

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2010

GCSE

GCSE English Literature (1213)
Paper 2F (Foundation)

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GCSE English Literature 1213 2F

As with previous years, there was the predictable choice of texts for the 1213 2F paper, particularly in the Prose section. Overall there was a sound response to the paper and none of the candidates appeared to have difficulties in responding to the questions. The majority of candidates appeared to have been well prepared. However, not all candidates managed their time particularly well, perhaps concentrating on the Prose response and not allowing themselves adequate time for the Drama in particular.

The take-up on Section D continues to be very small.

Where no comments are offered on particular questions, this is because there were insufficient responses on which to base a generalised comment.

Section A: Modern Poetry.

Collections A and B continue to be the more popular, with rather less take-up for 'Nature'. The more successful candidates focused on the questions, recognising the need for comparison, which is an integral feature of this section. There appeared to be quite a sound understanding of technical terms, and there was comment on imagery and its effect on the poetry. Many candidates used the bullet points thoughtfully, though there was perhaps an over-reliance on the bullet points for both the structure and content of the responses, rather than just using these as a guide.

Q1. This was probably the most popular question and best answered, presumably as candidates could relate to it quite easily. The personification of the clock in 'Half-past Two' was often identified as was the figure of authority 'She'. The dark tone of the 'House' was identified and comparisons between the two childhood experiences were made.

Q2. This was a less popular question. The poem 'Refugee Blues' was often explained well, but the choice for comparison was not always appropriate, more often than not resulting in two separate almost unconnected responses.

Q3. This question was very popular and the responses showed a clear engagement with both poems. It was clear that the candidates were able to identify and comment on the theme of choice with varying degrees of success.

Q4. This question had a very mixed response. Some candidates clearly struggled with the question, not knowing who Maya Angelou was and the fact that the poem is grounded in Afro-American culture and history. Others displayed a clear understanding and were able to identify many key features of the poem. The choice of the second poem was not always appropriate and hence did not allow for a full comparison.

Q5 & Q6. Both had very few responses.

Section B: Modern Prose

'Of Mice and Men' continues to be overwhelmingly popular. It is evident that candidates respond with enthusiasm to the text. One or two issues did however, arise. Quite a few candidates based their responses on the film version, referring to scenes that were not in the novel.

Q7. This was the most popular question with most candidates identifying Curley's wife as a flirt, but relatively few delving into her motivation - loneliness, a loveless marriage for example. Overall the majority of responses were very descriptive and offered a portrait of the character.

Q8. The majority of responses focused on Crooks and attempted to find textual support for their responses. Some candidates chose the Girl and were able to produce far more analytical responses than those who chose question 7. A wide range

of characters were chosen, with candidates often writing a paragraph on at least 3 or 4 characters rather than going into greater depth with just one or two.

Q9. There was a clear understanding of the text and some attempt to discuss the relationship between the child and the adult. Comments were supported by textual evidence.

Q10. This was a more sophisticated question which required a deeper understanding of the novel. The candidates who chose it tackled it well, looking at some of the novel's major themes of intolerance and injustice, for example.

Q11 & Q12. There were very few responses for these questions.

Q13 & Q14. There were very few responses for these questions.

Section C: Modern Drama

'An Inspector Calls' was by far the most popular text. However, other texts, such as 'A View from the Bridge' and 'Educating Rita' were offered.

Q19. This was a very popular question with all the candidates showing an understanding of the play and Mrs. Birling's role in it. Candidates picked up on her snobbishness and hypocrisy, although many tended to rely on narrative to focus their responses.

Q20. A much less popular response, although those candidates who attempted it were able to comment on the relationship, or lack of it, between Eric and his father and produce a valid and supported response.

Q21. This was a popular question. Most of the responses were narrative linked to the bullet points. Many candidates were aware of Rita's desire for independence and explained how she developed, and some commented on how Frank was changed by their relationship.

Q22. Candidates clearly engaged and identified with both the main characters and the 'invisible' ones - Denny in particular - and tried to discuss the various relationships and the effect they had on the two main characters.

Q23. Candidates made a clear attempt to identify Rodolfo within the play and his impact on the other characters. The less confident responses were descriptive and narrative. However, all candidates showed a clear understanding of the main themes of the play.

Q24. There was clear identification of some of the family values, loyalty in particular, by the more confident candidates. Less developed responses tended to have a narrative focus. A clear understanding of the play was evident in most responses.

Q25 & 26. There were very few responses.

Q27 & 28. There were very few responses.

Q29 & 30. There were very few responses.

Section D: Modern Literary Non-fiction.

There were very few responses in this section.

GCSE English Literature: 1213 Grade Boundaries

Opt 1 01, 2F

C	D	E	F
58	45	32	20

Opt 2 01,3H

*	A	B	C	D	E
79	70	61	52	42	37

Opt 3 01T, 2F

C	D	E	F
58	45	32	20

Opt 4 01T,3H

*	A	B	C	D	E
79	70	61	52	42	37

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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