NASCA English First Additional Language Materials Draft 1

THEMES 3 and 4

Language and the world around us

Language and Literature

# THEME 3

# Language and the world around us

## Introduction

‘The world around us’ is a very broad theme! The three units within this theme aim to provide opportunities for you to engage critically with a range of texts: newspaper or magazine articles, letters to the press, graphs, tables, cartoons and advertisements. These texts focus on environmental and other community issues, both locally and internationally, and on tourism in South Africa. The activities have been designed to assist you to extend your speaking, listening, reading and writing knowledge and skills, your knowledge and ability to use language structures and conventions in context, and your visual literacy.

## Content Structure

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| Units | **Sub-Topic** |
| Unit 1  Media texts on environmental and other community issues | * reading and responding to (i.e. comprehending) a range of media texts; * discussing and debating a current issue; * distinguishing between facts and opinions in texts; * writing a summary in table form; * writing a news clip; * using language structures to write about causes and effects. |
| Unit 2  Public response texts on environmental and other community issues | * identifying the purpose of an argument text; * understanding the role of persuasive and /or emotive language in an argument text; * identifying features of a letter to the press; * writing a letter to the press; * identifying features of an argument essay; * understanding the function of conjunctions in an argument essay and other texts and being able to use these correctly; * drafting an argument essay, using evidence and examples to support a point of view; * editing and writing a final version of an argument essay; |
| Unit 3  Multimodal texts with a focus on tourism | * reading and interpreting bar graphs; * reading and interpreting statistical information in a table; * reading and interpreting cartoon strips; * reading and responding critically to tourism advertisements; * planning, preparing, drafting and editing an advertisement for a tourist destination. |

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| **UNIT 1** | Media texts on environmental and community issues and on responses to these issues |

### Introduction

The focus of this unit is on issues in the environment and community, both locally and internationally. Your knowledge and experiences are potential resources for learning and so the unit aims to make links between the content and activities included in it, and your life and community context. It also aims to make links between local and global environmental issues.

**Learning outcomes:**

When you have completed this unit, you should be able to:

* Read and respond to (i.e. comprehend) a range of media texts;
* discuss and debate a current issue;
* distinguish between facts and opinions in texts;
* write a summary in table form;
* write a news clip;
* use language structures to write about causes and effects.

**Unit 1.1 Reading and responding to extracts from a magazine article (1)**

The extracts (short sections) that you are about to read are from a magazine article titled ***Plastic Tsunami Alert***. A tsunami is a very large wave, often caused by an earthquake. It flows from the sea onto the land. A tsunami is so powerful that it is likely to destroy everything that it crashes into. Tsunamis have been in the news several times in the last few years because they have caused so much damage in several countries, particularly countries in Asia.

Artwork: two small images of tsunami damage

**Activity X: Prepare to read extracts from a magazine article**

Before you read extracts from a magazine article, answer the following questions, and if possible, discuss your answers with a partner or in a small group:

1. What are the names of some of the magazines that you know and/or read?

2. Which articles or sections of these magazines do you like best? Why?

3. Look at the extracts from the magazine article below.

3.1 Write down the **title.** Underneath it write a sentence to explain what you think this title means. Refer to the explanation of a tsunami to help you.

3.2 Write down the information in bold type below the title. Underneath it write a sentence to explain why you think the journalist has written these sentences at the beginning of the article. To help you, note that the phrase ‘drastic measures’ means ‘extremely serious actions that must be taken immediately’. ‘Dire consequences’ means ‘very bad effects as a result of some action’.

**Activity X: Read and respond to extracts from a magazine article**

For this activity, questions follow each section of the extracts from a long article. Some of the vocabulary used by the journalist is also explained. Write an answer to the questions on each section before moving on to the next one. Each extract is printed in a bigger font size than the explanations and questions that follow it.

Artwork: open access images of plastic pollution on beaches

***Plastic Tsunami Alert* by Andrea Abbott**

**Every 15 seconds three metric tons of plastic land up in the ocean. And then there’s the damage it does on land. Drastic measures are needed to deal with its dire consequences.**

At Durban’s Blue Lagoon that Saturday morning, the sun-kissed sea is as smooth as a millpond, wading birds stand stiff-legged in the shallows of the Umgeni estuary, a flotilla of penguins drifts upstream, and the beach and river banks are awash with rubbish.

**Explanations:** (i) The Umgeni is a river and the Umgeni estuary is the place where the river joins the sea. (ii) A flotilla is usually a term for a group of boats or ships that travel together but here is it used to describe a group of large water birds (pelicans) travelling on the river.

**Questions 1, 2 & 3:**

1. There are two different kinds of description in the journalist’s first sentence. What is your response to her description of the sea and the birds?

2. What is your response to her description of what is on the beach and river banks?

3. Suggest why she put these two descriptions in the same sentence.

I’m one of about a hundred volunteers stashing trash into yellow bags. Waste of all types festoons the landscape but plastic outnumbers the lot. In under two hours, we fill 320 bags. A good effort and it’s rewarding to know that we’ve prevented that garbage from entering the sea.

**Explanations:** Trash is a synonym for rubbish or waste. To festoon usually means to decorate with flowers or paper streamers.

**Questions 4 & 5**

4.Quote thewords that tell readers that the journalist is taking part in the operation to clean up the area.

5. Was she pleased about what was achieved? Give a reason for your answer.

Still, it’s sobering to note that, at the end of our stint, a hell of a lot of rubbish remains. Worse, is the realisation that our effort literally amounts to a drop in the ocean. Daily newsfeeds carry shocking statistics of the tidal wave of marine plastic pollution, but one especially chilling projection is that, by 2050, plastic in the oceans will outweigh fish.

**Explanations**: A ‘stint’ is a period of time that a person spends doing something and ‘a drop in the ocean’ is an expression used in English to mean a very, very small amount or contribution. ‘Marine’ is an adjective to describe nouns connected to the sea (in this case plastic pollution). A projection is a forecast or an estimate of what will be the case in the future.

**Question 6**

6. Explain in your own words what is shocking about the information given by the journalist.

8.3 billion tons of plastic have been manufactured since the early 1950s when the material first started being mass produced. The bulk of it has ended up in landfills or pollutes both land and sea. In the sea, it causes a great deal of harm to marine wildlife with many creatures including fish, whales and turtles facing death by starvation. This is because their digestive systems are so full of plastic that they cannot process food. Findings from research undertaken by the Department of Marine Biology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal include the following: The stomachs of all 16 species of fish studied, contained plastic. Fish that have consumed plastic lay fewer eggs and thus there will be fewer fish in the future.

**Explanation:** A landfill is a term for a place on land where rubbish is collected in large pits.

**Questions 7 & 8**

7. Suggest why the journalist names the place where research has been conducted.

8. Two of the dire consequences of plastic pollution in the sea are mentioned in the paragraph.

What are they?

To end on a positive note, the cumulative effect of every beachgoer removing ten items of trash will make a world of difference in the battle to protect the marine environment.

(Extracts slightly adapted from Plastic Tsunami Alert by Andrea Abbott*, Country Life*, November 2017 pp. 50-55)

**Explanation:** Cumulative means ‘increasing gradually’.

**Questions 9 & 10**

9. What is the journalist challenging readers to do?

10. If you do not live near a beach, what could you do to help deal with plastic pollution in your area?

**Activity X: Expressing views on the pros and cons (advantages and**

**disadvantages) of plastic materials**

You have just read extracts from a magazine article in which the writer has described how plastic waste spoils beautiful places and is responsible for the deaths of marine creatures and for a decrease in the numbers of eggs that fish lay. If you have access to the internet, go to <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/video/plastic-pollution-how-humans-areturning-world-plastic>

This video describes what plastic is doing to our world. However, the invention and mass production of plastic has also made people’s lives easier in many ways. If you are able to work in a group, divide into two teams. One team should make a list of all the advantages or benefits of plastic that group members can think of. For example think about plastic containers and their uses. The other team should make a list of all the disadvantages of plastic they can think of. Once the lists have been completed, each team should use the points in its list to participate in a discussion about the pros and cons of plastic materials.

If you are studying on your own, make two lists: one of the advantages and the other of the disadvantages and then decide which list you find the more convincing and why.

**Unit 1.2 Reading and responding to a magazine article (2)**

#### Activity X: Think about water and water supplies.

#### This is a pre-reading activity that aims to prepare you for intensive, detailed reading of a short magazine article.

Answer the following questions, and if possible, discuss your answers with a partner or in a small group:

1. What is the source of the water that you use at home or at work (i.e. where does it come from)?

2. How would you describe the quality of this water (e.g. clean or polluted)?

3. Is this water easy or difficult to obtain? Give a reason for your answer.

4. Have you ever experienced a water shortage? If so, what caused it? If the shortage problem was solved, how was it solved?

Artwork: Open access image of a large water storage dam and of a polluted river with people drawing water from it

**Activity X: Read a magazine article intensively**

Intensive reading is careful reading in which you notice and think about each piece of information that the journalist has included. Intensive reading is important for full understanding of any text.

Read the magazine article and write an answer to each question that follows it.

**Liquid Damage**

Water *scarcity* poses a threat to global security.

The world isn’t running out of usable water. Fresh water is a very small portion of the planet’s entire water supply: it accounts for only about 2.5% of all water, and just 1% of fresh water is readily accessible. But it is all over the world, and it’s renewable.

The main problem with water isn’t volume, it’s about *distribution*. Water isn’t always where people need it, and all societies need it for everything: health, sanitation, agricultural production, energy and industry.

The ability to handle the distribution of water to meet these demands is related to how rich a country is. While affluent countries are generally able to manage water resources to meet the demand, poorer countries struggle. They often lack the infrastructure to deliver clean, safe water. Their economies tend to rely too much on industries like mining that are not well controlled and that dirty the water.

Poor nations are already suffering from serious water problems. Three quarters of a billion people lack access to clean water, and water-related diseases take the lives of about 840, 000 a year, according to Water.org. Together women and children across the world spend 140 million hours a day collecting usable water, often from unclean sources.

Lack of water has played a role in countless conflicts both inside countries and between countries. For example, there have been riots in South Africa over lack of access to clean water. In Sudan, the civil war in the 2000s was driven by conflict over water resources. As the world’s population grows, there are likely to be more conflicts over water.

The world’s water supply crisis is serious but not hopeless. The global community can develop institutions and technologies to manage water supplies better. Many of the policies that are needed already exist. What’s most badly needed is political will and action.

|  |
| --- |
| **scarcity:** shortage; **distribution:** how things are divided up and handed out; **affluent**: wealthy |

1. What percentage of the world’s water is fresh water?
2. Is the following statement True or False? Quote from the passage to support your answer.

*There is not enough usable water in the world for all its people.*

1. Explain why water is a greater problem for poorer countries than for wealthier ones.
2. According to the article, what is needed most to solve the water crisis?

5. Do you agree or disagree that this is what is most important for solving the water crisis?

Give a reason to support your answer.

6. The article refers to service delivery riots in South Africa over water problems.

6.1 Do you think people are justified in protesting about lack of provision of basic needs such as

clean water? Give a reason for your answer.

6.2 Suggest why the protests are mainly in poor areas.

**Activity X: Summarise an article**

When you are studying, or when you are asked to summarise a long report at work, it’s important to be able to identify the main points in the book or article or report that you have read. The next activity provides an opportunity for you to practise summarising, by writing some of the main points made in the article about water. Write these under the four headings.

Under each heading one point has already been written. The numbers in each column indicate how many points you should add (e.g. four in column 1, but only 1 in column 3).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Uses of water** | **Problems associated with water that people experience** | **Conflicts over water** | **Solutions to the water crisis** |
| Sanitation   1. ….. 2. ….. 3. ….. 4. ….. | Time taken to collect water.   1. ….. 2. ….. 3. ….. | Civil war in Sudan  (8) ….. | Good institutions   1. ….. 2. ….. |

**Unit 1.3 Language structures and vocabulary: learning how**

**to write about cause and effect**

A *cause* is something that leads to something else and makes it happen. For example: Smoke from factories can cause lung diseases.

An *effect* is something that is caused by something else. For example: Lung diseases are an effect of smoke from factories.

The article you have just read gives information about the effects of the water crisis on the world. For example:

Water-related diseases take the lives of about 840, 000 people a year.

**Activity X: Practise writing sentences that describe causes or effects**

It is possible to write about causes and effects in several different ways. This activity enables you to practise writing cause or effect sentences in several ways. Presenting the same information in different ways adds interest and variety to a text.

1. Use information from the example sentences above to rewrite the sentence below, by using the word

“effect” in your sentence:

The death of about 840, 000 people…

2. Now re-write the sentence using the word “cause” in your sentence. Begin the sentence with the

words Water-related diseases….

3. Here are some other ways of expressing cause and effect:

Water-related diseases *lead to the death of about 840, 000 people a year*.

About 840, 000 deaths a year *result from water-related diseases.*

Read the sentence below and then rewrite it using each of the following in separate sentences:

3.1 result of

3.2 cause of

3.3 led to

The sentence for you to rewrite: There have been riots in South Africa over lack of access to clean water.

**Unit 1.4: Reading, responding to and writing news clips**

A news clip is a short item on radio or television news, or a very short report in a newspaper or on social media. Although it is short, a news clip usually contains a great deal of information. A clip consists mainly of facts that can be checked but sometimes it includes some of the opinions of the journalist about what he or she is reporting on.

A **fact** can be tested or proved. For example:

South Africa has twelve official languages.

The South African parliament is situated in Cape Town.

However, writers can use facts selectively so that they present only parts of the information about an event or situation. If a journalist does this in a news clip, he or she can be accused of being biased (not objective) or of not providing a complete account of the event.

An **opinion** is something personal that a writer or speaker expresses. It is his or her own view and may be biased (one-sided) or may express a generalisation.

All taxi drivers drive badly. (a generalisation)

Shopping is boring. (an opinion)

The two clips that you will read below report on protest actions taken in 2016 in South Africa. When journalists report on protest action sometimes they include comment from all the ‘stakeholders’ involved or affected. At other times they include comment from only some of them. Think about any clips about recent protest actions in South Africa or elsewhere that you have heard, viewed or read and whether the positions of all stakeholders were included in these clips.

Artwork: picture of the fees must fall protest or a service delivery protest or both

**Activity X: Read and respond to the features and content of two**

**news clips**

Answering the questions below the two news clips should help you to further develop your summarising skills and also help you to understand some of the features of news clips.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | **Fees must fall**  10/09/2016. 10am  Students at the  University of Cape  Town staged a mass  protest against the  increase in fees. The  situation was very tense  with a large police  presence and private  security hired by the  university. A  spokesperson for the  FeesMustFall group  indicated that all  academic activities will  be stopped until  management accedes to  their request for a  meeting over the  suspension of five  members of the SRC.  The protest has been  peaceful and students  are mostly marching  around the  administration building  singing protest songs  and holding banners.  This is Melissa  Petersen reporting for  SAFM from Cape Town. | | |  | | --- | | **Service delivery**  9/11/2016 14h00  The main road leading into the  Marikana informal settlement in  Mbombela, Mpumalanga has been barricaded with burning tyres and rocks since this morning. This is the third day of service delivery protests in this area. The Mayor of Mbombela municipality has condemned the protest action and lamented the fact that businesses and schools have been affected by the closure of the main road into the township. The spokesperson for the residents, Liteboho Matsoso, told journalists at a media briefing this morning that protests will intensify unless the municipality addresses the list of grievances handed to the mayor at yesterday’s march to the city hall.  Hlaudi Ramaphosa for Mpumalanga Radio in Marikana, Mbombela. | |

1. For the *Fees must fall* news clip, write down five key points made by the journalist. Here are

some questions to help you: Who was involved? Where did the action take place? What was the

reason for the action? What happened?

2. How does the journalist end the *Fees must fall* news clip?

3. In the *Fees must fall* news clip, the journalist includes a statement from the students but not

from the management of the university. Does this affect the objectivity of this news clip? Give a

reason for your answer.

4. For the *Service delivery* news clip, write down five key points made by the journalist. Here are

some questions to help you: Who was involved? Where did the action take place? What was the

reason for the action? What happened?

5. For the *Service delivery* news clip, quote one example of objective reporting by the journalist

(i.e. reporting facts that can be checked by others).

**Activity X: Write a news clip**

Imagine that you are a journalist covering a protest over water shortage in an informal settlement. Draft a news clip about the protest.

Use these guidelines to assist you:

* Focus on facts: who was involved, when, where and why did the protest take place, what happened.
* Include statements from key ‘stakeholders’ involved.
* End with information about yourself as the reporter (name, news organisation, place).

When you have completed your draft version, read it carefully and make any changes that you think will improve the clip. Use these questions to assist you in revising and editing your news clip:

* Have you included the necessary facts (who, when, where, why, what happened)?
* Are these facts in the best order? If not, change the order (sequence).
* Have you included statements from key stakeholders?
* Have you ended with your name, news organisation and place?
* Are your sentences correctly punctuated?
* Have you used grammar correctly (e.g. verb tenses that indicate that the riot happened in the past or verb tenses that indicate that the riot is still going on)?

**Reflections on Unit 1**

Before you move on to Unit 2, re-read the learning outcomes for this unit on page X. Which ones have you enjoyed working on most? What has been the most challenging for you? On which one(s) do you think you have made the most progress?

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| **UNIT 2** | Public response texts which focus on environmental or other community issues |

**Introduction**

Public responses to local, national or international issues often involve arguments of various kinds. When people argue they usually try to persuade others that their argument is correct, or to convince them of why something is important, or why a particular action should be taken. Arguments may be spoken or written. In this unit the focus is on arguments in written form.

**Learning Outcomes**

When you have completed this unit you should be able to:

* identify the purpose of an argument text;
* understand the role of persuasive and /or emotive language in an argument text
* identify features of a letter to the press;
* write a letter to the press;
* identify features of an argument essay;
* understand the function of conjunctions in an argument essay and other texts and be able to use these correctly;
* draft an argument essay, using evidence and examples to support a point of view;
* edit and write a final version of an argument essay;

**Unit 2.1 Identifying arguments in letters on environmental**

**or other community issues**

Artwork: two people arguing

**Activity X: Decide on a definition of argument**

1. Use a dictionary to find the similarities and differences between each of these words:

***argue fight disagree quarrel discuss debate***

2. Write your own definition of **argument**

**The structure and language features of argument writing**

When people feel strongly about an issue they often write letters to their local council, or to newspapers or magazines, or use social media such as Facebook or Twitter to express their views. In doing so, they try to persuade others to accept their point of view by presenting **arguments** and sometimes by using **emotive language.** It is useful to be able to identify arguments and also to identify examples of emotive language in order to decide whether or not you accept or reject the points of view that you read and to present your own arguments clearly and persuasively.

For Activity X and Activity X you will read two examples published in a book titled *Exploring How Texts Work* by Beverly Derewianka (1991). The first example is a letter to the chairperson of a local council in which the writer is trying to persuade the council to take action. The second example is a short argument written by a young school boy in which he attempts to persuade readers to agree with his point of view.

After you have read each example, answer the questions below it.

**Activity X: Identify and respond to features of an argument text (1)**

**A letter to the chairperson of a local council which aims to persuade the council to take action on an issue**

Dear Sir

On behalf of the residents of …., I would like to express our concern at the unreasonable amount of pollution created by the steel works in our area.

The pollution is increasing and causing many problems in the neighbourhood. The sulphur fumes cause breathing difficulties when a north-easterly blows. The ash from the stack makes washing dirty. The coal trucks are ruining the roads and making sleep impossible for shift workers.

We would like to suggest that an enquiry be held into the running of the steel mills and the impact on the local community.

We hope that you will give this matter serious consideration at your next meeting.

Yours sincerely

Bruno Gallo

1. How would you describe the tone of this letter? (In your speech or writing you choose a particular tone to show how you are feeling or in order to get something done.)

2. Suggest why the writer uses this tone.

3. What does the writer do in the first sentence?

4. What does he do in the second paragraph?

5. What does he do in the third paragraph?

6. In your own words, state what the letter writer is asking the council to do.

**Activity X: Identify and respond to features of an argument text (2)**

**A paragraph written by a seven year-old boy which attempts to persuade readers to agree with his point of view**

I think it’s good to be bald. Firstly you don’t have to wash your hair. Secondly you don’t have to comb your hair. And thirdly you don’t have to go to the barber. So you’re lucky if you’re bald. (Stef, aged 7)

The young boy who wrote this short argument text already knows several important things about writing an argument.

1. What does he do first?

2. What does he do in the next three sentences?

3. How does he conclude his argument?

Answers to the questions in Activities X and X are given here to help you to prepare for writing two argument texts: (i) a letter to the press and (ii) an argument essay.

**Answers to Activity X**

1. The tone is firm, but also courteous and respectful.

2. The writer wants the council chairperson to respond positively to his request.

3. In the first sentence he states his concern very clearly.

4. In the second paragraph he describes the various types of pollution and their effects on local

residents. This paragraph supports the request he made in the first paragraph.

5. In the third paragraph he outlines the action that residents would like the council to take.

6. The writer is asking the council to make time at its next meeting for a serious discussion of

pollution in the area and of residents’ suggestion that an investigation into this pollution be

conducted.

**Answers to Activity X**

1. In his paragraph Stef begins with a statement of his point of view or position.

2. In the next three sentences he provides reasons (arguments) to support his point of view or

position.

3. In the final sentence he restates his position, using the positive word ‘lucky’ rather than repeating

the word ‘good’.

**Activity X: Read and respond to a letter to the press**

In some argument texts the writers use a great deal of **emotive language**. Such language is often found in letters to the press where writers feel very strongly about something and attempt to persuade readers to feel the same way. Here are three examples in which the emotive language has been underlined:

I am delighted to learn that school tuck shops may no longer be allowed to sell sweets and cold drinks to learners. These products have very little nutritional value and are ruining the nation’s teeth.

Cell phones must not be allowed in the classroom. They distract learners’ attention from the serious business of learning.

Smart phones are a great asset in the classroom. They enable learners to find out the meaning of words or to find information to add to what is in a textbook or to what they are told by teachers. Smart phone use in class leads to smarter learners!

Now read a letter to the press and answer the questions that follow it.

5 Kudu Lane

Mbombela

1200

18 August 2019

The Editor

The Weekly Post

P.O. Box 76

Mbombela

1200

Dear Sir

Litter is a tourist turnoff

Recent articles in your newspaper have focused on ways of encouraging tourists to visit our beautiful province. It’s ridiculous to expect an increase in tourists until all of us clean up our act. Why would tourists want to drive through streets filled with litter in our towns or on country roads with rubbish all along the edges? Even where there are rubbish bins these are not emptied frequently enough. Filthy, stinking rubbish surrounds them. This mess is not only horrible to look at but it is also a health hazard.

Instead of spending money on expensive tourism advertising campaigns, I suggest that our provincial government and local councils spend more on rubbish removal and on an education campaign in schools and local community centres.

Let’s all get off our backsides and take part in cleaning up our yards and streets. Many of us could do with some extra exercise so let’s also get out of town and walk along the edges of the roads to pick up litter there.

Once we have a clean and tidy province we’ll be ready to welcome tourists.

Yours faithfully

Jonas Dladla

Questions

1. The format or structure of a letter to the press is the same as that for a letter of application for a job or bursary or a business letter (e.g. a letter of complaint about a faulty product). Write down what you noticed about the following:

1.1 the position and order of the two addresses;

1.2 the form of the greeting or salutation;

1.3 the form of the ending;

1.4 the form of the line that follows the greeting.

2. What is the writer’s main argument?

3. What suggestions does he make for actions to be taken?

4. List four examples of emotive language used by the writer to support his point of view.

5. What is the connection between the underlined heading and the final sentence?

**Unit 2.2 Preparing and writing a letter to the press**

It is quite possible that at some time in your life you will wish to express your views on an issue to readers of a newspaper in your area. The next activity gives you an opportunity to practise writing such a letter.

**Activity X: Prepare and write a letter to the press**

**1. Decide on a topic and do some research on it**

What environmental or other community issues are people in your area concerned about at present? Make a list of these and then choose one to write about in a letter to a newspaper that is widely read in your area.

Your aim is to persuade readers of the newspaper that your arguments are correct and that the actions you suggest should be supported. To prepare for writing this letter you may need to do some research, in order to have information to use in making your argument.

**2. Take note of the format and use of emotive language in a letter to the press**

As you will have noticed in the previous activity, letters to the press are presented in a particular format and often include emotive language which aims to persuade readers to accept the writer’s position on an issue. Use the example you have just read as a guide to the format of your letter and to the use of emotive language.

**3. Draft a letter to the press**

Think of a headline for your letter and then use information from the research you have done to develop your arguments and suggestions for action.

4.Prepare the final version of the letter by revising, editing and proof reading the draft version.

At this stage check that you have presented your arguments in the best order (sequence), that you have evidence to support your arguments and that the suggestions for action are clearly written. After this, check on the format of your letter, your use of grammar and punctuation and on your spelling and make any changes that you think will improve your letter.

**Unit 2.3 Preparing and writing an argument essay**

**Unit 2.3.1 The form of an argument essay**

There are two main types of argument essay. One type presents arguments in support of only one position. **This is an argument (or argumentative) essay**. The other type presents both sides of an argument and is called **a discursive essay.** Both types are commonly set as assignment or examination tasks for courses of study so it is important to be able to write these well.

Below is an example of an **argument essay** in which the writer’s position or argument is that smoking is decreasing in some ‘first world’ countries but increasing in ‘developing’ or ‘third world’ countries. The essay is taken from a book titled *Write to Improve* by Sarah Murray and Lis Johanson. As this book was published in 1989, the information is quite old and the terms ‘western’, ‘first world’, ‘third world’ and ‘developing’ would now be criticised by many people who associate such terms with colonial ways of thinking. As two examples of change, China now has the world’s second largest economy and in post-apartheid South Africa, there have been numerous campaigns to warn people of the dangers of smoking and smoking is now banned in most public indoor spaces such as offices and restaurants.

However, the essay is an excellent example of how to organise information and to present it clearly to support the development of a particular argument.You will notice that the writer has included references that she has consulted. It is a good idea to get used to doing this, because it is a requirement once you are studying at tertiary level.

While you are reading the essay, notice the following:

* how the writer begins her essay;
* how she presents information to support her argument that the number of people who smoke is decreasing in ‘western’ countries and the reasons for this decrease;
* how she presents information to support her argument that smoking is increasing in ‘developing’ countries and the reasons for this;
* how she makes connections or links between paragraphs, and between ideas within paragraphs;
* how she sums up her main points in the concluding paragraph.

***Smoking is decreasing in western countries but increasing in developing countries***

It appears that the incidence of smoking is decreasing in some western countries but increasing in developing countries. Davies reports:

In Britain there has been a drop of 27 per cent in the number of cigarettes consumed. But many

developing countries have seen a significant growth in the past decade (Davies, 1986:9).

In China, for example, tobacco use has doubled in the past twenty years and there are now 200 million smokers smoking over two billion cigarettes a year (Davies, 1986: 9).

The major reason why cigarette smoking is decreasing in the West is that people have become aware of the danger which smoking causes to health. The World Watch Institute in the USA describes tobacco as being “the cause of more deaths and suffering among adults than any other toxic material in the environment” (Davies, 1986:9).

The reason that people in the West have become aware of these dangers is that they have been informed of them. For example, in Britain all cigarette packets and advertisements must contain the following warning: “The Surgeon General has determined that smoking can be hazardous to your health” (*Upbeat*, 1984: 15). As a result, six out of ten British people want to stop smoking (*Upbeat*, 1983: 28-29).

Because of this decrease in smoking, tobacco companies are finding it difficult to sell their product in the West, and have begun to direct advertising towards developing countries. In these countries there is less control on advertising and people are less aware of the dangers of smoking to health. Kriel (1979: 16) also suggests that advertising is more effective in the Third World because people aspire to the Western lifestyle it presents. The direction of marketing towards developing countries has caused an increase in smoking.

Doctors and anti-smoking campaigners in developing countries want to make people aware of the dangers of smoking. However, the tobacco companies are very wealthy and powerful. For example, in South Africa they prevented the government-controlled television service from showing a programme on the dangers of smoking *(Upbeat*, 1984: 15).

It is not only the tobacco companies but also governments which make money from tobacco. They do so by means of taxes and duties. In South Africa in 1983, for example, the government received revenue of

R467 190 000 from this source (*Upbea*t, 1984: 15).

In Mexico and Zimbabwe tobacco represents nearly a quarter of agricultural production and is, therefore, a major source of revenue to the government. In some countries, for example, China and Kenya, the companies are actually controlled by the state, thus increasing their profitability to the government. For these reasons the government has an interest in supporting the tobacco industry rather than in informing people of the dangers of smoking to health.

In conclusion, it would seem that the major reason why the incidence of smoking is decreasing in some western countries is that people are well-informed of the dangers of smoking. In many developing countries the incidence of smoking is still increasing because it seems that the tobacco industry and government prevent this information from reaching people.

For some recent information on countries in which few or many people smoke cigarettes go to [www.who.int/gho/tobacco/use/en/](http://www.who.int/gho/tobacco/use/en/)

If you are able to access this information from the World Health Organisation you will notice that in 2015 the incidence of smoking is lower in the countries of western Europe, the USA and Australia than it is in some countries in Africa, most Asian countries and countries in eastern Europe.

**2.3.2 The form of a discursive essay**

In a discursive essay the writer presents both sides of an argument (often the advantages and disadvantages of something or reasons for and against taking a particular action).

In Unit 1.1 you were asked to participate in a debate, or if you are working on your own, to draw up two lists about the advantages and disadvantages of plastics. To write a **discursive essay,** based on this debate or based on your lists, you would do the following:

1. write a short introductory paragraph in which you state that you are going to present

arguments for both the advantages and disadvantages of plastics;

2. present arguments for the advantages of plastics – using several paragraphs to do this;

3. present arguments for the disadvantages of plastics – using several paragraphs to do this;

4. end with a conclusion in which you express your position on whether the advantages or the

disadvantages are more important.

**Unit 2.3.2 Using conjunctions in an argument essay**

Conjunctions are commonly referred to as ‘joining’ or ‘linking’ words. They are very useful to writers because they can be used to show connections between pieces of information or to introduce contrasting ideas. Here are some examples from the argument essay on smoking that you have just read.

It appears that the incidence of smoking is decreasing in some western countries **but** increasing in developing countries. (The contrasting information is introduced by the conjunction ‘but’.)

In China, for example, tobacco use has doubled in the past twenty years **and** there are now 200 million smokers smoking over two billion cigarettes a year. (Additional information is introduced by the conjunction ‘and’.

Doctors and anti-smoking campaigners in developing countries want to make people aware of the dangers of smoking. **However**, the tobacco companies are very wealthy and powerful. (The contrast between what doctors are doing and what the tobacco companies want doctors to stop doing is introduced by the conjunction ‘However’.)

In many developing countries the incidence of smoking is still increasing **because** it seems that the tobacco industry and government prevent this information from reaching people. (A reason for the increase in smoking in developing countries is introduced with the conjunction ‘because’.)

If you have access to the internet go to the site [www.smart-words.org/linking-words/conjunctions.html](http://www.smart-words.org/linking-words/conjunctions.html) for clear explanations of different types of conjunctions and their uses.

**Activity X: Write sentences using conjunctions correctly.**

For language practice, change sentences 2, 3 and 4 into one longer sentence by choosing two correct conjunctions from the list below and by changing the punctuation.

1.My sister is learning Portuguese.

2. It is a very difficult language.

3. One day I’m sure she will be able to speak it well.

4. She has a Portuguese-speaking boyfriend with whom she practises using the language. (**but, although, as, because, therefore**)

For language practice join sentences 5 and 6 into one sentence and then join sentences 7 and 8 into one sentence by choosing the correct conjunctions from the list below and by changing the punctuation.

5. My brother likes speaking township Zulu.

6. He also likes speaking Afrikaans.

7. Our father speaks to him in Zulu so he can learn it properly.

8. No-one helps him learn Afrikaans. ( **however, so, and, nevertheless, but**)

**Activity X: Write an argument (argumentative) essay or write a**

**discursive essay**

In order to write your essay, take the steps outlined below.

**Step One: Choose an argumentative or a discursive essay and then choose a topic**

For this final part of Unit 2 either write an argument essay in which you present arguments in support of or against one position OR write a discursive essay in which you present two positions and then come to a conclusion about which side of the argument you support**. You may choose your own topic, but if you do not have one in mind, here are some possible topics:**

The advantages of plastic products OR The disadvantages of plastic products OR The advantages and disadvantages of plastic products

Cell phones should not be used in the classroom OR Cell phones should be used in the classroom OR The advantages and disadvantages of cell phone use in the classroom

It is better to live in a rural area than in a city OR It is better to live in a city than in a rural area OR The advantages and disadvantages of city life OR The advantages and disadvantages of rural life

South Africa should make a bid to host the Olympic Games OR South Africa should not make a bid to host the Olympic Games OR The advantages and disadvantages to South Africa of hosting the Olympic Games.

**Step Two: Make notes on your ideas for the essay and on information that you need to find in order to develop your arguments.**

**Step Three: Plan your essay**: What will you write in the introduction? In what order will you present your arguments and the information that supports each argument? How will you conclude?

**Step Four: Write a draft version of your essay.** If possible, ask someone else to read this draft and to make suggestions for improvements to it.

**Step Five: Revise, edit and proof read your essay.** This is where you make any changes that will improve your essay.Pay attention to the **order** in which you have presented your arguments and the information that supports each one, to your choice of **conjunctions**, to **other aspects of grammar , spelling** and **punctuation.**

**Reflections on Unit 2**

The content and activities in this unit have focused on reading and writing arguments of different kinds and in different kinds of texts. In responding to the activities in this unit, what has been your greatest achievement? Why do you consider it to be so? What, if anything, do you still find difficult?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **UNIT 3** | Understanding and designing multimodal texts with a focus on tourism in South Africa |

**Introduction**

Multimodal texts present information in more than one mode or form (for example, words, images and sound). This unit offers you opportunities to learn how to read graphs, to interpret tables and to analyse cartoons and advertisements critically. Information is not only provided through words. It can be communicated in a number of visually interesting ways. For example, different colours can be used in a bar graph to show the differences between one item of information and another. As readers, we often remember the message of a cartoon because of the way it has been drawn and because of the words the cartoonist has used. In an advertisement, photographs or drawings may encourage consumers (including tourists) to buy the ‘product’. In the final section of this unit it is your turn to be creative as you will be asked to design an advertisement to attract tourists to a place of your choice.

**Learning outcomes**

When you have completed this unit, you should be able to:

* read and interpret bar graphs;
* read and interpret statistical information in a table;
* read and interpret cartoon strips;
* read and respond critically to advertisements;
* plan, prepare, compose and edit an advertisement for a tourist destination.

Artwork: image of tourist destination in SA, for example Vilakazi Street in Soweto

**Unit 3.1 Reading and interpreting information presented in a bar graph**

Presenting information in a graph often makes this information easier to understand and to remember. There are several forms of graphs, with a **bar graph** being one of the most frequently used.Bar graphs are useful for showing comparisons between different numbers (percentages, quantities, amounts).

A bar graph has two **axes**. Each **axis** is labelled on the graph. An axis is a line along the side, or at the bottom of a graph that is used to mark measurements. The plural form of axis is **axes.**

The horizontal axis is the axis across the bottom of the graph. In Figure X below, this axis is labelled ‘Country of residence’ (i.e. the country in which the tourist lives or resides).

The vertical axis is the axis that goes from bottom to top, up the left hand side of the graph. In Figure X, this axis is labelled ‘Number of tourists’.

