



# The Poetry Object

## Year 9 NAPLAN Style Resources

These resources are intended to support teachers and schools as they prepare for the NAPLAN English Reading test for Year 9. They do not and are not intended to reflect the exact format or nature of the NAPLAN tests.

Experienced NSW English teacher and marker Nerida Wayland has composed the following resources for The Red Room Company.

### Biography:

Nerida Wayland has taught secondary English since 1997 in both the public and private systems, as well as overseas in London. Her qualifications include: Education, TESOL K-12 and Book Editing and Publishing.

She is currently finishing her final year of a Masters in Children's Literature degree at university where she is writing a dissertation exploring the impact comedy has on representations of masculinity and how humour functions to interrogate dominant ideologies in children's literature. She was the recipient of the Macquarie University "Northside Arts Festival Prize" for an essay on a work of art in any artistic form in 2009.

Nerida writes book reviews, has had a short story published in an anthology and is completing a creative writing course as part of her degree. She is a Mum to two little boys who provide the perfect excuse for her to read picture books every night.



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# The Poetry Object

## NAPLAN Style Sample Questions

Year 9

The School Teacher

Read the poem *The School Teacher* by Liz Allen and answer the following questions:

1. Identify the main idea in the poem:

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2. Which adjective best describes the teacher's attitude to her physical appearance?

- Fastidious
- Aggressive
- Serene
- Apathetic

3. 'pervasive feeling' means:

- Contained or manageable
- Widespread or rife
- Occasional or sporadic
- Unnerving or unsettling

4. 'her flat little life' conveys a tone of:

- Bitterness
- Sadness
- Optimism



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- Ambivalence

5. 'the acceptance of / imperfection which has crept up like the formation / of wrinkles' is an example of:

- A metaphor
- A simile
- Personification
- Allusion

6. This example shows the reader that:

- She detests anything that is imperfect
- It has happened quickly
- It has happened over many years without her realising
- She celebrates imperfection

7. Why does the poet use the image of the plane in the poem?

- It is symbolic of her loss of control, emotion and freedom in her life
- It is symbolic of her tragic circumstances
- It is symbolic of her desire to take a holiday
- It is symbolic of her own panic

8. The allusion to 'Captain Cook' is effective because:

- It reinforces her desire to travel and explore
- It conveys her dissatisfaction that, unlike Captain Cook, her life will probably go unnoticed and hasn't been very meaningful
- It emphasises her boredom at being stuck in a classroom
- It conveys her admiration for order and merit

9. When a phrase or clause of one line runs on without pause to the next line, it is called:

- Hyperbole



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- Lineation
- Enjambment
- Narrative

10. The mood of this poem is:

- Angry
- Optimistic
- Apologetic
- Discontented



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## NAPLAN Style Sample Questions

Year 9

### The Haircut

Read the poem *The Haircut* by Steven Herrick and answer the following questions:

1. The point of view expressed in this poem is:
  - Aunt Alice's
  - Keith's
  - Harry's
  - A third person omniscient narrator
2. In this context, a synonym for 'intention' is:
  - Objective
  - Thoughts
  - Fears
  - Instructions
3. Harry attempts to 'fake injury' because:
  - He is a talented actor
  - He is trying to distract Aunt Alice from cutting his hair
  - He is a hypochondriac
  - He wants her to feel sorry for him
4. The purpose of this poem is to:
  - Provide a historical snapshot of Australia
  - Entertain using an amusing childhood anecdote
  - Evoke sympathy for people with unattractive hairstyles
  - Criticise bullying in Australian society



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5. Which words best describe Aunt Alice?

- Bossy and efficient
- Conservative and cranky
- Maternal and compassionate
- Emotional and erratic

6. Harry's attitude towards Aunt Alice is one of:

- Admiration
- Neutrality
- Apprehension
- Affection

7. 'with his Helmet still on' suggests:

- Keith's hair is now the shape of the dessert bowl and resembles a helmet
- Keith still has the dessert bowl on his head
- Keith is wearing a hat that looks like a soldier's helmet
- Keith has dressed up like a soldier to scare Aunt Alice

8. 'firing across the battlefield' is an example of:

- A simile
- Personification
- A metaphor
- Alliteration

9. Herrick uses direct speech to:

- Show there are a number of characters in this poem
- recreate the voice and personalities of different characters
- develop the plot and add more action
- build suspense



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10. Why does Herrick use many examples of war imagery in this poem?

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## STIMULUS FOR YEAR 7 AND YEAR 9 READING

### The School Teacher

*for Ben Hazlett and Norfolk Island Central School*

The showering, brushing of teeth, careful  
straightening of hair into sharp smooth planes  
gives her order and containment like certain yoga  
poses. She removes the odd eyebrow hair, which

grows outside the row like a weed. She bends  
to water each plant individually. She visits the  
local beautician. The first hairs waxed off her leg  
leave a long clean strip like a runway. They

discuss yesterday's plane crash – it ran out  
of fuel and went into the water near Headstone,  
only half had time to get out their life jackets –  
she thinks of them in the cold dark, that wide

trough of panic. Her fingernails are buffed into  
neat pink shells and her careful makeup  
presents a front as solid as Captain Cook's  
Monument. She wonders what it would

feel like to discover an island. Who will  
remember her flat little life, its 50 minute  
segments? She stands in front of another  
class and is struck by the acceptance of



