

**WEB**

writing courses for and by writers

AFA in CREATIVE WRITING (CW19)

Answer booklet

Name of centre	
Centre number	
Name of candidate	
Candidate number	
Title of paper	Responsive Writing - Component 3
Paper reference	Component 3

Commission / Assignment	Mark	
	1	
	2	
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Critical commentary (WRITE-3 only)		



- lightning / a storm on the sea → bellowed
↳ monster

PLANNING - SECTION A

Unago / Kanugo = downy hair ✓

Line ideas

- Q. 04 → a journey ✓
- the boat ✓
- the velvet sea ✓
- the horizon of torn paper ✓
- the obscured sun ✓
- the water likened to her comforter back home ✓
- Rodin's statues ✓
- light bathing marble skin ✓
- her lover / conception / better days ✓
- Titanic ✓
- The water rushed ✓

Phrases

Plot?

- a girl ^{an} in in-patient clinic for the treatment of eating disorders ✓
- She hallucinates / dreams about this journey on the boat ✓
- She has a miscarriage → resumes her disorder after 12 weeks of pregnancy because she thinks it will be safe? → In her devastation, she hallucinates? → or, she is so deep into anorexia that she hallucinates? ✓
- A girl at an eating disorder clinic, dreams in the night of taking a journey to be reunited with her lover. Across the ocean. She wakes up drenched in blood → mid-carried. ✓

→ be cause of her relapse.

'The Body's Defences Against Itself':

sweating, bleeding,

- negative + excessive bodily functions → nasal issues with the baby in 'Wash Clean the Bones'. ✓

Commentary notes.

- Isolation present in all. ✓
- loss of identity → in 'Suicide, Watch', Jilly loses her identity to social media → self-harm and suicide ✓
- the catharsis or / and culmination of events at the end of each story → Jilly's death. Alma tries to drown her baby Ralph but then stops herself in 'Wash Clean the Bones'. In 'Whisper to a Scream', ✓
- Themes of bullying. Isolation. Internal crisis. ✓



PLANNING

Raina, who makes ASMR videos, almost uploads a video where she talks about her real issues, because she feels so unheard/alone. She doesn't, however. - exists only in her memory ✓

↳ all of these characters go on a brief journey, full of flashbacks but only taking place for an hour or two each time (all in a under 1 day), and yet we feel like we've known them ages. ✓

- Eating disorder because she wants to gain control → stems from the isolation experienced in all of Thompson-Spires' stories

- Title:

- Psychedelic. Swims. Shapes. Clouds in shapes overhead.

- An ochre sky, ^{horizon} barely differentiable from the heavens above.

- The skies are misty, hazy. ~~The~~ sky and earth indistinguishable in the distance - The waves broke against the side of the boat.

- Zoom in, zoom out - 10-inch thick windows.

- imagery of beds throughout. Statues. Water and the sea.

- God and the Heavens. - Reach out and touch the water.

- 'Wash Clean the Bones' → she rings at funerals. She works in a hospital, surrounded by death.

- the icy mist as her awakening / miscarriage

- The girl finds / creates parallels between her memories and her dream.

- 'To the Bone' with Lily Collins ✓

- Cobalt blue - Hot lava under the surface of the earth.

~~230~~ (230-250 words per page)

wirpy
envelope
links



PLANNING

- no humor / ~~not~~ comedy
- the 'warm embrace' as her desire for contact: loving or maternal.
Also the escape ~~of~~ death? or the warmth of the infinite ocean.
- How can I introduce an eating disorder earlier on?
- Parallels between the diets and the computers earlier + later on
- 'The body's defences against its mind's choices' → reflect 'The Body's Defences Against Itself?'



PLANNING

-Form: Prose-fiction





SECTION A,

ASSIGNMENT 4: Velvet Ocean → FINAL DRAFT.

~~The sea was made of grey velvet, striping and rippling under
neath~~

~~A velvet sea twisted~~

The velvet sea twisted below the misty skies, rippling with waves
as if it had been tugged and ^{by God himself,} shaken like a tablecloth, or a

fit freshly-stuffed duvet cover, ~~perhaps by God himself~~. It was
the colour of molten silver but looked soft to the touch, ~~precisely~~

~~with~~ gentle and covered with tiny, ever-changing peaks. She
felt like a God, ~~or at the very least an angel~~, looking down

on Earth from above, gazing upon it ~~mountain ridges that~~
snow-capped mountain ^{ranges,} ridges that resembled torn paper.

