



KNOX
GRAMMAR
SCHOOL

STATE

DA VINCI DECATHLON 2021

CELEBRATING THE ACADEMIC GIFTS OF STUDENTS
IN YEARS 7 & 8



ENGLISH SOLUTIONS

TEAM NUMBER _____

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total	Rank
/15	/10	/5	/5	/5	/15	/10	/15	/9	/6	/15	/110	

PLAYING GAMES

Let's get warmed up with some word games! Chances are you have played them before...but can you do it when there are points at stake?

MAKE MANY WORDS (15 MARKS)

How many words can you make from the letters in the box? Write down as many as you can. Each word **MUST** use the letter in the middle box, each letter may only be used once, and each word must be **FOUR** letters or more. No proper nouns, abbreviations or acronyms. No foreign words are allowed unless they are part of common Australian parlance (eg – faux pas, chowder, kowtow etc).

1-15 WORDS = 5 MARKS 16-30 WORDS = 10 MARKS 30-50 WORDS = 15 MARKS

U	F	O
N	E	R
A	T	T

Write your words in the table below:

FORTUNATE	TAUTER	NOTER	FATE	RENT
FORTUNE	ROTATE	OFTEN	FEAR	TENT
TAUNTER	ORANTE	OUTER	FEAT	TONE
FATTER	ATONER	TENOR	FETA	TRUE
FATTEN	RATTEN	TONER	FRET	RATE
ATTUNE	ROTTEN	UTTER	TUNE	ROTE
NATURE	AFTER	OTTER	EARN	TARE
NUTTER	FORTE	ORATE	NEAR	TEAR
NATTER	TUNER	FANE	FATE	TEAT
NOTATE	ATONE	FERN	NEAT	TOTE

Please note this is not an exhaustive list. Please consult a dictionary to double check other words.

WORD JUMBLES (10 MARKS)

Below are ten words, all relating to chance, all jumbled up. Can you unjumble the letters to make coherent words?

SKIR	RISK
TAFE	FATE
DODS	ODDS
CYMKU	LUCKY
KLEFU	FLUKE
NIDICCCENOE	COINCIDENCE
DETAILCINN	INCIDENTAL
NONTINGETC	CONTINGENT
IDOKELOLIH	LIKELIHOOD
TABILPARBIY	PROBABILITY

LINK WORDS (5 MARKS)




Compound words are formed when two or more words are put together to make a new word. Create FIVE compound words by filling in the middle column with the end of the word on the left and the beginning of the word on the right. The first one has been done for you.



TEAM	WORK	BOOTS
BODY	GUARD	DOG
CAT	FISH	BOWL
HORSE	PLAY	GROUND
LIFE	TIME	LINE
SUN	FLOWER	GIRL

LET'S GET VISUAL

SYMBOLS OF CHANCE (5 MARKS)

Chance is a concept with many connected ideas. Look at the symbols in the left hand column and explain how they are related to the concept of chance.

SYMBOL	EXPLANATION
	<p>Represents the unknown/possibility.</p>
	<p>Represents choice, success dependent on other choices.</p>
	<p>Represents risk.</p>

	<p>Represents luck.</p>
	<p>Represents superstition.</p>

ANALYSING SYMBOLS (5 MARKS)

Visual texts convey meaning without words. What we read into a text depends on the colour, compositions and the symbolic elements,

Analyse the image below to explain how it represents the concept of chance. Remember to think of concept broadly to create and justify a unique argument.

Make sure you identify at least one EXAMPLE, one TECHNIQUE and conduct ANALYSIS by explaining the effect and impact.



MARKING GUIDELINES

5 MARKS – Effective paragraph with example, technique and analysis. Limited spelling/grammatical issues.

4 MARKS – Competent paragraph with example, technique and analysis. Some spelling/grammatical issues.

3 MARKS – Paragraph with example, technique and attempt at analysis. Some spelling/grammatical issues.

2 MARKS – Attempted paragraph with example and technique. Consistent spelling/grammatical issues.

1 MARK – Relevant attempt to complete task.

RISK TAKERS

PERSUASIVE WRITING (15 MARKS)

British Antarctic explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton (1874-1922) placed this advertisement in London newspapers in 1900 in preparation for the National Antarctic Expedition (which subsequently failed to reach the South Pole). Shackleton later said of his call for volunteers that “it seemed as though all the men in Great Britain were determined to accompany me, the response was so overwhelming.”