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imperfection which has crept up like the formation  
of wrinkles. She used to enjoy stuffing little heads  
full of information until they were bursting like  
suitcases. Her expectations have been replaced

by a pervasive feeling she has been let down  
by something or someone. She has forgotten  
hope – how it feels to rush headlong into the  
future: a plane as it lands, the brakes straining,

pushing out, pushing through

Liz Allen

<http://redroomcompany.org/poet/elizabeth-allen/>

<http://redroomcompany.org/poem/elizabeth-allen/school-teacher/>



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## Year 7 and Year 9 Stimulus

### The haircut

Aunt Alice arrives, as usual,  
with lamingtons and demands  
to 'clean this, tidy that'.  
But today carries scissors,  
and we know her intention.  
Keith sits on the back stairs  
with a dessert bowl on his head,  
eyes closed,  
and Aunt Alice  
cutting,  
swift as an executioner,  
every hair that falls lower  
than the bowl.  
'Finished!'  
Keith walks inside  
like a defeated soldier  
with his helmet still on.  
'Harry. Next.'  
I fake injury,  
lice,  
dizzy spells  
but Aunt Alice can't be fooled.

I sit on the stairs.  
eyes shut, listening to the clip clip  
of scissors  
but only hearing



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the laughter and shouts  
tomorrow at school  
of  
'Helmet-head Hodby!'  
firing across the battlefield  
we call a playground.  
'Helmet-head Hodby!'

Stephen Herrick from "by the river"



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## Year 9 NAPLAN Style Resources

### Multiple Choice Answers

#### Year 9: The Haircut

1. Harry's
2. Objective
3. He is trying to distract Aunt Alice from cutting his hair
4. Entertain using an amusing childhood anecdote
5. Bossy and efficient
6. Apprehension
7. Keith's hair is now the shape of the dessert bowl and resembles a helmet
8. A metaphor
9. Recreate the voice and personalities of different characters

#### Year 9: The School Teacher

2. Fastidious
3. Widespread or rife
4. Bitterness
5. A simile
6. It has happened over many years without her realising
7. It is symbolic of her loss of control, emotion and freedom in her life
8. It conveys her dissatisfaction that, unlike Captain Cook, her life will probably go unnoticed and hasn't been very meaningful
9. Enjambment
10. Discontented



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## Year 9 Teaching Strategies for The School Teacher

### Pre-reading activity: Sequencing

Cut up the poem into stanzas. In pairs students are to sequence the stanzas in the correct order.

Once they have completed the activity, the teacher reads the poem to the students.

### Questions to discuss as a class:

- How did you and your partner approach this task? Did you have a strategy?
- How did you work out the sequence of the stanzas?
- What prompts/indications did you look for in order to work out the correct order?
- If you put them in the incorrect order, where did you go wrong?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What do you notice about the structure of the poem?

### Teaching Strategies

1. Annotate the poem with the students. Highlight key words, identify poetic techniques, underline words that suggest tone/attitudes and define any words they are not familiar with.
2. Students are to identify three emotions that they think are being conveyed in this poem. They are to find a quote that they think relates to each of these emotions.
3. As a class, students are to brainstorm what qualities they think a teacher should have. Once complete, they are to write a reflection in response to the following question:  
In your opinion, how does the teacher in the poem reinforce or challenge the stereotypical qualities of a school teacher?
4. Students are to focus on the following poetic techniques in the poem and answer the questions on each:
  - Identify an example of each of the following techniques: rhetorical question, enjambment, symbolism of the plane and a simile.
  - Explain the effect of each of these techniques. What do they show the reader?



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- What feeling or attitude does this technique create?

5. Students compose their own title for the poem. They present it to the class and justify why they chose it. Why is it significant? What does it reveal in relation to the poem?



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## Year 9 Teaching Strategies for The Haircut

### Pre-Reading Activity: Compose a free verse poem

The playground can be like navigating a minefield or pirouetting through fresh flowers depending on who you are, how you view school and what your experiences have been. Students are to compose a six line free verse poem that is an extended metaphor of the playground. They are to make a comparison that conveys how they view the playground and what emotions they wish to convey.

As a class, get students to brainstorm possible comparisons on the board. Write 'The playground is a...' in the middle of the board and record students' ideas around it. Students select a metaphor and then build on it by listing other descriptions, jargon, images, words that relate to, and extend, their chosen metaphor. They use this planning to compose a free verse poem of their own.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Read the poem together, allocating the direct speech parts to students. Get them to adopt the tone they think Aunt Alice and the taunting students in the playground would use.
2. Annotate the poem with the students. Highlight key words, identify poetic techniques, underline words that suggest tone/attitudes and define any words they are not familiar with.
3. Students summarise the main events in the poem in their own words.
4. Students fill in the table below:



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Identify the Technique	Illustrate with Examples	Explain its Effectiveness
Simile		
Metaphor		
Repetition	'but' 'helmet head' Hodby	
Onomatopoeia		
Alliteration		
Direct Speech		
First Person Perspective		



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Lineation		
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## A dense, vertical collage of various orange and yellow textured paper scraps. The pieces are irregular in shape and feature different textures, including smooth, woven, and ribbed. Some pieces contain text: 'Use' at the top, 'Whip' and 'nder' in the upper middle, 'id.' below 'Whip', 'wendy' in the lower middle, and a large '3' at the bottom. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by shades of orange, yellow, and brown.

Experiment with a variety of techniques in your writing and include at least one sound and one visual technique. Be sure to use images, language and descriptions that fit with Aunt Alice's character.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



[illegible]