**Stage 2 English**

Assessment Type 1: Responding to Texts

Comparative Study: East West 101/City Homicide

Crime dramas are a genre of television programme that focus on expressing events and the lives of law-enforcers, as well as victims and criminals. They often revolve around a 'good-versus-evil' struggle in which the criminal is able to elude the officers until a key breakthrough is made. Looking at two Australian crime-drama episodes, *East West 101's 'The Heroes Standard'* and *City Homicide's 'Secret Lover',* comparisons of the purpose, audience, context, conventions and language can be made.

The main purpose of all crime drama programmes is to entertain their audience, and to generate income and ratings for their respective broadcasting stations. *City Homicide* can be seen to seek the widest audience of the two dramas because of the broadcasting station it airs on, Channel 7, which, as a privately owned station, focuses on increasing viewers and profit. Opposed to this, *East West 101,* airing on the SBS, a partly government funded station, provides the audience with an interesting view into other cultures, and portrays this through the diversity of the team, which includes characters from Arabic, Islander and Asian backgrounds. *East West 101* can also be seen to appeal to a younger audience than *City Homicide;* evident by the emphasis on violence and the exciting plot. *City Homicide* on the other hand, can be thought of as more of a laid-back viewing process, shown by the lack of emphasis on violence, and extreme similarities it holds with programmes that air on other privately owned broadcasting stations.

Both *City Homicide* and *East West 101* exhibit the fundamental conventions of the crime-drama genre. As is commonplace, most programmes of the genre open with a set-up of the crime. *East West 101* however, opens with a dream sequence that evolves the story of the main character and sets the mood for the episode, whereas *City Homicide* opens with the fairly generic discovery of the body and introduction of the police team. Whilst both programmes feature the processes of investigation of the crime, the interrogation of suspects and detective work, the way in which each episode is concluded has stark differences. In *City Homicide,* the criminal is revealed along with their motive, effectively ending the central story with the episodes conclusion. Contrastingly *East West 101's "The* Heroes *Standard"* is one part of an overarching story that occurs through a number of episodes. No clear resolution is presented, and the audience must wait until further episodes to be told how the story ends. Cinematography plays a part in both programmes, being used to direct the audience's attention towards different factors such as clues or interrogation victims. *East West 101* makes heavy use of tracking shots, giving the audience the effect of following the action and being involved in the investigation. Comparatively, *City Homicide* utilises mainly restricting shots of characters and scenes. This can be seen as an attempt to *save* money on the part of the broadcasting station, and is supported by the heavy usage of cheaper, indoor set scenes throughout the programme. Through genre conventions and a range of film techniques both crime dramas meet audience expectations.

In both programmes, the use of colloquial Australian language is evident between team-members, interjected with formal diction as the need arises, such as when the detectives are speaking with the families of victims or suspects. Australian phrases such as "bloody idiot" and "mate" are used in *East West 101,* with colloquialisms such as "sickie" and "muck in" being used throughout *City Homicide.* However, English is not the only language spoken throughout the episodes. During the second dream sequence in *East West 101,* the voice of Malik's father is heard speaking Arabic; this inclusion allows a deeper and emotional connection to be made between Malik and his father. This creates an emotional and spiritual tone for the audience in following scenes revolving around the family's struggles. Arabic is spoken in *City Homicide* too, however, a relatively negative connection is attached to the language, and in part, blames religion for the death of the victim. Through the expression of language, the programmes are able to connect not only socially, but also emotionally with the audience.

