

Year 10 English Assessment Task 1

Creative Non-Fiction – Social Satire

Part 1A: Creative Non-Fiction:

Caravans

Some things in motoring are mutually exclusive. You can't, for instance, have a really fast car that is also economical; you can't have a sports car that's also practical; and you can't have your dignity if you also tow a caravan. Suffering from mutual exclusivity, caravanners (at least, I think that's what you call 'them'), don't seem to realise that you can't tow a two-ton behemoth with a shower and toilet and king-size bed and STILL maintain the legal 100 kph freeway speed limit. Towing a caravan is actually quite selfish. As anti-social as a hermit with halitosis, in fact. See, it's not just the act itself which is selfish, it's also the drivers. It seems lane courtesy is a foreign concept to those towing a caravan Please, get out of the right-hand lane! And so, battle commences; an unfathomable scourge of lane hoggers, completely oblivious to the growing queue of angry motorists behind them. As they gaze mindlessly at some sheep, an ever-growing syndicate of enraged motorists grab their pitch-forks and touches, gearing up for battle. Like a shining beacon of hope, an "OVERTAKING LANE 300M" sign emerges. With 200m to go, the cars move into attack position, forming a tightly-packed squadron. At 100m and the leader of the pack drops down into 3rd, promoting other motorists to do the same. With the driver arming their indicator and revving their engines, the kids in the back stop looking at their screens and look at each other; a moment of quiet; the calm before the storm. 50m to go and like a lion about to pounce on its vulnerable prey, the string of cars moves to overtake the caravan in one swift motion. The children have gone back to their devices. Finally turning their gaze to their rear-view mirror, the caravanists surrender and pullover. Rejoice, they live to drive another day.

Down at the bush

I remember distinctly the day I fell out of a tree. I remember because it really hurt. I got right to the very top, actually. But as with most trees the branches become smaller and thinner as you near the top. I recall there were a few girls there, and in year 3 being able to climb to the top of the tree was the equivalent of having your own 60ft yacht. My only competition in climbing the tree was a boy called Nicholas Hogg who, despite being 9 years old at the time, already had three chins. Poor Nick could only make it up about two branches before his mother was inevitably called. That left just me and the girls who subsequently refused to climb the tree themselves. Each branch I climbed I would look down to see the girls at the base of the tree, clearly eager for me to climb up even higher. This process would continue until you reached a certain height where their mood suddenly transpired from sheer awe to outright stupidity. A shift I probably should have picked up on.

I only broke a few bones and minor ones at that. But weirdly, it was the single greatest thing that happened to me all year. I was obsessed over. Everyone wanted to hear the story about miraculous Mr Darcy who escaped a near-death experience. I was the hero of the playground and I loved it. Those were the days.....no really, those were the days. We got home from school and we played in the bush till sunset. In the summer months this was often as late as 8:00pm. Our parents called us in for dinner around this time, our excuse of "but mum it's still light" prevailed day after day. Confined to the classrooms by day, our spirits were freed by the glorious setting sun and gentle evening breeze. Religiously bare-foot we galloped gaily around the neighbouring football fields, our every step cushioned by the thick, supple grass. Sounding reminiscent of a story your parents told you about how life was back in "the good old days", yet they insist we stay inside. "It's no safe like it used to be", they say, gently closing the curtain.