



General Certificate of Education

**English Language and Literature
6726**

Specification B

NTB6 Critical Approaches

Mark Scheme

2008 examination - June series

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NTB6

Assessment Objectives

In this paper candidates must communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insights gained from the combination of literary and linguistic study using appropriate terminology and accurate written expression (AO1).

There is special emphasis on the need to

- respond with knowledge and understanding to texts of different types and from different periods, exploring and commenting on relationships and comparisons between them (AO2ii, weighting 7.5%)
- use and evaluate different literary and linguistic approaches to the study of written and spoken language, showing how these approaches inform their readings (AO3ii, weighting 5%)
- show understanding of the ways contextual variation and choices of form, style and vocabulary shape the meanings of texts (AO4, weighting 2.5%)
- identify and consider the ways attitudes and values are created and conveyed in speech and writing (AO5, weighting 2.5%).

MARK BOUNDARY DESCRIPTORS

These descriptors are intended as a general guide only. Any given script does not have to show all the features for its band, but should be placed on the 'best-fit' principle. Examiners should mark positively at all times, and reward any well-supported approach.

It is very important that examiners should use as wide a range of marks as possible in order to provide clear distinctions between different levels of achievement. Even a mark of 50 does not imply perfection.

Texts 7 and 8 are compulsory and there are penalties for rubric infringements if they are omitted. A paper that completely leaves out both unseen texts should not score higher than 25 in Question 1. A paper that misses out one of these should not score higher than 38 in the same question. Examiners should mark 'RI' (Rubric Infringement) at the top of the first page of the script.

Band 6

43 – 50

The best answers that candidates working at this level under examination conditions can be expected to produce

- script shows understanding of the ways the topic is presented in the texts chosen, making very good use of the unseen texts
- establishes and analyses in detail a number of interesting points of comparison
- explores the way attitudes and values are implied in both unseen and pre-release texts
- explores ways in which context can shape meaning
- explores and analyses such matters as genre, purpose and audience in both unseen and pre-release texts
- analyses formal and stylistic features
- analyses relevant features such as discourse or pragmatics
- confidently applies literary and linguistic theory to texts
- shows fluent, clear and controlled expression, using precise critical terminology

Band 5

35 – 42

Good answers that display many of the qualities of the top band, but with some lack of consistency or thoroughness; more strengths than weaknesses

- script shows understanding of the way the topic is presented in most of the texts chosen, making substantial use of the unseen texts
- explores and explains presentation of textual material with frequent use of illustrative example
- establishes and develops several points of comparison
- explores the way attitudes and values are implied in most of the texts chosen
- shows awareness of the ways context and genre shape meaning
- is able to make comments on the form and structure of texts as well as vocabulary
- is able to make some competent use of literary and linguistic theory
- uses straightforward, clear English

Band 4

26 – 34

Answers in which there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Scripts that have merit but show very uneven treatment of the texts are likely to fall into this band. Comments may be implicit and under-developed in places

- script shows understanding of the way the topic is presented in some of the texts chosen, making some effective use of the unseen texts
- explains several points of comparison between texts
- responds to and explains implied attitudes and values
- identifies some relevant aspects of genre and context with supporting illustration
- chooses appropriate features of vocabulary or grammar for illustration and comment
- shows awareness of the methods of critical approaches with some competent use of technical terms
- reasonably accurate and clear use of English, with only occasional slips

Band 3

17 – 25

Answers that address the task but contain a number of weaknesses. Scripts that show superficial understanding may fall into this band

- script shows understanding of the topic and identifies or lists significant features, with some illustrated reference to the unseen texts
- makes some detailed comparisons between texts
- describes a variety of attitudes and values at a simple level
- describes some effects of context, possibly in general terms
- shows how texts demonstrate specific features of genre and supports this by illustrative reference
- identifies relevant features of vocabulary or grammar
- makes some reference to theory, which may be vague or inaccurate
- shows some familiarity with technical terms
- partly effective written expression; generally accurate but with flaws in fluency

Band 2

9 – 16

Answers that contain a significant number of weaknesses. Answers in this band may be very general or may summarise the texts

- script may show only general understanding by superficial description of the content of the texts, neglecting or making only superficial reference to the unseen texts
- makes only very obvious or general comparisons between texts
- identifies general attitudes and values in simple terms
- describes context in general terms
- identifies genre and purpose in general terms, possibly using pre-prepared lists
- may identify features of form or vocabulary without specific comment
- very limited or inaccurate use of critical terminology
- lapses in control of written English

Band 1

1 – 8

Answers in this band are likely to show fundamental weaknesses in understanding of the texts and of the task, with little evidence of study of English Language and Literature. Very brief responses are likely to fall into this band

- script may show little understanding of ideas concerning the topic in either the pre-release or the unseen texts
- makes brief and general comments on each text in turn without evidence of comparison
- likely to misunderstand or to ignore attitudes and values
- little awareness of the importance of context
- little awareness of genre, purpose or audience
- little awareness of differences of form, style and vocabulary between texts
- little or no use of critical terminology
- frequent lapses in spelling grammar and punctuation; may show lack of the control of language appropriate for this level.

