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### **Summary**

This document contains one sample response for VCE Area of Study Unit 2: Creating and presenting based on the text, *Spies*. One of the responses is written in an expository form, the other in a persuasive form. Alongside each response is a series of notes containing a summary of the key elements that make each response strong which may be emulated by students.

### **In general this document may be useful for,**

Students wishing to see a model response and to gain advice on how best to structure a response to a prompt and incorporate ideas of context and text.

## SAMPLE RESPONSE 1: EXPOSITORY ESSAY (FRAYN'S SPIES)

PROMPT: "A PERFECTLY OBJECTIVE VIEW OF REALITY CAN NEVER BE ACHIEVED. DISCUSS."

As humans, we are all prone to perceiving reality through the lenses of our subjectivity. We are unable to see the world in an unbiased way, without being influenced by the factors which formulate our perception and opinion. While an objective view does exist in every occasion, we are not privy to it. Human nature dictates the perception of the individual – we are constantly passing judgement on what we see around us. This perception is formulated by own life experiences, coupled with our beliefs, values, and psychological state at the time. Furthermore, our perception is entirely selective; our ability to fully comprehend the big picture is limited. At the same time, our understanding of an event is unlikely to reflect that of another person, as a consequence of differing factors which form our own unique perception. Memories, in particular, influence the way in which we view the present. Childhood memories are particularly prone to the influence of subjectivity, largely as a consequence of children's limited perception and understanding of the world. Despite our best interests, humanity is unable to view the world around them in an objective light.

The way an individual perceives and interprets their own reality is subject to interpretation and bias. As much as one might convince themselves that they are non-judgmental in their perception, there will always be factors which influence their view of the world. Our values, beliefs and life experiences have simply played too large a role in shaping our identity for us to be able to remove ourselves from their influence when passing judgement or evaluating our lives. Our opinions and these factors are inextricably combined. In order to perceive an event in an objective way, we would have to be completely detached from what we were viewing, and form no opinions about it. Humans are opinionated and judgemental; it is simply part of our nature. Within the novel 'Spies' by Michael Frayn, Stephen's perception of the family and life of his friend Keith Hayward is influenced by the reality of his own 'unsatisfactory' family. His perception of the Hayward family is obscured by his bias in their favour, against that of his own family. In his mind, his parents and his house are incomparable to Keith's parents and his house. Thus, it could be suggested that individuals are strongly influenced in their perceptions. Furthermore, it highlights that individuals are fixed in their way they view reality, as a consequence of their subjectivity. No matter what his family did, Stephen was always likely to view Keith's life as superior to his own, simply as a consequence of his perceptions. Ultimately, the inability of humans to remove themselves from important influences within their lives means that they always perceive reality in light of these influences.

Moreover, reality is contentious and open to interpretation, it is impossible for two people to have a mutual understanding of a reality they share. No two people, no matter how interconnected their lives have been, can share the exact same perception, as no two people hold the same values, beliefs and life experiences. Yet, even if two people were to see a reality in a very similar light, the way in which they process and evaluate their perception is likely to differ. What is more, perception is selective. The individual processes their perception and subconsciously chooses what they deem to hold on to, and remember. Yet in other cases, a person might not fully comprehend elements of an event, leading them to disregard the information. Such a process further increases the differences between two understandings of a shared occurrence. Within Spies, war is experienced