<http://wace1516.scsa.wa.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/34505/English-ATAR-Y12-sample-assessment-tasks-WACE-2015_16_pdf.pdf>

**Reading Practices Year 12 ATAR Unit 3**

Some would argue that a reading practice involves looking through a particular (theoretical) lens and that your reading of the text depends upon which lens you adopt and what it is that you pay attention to. With any text, ask ‘What is the story? What happens? What is the history that it refers to? How is the story told? What voices are there? What language (words, phrases, images, sounds, rhymes) get your attention? Why? Which lines/images do you like most? After you have thought about the language, consider the generic conventions the writer/text uses, then the historical context, etc. down through the list of ‘lenses’ below.

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| |  | | --- | | **Reading practices** | | **Novel Excerpt: Swallow the Air** |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **generic conventions,** for example, how the text is typical/atypical of a particular **genre or form**, for example, how it conforms or doesn’t conform to a specific form (e.g. ode, short story, absurdist drama) within a broad genre of poetry, prose or drama. Discuss techniques used that are typical of the form. |  |
| Create a reading of this text, paying particular attention to the use of **language**, for example, choices of words, use of literal/figurative language, creation of images, sentence structure, tone, style, language techniques that are typical of the form. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to the **historical context** in which it was written, including the time and place in which it was written and the values of that society or culture at that time. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to the **historical context** in which it is being read now, the time and place in which it is being read now and the values of this contemporary society or culture. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to comparing/contrasting how the historical /cultural contexts affect the way the text was read when it was written and how the text is being read now. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to representations of **class** within the text or implied by the text, for example, whether ‘society’ is represented as being divided into classes and whether one class is deemed to have power over another. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to representations of **race/ethnicity**, for example, what the text is suggesting or implying about particular abstract ideas about race or ethnic groups.  Create a **post-colonial** reading of this text. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to representations of **gender**, for example, of ‘male’ or ‘female’ or ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’. A feminist reading is an example of a gendered reading. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **representations of culture**, cultural identity or nationality, for example, of groups of people, for example, ‘Australians’ or ‘immigrants’ or ‘country people’ or ‘bikies’ or ‘emos’.  Does the text, through such representations, ‘naturalise’ aspects of culture? |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **representations of religion** or religious groups, for example, ‘fundamentalists’ or ‘Christianity’ or ‘hotgospellers’ or ‘pantheism’.  Discuss the pervading ideology of the text: is it pro-religion, pro-secularism, pro-freedom  of choice? |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **representations of ‘the other’ or ‘the marginalised’**, for example, of minority groups within society, for example, of the disabled, of the ill, of the unemployed, of the itinerant, of the disempowered, of the old. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **representations** of any number **of abstracts** like ‘love’ or ‘responsibility’ or ‘morality’ or ‘the rights of the individual’ or ‘power’.  Discuss the moral, ethical or philosophical ideas represented in the text. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **representations of any number of groups**, for example, ‘teenagers’, ‘labourers’, ‘children’, ‘students’, ‘shoppers’, ‘capitalists’.  What groups are ‘represented’ in this text? In what ways? Why? What values and attitudes are at work, are being challenged? |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **the author**: that is, the author’s context, the author’s biography, the author’s values, attitudes and beliefs, the author’s oeuvre. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to the **intertextual links** that one can observe with other texts. Such links might work in relation to theme, style, technique, generic convention, genre, reading practice employed, ideology, context. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention **to the reader**, to your response as a reader, to your context, to the values and attitudes, beliefs and ideologies that you bring to the text, to your reading practices. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to **the aesthetic qualities** of the text as opposed to the ideological qualities, the form as opposed to the content, the expression as opposed to the ideas, the beauty (or otherwise) of the technique as opposed to the theme.  What is ‘beautiful’ (in literature, fiction, non-fiction, film etc.)? Who decides? How do we decide? |  |
| Create a **psychoanalytical reading** of this text. Psychoanalytical readings tend to focus on desires and motivations, values and attitudes, ideologies perhaps, for example, of characters, of real-life individuals, of authors, even of cultures or societies. |  |
| Create a reading of this text in which you argue that this text is typical/atypical of texts belonging to **a particular period or style**, for example, a ‘Romantic’ text, a ‘metaphysical’ text, an ‘existentialist’ text, Victorian, ‘Dickensian’, a post-modern text, science fiction, social media, hybrid, comedy, tragedy, satire, magic realism… |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying attention to ideologies relating to **ecology or conservation**, to representations of the landscape and cultures’ relationships with the landscape, to images of the urban and industrial or the rural, regional or pastoral. |  |
| Create a reading of this text paying particular attention to any **combination** of the above reading practices. |  |

Adapted by J Armstrong 2016