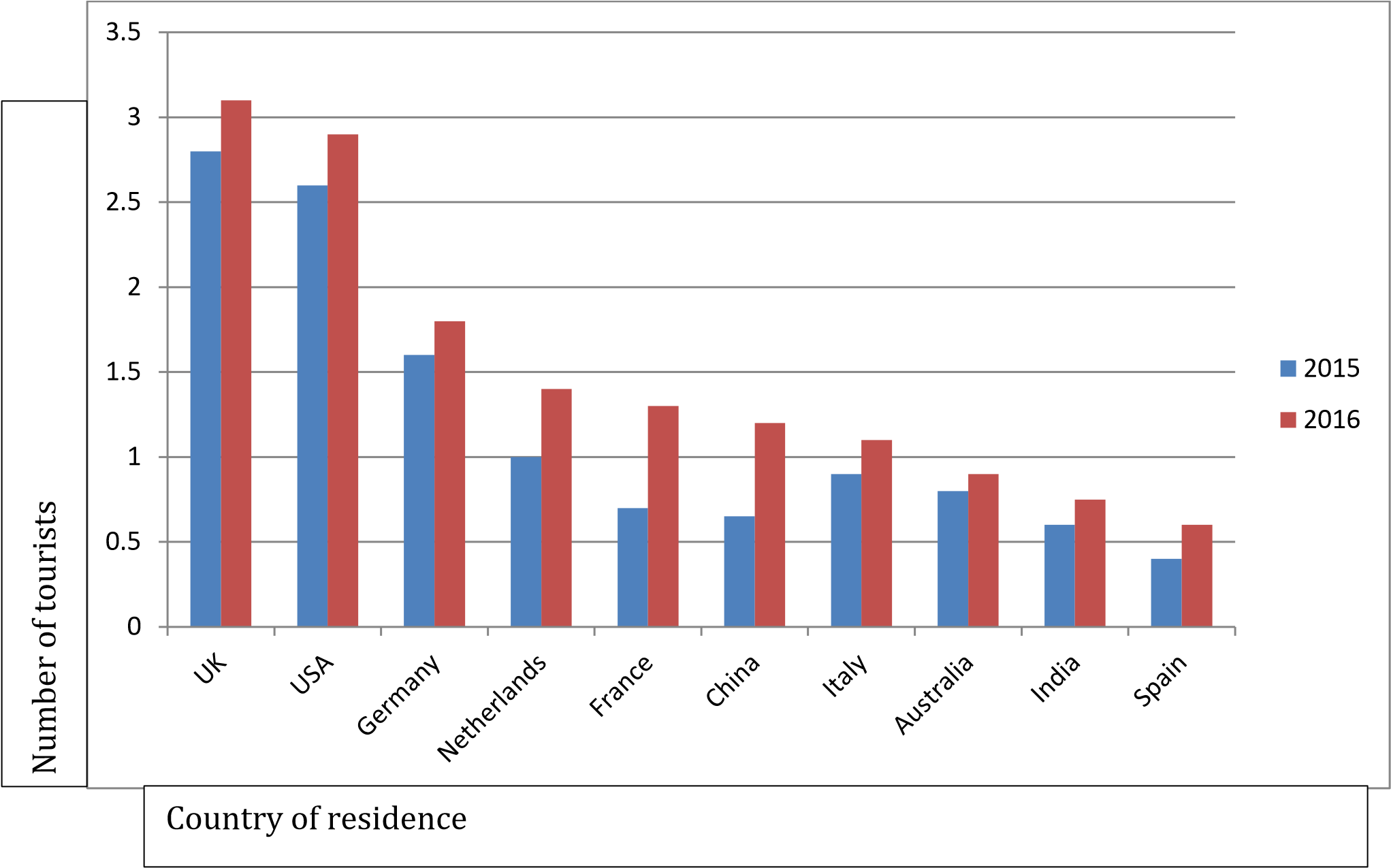
### Activity X Read and interpret a bar graph (1)

The next activity gives you an opportunity to practise reading a bar graph. Such graphs are likely to be included in the workbooks for some of your other subjects or in materials that you will study after you have completed your NASCA studies. They are also commonly found in newspapers and magazines and sometimes on social media.

Read the information in Figure 1 from *Statistics South Africa*. It shows the number of tourists visiting South Africa in August 2015 and in August 2016.After reading the graph, write answers to the questions below it.

**Figure 1 Number of tourists visiting South Africa from ten countries in August**

**2015 and in August 2016.**



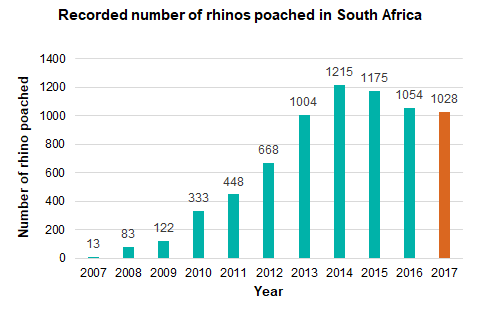
1. Name the two countries which showed the **greatest increase** **in tourist numbers** from 2015 to 2016.
2. Name the country in which there was the **least change in tourist numbers** from 2015 to 2016.
3. Explain how a reader knows that there were more tourists from each of the ten countries in 2016 than was the case for 2015.
4. 0.5 represents 50,000 tourists. How many tourists from the UK (United Kingdom) visited SA in 2016?
5. After reading this graph, what observation can you make about the countries from which the tourists came? (Note: there is no single ‘correct’ answer to this question).

One of the reasons why many tourists like to visit game parks in South Africa is to see rhinoceros. Unfortunately, people in some countries believe that when rhinoceros horn is ground into a powder and taken as medicine it is helpful for overcoming various health problems and is especially useful as an aphrodisiac (a substance that arouses sexual desire). Although there is no truth in this belief, some people are prepared to pay a great deal of money for rhinoceros horn. This makes killing rhinoceros and cutting of their horns attractive to poachers - often unemployed men who are desperate for an income.

For further practice in reading and interpreting bar graphs, read the graph in Figure 2 about the number of rhinoceros killed by poachers between 2007 and 2017and then answer the questions below it.

**Activity X: Read and interpret a bar graph (2)**

**Figure 2 Recorded number of rhinos poached in South Africa**



Source: savetherhino.org

1. What information is given on the **vertical axis**?

2. What information is given on the **horizontal axis**?

3. In which year were the greatest number of rhinoceros poached?

4. Between which two years was there the greatest increase in the number of rhinoceros poached?

(Hint: Look at both the height of the bars and the numbers.)

5. Was the **decrease** in the number of rhinoceros poached greater in 2016 or 2017?

6. What evidence does the graph provide to support the claim that game park personnel are having

some success in dealing with the poaching problem?

**Unit 3.2 Reading and interpreting information presented in a table**

Tables are useful for summarising different kinds of information as you found in Theme 3, Unit 1.2. A well-designed table should present information in a form that is easy to read and remember.

When you read a table, take note of the following:

* the heading -this may be found above or below the table;
* the source of the information – usually placed below the table but sometimes part of the heading;
* the heading of each column in the table;
* the information placed under each column heading.

**Activity X: Read and interpret a table**

You may find that you need to read and interpret tables in the workbooks for your other NASCA subjects, for further studies or for general interest when you read newspapers, magazines or social media. Therefore, it is useful to know how to read and interpret the information contained in them.

Some tables have several rows of information below each column heading, but in the example below, there is just one row.

Study the table about visitors to South Africa in 2015 and 2016 and then answer the questions about it.

**Visitors to South Africa 2015-2016**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **From Africa 2015** | **From Africa 2016** | **From overseas 2015** | **From overseas 2016** | **Country not stated 2015** | **Country not stated 2016** |
| **6 746 114** | **7 501 512** | **2 144 998** | **2 531 046** | **12671** | **11605** |

Source: Traveller 24

1. What is the heading for this table?

2. What is the source of the information in the table?

3. Overall, did the number of visitors to South Africa increase or decrease in 2016?

4. For both years, where did the greater number of visitors to South Africa come from?

5. Suggest why the greater number of visitors came from this part of the world.

6. The information about visitors is taken from a form which they complete when they arrive at a border post (if travelling on land) or at a port (if travelling by ship) or an airport (if traveling by air). Give one possible reason for the decrease, in 2016, in the number of visitors from ‘country not stated’.

**Unit 3.3 Reading and interpreting a cartoon strip**

A cartoon strip is an example of what is called **a multimodal text.** As explained in the introduction to this unit, a multimodal text uses two or more **modes** to communicate its message. For example:

* an advertisement in a magazine usually includes words and images (either drawings or photographs);
* an advertisement on television usually includes spoken and / or written words together with moving images and sound;
* a cartoon in a newspaper or magazine usually includes words and drawings;
* information on an internet website or on a smartphone usually includes words, still and / or moving images and may include sound.

It is important to be able to read words and images critically. When you can do this, you are able to decide how the designer of the text hopes you will respond to it and whether or not you choose to respond in this way.

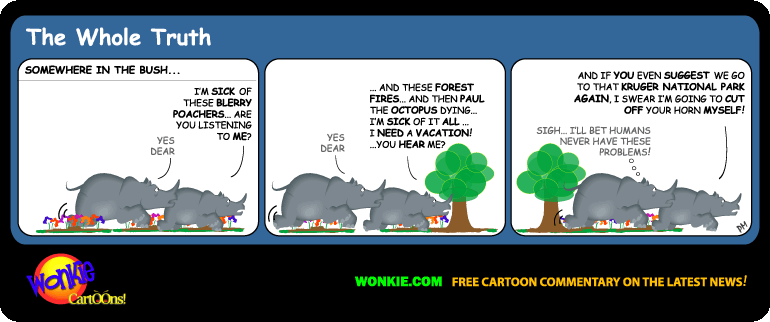
**Activity X: Read a cartoon strip critically**

Cartoonists create single cartoons or cartoon strips (consisting of several separate frames) for a number of reasons. Two of the main ones are (i) to make a critical comment on a political or social issue and (ii) to entertain or amuse those who read them. Some cartoonists do both in the same cartoon or cartoon strip.

The cartoon strip below consists of three frames (sections). Look at every detail of the drawing and read every word in each frame. Read the words spoken by the female (smaller) and male (larger) animal aloud to help you understand the cartoonist’s message. After you have done this, answer each of the questions below it.

‘The Whole Truth’ is one of several cartoon strips available from wonkie.com which is a not-for-profit cartoon blog that is hosted and run from Canada. Cartoons are contributed by cartoonists from a number of countries, including South Africa. If you are interested in reading more cartoons in ‘The Whole Truth’ series go to <http://www.wonkie.com> (Note to designers: I think this is an open access site)

Note that in the cartoon strip below the animals have not been drawn realistically. They have elephant bodies and ears and a rhinoceros horn.



1. In all three frames, who does most of the ‘talking’?

2. Suggest why some of the main speaker’s words are in **bold type.**

3. Suggest why the other speaker’s words are in a lighter colour.

4. In frames 1 and 2, what do the questions and the replies suggest about the relationship of the two speakers to each other?

5. Frame 3 introduces a serious environmental issue that the cartoonist expects readers to already know about. Why are some rhinoceros having their horns cut off?

6. In frame 3 the circles between the animal’s head and the words above them are called ‘thought

bubbles’. Suggest why the larger animal does not say these words aloud.

7. Read the information about stereotypes before answering the final question.

A **stereotype** is a common idea of what a type of person, or what a type of relationship

between people, is usually like. A stereotype is often incorrect. For example there are many

stereotypes to do with age or gender such as the following:

Older people are afraid to use new technologies.

All women are excellent drivers.

Men will never ask for directions.

Do you find the cartoon strip amusing OR are you critical of the cartoonist for presenting what

could be described as a stereotypical relationship OR do you have some other response to it?

Give a reason for your response.

**Unit 3.4 Reading and interpreting tourism advertisements**

In the final frame of the cartoon in Unit 3.3, one animal refers to the Kruger National Park. Now that you have read a bar graph about the number of rhinoceros killed by poachers, you can understand why elephants and rhinoceros might prefer not to be there. However, many tourists do enjoy going to game reserves. In this section you will have opportunities to read and think critically about two advertisements which aim to attract tourists to particular destinations. Here are some questions to keep in mind when reading advertisements:

* Who is the ‘target market?’ In other words, whose attention is the advertiser trying to attract?
* What action does the advertiser want people in the target market to take?
* How does the advertisement try to encourage them to take this action? Answering this questions involves looking carefully at the words and images used, how they are arranged on the page or screen (that is, the **layout**) and at what the advertisement offers to readers.

**Activity X: Read and respond critically to two tourism advertisements**

The main purpose of this activity is to provide you with practice in reading multimodal advertisements critically. If you can read or view (or both) an advertisement critically, you will be able to identify how the designer of the advertisement wants you to respond and then decide whether you wish to respond like this or not.

The first advertisement below was designed to advertise the 2015 celebration of World Tourism Day at the Kruger Gate entrance to the Kruger National Park Gate, near Phalaborwa.

The second advertisement was designed to promote tourists’ interest in visiting South Africa.



1. Who is the host of this celebration? (Clue: Look at the logo underneath World Tourism Day.)
2. Suggest why this host would wish to celebrate ‘World Tourism Day’.
3. Quote the phrase that suggests that this advertisement is aimed at South African tourists rather than international ones.
4. The advertisement includes a reference to a webpage (www.golimpopo.com). What do you think will be advertised on the webpage?
5. Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which the words used are an exaggeration of something. Explain why ‘a million new experiences’ is an example of hyperbole.

6. Describe the image in the top right hand corner of the advertisement. In your view,

is it an effective image or not? Give a reason for your answer.

7. The small images of outdoor scenes in the bottom left corner are placed inside a globe.

How do you think the advertisers want readers to respond to this image?

8. In very small print, underneath ‘South Africa, Limpopo Province’ and the image of the South

African flag, are the words ‘The preferred ecotourism destination’. What questions could

you ask the advertisers about this statement?

9. If you were thinking of attending the World Tourism Day celebrations at the Kruger Gate,

what further information would you like to have before you decided whether or not to

attend? (In other words, think about important information that is missing from this

advertisement.)

10. The name *Ba-Phalaborwa* was given to the area around Phalaborwa town by the Sotho

people who moved to the area from further south. The name means better than the south.

These people mined and smelted copper and iron ore many hundreds of years ago. Masorini,

near the Kruger Gate, is a reconstructed Ba-Phalaborwa hill village with huts, grain storage

areas and an iron smelting site. In your view, should information about Masorini have been

included in the advertisement? Give a reason for your answer.

Now read a different kind of advertisement and the description of it on the next page and answer the questions that follow the multimodal advertisement and the description.



Source: South African tourism [www.southafrica.net](http://www.southafrica.net)

**Description of the advertisement**

In the background is Table Mountain with part of the city of Cape Town in front of it. On the left is a baobab tree, found only in the north of South Africa, together with and a lion and a giraffe - suggesting game reserves or national parks. In front of the sea, on the right and in the foreground are a Cape Dutch house from the winelands outside Cape Town and in right hand corner South Africa’s national flower, the protea. The only human figure is a smiling woman wearing traditional dress. She is placed just to the left of the centre, right at the front of the advertisement. The South African flag attached to the words SOUTH AFRICA draws attention to these two words.

1.As someone living in South Africa, what is your response to this advertisement? (Think about how it represents South Africa.)

2. Why do you think South African tourism chose to present South Africa in this way?

3. After reading this advertisement, what might people in other countries expect to find when

visiting South Africa?

**3.5 Designing a tourism advertisement**

Now that you have read and responded critically to two advertisements that were designed to promote tourism, it’s your turn to design an advertisement to attract tourists to the area where you live – in a city or town, in an informal settlement or on a farm, near the sea or a river, in the mountains or in a desert area. All places are of interest to some tourists.

**Activity X: Design an advertisement to attract tourists to the area**

**where you live**

Here is a series of steps to follow:

1. Decide what you would like visitors to your area to see and do. You could be advertising a

particular event (such as a celebration of World Tourism Day, as in advertisement 1 above) or

you could be advertising a place to be visited at any time.

2. Brainstorm ideas for phrases, images and the overall design (layout) of your advertisement.

3. On a large sheet of paper, make a first draft of your advertisement. Think about where the

phrases and images that you have chosen will be placed on the sheet so that readers are

attracted to the advertisement and so that they are likely to notice and respond to the most

important information.

4. If possible, exchange your draft version with a fellow NASCA English student. Tell each other

what you like about each other’s draft advertisement and then make suggestions for

improvements to it. If you do not have a study partner, ask someone whose opinion you value

to comment on your draft.

5. After you have received some feedback on your draft advertisement, prepare a final version,

paying attention in this version to choice of images and words, overall layout, spelling,

punctuation and grammar.

**Reflections on Unit 3**

In this unit you have read several texts that include visual features and have designed your own advertisement. What have you learned about how to read and how to design graphs, tables, cartoons and advertisements?

**Examination practice tasks based on Theme 3**

**1. Write a summary in table form**

The text below has been compiled from an article by George Hull, published in 2015 in *The Conversation* and from a *Sunday Times* article published in 2018.

While you are reading it, notice the arguments for and against free higher education. After reading it, complete the table summary below it.

**Free university education is not the route to social justice**

‘Free education in our lifetime’ is a slogan adopted by many students in their protests against fee increases at South African universities. But is it true that in an ideal world higher education would be free – that is, fully funded by the state? More to the point, would higher education be free in a just society?

Supporters of free university tuition are right to point out that higher education benefits the whole society. Having well-trained doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants, managers, engineers, journalists and civil servants benefits us all. Also, the critical reasoning skills that students develop through studying humanities subjects such as economics, African studies and philosophy, assist civil society to hold government to account.

However, higher education also benefits individuals both as a mind-expanding experience and in giving them a competitive advantage in the job market. A good university degree can open the way to high-status, high income work opportunities.

While everyone pays tax of one kind or another, in South Africa at present only 15% of those over the age of twenty have received a university education. Surely it is not fair that the rewards of higher education should be fully funded by taxpayers when only a minority enjoy them. There are far stronger arguments for making pre-school, primary and secondary education and healthcare free at point of use, because everyone can expect to need health care and to receive schooling.

In addition, there is an enormous need for government to increase funding to improve the quality of TVET colleges so that the demand for skilled artisans such as electricians, plumbers and welders can be met.

So what should be done? In the medium to long term South African higher education needs a fair funding model. 50% contribution from government and 50% from individuals, with loans available for those who cannot afford to pay until they start working after graduation would be an appropriate starting point.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Arguments in favour of free university tuition** | **Arguments against free university tuition** | **Actions to be taken to resolve the argument** |
| 1.  2. | 3.  4.  5.  6.  7. | 8.  9. |

**2. Write a discursive essay**

Once you have completed the table, use the information, together with your own ideas, to write a 250-300 word essay in which you present arguments for and against free university tuition and end with your own position on this debate.

**3. Read and answer comprehension questions on an advertisement**

While many advertisements are designed to encourage readers to visit places as tourist or to buy particular products, some advertisements are designed to persuade readers to stop doing something. The advertisement that you are about to read, and on which you are asked to answer comprehension questions, is designed to persuade readers to stop doing something that is bad for their health.



The small print under the red circle says: Quit smoking: no ifs, ands or butts.

Note to designers: This is from Pintarest so there may be copyright implications but I’d really like to use it

Write an answer to each question below.

1. What is the skull and crossbones shown in the poster usually associated with? (2)

2. In this poster, what is the skull and crossbones made of? (2)

3. Suggest why the designer of the poster used this item to make the skull and crossbones. (2)

4. What is the expression ‘travel in packs’ usually used to describe? (2)

5. What is your response to the poster designer’s sentence: Cigarettes are killers that travel in packs? (3)

6.The blurred writing at the bottom of the poster, reproduced in the text box, is a command: Quit smoking – no ifs, ands or butts.

6.1 Complete this sentence: Writers usually use the conjunction ‘but’ when they are going to … (2)

6.2 Suggest why butts has been written with two ‘t’s in the advertisement. (2)

7. Immediately above the command is a cigarette surrounded by a circle with a line through it. Suggest why the designer of the poster has included this visual element in the poster. (2)

Total marks: 17

**Answer key for selected activities in Theme 3 and for the examination practice tasks**

**Theme 3, Unit 1**

**Activity X: Prepare to read extracts from a magazine article**

Questions 1 and 2: Own answers

3.1 Plastic Tsunami Alert. The title means that everyone should be aware of the possibility of tidal waves of plastic damaging the environment.

3.2 ‘Every 15 seconds three metric tons of plastic land up in the ocean. And then there’s the damage it does on land. Drastic measures are needed to deal with its dire consequences.’

The journalist wants readers to be aware that plastic waste is a very serious problem about which people must take action immediately.

**Activity X: Read and respond to extracts from a magazine article**

1. Personal response answer. A likely answer is that the description of the sea and the birds is peaceful and beautiful.

2. Personal response answer. A likely answer is that it is disapppointing that the beauty of the area is being spoiled by rubbish on the river and on the beach.

3. The journalist probably wants readers to feel strong emotions – firstly enjoyment of the beauty of the scene described and then shock and disgust about the rubbish.

4. ‘I’m one of about a hundred volunteers stashing trash into yellow bags.’

5. Yes she was pleased because she writes that the volunteers’ work was ‘a good effort’. Also the volunteers felt pleased that they had stopped some garbage from entering the sea.

6. The efforts of the volunteers will have made little difference to the plastic pollution problem which is getting worse every day so that by 2050 there may be more plastic than fish in the sea.

7. The journalist probably does this to emphasise that the findings from the research can be trusted because they come from the work of a university department.

8. Marine wildlife will starve to death because their digestive systems are so full of plastic that they can no longer process food. Fish that have eaten plastic produce fewer eggs and thus there will be fewer fish in the future.

9. The journalist is challenging readers to take part in cleaning up the beaches.

10. Personal reponse. Your answer will depend on the plastic pollution in your area.

**Activity X: Read a magazine article intensively**

1. About 2.5% of the world’s water is fresh water.

2. False. The article states that ‘The world isn’t running out of usable water’. It also states that ‘The main problem with water isn’t volume, it’s distribution’.

3. Poorer countries often lack the infrastructure (e.g. water pipes, water treatment plants) to deliver clean safe water to people. Also many poorer countries rely on industries such as mining that are not well controlled and that make a lot of the available water dirty (polluted).

4. According to the article, the main problem is lack of political will and action.

5. This is a personal response answer. You could agree or disagree. For example, you might disagree because you think the main problem is lack of available funding for water projects.

6.1 This is also a personal response answer. For example you may think that people are justified in protesting because access to clean water is a basic human right.

6.2 People in wealthier areas usually have more economic and political power to make sure that their areas are looked after while people in poorer areas are less likley to have such influence. (There could also be other reasons.)

**Activity X: Summarise an article**

1. health 2. agricultural production 3. energy 4. industry

5.unclean sources 6. water-related diseases. 7. cause of many deaths

8.riots in South Africa

9. use of good technology

10. political will and action

**Activity X: Practise writing sentences that describe cause and effect**

1. The death of about 840 000 people per year is an effect of the lack of clean water.

2. Water-related diseases have been the cause of (OR have caused) the deaths of about 840 000 people per year.

3.1 Riots in South Africa are a result of lack of access to clean water.

3.2 Lack of access to clean water has been the cause of (OR has caused) riots in South Africa.

3.3 Lack of access to clean water has led to riots in South Africa.

**Activity X: Read and respond to the features and content of two news clips**

1. Five facts from the fees must fall newsclip: Students at UCT staged a mass protest. The protest took place outside UCT’s administration building. The protest was against an increase in university fees. Police and private security personnel were present. The protest was a peaceful march with students singing and holding banners.

2. The journalist ends the news clip with her name (Melissa Petersen), the news organisation she represents (SAFM radio) and the place from which she is reporting (Cape Town).

3. Failure to include a statement from UCT management might affect the objectivity of the newsclip because readers do not know management’s response to what the student spokesperson said.

4. Five facts from the service delivery protest news clip: Residents from the Marikan informal setlement (1) in Mbombela (2) have been protesting about poor service delivery (3). They barricaded the main road into the settlement (4) and marched to the city hall in Mbombela to hand ovder a list of grievances (5).

5. One objective fact that could be checked: The main road into Marikana was barricaded with rocks and burning tyres.

**Theme 3, Unit 2**

**Activity X: Decide on a definition of argument**

The definitions below are taken from the *Longman Active Study Dictionary* (2008)

**argue**: (i) to shout and say angry things to someone because you disagree with them;

(ii) to explain clearly why you think something is true or should be done

**debate** (as a verb): to discuss a subject foramlly so that you can make a decision or solve a problem

**disagree**: to have different opinions from someone else

**discuss**: to talk about something with someone in order to exchange ideas or decide something

**fight** (as a verb): (i) to try hard to win or to get something done

(ii) to take part in a battle

(iii) to argue

**quarrel** (as a verb): to have an angry argument

**argument** (noun): (i) a situation in which people shout and say angry things to each other because

they disagree with each other

(ii) a set of reasons that show that something is true or untrue, right or wrong,

etc.

**NOTE**: It is the second meaning of argument that is the focus of the activities in Unit 2.

**Activity X: Read and respond to a letter to the press**

1.1 The letter writer’s address comes first and is placed on the top right hand side of the page.

The newspaper editor’s address comes next and is placed on the left hand side of the page.

1.2 The form of greeting is formal (Dear Sir) because this is a formal letter and because the name

of the editor is not necessarily known by the letter writer.

1.3 The closing greeting is also formal – Yours faithfully at the end ‘matches’ Dear Sir at the

beginning.

1.4 The topic of the letter is stated and is underlined.

2. The writer’s main argument is that tourists are unlikely to visit an area which is littered with

rubbish.

3. The provincial government and local councils need to spend more on both rubbish removal and

on educating residents about why they should keep their area clean.

4. There are more than four examples: tourist turnoff; our beautiful province; ridiculous; filthy

stinking (rubbish); horrible; health hazard; expensive (tourist advertising campaigns)

5. Tourists will be turned on (the opposite of turned off) by a clean and tidy province.

**Activity X: Write sentences using conjunctions correctly**

**Although** it is a very difficult language, one day I’m sure she will speak it well **because (**or **as**) she has a Portuguese-speaking boyfriend with whom she practises using the language.

OR

It is a very difficult language **but** one day I’m sure she will speak it well **because** (or **as**) she has a Portuguese-speaking boyfriend with whom she practises using the language.

My brother likes speaking township Zulu **and** he also likes speaking Afrikaans.

Our father speaks to him in Zulu so that he can learn it properly **but** no-one helps him to learn Afrikaans.

NOTE: These two ideas could be written as separate sentences, linked by the use of However followed by a comma, at the beginning of the second sentence: Our father speaks to him in Zulu so that he can learn it properly. **However,** no-one helps him to learn Afrikaans.

**Theme 3, Unit 3**

**Activity X: Read and interpret a bar graph (1)**

1. France and China

2. Australia

3. For each of the ten countries the red bar which representents 2016 is higher than the blue bar which represents 2015.

4. 310,000

5. One possible observation is that the five countries from which the most tourists came are all wealthy countries in which many people can afford to travel. Another possible observation is that no African countries have been included in this list and as many people visit South Africa from other African countries, the absence of this information can be questioned.

**Activity X: Read and interpret a bar graph (2)**

1. The number of rhinoceros poached is given on the vertical axis.

2. The year is given on the horizontal axis.

3. 2014

4. 2012-2013

5. 2016

6. Each year since 2014 the number of rhinoceros poached has decreased.

**Activity X: Read and interpret a table**

1. Visitors to South Africa 2015-2016

2. Traveller 24

3. The number increased.

4. The greater number of visitors came from Africa.

5. One possible reason is that for visitors from countries neighbouring South Africa the travel costs are much less than for those coming from Europe or Asia, for example. Another is that some of the visitors from other Africna countries probably came to investigate trade or wpork possibilities or to buy goods to sell in their own countries. (NOTE: There are other possible reasons. This is a personal response question.)

6. It is possible that in 2016 more people completed the form correctly, stating their country of origin.

**Activity X: Read a cartoon strip critically**

1. The smaller animal, presumably the female, does most of the talking.

2. The words are in bold type to show that the speaker emphasizes these words when ‘she’ speaks.

3. The larger animal seems to be dominated / bossed about by the smaller animal and by putting the words in lighter type the cartoonist is suggesting that the larger animal is the weaker partner in the relationship.

4. The cartoon seems to be about two animals in a long term relationship (like a husband and wife who have been together for a long time), with the female being the boss.

5. Rhinoceros horn is what the poachers value and they kill rhinoceros to get their horns. As a rhinoceros can live without its horn and cutting it off is like cutting fingernails (i.e. it does not hurt), some game reserve personnel are cutting off these horns in an attempt to save the lives of rhinoceros.

6. If the largeranimal said these words aloud ‘he’ might get into trouble with the smaller animal so ‘he’ just thinks them to ‘himself’.

7. This is a personal response question. You might find the idea of animals having a ‘where to go for a holiday conversation’ in which the female seems to be the boss quite amusing. OR You might approve of the cartoonist drawing attention to the important issue of rhinoceros conservation. OR You might be critical of the cartoon because it presents what many people would consider to be a stereotypical relationship – a bossy wife and and a hen-pecked husband. OR you might be irritated by the cartoonist’s decision to give human characteristics to animals.

**Activity X: Read and respond critically to two tourism advertisements**

1. The host is the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism of the Limpopo Provincial Government.

2. It is the job of this provincial government department to promote tourism. Tourism is good for the economy of the province.

3. ‘A million new experiences are a sho’t left to Limpopo’. The expression sho’t left is a local South African expression that is not likely to be known by people from other countries.

4. The web page is likely to advertise other tourist destinations in Limpopo.

5. Even if visitors have a number of new expereinces it is not possible that these will add up to one million.

6. This is a personal response question. The image is not very clear but it seems to be the outline of a person wearing a back pack and looking at a map. Perhaps this is meant to suggest that Limpopo is a good palce to go hiking but as the image is not very clear many readers would probably find it not very effective.

7. The image is suggesting that travelling in South Africa is like seeing the while world inside one country because there are so many different kinds of experiences that tourists can have.

8. There are several questions that could be asked: ‘What is ecotourism?’ (The advertisers assume that everyone knows what this is.) ‘Why is Limpopo the preferred destination for ecotourism?’ (No reason is given.) Who prefers it? (No information is given.) ‘How do the advertisers know this? (They don’t tell readers.)

9. For anyone thinking about attending the celebration it would be useful to know what time it starts and ends, whether there is any entrance fee and if so, what is the cost.

10. This is a personal response question. You may think it is important to include information about the economic and cultural practices of people who lived in this area in the past so that tourists know that they can find out about these practices. Alternatively, you may think that this would require adding too much detail to the poster and that it would be better to have this information on the web site.

**Answers to Unit 3 examination practice tasks**

**1. Write a summary in table form**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Arguments in favour of free university tuition** | **Arguments against free university tuition** | **Actions to be taken to resolve the arguments** |
| 1. University education benefits the whole society by providing well-trained professionals in many fields.  2. It also benefits the whole society by helping students to develop critical thinking skills that assist civil society to hold  government to account. | 3. University education benefits individuals giving them advantages over others in the job market.  4. Everyone pays taxes but only a minority go to university so government should spend money on what benefits everyone.  5. Pre-school, primary and secondary school should be free because everyone should receive schooling.  6. Health care should be free because everyine needs this.  7. Government needs to spend more on TVET colleges to meet the demand for skilled artisans. | 8. 50% of university tuition fees should be paid by government and 50% by individuals  9.Loans should be given to those who can’t afford the 50% and these must be paid back when graduates start working. |

**2. Write a discursive essay**

Make sure that you have done the following:

* begun with short introduction to the topic;
* presented arguments for and against free university tuition, using information from the table together with your own ideas;
* ended with your own position on this debate;
* written a total of 250-300 words;
* revised, edited and proof read your essay so that ideas are in an appropriate sequence with clear links between them and that grammar and punctuation have been correctly used.

**3. Read and answer questions on an advertisement**

1. The skull and crossbones are traditionally associated with pirates. (Think of the symbol of Orlando Pirates football club.) The skull and crossbones are also sometimes used to indicate serious danger that could lead to death. (2)

2. In the poster the skull and crossbones are made from cigarettes that the viewer is looking down on. (2)

3. The skull and crossbones are used to show that smoking is dangerous to people’s health and can lead to death from a variety of illnesses. (2)

4. The words ‘travel in packs’ are usually associated with animals such as wild dogs or wolves that like to hunt together to kill their prey. (2)

5. This is a personal response question. Many readers would probably suggest that it is a clever play on words (a pun) because cigarettes are usually sold in packets or packs (though sometimes they can be bought as individual cigarettes) and because animals that travel in packs kill their prey, the message in the advertisement is that smoking cigarettes can also result in death. (3)

6.1 Writers usually use the conjunction ‘but’ when they are going to introduce something different or surprising or to give a reason why something did not happen. (2)

6.2 This is another example of playing with words because butt with two ‘t’s refers to cigarette butts (the little stump or ‘stompie’ that is left after the cigarette has been smoked). (2)

7. A circle with a line through it is a sign that something is not permitted or that it is prohibited or forbidden. In the advertisement it is placed over a cigarette to indicate that smoking should be forbidden because it is so dangerous. (2)

Total marks: 17.

# THEME 4

# Language and Literature

## Introduction

This theme consists of five units. It begins with a unit which asks you to think about literature and your response to some of the reasons given by teachers in schools and universities for including literature in the language curriculum. Unit 1 also provides opportunities for you to revise or extend your knowledge of literary terms. In Unit 2 the focus is on poetry, in Unit 3 the short story and in Unit 4 autobiographical and biographical writing. The focus of Unit 5 is on writing a review of a literary text, television programme, film or performance. So far in this course you have read mainly non-fiction. This final theme provides opportunities for reading and responding to a range of imaginative texts as well as to extracts from some non-fiction autobiographical and biographical texts.

**Artwork: collage of photographs of writers – South African and international**

## Content Structure

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Units | **Sub-Topic** |
| Unit 1  Thinking about literature  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Unit 2  Reading and responding to poetry | * thinking about literature: what ‘counts’ as literature; the value of literature in the language curriculum * understanding literary terms   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   * thinking about poetry: what ‘counts’ as poetry * reading and analysing ten poems * answering contextual questions on poems |
| Unit 3  Reading and responding to short stories | thinking about short stories and their characteristic features  the role of theme(s), characterisation, plot and language use in a short story  reading and analysing six short stories  answering contextual questions on short stories  writing an essay on a short story or short stories |
| Unit 4  Reading and responding to extracts from autobiographical and biographical texts | * thinking about autobiographical and biographical writing – characteristic features including language use * responses to extracts from three autobiographical texts and one biographical text * answering questions on extracts from autobiographical texts * writing an essay on extracts from an autobiographical text (or texts) |
| Unit 5  Reading and writing reviews of fiction or non-fiction texts | * understanding features of a review of a literary work, television programme, film or play * writing reviews |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **UNIT 1** | Thinking about literature |

**Introduction**

In this unit you will be introduced to several ways of thinking about literature and literary texts such as poems, short stories, novels, plays, autobiographical and biographical writing. You will also have opportunities to revise, or to learn for the first time, a number of terms that are useful for speaking or writing about literary texts.

**Learning Outcomes**

When you have completed this unit you should be able to:

* express your views on what ‘counts’ as literature;
* express your views on the value of literature in the language curriculum
* understand literary terms;
* be able to use literary terms appropriately when discussing literary texts.

**Activity X: Think about the differences between reading**

**literature and reading other kinds of texts**

In *Literature in the Language Classroom* Peter Rule asks these questions:

What is the difference between *reading literature* and *reading other kinds of texts*? Think, for example, about how you read a short story and how you read a newspaper report. What is the difference in your expectations of each text, and how you understand their meanings? (1996: 9)

If possible, discuss these questions with a study partner but if you are working on your own, write your answers in your study journal.

