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Examiners' Report June 2009

GCE08

GCE English Literature 6ET01

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Introduction

As in January, timing did not seem to present a very significant problem and most students managed to provide full and detailed responses to all sections of the paper.

All of the tasks set drew a pleasing number of responses though Q10a and Q10b were markedly less frequently answered.

As might have been expected, the quality of written expression and organisation ranged from indifferent to outstanding.

The exam is divided into three sections, as already stated. What follows is a commentary on levels of performance in each of these components and where appropriate, exemplification of student response. For further guidance, centres are directed to the Edexcel website and the training events provided by Edexcel.

Section A – Unseen Poetry & Prose

This part of the exam offers candidates a choice of response. Two unseen texts are set - one poem and one prose extract, followed by three short answer tasks. Candidates choose one or the other passage to answer on. In June, the poetry question was much more popular than the prose.

Poetry

The poem set was *To An Athlete Dying Young* by A.E. Housman. The tasks were:

Q1a Rhyme is often considered to be an important feature in poetry.

Discuss the use and effect of rhyme in this poem.

Q1b Poets often make use of imagery.

Using two examples from the poem explore this poet's use of imagery.

Q1c Irony is an important aspect of poetry.

Using your knowledge of poetry, discuss how this poet uses irony for effect.

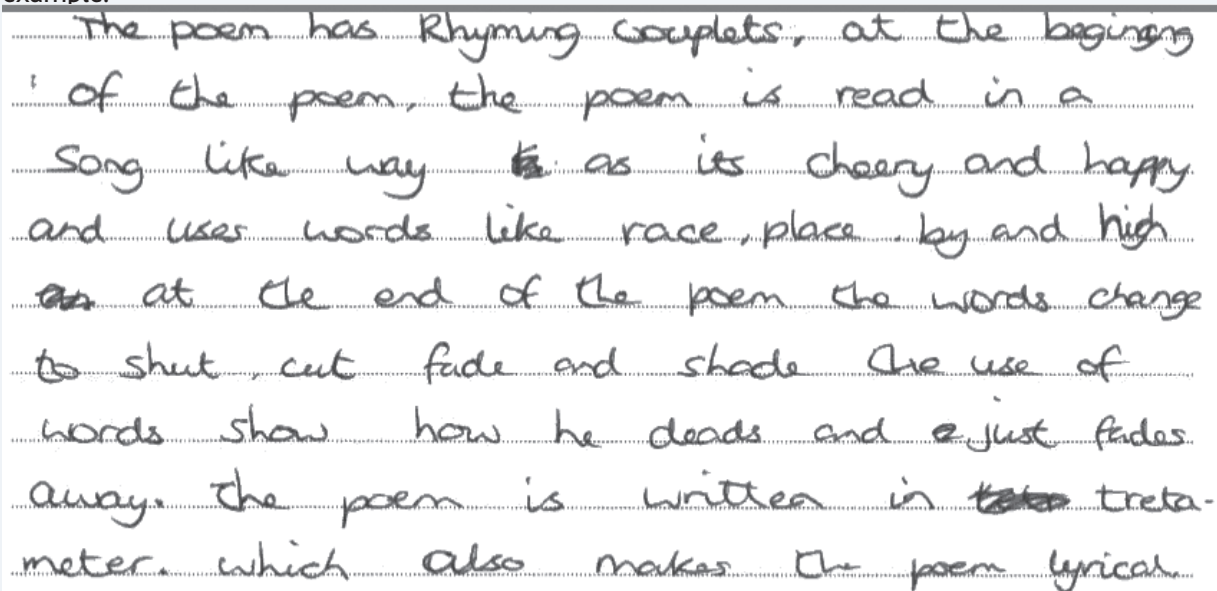
The first task targets AO1 (5 marks), the second AO2 (5 marks) and the third AO1 and AO2 together (10 marks in total), leading to 20 marks overall.

Prior to the January exam, there had been some concern about the amount of space available on the answer paper for the short task responses. Whilst there were some candidates who badly over-ran (almost always to no significant gain), the undoubted majority managed to confine themselves to the demarcated areas in both sessions, often writing in exactly the way that it had been anticipated that they would.

