

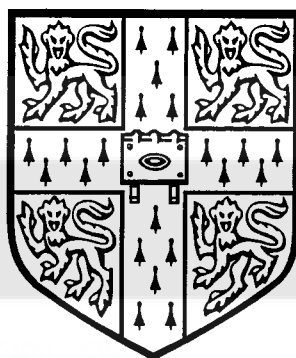


A Level

English

Session: 1994 June
Type: Mark scheme
Code: 9000

University of Cambridge
Local Examinations Syndicate



GCE Examinations June 1994

MARKING SCHEME
for
ENGLISH SUBJECTS

This marking scheme is a working document prepared for use by Examiners. All Examiners are required to attend a Coordination meeting to ensure that the Marking Scheme is consistently interpreted and applied in the marking of candidates' scripts.

UCLES will not enter into any discussion or correspondence about any Marking Scheme. It is acknowledged that there may be different views about some matters of emphasis or detail of a Marking Scheme. It is also recognised that, without the benefit of attendance at a Coordination meeting, there may be different interpretations of the application of a Marking Scheme.

General Marking Information

Good Practice

The process of assessment is a POSITIVE not a negative one, in the main.

Good Examiners:

pace themselves to allow time for careful discrimination;

do not make too early a judgement of an answer. Some candidates begin badly, either with a nervous lack of focus or a tract of summary/narrative, but recover to make more valid and relevant points towards the end;

consider carefully the answer which seems cursory or brief, but is in fact relevant and concise. Some candidates do not use many quotations, but they are apt and advance the argument of the essay;

do not skim through for 'points' and miss an elegant, balanced and articulate style which embodies these points so clearly and precisely;

reflect where genuine error has been made and do not react punitively giving 0 for the essay, although it is a reasonable answer;

remain flexible where the candidate introduces unusual or (to the Examiner) unorthodox ideas. The test must always be whether the material is used effectively to explore the question, not whether it conforms to the Examiner's own opinions.

Marking Procedures

Annotation Please annotate the script on each page and make a comment at the end of each answer (with the mark for the individual question) and a general comment by the total mark on the front of the script. Such indications are essential when cross-moderating, and when scripts are re-read later in the examining process).

Arriving at the Mark Please assess each answer in conjunction with the mark band descriptions, allocating the answer to a band first of all and then deciding where in that band it falls and assigning it a mark. When you come to the end of the script and have totalled the marks for each question, compare the total with the paper total - grade indicators and see if the arithmetical final mark fully reflects the qualities you have perceived in the individual answers. If you need to make a minor adjustment, this should be signalled in your overall script comment alongside the total figure.

Short Work Examiners should be aware of the candidate who presents uncompleted answers. 'Short Work' can be presented in various forms. Sometimes it is in note form; sometimes a series of hurriedly sketched-in paragraphs. It is essential that Examiners mark such 'short work' strictly on the basis of what is given. The work should not be marked up on the grounds of quality elsewhere in the script as this can lead to unfairness. Please signal the shortcomings of the script by writing SHORT WORK at the top of the first page and this can be picked up at the Review if there is an odd grade as a result. Please distinguish between this kind of short work and those scripts where fewer answers than required have been attempted. These should not be marked 'Short Work' but the fact that fewer answers than required have been presented should be noted on the front page.

A Level English, Syllabus 9000

The Syllabus

Aim

To encourage an enjoyment and appreciation of English Literature based on an informed personal response and to extend this appreciation where it has already been acquired.

Skills Tested

1. Knowledge - of the content of the books and where appropriate of the personal and historical circumstances in which they were written;
2. Understanding - extending from simple factual comprehension to a broader conception of the nature and significance of literary texts;
3. Analysis - the ability to recognise and describe literary effects and to comment precisely on the use of language;
4. Judgement - the capacity to make judgements of value based on close reading;
5. Sense of the Past and Tradition - the ability to see a literary work in its historical context as well as that of the present day;
6. Expression - the ability to write organised and cogent essays on literary subjects.

The Special Paper (Paper 0)

This paper is designed for good candidates who have here an opportunity to show their critical abilities and wide reading, when not confined to the syllabus of set texts. The questions are therefore mostly open-ended and give a wide choice, allowing candidates to write on their own particular interests. Some, especially those taking a modern language A Level, make use of foreign texts, and this is acceptable if sensibly employed.

For this paper candidates are allowed to take in a few books for reference, so do not be impressed by profuse quotation.

The Answers

Mark each answer out of 33.

Part 1

Distinction

20-33

Essays at this highest level should show real originality and discrimination; candidates must prove they have responded vigorously to all or most of the key issues presented by the passage(s). They should have been able to identify, analyse and evaluate tone and attitude as well as argument and character; their handling of quotation and critical terms will have been assured, and their expression thoroughly fluent, economical and accurate.

Merit

17-19

These essays will show good understanding and a significant degree of critical awareness; however, they may not be consistently well focussed. If they reveal genuine freshness of argument and insight, this may not be so fully supported by close and economical textual reference. On the other hand, some essays that are very competent technically but which lack much evidence of real personal engagement may also reach this grade. They must be fluently and accurately written.

Part 2

Distinction

20-33

Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone.

Merit

17-19

Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the texts the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound.

Archives &
Heritage

The Shakespeare Paper (Paper 1)

The Shakespeare paper is the only compulsory component amongst the many A Level English papers offered at present. In view of this, and in the context of what might be called the heritage agenda which has dominated discussion of English Literature within the profession, in the media and elsewhere recently, it is important to remember the stated aim of the syllabus: the encouragement of enjoyment, appreciation and informed personal response. This will take a great variety of forms in answers to the Shakespeare paper and we must give credit for them where due, whether or not they conform to our own opinions or orthodoxies. The many candidates who take this paper have almost all studied the plays to acceptable A Level standard; they will, however, differ in the force, relevance and perception with which they write on them, as well as in the textual substantiation which underpins their responses. Our discriminations are made in these areas.

