Common Module – Texts and Human Experiences

**HSC hub – English Advanced and Standard**

Resource booklet

Lifting your response

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## Recommended materials

It’s important to always visit the NESA website specific to your course even though this is a common section. [Advanced syllabus module](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-advanced-2017/modules) statement on the NESA website. [Standard syllabus module statement](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-standard-2017/modules)on the NESA website.

**English Advanced**

* access to the 2019 [2019 HSC English Advanced Paper 1](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/resources/hsc-exam-papers/hsc-exam-paper-detail/2019/english-advanced-2019-hsc-exam-pack)examination paper
* access to the 2018 [NESA English Advanced Paper 1 sample questions paper](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/ca688818-bb25-407b-b757-0fd9ae0aa7c1/sample-questions-new-hsc-english-adv-paper-2-exam-2019.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=)
* access to the English [Advanced Paper 1 HSC marker feedback](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/resources/hsc-exam-papers/hsc-exam-paper-detail/2019/english-advanced-2019-hsc-exam-pack)

**English Standard**

* access to the [2019 English Standard Paper 1](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/1262e215-0029-48d9-b749-ff65b2b8fba1/2019-hsc-english-standard-p1.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE-1262e215-0029-48d9-b749-ff65b2b8fba1-n4J.0NN)examination paper
* access to the [Sample Questions New HSC English Standard Paper 1](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/0a850596-eb7b-4ece-80fb-0f9703df7098/english-standard-stage-6-sample-hsc-questions-paper-1-2019.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=) examination paper
* access to the English[Standard Paper 1 HSC marker feedback](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/resource-finder/hsc-exam-papers/2019/english-standard-2019-hsc-exam-pack)

**You will need**

* at least one body paragraph from a piece of writing appropriate for Paper 1 Section II (your assessment for your prescribed text, a trial response or a practice response you have completed in class). It would be beneficial to have a couple of response for your prescribed text
* to add extra spaces to the answer spaces within the booklet if this is to be printed
* a copy of your school-based coursework, assessments and access to your prescribed text
* pens and different coloured highlighters.

## Advice to the teacher supporting students

If using in a classroom context you may like to –

* use this resource in a workshop setting with a group, with the whole class or provide individual students set tasks to work through on their own
* pause the recording and ask students to read, reflect and write
* refer to school-based course work, the text and assessments to do the activities.

## Advice to the independent student

If using this resource at home independently you will need –

* access to all your school-based coursework, assessments and access to your text
* a copy of the student booklet in either hard copy or digital
* pens and different coloured highlighters.

In this section we will explore what is different about the approach to writing a personal response within the Common Module, this is Paper 1 Section II of the HSC examination.

Resource 1 – Common Module – Texts and Human Experiences

In this common module students deepen their understanding of how texts represent individual and collective human experiences. They examine how texts represent human qualities and emotions associated with, or arising from, these experiences. Students appreciate, explore, interpret, analyse and evaluate the ways language is used to shape these representations in a range of texts in a variety of forms, modes and media.

Students explore how texts may give insight into the anomalies, paradoxes and inconsistencies in human behaviour and motivations, inviting the responder to see the world differently, to challenge assumptions, ignite new ideas or reflect personally. They may also consider the role of storytelling throughout time to express and reflect particular lives and cultures. By responding to a range of texts they further develop skills and confidence using various literary devices, language concepts, modes and media to formulate a considered response to texts.

Students study one prescribed text and a range of short texts that provide rich opportunities to further explore representations of human experiences illuminated in texts. They make increasingly informed judgements about how aspects of these texts, for example context, purpose, structure, stylistic and grammatical features, and form shape meaning. In addition, students select one related text and draw from personal experience to make connections between themselves, the world of the text and their wider world.

By responding and composing throughout the module students further develop a repertoire of skills in comprehending, interpreting and analysing complex texts. They examine how different modes and media use visual, verbal and/or digital language elements. They communicate ideas using figurative language to express universal themes and evaluative language to make informed judgements about texts. Students further develop skills in using metalanguage, correct grammar and syntax to analyse language and express a personal perspective about a text.

[English Advanced, Standard and Studies Stage 6 Syllabuses](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english)(2017) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2017.

It’s important to always visit the NESA website specific to your course even though this is a common section. It’s important to always visit the NESA website specific to your course even though this is a common section. [Advanced syllabus module](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/english-advanced-2017/modules) statement on the NESA website. Standard syllabus module statement on the NESA website.

## Resource 2 - what is different about a common module personal response?

### Representation

From the English Textual Concepts definition – ​

* depiction of a thing, person or idea in written, visual, performed or spoken language​
* composers make choices ​
* representation may aim to reflect the natural world as realistically as possible or may aim to convey the essence of people, objects, experiences and ideas in a more abstract way. ​

From the Stage 6 Syllabus Glossary –

“The way ideas are portrayed and represented in texts, using language devices, forms, features and structures of texts to create specific views about characters, events and ideas. Representation applies to all language modes – spoken, written, visual and multimodal.” ​

From Barbara Stanners, 1984, Phoenix Senior English Textual Study –

"Representation analysis involves examining the interconnectedness and impact of explicit choices and decisions made when a composer shapes meaning within a text. The chosen medium and subject matter as well as the structure and language forms, devices and techniques also need to be considered. Ideas, beliefs and values can be challenged by the way they have been portrayed and this can be shaped in layered and often complex ways."​

Resource 3 – defining aspects of a personal response

A response with a clear argument that presents and substantiates your opinion

Characteristics include –​

* opinion ​
* strong voice​
* relevant evidence.

Remember, first person is not the only way to develop a personal response. Good verbs and nouns with the occasional ‘we’ and ‘us’ and ‘our’ (first person inclusive) operate in the same way as ‘I’ and ‘me’ and ‘my’. You can limit the use of first person to inclusive pronouns and ace your writing with rich diction that clearly reflects your point of view – this will create the authentic voice and style required in a personal response.

### Representation

**This is the focus in the discussion of how the composer has guided your reading of the text.**

Characteristics include –

* writing from outside the text ​
* references to how meaning is shaped using metalanguage ​
* references to how readers are positioned to respond ​
* judgements about the compositional tools and how these shape meaning.

### Writing from outside the text

To write from outside the text means that your writing will include references to the composer –​

* about the way the composer has constructed meaning​
* about the compositional tools that shape the text​
* about the context of the composer​
* about the purpose of the composer. ​

Resource 4 – areas to focus on to lift your response

* metalanguage, for example, unreliable narrator​
* references to the composer, for example, Orwell or author's representation​
* reader response, for example, allows us to recognise
* stronger diction that conveys an opinion, for example, invites.

### Colour coding guide

* In red - Metalanguage, for example, words like - unreliable narrator
* In pink - References to the composer, for example, Orwell or author's representation
* In bold - Reader response, for example, phrases like - allows us to recognise
* In blue - Stronger diction that conveys an opinion, for example, a word like - invites.

### Sample 1 – descriptive

Winston and his unfulfilling experience as an individual within Oceania is represented in Nineteen Eighty-four. Winston’s sense of discord as a member of the Party, shows he lacks the same passion or vigour he witnesses in his “comrades” as they participate in the Two Minutes Hate. He feels alien to The Party, and yet a member within it, hence Winston’s behaviour is inconsistent, evidenced in his emotional commentaries about Symes or Mr Parsons. Sporadically praiseworthy but mainly laden with abhorrence, Winston is an unreliable citizen.

### Sample 2 – metalanguage

Orwell’s use of limited third person narration focuses almost exclusively on Winston and his unfulfilling experience as an individual within Oceania. The author’s representation of Winston’s sense of discord as a member of the Party, shows he lacks the same passion or vigour he witnesses in his “comrades” as they participate in the allegorical Two Minutes Hate. This narrative perspective shows the character's sense of alienation from The Party, despite the irony of his membership. Orwell’s disapproval of totalitarian regimes, evidenced in his satirical representation of the novel's protagonist serves to emphasise Winston’s behaviour is inconsistent: evidenced in the use of emotive commentaries about Symes or Mr Parsons, which are sporadically praiseworthy but mainly laden with abhorrence, Winston is constructed as an unreliable narrator.

#### Activity 1 – annotating sample paragraphs

1. Utilise the colour coding guide provided within Resource 4 and annotate sample 2 focusing on metalanguage and references to the composer

* In red - metalanguage, for example, words like - unreliable narrator
* In pink - references to the composer, for example, Orwell or author's representation

Utilise the explanation provided for you in the presentation as a support for this activity. This is a practise before you annotate your own work.

#### Activity 2 – lifting your own response

1. Now apply this annotation process, focusing on metalanguage and references to the author, to your own paragraph response.
2. Re-write your paragraph adding metalanguage and references to the composer you identify as missing.
3. You might like to explore the sample band cut off responses provided within the [NESA English Standard standards materials](https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/resources/hsc-standards-materials/english-std-material/english-standard-hsc-standards-materials) and complete an annotation of a Band 5/6 and a Band 4/5 response. This reflection and annotation can help you identify the features of stronger responses. It can also help you reflect on areas for improvement within your own writing (at publication, September 2020, the Standards packages for Advanced were not available. However, as Paper 1 Section II is common the responses contained within the Standard package are likely to include Advanced and Standard work samples). Your teacher may also show you samples from the NESA English Advanced, Standard and Studies exam workbook for Paper 1.