Q1a

Most candidates were able to make at least some relevant comments, with some sophisticated explorations of the relationship between form and content. Use of exemplification was variable. The effect on poetic rhythm of rhyming couplets was often discussed to good effect as was the notion, frequently repeated, that the regularity of rhyme (and rhythm) might reflect the steady pace of running or that aspects of it had the finality of death.

It was clear from the responses that many centres had used the sample assessment materials to good effect in preparing their candidates for the examination. In some cases, however this led to them looking for lyrical or song-like qualities at all costs (and where there were not many to be found), as is true of the following example:



The poem has Rhyming couplets, at the beginning of the poem, the poem is read in a song like way as its cheery and happy and uses words like race, place, by and high as at the end of the poem the words change to shut, cut, fade and shade. The use of words show how he deads and e just fades away. The poem is written in ~~trata~~ tetrameter, which also makes the poem lyrical.

Q1b

This was a straightforward proposition and one which produced a lot of well informed answers, often focusing to sound purpose on the image of "early though the laurel grows/ It withers faster than the rose", for example.

Q1c

As in January, this task proved to be a differentiator and it is where the element of stretch and challenge truly resided in this section of the exam. Very many candidates were confused as to what irony might mean, and responses ranged from those where it was taken as a synonym for humour (usually with unfortunate consequences) to those whose grasp of the concept and how it worked in the poem was impressive. One candidate who had done very well on 1a & 1b was only able to offer: "Irony is the gap between what is said and what is meant." as the whole of their answer. A significant minority were unable even to venture that far. Even despite the title, there was a lot of confusion as to what exactly Housman was commenting on (the "Athlete" was often thought to be very much alive, for instance).

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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a high scoring candidate who scored 9/10, even though not all of the contentions are quite agreeable, perhaps.

Throughout the poem the poet uses irony to emphasize the futility of human existence. This semi-nihilistic view is shown through the use of "And the name died before the man". This shows how even though fame is sought, it rarely lasts it also implies that as all are born equal all will die equal, in anonymity. Throughout the 6th. stanza the poet builds on the irony "So set before its echoes fade" "The still defended challenge cup". This hints at a new message - enjoy life whilst you can. The description of people as "Runners" and the parody of celebration "And home we brought you shoulder high." Is also ironic as it implies that mankind races through life with the finish line invariably as death. This use of irony makes the poem as an appeal, encouraging people to slow down and enjoy life rather than race towards the final goal. The irony also goes some way to break up the solemnity of the poem, adding a trace of humour and encouraging the reader to see the lighter message of the poem.

Prose

The prose extract was taken from Charles Dickens' novel *The Old Curiosity Shop*. The tasks were:

- Q2a Novelists use language choices to create interest.
Identify and comment on the effect of the writer's use of language in this extract.
- Q2b Novelists make use of pace for particular effects.
Identify two examples of methods used to vary pace in this extract and comment on their effect.
- Q2c Writers often try to create humour in their novels.
Using your knowledge of humour, discuss the ways in which Charles Dickens develops it in this passage.

The first task targets AO1 (5 marks), the second AO2 (5 marks) and the third AO1 and AO2 together (10 marks in total), leading to 20 marks overall.

Q2a

Many candidates did a sound or better job with this question, commenting purposefully on Dickens' use of terms such as "complimented", "buffets" and "dwarf", their effects and sometimes the changes in reaction which nouns such as the latter might have on different audiences. Very few candidates indeed proved completely unable to handle this question.

Q2b

An exemplar response is offered here, by way of commentary:

Firstly, the writer uses few full stops, and plenty of commas and semicolons in the 1st paragraph to ensure that the action is not broken up, and to create a long chain of events. This is coupled with lots of verbs, 'rushing... closing... rained... clung... hammered', to increase the tempo. Secondly, the direct speech; short sentences and ^{many} lots of questions keep the ^{2nd half of the} scene alternating from one character to the next, emphasised by an increased use of tags, 'said Quip... returned Dick... muttered the Dwarf'. ~~The short p~~ coupled with the short paragraphs in the direct speech section, the tempo in this section is slowed, reflecting the end of the fight: the two characters gasping for breath.