Section A is a test of close critical reading of extracts from the set plays, printed in the question paper. Emphasis is upon language, imagery, characterisation, tone, dramatic and structural effects; questions often ask for consideration of possible audience response and the means by which effects are created within some 40 lines of the play.

Section B is complementary to Section A, asking essay questions which are intended to allow candidates to use their broad knowledge of the plays, but directed precisely towards particular areas of interest. The wording of the questions usually invites discussion, dissension and exploration, rather than the mechanical use of prepared material. We believe that candidates of all abilities respond best when encouraged to think freshly about their familiar texts; questions are set accordingly.

The Answers

Examiners should familiarise themselves with the following mark ranges, which are intended to encourage a fair spread of marks within the accepted grade boundaries:

Script total:

88-100	A+
76-87	A
64-75	B
52-63	C
40-51	D
28-39	E
16-27	N
00-15	U

Section A

It is very important that the global mark for Section A reflects the overall grade of the candidate.

36-40	A+
31-35	A
26-30	B
21-25	C
16-20	D
11-15	E
06-10	N
01-05	U

Mark each answer in Section A out of 20 according to the following scale:

A+	18	19	20
A	16	17	
B	13	14	15
C	11	12	
D	09	10	
E	06	07	08
N	04	05	
U	01	02	03

Section B

Mark each answer in Section B out of 30 according to the following scale:

A+	27	28	29	30
A	23	24	25	26
B	19	20	21	22
C	15	16	17	18
D	12	13	14	
E	08	09	10	11
N	04	05	06	07
U	01	02	03	

Grade Descriptions

A+	Context 18-20	As A below, with originality, independence of judgement; exceptional, surprising, enviable. Examiner will feel exhilarated. Do not withhold full marks because you think a point is missing!
	Essay 27-30	As A below, work is firmly structured, forcefully argued, personal, discriminating, sensitive, exciting.
A	Context 16-17	Precise attention to the terms of the question. An answer of unusual clarity and aptness with telling analysis of well-chosen textual detail. Sensitivity to nuances of tone, imagery, dramatic effect, are obvious. Critical terms handled confidently.
	Essay 23-26	As above, relevant, assured, coherent; natural style, refs. blended into flow of argument.
B	Context 13-15	Clearly focused on the question, showing intelligent grasp of appropriate material and responsive appreciation of some details of the text. Appropriate use of critical terminology.
	Essay 19-22	Proficient work, well argued and showing genuine understanding and appreciation of the text. Answer may be substantial, if sometimes laboured, well supported by textual reference; writing articulate with appropriate use of critical terminology. Look for concise, intelligent arguments which use text sparingly but precisely, too.
C	Context 11-12	Handled competently and systematically with greater response to textual detail. Occasional near insight but not sustained.

	Essay 15-18	Competent, conscientious answer which tackles the question systematically, with adequate knowledge of the text and attempts at interpretation and evaluation. Sensible discussion in generally sound style with occasional moments of perception. The top of this band may contain bright articulate essays which have an intelligent grasp of the question but insufficient textual detail.
D	Context 9-10	An answer relevant to the main thrust of the question showing some understanding of the more obvious features of the passage and with some limited attempt to refer in detail to language etc. Lack of sparkle or originality but adequately done.
	Essay 12-14	Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of either. Some attempt to build up a consistent argument or point of view, with occasions when ideas or personal opinions seem to be developing. Style generally competent, with basic critical terms understood.
E	Context 6-8	Limited relevance to the question, showing basic knowledge of the text, often using reasonably accurate narrative/summary, but with occasional attempt at critical/personal response. Passable, but no more.
	Essay 8-11	Basic knowledge of plot, character and more obvious themes; limited relevance to question, often amid tracts of plot summary, but argument is not developed in any detail and opinions/assertions tend to be simplistic. There may be reliance on excessively lengthy quotation, or more commonly essay is a sketchy piece which presents a basic argument. Good essays which are tangential to the question can be given up to 11.
N	Context 4-5	Some peripheral bearing on the question, reasonable coherence, some limited knowledge of the text, much dependence on narrative/paraphrase which may be inaccurate in detail. Comment may be literal and generalising. Not passable.
	Essay 4-7	As above. Essay is often naive, without precise reference to the text.
U	Context 1-3	Answer likely to be of extreme brevity, irrelevance, incoherence or serious ignorance of the text. Some intermittent evidence of textual awareness may be present. Don't give 0 or 2 out of derision: relative merit must be weighed here too. Be careful.
	Essay 1-3	As above. Lowest mark must be carefully judged.

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.

The Open Texts Paper (Paper 2)

Since annotated texts are present in the examination room, mere trotting out of prepared notes or essays will always fall seriously short of fulfilling the Open Texts task, which is to delve thoughtfully into the resource which the text offers in response to the set question's particular challenge.

This is not a paper where the presence of the text is simply a 'bonus'. The Open Text examination offers opportunities of a kind which differ from those of other papers, but which also challenge the candidate in a different way. The very best kind of preparation develops responsiveness to varied question types and approaches - in particular, sensitivity to the difference between the 'open' and 'closed' text based question. The question 'how far' is too often ignored: it demands an argument and a conclusion.

When asked to look at a passage or poem as a 'starting point' candidates must be prepared to move to the wider issues raised by the question. Candidates must cover both parts of a two-part question eg. 'artistic and thematic unity' and 'technique and concerns'.

The Answers

A + 66-75 **22, 23, 24, 25**

Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. Such papers will be quite exceptional, and should certainly provoke envy in the reader!

A 57-65 **19, 20, 21**

Excellent work, coherent, freshly personal and discriminating in response to the text and to the question, grasping the work as a whole and, perhaps, in its time. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone.

B 48-56 **16, 17, 18**

Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the text the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound.

C 39-47 **13, 14, 15**

Essays will display competence in framing an argument in response to a question and in showing appreciation of theme and character in the literature studied. Sensible discussion in a generally sound style with occasional moments of personal insight and perceptive comment.