**1.2 What counts as literature?**

In answering his own questions, Rule writes the following:

From the perspective of reading, we do not expect the same things from literary and non-literary texts, and this influences the way that we make sense of them. Consider a washing machine manual and a poem about washing machines. The one we read for instructions or information and the other for a particular way of seeing or appreciating washing machines. The one has application to the everyday world. The other, although it is about the everyday world, is somehow framed or set apart from it. It is about washing machines, yes, but it is also about itself, its own patterns and patterning of language. The one requires that we step forward and act, the other that we step back and reflect. Then, if the poem works, we see the washing machine in a new way. (Rule, 1996: 13)

It is possible to summarise what Rule writes about a washing machine manual and a poem about washing machines in the following way:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Washing machine manual** | **Poem about a washing machine** |
| Read for instructions or information | Read to appreciate a particular way of seeing / thinking about washing machines |
| Useful in the everyday world | Set apart from the everyday world – language quality and language patterns are important |
| Requires readers to step forward and act | Requires readers to step back and reflect in order to see / think about a washing machine in new ways |

One definition of literature is: *quality, imaginative, written texts.* However, there are several problems with this definition. Firstly, how is quality to be judged and by whom? Secondly, what counts as ‘imaginative’ and what does not? Thirdly, particularly in Africa, there is a rich tradition of oral or spoken art forms such as praises, laments, proverbs and stories. You will have an opportunity to think further about what count as literature in each of the units in Theme Four.

**1.3 What is the value of studying literature?**

Below are some answers to this question, given by teachers and authors, and summarised by Rule (1996: 12 - 13).

**1. Literature is a way of developing character and integrity (honesty)**

Readers find examples of good characters and good values in great works of literature. These can provide them with models of how to think, feel and live.

**2. Literature initiates young people into their cultural heritage.**

By reading literature, young readers become educated in their own culture. Great works of literature expose them to “the best that has been written in the language,” as the English critic Mathew Arnold argued, and this gives them a strong sense of who they are and where they come from in a cultural sense.

**3. Literature gives readers access to other cultures and other times**

Literature can be understood as a form of **word-travel** which allows readers to enter into other worlds. Through literature readers can gain a better understanding of other cultures and historical periods, and thus expand their horizons.

**4. Literature promotes personal development**

Literature helps readers to become aware of themselves and the world in new ways. It helps them to develop as individuals and to become more sensitive to the insights and experiences of others.

**5. Literature helps with the learning of language**

Literature provides authentic texts which can help readers to develop their vocabulary and their knowledge of grammatical constructions. Through reading literature they become acquainted with the variety of possibilities that exist for expressing oneself within the language.

**6. Literature can develop a critical orientation to the world**

Literature can bring one’s own life and experience into question (Ndebele), thus developing a deeper and more critical ‘understanding’ of the world (Brecht).

**7. Literature develops skills and techniques for understanding literary texts**

Literature helps students to develop a language for analysing features of literature such as figurative language, themes, characters and point of view. It enables them to discuss literature and how it works. It helps them to become skilled and informed readers of literature.

**Activity X: Respond to statements about the value of studying literature**

1. Rank the seven statements you have just read, in order, from the one you agree with most (1) to the one you agree with least (7). For example, if you agree most strongly with the statement that Literature promotes personal development, rank this as number 1.

2. When you have completed your ranking, complete one of the two sentences below in which you express your own views about studying literature:

* Literature should be part of a language curriculum because ….

OR

* Literature should not be part of a language curriculum because ….

3. Rule expands on two of the reasons for studying literature:

(i) literature as a way of developing critical and creative thinking;

(ii) literature as word travel.

While you are reading what he wrote more than twenty years ago, think about what has already changed since then and think about what you agree or disagree with in the ideas he expresses.

**Note**: Several of the suggestions that Rule makes about ways of reading literature will be explained further when you study the poems, short stories and extracts from autobiographical and biographical writing that are included in Theme Four.

**1.4 Literature as a way of developing critical and creative thinking**

‘In a rapidly changing world, it is my view that young South Africans need to think critically and creatively. They will have to adapt to new technologies in the future, possibly change jobs more than once, confront as yet unimagined political and ecological challenges, learn to live in a smaller world and a bigger universe. Literature is an important resource for helping us to develop critical and creative thinking, since literary texts can help us to reflect on our own cultural experience. They also present us with other worlds that bring our own into question. Literature can challenge and change the way we see the world. By travelling into the *word-worlds* of literary texts, by bringing these worlds to life in our imaginations, we are enabled to see in a new way and thus to reconsider the world around us.

Another important reason for teaching literature concerns the **dialogues** that itcan create. As Franz Kafka said, “Literature is the axe that breaks the ice within us.” In similar vein, Njabulo Ndebele defines art as “an act of knowledge through self-confrontation” (Noma Awards acceptance speech, 1985; in *Staffrider*, 6.2). Literature has a special potential to open up dialogues both within us and between us as readers. …

In addition to this, literature can generate dialogues between the past, present and future. Again, this is particularly important in a country which, besides struggling to cope with the present, is striving to come to terms with its past and to imagine its futures.

What all this suggests is that **the meanings of literature do not lie simply in the texts themselves**. Meaning is not like treasure in the box of the text. Rather, it arises from the relation between readers and the text. Of course the text suggests a range of possibilities, but these have to be interpreted by readers in a particular context. That is why different generations find different meanings in the same text. … As readers, we bring our own experiences, attitudes and habits of reading to every text that we read, and make sense of it in terms of what we know.

**1.5 Literature as word travel**

Literature can be understood as a form of word travel. It takes us into the lives and minds of characters; it re-situates us in other worlds and ways of being. One way of understanding what literature means is to allow ourselves to take this journey into the world of the text. This might involve exploring the writer’s historical and biographical context, identifying the main patterns of language and ideology in the text, analysing character, setting, point of view, conflict and so on. However, although very important this is only one way of reading. Another way is to make the text travel in our direction as readers and learners, into our own world. How does it compare with what we know? Do we agree with the ideas that are presented? What insights does it give us into our own lives? What is it silent about? As readers we are in a position to create dialogue between the world of the text and our own world through this kind of word travel. (Excerpts from Rule, 1996: 16-17)

**1.6 Features of literary language or literary devices**

One meaning of the word ‘device’ is a special way of doing something. Whole books have been published as ‘dictionaries’ that explain features of literary language or literary devices. This section draws on some of these books, particularly Hendry’s *Your friendly guide to literary terms* (1997), to provide definitions of some of the more commonly used literary devices.

Knowledge of these literary devices is important for reading and writing poems, stories and plays and for studying non-fiction prose and ‘everyday’ texts such as brochures and advertisements. The devices are presented in alphabetical order.

**Selected literary terms presented in alphabetical order**

**Alliteration**

Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words. Here are two famous examples:

… the stuttering **r**ifle’s **r**apid **r**attle (from Wilfred Owen’s poem ‘Anthem for a Doomed Youth) – the repeated ‘r’ sound suggests the noise of gunfire.

… He sipped with his straight mouth,

Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack long body,

Silently (from D. H. Lawrence’s poem ‘Snake’) – the repeated ‘s’ sound suggests the sound and the movement of the snake.

Alliteration is also often used in advertisements

*Bra’ Brown’s Bread is Best! For your next holiday, make the most of magical Mozambique!*

**Assonance**

Assonance is the repetition of similar or identical vowel sounds to create a particular effect. Here is an example from a poem that you will study in Unit 3: ‘r**a**ge, r**a**ge ag**ai**nst the dying of the light’.

**Climax**

The highpoint or the section of a work of poetry or prose that is the most intense or has the greatest impact. For example, in Stephen Spender’s poem, *The express*, he describes the growing noise and speed of the train;

It is now she begins to sing – at first quite low

Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness –

The song of her whistle screaming at the curves,

Of deafening tunnels, brakes, innumerable bolts.

**Comparisons (simile and metaphor)**

**Simile**

When speakers or writers use a simile, they compare two ‘things’ directly. They use **as** or **like** in making the comparison:

*Her hands felt as cold as a dog’s nose*. The coldness of the woman’s hands is being compared to the coldness of a dog’s nose. (Healthy dogs and cats always have cold, damp noses.)

*The old man’s bent back was like a curved tree branch.* (Bent and curved are synonyms and a tree branch is also likely to be ‘bumpy’ like an old man’s spine.)

Some similes have become **clichés** (phrases that have been repeated so often that they are no longer fresh or interesting):

as good as gold

as heavy as lead

as white as snow

as pretty as a picture

as cool as a cucumber …

Here is an example of the use of similes in a poem:

*I Asked the Little Boy who Cannot See*

I asked the little boy who cannot see,

‘And what is colour like?’

‘Why green,’ said he,

‘Is like the rustle when the wind blows through

The forest, running water, that is blue;

And red is like a trumpet sound; and pink

Is like the smell of roses; and I think

That purple must be like a thunderstorm;

And yellow is like something soft and warm;

And white is a pleasant stillness when you lie

And dream.

(Anonymous. Reprinted in *Oxford Successful Reading Book 6*)

Here is an example from the opening paragraph of a boy’s description of his mother in which the author uses similes to compare the mother to the earth and to the sun:

‘My mother is like the earth – full of goodness, warm and brown and strong. My mother is like the sun rising in the early morning, lighting up the dark corners and gently coaxing us awake. (Hugh Lewin, *Mothers.* Reprinted in *Oxford Successful English Reading Book 6*.)

**Metaphor**

One ‘thing’ is compared directly to another without using ‘as’ or ‘like’. For example:

The soldier was a lion in battle.

The striker is a goal machine.

The people are ants on the ground below.

Metaphors are sometimes more difficult for learners to identify. Here are a few examples:

The clouds sailed across the sky. (The direct comparison is with a boat on the sea)

The boy’s bedroom is a minefield. (There is so much mess that anyone trying to walk on the floor is in danger of hurting himself or herself, as they would if walking through an area in which mines had been planted to explode when stepped on.)

The crocodile’s teeth are white daggers.(Daggers are short sharp weapons to which the crocodile’s teeth are compared.)

**Diction**

This term is used particularly to refer to a writer’s choice of vocabulary. As Hendry (1997) explains, ‘Many words have an emotional component which gives them an extended **connotation** beyond their simple dictionary meanings. Thus the word *regime* with its connotations of authority and oppression is a term that will more than likely be applied to a government by its opponents than by its supporters.

**Enjambment**

In poetry, enjambment is sometimes described as a ‘run-on line’. The sense of a line of poetry is carried over into the next line without interruption from punctuation. In this example from Robert Frost’s well-known poem *The road not taken,* the enjambed lines help readers to think that they are listening to someone talking to them:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,

And sorry I could not travel both

And be one traveller, long I stood

And looked down one as far as I could

To where it bent in the undergrowth …

**Euphemism**

Euphemism is the use of a word or phrase generally considered to be milder or less offensive or more ‘politically correct’ and socially / culturally acceptable than a more direct or blunt word or phrase. Here are two examples: a euphemism for a short person is ‘a vertically challenged’ person; a euphemism for a nightclub bouncer is ‘an exit-co-ordinator’.

**Figurative language**

The use of words or phrases in ways that differ from their usual or **literal** meaning. For example, when the South African poet Dennis Brutus describes looking through the bars of the window in his prison cell ‘where the stars flowered’, this is figurative language because stars are not literally (really) flowers.

**Free Verse**

This description applies to poetry in which there is no rhyme scheme (see below) but in which there is a greater sense of rhythm (see below) than in ‘ordinary' prose. Sometimes the lines are of irregular length. To return to D.H. Lawrence’s *The Snake:*

A snake came to my water trough

On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,

To drink there.

**Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is deliberate exaggeration. For example, a big plate of food is described as ‘a mountainous’ plate of food.

**Imagery**

This is a very important concept in all literary genres. It refers to the creation of images through the use of words that arouse any or all of the senses.

The term imagery is also used to refer to the use of **figurative languag**e, particularly in terms of similes and metaphors (see above).

**Irony**

Irony can take various forms but what they have in common is a difference of some kind between what the situation appears to be and what it really is. There are three types: verbal, situational and dramatic. The examples below are adapted from ‘Definitions and Examples of Irony in Literature’:

**Verbal irony:** occurs when a speaker’s intention is the *opposite* of what he or she is saying. For example, a person stepping out into a storm and saying ‘”What nice weather we’re having!”

**Situational irony**: occurs when the actual result of a situation is totally different from what you’d expect the result to be. Radio or television sitcoms often use situational irony. For example, a family spends a lot of time and money planning a surprise birthday party for their mother to show her how much they care for her. However, it turns out that her birthday is *next* month and none of them knew the correct date so instead of being pleased she is upset that no-one cares enough to remember her birthday.

**Dramatic irony:**occurs when the audienceknows a key piece of information that a character in a play, film or novel does not. This is the type of irony that makes viewers yell, ‘DON’T GO IN THERE!’ during a scary film.

Note: sarcasm is not a synonym for irony. Sarcasm is destructive and is intended to cause hurt.

**Mood**

Mood refers to the emotional atmosphere of a piece of writing. In *Wild Swans at Cool*e, W.B. Yeats’ choice of the words in italics conveys a mood (or feelings) of aging and gloom:

The trees are in *their autumn* beauty,

The woodland paths are *dry,*

Under the October *twilight* the water

Mirrors *a still* sky

**Onomatopoeia**

The use of words in which the sound matches or mimics or copies the action described. For example:

The *rustle* of leaves in the wind

The *pitter patter* of small children’s feet

The *drumming* of hail on a tin roof

In Gauteng there is a township called Etwatwa which was given this name when it was an informal settlement during the last years of apartheid. Etwatwa mimics or copies the sound of a bullet travelling through corrugated iron sheeting.

**Oxymoron**

The placement of two contradictory words or phrases next to or close to each other

For example: open secret (If information is ‘open’ or ‘available then it is no longer a secret.)

**Paradox**

A paradox is a statement that seems at first to be self-contradictory or absurd but which reveals itself not to be when more closely examined. Hendry (1997) quotes an example from William Wordsworth’s poem *The rainbow* in which the poet uses a paradox to suggest that what a man becomes in maturity is influenced by what he was as a child:

The child is father to the man

**Personification**

When a writer or speaker uses personification, he or she give human qualities to something that is not human. For example, ‘angry wind’. Only people have emotions such as ‘anger’ so the wind cannot literally be angry. Here is another example, from a poem about a train by Stephen Spender, which also includes a simile: ‘gliding like a queen she leaves the station’. In poems and stories for children, animals, birds and reptiles are often given human qualities. This is a kind of personification which is also termed *anthropomorphism.*

**Repetition**

Writers choose repetition of the same sentence or phrase or word to make a particular point to readers. Below is an adapted version of Richard Rive’s famous poem ‘Where the rainbow ends.

*Where the rainbow ends* (an adapted version of Richard Rive’s poem, in *New Successful English Learner’s Book, 5)*

Where the rainbow ends

There’s going to be a place, brother,

Where the world can sing all sorts of songs,

And we’re going to sing together, brother,

You and I, though you’re white and I’m not.

It’s going to be a sad song, brother,

Because we don’t know the tune,

And it’s a difficult tune to learn.

But we can learn, brother, you and I.

There’s no such tune as a white tune.

There’s only music, brother,

And it’s music we’re going to sing

Where the rainbow ends.

**Rhyme**

Words that rhyme have the same, or very similar last sound, even though the spelling of the sound may differ

**Rhythm**

This is the sense of movement that is created in a text, often by the use of **metre** (repetition of regular stress patterns). Here is an example from Alfred Noyes’ poem *The highwayman* in which, although the description is of the horseman, the rhythm suggests the galloping sound of a horse’s hooves:

He’d a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace

at his chin,

A coat of claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;

They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the

thigh!

And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,

His pistol butts a-twinkle,

His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

**Satire**

A satirist ridicules or makes fun of human weaknesses or foolishness and hopes that by exposing them they can be corrected.

**Setting**

The place and time in which a work of literature is set. It is often a factor in establishing atmosphere or mood.

**Symbol / symbolism**

A symbol is something that stands for or represents something else. For example, in Robert Frost’s poem *Mending Wall*, the physical wall between two properties symbolises the barrier that prevents some people from communicating with others.

**Theme**

The simplest definition of theme is that it is the ‘message’ that a writer wishes to convey to a reader. In a poem, short story, novel, play or non-fiction prose text such as an autobiography, there may be more than one theme.

**Tone**

As suggested by the expression ‘tone of voice, tone refers to the attitude that a speaker or writer wishes to convey to a listener or reader.It can be serious, light-hearted, angry, etc.

**Many of these literary terms will be used in Units 2 to 5 of Theme Four. You will be expected to be familiar with them when you answer questions on literature in Paper 1 of the external examination.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **UNIT 2** | Reading and responding to poetry |

**2.1 Introduction**

In Unit 1 you read that it’s not easy to agree on a definition of ‘literature’. In this unit you will find that it’s also not easy to decide what ‘counts’ as poetry and what does not. With his example of the difference between an instruction manual for how to use a washing machine and a poem about a washing machine, Peter Rule introduced you to the idea that poets use language in ways that differ from everyday uses of language. Robin Malan, the editor of several anthologies of poetry for students, states that ‘poetry is difficult to pin down with any exactness’ (1995: v) so he gives a number of possible answers to two questions: What is a poem? and Why do poets write poems?

After reading and thinking about what makes poetry different from other kinds of oral and written texts, you will read and respond to 10 poems in preparation for answering questions on some of them in Paper 1 of the NASCA examination.

**Learning Outcomes**

When you have completed this unit you should be able to:

* express your ideas on what makes poetry different from other kinds of oral or written texts;
* use literary terms to discuss poetry;
* understand, analyse and express your personal response to ten poems;
* answer contextual questions on ten poems.

**Activity X: Read and respond to answers to two questions: What is a poem? Why do poets write poems?**

1. While you are reading some of the possible answers to these questions, think about which ones are most similar to your own ideas about poems and poetry writing and which are most different.

2. When you have finished reading and thinking about these answers. Write your own answers to both questions.

**What is a poem?**

* The organising of an experience into patterns of sound which will communicate that experience truthfully.
* The right words in the right order.
* Trying to find the imaginative truth about something, a different kind of truth from scientific truth.
* Making people think: ‘Oh yes, it *is* like that, I hadn’t thought of it that way before!’
* Some new insight into some aspect of being alive.
* Communicating some aspect of life in sounds and words spoken and heard or written on a page.
* Making someone else see, feel, experience, something exactly as you did.

**Why do poets write poems?**

* To communicate to someone else *exactly* what they saw/heard/ smelled/etc. and how they felt about it.
* To make the listener or reader say: ‘Yes, she/he has got it exactly right! That’s exactly how it is!’
* To communicate directly, orally with people; to perform the poems in public, rather than, or as well as, having them published in written form.
* To find a way of expressing ideas and concerns about the world around them (social, political issues) or private personal concerns; or the way one of these affects the other.

(Malan, 1995a: vi)

Editors of anthologies (collections) of the work of different poets sometimes group the poems into **themes** or categories which suggest *what* some poets write about and *why*. Here are two examples:

Themes in *Dreams and other poems,* an anthology compiled by Blanche Scheffler (2010):

Poems that sing

Poems that describe

Poems that make us smile

Poems that tell a story

Poems about our parents

Poems about our world

Poems about people

Themes in *Where the rainbow ends*, an anthology compiled by Helen Laurenson (2006):

Poems about poetry

Poems about attraction

Poems about being apart

Poems about people

Poems about war and oppression

Poems about nature

Poems about the world we have made

Poems about South Africa

**Activity X: Think about your favourite poem or song lyrics**

Think about your favourite poem or your favourite song lyrics (words of a song). Why is this poem or song your favourite? Is it about any of the themes in the two lists above? If so, which one? If not, how would you describe its theme?

**2.2 Learning how to analyse and respond to poems**

To prepare for analysing and answering questions on the ten poems prescribed for Paper 2, in this section you will read comments on four short poems. Each of the four is a different example of what ‘counts’ as poetry.

POEM 1

***The Crocodile* A traditional Sotho poem**

Cruel one, killer whilst laughing

The Crocodile is the laughing teeth that kill

(p.17 in Scheffler et al, 2010)

With reference to **themes** in poetry, this very short poem is both a poem that describes and a poem about nature. It makes its impact on listeners or readers because of the **contrast** between the horror of killing and death on the one hand and the joy of laughter on the other. When a crocodile opens its jaws very wide, it looks as if it is laughing, but its teeth are extremely dangerous. This is why the Sotho poet uses a **metaphor** in the second line: The Crocodile is the laughing teeth that kill.Because they are so dangerous, a crocodile’s laughing teeth could be considered an example of an **oxymoron.**

To revise the difference between smile and metaphor, re-read the section on **comparisons** in section 1.6 of Unit 1. Also re-read the definition and example of an oxymoron.

POEM 2

***The drum speaks our language* by Paul Chidyausiku**

When the chief was enthroned,

The drum thundered.

When the chief died,

The drum moaned.

When invasion was imminent, imminent – about to happen

The drum called men to arms.

When the spirits were angry,

The drums appeased. appeased – made calm or peaceful again

When the young men were merry,

The drum provided the rhythm.

The drum spoke our language,

Who of us has no ear for it?

Who of us has not a place for it in his heart?

(p. 8 in Scheffler et al, 2010)

This is a poem that ‘sings’ as the poet describes the role of the drum in traditional African society. It is a **praise poem** in which the following features make important contributions to the praise that the poet is offering to the drum:

* **repetition** and **pattern** in the first two stanzas: When … The drum …
* change to the pattern in the last stanza
* shift from past tense to present tense in the verbs in the last two lines
* choice of verbs to describe different sounds and beats of the drums to suit different occasions
* **personification** of the drum (it moaned; it spoke)

With his questions in the last two lines the poet seems to be asking readers, who may no longer live in traditional village communities, to continue to value the drum.

POEM 3

***The writer of this poem* by Roger McGough**

The writer of this poem

Is taller than a tree

As keen as the North wind keen – sharp or cold

As handsome as can be

As bold as a boxing glove

As sharp as a nib nib – the sharp point of an ink pen

As strong as scaffolding scaffolding - a framework to support builders

As tricky as a fib fib – a lie or untruth

As smooth as a lolly ice lolly ice – an ice cream on a stick

As quick as a lick

As clean as a chemist shop

As clever as a √

The writer of this poem

Never ceases to amaze

He’s one in a million billion

(or so the poem says!)

(p. 4 in Scheffler et al, 2010)

This is a poem about a person who is praising himself or boasting about himself in such an exaggerated way that the poem is meant to be amusing. The second last line is an example of **hyperbole** (He’s one in a million billion). The last line, written in parentheses and ending with an exclamation mark, suggests that the poet is making fun of, or laughing at, himself.

The poet makes use of many **similes** to build up his description of himself, each one introduced by the word ‘as’. He also uses a regular **rhyme** scheme. In each verse the last word of the second line rhymes with the last word of the fourth line. Notice that at the end of the third stanza he uses the symbol for the word tick instead of writing the word.

POEM 4

***Distant relative* by Dave Reeves**

I’d rather

my father

were nearer

(pp.47-48 in Krone, et al. 2013)

In the anthology from which this poem is taken there is a drawing of a boy, with a sad face, dressed in cricket clothing and carrying a cricket bat. In the background his father sits in a chair, reading a newspaper with his back to the boy. This is the illustrator’s interpretation of the **mood** of the poem. Although it consists of only eight words, the combination of the title and the three short lines enables the poet to express the child’s feelings powerfully. The **rhythm** of the poem (three syllables in each line), the **repetition** of ‘er’ at the end of each line and the **structure** **or form** of the poem, with its division into two stanzas, all contribute to readers’ likely responses to it.

**Activity X: Respond to four poems**

1. How did the description of the crocodile in Poem 1 make you feel?

2. Write a two line poem to describe a creature that you feel either positive or negative about.

3. In Poem 2, notice all the things that the drum does. Suggest what else a drum could do.

4. Are drums important to you? How would you answer the questions that the poet asks in the last two lines of Poem 2?

5. How did you respond to the writer’s boastful description of himself in Poem 3?

6. Write a few boastful lines about yourself and then, just for fun, share them with a friend.

7. Distant relative is usually a term used to describe someone who is related to you but who lives far away, or someone who is not a close relation (e.g. a second cousin). Why do you think the poet chose this title for a poem about father and child?

8. How did you feel when you read Poem 4?

Now that you have begun to think about some of the different ways in which poems can be written and about some of the different themes expressed in poetry, it’s time to turn to the poems to be studied for examination purposes. **An answer to each question, on each poem, is included in the Answer Key at the end of Unit Five. Try to answer the questions yourself before turning to the Key but once you have done so, study the answer in the key in preparation for answering questions in the examination.**

**2.3 Ten poems to be studied for examination purposes**

*An African Thunderstorm* by David Rubadiri

*Dawn* by Joseph Kumbirai

*Poem for my mother* by Jennifer Davids

*Apricot jam* by phillippa yaa de villiers

*On his blindness* by John Milton

*Dreams* by Langston Hughes

*My name* by Magoleng wa Selepe

*In Detention* by Chris van Wyk

*We thank the women* by Gcina Mhlope

*Love poem for my country* by Sandile Dikeni

**2.3.1 Poems about nature and people’s responses to aspects of the natural word;**

**poems that describe**

The first two poems that you will study in detail are examples of ‘poems about nature’ and people’s responses to aspects of the natural world. They are also examples of ‘poems that describe’. The descriptions express the feelings of each poet about what he describes. Before you read each one, read the biographical information about the poet to help you to ‘travel into’ his or her world (Rule, 1996) and do the pre-reading activity to help you to prepare for responding to the poem. The while reading activity should help you to answer post-reading questions on the poem.

***An African Thunderstorm* by David Rubadiri**

David Rubadiri (born 1930) is a Malawian who is well-known for his writing as a poet, playwright and novelist and for his teaching of English at universities in Uganda, Kenya and Botswana. In 2000 he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malawi. He has also served his country as a diplomat, including representing Malawi at the United Nations.

**Pre-reading activity:** Think about your experiences of approaching thunderstorms and of the arrival of a storm. What do you do before a storm starts and what do you do once it is underway?

**While reading activity:** Take note of all the words and phrases that express movement and sound.

***An African Thunderstorm***

From the west

Clouds come hurrying with the wind

Turning sharply

Here and there

Like a plague of locusts

Whirling,

Tossing up things on its tail

Like a madman chasing nothing

Pregnant clouds

Ride stately on its back,

Gathering to perch on hills

Like sinister dark wings;

The wind whistles by

And trees bend to let it past.

In the village

Screams of delighted children,

Toss and turn

In the din of the whirling wind,

Women –

Babies clinging on their backs –

Dart about

In and out

Madly;

The wind whistles by

Whilst trees bend to let it pass.

Clothes wave like tattered flags

Flying off

To expose dangling breasts

As jagged blinding flashes

Rumble, tremble and crack

Amidst the smell of fired smoke

And the pelting march of the rain.

(pp.42-43, in Fraser, 1975)

**Activity X: Write an answer to each question on *An African***

***Thunderstorm***

**Post-reading questions**

1. In the first stanza what is suggested by the poet’s choices of the verbs ‘whirling’, ‘tossing up’, ‘chasing’? (2)

2. Explain why the poet compares the action of the wind to a plague of locusts. (2)

3. In stanza 2, why does the poet describe the clouds as ‘pregnant’? (2)

4.1 In the same stanza, quote the simile the poet uses to describe the clouds. (1)

4.2 What is your response to this simile? (2)

5. In stanza 3 how do the short lines (Toss and turn … Dart about/In and out/Madly) contribute to the meaning of the poem? (2)

6.1 Complete this sentence; ‘Rumble, tremble and crack are examples of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (1)

6.2 What do these sounds describe? (2)

7. What do the words ‘pelting march’ suggest about the kind of rain that is falling? (2)

8. The poet describes the actions of children and women but not of men. What could be his reason for omitting men from the poem? (2)

9. How do you think the poet feels about thunderstorms? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**Activity X: Add a final stanza to the poem**

This is not a task that you would be asked to complete in an examination. However, now that you have read and thought about David Rubadiri’s description of the storm, become a poet yourself by writing a final stanza to add to his poem in which you describe the scene in the village after the storm is over.

***Dawn* by Joseph Kumbirai**

Joseph Kumbirai (1922-1986) was born on a mission station in what is now Zimbabwe. He became a Catholic priest, teacher and lecturer in African languages. He wrote poetry in the Shona language about many aspects of Zimbabwean life and about Zimbabwean landscapes. The poem you are about to read was translated into English by another poet, Douglas Livingstone.

**Pre-reading activity:** Think about your favourite time of day. What makes it a special time for you?

**While-reading activity***: Dawn*could be considered an example of praise poem. Identify what is being praised and notice the words the poet uses to offer praise.

***Dawn***

Cock-crow and early-rise! the cock (rooster) crows when the sun comes up

Venus, the morning star, appears, Venus – the morning star, the planet that can be

a first light, growing. seen in the early morning

The sky is a blood-orange;

The first zestful breeze delights the heart zestful – full of energy and enthusiasm

but shrivels up the morning star. shrivels – shrinks; causes to fade away

The roosters’ voices fade

while the lights get brighter;

the elephants of dawn have finished washing.

The first dew steams

along with smoking hearths;

birds awaken, chirruping. chirruping – singing happily

Brilliantly, pristine, pristine – new, untouched, very clean

the great sun appears

like a large and glittering forehead.

Children warm their backs,

shouting: The sun,

the sun is King!

Their little polished heads

shimmer and glitter

like leaves turning from the west.

As the sun sets, so we set;

as the sun rises, so we rise:

the sun, the sun is King!

(pp. 73-74, in Laurenson, 2006)

**Activity X: Write an answer to each question on *Dawn***

1. In stanza 1, what two things indicate that dawn is breaking (i.e. a new day is beginning)? (2)

2.1 Using your own words, describe the colour ‘blood-orange’ (2)

2.2 What is your response to the poet’s use of this colour to describe the sky? (2)

3. Quote the word in stanza 2 which tells readers that the night is ‘dying’. (1)

4. With reference to stanza 4, explain what would be causing the dew to ‘steam’ and the hearths to be ‘smoking’. (2)

5. With reference to stanza 5, suggest why the poet describes the sun as ‘brilliant’ (1) and as ‘pristine’ (1).

6.1 Quote the full simile that the poet uses in stanza 5. (1)

6.2 Do you think this is an effective simile? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

7. In stanza 7 the children are described as having ‘polished heads’. Explain what could cause a child’s head to look polished. (2)

8. In the final stanza, what is the poet suggesting about the lifestyle of the people he refers to as ‘we’ and about the role of the sun in their lives? (4)

(total: 20 marks)

**2.3.2 Poems about family relationships in particular social contexts**

In the past and in the present many poets have written, and are writing, about family relationships of some kind. It’s likely that you have already read examples of these. The two chosen for you to study are both written from the point of view of the younger person in the relationship – a teenage girl in *Poem for my mother* and a younger girl in *Apricot jam*. There is some similarity between the backgrounds or context of the two poems: the hard life experienced by many people in apartheid South Africa which continues, in terms of poverty, into the present.

***Poem for my mother* by Jennifer Davids**

Jennifer Davids is a South African poet who was born in Cape Town in 1947. She trained as a teacher at Hewat College, specialising in the arts and afterwards taught in Langa township and in London. *Poem for my mothe*r was published in a collection called *Searching for Words* in 1974 but was written much earlier in Davids’ teenage years.

People who have studied this poem consider its main themes to be the nature of the relationship between mother and daughter and their ability or inability to understand each other.

**Pre-reading activity:** Have you ever shared something that is important to you with another person who made it seem unimportant? If so, how did you feel? Have you ever done this to someone else? Do you know how they felt? (adapted from questions designed by Laurenson, 2007: 113)

**While reading activity:** Identify the **metaphors** and **similes** used in this poem and think about their contribution to its meaning(s)

***Poem for my mother***

That isn’t everything you said

on the afternoon I brought a poem

to you hunched over the washtub

with your hands

the shrivelled

burnt granadilla granadilla – a fruit with a skin that looks wrinkled, dark purple

skin of your hands brown when it is ripe

covered by foam.

And my words

slid like a ball

of hard blue soap

into the tub

to be grabbed and used by you

to rub the clothes.

A poem isn’t all

there is to life, you said

with your blue-ringed gaze

scanning the page scanning – looking very quickly

once looking over my shoulder

and back at the immediate

dirty water

and my words

being clenched clenched – held tightly

smaller and

smaller.

(pp. 22-23, in Malan, 1995a)

**Post reading questions**

The questions on this poem in Activity X below (some of them from Laurenson, 2007: 113), begin with the literal, move through the inferential and end with evaluative and appreciative questions.

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Poem for my mother***

1. What is the mother doing when the daughter brings her the poem she has written? (1)

2. Does her mother read the daughter’s poem carefully ? Quote from the poem to support your answer. (2)

3. ‘the shrivelled burnt granadilla skin of your hands’. In this **metaphor,** what two things are being compared and what does this comparison tell readers about the mother’s hands? (3)

4.1 Quote the **simile** in the second stanza (1)

4.2 Explain how this simile affects your response to the poem. (2)

5. ‘your blue-ringed gaze’ What does this suggest to readers about how the mother looks and what her life is like?

(2)

6.1 What does the mother say about poetry? (1)

6.2 Why do you think she has this view of poetry? (2)

7. How does the daughter feel about the way her mother reacts? (2)

8. Explain how the **structure** of the last stanza contributes to its meaning. (2)

9. Suggest two different reasons why Jennifer Davids chose the *Poem for my mother* as the title of this poem. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

***Apricot jam* by phillippa yaa de villiers**

Phillippa yaa de Villiers was born in Hillbrow, Johannesburg in 1966 to a white Australian mother and a black Ghanaian father. When she was nine months old she was adopted by a white couple who became her parents, but she was not told of her adoption until she was twenty. She wrote the following about how these experiences affected her:

“I started writing when I was a child, my first published poem was when I was 11. I was brought up in a home that loved poetry and literature, especially the English language. But it was only when I was older that I realised that writing is so much more than words playing on a page. Writing contains the writer, their concerns, their social context and their history. My own history became a block to my creativity as I started to explore my identity as a black woman adopted by a white family in apartheid South Africa. I felt like the colonised and the coloniser were fighting each other inside my brain. Writing continued to be important to me but I was convinced that is was simply a therapeutic process, or no value to anyone else.” (quote from Wikipedia entry, downloaded 10/10/18).

Her writing of television scripts, prose and poetry and her performances of her poems have been highly valued by both South African and international readers and audiences and she has won numerous awards for her writing, including the Commonwealth prize in 2014. The poem you are about to read is from her third book of poetry, *ice cream headache in my bones* (2017)*.*

If you have access to the Internet, google ‘phillippa yaa de villiers’ to find video clips of phillippa performing some of her poems.

**Pre-reading activity:** Think of one of the memories of your childhood that has affected you greatly. What is the memory? How has it affected you?

**While reading activity:** Read the poem aloud and while you are doing so, notice how the punctuation helps you to make sense of what the narrator of the poem describes.

***Apricot jam***

when I was seven my mother told me

*man daf nie auf der strasse essen* the German words in line 2

never eat in the street are written in English in line 3

you torment those who are starving. Her eyes torment – be cruel to

went monochrome on me, detached monochrome - consisting only

to a five-year-old in Johannesburg’s dusty streets, of black, white and grey colours

1929:

eating a thick slice of her mother’s

home-made white bread with apricot jam

and a black child asked for some

and she refused, and when she grew up

haunted by her sin haunted – reminded of

she met a black child and said something bad

you will never starve again,

you are mine;

she fed me thick slices of white bread with apricot jam

and the child tried to swallow

but the bread stuck in her throat.

The sweetness wouldn’t come.

