



General Certificate of Education

English Literature 6746

Specification B

LTB6 Exploring Texts

Mark Scheme

2006 examination - June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

LTB6: Exploring Texts

Skills Descriptors – Question 1

BAND 1: MARK RANGE 0 – 5

AO2ii	simple account of content
AO2ii	little sense of comparison across texts
AO3	very little understanding of genres, language features and structural devices
AO3	very little discussion of how authors' techniques shape meanings

BAND 2: MARK RANGE 6 – 12

AO2ii	some focus on the task with basic textual understanding; a little illustrative support
AO2ii	some comparison across texts
AO3	some limited understanding of genres, language features and structural devices
AO3	some limited discussion of how authors' techniques shape meanings

BAND 3: MARK RANGE 13 – 19

AO2ii	focus on task with some understanding of text; some illustrative support
AO2ii	some consideration of contrasts and comparisons across texts
AO3	some understanding of genres, language features and structural devices
AO3	some discussion of how authors' techniques shape meanings

BAND 4: MARK RANGE 20 – 26

AO2ii	clear focus on task with informed understanding of text; apt supportive references
AO2ii	detailed consideration of contrasts and comparisons across texts
AO3	consideration of genres, language features and structural devices
AO3	consideration of how authors' techniques shape meanings

BAND 5: MARK RANGE 27 – 33

AO2ii	detailed understanding of the text and task; good selection of supportive references
AO2ii	detailed exploration of contrasts and comparisons across texts
AO3	exploration of genres, language features and structural devices
AO3	some evaluation of how authors' techniques shape meanings

BAND 6: MARK RANGE 34 – 40

AO2ii	secure, confident and well informed understanding of text and task; excellent selection of supportive references
AO2ii	detailed and perceptive evaluation of issues raised through contrasts and comparison across texts
AO3	detailed exploration and analysis of genres, language features and structural devices
AO3	perceptive evaluation of how authors' techniques shape meanings

Possible Content

Question 1

Compare and contrast the ways in which Wordsworth, in ‘Lucy Gray’, and George Eliot, in the given extract from *The Mill on the Floss*, present children and parents.

Key differences resulting from genre: expect students to be aware of differences in language use, register, tone, character revelation and representation, point of view, relationship between reader and subject matter, importance and development of story, setting, structure. Importance of showing an understanding of whether texts are complete or are extracts.

Similarities and differences in subject matter and viewpoint: with the exception of stanza one of ‘Lucy Gray’, both relate their narratives from a third person perspective. Candidates will be aware from the pre-release material that there is an autobiographical element combined with George Eliot’s fictional narrative. Although Eliot uses third person narrative here, she shows us events through the eyes of Maggie. Wordsworth claimed that the incident described in the poem was a real one told to him by Dorothy but not one relating to anyone he was personally acquainted with. Candidates may legitimately guess at this or other possibilities. Wordsworth also said that his object in writing the poem was to produce a convincing portrayal of ‘entire solitude’, hence the sub-title. Candidates may well make intelligent guesses about his purposes on the basis of the sub-title and the nature of the poem. Both poems deal with a family situation, but they are entirely different in nature. Lucy is ‘solitary’, Maggie part of a closely-knit family with a brother who is of great importance to her. It is suggested, however, that she is isolated by her considerable intelligence combined with her gender in comparison with the less intellectual Tom. Relationship with father is clearly good, with Mr T loving and admiring of Maggie’s intelligence but unable to deal with it when it is found in a female. The parents in ‘Lucy Gray’ are loving and devoted but the father exposes Lucy to danger in order to protect the mother. Both writers may be seen to have clear agendas. Both texts focus on female figures and their connection with their parents.

Characterisation: the novel presents a realist view of the family and their interactions, the poem an idealised view of a child whose story has been received at second or third hand and is used to illustrate a view of the relationship between humans and the natural world rather than with any interest in a developed human being. Maggie, on the other hand, is a construct into which life and energy are breathed, with a variety of normal human traits that create an impression of verisimilitude. Maggie seen in different roles, eg as reader and as sister. Eliot characterises Mr T and Riley also through descriptive detail, speech and actions.