D 30-38 **10, 11, 12**

Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of both. Nevertheless, there will be occasions when ideas or personal response seem to be developing. Perhaps slightly flawed by omission, weaknesses of structure or lack of purposeful selectivity.

E 21-29 **7, 8, 9**

More than just a factually accurate knowledge of story, theme and character and powers of expression adequate to its communication, however plainly. The beginnings of a relevant response to the text showing some attempt to deal with meaning, but partial or simplistic: paraphrase and narrative, or sometimes running commentary: stylistic effects may be listed but not discussed adequately.

N 12-20

4, 5, 6

Often literal minded, candidates at this level may struggle to frame statements and to put an answer together in response to the question, of which only part may have been grasped. Reference may not be accurate and misinterpretation may be evident. Some attempt to hold fast to text and to question should be apparent. Not entirely incoherent, but often disorganised and repetitious.

U 0-11

1, 2, 3

Utterly inadequate by reason of lack of substance and inability to give expression to anything resembling relevant ideas or responses. Accounts of text and question are likely to be garbled. Reserved for candidates who barely begin to make relevant observations, however long the answers (though they are usually short).

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.

Archives &
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The Chaucer Paper (Paper 3)

In its syllabus and mode of assessment Chaucer and Other Major Authors is a traditional paper. Candidates are required to study a selection of 'classic' literary texts (including a Chaucer Tale compulsory for UK) and to sit a three hour unseen examination paper. No part of the syllabus is assessed through course work and no texts are permitted in the examination.

It is important that Examiners keep this last point in mind during the marking process. Advanced Level English is not a memory test and more is required for success than the ability to learn off and regurgitate chunks of text regardless of contextual pertinence. Nevertheless, critically modest candidates who show sound knowledge of the texts, with detailed references and accurate quotation sensibly addressed to the questions, should achieve a clear pass.

Experience over a number of years has shown that Paper 3 has realised the aims of the Advanced Level English syllabus. A very large proportion of the candidates will have studied the texts with understanding and enjoyment and many will respond to the issues raised by the questions in a strongly personal way. Candidates will, of course, vary considerably in the sophistication and subtlety of their textual understanding and approach and also in their ability to organise and articulate their responses. Marking should be seen as a process by which each individual candidate receives full credit for the qualities, however modest, revealed in his/her script.

A minority of candidates is likely to be assessed as below the standard required for an Advanced Level pass, but very few will offer work of such poor quality as to be unclassifiable.

Paper 3 is divided into two distinct, though complementary, parts. Each part is designed to test specific literary skills, and in marking scripts as a whole Examiners are urged to approach each question with a fresh and open mind. Indifferent context answers may be followed by full, relevant and stimulating essays - and, of course, vice versa.

Part 1

The questions in Part 1 are designed to give candidates the opportunity to show their ability to read with close and discriminating attention selected passages of the texts they have studied. They are expected to provide evidence of this ability by offering concise comment on, for example:

thematic issues, portrayal of character and relationships, narrative standpoint, linguistic features, aspects of style;

the development of thought and feeling and the qualities of expression in a given poem or in two poems offered for comparison/contrast;

the features of a passage that are characteristic and recurrent in a particular text, or that throw a new light on its concerns and workings - indicating ability to see the whole of a text in its parts and vice versa;

the effect of specific passages on the reader and the literary means by which a writer achieves such effects.

It has been increasingly the policy of the paper to set one composite question marked out of 20 on each individual passage. Where questions are sub-divided, the published marks are intended to indicate to candidates the relative weightings of the sub-questions. Examiners are encouraged to award a global mark for sub-divided context questions whenever they consider that this would be fairer to the candidate than totalling the marks for each sub-question

Examiners should be scrupulous in assessing answers without preconceptions as to what candidates should write: in no circumstances should candidates be penalised for failing to make predetermined points or responses.

On the contrary, Examiners will reward readings of passages that are, in their varying degrees:

relevant to the question(s), intelligible, substantiated by textual reference and examination, coherently articulated, persuasively argued, marked by the candidate's personal critical responses to what has been studied.

Examiners are likely to assess as unsatisfactory answers that are, in varying degrees:

of no/marginal relevance to the questions, thin/superficial in their treatment of the issues, generalised and remote from the given passage, limited/vague in their awareness of the relation between specific passages and the works from which they are taken.

No specific mark allotment is made for style and control of written English. A plain, clear style and reasonably accurate English are the hallmarks of much work in the pass/clear pass categories.

Answers written with disciplined concision and accuracy, with a range and flexibility of style and vocabulary, are likely to score highly. Examiners should be sensitive to such qualities of expression as early indicators of a possibly excellent/outstanding script.

On the other hand, answers that are verbose, repetitive, convoluted, inaccurately written are likely to receive lower reward. However, Examiners are reminded that stimulating and original answers may be expressed in inaccurate English (ie. frequent spelling errors and vagaries of punctuation).

The essential point to bear in mind is that marking should always be positive and based on what the candidate has written about the passages - never on what s/he has not written.

Part 2

Part 2 of the paper is designed to offer candidates the opportunity to develop more sustained and textually wide-ranging answers, combining as appropriate both macro- and micro-knowledge of the texts. Questions may invite candidates to focus on a particular aspect of a text and assess its contribution to the overall effect of the work; or they may offer a general proposition about a work, inviting candidates through informed discussion to indicate how far they would concur with, challenge or reject the given view. Again, it must be stressed that there are no lines of argument that per se are acceptable/unacceptable: orthodox views may be unconvincingly argued, heterodox readings vividly and engagingly presented.

Finally, while there is bound to be a subjective element in the assessment of literary critical answers, Examiners are urged to be scrupulous in avoiding prejudice for or against particular styles of writing and critical approaches.