(p. 12 in yaa de villiers, 2017)

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Apricot jam***

1. Describe what the speaker’s mother was remembering about her own childhood when she told the speaker not to eat in the street. (4)

2. What does the poet mean when she writes that the mother’s eyes ‘went monochrome’ and ‘detached’ (2)

3. When the speaker’s mother grew up, what did she do to atone (make up for) her ‘sin’? (2)

4. In the last lines of the poem the speaker refers to herself as ‘the child’. She does not explain why she found it difficult to eat the bread and jam. Give two possible reasons. (4)

5. ‘The sweetness wouldn’t come.’ Complete the sentences below:

5.1 The *literal* meaning of’ the sweetness wouldn’t come’ could be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (2)

5.2 The *figurative* meaning of the ‘sweetness’ wouldn’t come could be\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(2)

6. The section of the poem between ‘Her eyes went monochrome on me … and ‘but the bread stuck in her throat’ is one long sentence. Suggest why the poet put all this information into a single sentence. (2)

7. Does the title *Apricot jam* give an idea of the main theme of the poem? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**2.3.4 Poems to inspire readers**

Many poets have written poems to encourage or give hope to (inspire) themselves and their readers. The two examples that you are going to read and study were written more than three hundred years apart, but their message of encouragement is as relevant (important and useful) today as when each one was written.

***On His Blindness* by John Milton**

John Milton (1608-1674) was a writer of prose and poetry and a civil servant in the government of Oliver Cromwell. He could speak ten languages and wrote in English, Latin, Greek and Italian. He introduced a number of new words into the English language. He is best known for his very long poem *Paradise Lost* and for his support of freedom of speech and freedom of the press*.* He became completely blind in 1651-52 and it is believed that he wrote the sonnet *On His Blindness* shortly after losing his sight.

**Pre-reading activity:** Perhaps you, or someone you know, is ‘differently-abled’. This term is used today in place of ‘disabled’ . It indicates that children and adults who can’t see or who are partially sighted, or who can’t hear or who are hearing-impaired, who can’t speak or who have difficulty speaking, or whose movement is restricted in some way as a result of illness or an accident, can be functional members of society. Advances in technology and in medical research are helping the differently-abled to study, to work, to play sport, etc. Before you read *On His Blindness*, think about the challenges faced by those who are differently-abled and about what you might do to support anyone you know who experiences these challenges.

**While reading activity:** This poem is a **sonnet.** A sonnet always has 14 lines. Often the first eight lines have one theme or subject and the last six have another theme or subject, although the two are related. In this sonnet, the first seven and a half lines ask a question and the final six and a half lines provide an answer. While you are reading, try to identify the question and the answer. The poem also has a definite **rhyme scheme** or pattern. While you are reading try to work out this rhyme scheme or pattern.

***On His Blindness***

When I consider how my light is spent spent – over, finished

Ere half my days in this dark world and wide ere - before

And that one talent which is death to hide talent - ability

Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent lodged – stuck; bent - determined

To serve therewith my Maker, and present

My true account, lest He returning chide, chide - criticise

“Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?” exact – demand; denied – not

I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent fondly - foolishly That murmur soon replies, “God doth not need

Either man’s work or his own gifts. Who best

Bear his mild yoke, they serve Him best. His state yoke – something that limits your

Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed, freedom; bidding - instruction

And post o-er land and ocean without rest; o’er - over

They also serve who only stand and wait.”

(pp. 114-115, in Bavasah et al, 2008)

**After reading activity:** People who have written about *On His Blindness* assume that Milton is the speaker in the poem. As the speaker, he describes how frustrated he feels because his blindness stops him using his talent for writing poems to serve and celebrate God. However, he comes to realise that there are many ways of serving God.

The following sentences summarise the poem but they are not in the correct order. Rewrite them in the correct order to show that you understand the poem:

* I ask God if He expects me to work when I am blind.
* I think about how I am blind and how I cannot use my talent.
* They also serve who only stand and wait.
* God doesn’t need anyone’s talents: He is great and all powerful. (Activity from Rule, 1996: 36)

**Note:** For this poem, answers to the while reading and after reading activities are included in the Answer Key.

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *On His Blindness***

1. Explain what the ‘speaker’, presumed to be Milton himself, is thinking about (considering) in the first two lines. (2)

2. Milton’s Christian faith was very important to him. In the Bible there is a parable about the importance of using the talents that have been given to each person by God. According to the ‘speaker’, what has happened to his talent? Quote from the poem to support your answer. (3)

3. ‘my soul more bent/ To serve therewith my Maker’ Complete this sentence: These words mean that the narrator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (2)

4. Rewrite the ‘speaker’s’ question in line 7 in modern English. (2)

5. Patience is a quality or type of behaviour (staying calm, not getting upset or angry when in a difficult situation) but in the poem the speaker talks to Patience . Complete this sentence: When the speaker talks to Patience this is an example of the figure of speech called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1)

6. Think about the theme of the whole poem and then suggest why Milton chose the name Patience for the speaker’s imaginary conversation with God’s representative. (2)

7. Patience tells the speaker that what God wants is for a person (‘man’ in this poem) to ‘best /Bear his mild yoke’. Explain what these words mean. (2)

8. The last three lines of the poem state that thousands of people rush about (‘speed… without rest’ in order to do what they think God wants them to do. However, according to the poem, there is another way of serving God. What is it? (2)

9.1 State the theme or message of this poem (2)

9.2 *On his blindness* was written several hundred years ago. In your view is its theme still relevant today? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

(total: 20)

***Dreams* by Langston Hughes**

Langston Hughes (1901-1967) was an African- American poet, social activist, novelist, playwright and journalist who lived most of his adult life in Harlem, New York. His many poems were published in a total of 17 collections. He won a number of awards for his writing and for his social activism.

If you have access to the Internet you can watch a short video about Langston Hughes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=in>P7brkYUso

**Pre-reading activity:** If someone asked you about your dreams for the future, for yourself, your family, your country and the world, what would you say?

**While reading activity:** Identify two metaphors used in the poem

***Dreams***

Hold fast to dreams

For if dreams die

Life is a broken-winged bird

That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams

For when dreams go

Life is a barren field

Frozen with snow.

(p.118, in Scheffler, 2010)

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Dreams***

1.1 Explain what it means to ‘hold fast’ to something or someone. (2)

1.2 Complete the sentence by choosing the correct term from the list:

By writing ‘hold fast’ the poet is …….. (asking / suggesting / ordering / stating) readers to

take a particular action. (1)

1.3 Explain why the poet addresses readers in this way. (2)

2. What is your response to the poet’s comparison of dead dreams with life as ‘a broken winged-bird

that cannot fly’? Give a reason for your response. (3)

3. Compare the second line in each stanza. Which of the two stanzas is more hopeful and why? (2)

4.1 What does the word barren usually mean? (2)

4.2 Suggest why the poet uses the metaphor of ‘a barren field / Frozen with snow’ to describe life

without dreams. (3)

5.1 In your own words, explain the message that the poet wishes to give to readers. (3)

5.2 Do you agree or disagree with his message? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**2.3.5 Protest poems**

Protest poems have also been written throughout history, with poets being concerned about political, economic, social and individual justice issues. Their poems and songs have supported protesters during marches and other actions taken to promote a more just world. During the apartheid era in South Africa, many protest poems were written and performed. The two that you are going to read and study were both written during that period of South Africa’s history.

***My name* by Magoleng wa Selepe**

None of the anthologies of poetry in which this poem is included has any information about the poet. The editors of one of these anthologies write as follows: ‘This wonderful poem was written by a poet whom no-one seems to remember. It makes the subject matter of the poem even more moving and sad’ (Bavasah et al, 2008: 96).

**Pre-reading activity:** How do you feel about your name or names? What do you know about the meaning of your name(s)? Who gave you your name(s)?

**While reading activity:** Go back to the themes commonly written about in poems, or categories of poems, that are listed on page X. Identify two possible themes / categories from the list that could be used to describe this poem.

***My name***

Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa

Look what they have done to my name …

the wonderful name of my great-great-grandmothers

*Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa*

The burly bureaucrat was surprised. burly – big, muscular;

What he heard was music to his ears bureaucrat – government officer

(civil servant)

‘Wat is daai, se nou weer?’

‘I am from Chief Daluxolo Velayigodle of emaMpondweni

And my name is *Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa.’*

Messia, help me!

My name is so simple

and yet so meaningful,

but to this man it is trash … trash – rubbish

He gives me a name

Convenient enough to answer to his whim: convenient - easy

I end up being whim – a wish to do something without any

Maria … good reason for doing it

I …

*Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa*

(pp. 99-100 in Laurenson, 2006)

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *My name***

1. In line 1, who is ‘they’? Choose from this list:

(a) the speaker’s great great grandmothers;

(b) apartheid era civil servants;

(c) the speaker’s employers (1)

2. Quote words from the poem which show that the speaker is proud of the history of her family. (1)

3.1 What has the speaker just told the bureaucrat? (1)

3.2 According to the speaker, what she said was music to the bureaucrat’s ears. Explain the meaning of ‘music to one’s ears’ (2)

3.3 It is likely that speaker was being ironic. Explain why. (2) (To help you to answer this question, re-read the explanation of irony on page X.)

3.4 Name the figure of speech used in ‘burly bureaucrat’. (1)

4. Use information from the poem to explain why the speaker’s name is meaningful to her. (2)

5.1 Name the figure of speech in ‘it is trash’ (1)

5.2 Describe your response to the use of this figure of speech in the poem. (2)

6.1 In your own words explain why the bureaucrat give the speaker the name Maria. (2)

6.2 What does giving her this name suggest about his attitude to her? (2)

6.3 What is your response to his attitude? (2)

7. What is the effect of the repetition of the speaker’s name at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the poem? (1)

(total marks: 20)

***In Detention* by Chris van Wyk**

Chris van Wyk (1957-2014) was born at Baragwanath hospital in Soweto and grew up in Riverlea, Johannesburg. He wrote about his childhood and young adult memories in two memoirs titled *Shirley, Goodness and Merc*y and *Eggs to Lay and Chickens to Hatch*. An extract from the first of these memoirs is included in Unit 4. He also wrote a number of books for children and for newly literate adults, as well as short stories and poetry. He is particularly well known for writing an abridged (shortened and simplified) version of Nelson Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom* so that this important book could be read by children, and also for the poem that you are about to read.

In his notes to this poem Robin Malan writes the following:

Detention is being held in police custody. Under the apartheid government, a person could be held without access to family or lawyers, without being charged or brought to trial, for periods of time that could be extended indefinitely.

Under the apartheid government, more than seventy people died while in detention without charge or trial. On 12 September 1977 Steve Biko was the 46th to die in police custody. There is understandable scepticism [doubt/ disbelief] about some of the official reasons given for these deaths. For instance, Ahmed Timol (d 1971) ‘fell from a tenth floor window’ at Johannesburg Security Police headquarters, Imam Abdullah Haron (d 1969) ‘slipped down the stairs’, no explanation being given for the 27 bruises found on his body and Solomon Modipane (d 1969) ‘slipped on a piece of soap and fatally injured himself’.

**Pre-reading activity:** Have you ever tried to avoid getting into trouble by telling a lie? If you have, did you find that as the lie became more and more complicated it caused more and more trouble? Whether or not you have had this experience, think about possible complications caused by not telling the truth about something.

**While reading activity:** While you are reading the poem think about the effects on readers of its structure and its punctuation.

***In Detention***

He fellfrom the ninth floor

He hanged himself

He slipped on a piece of soap while washing

He hanged himself

He slipped on a piece of soap while washing

He fell from the ninth floor

He hanged himself while washing

He slipped from the ninth floor

He hung from the ninth floor

He slipped on the ninth floor while washing

He fell from a piece of soap while slipping

He hung from the ninth floor

He washed from the ninth floor while slipping

He hung from a piece of soap while washing

(p.95 in Malan, 1995a)

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *In Detention***

1. As the poem ‘progresses’ what happens to each of the official reasons given? (3)

2. As a reader, what do you come to think of the reasons? (3)

3. How do you react to these reasons? (3)

4. Suggest why ‘He’ is not named by the poet. (2)

5. The poet has taken a very serious situation and made it appear humorous. This form of humour is sometimes called ‘gallows humour’. In your view is it appropriate for a poet to write this way about something so serious? Give reasons for your answer. (4)

(total: 15 marks)

**2.3.6 Praise poems**

Praise poems have a very long history on the African continent and in some other parts of the world, They were usually composed to be performed, often at special events such as the ceremonies for welcoming a new chief of a tribe. They were passed on, orally, from one generation to another without being written down. The two that you are going to read are modern praise poems in which the poets have written down their praises. However, both poems are best read aloud.

***We thank the women* by Gcina Mhlope**

Gcina Mhlope was born in Kwa-Zulu Natal, in 1958, to a Xhosa mother and a Zulu father. She has become very well-known in South Africa and in many other countries as an anti-apartheid activist, a storyteller, playwright and poet. She tells stories for children and for adults in English, Afrikaans, Zulu and Xhosa. In 2016 she was chosen as one of the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation)’s 100 Women who have made a difference in their own countries and around the world.

If you have access to the Internet, google ‘Gcina Mhlope on video’ and you will be able to view a number of clips of her wonderful performances.

**Pre-reading activity:** Who are your South African heroes (women and men)?

**While reading activity:** Take note of all the individual women and groups of women whom Gcina Mhlope praises.

***We thank the women***

If the moon were to shine tonight

To light up my face and show off my proud form

With beads around my neck and shells in my hair

And a soft easy flowing dress with the colours of Africa

If I were to stand on top of a hill

And raise my voice in praise

Of the women of my country

Who have worked throughout their lives

Not for themselves, but for the very life of all Africans

Who would I sing my praises to?

I could quote all the names

Yes, but where do I begin?!

Do I begin with the ones

Who gave their lives

So that we others may live a better life

The Lilian Ngoyis, the Victoria Mxenges

The Ruth Firsts

Or the ones who have lost their men

To Robben Island and their children to exile

But carried on fighting

The MaMotsoaledis, the MaSisulus

The Winnie Mandelas?

Or maybe I would sing praises to

The ones who have had the resilience resilience – strength to overcome problems

And cunning of a desert cobra

Priscalla Jana, Fatima Meer, Beauty Mkhize

Or the ones who turned deserts into green vegetable gardens

From which our people can eat

Mamphela Ramphele, Ellen Kuzwayo

Or would the names of the women

Who marched, suffered solitary confinement and house arrests

Helen Joseph, Amina Cachalia, Sonya Bunting, Dorothy Nyembe,

Thoko Mngoma, Florence Matomela, Bertha Mkhize,

How many more names come to mind

As I remember the Defiance Campaign

The fights against Beer Halls that suck the strength of our men

Building of alternative schools away from Bantu Education

And the fight against pass laws.

Maybe, maybe, I would choose a name

Just one special name that spells out light

That of Mama Nokukhanya Luthuli

Maybe if I were to call out her name

From the top of the hill

While the moon is shining bright;

No -ku-Kha-nya!

NO-KU-KHA-NYA!

Maybe my voice would be carried by the wind

To reach all the other women

Whose names are not often mentioned

The ones who sell oranges and potatoes

So their children can eat and learn

The ones who scrub floors and polish executive desktops

In towering office blocks

While the city sleeps

The ones who work in overcrowded hospitals

Saving lives, cleaning bullet wounds and delivering new babies

And the ones who have given up

Their places of comfort and the protection of their skin colour

Marian Sparg, Sheena Duncan

Barbara Hogan, Jenny Schreiner.

And what of the women who are stranded in the homelands

With a baby in the belly and a baby on the back

While their men are sweating in the bowels of the earth?

May the lives of all these women

Be celebrated and made to shine

When I cry out Mama Nokukhanya’s name

NO-KU-Kha-NYA!

And we who are young, salute our mothers

Who have given us the heritage of their Queendom!!!

(downloaded from http://www.saha.org.za/women/we\_thank\_the\_women.htm)

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *We thank the women***

1. In the first stanza the speaker describes herself. How does she feel about herself? Quote from the stanza to support your answer. (2)

2. In stanza 2 the speaker asks two questions. What are they? (1+1)

3. In stanzas 3 to 5 the speaker names five categories of women who should be praised. List these five categories. (5)

4. Refer to stanzas 6 and 7. Explain why the speaker decides to focus her praise on Mama Nokukhanya Luthuli. (2)

5.In stanza 7 the speaker reminds readers / listeners of the challenging lives that many men and women lead. Briefly describe three of these challenges. (3)

6. In the final stanza, what is the speaker’s wish for all the women whom she praises? (2)

7. Refer to the final line of the poem. Explain the phrase ‘the heritage of their Queendom’. (2)

8. *We thank the women* is an example of a performance poem. In your view, what makes it a poem that could be enjoyable to perform? (2)

***Love poem for my country* by Sandile Dikeni**

Sandile Dikeni was born in Victoria West in 1966. He studied at the University of the Western Cape where he was a member of the SRC. He was detained without trial in 1986 and started writing poetry at this time. When he was released he became a popular performer at political rallies and community cultural events. In the post-apartheid era he has worked as a journalist, radio broadcaster, political commentator and poet.

**Pre-reading activity**: If you were to choose three things to praise about South Africa, what would they be?

**While reading activity:** Think about your answer to the pre-reading question while you read what Dikeni praises.

***Love poem for my country***

My country is for love

so say its valleys

where ancient rivers flow

the full circle of life

under the proud eye of birds

adorning the sky adorning - decorating

My country is for peace

so says the veld

where reptiles caress caress - stroke

its surface

with elegant motions

glittering in their pride

My country

is for joy

so talk the mountains

with baboons

hopping from boulder to boulder

in the majestic delight

of cliffs and peaks

My country

is for health and wealth

see the blue of the sea

and beneath

the jewels of fish

deep under the bowels of soil

hear

the golden voice

of a miner’s praise for my country

My country

is for unity

feel the millions

see their passion

their hands are joined together

there is hope in their eyes

we shall celebrate

(pp. 84-85 in Bavasah et al, 2008)

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Love poem for my***

***Country***

1.1How do you respond to the poet’s use of a refrain (My country is for…)? (2)

1.2 How do you respond to the poet’s choice of images? (Choose two images to comment on) (2)

1.3How do you respond to the optimism expressed in the poem? (2)

2.1 List three different examples of personification in the first three stanzas (3)

2.2 What is your response to this personification? (2)

3.1 How would you describe the tone of the poem? Quote from it to support your answer. (3)

3.2 Do you feel the same way as the poet? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

4. ‘we shall celebrate’ According to the poem, who will be celebrating and what will they be celebrating? (2 + 2)

(20 marks)

**2.4 Preparing to answer questions on poems in an examination.**

While many questions on poems will be specific to a particular poem, there are also ‘question types’ that are often asked about many poems. To prepare for answering such questions, make sure that you can identify the following in the poems you have studied:

* the type of poem (e.g. sonnet, praise poem)
* the rhyme scheme if there is one (e.g. abab or aabb)
* the structure of the poem (e.g. stanzas / lines of equal length; stanzas / lines of unequal length)
* the punctuation used
* the figures of speech used (e.g. metaphors, similes, personification)
* the sound devices used (e.g. alliteration; onomatopoeia)
* any examples of repetition
* the main theme(s) of the poem

Also, make sure that you understand what the questions require you to do when writing your answer. Here are some examples:

* Identify the figure of speech used in line …
* Identify and explain the figure of speech used in line … (notice that this is a two part question)
* Explain the meaning of line(s) …
* Comment on the effectiveness of the figure of speech used in lines… (This question requires you to give your opinion on the effectiveness of the figure of speech in the context of the poem. Of course, to do this, you first need to identify the figure of speech.)
* What is the tone of lines …?
* Why do you think the poet has used this tone?
* Do you agree with the ideas expressed in lines …? Give a reason for your answer.
* How do lines … make you feel? Give a reason for your answer.
* What message do you think the poet wishes to express to readers?
* What is your response to the title of the poem? Give a reason for your response.

**Reflection on Unit 2**

In their introduction to a collection of poems Bavasah et al write the following:

Have you ever felt frightened? Or a passionate sense that things are unjust? Or maybe you have felt love, and then the deep pain of betrayal. These experiences make us human, and they are the kind of experiences that drive people to write poetry. Poets want to share their felling of celebration, of humiliation, of loneliness and they use their words carefully so that when we read their poems we can feel in our bones what they are feeling too. (Bavasah et al, 2008: vii)

Now that you have studied ten poems, are your feelings about poetry the same as when you began this unit or have they changed? Do you have a favourite poem? If so, why is this your favourite?

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| --- | --- |
| **UNIT 3** | Reading and responding to short stories |

**Introduction**

This unit begins with a short section on characteristic features of short stories (i.e. features common to many short stories). This section is followed by the full text of each of six short stories. After each story there are contextual questions to answer and in the middle of the unit there is information on how to write a literature essay. At the end of the unit there are some literature essay topics, based on one or more of the six short stories, for you to write about in preparation for the NASCA examination.

**Learning outcomes**

When you have completed this unit you should be able to:

* explain characteristic features of short stories;
* discuss the role of theme(s), characterisation, plot and language use in a short story;
* analyse and respond to six short stories;
* answer contextual questions on six short stories;
* write a literature essay on a short story or short stories.

**3.1 Characteristic features of short stories**

According to Rule (1996), it is very difficult to write a definition of a short story besides saying that it is short and that it is a story, He points out that ‘there is not much agreement among literary critics and writers about exactly how “short” it should be or exactly how it should tell a story’

(1996: 90).

Short stories can be told in many different ways ‘so that one of the key features of the genre is its plasticity or flexibility’ (Rule, 1996:90). Rule is suggesting that writers of short stories can ‘bend’ or ‘change’ the ways in which they choose to write. However, there are certain features that short stories tend to have in common, even if some writers ignore these or use them in unusual ways in order to create particular effects.

**Firstly**, because the story is ‘short’, the author has to get to the point quickly. As Rule explains, short stories tend to have a narrow focus on a particular episode. He gives the following example of a very short story:

The divorced man decided to hang himself with his belt from the chandelier. However, both the

light fitting and his trousers fell down, and he woke up later wondering where he was.

This very short story has all the key features of the genre: a character, a single episode (the hanging), conflict (the divorced man struggling against himself and perhaps, indirectly, his ex-wife), and a resolution or climax (the failure of the suicide).

**Secondly,** because there is not enough space to develop a number of ‘rounded’ or fully developed characters, readers are likely to learn much less about characters in a short story than in a novel. The short story writer often concentrates on the particular information about a character that is important for the story. In general, characterisation (detailed descriptions of characters) tends to be less important than plot (the actions or events that unfold). In the very short story above, all a reader knows about the man is that he is divorced, desperate and unsuccessful.

**Thirdly**, the author has to attract the attention of the reader from the beginning and so a short story often develops around a single theme. In an introduction to a collection of short stories Nadine Gordimer wrote, ‘a short story is a concept a writer can ‘hold’ fully realised, in his (sic) imagination at one time’ (quoted in Malan, 1994: xi). By contrast, a writer will probably include several themes in a novel in which there are likely to be many characters, settings and events.

**Fourthly,** there is often a surprise ending or an unexpected twist at the end of a short story. Short stories usually end soon after the climax, sometimes leaving a great deal to the reader’s imagination.

**Finally**, telling a story always involves making choices, including choices about language. The story about the failed suicide would not have worked in the same way if it had been told in the first person or in the present tense.

**Activity X : Write a short story using 50 words or less**

Write a short story, using 50 words or less, that includes one or more characters, a single episode, conflict and a resolution. If possible, exchange your story with a fellow student. Discuss what each of you could add to these approximately 50 words to make readers interested in a longer story. If you don’t have a study partner, decide for yourself what to add to the story to make its character(s), setting(s), event(s) and resolution or climax more interesting

In a speech in which he accepted an award for his writing, Njabulo Ndebele spoke of the technical aspects of writing short stories:

The world of fiction demands that the writer grapple with some of the following problems which

are basic to his (sic) art: setting, conflict, credible characterisation, consistent narrative point of

view, the complexities of fictional language and time. (quoted in Malan, 1994: xi)

In introducing some observations on the characteristics of short stories, Davis, Dixon and Kerr (2009) quote Hemingway’s comment that short stories ‘often reveal the tip of an iceberg. The rest of the iceberg is suggested’ (2009: 183), meaning that readers are invited to use their own experiences and their imagination when responding to short stories.

**Think about each of the ideas introduced in this section as you read six short stories and respond to activities based on them.** The stories are the following:

*The Old Woman* by Bessie Head

*Waiting for the Lotto* by Liesl Jobson

*Flight* by Sindiwe Magona

*Tuesday morning in the city* by Danapalan Pillay

*Another evening at the club* by Alifa Rifaat

*A blow, a kiss* by Tim Winton

**3.2 *The Old Woman* by Bessie Head**

Artwork: photograph of Bessie Head and of Serowe village

**Background information about the author**

Bessie Head was born in Pietermaritzburg in 1937, the child of a white mother and a black father. She knew neither of her parents. She had a very difficult childhood in orphanages and foster homes. She was trained as a teacher and worked for a time as a journalist. After an unhappy marriage in Cape Town, she left South Africa with her small son Howard and went to live as an exile in Botswana, first as a refugee in Francistown and then settling down in the large village of Serowe. She died of hepatitis in 1986. In her life time she published five books, including a book of short stories. Since her death, a novel and four books of short stories, autobiographical pieces and letters have been published. She is regarded as one of Africa’s finest writers, with two of her best known books being *Maru* and *Where the rain clouds gather*. (Information source: Robin Malan (1995) *New Beginnings*)

**Pre-reading activity:** Think about elderly women whom you know. Are they alike in any ways? If so, in what ways are they similar?

**While reading activity: If you are uncertain of the meaning of the words in bold type, look them up in the word list underneath the story to help you to understand the story**

***The Old Woman***

She was so **frail** that her whole body **swayed** this way and that like a thin stalk of corn in the wind. Her arms were as flat as boards. The flesh hung loosely, and her hands which clutched the walking stick were turned outwards and knobbled with age. Under her long dress also swayed the tattered edges of several petticoats. The ends of two bony stick-legs peeped out. She had on a pair of **sand-shoes**. The toes were all sticking out, so that the feet flapped about in them. She wore each shoe on the wrong foot, so that it made the heart turn over with amusement.

Yet she seemed so strong that it was a shock when she suddenly bent double, **retched** and coughed emptily, and crumbled to the ground like a quiet sigh.

‘What is it, mmm? What is the matter?’ I asked.

‘Water, water,’ she said faintly.

‘Wait a minute. I shall ask at this hut here if there is any water.’

‘What is the matter?’ they asked.

‘The old lady is ill,’ I said.

‘No,’ she said **curtly**. ‘I am not ill. I am hungry.’

The crowd laughed in embarrassment that she should display her need so **nakedly**. They turned away; but old ladies have no more shame left. They are like children. They give way to weakness and cry openly when they are hungry.

‘Never mind,’ I said. ‘Hunger is a terrible thing. My hut is not far away. This small child will take you. Wait till I come back, then I shall prepare food for you.’

Then, it was late afternoon. The old lady had long passed from my mind when a strange young woman, unknown to me, walked into the yard with a **pail** of water on her head. She set it down outside the door and squatted low.

‘Good day. How are you?’ I said.

She returned the greeting, keeping her face empty and carefully **averted**. It is impossible to say: What do you want? Whom are you looking for? It is impossible to say this to a carefully averted face and a body that squats quietly, patiently. I looked at the sky, helplessly. I looked at the trees. I looked at the ground, but the young woman said nothing. I did not know her inside or out. Many people I do not know who know me, inside and out, and always it is this way, this silence.

A curious neighbour looked over the **hedge.**

‘What’s the matter?’ she asked.

I turned my eyes to the sky again, **shrugging** helplessly.

‘Please ask the young woman what she wants, whom she is looking for.’

The young woman turned her face to the neighbour, still keeping it averted and said quietly:

‘No, tell her she helped our relative who collapsed this morning. Tell her the relatives discussed the matter. Tell her we had nothing to give in return, only that one relative said she passes by every day on her way to the water tap. Then we decided to give a pail of water. It is all we have.’

Tell them too. Tell them how natural, sensible, normal is human kindness. Tell them, those who judge my country, Africa, by gain and greed, that the gods walk about her barefoot with no **ermine** and gold-studded cloaks.

**Word list**

**frail** thin and weak

**swayed** moved slowly from one side to the other

**sand shoes** takkies; tennis shoes made of canvas

**retched** almost vomited; made a vomiting noise

curtly using very few words to speak in a way that may be considered rude

**nakedly** openly (i.e. without covering up or hiding her need)

**pail** bucket

**averted**  looked / turned away

**hedge**  a row of plants that separates two gardens of fields

**shrugging** raising and lowering one’s shoulders

**ermine** an expensive white fur

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *The Old Woman***

1.1 Describe the image that you have of the old woman after reading the first paragraph of the story. (2)

1.2. Quote two examples of **similes** that the writer used to help to convey this image. (2)

2.1 Explain why the crowd that gathers when the old lady falls to the ground is embarrassed by what she says. (2)

2.2 If this incident had happened today do you think such a crowd would feel similar embarrassment or not? Give a reason for your response. (2)

3.1 Notice that the writer does not give readers any details about the meal she cooked for the old woman or how the old woman responded, as this information is not central to the climax of the story.

The young woman who brought the pail (bucket) of water kept her face averted (turned away) from the narrator of the story. Suggest why she did not show her face to the narrator (2).

3.2 Quote from the story to explain how the reader knows that the narrator of the story is an ‘outsider’ to the village community. 2)

4. At the **climax** of the story, what makes the gift of a pail (bucket) of water precious to the narrator? (2)

5. As a comment on the climax, the narrator says that human kindness is ‘natural, sensible and normal’? Do you agree or disagree with this description of kindness? OR Do you both agree and disagree Give two reasons for your response. (4)

6. It is not clear to whom the narrator is referring when she says ‘Tell them’ but presumably ‘them’ includes people who are critical of those in African countries who are greedy and /or corrupt. What do you think she means by the words ‘ the gods walk about her (i.e. Africa) barefoot with no ermine and gold-studded cloaks’? (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**3. 3 *Waiting for the Lotto* by Liesl Jobson**

Artwork: To do with the Lotto

**Background information about the author**

Liesl Jobson was born in Durban. She has university degrees in Music and Creative Writing. Her poetry and prose have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies in South Africa and internationally. She won the People Opposing Woman Abuse (POWA) Writing Poetry Competition in 2005 and was awarded a Community Publishing Project grant from the Centre for the Book in 2007. The collection of writing that includes *Waiting for the Lotto* won the Ernst van Heerden Creative Writing Award from the University of the Witwatersrand in 2006. Currently, Liesl is a freelance writer, editor of a poetry magazine, photographer and bassoon player.

***Waiting for the Lotto***

**Pre-reading activity: From the title, predict what the story will be about**

**While reading activity: Find out whether your prediction was correct, partly correct or incorrect. Also use the word list to check the meaning of any of the words in bold type that are unfamiliar to you.**

***Waiting for the Lotto***

Every Wednesday, the lotto **jingle** plays each hour on every radio station: “Tata ma chance, tata ma millions…”

Suzette Coetzer turns the radio down as her first class arrives. She bought a lotto ticket at the Athlone Quickshop when she filled up at the garage. It is hard to tell which will happen first – winning the lotto or the Good Hope Remedial Centre getting the promised payout. Both **eventualities** seem equally unlikely.

The class **jostles** in line outside the studio. Nyiko’s crutch accidentally trips Mpumi. He scrapes his knee on the ground. Suzette **dons** rubber gloves to wipe the wound clean. It is the last pair in the box. There is no money left in petty cash for more.

“Thula, buti,” she **croons**, opening the antiseptic and **dousing** a ball of cotton wool. She wipes gently around the cut. It’s possible, but unlikely that he has AIDS. He doesn’t have the **pronounced pinched face.**

The rest of the class are taking their places and start to fiddle with the tools on their desks. “No touching yet. You have to wait a moment. I’ll be right with you.”

Looking up from the gravel that is stuck in Mpumi’s graze, she sees Nyiko dig his nails into the lump in front of him. “leave it alone, Nyiko,” she warns. As soon as her head is bowed again, Nyiko pinches off a piece and slips it into his mouth.

With a plaster on his knee, Mpumi hobbles to his desk with an exaggerated limp. The class has started late. Today they will make Mother’s Day presents. Miss Coetzer instructs them to roll out their lumps evenly.

Suzette notices Nyiko **drooling** clay gravy as he rolls out his lump. His movements are slow, precise. He hasn’t been assessed because the centre can no longer afford an **occupational therapist**. His **fine motor co-ordination** was probably **compromised** by a birth injury. Or a blow (or blows) to his head. She wipes his face with a towel, He wrinkles his nose, complains.

At the next table, the rolling pin thunks over the edge of Sipho’s clay pat. On the radio the Soweto String Quartet play *Zebra Crossing,* one of the station’s standards. She likes the children to hear classical music. It calms them, but today the children wriggle and fidget more than usual. Sarah bumps the table. Nyiko grumbles. Suzette tells them to quit it.

“He started, “ says Sarah

“Enough now. Have you cut your bird out yet, Sarah?”

Sarah holds the cut-out up for her teacher’s inspection. It is too thin. The shape stretches and the girl flings it down on the board. “Don’t fret, Sarah. Just start again,” she says, rolling the clay back into a ball and handing it to Sarah.

“Is that smooth enough yet?’ Miss Coetzer asks Sipho who adjusts his heavy spectacles. He squats with his chin resting on the desk, the clay level with his eyes and pats it. “Yes, Miss.”

“Good, “ says Miss Coetzer as she hands him a **cookie cutter** in the shape of a bird..

She wipes away the crumbs of clay sticking to his moist chin. He presses the shape out of the cookie cutter and lifts the surrounding clay away from it.

“Inyoni!:” he squeals with enthusiasm.

“What is the English word for ‘inyoni’, Sipho?” the teacher asks.

‘Bird?’

‘Right ,” Miss Coetzer smiles. This is a **breakthrough.**

Sipho flaps around the class with **lumbering** wings, send Mpumi’s rolling pin spinning which knocks Nyiko’s pinch pot to the ground. Ten months ago she applied for funding from **Uthingo**. There is still no **confirmation.** She has made endless calls to disinterested clerks.

“Mampara! Clumsy fool!” shouts Mpumi, kicking Sipho with his good leg. Sipho retreats, **cowering** under the corner table. His teacher crawls in beside him, wraps her arms around the **keening** boy. The grant the centre receives from the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund barely covers the running costs. Very few parents can afford the fees.

“Settle, boykie, settle down.” Sipho’s heart hammers like a trapped bird under his rib cage. She holds him and watches Nyiko putting clay in his mouth again. Last week’s headlines announced the disappearance of Lotto millions. In the careers section there were posts advertised for **remedial teachers** in the United Arab Emirates.

“Nyiko! Don’t do that.” She thinks of the newspaper headlines, **railing** at the loss of South African teachers to British schools.

“Clay is not for eating. Spit it out.” Nyiko swallows, grinning. He will get worms, she thinks. Then: he probably already has them.

In the boot of her car is her change of clothes. She wants to look suitably **chic** for the job interview this afternoon. Underneath the table she does not feel **sophisticated** holding a frightened boy, rocking in her arms. If only she could shower, could rinse away the smell of sadness.

The health inspector will close the centre if an assistant is not appointed by next term. Sipho quietens, then crawls from the nest of her arms. She climbs out from under the table, feeling stiff. She brushes the clay dust from her knees and goes to inspect the other children’s birds.

“Good work, Mpumi … Make a hole for the hanging thread now, Nyiko … Nice feather decoration Sarah. You’ve tried hard.”

Just before the class ends, the radio jingle plays again. “Tata ma chance …”

Suzette Coetzer stares at the **glossy** leaflet she received from the educational recruitment agency. In the foreground is a palm tree. A child joins the voice on the radio, chanting, “Your license to dream.

Behind the palm tree is a **minaret**.

