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Examiners' Report January 2010

GCE English 6ET03

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GCE08 English Literature Unit 3: 6ET03

Interpretations of Prose and Poetry

Section A: Unprepared Poetry or Prose

For the unseen poetry and prose question a majority of the candidates elected to write about the poem. We were able to differentiate a wide range of achievement from the responses received to both unseens. We are concerned to provide unseen material that is accessible to the whole candidature and, although the poem and prose passage provided challenges, they were considered to be accessible at a variety of levels.

We would like to remind all users of the examination that examiners award an individual mark for each of the two assessment objectives.

For AO1 examiners are looking for a literary approach to the topic with appropriate use of literary terminology. We are happy to acknowledge literary points made even if the precise literary term is not used (e.g. 4 line stanzas as opposed to quatrains for example). Literary terms were sometimes used inaccurately; this poem is not a ballad for example. The other facet of this AO is the requirement to write accurately and coherently. Even high scoring answers are sometimes inaccurate grammatically and in matters of general accuracy such as spelling, but it is only one part of the AO which is scored out of ten.

For AO2 examiners are looking for the application of the precise wording of the question which targets this AO's focus on structure, form and language. What some candidates find difficult is to link a comment on a feature of the writing with how it relates to what the writer is actually saying. Many answers, which often showed a clear literary mindset, did not actually say sufficiently clearly what they thought the poem or prose extract was about. It is possible to do this without merely providing a summary of content.

Question 1: Poetry

The challenge to the reader is to reach into the character presented by the poet and to establish exactly what it is that she is waiting for. There is a level of ambiguity which some candidates were happy to acknowledge although most candidates thought the speaker was waiting for God, Death or a lover. Uncertainty was not an issue if the possible alternatives were discussed and textual evidence provided.

Many candidates decided to progress through the poem stanza by stanza. This is a valid if not the only way to tackle the task. The contrasts in atmosphere, the oppositions between the cold and bleak world outside and the comfort of the warm interior were well observed as were the narrator's solitude, her status in the house, who exactly are the 'haughty sire' and angry dame'? What or who is she waiting for?

Knowledge of the features of Gothic literature, the Brontës' solitary life on the Yorkshire Moors and the world of *Wuthering Heights* provided some interesting, although unassessed, contextual information. The 'guiding star' was usually attributed either to that which guided the Wise Men in the Bible or the North Star and sometimes to an amalgamation of both. The importance of the 'little lamp', because of the way it is referred to more than once, was often acknowledged. Punctuation was only tackled effectively when linked to ways in which specific effects like the caesuras and exclamation marks were used in the poem to vary the pace and perhaps related to the variety to be found in the rhythm. The rhyme scheme was usually mentioned although to see no rhyme in the final stanza is odd. Again this feature of the writing needed to be linked to how the meaning and tone are constructed for it to be effective. Too many candidates think that merely identifying the feature is sufficient. The simple language was sometimes used to suggest that the speaker is a young or unsophisticated individual; the archaic usages such as 'o'er' and 'e'er' were too often identified as old English. It would have been gratifying to have seen more acknowledgement of the use of inversions as in the opening line of the poem and when dealing with metre, the stressed syllables with which many of the lines begin.

This lyric, due to the tight AABB rhyme scheme, and the inverted syntax ~~is~~ used to enforce the rhyming words, phonologically seems like a song. The poem opens in present tense, ~~of~~ creating immediacy; we seem to be there, listening to the wises of the house.



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Examiner Tip

A sound approach to poetry is suggested by the following extract:



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Examiner Comments

The use of correct terminology such as *lyric*, *rhyme scheme* and *inverted syntax* in a clearly and accurately written sentence which then linked to valid reader response suggests that the candidate will be scoring in AO1 in band 3.

