General Certificate of Education

English Language and Literature 2726
Specification B

ELLB4   Text Transformation

Report on the Examination
2010 examination - June series

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Principal Moderator's Report

This was the first summer submission of candidates' work for the new Text Transformation unit in the English Language and Literature B Specification. As it has been developed from the legacy Text Transformation unit (NTB4), there are no essential differences in what constitutes an acceptable transformation and centres who offered the legacy specification should therefore be very familiar with the principle: a literary source text is chosen by the candidate to form the basis of a new piece of writing that must be of a significantly different genre (not necessarily literary) from that of the source text; however, this new text must still have identifiable links with the source text and should provide a new slant upon, insight into or interplay with this original. These close links between the legacy unit and the new means that most centres seemed to have little difficulty in ensuring that their candidates produced work that fulfilled the criteria for ELLB4. However, as there were a number of centres that allowed their candidates to submit folders that infringed (seriously in some cases) the rubric requirements for the unit, it may be worth restating what constitutes an acceptable submission.

There are **three** lists of permitted authors published in the specification from which candidates must choose their source texts for their transformations. These authors represent the three main literary genres of poetry, drama and prose fiction. A candidate is required to choose works by **two** authors and **cannot choose authors from the same list**. In other words, if a candidate chooses a source text written by a poet from the poetry list, s/he **must** choose this second work from an author who appears on either the drama or prose fiction list. There is no flexibility in this requirement. Even if a writer produced work in more than one genre, the candidate can only choose to transform a work by that author from the genre list in which s/he appears. For example, Shakespeare wrote both poems and plays, but as he appears only in the drama list it is unacceptable to base a transformation on his sonnets. A further example: for the purposes of this specification, Thomas Hardy is a novelist and short story writer, not a poet.

Having chosen works by these two authors, candidates have a further decision to make. They must decide whether to write two separate and distinct transformations (together with their associated commentaries) or to write a 'joint' transformation which blends their two source texts (still from different genres) together, again with an associated commentary. It is thus possible, say, for candidates from the same centre to choose the same two source texts and for one candidate to write two separate transformations and for the other candidate to write a joint transformation based on these two texts.

The introduction of lists of set authors worked very well. No longer were moderators faced with having to tell centres that students had made unsuitable and unhelpful choices of source texts that led to unsuccessful transformations, as was occasionally the case with the legacy NTB4. More importantly, this change to set author lists seemed to result in some very good transformations and commentaries being submitted. The choice of a text by a 'serious' author seemed to allow candidates to write commentaries that focused on the most significant factors. There was a welcome range of authors chosen by candidates and centres and there were very few, if any, of the writers who were not chosen by candidates.

Centres frequently ask for examples of joint transformations and the following list is comprised of a selection of those submitted for this summer's moderation. A word of warning: their inclusion on this list does not mean that they automatically led to good transformations, merely that they demonstrate what is acceptable as a joint transformation. Some candidates whose choices are represented here produced excellent work; others, less successful work.

- Wilfred Owen poems and *Richard II*   wartime reminiscences

- *The Pardoner's Tale* and *Romeo and Juliet*   television script

- *Translations* and *Gulliver's Travels*   short story

- *Mansfield Park* and Wilfred Owen poems   epistolary short story

- *Pride and Prejudice* and *Romeo and Juliet*   US high school love story

- *The Great Gatsby* and *The Owl and the Pussycat*   problem page letters

- Benjamin Zephaniah poem and *Desiree's Baby*   1001 Nights tale

- *Jane Eyre* and 'The Laboratory' (Browning)   series of letters

- *Jane Eyre* and 'The Flea' (Donne)   story in the style of *The Wind in the Willows*

- *Pride and Prejudice* and 'My Dream' (Rossetti)   la Fontaine fable

- *Heroes and Villains* (Carter) and
  A Midsummer Night's Dream   story in the style of JRR Tolkien

- *The Awakening* (Chopin) and 'Elegy XVIII' (Donne)   short story in the style of Damon Runyon

It is clear from some of these examples that it is acceptable for candidates to choose to transform the works of two authors from two of the lists (e.g. Charlotte Brontë and John Donne) into the style of a third author (e.g. Kenneth Graham) whether or not this third author is from one of the lists. What is **not** acceptable, however, as a joint transformation is when a candidate transforms one text by an author on the list in the style of another author from a different list. For example, to transform a selection of Wilfred Owen's poetry into an Alan Bennett *Talking Heads* monologue results in only one transformation and therefore a second must be submitted. In this example, there is interplay with/insight into only one text – the Wilfred Owen selection. Candidates should also ensure when submitting a joint transformation that there is a more or less equal balance between the use of the two source texts in such a transformation. One text should not dominate at the expense of the other.

The new regulations for the submission of coursework mean that candidates need only submit the final version of the transformation(s) and commentary(ies). There is no need therefore for centres to submit all drafts of a candidate's work to the moderator. Nor is it necessary for candidates to produce an 'Evidence of Planning' sheet, as it is for the AS coursework unit ELLB2. The commentary(ies) produced by the candidate will contain such evidence. The only additional material that need be included by a candidate (if necessary) is a style model of the genre for the transformation or an extract from the source text if the centre considers that it will be unfamiliar to the moderator. In addition, the new regulations stipulate that the transformation and associated commentary must be annotated by the centre. The vast majority of centres complied with this requirement and included helpful formative and summative comments on candidates' work and these greatly facilitated the work of moderators. In addition, many centres included a well-designed and detailed sheet for each candidate that indicated the rigorous and professional process of internal standardisation that had taken place. Whilst this is not an AQA requirement (the Candidate Record Form (CRF) is), it was always reassuring and helpful to moderators to see such attention to detail by centres in the assessment of candidates.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades
Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.