The Answers

Mark each answer in Part 1 out of 20 according to the following scale:

A+	18	19	20
A	16	17	
B	13	14	15
C	11	12	
D	09	10	
E	06	07	08
N	04	05	
U	01	02	03

Mark each answer in Part 2 out of 30 according to the following scale:

A+	27	28	29	30
A	23	24	25	26
B	19	20	21	22
C	15	16	17	18
D	12	13	14	
E	08	09	10	11
N	04	05	06	07
U	01	02	03	

A+ 88-100

Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. Such papers will be quite exceptional, and should certainly provoke envy in the reader!

A 76-87

Excellent work, coherent, freshly personal and discriminating in response to the text and to the question, grasping the work as a whole and, perhaps, in its time. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone.

B 64-75

Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the text the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound.

C 52-63

Essays will display competence in framing an argument in response to a question and in showing appreciation of theme and character in the literature studied. Sensible discussion in a generally sound style with occasional moments of personal insight and perceptive comment.

D 40-51

Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of both. Nevertheless, there will be occasions when ideas or personal response seem to be developing. Perhaps slightly flawed by omission, weaknesses of structure or lack of purposeful selectivity.

E 28-39

More than just a factually accurate knowledge of story, theme and character and powers of expression adequate to its communication, however plainly. The beginnings of a relevant response to the text showing some attempt to deal with meaning, but partial or simplistic: paraphrase and narrative, or sometimes running commentary: stylistic effects may be listed but not discussed adequately.

N 16-27

Often literal-minded, candidates at this level may struggle to frame statements and to put an answer together in response to the question, of which only part may have been grasped. Reference may not be accurate and misinterpretation may be evident. Some attempt to hold fast to text and to question should be apparent. Not entirely incoherent, but often disorganised and repetitious.

U 0-15

Utterly inadequate by reason of lack of substance and inability to give expression to anything resembling relevant ideas or responses. Accounts of text and question are likely to be garbled. Reserved for candidates who barely begin to make relevant observations, however long the answers (though they are usually short).

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.

Heritage

The Romantics Paper (Paper 4)

- i) Examiners should note that this is not a Romantic Studies paper and candidates are not expected to make comparisons between the texts, nor to overload their answers with commentaries on the 'Romantic' mind. There will be those who respond to questions with general commentaries on 'the Romantics' which may be (but are often not) historically accurate. Where, however, there is still adequate reference to the text and where the question is addressed adequately what is there should be rewarded and the extraneous historical material may be ignored.
- ii) There should be few problems over the literary-critical discursive questions as it will be quite clear to what extent candidates are aware of the terms of the question and their ability in answering. In the extract questions, however, there will be some who simply use the extract as a 'trigger' for a discursive essay that has either been expected or prepared. Examiners should note that the terms of the extract questions are quite precise and direct the candidates to the extracts and to particular questions of style eg. the narrator's stance, ways of telling the story, the representation of methods and concerns in the text as a whole and the representation of poetic style etc. Not all candidates will deal with these issues entirely satisfactory but they should be expected to respond to the terms of the actual question in order to get adequate marks. In all cases they are also expected to refer more widely to the text or texts as a whole and these extracts should not be treated as practical criticism exercises. In general, though, past experience leads one to expect the extract to be dealt with rather more cursorily than would be hoped for in the case of most answers. The best candidates, of course, integrate discussion of the passage with the treatment of the text as a whole.

The Answers

A+ 88-100

22, 23, 24, 25

Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. Such papers will be quite exceptional, and should certainly provoke envy in the reader!

A 76-87

19, 20, 21

Excellent work, coherent, freshly personal and discriminating in response to the text and to the question, grasping the work as a whole and, perhaps, in its time. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone.

B 64-75

16, 17, 18

Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the text the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound.

C 52-63

13, 14, 15

Essays will display competence in framing an argument in response to a question and in showing appreciation of theme and character in the literature studied. Sensible discussion in a generally sound style with occasional moments of personal insight and perceptive comment.

D 40-51

10, 11, 12

Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of both. Nevertheless, there will be occasions when ideas or personal response seem to be developing. Perhaps slightly flawed by omission, weaknesses of structure or lack of purposeful selectivity.

E 28-39

7, 8, 9

More than just a factually accurate knowledge of story, theme and character and powers of expression adequate to its communication, however plainly. The beginnings of a relevant response to the text showing some attempt to deal with meaning, but partial or simplistic: paraphrase and narrative, or sometimes running commentary: stylistic effects may be listed but not discussed adequately.

N 16-27

4, 5, 6

Often literal-minded, candidates at this level may struggle to frame statements and to put an answer together in response to the question, of which only part may have been grasped. Reference may not be accurate and misinterpretation may be evident. Some attempt to hold fast to text and to question should be apparent. Not entirely incoherent, but often disorganised and repetitious.

U 0-15

1, 2, 3

Utterly inadequate by reason of lack of substance and inability to give expression to anything resembling relevant ideas or responses. Accounts of text and question are likely to be garbled. Reserved for candidates who barely begin to make relevant observations, however long the answers (though they are usually so).

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.



The Victorians Paper (Paper 5)

- i) Examiners should note that this is not a Victorian Studies paper and candidates are not expected to make comparisons between the texts, nor to overload their answers with socio-historical commentaries on Victorian social conditions. There will be those who respond to questions with general commentaries on 'the Victorians' which may be (but are often not) historically accurate. Where, however, there is still adequate reference to the text and where the question is addressed adequately what is there should be rewarded and the extraneous historical material may be ignored.
- ii) Candidates are free to choose between the literary-critical discursive essay mode in the (a) questions; and the extract questions in (b). There should be few problems over the (a) questions as it will be quite clear to what extent candidates are aware of the terms of the question and their ability in answering. In the (b) questions, however, there will be some who simply use the extract as a 'trigger' for a discursive essay that has either been expected or prepared. Examiners should note that the terms of the (b) questions are quite precise and direct the candidates to the extracts and to particular questions of style eg. the narrator's stance, ways of telling the story, the representation of methods and concerns in the text as a whole, dramatic characteristics and the representation of poetic style etc. Not all candidates will deal with these issues entirely satisfactorily but they should be expected to respond to the terms of the actual question in order to get adequate marks. In all cases they are also expected to refer more widely to the text or texts as a whole and these extracts should not be treated as practical criticism exercises. In general, though, past experience leads one to expect the extract to be dealt with rather more cursorily than would be hoped for in the case of most answers. The best candidates, of course, integrate discussion of the passage with the treatment of the text as a whole.

The Answers

A+ 88-100

22, 23, 24, 25

Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. Such papers will be quite exceptional, and should certainly provoke envy in the reader!

A 76-87

19, 20, 21

Excellent work, coherent, freshly personal and discriminating in response to the text and to the question, grasping the work as a whole and, perhaps, in its time. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone.

B 64-75

16, 17, 18

Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the text the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound.

C 52-63

13, 14, 15

Essays will display competence in framing an argument in response to a question and in showing appreciation of theme and character in the literature studied. Sensible discussion in a generally sound style with occasional moments of personal insight and perceptive comment.

D 40-51

10, 11, 12

Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of both. Nevertheless, there will be occasions when ideas or personal

response seem to be developing. Perhaps slightly flawed by omission, weaknesses of structure or lack of purposeful selectivity.

E 28-39

7,8,9

More than just a factually accurate knowledge of story, theme and character and powers of expression adequate to its communication, however plainly. The beginnings of a relevant response to the text showing some attempt to deal with meaning, but partial or simplistic: paraphrase and narrative, or sometimes running commentary: stylistic effects may be listed but not discussed adequately.

N 16-27

4,5,6

Often literal-minded, candidates at this level may struggle to frame statements and to put an answer together in response to the question, of which only part may have been grasped. Reference may not be accurate and misinterpretation may be evident. some attempt to hold fast to text and to question should be apparent. Not entirely incoherent, but often disorganised and repetitious.

U 0-15

1,2,3

Utterly inadequate by reason of lack of substance and inability to give expression to anything resembling relevant ideas or responses. Accounts of text and question are likely to be garbled. Reserved for candidates who barely begin to make relevant observations, however long the answers (though they are usually short).

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.

The Moderns Paper (Paper 6)

I hope that we shall be able to establish a standard, especially for what we regard as a passing answer, at the co-ordination meeting, when we shall also try to get an idea of the range of strategies that candidates have adopted in addressing the questions on the paper. Answers should fail which merely rehearse the story or which evade the questions with prepared notes on the text or the author's biography. Information from outside the text should not, however, be automatically discarded: relevance to the question will determine its value. The candidate will not do well who relies heavily on narrative, or who writes everything s/he knows about the text, counting on the Examiner to edit actively and give credit, or who draws substantially on previously written essays without modifying the material in the light of the question addressed, or who deals with only part of the question. Answers should be rewarded if they are structured to respond systematically to the issues raised by the question, and show evidence of individual response and independent thought in relation to the questions, as well as to the texts. Note that the questions are set to give candidates opportunities for personal reflection, not to direct them into pre-determined channels of response. Any capacity for critical analysis should be rewarded, even in short answers and/or even if it is not sustained for the whole answer or script at the highest level that the candidate is capable of.

The objective of our marking at this stage is to arrange the scripts in order of merit, taking our bearings from the agreed fixed points of pass and distinction marks, not to project what the candidate's final overall grade is likely to be. It is particularly important that you should use as wide a range of marks as possible, and avoid bunching at grade boundaries.

The Answers

A+ 88-100 22, 23, 24, 25

Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. Such papers will be quite exceptional, and should certainly provoke envy in the reader!

A 76-87 19, 20, 21

Excellent work, coherent, freshly personal and discriminating in response to the text and to the question, grasping the work as a whole and, perhaps, in its time. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone.

B 64-75 16, 17, 18

Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the text the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound.

C 52-63 13, 14, 15

Essays will display competence in framing an argument in response to a question and in showing appreciation of theme and character in the literature studied. Sensible discussion in a generally sound style with occasional moments of personal insight and perceptive comment.

D 40-51

10, 11, 12

Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of both. Nevertheless, there will be occasions when ideas or personal response seem to be developing. Perhaps slightly flawed by omission, weaknesses of structure or lack of purposeful selectivity.

E 28-39

7, 8, 9

More than just a factually accurate knowledge of story, theme and character and powers of expression adequate to its communication, however plainly. The beginnings of a relevant response to the text showing some attempt to deal with meaning, but partial or simplistic: paraphrase and narrative, or sometimes running commentary: stylistic effects may be listed but not discussed adequately.

N 16-27

4, 5, 6

Often literal-minded, candidates at this level may struggle to frame statements and to put an answer together in response to the question, of which only part may have been grasped. Reference may not be accurate and misinterpretation may be evident. Some attempt to hold fast to text and to question should be apparent. Not entirely incoherent, but often disorganised and repetitious.

U 0-26

1, 2, 3

Utterly inadequate by reason of lack of substance and inability to give expression to anything resembling relevant ideas or responses. Accounts of text and question are likely to be garbled. Reserved for candidates who barely begin to make relevant observations, however long the answers (though they are usually short).

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.

The Unseens Paper (Paper 7)

The unseen Comment and Appreciation paper particularly tests the skills of understanding, analysis and judgement. Although good candidates may well display some sense of the past and tradition in their answers (for which credit should be given wherever appropriate), knowledge of the personal and historical circumstances in which any of the passages or poems were written is not expected.

The paper is described in the syllabus as follows:

Four questions will be set, of which candidates must answer any two. Each question will be based on a passage or passages of prose or poetry or drama. There may be a single passage for comment or more than one passage for comment and comparison. Questions may contain alternative sections. The intention of the questions is to test the candidate's ability to read literature critically, to organise response to unseen passages and to present that response as clearly and directly as possible. The questions will be of a kind to allow the candidate's sensibility full play, and be not limited merely to comprehension or paraphrase. Some questions may offer the opportunity for 'imaginative' response. Prose, poetry and drama from before 1550 will not be set.

