

Examiners' Report Summer 2007

IGCSE

IGCSE English Literature (4360)

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4360/01 Drama and Prose

Section A: Drama

It was pleasing to see candidates were very familiar with their texts. Candidates must answer the question that is asked in the paper and avoid writing summaries and narratives.

Q1(a) asked about how Antony achieved success. To achieve high marks a close focus on answering the question was needed in a response rather than straight forward character studies of Antony. In Q4(a) it was important that in addition to character studies of Marco and Rodolfo their similarities and differences were analysed. The part of the question which asked about the importance of each character in the play was not answered in detail by some candidates and a minority did not answer this part at all.

Although Q4 was by far the most popular, some responses were general and narrative. Candidates who answered questions on 'A Doll's House' gave focused and pleasingly perceptive and engaged comments in their answer.

Section B: Prose

Many of the comments made above also stand in this section as well. In some cases it seemed that candidates had prepared answers to last year's questions and then tried to make them fit this year's question. The key skill of analysing the requirements of a question must be taught.

There were some very perceptive responses to Q6(a). The study of literature should encourage personal thought and personal responses and it was clear in that question that many candidates had simply learnt about the characters without thinking about the techniques that Austen had used to present them. Candidates must be encouraged to analyse all aspects of the texts that they are studying and be discouraged from thinking that a Literature examination is a mere memory test. The use of textual knowledge should be limited and focused to answer the question.

4360/02 Poetry

What is of the highest importance here is a developed understanding of theme and purpose along with an appreciation of the techniques that are used to communicate them. It is not sufficient to list literary techniques. Examiners wish to see genuine, informed, personal responses.

In Q2 candidates were given the opportunity to make a free choice of the poems that they would like to recommend to a friend. This presented a real opportunity to show why a candidate had enjoyed two particular poems and to explain why they were worth recommending to others. Understanding of the poems and personal analysis of the poems was required in the response.

4360/03 Poetry (Coursework)

The number of centres choosing this option rose again this session. The choice of themes dealt with tended to follow the divisions of the Anthology but some of the stronger candidates did show clear awareness that their poems could link to more than one theme. Precisely focused assignment titles greatly enhanced the individuality of responses and reduced the incidence of very similar points in very similar essays which was evident elsewhere.

Understanding of the poems was generally good although there were times when there was a tendency to over simplify and miss parts of the poems that did not fit in with the candidate's view.

Quotations were often well integrated but a few number of candidates needed to be more precise with their selection to ensure that the words quoted fitted the sentence and made sense. It is also important that care is taken when quoting. A few examples from some unfortunate misquotations seen were: '*back down the vesta of years*', '*tickling piano*', and '*ordure of diarrhoea*'

Some centres over-rewarded candidates who did no more than pick out some phrases and comment on their contribution to the overall tone. Other centres however, were able to make the distinction between fairly strong candidates who merely appreciated and responded to the poet's choice of language and the very strongest who gave the sustained detailed analysis required for the highest grades.

Centres should note that the highest and lowest scoring folders need to be sent as well as the asterisked ones, if not already included. Also, that there should be an Authentication Form for each candidate signed by both the candidate and the assessor as well as the folder Front Sheet.

Statistics for IGCSE English Literature 4360

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Option 1	68	60	52	45	37	30	23	16
Option 2	73	63	53	44	36	29	22	15
Option 3	73	63	53	44	36	29	15	7

Note

Option 1: Candidates taking papers 1 and 2.

Option 2: Candidates taking paper 1 and submitting coursework.

Option 3: Candidates taking paper 1 and transferring a previous session's coursework mark.

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