



English – Writing Work Samples

Level 9 and 10

Authorised and published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
Level 7, 2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

© Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2018.

No part of this publication may be reproduced except as specified under the *Copyright Act 1968* or by permission from the VCAA. Excepting third-party elements, schools may use this resource in accordance with the [VCAA educational allowance](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/aboutus/policies/policy-copyright.aspx). For more information go to: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/aboutus/policies/policy-copyright.aspx.

The VCAA provides the only official, up-to-date versions of VCAA publications. Details of updates can be found on the VCAA website: www.vcaa.vic.edu.au.

This publication may contain copyright material belonging to a third party. Every effort has been made to contact all copyright owners. If you believe that material in this publication is an infringement of your copyright, please email the Copyright Officer: vcaa.copyright@edumail.vic.gov.au

Copyright in materials appearing at any sites linked to this document rests with the copyright owner/s of those materials, subject to the Copyright Act. The VCAA recommends you refer to copyright statements at linked sites before using such materials.

The VCAA logo is a registered trademark of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Level 9

Task: A creative response to *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton as described below.

On page 68 (Chapter 4), there is a gap in the narrative.

Ponyboy writes, 'A red haze filled my mind ...' and then, 'The next thing I knew ...'

Write 400–500 words about what happens in between from the point of view of another character who is present during this event.

Before you do this, think about the following:

- What experiences in the character's past will influence his behaviour and reactions?
- How has the character been described previously?
- Look at the way SE Hinton writes when Ponyboy is attacked on page 6.
- How could you choose to tell this part of the story? What effect will each choice have?

Achievement standard (extract):

Students understand how to use a variety of language features to create different levels of meaning ... In creating texts students demonstrate how manipulating language features and images can create innovative texts ... They edit for effect, selecting vocabulary and grammar that contribute to the precision ... of texts and using accurate spelling and punctuation.

For more information, please see: [Victorian Curriculum F–10: English – Level 9 – Writing](#)

Johnny

Ponyboy has gone blue, and Johnny sits there, adrenalin filling his every vein. He reaches into his pocket---
(He isn't thinking, he never thinks, what is he doing, no no no no NO STOP --)

The handle of the switchblade is made of wood, shaking uncontrollably in his hand as it gets gripped with pale, unsure and *unpractised* fingers.

Ponyboy's neck is completely submerged; the cruel, soulless laughter of the monsters that did this echoing throughout his ears, blocking out any rational thought and making him feel sick.

He roughly shoves the one holding Ponyboy, and he recognises the face.

(He's seen him before, he was there with everyone else when he got *beaten up and smashed so badly that--*)

A shout of anger comes from the mouth of the filthy, *filthy* soc as he scrambles up from the ground, and he barely registers the fact that there are suddenly more than one, and they are all surrounding him.

He has never been so scared in his life. His entire body is burning up and he's shaking like it's zero degrees, even though he's sweating and he can feel the handle of the knife turning slick in his hands.

He is being blinded by fear, so much fear, it is drowning him into its endless abyss. He acts on pure instinct, and thrusts himself forward as fast as he can, thinking only of his own survival.

(He feels bile rising up in his throat, the ugly, horrible taste filling his mouth as the damp smell of blood hits him. Oh god, what is he doing, *WHAT IS HE DOING---*)

His ears are ringing, and his feet go numb as he feels his hand come into contact with the horrifying wetness of the dark shirt, even darker now with the stain of *burning hot* blood that grows freezing in mere seconds.

The scream of agony is ignored, and he suddenly feels sick, putrid, dizzy, *frightened* as the knife hits something other than soft flesh, something hard, like a bone.

The silence is crushing, deafening, destructive as the last of the socs run as fast as they can, thinking only of themselves and how they don't want to be caught at the scene of a disgusting, wretched, rancid, *awful, atrocious, hoRRIBLE, SICKENING*

M u r d e r

Johnny has never realised just how pretty the stars look at night, alone. And even when Ponyboy starts spluttering and coughing up water, he has never felt more alone in his entire life.

This text sample has been assessed, on balance, as representative of Level 9.

This text sample provides evidence that the student:

- develops creative text responses from the perspective of a particular character, using a third person narrator and some stylistic features of the original text, for example, *A shout of anger comes from the mouth of the filthy, filthy soc and got beaten up and smashed so badly that*
- understands how punctuation is used, along with layout and font variations, to emphasise key points in the text, for example, the use of parentheses, hyphenation, italics and upper-case
- understands how certain abstract nouns can be used to summarise preceding or subsequent stretches of text, for example, *Murder*
- experiments with the ways that language features can be adapted in literary texts
- uses a range of paragraph styles and lengths to create a stylistic effect and to vary the pace of the text
- creates literary texts, including hybrid texts, that innovate on aspects of other texts, for example, including a character's inner thoughts within parentheses, such as *(He isn't thinking, he never thinks, what is he doing, no no no no NO STOP --)*
- reviews and edits writing to improve clarity and control
- employs a range of grammatical structures and sentence types to strengthen the imagery of the text, for example, *The scream of agony is ignored, and he suddenly feels sick, putrid, dizzy, frightened as the knife hits something other than soft flesh, something hard, like a bone*
- publishes texts using a word processing program, flexibly and imaginatively, for example, by using a variety of spacing to build the pace of the text.