Unit: NTB6

Series: June 2008

1. Compare the ways in which the topic of fire is presented.

In your answer you **must** refer in detail to Texts 7 and 8 and to at least **two** texts from the pre-release material.

In your answer you should:

- focus on how fire is presented
- make explicit comparisons between your chosen texts
- identify the attitudes and values expressed and implied
- support your claims by reference to relevant aspects of context and genre
- provide precise analysis of relevant language use.

(50 marks)

There are many valid methods of tackling this question. Candidates may use any line of approach that shows use of a framework or frameworks and that is supported by evidence from the texts. Question 2 offers them an opportunity to explain their specific choice of method.

Texts may be compared in a variety of ways, for example the comparison may stress:

- mode
- purpose
- audience
- genre
- gender representation
- context
- style etc.

	Band 1 1 – 8 marks	Band 2 9 – 16 marks	Band 3 17 – 25 marks
	Rudimentary understanding and comparison – little evidence of the study of language and literature	Simple comparisons and understanding – summarises texts and states the obvious	Addresses the task, but response contains significant weaknesses and lacks development
AO1	Frequent and serious lapses in spelling, grammar and punctuation, or a very brief response	Significant lapses in control of written English	Partly effective written expression; generally accurate
AO2ii	Little understanding of ideas concerning the topic in the texts. Brief or general comments on each text in turn	Summarises the content of the texts in relation to the topic. Makes very obvious or general comparisons between texts	Shows understanding of the topic and identifies or lists significant features. Makes some illustrated comparisons between texts
AO4	Little evidence of awareness of context or genre. Little or no use of critical terminology	Describes context or genre in simple terms. May identify and compare features of genre without linking them to the topic. Makes very limited or inaccurate use of critical terminology	Describes some aspects of context and genre. Shows some relevant use of critical terms. Textual references may lack adequate comment
AO5	Ignores or shows misunderstanding of the attitudes and values expressed	Identifies obvious or general attitudes only	Describes some specific attitudes and values at a simple level

Band 4 26 – 34 marks	Band 5 35 – 42 marks	Band 6 43 – 50 marks
Shows merit and provides some valid comparisons, showing understanding, but may be underdeveloped in places	Good perceptive answers showing many more strengths than weaknesses	A very good response to all chosen texts, supporting perceptive comment by precise reference
Reasonably accurate and clear use of English with only occasional slips	Clear, accurate and organised expression	Fluent, clear and well-controlled expression
Shows understanding of the presentation of the topic in several texts, making some effective use of the unseen texts. Explains several points of comparison between texts	Shows understanding of ways the topic is presented and developed in most of the texts chosen, making substantial use of the unseen texts. Establishes and develops a number of points of comparison	Shows understanding of the ways the topic is developed in all the texts chosen. Establishes and analyses in detail a number of interesting points of comparison
Explains some relevant aspects of context and genre. Demonstrates some competent use of technical terms	Explores ways in which context and genre can shape meanings. Shows perception of overall form and structure as well as vocabulary. Is able to make some competent use of literary and linguistic theory	Analyses a range of relevant formal and stylistic features. Supports comments by awareness of links between text and context. Confidently applies literary and linguistic theory to texts
Responds to and explains some implied attitudes	Explores ways attitudes are implied in most texts, but may show some inconsistency	Analyses ways attitudes are implied in both unseen and other chosen texts
NB – Award top half of band for use of precise terminology in identifying features: <i>'archaic...elision...adjective...interrogative'</i>		

Unit: NTB6

Series: June 2008

2. Explain the methods you chose to compare the texts, and show how useful these were in contributing to your understanding of and response to the texts.

(20 marks)

This task mainly tests objective AO3ii.

It is, if anything, even more important to use the full range of marks here, as otherwise the shorter scale may produce greater bunching and hence less real discrimination.

Reward generously those answers that:

- show clear and purposeful methods of critical approach
- recognise that different approaches may be appropriate for different kinds of text
- recognise that there may be valid alternative approaches to the same text.