Resource 5 – sample paragraphs

### Sample 3 – reader response

Orwell’s use of limited third person narration positions readers to focus their reading on Winston and his experience as an individual within Oceania. The author’s representation of Winston’s sense of discord as a member of the Party, allows us to recognise that he lacks the same passion or vigour he witnesses in his “comrades” as they participate in the allegorical Two Minutes Hate. This narrative perspective shows the character's sense of alienation from The Party, despite the irony of his membership, positioning readers to understand Winston’s attitude. Furthermore, Orwell’s disapproval of totalitarian regimes, evidenced in his satirical representation of the novel's protagonist serves to emphasise to readers that Winston’s behaviour is inconsistent: evidenced in the use of emotive commentaries about Symes or Mr Parsons, which are sporadically praiseworthy but mainly laden with abhorrence, Winston is constructed as an unreliable narrator.

#### Activity 3 – annotating sample paragraphs

1. Utilise the colour coding guide provided within Resource 4 and annotate sample 3 focusing on reader response.

In bold - Reader response, for example, phrases like - allows us to recognise.

Utilise the explanation provided for you in the presentation as a support for this activity. This is a practise before you annotate your own work.

#### Activity 4 – adding reader response

1. Now apply this annotation process, focusing on reader response, to your own paragraph response.
2. Re-write your paragraph adding reader response references to the composer you identify as missing.
3. Before you move on, you may wish to use to complete activity 2 and 4 again on a different paragraph.

### Sample 4 – stronger diction

Orwell’s use of limited third person narration invites readers to focus their reading almost exclusively on Winston and his unfulfilling experience as an individual within Oceania. The author’s evocative representation of Winston’s sense of discord as a member of the Party, forces us to recognise that he lacks the same passion or vigour he witnesses in his “comrades” as they participate in the allegorical Two Minutes Hate. This narrative perspective emphasises the character's sense of alienation from The Party, despite the irony of his membership, positioning readers to judge Winston’s attitude. Furthermore, Orwell’s contempt for totalitarian regimes, evidenced in his satirical representation of the novel's protagonist serves to emphasise to readers that Winston’s behaviour is inconsistent: evidenced in the use of emotive commentaries about Symes or Mr Parsons, which are sporadically praiseworthy but mainly laden with abhorrence, Winston is constructed as an unreliable narrator.

#### Activity 5 – annotating sample paragraphs

1. Utilise the colour coding guide provided within Resource 4 and annotate sample 4 focusing on stronger diction.

In blue - stronger diction that conveys an opinion, for example, a word like - invites.

Utilise the explanation provided for you in the presentation as a support for this activity. This is a practise before you annotate your own work.

#### Activity 6 – adding stronger diction

1. Now apply this annotation process, focusing on using stronger diction, in your own paragraph response.
2. Re-write your paragraph adding reader response references to the composer you identify as missing.
3. Before you move on, you may wish to use to complete activity 2, 4 and 6 again on a different paragraph.

#### Activity 7 – continuing to refine your personal response

1. At the end of this presentation, you are encouraged to self-edit another sample of writing you completed this year for the common module.
2. Look carefully at the word choices you've made and think about which words can be replaced to add connotation – and thus personal voice – to your written response. ​
3. Apply this learning to a practice question. ​
4. Reconsider the use of verbs such as 'shows' or 'demonstrates' when you are referring to the impact of a language device or feature, or the impact of an idea. Instead, use verbs that connote the way these ideas or devices engage the reader. For example, emphasise, highlight, accentuate, crystalise, champions, and so on. Really try to apply what you have learnt here to your own writing.

### Sample question

**SECTION II**

**20 marks  
Attempt Question 6  
Allow about 45 minutes for this section**

Answer the following question in the Section II Writing Booklet. Extra writing paper is available if additional writing space is required.

| Your answer will be assessed on how well you:   * demonstrate understanding of human experiences in texts * analyse, explain and assess the ways human experiences are represented in texts * organise, develop and express ideas using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context |
| --- |

**Question**

Composers invite us to understand and reflect upon the complex nature of the human experience.

In what ways does the composer of your prescribed text convey this complexity?

**or**

Composers invite us to expand our understanding of the complexity of the human experience.

To what extent is this true of your prescribed text?