In assessing the quality of individual answers please focus on the following specific questions:

- How well has the candidate met the specific demands of the question?
- How well has the candidate understood the passage/poem and how far have any difficulties been confronted rather than avoided?
- How sensitive has the candidate been to the language, tone and distinctive literary qualities of the writing?
- How aware has the candidate been of the narrative perspective or writer's point of view in the passage/poem?
- How clearly has a genuinely informed personal response to the passage/poem been communicated through the candidate's writing?
- Has the candidate presented a view of the passage/poem as a whole rather than simply offering a partial or line-by-line commentary?

Guidance on Specific Types of Passage, or Question

DRAMA: Candidates should always be given credit for exploring the specifically dramatic qualities of a passage or scene. (Specialist Theatre Studies skills or knowledge are not expected.)

POETRY: Although little credit should be given for simple mechanical description of poetic form, candidates should always be rewarded for showing awareness of the aptness and effectiveness of poetic form and technique in any given poem.

PROSE: Candidates should be given credit for assessing the character and effectiveness of the passage in relation to its specific genre (fiction, biography, essay, reportage, etc.)

'COMPARE AND CONTRAST': Candidates should always be given credit for good organisation of their answers to this question. Essays which genuinely compare and contrast will always score more highly than essays which simply discuss each poem or passage in turn and confine comparative comments to the last paragraph.

Recreative Response Grade Descriptions

Grade B: some original touches, revealing evident understanding and appreciation of the text and its characteristics.

Grade D: answers will reveal an awareness of the main features of the text. Characterisation or style will be addressed, though development will be slight.

Grade E: some obvious features of the original text will be noted, either in the recreative work or in the commentary. Some limited evidence of the literary style of the passage must be shown.

Grade N: the candidate will have shown intermittent awareness of the character of the original passage but not enough to frame any convincing response.

The Answers

A+ 44-50	22, 23, 24, 25
Outstanding work which displays a striking originality and an impressive grasp of critical approaches. The candidate will write elegantly, fluently and allusively.	

A 38-43 19, 20, 21
Essays at this highest level should show real originality and discrimination; candidates must prove they have responded vigorously to all or most of the key issues presented by the passage(s). They should have been able to identify, analyse and evaluate tone and attitude as well as argument and character; their handling of quotation and critical terms will have been assured, and their expression thoroughly fluent, economical and accurate.

B	32-37		16, 17, 18
<p>These essays will show good understanding and a significant degree of critical awareness; however, they may not be consistently well focused. If they reveal genuine freshness of argument and insight, this may not be so fully supported by close and economical textual reference. On the other hand, some essays that are very competent technically but which lack much evidence of real personal engagement may also reach this grade. They must be fluently and accurately written.</p>			

C	26-31	13, 14, 15
	These essays should show competent understanding and response; they may contain some evidence of qualities which, if sustained, would be worth a higher grade. Conscientious essays which pursue a thorough but rather unsophisticated argument are likely to fall within this grade. Expression has still to be accurate, but may lack some subtlety. Work which is distinctly promising but which lacks an adequate conclusion could receive marks in this range.	

D 20-25**10, 11, 12**

Essays in this grade may be typically rather uneven, containing some clear evidence of critical awareness and response but having also passages that might be rather pedestrian or might rely too much on narrative; alternatively some will be conscientious but stolid and non-selective. At this level the capacity to shape an effective argument or to discuss tone and attitude will tend to be restricted. Expression needs to be still adequate, with no significant lapses of accuracy.

E 14-19**7, 8, 9**

Here candidates still have to show sound basic understanding of the texts and of how to respond to them, but analysis and evaluation will be limited and/or mechanical. There may be some misreadings, but not enough to undermine significantly the general ideas put forward. Expression may be hampered occasionally, but not seriously, by loss of clarity or accuracy. Work which shows promise but is seriously incomplete could appropriately receive marks in this range.

N 8-13**4, 5, 6**

These essays, while still showing some awareness or understanding, are likely to suffer from a degree of confusion or irrelevance which keeps them below an E standard. Attempts at analysis are likely to be too brief or naive to show sufficient development or insight. Work which is too short to merit an E grade but which deserves some recognition should be placed in this range.

U 0-7**1, 2, 3**

This grade should be reserved for work in which the candidate has struggled unsuccessfully to show sufficient signs of an adequate response to the passage(s) set. Work which is too short, misguided, incoherent or irrelevant to merit classification should be placed at this level.

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.

The Comment and Appreciation Paper (Paper 8)

Although it is possible to itemise the various skills this paper is particularly designed to test, it would be wrong to be too precise or schematic about such matters. Clearly the ability to analyse literary effects (using that phrase in its widest sense) is of prime importance, and equally clearly this involves something very much more than a mechanical recognition of the presence of alliteration, the decoding of a rhyme scheme and the identification of a metre as regular or irregular. One of the chief distinctions between the able and the merely adequate student is the former's capacity to gauge the tone of a given passage and to recognise possible inconsistencies, contradictions or conflicts of attitude. The sign of a good candidate and one with capacity for further development, is very often a readiness to linger over certain words or phrases with a view to making them yield their full potential of meaning. A candidate who is prepared to consider alternative possibilities of meaning, even if he or she goes astray, is always to be preferred to one who sidesteps difficulties.