Some might interpret this as a religious poem, perhaps of a devotee waiting for God, or a sign. This is suggested by the religious terminology ("guiding-star"; "angel"; "faith sustained"). ~~On the other hand we might notice~~ Such interpretation might also be enforced by the somewhat derogatory terms used to describe any human action ("lurking human snare"), for example the imperatives in stanza three, followed by a vocative which suggests unpleasant connotations.



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Examiner Tip

A personal response linked to precise use of language in the poem.



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Examiner Comments

This will score highly in AO1 because of the use of terminology and use of appropriate quotations. It will score quite highly in AO2 as well because the writer is taking a critical approach, shows understanding and deals with features of structure and language at quite a high level.

A rather different personal response is suggested by the next extract.

Bronte parallels death's arrival with that of a loved one. 'What I love shall come like visitant of air,' the ghostly imagery continues to establish the eerie tone that runs through the poem.



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Examiner Tip

Link the comment to a quotation.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has linked comments to an apt quotation so the speculative approach is rooted in the text. The candidate follows the quotation with a further comment that clinches the point although it is unfortunate that 'eerie' is misspelled.

By contrast a valid point not rooted in the poem is less valuable.

To add to this, the rhythm is slightly irregular, ~~annoying~~ unnerving the reader due to its use ~~along~~ alongside the regular rhyme scheme, and adding to the bizarreness of the voice and situation.



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Examiner Tip

A valid point is made but it would be more valuable with an example to back it up.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has provided evidence of achieving part of the descriptor in AO2 to demonstrate critical understanding and examine features of structure and hinting at but not illustrating the use of language.

The poem is structured in a way that builds up suspense, excitement, or even fear, shown ~~in the last stanza~~ by the ~~use~~ heavy use of caesura in the final stanza, including exclamation marks, which build up a climax of emotion, leaving the reader ever curious about this being, but perhaps even more so ~~in~~ doubtful of the ~~mental~~ ~~well~~ good mental health of the persona.

In conclusion, Brontë's use of language, including natural and religious imagery, form, including a regular rhyme scheme, and structure, including a build up of suspense, shapes meanings in this poem, including the idea of a non-human, powerful being, and also questions the validity of the persona, who could be mentally unwell.



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Examiner Tip

Link comments on structure to specific examples. Bring the essay to a satisfying conclusion.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has linked structure to mood and how it is achieved quite well. The use of correct terminology helps to make it clear what is being said and it leads to a satisfying conclusion with an acceptable personal response. On this evidence the candidate would be likely to be moving into band 3 for AO1 and fairly high in band 4 for AO2.

Question 2: Prose

The challenge of this extract from a modern novel was to assess its quite complex style in which the writer was attempting to enter the mind of a twelve or thirteen year old. Hence it is important, from a literary criticism point of view, to talk about the narrator and not the writer. Although candidates were not told that the speaker was a boy, and it was not necessary to come up with the correct answer, many perceptive writers made an attempt to discuss the nature of the narrator, how he presents himself through his use of simple, naïve and highly colloquial language and his relationship to the media representation of the end of the Falklands War.

Many candidates were able to identify the shifts in tone between the two main paragraphs and link them to the respective viewpoints of the two newspapers. The empty jingoism (this was a word used by at least one candidate) associated with the *Daily Mail* was successfully contrasted to the narrator's own short comment 'I *should* be really happy' and the perspective offered by Julia and *The Guardian*. The informality of the language, its satirical edge and its initial humour that shifts as things become more serious in the second long paragraph were generally well observed. The precision of the comments and the precise terms to describe and analyse them were the main discriminators here. The narrator's uncertainty over what or who to believe exactly (his relationship to Julia as someone to look up for example, she is the narrator's older sister, but that doesn't matter in the context of the extract) seems to achieve a sort of epiphany as he realises that the *Daily Mail* attitude is trivial as he acknowledges that it has moved on to a typical tabloid piece of celebrity gossip in the final moments of the extract.

