

91100R



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

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## Level 2 English, 2016

### 91100 Analyse significant aspects of unfamiliar written text(s) through close reading, supported by evidence

2.00 p.m. Thursday 17 November 2016  
Credits: Four

## RESOURCE BOOKLET

Refer to this booklet to answer the questions for English 91100.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–4 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MAY KEEP THIS BOOKLET AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

**TEXT A: FICTION**

In this passage, the writer is sitting by the sea on an autumn morning.

**The Kumara Harvest**

I remember how, when I was young, we would go to the sea. I remember how I used to get excited when we reached it for the first time. I still recall that feeling, though now I see it every day. The beach sloped away steeply and my father would tell me of the deep water and strong current only a short distance from where we stood. I remember that the summers seemed better then and that one day my father said we were going to live by the sea, but we never did. My mother died and my father couldn't face the sea alone. 5

It is later than I would prefer; by now it must be almost nine. I sit high up on the bank and before me lies power and mystery, light and dark, and a force that I cannot hope to understand. It draws me slowly in as I sit here alone, not doing, just being. For the people that were here long before me, this time would have heralded the start of the kumara harvest: 10  
 “*Ka hauhake te kai i konei; ka ruhi te tipu o nga mea katoa*”. Now, as I am sure it did then, the sun casts dazzling plays of light over the water. The white surf is tossed violently upwards and then slowly, powerfully, rolls in to crash breathlessly amongst the sand.

Amidst this tumult are little dots. To the untrained eye they might be seals playing boisterously in the water. But I know that seals cannot carry surfboards and these creatures do, linked 15  
 to their bodies with an umbilical precision, as if their lives depended on it—and perhaps they do. My gaze falls on a particular flock; they are at the water's edge and run swiftly, confidently, excitedly into the shallows to meet the oncoming waves, their first of the day.

The beaches of my childhood were small and sandy. Behind them stood stone cottages and shops. The sea was usually calm, but the strong current and water temperature on all but the 20  
 hottest days would keep us playing in the sand or climbing the cliffs at the end of the beach. Tied up along the pier would be fishing boats, and with them came seagulls and the smells of the sea. After we left, it was a long time until I saw the sea again.

I sit quietly; there is nothing I have to do here. The power of the ocean tells me that to try would be foolish, so I sit and I watch and I listen, sometimes to the people, sometimes to 25  
 myself. This is the place where I come to think, a place to where I can escape and from where, if only for a few minutes, the world is kept away. Watching the waves, I see in them my life so far—the good and the bad, the happy and the frightening, the loved and the lonely. I see in them the faces of my parents and of their parents too. I feel the wind on my face and I taste the salt that it carries in from the sea. 30

I wonder what my son thinks when he sees the sea. How he feels with his little feet in the wet sand as the water laps over them. I wonder if he'll ever tell me and I wonder if I'll be there for him to tell.

**Glossed phrase**

Ka hauhake ... katoa	a description of the tenth month of the Māori year: “crops are now lifted; all growth becomes exhausted”
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**Sources**

Text (adapted): Andy Williamson, in *Trout 3*, <http://www.trout.auckland.ac.nz/journal/3/williams/kumara.htm>.

Glossed phrase (adapted): Elsdon Best, *The Maori Division of Time* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1959), p. 22, found on <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-BesTime.html>.

**TEXT B: POETRY**

In this poem, the poet reflects on the experience of a flood.

**Cloudburst**

The windows of heaven opened,  
 a sea spilt out of the sky,  
 streets sank beneath the waves,  
  
 the fountains of the deep gushed,  
 ponds, reservoirs and sewers threw up, 5  
 men took to their boats.

When the waters fell, a stubble  
 of trash sprouted over the town  
 and scum fouled its face.

We were quick to produce a statistic; 10  
 we resolved we had suffered  
 a once-in-a-thousand-years disaster.

Lucky us; others in the same lottery  
 drew bombs, pestilence, earthquakes,  
 fire, terror and starvation. 15

So the dove of good favour returned;  
 insurance paid for the damage  
 and the council mopped up.

Misfortune uses us lightly.  
 We have now a millennium to lie back 20  
 and wait for the next cloudburst.

Source: Kevin Ireland, *Selected Poems, 1963–2013* (Wellington: Steele Roberts, 2013), p. 96.

**TEXT C: NON-FICTION**

This is an extract from an introduction to a collection of New Zealand poetry.

**Best New Zealand Poems 2005**

The best New Zealand poems, like the best poems anywhere, are capable of changing our idea of what a poem is—surprising us, overtaking our expectations. The poem is both the winding road and the wild horse that gallops past us as we read, so that when we come around the last bend, there it is, waiting for our shock of recognition.

Such poems make the world bigger by taking us somewhere new. I would agree with those who say that in the English language, at least, we don't live in an age of great poets. But we do live in an age of great poems, and they're often found in unlikely places. To notice them, you have to be open to the notion of many poetries, rather than one dominant idea of what makes a poem. New Zealand is particularly good at nurturing the kind of variety that lets very good poems thrive. And what's especially refreshing about poetry from New Zealand, it seems to me, is that there is a high degree of local acceptance of this variety.

It's still the case, though, that in some parts of the world 'poetry' means one particular kind of poetry. I was reminded of this recently when I heard that a distinguished French poet, presented with a selection of New Zealand poems, responded that some were "not poems". It's the same kind of tone you hear from people who respond that certain kinds of music are "not music". In France, in fact, 'poetry' is like 'classical music', in the sense that however modern it is, it still has to be 'classical'—to aspire to the realms of high art—or else it's not poetry. (If you want to make anything that resembles jazz, or pop, or folk, they give you a guitar and kick you out of the church.)

Across the Channel, in the home of English, there's also a specific way of doing things; what's surprising about many poems from Britain is just how unsurprising they are—how domesticated, how well-behaved—the poet getting quietly worked up about something in the plainest conversational tone.

New Zealand, of course, used to be a rather British place, and had its own received way of writing poems. It was the injection of freedom that American models provided that turned things upside-down. Part of the variety on show in this collection lies in the wide range of things that New Zealand poets write about; long gone are the days when some things were considered suitable for poetic treatment and others not.

I suggest a definition, if we need one, of what qualities these poems share. They're all overflowing with something; they're pieces of language that brim over with more than everyday language holds—with sound, story, history, grief, love, comedy, and all sorts of unexpected meaning. The poem comes out of change, with changed language, and changes us.

Source (adapted): Andrew Johnston, in *Best New Zealand Poems 2005*, <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters/bnzp/2005/introduction.htm>.