CSSA
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION OF NSW

2015
TRIAL HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATION

English (Standard)
and English (Advanced)
Paper 1 – Area of Study

Morning Session
Monday 27 July 2015

General Instructions
• Reading time – 10 minutes
• Working time – 2 hours
• Write using black or blue pen
  Black pen is preferred
• Write your Centre Number and
  Student Number on the top of
  this page
• Begin each Section in a separate
  writing booklet

Total marks – 45

Section I  Pages 2 - 7

15 marks
• Attempt Question 1
• Allow about 40 minutes for this section

Section II  Page 8

15 marks
• Attempt Question 2
• Allow about 40 minutes for this section

Section III  Pages 9-10

15 marks
• Attempt Question 3
• Allow about 40 minutes for this section

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Section I

15 marks
Attempt Question 1
Allow about 40 minutes for this section

Answer the question in the Section I Writing Booklet. Extra writing booklets are available

In your answers you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of the way perceptions of discovery are shaped in and through texts
- describe, explain and analyse the relationship between language, text and context

Question 1 (15 marks)

Examine Texts One, Two, and Three carefully and then answer the questions on page 7.
How she met her mother

A daughter who sets out seeking the truth with her camera ends up disclosing a secret, writes Craig Mathieson

M, 108 minutes.

★★★★★
Sarah Polley’s astounding documentary Stories We Tell is a difficult film to explain, which is fitting since the subject is family, and every family is a knot of obligation and understanding that only makes sense to its own members. It’s safe to say that in exploring her own origins and her mother’s complex life, the Canadian actor-turned-filmmaker makes the history of her clan into both a memoir and a memorial. Every question answered raises a new query, although not the ones you might expect.
The genesis is simple. Whether pitched as an observation or a joke, the Polley family of Toronto has long noted that the youngest of the five children, Sarah, bears no resemblance to her father, Michael. At the point when it stops being funny, or conversely, where there’s nothing to do but laugh at the notion, Sarah picks up a camera and tries to ascertain the truth.
The person she needs to ask, her mother Diane, died from cancer when Sarah was 11, so the inquiries begin with memories of her mother from siblings and family friends. An aspiring actress with a Californian smile who eventually became a casting director, Diane is remembered with generosity and tact, which only makes her youngest child doggedly pursue specifics.

As an actor, whether in Atom Egoyan’s The Sweet Hereafter in 1997 or Zack Snyder’s Dawn of the Dead remake in 2004, Sarah Polley was remarkably expressive.
She could render the tangled simple in but a few moments of close-up. Her two previous films as director, 2006's *Away From Her* and 2011's *Take This Waltz*, partially duplicated that across an entire piece, but it's a documentary (of sorts) that proves to be her most poignant and powerful work to date.

One of the advantages held by *Stories We Tell* is that it's a Canadian film – there are no histrionics, nor does Sarah place herself as the central character who pursues her investigation to ponder what she is learning or what kind of film she is making. The 34-year-old is seen infrequently but heard more, even if her brothers and sisters are initially bemused by her questions.

As a work of narrative, the film is deeply complex, aiming not just for revelation but also resonance. Events from more than three decades ago extend into the present, and Polley doesn't just document those links, she enhances or even remakes them. The primary source of archival material, her father's Super-8 footage, grows to be so specific that it virtually matches contemporary quotes, as if it was placed in a time capsule awaiting Sarah's arrival.

Many of those involved in the story are, or were, actors, and the movie asks when are we performing in real life and when aren't we? Polley has her father, Michael, record a narration for the documentary, excerpted from his own writings, and so this affectionate if reserved man becomes part of documenting a process he painfully lived through.

Sarah directs her father's readings, interrupting him with calm efficiency so that he begins to doubt her motives. "It's an interrogation process," she jokes, but the process does find candidates for Sarah's biological father from those who worked on a 1978 stage production in Montreal that Diane came back from pregnant, and it's by no means a spoiler to say that the director meets her maker.