MEN WANTED FOR HAZARDOUS JOURNEY. SMALL WAGES, BITTER COLD, LONG MONTHS OF COMPELTE DARKNESS, CONSTANT DANGER, SAFE RETURN DOUBTFUL. HONOR AND RECOGNITION IN CASE OF SUCCESS. – ERNEST SHACKLETON.

Despite the treacherous and uncomfortable conditions, curiosity prevailed. The risk was worth the gain. But with an advertisement like that, would you like to go? Would you be allowed to?

Your task is to write a letter to a loved one convincing them of your desire to join Shackleton’s expedition to the Antarctic. Your letter of **TWO PARAGRAPHS** must include:

- A striking and appealing opening sentence.
- At least THREE persuasive devices.
- At least TWO clear arguments as to why you wish to partake in the expedition.

MARKING CRITERIA

CRITERIA	SKILFUL 5	EFFECTIVE 3-4	SOUND 1-2	LIMITED 0
Appeal to the emotions and reason				
Strength and clarity of arguments				
Control of persuasive language conventions/devices				
TOTAL				/15

A NEW DAY

If there is one thing we can count on in this world, it is that the sun will rise tomorrow. Each new day represents the chance for something new. At the end of each day, we can look back on it as being either lost or spent.

Mary Ann Evans, better known as George Eliot (1819-1880), shows us how to tell the difference, and what is worth the day's expense.

'COUNT THAT DAY LOST' – GEORGE ELIOT

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went --
Then you may count that day well spent.

But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay --
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face--
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost --
Then count that day as worse than lost.

COMPREHENSION (10 MARKS)

Complete the following sentences:

1) On a day that you have done a 'self-denying deed', you should: (1 MARK)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feel good about yourself.
2) The speaker thinks that you can count a day "as worse than lost" if: (1 MARK)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You haven't helped another person.
3) Explain how the purpose of the two stanzas differ? (2 MARKS)
First stanza focuses on the positive things a person may do throughout his day and the positive effect they have on his life, the second stanza focuses on the negative result a person may have if he decides not to help others.
4) Identify and analyse the meaning behind 'Once glance most kind that felt like sunshine': (2 MARKS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simile; giving someone a kind look can make them feel warm and safe, as if touched by the sun.

5) Why do you think the poem is called 'Count That Day Lost' as opposed to 'Count That Day Spent'? Justify your answer. (2 MARKS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing title on the negative forces responders to recognise the consequences of their thoughts. Students do NOT need specific examples. Reward thoughts.
6) Identify the message behind the poem and give two examples of how you can apply the message of the poem to your own life: (2 MARKS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should identify the message, however if it is implied in their responses, and their responses are clear, concise and justified, they can be rewarded. Make your life meaningful by helping others.

CREATIVE WRITING (15 MARKS)

Many writer's take inspiration from other places when developing their stories. J.R.R Tolkien was inspired by his experiences as a soldier in the First World War when writing *Lord of the Rings*, J.K. Rowling took inspiration from people and places in Edinburgh when writing *Harry Potter* and Gregory Maguire found an alternate perspective in *The Wizard of Oz* when writing his novel turned musical, *Wicked*.

You have identified what you deem to be the key message in 'Count That Day Lost'. Now take this message and turn it into the closing paragraphs of an original short story.

You can set the story in any time period you like, give it any context, include fictional or non-fictional characters. The only requisite is that the message from 'Count That Day Lost' is clear and you write the closing paragraphs of the story.

MARKING CRITERIA

CRITERIA	SKILFUL 5	EFFECTIVE 3-4	SOUND 1-2	LIMITED 0
Perceptive and clever representation of key message				
Creative flair and engagement with task				
Control of language conventions/structure of the closing paragraph of a short story				
			TOTAL	/15

THE EXISTENCE OF FATE

If you believe in fate, you believe there is chance anything could happen at any time. Your life and your existence are out of your hands. If it is meant to be, it will be. It is a romantic notion, some would say a freeing notion – everything is left up to chance.

But not everyone believes in fate. As human beings, we have the capacity to make choices. The choices we make alter the course of our existence. Ultimately, we have freewill.

Are our choices fate? Or does fate not truly exist?

