



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCE (NEW)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND
LITERATURE
AS/Advanced**

SUMMER 2017

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WJEC
GCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (NEW)

Summer 2017

UNIT 1: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND CREATIVE WRITING

General Comments

This was the second time that Unit 1 had been taught by centres and sat by candidates as part of the new AS specification in Wales. Centres are now, no doubt, more familiar with the particular challenges of this unit and are on the whole preparing candidates well for answering question 1 on an anthology poem and an unseen text and question 2 which asks candidates to produce two pieces of creative writing and a comparative commentary. Candidates dealt with planning of time more effectively this year, and instances where candidates did not complete the whole paper, missing question 2iii entirely or only writing a few sentences, were fewer this time around.

There are marked responses available as part of OER, as well as online CPD resources on the WJEC website to assist with the teaching of terminology as well as frameworks for supporting comparative responses. It is vital that centres make full use of the resources on offer to best serve the interests of their candidates.

Section A: Comparative analysis of poetry and unseen text.

Question 1

Question 1 asked candidates to compare and contrast how leisure time is presented in Text A, an anthology poem which they would have studied in class, 'Leisure', and either Text B or Text C. 'Leisure' proved an accessible choice, with the majority of candidates demonstrating sensible understanding of meaning in the poem. There was a more or less equal take-up of both unseen texts, with candidates writing clearly about both, and some noting the modern twist on having time to think in Text C and the self-deprecating humour in Text B. It is worth noting here the specification's requirement that one of the unseen texts will be spoken; this may be from a range including (but not limited to) a talk or speech, a spoken literary text such as a play script, monologue or audiobook excerpt, vlog and voiceover extracts, to name a few. These spoken texts may also be written or transcribed, and candidates should sit the exam prepared to comment on transcript features such as intonation, pausing and other features of discourse such as turn taking.

Candidates are instructed to comment on either Text B or Text C, though this year we did see a slight rise in the number of rubric infringements where candidates had not followed this instruction. A handful of responses compared the anthology poem to both texts B and C in Question 1, setting themselves the task of comparing three texts. It is possible that resit candidates who are also preparing for the second year Unit 4, where the synoptic question is three unseen texts to compare and contrast, have become confused between that question and this. Candidates can only be awarded marks in Unit 1 for their comparison of the poem to one of the unseen texts and it costs them marks and time to do otherwise.

The best responses this summer used a wide range of technical terms confidently (AO1), explored approaches meaningfully (AO2) and made thorough comparisons and contrasts between the texts (AO4). Successful use of terminology was demonstrated through accuracy of a wide range of terms, including terms from poetry and spoken language. The poem was accessible and straightforward in its language choices, and many candidates wrote well about the parallel syntax which dominates the poem, as well as Davies's use of a lyrical iambic tetrameter. The personification of 'beauty's glance' in nature as female was noted by most; interpretations ranged from those who maturely commented on the pastoral and romantic influences here, to those who wondered whether Davies had a more sinister reason to 'stand and stare' at a woman in the woods.

Errors in the identification of terms were sometimes an issue here, as in Question 2 (iii). Errors which occurred most frequently were the misidentification of syndetic and asyndetic lists in the unseen texts and some problems identifying word classes in all three. Some candidates dealt very well with some challenging aspects of syntax in unseen texts, and this was pleasing to see, as they had obviously been very well prepared for the examination. Weaker responses often struggled to use technical terms, with many using just one or two basic terms; had difficulty linking the approaches identified to the meanings in the texts for Question 1 or in their own writing for Question 2 (iii); and failed to compare and contrast effectively.

Contextual material (AO3) was also most effectively used when relevant to meaning. The significance and influence of contexts in which texts were produced and received (AO3) was worth a quarter of the marks for this question, and candidates needed to make some sustained and embedded references to context in order to meet the requirements for the upper bands in their response. Some candidates struggled to say anything meaningful about the context of Davies's poem, limiting their comments to the fact that he was homeless and lost a leg, but not applying context more specifically than that. Centres should encourage candidates to think about the social, cultural, religious and political implications of the time that the poem was written, as well as the biography of the poet and any contextual issues raised in the poem's meanings. PERSIA is a good mnemonic to remind them of the different forms that context can take: Political, Economic, Religious, Society (and attitudes), Individual (biographical) and Artistic (literary movements and influences). Candidates will also be rewarded in AO3 for comments on readership and interpretation, and some responses fruitfully commented on how the poem and the unseen texts manipulated the audience responses of humour and empathy in their discussions. Contextual analysis was most successful when it illuminated something in the poem; often, examiners felt that candidates were aware of the need for context, but adopted an 'anything goes' approach, making sweeping generalisations about the Georgians (good at saving money 'like squirrels hiding nuts'), about religious beliefs at the time and attitudes to leisure.

Summary of key points: key considerations for centres

- Embedding relevant contextual influences throughout the response is important; candidates should avoid writing one isolated paragraph on context at the beginning of their response and making no reference to it in the rest of the essay
- Candidates should seek to move beyond basic biographical context: use PERSIA to explore context
- Responses need to use integrated study and apply a wide range of accurate terminology, including terms from poetry analysis and spoken language
- Centres should teach a structure which allows the candidate to successfully compare and contrast two texts
- Section A responses which are often rich with terminology sometimes struggle to explore meaning or impact for AO2
- Other Section A responses included barely any terminology and were difficult to reward given that one text has been studied and prepared before the examination

Question 2:

The key to doing well on this section relies on effective time management and planning in order that enough links and connections are embedded in the two written pieces so that pertinent connections can be made in 2 (iii) at relative speed. Candidates needed to pay careful attention to genre, audience and purpose in the written tasks and should have made sure that they were producing the text type that they have been set. Candidates are advised to aim to write approximately 200 words for each task, and it is worth them seeing what 200 words of their own handwriting looks like in advance of this examination; examiners were seeing pieces which exceeded 500 words for these tasks. Over-long pieces are time consuming and often do not gain any extra marks: expertise and creativity can be assessed in 200 words and it would be better for candidates to use any extra time to either plan their pieces or write their commentary in 2iii.

2 (i) An extract from a dramatic monologue

2 (ii) A review for a magazine or newspaper

Responses were generally sound in 2 (i) and most candidates demonstrated a secure awareness of the appropriate genre, audience and purpose for the task of monologue writing. This is a text type they should be more than familiar with from Unit 2 drama study and their preparation for this AS unit. Some wrote convincingly about their persona's busy day, ranging from disastrous morning domestic routines described with either melodrama, humour or both (burnt toast, packed lunches, tantruming children, missed buses), to more dramatic situations which showed creativity in their interpretation of 'busy' (narrators struggling with depression as well as moments which preceded global crises such as the tsunami or terror attacks were seen this year). Candidates who chose a narrator carefully and who thought about the differences between the outer life and the inner life, and used the monologue to express that, were successful, as were those who crafted the monologue with stage directions, with props and directorial comments. Many monologues contained a wry and ironic humour as an element of the 'reflection' in the question, and lots used an appropriate colloquial style and vocabulary to effectively bring their narrator's voice to life. Some responses were unable to select and filter the sorts of credible experiences fit for the task, and so implausible hostage situations, assassination attempts and blood baths were often less successful. For some, the monologue genre itself was problematic, with some candidates struggling to move beyond narrative prose, complete with a narrator and dialogue between characters. Again, as was the case with the play script set in 2016, candidates should be familiar with conventions of layout, stage directions and other paralinguistic features necessary in dramatic texts. For some it was hard to see any recognition of appropriate audience and purpose.

