



General Certificate of Education

**English Language and Literature
1721**

Specification A

**ELLA1 Integrated Analysis and Text
Production**

Report on the Examination

2010 examination - January series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX
Dr Michael Cresswell Director General.

General

Examiners commented that most candidates clearly knew their texts well, and overall showed a good level of enthusiasm and engagement with them. There were some quite brief responses, which could be a reflection that some candidates are not really ready for the exam at this early stage.

'A' Questions

Examiners noted that a number of candidates who show understanding and some perception do not appear to be using a literary / linguistic framework for analysis. It is possible that some centres are not preparing candidates to use a framework approach, with use of literary / linguistic terminology, or that candidates have not yet developed their skills in this area. Many of these candidates produced what might be considered a sound 'literature' response, with a 'point/supporting quote' approach, but no close engagement with details of language. Some obviously able candidates are being held back by this. There were also quite a few candidates who did not focus tightly on the question set; for example, 'Irwin's teaching style' became a character study of Irwin, and 'Jack's attitudes to Algy' became 'the relationship between Jack and Algy'. Some examiners felt that candidates were spending too long on the A question at the expense of the B question.

There are two marks awarded for this question on the following assessment objectives:

AO1 (15 marks) – Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent written expression.

AO2 (15 marks) – Demonstrate detailed critical understanding in analysing ways in which structure, form and language shape meanings in a range of written and spoken texts.

The AO1 mark focuses in particular on the candidate's relevant analysis of literary and linguistic features of the text and the use of literary and linguistic terminology.

The AO2 mark focuses on the candidate's interpretation and ideas in response to the question.

Successful candidates:

- focused on the question
- supported ideas by exploring the language of relevant quotations
- provided a sense of overview
- produced sustained answers
- showed a sound knowledge of literary and linguistic terms
- produced well expressed answers.

Less successful candidates:

- did not adequately address the question
- did not comment on the language or literary techniques of the text
- produced very brief responses with only a few superficially relevant ideas
- produced answers that were poorly expressed
- wasted time writing 'conclusions' that merely summarised the points covered.

'B' Questions

There were some very good, creative responses to the B questions and, judging from the overall engagement with the tasks, candidates appeared to enjoy writing their responses. Most candidates were able to produce at least a reasonably appropriate form for the tasks set. Weaknesses noted by examiners were a lack of specific relevant detail from the texts and an inability to recognise sentence boundaries. Apostrophes were often completely absent from some candidates' work and a small number of candidates persistently used lower case 'i'.

There are two marks awarded for this question on the following assessment objectives:

AO4 (30 marks) – Demonstrate expertise and creativity in using language appropriately for a variety of purposes and audiences, drawing on insights from literary and linguistic studies.

AO1 (15 marks) - Select and apply relevant concepts and approaches from integrated linguistic study, using appropriate terminology and accurate, coherent written expression.

The AO4 mark assesses the candidate's ability to do the following: show awareness of genre; write in an appropriate style for audience and purpose; create a convincing sense of a character's voice; choose appropriate information from the text in order to complete the task. The AO1 mark is solely concerned with the candidate's accuracy in terms of spelling, punctuation, grammar and expression.

Successful candidates:

- showed a sound sense of form/genre
- created a convincing sense of their character's voice
- revealed sound knowledge of the text
- used significant details from the text
- produced sustained responses
- produced writing that was well expressed and technically accurate.

Less successful candidates:

- showed limited or patchy awareness of form/genre
- used language that was inappropriate for form or character
- showed limited awareness of characters' attitudes
- revealed limited knowledge of the text
- copied extracts from the text
- revealed errors in understanding of the text
- produced very brief responses
- produced writing that contained technical errors and flaws in expression.

Responses were seen on most of the set texts, although there were very few on *Close Range* and *The Rivals*, therefore it has not been possible to make meaningful comments below on these texts.

***Things Fall Apart*: Chinua Achebe**

1(A)

Many better responses picked up on differing perspectives and attitudes, applied a framework for analysis and produced a thorough overview. Weaker responses were lacking depth and detail, although most managed to retain a relevant focus on the question. There was a tendency, for some, to explain the Ibo response in a rather descriptive, narrative way, rather than analytically. Some candidates failed to focus on the chapters specified.

1(B)

This was probably the more popular of the Achebe questions. There were some reasonable attempts at creating Ekwefi's voice, although there was a tendency to narrate the events of chapter 11, rather than reflect on them. Amongst weaker responses, there was some misunderstanding regarding the task. The 'first person narrative' was ignored and some rewrote the events from the text adding extra bits of detail. There was also some confusion about Ekwefi's feelings for her husband.

Wuthering Heights: Emily Brontë**2(A)**

Many candidates chose to explore Heathcliff's description early in the novel and there was some very good engagement with the language of this extract. Obviously this was an appropriate choice, although few candidates looked beyond this scene. Many candidates successfully contrasted Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights. Some candidates had difficulty focusing on setting and atmosphere and digressed into character comparisons.

