

Marking notes

November 2015

Literature and performance

Standard level

Paper 2

6 pages

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Assessment criteria

These notes to examiners are intended only as guidelines to assist marking and as a supplement to the published external assessment criteria for written paper 2. They are not offered as an exhaustive and fixed set of responses or approaches to which all answers must rigidly adhere. Good ideas or angles not offered here should be acknowledged and rewarded as appropriate. Similarly, answers which do not include all the ideas or approaches suggested here should not be so heavily penalized as to distort appreciation of individuality.

With reference to criterion C, the better answers will contain examples that show an adequate sense of stylistic features with some awareness of their effects, using critical analysis and pertinent detail.

The best answers will show a strong sense of the stylistic and comparable features of the works, as well as the effects of these features.

Of course, some of the points listed below will appear in weaker papers, but are unlikely to be developed.

These apply to all answers below.

A maximum of **[5 marks]** may be awarded for each of the five criteria.

Criteria A and B

The danger of rewarding or penalizing the use of illustration/references/quotations twice in both these categories should be avoided.

Criterion B

“Personal response” and “independence of thought” appear as the levels of the descriptors increase. What is sought is an engaged and individual treatment of the chosen topic. Engaged and individual essays will usually make themselves clear by showing insight into the implications of the question and the quality and interest of the details cited in support.

The first person singular does not automatically constitute a personal response and conversely an impersonal academic style does not necessarily indicate a lack of personal response.

Criterion C

It is expected that every question set will provide candidates with ample opportunities to demonstrate their awareness of the demands of this criterion. However, where a question does not explicitly offer such opportunities, examiners should interpret criterion C broadly, to ensure that candidates are not unfairly disadvantaged. In such cases it would be sufficient for candidates to show, as appropriate to the question, an awareness of how elements such as plot, character, setting, structure, voice, *etc* are used by writers to meet their purposes. No matter how the question is phrased, candidates must also address related matters of style and technique.

“Awareness” and “appreciation” of literary features are the key elements under this criterion. The mere labelling, without appreciation, of literary features will not score the highest marks. On the other hand, the candidate who is attentive to literary features and deals with them in a meaningful way, but who does not consistently use the vocabulary of literary criticism, can still be awarded the higher achievement levels.

Reminder: the term “literary features” is broad and includes elements as basic as plot, character *etc*, attention to which is valid and must be rewarded as appropriate.

Criterion D

Any form of structuring to the essay will be rewarded if it is effective and appropriate. Different conventions are in operation and therefore all approaches are acceptable and will be judged on the basis of their effectiveness. Examiners should remember that structure does not exist by itself, but any structure must be measured by appropriate reference to the terms of the question and by its capacity to integrate these towards the development of an organized and coherent essay.

Reminder: in this criterion, supporting examples must be evaluated in terms of how fluently they are incorporated/integrated to shape/advance the argument, **not** in terms of their appropriateness or accuracy.

Criterion E

If you have reservations about awarding a four, you should ensure that these are well founded before awarding a three. The broadness of achievement in level three sometimes makes examiners reluctant to award four.

Judgment needs to be used when dealing with lapses in grammar, spelling and punctuation; therefore do not unduly penalize.

Mechanical accuracy is only part of this criterion. Ensure that all the other elements are considered.

Examiners should be careful to avoid being prejudiced in their application of this criterion by achievement levels in other criteria. It is possible to score highly on this criterion even if candidates have scored in the lower levels on other criteria, and vice versa.

1. An adequate to good answer will be able to cite, quote or paraphrase some openings and/or closings or both, and make some cogent observations about the poet's selections. These observations could include such interpretations of 'weight and interest' as the relevance of the features to the drive and content of the poem, the effects on the reader, elements of surprise or predictability, technical choices and the like.

A good to excellent answer may include a greater degree of familiarity with the poems as well as more precise evaluation of the choices for opening and closing poems. The possible directions listed above as well as others would be addressed in creating a fuller and more precise response to the question.

2. An adequate to good answer will identify some elements of the poem that offer some possibilities for dramatic representation and explain both what they are and why they could be considered "dramatic." These elements could include conflict, epiphany, dialogue or violence as well as many others.

A good to excellent answer may include some persuasively developed examples that are more precisely explored in terms of the elements listed above, possibly going on to show how these elements affect the whole delivery and impact of the poem.

3. An adequate to good answer will be able to offer examples where poets have borrowed the words or thoughts of others to infuse their poems with variety and depth. Such answers will be able to suggest what exactly these materials have added to the overall effect of the poem with some accurate perceptions about what these have offered.

A good to excellent answer may include more precise and connected examples of these importations to the poems. The analysis will likely demonstrate more effectively that the thoughts and sayings have been important to the construction and impact of the poems.

4. An adequate to good answer will find good examples of expressions of loss and/or longing or similar emotions and convey, first the nature of the causal factor, and then analyse the poetic strategies poets have used to express the emotion and in some cases to come to terms with it.

A good to excellent answer is likely to use more precise terms and synonyms to discuss the emotions expressed and the precipitating cause, and then to show more fully the way poets have used their work as a form of expression and possibly catharsis.

5. An adequate to good answer will identify instances where the conflict of personal beliefs and societal pressures have been addressed in poems by at least two writers. The candidate will need to speak with some specificity about which aspect(s) within the "society" are represented by the poet and how the conflicts are treated through the medium of poetic structure and language.

A good to excellent answer, in addition to addressing the demands of an adequate answer, may also find some interesting comparisons and contrasts between the ways different institutions in society are treated by the poet, or look carefully at such matters as the subtlety of the approaches to conflict and the determination to find resolution or not in the views expressed.

6. An adequate to good answer will choose either free or metrical verse, or both, making clear an understanding of each approach to poetic speech. The candidate should be able to demonstrate what techniques are characteristic of each form and employed in the particular poems chosen for discussion. Some effects of the form should appear in the good answers.

A good to excellent answer may work with either form or both, and will show a perceptive understanding of their choices, and possibly how the two forms differ in both construction and effect. Whatever the line of argument, the answers in this category are likely to reveal a somewhat developed sense of the impact of the verse form on the content of poems.