This extract describes the ^{differing} responses to the end of the Falklands War. Firstly, exploring "The whole of Great Britain's" reaction, represented by the "Daily Mail", and then secondly exploring "Julia's" reaction, represented by "the Guardian". The first reaction is presented unfavourably, and perhaps mockingly, and the second reaction is presented without bias, it is simply presented as what "Julia says".



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Examiner Tip

Provide a clear introduction.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has a sense of the tone of voice suggested by the language and there is some sense of structure so that there is some immediate evidence of achievement in AO2.

There is a strong sense of the writer's humour in this extract. This humor is mainly used to mock the reaction the "whole of Great Britain".

Mitchell even mocks Thatcher (the most popular ~~pres~~ prime minister "ever", the italicization of "ever" stressing her popularity) as merely being an entertainer, and not only that but, as could be interpreted by not only the reputation the Eurovision song contest has but the ~~was~~ unserious nature of the name "Bucks Fizz", a cheap entertainer. When humor is added to this comparison, Mitchell's narrative voice takes up a mocking, superior and

high brow tone. Mitchell also uses humor to undermine the jingoistic patriotism of "everyone" as they "sang 'Rule... slaves'". Mitchell asks the reader if it just a "never-ending chorus" to highlight fatiguing and brainless nature of this particular song.



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Examiner Tip

Make points clearly and link them to specific sections of the passage.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has identified the humour in the writing and illustrated it clearly, using appropriate language such as 'italicization', 'narrative voice', 'high brow tone' and 'jingoism'. Therefore the candidate is hitting AO1 in band 3 and AO2 in band 4. It is probably not quite evaluative enough to achieve AO2 band 5 although it is close. It is a shame about the imperfect spelling.

The end of the extract is another example of Mitchell using sarcasm (his question about 'the rule britania' song being a previous example) to ~~create the~~ mock "the Daily Mail" and the intertext that it represents. The phrase "big story" coupled with the ~~matter of fact~~^{factual} tone of this sentence is what makes it sarcastic.



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Examiner Tip

Make comments about the writer's use of language.



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Examiner Comments

This a further example of the same candidate's ability to link points about language supported by quotations. The candidate therefore continues to score well in AO1 for his critical insights and appropriate use of terminology, although inaccuracies would alone prevent him from getting top marks in band 3. The analytical approach, engagement with language and a strong critical understanding reinforce the impression of band 4 for AO2.

Section B: Paired Texts

For the texts, a very large proportion of the responses were from the sections entitled *Relationships* and *War*. Very few answers were received from the *Identifying Self* or *Journeys* sections.

We were gratified by the sound knowledge of the texts studied by the candidates in many of the answers when a complex novel (and as often as not two) had been assimilated in quite a short teaching time. When poetry collections or anthologies were discussed, the better answers showed detailed knowledge of a range of poems rather than the very small number, sometimes just a single poem referred to by some candidates. The requirement to study a post-1990 text was achieved by all candidates.

As with the Unseen section of the paper, an individual mark was awarded for each assessment objective. The two AOs that are marked out of ten have already been dealt with in the earlier discussion on the Unseens. The double weighted AOs deserve some attention in order to highlight some of the issues which teachers and candidates need to address.

For AO3 the links between texts is the most important skill that the examiners are looking for. Some low achieving answers hardly make any comparisons but merely present distinct sections on each text without making even the most obvious links. A well-informed personal response is what is sought here and if the response includes references to specific critics that is quite acceptable as long as they contribute to the candidate's own argument. An effective approach to comparison is to identify specific points of comparison and deal with how they are dealt with in each text in turn.

For AO4, which is probably the most challenging of the AOs to hit consistently, there are a number of pitfalls to identify. The context of the modern reader is to be taken as the candidate's own informed personal response, perhaps supported by other critical voices. The context of the time of a text's own production may be more problematic. The post-1990 texts may be about an historical past and therefore the area of slippage between say the 1990s when *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, *Spies* and *The Ghost Road* were being written and the two world wars which are their subject matter needs to be addressed. That slippage is sometimes addressed by the narrator himself looking back at his earlier self, in *Spies* and *The Kite Runner* for instance, but in the case of *The Ghost Road* the link is not so clear as we have a fiction employing a range of 'real' and imagined characters and events presented with a very late twentieth century sensibility. Some of these issues will be dealt with in the ensuing discussion on the specific questions.

Questions 3a and 3b: Relationships

All the texts in this part of the specification had been studied with the exception of the selection from *Emergency Kit*.

Both questions received a significant number of responses and of the novels, *Tess* and *Gatsby* were the most popular choices. The kinds of relationships dealt with in answers to the (a) question tended to incline towards love affairs of different kinds. We read some extremely interesting answers which established perceptive links between the kind of male female relationship that the novels concern themselves with and the not dissimilar situations to be found in the poems in the metaphysical poetry anthology. These may well find a focus in the dominant males such as Alec and Angel in *Tess*, Tom Buchanan in *Gatsby* and the narrators of such poems as Donne's *The Flea*, *Song* and *Elegy: To his Mistress Going to Bed* (with frequent references to the speaker's *roving hands*) and Marvell's *To His Coy Mistress*.

More interestingly, the discussions which dealt with *Rapture* made thoughtful and insightful comments about the nature of the relationship between the speaker and her lover. The stages of the relationship from beginning to end found parallels in the novels under discussion and some candidates found significant cross connections in the imagery to be found in both poems and novels. The nature of the relationship itself, for example whether or not it is a lesbian relationship, autobiographical or not, found parallels in Katherine Philips's poem *To My Excellent Lucasia, on Our Friendship*. Many readers speculated on just how good friends they were. Language links between Duffy and the Metaphysicals were often highly perceptive and showed detailed knowledge of content and language. Other comments on relationships which are worth mentioning include contrasts between couples such as Tom and Daisy Buchanan, Myrtle and George Wilson, Tess and both Alec and Angel, Pelagia and both Mandras and Corelli. In addition parent child relationships such as Tess and her father and Pelagia and Dr Iannis provided thoughtful discussions. More irregular relationships that included Duffy's persona and her lover as well as Carlo and Francesco also provided valid material. Same sex love was much in evidence when discussing *Rapture* although many writers were at pains to point out that neither of the lovers is made gender specific.

The contexts here are also challenging. The world of the Jazz Age and the American Dream were often effectively incorporated into discussions of *Gatsby* as the empty values of the world of found connections with the relationships and emotions to be found in the characters. The nineteenth century world of *Tess* addressed issues of class and status as much as gender. Tess's father's sending her to 'claim kin' after the death of Prince was perceived as an essential starting point for her decline. The highly charged imagery associated with Talbothays was well used and provided excellent connections with the similarly charged language used by Duffy and the Metaphysicals. There is a lot of material about *Rapture* and the world inhabited by Carol Ann Duffy, as well as a number of contemporary reviews of the poems. Her own comments on her poetry had also been discovered and incorporated into discussions. Teachers had clearly drawn candidates' attention to many of these facets of the texts and at best they were able to incorporate them effectively into their essays. The danger is sometimes to add on such comments without linking them fully into what the candidate him/herself thinks.

When dealing with the (b) question candidates found plenty of examples of 'unpleasant feelings and unsatisfactory relationships' although the ability to challenge the terms of the question and provide a balanced debate that showed the positive side of relationships and feelings was very acceptable. The contrasts between the idyllic scenes that Angel and Tess enjoy before things go wrong, and the stages of the relationship dealt with in *Rapture* were two good cases in point and often showed detailed knowledge of the whole book in the case of the Duffy collection.

In 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles', 'The Great Gatsby' and 'Rapture' we see strongly conveyed relationships and the emotions they cause. Hardy presents us with a young girl Tess who has a very harsh start, ^{at such a young age,} so doesn't have much faith in relationships. Fitzgerald shows us how a lot of adults can suffer and feel strongly against one another because of their adulterous lives and Duffy takes us on a journey through her own personal relationship which not only makes her emotional but as a reader we start to feel emotional as well towards the end.



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Examiner Tip

Provide a clear focus to the essay.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate sets out the agenda clearly if unsubtly. The terms of the question about relationships are addressed and the three texts that are going to be discussed are seen to have some links. For the clarity of what is said the candidate is moving towards AO1 band 2. Some more evidence is needed before making any judgement on AO2. The candidate has hit the first bullet point of AO3 band 2 and may well move into band 3 or higher if these ideas are developed in a literary way.

An example of her partner's lack of presence ^{ironically} is in the poem 'presents' in which we are told 'a hair of your head on my sleeve / like a scrawled receipt'. The reference to the scrawled receipt would suggest that Duggy's partner is 'buying' her but not actually there in person, true love doesn't come in the form of materialistic goods. This is shown similarly in Hardy's 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles' when Tess is bought by Alec, he showers her with material goods and tries to buy her soul, as Duggy's partner does.



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Examiner Tip

Make effective links between texts.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate is moving through the poems in *Rapture* in some detail and has made some thoughtful comments on the relationship and its unhappy ending. This is clearly indicated in the preference to the poem and the quotation from it. The link to *Tess* is cleverly done and very precise in the nature of the comparison made. This suggests AO3 first bullet point at band 4.

Alec claims he loves Tess but it isn't love, it's lust, false affection, as seen in Rapture by Duffey's partner. The Great Gatsby is also a novel full of false affection and money driven desires. Only Gatsby really loves anyone and that is Daisy. Tom doesn't love Daisy and I don't believe she loves him either but Tom buys her as he did Myrtle Wilson, and how Alec did with Tess.

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Examiner Tip

Link three texts effectively.

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Examiner Comments

The same candidate has made a sound attempt to draw together all three texts under discussion. Once more AO3 in band 4.

~~And~~ A modern and past reader's opinions on the books would differ greatly. For example, the alleged rape of Tess would be seen as a terrible incident to the modern reader and Alec would be punished but at the time, Tess would have been seen as the morally lower person for losing her chastity to a man and not marrying him. With regards to 'The Great Gatsby', time had moved on since the Victorian era that Tess lived in, but women were still socially subservient to men. The only woman who really breaks this stereotype is the ever-independent Jordan Baker. The affair in Rapture is more acceptable to modern readers because losing our chastity is seen as a less important thing these days, most likely due to a decline in religious importance.


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Examiner Tip

Always ensure that you make points about contexts in order to hit AO4.


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Examiner Comments

This candidate ends the essay with these contextual points. They do come at the end but there is no sense that this is an afterthought as the comments seem to incorporate her emerging overview. The candidate hits the first three bullet points for AO4 at level four. Compare with the band three criteria to see that enough is being done to go into the higher band, albeit at a fairly low level.

Through 'forest' buffy voices and unconventional structure to her poems, reminiscent to her way of thinking as it adapts an unconventional sonnet form before the reader. Sexual connotations are in abundance and channeled through the natural surrounding with the 'wet perfume of soil' as they go 'deeper' within the realms of an ecstasy of passion. It's Platonic ending of 'find 'me'' illustrates an unimpaired factor to relationship in which the fundamentals are being uprooted; a subtle indication that the intensity and capacity for an eclectic range of emotions can not be sustained over a long period, hence leading towards unpleasant feelings and unsatisfactory relationships.

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Examiner Tip

Use specific detail in your analysis and use literary terminology as appropriate.

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Examiner Comments

This candidate makes some very specific comments about the poem under discussion and refers to structure form and language clearly and precisely, as comments are made which are analytical in nature. The candidate is therefore suggesting achievement in AOs 1 and 2 in band 3.

Thomas Hardy, through his eponymous heroine Tess in 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' is completely contrasting ~~in his use of~~ to buffy in his use of nature. Hardy uses nature for introspection and social commentary, providing realism as opposed to convoluted fantasy. This realism stems from the author's employment of an omniscient third person narrative that captures the zeitgeist of the rural classes of Victorian upbringing, with a clear recognition of Hardy that 'Tess is within the malthusian nightmare of rural poverty', and will struggle to awaken ^{from this}. Therefore, the realistic use of nature through the plot is indicative of 'real life', preparing the reader for a whole host of unpleasant feeling and unsatisfactory relationships (from the heroine's perspective) that are to come as opposed to buffy with which the unpleasant and unsatisfactory arrives completely unaware to both herself and her 'love object'. Nature aligns itself alongside the phallicentric society in which the Serrisvine Alec d'Urberville and the ^{Social} ~~social~~ Angel Clare operate, applying a dominating force over Tess. The males of the novel adapt to their setting to exert themselves sexually upon Tess who Hardy assured the reader as being 'a pure woman'.



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Examiner Tip

Use literary language when dealing with novels as well as poems. As the argument is developed juxtapose the comments to incorporate more than one text.



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Examiner Comments

In this extract put aside the minor spelling errors and the slightly convoluted expression. Note instead how the candidate is again scoring well in AOs 1 and 2 as the discussion moves on to Tess. The literary terms continue to be wide ranging and correctly used, there are perceptive links between the texts so AO3 is being addressed and the candidate also refers to cultural, historical and literary contexts.

So far we have dealt with writers not always referring to real life when talking about unpleasant feelings and unfulfilling relationships. In the case of Duffy, we are more likely to assume that the relationship treated in the poem ~~sequence~~ sequence is rooted in reality. This due to the fact that autobiography is a post 20th century concern, and writers such as S. Plath, A. Sexton and Lowell, who write autobiographies in the genre of confessional poetry (which is likely to have influenced Duffy), are more common. We are likely to interpret the relationship as real although Duffy has opted to eschew any description of her beloved, creating universality of appeal. Unlike her other volumes, "Rapture" does not have a socio-political statement and therefore, perhaps, a feminist interpretation would not be appropriate. This unlike in some cases of Donne's poetry, where the ironic reference to women has often been interpreted as ~~misogynistic~~ misogynistic.


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Examiner Tip

Use the link between two texts to make contextual points.


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Examiner Comments

This candidate is scoring high in AO4 because of the detailed comments on the influences on Duffy's poetry whilst also making a valid and thoughtful link to Donne.

Questions 4a and 4b: Identifying Self

There was a very small number of responses to this grouping of texts and it is impossible to draw any conclusions from them except to observe that the texts that had been studied included *Great Expectations*, *Life of Pi*, *Taking off Emily Dickinson's Clothes* and *The Fat Black Woman's Poems*.

Questions 5a and 5b: Journeys

There were so few answers to these questions that it is impossible to make any comments except to note that the texts dealt with were *Small Island*, *The Final Passage* and *The terrorist at my table*. We hope that more candidates will study this particular grouping of texts in future sittings.

Questions 6a and 6b: War

We read responses to all of the set texts for this part of the specification. Each of the novels had a significant following with particular interest in comparing *Spies* and *The Ghost Road*. *101 Poems Against War* was the most popular of the poetry texts, and we did not see many responses to *Legion*.

Examiners were perfectly happy to see candidates challenging the inevitability and inescapability of war by referring to *The Horses* and *Conscientious Objector*. It is important to engage with the proposition however and some answers tended to deal with war in a fairly general way.

Some uncertainty on the contexts meant that some writers thought that *Spies* was set in World War One or that Owen fought in the French Revolution. It is perhaps unnecessary to translate *Dulce et Decorum Est* for the examiner although reference to the irony of its use in Owen's poem and its Horatian source were rather rare.

