



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2020

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In English Literature (1ET0)
Paper 2: 19th-century Novel and Poetry since
1789

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

November 2020

Publications Code 1ET0_02_2011_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2020

Introduction

Centres are thanked for choosing Pearson Edexcel as their GCSE English Literature provider, particularly during a very challenging year. Centres should be congratulated for preparing their candidates so well and we hope that you and your students are delighted with the results.

Assessment Overview

This GCSE 1ET0 02 English Literature examination consists of two sections (Prose and Poetry) and lasts for 2 hours and 15 minutes. This is a closed book examination.

Section A – 19th-century Novel, candidates answer the two-part question based on the text that they have studied. The text choices are:

Jane Eyre – Charlotte Brontë
Great Expectations – Charles Dickens
Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde – R L Stevenson
A Christmas Carol – Charles Dickens
Pride and Prejudice – Jane Austen
Silas Marner – George Eliot
Frankenstein – Mary Shelley

For the chosen text, candidates are presented with an extract (approximately 400 words) and answer a question relating to it, paying particular attention to the writer's use of language, form and structure. The second part of the question draws on the candidate's knowledge about their chosen text and asks them to provide a response giving examples from elsewhere in the novel.

Section B is divided into two parts: Anthology Poetry and Unseen Poetry. Candidates choose to study one of three poetry collections in the Anthology: *Relationships*, *Conflict* or *Time and Place*. For each collection, candidates will have studied fifteen poems, which are listed below the question. For the question, one of the poems is provided and candidates must compare it with another from the same collection. The second part of Section B is the contemporary Unseen Poetry. Candidates are presented with two poems which they must compare.

Candidates are advised to spend about 55 minutes on Section A - 19th-century Novel; 35 minutes on Section B, Part 1 – Poetry Anthology and 45 minutes on Section B, Part 2 – Unseen Poetry.

The questions on this paper have been designed to enable candidates to show what they can achieve in relation to the detailed study of texts. The total number of marks available for this paper is 80. All four parts carry 20 marks per question.

We are delighted to announce that we are adding an **additional poetry cluster** entitled ***Belonging*** to our Anthology for first examination in Summer 2021. Additional prose and plays have also been added to Paper 1. Please see our website for further details. Our website also has full details about different options available for centres this coming summer

and the latest COVID-19 updates. Teaching materials for the new texts can also be found on the relevant pages for Literature and the website is regularly updated with new and exciting resources.

This November paper performed well and the quality of responses is similar to those seen in previous series. With a much smaller entry than Summer 2019, comments are based on evidence seen.

Principal Examiner Comment

This has been a very successful series. There were no errors on the examination paper and no erratum notices issued. On the whole, candidates have responded to the tasks exceptionally well and the full range of marks has been awarded for all questions.

As seen in previous series, for Section A the most popular text was *A Christmas Carol* followed by *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. The least popular option was *Great Expectations*. Other texts with small entries were *Jane Eyre*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Silas Marner* and *Frankenstein*.

The prose section assesses AO2 (language, form and structure) for Part A, and AO1 (knowledge and understanding) for Part B.

Generally, candidates seemed well prepared and knew their chosen text. For Part a) questions, candidates sometimes lacked a clear focus on language and structure with responses sometimes becoming a little narrative. There were also some candidates that attempted Part A of the question, but not Part B where they are asked to explore other areas of the novel. Although reported on in the last two examiner reports, several candidates included unnecessary contextual points in Part b), which was particularly evidenced in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* responses when candidates explored the role of reputation in Victorian society. Some candidates attempted to provide further language analysis in Part B of the Prose question, which is not assessed. Candidates should simply demonstrate their understanding of the novel they have studied in relation to the question.

There were some responses that were not entirely relevant in response to the question and perhaps some candidates had tried to memorise or adapt previous essays they had written for examination practice. Responses that did well often covered three or more areas from the whole of their chosen text and explored them in some detail.

As in previous series, responses placed in lower levels tended to:

- lack focus on the question
- misread the question or include irrelevant points
- not deal with the correct Assessment Objectives - for example, not exploring the language, structure and form in Part a) or exploring context in Part b).

Responses placed in higher levels tended to:

- focus on the question

- identify a wide variety of techniques used by the author, which were correctly identified and supported with evidence. Examples were explained in some detail and the effect on the reader was considered
- demonstrate an assured or perceptive understanding of the novel and the techniques used by the author.