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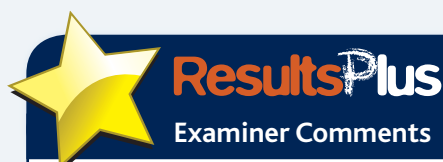
This perceptive and thoughtful answer does a lot, in a short space, with a task that many found much more challenging than Q1a. It was awarded 5/5.

Q2c

Here, the same candidate's work is provided:

The opening paragraph uses ambiguous language, 'in the arms of' 'complimented', 'skilful and experienced' 'good-will', at once contrasting with the idea of a street brawl. This creates humour, as it demeans the violence of the event and gives it a comical edge: is it a love story, or a fight scene? The comedy continues with the realisation that it is the wrong man, 'I thought it was somebody else', and the ridiculous situation and irony builds to a climax with the final line, 'I thought there was somebody dead here'. The cliffhanger produced here shifts the poem into the completely ridiculous: the reader, having been explained the situation in detail previously, with lots of imagery such as the metaphor, 'shower of buffets' and the comical, 'advancing and streaking in tons with a threatening attitude', can vividly imagine the scene, and thus laugh with the narrator. The humour in the passage is understated: it is the subtext that is comical, rather than the actual narrative. However, clearly the narrator, too, finds the scene funny: the use of formal language in the phrase, 'whether he wanted any more?' shows how alien the narrator is to such events, and he describes the fight as, 'a kind of dance'. Finally, the author's description of the characters, 'the Dwarf', 'Mr Richard Swiveller performing a kind of dance' adds a final humorous touch to the scene.

(Total for Question 2 = 20 marks)



This response is confident and perceptive throughout, showing full understanding of Dickens' narrative method and use of language.

General Comments

Candidates seemed, on the whole, to be at least reasonably well-equipped to handle the demands of this section of the exam. Even where it is not specified that they do so, students are advised to choose two examples for comment when they are answering the a. or b. parts of their chosen task. They should exemplify briefly and try to ensure that they offer some evidence of evaluation or engagement with the text. Many answers were well on their way to having met these essential requirements. Centres are reminded that individual points cannot be given double credit – where answers to questions choose to use the same examples on which to base their comments, the analysis, at the very least, must be different. For example, candidates who remarked on the humour of Dickens' use of "complimented" for 2a could not gain reward for saying something similar in 2c.

Section B – Poetry

This part of the exam offers candidates a choice of response. A selection of poems from three anthologies (*From Here to Eternity*, Oxford University Press and *The Rattle Bag*) are set, grouped under the headings *Home*, *Land and Work*. The first option is a generic essay, allowing students to choose which poems they use to address the terms of the task. The second task specifies one poem from each anthology and invites candidates to select at least one other with which to respond.

Section B targets AO1 (15 marks), AO2 (5 marks) and AO3 (20 marks).

The poetry tasks were:

Q3. Home

Either:

- (a) 'Home often seems to haunt those who write about it.'

Compare and contrast the ways in which home is presented in **at least two** poems in the light of this claim.

Or:

- (b) 'Poets often explore the themes of loneliness and isolation in writing about home.'

Using **one** of the following poems as a starting point, compare and contrast how poets present these themes in at least one other poem.

Either Edward Thomas *The New House* (From Here to Eternity)

or Walter De La Mare *The Listeners* (Oxford University Press)

or John Betjeman *Death In Leamington* (The Rattle Bag).

Q4. Land**Either:**

- (a) 'Poets writing about land often try to appeal to the senses in order to make their work more vivid.'

Compare and contrast **at least two** poems in the light of this statement.

Or:

- (b) 'Many poems about land present ideas of beauty.'

Using **one** of the following poems as a starting point, compare and contrast how poets present ideas of beauty in at least one other poem.

