



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2021

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
English Literature (1ET0)

Paper 2N: 19th-century Novel

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Paper Introduction

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1) in English Language is a linear course. It consists of two externally examined components and one endorsement for Spoken

Language. Paper 1 is worth 40% of the total GCSE and consists of two sections, lasting for one hour and forty-five minutes in total. Candidates are recommended to spend one hour on section A which tests reading with questions on an unseen 19th-century fiction extract of approximately 650 words. In the November 2021 series this was an extract from *Lady Audley's Secret* by Mary Elizabeth Braddon. There are four questions on the text which are stepped in difficulty with the following mark breakdown: Q1 = 1 mark, Q2 = 2 marks, Q3 = 6 marks and Q4 = 15 marks. Questions 1 and 2 test AO1: Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. Question 3 tests AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views and Question 4 tests AO4: evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

Section B tests writing, and candidates are recommended to spend 45 minutes on this section which is worth a total of 40 marks, giving the paper a total of 64 marks. In this section, there is a choice of two writing tasks, linked by a theme to the reading extract. One of the writing tasks provides two images that students can use to help them generate ideas for their writing; in this series that was question 6. Students can write a response that draws on just one or neither of the images. This is an untiered specification and the choice of texts and questions set are such that all candidates are able to access the paper and to show their abilities in reading and writing. In

In the November of 2021 candidates found the paper to be engaging and interesting and they responded well to it.

Question 1

Question Introduction

Question one is a single mark question which tests candidates' ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This low-tariff question is intended to lead candidates into the examination and was successfully done by the majority of candidates in the November 2021 paper. The examples below indicate the most common responses with most candidates able to successfully answer this question with a choice of either of the two correct answers: 'darkening' or 'twilight'. Most candidates quoted a phrase or a whole sentence containing one of the correct responses; all of these were awarded the single mark that was available. Where candidates were unsuccessful they either chose a section of the text from lines 1-4 which did not answer the question or chose text from outside the line references given.

Introduction

Centres are thanked for choosing Pearson Edexcel as their GCSE English Literature provider, particularly during another 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 normally consists of two sections (Prose and Poetry) and lasts for 2 hours and 15 minutes. This is a closed book examination; however, for this November 2021 series, it was decided to split the 1ET0 02 paper in two options: Poetry or Prose (Novels) in order to provide greater accessibility after a very challenging year.

1ET0 02N – 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.

1ET0 02P is in two parts: Anthology Poetry and Unseen Poetry. Candidates choose to study one of four poetry collections in the Anthology: *Relationships*, *Conflict*, *Time and Place* or *Belonging*. 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 is the contemporary Unseen Poetry. Candidates are presented with two poems that 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 normally 80; however, 1ET0 02N and 1ET0 02P both carry 40 marks, 20 marks per part.

For 1ET0 02P it was the first inclusion of the additional *Belonging* poetry cluster. Unfortunately, due to the very limited number of entries, there were no responses this time. 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.

The November 2021 papers 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 Prose paper assesses AO2 (language, form and structure) for Part A, and AO1 (knowledge and understanding) for Part B. It should be noted that context is not assessed here.

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 paper 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 Examiner.

1ET0 02N

Question 1, *Jane Eyre* (a: Jane's discussion with St John Rivers and b: secrets)

Question 2, *Great Expectations* (a: settings and b: Joe Gargery)

There was just one response for each of these novels.

Question 3, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (a: Dr Jekyll's laboratory and cabinet and b: My Hyde)

The marks for this second most popular prose text ranged from Level 2 to Level 5, with the majority placed in Level 3. For Part a), some of the responses did not provide enough examples and there was little coverage of the given extract. Those gaining marks at the lower-end of Level 3 were not dealing with the Assessment Objective fully and tended to provide commentaries with some analysis.

For Part b) of the question, often there were not enough examples from the novel. Candidates tended to make general comments without supporting them with specific references or key episodes in the novel. There were also some candidates including details that do not feature in the novel, such as one reference to Lanyon's wife and children. Possibly, a film adaptation had been influential in the response; however, points made must be based on the novel.

