



HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

1996

ENGLISH

2/3 UNIT (COMMON)

PAPER 1

RESOURCES AND USES OF
ENGLISH

AND

SHAKESPEARE
(*Hamlet*)

*Time allowed—Two hours
(Plus 10 minutes' reading time)*

DIRECTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Attempt ALL questions.
- Answer Questions 1 and 3 in *separate* Writing Booklets.
- You may ask for extra Writing Booklets if you need them.
- Answer Question 2 in the Question 2 Answer Booklet provided.

Section I

- **Question 1. Reading Task** (15 marks). Allow about 30 minutes for this question.
- **Question 2. Writing Task** (20 marks). Allow about 40 minutes for this question.

Section II

- **Question 3. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*** (25 marks). Allow about 50 minutes for this question.

SECTION I—RESOURCES AND USES OF ENGLISH

QUESTION 1. Reading Task (15 marks)

Use a *separate* Writing Booklet. Allow about 30 minutes for this question.

Examine the following passage. How effective do you find it in expressing the narrator's feelings? In your answer, refer in detail to the passage.

ON FIRST SEEING SYDNEY

When I'd first rumbled out of Adelaide, four years earlier, I'd been wide-eyed and gasping. You could have sold me falcon's teeth and plastic jade. I was in the market, I couldn't wait to scramble onto all the rides. I hadn't needed a lot to have my head spun around. An Asian supermarket maybe, or a car parked crookedly on a teeming footpath. Nonchalance and vigour
5 rubbing shoulders. Nothing much in themselves of course, but stuff that couldn't happen in the world I'd known previously, the world of dusty prudence and prohibition. No wonder Melbourne had blown me away, with its gleaming towers, and its dim chaos resolving into low-key elegance within a hundred yards, its arrogance and industry.

But what about now? I'd heard a few jokes since then. I'd seen scams perfected and cancelled
10 out. I'd shaken punkhood, I was sure of that. Childhood had flapped its wings. But had I since grown weary? Had I seen the lot? I'd soon find out. Three million Sydney souls were lining up, awaiting their audition . . .

The city had been in our sights for miles. And you could feel it too. It loomed up like a power station. We were still too far off to hear it humming, but that's what it was up to, you could
15 tell. You didn't have to poke its biceps to know the score.

Signs of humanity were becoming more frequent. There were houses and shops and intersections, and the traffic started to feel different. Not slower. Everyone drove like Steve. But it was different, as if they all knew the turf, and weren't just intent on a speck in the distance, like the people on the highway had been. A buzzing urgency provided the drone. The
20 rest was ad lib.

Quite suddenly, the impression of being out on the edge of something disappeared. There were used car yards and pubs. And light industry, and some not so light, and more car yards. We were in it now, sink or swim. The city centre, oddly enough, still seemed out of reach. It stood quietly, hands on hips and snorting. It seemed to be amused by the endless caravans
25 bickering at its gates.

I was full of this glittering and brutal town. It pumped me with adrenalin. It galvanised me, and tampered with my blood. It left me wordless, a chilling novelty. I'd just have to drop my jaw, and leave it at that.

The traffic roared. There didn't seem to be any rules, or even conventions. Except that you
30 kept your foot down hard. It was a sprint. An evening at the dogs. The whole town bristled and stuck its chin out.

I'd caught a glimpse of the Harbour Bridge from some point back there, but the plot hadn't been blown. I still had no idea of its size and authority. In a couple of minutes I could see the whole set-up. I stared at its changing angles. Then we were treading its boards. Through the blurred
35 bars the harbour lights winked. Cars tore past us. I leaned out the window and shouted as loud as I could. For as long as I could. I saw the entire throbbing city. And then we were back on the bridge, driving the opposite way. I was able to squeak out a sentence.

'People who don't live in Sydney must be unwell.'

WANDA KOOLMATRIE, *My Own Sweet Time*, Magabala Books 1994

QUESTION 2. Writing Task (20 marks)

Answer the question in the Question 2 Answer Booklet provided.

Allow about 40 minutes for this question.

Imagine this.

Students have been training for the athletics carnival for at least a term. The school dag,* it turns out, is really good at long distance running. When the race is run, the dag is way ahead of the rest of the runners, but just before crossing the finish line he/she stops, turns around, and walks back along the track.

In about 300 words, explain the circumstances that might have led up to this refusal to win. Write from the point of view of anyone who might have been there at the time.

**dag* A dag is a dag is a dag. A nerd, a nigel, a dork.
 You wouldn't want to know a dag.
 A dag has no idea.

dag definition A person who does not belong to the main group because of difference in attitude, behaviour, personality . . .

SECTION II—SHAKESPEARE

QUESTION 3. *Hamlet* (25 marks)

Use a *separate* Writing Booklet.

Allow about 50 minutes for this question.

'Having to enter and act in the brutal world of his uncle, Hamlet himself becomes a creature of that world.'

Does he? What do you think?

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