(pp. ,in Jobson, 2007)

**Word list**

**jingle** short song used in a radio or television advertisement

**eventualities** things that might happen

**jostles** pushes against others

**dons** puts on

**croons** sings softly and lovingly

**dousing**  pouring liquid over something (in this case pouring

antiseptic liquid onto cotton wool

**pronounced pinched face**  very noticeably thin and unhealthy looking face

**drooling** letting liquid in your mouth run out onto your face

**occupational therapist** a person trained to assist children and adults to

improve the ways in which they use their hands when

these have been damaged

**fine motor co-ordination** ability to control small muscles(e.g. in the hands) to

make movements such as picking up a pencil

**compromised** affected negatively (badly)

**cookie cutter** metal or plastic sharp cutting object for placing over

dough or clay to cut out shapes for biscuits (cookies)

**breakthrough** an important new development

**lumbering** heavy and slow movement

**Uthingo** the name of the company running the lottery at the

time at which the story was written

**cowering** bending the body low when frightened

**keening**  usual meaning is singing sadly for someone who has

died; in the story, sad noises made by the frightened

boy

**remedial teachers** teachers who help learners who are ‘differently abled’

or who have special needs**;** no longer considered an

appropriate term so such teachers tend to be called

‘inclusive educators’ or educators of learners with

special needs

**railing** complaining in an angry way

**chic** fashionable or stylish

**sophisticated**  knowledgeable, ‘cultured’

**glossy** shiny (printed on good quality paper)

**minaret**  a spire on a mosque (place of worship for Muslims)

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Waiting for the Lotto***

1. The **setting i**s particularly important to this story but it is not described at the beginning. The reader has to work it out from several clues that are given throughout the story. Describe the setting, using clues from the story. (4)

2. 1 Complete this sentence: The main problem faced by the Good Hope Remedial Centre is …. (1)

2.2 The author uses a radio jingle at the beginning and near the end of the story to **frame or structure the story**. Explain the importance of this jingle to the story. (2)

3.1 There is **one main character** in this story. Write two words that you would use to describe her. (2)

3.2 Give a reason for your choice of words. (2)

4. How do the descriptions of the children make you feel about them? Give a reason for your answer. (3)

5. ‘Last week’s headlines announced the disappearance of Lotto millions. In the careers section there were posts advertised for remedial teachers in the United Arab Emirates.’ What clues do these two sentences give readers about what Suzette Coetzer may do in the future. (4)

6. This story is an example of a **‘tip of the iceberg’ story**. What do the final two paragraphs suggest Suzette Coetzer will do? (2)

(total: 20)

**Activity X Based on what you have learned from reading it, write two contrasting continuations of the story *Waiting for the Lotto.***

**3.4 *Flight* by Sindiwe Magona**

**Background information about the author**

Sindiwe Magona was born in the Transkei, grew up in Cape Town and did domestic work there while completing her secondary education by correspondence. She completed her first degree through UNISA and then a Masters degree at Columbia University in New York. In 1993 she was awarded an honorary doctorate from Hartwick College in the USA. Sindiwe Magona worked in various capacities for the United Nations until her retirement in 2003. In 2007 she was awarded the Grinzane Award for writing that addresses social concerns, the Molteno Gold Medal for promoting Xhosa culture and language and a Lifetime Achievement Award for her contribution to South African literature. In 2011 she was awarded the Order of Ikhamanga by the president of South Africa and in 2012 she was joint winner with Nadine Gordimer of the Imbokodo Award. Her first published work was *To My Children’s Children* (1990) and her most recent *The Woman on the Moon* (2014).

**Pre-reading activity: Can you remember an event from your early childhood that upset the adults in your community? If so, what happened? How did you feel about what happened?**

**While reading activity: There is a great deal of descriptive writing in this story. Think about what the author is describing and how you respond to her descriptions.**

***Flight***

Cries of *Khawulele! ‘Wenk’umuntu!’* shattered the stillness of the saucer-like village nestling in the valley, surrounded by green hills and scrub-dotted mountains.

Echoes bounced from hilltops, clashed mid-air, **ricocheted** and fell in jumbled noises that boomed, invading our ears and jamming out all other sounds.

*weh weh weh khauu khauu khauu*

*leh leh leh leh tuu tuu tuu!*

Like a powerful magnet the commotion pulled us away from the rag dolls that had so occupied us but a moment before.

*iii-ii-iiiiiWuu-uuuuu!*

*Mmbaaa – mbeeehh-ni!*

*Qhaaa-wuu-leee-laani!*

An old man: short, tight-curled springs of wool on his head making a greyish-white skull cap **tottered** pastin what I saw was his earnest attempt at running. His left hand clasped the blanket loosely wrapped around his body; his right arm, from the shoulder, was stuck out as if from a **toga**.Thin, long and bony, it swung back and front in time to his intended **accelerated** step. Held high in the hand, a knobkerrie jutted out and away from his body. Each time he shouted – ‘*Mbambeni!-* Catch her!’ he stretched out the arm holding the knobkerrie, pointing the stick towards the mountain.

My eyes leapt to where he pointed. The mountain was playing a game of hide and seek with the sun. Or was it with the clouds? Anyway, half the mountain had disappeared. I threw my eyes towards the remaining half. There, distance-shrunk figures scurried, hurried, ran, and scrambled.

Ahead, a lone figure darted like a hare with a pack of dogs hard on its tail. The clouds were no **idle** players, I saw. They were the third party to this game; they would make the **telling** difference.

Clearly, that day, I witnessed the birth of tears. The clouds wept and showered soft tears of mist onto the silent mountain. Would the fleeing figure gain the mist blanket in time? The sun smiled and the mist disappeared in a spray of long, hot, yellow needles, the children of the sun.

There she was, clearly, I saw her. Surely her **pursuers** too could see her? – see her as I did?

My insides churned. A hot ball of fear curled inside my stomach. But the clouds, not to be outdone, wept. Thick, fat, dark-grey spears fell. Fast and hard they came. Thick, fat; safe for her to be **enveloped** in and lost to her **pursuers.**

‘*Uye phi? Uye phi*? Where’s she gone?’

Sounds of distress from those who were bent on her capture reached me. I held my breath as I strained with her, willing her to **elude** them, **urging** her on and on and on.

My last glimpse of her: blue German-print dress paled to a soft sky-blue by distance and lack of light … there she was, flitting here and there between boulders, her long new-wife-length dress making her seem without feet. As she hurried escaping, she appeared to me to be riding the air – no part of her body making contact with the ground.

Away she floated; the men **plodded** behind her.

I saw her **waft** into the wall of mist. I saw it close the crack she’d almost made gliding into it. Like a fish slicing into water, she’d but disturbed it. And it rearranged itself, accepting her into itself. And away from those who **harried** her.

I cannot remember her face at all. It was a long time ago and perhaps she had not **tarried** long with us. I don’t know. But I remember her leaving. And that is because it taught me about determination, the power of one’s will.

She was a young woman, a new wife. Her husband, my uncle, was away at work in one of the mines where all the men of the village went for a very long time. Later, much later, with great learning to aid me order my world, I would come to know the precise length of their stay – eleven months each year. However, this knowledge was **light years** away from me that fear-filled day long, long ago.

It must have been midday for the sun was well up and we children were already outside at play; that is, those of us too little to go to the one mud-walled, grass-thatched house called school.

I know I should’ve been sad at losing an aunt. I know she was a good *makoti,* cooked and cleaned well, and we children were saved from a lot of chores by her coming – new wives are worked like donkeys as **initiation** into their new **status.** I know I should have sympathized with my uncle who lost not only a wife but also the cattle, the lobola, he had given for her.

All I know, is the **thrill** I felt watching her escape into the thick grey cloud and mist.

**Word list**

**tottered** walked unsteadily

**toga** loose flowing garment worn by men in ancient Rome

**accelerated** speeded up

**idle** lazy

**telling** significan**t**

**pursuers** people chasing after someone or something

**enveloped** covered

**elude** avoid being caught

urging encouraging strongly

**plodded** walked slowly and with difficulty

**waft** float gently

**harried** attacked

**tarried** stayed

**light years**  a very long time in the future

**initiation** introduction

**status**position in a family or organisation

**thrill**  strong feeling of excitement and pleasure

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Flight***

1.The narrator begins her story with a description of its setting. In your own words, describe where the village is situated. (2)

2. Quote words from near the beginning of the story that show that the narrator is a young child at the time of the events in the story. (1)

3. From the child’s description of the old man, would he be likely to catch the ‘lone figure’ on the mountain? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

4.1 Quote the simile that the narrator uses to describe the chasing of the young women by a group of villagers. (1)

4.2 By using this simile, who does the narrator suggest will ‘win’? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

5.1 Name the figure of speech used in the description ‘the clouds wept’. (1)

5.2 Explain why the weeping clouds are important in the story. (2)

6. Through the child narrator the author suggests at least two reasons why the young woman would have wanted to escape. In your own words, give these reasons. (4)

7.1 Explain why the child should have been sad that the young wife succeeded in escaping. (1)

7.2 Suggest why, instead of being sad, she ‘felt a thrill watching her escape’. (2)

8. The young woman who escapes is described as ‘a new wife’ and as a ‘makoti’ but readers do not learn her name. Suggest why the author did not give her a name. (2)

(20 marks)

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**3.5 Comparing and contrasting *The Old Woman*, *Waiting for the Lotto* and *Flight***

Below is an example of a literature essay in response to this topic:

Compare and contrast the characters, settings, themes and endings in *The Old Woman*, *Waiting for the Lotto* and *Flight.*

While women are the central **characters** in all three stories, the **settings in time and place are very different**: *The Old Woman* is set in a village in Botswana perhaps fifty years ago; *Flight* is also set in a rural village, but in South Africa during the apartheid era; *Waiting for the Lotto* is set in Cape Town in the early 2000s when the lottery (Lotto) slogan was ‘tata ma chance’ and the lottery was run by Uthingo. In the first story there is a sense of people’s lives going on in ways that are likely to change very little. In the second, the young makoti who is the central character makes change happen in ways that will not be acceptable to most people in her community, though they are to the child narrator. In the third, change is an ever-present, if somewhat remote, possibility.

It could be argued that in very different ways each story is concerned with kindness / unkindness; patience / impatience**,** i.e. that this is a common **theme.** In *The Old Woman* the narrator shows kindness and generosity while the crowd laughs and turns away in embarrassment; the old woman’s family show kindness and generosity in their gift of a pail of water (significant in a community in which water has to be carried some distance from a communal tap). In *Flight* the tremendous burdens placed on the young makoti are unkind and while she tries to accept them patiently, it seems that eventually she runs out of patience and decides to escape, a decision that the narrator agrees with. In *Waiting for the Lotto*, despite her stress and her feelings of being ‘burnt out’, Suzette Coetzer show great concern for the children. She deals with their needs gently and encourages them to complete their activities. While she does show some impatience, most of the time she is very patient in responding to the challenges that the children face.

Where the stories differ most is in their **endings**. The narrator of *The Old Woman* concludes with her views on the people and continent of Africa: she makes a definite statement with which readers can agree or disagree (or both agree and disagree). The narrator of *Flight* reflects on what she should have felt and what she actually felt, leaving it up to readers to think about their own responses to the young woman’s flight. *Waiting for the Lotto* ends inconclusively: Suzette Coetzer may or may not be offered a teaching position in the United Arab Emirates and if she does receive such an offer, she may or may not accept it. It is also possible that funds for the continued running of the centre for children with special needs will be allocated by the lottery administrators. The reader is left to imagine the consequences of various possibilities.

**Notes on this essay**

1. It is a little longer than you are expected to write for examination purposes.

2. Most exam questions would ask for comparisons and / or contrasts between two rather than three texts. This would make it easier to ‘fit’ your essay into 300 words.

3. It does not really have an introductory paragraph or a concluding paragraph. Its structure is to take one of the four features that have to be compared and contrasted and to write about this in a particular paragraph (character and setting are both written about in paragraph one.)

4. While there are no direct quotations from the stories, it is clear that the writer knows each story well. At the end of Units 2, 3 and 4 there are general revision questions to ask yourself about the poems, short stories and extracts from autobiographies. If you can answer these, then you have the foundational knowledge that you need to write a literature essay or to answer contextual questions.

**3. 6: Further information on writing a literature essay**

**Guidelines for writing a literature essay**

Read these guidelines carefully and practise using them throughout the year. In the examination, you need to be able to plan and write a 250-300 word literature essay in 45 minutes.

1. Read the question carefully and make sure that you understand what you are expected to do. For example, if the question says ‘explain’, you should explain, not reflect, argue or describe. Words such as explain, compare, contrast, etc. are called **task words** and they tell you what type of essay the examiners expect.

2**. Keep the topic in focus**. For example, if the question focuses on two main characters and you answer about other characters and only mention the two main characters in passing, you are not answering the question. You should focus on the characters indicated in the question and not shift to a discussion of someone not asked about.

3. Always remember to write down the correct number for the question you have chosen to answer. If the marker/examiner is not sure which question you have answered, you are likely to receive a low mark.

**The structure of a literature essay**

**Introduction**

In a brief introductory paragraph, try to arouse the interest of the reader (essay marker) in what you are going to write about.

Introduce your response to the question by outlining the structure of your essay (e.g. what you will argue; how you will go about a comparison, etc.)

**Structure of the essay**

Each paragraph should contain a central idea, backed up by evidence to support it.

The paragraphs should be in a logical order or sequence and you should use logical connectives to create links between the last line of the previous paragraph and the first line of the next paragraph. Paragraphs that are linked logically tend to be easy to read.

**Examples of logical connectives to use in a literature essay**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Logical connectives** |
| ordering ideas | firstly, secondly, next, finally, in conclusion |
| addition | furthermore, moreover, in addition |
| similarity | similarly, in the same way |
| contrast | however, although, though, nevertheless, on the one hand … on the other hand |
| cause / effect | because, therefore, as a result, consequently |
| conditions | If, unless, provided that |
| sequence (in time) | next, soon, after, then, later, suddenly, afterwards |

**Evidence to support your answer**

Every view or opinion you express, or point that you make, must be substantiated with evidence from the text. You need to support and justify why you hold a certain view. It’s fine to have a different/radical/unusual response to a question, but you must motivate your reason for having that response.

If you cannot remember the direct quotation to support your point, refer the reader to the scene or incident in the story, for example: *When the old woman’s relative arrived at the narrator’s house, she would not speak directly to the narrator.*

It is not acceptable to use an incorrect quotation to support a point as it suggests that you do not fully understand the text.

**Conclusion**

The conclusion, like the introduction, should be brief and should relate to the question you have been answering throughout the essay.

**Style**

**T**he literature essay should be written in a formal manner. Avoid the use of colloquialisms, slang, vulgar words or abbreviations. Also avoid repeating the same point.

**3.7 *Tuesday morning in the city* by Danapalan Pillay**

**Background information about the author**

Danapalan (Dan) Pillay was born in 1965 and grew up in Chatsworth in Durban which he once described as ‘the Indian Soweto’. He obtained his high school education in Swaziland at Waterford Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa. He then studied English literature at the University of Natal (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal) and was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study at two famous American universities (Yale and Duke). In 2002, Duke University published a book based on his studies titled *Re-reading Apartheid: Governmentality, Identity, Ethics.*

The story you are about to read is set in Durban during the apartheid era when friendships among people of different ‘racial’ groups were discouraged and sexual relationships between ‘White’ and ‘Black’ were against the law according to an act of parliament termed ‘the Immorality Act.’

**Pre-reading activity**: From the title, predict what the story will be about

**While reading activity:** Notice the writer’s unusual style. The narrator often uses single words or phrases rather than full sentences in telling the story.Think about your response to this style.

***Tuesday morning in the city***

I’m becoming used to it at last. Curious glances and inquisitive eyes do not penetrate as deeply as before. And she still walks on unknowingly. Blue-eyed, golden-haired **WASP**, so *very* white.

A little smile as we cross the street, uncertainty and unfamiliarity **masking** any of her other emotions. Fat woman pushing pram stops and stares at the spectacle. I grin happily at her – strange **masochism**. It’s getting dangerous now – dangerous because I’m beginning to enjoy it. Warm sunlight highlighting blonde hair down Smith Street. Turn left and into West. Stops to look at ridiculously expensive **Parisian finery** in store window.

‘Ridiculously expensive,’ she murmurs.

She goes into the store. I wait. Down West Street again. White shoppers on white bench waiting for white bus. White glances – black grin.

Police van … sudden disappearance of black grin. Walk past it separately? No. Sunlight on number plate. SAP123456. Sunlight on gold SAP lettering six feet off the ground. Warm smile from blue eyes, weak grin from me. Almost past. Screaming heartbeat gradually reduced to monotony. Breathing rate slowing. I swallow dryness from my throat.

‘Stop.’

Cadbury wrapper in corner of crack on pavement. Blue eyes look back enquiringly. Mine don’t.

‘Come here.’

Two White, one Black. Six feet times three equals eighteen feet. Five feet six times one equals five feet six. Remain aloof. Pretend to be foreign? No.

Boycotting school, **molesting** a white woman, **immorality** … Waterford United World College, Swaziland. Equal rights, no consideration of colour or creed. ANC training? No. Walking, not molesting. Friend, not victim. Conversation, not **copulation.**

‘Lies.’

Boycotting school, molesting women, immorality … into the van for a search.

‘You can’t do that … you can’t … hasn’t done anything …’

Indignant protests. Ignore them. Forget it, blue eyes, this is Oom Piet, not good ol’ Uncle Sam. Hands, still calm and steady on the white doors, bring me into the dark interior. Corrugated metal floor. Five feet six standing uncomfortably. Six feet two doubled over. Questions. Stay calm.

Friend. American. Not boycotting school, on holiday. Turn out pockets. Remain **aloof.** Calm, reassuring voice murmurs answers from constricted throat in English accent, recently developed. Afraid I left my Molotov Cocktail at home today, Sergeant.

Sprawled on floor. Pain … blood … a taste of salt … split lip. **Ornate** ring on third finger of his right hand. A slap then, not a fist …, even more **humiliating**. Tear forming in left corner of eye. Self-pity welling up in left corner of heart. Both brushed aside impatiently, ashamedly. Thank God he was so awkwardly placed. Count your blessings. Pick yourself up. Sorry I was cheeky baas. Combination of fury and humiliation, and fear building up. **Suppress** it. Infamous weak grin exposing gashed – no, torn lip, and bloodstained teeth. Red blood on white Renaissance shirt, R 12,99. Must be my Communist inclinations. SABC NEWS:

‘A total onslaught was mounted today on Pillay’s Communist inclinations. Some of his Red **fervour** was lost.’

Commercial break.

‘New two-fisted PUNCH will make your white shirt with bloodstains absolutely, totally PURE WHITE. We cannot guarantee that for your skin, however.’

Thank you Esme.

‘Reference book, I.D.!’

Don’t carry one. Brown Black, not Black Black. Black boots glower at me. Corrugated metal floor presses into soles of trainers.

‘Out.’

Over and out. Make for door, dripping blood on corrugated floor.

‘Stop,’

Freeze.

‘Wipe up your blood.’

On hands and knees, white handkerchief moistened with pink saliva swabbing corrugated metal floor. I look up at last.

Contemptuous eyes.

‘Out.’

Out … over?

Glowering black boot on left corner of buttocks aids exit. Ultimate indignity. Sprawling on hard, blue-grey tar. Smells warm. Tastes warm. Sunlight glints **maliciously** off store windows.

Pick yourself up.

Sorry baas, thank you baas.

Gold hair, white face – blue eyes wide with … contempt? No. shock. Sunlight glints maliciously off curious glances and inquisitive stares. Amused eyes, excited eyes, sympathetic eyes, frightened eyes, **sardonic** eyes … white youth, black leather jacket, about my age. **Derision**. You asked for it , pal. You got it.

Nice chick though.

Casually I take out my handkerchief. Use the side without snot or tears or blood to wipe face, rub **ineffectually** at shirt. Shock unfreezing in her eyes. Replaced by … **contempt**?

No, concern.

‘You alright?’

Sure.

(pp. 104-109, in Malan, 1995a)

**Word list**

**WASP** An acronym to describe a category of people: White Anglo-Saxon Protestant

**masking** hiding

**masochism** getting pleasure from being hurt

**Parisian finery** fine clothes made in Paris

**molesting** attacking or harming someone, especially in a sexual way

**immorality**  morally wrong behaviour

**copulation** sexual relations

**Uncle Sam** a figure symbolizing the American government

**ornate** highly decorated

**humiliating** shaming, embarrassing

**suppress** stop feelings from showing

**fervour** very strong belief or feeling

**maliciously**  intending to hurt

**sardonic**  showing lack of respect

**derision**  something silly or unimportant

**ineffectually** not achieving the correct effect

**contempt**  feeling that someone or something does not deserve respect

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Tuesday morning in***

***the city***

1. According to the narrator, people in a Durban street are looking curiously at him and at the young WASP woman. Explain why these people would be doing this. (2)

2. ‘White shoppers on white bench waiting for white bus. White glances – black grin.’

2.1 What point is the author making through the repetition of ‘white’ by the narrator ? (2)

2.2 Suggest why the narrator is grinning. (2)

2.3 In the next paragraph what happens to the narrator’s grin and why? (2)

3. The narrator has to decide how to respond to the request to ‘Stop’ and to ‘Come here’. In your own words sum up what he thinks he might do and then what he decides to do (2 + 2)

4. 1The narrator tries to make fun of what happens to him. Quote some words from the story that indicate this. (2)

4.2 Use information from the story to explain how he really feels. (2)

5. Describe how the narrator expects the young WASP woman to feel and how she does feel. (2)

6. The narrator tells the story in incomplete sentences. Comment on the effect of the author’s style on you as a reader of this story. (2)

(total: 20)

**3.8 *Another Evening at the Club* by Alifa Rifaat (translated by Denys Johnson-Davies)**

**Background information about the author** (from Oliphant, A. 2009: 173)

Alifa Rifaat was born in Egypt in 1930. As young woman, she hoped to go to university, but her parents were against this. They planned am arranged marriage for her, instead. She accepted these traditions. Rifaat’s Muslim faith is a central feature of her writing. However, her stories challenge readers to reconsider exactly how the faith is actually practised. Her message is that the Muslim faith teaches that husbands should respect the needs of their wives. Rifaat only ever spoke Arabic, and only left Egypt once in order to go on pilgrimage to Mecca(Hajj). Alifa Rifaat was widowed at the age of 48 after raising three children on her own and died in 1996 at the age of 66.

**Pre-reading question:** What do you think the title of the story suggests about the central character’s feelings about her evenings?

**While reading activities:** Find evidence in the story that supports or contradicts your thoughts about the title. Also, take note of the meanings of any words in the word list that are new to you.

***Another Evening at the Club***

As this is a longer story than the four you have read so far, and as its context is likely to be unfamiliar to you, read a summary from Oliphant (2009: 180) before you read the whole story. The summary does not give away the climax of the story so you will need to read to the end to find out what happened!

**Summary of the story**

A teenage girl, Samia Barakat, enters into an arranged marriage with Abboud-Bey, an older man in his late thirties. Samia is considered lucky as her husband has a good job and is wealthy compared to her family. Just before they get married he gives her an emerald ring for her birthday.

One evening she goes to a birthday celebration at the club (a middle class venue for food and entertainment). She has a beer which leaves her feeling rather light-headed and a bit tipsy. She goes home, takes off the ring, and goes to bed. The next morning, she cannot find the ring. She tells her husband what has happened, and they conclude that the only person who could be responsible is a young servant, Gazia, As nobody else has entered the room. Her husband then takes action against the servant. This leads to some unfortunate consequences and some disturbing realisations for Samia.

**The story: *Another Evening at the Club***

In a state of **tension** she awaited the return of her husband. At a loss to predict what would happen between them, she moved herself back and forth in the rocking chair on the wide wooden verandah that ran along the bank and occupied part of the river itself, its supports being fixed in the river bed, while around it grew grasses and reeds. As though to **banish** her **apprehension**, she passed her fingers across her hair. The **spectres** of the eucalyptus trees ranged along the garden fence rocked before her gaze, with white egrets **slumbering** on their high branches like huge white flowers among the thin leaves.

The crescent moon rose from behind the eastern mountains and the peaks of the gently stirring waves glistened in its feeble rays, intermingled with threads of light leaking from the houses of Manfiacut scattered along the opposite bank. The coloured bulbs fixed to the trees in the garden of the club at the far end of the town stood out against the surrounding darkness. Somewhere over there her husband now sat, most likely **engrossed** in a game of chess.

It was only a few years ago that she had first laid eyes on him at her father’s house, meeting his gaze that weighed up her beauty and priced it before offering the **dowry.** She had noted his eyes ranging over her as she presented him with the coffee in the Japanese cups that were kept safely locked away in the cupboard for important guests. Her mother had herself laid them out on the silver-plated tray with its **elaborately embroidered spread**. When the two men had taken their coffee, her father had looked up at her with a smile and had told her to sit down, and she had seated herself on the sofa facing them, drawing the end of her dress over her knees and looking through lowered lids at the man who might choose her as his wife. She had been glad to see that he was tall, well-built and clean-shaven except for a thin greying moustache. In particular she noted the well-cut coat of **English tweed** and the silk shirt with gold links. She had felt herself blushing as she saw him returning her gaze. Then the man turned to her father and took out a gold case and offered him a cigarette.

“You really shouldn’t, my dear sir,” said her father, patting his chest with his left hand and **extracting** a cigarette with trembling fingers. Before he could, bring out his box of matches, Abboud-Bey had produced his lighter.

“No, after you, my dear sir,” said her father in embarrassment. Mingled with her sense of excitement at this man who gave out such an air of worldly self-confidence was a guilty shame at her father’s **inadequacy.**

After lighting her father’s cigarette, Abboud-Bey sat back, crossing his legs, and took out a cigarette for himself. He tapped it against the case before putting in the corner of his mouth and lighting it; then he blew out circles of smoke that followed each other across the room.

“It’s a great honour for us, my son, “ said her father, smiling first at Abboud-Bey and then at his daughter, at which Abboud Bey looked across at her and asked:

“And the beautiful little girl’s still at secondary school?”

She had lowered her head **modestly** as her father had answered:

“And from today she’ll be staying at home in readiness for your happy life together, Allah permitting,” and at a glance from her father she had hurried off to join her mother in the kitchen.

“You’re a lucky girl,” her mother had told her. “He’s a real find. Any girl would be happy to have him. He’s an Inspector of Irrigation, though he’s not yet forty. He earns a big salary and gets a fully furnished government house wherever he’s posted, which will save us the expense of setting up a house – and I don’t have to tell you what our situation is – and that’s beside the house he owns in Alexandria where you’ll be spending your holidays.”

Samia had wondered to herself how such a splendid **suitor** had found his way to her door. Who had told him that Mr Mahmoud Barakat, a mere clerk at the Court of Appeal, had a beautiful daughter of good **reputation**?

The days were then taken up with going the rounds of Cairo’s shops and choosing clothes for the new grand life she would be living. This was made possible by her father borrowing on the security of his government pension. Abboud-Bey, on his part, never visited her without bringing a present. For her birthday, just before they were married, he bought her an emerald ring that came in a **plush** box bearing the name of a well-known jeweller in Kasr-el-Nil Street. On her wedding night, as he put a diamond bracelet round her wrist, he had reminded her that she was marrying someone with a brilliant career in front of him and that one of the most important things in life was the opinions of others, particularly one’s equals and seniors. Though she was still only a young girl she must try to act with suitable **dignity**.

“Tell people you’re from the well-known Barakat family and that your father was a judge,” and he went up to her and gently patted her cheeks in a fatherly, **reassuring** gesture that he was often to repeat during their times together.

Then, yesterday evening, she had returned from the club somewhat **lightheaded** from the bottle of beer she had been required to drink on the occasion of someone’s birthday. Her husband, noting the state she was in, hurriedly took her back home. She had undressed and put on her nightgown, leaving her jewellery on the dressing table, and was fast asleep seconds after getting into bed. The following morning, fully recovered, she slept late, then rang the bell as usual and had breakfast brought to her. It was only as she was putting her jewellery away in the wooden and mother-of-pearl box that she realised her emerald ring was missing.

Could it have dropped from her finger at the club, in the car on the way back? No, she **distinctly** remembered it last thing at night, remembered the usual difficulty she had in getting it off her finger. She stripped the bed of its sheets, turned over the mattress, looked inside the pillow cases, crawled on her hands and knees under the bed. The tray of breakfast lying on the small bedside table caught her eye and she remembered the young servant coming in that morning with it, remembered the noise of the tray being put down, the curtains being drawn, the tray then being lifted again and placed on the bedside table. No one but the servant had entered the room. Should she call her and question her?

Eventually, having taken two aspirins, she decided to do nothing and await the return of her husband from work.

Directly he arrived, she told him what had happened and he took her by the arm and seated her down beside him:

“Let’s just calm down and go over what happened.”

She repeated, this time with further details, the whole story.

“And you’ve looked for it?”

‘Everywhere. Every possible and impossible place in the bedroom and the bathroom. You see, I remember distinctly taking it off last night.”

He **grimaced** at the thought of last night and then said:

“Anybody been in the room since Gazia when she brought in the breakfast?”

“Not a soul. I’ve even told Gazia not to do the room today.”

“And you’ve not mentioned anything to her?”

“I thought I’d better leave it to you.”

“Fine, go and tell her I want to speak to her. There’s no point in your saying anything, but I think it would be as well if you were present when I talk to her.”

Five minutes later Gazia, the young servant girl they had recently employed, entered behind her mistress. Samia took herself to a far corner of the room while Gazia stood in front of Abboud-Bey her hands folded across her chest, her eyes lowered.

“Yes sir?”

“Where’s the ring?”

“What ring are you talking about, sir?”

“Now don’t make out you don’t know. The one with the green stone. It would be better for you if you

hand it over and then nothing more need to be said.”

“May Allah blind me if I’ve set eyes on it.”

He stood up and gave her a sudden slap on the face. The girl **reeled** back, put one hand to her cheek, then lowered it again to her chest and made no answer to any of Abboud’s questions. Finally he said to her:

“You’ve got just fifteen seconds to say where you’ve hidden the ring or else, I swear to you, you’re not going to have a good time of it.”

As he lifted up his arm to look at his watch the girl **flinched** slightly but continued in her silence. When he went to the telephone Samia raised her head and saw that the girl’s cheeks were wet with tears. Abboud-Bey got through to the Superintendent of police and told him briefly what had occurred.

“Of course I haven’t got any actual proof but seeing that no-one else entered the room, it’s obvious she’s pinched it. Anyway, I’ll leave the matter in your capable hands. I know your people have their ways and means.” He gave a short laugh, then listened for a while and said: “I’m really most grateful to you.” He put down the receiver and turned round to Samia:

“That’s it, my dear. There’s nothing more to worry about. The Superintendent has promised me we’ll certainly get it back. The patrol car’s on the way.”

The following day, in the late afternoon, she’d been sitting in front of her dressing table re-arranging her jewellery in its box when an earring slipped from her grasp and fell to the floor. As she bent to pick it up she saw the emerald ring stuck between the leg of the table and the wall. Since that moment she had sat in a state of panic awaiting her husband’s return from the club. She even felt tempted to walk down to the water’s edge and throw it into the river so as to be rid of the unpleasantness that lay ahead.

At the sound of the screeching tyres rounding the house to the garage, she slipped the ring onto her finger. As he entered she stood up and raised her hand to show him the ring. Quickly, trying to choose her words but knowing that she was expressing herself clumsily, she explained what an extraordinary thing it was that it should have lodged itself between the dressing table and the wall, what an extraordinary **co-incidence** she would have dropped the earring and so seen it, how she’d thought of ringing him at the club to tell him the good news but …

She stopped in mid-sentence when she saw his frown and added weakly:

“I’m sorry. I can’t think how it could have happened. What do we do now?”

He shrugged his shoulders as though in surprise. “Are you asking me, my dear lady? Nothing of course.”

“But they’ve been beating up the girl – you yourself said they’d not let her be till she confessed.”

Unhurriedly he sat himself down as though to consider this new **aspect** of the matter. Taking out his case, he tapped a cigarette against it in his **accustomed** manner, then **moistened** his lips, put the cigarette in place and lit it. The smoke rings **hovered** in the still air as he looked at his watch and said:

“In any case she’s not got all that long before they let her go. They can’t keep her for more than forty-eight hours without getting any evidence or a confession. It won’t kill her to put up with things for a while longer. By now the whole town knows the servant stole the ring – or would you like me to tell everyone: ‘ Look folks the fact is that the wife got a bit tiddly on a couple of sips of beer and the ring took off on its own and hid itself behind the dressing table.’ What do you think?”

“I know the situation’s a bit awkward …”

“Awkward? It’s downright **ludicrous.** Listen, there’s nothing to be done but to give it to me and next time I go down to Cairo I’ll sell it and get something else in its place. We’d be the laughing stock of the town.”

He stretched out his hand and she found herself taking off the ring and placing it in his outstretched palm. She was careful that their eyes should not meet. For a moment she was on the point of protesting and in fact uttered a few words:

“I’d just like to say we could …”

Putting the ring away in his pocket, he bent over her and with both hands gently patted her on the cheeks. It was a **gesture** she had long become used to, a gesture that promised her continued security, that told her that this man who was her husband and the father of her child had also taken the place of her father who, **assured** that he had found her a suitable substitute, had followed up her marriage with his own funeral. The gesture told her more **eloquently** than any words that he was the man, she the woman, he was the one who carried the responsibilities, made the decisions; she the one whose role it was to be beautiful, happy, carefree.

Now though, for the first time in their life together, the gesture came like a slap in the face.

Directly he removed his hands her whole, body was seized with an uncontrollable trembling. Frightened he would notice, she rose to her feet and walked with deliberate steps towards the large window. She leaned her forehead against the comforting cold surface and closed her eyes tightly for several seconds. When she opened them, she noticed that the cafe lights strung between the trees on the opposite shore had been turned on and that there were men seated under them and a waiter moving among the tables. The dark shape of a boat momentarily blocked out the café scene; in the light from the hurricane lamp hanging from its bow she saw it cutting through several of those floating islands of Nile waterlilies that, rootless, are swept along with the current.

Suddenly she became aware of his presence alongside her.

“Why don’t you go and change quickly while I take the car out? It’s hot and it would be nice to have super at the club.”

“As you like. Why not?”

By the time she had turned round from the window, she was smiling.

**Word list**

**tension**  nervousness and anxiety

**banish** get rid of

**apprehension** fear

**spectres**  shadows, ghosts

**slumbering** sleeping

**engrossed** busy with, deeply interested in

**dowry** gifts to secure a marriage

**elaborately embroidered spread** a tray cloth with very detailed coloured stitching on it

**English tweed** mixed wool and cotton cloth, usually rough in texture

**extracting** pulling out

**inadequacy** feeling of not being good enough

**modestly** politely, opposite of proudly

**reputation** opinion that people have of someone

**plush** rich, velvet-like fabric

**dignity** calm and serious way of behaving

**reassuring** making someone feel less worried about something

**lightheaded**  dizzy

**distinctly** clearly

**grimaced** pulled a face, frowned

**reeled** fell backwards, staggered

**flinched**  moved backwards suddenly because of being afraid

**co-incidence** two things happening together in a surprising way

**aspect** view

**accustomed**  usual

**moistened** made damp or wet

**hovered** hung (above or over)

**ludicrous** laughable, ridiculous

**gesture**  action or sign (often made by the hands)

**assured**  confirmed or made sure

**eloquently** clearly and well-expressed

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *Another Evening at***

***the Club***

1. The first two paragraphs of the story describe Samia’s surroundings while she waits to tell her husband about finding the ring. Describe the **contrast** between these surroundings and Samia’s feelings. (2)

2. Give two reasons why Samia’s parents believe that Abboud-Bey would be an excellent husband for their daughter. (2)

3. Abboud-Bey gives Samia expensive gifts. What do these gifts suggest about his values? (2)

4.1 Why does Abboud-Bey suggest that Samia should lie about her father’s job? (2)

4.2 What is your response to this suggestion from Abboud-Bey? (2)

5. 1 When Samia tells Abboud-Bey that she has found the ring, why does he refuse to take action to secure the release of Gazia from police custody? (2)

5.2 What is your response to the reason that he gives for doing nothing? (2)

6.1 At the end of the story, what does Samia realise about her husband? (2)

6.2 What does she realise about her own position in society? (2)

6.3 Explain how her final actions demonstrate what she has realised about her position. (2)

(20 marks)

**3.9 *A Blow, A Kiss* by Tim Winton**

**Background information about the author**

Tim Winton was born in Perth, Western Australia in 1960. He has written a total of 29 books for children and adults, some of them non-fiction, some fiction, with the fiction including short stories. He has won numerous prizes for his writing and has twice been a finalist for the Man Booker Prize, the biggest literature prize in Britain. The landscapes and seascapes of Australia are important in much of his writing and he does a great deal of work for a number of environmental conservation projects.