Either Dylan Thomas *Poem in October* (From Here to Eternity)

or Ann Stevenson *Himalayan Balsam* (Oxford University Press)

or Emily Dickinson *How the Old Mountains drip with Sunset* (The Rattle Bag).

Q5. Work**Either:**

- (a) 'Poems about work often depict very strong ideas of masculinity.'

Compare and contrast **at least two** poems in the light of this statement.

Or:

- (b) 'Some poets writing about work are primarily concerned with the theme of memory.'

Using one of the following poems as a starting point, compare and contrast how poets explore the theme of memory in at least one other poem.

Either Molly Holden *Photograph of Hay-maker, 1890* (From Here to Eternity)

or William Wordsworth *The Solitary Reaper* (Oxford University Press)

or Philip Larkin *At Grass* (The Rattle Bag).

Q3a

The word 'haunts' was interpreted in a number of valid ways. Rossetti's 'At Home' and Hardy's 'The Self-Unseeing' were popular choices, as was Larkin's 'Home Is So Sad'. There was a general confidence in dealing with poetic effects; the ability to make discriminating and cohesive comments on the complexity and nuance of language was obviously rarer.

Q3b

Very many answers were on 'The New House', which was generally dealt with competently and even confidently in some cases, with intelligent discussion of form as well as content. Few candidates used 'The Listeners' and many of those who used 'Death in Leamington' tended to describe rather than analyse, often adopting a verse by verse approach.

Q4a

The following opening to a candidate's response is a good guide to how well many candidates engaged with the task at hand from the outset, as opposed to simply repeating the terms of the question or producing a rehearsed answer:

I agree with THIS statement completely. I think that poets who appeal to senses and make the images more vivid are much more successful, as they really make you feel part of the poem, because it's so clear to you. Two poems that particularly appeal to my senses are 'To Autumn' and 'The way through the woods'. Both use aural, visual and sometimes tactile images so well that they create a very vivid and clear image idea in my mind.

'To Autumn' is about nature's cycle, and a celebration of the poet's favourite season - Autumn! The whole poem is literally oozing with the season, because of the imagery and sense appeal. In contrast, 'The way through the woods' is about the beauty of the place developing and increasing over time. It's about transience. There are elements of fairytale and mystery in this poem, and again this is achieved through the appeal to the reader's senses.

Q4b

Those who had studied Emily Dickinson were a joy to read and said things like ‘...they mark a limitless present in every feature of the poem’ and ‘the static grasp of the painting’ and ‘littered with enjambments’. Weaker candidates tended to broader references without specific comment or exemplification: “Its lyrical quality makes it pleasant to read or hear...”. Candidates could be advised to avoid broadly didactic, but unsupported statements such as “The quality of language has to be of the highest calibre to have the desired effect.” Observations of this kind can be disappointing as they frequently suggest an able candidate padding out an answer. “Especially when the October wind” tended to be mined for language features, without the effects of quoted features on the meaning of the poem being adequately developed. Better candidates did comment productively however: “Cough” has connotations of sickness, while a raven is often associated with foreboding and evil. This suggests mortality, or the closeness of death.”

Q5a

There tended to be some confusion and mistaken interpretation at times, with students constrained by limited definitions of masculinity and not perceiving the sophistication of some of the content. There were, however, some good responses to this question with elements of the mythic portrayal of the male figure, religion and sexuality, morality and social change explored via examples taken from poets such as Hopkins. A large number of candidates discussed Mitchell’s ‘Thoughts After Ruskin’ in appreciative detail – the poem seems to have had an authentic effect on their perception of the world. Challenging the question in a different way were discussions of the innocence of Blake’s chimney sweeper.

Q5b

Weaker answers tended to rove the poems looking for specific references to memory, whilst ignoring the rich fields of figurative evocation on offer. This topic was also prone to vague references such as “lots of imagery is used” without any specific examples being put forward for comment. Many responses dealt competently with standard approaches to memory (usually personal) but there were also some more sophisticated explorations of different kinds of memory and the effects of sentiment and nostalgia.

