

## Year 10 assessment task sample response and marker comments

The Task (key words have been put in bold)

In a response of about two pages, identify the **main forces in Australian popular culture** in the period since World War II, and explain **how they have contributed to continuities and changes** in the Australian way of life in that period.

Your response must also include a section showing **evidence of planning** and an **annotated bibliography** indicating the sources of information you have accessed to prepare the response.

### Sample planning notes

Main forces to discuss:

- Rock 'n' roll music – showed a generation gap; Australia followed overseas trends; eventually created own original sound that has succeeded overseas (Easybeats, Go-Betweens, Jezabels)
- Sport – originally showed mainly British influence in cricket and rugby codes; Australian Rules our own sport; soccer becomes more accepted and brings us into world – also allows women more access
- Film – was mainly American influence – worried people; Gorton and Whitlam lifted the industry by giving government help → revival of 1970s and Crocodile Dundee in 1980s
- TV – started in 1956 – Olympics; Menzies said no local content quota > lot of American shows, and more worries we were getting swamped > Skippy saves the day; now we have strong local shows such as Neighbours that have run for years
- Kids' books and music – Australia has produced great kids' books over the years such as Blinky Bill, Possum Magic → TV shows like Blinky Bill and Johnson and Friends, Bananas in Pyjamas > The Wiggles.

Continuities:

- Australia has always enjoyed popular culture → cricket after World War II; how quickly we took up rock 'n' roll and TV (1956 – critical year); always liked going to movies
- British influence has been consistent (interview with Mum about TV shows she likes)
- We always take up new technology (TV, rock 'n' roll; VCRs, DVD, iPod, iPhone)
- We're an outdoor nation – a lot of popular culture is about going out (surfing, going to Groovin' the Moo and Big Day Out)
- Oldies are always worried about what the kids are doing – still a bit of a generation gap (John J Sutton letter; Mum's stories about not being allowed to Michael Jackson in 1980s; Dad not letting me go to Groovin' the Moo and Big Day Out).

## Changes:

- Emergence of American influence after World War II (music, TV)
- New technology (role of TVs, transistor radios, iPods)
- Sharing music and ideas with social media
- New music always coming through
- Football getting accepted by more Australians
- Women finally getting a chance in sport, music etc.

## Sources used:

- Class notes
- *Oxford Big Ideas. History 10: Australian Curriculum* – Carrodus et al, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2012 (text book)
- *Rock Through History* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) – B Howitt, Longman, Melbourne, 1994 (school library)
- *My Generation*, B Howitt, Longman, Melbourne, 1993 (school library)
- Interview with Mum (home)
- Websites - need list.

## Sample response

There have been a number of forces in Australia that could be described as popular culture. Some of these include rock 'n' roll music, films, television shows, different sports and children's books, music and TV shows. All of these can help show continuities and changes in Australia since World War II.

Rock 'n' roll and TV arrived in Australia in the same year, 1956. This was a very important time in our history because it was these two popular cultures that Australians really took to. Right from the start Australians liked rock 'n' roll. We can see this by looking at the question of what was the first rock 'n' roll record in Australia. It has been suggested (<http://www.theage.com.au/news/Music/Discovered-rocknrolls-scratchy-start/2005/06/03/1117568374677.html>) that the first Australian rock 'n' roll record was a version of Rock Around the Clock in 1955 by a Thursday Islander called George Assang. He had to change his name to Vic Sabrino so it didn't sound indigenous, because it was hard for Aboriginals to get work in the 1950s. This was only a year after Bill Haley had recorded the song. When Johnny O'Keefe recorded his own song, The Wild One, in 1957, Australian rock 'n' roll was really underway.

Television was also pretty quick in getting established. There was a rush to get it started because of the Melbourne Olympics. They think Bruce Gyngell, who was the first person on Australian TV, had to do his opening later on, because nobody thought to record the first version (Oxford Big Ideas page 189). TV sets cost a lot of money in the 1950s, so people used to watch them through shop windows (interview with my Mum).

Films have always been popular in Australia. People used to take movies around to towns on a horse and cart in the 1920s (Film: The Picture Show Man). After World War II Disney films became very popular, as did big Hollywood films. Until TV came along, every town and suburb would have a picture theatre. In the 1970s the government decided we needed a film industry again and John Gorton and Gough Whitlam helped set up the Australian film industry (Oxford Big Ideas). This resulted in lots of films being made here, and in 1986 *Crocodile Dundee* became the most popular Australian film ever (class notes).

Australians have always loved sport because we have a good climate for being outdoors. Straight after World War II it was mainly British sports we played such as cricket and rugby league, and also Australian Rules, which was our own invention. One clear continuity was Don Bradman, who played cricket before and after the war. He was the best in the world and helped make Australia the best cricket country in the world.

