

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH (9695): SET TEXTS PAPERS

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:

Band 1

22-25 Very good work, showing detailed knowledge of texts, understanding of theme, characterisation, linguistic features and other textual issues, some awareness of literary conventions and contexts, techniques and genre characteristics, and the ability to address this knowledge and understanding with sustained relevance to the issues raised by the questions. Responses to texts will be perceptive, often freshly personal, and may show originality in approach to and treatment of questions. There may be evidence of sensitive awareness of the contexts in which the literary works studied were written and understood. Candidates will express complex literary ideas and arguments with clarity and fluency. Answers will be coherently structured, with logical progression and effectively linked paragraphs. Control of written English will be accomplished, with few errors.

In answers to passage-based questions, work will sustain an appropriate balance between critical appreciation of given extracts and consideration of the broader textual issues raised by the questions, and show striking ability to relate part of a text to its whole and vice versa.

Band 2

18-21 Proficient work, showing secure knowledge of the texts, understanding of themes and characters, some awareness of literary qualities and contexts, and the ability to address knowledge and critical understanding in a way relevant to the issues raised by the questions. There will be evidence of personal response to the texts, straightforward and vigorously articulated, perhaps, rather than penetrating and subtle. However, candidates may also express quite complex ideas with some fluency. Literary arguments will be coherent, with progression of ideas through clearly linked paragraphs. In general, control of written English will be confident, with only occasional errors.

In answers to passage-based questions, work will show engagement with both the given extracts and the wider textual issues, but may not always strike the most effective balance between these related elements. There will be a confident relation of a part of the text to its whole.

Band 3

14-17 Competent work, showing sound knowledge of the texts relevantly addressed to the question. There will be intelligent understanding on the levels of theme and character, and some evidence of appreciation of literary qualities, contexts, methods and effects. Material will be coherently organised with occasional insights, although argument may at times lack critical depth and balance, with failure to see and explore the subtler implications of questions. Candidates will express intelligent, straightforward ideas clearly, though there may be occasional loss of fluency with points not always strongly connected. Expression will be clear and generally accurate.

In answers to passage-based questions, work will attempt to cover both aspects, and there will be some sense of a relationship between the text as a whole and its constituent parts.

Band 4

10-13 Work, showing sometimes very detailed, knowledge of the texts with some evidence of ability to use it in an appropriate way to address the questions. Understanding is likely to be partial and restricted to the more obvious aspects of texts. There will be some reference to literary features of form and language. Argument will be basically coherent but may lack flexibility, be simplistic in approach and assertive in tone. There is likely to be some reliance on paraphrase and narrative summary. Candidates will articulate simple ideas with clarity but there may be some imprecision and clumsiness of expression in dealing with more complex concepts. Points will not always be clearly linked and there may be occasional obscurity in the presentation of ideas and responses. Expression will be mostly clear and appropriate.

In answers to passage-based questions, work may be lacking in balance of approach, with over-concentration on the given extracts and little attempt to explore the broader textual issues. Conversely some answers may be in effect general essays, with insufficient treatment of the passages. Ability to negotiate between parts of a text and its whole will be strictly limited.

Band 5

6-9 Work of a very basic standard, showing knowledge of the texts but limited ability to use it selectively to address the questions. There may be occasional errors of fact and inappropriate and inaccurate reference and quotation. There will be some evidence of understanding and an attempt to engage with issues of literary context, form and language. Argument will contain valid points but may lack coherence, with repetition, assertion and relapse into narrative summary/paraphrase. There may be a tendency to drift from relevant discussion into material of tangential significance, with reliance on prepared answers and received opinion. Writing will be basically clear but prone to problems in expression and inappropriate register. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be quite common, with the occasional confused passage of writing. However, there will be no sustained loss of communication.

In answers to passage-based questions there will be some evidence of understanding of how part relates to whole. Treatment of the given extracts may well be sketchy or overlong and indiscriminating. Comment on the wider textual issues is likely to be general. There may be a lack of balance.

Band 6

2-5 Textual knowledge will be narrative based and may contain errors, some quite significant. There will be some appropriate points made in response to the question, showing some knowledge of the text. This will be limited and generally restricted to levels of plot and characters – the latter treated very much as "real" people. Answers are likely to be partial, undeveloped, narrative commentary in approach, with the assertion of simple points rather than progressive lines of argument. Some confused, and even seriously garbled, passages of writing are likely to occur. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling will be commonplace.

Answers to passage-based questions are likely to be seriously unbalanced, with an emphasis on narrative or paraphrase. Passages are likely to have been only partially understood and tentatively located contextually, with little coherent sense of the relationship between textual part and whole. Expression will be insecure, with significant lapses in tone and register.

Band 7

0-1 This band is reserved for work which is inadequate. Textual knowledge will be sketchy, superficial and marked by significant errors and omissions. There will be no evidence of critical understanding or of personal engagement with texts, and difficulty in articulating even the most basic points. In answers to passage-based questions, extracts are likely to have been seriously misunderstood and mislocated contextually, with no coherent sense of the relationship between textual part and whole. Quality of language will be weak, with frequent lapses in tone and register.