Section C - Prose

This part of the exam also offers candidates a choice of response. Five groups of three texts are presented: *Jane Eyre* and either *Wide Sargasso Sea* or *The Magic Toyshop*; *Brighton Rock* and either *Lies of Silence* or *A Clockwork Orange*; *Pride and Prejudice* and either *French Lieutenant's Woman* or *The Yellow Wallpaper*; *Wuthering Heights* and either *The Scarlet Letter* or *The Color Purple* and *Howards End* and either *The Remains of the Day* or *The Shooting Party*. The first option for each group is a generic essay. The second choice specifies an extract from the core text – the prompt suggests focus on that passage to start with, but candidates are intended to move outwards into a wider exploration of the core text and the one chosen to extend the argument.

Section C targets AO1 (15 marks) and AO2 (25 marks).

The Prose tasks were

Q6. *Jane Eyre* (Penguin Classics) and either *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Penguin Modern Classics) or *The Magic Toyshop* (Virago)

Either:

- (a) 'The theme of appearance and reality is the cornerstone of the novel.'

Explore the methods writers use to present the theme of appearance and reality.

In your response you should focus on *Jane Eyre* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Or:

- (b) 'Without its vivid and often dramatic settings, *Jane Eyre* would not be half the book that it is.'

Using *Jane Eyre* page 489 as your starting point from 'Hear an illustration, reader' to "'I have heard something of it.'" page 491, explore the methods writers use to develop setting.

In your response you should focus on *Jane Eyre* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Q7. *Brighton Rock* (Vintage) and either *Lies of Silence* (Vintage) or *A Clockwork Orange* (Penguin)

Either:

- (a) 'Characters faced with difficult choices are usually the most interesting to read about.'

Explore the methods which writers use to present characters faced with difficult choices.

In your response you should focus on *Brighton Rock* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Or:

- (b) 'A book which asks more questions than it answers...'

Using *Brighton Rock* page 112 as your starting point, from 'The Boy pulled her up to him.' to 'Her immature voice stumbled on the word, 'She's ignorant.'" explore the methods by which writers raise and answer moral questions in their narratives.

In your response you should focus on Brighton Rock to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Q8. *Pride and Prejudice* (Penguin Classics) and either *French Lieutenant's Woman* (Vintage) or *The Yellow Wallpaper* (Virago)

Either:

- (a) 'The main interest of the novel is in its portrayal of intricate characters.'

Explore the methods which writers use to portray intricate characters.

In your response you should focus on *Pride and Prejudice* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Or:

- (b) 'A number of voices are employed in the telling of the tale but in the end, they all merge into one'

Using *Pride and Prejudice* Chapter 48 page 281 as your starting point from 'Every day at Longbourn was now a day of anxiety;' to 'Elizabeth had received none since her return, that could come from Pemberley.' page 283, explore the ways in which writers use different narrative voices.

In your response you should focus on *Pride and Prejudice* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Q9. *Wuthering Heights* (Penguin Classics) and either *The Scarlet Letter* (Oxford World's Classics) or *The Color Purple* (Phoenix)

Either:

- (a) 'The primary motive of the characters is revenge.'

Explore the methods which writers use to present the theme of revenge.

In your response you should focus on *Wuthering Heights* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Or:

- (b) 'The development of suspense is the main appeal of *Wuthering Heights*.'

Using *Wuthering Heights* page 22 as your starting point from 'I began to nod drowsily over the dim page;' to "'I'm come home, I'd lost my way on the moor!'" page 25, explore the ways in which writers create suspense.

In your response you should focus on *Wuthering Heights* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Q10. *Howards End* (Penguin) and either *Remains of the Day* (Faber and Faber) or *The Shooting Party* (Penguin)

Either:

- (a) "A sense of place is vital to the successful telling of any story."

Explore the methods which writers use to create a sense of place.

In your response you should focus on *Howards End* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Or:

- (b) 'Communication is the key theme of the book.'

Using *Howards End* page as your starting point, from 'Margaret greeted her lord with peculiar tenderness on the morrow.' page 158 to 'And this morning he concentrated with a vengeance.' page 160, explore the methods which writers use to explore the significance of communication.