Australia has also created some unique kids products. We have a great tradition of books such as Blinky Bill, Snugglypot and Cuddlepie and Possum Magic (class notes). These are books Australian kids were brought up on for years before TV. When TV came along there was Skippy, and later Blinky Bill was a cartoon, and Bananas in Pyjamas and Johnson and Friends were on ABC TV every day. The Wiggles started in the 1990s (Rock Through History) and changed everything. They became a big force in Australian popular culture.

All these forces in popular culture have been very important in keeping continuities and encouraging changes. We have always liked popular culture, and that is clearly a popular culture. You can see how quickly we took up rock 'n' roll (class notes, Oxford Big Ideas), and by January 1957 we were having the first rock 'n' roll tour outside America, when Bill Haley arrived here. Sport was always popular, and England came out straight after the war to keep the Ashes going. You can also see that films have always been popular. In the 1950s before TV, Australians used to go to the movies to see the news (Oxford Big Ideas).

British influence is a continuity, not only in sport, but also in TV. When I interviewed my Mum, she remembered always watching Benny Hill on TV as a girl, and said my grandparents always enjoyed British shows too (interview with Mum). Even The Beatles shows continuity, because they caused riots when they toured here in 1964 (class notes). We have always kept close to British culture and referred to it as the 'mother country' for many years (interview with Mum).

Another continuity is that parents always seem to be worried about what their kids are doing. We compared the views of John Manners and John J Sutton (class work) about Bill Haley's tour, and the old people always tried to stop rock 'n' roll. This has continued. My Mum wasn't allowed to see Michael Jackson when he toured here in the 1980s because my grandfather said it was too dangerous and that she could get trampled. It has continued until today because my Dad won't let me go to Groovin' the Moo or Big Day Out because he says it's too dangerous for young girls. Hopefully it will be a change in the near future.

American influence has been the big change in popular culture. Since World War II we have become much closer to America after they saved us from the Japanese invasion. TV and rock 'n' roll helped us become very American as kids went crazy for rock 'n' roll and had heroes like Superman (My Generation).

Technology has certainly changed things too. TVs became cheaper in the 1960s, and started going into most houses. In the 1970s we got colour TV, and then video players and DVDs. In this century we have had a digital revolution with iPods, iPhones and computers. Everybody has a mobile phone and we connect with Facebook every day. This has meant it is a lot easier to share ideas and hear new music such as The Jezabels or Arctic Monkeys. Computers and social media have just made everything so much easier to access.

Things have got more equal for women too. The Matildas in football (Oxford Big Ideas) have probably achieved more than the Socceroos, and football has become a lot more accepted. Kylie Minogue became a huge star and actresses like Naomi Watts and Nicole Kidman really helped link Australian women to success. I think popular culture has certainly helped women get more recognition.

Australia is different to what it was in 1945. There's a lot more influences, and popular culture has played an important role in this. Music, film and TV have brought new ideas into Australia. Music helped teenagers develop an independent life from their parents, we have developed a successful film and TV industry, and our success at the men's and women's football World Cups shows that popular culture has also helped us to accept the benefits of a multicultural Australia. Through it all, popular culture has remained an important continuity.

## Sample annotated bibliography

Website

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/Music/Discovered-rocknrolls-scratchy-start/2005/06/03/1117568374677.html>

I used this to show why I thought George Assang had Australia's first rock 'n' roll record.

Books

- *Oxford Big Ideas. History 10: Australian Curriculum* – Carrodus et al, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2012 (text book)  
This is the book we used in class. I found a lot of useful information in it, and it was easy to understand.
- *Rock Through History* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) – B Howitt, Longman, Melbourne, 1994 (school library)  
I found this in the school library and it had a lot of information on Australian music. The only bit I used in the essay was about how important The Wiggles were, but it helped me understand about the importance of Australian music.
- *My Generation* – B Howitt, Longman, Melbourne, 1993 (school library)  
This was also in the school library and had the stories of people who grew up in Australia in 1957, 1969, 1977 and 1989. It was good for seeing how popular culture affected people.

## Notes

I used notes from the work we did in class. They helped me to understand a lot about the impact and importance of popular culture.

## Interview

I interviewed my Mum at home. It was originally for a class task, but the information became useful in helping me understand some things about popular culture.

## Marker's comments

This is a solid, if unsophisticated response. Planning was undertaken, and was used to help shape the response and develop an historical argument. The identification of key words in the question helped to organise planning and obviously helped ensure that all key points were covered. The writer shows a basic understanding of the topic, and has been able to identify relevant forces of popular culture. They have attempted to develop and sustain a historical argument and identified continuities and changes. They have produced examples in support of their argument and acknowledged their sources in a basic way. Although their communication is unsophisticated and the discussion has limited depth, they have attempted to deal directly with the question, and show they understand the nature and impact of popular culture on Australia. Their bibliography includes annotations, and showed some initiative in using library books and an interview as well as the standard text book and class notes. This is an encouraging response that shows some progress towards the achievement standards.

Mark 13/20