For 2 (ii), candidates were asked to write a review for a magazine or newspaper of a hotel which promises that guests will 'be able to relax and unwind'. Most candidates showed a familiarity with and ease at writing in the review genre and produced pieces fit for purpose and audience. On the whole, most responses praised the hotel and balanced the need for information and opinion. Some adopted a promotional tone, writing pieces which really were more advertisements than reviews; those that did this usually chose the first person plural narrative voice, 'We offer...', and a range of hyperbolic adjectives to 'sell' the hotel to its audience, which led to issues with AO5, 'style and tone are appropriate for audience, purpose and genre'. Critical reviews which went into detail about the problems they had encountered during their stay were often successful and engaging, though once instance where the guest found milk in the mini-bar dated '18th March 1987' and a mirror covered in layers of dried blood did stretch credibility somewhat!

Technical accuracy and quality of written expression was a problem for some candidates in both tasks, and lapses in spellings, technical errors in punctuation and lapses in clarity all impact on AO5. Examiners are mindful that candidates are writing at speed, trying to juggle creativity, fluency, the need to build in features to comment on in 2 (iii), but some responses contained some significant slips in accuracy.

Examiners saw some rubric infringements in the creative writing tasks this year, including some heavy 'lifting' of the unseen texts in Question 1 as creative writing pieces in questions 2 (i) and (ii). It is fine for candidates to show the ways in which they have been inspired by the texts in Question 1 and sometimes strands of imagery or particularly resonant phrases are used creatively and reframed originally in the writing pieces (references to sheep, cows and squirrels in 2 (ii) were particularly popular!) but it must be said that candidates will not be awarded marks for simply copying sentences / chunks of the unseen texts out and trying to pass them off as their original work.

2 (iii) An analytical commentary

In this report last year, I commented that it was in responses to this question that candidates who had not managed their time effectively struggled. On the whole this year this was less of a problem, and it was really pleasing to see far fewer incomplete and unfinished exam scripts. Centres are obviously finding successful strategies for candidates to improve their time management.

The key to success here was in the strength of the links made between the two written pieces, and it is sensible to suggest to students that they should prepare and plan for these links by including similar and different features in their two pieces. Some were lost for what to compare and offered very general comments, often venturing into evaluation of what was and what was not successful in their written pieces, which is not necessary. Whilst there are a range of approaches that could be taken in this question, those who opted to analyse linguistic and literary features of both pieces concurrently did well, as did those who used the frameworks of language (broadly, Form and Structure, Grammar, Lexis, Imagery and Phonology) loosely to structure their connections, but who moved beyond it in order to improve the quality of their links. Whilst terminology (AO1) is worth only 5 marks here, it seems the use of a range of terms is crucial to their analysis of language choice and impacts too (AO2), which in turn has an impact on the quality of links (AO3). The best responses for 2 (iii) were ones which avoided commenting at length on 'general' similarities of content, organisation and audience; it was best to get stuck into the linguistic analysis of the two texts and make good use of integrated study to compare features and their impacts.

Summary of key points: key considerations for centres

- Section B, Question 2 (iii) responses need to comment on and explore connections between written pieces thoughtfully and this is best done when candidates embed and then comment on a range of linguistic and literary terms
- Comparisons are key to Question 2 (iii), and responses needed to do more than just comment on one written piece and then another
- Candidates should be reminded that the creative tasks in 2 (i) and (ii) should be approximately 200 words; there is no need to write more than this
- Plagiarism is an issue when candidates overtly lift material from the unseen texts in Question 1 and use them in the creative tasks in Question 2

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UNIT 2: DRAMA AND NON-LITERARY TEXTS

General comments

There were many excellent responses in evidence again this year. Candidates continued to engage with the texts and produced work of a very high quality. It is clear that there are centres which thoroughly prepare their candidates for this examination, enabling them to respond to any of the possible questions which may be asked on their texts. Candidates who consistently ensured their responses met and addressed all of the relevant Assessment Objectives, made it straightforward for examiners to reward their work. Whilst different Assessment Objectives are relevant for different questions, the three for this Unit are **AO1**—linguistic and literary terminology, written expression and organisation of response, **AO2**—analysis and discussion of meaning, and **AO3**—discussion of context. It is a very worthwhile use of time to ensure that all candidates fully understand these Assessment Objectives and which ones apply to each question, as this is how examiners make final decisions on mark allocation.

Some of the same messages apply from the report last year. Most notable is the lack of **range** in linguistic and literary terminology, which again limited the marks candidates could be awarded for AO1. Simply identifying stage directions and sentence mood is not going to help the candidates move up the Band descriptors. Examiners, even at this level, expect to see the identification and **discussion** of sophisticated and complicated terminology, something which is integral to the integrated nature of this course. Terminology should be taught from the onset and tested throughout the course to ensure that candidates are comfortable using and discussing it before the examination. It is frequently the gateway into specific analysis (AO2) and can help candidates explore meaning in a more purposeful and direct manner. The other main message repeated from last year, is that candidates must be reminded that they need to specify which word they are discussing when identifying terminology. It is meaningless to simply state ‘the noun’ and then not identify which word they mean in their quotation.

There were also wide variations in how centres and candidates address context. As stated last year, candidates need to try to avoid simple ‘bolt-on’ biographical information about the writer. Whilst some biographical information can clearly have an impact on the production and reception of texts, examiners do not reward potted histories with no relevance to the question. The most successful candidates integrate their contextual discussion (AO3) as part of their analysis, and use it to further support their argument. Contextual information is extensive, and candidates should spend time in class exploring its implications as part of their analysis of the text, so that they can respond with authority on the social, political, historical and cultural issues and ideas of the time, and how this may or may not be different for a contemporary audience.

Section A: Post-1900 drama (open book)

The most popular text in this section was 'A Streetcar Named Desire' followed by 'Kindertransport', but responses were seen on all of the texts on the specification.

This section consists of a choice of two two-part questions which address a specified extract (AO1 and AO2), and then an issue from the extract elsewhere in the whole play (AO1, AO2 and AO3). It is essential that candidates know which question requires contextual discussion, as too frequently candidates are discussing context, or biographical information, in part (i) of the question. Occasionally this can be rewarded under AO2 if it illuminates analysis, but it is not necessary in this part of the question. With three essays to write in 2 hours, this unit is time sensitive, and candidates should be encouraged to avoid wasting time discussing context in part (i), although briefly internally contextualising the extract is often a productive way to start their response. Candidates should also be guided to remember the mark allocation for this section. There are 25 marks available for part (i) and 35 for part (ii), so it is advisable that they do not write more, or spend more time on part (i) than part (ii) of the question.