In your response you should focus on *Howards End* to establish your argument and refer to the second text you have read to support and develop your line of argument.

Q6a

A significant number of candidates continue to struggle with 'appearance and reality'. In many such instances their first reading of the question seems to have elicited a response that concerned itself solely with female 'appearance'. In some cases they then spent their time with this interpretation of the question and weighed up the relative experiences of Jane and Antoinette/Bertha, or Melanie according to their beauty and acceptance or rejection in society because of it. These answers were often further weakened by an overly keen pursuit of learnt themes. Better answers properly explored the two contrasting concepts from the texts, and weighed up the use of fantasy, supernatural, beauty, magic realism, social expectations, narrative voice, etc. as required. One other marker of stronger essays was a willingness to define the concepts of appearance and reality in the introduction and to construct a well-planned and shaped discussion thereafter. Another was dealing with the significance of Jane's experience at Heath End.

Q6b

Surprisingly few candidates examined the prescribed passage in any detail though there were many excellent discussions of the use of setting, which was particularly well done in the case of *Wide Sargasso Sea*. This stated, there was a generally good understanding of the importance of setting to the novels, with pathetic fallacy and symbolism often being discussed very well. However, candidates might be advised to avoid employing terminology - "...a novel that focuses greatly on bildungsromans" - without using the reference to make a relevant point. On the other hand, such usage sometimes enhanced understanding: "The bildungsroman genre shows her growth from repression....youth...developing self-containment... finding love...growing into a confident adult." Better essays also subtly inter-related mood, character and setting, making apt reference to technique in the process: "The character of Miss Reed is reflective of the location through the eyes of Jane: forbidding and dark in the 'cold winters' and 'raw twilight.'"

Q7a

Candidates found no difficulty in selecting material for their response here, and most were evidently engaged with the “difficult choices” that Greene, Moore and Burgess had given their characters. Although there was some lapsing into narrative, the standard of argument was mostly good, and the best answers demonstrated in detail how the authors presented their characters in moments of decision. Regarding the core text particularly, the choices of Pinkie, Ida and Rose were often anatomised in detail, with many responses recognising the complexities and some of the means Greene uses to present them.

Q7b

Perceptive candidates provided detailed discussions of the ways in which Greene probes religious/ supernatural belief. A few considered the contrast between the superstructure of the thriller genre and the profundity of the moral questioning. The best answers drew out the debate around Ida’s moral position from the extract and clearly discussed the ambiguities and hypocrisies that create the fraught situations in the novel. *A Clockwork Orange* was often favoured as the supporting text, with the refrain of ‘What’s it to be then?’ providing a number of opportunities for structural examination clearly linked to the question. There was also some strong critical commentary and comparison relating to the framework, and lack of it, that Pinkie’s Catholic faith and the Ludovico Technique provide for the main protagonists. Weaker responses failed to note the blurring of lines across the moral debates, presented confused arguments and dealt in absolutes from a very subjective position without sufficient use of the extract. *Lies of Silence* responses were comparatively few and often never really got beyond plot, though there were those who could easily see the significance of the questions which Dillon was faced with and their moral exigencies.

