



National Certificate of Educational Achievement
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2009

Internal Assessment Resource

Subject Reference: **English 2.1**

Internal assessment resource reference number:
Eng/2/1_C6

Being There

Supports internal assessment for:

Achievement Standard 90375 v2
Produce crafted and developed creative writing

Credits: 3

Date version published:

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**Ministry of Education
quality assurance status:**

For use in internal assessment
from 2009

Teacher Guidelines:

The following guidelines are supplied to enable teachers to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource.

Context/setting:

This resource may be used as part of a writing unit. Students will develop a piece of writing which focuses on describing a scene.

Conditions:

This activity should be worked on in the classroom under teacher supervision to ensure authenticity. Teachers may guide students through the initial tasks, helping them to make suitable language choices. Teachers may demonstrate how the techniques/language choices used in the samples in the activity can be applied to the students' own writing.

As students develop their final drafts, teachers can offer appropriate guidance that writing may need further work on ideas, language, structure or accuracy in spelling, punctuation or paragraphing. Teachers may not correct errors, rewrite sentences or suggest specific ideas. Students should have access to dictionaries to check their writing. Word processing is acceptable providing it is done under teacher supervision.

Teachers are directed to Explanatory Notes 10 - 12 in the achievement standard.

Resource requirements:

- Access to extracts in this activity
- Thesaurus
- Dictionary

Additional information:

None.

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Being There

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Student Instructions Sheet

You will write a description about a place. Using student writing inspired by Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* as a starting point, you will then choose your own scene and develop a description which evokes a sense of being there, of the place, its people, its sights and sounds. Your writing will be rich in imagery combining elements of both poetry and prose. Your writing in this particular style will be between 300 and 400 words long.

You will be assessed on

- how well you express and develop your ideas
- your ability to use an appropriate writing style
- how well you organise your writing
- your accuracy in spelling, punctuation and paragraphing.

Introduction

“To begin at the beginning”

In the prologue to one of his most famous works *Under Milk Wood*, the Welsh writer Dylan Thomas draws you into the scene in a small town at night. It is no ordinary description. Thomas invites you to explore this town with its houses “blind as moles” beside a “fishing boat-bobbing sea” on a “starless and bible-black” night. Because “only your eyes are unclosed to see the black and folded town fast, and slow, asleep”, he commands you to “look” and “listen” as he describes the people: “the preacher, policeman, the webfoot cocklewoman and the tidy wives”; then the animals: “the dogs in the wetnosed yards; the cats nap in the slant corners or lope sly.”

As a lead in to the drama which follows Thomas entices you to “come closer now” and enter the dream world of the people as they sleep: “From where you are, you can hear their dreams.”

Through imagery, rhythm and word play Thomas creates a unique sense of being there in the small town at night.

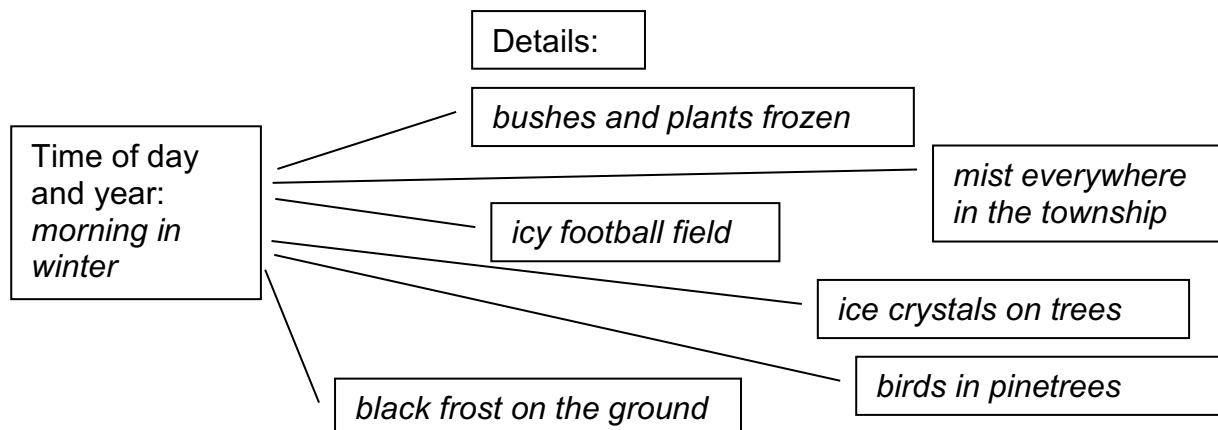
You will take a scene you know well and develop your own description where you invite your readers to explore the scene.