Candidates should also be aware that it is self-penalising to discuss the extract from part (i), as an aspect of their response to part (ii) of the question. The question clearly states that they should refer to at least two other episodes from the whole play. Candidates are rewarded under AO1 for their selection of episodes, and they should be ones which highlight and exemplify how this theme or idea is presented elsewhere in the play. There is no requirement for them to discuss more than two episodes, and candidates who wrote about multiple examples frequently suffered due to the lack of depth in their analysis. Careful selection and detailed analysis, with terminology and integrated contextual discussion is the key to success in this part.

Tennessee Williams: *A Streetcar named Desire*

Both of these questions were popular with candidates, with virtually all pointing out that in question 1, it was the first meeting of Blanche and Stanley, and there was obvious awkwardness between them. Many discussed the way Stanley tries to dominate proceedings right from the start. When commenting on loneliness elsewhere in the play, the central focus was Blanche and her relationships with other characters. In question 2, many candidates were able to discuss the presentation of dramatic tension with success, with some excellent responses detailing how the physical violence between Stanley and Mitch was a key contributing factor. Some responses to the presentation of madness interestingly engaged with stagecraft as a contributing factor, especially the importance of the *Polka* music.

Peter Shaffer: *Amadeus*

Again, both questions were popular with candidates. Question 3 asked them to explore Salieri and his attitudes in the extract, which then led into a discussion on pride elsewhere in the play. Candidates wasted no time in pointing out his aloofness and sense of superiority in the extract, but also chose some thoughtful examples from the whole play, including examples when pride had been either damaged or hurt. In question 4, many commented on Mozart's frustration at the attitudes of others to music, and also discussed key contextual ideas relating to the Age of Enlightenment, when selecting challenges faced by Mozart.

Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard: *Shakespeare in Love*

This text continues to be popular with some centres, and it's easy to see why, as candidates clearly enjoy its humour and subtle references. Of the two questions, number 6 was attempted more frequently, as part (ii) enabled candidates to comment on a number of characters, with some discussing Fennyman as 'the money', and Burbage and Henslowe as theatre owners. There were also some excellent responses which commented on how Viola was treated by men, and how they responded to Queen Elizabeth when in her presence.

Edward Albee: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Question 8 was more popular on this text, as many candidates noted the extreme tension evident in the extract. Part (ii) of this question also afforded them the opportunity to discuss key themes from the play, and many did so very effectively, commenting on the various attitudes to reality and truth evident from all four characters. In question 7, part (ii) responses tended to focus predominantly on George and Martha, at the expense of Nick and Honey.

Diane Samuels: *Kindertransport*

The majority of candidates opted to write about question 9 for this text, with many discussing the abuse of power evident from the Officer, and how this may affect Eva. Comments on the relationships between adults and children elsewhere, tended to focus on Eva/Evelyn's relationship with respective mothers—Helga and Lil—and how this could have had an impact on how Evelyn behaves with Faith. Some, possibly due to the extract, also commented on Eva's interaction with other minor characters, such as the Organiser or the Postman. All of these were valid. Those who responded to question 10 highlighted the clear affection in evidence between Eva and Lil in the extract, and responses to part (ii) tended to again focus on how Eva/Evelyn faced change at various stages of the play. Context was used very effectively for this text.

Key points:

- **Only discuss the set extract in part (i)**
- **Avoid discussing the set extract in part (ii)**
- **Linguistic and literary terminology must go beyond identification of sentence mood**
- **Specify the terminology being discussed**
- **Context should be integrated throughout the essay in part (ii) and avoided in part (i).**

Section B: Non-Literary text study (open book)

In this section, 'In Cold Blood' and 'Once in a House on Fire' were the most popular texts, but responses were seen on all of the texts on the specification.

Candidates are required to select one essay question from a choice of two, and in their response demonstrate knowledge of the whole text, whilst addressing **AO1, AO2 and AO3**. It is therefore essential, as with Section A part (ii), that context is an integral aspect of their discussion, and sweeping generalisations should be avoided. There is also a tendency in this section, for candidates to slip into narrative, or simple description of the events in the text which relate to the question. Again, unless discussion is grounded in analysis of language, then candidates are self-penalising.

There are 60 marks available for this section, so candidates need to write on their text in some detail. However, this does not mean that they should demonstrate extensive coverage at the expense of detailed analysis. In order to reach the top bands for AO2, candidates need to demonstrate sustained and perceptive analysis, and are more likely to achieve success in this, if they select three or four carefully chosen episodes and comment on them in detail. As stated previously, time in class can be devoted to essay planning and selecting a range of episodes which perhaps cover a number of different themes/issues. Candidates have a clean copy of the text in the exam, and they can look again at episodes to make a final judgement as to which ones work most effectively for the question. This aspect of essay planning and organisation can earn them marks for AO1.

Andrea Ashworth: *Once in a House on Fire*

This text continues to be very popular with centres and candidates. Of the two questions on offer, more candidates responded to the presentation of courage/bravery (Q 11) rather than life as a teenager (Q 12). Question 11 saw candidates draw on a range of different examples from the text, but the primary focus was predominantly Andrea herself, and how she demonstrated courage throughout her life. Many candidates also saw this as an opportunity to focus their responses on male acts of violence, and whilst there was some relevance to their discussion, unless they brought their argument back to the actual question, they were losing marks. There were some interesting examples of how context could be used effectively in responses to question 12, with a number commenting on the social and cultural aspects of the time. However, some of these were far too general, and didn't add to or develop the analysis.

Truman Capote: *In Cold Blood*

Candidates continue to produce impressive work on this text, and it was again the most popular text on the paper. Responses to the questions were fairly evenly split. Question 13 asked about the presentation of violence, and whilst there were some detailed accounts of the murder scenes, more successful candidates branched out further within the text, considering the different ways Perry and Dick approach and react to their crimes, and how others, for example Willie-Jay and Dick's parents respond to their actions. Question 14 also saw some fully engaged responses, and whilst nearly all candidates discussed the idealised notion of Herb Clutter as a father, many also discussed Tex and Dick himself as examples of poor fathers.

Dave Eggers: *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*

For this text, question 16 was slightly more popular than 15. The presentation of his own parents brought the majority of candidates to discuss his mother in far greater detail than his father. Whilst there is a clear imbalance in their presentation in the text, that does not mean that his father isn't worthy of discussion, and a number of candidates missed an opportunity to comment on how Eggers' presentation of his father, can also be viewed as having an influence on how readers perceive his mother. There were some interesting responses to question 15 which asked about the presentation of friendships, but too many relied on discussion of his 'friendship' with his brother. Whilst this was a valid approach, it ignored the fact that Eggers sometimes struggles with friendships, especially John, and didn't explore the more mature aspects of how he copes with such friendships.

Robert Minhinnick: *Watching the fire-eater*

This text continues to be popular with a number of centres, and both questions allowed candidates to select a wide range of chapters to discuss. As expected 'Rio de Journal' figured heavily in both questions, and with good reason, but this one chapter should not dominate responses. For question 17, candidates selected to discuss his times in America and Ireland as some of their other points, with a few discussing England in 'Cat's Eyes'. The most successful responses commented on issues relating to 'Otherness' in relation to his presentation. In question 18, there was some impressive work on the connection between nuclear power and the environment as candidates explored 'Chamber of Horrors', and there was also strong relevance to discussing Cardiff as a 'green capital' in 'Dock of the Bay'.

