Sample Close Reading Task

Write a detailed analysis of the poem below, outlining your reading of the poem on the next page, and exploring some of the textual characteristics and/or contextual issues that inform your reading.

In your interpretation you might like to consider:

the ideas put forward
your reaction to these ideas based on your values and attitudes
the use of language and generic conventions
your reading of other texts
the ways of reading you have learned about and your context as a reader
the contextual information you are given

TEXT A

This is a poem written by Australian poet Judith Wright.

Finale

The cruellest thing they did
was to send home his teeth from the hospital.
What could she do with those,
arriving as they did days after the funeral?

Wrapped them in one of his clean handkerchiefs
she’d laundered and taken down.
All she could do was cradle them in her hands;
they looked so strange, alone –

utterly jawless in a constant smile
not in the least like his. She could cry no more.
At midnight she took heart and aim and threw
them out the kitchen door.

It rocketed out, that finally-parted smile,
into the gully? The scrub? The neighbour’s land?
And she went back and fell into a stupid sleep,
knowing him dead at last, and by her hand.
Sample Writing Tasks

Plan and write a narrative exploring a selected theme. Your story should make extensive use of prose fiction narrative conventions and exhibit:

- a sophisticated vocabulary
- appropriate format on the page
- high quality spelling, punctuation and grammar

Plan and write a sonnet on a selected theme. Your sonnet should demonstrate the flow of thought typical of lyric poetry, and make use of appropriate poetic techniques, such as:

- imagery and/or symbolism
- metre and rhyme pattern appropriate to the sonnet form
- careful selection of diction
- appropriate structuring into stanzas

Sample Essay Tasks

Write a research essay (1200 - 1500 words) exploring a real society and relating your research to the setting and themes of a studied text.

Write an essay (800 - 1000 words) explaining how your own social and cultural context influenced your reading of a literary text.

Write an essay (800 - 1000 words) explaining how a selected text manipulates language for effect.

Write an essay (800 - 1000 words) explaining the relationship between setting and theme in a narrative text.

Write an essay (800 - 1000 words) explaining how generic conventions are manipulated by the writer of at least one text to influence the response of readers.

Write an essay (800 - 1000 words) discussing the proposition that the beginning and end of a long narrative text are often crucial in positioning readers with regard to its themes.