Language use: Eliot: stress on realism through use of dialogue and dialect. Maggie’s speech is colloquial but standard English in comparison with her father’s, accentuating her difference from the rest of the family. Narrative in formal, often Latinate lexis. Use of figurative language, eg in description of Maggie as ‘like a Skye terrier’ and in Mr T’s comment ‘I’ll niver pull my coat off before I go to bed’. The latter suggests proverbial wisdom. Significant motif of books throughout the passage. Mingling of comic and serious tone. **Wordsworth:** some candidates might be aware of Wordsworth’s views on the language of ordinary people in ‘Lyrical Ballads’. Language here quite simple with very little that is figurative. Some ‘poetic’ lexis, ‘Of’, ‘o’er’, ‘blither’, ‘With many a wanton stroke’ and syntax and phraseology of a past age (including archaism) as well as inverted word order usual in poetry of the time. Focus on the natural setting and weather conditions. Vivid visual imagery. Effect of rare use of imagery, ‘the powdery snow...’. Lexis to emphasise the solitary: ‘the wild’, ‘a wide moor’, ‘an open field’ etc. Symbolism of the minster-clock, the moon and the lantern. Sense of the elusive and mysterious through the ‘powdery snow/That rises up like smoke’ and the sudden cessation of footmarks.

Concerns of the texts: Eliot: gender, particularly in relation to the value (or lack of value) of women in society and the education of girls; books and the related aspects of the restriction of intellectual freedom and independent thought; the significance of mention of witches in relation to two previous aspects; marriage and the way men choose their partners; paternal pride at variance with the accepted norms of society; parental fear of being superseded by offspring; relation between appearance and reality in life.

Wordsworth: human beings in relation to nature; the importance of solitude; religious belief; the supernatural.

Structure: Eliot: only an extract from the novel, but gives a vignette of family life, Mr T's problem over Tom's education and Maggie's character and relationship with her brother. Relation between narrative, description and dialogue: this passage predominantly dialogue with some narrative, description. Dialogue has various functions: reveals character, family situation; educational and social status; highlights concerns of text; mimesis gives illusion of realism, immediacy. Contrast in characterisation, both of characters within the episode and those merely discussed, eg suggested polarity of Maggie and Mrs T in relation to gender expectation. **Wordsworth:** complete text in quatrains with alternate rhyme and alternate four foot and three foot iambics. Ballad format suitable to narrative and also to the almost mythical element. The supernatural appearance of the child used as a framing device at beginning and end of poem. Simple rhyme scheme with mostly monosyllables and considerable repetition. Mirrors the simple, natural but significant subject matter. Partly structured through journeys, Lucy's and the parents' and the continuing journey between humans and nature as having moral and spiritual significance as well as physical.

Setting: Eliot: not a great deal here to go on but it's clearly a domestic interior in a comfortable, middle-class home and the reference to milling and farming suggests it's rural. Realistic setting with fire, books, choice supper dishes, etc. Wider social setting revealed through attitude to girls and education and through language use. Sense of restriction through the dialogue, which indicates male attitudes.

Wordsworth: importance of natural setting and its rhythms: the hare on the green, the storm and snow. Lucy's footprints in the snow a realistic detail but also a symbol of the journey of life and the journey to a premature death, 'And many a hill did Lucy climb', 'The storm came on before its time'. Humans and natural world as discussed above.

Skills Descriptors – Question 2**BAND 1: MARK RANGE 0 – 5**

AO1	technical weaknesses which impede the communication of meaning/unclear line of argument
AO4	little understanding of different interpretative approaches
AO4	little personal response based on slender evidence or misreading
AO5ii	very little relevance to texts/context/task

BAND 2: MARK RANGE 6 – 12

AO1	simple attempt at structuring argument/some use of critical vocabulary but some technical weakness
AO4	reference to different interpretations of texts
AO4	some evidence of personal response
AO5ii	some limited awareness of links across texts/context/task

BAND 3: MARK RANGE 13 – 19

AO1	use of critical vocabulary and generally clear expression/some structured argument
AO4	some consideration of different interpretations of text
AO4	evidence of personal response with some illustrative support
AO5ii	awareness of links across texts/context/task

BAND 4: MARK RANGE 20 – 26

AO1	clear expression and use of accurate critical vocabulary/clear line of argument
AO4	clear consideration of different interpretations of text
AO4	clear evidence of personal response with illustrative support
AO5ii	clear consideration of links across texts/context/task

BAND 5: MARK RANGE 27 – 33

AO1	accurate expression and effective use of appropriate critical vocabulary/well structured argument
AO4	clear consideration of different interpretations of text and some evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses
AO4	clear and detailed evidence of personal response with good selection of supportive references
AO5ii	detailed exploration of links across texts/context/task

BAND 6: MARK RANGE 34 – 40

AO1	technically fluent style and use of appropriate critical vocabulary/well structured and coherent argument
AO4	perceptive consideration of different interpretations of text with evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses
AO4	clear and detailed evidence of confident personal response with excellent selection of supportive references
AO5ii	perceptive evaluation of links across texts/context/task

Possible Content

Question 2

On the basis of your reading of Items Two, Three and Four, write about:

- the extent to which Item Two and **either** Item Three **or** Item Four have informed your response to the extract from *The Mill on the Floss*
- what you have found interesting about the representation of gender in at least two literary texts you have read during your Advanced Level studies.