As in previous series, the most common errors in the prose section were:

- not exploring the extract enough – perhaps giving only one or two examples only (Part A)
- appearing to muddle the Assessment Objectives – for instance, not exploring the language, form and structure in part a), the given extract, but unnecessarily trying to analyse the language, form and structure for their examples 'elsewhere in the novel' – as this is closed book, a most difficult task to try and achieve and is not assessed here
- commenting on context (not assessed in Part B) or
- incorrectly using the extract to answer Part B).

All responses were marked by the Principal and Senior Examiners. Most commented on the success of the paper and they generally felt that candidates had worked very hard and had mostly been well prepared for the examination.

Section 1 – Prose by question

Question 1, *Jane Eyre* (Mr Rochester's reactions to Jane's return and unhappiness)

There were just 6 response to *Jane Eyre*. A range of marks were awarded, but there were some Question 4s in this small number of scripts. For Part A, most candidates identified how Rochester repeats his question 'Who's there?' and the commented on the use of italics. Most considered how Rochester was confused, how he questions his sanity, his feelings of loss and the misery he has felt. For Part B, comments included Jane's unhappiness at Gateshead, when she runs away from Thornfield and when she falls ill.

In the small number of responses seen, there was some evidence of candidates not attempting Part B of the question.

Question 2, *Great Expectations* (Mr Jaggers and the importance of money)

With a small number of responses, it is difficult to provide detailed commentary. There were some brief responses and not enough consideration of the language, form and structure of the given extract. Even in the small number of responses, marks ranged from L2 to L5, suggesting that the extract and questions were accessible and gave opportunities for all abilities. There was evidence of some candidates simply paraphrasing the given extract without exploring specific words or phrases and some did not attempt Part B of the question.

Question 3, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (Dr Lanyon and the importance of reputation)

This is the second most popular prose text. A full range of marks were awarded for this novel, with most gaining a mark in Level 3 or Level 4. As often seen in responses to this novel, candidates included some contextual points, which is not assessed in this part of the paper. Typical responses followed the Point Evidence Explain format, but often there were not enough examples provided or ideas were not developed in sufficient detail. Most considered how Lanyon was a 'good friend', a loner who sometimes enjoys the company of others and some commented on his sense of humour. More close analysis and examples of language, form and structure would have benefitted some responses.

For Part B, the full range of marks was awarded. Some candidates did not deal with the question and others provided detailed commentaries that explored how reputation and its importance are seen through Utterson, Doctor Jekyll and Hyde.

Question 4, *A Christmas Carol* (the settings and Bob Cratchit)

This remains the most popular prose text. Again, the full range of marks were awarded, with many candidates gaining a mark in Level 3 or above. There was some evidence of candidates not attempting Part B of the question and some not focussing sharply enough on the close analysis of language, form and structure of the given extract. Some candidates did not consider all areas of the given extract or did not make comparisons of the Main Street, court, shops and counting house settings with the Mansion House. Others missed the opportunity to comment on the weather and atmosphere in the extract, but others identified a wide range of techniques used in the extract, including pathetic fallacy, metaphors, personification, colour imagery, verbs and similes.

For Part B, some candidates commented on the given extract before providing examples from elsewhere in the novel. Some candidates did not provide sufficient comment or examples to progress further than Level 3; however, others offered a sustained response demonstrating a thorough, and sometimes assured, understanding of the novel. Most considered Bob Cratchit's relationship with Tiny Tim and the importance of family, particularly evident when the family have their Christmas dinner and Bob toasts Scrooge as the 'founder of the feast'. Few commented on how Scrooge teases Bob at the end of the novel or how he gives him a pay rise, but there were comments about Bob's poor working and living conditions.

Question 5, *Pride and Prejudice* (Pemberley and Mr Darcy)

There were a very small number of responses and most were successful, gaining marks in Levels 4 and 5. Evidence was seen of a candidate gaining full marks for Part B and a Level 4 for Part A because, although the response was sustained, more points could have been included or developed further. Similarly, another script was awarded full marks for Part B, but gained Level 4 for Part A because language, form and structure were not explored fully enough. For Part A, candidates often identified the use of exclamations and commented on the beauty of Pemberley. For Part B, one candidate (who gained full marks) identified Darcy as being: proud, rude, wealthy, handsome, reserved, awkward in

public, arrogant, shy, friendly, caring for his tenants, humble, genuine and leaning from Elizabeth's retributions and supported all ideas with examples from the novel.