	AO3ii
	Use and evaluate different literary and linguistic approaches to the study of written and spoken language, showing how these approaches inform their readings
Band 6 18 - 20	Provides a detailed and thoughtful account of the approaches and methods used in own analysis. Shows knowledgeable understanding of a variety of literary and linguistic approaches and theories. Evaluates the usefulness of own choice of methods
Discusses own approach and methods	
Band 5 14 – 17	Shows confident use of different methods of comparison between the texts. Makes informed judgements on the choice of approach appropriate for different contexts, genres etc. Explains the methods used in own analysis
Explains own use of methods	
Band 4 10 – 13	Describes an organised approach to Question 1. Demonstrates awareness of the appropriate method for different types of text. Shows command of technical terminology and awareness of the literary and linguistic frameworks acquired during the A level course
Describes own use of methods	
Band 3 7 – 9	Shows some knowledge of appropriate methodology and of technical terms, and some ability to apply these. May deviate into re-working parts of Question 1 or into an account of purely personal reactions to texts. Lists of –isms with little convincing reference to the candidate’s own use of them are likely to fall into this band
Identifies appropriate methods of approach	
Band 2 4 – 6	Concentrates mainly on process. Makes some attempt to classify texts. May make general reference to some literary and linguistic approaches and critical terms but without much evidence that they understood or applied to the texts in Question 1
Shows general knowledge of critical methodology	
Band 1 1 – 3	Gives obvious description of process – reading, working out the general topic, making notes etc.
Outlines basic process	Very brief answers are likely to fall into this category.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

Text 1

'The Gift of Fire' – from the myth 'Prometheus', *Traditional Tales from Ancient Greece*

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- account of the myth of Prometheus, simplified for a child audience
- gives a bare narrative, mainly consisting of actions
- describes the practical uses of fire and its physical transmission
- fire presented as a valuable gift for humans.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- simple attitudes, undeveloped – 'Zeus wanted to keep the secret of fire for the gods. Prometheus thought this was unfair'
- Prometheus has proprietorial interest in 'his' humans
- Zeus represented as unreasonable and selfish
- fire is dangerous to those who handle it; Prometheus is severely punished.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- myths are typically evolved to explain natural phenomena
- large print
- gives explanations of unusual words - 'a vegetable called fennel' - because of child audience.

Other comments on language features may include:

- short sentences
- exclamation mark as simple indicator of tone, 'They were fires!'

Text 2

'Fire and Ice' – Robert Frost

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- superficially simple poem rich in connotation
- fire is used as a metaphor for passion – 'desire'
- suggestion that this is dangerous, possible link with Text 1
- 'the world will end' gives a cosmic scale to the destruction.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- pronoun 'I' suggests personal experience
- Frost distrusts heat of emotion as potentially destructive, but suggests that coldness, and 'hate' may be equally so.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- highly crafted literary poem that works on suggestion rather than statement
- basic iambic metre but irregular line lengths, short lines at the end create a pause suggestive of chill
- rhymes abaabcbcb, giving an enclosed form. Shift in rhyme scheme marks the change in emphasis from fire to ice.

Other comments on language features may include:

- American spelling of 'favor'
- balanced expression, 'Some say', 'fire ' and 'ice' each repeated once.

Text 3

Jane Eyre – Charlotte Brontë

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- first person narrative by main protagonist, emphasising alarm and excitement of an attack by fire
- Jane rescues Rochester from a literal fire in his bedroom
- fire also used as a symbol of passion, possible link with Text 2.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- Jane's suspicion of Grace Poole and the mysterious sounds in the darkness
- instant alarm at the smell of smoke, and immediate concern for Rochester at some risk to herself show the character development of Jane
- Jane's respectful attitude, addresses Rochester as 'sir'
- tension between this and the evident growing intimacy between Rochester and Jane shown in his reactions.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- extract from a novel, indicates a stage in the relationship of the main characters; one of a series of occasions when Jane rescues Rochester
- suspense – reader does not know the identity of the mysterious arsonist at this point
- gothic horror element used seriously – 'goblin laughter', 'possessed with a devil' - and more fancifully by Rochester, 'in the name of all the elves in Christendom'
- use of dialogue shows an unusual master/servant relationship – Rochester calls Jane, 'witch, sorceress'.

Other comments on language features may include:

- dated lexis 'Ere long', 'whence these blue wreaths issued', 'the quenched element', 'liberally bestowed'
- grammatical inversion 'thought I'
- cultural references, basin and ewer, lighting by candles.

Text 4

Blue Remembered Hills – Dennis Potter

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- dangers of fire, possible link to Text 5 in comment on motivation
- fast moving, dramatic events with present tense narration
- tragic sequence, showing the dark side of childhood experience, with real horror as the child screams at the end of Scene 26
- vulnerability of protagonist, possible link to Text 3.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- Donald Duck is a naïve protagonist, unaware of the possible consequences of his actions, so are the other children, who are cruel and destructive without understanding exactly what they are doing
- the children show fear of an escaped Italian prisoner; their relief on finding that 'We be safe now' turns to aggression against Donald
- verse at the end is an ironic comment on 'lost content' and adult stereotypes of happy childhood.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- television script, with short scenes and many instructions for visual presentation
- set in the West Country, 1943
- symbolic reference to the adult world, where there is a war on – ‘bloody bugging Japs’, ‘bloody Itie’, irony of ‘England’s Glory’ matches starting the fire.