In his novel, *The Fault in Our Stars*, John Green examines the existence of fate through the story of two teenagers battling cancer and emotions at the same time. Should they get together? Or would that be silly given their circumstances?

The following excerpt is a letter that aims to give advice to one of the teens in relation to their predicament:

Dear Mr. Waters,

I am in receipt of your electronic mail dated the 14th of April and duly impressed by the Shakespearean complexity of your tragedy. Everyone in this tale has a rock-solid hamartia*: hers, that she is so sick; yours, that you are so well. Were she better or you sicker, then the stars would not be so terribly crossed, but it is the nature of stars to cross, and never was Shakespeare more wrong than when he had Cassius note, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars / But in ourselves." Easy enough to say when you're a Roman nobleman (or Shakespeare!), but there is no shortage of fault to be found amid our stars.

While we're on the topic of old Will's insufficiencies, your writing about young Hazel reminds me of the Bard's Fifty-fifth sonnet, which of course begins, "Not marble, nor the gilded monuments / Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme; / But you shall shine more bright in these contents / Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time." (Off topic, but: What a slut time is. She screws everybody.) It's a fine poem but a deceitful one: We do indeed remember Shakespeare's powerful rhyme, but what do we remember about the person it commemorates? Nothing. We're pretty sure he was male; everything else is guesswork. Shakespeare told us precious little of the man whom he entombed in his linguistic sarcophagus. (Witness also that when we talk about literature, we do so in the present tense. When we speak of the dead, we are not so kind.) You do not immortalize the lost by writing about them. Language buries, but does not resurrect. (Full disclosure: I am not the first to make this observation, of the MacLeish poem "Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments," which contains the heroic line "I shall say you will die and none will remember you.")

I digress, but here's the rub: The dead are visible only in the terrible lidless eye of memory. The living, thank heaven, retain the ability to surprise and to disappoint. Your Hazel is alive, Waters, and you mustn't impose your will upon another's decision, particularly a decision arrived at thoughtfully. She wishes to spare you pain, and you should let her. You may not find young Hazel's logic persuasive, but I have trod through this vale of tears longer than you, and from where I'm sitting, she's not the lunatic.

Yours truly,
Peter Van Houten

- Hamartia = fatal flaw.

LITERARY ALLUSIONS (9 MARKS)

Literary allusions are references within a text to another literary work. There are three in the extract above. Can you identify them all? You will get one mark for each cell you complete.

Fill out the table below with the example and the text it comes from:

ALLUSION	TEXT	COMPOSER
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars / But in ourselves."	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	William Shakespeare
Not marble, nor the gilded monuments / Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme; / But you shall shine more bright in these contents / Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time."	Sonnet 55	William Shakespeare
I shall say you will die and none will remember you.	Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments	MacLeish

/9

WEIGH IT UP (6 MARKS)

Reading through the letter, you may have noticed it considers the existence of both fate and freewill. Can you find THREE examples of fate and THREE examples of freewill without using the examples above?

Put your answers in the table below:

FATE	FREEWILL
Everyone in this tale has a rock-solid hamartia: hers, that she is so sick; yours, that you are so well.	Shakespeare told us precious little of the man whom he entombed in his linguistic sarcophagus.
... there is no shortage of fault to be found amid our stars.	The living, thank heaven, retain the ability to surprise and to disappoint.
Language buries, but does not resurrect.	She wishes to spare you pain, and you should let her.

/6

N.B. – Use your own discretion – if you can justify it, reward it.

DISCURSIVE WRITING (15 MARKS)

Discursive writing is writing that considers multiple perspectives. It isn't designed to persuade you, it doesn't have to be hard facts, it just need to explore the whole idea and consider the possibilities.

Your final task is to write a short discursive piece considering the following idea:

Fate versus Freewill: Is it one or the other?

You should write TWO paragraphs, one discussing the idea of fate, one discussing the idea of freewill. You should inform your discussion based on your own knowledge, as well as the knowledge you have gained reading the excerpt from *The Fault in Our Stars*.

MARKING CRITERIA

CRITERIA	SKILFUL 5	EFFECTIVE 3-4	SOUND 1-2	LIMITED 0
Perceptive consideration of fate				
Perceptive consideration of freewill				
Control of language conventions/structure				
			TOTAL	/15