~~Her hand subconsciously reached~~ She wanted to reach out,

through the five-inch thick ~~plastic~~ plastic windows of the boat,

to ~~feel~~ feel the silken water caress her finger tips, pulling

her in, in, to its ~~softly embracing~~ warm embrace. Staring out,

the Ocean's infinite expanse were obscured to her, by the

haze. The thick clouds of mist, whiteness, that made

the ~~of~~ line between Earth and sky indistinguishable. It

made the space feel endless. She did not know where the boat was

going, it was simply diving into the ~~white~~ cloudy realms

ahead, never to dock in another harbour, never to stumble upon

the craggy cliffs of land again. The waves gently broke



against the metal sides of the boat, every now and again ~~let~~
forcefully enough to lap at the windows, ~~droplets~~ ^{droplets} gleaming
on the ~~lower~~ ^{lower} inches of each, ~~shattering~~ shattering the view
into thousands of telescopic ~~paradises~~ ^{worlds}. Enchanting her, luring her in.
~~it~~.

'She ~~remembered~~ remembered how he lay on the velvet computer
~~is~~ thrown ~~over~~ across her bed. Like a Rodin statue.

Dusky light from the evening outside bathing his marble skin.

His muscles rippled when he moved, like a river's flow. The fresh-

water bathing her, cleansing her. The crisp duvet crunched

underneath, the blankets soft ~~fab~~ ~~fab~~ fabric swirling

about them. The sea-green of his veins, underneath the milky

skin of strong forearms. She remembered his ~~hands~~ fingers

running over her, bumping along her pronounced ribs and

stroking her downy forearms. ~~lanugo~~. Lanugo, that was

what the doctors had called it. ^{Or had they said lanugo?} The body's production of extra

baby hairs, down, to try and preserve heat and reduce the

energy loss. Her body's defences against A ~~other~~ mind's

choices. ~~Her eyes, downcast, shimmering, were the only clue of~~

~~her shame~~. Her body crying out for help, for air under the

warm water as A enveloped her, ~~water~~ waves jostling overhead,

the blurry glare of the sun fading away in ~~the dark~~ to the

darkness. Downcast eyes fluttered as she felt him pulling.



up her chin, gazing into her with serence, deep eyes, drawing her back into the room. She felt safe. His hair was as soft as the feathers which stuffed the pillows on which they lay. Her heart swelled.

~~On the boat, they were appra~~ The boat was approaching the mist. It was like a mirage; she didn't know if they would ever really reach it, but still she could feel it ^{already} cooling, seeping in to the air around her, permeating her skin and cells. The sky was tinged with ochre as evenings loomed through the clouds. Streaks of red seared through, hot flashes of colour in an otherwise tranquil sky. The waves continued to lap at the sides of the boat, constant. She wondered how many ships lay wrecked at the bottom of the sea. How it would feel to bathe in it, to feel the salty water sting her cuts, whether it would cleanse them like the freshwater of a bubbling, ~~was~~ rushing river. Ice washed over her ~~the~~ ~~eyes~~. They had reached the infinite point; the mist all around them, ~~like~~ like foggy glasses or ~~a~~ a fogged-up window. The sea was almost black, ~~she remembered him~~ again. His eyes, voice, touch. Her fingertips fizzed, though maybe that was just because of the heat ^{from} of the coffee cup they grasped like ~~bubbling~~ lava bubbling under the surface of the Earth's crust. ~~Then~~ Ice washed over her. They had ~~rea~~ The boat had reached the infinite point; the mist was all around them, like ^a fogged-



up window. The sea was almost black, no longer did the light from the heavens above bounce off it. The snowcaps on top of the mountains had melted, exposing these bare ~~the~~ black rock underneath.

She awoke. A sheen of sweat coated her forehead. Her body felt hot and wet, as if she'd just taken a bath in her night-clothes ~~pyjamas~~. The star-shaped nightlight glowed orange in the corner of the room. Minutes later, standing in front of the mirror in the communal bathroom, her ~~tears~~ ^{eyes} welled up. When that icy mist had diffused into her ^{in her dream, very real} a warmth had flooded out. Her baby, their baby. Her ~~clothes~~ ^{pyjama} bottoms dripped with red as she peeled the m off. ~~Her bones jutted out the dip of her coat~~ The dip exaggerated dip of her collarbone jutted out, rising and falling with her heavy breaths. Any moment now a nurse would come at the sound of her wails. She had thought it would be okay. It had been past the twelve-week mark when she'd relapsed, past the point where ~~the~~ ~~baby should have been at risk of~~ ~~from his deprivation~~ a baby ~~should~~ could be lost because of its mother's deprivation, or so she'd thought. But now the child was gone, and so was she. Slunk away into the warm embrace of a placid ocean, wispy clouds drifting overhead.

SECTION B: Commentary

'Heads of the Colored People' by Nayissa Thompson-Spires ~~##~~ was the stimulus for my writing 'Velvet Ocean'. The biggest singular reason for this was because of the way ~~the~~ Spires chose to tackle very contemporary ~~##~~, and generally quite somber events with such a heart-felt and somehow universal approach. Writing in third person, as Spires does, I felt I was able to convey a similar sense of distance from the protagonist, while maintaining the poignancy of events by giving a reader the same omnipresent narrator to follow. Unlike Spires, however, I chose not to identify my character, leaving her as the simple "she" throughout the writing. This is a common feature of my writing, and one which I did ~~to reduce the~~ because I feel it can often help to increase a sense of melancholia and even intrigue. Additionally, ~~because~~ 'Heads of the Colored People' has often within it an almost comedic, or ironic ~~turn of phrase~~ twist which I associate with the heavy reference to characters' names, which was something I wanted ~~to~~ to stay away from.