George Orwell: *Down and Out in Paris and London*

Candidates were asked to respond to either the presentation of women (Q 19) or class (Q 20). The treatment of women at the hands of men figured heavily in question 19, with many citing the numerous references to prostitution as an example of their vulnerability. Others commented on this as an example of even fewer employment opportunities being available for women. In question 20, the majority of candidates discussed the evidence of a class distinction being evident amongst the tramps, and a clear hierarchical system even in the most menial of jobs. The most successful candidates were able to discuss Orwell's contextual ideologies with confidence.

Key points:

- **Spend a short period of time selecting the most effective episodes for discussion**
- **Avoid narrating/describing the text. Follow S/E/A and include at least one term for each quotation**
- **Ensure that context is used in a meaningful and productive manner, and is not over-generalised**
- **Technical accuracy and correct spelling is essential, as is the use of standard English**
- **Aim for sufficient coverage of the whole text.**

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UNIT 3: SHAKESPEARE

General Comments

This unit requires candidates to respond to a given extract on the set Shakespeare play they have studied and to write one essay (from a choice of two) on the same Shakespeare play. For the first examination of this unit, it was pleasing to see that all the set texts had been attempted. *King Lear* appeared to be the most popular Shakespeare text studied. As a closed text examination, this paper is challenging for candidates and it was encouraging to note that many centres had thoroughly prepared candidates for this examination. Overall, candidates engaged with the set texts and examiners read many insightful and perceptive responses to the set questions. The best responses evaluated literary and linguistic features (AO1), confidently linking language and meaning (AO2). For Section B candidates also had to provide relevant contextual detail (AO3) and link it meaningfully to the set text they had studied. The best responses saw this context being *applied* to the Shakespeare text.

There were some centres where the depth and thought behind candidates' analysis was limited and knowledge and understanding of terminology was very uneven. Candidates need to be reminded that discussion of a range of literary and linguistic terminology is essential in an integrated course. Given the AO1 weighting for both Section A and Section B on this paper, terminology should be at the forefront of teaching for this unit.

Section A: Extract Analysis

AO1: 25 marks
AO2: 15 marks

Responses were seen on all the texts on the specification, with *King Lear* being the most popular.

For Section A, candidates are required to respond to an extract on the set text they have studied. This extract is printed on the paper itself. The advice is to spend 45 minutes responding to Section A. This requires the candidates to read, think and write at speed. Although they will select detail from within the extract itself, candidates are expected to provide coverage of the whole extract. Some candidates only referred to the first half of the extract and completely ignored the ending. Better responses provided sustained analysis of the extract itself, covering a range of points and exploring language/meaning in detail. Responses that were a side to a side and half rarely scored well. They were too brief, failing to cover the extract in enough depth. Candidates should also be reminded that they must focus on discussing the specified extract rather than other parts of the play

Given that candidates have studied the play in its entirety for this unit, it is expected that they should be able to respond to the extract with knowledge and insight. There were instances where candidates seemed to be treating the extract as an unseen text and showed limited knowledge of the text they had supposedly studied. There were also a number of cases where misreadings occurred and candidates were unable to place the extract in the context of the play itself.

Given the AO1 weighting for this question, examiners expect to see a range of literary and linguistic terms being correctly identified. The extract is printed on the examination paper and Section A is a key opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of terminology. The best responses saw a wide range of terminology being meaningfully applied and there were some thoughtful readings offered. Some candidates, however, did not use any terminology at all and, as this is a language and literature qualification, this severely impacted upon the AO1 mark awarded.

Candidates should be encouraged to use specific terminology for each quotation they cite. There were too many occasions when candidates would use a quotation and label it the 'verb'/'modal verb'/'noun' etc, without identifying which word they were attempting to analyse - they must be specific in their identification of terms. Some candidates resorted to feature spotting where they listed lots of terms without linking the language to meaning. These responses tended to score poorly for AO1 as the terms were not being purposefully applied.

Context (AO3) is not explicitly assessed in Section A. It is possible to credit contextual information if a candidate has used relevant detail to inform their reading (AO2) of the extract. However, a number of candidates included irrelevant contextual detail at the expense of close focused literary and linguistic analysis (AO1) when discussing meaning (AO2).

Candidates need to be reminded of the importance of reading the set question and shaping their response to address the requirements of the question asked. Some candidates wrote generalised responses to the extract, completely ignoring the question itself and this was self-penalising.

Antony and Cleopatra

The majority of responses seen were competent and candidates offered insightful observations on the characters/situation. Some candidates thought, however, that Enobarbus had refused to fight Antony.

King Lear

There were some excellent responses to this question. A number of candidates, however, ignored the set question completely and did not consider how Lear's state of mind was created. Some candidates focused in great detail on the presentation of Kent at the start of the extract. Better responses did attempt to link Kent's treatment of Lear with Lear's diminishing capability but several candidates struggled to make it relevant. Some candidates ignored the second half of the extract, which was a pity given that it was rich in opportunities for analysis. Some candidates misread the extract and referred to Goneril and Regan as the 'Poor naked wretches'.

Much Ado About Nothing

The best responses here focused clearly on how Leonato's thoughts and feelings were conveyed. Some candidates ignored the question completely and responded descriptively. Some candidates discussed the presentation of Leonato rather than inferring how his thoughts and feelings were established and conveyed.

Othello

There were some competent responses to this extract and the better candidates had a real grasp of Iago and his attitudes to Desdemona. Unfortunately, some candidates had not read the complete question and focused only on Iago. There was also some misreading of Iago's attitudes to Desdemona where candidates failed to grasp Iago's ability to manipulate and misrepresent Desdemona and Cassio, claiming he sympathised with and genuinely liked Desdemona.

The Tempest

Very few candidates attempted this question. Some candidates ignored the question completely and wrote about the presentation of characters. Better responses explored how the language/character/plot/staging was used to create dramatic tension.

Summary of key points

- Read the question carefully and make sure candidates answer the question that has been set
- Terminology must be applied accurately
- Terminology needs to be wide-ranging
- Candidates should refer to at least one term per cited example – this term should be specifically supported by the example
- Avoid description/narration – candidates should be encouraged to adopt the SEA approach
- Candidates should demonstrate clear understanding of the given extract – this is not an unseen text
- Include a brief introductory sentence placing the extract in the context of the play

Section B: Essay

AO1: 35 marks

AO2: 15 marks

AO3: 25 marks

For Section B, candidates need to produce one essay from a choice of two on the same text that they used for Section A. In answering their chosen essay title, candidates are expected to show wider knowledge of the text as a whole. It is acceptable for candidates to refer to a selection of key episodes in detail as long as they place them within the context of the whole text and they are relevant to the actual response. The selection of examples to support their argument also addresses AO1, as this Assessment Objective considers their line of argument and the organisation of their response.