***A Blow, A Kiss***

As this is another longer story, with some possibly confusing detail, first read the summary of the story from Oliphant (2009: 242). Again, the summary does not include the ending to the story.

**Summary of the story**

Albie and his father are returning home one evening from a salmon fishing trip. A drunk man on a motor cycle drives past them, going very fast. The man crashes and Albie’s father stops to help him. The man does not want help and attacks Albie’s father who knocks him unconscious. Albie’s father leaves Albie to look after the motorcyclist while he goes for help.

While he is gone the man regains consciousness. He calls out for his own father and begins to sob. In a fatherly gesture Albie kisses the motor cyclist’s face and he stops crying. Albie’s father returns without help and they take the man to town themselves. At the petrol station they are told that the man’s father is across the road in the bar. What happens next helps us to better understand the relationships between these two fathers and their sons.

**Pre-reading activity:** Think about how members of your family show that they care about (or don’t care about) one another.

**While reading activity:** Notice how the characters in this story show their feelings for one another. Also, take note of the meanings of any words in the word list that are new to you.

***A Blow, A Kiss***

Despite their bad luck, Albie had enjoyed the night. Just the pipe smell of his father and the warmth of him in the truck’s cab beside him was enough. It did not matter that they had caught ten salmon and buried them in the sand for safekeeping and not found them again. The **Tilley lamp** tinkled, cooling beneath his feet on the floor of the cab. Ahead, the unlit road rolled out.

A motor cycle whipped past, going their way. Albie saw the small red light for a moment and then it was gone.

“He’s flying,” his father murmured.

“Yeah,” Albie felt his chin on his chest. He heard the lamp tinkle. His eyes closed. He looked up again, felt himself **plummeting** forward, heard his father pumping the brakes.

“He’s down!” **bellowed** his father.

Albie pulled himself away from the window screen. His father was already out of the cab and in the **vortex** of the headlights. On the road, the motorcycle was sprawled, **intertwined**  with the rider, an ugly spillage. Against the blackness of the machine and leather, Albie saw blood. He did no move on the seat. He held the Tilley lamp hard between his feet; he had not let it fall and break.

His father pulled the machine from the man who groaned. He took the helmet off. He held up the man’s hands. They were the colour of bleeding pork. Albie had never seen so much human blood, although he had seen cut pigs and **jugulars** of salmon **cannoning** red on white sand. Groans became shouts. Without warning, the fallen man lashed out at Albie’s father and pulled him down to the ground by the ears and the two men locked limbs and rolled on the bloody **bitumen** in the headlights of the truck. Albie did not move. He held the Tilley lamp tight until his thighs ached. He heard the wet sound of fists connecting. Crickets and the quiet **idle** of the engine underlay this noise. Beyond the grovelling men, past the point of the truck’s headlights, there was only darkness. In a moment there was quiet. **Crickets chanted**. The engine idled.

“Albie!”

Albie slid out of the cab as soon as he heard his father’s voice. Every line and feature was stark in the glare. Blood ran from his father’s lips. The fallen rider lay , **gored** jaws apart, beneath him.

“ Come here, Albie, his father motioned with a free hand. Albie smelt blood and beer and petrol and hot metal. He saw a **translucent** disc on his father’s cheek and for a moment he thought it was a tear but it was a fish scale. “He’s unconscious. We shouldn’t move him. I’ll have to call for help. Come over further. Now get on him.” Albie was astride the bleeding, still man. “Put our feet on his hands, He won’t move. He’s out.” Albie wondered why it was necessary to sit on a man who was not going to move. He looked at the blood streaming from his father’s lips. “He’s in shock – he didn’t know what he was doing,” his father said. I won’t be long – stay put.”

Albie felt his shoulder briefly squeezed and heard his father’s boots marching back to the truck. The lights **veered** from him and the truck passed and the tail-lights became tiny red points, eyes that closed and left him with the dark. He heard the man’s breathing, felt the rise and fall of leather, listened to the cricket hymns, wondering what should be done, how he should behave towards this man who had struck his father. In the dark, he could not see the places where the skin had been **pared** away. He saw no human blood, but he could smell it.

“He was only helping you,” he said to the man. The leather jacket groaned beneath him. Albie wondered what his mother would be doing. Probably ringing Sergeant Fobles, he thought; she’ll be angry and blame Dad, kiss us. Albie knew she would use her kisses like blows: punishment for them.

The leather jacket was wet in parts and torn. It shocked him that leather should rip like that; it was the strongest stuff there was, and only time and sweat and constant **fatigue** could waste it, not those few seconds when the single tail-light disappeared and this man skittered along the road like a moist piece of moss.

“You’re lucky we were here,” he said, shifting position on the mount. “You’re lucky my Dad’s going for help.”

Town was only twenty minutes’ drive from the coast. Farmland stretched right to the high-water mark. Albie had seen cattle on the beaches, **wallowing** in the surf. He hoped his father found a farm with a phone.

“Come on, Dad. Come on, Dad. Come on, Dad.” He often prayed to his father in his absence. God, he decided, was just like his Dad, only bigger. It was easier to pray to him and hope God got the message on relay.

“Dad?”

Albie flinched. The injured man had spoken.

“Dad?”

Albie’s body shrank into itself. He waited for the man to move, to attack.

“Dad?”

“Yes,” Albie whispered. His throat was full of heart.

“Oh. Oh, Dad. I’m sorry, Was coming back.”

Albie listened as the man began to weep; he rode the man’s sobs, high on his chest, and it hurt him to hear. Like the sound of a tractor engine **turning over** on a dying battery.

“It’s alright,” Albie said to him, “it’s alright.” The sobbing continued, jogging him, making the leather groan and the seat of his pants hot until Albie thought he might be sick or get up and run away into the bush at the side of the road.

But he did not run. He bent down and kissed the wet, prickled face. The sobbing stopped. Even the crickets paused. Albie tasted salt, felt a **jumble** of things **lurching** in him; he felt not sick, just full.

It was the moment when Albie thought the man might die.

The lights forking out over the crown of the hill took him by surprise. He watched them dip and sweep, disappear and reappear until he could hear the sound of the truck’s engine.

In the piercing white light of the truck’s lamps, as it stopped dead with a shriek of brakes, Albie knew what it must be to be a rabbit, powerless, snowblind, **vulnerable** to **atrocity**. The light seemed to **ricochet** inside his head, **confounding** him. He heard his father’s boots.

“You alright? There’s blood on your face!”

Albie felt himself swept up into his father’s arms; he yielded to it. His father hugged him, touched his cheeks with his fingers and his tobacco breath. On his own feet again, Albie found his voice and asked, “Is he going to die?”

“Dunno,” his father said, “I don’t know enough about it.”

“Oh.”

“There’s no phones. I should have known in the first place. Man’d have to be an idiot. We’ll take him in ourselves like we should’ve anyhow.”

“We didn’t want to move him.”

“Yeah.” His father seemed to take comfort in this.

Albie tried to stay awake in the warm cab, seduced by the smell of his father and the **crooning** note of the engine. The sweat had dried on him. His arms still ached. He had never lifted anything so heavy, so awkward as that fallen motorcyclist. They had tried to get his **contorted**, cold machine in too, but had to leave it at the roadside. Every few minutes Albie turned to see through the window the shape of the injured man beneath the **tarpaulin** on the **tray** beside the rods and sacks and engine parts.

He held the Tilley lamp between his heels. It kept hm awake, a duty.

“Should’ve known better,” his father muttered. The **featureless** road wandered left and right, studded with the eyes of beer cans**, mile pegs,** rabbits.

Somewhere in his fog of fatigue, Albie hoped his mother would understand. She loved them; she didn’t like them to be late.

Town was mostly asleep at this time of night. Only the pub and the petrol station were open. It was a fuel town at night, a farm town by day. As they pulled into the sudden brilliance of the petrol station **tarmac,** Albie saw Mr Stevens wave to his father, a wave without hands. His father got out. After a moment Mr Stevens came over. Albie listened.

“That’s Wilf Beacon’s boy,” Mr Stevens said, peering in the back at the man on the tray beneath the tarp. Dead?”

“No.”

Albie wished his father would check. He was afraid. But he saw the tarp rising and falling.

“Where’s Beacon then?”

“Across the road.”

Albie knew that in this town “across the road” meant in the pub. The pub frightened Albie. From out on the veranda, it was a roar, a sour smell, unknown.

His father poked his head in the window. “Stay here son.”

Not long after, Albie saw two men stumble out on to the pub veranda. One was his father. The other man had him by the throat and his father had the man’s **forelock** in his fist. Shouting. Albie saw his father hit the man in the chest. The man fell to his knees. His father helped him up and they came across the road to Stevens’ Garage.

“Just pull yourself together,” he heard his father say with a harshness that made his skin prickle.

“Where’s his suitcase? He had a sleeping bag! You’ve **done ‘im over**! What’ve you been doin’ to my boy?”

“Pickin’ him up off the side of the road. He’s drunk like you. He’s hurt, you bloody idiot!”

Albie hated that man. He couldn’t remember seeing him before. He was not a farmer. Might have been a farm hand for someone he didn’t know. He didn’t care. He hated him. He wanted the man to see his son, and to weep like the son had wept out on the road with that hopeless starter motor sound in the dark.

His father shoved the man around to the back of the truck. Albie’s insteps were cold from pressing against the lamp. He watched through the grimy little back window. The man staggered up on to the tray and knelt with a thud beside the body under the tarp.

“Little coward. Leave a man alone. Own father, Own father.” The rider’s bloody face was immobile. The old man’s hand touched it, lifted the head off the truck tray. “And what’ve yer got to say for yerself? They bring yer back to *me*!” The sound of the rider’s head being dropped on to the metal tray **vibrated** through the whole truck like the sound of a **mallee root** being tossed n. Again. Whump. The father beat his son’s head against the tray. Albie’s father looked helpless, did not move.

Albie got out. The flat bed of the truck **resounded** again. The jumble inside Albie pushed upwards; he wanted to be sick. He snatched the Tilley lamp by the handle. He heard the startled voice of his father. He swung the lamp up and over, a **bowling movement**. Glass and sound and splintery light happened all at once and his father had hold of him as the drunk old man lay still on his son, stinking of beer and **kerosene.**

As they turned off the bitumen road into their own run of gravel to the yellow-lit house down the valley, Albie ended the silence with a question. He was startled by his own toneless delivery.

“Why did that man hit his son for getting hurt?”

His father sighed. He sounded relieved that the silence was finished. “I don’t know, boy.”

“Would you do that to me?”

The truck **slewed** and stopped.

“Lord no. God A’mighty, no!”

‘He was going home,” Albie said.

His father’s mouth moved. He reached out and put his knuckles to Albie’s cheek, left them there for a long time, as though still waiting for words to come. “Sorry about the salmon,” he said at last, “I should’ve known better.”

The truck moved forward again. Albie felt those knuckles on his cheek still and knew, full to bursting, that was how God would touch someone. He neither moved nor spoke and the truck trundled on.

**Word list**

**Tilley lamp** paraffin lamp

**plummeting** falling fast

**bellowed** shouted loudly

**vortex** swirling whirlpool (of lights**)**

**intertwined** tangled up

**jugulars** large neck veins that carry blood to the head

**cannoning** spewing / pumping out

**bitumen** tar

**idle**  sound of an engine ticking over

**Crickets chanted** insects that make a noisy ‘song’

**gored** bloody

**translucent** can be seen through, transparent

**veered** turned away

**pared** peeled

**fatigue** usually means tiredness; here means ‘being worn often’

**wallowing** splashing about

**turning over** trying to start (engine)

**jumble** mixture

**lurching** rolling about, swaying

**vulnerable** defenceless

**atrocity** great cruelty or violence

**ricochet** bounce off something / someone

**confoundin**g confusing

**crooning** singing softly

**contorted** twisted, bent out of shape

**tarpaulin (tarp)** canvas sheet or cover

**tray** back part of a truck behind the cab

**featureless** empty

**mile peg**  stone marker measuring distance in miles

**tarmac** tarred area (in the story, a parking lot)

**forelock**  hair just above the forehead

**‘done ’im over’** stolen from him

**vibrated** shook with small fast movements

**mallee root** roots of an Australian tree which make good firewood

**resounded** echoed

**bowling movement** overhand swinging movement like that used by a cricket bowler

**kerosene** paraffin

**slewed**  skidded sideways

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on *A Blow, A Kiss***

1. Had Albie and his father had a successful evening? Quote from the story to support you answer. (2)

2. What does his response to the injured motorcyclist’s attack on him suggest about the character of Albie’s father? (2)

3.1 Name the figure of speech used in this description: ‘the tail-lights became tiny red points, eyes that closed and left him with the dark’ (1)

3.2 How was Albie feeling at the time of this description? (2)

4.1 Name the figure of speech used in this sentence: ‘Like the sound of a tractor engine turning over on a dying battery.’ (1)

4.2 How does Albie feel about this sound and what does he do?. (2)

5. ‘Albie knew she would use her kisses like blows’. What does statement this suggest about his mother’s relationship with her husband and son? (2)

6. What do the words and actions of the two fathers in this story suggest about their relationship with their sons? (4)

7. How does Albie feel about his father? Quote from the story to support your answer. (2)

8. What is your response to the title of this story (2)

(20 marks)

**3.10 Preparing to answer examination questions on short stories.**

The short questions on the examination paper are likely to be similar to the ones you have answered on each story. In addition there are essay questions on the short stories. You learned about writing a literature essay on pages XX. Below are two examples ofliterature essay questions.

1. In the story*A Blow, A Kiss* Tim Winton describes contrasting relationships between fathers and sons and the effect of these on the sons. Write a 250-300 word essay in which you describe the two sets of father-son relationships in the story and what you consider to be the effects on the sons’ characters of their fathers’ words and actions.

2.The short stories *Flight* and *Another Evening at the Club* both focus on the power or powerlessness of women. Write a 250-300 word essay in which you do the following:

* describe what contributed to the powerlessness of the main adult female character in each story;
* describe how differently the two women responded to the situation in which they found themselves;
* suggest what you would have done if you had been in each woman’s position and why.

After you have completed your planning for each essay, compare what you have written with what is presented in the Answer Key.

**Reflection**

After reading each of these short stories and completing the activities set on them, what have you learned about:

* the short story as a genre?
* ways of analysing stories?
* writing about stories?
* yourself as a result of your responses to each story?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **UNIT 4** | Reading and responding to extracts from autobiographies and a biography |

**4.1. Introduction**

You probably know that ‘auto’ means self and that an **autobiography** is a text in which the author tells his or her own life story while a **biography** is the story of a person’s life told by someone else. However, the novelist Graham Greene argues that an autobiography is only ‘a sort of life’ and uses these words as the title of his own autobiography. Greene explains that the author of an autobiography chooses what content to include and what to leave out and when making these choices he or she is influenced by memories, diary notes, etc. which may not always be entirely accurate.

Some autobiographies are written with the assistance of a professional writer. Some are written as a history of that person’s whole life from small child to elderly person whose life’s achievements are almost complete. Nelson Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom* tells his life story from when he was a small boy to when he was finally released from prison to participate in preparations for South Africa’s first democratic elections.Other autobiographies focus on key special memories in that person’s life and may be written at a time when the author still hopes to live for many years. This type of autobiography is often called a **memoir.**

In writing a memoir an author remembers and reflects on experiences in his or her life. Some memoirs are relatively short but others are full length books. Some memoirs deal with only a particular part of a person’s life.

There are several kinds of biography. Some are written by authors who have personal knowledge of the person who is the subject of the biography (for example, the author has been able to have discussions with this person over a period of time). Others are based mainly on the author’s research – perhaps because the person is no longer alive. The biographer can choose to be mainly sympathetic towards or positive about the person, to be somewhat critical or to be very critical of the person and his or her ideas and actions.

**In this unit you will read and do activities based on extracts from two memoirs, one autobiography and one biography.**

**4.2 Extract from Chris van Wyk’s memoir *Shirley, Goodness and Mercy***

**Background information about the author and the memoir**

Chris van Wyk wrote the poem *In Detention* which you studied in Unit 3. Information about him is included in that unit. He wrote two volumes of memoirs. The extract you are about to read comes from the first one, *Shirley, Goodness and Mercy* which was published in 2005. The second volume called *Eggs to Lay and Chickens to Hatch* was published in XX.

The blurb inside the front cover of *Shirley, Goodness and Mercy* reads as follows:

‘In 1962, at the age of five, Chris van Wyk went to school for the first time. Within days he learnt to recite Psalm 23. Bursting with pride, he rushed home to show off his newly acquired knowledge to his mother, Shirley. So taken was she with his accomplished delivery that she burst into gales of laughter.

Soon others too, were accorded the privilege of listening to him – again and again. And every time they responded as his mother had. So he carried on undaunted:

‘… Shirley, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.’

The malapropism [amusing misuse of a word] aptly reflects the tone of this heartwarming, yet compellingly honest story about a young boy growing up in the coloured townships of Newclare, Coronationville and Riverlea during the apartheid era.

Despite van Wyk becoming involved in the ‘struggle’, this is not a book about racial politics. Instead, it is a delightful account of one boy’s special relationship with his relatives, friends and neighbours – often decidedly quirky – who made up his community, and of the important coping role laughter and humour played during the years he spent in bleak and dusty townships.

Unusually, the extract you are about to read ends with a poem in which the adult Chris van Wyk thinks back to the time of the visit to the bookshop and other childhood pleasures.

**Pre-reading activity:** Think about special times that you have shared with a family member. How did these times make you feel?

**While reading activity:** Notice how Chris van Wyk communicates his love for books and his love for his grandmother, particularly in the poem with which the chapter concludes,

**The extract from *Shirley Goodness and Mercy***

This extract is a complete chapter from the memoir. The chapter is titled ‘The mystery of the lots of nice books’

One Sunday afternoon my Ouma comes visiting us in Riverlea. Before she leaves she calls me to her side.

‘Hey, Kuller, ‘ she says. ‘I’m getting my pension on Wednesday.’ She takes my hand in hers as she speaks. ‘Meet me in town after school and we’ll go and buy you some of those books that you like.’

I have a date with my ouma.

On Wednesday I’m there, in President Street, near the post office. My ouma comes up to me, **materialising** from the shoppers and passers-by. The city is not as busy as it is on Saturday mornings, when people stream in from suburb and township to ‘shop where South Africa shops’ – at stores like OK Bazaars.

I saw my ouma only three days ago at our house but I’m so happy to see her that I laugh. She’s wearing a hat and I think it’s about a hundred years old. She’s got a black bag slung over her arm. She once scolded me for clicking it open and closed, open and closed, about two dozen times. By the way she smiles at me now and wipes the sweat off my nose with her crumpled tissue, I’m sure she’s forgotten about that long ago.

Off we go, walking past shops where the white people sit and eat and talk. The bookshop in Diagonal Street is called Homes and Orphans. It has this name, I learn later, because it collects old books from the rich (who are white) and sells them to the poor (who are Coloured and African), and gives the money to old-age homes and orphanages. I know I’m a Coloured boy because that’s what you have to put on any kind of official forms – at school, in Church or when applying for an identity document – but right now I don’t feel poor at all.

A second-hand bookshop must be the best place to visit anywhere in the world and the second-hand book is surely not a hand-me-down but a new creation in its own right. The books that line the shelves are old, slightly worn but proud to present themselves to another **potential** owner. They have grown in **stature**: from having started out with only one story, they now have two tales within their covers. They have the original story that you will read from cover to cover, written by a famous or favourite author. But they also have the other story, the one about their previous owner. This story is a mystery, never to be revealed to you, except in the merest of hints – if you’re lucky.

Maybe it will be in the form of a dedication on the title page. It could say something like this: for Joshua. Take this on your journey together with our love. Auntie Ruth and Uncle David – August 1958.

Who is Joshua? you will ask. And if you’re a South African growing up in the sixties you might think that he must be a white boy to have gone on a long journey. Coloured boys go to their grannies for the holidays over in the next township and maybe to the sea once in their lifetime. But as for leaving the country, oh no, they stay right where they are from birth to death. But white people, well every day they fill up the aeroplanes that fly over our homes, on their way to Cape Town, or far, far away where they have a grandmother living in France or Holland or Spain or England. Or their parents are divorced and they go and live with Dad and his new wife in London. Or their parents are **ambassadors** so they go to Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Rome. Coloured, well they just roam from one **ghetto** to the next.

But in the end, no matter how old these books are, they take me on journeys to these ‘White Only’ places. There’s no warning on page 13 or 48 that says: ‘Stop reading. For ‘Whites Only’ like those signs I’ve begun to notice at post offices, bus stops, restaurants.

The bookshop has a bell that goes *ding-dong* for me and *ding dong* for ouma as we walk into the shop.

The white shopkeeper straightens himself up behind the counter where he has been reading a book. My ouma puts on her musical voice, reserved for white people and Coloureds who come to her door with pen and paper in their hands. It has a **lilt** in it and is, without being rude to my ouma, not unlike the bell we have just heard. I won’t say my ouma is **pretentious**, it’s just her way of showing politeness.

The man smiles at us. Ouma says, ‘Tell the gentleman what you want.’

I tell him I want the Hardy Boys. He says, ‘There you go,’ pointing to a shelf behind me. I turn to the shelf and I can’t believe my eyes. *The Clue in the Embers, The Sign of the Crooked Arrow, The Mystery of the Chinese Junk, The Sinister Signpost …* There are so many of them it’s The Mystery of the Lots of Nice Books!

These titles are not easy to come by. I have three in my collection, my friend Robert Rhoda, has two, Cliffie Weideman has one and Keith Hendricks has two. And here is a whole row, all with the unmistakable **embossed silhouette** of the two sleuths (another word for ‘detective’, if you want to write compositions that impress your teacher) from Barmet Bay in the United States of America. Ouma says I can have two. I pull two off the shelf and bring them to the counter. Since it’s Ouma’s money – 25 cents each, from a widow’s pension of about R15 per month, half that of a white pensioner – I want her to help me choose. She perches her glasses on her nose and pages through them, slowly, slowly.

‘This one looks nice,’ she says. ‘And this one also looks nice, very nice.’

Good.

Ouma pays the gentleman. She says good afternoon. Usually I just say goodbye

to people but now I also say good afternoon because it sounds **posh**. He nods and we’re out of there.

My ouma takes me to the Riverlea bus stop and chats with me until the bus comes.

‘Bye, Ouma.’

‘Bye son.’

I get on the bus and before we’ve reached home I’m ten pages in to *The Flickering Torch Mystery*.

The story doesn’t end there.

A few months later, my ouma turns fifty. We have one of those parties for her where everyone brings something to eat and we all get together and eat and drink and joke and every room is packed with cousins jumping on the beds and the toilet is never vacant and two dozen adults are laughing and one dozen babies are crying.

Then somebody, I think Uncle Willie, calls us to order so that we can sing Happy Birthday for my ouma, who is sitting at the table blinking and beaming at all the goodies that have been cooked and baked and written up in icing in her honour.

This is my chance. While everybody else has bought birthday cards, I’ve written my ouma a letter. Birthday cards, those are someone else’s words, some man or woman who has never met my ouma but who tells her how much she is loved and to have a special day, all in lines that rhyme, so that if the last word on one line is ‘mother’, you know the last word in the next line will be ‘another’. If you hit ‘today’ then you can be sure to run into ‘in every special way’. And ‘tears’ always goes with ‘years’ except when they sometimes surprise you with ‘fears’.

Who am I fooling? I quite like the rhyming, and think the writers have great timing. My problem is simple: I had no cash, so I wrote my own birthday message to my ouma in a letter. It doesn’t rhyme. It goes like this:

Dearest Ouma

On this wonderful day as you turn fifty, I want you to know that I will always love

You. You are special to me, buying me books and giving me money for the

swimming pool. So enjoy your day and remember that I will love you for ever.

Your grandson

Christopher van Wyk

I step out from the jostling cousins and hand over my letter.

‘Now what is this, my son?’ she says, turning it over in her hand.

‘It’s a letter for you, Ouma. Birthday wishes. From me.’

‘Oh, my child.’

‘Read it Ouma. Read it out loud so everyone can hear.’

‘Oh, but I don’t have my glasses now.’

‘I’ll get them for you, just tell me where they are.’

‘No, later …’

A hand reaches out and pulls me away from my ouma’s side, back into the crowd. It’s my mother. Now, whenever we go out, the last instruction from my mother is always: ‘And behave yourselves.’ As far as I know I have behaved perfectly. So what is my mother’s problem?

‘Leave it,’ she says in a harsh, impatient whisper. ‘Your ouma can’t read.’

Can’t read? That’s impossible. I don’t believe it. Surely all people my age and older can read. How? Well, they just pick up a book and read. Did I ever see my ouma read? I must’ve, surely … But there’s so much birthday noise around me I can’t think straight.

About twenty years later, still **intrigued** by the mystery of the **illiterate** granny, I sit down and pen this poem:

Ouma

When I think of my ouma’s house, I remember paradise

where the almighty was always broke

but kept puffing up the deflated clouds

and mending the flagging harp strings in the corner

of her room where the sun poured through the curtains

like the warm, weak black tea that she liked to sip

while she listened to our disputes, kissed our bloody knees

felt our tired foreheads for fevers that sometimes

crept into our games and knocked us out for days.

In the mornings, holidaying at my ouma’s,

all my cousins and I rose as one from beds and

makeshift beds among the shoes and mice and drifted to the

warm kitchen where twenty cups of tea stood like a fleet

of cracked steamboats waiting for us to dip

our buttered bread into the sweet black brew.

And my cousins knew all the film stars, all the pop songs

and some verses from the Bible that we learned

from the Salvation Army with their funny hats and

twangy voices and skins so white and frail that I did believe

if we were all fitted with our wings one day their shoulders

would never take the strain. They met us every Sunday under

a tree in Hamilton Street where they dispensed

with endless tracts of verse.

And often all of these, the verses and the

film stars and the pop songs, came together

in one huge festival that brought every braided girl

and snot-nosed boy from Fuel Road

to Riversdale Street into my ouma’s yard

so that my heart almost burst

with all the love and merriment.

And once upon a holiday I came

for my umpteenth – but almost last – time to ouma’s

and there was my cousin Richard with a new gun

and without blinking, Ouma, the fastest gun alive

snapped the symmetric plastic pistol in two; one for me

and one for Rich, who didn’t mind one bit. Then

we tamed the pillows into horses and shot each other

down until we both died laughing.

And once Ouma, the fastest draw alive,

took me to town to draw her pension. And

afterwards, at the second-hand bookshop,

bought me two books that she helped me choose

by flipping randomly through them.

Although much later I learned that the black words

on the white sheets that swept me across the seas

to adventures in faraway lands were to Granny

like coal strewn across a field of snow.

And now Ouma’s hair is turning silver as the stars

drop their tears on her head begging her to come

and live among them in their own version of paradise.

Ouma has been resisting for so long now but soon

I know she’ll give in as she always has to all of us whose

empty cups she fills with dreams and golden tea.

**Word list**

**materialising** appearing

**potential** possible

**stature**  importance

**ambassadors** representatives of one’s country in another country

**ghetto** a part of a town or city where poor people or peopleof a particular group live

**lilt** a pleasant pattern of rising and falling sounds

**pretentious** trying to seem more important than you are

**embossed silhouette**  decorated outline (of the detectives on the spine of the books)

**posh** ‘upper class’

**intrigued** very interested

**illiterate**  not able to read and write

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on the chapter from**

***Shirley, Goodness and Mercy***

**NOTE:** Most questions are on the prose in this chapter but some are on the poem at the end of it. This gives you a further opportunity to respond to questions on poetry.

1. How would you describe the tone of this chapter? Give a reason for your answer. (2) The tone is one of admiration and love (for the writer’s grandmother), but also of sadness (because his grandmother had not had a chance to learn to read). (2)

2. As was the case in *Tuesday morning in the city,* the chapter from Chris van Wyk’s memoir includes a great deal of information about the unequal treatment of people under apartheid. Give two examples from the chapter of unjust ways in which people from the ‘Coloured’ community were treated during the apartheid era. (2 + 2) They received smaller pensions than ‘white’ people. They could not eat in the same shops as ‘white’ people. (2 + 2)

3. In the bookshop, how did Ouma manage to stop Chris from finding out that she could not read? (2) Ouma pug on her glasses and paged through the books, pretending to read them and saying which ones ‘looked nice’. (2)

4. Would you have liked to be at Ouma’s fiftieth birthday party? Use information from the memoir to explain why or why not. (2) This is a personal response question. Readers who enjoy big family gatherings with much laughter and food would probably like to have been there. Those who don’t like being crowded together or who don’t like a lot of noise may not have wanted to be at the party. (2) NOTE: The important point is to give a reason for your answer.

5. At the birthday party both Chris’s mother and Chris get upset. Explain why. (2) Chris’s mother gets upset because she thinks her son will have embarrassed his grandmother by asking her to read the card he had written for her. Chris is upset both because he really wanted his grandmother to read what he had written for her and because he is so sad to learn that she has been pretending to read when she cannot. (2)

6. The second part of this chapter from his memoir consists of a long poem in which Chris celebrates his grandmother’s influence on his life. He begins by remembering her house as

… paradise

where the almighty was always broke

but kept puffing up the deflated clouds

and mending the flagging harp strings in the corner

of her room

In this metaphor with what is he comparing his grandmother’s home? (2) He is comparing his grandmother’s home to an earthly version of heaven (paradise) in which God (‘the almighty’) has very little money (‘is always broke’) but the place is still very special. (2)

7. ‘ …much later I learned that the black words

on the white sheets that swept me across the seas

to adventures in faraway lands were to Granny

like coal strewn across a field of snow.’

7.1 In your own words explain what books (with black words on a white page) enabled Chris to do. (2) They enabled him to travel in his mind all over the world and to have adventures. (2)

7.2 Comment on the effectiveness of the simile used to describe Granny’s inability to read. (2)

The simile is effective because it suggests two things: the look of black words on white paper; the uselessness of coal on snow as the coal would not be able to burn. The words on the page were useless to Chris’s grandmother because she could not make sense of them. (2)

8. In the first half of the chapter the verbs are in the present tense but in the poem the verbs are in the past tense, except for the last stanza when the present tense is used again. Suggest why the author chose to use each tense in part of this chapter of the memoir. (2)

(total marks: 20) In the first part of the chapter the author uses present tense to involve readers in the story as though it is happening in the present. In the poem, he is remembering special times at his grandmother’s house in the past, when he was young. In the final stanza he is thinking about his grandmother in the present, as a very old lady. (2)

**4.3 Extract from Sisonke Msimang’s *Always Another Country***

**Background information about the author**

The back cover blurb for Sisonke Msimang’s memoir published in 2017 reads as follows: ‘In *Always Another Country* Sisonke Msimang writes about her exile childhood in Zambia, Kenya and Canada, her college years in the USA, and returning to South Africa in the 1990s. She reflects candidly on present-day South Africa, but this is a book about family, romance and motherhood; of childhood jealousies and adult passions, and what it means to be born into a life scored by history. Her memoir is a chronicle of a coming of age, for both a woman and a young democracy.’ This memoir was short-listed for *The Sunday Times* Alan Paton non-fiction award.

**An extract from *Always Another Country***

Note: In this part of the memoir Sisonke writes about a memory of living in Canada with her family when she was a teenager.

**Pre-reading activity:** Think about times in your life when older members of your family and community seem not to have understood your needs.How did their lack of understanding make you feel?

**While reading activity:** Look for clues that tell you that, at this stage in her life, Sisonke wanted to be as similar to Canadian teenagers as possible

***The bike***

Mummy wants us to learn how to be responsible, so every month she gives us five dollars and takes us to the bank to deposit it ourselves. Mandla and I are very neat, our handwriting steady and firm on the page. Zeng is only six so she has to write and rewrite and we sigh and sigh because the bank is quiet and boring and no other kids are ever there except us with our little books that have rainbows across them at the top saying ‘Future Account’.

When I decide to save up for a bike Mummy is proud and says, ‘This is exactly what your savings account is for.’

I complain to her that Canadian kids all have bikes, but she does not see a bike as a basic need – she sees it as a **luxury.** I disagree: a bike is a **necessity** like food and water. Canadian parents don’t tell their children to save up for basics. Mummy says no: ‘A bike is a nice-to-have, not a must-have.’ This is a cultural gap that we will not **breach.**

All my friends have ten-speeds and ride their bikes to school but I walk, even though, as Mummy says, I have a ‘perfectly good bike at home.’ Mummy and Baba purchased it when we arrived in Canada, so I have had it since I was ten. Its brakes squeak, it has handlebars that turn up on either side and worst of all it has a banana seat. I am thirteen years old and my mother sees no problem with me riding around the neighbourhood looking like **Fat Albert’s** broke little sister.

I zip up my disappointment and focus on earning money so I can buy myself a new bike. I put up signs at the supermarket offering babysitting services with our house number on it and calling myself Sissy so that people aren’t put off by the name. I volunteer to do odd jobs around the house and **needle** Mummy into paying for them. I even charge Mandla for helping her with her homework but Mummy finds out and makes me give it back. I am desperate for this new bike.

My progress towards saving for the new bike is **accelerated** when Uncle Glen comes to visit. He lives in Abidjan which I know is the capital city of the Ivory Coast because Felix Houphouet Boigny is the life president and happens to be one of Baba’s favourite **dictators.** Uncle Glen lives in the country Boigny rules. He works there in a fancy job at the African Development Bank and he is in Ottawa for a conference.

He comes over for dinner and as he greets us he gives us each fifty dollars. Fifty dollars. Queen Elizabeth stares at each of us **serenely** from the middle of each of the clean rose-coloured notes. The Canadian parliament, which I visited on a school trip, looms behind the Queen, ominous and even more **rega**l than she is. I look over at Mandla and Zeng and see they are just as **dumbfounded** as me. Mummy has to remind us to say thank you and to close our mouths.

Normally Mummy would refuse to accept the money, but Uncle Glen is her older brother so Baba will not complain that he might have **An Agenda.**

….

A week after he leaves, I deposit Uncle Glen’s money. At the bank, Mummy gives me the last thirty dollars I need and adds forty extra so that there is something left in my account after I have withdrawn the amount to pay for the bike.

The next weekend we go to the bike shop. Mummy is smiling a lot and she mentions more than once to the salesman that she wants to make sure that this is a good bike because I saved up for it myself. I am embarrassed. Her accent is too thick and she thinks he will care about some kid and her savings plan. I am wrong. The man warms to Mummy and he is impressed. He says he has been trying to teach his kids about saving but they won’t listen. He gives me a free pump and three extra months on the **warranty.**

I ride my bike to school the next morning, hunched over like a professional. I move faster than I ever have before with the wind on my face and the morning sun on my shoulders. I wait at the busy corner for Mandla and Zeng to catch up, then I speed off and wait again at the stop sign. When they get to me I tell them to hurry up and I’m off again.

