Examiners' Report

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel GCE English Literature and Language (6EL02)

Paper 2 Creating Texts

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Outline of Unit

Students are required to produce a folder containing two pieces of creative work. One intended for a Reading audience. One intended for a Listening audience. Both pieces must be linked, using a theme named in the Specification. This creative work is supported by two Commentaries. These should discuss how the work has been crafted drawing upon the influences of the chosen literary texts studied. This work is supported by two analytical Commentaries, which must make detailed comments upon the literary and linguistic features developed in the creative work. As far as possible there should be a balance between these two key features.

Topic Areas

- Entrapment
- Dystopia
- Gothic and Supernatural
- Women's Lives
- Journeys and Pilgrimages

Overview

Gothic and Dystopian themes have remained the dominant choices. Whilst Entrapment, Women's Lives and Journeys and Pilgrimages remain a minority choice, they have produced some quite outstanding work from candidates. The quality of creative work has remained high, with centres trying to give students considerable freedom in approaches to literary sources, textual content and styles of writing. Experimentation with particular generic features has become an established element in much work. In past papers this has been more noticeable in the work produced for Reading Audiences. However, this year's paper has generated a quite substantial body of writing showing a more incisive critical and creative grasp of that which determines a Listening Audience. This would appear to have been stimulated by some centres encouraging more detailed appraisal of poetry and drama texts. A further outcome of this greater concentration upon a range of literary sources, in the Listening element, has been a clear decrease in the use of media related sources, such as film and television productions. Candidates have, therefore been able to direct their analyses and comments towards the more pertinent literary and linguistic features in the particular works. In terms of creative production this more focused literary approach has ensured a greater willingness to experiment with narrative and thematic structures; and to increase the lexical diversity in the work. This has proved particularly effective in the Listening work with candidates moving away from stolid monologues into more experimental productions, drawing particularly upon the conventions of radio dramatisation. Perhaps the most satisfying aspect of this development has been the greater distinction made between the Reading work and the Listening work. There remain a few difficulties with Listening

work in a minority of centres. This was specifically noted in the use of political speeches as primary source material by, amongst others, Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill and Barack Obama, with little focused reference to the required drama or poetry texts studied. Whilst such sources might be suitable as secondary reading, they are not readily accessible in terms of candidates developing either interpretative analytical skills, or being able to produce effective links with their own original writing. The outcome of this approach has limited the quality of A03 in the candidates' folders.

Reading Audience Creative Work and Commentaries

For the purpose of this report some of the specific qualities noted in a range of candidates' work will be listed below as examples of good practice.

Some Key Features in Creative writing:

- Theme made quickly apparent through plot and lexis.
- Clear and sustained narrative voice/voices.
- Influence of source text evident.
- Deliberate use of language devices, such as specific word choices and arresting metaphors.
- Paragraphs maintaining a clear and coherent sense of generic specifics.
- Interesting and engaging use a specialised or idiomatic vocabulary.

Some Key features in accompanying Commentary:

- Clear links to primary and secondary source texts.
- Use of a developed and secure critical vocabulary to address literary/linguistic features.
- Comments were evaluative rather than descriptive.
- Only giving brief comment on characters actions and plot.
- Considerable accuracy in punctuation and grammar.

Listening Audience Creative Work and Commentaries

Some Key Features in Creative Listening:

- Ensuring the theme was made clear quickly.
- Speech often allowing more experimental use of language.
- Thinking about how the words might sound to a listener.
- Soliloquies restricted in length and supported by other features of speech.
- Recognition that there is no necessity to have continuity in spoken discourses.
- Remembering that Listening is not the same as Reading.

Some Key Features in accompanying Commentary:

- Making clear links to primary and secondary texts.

- Not summarising the contents of creative piece.
- Trying to evaluate the specific features of spoken discourses.
- Trying to specify what kind of audience the work might appeal to.
- Discussing how grammar and lexis might differ from prose narratives.

Centres might wish to note that the following technical speech terms have appeared in candidates' work this session:

Non fluency features; Adjacency pairs; sociolect; colloquial speech; Received Pronunciation.

Bibliographies

It has remained a requirement of the Specification that candidates submit a short relevant bibliography with their folders. This rule is still not being followed by a minority of centres. With the almost universal use of web-based research it is important that centres do ensure candidates produce written evidence of basic research. This need not amount to lengthy lists. A maximum of ten primary references is quite sufficient.

Centre Moderation

Almost all centres submitted work which was accompanied with very detailed and helpful comments by markers. There was good evidence of centres marking all AO's with confidence. In larger centres internal moderation had taken place.

Concluding Comments

Moderator reports on performance were uniform in commenting on good practices by teachers. There was less evidence of unfocused and generalised comment on minor secondary sources; especially those drawn from film versions of texts. As has been raised above, there was good evidence of a more technically advanced critical approach to the Listening element in the Specification. It might be added that candidates' ability to use a range of linguistic terminology with some accuracy has continued to develop. In the case of some centres this had almost eliminated any literary appraisal. As far as possible centres should try to ensure a balance is struck between the two. The fact that this point can be raised indicates a really significant development having taken place over the course of this Specification.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx