the two texts show the dangers of hysteria.

OR

ii. ”I knew how easy it is for a widow to be turned witch in the common mind…” (*Year of Wonders*)

Compare the ways in which these texts explore the power of women in their societies.
Pair 6  *Bombshells* by Joanna Murray-Smith and *The Peneloipiad: The Myth of Penelope and Odysseus* by Margaret Atwood

i. Compare what the two texts say about the actions that people take when confronted with their own powerlessness.

OR

ii. ‘The women in these texts primarily define themselves through their relationships with others.’
Compare what the texts suggest about identity.

Pair 7  *Black Diggers* by Tom Wright and *The Longest Memory* by Fred D’Aguiar

i. The various forms of individual narratives in ‘Black Diggers’ and ‘The Longest Memory’ make a powerful critique of racism.
Compare how this idea is explored in both texts.

OR

ii. “I thought things would change after the War.” (‘Black Diggers’)
“My son, whose dreams were such that he argued his children would be free.”
(‘The Longest Memory’)
Compare the ideas about dreams and reality explored in both texts.

Pair 8  *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb, and *Made in Dagenham* directed by Nigel Cole

i. “I was a girl in a land where rifles are fired in celebration of a son, while daughters are hidden away behind a curtain” (I am Malala)

“I'm Lisa Burnett, I'm 31 years old and I have a first class honours degree from one of the finest universities in the world, and my husband treats me like I'm a fool.” (Made in Dagenham)

I am Malala and Made in Dagenham explore the role of gender in society and challenge these in interesting ways. Discuss.

OR

ii. ‘I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban’ and ‘Made in Dagenham’ show that corruption can inflict individuals and institutions. Discuss.
SECTION C – ARGUMENT AND PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE

Instructions for Section C

Section C requires students to write an analysis of the ways in which argument and language are used to persuade others to share a point(s) of view.

Read the background information on this page and the material on pages 9 to 13, and write an analytical response to the task below.

For the purposes of this task, the term ‘language’ refers to written, spoken and visual language.

Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 14 of this book.

Section C will be worth one-third of the total marks for the examination.

Task

Write an analysis of the ways in which argument and written and visual language are used by both James Pattison and Vanessa Leoncelli to try to persuade others to share the points of view presented.

Background information

EXCEL Equity Pty Ltd (referred to in short as “EE”) is a multi-national financial organisation specialising in property and share portfolio management. In a bid to improve the organisation’s appeal and image, the company’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Conor McLaughlin, is investigating the possibility of implementing in-house childcare at all of EE’s city offices. This initiative would see a fully accredited childcare centre built into EE’s existing infrastructure, and its services would be offered to all EE employees. With the Annual General Meeting (AGM) soon approaching, McLaughlin has established a confidential email thread with his nine company Directors in order to ascertain their thoughts on whether such a policy would be in EE’s interests.
Dear Directors,

As I have indicated to you over the phone and/or in person, I am looking into the viability of implementing in-house childcare for all EE employers. At this stage, the policy is just an idea, but I would like your honest (and confidential) opinion on whether or not, in principle, you believe that such an initiative would be good for the company and its stakeholders.

At your earliest convenience, please “REPLY ALL” with your thoughts. This matter will be raised as an agenda item at September’s AGM.

Yours sincerely,

Conor McLaughlin
Chief Executive Office
Excel Equity
Sydney, Australia
Hi all,

Well, I’m happy to kick things off with what I anticipate will be a somewhat controversial opinion. Such proposals are certainly not new; in fact, if I’m not mistaken, I remember a former boss of this very company mooting the possibility of a similar service back in the early 90s. But despite being talked about and talked about for decades, in-house childcare – as a core policy for large-scale organisations like EE – has not taken off, and for good reason. I think of this idea in the same way I think of those “All-You-Can-Eat” restaurants that were all the rage back in my teenage years (bear with me, please!!): they sound appealing on paper, and the idea might have worked for one or two businesses, but on the whole, the concept almost always does more damage than good. Good on paper, bad in practice.

Any successful business needs to have a structure and working environment that values all its employees equally. This is one of EE’s greatest assets, Conor, and I applaud you for all the work you’ve done to make certain that this company remains a “pin-up boy” for transparency and for treating all its workers the same, regardless of any differentiating factor such as race, religion, sexual orientation and gender. If we were to establish the kind of in-house childcare centre that you have alluded to, I fear we will compromise our image as a company that treats all its employees with an even hand. We will drive a wedge between two kinds of workers: those with kids, and those without kids. For those with children, and who may no longer bear the logistical and financial burdens of childcare, the message we are sending is a decidedly affirming one: we value you and your family. But what about the hundreds (thousands, perhaps) of employees without children? What message are we sending them? That in order to truly enjoy the spoils of this wonderful organisation, you’ve really got to have kids?

Think about how much the provision of free, in-house childcare would save an employee over a five-year span. The figure would certainly be in the thousands of dollars – perhaps even the tens of thousands for those with multiple children. If one of our employees without kids were to insist that her salary be increased to offset that fact that she does not enjoy the benefits of the company policy, what would our response be? And as someone who knows a thing or two about employment litigation, if such a matter ended up before the courts (touch wood!), I’m not sure we’d have a legal leg to stand on. Oh, and spare a thought, too, for our fellow employees who have kids, but not of childcare age. Imagine having juggled the economic and organisational demands of putting kids through crèche and kinder for all those years, only to see that free, in-house childcare is now a company policy for our younger parents. What a whack that’d be! I wouldn’t be surprised if employees in that boat asked for EE to make an equivalent contribution to school fees, in lieu of the childcare benefit. Floodgates = opened…

The thing is, such a policy seems, on the surface, to be quite a progressive one. But it isn’t. It’s the opposite, actually. It harks back to a time when society only valued a certain kind of person and a certain kind of family unit. And unless I’ve been sitting in a different board room over the past decade, that isn’t what EE is about. But if that’s not enough of a reason to think twice about this proposal, take a look at this:
That exhausted young lady, as some of you may recognise, is my gorgeous daughter, Chloe. Much to the consternation of her family, Chloe decided to keep working as a consultant from home, while also trying to look after a newborn baby girl. Let me tell you this: she didn’t last long before she was completely and utterly burnt out. She described it as trying to drive a car while cooking a stirfry! Now I know in-house childcare is not exactly the same as working from home, but they have something fundamental in common: they both blur the lines between work and home. When a workplace is a vibrant, supportive, challenging one like it is here at EE, it can actually provide a welcome, healthy break from family/home life. This is not to say that men and women are counting down the minutes before they can flee home and find sanctuary at work. Of course not! But it would be helpful to be honest and upfront in acknowledging that a clear distinction between our work and home spheres is a good thing. No hardworking, committed employee likes to feel as though their family life is encroaching upon their work, and EE certainly does not want to intrude upon the personal lives of its workers. In-house childcare will dismantle that crucial barrier, and the company’s output and the work-life balance of our people will suffer.


So my view in a nutshell? Good on paper, bad in practice.

Looking forward to discussing this further at the AGM.

Warmly,

James Pattison
Director – Melbourne Office
Excel Equity.
From: Vanessa Leoncelli
Sent: Monday, 30 July 2018 8:36 PM
To: EE_Directors; Conor McLaughlin
Subject: RE: CONFIDENTIAL: In-house childcare: policy discussion.

Evening all,

I am typing this email on my couch, having just sat down after a 9 hour working day that involved rushing across town during peak hour to collect my twins before their crèche closed— so yes, I am slightly conflicted...!

I, too, look forward to a full and frank discussion about this at our AGM, and it might surprise that you that I agree with a lot of what James has had to say; I adore my colleagues, many of whom do not have children, and I would hate to think that anyone, for any reason, felt under-valued or under-appreciated at EE.

The interesting this is that I actually don’t think that employees without children would actually feel this way. The tricky thing about James’ characterisation is that it makes the provision of childcare seem like a “zero/sum game” – that is, one group gains (e.g. those with young children) to the extent that another loses (e.g. those without young kids). But I’m not sure this paints an accurate picture of the proposal. Does providing a service to one group of staff members necessarily amount to taking away from another? We all know that, as part of EE’s commitment to staff development, we often contribute to employees’ further education (I just signed off on a staff member’s Master of Finance approval!). Does making such a contribution to those seeking to extend their skills and knowledge mean taking something away from those who are not? It’s a tough one, but I’m not convinced it does.

Anyway, lots to think about. …
Enough work for me for one day – It’s one episode of “Grey’s Anatomy”, then bedtime for me!

Regards,

Vanessa Leoncelli
Director – Sydney Office
Assessment criteria

Section A will be assessed against the following criteria:

• knowledge and understanding of the text, and the ideas and issues it explores
• development of a coherent analysis in response to the topic
• use of textual evidence to support the interpretation
• control and effectiveness of language use, as appropriate to the task

Section B will be assessed against the following criteria:

• knowledge and understanding of both texts, and the ideas and issues they present
• discussion of meaningful connections, similarities or differences between the texts, in response to the topic
• use of textual evidence to support the comparative analysis
• control and effectiveness of language use, as appropriate to the task

Section C will be assessed against the following criteria:

• understanding of the argument(s) presented and point(s) of view expressed
• analysis of ways in which language and visual features are used to present an argument and to persuade
• control and effectiveness of language use, as appropriate to the task