Bullet One:

Item Two:

- candidates may look at the questions posed at the beginning of the extract and relate them to extract from *Mill on the Floss*.
- literary representations of women repeating familiar cultural stereotypes. Application here that Eliot reveals Maggie not as the cultural stereotype but as a woman striving for fulfilment and being thwarted by society's expectation that she fulfil such a stereotype.
- work of female writer. Does it also succumb to stereotyping in any way?
- characters as constructs. Candidates likely to point out that they are constructs whether they represent stereotypes or women as they may see themselves in the real world.
- continued social and cultural domination of males. Shown in the passage by Mr T and Riley and by Mr T's choice of Mrs T as a wife because she 'was a bit weak, like'. But Eliot's purpose to protest against that dominance.
- negative connotations of portrayal of women. Eliot shows how Maggie's creative imagination and independent thought, although reluctantly admired by her father, are traits thought to be dangerous and unsuitable in women. Eliot uses the word 'patronisingly' of Riley, who thinks Maggie should find a 'prettier' book. Maggie's books lead her to her own original thoughts and conclusions, a dangerous trait in a woman.
- unequal power relations. The importance of Tom's education shows this being perpetuated in the Tulliver family.
- view of education as only for the male. Tom is revealed to be of limited intellectual ability but is to be educated to be able to hold his own in the world. Mr T also shown to be not very educated or intellectually able but expected to take a ruling position in society because he's male. Maggie, who is shown to have the keenest wits, will not be expected to play a leading role in society in the same way.
- focus on gender as socially constructed shown in a variety of ways in the extract, but Eliot shows clear understanding of that. Attempting to enter the male domain results in Maggie being made to feel 'a sense of disgrace' and withdraw to nurse her doll, symbol of the belief that women are child bearers and rearers rather than thinkers or actors.

Candidates need to respond precisely to 'informed your response'. There are many possible reactions, some of which are:

- they are already well informed about feminism and feminist literary criticism, in which case they may argue that they already read with awareness of the factors discussed by Bertens so that their reading of the passage has not been significantly altered. If so, they still need to be precise in relating the points made by Bertens to the extract they're dealing with.
- they may be unfamiliar with feminist ways of looking at novels and have been persuaded to look at the literary extract in a new way.
- they may disagree with the feminist literary critical view and apply that argument to the literary extract.

Item Three:**Text a)**

A couple of points here will not be clear to the candidates because this is an extract from a critical viewpoint relating to Eliot's reading of Wordsworth and they may quite appropriately comment on that. Likely points of focus here are:

- the importance of female education to Eliot and the use she makes of that concern in the given extract
- the significance of the way Eliot makes use of books in the literary extract as showing both Maggie's intelligence and imagination and the way a male dominated society despises and constrains them
- hint of the similarity between Maggie and Tom's relationship and Eliot's relationship with her brother Isaac. Candidates may see possible parallels in the extract.

Text b)

Broadens the comment to deal with other parts of the novel. Candidates may argue that:

- they find this confusing because they have not read the rest of the novel
- they find it helpful because it helps them to see the significance of the episode where Maggie is humiliated because of her intelligent and thoughtful reading
- the reference to the doll is helpful as it gives a logical continuation from the reference to Maggie nursing the doll for comfort in the given extract
- they find it helpful because it gives very specific examples of how literary text may be interpreted in a feminist way
- they may comment on how far the glimpse of Maggie's childhood here can be described as 'golden'.

Item Four

Likely aspects for focus:

- much greater acceptance of the stereotypical role of the male and female than in the literary extract
- sentimentalising view of the past
- as with 'golden' childhood mentioned in Extract B of Item Three, the phrase 'infantine content' may seem inadequate as a way of summing up childhood, in the light of the literary extract
- candidates should refer in detail to the poetry text here and may legitimately comment on the use of language and imagery in comparison or contrast to the use of language in the prose extract.

Bullet Two:

Response very much dependent on the particular texts studied and on the individual reader response. Candidates should focus clearly on the 'representation of gender', not just write vaguely about characters from novels or other texts. A fertile area would be women in Shakespeare, since many candidates look at the way Shakespeare presents women in, for example, *Othello* or *Hamlet* and they frequently discuss the different ways in which Elizabethan and more modern audiences might react to them.

Key points for them to focus on are the attitude of the writer towards his or her male and female characters and the date when the text was written. Examiners should expect candidates to be aware of what feminism is but should not expect them necessarily to have any specific knowledge of feminist criticism.