The full extract from *Under Milk Wood* can be read in the appendix.

1 Developing an outline

- a) Choose a scene you know well. It might be the farm, the township or suburb where you live, or the local shopping mall or park.
- b) Observe the scene carefully. Take notes on what you see. Record what may seem like small details, such as what particular people are doing or what parts of the scene looks like. It might be that the trees move in a certain way when the wind blows or the sun striking a building makes it look different.
- c) You might go back to the scene at another time and record some more details. What has changed?
- d) Develop an outline for your description. You could choose use or adapt these ideas or develop your own:
 - Choose a time of year: • *Eg: winter*
 - Establish a place and time of day: • *morning in the township*
 - Populate your scene: • *children and family waking up getting ready for church*
 - • *Joe working in the garage*
 - Move to a new time of day in the same scene: • *later in the morning*

- e) Build details around each of the ideas you listed in (d). You could set out your details as follows:



Task 2 Experimenting with syntax

- a) Read the opening sentence from this description of a winter scene:

It is winter, early morning in the little township, chilled and blackfrosted, the plants and bushes stiffly frozen, the football field icy, the trees carrying crystals of sharp ice up to the wet sodden air-hugging mist.
from *Tarras* (exemplar A, page 8)

The opening develops details from the plan in task 1(e). Look at how the sentence is constructed with several details combined together concisely.

- b) Now read:

It is dawn in winter. There is a deafening buzz of silence in the park which is wrapped in frozen air. The bike track is silent and deserted. Sitting next to the green hedge, the swings and the slide that comes out of the fort are dew covered.
from *Morning at the Mall* (exemplar C, page 10)

Rewrite the opening to *Morning at the Mall* using a similar sentence pattern to the opening of *Tarras*.

- c) Read the whole of *Tarras* on page 8. Talk about how the effects created by the sentence patterns. What sorts of things are grouped together in one sentence?
- d) Draft your own opening where you set the scene and establish the atmosphere. Incorporate the details you planned for your opening in task 1 (e) experimenting with the same sort of sentence pattern shown here in task 2(a). Write in the present tense to create a sense of being there.

Task 3 Exploring personification

- a) Read these sections from *On the Farm* (Exemplar B, page 9). The words which are central to the personification are in bold.

*Chilly sunrise **creeps up** over the farm. There an old farm house **lounges lazily**, well-warmed and well lived in.*

*The delicate breeze **breathes - gentle and curious -** over the mountaintop. It **swoops down**, in and out and around the branches of the tall pine trees before **slithering off**, then high, high back up into the clear morning sky it goes*

*The sun **stands sternly, supervising** all from the centre of the sky*

- b) Read the whole of *On the Farm* on page 9. Talk about how the personification helps develop a sense that the scene is alive.
- c) Personification is also used in *Tarras* (page 8) and *Morning at the Mall* (page 10). Read both descriptions and identify examples. Discuss what effects they create.
- d) Draft one or more sentences which personify a part of nature (like the wind, the mist or the morning) which you could incorporate into your own description.

Task 4 Drafting

- a) Look back to your ideas and notes from task 1(d) and (e). Develop your own description of your scene based on this material. You might also incorporate sentence patterns and images drafted in tasks 2 and 3.
- b) Think about the time frame you will use. Time might move only a few hours (as in *Tarras* or *Morning at the Mall*) or over a whole day (*On the Farm*).
- c) Write in the second person. Use direct address to give a sense that you are inviting the reader to share your impressions of a place you know well.
- d) Read your draft aloud to a partner or the class to highlight how you have used language.
- e) Re read the exemplars on pages 8 to 11. Discuss their strengths and where they could be improved. You may not use any of this material in your own work.

Task 4 Developing a final version

- a) Develop a final draft of your description. It should develop **ideas** about the scene
- b) Your writing should be crafted to **create effects** through its use of
 - imagery and other language devices such as alliteration
 - rhythm
 - present tense and direct address
- c) be **effectively structured** with
 - an opening which sets the time and place
 - the introduction of characters into the scene
 - a moving on in time
- d) use appropriate **writing conventions** accurately, including some complex sentence patterns.