When planning the next stage of the teaching and learning program to progress this student's learning, focus on the following skills and knowledge:

Level 9

- Review and edit students' own and others' texts to improve clarity and control over content, organisation, paragraphing, sentence structure, vocabulary and audio/visual features ([VCELY450](#))

Level 10

- Create literary texts with a sustained ‘voice’, selecting and adapting appropriate text structures, literary devices, language, auditory and visual structures and features for a specific purpose and intended audience ([VCELT477](#))
- Create imaginative texts that make relevant thematic and intertextual connections with other texts ([VCELT478](#))
- Review, edit and refine own and others’ texts for control of content, organisation, sentence structure, vocabulary, and/or visual features to achieve particular purposes and effects ([VCELY480](#))

Level 10

Task: Students were asked to respond creatively to *The Book Thief* by writing a speech in the voice of one of the characters several years after the war has ended. The speech should have outlined the narrative of the text and what is learnt through the experience of the chosen character. A statement of intention should have also been provided.

Achievement standard (extract):

Students show how the selection of language features can achieve precision and stylistic effect. They explain different viewpoints, attitudes and perspectives through the development of cohesive and logical arguments. They develop their own style by experimenting with language features, stylistic devices, text structures and images. They create a wide range of texts to articulate complex ideas. They demonstrate understanding of grammar, vary vocabulary choices for impact, and accurately use spelling and punctuation when creating and editing texts.

For more information, please see: [Victorian Curriculum F–10: English – Level 10 – Writing](#)

Liesel

My name is Liesel Meminger. I am 18 years old and currently live in a small town called Munich, working in a tailor shop. In 1943, everyone I loved was bombed. I'm here today to tell you my story, my experiences and what I've learnt.

In 1939, World War II began when Hitler invaded Poland. I was nine- almost ten. My mother and father were communists; that is, they believed everyone deserved ownership of common resources, and that wealth should be shared equally or depending on your skills and requirements. I know nothing of my father, but I know that being a communist was a sin in Nazi Germany. At the beginning of the war, my mother could no longer look after my brother, Werner, and I so he and I made our way to Munich by train. My younger brother never made it to our intended new home on Himmel Street. He was sick, assumedly Tuberculosis or Typhus and died on the train instead, without a goodbye. My mother and I buried him beside the train tracks where a gravedigger dropped his manual in the snow. 'The Gravedigger's Handbook' was my first taste of literature, and I still have it to this day. Once the train arrived at Munich, I said farewell to my mother. That moment would stay with me as the last time I saw my real mother.

Himmel Street no longer exists- it was blown to pieces. Before the street named after heaven became ash and rubble, my new foster parents waited at number 33.

My mama's name was Rosa. If you knew Rosa, you knew not to contradict her. She was opinionated and hot-headed with a temper hotter than the burnt pea soup she consistently produced. She was kind and beautiful, too. You just had to look past the rough edges.

My papa's name was Hans. He was the kind of man who's smile encouraged you to smile, as if his kindness was infectious. His eyes had a twinkle to them and it was once said they were made of kindness and melting silver.

Munich was a small town, but I still felt small and insignificant when I arrived without my family. For a while, feeling insignificant helped me handle the absence of my brother and mother, as if my pain would disappear, if I could. My papa showed me that you don't have to disappear; simply focusing on the beauty of life can take away from the pain. He taught me this by teaching me to read. The words were like a warm blanket, I could bury myself in them, and they kept me protected and warm inside.

Both my mama and papa taught me lessons, qualities and stories that I hold close to my heart today, and forever. Saying goodbye to the people who took you in, accepted you as their daughter and loved you for the person you were was the hardest thing I have done, and I was only thirteen. I learnt then the true devastation war brings. It tears apart families, causes famine and poverty, and snatches lives from the unwilling. And what's more, the people left behind are those who experience the most pain.

My time with Mama and Papa was reduced to years, maybe just four, but the impact my parents had on me was stamped into my heart permanently. Whether it was pronouncing words, folding washing or rolling cigarettes, the lessons I learnt had value beyond execution. They held care and persistence and *love*. How lovely it was to feel loved.