Other comments on language features may include:

- very brief utterances appropriate for inarticulate children
- naturalistic speech full of elisions and ellipsis
- taboo language shows Donald’s intensity
- dialect forms – ‘I be’, ‘didn’t us’, ‘mam’ give sense of location
- name ‘Donald Duck’ indicates a victim.

Text 5

‘Serial Arson’ - Deviant Crimes website

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- psychological explanation of various kinds of arson
- classifies different types of motivation
- possible links with Texts 3 and 4.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- descriptive, clinical list of deviant attitudes – excitement, economic gain, moral judgement, revenge, vanity – each given a separate paragraph
- attitude of the website itself is objective and largely non-judgemental, although the inverted commas round “immoral” create a distance between writer and topic.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- academic treatment, with references given at the end
- characteristic website layout with links indicated
- refers to historical examples of the use of fire to cause terror, such as 9/11 and Ku Klux Klan.

Other comments on language features may include:

- third person account, present tense
- some technical lexis – ‘serial arson’, ‘typologies’, ‘pyromania’, ‘fire buff’
- heavy use of the modal verb ‘may’ to avoid over-simplification.

Text 6

Inaugural speech – George W. Bush

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- use of fire as a metaphor for enthusiasm for ‘freedom’
- metaphor is extended and elaborated for emphasis – hope ‘kindles’ hope, the cause ‘warms’ friends and ‘burns’ enemies
- benevolent use of fire a possible link with Text 1 and Text 7.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- confidence that American intervention in world affairs is in the cause of ‘freedom’
- the wars are a triumph of ‘courage’ over ‘evil’
- American deaths in this context are idealistic and honourable.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- scripted speech for a set formal occasion, the President's inauguration, expected to be inspirational
- this was Bush's second term of office, set against the background of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, hence the references to fighting and deaths.

Other comments on language features may include:

- direct address to the audience
- inclusive adjective 'our' repeated
- large number of emotive abstract nouns 'patience', 'obligations', 'freedom', 'hope', 'idealism'
- rhetorical use of triplets: 'the quiet work... the idealistic work.. the dangerous and necessary work'; 'life is fragile, and evil is real, and courage triumphs'
- shifts from the past 'I have asked..' to the future 'you will add not just to the wealth of our country, but to its character' in appealing for support.

Text 7 (Unseen)

'What is this fire?' – Tim Rollins et al.

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- link to the simplified Prometheus myth of Text 1 but now treated purely on a metaphorical level, discussing the complexities and significance of the story
- links to destructive aspects of fire in Text 2 and to Bush's metaphorical use of fire in Text 6.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- dialogue explores the significance of fire in terms of power, creativity, knowledge, enthusiasm
- discusses the ambiguity of fire, potentially creative or destructive
- considers Zeus' motivations for the punishment of Prometheus in detail; suggestion that the power of the gods depends on their superior knowledge and on the relative ignorance of man
- explores the idea of schools' failure to 'light the fire' of enthusiasm in their students.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- edited transcript of a discussion, retains some features of spontaneous speech, such as elisions and ellipsis, but mainly tidied into sentences
- refers to a range of literary and artistic uses of the myth: Aeschylus, Mary Shelley, R.L.Stevenson, the Incredible Hulk.

Other comments on language features may include:

- Tim leads the discussion by asking questions, asking for clarification ('Ideas like', "Let's order a pizza?"), objecting to silly answers ('Oh come on!...').

Text 8 (Unseen)

'A Farthur Account of this Lamentable Fire' – *London Gazette*

Comments on presentation of the topic may include:

- graphic contemporary account of a real event, the Great Fire of London
- factual details of how the fire began, specific streets named, time, weather conditions
- dramatic presentation, particularly in the second paragraph, changing to present tense for vividness
- catastrophic effects link to Text 4.

Comments on attitudes and values may include:

- writer stresses the scale of the fire and its violence
- emphasis on chaos and suffering
- expressions of pity and horror - 'This dismal fire', 'No man that had the sence of human miseries could unconcernedly behold the frightful destruction'.

Comments on genre and context may include:

- newspaper article reporting sensational topical event, one of a number of contemporary accounts extant
- paragraphs longer than is common in modern practice
- italics used for place names.

Other comments on language features may include:

- urgency of repeated 'Fire! Fire! Fire!'
- active verbs, often accompanied by modifiers – 'resound', 'crying piteously', 'rushing wildly', 'hobbling', 'raging'
- archaic features : spelling –'farthur', 'sence'; verb form 'doth'; 'cripples' now not socially acceptable language.