At school I act like it’s no big deal. I add my bike to the rack alongside the others, and fiddle with the lock. Everyone notices though, just as I have been hoping they will. Belonging **thrums** in my veins. ( Extracts from pp.95-98)

**Word list**

**luxury** something expensive that someone wants but does not need

**necessity**  something basic that one must have to survive (e.g. water)

**breach**  break through

**Fat Albert** a cartoon character

**needle** to deliberately annoy someone

**accelerated**  made faster or quicker

**dictators** leaders who have complete power (i.e. they make all the decisions)

**serenely** calmly

**regal**  royal – looking like a king or queen

**dumbfounded**  extremely surprised

**An Agenda** these words are written with capital letters to indicate that Sisonke’s father

is concerned that people who offer his children money may want something from

them such as sexual favours

**warranty** guarantee of good quality

**thrums**  a happy combination of throbbing and humming in the blood

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on the extract from**

***Always Another Country***

1.1 In the first paragraph, what is the evidence that Sisonke’s mother behaves differently with her children than Canadian parents do? (2)

1.2 Sisonke writes that the bank is ‘quiet and boring and no other kids are ever there except us’. Which of these three is likely to be the most important reason why she dislikes going to the bank. Give a reason for your answer. (2)

2. Suggest why Sisonke’s mother would consider a bike to be a luxury rather than a necessity. (2)

3. In your own words explain why Sisonke won’t ride to school on the bike she already has. (2)

4. In the paragraph where Sisonke describes her baby sitting notice, what evidence is there that people in the local community may be racists? (2)

5. Suggest why Sisonke describes the fifty dollar note in such detail. (2)

6. At the bike shop, suggest how Sisonke’s mother feels after talking to the salesman. Give a reason for your answer. (2)

7. When she describes riding her new bike to school for the first time, quote words that show that Sisonke was very happy. (2) 8. Explain why Sisonke would want to act as though her new bike ‘was no big deal’? (2) It is important to her to act like a ‘cool’ teenager. (2)

8. The final two sentences ‘speak’ of what Sisonke thinks she has achieved. In your own words describe this achievement. (2)

(total; 20 marks)

**4.4 Similarities between the extracts from the two memoirs**

* Each is written from the perspective of a young person – a young boy in the case of Chris van Wyk and a teenage girl in the case of Sisonke Msimang. Each includes thoughts and descriptions that are appropriate to the young, such as Chris’s account of his grandmother’s fiftieth birthday and Sisonke’s description of the boredom felt by herself and her siblings at the bank.
* Each is written in the present tense to make the story of what they are remembering more vivid and immediate for readers.
* In both memoirs of childhood, the writers indicate love for their families but also some criticism of family members’ beliefs and actions (with the exception of Chris’s grandmother (ouma) who is not criticised in any way)
* Each extract ends powerfully – Chris van Wyk’s with the love / praise poem to his grandmother and Sisonke Msimang’s with the moving comment about moving from outsider (political exile without a Canadian bike ) to insider status ( she is just like the rest of her classmates now that she has a Canadian bike).
* Each includes some political or critical social comment – Chris van Wyk’s are about the advantages available only to ‘white’ people in the apartheid era; Sisonke Msimang’s focus on the Ivory Coast president being a dictator and being president for life

**4.5 Differences between the extracts from the two memoirs**

Perhaps the most obvious difference is that humour is much more evident in Chris van Wyk’s writing than in Sisonke Msimang’s – for example when he describes a family gathering ( two dozen adults laughing and one dozen babies crying). Another is that van Wyk is an insider to the social, cultural and political practices that he describes while Msimang is an outsider who, as a thirteen year old, desperately wants to ‘belong’ and to become an insider (a position that changes later in the memoir as she grows older).

**4.6 Autobiographies and biographies**

In this section, the questions in several of the activities have been included to help you to think about features of autobiographies and biographies. The section concludes with one set of examination questions on a second extract from *Long Walk to Freedom*. If you have access to the internet and are interested in listening to and viewing the first president of a democratic South Africa giving speeches, you will be able to find several of them on YouTube.

Note to editors: not sure how best to explain this.

**Activity X: Read the contents page of *Long Walk to Freedom* and answer the questions below it.**

**4.6.1 The contents page of Nelson Mandela’s autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom***

CONTENTS

*Part One*

A COUNTRY CHILDHOOD 1

*Part Two*

JOHANNESBURG 53

*Part Three*

BIRTH OF A FREEDOM FIGHTER 81

*Part Four*

THE STRUGGLE IS MY LIFE 123

*Part Five*

TREASON 171

*Part Six*

THE BLACK PIMPERNEL 229

*Part Seven*

RIVONIA 269

*Part Eight*

ROBBEN ISLAND: THE DARK YEARS 331

*Part Nine*

ROBBEN ISLAND: BEGINNING TO HOPE 391

*Part Ten*

TALKING WITH THE ENEMY 445

*Part Eleven*

FREEDOM 487

*INDEX* 545

To introduce readers to this long book, Holloway et al (1999) ask a series of questions. In your journal write an answer to each one.

1. Which chapters do you think deal with Mandela’s personal life?

2. Which chapters probably deal with his political activities and experiences?

3. What aspects of his life do you think Mandela’s autobiography will choose to emphasize?

4. Why do you think the autobiography emphasizes the things it does?

5. Plan the contents page of your own autobiography. What would each of your chapters be called?

These questions and your answers indicate that a writer of an autobiography is selective: s/he chooses to write about some of his or her life story in detail, some briefly and some not at all. Below is a short extract which describes Mandela’s first attempt to write an autobiography. The first draft was lost but it was the starting point for *Long Walk to Freedom* as Mandela describes in the extract below.

**4.6.2 Extract from *Long Walk to Freedom***

**Pre-reading activity:** Writing can be hard work. Who or what do you think would encourage you to write your autobiography?

**While reading activity:** Try to identify features of the extract that are typical of autobiographical writing.

One day Kathy [Ahmed Kathrada], Walter [Sisulu] and I were walking in the courtyard when they suggested that I ought to write my memoirs. Kathy noted that the perfect time for such a book to be published would be on my sixtieth birthday. Walter said, that such a story, if told truly and fairly, would serve to remind people of what we had fought and were still fighting for. He added that it could become a source of inspiration for young freedom fighters. The idea appealed to me, and during subsequent discussions I agreed to go ahead. …

We created an assembly line to process the manuscript. Each day I passed on what I wrote to Kathy, who reviewed the manuscript, and then read it to Walter. Kathy then wrote their comments in the margins. Walter and Kathy never hesitated to criticize me, and I took their suggestions to heart, often incorporating their changes. This marked-up manuscript was then given to Laloo Chiba, who spent the next night transferring my writing to his own almost microscopic shorthand, reducing ten pages of foolscap to a single small piece of paper. It would be Mac’s [Maharaj] job to smuggle the manuscript to the outside world. …

I wrote rapidly, completing a draft in four months. I did not hesitate over choosing a word or phrase. I covered the period from my birth through the Rivonia Trial, and ended with some notes about Robben Island.

I relived my experiences as I wrote about them. Those nights, as I wrote in silence, I could once again experience the sights and sounds of my youth in Qunu and Mqhekezwini; the excitement and fear of coming to Johannesburg; the tempests of the Youth League; the endless delays of the Treason Trial; the drama of Rivonia. It was like a waking dream and I attempted to transfer it to paper as simply and truthfully as I could. (pp. 415-416)

**4.6.3 Commentary on features of this example of autobiographical writing**

You were asked to try to identify features of autobiographical writing in the extract you have just read. While you read comments on this extract written by Holloway et al (1999), notice whether some of the features you identified are similar to what they comment on.

‘Firstly, the writing is done for a purpose. There is an underlying intention. In this case, Mandela’s purpose in recording his life story was to remind people of the struggle for political liberation and to inspire a younger generation of freedom fighters. Given the purpose of the autobiography, it is not surprising that the text focuses more on public events and policies and less on the private thoughts and experiences of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

A second aspect of autobiographical writing revealed here is that writing is a selective process. In the case of an autobiography and in ‘memoirs’ especially, writing relies on memory. The writer writes about what he or she remembers of the past. In the case of *Long Walk to Freedom*, the autobiography is a recollection of Mandela’s past. It is also a selective portrayal of that past from his point of view. This raises interesting questions about whether autobiographies should be accepted as being absolutely true or not. People find it difficult to escape their personal preferences and biases. An autobiography may be factual because it records events which really happened. But it is, and has to be, a subjective interpretation of events. Other people might see and react to the same events in different ways.

Mandela’s autobiographical writings were also edited and commentedon by Walter Sisulu and Ahmed Kathrada before being finalized. This process suggests that the final text was carefully shaped or made. Autobiographies are not simply spontaneous stories about somebody’s life. They are stories in which the author deliberately selects and arranges events in order to encourage the reader to see those events in particular ways.

It is impossible for an autobiography to encapsulate [summarise] a whole life by telling every single detail about a person. Life is too complex and varied to permit a record of every detail. We do not remember all the events of our life with equal clarity. We do not necessarily understand ourselves fully. Also, we never full understand the meaning, significance and implications of our interactions with others. Finally, we may find it difficult to speak about certain things – especially those of a deeply personal or traumatic nature – in a direct way. The act of writing an autobiography is the act of reliving the past, in terms of both its joy and its pain.

In *Long Walk to Freedom* readers are aware that certain aspects of Mandela’s life, are emphasized at the expense of others . Although this autobiography is a thorough account of Mandela’s life, the feelings of the inner, private person are usually concealed. Thus, while the autobiography documents hardship and struggle, it only hints at the author’s inner feelings. The ‘I’ that narrates is often emotionally distant, even though this is his life story told by him. Personal feelings and inner anguish are partly concealed by focusing on the details of outer events and actions.’ (pp. 42-43)

**For examination preparation, read and answer questions on a second extract from *Long Walk to Freedom* in which personal feelings are more evident.**

**Activity X: Read a second extract from *Long Walk to Freedom* and write**

**a response to each question on this extract**

**Background to the extract**

When Nelson Mandela first came to Johannesburg as a young man, he found accommodation in the backyard room of a house in Alexandra that belonged to the Xhoma family. Read about his feelings for one of the Xhoma daughters and then answer the questions that follow this extract from pages 69 to 71 of his autobiography.

**The extract from *Long Walk to Freedom***

The Xhoma family had five daughters, each of them lovely, but the loveliest of all was named Didi. Didi was about my age and spent most of the week working as a domestic worker in a white suburb of Johannesburg. When I first moved to the house, I saw her only seldom and **fleetingly**. But later, when I **made her acquaintance** properly, I also fell in love with her. But Didi barely took any notice of me, and what she did notice was the fact that I owned only one patched-up suit and a single shirt, and that I did not present a figure much different from a **tramp.**

Every weekend Didi returned to Alexandra. She was brought home by a young man whom I assumed was her boyfriend, a flashy, well-to-do fellow who had a car, something that was most unusual. He wore expensive, double-breasted American suits and wide-brimmed hats, and paid a great deal of attention to his appearance. He must have been a gangster of some sort, but I cannot be sure. He would stand outside in the yard and put his hands in his waistcoat and look altogether superior. He greeted me politely, but I could see that he did not regard me as much competition.

I **yearned** to tell Didi I loved her, but I was afraid that my **advance**s would be unwanted. I was hardly a **Don Juan.** Awkward and hesitant around girls, I did not know or understand the romantic games that others seemed to play effortlessly. On weekends, Didi’s mother would sometimes asked her to bring out a plate of food to me. Didi would arrive on my doorstep with the plate and I could tell that she simply wanted to perform her errand as quickly as possible, but I would do my best to delay her. I would query her opinion on things, all sorts of questions, ‘Now, what standard did you **attain** in school?’ I would say. Standard five she would say. ‘Why did you leave?’ I asked. She was bored, she replied. ‘Ah, well, you must go back to school,’ I said. ‘You are about the same age as I am,’ I continued, ‘and there is nothing wrong with returning to school at this age. Otherwise you will regret it when you are old. You must think seriously about your future. It is nice for you now because you are young and beautiful and have many admirers, but you need to have an independent profession.’

I realize that these are not the most romantic words that have ever been **uttered** by a young man to a young woman with whom he was in love, but I did not know what else to talk to her about. She listened seriously, but I could tell that she was not interested in me, that in fact she felt a bit superior to me.

I wanted to **propose** to her but I was unwilling to do so unless I was certain she would say yes. Although I loved her, I did not want to give her the satisfaction of rejecting me. I kept up my pursuit of her, but I was timid and hesitant. In love, unlike politics, caution is not usually a **virtue**. I was neither confident enough to think that I might succeed nor secure enough to bear the sense of failure if I did not.

I stayed at that house for about a year, and in the end, I uttered nothing about my feelings.

**Word list**

**fleetingly** very briefly

**made her acquaintance** met someone for the first time

**tramp** a homeless person, moving from place to place

**yearned**  wanted very much to do something

**advances** attempts to start a relationship with someone

**Don Juan** the original Don Juan was a famous seducer of women

**attain** achieve or complete

**uttered**  spoken

**propose**  ask someone to marry you

**virtue** a good quality

1. In the first paragraph of this extract Mandela sets the scene for discussing a relationship that never happened. Describe the main difference between Mandela and Didi that he tells his readers about in this paragraph. (2)

2.1 According to Mandela, what did Didi notice about him? (2)

2.2 Suggest why Mandela gives such a detailed description of the young man who brought Didi home each weekend. (2)

3. Do you agree with Mandela that he did not know how to engage in romantic conversation? Use information from the extract to give a reason for your answer. (2)

4. What do Mandela’s conversations with Didi tell readers about his values? (2)

5. Suggest why Didi may have felt superior to Mandela at the time that he wrote about her.(2)

6. Mandela suggests that is a good idea to be cautious in politics but not in love. Do you agree or disagree with him about each of these (be cautious in politics; don’t be cautious in love)? Give reasons for your answers. (2 + 2)

7. Mandela tells readers why he did not propose to Didi. From what you know of his later life, would you say that how he thought about himself and how others thought about him would have stayed the same or changed? Give a reason for your answer. (2)

8. The extract comes to a definite conclusion in its final sentence, signalling to the reader that Mandela will now move on to write about other things that happened to him or actions that he took. Suggest a title for the extract that you have just read. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**4.6.4 A short biography of Luvo Manyonga**

Unlike an autobiography which is written about the author’s own life, a biography is written by one or more authors about someone else’s life. The biography of a South African long jump athlete that you are about to read has been slightly adapted from an entry in Wikipedia.



Note to editors: not sure if this is a copyrighted image so please check

**Activity X: Identify the differences between the style and content of a short biography and extracts from an autobiography and two memoirs**

While you read, make notes in your journal about the ways in which the writing in this biography differs from the writing in the extracts from Nelson Mandela’s autobiography and the extracts from Chris van Wyk’s and Sisonke Msimang’s memoirs. When you have finished, compare your notes with those in the Answer Key at the end of Theme Four.

**Luvo Manyonga**

Luvo Manyonga, who was born on 8 January 1991, is a South African track and field athlete who specialises in the long jump. His personal best jump of 8.65 metres was achieved in Potchefstroom in 2017. He was the Olympic Games silver medallist in 2016.

He was the African Games champion in 2011 and the runner up at the 2016 African Championships in Athletics. Manyonga represented South Africa at the 2011 World Championships in Athletics, placing fifth. He was world junior champion in 2010 and world champion in 2017. In the 2018 Commonwealth Games held in Gold Coast , Australia, he won the men’s long jump title.

*Early life and career*

Manyonga was raised in Mbekweni township in Paarl, a city in the far south-west of South Africa. His father John, a fork-lift truck driver, was largely absent, leaving Manyonga to be raised by his mother Joyce, a domestic cleaner. He took part in local track and field competitions and his talent for long jump was soon identified. A local coach, Mario Smith, was surprised by the young man’s ability and immediately set about supporting Manyonga towards a professional career.

Manyonga had his first international success at the 2009 African Junior Athletics Championships. Travelling to Mauritius, he jumped 7.49 metres for the bronze medal. He ended that year with a long jump best of 7.65 metres as well as a triple jump of 15.54 metres.

A breakthrough came the year after when he jumped 8.19 metres to win at the Weltklasse in Germany. This jump was in the top ten all-time by an under-20 athlete at that point. He delivered on that performance with a gold medal at the 2010 World Junior Championships, becoming only the second African to win a horizontal jumps medal at the competition (after fellow South African Godfrey Khotso Mokoena). Seeing his progress, he set himself targets to qualify for the 2010 Commonwealth Games and 2012 London Olympics.

*Africa Games champion*

He arrived on the senior international scene in the 2011 season. Competing in Finland that July he cleared a personal best of 8.26 metres which ranked him in the top 15 in the world that year. He qualified to represent South Africa at the 2011 World Championships in Athletics – one of two South Africans competing, alongside Godfrey Khotso Mokoena. He jumped 8.04 metres to make the final while reigning world silver medallist Mokoena failed to progress. Manyonga opened the final with a jump of 8.21 metres, which was his best of the competition and brought him fifth place at his first major competition.

Two weeks later he appeared at the All-Africa Games and defeated former champions Ignisious Gaisah and Ndis Kaba Badji to take the gold medal. He was runner-up at the DecaNation in his last top level performance of the year.

*Tik use and doping suspension*

Manyonga opened his 2012 season with a jump of eight metres on the national Yellow Pages series. However, the winnings of R80,000 that he had received from his performances the previous year disrupted his life. Family and friends came to rely on him financially and he quickly fell into debt. Coach Mario Smith began to support Manyonga’s family at his own expense so the jumper could focus on training. Around this time, Manyonga became a regular user of tik – the local variant of crystal methamphetamine commonly used in his township. He first tried the recreational drug in 2011 and had used it when outside competition (when it would not constitute a doping offence), but he gave a positive doping test in competition at a national series meet on 20 March. He waived his right to have a ‘B’ sample tested and admitted taking the drug for non-performance-enhancing reasons, resulting in his suspension from competition. He admitted he had developed an addiction in the preceding months and was admitted for drug rehabilitation.

His coach Mario Smith was his advocate at the tribunal for the doping offence. Smith argued for a reduced period of sanction, entered as mitigating factors [factors to make a penalty or punishment less severe] Manyonga’s poor family situation, use of the drug for non-enhancing reasons, and lack of education on doping matters. The prosecutor argued for a full two year ban, based on Manyonga’s admission of taking the drug though also noting that the athlete had suffered a failure of support from the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee, Athletics South Africa and Stellenbosch Athletics Club, despite being one of the country’s best Olympic athletes. The tribunal set a slightly reduced 18 months suspension as the punishment and in summation stated that “There can be no disputing that the Athlete is at fault …but the exceptional social circumstances that many black athletes encounter in South Africa cannot be ignored.”

Manyonga began working with John McGrath, an Irishman and strength training coach, in 2014. Planning a return to action, Smith sent paperwork to the national athletics body for entry to the 2014 Commonwealth Games. This was not processed correctly and ultimately Manyonga did not compete. Smith died during that year in a car accident while on the way to visit his athlete in Mbekweni. Manyonga’s life took a turn for the worse and he missed his coach’s memorial having come across some friends taking tik en route. Following this, the National Olympic Committee president Gideon Sam visited the athlete’s family home. Shocked by his situation, Sam arranged for the Committee to pay for training and accommodation at University of Pretoria’s High Performance Centre. Manyonga reacted positively, saying ‘I decided I can’t take it anymore in Cape Town because that is where I hook myself up with the devil.” He began training again full-time in mid-2015.

*Return to track*

Having missed four outdoor seasons since 2012, Manyonga returned to professional track competition in 2016. His talent had not dimmed and he cleared a world-leading and personal best distance of 8.30 metres in Pretoria in March. He faltered at the South African Athletics Championships, mistiming his jumps and ending in thirteenth place. He was back over 8 metres on hi IAAF Diamond League debut at the Golden Gala, then claimed his first senior medal in almost five years at the 2016 African Championships in Athletics in Durban through a wind-assisted 8.23. This made it a South African 1-2-3 as Manyonga was runner-up to Rushwahl Samaai.

He entered the 2016 Rio Olympics ranked in the world’s top ten jumpers. In the Olympics he was in the top four throughout the competition, leaping into the lead with his fifth round 8.37 metres. He was surpassed by Jeff Henderson’s final leap of 8.38 to take the silver medal.

Manyonga won gold at the 2017 World Championships in London, jumping 8.48 metres.

Manyonga continued a great run of form by winning the gold medal at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, jumping a games record of 8.41 metres in the final.

**4.6.5 Two essay questions based on Unit 4**

(i) The two extracts from *Long Walk to Freedom* are from different time periods in Nelson Mandela’s life. In a 250-300 word essay describe the similarities and differences between the younger and older Mandela that are evident in the two extracts.

(ii) Chris van Wyk and Sisonke Msimanga each describe events from their childhood. Write a 250-300 word essay in which you discuss the similarities and differences between the descriptions of childhood in the two extracts. (Refer to sections 4.4 and 4.5 of this unit to help you to write the essay.)

**Reflection on Unit 4**

In this unit you have read extracts from two memoirs, one autobiography and one biography. What did you notice about the differences between these non-fiction texts and the short stories that you read in Unit 3? Which extract in Unit 4 did you enjoy most and why?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **UNIT 5** | Reading and writing reviews |

#### 5.1 Introduction

In Theme 3 you learned about multimodal texts. Each day, all over the world, new multimodal texts appear on large and small screens (e.g. films, videos, television programmes), at performance venues (e.g. theatres, concert stages, parks), in art galleries, in bookshops, in the street (e.g. street theatre) and on radio. How can people find out about texts that they might be interested in viewing, listening to or reading? Many newspapers and magazines have a section in which new texts, or sometimes new productions of ‘old’ texts (e.g. performances of one of Shakespeare’s plays or of some traditional African praise poems) are reviewed by people who are knowledgeable about a particular genre (type) of text (e.g. plays, films, books, paintings). Some reviews are available on the internet and there are also television and radio programmes which focus on reviews of texts.

A review is both a report and an argument – it provides information about the text and it also states the reviewer’s opinion of the text, supported by his or her reasons for this opinion.

**Learning outcomes**

After completing this unit you should be able to:

* identify features of a review of a film, television of radio programme /series, play or book
* evaluate reviews
* write reviews

**Activity X: Tell someone about your favourite film, or television or**

**radio programme, or play, or music, or book, or art**

**exhibition, or concert, explaining why it is your**

**favourite**

In doing this activity you probably gave some details about the content and the ‘performers’ (e.g. actors, musicians, writers, artists) and reasons why what you chose is your favourite.

**5.2 Features of reviews of films, television or radio programmes/series or plays**

In general, reviewers have two purposes: (i) to inform their readers or listeners and (ii) to persuade them to agree with the viewpoint of the reviewer.

What kinds of information they include will vary according to the genre of the text. The following are likely to be included in a **review of a film or television or radio programme/series or a play:**

* the director’s name
* the main actors
* when (and sometimes where) the film / series was made
* a summary of the storyline
* information about special features (e.g. music, camera work, lighting, sound effects)
* who is likely to enjoy the film or series or play

In order to persuade readers or listeners to agree with their viewpoint, reviewers use a number of techniques such as:

* asking questions to which they then give answers (e.g. Why is this film so popular?)
* sometimes writing in the first person (e.g. ‘I didn’t want the film to end’)
* using adjectives (This scary, shocking film …)
* sometimes including informal language ( This is a must-see)
* expressing opinions (The film of the year!)

**Activity X: Read a film review and identify features from the list**

**above that are included in it**

Note to editors: This review appears on p. 117 of Brennan et al, 2013. *Focus on English FAL, Grade 12*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman so there could be a copyright issue but it’s such an excellent example that I’d really like to use it. I’m not using the activities from the textbook that go with it

**Thumbs-up for Otelo Burning**

This local production, directed by Sara Blecher, is an unusual coming-of-age film that will appeal to a wide audience. The action takes place around Lamontville, a poor, coastal township in KwaZulu-Natal during the late 1980s. Although this period was characterised by political turmoil and violence, the film is not a political drama.

The story focuses on the lives of three teenage boys, Otelo, Ntwe and New Year, who are introduced to the sport of surfing. Initially they are reluctant, but soon it becomes fascinating and alluring. Surfing takes them away from the harsh reality of poverty, and allows them to experience a new kind of freedom. It is not just about the freedom of being in the ocean; it is about achieving personal goals, overcoming fears and challenging conventions, all of which lead to a feeling of personal empowerment. As the story unfolds, the characters have their own personal struggles to deal with.

The director has created an authentic film by casting local actors and keeping the film in isiZulu. Jafta Mamobolo gives a particularly fine performance as Otelo. The cinematography is most impressive, with superb surfing shots that allow the audience to experience their own real sense of freedom from their cinema seats.

**Activity X: Write a review of a film or television or radio programme/**

**series or a play**

Write a review which includes the following:

* the title, and, if known, the director
* a summary of the content of the film / programme / series/ play
* what you particularly liked about it (e.g. the acting, the story, the music used; the ideas expressed in it) and why
* anything that disappointed you about it and why
* your overall opinion of the film/ programme/series/play

Give your review a title

**5.3 Features of book reviews**

* Often the review has a title which states something that the reviewer thinks is important about the book.
* The reviewer’s name is usually given at the beginning or end of the review.
* Usually the review includes a brief summary of aspects of the story and its main characters (fiction) or information (non-fiction).
* Sometimes other books by the same author are referred to in the review.
* The reviewer expresses his or her judgement of the book
* At the bottom the review the following information is usually given: the title of the book, the author’s name,. the company that published the book and sometimes the price of the book.

**An example of a book review**

You have read one of Tim Winton’s short stories, *A Blow, A Kiss*. What you are about to read is a review of his most recent novel, *The Shepherd’s Hut.*

**Pre-reading activity:** The review is titled *Forgiveness in an unforgiving landscape.* Predict what the novel is about.

**While reading activity:** See how many of the features of book reviews, listed above, you can find in the review. Also note the explanation of words that may be new to you in the Word list that follows the review.

There are some post-reading questions based on the review to help you to understand its features. Make sure you have understood the words in the Word list before you attempt to answer them.

**Note:** You would not be expected to write such a long review for assessment purposes.

***Forgiveness in an unforgiving landscape***

A boy finds **redemption** with a disgraced priest in a magnificent new novel by Tim Winton writes **Michele Magwood**

In Tim Winton’s 2017 memoir, *The Boy Behind the Curtain*, he describes his upbringing in an **evangelical** church. His parents were latecomers to religion, joining the church only after Winton’s father, a traffic cop, nearly died in an accident. They made up for lost time. The author remembers the twice-on-Sundays “no-frills, bare-knuckled” services where they bellowed hymns “Until we saw spots and our limbs tingled.” But mostly he remembers the **epic** sermons.

“It was church that taught me the beauty and power of language,” he writes. “Recited and declaimed from the pulpit week after week and year after year, these stories and their **cadences** were deeply imprinted.”

It was here, too, that Winton became aware of the notions of grace and redemption, faith, sacrifice and mercy. Though his books are never **overtly** religious, these are **recurring** themes in his writing, gleaming just under the surface.

Another of his **overriding** themes is masculinity, especially in the form of young, damaged **proto-men** who he sends on physical or **metaphysical** journeys. And in every one of his books the landscape is **paramount**, less a backdrop than a character in itself.

In *The Shepherd’s Hut* all of these themes are **rendered down** into a **hot ingot of a story**, **forged** **by elemental forces** as **blinding as the saltpans** in which it is set but utterly **transcendent**. This is **ur-Winton.**

Jaxie Clackton is just 15, a rough, punching, furious boy whose whole life has been one of loss and pain. His mother has died, as if in final self-defence against the endless beatings of her drunken husband, the local butcher in their fly-blown, one-pub West Australian town. With her gone, “Captain Wankbag” as Jaxie calls him, turns his fists onto his son. There is only one good thing in Jaxie’s life, his love for Lee, the only one who understands him. But Lee is his cousin, their love is **taboo.** Broken and barely surviving in a community that turns a blind eye to his **predicament**, Jaxie prays to God to “kill this c\*\*t off once and for all.”

But when his father is, indeed, killed off in an accident of his own making, Jaxie knows he will be blamed for it. Gathering a few **provisions** he flees to the bush. He has no plan other than to hide and eventually reach Lee hundreds of kilometres away.

From the arresting opening paragraph we know he will make it out: When I hit the bitumen and get that smooth grey rumble going under me everything’s hell different. Even with the engine working up a howl and the wind flogging in the window the sounds are real soft and pillowy. Civilised I mean. And that’s hectic. But when you’ve hoofed it like a dirty goat all these weeks and months, when you’ve had the stony slow prickle-up hard country right in your face that long it’s bloody sudden. Some crazy shit, I tell you. Brings on this angel feeling. Like you’re just one arrow of light.”

Deep in the wilderness, when he is half-starved and **hallucinatory** “Burred up and narky as a **feral** cat,” Jaxie stumbles upon an old man in a hut on the edge of a salt lake.

This is Fintan MacGillis, a disgraced Irish priest, cast out by the church. He is no abuser, though; he is more of an **ascetic**, an **anchorite**, and the reference to John the Baptist is clear. He feeds Jaxie, clothes him, bathes and restores him. The boy is **leery** of him and rude. They have to learn to trust each other but they settle into a **fitful** companionship. …

Gradually Jaxie sheds his spikes and begins to alter. The brutal landscape shapes him too. He becomes **minutely attuned** to nature and stripped to the core of his young being. MacGillis sees something in him, a base material of goodness. “When you do right, when you do good,” he tells Jaxie, “well, then you are an instrument of God. Then you are joined to the divine, to the life force, to life itself.”

And an instrument of God is what he becomes when the **narrative** **erupts** in a hideous violence. Jaxie will be tested beyond what he could ever have imagined.

“At that moment “All the birds landed. All the decent things in him landed. On me. On my head. And I knew where I was, and who I was, and what I was. Yes, what I am. And it was just like he said. What I laughed at him for. It was like the sun and the moon going through me. I was charged.”

Everything of Winton lands in this book, his **preoccupations** and **perceptiveness**, and his **matchless** writing.

**Harrowing** but tender, it is **profoundly charged.**

(Sunday Times, 5 August, 2018)

**Word list**

**redemption**  saved from something bad

**evangelical** keen to share religious beliefs with others

**epic** very lengthy and exciting

**cadences** patterns of sound

**overtly** openly

**recurring** repeating

**over-riding** dominant or main

**proto-men** adolescent males

**metaphysical** concerned with the nature of truth and life

**paramount** most important

**rendered down** broken down

**hot ingot of a** story precious metals are heated and formed into blocks called ingots so

the reviewer is describing a very precious or special story

**forged by elemental** forces forces of nature and people’s characters contribute to the

development of the story

**blinding as the** saltpans pans of dried salt are flat and white and when the sun shines on

them the light is blinding

**transcendent**  unlimited

**ur-Winton** Winton, the author, at his best as a writer

**taboo** forbidden

**predicament**  serious problem or difficulty

**provisions** supplies (e.g. food and water)

**hallucinatory** in a state of imagining what is not there

**feral**  wild or untamed

**ascetic** living a very simple life with no physical comforts

**anchorite** a hermit, living on his own away from others

**leery**  wary or suspicious

**fitful**  irregular, not continuous

**minutely** attuned closely in tune with

**narrative erupts** story ‘explodes’

preoccupations what one thinks about most

**perceptiveness** ability to notice things carefully

**matchless** the best – not able to be matched by others

**harrowing** shocking and upsetting

**profoundly charged** deeply emotional, full of feeling

**Activity X: Write a response to each question on a review of *The***

***Shepherd’s Hut***

1. Quote one phrase from the beginning of the review and one phrase from the end of the review which tell readers that the reviewer really likes this book.

2. Suggest why the reviewer begins with a brief description of some of the content in one of Tim Winton’s earlier books.

3. What does the reviewer consider to be two of the main themes in many of Tim Winton’s novels, and also themes in *The Shepherd’s Hut*?

4. What impression of the two main characters does the reviewer give readers?

5. Does the reviewer tell the whole story of the novel? Quote from the review to support your answer.

6. In her praise of *The Shepherd’s Hut* the reviewer personifies the book in her description of it. Quote an example of personification and explain what it means to you.

**Activity X: Write a review of a fiction or non-fiction text**

1. Choose a text you have read recently that you would like to review. It could be a novel, a short story, a magazine article, an anthology or even a book you’ve used to help you study. In other words, it could be fiction or non-fiction. It could also be a book you enjoyed, did not enjoy or had mixed feelings about.

2. Start off with a clean page and write down all the ideas that come into your mind when you think of the text you have chosen to review. Here are some questions to make you think and get you started:

* + How did you feel when you read it?
  + Did you learn something?
  + Did it make you laugh or cry?
  + Did it have a message for you?

3. Think about your audience. Your task is to write a review for a magazine for other learners. Your audience could be learners or adults with jobs and families. When you write make sure you keep the audience’s interest in mind.

4. Your aim is to tell the readers about the text you have chosen. You could persuade them that it’s a terrible or excellent text or explain why you have mixed feelings about it.

5. Remember that a review must provide readers with:

* + information about the text, for example, what it is about, who wrote it, who is likely to enjoy it, etc.
  + the title of the text, the author, the publisher and date of publication.
  + opinions about the text, for example, how enjoyable, interesting, useful or relevant it is; disappointing aspects of the text.

6. Write in the present tense

7. Include some quotations from the text to give readers of the review a taste of the content of the

text.

8. Write your name next to or underneath the title of your review.

9. Edit the draft review and then write a final version. WORD COUNT?

**Reflections on Theme Four**

This has been a long theme in which you have read and responded to many texts, written in a range of genres. There have been numerous opportunities for you to extend your vocabulary and to express your own views on the texts. To conclude the course think about the following:

* Which text or activity have you enjoyed most and why?
* What do you consider to be your greatest learning achievement? Why?
* What, if anything, do you still find difficult about reading, writing or speaking English?

**Answer key for selected activities in Theme 4 and for the examination practice tasks**

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *An African Thunderstorm* by David Rubadiri**

1. These verbs suggest that the wind is getting stronger as the storm approaches and that it is affecting objects on the ground. (2)

2. A plague of locusts (a type of insect) usually eats all the vegetation in its path. It is destructive, just as this wind could be destructive. (2)

3. The crowds are heavy with rain as a pregnant woman is heavy with child. (2)

4.1 The clouds are compared to the ‘sinister dark wings’ of birds perching on hills. (1)

4.2 The simile suggests that the clouds are low and dark and likely to bring rain. However, it is not clear why the poet has used the word sinister because this word usually describes something bad or evil. Perhaps only the children are delighted about the rain and the adults are fearful of the power of the coming storm.(2)

5. They suggest to the reader the quick movements of children and adults as they prepare to cope with the storm. (2)

6. 1 onomatopoeia. (1)

6.2 They describe the noise of the thunder. (2)

7. Pelting rain is very heavy rain that strikes the ground hard. When soldier march, they move forward steadily. Pelting march suggests that the rain is going to keep falling heavily for some time. (2)

8. Perhaps the poet is describing a community in which men have had to leave their families in order to find work far away in mines or on farms or in cities. (2)

9. It is not clear how the poet feels about thunderstorms. His descriptions are mainly about the destructive power of the storm even though it brings rain which is likely to be much needed. (2) NOTE: other answers could be given as long as they are supported with a reason.

(20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on Dawn by Joseph Kumbiriri**

1. cocks crowing; Venus, the morning star, appears (2)

2.1 A blood orange is a fruit which has an orange coloured skin but the flesh inside is red in colour – almost the colour of blood (2)

2.2 One response could be: It is an effective description because the sun is round and red-coloured as its rises. Another response could be: It is not an effective description because blood suggests violence and the poet is describing a peaceful morning.(2) NOTE: The important point is that your answer must relate to the poem and you must give a reason for your point of view.

