

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2008 question paper

0486 LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/03

Paper 3 (Alternative to Coursework), maximum raw mark 20

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

- CIE will not enter into discussions or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

CIE is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2008 question papers for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level syllabuses and some Ordinary Level syllabuses.



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Introduction

The first thing to note is that we shall meet a wide range of candidates in this examination. We must be prepared to use the range of marks available. This particularly applies Band 1; it should be quite normal to award full marks to an essay. We are not looking for the perfect answer, whatever that might be!

In this Syllabus we aim to encourage the candidates to make some personal response to their reading. That means that, while we may have legitimate expectations to the ground most answers may occupy, we must at times be prepared to meet the candidates on their chosen ground.

We must try at all times to tease out what the candidate is trying to say to us. We must recognise that it is possible for a candidate whose technical command of English is limited, but whose language still manages to communicate understanding, to receive high marks. Nor should we reward fluency and display of literary terms if we feel that there is little evidence of such understanding. Remember that we are assessing literary response, not language skills.

It is vital that we constantly remind ourselves that this is unseen work and we should not be overcritical of an occasional false note or misunderstanding. We are marking the quality of the process of engaging with literature, and not merely assessing the accuracy or otherwise of the conclusions reached. Above all, we should be alert to any response to the affective power of the words, however it might be expressed.

Grade Descriptors

The descriptors are an attempt to guide examiners to an understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or 'typical' of work in the band. Together with the marking notes specific to the passage/poem set for that exam, they form a means of general guidance. However, as is emphasised later in the Marking Notes, the photostats taken from work produced in the examination will be the principal means by which we shall standardise the marking.

Band 9	0–1	The answer does not meet the criteria for Band 8
Band 8	2–3	Candidates will – show just a very little awareness of
Band 7	4–5	Candidates will – make a few straightforward points about....
Band 6	6–8	Candidates will – make some straightforward points about... show a little understanding of...
Band 5	9–11	Candidates will – begin to develop a response..... show some understanding of....
Band 4	12–14	Candidates will – make a sensible response.... show reasonable understanding of.... show a little awareness of the way language works...
Band 3	15–17	Candidates will – make a considered, sustained response. show clear understanding of show some awareness of the way language works....
Bands 1 and 2	18–20	Candidates will – sustain a perceptive, convincing response show extensive understanding respond sensitively to the way language works...

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Marking notes

This is a working document; it is not exhaustive; it does not provide “correct” answers. The comments on the individual bands are intended to add flesh to the descriptors in the generic mark-scheme.

Notes on Question 1 (poem)

For the record, the poem is by Sheenagh Pugh and is about Afghanistan, but candidates are not expected to have knowledge of these facts nor would it necessarily be helpful for them. The question is deliberately very open. While many candidates will be content with seeing the poem as just about the relationship between the lion and its keeper, it is hoped that more far-sighted candidates will feel their way to an awareness of wider significances, even though they may be very imprecise about these; for example, that some may explore truths about bereavement or old age enshrined in this simple poem, or even perhaps the sense of a city which has lost its heart. But a reasonably articulate awareness of the former will almost certainly betoken at least a Band 2 mark and of the latter, a Band 1 mark.

For the great majority of the candidates who follow the bullet points, there should be plenty to respond to. Much of their success in responding to the first bullet point will depend on their attention to the details of the poem, for example, the staying on long after the keeper’s pay had stopped, the description of their relationship as “keeper and captive”, the significance of bombs falling, and the description of the lion’s “rough glowing fur”. The movement to the bereavement is subtle indeed, with the shock of the recognition of his death almost palpable, “but never like this” smoothly sequent to the snoozing comforts of their mutual shelter from the falling bombs. The clichés of the fifth stanza provide little comfort. The last stanza will repay attention. Astute candidates may comment on the seeming incongruity of the phrase “out of sunlight” and the sad despair of the last line, “without a lion”.

Marks 2–5 Candidates will respond in general terms to the situation of the lion and the lion-keeper, with a basic awareness of what life is like for them and how the lion-keeper feels about its death. Answers may be very brief or general and may not focus on the words of the poem. It is very possible that candidates will write generally about issues not really central to the poem, such as the ethics of animal captivity.

Marks 6–8 Although there may be some serious misunderstandings in this mark range, the candidates will generally show a little awareness of the relationship between the lion and the keeper, perhaps showing understanding of their mutual dependency and they will show some understanding of what the bereavement means for the keeper. There may be some elementary response to the pathos of the poem. They will show limited ability to relate their thoughts and feelings to the words of the poem, however, and/or they may quote or paraphrase without showing much understanding. Candidates in this range may also be sidetracked into general discussion of animal rights or, in some other way, abandon discussion of the poem itself.

Marks 9–11 There will be clear signs that the candidate has appreciated some of the pathos of the lion-keeper’s position, both before and after the lion’s death. There may, however, be flaws in understanding and either an inclination to paraphrase or to engage in unfocused general comment. There should be some evidence that the candidate has started to respond to the words that the poet has used to communicate thoughts and feelings, but most of this evidence will not be explicitly expressed and will not be very convincing.

Marks 12–14 There should be a reasonably secure but basic understanding of what the lion-keeper feels towards his charge and some sort of feeling for the relationship. There should also be a response to the way the bereavement is described. There should also be a clear, if undeveloped response to the poet’s craft, to the way she describes the situation. There may be a brief response to the details chosen and, to the words

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used, for example, “the deepest purr in the world”. There may be a very elementary awareness of the parody of clichés used in bereavement in the fifth stanza. Wherever there is evidence of some of this appreciation of use of words, we should be ready to raise the mark into band 4 but we will not expect either clarity or development.