Both *East West 101* and *City Homicide* have a focus on Islamic culture through the episodes. Stereotyping of Muslims is evident in both programmes, and reflects how the culture is treated in modern society, following the attack on the World Trade Centre, and the recent uprising of Islamic terrorist groups. However, *East West 101* tries to shut down some of these stereotypes, this can be seen when Malik is heard saying, "Try to keep an open mind" when the lead detective assumes that the suspects were trained in a Middle Eastern terrorist camp. Malik, the main detective in the programme, and a Muslim, is awarded a medal at the beginning of the episode, and shown to be a valued member of the police force and community. This allows the audience to look past any prejudice, seeing the character for who he was intended to be, and challenging the stereotype. Contrasting this, *City Homicide* presents the religion in a negative light, focusing on aspects such as honour killings and strict cultural expectations. However, it is later revealed that the victim's death was not related to Islamic culture at all, and it is through this twist that like *East West 101, City Homicide* attempts to break the stereotype. The strict cultural factors of the Islamic culture is what, in both programmes is initially blamed as the cause of the victims deaths, challenging any xenophobic beliefs that may be held by the audience.

Through the analysis of the crime dramas *East West 101 and City Homicide, a* number of similarities can be drawn in regards to the language used and their similar use of the fundamental conventions of the genre. There is however, a stark contrast in the social context of the programmes, with *East West 101* seemingly seeking a wider and more diverse audience than *City Homicide* through their character portrayal and cultural sensitivity.

Performance Standards for Stage 2 English A-

| - | Knowledge and Understanding | Analysis | Application |
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| A | Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of ideas and perspectives in a range of texts.  Thorough knowledge and understanding of the ways in which creators of texts use a range of language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.  Extensive knowledge and understanding of a wide range of ways in which texts are created for different purposes, audiences, and contexts. | Complex analysis of ideas, perspectives, and/or aspects of culture represented in texts.  Perceptive analysis of language features, stylistic features, and conventions used in texts, and thoughtful evaluation of how these influence audiences.  Critical analysis of similarities and differences when comparing texts. | Versatile and precise use of language and stylistic features to create a wide range of coherent texts that address the purpose, audience, and context.  Fluently integrated use of evidence from texts to develop and support a response.  Sophisticated use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression. |
| B | Knowledge and understanding of ideas and perspectives in a range of texts.  Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which creators of texts use a range of language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.  Knowledge and understanding of a range of ways in which texts are created for different purposes, contexts, and audiences. | Detailed analysis of ideas, perspectives, and/or aspects of culture represented in texts.  Detailed analysis of language features, stylistic features, and conventions, and evaluation of how these influence audiences.  Clear analysis of similarities and differences when comparing texts. | Accurate use of language and stylistic features to create a range of coherent texts that address the purpose, context, and audience.  Appropriate use of evidence from texts to develop and support a response.  Consistent use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression. |
| C | Knowledge and understanding of some ideas and perspectives in texts.  Knowledge and understanding of the ways in which creators of texts use some language features, stylistic features, and conventions to make meaning.  Knowledge and understanding ways in which everyday texts are created for different purposes, contexts, and audiences. | Analysis of some ideas and perspectives represented in texts.  Description and some analysis of different language features, stylistic features, and conventions, and/or some evaluation of how these influence audiences.  Analysis of some similarities and differences when comparing texts. | Generally accurate use of language and stylistic features to create texts that address the purpose, context, and audience.  Selection of some evidence from texts to develop and support a response.  Appropriate use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression. |
| D | Knowledge and understanding of some ideas in a narrow range texts.  Some knowledge and understanding of the ways in which creators of texts use language features and conventions to make meaning.  Knowledge and understanding of ways in which some everyday texts are created for different purposes and audiences. | Description of some ideas in texts.  Description of some language features, stylistic features, and/or conventions.  Description of some similarities and differences in texts. | Use of some language and stylistic features to create a narrow range of texts.  Partial use of basic evidence from texts to develop a response.  Inconsistent use of expression. |
| E | Identification of an idea in a text.  Identification of a limited range of ways in which creators of texts use language techniques.  Recognition of one or more ways in which a familiar text is created. | Reference to an idea in a text.  Recognition of language or stylistic features.  Recognition of a simple connection between texts. | Restricted use of language or stylistic features to create a text.  Limited use of evidence from a text in a response.  Limited use of clear expression. |