



General Certificate of Education

English Language and Literature 1726

Specification B

**ELLB2 Themes in Language and
Literature**

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - January series

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This January's entry for ELLB2 was, not surprisingly, very small. The candidates were from one centre. The chosen pairing was *Utopia* by Thomas More (translated by Ralph Robinson 1551) and *1984* by George Orwell. While the entry did not represent the full range of marks available for this unit, it is possible to comment upon a number of significant features that may prove helpful to centres as they prepare to submit their candidates' work for the summer session.

PART A

Candidates selected their extracts for comparison carefully. The theme of power – for example, the use of power in *Utopia* to establish a fair and just society, compared with the abuse of power in *1984* – was discussed thoughtfully. Other key themes, such as Winston Smith's refusal to conform, were also included. There was some intelligent and informed writing but also some discussion which, while it was useful as background information, was not clearly linked to the extracts for the task. It is more meaningful if details of social, historical and cultural significance are integrated into the discussion of the extracts. The quality and depth of information were often stronger than the clarity of expression and the structure of the submissions. Submissions were neatly presented and clearly legible. Word processed responses are generally much easier for the moderator to read, though candidates should be advised to proof-read their work carefully, to avoid unintentional technical inaccuracies. Similarly, while photocopied extracts are not required, it is helpful if centres are able to include them, particularly where extracts have been edited.

There was good evidence of knowledge of the set books as whole texts and good treatment of the theme, though marks were lost where analysis of key features of literary and linguistic significance were neglected.

However, a main strength was the approach to comparison. Centres are reminded that sustained comparison is not expected and may not even be productive. Some comparison of significant features is sufficient.

PART B

The creative task proved to be a challenge but one which candidates rose to. The 'monologue' and the 'missing chapter' approaches were used effectively to give a voice to minor characters, such as the neighbour who relished her role as an unpaid spy. It was also used to extend the point of view of other characters.

Candidates produced work which showed a good understanding of what the tasks required. While levels of performance were varied, a common factor was the individuality of their submissions.

The centre's interpretation and application of the mark boundaries and the teachers' annotation of submissions were exemplary.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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