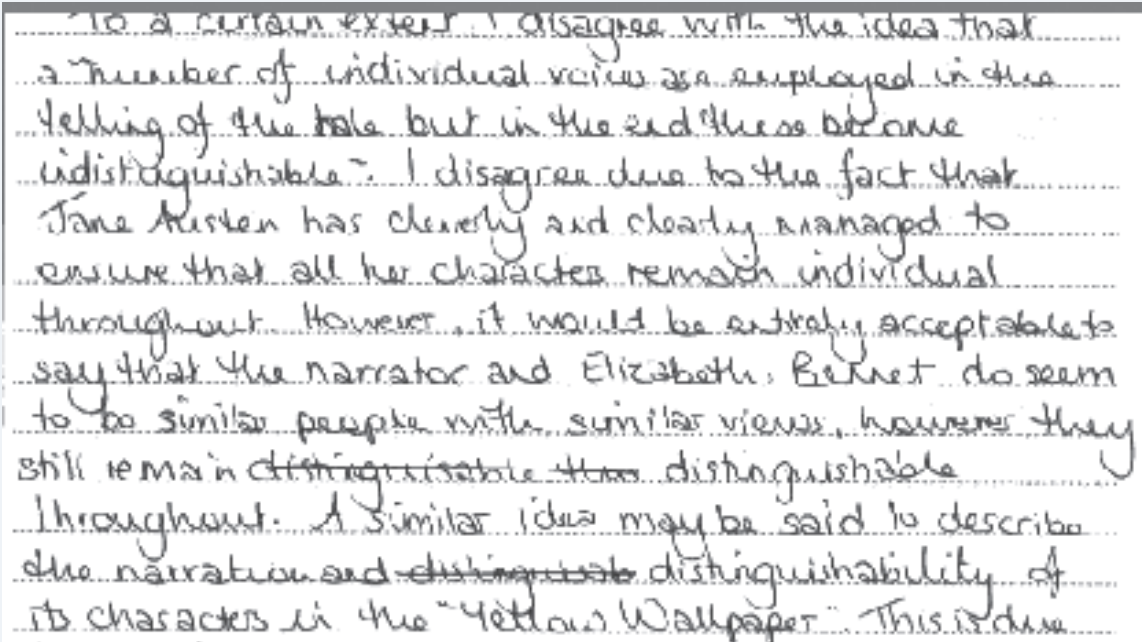
Q8a

The exam seeks to promote discursive response. Here is an example of a candidate trying interestingly to use an unlikely character to promote an argument in a way that not very many did, in answering what was a hugely popular question:

Mrs Bennet is the character portrayed in the most negative light. She is portrayed as hysterical, stupid, a gossip and as "a woman of little knowledge and mean understanding." Mrs. Bennet could be the one character that ~~seems~~ goes against the statement made, as her character is not reflected as being an intricate one as our opinion of her stays the same throughout the novel and her character seems to rely solely on face value as she is of no deeper meaning, towards the end when her daughter Lydia goes missing as she has run away with Mr. Wickham she lays in bed as all the others run around whilst she complains about "what this must be doing to [her] nerves." However on one level she does in fact support the statement made as we see her ~~character~~ character only interested in marrying her daughters off, and how much fortune each man of interest has. Although these qualities of her personality are mocked throughout we begin to think whether her way of thinking is so wrong after all, as ~~though~~ society has made her that way and she is just conforming, as Charlotte Lucas also marries for money telling Lizzie she "is not a romantic, you know. I never was." However she is portrayed in a positive light and so maybe Mrs. Bennet's character is one of comedy but the deeper meanings to her beliefs are not so stupid, as she is also seen to reflect society of that time.

Q8b

Answers to this task were also highly featured. Here is an example of a candidate offering interest and engagement in a reasonably secure opening:



To a certain extent, I disagree with the idea that a number of individual voices are employed in the telling of the tale but in the end these become indistinguishable. I disagree due to the fact that Jane Austen has clearly and clearly managed to ensure that all her characters remain individual throughout. However, it would be entirely acceptable to say that the narrator and Elizabeth Bennet do seem to be similar people with similar views, however they still remain distinguishable throughout. A similar idea may be said to describe the narration and distinguishability of its characters in the "Yellow Wallpaper". This is due

Many candidates found Q8b a real challenge and there is no arguing that in relation to *The Yellow Wallpaper* especially, it is a tough proposition for an exam. Besides the simple re-count and character summary, therefore, it was genuinely pleasing to see so many erudite and acute answers on the uses of narrative voice to create interest for the reader. Responses using *The French Lieutenant's Woman* were rare, but when they did occasionally crop up, they offered some interesting perspectives, especially as regards the use of, for example, the author's supposed "own voice" in that novel.

