

N5

National Qualifications

2023

English

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation (Text)

Wednesday, 10 May

Instructions to Candidates

Candidates should enter their surname, forename(s), date of birth, Scottish candidate number and the name and level of the subject at the top of their first answer sheet.

Total marks - 30

Read the passage carefully and attempt ALL questions, which are printed on a separate sheet.

You must clearly identify the question number you are attempting.

(Please note that the line numbering in this Print Copy of Braille refers to the actual braille lines and as referred to in the questions.)

[Braille Page 2] The Bounding Success of Bluey

In this article, the writer discusses Bluey, the Australian animated TV series.

- 1 *Bluey* is the best show
on television,
but nothing about it
would suggest that this is the case.
- 5 It's a simple animation,
designed for pre-schoolers,
about the adventures
of a family of Australian Blue Heeler dogs,
made up of Bluey, a six-year-old,
10 her four-year-old sister, Bingo, and her parents.
Imagine *The Simpsons* if everybody liked each other,
or *Peppa Pig* if the father
was a functional member of society,
and that's *Bluey*.
- 15 On every level it is unbeatable — charm,
perceptiveness, ambition, execution
and cross-generational appeal.
In six years of parenting,
Bluey remains the only programme
20 to have caused all four members of
my household to laugh to the point
of breathlessness
at the exact same time.
Such a range of qualities perhaps
25 **[Braille Page 3]** goes some way to explaining
its rapid growth in popularity.
When it launched in Australia in 2018,

Bluey quickly became the most downloaded show in the history of ABC's on-demand service and has now racked up around half a billion views. When it debuted on CBeebies in the UK, it immediately became the most-watched show of the day. It even won an Emmy award. It is so successful that Hollywood A-listers are lining up for roles. People cannot stop watching *Bluey*. "Obviously I wanted it to be rewatchable," says *Bluey's* creator Joe Brumm from his home in Queensland, with a mixture of modesty and pride. "But kids have really put it to the rewatching test." Brumm lived in London for 10 years, animating pre-school shows, which gave him a starting point for *Bluey*. Although Brumm credits many shows as giving him these initial ideas, he says the main two are British. "I really love *Peppa Pig*," he says. "I loved how quintessentially English it was, and I felt like I'd love [Braille Page 4] to do a universal kids' show that had an Australian feel." And *Bluey* is a distinctly Australian

show: from the setting to the
language to the hiring of the
60 son of Steve Irwin, the naturalist
and TV presenter, as a guest star.
Brumm's other British influence,
Gavin & Stacey, was intended
for an older audience. "I loved that show,"
65 he says. "My wife loved that show.
My parents loved that show.
It was genuine co-viewing, where two
generations weren't laughing at
each other's exclusion, but
70 were starting to understand how
each generation sees the other.
I always thought: `I'd like to try that,
but let's get four-year-olds and
40-year-olds watching together.` That felt fairly bold."
75 And yet, in *Bluey*, it is so deftly done.
My three-year-old's favourite episode
is *Featherwand*, where *Bluey's* younger
sister plays a game that makes
anything she points at too
80 heavy to carry. The kids get a
kick out of the children calling the
shots; the adults can relate to how
hard it is to get anything done around the
house when a four-year-old is determined to
85 **[Braille Page 5]** play.
"I'm not a big fan of that thing where you
tell jokes for the parents that the kids

just won't get," says Brumm. "I try to avoid that, and find the spot where you're

90 laughing at each other."
Bluey's secret weapon is Bandit, arguably the best screen dad of all time. Unlike, say, *Peppa Pig's* Daddy Pig —

95 a stereotypically blundering, bumbling fool — Bandit is playful and engaged and patient, no matter how tired and crotchety he gets.

100 I ask the question all *Bluey*-watching parents have asked themselves at some point: is Bandit based on you? "Well, on an extremely, extremely good day,

105 I would say I get close to Bandit," Brumm defers. "But no."
I ask Brumm whether the series is rooted in any particular philosophy about

110 parenting. "No, there are no set parenting strategies here," he says. "But I do read a lot about play. I really nerd out about play, and what that does

115 for kids, and how that helps them socialise. **[Braille Page 6]** If I'm proud of anything with *Bluey*,

it's the fact that I think it might t
each adults about how effective

120 play is in a kid's life."

As well as portraying parents in
their best light, it can also leave
them heartbroken, with some episodes
hitting grown-ups hard. My favourite

125 episode, for example, is *Camping*. Bluey
and her family visit a campsite, and
Bluey befriends a French puppy. They
bond, despite the language barrier,
and plant a seed in the dirt together. One

130 day, she wakes up to see that the
French family have left. Bluey is upset,
but her mother counsels her with an
unexpectedly profound speech on the
nature of loss. Then there's an update:

135 five years have passed, and Bluey
returns to the campsite. The
seed they planted is now a
tree — and she hears a familiar
French accent behind her. It is a
140 memorable and ambitious piece of
television that has reduced many a
parent to tears.

A third season of *Bluey* is
in production, and looks set to

145 **[Braille Page 7]** elevate the show
to even greater heights. Nevertheless,
each new season sounds like an

absolute production marathon. There
are 52 episodes per season,
150 and each episode takes five
months to create. As such,
Brumm's day is split into tiny chunks,
where he has to oversee a number
of episodes in any of their 14 stages
155 of production while simultaneously
writing the bulk of the episodes.
Generating new stories is becoming
an uphill struggle. Brumm has two
daughters, who were the age of Bluey
160 and Bingo when the show was
conceived, and formed the basis of
the characters. But they are older now,
and their day-to-day lives are getting
further and further from *Bluey's*. "It
165 is getting harder to write, because
four and six-year-olds are so different
from eight and ten-year-olds," he
says. "It's harder for me to see through
their eyes. I feel like every time I start
170 to understand a new phase,
my kid's already left it
and is starting a new
stage. I feel like, if I had a kid now,
I could just sort that kid right out."
175 **[Braille Page 8]** Is this his way
of saying that he wants another kid?
"No. Zero chance!" Instead, as

evidenced by the army of mums
and dads who scour each episode
180 for parenting tips, he will have to
make do with sorting our kids out instead.

[End of Passage]