

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

GCE Advanced Level

MARK SCHEME

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH		
9695/7	Comment and Appreciation	(Advanced Level)
MAXIMUM MARK: 50		



UNIVERSITY *of* **CAMBRIDGE**
International Examinations

Introduction

The syllabus for this Paper makes clear what candidates will be expected to do, and what examiners will therefore be looking for: "*The questions will test candidates' ability to read literature critically and demonstrate by informed discussion and opinion an understanding of the ways in which meaning is expressed through a writer's choice of form, structure and language.*"

The most important word above is perhaps "*informed*"; there is no expectation that candidates must bring to the paper any historical background or knowledge, though this may of course occasionally be helpful - what matters is that they demonstrate an understanding of *how* to approach a piece of previously unseen writing, and of how to respond to it in a piece of formal written criticism. Examiners will expect candidates to be informed about literary styles, conventions and techniques, and of the most common literary and critical terms; such knowledge will not be rewarded for its own sake - no credit will be given for "alliteration-spotting", for example - but where a candidate can demonstrate an awareness of how a text is written, can discuss this by means of the accepted terminology, and at the same time show that s/he has also a properly formulated and justified personal response then credit and reward will certainly be given. There can generally be no "right" or "wrong" answers; what matters is that a candidate supports, justifies and argues a response in such a way that the examiner knows that s/he can see how the meaning is being expressed, and can at the same time express such a knowledge and understanding. It may well be that a candidate will express a view which is different from the examiner's, or indeed different from what is generally assumed to have been the writer's; unless such a view is demonstrably and unarguably *wrong* it will always be accepted and rewarded according to its own merits.

ASSESSING THE WORK

In assessing the quality of individual answers, you should keep the following questions firmly in your mind:

- how well does the candidate meet the specific demands of the question?
- how well does the candidate understand the passage/poem, and how far have any difficulties been confronted rather than avoided?
- how sensitive is the candidate to the language, the tone, and the distinctive literary qualities of the writing?
- how aware is the candidate of the narrative perspective or the writer's point of view in the passage/poem?

- how clearly is a genuinely informed personal response to the passage/poem communicated through the candidate's writing?
- how far does the candidate's commentary illuminate the creative processes of the passage/poem?

Drama: candidates should always be given credit for exploring the specifically dramatic and/or theatrical qualities of a passage or scene (though specialist Theatre Studies skills or knowledge are not expected, and may indeed be unhelpful).

Poetry: although little credit should be given for simple or mechanical discussion of poetic form, candidates should always be rewarded for showing an awareness of the aptness and effectiveness of poetic forms and techniques in a given poem.

Prose: where appropriate, candidates should be given credit for showing an awareness of the character of the passage in relation to its genre (fiction, biography, essay, reportage etc.)

What to write on scripts

Make some annotation or comment on every page to show you have not missed a page.

Put the total mark for each question at the end of each answer.

Put the marks for both questions at the top of the script on the front page, add them and ring the total-e.g. - 12 + 13 = 25

Check this total carefully.

Put your Team and Examiner number next to the mark – e.g. 2.5

In writing comments on the script, use abbreviations, words or phrases from the mark scheme, comments on how the essay is developing, and where necessary brief factual comments or corrections. Add a summative comment at the end of the script. As a general rule your comments should be positive.

Some useful abbreviations and symbols-

K knowledge

U understanding

C communication

P personal response

O others' opinions

Q for focus on question

Q? for not focusing on question

Wavy underline for unclear phrase

(Please do not use your own abbreviations.)

Do NOT correct or comment on spelling and grammatical errors-just underline errors.

(But you may comment at the end of the script – e.g. “*Frequent errors in C obscure meaning*”)

Comments

These may be factual comments e.g. “*not a simile*” or comments on key features of the answer related to the mark scheme e.g. *needs textual support, well developed/undeveloped, clear/unclear, insufficient /reference to passage; needs to explain point; good ref to dramatic qualities; needs to expand; evidence?’ ‘connection’ ‘detail?’, not answering Q*

Be careful to distinguish between an unusual opinion and a factual error.

At the bottom of the script put a brief summary comment based on the mark scheme:

Sound knowledge and clear expression; points sometimes but not always supported, not enough detailed ref to the passages.

What not to write on scripts

Do not use more than one question mark e.g. ???

Do not use exclamation marks at all.

Do not use capital letters to “shout” e.g. NO

Do not use any emotive word or phrase- this includes: *poor, weak, bad, wrong, get on with it, so what? hardly! what?, this is not the point, muddled, nonsense, shallow*

Do not comment on handwriting or untidiness

Do not comment on the Centre as a whole or their teaching

Do not focus on what the candidate has NOT written but on what s/he has written

Using the mark bands

Place the answer in a band first. Look for the “best fit” of the answer into a band. An answer needs to show evidence of most but not necessarily ALL of the qualities described in a band, in order to be placed in that band. Then award a mark for the relative position of the answer within the band.

Candidates may address the question in many different ways. Do not expect any particular focus or approach and do not penalise answers for leaving out a particular focus.

Reward what is there, showing what you are rewarding, in your comments.

Consider all strands and weigh up the performance as a whole in placing the answer in a band, then show that you have done so in the summative comment, e.g.