EXEMPLAR A: EXCELLENCE

Tarras

It is winter, early morning in the little township, chilled and blackfrosted, the plants and bushes stiffly frozen, the football field icy, the trees carrying crystals of sharp ice up to the wet sodden air-hugging mist.

Listen. It is morning quietly roving the main road, the moist melodic streaming mist rising over the garage and the schoolhouse. It is grass shivering on the hill. Sunrise, dawn, the chorus of birds in the pinetrees.

It is Sunday morning. The thin clear slants of sun echo back onto the thick mist. In the silver windowed house, the parents sleep heavy while three blanketed children toss and turn. In the workshop of the garage, Joe is up and in his practical oil-stained overalls is working on that ute that the farmer needs today. Back in the house, the children now sit heavy-eyed around the wooden rectangular table.

And the toast burns as the jug boils.

"Hurry up kids, we'll be late," Mum shouts, sharp tongued. Washed and combed and brushed, families drive the short way to the little church on the hill. Past the swamp where the dragonflies shimmer and hover in the morning sunlight. Where the captured tadpoles would have grown into glazed green slippery little frogs.

Look. On the hill behind the house the pinetrees lift their heavy branches of sharp dense needles into the dwindling disappearing time-now-over mist. Down below in the township, the little general store opens its ready-for-anything doors to sell soap to biscuits, flour, tea towels, light bulbs and milk that will arrive later in the day carried for hours on the bus.

And soon you will be sitting on hard straight-backed wooden pews with no cushions. The tiny white wooden church echoing with the sound of morning hymns, streaming out into the frosty but now sunstreaked morning.

Clear, appropriate and effective **structure** which follows the lifting of the mist and coldness from the early morning scene: "wet sodden air hugging mist" to "moist melodic streaming mist" to "dwindling disappearing time-now-over mist."

Develops and integrates **ideas** about the Sunday morning scene. Mature thought and perceptive observation evident: "Where the tadpoles we captured would have grown into glazed green slippery little frogs."

Writing is controlled and **creates effects** which command attention: skilled use of premodified noun groups "ready-for-anything doors" and alliteration "slants of sun", "moist melodic streaming."

Writing **conventions** used accurately.

EXEMPLAR B: MERIT

On the Farm

It is spring. Chilly sunrise creeps up over the farm. There an old farm house lounges lazily, well-warmed and well lived in.

Listen, to all of the thousands of birds chirping, their musical notes forming together. The call of a lost frightened lamb speaks out above the sounds of the birds, seeking out its mother. Listen to the sound of the gentle breeze as it rustles its way through the million leaves in the trees. Listen to the horse's long tail as it swishes, swishes about through the air, flicking away the buzzing flies.

It is morning. The delicate breeze breathes - gentle and curious - over the mountaintop. It swoops down, in and out and around the branches of the tall pine trees before slithering off, then high, high back up into the clear morning sky it goes. Birds chirp, chirp, chirp in the branches overlooking sheep, cows, deer and goats that graze and gaze in the long tender grass. Fences, barely standing, fool these animals into staying there, unfree, contained within. Old worn down barns slouch silently, growing accustomed to their age. Two horses stand out, heads stretched down, meandering and munching through the tender grass that overlooks the river.

Look now. The sun stands sternly, supervising all from the centre of the sky. It sees that everything is alive, so alive. See, now, the thick grassy paddocks, thick with sheep, their lambs curled around their legs, sucking on their mothers, furiously wagging their tails this way and that. Look closely at the spiders, the earwigs, centipedes and other crawling insects as they sprawl busily about, well-fattened.

Feel the smooth velvet touch of the horse beneath your body. Feel the breeze gently blowing through each of the hairs on your head. Feel the plod, the plod of the horses, , their hooves clumping the ground with dull thuds, taking you across the old farm and now over the hills and off towards the falling sun.

Develops and sustains convincing **ideas** about the farm. Ideas lack perceptiveness needed at excellence level - a little clichéd in places: "breeze gently blowing through each of the hairs on your head."

Writing is controlled and **creates effects** through personification: "the sun stands sternly, supervising all from the centre of the sky."

