

Examiners' Report January 2007

GCE

GCE English Literature (8180/9180)

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6391 Drama and Poetry

General

It was pleasing to read the very positive comments that examiners made about the responses to the paper this January. Candidates had clearly been well prepared, and came to the exam with both thorough knowledge and, in general, an understanding of the demands of timed work. The standard of responses was therefore very sound overall, with, as usual, some exceptional scripts, full of perceptive and well argued comment.

However, a number of examiners commented that the poetry seemed weaker again this year, with some very sketchy answers or essays which, although they may be detailed and full, lack the focus and direction needed for Band 5. The level of confidence in dealing with generic issues is generally much higher with the drama texts than it is with the poetry.

Judging from the plans provided as well as the completed essays, it appears to be the case that some candidates are still under the impression that context is assessed in this unit.

An issue which remains central to possible underachievement in this unit is the balance required between a general but focused overview of the text (enabling the development of a clear argument, and therefore satisfying the demands of A04) and the need for a thoroughly detailed exploration of the scenes/poems. Candidates may well provide a great deal of A03 analysis but little in the way of detailed interpretation. Without a sense of ongoing and carefully signposted argument, however, responses will not achieve a mark at a high level, regardless of the detail contained in the essay.

The range of texts attempted by candidates in the January remains very limited, with questions 1, 3, 5, 9 and 10 attempted by very few.

Behn: *The Rover*

Only a few candidates answered on this text.

Q1(a)

This was the less popular of the two. In general, responses were confident, detailed and thoughtful, although answers were often based on character. The phrase 'particularly the women' was often ignored, although the idea of 'freedom' was generally well discussed.

Q1(b)

There were some thorough and informed discussions of the text, which were not always fully focused on the question, often over-using contextual material. There was also a tendency for candidates either to deal with how the women manipulate the men, ignoring the fact that the men 'seem to have the power' or the other way round.

Friel: *Translations*

There is always a tendency among the less confident to provide an all-purpose essay on language with this text regardless of the question. However, the (a) question here made this difficult to do and in many cases this resulted in some excellent answers which focused instead on the dramatic qualities of the play. Almost all candidates showed an impressive knowledge of the play and were generally effectively engaged in their responses.

Q2(a)

Candidates showed an appreciative familiarity with the play and often showed a thoughtful consideration of Friel's stagecraft. Even more pedestrian candidates who settled for a largely descriptive account of relationships found themselves ranging widely over the whole play. There were a large number of quite detailed examinations of the opening scene, many recognising the purposeful way in which Friel constructs a sense of community, and the best addressing the range of dramatic effects, from Doalty's bawdry to the plangency of Sarah's evident feelings for Manus. