

ENGLISH

Written examination



2018 Trial Examination

SECTION C SAMPLE RESPONSE

In the hope of gathering more support for the upcoming *Clean Up Australia Day*, the local president of Merri Creek Management Committee, Gordon Blemming has drawn up a letter designed to be distributed in local residents' letterboxes. His letter is conversational and humorous, however draws resident's focus towards the man-made pollution of Merri Creek and the impacts on environment, animals and the future generations.

The author immediately invites his reader to view the issue of pollution of the local waterways as a concern for all, however choosing to focus on those residents who do take a "leisurely stroll" or take their "golden retriever" down to the creek. The directness of the author's command for residents to "stop" implies that many of them turn a blind eye to the current issue and should be more alert to the pollution. This message is returned to in his closing remarks where he attacks those who may be "uneducated, careless or just need a little reminding". Blemming attempts to soften the blow of his attack with these three phrases, concluding with a thought provoking question "What will be your mark?" inviting the residents of Merri Creek to join his procession.

Blemming's conversational and at times humorous tone is established through an anecdote, where he attempts to appear less like a politician and more human, mentioning his dog "Charles" and their "weekly off lead romp". This relaxed mood is repeated throughout the piece with comments such as "Now I am getting a bit carried away" and "a three-eyed fish" "Can we eat it for dinner?" His human touch and relaxed mood, attempts to contain the persuasiveness of the piece and the subtle bias present through sponsor logos that appear in small after the close of the letter. Furthermore, the cartoon which echoes the grandchild's naïve proposition to eat a three-eyed fish, is at first humorous due to the Disney animation allusion "Finding Dory". However, upon closer inspection the moss coloured water that ripples towards the young child helps to firm the opinion of the reader that the waterways are full of "algae" and are "vile". Finally, the wide-eyed child, oblivious to the signage "Caution Toxic Algae" encourages the reader to picture their own child or grandchild and agree that the "parks and waterways are not just for us today".

By repeatedly detailing the harm pollution can do to animals and "the flora and fauna", Blemming attempts to obscure his bias against those who do the wrong thing. This opinion is further masked through the many direct calls to action such as "we need to stick together"

inviting readers to stand united against those who do pollute. This attack is furthered when Blemming indirectly blames smokers and creek side revellers for the pollution, by listing these items as those that cause harm to “the wildlife”. Blemming assumes his readers, home owners or renters who would take the time to read his letter, will agree that this behaviour is inappropriate and not suitable for their neighbourhood. In turn the author hopes readers will join his cause and be part of the “focussed group of volunteers” to clean up the creek.

These arguments are brought together when Blemming mentions the “council” and agrees that they could be doing more. In a further attempt to humanise himself and his cause he admits some fault in not being cautious enough with his dog “Charles”, all this in the pursuit of casting the blame back on those who misuse and mistreat the environment. Blemming also supposes that some reading his letter will be those very people he is attacking, therefore offering them the simple solution of treating the waterways just as they do “at home”.

Finally, Blemming’s tone makes a sudden and direct shift, his final request of readers positions them to feel a part of the “community”. Through forthright and commanding phrases, Blemming makes his agenda clear, that everyone should be making a “positive” impact on the environment. By changing his mood and directing his letter towards the upcoming *Clean Up Australia Day*, Blemming hopes to leave no question in his reader’s mind that they must join the bandwagon, stand united and return the environment to its “natural” state. His vision is clear and, although he has repeatedly accused particular people of ruining the creek, he wants his readers to “keep it beautiful”.