The best responses were shaped and the candidates' arguments were clearly constructed. Work needed to be sustained and some responses were too brief at only two pages. However, there were also examples of work where the essays were very long and lacked organisation. These were often descriptive and had no real focus on the set question. Some candidates chose to ignore the question completely and wrote about what they liked. This is clearly not advisable.

Given the fact that this is a closed text examination, in order to fully access AO1 students needed to have prepared thoroughly and learned a sufficient number of relevant quotations. They needed to apply a range of literary and linguistic terms to access the marks available. Some candidates offered superb responses which utilised sophisticated terms. However, as with Section A, many candidates needed to be far more specific in identifying language. For example:

The use of the conjunction 'By land and sea'....'

The modal verb 'I'll fight'...

The declarative 'cannot heave my heart'

The noun phrase 'Some heavenly power guide us/Out of this fearful country'...

Students often used the term declarative and quoted part of the sentence. Verb and noun phrases were used in abundance with students quoting whole sentences. It is essential that students are more precise in their application of terminology.

Students need to be reminded of the importance of quoting accurately from the play. There were many examples of students making quotations up which clearly could not be credited.

Context (AO3) is clearly important in Section B. However, some candidates provided generalised context which had little relevance to the set task. Too frequently, context was addressed through irrelevant biographical information relating to the author. Some responses read more like 'history' essays and there was limited discussion of the play itself. It is essential that in their responses candidates lead with the play itself and embed relevant contextual detail in their analysis. Candidates should work outwards from the text and relevant context should be used to illuminate the candidate's argument. The best responses applied context to their reading of the text and provided thoughtful interpretations of the play. Candidates who wrote mini-biographies, random historical detail or who included context as a 'bolt-on' at the end of a paragraph performed less successfully than those who meaningfully embedded contextual detail into their responses.

In terms of organisation, students need to be reminded of the importance of paragraphing. The correct spelling of Shakespeare and character names must also be stressed.

Antony and Cleopatra

There were a limited number of centres studying this text. Both Question 6 and Question 7 were well done. Question 6 – duty- proved to be popular and was coherently responded to. Question 7 – masculinity – resulted in some essays using a character based approach which led to more descriptive responses. Where students dealt with masculinity as a concept, the level of analysis was excellent.

King Lear

Question 9 – the presentation of suffering – was a very popular choice. Candidates who constructed a clear argument here provided competent responses. Some responses were character based which tended to lead to more descriptive responses. Some candidates based their response on a single character and this was insufficient. Question 8 asked candidates to consider the idea that Cordelia was a compassionate but flawed heroine. Some candidates wrote about Cordelia in general and made no attempt to address the question. Several candidates based their response entirely on Act 1 Scene 1 and this was not wide-ranging enough.

Much Ado About Nothing

Question 10 asked candidates to consider Shakespeare's presentation of Hero as a stereotypical female in a male-dominated society. Some candidates ignored the question completely and wrote descriptively about Hero. The best response shaped a clear argument and considered the relevant contextual factors. Some candidates had a limited overview of Hero's role in the play as a whole. Question 11 focused on deception. This tended to elicit a character based response which was heavily descriptive. Better candidates dealt with deception as a plot device.

Othello

Question 12 focused on male power and Question 13 the theme of betrayal. Better responses to both questions constructed a clear argument and considered the concept of power/betrayal within the context of the text. Some candidates adopted a character based approach – these responses tended to be more descriptive. Some candidates had clearly learned an essay on women and they were determined to write about the female characters under the umbrella of male power. This worked where the candidates clearly argued that male power was oppressive for female characters. However, some candidates struggled to maintain relevance and this was self-penalising.

The Tempest

Responses were seen on both Question 14 and Question 15. For Question 14, better responses engaged with the quotation and considered why Prospero may be considered a difficult character for audiences to sympathise with. Weaker responses tended to provide a character description. Question 15 asked candidates to consider the different ways in which power was presented. Better responses considered power as a concept. Some candidates selected a character approach to this topic which led to more descriptive responses.

Summary of key points

- Answer the set question
- Candidates need to shape their response into a coherent argument
- Terminology must be applied accurately
- Terminology needs to be wide-ranging
- Candidates should refer to at least one term per cited example – this term should be specifically supported by the example
- Avoid description/narration – candidates should be encouraged to adopt the SEA approach
- Candidates should show understanding of the whole text
- Where specific extracts have been used to construct the response, candidates should demonstrate understanding of how these are relevant to the play as a whole
- Candidates need to put the text at the centre of their response and apply relevant context (rather than vice-versa)
- Context should be applied and embedded into the candidate's response
- Context should be meaningful
- Centres should prepare their candidates with a wide and broad understanding of the social, political, historical and cultural context of their chosen text
- Centres should also encourage candidates to consider how their chosen texts can be interpreted in contemporary and modern societies

**WJEC
GCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (NEW)**

Summer 2017

UNIT 4: UNSEEN TEXTS AND PROSE STUDY

Those familiar with reports on LL4 will recognise many of the strengths and weaknesses referred to here. The most important changes for the new specification are the increased weightings of AO4 on Section A and AO3 on Section B. Planning and preparation to maximise candidates' achievements in these areas is essential and varied markedly between centres. The current examination is also 30 minutes shorter than LL4, making timed practice even more valuable. Clearly, the 'open book' nature of Section B has led some centres (or candidates) to neglect essay planning and analysis practice on the studied novel. Thorough knowledge of the text is essential for effective selection for the chosen question, to ensure that detailed analysis of appropriate episodes is at the centre of the response.

SECTION A: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UNSEEN TEXTS

Compare and contrast the presentation of women in:

Text A: extract from *Vanity Fair* **Text B:** the poem 'Any Woman' **Text C:** speech by Hillary Clinton

AO1: 15 AO2: 15 AO4: 30

Overview

This collection of texts elicited an enormous range of responses, both in quality and in the range of ideas generated. The most impressive responses were remarkably assured, firmly organised to address the dominant comparative element, fluently written and thoroughly informed by selective application of a wide range of literary and linguistic approaches. At the bottom of the range, some candidates appeared to have embarked on writing before reading the texts carefully or considering the possible range of connections between them.

AO1

Use integrated linguistic and literary approaches

Apply terminology purposefully

Organise and write coherently

Planning and organisation

Every year these reports have pointed out that empty introductions and conclusions waste space and time but gain no marks. There is no requirement to write out the text descriptors although it is advisable to read them carefully. For example, more than one response claimed that Text A was from a fashion magazine for women. Very generalised openings are also unhelpful (e.g. '*The three texts all have the theme of women in common and use linguistic and literary techniques to convey their ideas. There are some similarities between their views but also some differences, which might be because they were written for different purposes and audiences*'). None of this is untrue but neither is it useful.

Successful introductions always show evidence of thorough reading, focus on the question set and start to address the comparative element of the question in a meaningful way. Candidates can gain credit straight away for organisation (AO1), understanding (AO2) and connections (AO4). Perhaps only those gifted with rapid comprehension can offer cogent links in the opening paragraph – but everyone can avoid wasting time.