Some analytic ability is clearly indispensable. Other skills that are especially looked for include the capacity to mount and develop a coherent argument, the ability to present a cogent and well-organised discussion of a particular passage, the willingness to make informed comparative judgements and so on; but what is looked for above all is an individual and personal response and the ability to communicate this effectively. It is this capacity more than any other that distinguishes the candidate who is prepared to think for him or herself from one who has, with a greater or lesser degree of diligence, committed his or her notes to memory. It cannot sufficiently be stressed that no matter what form the questions take an intimate engagement with the author's language (as reflected in the passage offered) should always feature as at least part of a candidate's answer. As it is, a sizeable number of candidates in answering Section B seem to be under the misapprehension that they are being invited to offer either a detailed critical discussion or a general essay on the set text and opt for the latter: at least some close analysis of the passage given, it should be emphasised, is always required - otherwise there would be little point in preceding the questions with such passages. In fairness it should be added that there are cases where a candidate may feel uncertain as to what proportion of his answer to devote to the particular passage and what proportion to a more general discussion of the text from which it comes. Examiners should take a flexible view on this point. In a good script general points often arise out of particular observations without any rigid division between the two but not unnaturally many candidates prefer to concentrate first on detailed discussion of the passage and leave more general comparative or contextual remarks to their closing paragraphs. As a very rough guide it may be said that a candidate responding to a question which takes the form 'Offer a critical appreciation of this passage, indicating in what ways it is characteristic of the set text as a whole' would normally be expected to devote something like three-quarters of his or her answer to the passage given. But in such cases there is considerable latitude for a candidate to exercise his or her own judgement as to what is appropriate. Scripts are assessed in terms of the overall conviction they carry, not in terms of a narrowly conceived points system.

The Answers

The Total for the Paper

A+	66-75
A	57-65
B	48-56
C	39-47
D	30-38
E	21-29
N	12-20
U	0-11

Section A

A + 22,23,24,25
Outstanding work which displays a striking originality and an impressive grasp of critical approaches. The candidate will write elegantly, fluently and allusively.

A 19, 20, 21
Essays at this highest level should show real originality and discrimination; candidates must prove they have responded vigorously to all or most of the key issues presented by the passage(s). They should have been able to identify, analyse and evaluate tone and attitude as well as argument and character; their handling of quotation and critical terms will have been assured, and their expression thoroughly fluent, economical and accurate.

B 16, 17, 18
These essays will show good understanding and a significant degree of critical awareness; however, they may not be consistently well focussed. If they reveal genuine freshness of argument and insight, this may not be so fully supported by close and economical textual reference. On the other hand, some essays that are very competent technically but which lack much evidence of real personal engagement may also reach this grade. They must be fluently and accurately written.

C 13, 14, 15
These essays should show competent understanding and response, they may contain some evidence of qualities which, if sustained, would be worth a higher grade. Conscientious essays which pursue a thorough but rather unsophisticated argument are likely to fall within this grade. Expression has still to be accurate, but may lack some subtlety. Work which is distinctly promising but which lacks an adequate conclusion could receive marks in this range.

D 10, 11, 12
Essays in this grade may be typically rather uneven, containing some clear evidence of critical awareness and response but having also passages that might be rather pedestrian or might rely too much on narrative; alternatively some will be conscientious but stolid and non-selective. At this level the capacity to shape an effective argument or to discuss tone and attitude will tend to be restricted. Expression needs to be still adequate, with no significant lapses of accuracy.

E 7, 8, 9
Here candidates still have to show sound basic understanding of the texts and of how to respond to them, but analysis and evaluation will be limited and/or mechanical. There may be some misreadings, but not enough to undermine significantly the general ideas put forward. Expression may be hampered occasionally, but not seriously, by loss of clarity or accuracy. Work which shows promise but is seriously incomplete could appropriately receive marks in this

N 4, 5, 6
These essays, while still showing some awareness or understanding, are likely to suffer from a degree of confusion or irrelevance which keeps them below an E standard. Attempts at analysis are likely to be too brief or naive to show sufficient development or insight. Work which is too short to merit an E grade but which deserves some recognition should be placed in this range.

U 1, 2, 3
This grade should be reserved for work in which the candidate has struggled unsuccessfully to show sufficient signs of an adequate response to the passage(s) set. Work which is too short, misguided, incoherent or irrelevant to merit classification should be placed at this level.

Section B

A+ 22, 23, 24, 25
Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. Such papers will be quite exceptional, and should certainly provoke envy in the reader!

A 19, 20, 21
Excellent work, coherent, freshly personal and discriminating in response to the text and to the question, grasping the work as a whole and, perhaps, in its time. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone.

B 16, 17, 18
Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the text the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound.

C 13, 14, 15
Essays will display competence in framing an argument in response to a question and in showing appreciation of theme and character in the literature studied. Sensible discussion in a generally sound style with occasional moments of personal insight and perceptive comment.

D 10, 11, 12
Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of both. Nevertheless, there will be occasions when ideas or personal response seem to be developing. Perhaps slightly flawed by omission, weaknesses of structure or lack of purposeful selectivity.

E 7, 8, 9
More than just a factually accurate knowledge of story, theme and character and powers of expression adequate to its communication, however plainly. The beginnings of a relevant response to the text showing some attempt to deal with meaning, but partial or simplistic: paraphrase and narrative, or sometimes running commentary: stylistic effects may be listed but not discussed adequately.

N 4, 5, 6
Often literal-minded, candidates at this level may struggle to frame statements and to put an answer together in response to the question, of which only part may have been grasped. Reference may not be accurate and misinterpretation may be evident. Some attempt to hold fast to text and to question should be apparent. Not entirely incoherent, but often disorganised and repetitious.

U 1, 2, 3
Utterly inadequate by reason of lack of substance and inability to give expression to anything resembling relevant ideas or responses. Accounts of text and question are likely to be garbled. Reserved for candidates who barely begin to make relevant observations, however long the answers (though they are usually short).

The above list does not exhaust all the possibilities. For example, some work may be lively in conception but so sketchy in execution that its promise is not fulfilled. On the other hand, some short work may turn out on closer inspection to be succinct and challenging, hence worthy of reward.