3. shrivels (1)

4. The dew steams because of the warmth of the sun on it and the hearth smokes because a fire has been lit in it. (2)

5. At the beginning of a new day the sun shines very brightly and so pristine (new) and brilliantly (very brightly) are appropriate choices of descriptive words. (1)

6.1 ‘the great sun appears like a large and glittering forehead’ (1)

6.2 It is an effective comparison because a person’s forehead is fairly round and if it is freshly washed and shining, it sparkles like the sun. OR It is not an effective comparison because a person’s forehead is not entirely round and is not likely to glitter. (2)

7. A child’s head could look polished if the hair had been shaved off and skin cream or Vaseline rubbed into it. (2)

8. The poet suggests that in this community people relate closely to nature. (2) They get up when the sun rises and they go to bed or at least relax quietly when the sun sets. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *Poem for my mother* by Jennifer Davids**

1. The mother is washing clothes. It appears that she earns her living as a washerwoman or laundry worker. (2)

2 The poet writes ‘your blue-ringed gaze/scanning the page once looking over my shoulder/and back at the immediate dirty water’. These lines suggest the mother just glanced at the poem and did not read it carefully. (2)

3. The way the mother’s hands look is being compared to the way the dark and dried-up skin of a granadilla fruit looks. (1) This tells the reader that the mother’s hands have suffered from being so often in water and for so long as she does other people’s washing. (2)

4.1 ‘my words / slid like a ball / of hard blue soap / into the tub’ (1)

4.2 In this simile the poet’s words are being compared to a ball of soap which drops into the water where words can no longer be seen or heard. The simile helps readers to understand that the daughter feels that her mother has no interest in her poem. (2)

5. ‘Blue-ringed gaze’ suggests that the mother has blue shadows around her eyes. These could be either from tiredness because she works so hard or perhaps, worse, that she has bruises because she is an abusive relationship and has been physically beaten. (2)

6.1 The mother says ‘a poem isn’t all there is to life’. (1)

6.2 Her words suggest that poetry is a luxury in a situation in which people have to do hard physical work in order to survive. (2)

7. The daughter feels that her mother does not value her writing – her words are not important to her mother. (2)

8. The final stanza consists of very short lines with the final line being just one word. This structure contributes to the ‘message’ that the poet’s words are disappearing into ‘nothingness’ and will be lost. (2)

9. On the one hand the poet could be narrating the story of the sad experience of her mother not valuing a poem she had written for her as a gift to her. One the other, the title could refer to her recognition and understanding of her mother’s hard life. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *Apricot jam***

1. The speaker’s mother was remembering a time in her childhood when she ate some of her mother’s home-made bread, spread with apricot jam, while in the street. A hungry child asked her for some of what she was eating and the speaker refused to share her food with this child. (4)

2. The poet means that the mother’s eyes became colourless as she moved away from the present (detached herself) and thought back to the time when she had behaved selfishly as a child. (2)

3. She adopted an unwanted child and made sure that this child had plenty to eat. (2)

4. One reason may be that ‘the child’ felt guilty about having plenty to eat when others did not (2) Another reason may be that she was not sure whether her mother really loved her or whether she had adopted her mainly to make up for having behaved selfishly in the past. (4)

5. 1 The *literal* meaning of’ the sweetness wouldn’t come’ could be that when the narrator ate some bread and jam it did not taste sweet to her. (2)

5.2 The *figurative* meaning of the ‘sweetness wouldn’t come’ could be that the narrator felt sad and therefore she could not feel positive about eating the bread and jam. (2)

6. This long sentence is the heart of the poem. It gives the mother’s reasons for her actions and the narrator / adopted child’s response. (2)

7. While eating bread with apricot jam on it is central to the ‘story of the poem, the main theme is the relationship between adopting mother and adopted child and so the title does not really indicate the theme. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *On his blindness***

**While reading activity:** Question: How does God expect me to do my writing work for Him if I can’t see? Answer: You can serve God by accepting your position in life and waiting to learn what else He would like you to do. Rhyme scheme: abba abba abba ab

**After reading activity: Correct order of summarising sentences:**

I think about how I am blind and how I cannot use my talent.

I ask God if He expects me to work when I am blind.

God doesn’t need anyone’s talents. He is great and all powerful.

They also serve who only stand and wait.

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *On His Blindness***

1. He is thinking that he may live for many more years but because he has become blind, he feels as though his life is over (‘spent’). (2)

2.His talent as a writer (1) has become ‘useless’ (1) because he can no longer see to write(1). (3)

3. ‘my soul more bent/ To serve therewith my Maker’ Complete this sentence: These words mean that the narrator wishes more than ever to serve his God. (2)

4. Does God expect me to work for him each day even though I have no sight? (2)

5. When the speaker talks to Patience this is an example of the figure of speech called personification. (1)

6. Think about the theme of the whole poem and then suggest why Milton chose the name Patience for the speaker’s imaginary conversation with God’s representative. (2)

7. God wants each person to accept any small (mild) restrictions on his or her freedom (yoke) and to cope with them as well as possible. (2)

8. According to the poem, it is possible to serve God by being still and waiting for His instructions about what He would like you to do. (2)

9.1 The theme or message of this poem is that God wants everyone to accept that people’s lives will be very different. Some will be very active and others will be quiet and still but all can serve God well. (2)

9.2 This is a personal response question to which answers may depend partly on whether you believe in God or whether you believe that people should either accept or challenge their situation in life. (2)

(total: 20)

**Activity X: Answers to question on *Dreams***

1.1 It means to hold on tightly and not let go. (2)

1.2 By writing ‘hold fast’ the poet is ordering readers take a particular action. (1)

1.3 The poet want to make sure that readers will not give up on their dreams because if they do their lives will become much less interesting. (2)

2. Most readers are likely to answer that it is a powerful comparison because a broken-winged bird has a very limited life, as do people who have given up on achieving their dreams. (3)

3. The first stanza is more hopeful because it includes the word ‘if’ which suggests that dreams my not die. The second stanza is less hopeful because it states ‘when dreams go’ (i.e. they will definitely go, leaving life empty and cold. (2)

4.1 Barren usually means infertile or unable to support life or unable to grow anything’. (2)

4.2 The poet wishes to suggest how empty and meaningless life without dreams would be. (3).

5.1 The poet wishes everyone to have dreams and to not give up on trying to achieve them, even in difficult circumstances because without something to hope for (dream about) life is likely to feel meaningless. (3)

5.2 This is a personal response question. While many readers are likely to agree that it important to have dreams (hopes) and to keep on trying to achieve them, some people’s circumstances make it very difficult for them to dream. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on*****My name***

1. b. apartheid era civil servants (1)

2. ‘I am from Chief Daluxolo Velayigodle of emaMpondweni

And my name is *Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa.’* (1)

OR

‘the wonderful name of my great-great-grandmothers

*Nomgqibelo Ncamisile Mnqhibisa’* (1)

3.1 The speaker has just told the bureaucrat her full name. 1)

3.2 If something is music to one’s ears, it sounds pleasing or gives pleasure.(2)

3.3 It is likely that speaker was being ironic because the long beautiful name would be difficult for him to understand and to pronounce and would thus give him an excuse to change it to something shorter and easier for him to say. (2)

3.4 alliteration (1)

4.Her name is meaningful to the speaker because it is has a long history in her family. (2)

5.1 metaphor (1)

5.2 By stating that the bureaucrat thinks the speaker’s is trash (rubbish), the poet is indicating how rude, arrogant, disrespectful and racist the bureaucrat is in his interaction with the speaker. Thus the metaphor contributes to the meaning of the poem. (2)

6.1 He gives her this name because it is easy for him to write and to say. (2)

6.2 It suggests that he has no respect for her and for her heritage. (2)

6.3 This is a personal response question but most readers are likely to be very critical of the bureaucrat and to consider him to be a racist. (2)

7. The repetition reminds readers of the importance of the speaker’s name to her and of the beauty of its sound.(1)

(total marks: 20)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *In Detention***

1. The reasons become more and more muddled and make less and less sense. (3)

2. They sound like someone telling lies and getting mixed up in his or her own lies (3)

3. This is a personal response question but most readers are likely to respond with disgust to the clumsy attempt to cover up the truth of how men and women died in detention. Your response could be explained in several ways. (3)

4. ‘He’ represents all the people (mainly men) who died in detention because of the practices of apartheid era police and prisons officers, rather than one specific individual. (2)

5. The poet has taken a very serious situation and made it appear humorous. This form of humour is sometimes called ‘gallows humour’. In your view is it appropriate for a poet to write this way about something so serious? Give reasons for your answer. (4)

(total: 15 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *We thank the women***

1. She feels very positive about herself. She is happy to ‘show off her proud form’ and her African dress. (2)

2. Who are the women to whom the narrator would sing praises? How would she decide with which women to begin? (1+1)

3. The five categories are: (i) the women who lost their lives in the struggle for freedom; (ii) the women who lost their husbands and /or children as a result of death or exile ; (iii) the ones who had the strength and cunning to overcome problems; (iv) the ones who grew food for others; (v) the ones who led political protests. (5)

4. She chooses Mama Nokukhanya Luthuli as a representative of all the other individual women and categories of women. (2)

5.Some women have to work very hard at low paid tasks such as selling fruit and vegetables or cleaning offices, some work in difficult conditions such as those who work in overcrowded hospitals, some live without their husbands in remote rural areas, with little support for their children. (3)

6. The speaker wishes that the lives of all the individual women and categories of women she has mentioned could be celebrated. (2)

7. Young women have inherited from their mothers the special qualities of queens (royal women). (2)

8. Firstly, it is a praise poem and these are usually enjoyable to perform. Features such as the lists of women’s names, the actions of women that could be performed, the repetition and the shouting of Mama Nokukhanya Luthuli’s name are all likely to contribute to enjoyment in performing this poem. (2)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *Love poem for my country***

1.1 This is a personal response question. One response is that the refrain creates the effect of a praise poem and many people would enjoy it for this reason. (2)

1.2 There are a number of images that describe birds, animals, reptiles and fish – their appearance, movement or actions; others that describe features of the landscape and finally others that describe the people of South Africa. Any two could be chosen and discussed (2)

1.3 Some readers are likely to respond positively and others are likely to suggest that the poet is overly optimistic given all the challenges that many people in South Africa face. (2)

2.1 ‘so say its valleys’; ‘so says the veld’; ‘so talk the mountains’ (3)

2.2 This is a personal response question. The poet suggests that natural features of the beautiful country can, like people, encourage us to love, to promote peace, to be joyful. Readers may agree or disagree but should give a reason for their response . (2)

3.1 The tone is one of joy or celebration or optimism: ‘Love poem for my country’; ‘we shall celebrate’ are two examples of quotations that indicate the tone. (3)

3.2 This is a personal response question. Readers may agree or disagree with the poet OR both agree and disagree, but must give a reason for their answer. (2)

4. The millions of people, with hands joined together and hope in their eyes, will be celebrating the unity of South Africa’s people and the possibilities of improved lives in the future. (2 + 2)

(20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *The Old Woman***

1.1 The image is of an old woman who is no longer able to take care of herself. She is extremely thin and her clothes and shoes are worn out. Note: These ideas could be expressed in different ways. (2)

1.2. … her whole body swayed this way and that like a thin stalk of corn in the wind (1)

Her arms were as flat as boards. (1)

2.1 In this community people are expected to hide their needs rather than tell people what is wrong and what help they need. Note: This idea could be expressed in different words. (2)

2.2 This is a personal response question. You could be awarded marks for saying that a crowd today would still be embarrassed and then explain why OR you could say they would not be embarrassed because times and cultural practices have changed so that people are not ashamed of asking for what they need (or give another explanation). (2)

3.1 The young woman did not show her face to the narrator as a mark of respect / way of showing respect to an older person and to a stranger. Note there could be other possible reasons. (2)

3.2 ‘Many people I do not know who know me, inside and out, and always it is this way, this silence.’ (2)

4.The bucket of water is precious because it is such a thoughtful gift. The family has noticed the narrator walking to the water tap and even though they have no money or food to give her, they can save her a trip to the tap. (2)

5. This is another personal response question and your answer is likely to be based on your own experiences. The important point is to give two reasons for your response. (4)

6. It is likely that the narrator means that there are people in Africa who are not rich in money or material goods such as ermine and gold-studded cloaks or even shoes, but who behave so well to others that they can be compared to gods. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *Waiting for the Lotto* by Liesel Jobson**

1. The setting is an non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Cape Town which caters for learners with a variety of special needs. It is obviously not in a wealthy area as most parents cannot afford to pay fees. The organisation seems to rely on donor funding and has applied for some funding from the national lottery. (4)

2.1 The main problem faced by the Good Hope Remedial Centre is lack of funding / money to pay for what it needs to keep running. (1)

2. 2The importance of the jingle is that it becomes apparent during the story that the NGO may have to close down if it does not obtain a grant from the national lottery. It is also possible that Suzette Coetzer will decide to leave the organisation whether it closes or not because she is so stressed / burnt out by trying to cope with insufficient resources. This situation leaves the reader concerned about the future of the children described in it. (2)

3.1 Hard-working, caring, stressed, burnt-out, frustrated, guilt-filled (because she may decide to leave the organisation) - there are other possibilities (2)

3.2 The reason would depend on the words chosen. (2)

4. This is a question to which each reader is likely to respond somewhat differently. It is likely that the writer wants readers to feel sympathy for both the children and their needs and the teacher who faces such challenges in responding to their needs. (3)

5. If a great deal of Lotto money has ‘disappeared then this reduces the chance of some money being available for the NGO and of the organisation being able to keep going. If it closes Ms Coetzer will be out of a job and that’s one reason for taking notice of the Sunday Times advertisement. (4)

6. It is not clear what she will do but given that we all have ‘a license to dream’ (i.e. permission to dream) it is possible that if she is accepted she will travel to a land of palm trees and minarets (typically found in countries such as the United Arab Emirates) to teach there. (2)

(total: 20 marks)

**Activity X: Two contrasting continuations of the story *Waiting for the Lotto***

There could be several possible continuations. Perhaps two of the more likely are the following:

(i) The Good Hope Centre gets sufficient funding from the Lotto or from other funders to keep going, to buy equipment and to employ an occupational therapist. Under these circumstances Suzanne Coetzer decides to keep working there and with more staff and resources the children are able to make greater progress.

(ii) The Centre does not get sufficient funding and Ms Coetzer accepts a well-paid position in the United Arab Emirates where teaching is much easier but where she misses Cape Town, the children and the families with whom she used to work.

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *Flight***

1. It is situated in a valley surrounded by hills and mountains (2)

2. ‘the commotion pulled us away from the rag dolls that had so occupied us but a moment before.’ (1) (In other words, young girls had been playing with their rag dolls)

3. The old man would be unlikely to catch the lone figure because the narrator says that he ‘tottered past’. This means that he could hardly walk, let alone run. (2)

4.1 ‘a lone figure darted like a hare with a pack of dogs hard on its tail.’

4.2 She suggests the young woman will win because a hare can run faster than dogs. (2)

5.1 personification (1)

5.2 The misty rain would hide the woman and make it more difficult for those chasing her to find her. (2)

6. She would have been lonely because her husband was away working on the mines. She had to work very hard for everyone in her new family. (2 + 2)

7.1 She was losing an aunt who was a good woman. (1)

7.2 She admired the young woman’s determination and independence. (2)

8. The young woman is a symbol of, or stands for, all young women who wish to change traditional practices that they see as unfair and so she is not given an individual name. (2)

(20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on Tuesday morning in the *city***

1. At the time in which the story is set, it was very unusual for people of different race groups to walk and talk together in the street. (2)

2.1 He is emphasizing the segregation or separation of people in South Africa that was the law during apartheid times. (2)

2.2 He is grinning because he is pleased that he has made the white people uncomfortable by walking and talking with a young white woman. (2)

2.3 The grin disappears because he sees the policemen taking an interest in what he is doing. (2)

3. He thinks he might run away but then he realises that there are three policemen and they are all bigger and stronger than he is so he does not do so. (2)

4. ‘A total onslaught was mounted today on Pillay’s Communist inclinations. Some of his Red fervour was lost.’ Red is the colour associated with the flag of the Russian Communists and red is the colour of the blood that spilled onto the narrator’s shirt and thus was lost, as was his support for Communism. (2)

4.2 The narrator feels humiliated and angry about the way he has been treated by the police. (2)

5. The narrator expects the young woman to feel contempt (lack of respect) for him but she does not. Instead she is concerned about him. (2)

6. This is a personal response question. For example, some readers may like the style because it helps them to feel what the narrator is feeling. Others may find it irritating because it makes the narrator seem too self-important. Note: There are other possible responses. (2)

(total: 20)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *Another Evening at the Club***

1. The surroundings are very calm and peaceful (a quiet river, trees with birds sleeping in them) but Samia is not feeling calm. She is fearful (apprehensive) about what she needs to tell her husband. (2)

2. Abboud-Bey earns a very good salary, gets a free house from the government for whom he works and has his own home in Alexandria. (2)

3. He values beautiful objects and likes to show off his ability to provide them for his wife. (2)

4.1 Abboud-Bey suggests this because Samia’s father’s real job has a low status and is an embarrassment to Abboud-Bey. He wants people to think that he is marrying the daughter of an important person. (2)

4.2 This is a personal response question but most readers would probably be critical of Abboud-Bey for being a ‘snob’, for having such superficial values and for suggesting that Samia tell a lie. (2)

5. 1 He is worried about what people will think of him and Samia and the actions they took. (2)

5. Again, this is a personal response question but most readers are likely to be critical of Abboud-Bey for failing to consider Gazia’s situation. Her reputation has been ruined and she may have been physically abused by the police. (2)

6.1 Samia realises that he controls her life and she has no freedom. (2)

6.2 She has the security of a comfortable life but she has no independence. (2)

6.2 She agrees to her husband’s request to change her clothes and to go with hm to the club. (2)

(20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on *A Blow, A Kiss***

1. They had not been successful because after they caught ten fish they buried them in the sand while they moved elsewhere to fish and then couldn’t find the place where they had buried them. ‘Despite their bad luck, Albie had enjoyed the night. …It did not matter that they had caught ten salmon and buried them in the sand for safekeeping and not found them again.’ (2)

2. Albie’s father’s response suggests that he is a kind and generous man who understands people. (2)

3.1 Personification (1)

3.2 Abie is feeling anxious because he has been left with the injured man in the darkness and he does not know what might happen. (2)

4.1 Simile. (1)

4.2 Albie is upset and concerned for the injured man. He comforts him by kissing his face. (2)

5. The mother loves her husband and son but she is also cross with them for making her worried so she will kiss them, but she will do it angrily. (2)

6. Instead of being concerned about his son’s injuries, the father of the motor cyclist shouts angrily at him. By contrast, Albie’s father is concerned to protect his son and show him that he loves him by hugging him when he thought he had been hurt and at the end of the story by putting his hand (knuckles) on Albie’s cheek. (2 + 2)

7.’“Come on, Dad. Come on, Dad. Come on, Dad.” He often prayed to his father in his absence. God, he decided, was just like his Dad, only bigger. It was easier to pray to him and hope God got the message on relay.’ OR

‘Albie felt those knuckles on his cheek still and knew, full to bursting, that was how God would touch someone.’

8. The title seems appropriate because it sums up what happened at several points in the story: anger and violent blows but also concern and tender kisses and caresses (soft touches with the hand, like kisses). (2)

(20 marks)

**Activity X: A mind map / plan for an essay question based on A Blow, A Kiss**

**Activity X: A mind map / essay plan for an essay question based on *Flight* and *Another Evening at the Club*.**

**Activity X: Answers to questions on the contents page of *Long Walk to Freedom***

1. It is difficult to be certain from the chapter titles alone, but certainly Chapter1 and probably Chapter 2 because it is only in Chapter 3 that Mandela first refers to politics.

2. It could be argued that the answer should be Chapters 3 to 7 and then 10-11. However, it could also be argued that his political activities continued while he was in prison on Robben Island and therefore the answer should be Chapters 3-11.

3. This is also a difficult question to answer, but the chapter titles suggest that the emphasis will be on his political activities.

4. Political activities have played the major role in his life and thus many of his memories are of political activity. Also, he probably expects readers to be most interested in these given that he became the first president of post-apartheid South Africa.

5. Over to you! Think about what you would like to tell others about your life.

**Answers to questions on an extract from *Shirley, Goodness and Mercy***

1. The tone is one of admiration and love (for the writer’s grandmother), but also of sadness (because his grandmother had not had a chance to learn to read). (2)

2. ‘Coloured’ people received smaller pensions than ‘white’ people. They could not eat in the same shops as ‘white’ people. (2 + 2)

3. Ouma put on her glasses and paged through the books, pretending to read them and saying which ones ‘looked nice’. (2)

4. This is a personal response question. Readers who enjoy big family gatherings with much laughter and food would probably like to have been there. Those who don’t like being crowded together or who don’t like a lot of noise may not have wanted to be at the party. (2) NOTE: The important point is to give a reason for your answer.

5. Chris’s mother gets upset because she thinks her son will have embarrassed his grandmother by asking her to read the card he had written for her. Chris is upset because he really wanted his grandmother to read what he had written for her and because he is so sad to learn that she has been pretending to read when she cannot. (2)

6. Chris is comparing his grandmother’s home to an earthly version of heaven (paradise) in which God (‘the almighty’) has very little money (‘is always broke’) but the place is still very special. (2)

7.1 Books enabled Chris to travel in his mind all over the world and to have adventures. (2)

7.2 The simile is effective because it suggests two things: the look of black words on white paper; the uselessness of coal on snow, as the coal would not be able to burn. The words on the page were useless to Chris’s grandmother because she could not make sense of them. (2)

8. In the first part of the chapter the author uses present tense to involve readers in the story as though it is happening in the present. In the poem, he is remembering special times at his grandmother’s house in the past, when he was young. In the final stanza he is thinking about his grandmother in the present, as a very old lady. (2)

(20 marks)

**Activity X: Answers to questions on an extract from *Always Another Country***

1.1 Sisonke’s mother wants her children to learn to be responsible with money by saving for the future. (2)

1.2 The fact that no other kids are in the bank is likely to be the most important because as a young teenager Sisonke wants to be where the other teenagers are. (2)

2. Sisonke’s mother had grown up in a society where a bike was a luxury and where many people walked long distances. (2)

3. Sisonke is too embarrassed to ride her old bike because it is not like the bikes of her schoolmates. (2)

4. Sisonke calls herself Sissy so that people won’t know she is African because if they did they might not hire her. This suggest that they are likely to be racists. (2)

5. It I likely that Sisonke describes the note in such detail because she is amazed to have such a ‘big’ note (i.e. one worth so much money) given to her and to her siblings. (2)

6. Sisonke’s mother is likely to feel very pleased because the salesman agrees with her and admires her for having taught her children to save money. (2)

7. ‘… hunched over like a professional. I move faster than I ever have before with the wind on my face and the morning sun on my shoulders.’ (2)

8. It is important to Sisonke to act like a ‘cool’ teenager. (2)

9. Sisonke thinks she has managed to fit in and to be like everyone else in her school. (2)

(total; 20 marks)

**Activity X: Differences between Manyonga’s biography and the extracts from an autobiography and two memoirs**

Unlike the memoirs and the extract from an autobiography that you have read, this **biography is written in the third person.** The writer begins with a short summary of Manyonga’s achievements and then goes into more detail about his life, his struggles and his achievements. With the exception of one quotation about tik and its effects, **the reader learns nothing about Manyonga’s thoughts about his family, his struggles, his achievements, what he is proud of or sad about or what has brought pleasure to his life.** The writer has chosen to present Manyonga’s family in a particular way that Manyonga may agree or disagree with and throughout the entry what is emphasized is Manyonga’s talent and achievements as an athlete. The sub-headings in this short biography emphasize what the writer thinks is important about Manyonga’s life

**Activity X: Answers to questions on a review of *The Shepherd’s Hut.***

1. ‘magnificent new novel’ / ‘arresting opening paragraph’ (beginning) and ‘matchless writing’ (end)

2. The reviewer does this because themes in these books also appear in *The Shepherd’s Hut.*

3. Two of the main themes are *‘*grace and redemption, faith, sacrifice and mercy’ (based broadly in Christianity) and masculinity (especially in relation to teenage boys)

4. Jaxie is an angry, lonely, physically self-reliant teenager who uses a great deal of foul language. Fintan MacGillis is an elderly former priest, originally from Ireland, who lives simply and self-sufficiently in the bush and who sees good qualities in Jaxie.

5.The reviewer does not tell the whole story of the novel because she states ‘… when the narrative erupts in a hideous violence. Jaxie will be tested beyond what he could ever have imagined. Thus from the review readers do not know how Jaxie will be tested.

6. ‘ tender’ is an example of personification because this word is usually used to describe the behaviour of a person who is gentle and kind. ‘profoundly charged’ is also an example of personification because it is a term used to describe a person who is deeply X

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Note: This may change as some of these terms are used elsewhere within the units.

## Glossary of terms

**abbreviation –** a shortened form of a word, e.g. ‘com’ for ‘comrade, ‘Dr’ for ‘Doctor’.

**acronym** – a word made up from the first letters of the name of something, e.g. *NASCA is National Senior Certificate for Adults*

**active voice:** a form of a sentence in which the actor (or subject) comes before the verb, which is in the active form, e.g. *The doctor (subject) examined (verb) the patient.* adjective – (part of speech) a word that describes a noun, e.g. the *sick* patient. adverb - (part of speech) a word that describes a verb, e.g. he studied *diligently.* **aesthetic** – the use of language to create something artistic, fine and beautiful **alliteration –** the use of several words together that begin with the same sound or letter, e.g. *Round the rocks the ragged rascal ran*

**allusion** – writing or speaking that mentions a subject, person, etc. indirectly, e.g. *He alluded to the president’s ill health*

**ambiguity** – a possible double meaning which may make a message unclear when used by mistake, *e.g. I am going out for the present may mean I am leaving for this time OR I am going to get a gift*

**anecdote** – a short story of based on personal experience **anti – climax** – a situation or event that is less exciting because it happens after something that was much better. In literature study anti – climax suggests that the expectations built up by the writer are deliberately disappointed.

**antonym** – a word that is opposite in meaning to another word in the same language, e.g. *tall* and *short* are antonyms.

**appreciation** – pleasure you express when you realise something is good, useful, or well done; an understanding of the importance or meaning of something **appropriate** – correct or suitable for a particular time, situation, or purpose

**assonance** – repetition of vowel sounds in two or more words, e.g. *All is in tune in the world in June* **assumptions** – something that you think is true although you have no definite proof.

**bias** – an opinion about whether something is good or bad which influences how you deal with it.

**character** – a person in a story. The way that a person is presented in a story is called characterisation. Character can also refer to a person’s personality, values and beliefs. **cognitive academic skills** – these are skills such as inferencing, synthesising and evaluating; the term *cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)* was coined by Jim Cummins to describe abstract, decontextualised,cognitively demanding language i.e. the kind of language that you would find in a science textbook

**coherent** – something which makes logical sense; a coherent paragraph has a clear development of ideas and sentences have logical links **cohesive** – a cohesive text is one which flows and has unity. It makes use of connectives, conjunctions and pronouns, which hold the text together, e.g. *Punctuation is important* ***because it*** *makes written language easier to understand.*

**colloquial** – language or words that are used mainly in informal conversations rather than in writing or formal speech, e.g. *just chuck it there* (colloquial) instead of *please place it there*

(formal) **connotation** – the meanings which a word suggests, e.g. *plump* has positive connotations such as *attractive, comfortable, cheerful*; whereas *fat* has more negative connotations**climax** – the most exciting, effective or important part of a story, which usually comes near the end.

**complex sentence –** sentence with a main clause, which can stand as a sentence on its own, and one or more subordinate clauses, e.g.*The man, who bought a second-hand car and travelled to Gauteng, is still looking for a job.*

**compound sentence** - a sentence that is made up of two main clauses joined by a conjunction, e.g. *He went to town and he bought a carton of milk.*

**conflict** – struggle that arises between characters, between characters and their circumstances or from opposing desires or values

**conjunctions -** (also called link words) words that are used to join sentences, e.g. and, but, however.

**critical language awareness –** the analysis of how meaning is constructed by those in power to maintain their position; the analysis of language forms to reveal the mechanics of power – based relationships. It empowers the learner to resist manipulation and to use language sensitively **critique** – a detailed explanation or evaluation of something such as political beliefs **denotation** – the literal or straightforward meaning of a word **denouement –** the exciting last part of a story or play **direct speech:** the exact words that a person has said. Quotation marks are used to show direct speech, e.g. “I love you,” said Thabo.

**disjunctions -** conjunctions that link two sentences by showing that they are different, e.g. but, however, nevertheless (He went to school but he was sick.) **emotive language**– language which arouses strong feelings.

**essay** – a piece of prose writing that deals with a particular topic.

* narrative essay: tells the story of an event, e.g. *The best day of my life.*
* descriptive essay: describes something by creating a picture in words, e.g. *The most beautiful season.*
* argumentative essay: presents a specific opinion or viewpoint on a topic and supports it with relevant argument, e.g. *‘Why we should reduce the speed limit in South Africa’.*
* discursive essay: presents both sides of an argument in a clear and well-balanced way, e.g. *The case for and against choosing a woman as president of South Africa.*

**euphemism** – a polite word or expression that you use instead of a more direct one to avoid shocking or upsetting someone, e.g. *Pass away* is a euphemism for *die*

**genre** – a genre is a particular kind of text written with a specific purpose and audience in mind; it has a recognisable structure and language features. Examples are: novel, drama, poetry, short stories, film, diaries, journals, academic articles, comics, etc.

**homograph** – a word that is spelled the same as another, but is different in meaning, origin, grammar, or pronunciation, e.g. the noun *record* is a homograph of the verb *record* **homonym** – a word which has both the same sound and spelling as another word but a different meaning, e.g. the noun *bear* and the verb *to bear* **homophone** – a word which sounds the same as another but is spelled differently and has a different meaning, e.g. *one* and *won*

**hyperbole –** an exaggeration, e.g. to describe something so that it appears bigger than it really is, for example, *He gave me a mountainous plate of food*.

**icon** – a small sign or picture on a page or computer screen that is used to indicate or start a particular operation or activity, e.g. *To open a new file, click on the icon.*

**impact** – the effect or influence that an event, situation etc. has on someone or something **implied –** meaning that is suggested but not directly stated, e.g. *“It’s ten o’clock” may imply that the other is late*

**infer** – to read between the lines to form an opinion about something **inference** – something that you think is true based on the information you have i**nflection –** the way your voice goes up and down when you are speaking to communicate meaning

**indirect speech** (or reported speech): when a person’s words are reported by another person, e.g. *Thabo said that he loved her.*

**intonation** – a pattern of rise and fall in the pitch of one’s voice which contributes to the meaning of sentences, e.g. questions are spoken with a rising intonation **irony** – something which is the opposite of what is expected; using words to mean the opposite of what is expected **key word searches** – these can be carried out when the text is on the internet or in the computer’s memory. The programme can be asked to search for specific words or phrases **manipulative language** is aimed at getting an influence or unfair advantage over others, e.g. in advertising or political speeches – a language (or terminology) used to talk about language, e.g. *irony, hyperbole, alliteration.*

**metaphor –** a direct comparison without using the words ‘like’ or ‘as’, e.g. *He is a rising star.*

**metre** – the arrangement of sounds in poetry into patterns of strong and weak beats. It creates rhythm **mode** – a method, way or manner in which something is presented; a way of communicating (e.g. the written mode, the spoken or oral mode, the visual mode (which includes graphic forms such as charts); information can be changed

from one mode to another (e.g. by converting a graph into a passage). There are different modes of communication: the written mode, the spoken or oral mode, the visual mode, the kinetic mode which makes use of gestures; some texts combine these modes and are therefore called *multimodal texts* **narrator -** the one who tells a story

**narrative point of view -** the point of view adopted by the narrator, e.g. first person point of view uses “I”; third person point of view uses “he, she, they”.

**nouns** (parts of speech) - people, places or things. Abstract nouns are words for ideas such as love, irony, faith. Proper nouns are names of people, places and organisations, and use capital letters, e.g. John Dube, University of Johannesburg.

**onomatopoeia** – words which sound like what they describe, e.g. a brush *swishes*, a cow *moos*

**pace** – the speed at which something happens or is done

**passive voice** (opposite of active voice): a form of a sentence in which the actor (or subject) is removed from the sentence or put at the end, e.g. The patient was examined by the doctor.

**perspective** – a way of thinking about something, especially a way of thinking which is influenced by the type of person you are or by your experiences **plot** – the way that events are arranged in a short story or novel.

**point of view** – a particular way of thinking about or judging a situation, e.g. *From an economic point of view, the new development will benefit the town greatly.* Also someone’s personal opinion or attitude about something, e.g. *I respect your point of view, but I’m not sure I agree with you.*

**prefix** – groups of letters used at the beginning of words, with certain meanings, e.g. *auto*matic, *pre*view, *mis*behave. **pronoun** – a word that replaces the noun, e.g. she, he, it, we they.

**proofread** – the last step in the writing process before submitting, where you carefully read and check for errors. **pun –** a play on words, e.g. *Seven days without water makes a person weak.*

**referencing - a list indicating where information comes from, e.g. He included a list of references at the end of his essay.**

**reflect** – to think carefully about something, or to say something that you have been thinking about **refrain** – part of a song or poem that is repeated, especially at the end of each verse **register –** the words, style and grammar used by speaker and writers in different contexts or situations, e.g. official documents are written in a bureaucratic register, legal documents are written in a legal register **resolution** – when a problem or difficult situation in a story, play or novel is solved **rhetorical question** – a question that is asked for emphasis or dramatic effect rather than to get an answer, e.g. *Do you know how lucky you are?*

**rhythm** – a regular and repeated pattern of sounds, e.g. of strongly and weakly stressed syllables **rising action** – in the early part of a play, novel, story or film one or more conflicts are developed. Because of the increased sense of conflict the action is said to be ‘rising’ towards a climax.

**sarcasm –** speaking or writing using expressions which clearly mean the opposite of what is felt in order to be unkind of offensive in an amusing way, e.g. saying to someone who has arrived at a meeting very late, *So good of you to* *come.*

**scan** – to run one’s eyes over a text in order to find specific information, e.g. you scan a telephone directory for a name and number, or a timetable for the time of a train or bus **skim** – to read a text very quickly to get an overview, e.g. skim the newspaper headlines for the main news

**simile –** an indirect comparison using the words ‘like’ or ‘as’, e.g. *The politician is like a charging bull, She is as quiet as a mouse.*

**stereotype** – a fixed (and often biased) view about what a particular type of person (e.g. a woman, a foreigner, a particular race group) is like

**strategies** – a planned series of actions for achieving something

**suffix** – groups of letters used at the end of words, with certain meanings, e.g. kind*ness,* kind*ly,* celebra*tion.*

**summarise** – record main points in a brief way.

**symbol –** something which stands for or represents something else, e.g. a dove is a symbol of peace **synonym** – a word which has the same meaning or nearly the same meaning as another word in the same language, e.g. *big* and *large* are synonyms in English **synthesise, synthesis** – to draw together and combine information or ideas from a variety of sources; a synthesis is a clear and succinct summary of these combined ideas **tense –** the time indicated by a verb, e.g. he runs (present tense), he ran (past tense).

**theme** – the general message or main idea explored in a literary work, e.g. love, jealousy, violence, friendship are common themes.

**tone** – tone is the emotional message of a text. In a written text it is achieved through words (e.g. neutral words to create an objective tone). In a film it could be created through music or the setting.

**turn – taking conventions** – customs of behaviour and attitudes that people accept in order to cooperate and communicate

**understatement –** a statement which is not strong enough to express the true or full facts or feelings, e.g. *To say I am angry is the understatement of the year.*

**verbs** *(*part of speech) - words that show what the subject in a sentence is doing, e.g. He *is studying*,The driver *raced* away.**visualise (visualising)** – to form a picture of someone or something in your mind

**voice projection –** to enable listeners to hear clearly what you are saying; to “throw” your voice into an audience **word attack skills** – strategies for working out the meaning of unfamiliar words by recognising parts of them, e.g. that *rearrange* suggests that the action is being repeated because of the prefix *re*

**word family** – A group of words that share a common root, to which different prefixes and suffixes are added, e.g. *agree – agreeable, agreement, disagree, disagreement*