



**AQA Certificates
June 2012**

**English Literature
(Specification 8710)**

8710/1F

Report on the Examination

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Certificate in English Literature

Principal Examiner’s Report - 8710 / 1F - June 2012

June 2012 saw the first entries for AQA Level 1 / 2 in English Literature and, whilst the Foundation Tier entry was relatively small, there was clear evidence that students had engaged with the texts and enjoyed the opportunity to offer their personal responses and interpretations. Although a small number of students attempted only one of the two sections, there were few rubric infringements and most students appeared to be fully aware of the assessment objectives. Time management was an issue for some students and schools should be reminded that Section A (Unseen Poem) is worth 35 marks whilst Section B is worth 40 marks. Some students seemed to have spent much longer on Section A which disadvantaged them when writing on their chosen Prose / Drama text.

Section A: Unseen Poetry

In general, students engaged well with Duffy’s ‘Welltread’ and made telling comments on the ideas featured in the poem, particularly the small child’s fear of punishment and the way that memories of school can stay with us into adulthood. AO2 was sometimes less successful as students engaged in ‘feature spotting’ rather than explaining the effects created by the features of language and structure. For example, many students referred to Duffy’s use of alliteration without really considering why it was used and its possible effects on the reader.

Section B: Prose / Drama Texts

Not surprisingly for the first year of entry, the range of texts chosen was fairly narrow, but featured both prose and drama. There was evidence that students had been well prepared for this section and had benefited from studying their text in depth. Responses were often well supported with close textual detail and offered interesting and original interpretations. Again, AO2 was less well considered with some students relying on a rather narrative approach and tending to see characters as real people rather than the creations of a writer!

***A View from the Bridge* : Miller**

There were a number of excellent responses to this question, offering insightful comments on Eddie’s treatment of Rodolpho and the possible reasons for his behaviour. Some stronger students made sensitive comments with regard to stereotyping and also considered Miller’s possible messages regarding who was the ‘real’ man.

***Romeo and Juliet* : Shakespeare**

Not surprisingly a popular choice, producing some good responses to the ideas of ‘hate’ and ‘love’ in the play. Weaker students tended to adopt a rather narrative approach and were less secure on how Shakespeare created excitement in the opening scene. A couple of references to ‘using real guns’ suggested that the film is also popular!

***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* : Haddon**

By far the most popular choice of novel, it was clear that students of all abilities had engaged with the text and offered thoughtful responses regarding Christopher’s father. Better students commented on Haddon’s use of language and how it reflected Ed’s frustrations in dealing with his son.