The Contemporary Writing Paper (Paper 11)

The paper is entitled Contemporary Writing rather than 'literature'. Examiners must be open to both the range of texts on offer as well as to the much wider series of issues and questions that the paper (and the syllabus) raises - especially over more 'settled' literary assumptions. As the course description suggests, the paper seeks to test a candidate's ability to respond to the literary qualities of a text as well as relate those qualities to wider cultural and social contexts invariably (in the contemporary sense) through a candidate's individual experiences. We must, therefore, be as flexible as possible in our own judgement of the answers, guarding against a 'set' sense of what a question (or text) entails. In many ways, this will demand an approach which is sympathetic to the variety of attitudes expressed, often reaching behind the 'views' expressed to a larger critical and intellectual 'spirit' to which, hopefully, the answers point. Above all, we must be fair in relation to what the candidate has attempted to offer: recognising quality in the response even though we might disagree with the views given.

Note that the paper allows for alternative approaches (or a mixture of approaches). Thus a candidate might settle on a 'narrow' set of books or a 'wider general issues approach'. We need to be alert to these differences especially between centres.

Note also that questions tend to be either 'passage' based or to offer an opportunity for a discursive essay. Be aware of the different approaches and implications each 'type' of question assumes.

In turn we must also be careful that the 'literature' does not become peripheral to the wider questions posed by the paper. Weak candidates, no doubt, will continue to reduce texts to description and paraphrase as well as offering only generalised and untested 'opinions' of the (possible) larger debates. Good candidates, however, should be able to relate larger considerations very much to the texts considered. Such candidates will reveal a critical intelligence alert to both the particular and the general without loss of substance.

Of especial importance is the need to remember, as the Syndicate's description admits, that 'In the setting and marking of this paper the Examiners will bear in mind that there is little published criticism about some texts'. This has the virtue of, hopefully, limiting the mere rehearsing and repetition of set responses and cribbed 'notes' for guidance. Good candidates will be able to offer an individual sense of a text (and question) without the 'weight', as it were, of accumulated academic criticism bearing down upon them. Indeed the very lack of published criticism should offer a freshness of approach and vigour of interpretation, as well as further widening the range of possible answers. Weak candidates, once again, might flounder - bereft of a solid critical bedrock on which they can depend. Be alert to genuine but patchy attempts to express a distinct 'feel' for or response to a text, and reward appropriately.

Some texts, clearly, do pose more difficulties than others - especially in the kinds of questions (literary, cultural, social etc.) they raise. Candidates must be given credit and allowance for taking on the larger complex issues within the confines of an examination period.

Keep in mind the range of cultural traditions reflected in the paper. Assumptions concerning 'English' (and 'Englishness'), therefore, will be tested and questioned. Indeed, the paper, in part, encourages this as well as allowing a centre to read texts not by 'English' authors at all.

If particular centres have been heavily drilled in relation to specific viewpoints, please make a note of it in your report.

Handwriting, poor spelling and bad grammar will inevitably be a problem with some candidates. Where the handwriting is difficult to read please make every effort to understand what the candidate has written - guarding against a prejudiced response developing as one struggles to grasp each word hidden beneath the scrawl. Poor expression must be treated individually and is, in terms of response, an obvious matter of judgement. Remember that number six of the 'skills tested' is Expression - 'the ability to write organised and cogent essays on literary subjects.' The word 'cogent' is a useful reminder about length - brief answers can quite easily be alpha in quality. There is, so to speak, no standard length as there is no standard answer.

The Answers

A+ 88-100

22, 23, 24, 25

Outstanding work, displaying a striking originality in combining personal response with knowledge of the text, of the period in which it was written and of critical discussion. Such papers will be quite exceptional, and should certainly provoke envy in the reader!

A 76-87

19, 20, 21

Excellent work, coherent, freshly personal and discriminating in response to the text and to the question, grasping the work as a whole and, perhaps, in its time. The writing is likely to be very lively, and sometimes highly individual, handling critical terms with ease and blending skilful, often seamless reference to the text into the flow of the argument. Fine sensitivity to nuance and tone. In answers to 'passages' there will often be an acute focus on the detail of the writing.

B 64-75

16, 17, 18

Proficient work, soundly argued with insight into the significance and effect of the work studied. The candidate may be articulate, capable of challenging the question and able to support by detailed reference to the text the views put forward in the essay. Some individuality of approach may be becoming apparent: other answers may be very thorough. Work may not be highly incisive, but will be more than just sound. The candidate might also seek to establish a larger context within which the work might be read.

C 52-63

13, 14, 15

Essays will display competence in framing an argument in response to a question and in showing appreciation of theme and character in the literature studied. Sensible discussion in a generally sound style with occasional moments of personal insight and perceptive comment.

Note: Candidates at Grade C and above will show evidence of trying to 'probe' the question and/or the text. The 'better' answers will perhaps challenge assumptions and implications. Credit must be given here, whether the Examiner agrees with the view or not.

D 40-51

10, 11, 12

Stolid work, marching determinedly through text and question, though failing to perceive some of the implications of both. Nevertheless, there will be occasions when ideas or personal response seem to be developing. Perhaps slightly flawed by omission, weaknesses of structure or lack of purposeful selectivity.

E 28-39

7, 8, 9

More than just a factually accurate knowledge of story, theme and character and powers of expression adequate to its communication, however plainly. The beginnings of a relevant response to the text showing some attempt to deal with meaning, but partial or simplistic: paraphrase and narrative, or sometimes running commentary: stylistic effects may be listed but not discussed adequately.

N 16-27

4, 5, 6

Often literal-minded, candidates at this level may struggle to frame statements and to put an answer together in response to the question, of which only part may have been grasped. Reference may not be accurate and misinterpretation may be evident. Some attempt to hold fast to text and to question should be apparent. Not entirely incoherent, but often disorganised and repetitious.

U 0-26

1, 2, 3

Utterly inadequate by reason of lack of substance and inability to give expression to anything resembling relevant ideas or responses. Accounts of text and question are likely to be garbled. Reserved for candidates who barely begin to make relevant observations, however long the answers (though they are usually short).

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