One of the extraordinary qualities possessed by *Stories We Tell* is that with each step deeper into the truth, the story becomes more nuanced. It doesn't fall into the trap of simplifying people so that they neatly make sense to the viewing audience. The picture never condescends to judge Diane, nor does it stop explaining a sometimes difficult life once Sarah's paternity is established. There are no absolutes for you to cling to. Because it's not a conventional mystery, it doesn't end with the discovery of Sarah's birth father, Harry, but rather finds present day twists to complement the resolutions from the past. The most fascinating is that the man Sarah gets to know, sometimes uncomfortably, views these events as his story, whose telling he should oversee.

"You need witnesses," Harry tells Sarah, "witnesses confirm you," but what he doesn't see is that how one person remembers something is never the entire truth. Whole lives can literally exist in the gaps and omissions, and *Stories We Tell*, once you've stopped going over it, will make you reflect on your own family history. The movie fascinates, inspires and challenges. It's a triumph of creation.
Text Two – Short Story: 

I was given a voice. That’s what people said about me. I cultivated my voice, because it would be a shame to waste such a gift. I pictured this voice as a hothouse plant, something luxuriant, with glossy foliage and the word tuberous in the name, and a musky scent at night. I made sure the voice was provided with the right temperature, the right degree of humidity, the right ambience. I soothed its fears; I told it not to tremble. I nurtured it, I trained it, I watched it climb up inside my neck like a vine.

The voice bloomed. People said I had grown into my voice. Soon I was sought after, or rather my voice was. We went everywhere together. What people saw was me, what I saw was my voice, ballooning out in front of me like the translucent greenish membrane of a frog in full trill.

My voice was courted. Bouquets were thrown to it. Money was bestowed on it. Men fell on their knees before it. Applause flew around it like flocks of red birds.

Invitations to perform cascaded over us. All the best places wanted us, and all at once, for, as people said — thought not to me — my voice would thrive only for a certain term. Then, as voices do, it would begin to shrivel. Finally it would drop off, and I would be left alone, denuded — a dead shrub, a footnote.

It’s begun to happen, the shrivelling. Only I have noticed it so far. There’s the barest pucker in my voice, the barest wrinkle. Fear has entered me, a needleful of ether, constricting what in someone else would be my heart.

Now it’s evening; the neon lights come on, excitement quickens in the streets. We sit in this hotel room, my voice and I; or rather in this hotel suite, because it’s still nothing but the best for us. We’re gathering our strength together. How much of my life do I have left? Left over, that is: my voice has used up much of it. I’ve given it all my love, but it’s only a voice, it can never love me in return.

Although it’s begun to decay, my voice is still as greedy as ever. Greedier: it wants more, more and more, more of everything it’s had so far. It won’t let go of me easily.

Soon it will be time for us to go out. We’ll attend a luminous occasion, chained together as always. I’ll put on its favourite dress, its favourite necklace. I’ll wind a fur around it, to protect it from the drafts. Then we’ll descend to the foyer, glittering like ice, my voice attached like an invisible vampire to my throat.

Used with permission
The day they climbed, it was threatening to snow. The sky was the colour of steel and seemed to hang just above the tops of the bare trees.

The castle was called Ravenscraig, which was satisfactory, even though there were no real ravens.

Why did they climb it that day, as a vanguard snowflake tumbled from the darkening sky? Probably because no-one in his right and adult mind would have done it then and it was a necessary part of their attack on life to defy practical judgment.

The first part was easy, red rock and red earth, speckled here and there with snow, and some light to see the loom of the ancient stones. How old? Heaven knows, but old enough to have seen deaths, battles, different days. Old enough.

The climb was a commitment, an equation of increasing danger, each foot up a little steeper and a little darker and the snow, not falling thick but steady, gathering on ledges, waited for a trembling foot.

“Ah!” The dark one, leading, slipped, showering his friend with snow and dirt and fear. They grinned, shakily and almost invisibly at each other and looked down: in memory, on swirling sea and the backs of gulls, but that may be fantasy. It may have been only a little height, but surely it is remembered this well because it really was high enough for fear?

They had come to that moment in any climb which measures courage. Too far to go back, yet still so far to go with tiring muscles, faltering nerves.

They had not known it when they started (which is how inexpert they were) but the last part could only be climbed by inching up a chimney, back to one side, feet to the other, in compression like a spring of bone and flesh. They looked at it and puffed dubiously.