We were interested to see how novels like *Spies* and *The Kite Runner* could be connected by virtue of their use of flashbacks and the perspectives of older narrators looking back on childhood experiences in very different situations. *The Ghost Road* was also used to illustrate the use of different viewpoint and it was gratifying to see how the horrors of the World War One as depicted in the novel could be successfully linked to the poems that emerged from that conflict. In the main the well-known poems of Owen Sassoon and Rosenberg featured in many essays. It was slightly disappointing that the 'real' characters from *The Ghost Road* were not used to provide links between novel and the poems of Owen and Sassoon. *The 101 Poems Against War* anthology nevertheless had been studied in some detail and we saw in the answers reference to most of the poems in this selection as well as a large number of the selection in *From Here to Eternity*.

For every significant war there is a post-modern, with historians, military men and politicians speculating who and what are to blame for the start of it. For a modern reader especially, with so much analysis and findings available to us it may give us a sense of inevitability. For the countries involved, ~~must~~, with ^{watching} ~~sending~~ husbands, brothers and fathers ~~off to~~ leave to fight, hearing bombs drop or and visibly witnessing the destruction of war may feel like war is inescapable. This, however, is not entirely the case in the novels and poems studied, in 'The Kite Runner' Amir and Baba safely escape the conflict to start a new life in America. Michael Frayn ^{has} ~~have~~ his characters Stephen and Keith searching for war, in stark contrast to the notion that it is unescapable.


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Examiner Tip

Clear focus to essays from the very beginning.


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Examiner Comments

This candidate has established himself or herself as a modern reader responding to some of the precise wording in the question. When the two novels to be discussed are identified the candidate shifts the focus slightly to provide some challenge to the idea of 'inescapable' which is to be explored later. At a basic level therefore AOs 3 and 4 have been acknowledged.

Frayn does use Uncle Peter as an example of the difficulty to escape from war. In a time of conscription, Peter is thrown into a situation he can't handle 'You start playing some game, and ~~but~~ the and you're the brave one ... But the game goes on and on, and it gets more and more frightening.' This description ~~matches~~ could easily apply to Stephen's game with Keith, they thought they were doing a service for their country, they took pride in their work but Stephen it took a dark turn and plunged him into Stephen into a situation where the tragic death of Uncle Peter was the only way to see him from it all.


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Examiner Tip

Use an example from the text to develop and illustrate your points.


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Examiner Comments

This is from slightly further on in the same essay. The idea of the inescapability of war is now identified and illustrated clearly with an apt quotation and further comment which develops the point adequately.

Another example of an ~~intensity~~ war intensity in war is portrayed by HD Harold Pinter in 'American Football'. Pinter was a totalarian, known to be anti-war, anti-state and anti-America and his poem depicts a male soldier ~~describing the war~~ during the Gulf war 'It works. We blew the shit right out of them.' The language is simple but shocking and that might have been the view of people around the world at the time of the Gulf War, 36 allies combining to crush Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.



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Examiner Tip

Link texts and comment on specific features of language and contextualise.



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Examiner Comments

This extract links a discussion of *The Kite Runner* to one of *American Football*. The link is made subtly: 'Another example...' but acceptably. The identification of a language feature, its illustration and discussion show a literary approach and some detailed contextualisation at the band 3/4.

In both novels a double framed narrative is used and in *Spies* so and we have first person narrators telling their story in hindsight. Fryn was this effectively in portraying the Stephen's escape not from war, but from the persona his family's immigration forced him to adopt due to war.



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Examiner Tip

Comment on structure.



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Examiner Comments

The structure common to both novels is clearly identified. The discussion concentrates on just one of them so AO3 is being hit at level 3 rather than higher at this point.

Much like "Spies", "The Kite Runner" by Khaled Hosseini starts at a point where the narrator knows what has happened but chooses to re-live it in an extended flashback in order to tell the story and convey the writer's message in order to gain greater understanding of events that have shaped their later life. "The Kite Runner" is one of the first novels written about Afghanistan in English, opening the story up to Western readers, and definitely the most famous. However it was written after 9/11 and 7/7 meaning that in order to open it up to western society it has written about the West in a more favourable light than the Taliban - epitomized by the particularly cruel and sadistic Assef.