Question 6, *Silas Marner* (Silas's relationship with William Dane and the importance of trust)

Although there were just 8 responses to this text, a full range of marks was awarded with most in Levels 3 and 4. As seen with other texts, a greater range of examples for Part B would have benefited responses. Some responses to Part A were a little brief and there was some misunderstanding about William's true feelings for Silas. The lack of examples and comment on the use of language, form and structure hindered some responses. Others commented on how Silas trusts William and how Silas is described with a simile and how the extract included the use of religious imagery. For Part B, some considered how Silas lost his trust in God and his fellow Man, whilst others considered how this trust was regained after the arrival of Eppie.

Question 7, *Frankenstein* (Frankenstein's quest for knowledge and the importance of education)

Again, there were just a small number of responses and marks ranged from Level 1 to Level 4. Most candidates commented on Frankenstein's desire and enthusiasm to gain more knowledge and specific words or phrases were selected to support the points made. Often, more close analysis of language (Part A) would have benefited responses. For Part B, Robert Walton and the creature were often considered and their quest for knowledge was explored in varying amounts of detail.

When looking at Principal Examiner comments and reports for the past series, outcomes are very similar. The same key areas for improvement are noted for this November series. Candidates should:

- provide more close analysis of language, form and structure (Part A)
- provide a wider range of examples (both parts of the question)
- focus more on the question (Part B)
- avoid narrative responses
- remember that context is not assessed in this part of the paper.

Overall, the performance of this November series is very similar to previous series.

Section B, part 1, Anthology

For the Poetry Anthology Section B, by far the most popular question was Question 9, *Conflict*.

As seen with the Prose section, the full range of marks was awarded and most candidates fully engaged with their chosen question. In some

instances, candidates wrote more about their chosen poem rather than the one given and tried to fit that to the question. There were some 2-in-1 responses, where candidates had used the prose answer space for the poetry questions as well or had continued with the Unseen Poetry response immediately after the anthology one. There were very few rubric infringements (responses where only one poem had been discussed).

In addition to comparing the poems, candidates should comment on the use of language, form and structure (AO2) and include contextual points (AO3).

Question 8, Relationships

The named/given poem was *i wanna be yours* and the question focussed on emotions. Popular choices for comparison included: *Valentine*, *Nettles*, *My Last Duchess* and *A Child to his Sick Grandfather*.

Comments included the use of free verse, repetition, metaphors, the use of humour in *i wanna be yours*, how the speaker expresses ideas in simple terms – such as ‘vacuum cleaner’ or ‘coffee pot’, and how the speaker uses the metaphor of an ‘electric meter’. Some candidates did not consider the context of the two poems.

The full range was awarded, but there were some rubric infringements (only one poem considered), suggesting that the poem(s) had not been studied in sufficient detail, with candidates not writing anything or enough about the given or second poem.

Question 9, Conflict

The named/given poem was *Poppies* and the question focussed on how conflict affects others. Popular choices for comparison included: *Cousin Kate*, *Half-caste*, *Catrin* and *War Photographer*.

This remains the most popular Anthology collection. Again, the full range of marks was awarded, but many were in Level 2 and 3. This was often due to lack of coverage or close analysis of language, structure and form. Some candidates did not consider context.

Understanding of *Poppies* varied considerably. Some identified that the mother directly addresses her son and is upset by his departure, but others did not fully understand what the mother was doing in the poem. Few explored the reference to ‘Armistice Sunday’ in the first line of the poem and missed the opportunity to include a contextual point. More able candidates commented on the use of textile imagery and, those who did, often made relevant contextual points about the Jane Weir’s connection with textile design.

A number of candidates compared with *Cousin Kate* and often these responses were successful; however, some lacked a range of examples and did not consider or include a sufficient range of examples which kept them in Level 3. For example, in one response the candidate compared

Poppies with *Cousin Kate* and identified that conflict results in loss and how one focuses on positive memories and the other on the negative. There was a paragraph about contrasts in context and language, but there was very little close analysis of language and therefore close analysis was not sustained.

Question 10, Time and Place

The named poem was *In Romney Marsh* and the question focussed on how personal experiences are presented. Popular choices for comparison included *London* and *Nothing's Changed*.

Responses varied from the limited to assured and perceptive. Some candidates were not as familiar with the given/named poem and wrote more about their second choice. Those who were more familiar with the named poem considered structure, the use of colour imagery and the tone of the poem. The use of metaphors and similes was often used to draw comparisons with the second poem.

Some responses were assured and perceptive. These responses provided a wide range of comparisons with the second poem. For example, one candidate compared personal experiences in the named poem, *In Romney Marsh*, with *Nothing's Changed*. The response was sharply focused on analysing and comparing the language, form and structure of the two poems. A wide, varied range of points were made and there was a balance of treatment when exploring the entirety of the two poems. The atmosphere of the two poems was compared (the aesthetic and spiritual compared with the ugly) and there were some interesting comparisons considered (such as how both speakers are walking). There was assured understanding of the two poems, but the response lacked explicit contextual comments, preventing it from achieving of full marks, although some was inferred for *Nothing's Changed* ('break the glass between black and white people' and political points).