Writing is missing the succinctness of expression required at excellence level:

- too detailed and in places leaving little to the reader's imagination "listen to the sound as it rustles its way through the million leaves.."
- occasionally clumsy or archaic expression: "there unfree, contained within"

Clear and appropriate **structure** which develops different aspects of the scene. Structure effectively follows the passage of the day.

Writing **conventions** used accurately.

EXEMPLAR C: ACHIEVEMENT

Morning at the Mall

It is dawn in winter. There is a deafening buzz of silence in the park which is wrapped in frozen air. The bike track is silent and deserted. Sitting next to the green hedge, the swings and the slide that comes out of the fort are dew covered.

Listen. On the other side of the hedge you can hear the cars, the shouts of the children, the sound of the mall as it gets busier.

It is Saturday. The library has opened. Children with their grannies dodge through the cars in the car park to return books. Mothers and push chairs head towards the Warehouse, Books and More, ToyWorld, Harvey's World Travel and Hammer Hardware. The black belching truck groans away from the supermarket loading ramp. Pellets of fruit and veges wait to be pushed inside and sold. Three girls in blue supermarket uniforms are sitting at the tables outside the coffee shop smoking their cigarettes and shiver. No one else wants to sit outside with them. Drops of rain sit on the tables too.

Look. Back in the park the red and golds are warming up for the 9.30 game against the green and blacks. Nine year old boys puff white clouds of steam on their way up the field. Parents and children line up on the sideline ready to shout out in support. They pull up their collars and stamp their feet as the cold easterly wind sprints across the field.

The sun breaks through the clouds, but only for a few minutes. It must be time to head for the bakery and buy some morning tea. You wander over from the park, dodging the cars and the easterly on this winter's day. The mall is busier now. The cars cruise slowly round, looking for space to park. Your stomach tells you where you should be. The bakery.

Develops and sustains **ideas** about the mall and the park.

Straightforward description of scene given.

Writing creates some **effects**:

- "black belching truck"
 - "nine year olds puff white clouds"
- but not sustained. Lacks control required for merit.

Material is appropriately **structured** outlining different aspects of the scene in the park and and the adjacent mall.

Writing **conventions** used accurately.

EXEMPLAR D: NOT ACHIEVED

The River

It is summer. The warm sun heats my back, and the trees hang over the sparkling river, and the ducks swim happily round looking for any sign of food to appetise them.

Look. The children are playing and running free like wild horses. The children and the family feed the ducks as the cars whiz behind them. A big white mansion sits alone on the other side of the river as though keeping watch over the busy happy scene.

Listen. The heavy hearty huffs of the dogs hacks through the air. The chirpy children's voices mingle with the beauty that surrounds their lives. Feel the smooth grass and the dry lumpy earth. Feel the rough bark as it scrapes and and scratches along the soft skin of the children as they climb the treacherous trees.

Look. The white clouds are beaming down on this sparkling river as the rays of sunshine beam light upon the river. This creates a contrast in my worlds, the golden light of my thoughts and shadows of darkness, the interruption of my world. The fleeting breeze flows around the funky flowing river as the runners and their dogs run by. Some people try hard to be noticed, like the guy in the bike shorts and the people sitting at the tables.

Listen. Only you can hear the wind whispering the secrets of time. The whispering wind is releasing the secrets of time as the current of the river tinkles through your mind. Feel your mind wander away with your dreams and thoughts as the river of life slowly carries you downstream to your happy place.

The river echoes life's dreams. Listen hard and you can hear them.

Limited effects created:

- Attempt at complex sentence pattern results in loosely coordinated run on sentence.
- Some attempt at figurative language but images lack impact: "running free like horses"
- Clichéd alliteration: "heavy hearty huffs"
- Some inappropriate word choice: "funky"

- Overwritten.
- **Ideas** are incongruously linked in places eg the sounds of the dogs and children, and the feel of the grass and bark are grouped inappropriately
- Ideas are obscure, especially the ending.

Limited structure with a repetitive and muddled ending.

Writing conventions used reasonably accurately, apart from syntactical problems mentioned earlier.

APPENDIX

Extract from *Under Milk Wood* by Dylan Thomas (The prologue to 'Play for Voices')

To begin at the beginning:

It is spring, moonless night in the small town, starless and bible-black, the cobblestreets silent and the hunched, courtiers'-and-rabbits' wood limping invisible down to the sloeblack, slow, black, crowblack, fishingboat-bobbing sea. The houses are blind as moles (thought moles see fine tonight in the snouting velvet dingles) or blind as Captain Cat there in the muffled middle by the pump and the town clock, the shops in mourning, the Welfare Hall in widows' weeds. And all the people of the lulled and dumbfounded town are sleeping now.