The conclusion is another problematic area. A meaningful sentence or two, connecting the texts' treatment of the topic and informed by the analysis undertaken, is preferable to a long paragraph repeating what has been said in the essay or offering vague generalisations. Good time management is an important skill and those who have had thorough practice tend to favour a brisk ending.

Organising the essay

Some candidates had obviously been advised to use a systematic framework approach. The framework is a useful device to remind candidates of the range of features they should aim to cover but using it as an essay plan can result in the identification of purpose, audience, structure, form, lexis and syntax without referring to meaning. It is very difficult to score well on AO2 without a strong grasp of meanings. The AO4 comparative element usually suffers too as connections will very often be tenuous and superficial, without clear reference to what the texts actually say.

Candidates should also be reminded to answer the question. In centres where the framework approach was rigorously used, weaker candidates could write at length without making any reference to the presentation of women. Whatever the form of organisation used, meaning must always form the basis of any analysis.

A few candidates used linear organisation with a comparative section at the end. This is not the most highly recommended approach. While it has the advantage of getting to know the texts in detail before making connections, there is a danger of running out of time to cover the links. Unfortunately, a small number overlooked the comparative element altogether and this could only result in low marks.

Many responses started with Text A, probably the most challenging of the texts. Those who worked doggedly through from the beginning tended to lack a clear overview of Becky Sharp's characterisation and offered simplified readings, or became confused by the shift to women more generally. It is important to get an overview of each text as a whole before starting on the detail. The most useful material is not always at the beginning. Several spent far too long on the short opening paragraph, got as far as 'indefatigable complacency' and gave up. In these semi-linear responses, Text A was compared to Text B and Text C tended to be squeezed out. Time factors meant that dealing with the texts chronologically did make good sense but some competent responses started with the poem which many found more accessible than the novel.

Using connections between texts as an organising principle is recommended. Allowing 10-15 minutes for reading and annotation will help connections to emerge. Responses built around similarities and differences are the most successful, since they are organised to address the comparative element.

Terminology and expression

Common errors

Here are this year's top terminology complaints. Several apply also to Section B.

- **Connotation** is widely used incorrectly, often to make a simple synonym or paraphrase of the text sound acceptable. 'Connotation' means an *additional* tone, idea or feeling which a word or phrase suggests, as well as its literal meaning.
- Texts may contrast with each other but they cannot **juxtapose**, which refers to the close placing of two things.
- Poems have speakers but not **narrators** unless they are narrative poems, which Text B was not.
- A **vocative** is a term of address used directly to someone or something. There were no examples on this paper but the term was quite often used.
- **Lexical sets** are connected by meaning (e.g. trickery in Text A or architecture in Text B) and their identification requires quotation of the relevant words.
- **Phrase** is often being used inaccurately for a sentence or a clause.
- A list which includes a conjunction (often 'and') is **syndetic**. Prose which includes commas is not necessarily a list.
- **Symbol** and **metaphor** are not the same feature. Tynan's '*I am the pillars of the house*' is a metaphor.

The quality of expression, as ever, ranged from impressively fluent to inadequate for 'A' level work. Here are just a few observations:

- Candidates are expected to paragraph their writing and to pay attention to technical accuracy. Inaccurate spelling of characters' and writers' names and of key terminology is surprisingly common.
- We expect titles to have capital letters, as they do on the examination paper.
- Many confused 'woman' and 'women', apparently unaware of the difference between singular and plural.
- The over-simplifying terms 'positive' and 'negative' are still appearing instead of more nuanced or precise alternatives.
- The verb 'to showcase' does not indicate any particular literary or linguistic technique.
- Starting a sentence with 'Similarly' does not make sense unless there is some kind of connection to follow.

AO2

Show understanding of meanings
Show awareness of how meanings are created
Explore linguistic and literary features

Genre awareness

Genre will have an impact on the type of techniques candidates might choose to analyse. The most assured responses on Text A showed understanding that Becky Sharp is a fictional character and that Thackeray's treatment of marriage is intended to be humorous. They were also able to identify the omniscient narrator and distinguish his views from those of the protagonist. In many centres, poetic form had been thoroughly revised and candidates could make informed comments e.g. Text B's regular iambic tetrameter matching the speaker's confident attitude or supporting the prevailing imagery of structure and strength. Very few overlooked the discourse features in Text C and most made comments on the impact of the spoken delivery, especially of the stressed syllables. Those who were aware that they needed to consider genres were also able to see the presentation of women in Text C in relation to the expectations of its audience at a conference on women. However, some otherwise competent responses entirely omitted to acknowledge that Text B was a poem or that Text C was intended to be spoken and would be listened to rather than read.

Common errors on 'unseen' texts

Text A: *Vanity Fair*

Several assumed, because of the date (1848), that the husband would be in charge and those who did so struggled with the characterisation of Becky. Some failed to distinguish between Becky's viewpoint in the third person and that of the first person authorial voice.

Text B: 'Any Woman'

In some centres, literary terms were scarce and it was difficult to discuss the poem without referring to the metaphors. '*I am the pillars of the house*' is a metaphor. Describing yourself as part of a building is not personification. The poem was often said to be in rhyming couplets, even when alternate rhyme had been identified.

Range of approaches

This also applies to Section B.

Disappointing performances on AO1 and AO2 are sometimes a result of narrow approaches or unproductive application, especially of linguistic and phonological terms. For example, pointing out **declaratives** can be useful, particularly when combined with other terms e.g. the anaphoric declaratives used by Tynan '*I am the pillars. . . I am the fire . . . I am the light*'. However, as declarative is the most common sentence mood, it cannot be productive to keep using the term, especially when examples are not full sentences and therefore do not show sentence mood anyway.

A few centres have encouraged over-interpretation of **phonological effects**. Some discussion of sound effects is valid e.g. Clinton's use of the plosive verbs 'barred' and 'banned' was often a successful choice. But some assertions about the impact of alliteration, sibilance, fricatives or extended vowel sounds (to name a few) are entirely unconvincing and prone to error. Devoting a section to phonology, as the framework approach dictates, is almost guaranteed to produce flimsy analysis and tenuous links.

Word classes are difficult to master and easy to get wrong. Effective close analysis requires some accurate word classing but word class labels also take up time and space, which would often be better occupied by widening the range of linguistic and literary approaches. Because it would be technically possible to attach word class labels to every single word on the page, selection is a useful skill to practise. It is rarely useful to specify the class of each word in a quotation but a few centres seem to have encouraged this.

AO4

Explore connections across texts
Identify similarities and differences
Discuss reasons for these

Comments on AO1 indicate that the keys to success on AO4 are: careful reading, firm question focus, prioritising meanings and organising the essay around connections. Some candidates try too hard to find similarities, when differences and distinctions might be easier and more convincing to explore. Connections between two of the texts where there is an obvious link are good starting points.

Types of connection which could be productive include: thematic links, attitudes, genres, tone, viewpoints, contextual factors and techniques.

Useful starting points for this collection of texts included: domesticity, women as mothers, women individually or collectively, degrees of acceptance of female roles, changes over time and differences in tone. More confident candidates brought genres and purposes into the discussion. This led to discussion of stylistic differences such the importance of imagery in Text B, the creation of humour in Text A or the use of rhetorical devices in Text C.