Rudy was the boy next door. He had hair the colour of lemons, and could beat any of you in a race. Rudy noticed me when I arrived at Himmel Street. I think he decided to care at that very moment. Over the continuation of the war, Rudy and I were partners in crime. We did everything together- even if it was delivering mama's folded clothes to different parts of Munich. It was common knowledge that Rudy had a particular interest in me, but I always declined his kiss requests. I regret to inform you that the only time I kissed Rudy was while he lay still with ash covered lips.

Max was a Jew. I needn't tell you anymore of his background as in Nazi Germany, being a Jew meant it didn't matter what your past was-or potential future. You were a Jew and that's all that mattered. Max lived in our basement for most of the war while in hiding. Max was understanding and thoughtful; he was one my dearest friends. He had lost all his family to Hitler's unrelenting power, just as I had. I think that's what brought us together, the same nightmares, guilt and loss. He simply made me feel better. Not so alone. Out of everyone I cared for in my childhood, Max is the only person who is still by my side. That is how I came to understand the irony and bitterness of war. How is it that the target of mass genocide is the only person left standing? I thank God that I still have Max, but I hate the bittersweet outcome that is his life.

The effects of the war were horrendous. Whole towns were blown to pieces. 6 million Jews were killed. Over **80 million** Jews, soldier and civilians died. I have heard many say that although Hitler killed many, he was a leader. Hitler wasn't a leader, he was a mass murderer. The worst kind. In trying to exterminate Jews, he killed his own people, even those who fitted the German stereotype. Millions of people died in vain because of the sinister nature of a man. So how, of all people, did Hitler find his power? He had a voice! I'm sure you all remember it. It could be heard from miles around. He used his voice to feed the people of Germany lies, propaganda and fabrications.

If we never want to repeat the events of World War II, we must understand the power a single voice can have and use it for the greater good. We can create an army of preachers just by spreading what we know is right. That is; knowledge, acceptance, love and equality. When we lose any of these concepts, or let evil win, we lose our humanity and the outcome is hate. It is war and it is death. Even if only one of you takes away the importance of being kind, loving one another and the power of using our words for good, I know that we can make a difference. And with hope, not one of you will experience losing your loved ones to violence and hate.

Statement of Intention

For my speech, I chose to write a speech delivered by Liesel to a student body about Liesel's experiences and lessons following the conclusion of the war. This means I was writing to a fictional group of students, who may think in a similar way to me.

I used a first person point of view to allow the audience to connect and engage with the speaker's words. I enhanced this through the use of empathetic language and the repetition of simple words such as 'love', 'death', 'war' and 'kindness' to express my ideas in a simple manner. This assisted in expressing key ideas in the novel, like the power of wars and the devastation and destruction that war brings. I feel as if I have explored Liesel's personal emotions more than the text necessarily did as my speech was based off 'Liesel's' words, not just Liesel's writing or Death's perspective.

The purpose of my writing was to elaborate on Liesel's story, particularly her emotions and newly acquired lessons following World War II.

This text sample has been assessed, on balance, as representative of Level 10. The text has clearly been drafted to remove most errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

This text sample provides evidence that the student:

- understands how paragraphs can be arranged to achieve a particular purpose for a given audience, as the piece moves through a series of poignant personal reflections and anecdotes to the overall contention about the destructiveness and futility of war
- understands how images can be created for stylistic effect, for example, *hot-headed with a temper hotter than the burnt pea soup she consistently produced and the kind of man who's smile encouraged you to smile, as if his kindness was infectious. His eyes had a twinkle to them and it was once said they were made of kindness and melting silver*
- analyses how higher order concepts are developed in complex texts through language features, including nominalisation, for example, *I learnt then the true devastation war brings* refines vocabulary choices to discriminate between shades of meaning, with deliberate attention to the effect on audiences, for example, the juxtaposition between *lies, propaganda and fabrications* and *knowledge, acceptance, love and equality*
- creates literary texts with a sustained 'voice', accurately reflecting the perspective of a key character in a text, for a specific purpose and intended audience, through a clear understanding of the way characters relate to one another and their experience of the war
- reviews, edits and refines own and others' texts for control of content, organisation, sentence structure, vocabulary to achieve particular purposes and effects, for example, *feeling insignificant helped me handle the absence of my brother and mother, as if my pain would disappear, if I could*
- creates sustained texts, that reflect upon challenging and complex issues, as identified in the Statement of Intention
- uses a word processing program to create, edit and publish texts.

When planning the next stage of the teaching and learning program to progress this student's learning, focus on the following skills and knowledge:

Level 10

- Create imaginative texts that make relevant thematic and intertextual connections with other texts ([VCELT478](#))