Question 4, *A Christmas Carol* (a: the Ghost of Christmas Past and b: time)

As seen in past series, this remains the most popular prose text. Marks ranged from low Level 2 to full marks for both parts of the question. For Part a), those gaining marks in Levels 2 and 3 often did not include enough specific examples of language, form and structure. It was unusual to see so many candidates referring to a play, rather than a novel, and Centres are reminded that candidates should study the full novel in order to be able to explore the extract with more confidence and to access the full range of marks available for Part b) of the question. A number of candidates only referred to a small part of the extract and others included very long quotations in their responses with little or no comment on language, form and structure.

Some candidates repeated points a number of times or there were some that only used one or two phrases from the extract and used these several times to support different ideas. There was little use of specific language terminology.

(Centres are also reminded that this is a close book examination. There were some very long, impressively accurate, quotations included in some responses.)

For Part b), often the points made lacked specific examples from the novel and, as seen with *Jekyll and Hyde*, there was some generalised comment without including any specifics. There were some trying to include AO2 points, particularly language analysis, which is not assessed in this part of the question. Most candidates tended to explore the importance of time through Tiny Tim and the ghosts of Christmases Past, Present and Future.

Some responses were informal, even 'chatty', in approach and tended to end paragraphs with rhetorical questions, asking the examiner what they thought. This approach should be avoided, as more examples from the novel could be provided in this time.

Those gaining full marks provided a confident and in depth analysis of the extract, covering all parts of it, and provided a wider range of examples when exploring time.

Question 5, *Pride and Prejudice* (a: Lady Catherine de Bourgh and b: strong opinions)

There were no responses to this question.

Question 6, *Silas Marner* (a: Dunstan Cass and b: deception)

There were only 4 ePen responses to this text. For Part a) all responses gained marks in Level 3. These tended to provide a commentary without sufficient examples of language form and structure. Some excellent points about Dunstan Cass were made though, such as Dunstan having 'no redeeming features'; however, more close analysis and examples from the extract were required to qualify for a mark in a higher level.

For Part b), there was one nil return and three successful responses gaining marks at the top of Level 4 and mid-Level 5. Responses were detailed, although there was the occasional lapse into narrative; however, some very interesting points were made about deception and lies leading to punishment whereas kindness is rewarded. There were some contextual points made, which are not assessed in the Prose study; however, where context is used to support and enhance the points made, this can demonstrate the candidate's level of understanding of the novel.

Question 7, *Frankenstein* (a: the creature's observations of the cottagers and b: powerful emotions)

With just 3 responses, comments are limited; however, similar Part a) points can be made. All three responses gained Level 3 marks for both parts of the question. For Part a) rather than providing close analysis of specific words and phrases throughout the extract, the candidates tended to provide a commentary and include three or four examples of language. There were references to the use of adjectives, but there was also some literal interpretation by paraphrasing the given example.

For Part b), examples included Victor's emotions for Elizabeth, the creature learning to read, the creature's need of a companion and affection, and Victor's powerful emotions: 'learn from me'.

Comparison of Prose responses with Summer2019 and November 2020

When looking at Principal Examiner comments and reports from the past two series, outcomes are very similar and the same key areas for improvement could be mentioned in the November 2021 centre report, such as: focussing more on the question, avoiding narrative responses, provide more close analysis of language, form and structure (Part A), provide a wider range of examples and remember that context is not assessed in this part of the paper. These points tend to be mentioned every series and were equally evident in this November series too. Overall, the performance of this November series is very similar to previous series, despite limited evidence.

Paper Summary

Overall, both papers performed well and a full range of marks was awarded across each paper. All questions are worded similar in format and layout to all previous papers.

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

- 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 1ET0 02P, 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 the Prose study
- 1ET0 02P, Part 1, Anthology – candidates need to consider language, form, structure and context
- 1ET0 02P, in both parts the poems need to be compared and use relevant terminology where appropriate
- candidates should be reminded to label their answers clearly (identifying the question attempted and labelling Part B in the Prose response) and to use the correct space in the answer booklet. A separate area in the answer booklet is provided for candidates' responses to the Unseen poetry.

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.

Principal Examiner
GCSE English Literature
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