Connections led by technique e.g. lists, lexical sets, pronoun address can be successful, but only when the focus is on the question and the creation of meanings.

The role of context

Showing understanding of the influence of contextual factors is not rewarded separately on Section A. Nevertheless, they are important: on this paper it was essential to consider, for example, time factors which influenced Thackeray's portrayal of Becky Sharp in his Victorian novel. Hillary Clinton's very different assessment of the position of women in 1995 cannot be fully appreciated, unless it is seen in the context of a different time, as well as genre, purpose and audience. As long as contextual comment is part of a comparison it will gain credit.

Summary of advice for Section A

- **Timed practice is strongly recommended.**
- **Careful and thorough reading of the texts must be the first priority.**
- **Practise introductions. Dissuade candidates from writing out the text descriptors.**
- **Promote the use of a wide range of literary and linguistic terminology, not just word classes.**
- **Revise poetic form and features. One text will be a poem.**
- **Encourage organisation based on linking texts through meanings, attitudes, contexts and genres.**

SECTION B

Prose Study (Open Book)

AO1: 15 AO2: 15 AO3: 30

Texts and questions

The Color Purple was the most popular novel, followed by *The Handmaid's Tale*. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was also quite popular. There were a few responses on *Great Expectations* and even fewer on *Emma*.

By far the most popular question was on the causes and presentation of suffering. Several chose to write on the main character's relationships or the themes of education and learning. There were fewer responses on themes and issues established in the opening and only a handful on houses and homes. Achievement was not really influenced by the choice of question, although some of the responses on education and learning were particularly thoughtful. **The crucial factor was the inclusion or omission of the contextual element (AO3)**. It was also important for candidates to select relevant episodes to analyse. Too many gave descriptive outlines of their chosen topic or told the story.

Addressing the AOs

Including a range of **contextual factors (AO3)** was essential for a respectable mark on Section B. Clearly, in some centres, this had been impressed upon candidates and reinforced until every response had at least some basic reference to context and the strongest featured integrated informed evaluation at every stage of the response. In a few centres, only one or two mentioned any contextual factors at all. Overlooking the context altogether meant that even if they wrote and analysed well they could not possibly gain more than half marks. A candidate achieving a secure band 4 for AO1 and AO2 would end up with a disappointing 22/60. The contextual material has to be learned and candidates should be reminded of its importance, preferably through having practice essays AO marked.

The topic of suffering in *The Color Purple* was the most popular choice. It is very difficult to write this essay without referring to contextual factors – but a few managed it. At the top of the range there was an impressive range which included history, biography and critical opinions. In these centres, contextual topics had clearly been introduced alongside the teaching of the text.

Ensure that knowledge of dates is accurate. 'When it was written' or 'in that time' will not do. There is a list of starting points for each novel in the AO3 section of the Specimen Assessment Materials. Many centres have clearly been using this.

Evidence of integrated study (AO1) was limited in a significant minority of responses and very sketchy in many others. Those showing sound knowledge of terminology in Section A sometimes failed to use it in Section B or used only very general terms. Although close analysis as sustained as in Section A is not expected, candidates need to choose quotations in support of relevant arguments so that they can cover a range of literary devices and linguistic choices in their analysis. Earlier remarks on word class are relevant here: with such a range of studied material to hand, it is disappointing to see candidates who only label individual words.

Successful centres make sure that literary techniques are thoroughly discussed and revised, so that the focus is kept on linguistic **and** literary approaches.

Useful linguistic approaches are partly determined by the novel studied. Taking the most popular choices as examples, we would expect to see some discussion of dialect in *The Color Purple* and naming in *The Handmaid's Tale*. It was pleasing to see that there was little irrelevant use of dialect features used by Walker. Many candidates, however, did not mention them at all and some discussion is productive, linked contextually to the setting in the U.S. state of Georgia. In Atwood's novel, naming is dictated by the patriarchal theocracy, which enabled candidates to integrate relevant contextual points. These features are so essential to the novels that they will be relevant to any question chosen.

Summary of advice for Section B

- **Make sure that students are thoroughly conversant with the AO weightings.**
- **Insist on introductions which link the topic with at least one contextual factor.**
- **Advise candidates to choose at least three key episodes in the novel to analyse when addressing the question chosen.**
- **Practise integrating different contextual factors with the analysis of key episodes in the novel.**
- **Remind candidates to keep using a range of terminology.**
- **Revise literary terms and approaches to avoid too narrow a linguistic focus and address the 'integrated study' requirement.**

WJEC
GCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (NEW)

Summer 2017

UNIT 5: CRITICAL AND CREATIVE GENRE STUDY

General Comments

Non-exam assessment: 2500-3500 word folder

This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated. It gives opportunities for learners to independently select an aspect of prose study that interests them and to study one text (chosen from a list in Appendix A) provided by WJEC within that genre. In addition, learners are given the opportunity to select wider reading to inform their studies in this unit and to reflect on the learning that has taken place. In reflecting on their studies, learners will then be required to produce original writing related to their chosen genre.

Section A: Genre study

Centres had taken a range of valid approaches to this part of the non-examination assessment folder. The majority of centres had given candidates access to a range of texts within one or two genres. Some centres had given candidates complete free choice of both genre and texts leading to an entirely independent approach to the Unit. A minority of centres had prescribed genres and texts offering their candidates limited independence in their study. A few had 'taught' extracts from texts and given candidates a common task. This led to virtually identical content across the sample and is not in the spirit of the Unit. The genre study should provide candidates with the opportunity to explore an area of individual interest and to engage with challenging and interesting texts. Bibliographies included with the work were very useful and demonstrated the care and attention that candidates had given to researching their chosen genre. Many had read texts other than those analysed in their genre study and had undertaken critical reading which they engaged with effectively in their responses.

Work was seen from almost all of the genres on offer in this unit. Gothic and dystopia were the most popular genres with romance and identity/the outsider also featuring heavily in the samples of work seen. All candidates chose prose texts from Appendix A in the specification. Some texts proved very popular indeed such as *1984*, *Dracula*, *The Wasp Factory*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Catcher in the Rye* and *Wuthering Heights*. Wider reading was generally appropriate and moderators saw an impressive range of texts. A minority of texts were not sufficiently challenging for A2 study. Texts such as *The Hunger Games* and *Heroes* are better suited to study at earlier Key Stages and candidates should be encouraged to engage with more challenging material for the genre study. Centres should also avoid texts which are examined elsewhere on the specification such as *In Cold Blood* and *The Handmaid's Tale*. A minority of candidates used films such as *9 to 5* and plays such as *Macbeth* as their wider reading. The specification outlines that this Unit is a study of prose genres and so only prose texts should be referred to in the essay.