Many of Thompson-Spires' stories in the collection are based around a sense of isolation. This often stems from some kind of 'abnormal' ~~or unpleasant bodily function~~ bodily function, or one which is deemed 'awkward' or uncomfortable, for example, the excessively heavy sweating in 'The Body's Defences Against Itself', or the nasal



issues of a baby, Ralph in 'Wash Clean the Bones': Alternatively, the protagonists face isolation from a loss of identity. In 'Suicide watch', Jilly loses herself to social media. She feels unheard and isolated in her efforts to gain attention. ~~In 'Whisper to a screen';~~ With this loss of identity and increased isolation, Thompson-Spires concludes each story with a cathartic, or shocking, culmination of events. Jilly dies. Alma nearly drowns her child, Ralph. Raina almost uploads the first 'real' video of herself in 'Whisper to a screen'. All the characters reach a point of change, be it physically or by way of a mental, cognitive change. These are all ideas that I tried to incorporate into 'Velvet Ocean'. The protagonist, if ~~it~~ implied, is suffering from a serious eating disorder. She struggles with this, and by way of the ~~mist in the di~~ encroaching mist in the distance in her dream, a reader can see a change of sorts coming. By the end of the writing, and hence ~~at~~ over the course of that night, the girl miscarries, as the mist descends upon her, the result of a relapse into her eating disorder. Though this subject is one which I have no experience with, instead seeking inspiration ~~from the~~ ~~post~~ largely from the film 'To the Bone', I felt it was fitting and ~~presented~~ presented me with many avenues to create writing not dissimilar from Thompson-Spires', in theme at least.

Another influence I took from the stimulus text was in



relation to the structure of my piece. It is set over the course of one night, though time takes little form, as much of the writing takes place both in the girl's dream of her journey on the boat or in her memories of the time spent with her lover. Similarly, the stories in 'Heads of the Colored People' frequently take place over the course of around a day or so, as in 'Whisper to a Scream', yet the writing is full of 'flashbacks' to earlier times in the characters' lives, as an explanation of sorts for their current situations.

through
Midway ~~the~~ writing the initial boat scene, I came across the ~~the~~ issue of when to introduce an eating disorder. In 'Heads of the Colored People', such things often take centre-stage, yet I decided to implement it later on because I wanted to provide an initial, more sensory, foundation for the writing. The concept such as the "warm embrace" of the ocean, inviting the protagonist in, were used to allude to her desire for comfort; in reality, the ~~ocean~~ water would of course be freezing cold, and yet describing her longing to be touched or be submerged by it show a reader her internal turmoil and desire for escapism long before it is more explicitly referenced. Additionally, the dichotomy of the mist in that it is both beautiful and inviting, a place of infinity and numbing qualities, yet also "icy" and dangerous, and effectively ~~the~~ a metaphor for the miscarriage, ~~it~~ shows another way in which I tried to use



natural imagery to create a statement.

Initially, I was going to ~~focus~~ ^{centre} on 'Velvet Ocean' ~~as~~ around the protagonist's stay in an in-patient eating disorder treatment clinic, making the writing much more focused on the reality of the event and the emotions and feelings of ~~a~~ a patient there. However, this diverged into a ~~more~~ 'softer' piece of writing, more metaphorical, bar for the ~~sea~~ 'culmination' of events at the end, where my stimulus text's influence took over. The 'Journey' ~~on~~ itself also became somewhat more abstract than perhaps I initially intended, again becoming centred on the mist as a focal point for the end of the journey. It is a story about a girl's journey towards and following the impacts of relapse, the black ocean water providing a ~~contrast~~ dampener, an escape, to the struggles of coping with an eating disorder. Within the language and progression of the writing, too, I wanted to create parallels between metaphor and reality. The image of the ocean like a velvet blanket was intended to mirror the later reference to the boy lying on a real velvet throw in the protagonist's memory, blurring and inspiring the image with a warmth; ~~this~~ this was again reiterated in the associations between the sea as a shaken duvet, ~~and~~ and later the bed. ~~First~~ These are examples, too, of the girl creating parallels between her memories and her dream which, ~~to~~ was intended to create a pervasive 'dream-



'like' atmosphere to the writing. Going back to the earlier point that the ocean presents a "warm embrace" but also, symbolically, her descent into an eating disorder, I again used imagery to create parallels, between the initial beauties of the "snow-capped mountain ranges" and the final "bare black rock" exposed once the ice has melted. Writing in prose-fiction was a decision I chose to follow because of the way it enabled me to ~~I also made~~ explore creating all these parallels and descriptions in a way I wouldn't otherwise have been able to.

~~I chose to cut certain sections~~