Sound K of texts, some evidence of U but mostly narrative, occasional evidence of P, mainly clear C

Assessment Objectives:

- Ability to respond to texts in the three main forms (Prose, Poetry and Drama) of different types and from different cultures;
- Understanding of the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings;
- Ability to produce informed independent opinions and judgements on literary texts;
- Ability to communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight appropriate to literary study;
 - Ability to appreciate and discuss varying opinions of literary works

Each answer is marked out of 25, in accordance with the General Marking Criteria below.

Each band is divided into strands corresponding to the Assessment Objectives -Knowledge, Understanding, Personal Response, Communication, Others' opinions

Band 6 0 – 5

- K** Some understanding of the text, perhaps relying on narrative/paraphrase only
- U** Limited understanding of form, structure and language; perhaps only a series of points unrelated to the meaning and effects of the text. Little use or understanding of technical terms.

- P** There may be some signs of personal response, but not developed or properly supported from the text.
- C** Communication will be insecure. *Expression* may be weak with multiple errors and some breakdown in communication. *Structure* is likely to be lacking: answers may be partial, undeveloped, narrative/descriptive, and perhaps assertive of simple points rather than with progressive lines of argument.

Band 5 6 – 9 Work of a basic standard

- K** Some general understanding of the text, with limited ability to use this selectively to address the task. There may be some basic errors of interpretation and reading.
- U** Evidence of some understanding of ways in which the writer's choices of language shape meaning and effect, with some appropriate support from the text. Possible awareness of some of the effects of structure and form, with some occasional and relevant use of technical terms.
- P** Evidence of some personal response, with some appropriate support from the text.
- C** *Expression* will be basically clear, with some problems in expression and register. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be quite common, with the occasional confused passage of writing; however, there will be no sustained or serious loss of communication. There will be a simple *structure* to the answer, with evidence of an argument, though this may lack consistent coherence; some repetition and assertion, with relapse into narrative/paraphrase, and perhaps some irrelevant drifting from the thrust of the question.

Band 4 10 – 13 Solid work

- K** Some detailed and accurate understanding of the text, with some evidence of ability to use it appropriately in addressing the task.
- U** Some sound understanding of ways in which the writer's choices of structure, form and language shape meaning and effect, supported by appropriate and reasonably full quotation from the text. Focus is likely to be on language, with perhaps a little awareness of the effect of structure and form, together with some relevant use of technical terms. A little awareness of genre characteristics.
- P** Evidence of sound personal response to the text, supported by appropriate reference and quotation.
- C** *Expression* will be mostly clear and appropriate, with mostly accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. There will be a clear simple *structure* to the answer. Argument will be mostly coherent if perhaps assertive. Some reliance on narrative/paraphrase. Straightforward ideas will be articulated clearly, but there may be some imprecision and clumsiness of expression in addressing more complex responses, with perhaps some occasional lack of clarity.

Band 3 14 – 17 Competent work

- K** Sound understanding of the text, always relevantly addressing the task.
- U** Intelligent understanding of how theme and/or character are created by the writer; some evidence of appreciation of literary qualities, and of the methods and effects of the writing, supported by some relevant and critically helpful use of technical terms. Limited awareness of genre characteristics.
- P** Evidence of thoughtful personal response aptly related to the text and supported by appropriate quotation and exploration.
- C** *Expression* will be clear and generally accurate. *Structure* will be sound – coherently organised material with occasional insights, although argument may at times lack critical depth and balance, with failure to see and/or explore the subtler implications of the text. Answers will express thoughtful and straightforward ideas clearly, though there may be occasional loss of fluency with points not always strongly connected.

Band 2 18 – 21 Proficient work

- K** Secure and detailed knowledge and understanding of the text, relevantly addressed to the task.
- U** Intelligent and consistent understanding of how theme and/or character are created by the writer; evidence of appreciation of literary qualities, methods and effects, supported by relevant and critically helpful use of technical terms. Some awareness and some discussion of literary conventions, techniques and genre characteristics.
- P** Evidence of thoughtful and perceptive personal response, well supported from the text; some originality of thought, straightforwardly and vigorously articulated, perhaps, rather than subtle or with penetration.
- C** *Expression* will be confident, with only occasional errors; some complex ideas and responses expressed with some fluency. *Structure* will be sound; arguments will be coherent, with progression of ideas through clearly linked paragraphs.

Band 1 22 – 25 Very good work (NB – *do not reserve this band for the very best work you see, but ensure that you place answers in this band which fulfil the requirements described below; there will always be some answers of a standard higher than the top of the band.*)

- K** Secure and consistently detailed knowledge and understanding of the text, relevantly and consistently related to the task.
- U** Perceptive and sensitive understanding of how theme and/or character are created by the writer. Thoughtful appreciation and discussion of literary conventions, techniques and genre characteristics, well

supported with frequent and apt quotation, and sharply relevant and critical use of technical terms.

- P** Personal response to the text will be perceptive and often fresh, with some originality in approach. Understanding of textual subtleties.
- C** *Expression* will be accomplished and fluent, with very few errors. *Structure* will be coherent and clear, with arguments consistently clear and cogent; paragraphs will progress logically and be effectively linked.