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91098



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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 2 English 2023

91098 Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence

Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence.	Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s) convincingly, supported by evidence.	Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s) perceptively, supported by evidence.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

You should answer ONE of the essay questions in this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

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YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Excellence

TOTAL 07

8. Analyse how a relationship helped you understand more about other people's beliefs.

TEXT DETAILS

Written text type	Short story	Written text type	
Title	My Father Running with a Dead Boy	Title	
Author	Carl Nixon	Author	

PLANNING

This conflict was in the mind of Greg, it was the unresolved grievances he had with his father that needed to be resolved

We see this - unfamiliarity and distance of Greg with Ray
greg subconsciously wants to see Ray again
how memories of other's can preserve the image of us

ESSAY

Type your essay in the space below. You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 750–800 words. The quality of your analysis is more important than the length of your essay. (The counter will change colour when you reach the recommended word count.)

Support the points you make with specific details from the text(s).

Each and everyone of us deals with conflict in our lives, whether it be external or internal. They say "sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me". However reassuring this statement may be, it is often untrue. The greatest conflicts occur in harsh words, internal struggle, or unexpressed grievances. In the short story 'My Father Running with a Dead Boy' by Carl Nixon, we see an internal conflict illustrated in the mind of our protagonist - Greg. Greg will never get to see his father again and it is now too late for them to reconcile. Greg's grief manifests in different ways but by the end of the text, each of these forms of conflict are resolved in the climax of the text - Greg seeing his father again, but as the man he really was.

Conflict can manifest in unsuspecting ways, such as unfamiliarity and distance between characters. The audience cut into the story halfway through Ray's - Greg's father's - funeral. Immediately, Greg's thoughts are revealed to the character, stating - "It is a good turn out, better than I would've expected for a man as quiet and solitary as my father" and as he imagines his father alive he thinks, "I dread the awkward silence which always hovers near us, soon I will begin to talk about the rugby or the latest rates increase, although I don't really care about either. Then, inevitably, hating the cliché, I will work my way around to the rainy spell we've had lately. What does he think, will it be a hard winter?" It is made clear that Greg did not have a close relationship with his father. It is implied that Greg has not met most of these people attending Ray's funeral. Furthermore, the use of personification of the awkward silence 'hovering' over Greg and Ray depicts a relationship which cannot grow, almost like a cloud obscuring sunlight from a plant, unheard of for someone that ought to be called a 'dad'. The father and son are unable to connect on anything, with their conversations always being reduced to 'pleasant' small talk on subjects such as sports and the weather. Greg is enduring an internal conflict, between the knowledge that he and his father were never close and bitter reality that they will never attain that, not after Ray's passing. This conflict is gradually resolved throughout the text, as Greg comes to learn in an old man's eulogy that his father was a hero, traumatised by the death of a boy who he could not save. Greg comes to understand that his father may have been 'protecting' him by distancing himself and begins to reconcile his relationship with his father. Finally, at the climax, when Greg leaves the church, he sees a projection of his father as a "young and lively boy", as opposed to the "quiet and solitary man" he always knew him as. The climax of the story shows the emotional distance which Greg and Ray suffered from is bridged, with Greg having a new found appreciation for his dad. The only thing separating Greg and Ray now, is the divide between life and death: "on the other side of the bank".

Sometimes our conflict dwells in our subconscious mind. Whether Greg knew it or not, it is made clear that he longs to 'see' his father, continually imagining him and projecting his presence onto the funeral. This conflict between conscious and subconscious minds culminates in the climax of the text, where Greg sees a more accurate manifestation of his father when he was alive. We are introduced to this idea in the repetition of Greg seeing his father "out of the corner of [his] eye" and in the form of the old man delivering the eulogy, "For a moment, I think he is my father... But, no, his nose is more Roman." The persistent determination of Greg's mind to see his father illustrates the innate love which a son has for his father. Although the pair were distant, Greg's mind continues to

imagine Ray as if he was never really gone. He longs to be cared for, to feel the reassuring presence of his father again, regardless of their differences. This conflict leads to the climax of the text where Greg "see[s] a young man with blond wavy hair, he is not wearing a shirt... In his arms he holds a dead boy, as though he weighs nothing, a baby." Greg acknowledges his desire to see his father once more, to be cradled by him, but is able to accept that it will not happen. The author's purpose in this conflict makes us consider our relationships with our loved ones. Human weakness such as pride, bitterness, or fear can prevent us from reconciling our differences with those we care about. We are reminded that life is precious because it ends. We are encouraged to consider how much time we all have, take hold of the opportunities that we have been given to know or forgive those we love, and let go of anything holding us back from developing a closer relationship with them. Time is fleeting, and we do not want to be reduced to the same conflict as Greg - unable to say we reconciled before our/their passing.

Reconsidering our previous perceptions of others in our minds is a conflict we all are susceptible to. It is important to have an open mind, and empathise with others, as our experiences are not the same, and therefore the way we present ourselves is not the same. Greg, did not know the trauma which Ray dealt with, instead assuming that Ray was 'old and solitary'. Nixon uses light as a symbol of Greg's perception of his father in the text. Initially, the old man who Greg sees as his father, "wades in the pool of spilt fizzy drink [the light shining through the church]". Greg sees his father "lurking in the shadows", but as Greg comes to understand what Ray has struggled with, "[his] father creeps forward". Ultimately, this conflict leads to Greg seeing his father in a new light, "the water reflects upon his skin". The author's purpose is to help us consider our own perceptions of others. We do not know, nor fully understand anyone, not even ourselves. How often do we make hasty or misinformed judgement on others? We ought to try to understand and know those we love just as Greg did through receiving memories of Ray. Our innate bias and experience can cloud our judgement, but by keeping an open mind, we too will be able to reconcile with anyone, as long as we let ourselves - clearing our perception of them as the water shows for Greg.

'My Father Running with a Dead Boy' is a short story which deals with heavy themes due to the death of a father. We are shown the conflict which any child can struggle with to understand the permanence of death and the power of reconciliation. Through the example of Greg, we are reminded to combat any conflicts we have internally with those which we love before it becomes too late, empathise and forgive. If we heed these warnings, maybe we will also be remembered for our goodness, patience and love we had for others just as Greg saw his father, at the climax of the

Excellence

Subject: English

Standard: 91098

Total score: 07

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
6	E7	The introduction is focused with a thesis statement that is responsive to the question. The essay is cohesive and tight, exploring one conflict through a variety of perspectives: manifests in unsuspecting ways, dwells in our subconscious minds, and reconsiders previous perceptions of others to develop insightful conclusions that are clearly linked to the author's purpose. The candidate uses careful evidence, and analysed to enhance the progression of ideas and conclusions. To ensure a more secure fit, the conclusions in each body paragraph should be more controlled and less emotive.