**Stage 2 English**

**Assessment Type 1: Responding to Texts**

**Graphic Novel: *Ghost World* by Daniel Clowes**

**Introduction**

A graphic novel is a fictional story that uses panels of sequential artwork in a comic-strip format to tell a narrative and is published as a book.

Conventions and stylistic features of of graphic novels include:

* an interplay between text and image
* images that are essential to the storyline and characterisation
* gutters between panels that have meaning
* framing angle and close-ups that shape the perspective of characters
* symbolism
* panels that contain images and artwork
* dialogue, speech and thought balloons
* colours, sound effects (zzz, shhhh!, ringgggg) movement lines
* font size, style, colour and capitalisation that convey meaning

**Task**

Read the graphic novel *Ghost World* by Daniel Clowes and answer the following question in a written response of up to 1000 words in length.

In *Ghost World* Clowes explores the idea of growing up. How does the author explore this idea in the graphic novel? Refer to two or three stylistic features or conventions from the list above.

**Assessment**

In this task you should:

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the idea of ‘growing up’ explored in the graphic novel (KU1)
2. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the ways Clowes uses the stylistic features and conventions of graphic novels (KU2)
3. analyse the stylistic features and conventions used in *Ghost World* and evaluate how they influence the audience (An2)
4. use evidence from the text (Ap2)
5. produce clear and coherent writing, using appropriate vocabulary (Ap3)

In *Ghost World* Clowes explores the idea of growing up. How does the author explore this in the text?

In *Ghost World,* Clowes explores the idea of growing up. In exploring the idea of growing up Clowes demonstrates a supreme knowledge of the issue of finding a place in life that comes with growing up. In his writing the conventions of graphic novels are used to display the idea of growing up. However, in the text the most prominent conventions and stylistic features used are characterisation, imagery and dialogue. Whilst displaying these three conventions Clowes uses the factors of past, present and future to show this clearly.

Throughout the text of *Ghost World,* Clowes delves into the issue of growing up by using characterisation as a stylistic feature. The two main characters; Becky and Enid, are shown as shy teenage girls. They have a strange friendship in which they seem to get along best when they are insulting others. However, as time goes on the two slowly drift apart and find it hard to continue their friendship. The main reason for this happening is that as Becky grows up she begins to realise that Enid is not a great person to be with and starts to resent being with her. When Becky starts to show hostility towards Enid, she begins to do the same to Becky. This causes the two to drift further apart. It is apparent when the two get into a fight over Strathmore and the two leave each other's company on bad terms. From this point onward the friendship never truly repairs and ultimately spells the end of their friendship. Characterisation is an ideal stylistic feature that Clowes chooses to use in *Ghost World* to show how the two girls feel about growing up.

Another key stylistic feature that Clowes uses to explore the idea of growing up in *Ghost World* is imagery. In doing this he also uses the past as an idea to reinforce his technique of imagery and how it plays a big part in growing up. To do this he visually shows the feelings and emotions of the two girls as they go through an old photo album. In doing so Clowes displays how imagery can be used to show how growing up can change a person's view on things.

Throughout the whole section of the text where the girls are going through the photo album, there are two major instances that highlight how imagery is being used to display how the girls are coping with growing up. The first instance is the frame in the text where Enid finds the photo of her as a child with her favourite vinyl record. In this frame it shows how happy she used to be as a child. The immediate frame after shows Enid's face and how unhappy she is in the present. This scene of imagery compares the feelings and emotions that Enid had felt

as a child to what she now feels as she is growing up. This is an important moment because it shows how Enid is struggling to cope with growing up and how she misses how simple things used to be when she was a child. Clowes displays another important sense of imagery again when the girls find the photo of a favourite holiday destination from their childhood. When the girls come across the photo of Enid standing by the dinosaur at Cave Town it prompts an idea for the girls to go back to the cherished location. Upon rediscovering the dinosaur Enid says, "I remember this thing being HUGE!" This statement shows how Enid has come to the realisation that her childhood is long over and that she is now grown up. This also brings upon a feeling of sadness for Enid as she begins to come to terms with growing up. The technique of imagery is a crucial factor to these two sections in the text and without it the idea of growing up would not be apparent.

The dialogue used in the text is another stylistic feature used by Clowes to explore the process of growing up in the text of *Ghost World.* The dialogue is used to show how the girls think about their future once they've grown up. The dialogue used when the girls are talking about Strathmore is an important part of understanding how the two feel about growing up. At the beginning of the text Enid usually brushes off the topic by swearing or changing the topic.

However, later on in the text it is apparent that the girls are growing up when they actually talk about the prospect of growing up. When Becky says, "I guess it's kind of creepy to think of us acting like this when we're thirty", it shows how they have realised that they are growing up and can no longer act like children when they are confronted with an uncomfortable topic. The dialogue used in this section of the text is important in understanding how Clowes is showing the idea of growing up and how it is affecting the two girls.

Throughout the text of *Ghost World*, Clowes manipulates conventions and stylistic features to explore the idea of growing up. The techniques used are characterisation, imagery and dialogue. All three of the techniques used are important in displaying how the two girls; Becky and Enid, cope with the idea of growing up. To back these techniques up Clowes also uses the factors past, present and future to reinforce his ideas and views on growing up. All techniques are all used clearly and effectively to create a clear image of growing up and how the characters develop through ought the text.

**Performance Standards for Stage 2 English - Overall C+**

| - | **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. |