The majority of centres had offered candidates a wide range of tasks allowing for an appropriate level of independent study. This is undoubtedly best practice as a common task tended to result in genre studies with very similar content and a more limited overview of the genre being studied. Tasks on gender and power proved to be popular and worked well in a range of genres. The theme of setting was also popular in Gothic, travel and dystopia genre studies and it allowed candidates to demonstrate clear awareness of this important convention of these genres. Candidates who chose a narrow focus such as this tended to craft focused and perceptive responses. Some centres provided a critical quotation in the task which candidates were required to engage with when constructing their argument. This approach worked well and allowed candidates to make some perceptive observations. Phrasing of tasks was occasionally problematic. Candidates who responded to tasks which signposted the relevant Assessment Objectives tended to have more structured arguments. Broad tasks such as 'How do your chosen texts establish they are in the gothic genre?' and 'Compare and contrast your chosen texts' did not offer sufficient guidance to candidates and resulted in rather generic responses which covered a wide range of points briefly rather than three or four areas of focus in detail.

Use of terminology was varied across the work seen by moderators. In stronger responses, candidates applied a wide range of literary and linguistic terminology with confidence and precision. Where marks were awarded in Band 5, moderators expected to see candidates engage with language on both word and sentence level. In a minority of centres, the range of terminology across the sample of work submitted was too narrow and in rare cases, was entirely absent. This heavily impacted candidates' access to both AO1 and AO2 marks as the identification of terminology should always be linked to meaning. This resulted in some generosity in the assessment of AO1, particularly in Band 4 and 5. There was some misapplication of terminology such as syndetic and asyndetic listing, which were often confused. There was also a heavy reliance on straightforward terms such as declarative, imagery and lexical set. Whilst these terms provide a useful starting point, candidates should be interrogating quotations in much more detail. Stronger responses adhered closely to the Statement/Evidence/Analysis approach and applied terminology to all quotations. Arguments were generally well structured with the strongest responses including a focused introduction, clear topic sentences on paragraphs and a conclusion which effectively summarised points.

The use of contextual detail was also varied across the work seen. AO3 has a significant weighting in this section of the folder and as such candidates are expected to include a range of contextual points to illuminate their arguments. The strongest responses dealt with the conventions of their chosen genre, and the typicality of their texts within it, in some detail. This was a very effective approach and allowed candidates to demonstrate the knowledge they had gained from critical and literary research. Some candidates made very little reference to the genre of their texts. As this is a genre study, candidates should explore their chosen theme or issue and its significance within the chosen genre, not just within the texts themselves. Many candidates were also able to make useful references to biographical, historical and cultural factors surrounding their texts. Reference to reader responses and critical readings of the texts also proved very useful when used to illuminate the argument. In less successful responses, candidates included whole paragraphs of descriptive contextual points which did not connect to their argument and were, therefore, irrelevant to the demands of this section. Contextual points which were simply added on to the end of paragraphs also tended to be limiting as they were not fully integrated into the candidate's argument. There was a tendency toward generosity in the assessment of AO3 where candidates did not embed contextual detail or did not include sufficient reference for the number of marks available. Nearly all candidates included comparisons in their responses. Best practice was seen in centres where a comparative approach was adopted throughout and was signposted by comparative topic sentences. Fully integrated links between the core text and wider reading resulted in some very fruitful veins of argument.

Weaker responses on AO4 tended to be characterised by a lack of comparisons through the body of the essay, instead leaving all comparisons to the introduction and conclusion. Where this approach was adopted, there was sometimes generosity on the assessment of AO4.

Summary of key points:

Candidates should:

- apply a wide range of literary and linguistic terminology (AO1)
- avoid a lack of precision when applying terminology e.g. referring to a verb but then quoting an entire sentence (AO1)
- avoid general terms such as 'word', 'lexis' etc..., instead applying precise terminology at phoneme, word and sentence level (AO1)
- write in an appropriate academic style (AO1)
- clearly structure the argument including topic sentences to aid with organisation of ideas (AO1)
- establish clear links between terminology and meaning - HOW do the identified literary and linguistic features create meaning/effect (AO2)
- use the Statement/Evidence/Analysis approach to structure the analysis of key quotations (AO2)
- integrate contextual details (AO3)
- make specific reference to the conventions of the chosen genre and how the selected texts fit into that genre (AO3)
- consider reader responses to the chosen texts (AO3)
- embed contextual detail into the argument (AO3)
- ensure all contextual points are relevant to the task being addressed (AO3)
- adopt a comparative approach from the outset (AO4)
- select texts of an appropriate level of challenge for comparison (AO4)
- make detailed reference to the 'core' text and wider reference to one or two other texts (AO4)
- avoid superficial comparative comments or links which do not address the task (AO4)

Section B: Related creative writing

Nearly all candidates submitted short stories or story openings in this section. These stories showed that candidates had been well prepared by centres as there was a secure understanding of effective characterisation and use of setting. Some candidates also showed some originality in the structure of their stories using appropriate techniques such as the epistolary form, multiple narrative voices or time shifts. In some cases, there was a clear effort to mirror a particular author's literary style. A minority of candidates submitted monologues or non-literary writing such as speeches, articles and reviews. The monologues seen showed a clear understanding of the performance elements of the text type. The non-literary pieces were mixed in terms of success. Most showed a clear awareness of audience and purpose but a minority lacked clarity. Some non-literary pieces focused on the texts studied in Section A, for example a review of the film version of *Pride and Prejudice*. This led to a fairly narrow focus for the folder and candidates would have benefitted from selecting another romance text as the focus for the review. Nearly all of the creative writing pieces seen by moderators had obvious links to the genre study and it was clear that candidates were able to apply their knowledge to their own writing. Some candidates included a brief preface with their creative writing which explained the link. This was particularly useful when candidates were using non-literary work or when they had chosen to focus on a specific aspect of the author's style rather than mirroring the conventions of their

chosen genre. A minority of candidates submitted work which was a continuation of an existing text or which featured existing characters. This approach should be avoided as it is self-limiting and impacts upon flair and originality. Technical accuracy and the quality of written expression was generally very good. In some cases, technical errors marred the quality of the work. Thorough proof reading and editing during the drafting process would allow candidates to craft more polished writing pieces.

Summary of key points:

Candidates should:

- have clear links to the knowledge gained from the genre study
- show clear awareness of genre by either conforming to or subverting conventions
- use a style which is appropriate for audience, form, genre and purpose
- produce original and engaging writing
- use language choices which reveal detailed knowledge of literary and linguistic features and their impact
- proof read work carefully to ensure a strong degree of technical accuracy, particularly in terms of punctuation of speech
- use wide ranging vocabulary
- select the best genre for their writing. For example, in some cases first person narratives would have been better as monologues
- have a clear sense of audience and purpose

Administration

Administration on this unit was greatly aided by centres' use of the Non-examination Assessment Checklist. Annotation on the cover sheets was generally excellent with the majority of centres providing a very useful overview of how final marks were arrived at. A minority of candidate and teacher signatures were missing from the cover sheets provided with folders. It is a requirement of the specification that all work is authenticated by both the teacher and the candidate.

Conclusion

Moderators saw a great deal of excellent work in this unit. Successful folders included thorough comparative essays which showed a real engagement with the selected genre and engaging writing pieces which showed flair and originality. Centres should be commended on the hard work that had clearly gone into preparing candidates for this unit - it was a pleasure to read the work submitted in this year's moderation process.



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