Hush, the babies are sleeping, the farmers, the fishers, the tradesmen and pensioners, cobbler, schoolteacher, postman and publican, the undertaker and the fancy woman, drunkard, dressmaker, preacher, policeman, the webfoot cocklewomen and the tidy wives. Young girls lie bedded soft or glide in their dreams, with rings and trousseaux, bridesmaided by glow-worms down the aisles of the organplaying wood. The boys are dreaming wicked or of the bucking ranches of the night and the jollyrodgered sea. And the anthracite statues of the horses sleep in the fields, and the cows in the byres, and the dogs in the wetnosed yards; and the cats nap in the slant corners or lope sly, streaking and needling, on the one cloud of the roofs.

You can hear the dew falling, and the hushed town breathing. Only your eyes are unclosed to see the black and folded town fast, and slow, asleep. And you alone can hear the invisible starfall, the darkest-before-dawn minutely dewgrazed stir of the black, dab-filled sea where the *Arethusa*, the *Curlew* and the *Skylark*, *Zanzibar*, *Rhiannon*, the *Rover*, the *Cormorant*, and the *Star of Wales* tilt and ride.

Listen. It is night moving in the streets, the processional salt slow musical wind in Coronation Street and Cackle Row, it is the grass growing on Llaregyb Hill, dewfall, starfall, the sleep of birds in Milk Wood.

Listen. It is night in the chill, squat chapel, hymning in bonnet and brooch and bombazine black, butterfly choker and bootlace bow, coughing like nannygoats, sucking mintoes, fortywinking hallelujah; night in the four-ale, quiet as a domino; in Ocky Milkman's lofts like a mouse with gloves; in Dai Bread's bakery flying like black flour. It is to-night in Donkey Street, trotting silent, with seaweed on its hooves, along the cockled cobbles, past curtained fernpot, text and trinket, harmonium, holy dresser, watercolours done by hand, china dog and rosy tin teacaddy. It is night neddyding among the snuggeries of babies.

Look. It is night, dumbly, royally winding through the Coronation cherry trees; going through the graveyard of Bethesda with winds gloved and folded, and dew doffed; tumbling by the Sailors Arms.

Time passes. Listen. Time passes. Come closer now.

Only you can hear the houses sleeping in the streets in the slow deep salt and silent black, bandaged night. Only you can see, in the blinded bedrooms, the combs and petticoats over the chairs, the jugs and basins, the glasses of teeth, Thou Shalt Not on the wall, and the yellowing dickybird-watching pictures of the dead. Only you can hear and see, behind the eyes of the sleepers, the movements and countries and mazes and colours and dismays and rainbows and tunes and wishes and flight and fall and despairs and big seas of their dreams.

From where you are, you can hear their dreams.

Assessment Schedule Eng/2/1_C6 - Produce crafted and developed creative writing

	Descriptor	Example
Achievement	<p>Develop and sustain idea(s) in a piece of creative writing.</p> <p>Craft writing to create effects which are appropriate to audience, purpose and text type.</p> <p>Structure material in a way that is appropriate to audience, purpose and text type.</p> <p>Use writing conventions accurately.</p>	Refer annotated achievement exemplar <i>Morning at the Mall</i> on page 10.
Achievement with Merit	<p>Develop and sustain idea(s) convincingly in a piece of creative writing.</p> <p>Craft controlled writing to create effects which are appropriate to audience, purpose and text type.</p> <p>Structure material clearly in a way that is appropriate to audience, purpose and text type.</p> <p>Use writing conventions accurately.</p>	Refer annotated merit exemplar <i>On the Farm</i> on page 9.
Achievement with Excellence	<p>Develop, sustain, and integrate idea(s) convincingly, in a piece of creative writing.</p> <p>Craft controlled writing to create effects which are appropriate to audience, purpose and text type, and which commands attention.</p> <p>Structure material clearly and effectively in a way that is appropriate to audience, purpose and text type.</p> <p>Use writing conventions accurately.</p>	Refer annotated excellence exemplar <i>Tarras</i> on page 8.