2011 English (ESL) HSC Examination Paper 1 'Sample Answers'

When examination committees develop questions for the examination, they may write 'sample answers' or, in the case of some questions, 'answers could include'. The committees do this to ensure that the questions will effectively assess students' knowledge and skills.

This material is also provided to the Supervisor of Marking, to give some guidance about the nature and scope of the responses the committee expected students would produce. How sample answers are used at marking centres varies. Sample answers may be used extensively and even modified at the marking centre OR they may be considered only briefly at the beginning of marking. In a few cases, the sample answers may not be used at all at marking.

The Board publishes this information to assist in understanding how the marking guidelines were implemented.

The 'sample answers' or similar advice contained in this document are not intended to be exemplary or even complete answers or responses. As they are part of the examination committee's 'working document', they may contain typographical errors, omissions, or only some of the possible correct answers.

Section I

Question 1 (a)

Sample answer:

This text conveys:
- a strong sense of belonging to family, friends and community
- the composer's connection to place.

Question 1 (b)

Sample answer:

Hugh Mackay believes that young Australians benefit from being part of the 'tribal generation' by gaining a sense of belonging to the community, that is, through their friends. This group helps and supports each other. For example, they encourage each other when they succeed, and support each other when there is a crisis or tragedy.

Answers could include:

- They are always looking out for each other.
- They are always in touch so they are not alone.
- They are aware of each others' needs and wellbeing.

Question 1 (c)

Sample answer:

Hugh Mackay conveys his admiration for the 'tribal generation' by describing their behaviour in positive ways, eg they are 'tuned into each other's needs and wellbeing', and by using positive, descriptive language, eg 'precious resource'. However, he also shows us that he is aware of their shortcomings, by using negative abstract nouns like 'selfishness' and 'cruelty', and descriptive language such as 'lacking in self-respect', to describe their negative qualities.

Answers could include:

- Positive statements show his positive attitude – 'dreams of community'.
- His positive tone – 'The members of this generation are not yearning for a sense of community. They already have it' – conveys the admiration the composer has for this generation.
- The metaphor 'this rising generation of young Australians … is a sign post to our future' gives the audience a positive image of young Australians showing the rest of the Australian community how to live.
- Idiomatic language such as 'let's not get misty-eyed over this' shows his realistic attitude as he looks at the issue from both sides.
- The many examples of descriptive language with negative connotations, such as 'greed and deception', 'tribal rivalries' and 'ugly'.
- Rhetorical questions such as 'And who would disagree?' challenges the audience to agree with his view.

Question 1 (d)

Sample answer:

The photograph conveys a sense of belonging in a community. The composition and framing of the picture shows many individuals coming together with community spirit to help clean up after the flood. It portrays a diverse community, that is, people who are old, young and from different cultural backgrounds, working for a single purpose. The vectors created by the outstretched arms reaching towards the rubbish reinforces the idea of the community working together for a common goal.

Answers could include:

- The body language and posture of the man and woman leaning over and lifting heavy bags conveys the idea of common effort.
- The gaze of the individuals directed to the rubbish and not the camera emphasises that they are focused on the community effort, not on themselves.
- Lighting is used to highlight the many outstretched arms reaching towards the rubbish pile, to emphasise the communal nature of the cleanup.
- The serious facial expressions of the volunteers shows their concentration and sense of involvement in the common effort to clean up after the flood.
- The low-angle shot draws the viewer into the photograph and enables us to feel part of the community working together to clean up after the flood.

Question 1 (e) (i)

Sample answer:

The metaphor used in the headline compares the group of volunteers working to clean up after the flood to an 'army of angels'. This highlights the way in which these volunteers have come together in an organised way, like soldiers, to help others – like angels.

Question 1 (e) (ii)

Answers could include:

- 'They came in their thousands, an army of volunteers' suggests a large number of people, like an army.
- 'Standing in queues that stretch for hundreds of metres' suggests the organised manner in which the volunteers conducted themselves, just like soldiers in an army.
- 'The batch of recruits queued' suggests the volunteers are like groups of new soldiers waiting to receive orders.
- 'Helpers from all walks of life' suggests the volunteers are like angels, who help people.
- 'We'll just do whatever they tell us to, we're ready to help' suggests the volunteers are selfless, like angels.
- The description of the volunteers as 'busloads of weary, mud-splashed veterans marched past' suggests the volunteers are like soldiers.
- The quote 'You've just got to do whatever you can' suggests the volunteers are working tirelessly, like angels, to help others.

Question 1 (f)

Sample answer:

Texts one and two use different language features to achieve different purposes. Text one is written in an informal style, using first-person pronouns and anecdotes. It expresses the composer's feelings about her place and family in order to make a personal connection with the audience. Text two, however, is a social commentary in which Mackay expresses his opinion on the value of staying connected. He uses nominalisation to create a more formal and academic register, and conveys his attitude through the use of positive and negative emotive language.

Answers could include:

Text one: Colloquialisms, contractions, descriptive language

Text two: Long complex sentences, rhetorical questions, factual language, imperative language, modality, descriptive language, persuasive language

Text three: Purpose – to communicate the way in which communities work together and care for their members

Language – direct quotes, factual language/statistics, eye-catching/powerful image, bold headline, emotive language, descriptive language (metaphors, adjectives)