Marks 15-17 We will expect a reasonably clear or complex appreciation of the feelings of the lion-keeper for the lion and their mutual dependency and an understanding of the devastating effect of its death for the keeper. There should also be a response to the pathos of the poem. The candidate should also be able to develop points about the way the poet has presented this relationship. There may be an awareness of the way the poem is structured with the effect of the first word of the last stanza being changed from “who” to “but” explored; this sort of comment will normally betoken a higher mark in this range. There may also at these higher levels be an awareness of the sound of the verse, for example, the richness of the repetition of the “ur” sound in the last lines of stanza 3 and echoing still further into “curled” of stanza 4. However, the signs of a standard Band 3 answer will probably come from their ability to handle the language of the last two stanzas. We will look here for a reasonably developed response to the parody of the comforting clichés of stanza 5 and the wretched pathos of the phrases of the last stanza.

Marks 18-20 Seasoned poetry readers know that most successful poems hint at ideas and issues and feelings which are difficult to pin down or justify. The last bullet point asks candidates to define or describe the impact of the whole poem on them. We must be ready to accept with gratitude any answers which see further than the central lion and its keeper image, whatever form that vision takes as long as it is firmly rooted in the poem. We must, of course, distinguish this from easy comments about animal welfare, which have little to do with the poem. These wider visions may centre on the sadness of old lives which have seemingly lost their relevance in an uncaring world, the transformation of the keeper-captive relationship, or will extend the description of bereavement to that of one human being for another, particularly perhaps a man for his life-long partner. There may be also a dim awareness of political undertones, but we should not deny candidates full marks who have not perceived this. As always, there should be an engagement with the poetry of the piece.

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Notes on Question 2 (prose)

Almost all candidates should be able to see that he is sad but it is to be hoped that most will be rather more searching in their understanding of the nature of this sadness. There is a sense of finality and loneliness permeating the text. This comes partly from the writer's own explicit analysis – the "illogical" assertion that he no longer had a home, for example – but largely from the way he narrates his story. The sea passage is literally and metaphorically a sad journey from an old familiar world; the view of Kingston from the ship is profoundly atmospheric and his focus on where he imagines his own house to be quite affecting. Add to this the multiplicity of comparisons of loved ones being unable to communicate with you and a sensitive reader can empathise readily with the feelings which led to his crying in his palatial suite. Capable candidates might also be able to appreciate how the knowledge that he is "lucky" only makes his grief more acute.

The two parts of the question merge and we should mark them as a whole.

Marks 2–5 Candidates will be able to see that the writer is sad about leaving and perhaps refer to an explicit statement to that effect or to the fact that he cried. Answers might be quite vague and draw on general feelings about homesickness rather than what is specific to the passage. There may be very brief answers in this mark range or unpointed narratives.

Marks 6-8 There should be a reasonable, general understanding of the passage, though some key details might be misunderstood. There should be a broad, if undeveloped, understanding of the author's feelings, of his sadness and what is making him sad. This might still be mixed up with general comments about homesickness perhaps from the candidate's own experience. There may be some very straightforward references to what the writer says about his sadness, such as that it took him by surprise. However, there will be little or no reference to the way he has told the episode. There may be some unpointed narrative or paraphrase in this mark range with little or no linking commentary.

Marks 9-11 There will be signs that the candidate has begun to think about the way the author felt when leaving home *on this occasion*. This will probably imply that they are beginning to be aware that he sees this as the ending of his youth. There will usually be some quotations or references which show contact with the writing. Although there may be comparisons with their own experience, candidates will show that they have been able to keep these in context and have not substituted them for the writer's thoughts. There probably will be little or no analysis of *how* the author has communicated his feelings to the reader, although there may be signs that the candidate has been moved by the narrative.

Marks 12-14 Understanding of the passage should be reasonably secure and there should be an attempt to go a little further than just saying he is sad because he is missing his parents. There will probably be an awareness that this is a turning-point in his life, although this might be stated quite briefly, without development. There will be some attempt to show how his writing communicates the impact of his experience, perhaps by a rudimentary examination of the comparisons in the sixth paragraph, perhaps by an evocation of the scene where he traces the streetlights from the deck. Whatever the references candidates choose to analyse, we will not expect their responses to be very developed in this range.

Marks 15-17 We should in this range expect a more searching exploration of the writer's feelings and what makes them particularly poignant on this occasion. There will probably be a clear awareness of the writer's sense of the finality of the event, of a sadness which was particularly acute not least because it was unexpected, of the full sense of his being "at sea". There should also be a readiness to engage with the second bullet point. I think we should expect references to the way he builds up a melancholy

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atmosphere in the fourth and fifth paragraphs and an exploration of some of the comparisons in the sixth paragraph. There should normally be some commentary on the way he chooses to end that chapter as well. Please do not interpret this as a definitive list – there is no such thing – but as a guide to what a typical script in this range might attempt.

Marks 18-20 We should be looking in this mark range for a sensitive response to the tone of the passage and, while they may not be able to articulate it as such the interplay between fact and metaphor. There should be an ability to empathise with the author, while at the same time understanding the craft which allows us to share in his experience. In short, in this area we should be looking for an eye for detail, sensitivity to words and an engagement with the writing in whatever way this is manifested.