In comparison with previous series, performance is similar. The distribution of options followed the same pattern in popularity, the range of marks was consistent and similar key areas for improvement were noted. Most candidates approached the questions with enthusiasm and attempted to comment on all areas of the assessment objectives. There were some less successful responses and a small number of rubric infringements (writing about just one poem), but this is not unusual to see.

Section B, Part 2, Unseen Poetry

The two poems were *Storm* by Gillian Clark and *Wind* by James Fenton. The question asked candidates to compare the ways the writers present their thoughts about the weather. The Assessment Objective always

remains unchanged, with Q11 assessing comparison and AO2 (language, form and structure).

Again, a full range of marks was evidenced. There were some very brief responses where ideas were not developed fully enough, possibly due to time constraints, and there were the detailed and sustained responses that offered thoughtful interpretations and comparisons of the two poems. Often, areas of the poems had not been considered or there was not enough close analysis of specific words or phrases; however, most candidates gained marks in Level 3 or above. For example, one response gaining a mark in Level 3 considered both poems and made comment on the settings and the negative effects that bad weather has on the people and land. Some comments were underdeveloped and there was some evidence of literal paraphrasing; however, the candidate identified the use of a simile, hyperbole and onomatopoeia. Structure was not explicitly explored, but a sound understanding of the two poems was presented.

A Level 4 response presented some thoughtful commentary that demonstrated a thorough understanding of the two poems. These ideas included consideration of how a 'whiplash' is harsh and violent and how musical imagery is used throughout Poem 1. An interesting point was made about how time is blurred in Poem 2. There was comment in relation to structure, including the cyclical structure of Poem 2, and there was comparison of settings. Some terminology was used to support the examples given and the response was more secure.

In comparison, the unseen poems for Summer 2019 were *Childhood Memories – Shopping in the 1940s* by Mary McCreath and *Shopping* by Grace Nichols. Looking back on the Centre Report for 2019, similar comments were made, such as how some candidates had not developed ideas or had not fully explored the use of language form and structure in enough detail. The complexity of the unseen poems is similar and compare well, with *Storm* being more straightforward and comparable with *Childhood Memories* and *Wind* being more complex, which compliments Nichols' poem, *Shopping*.

When comparing the November 2020 unseen poems with previous series, the poems offered a wide range of opportunities for candidates to comment on the use of language, form and structure.

Paper Summary

Overall, the paper performed well and a full range of marks was awarded across each section and part.

As in previous series and based on the performance of this paper, centres are offered the following advice and reminders:

- please remind students to write their responses in the correct area of the answer booklet.
- space in the answer booklet is provided for each part. It does not matter which order questions are attempted, but the responses should be in the correct answer space.

- candidates should not use extra paper. Ample space is provided in the answer booklet.
- centres should remind their students of which Assessment Objectives are being assessed for each part of the paper.
- context is only assessed in Section B, Part 1 Poetry Anthology.
- for Section A Prose, Part (a) of the question, candidates must explore the language, form and structure of the extract. Candidates should just refer to the extract in this part of the question.
- Section A, Part (b), candidates should draw on their knowledge of the text that they have studied and give examples from elsewhere in the novel. Candidates may, depending on the question, explore specific areas in detail or cover a range of examples. Remember, context and language are not assessed in this part of the paper.
- Section A, Part (b), examples can be particular references to other parts of the novel such as events, episodes, character, action, and so on, that are relevant to the question. Candidates can paraphrase quotations from memory, but exact quotations are not mandatory, particularly as this is a closed book examination.

The Assessment Objective for this part assesses the candidate's knowledge of the texts and not language, form and structure. Centres should remind themselves of where the Assessment Objectives are assessed. Context is not assessed in Section A.

- Section B, Part 1, Anthology – candidates need to consider language, form, structure and context.
- poems need to be compared and relevant terminology employed where appropriate.
- candidates should be reminded to label their answers clearly (particularly Section A) and to use the correct space in the answer booklet. A separate area in the answer booklet is provided for candidates' responses to Question 11.

Again, we should like to thank our centres for their hard work preparing their students during a very difficult year. We very much hope that everyone keeps safe and well and hope that you join us again in the Summer. Please do remember to look at our website for the latest updates and new teaching and learning materials.