



GCSE

C700U10-1A



S24-C700U10-1A



THURSDAY, 23 MAY 2024 – MORNING

ENGLISH LANGUAGE – Component 1
20th Century Literature Reading and Creative Prose Writing

Resource Material for use with Section A

SECTION A: 40 marks

Read carefully the passage below.

This story is set in Australia.

1 They did not live in the town of Calwarra but about five miles out of it, along one of those
dusty roads that seemed to go on forever but led into the bush, to nowhere really. Their turning
was marked only by a rickety signpost. Most of the time it was a remote place where you
contended with heat, with drought, with ants and foot rot in the sheep but for a few weeks of
5 the year the farm was a hive of activity when they brought in the harvest of grain.

Alice lived alone with her father, Jack Cogdon, on the farm. He tended to retreat into his
work on the land and he was a strong and mostly unemotional man. He was determined to
tame the unforgiving land and he worked hard to make a living from the farm. He had started
with very little but slowly and surely he built up a successful business. He expected Alice to
10 help in the house and around the farm but he was kind in his way and loved his daughter.

Female relatives had offered to give Alice a home with them in the town, and one aunt even
arrived to argue her case.

‘You can’t look after a girl, Jack,’ she had said. ‘Girls aren’t like boys. They need other
women. They need someone to advise them on things. A father can’t, no matter how
15 well-intentioned.’

Her father fought back.

‘She’s my child. This is her home. Damn it – a father’s got a right to his own child, hasn’t
he?’

The aunt changed her argument. ‘She’ll never forgive you if you keep her cooped up here.
20 You’re spoiling her chances. If she came to town with me, she’d grow up knowing how to make
friends, to run a home. Things like that.’

He was silent for a moment. Then he said, ‘She’ll get all the experience she needs right
here, where she belongs.’

‘But it’s no life for a girl, Jack. See reason.’

25 He paused again before coming up with the reply that ended the argument.

‘All right,’ he said. ‘Ask her. You ask her whether she wants to stay here or go with you. They
say we must consult children nowadays, don’t they? All right. If she says she’ll go with you,
then you can take her.’

The aunt realised, as did her brother, that there was no point in posing the question. And so
30 she gave up the argument, muttering dire warnings as to what happened to girls who stayed
on farms and never had the chance of a proper education.

Time passed and to the secret disappointment of his sister, he managed well. Thwarted in
her plans, only once did she ever compliment him, and grudgingly at that.

‘She’s turning out well, Jack,’ she had said when they met at a family wedding. ‘It can’t have
35 been easy for you.’

But he had found it easier than he had thought. He drove her into town to school each
morning and was never late in picking her up in the afternoon, whatever was happening on
the farm. He bought her clothes, leaving the choice up to her, and she was always well turned
out. He had waited grimly for the teenage rebellion, for arguments over staying out late,
40 about accepting lifts home from boys who had just passed their driving tests but none of this
came. Her friends – the ones he met – seemed pleasant and well-mannered. They were the
children of other farmers, or of people from town, so there were no surprises there. They had
parties, of course, but she was able to stay in town with friends, and she was always back on

time. With a pang, he realised one day that, almost unnoticed, she had grown into a quiet, uncomplaining person. The thought filled him with pride.

At school she was particularly good at art and was encouraged by her teacher to think of going on to art school.

'You could get in,' she said. 'You could get a place in Melbourne, or even Sydney. And afterwards you could go to London or Paris. Somewhere like that.'

The girl's eyes shone but who would ever pay for it? There was hardly any money as it was.

'Look,' said the teacher. 'I'm not just saying this. You could be an artist.'

'Thank you,' said Alice. She was not used to compliments and was not sure how to respond.

'Have you spoken to your father about it? Have you discussed your future?' the teacher asked.

Alice looked at the floor. They had not talked about it. Nothing had been said.

The teacher knew of course. She knew that Jack Cogdon was one of those lonely, pathetic cases, a farmer depending on his daughter to cook and keep house. Some girls were suited to that life but this one had talent; this one should be spared that life.

Alice mentioned it at supper one night, after she had placed the plate of stew and vegetables before him and taken her place at the table.

'I've got to think about what I'm going to do when I finish school,' she said.

He was taken aback but he smiled at her weakly.

She was silent for a moment, then said, 'Miss Williams thinks I should try for art school. Melbourne maybe.'

He dug his fork into his stew, avoiding her gaze.

'Why not?' he said. 'You do what you want to do. It's your life.'

That was all he said, but she knew he was unsettled. For the rest of the meal, he seemed anxious, although he tried to convey an impression of normality. She knew of course what he was feeling. If she left, then he could never retire. He would work the farm until he was no longer capable of it, and then it would be sold. He would move to town, to one of those houses that were filled with retired farmers who did nothing all day and hankered after their lost farms. What he wanted, of course, was for her to marry a farmer's son, who would take over from him. Somebody, in fact, like the youngest Paget boy who had two older brothers and would never have a chance of his own place. By all accounts, he was a farmer through and through.

Jack said something to Mr Paget over a beer in a bar where they met occasionally.

'I'll have to give up one day, I suppose. I'm not as lucky as you. With your sons.'

The other man smiled. 'They can be tough to handle. You've had it easy, Jack.'

He paused, awkwardly. This was the unspoken tragedy among farmers. No son.

Jack said, 'Your youngest boy, though. What's he going to do?'

The other man shook his head. 'He's under my feet at the moment but he's a farmer – bone deep.'

For a few moments neither man said anything. Then Jack looked up from his glass of beer.

'He might get on with my Alice. They might hit it off,' he laughed.

The other man smiled. 'They could do worse, couldn't they?'

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