The dark one led, for it was his day. The other watched him go, pleased at his skill, aware he had to follow. Then it was his turn. Once, three quarters of the way up, a spasm of cramp stabbed his calf. His breath stopped and he made the pain go away by thought, by will. A revelation, that it could be done! At last, a ridge behind his shoulders, moving air in his face, he reached the top. No help, for it was a thing to do yourself.

On the top they lay side by side, feeling the snow land on the backs of their hands and bare legs, melting in their tousled hair, tension draining from them like water.

Inside the castle was a single room, huge, craggy-walled, with a door you had to lean on even to move. When it was shut, you could feel the velvet blackness on the surface of your eyes and hear things scuttling about. They did not stay long listening to the dark for as it had turned out, it had been the climb that mattered.

They went down the easy way, through a quiet park and deepening snow, to their homes and recriminations for being late, and dirty, and selfish.

But nothing could touch Alistair and me, that day.

In your answers you will be assessed on how well you:

- demonstrate understanding of the way perceptions of discovery are shaped in and through texts
- describe, explain and analyse the relationship between language, text and context

### Text one – Film Review

(a) Explain how the written and visual texts work together to demonstrate a process of discovery.

### Text two – Short Story

(b) How does the author represent an important aspect of self-discovery in this text?

### Text three – Memoir

(c) “A revelation, that it could be done!”

How does Jenkins show that the boys have been changed by their experience?

### Texts one, two, and three

(d) Justify which two texts, in your view, most effectively reveal the personal nature of discovery.

In your response, make close reference to both texts.

End of Question 1
Section II

15 marks
Attempt Question 2
Allow about 40 minutes for this section

Answer the question in the Section II Writing Booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

In your answers you will be assessed on how well you:
• express understanding of discovery in the context of your studies
• organise, develop and express ideas using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context

Question 2 (15 marks)

Use ONE of the sentences below as the FIRST sentence in a piece of imaginative writing that explores the following idea:

*Discoveries that are confronting lead to new discoveries.*

Use ONE of these sentences as your FIRST sentence:

(a) I had neither expected nor indeed suspected that such a thing would ever be revealed.

or

(b) It was a discovery as welcome as it was startling.

or

(c) Now nothing could remain as it once had been.
Section III

15 marks
Attempt Question 3
Allow about 40 minutes for this section

Answer the question in the Section III Writing Booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:
- demonstrate understanding of the concept of discovery in the context of your study
- analyse, explain and assess the ways discovery is represented in a variety of texts
- organise, develop and express ideas using language appropriate to audience, purpose and context

Question 3 (15 marks)

Significant discoveries surprise and challenge.

How is this idea conveyed in your prescribed text and ONE other text of your own choosing.

The prescribed texts are:

- **Prose Fiction**
  - James Bradley, *Wrack*
  - Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*
  - Tara June Winch, *Swallow the Air*

- **Nonfiction**
  - Bill Bryson, *A Short History of Nearly Everything*
  - Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, *The Motorcycle Diaries*

- **Drama**
  - Michae Gow, *Away*
  - Jane Harrison, *Rainbow’s End*
  - from Vivienne Cleven et al. (eds), *Contemporary Indigenous Plays*

- **Film**
  - Ang Lee, *Life of Pi*

- **Shakespeare**
  - William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

Section 3 continues on page 10
• Poetry
  Rosemary Dobson
  * Young Girl at a Window
  * Wonder
  * Painter of Antwerp
  * Traveller's Tale
  * The Tiger
  * Cock Crow
  * Ghost Town: New England

  Robert Frost
  * The Tuft of Flowers
  * Mending Wall
  * Home Burial
  * After Apple-Picking
  * Fire and Ice
  * Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

  Robert Gray
  * Journey: The North Coast
  * The Meatworks
  * North Coast Town
  * Late Ferry
  * Flames and Dangling Wire
  * Diptych

• Media
  Simon Nasht, Frank Hurley, The Man Who Made History
  Ivan O'Mahoney, Go Back to Where You Came From-
  Series I, Episodes 1,2,3 and The Response

End of paper