2(B)

Many candidates captured Linton's self-absorbed attitudes and voice. Successful responses selected relevant parts of the text from which to draw ideas. Weaker responses tended to be very brief and/or repetitive and there was a tendency for some to lapse into an overly melodramatic style (even for Linton).

The Kite Runner: Khaled Housseini**3(A)**

This remains a very popular text. Overall, responses to the B task were possibly more successful than to the A task. In response to this question, a number of candidates tended to drift off into character studies of the Baba and Rahim Khan, or Amir's relationship with Rahim Khan, rather than focusing tightly on the question. Better responses had a clear sense of overview and chose apt quotes to explore.

3(B)

Soraya's diary was a very successful question for many and there were many very thoughtful and sensitive interpretations of her character. A number of candidates used Afghan vocabulary to create an apt sense of voice. Weaker responses strayed from the timescale of the task and included the kite flying episode with Amir which happens months later. A minority of candidates copied chunks from the novel and substituted 'I' (or i) for 'she' or 'Soraya'.

Property: Valerie Martin**4(A)**

Many candidates picked the opening few pages as their choice of episode, which was acceptable, but perhaps led some to an analysis of Manon's attitude to her husband (possibly from an earlier practice essay) rather than to focus on how the reader's attitude towards slavery is influenced by the way events are described. Better responses were more tightly focused on the question and had a clear sense of overview.

4(B)

Most responses showed a sound appreciation of Mr Gaudet's voice and attitudes. Candidates who chose this question generally fared relatively better than those who chose the A question.

Close Range: Annie Proulx

5(A)

There were very few answers seen on this question.

5(B)

There were very few answers seen on this question.

The History Boys: Alan Bennett

6(A)

This was a very popular question and most had a reasonable sense of Irwin's teaching style, although responses were not always well focused on the task. Some candidates wrote straightforward character analysis, often bringing in Hector as a contrast, but many did manage to eventually link this back to the question. There were a few excellent responses that discussed whether or not Irwin's character traits influenced his teaching of History.

6(B)

This question proved to be quite a challenge for some candidates who seemed unsure of the form or context for the article and struggled to create a sense of Scripps's voice. That said, there were some very good responses that showed flair in their use of appropriate style and included content that was highly appropriate.

Murmuring Judges: David Hare

7(A)

Successful responses included an analysis of well chosen sections from the play in order to comment on Beckett's attitudes towards his job. Weaker responses made general comments on how Beckett is presented. A few candidates were confused by Beckett's role and clearly thought he was a policeman.

7(B)

The more successful letters had an apt sense of Gerard's bitterness, mixed with concern for Barbara and their children. Less successful responses made no mention of the outcome of the appeal and wrote in very general terms about life in prison, with little sense of Gerard's voice. Sometimes the outcome of the appeal was mentioned at the end of the letter as an insignificant detail or greeted with joy. Some candidates were unsure about how to express a sense of a character's voice in the written mode and included inappropriate spoken mode features such as elisions and accent features.

The Rivals: Richard Sheridan

8(A)

There were very few answers seen on this question.

8(B)

There were very few answers seen on this question.

The Importance of Being Earnest: Oscar Wilde

9(A)

Many responses lacked close focus on the question. As mentioned earlier, 'Jack's attitudes to Algy' frequently became 'the relationship between Jack and Algy'. Whilst this led to candidates making some relevant points, these answers were inevitably patchy in terms of relevance.

Those who focused on the question were able to provide a much clearer overview and more successful language comment.

9(B)

This was the more popular of the Wilde questions and there were some very lively and engaging attempts to create Cecily's girlish voice. The weakness for a number of candidates was in the content as many struggled to convey the complex events of the day with any clarity, or concentrated on minor events at the expense of important ones.

A Streetcar Named Desire: Tennessee Williams

10(A)

Responses to this question were mostly well handled, with candidates responding thoughtfully and sympathetically to Mitch's character. Most candidates gave a good overview by describing how Mitch changes towards Blanche, and there was plenty of focus on details of language and use of dramatic techniques. Weaker responses provided only partial overview by failing to consider how Mitch behaves later in the play.

10(B)

This was a very popular question and most candidates displayed a secure awareness of dramatic form. Stage directions were often appropriate and some were very skilfully written. However, occasionally the stage directions were longer than the dialogue and included irrelevant details that didn't help the focus of the task. Whilst there was some excellent use of dialect and colloquialisms in the creation of characters' voices, a number of candidates also had problems in replicating the dialect used in the play. Some used far too many phonetic and abbreviated forms. Some chose to include dialect features that were more in keeping with working class Yorkshire than New Orleans. Candidates would be well advised to study how Williams suggests the New Orleans dialect in his characters' speech.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.