Much like "Spies", "The Kite Runner" is written using a framed narrative and a catalyst, & a phonecall in this case (and the smell of a plant in "Spies") for the first person narrator to revisit his past. Hosseini, like Frayn, does not present war as inevitable or inescapable but instead chooses to focus on the horrors the war presents.



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Examiner Tip

Make effective links between texts.



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Examiner Comments

The similar structures are identified; there is good and detailed discussion of contexts. This develops from earlier comments on *Spies*.

The speaker in the poem, much like Uncle Peter, is left with a lasting reminder of the war through the form of a "smothering dream" where he sees "before my helpless sight" a man plunging at him "guttering, choking, drowning" in the trenches. Owen's ~~use~~ choice of shocking ^{imagery and} language "the blood, Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs" is used bluntly and would have been particularly disturbing for readers at the time it was written ~~as~~ ^{when} they were surrounded by propaganda and pro-war poetry.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Make links between novels and poems.
 Comment on precise language usage.
 Contextualise.


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Examiner Comments

The writer has made a useful link between the experience of a character in *Spies* with that of the narrator of *Dulce et Decorum Est*. The language is quoted and discussed with some contextualisation. This candidate's whole essay scored low in band 4 for AO3 and higher in band 4 for AO4.

he provides Amir with means it is inevitable he will return to Afghanistan. Hosseini typifies war's inescapability with Amir's physical return and subsequent beating by coupling it with the emotional pain suffered for the duration of the novel. The psychological and emotional suffering of war, it could be argued, is the most devastating of all as war leaves wives widowed and children fatherless, just as Amir is left fatherless in the foreign land of America. Hosseini comments on how just because one is free from the physical pain and suffering of war, doesn't mean they can escape the emotional effects. Similarly, Frayn comments on the greater effect of war, rather than the physical injuries or deaths. Frayn sets his novel in suburban England where all genuine evidence of war is absent, but for a bomb site. All the characters in the novel are kept distant from the war, and yet, all seem to be affected by it. ~~It shapes the protagonist's mind set and health of~~ and Stephen's play is shaped by the knowledge and stories of war; so too is their mindset as the heroism and threat of war lead them to spy on Mrs. Hignford, which in turn provides the narrative with its driving force.



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Examiner Tip

It is a good idea to deal with three texts if possible.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

There is a clear focus on the question in the introduction to this essay although the final sentence is unnecessary. Three texts have been identified and links between them established. The candidate has addressed the requirements of AO3 from the outset although it is too early to see at what level he might be achieving.

Hosseini's dialogue and narrative epitomise the trapped nature of people in war. The horrors of war are truly inescapable.

Both Hosseini and Frayn use a first-person narrative in their novels. This method allows best the reader to witness the effect of war. In Frayn's the way the knowledge shapes attitudes and in Hosseini's how the exposure to the reality shapes actions.

Ken Smith's poem 'Essential Serbo-Croat' also comments on the inevitability and inescapability of war. It is the form of the poem that truly is Serbo-Croat the poet's point. The poem takes the form of a tourist language guide book.



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Examiners Tip

Maintain the links between the texts in an ongoing discussion.



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Examiners Comments

There is an interim summing up of what has been said about *The Kite Runner* in the preceding paragraph (the dialogue and narrative have been illustrated). The brief linking paragraph makes some structural points and the introduction to the discussion of the poem suggests an emerging overview linking texts and genres as well as a clear awareness of poetic form. This suggests AO3 at band 3 and possibly higher. The spelling mistakes do the candidate no favours and suggest AO1 in band 2.

6ET03 Grade Boundaries

Paper No	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	N
6ET03/01	100	67	59	51	43	35	27

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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