Q9a

This was the most frequently answered of the prose tasks. Predictably enough, Heathcliff drew the majority of the attention here and there were often lengthy disquisitions on his conduct without real attention to his motives or how he is used to present and develop revenge. Necessarily, such an approach led to a lot of story-telling as opposed to concentration on the importance of the theme and the methods used to present it. There were some valiant efforts to consider revenge as a theme in *The Color Purple* but many who wrote about that text sensibly concluded that whilst it might have played a part, there were other much more important things to consider. Revenge (that of Roger Chillingworth) could be said to be a main driver in *The Scarlet Letter*. Unfortunately, given the potential for developing a line of discussion available in this respect, very few candidates seemed to have studied that novel. It is to be hoped that if *Wuthering Heights* is to remain so popular, more candidates will do better justice to the author's technique as opposed to the undoubted interest generated by her story. The best responses not only steered away from the latter but often chose as their jumping off point the notion that revenge really was not the main motivation of the characters and that they were often being drawn in such a way as to promote an entirely different idea.

Q9b

Here, as with many of the other b-type questions, there was surprisingly little detailed approach to the set passage. Whilst it was not perhaps easy to combine such a method with an extended argument ranging over the use of suspense in two texts, focus on the extract and the methods used in it is always going to do better than the kind of indiscriminating narrative which often prevailed. An element of suspense plainly does accrue in all three of the set texts here (though less obviously in *The Color Purple*, arguably) and there were a number of candidates who, whilst choosing either initially or ultimately to disagree with the proposition, made a good deal out of its prominence and the interest created thereby.

Q10a

As earlier stated, this was not a popular choice and therefore it was pleasing to see plenty of outstanding work here: "sense of place" was often handled in a creative and interesting way with discussion not only of Forster's (and, usually, Ishiguro's) presentation of the physical setting but also the spirit of a place. Likewise, candidates included in their response a consideration of social place. It is important to note here that whilst reference of this sort can be impressive, it has to be relevant and it is absolutely not a requirement.

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Examiner Comments

In this case, a candidate makes an energetic and positive start to the task.

A sense of place is critical in any narrative novel as it acts as a setting but also as a motif in "Howards End". The concept of place is key to E.M. Forster's critically acclaimed masterpiece as many critics state that the novel is directly trying to answer "who will inherit England?"

There are three key settings in "Howards End" the Wilcoxes home Howards End, the Schlegels home Wickham Place and the Sharn that the hosts live in. Each place represents a class in the ever shifting social spectrum and from this the reader sees the novel as a case study of society. The importance of the industrial revolution was incredible as it created such diversity in class and made many cities over populated. The novel contrasts Wickham Place and Howards End automatically in the form of Helens letters and the description of Wickham Place. Forster's concept of nature's beauty is downcast significantly "it is old and little and altogether delightful" enforcing his opinion onto the audience. His dislike for industrialization

Q10b

Communication between characters was well addressed, but not explored fully in every instance. Again many responses were descriptive rather than analytical, and few candidates focused on the specified passage (although there were still some strong responses). Particularly in *The Remains of the Day* many candidates overlooked what Stevens did not say and how important this communication was to the reader's understanding of the character and the plot, however there were some very good answers on his (lack of) communication with his father.

General Comments

Given the restrictions of time and often the complexity of the task, the examining team is prepared to accept that the structure, form, language idea is not easily coverable in depth. Therefore focus on issues such as plot, character and setting may well do for many candidates, though it is unlikely that they will massively prosper without some concessions to higher order analytical concepts and narrative elements (e.g. many stronger candidates engage with motif, irony, imagery, etc.). Candidates need to flag much more clearly that they are dealing with means and methods by perhaps making assertions even as basic as “the writer uses plot to present the theme of appearance and reality” or “the writer predominantly uses characterisation to develop irony”.

Conclusion

It is excellent to see so many candidates offering sustained engagement and interest (and in many cases managing to offer stronger responses to the prose than they had to the poetry or the unseen. Their stamina, palpable enjoyment of the subject and knowledge reflects very creditably indeed not only on themselves, but those who taught them. For the future, it is to be hoped that those either re-sitting or meeting the paper for the first time from January 2010 onwards will attempt, at least, to offer greater comparison (in the case of Section B) and more sustained focus on method and technique throughout.

6ET01 Grade Boundaries

Paper No	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E
01	100	73	63	54	45	36

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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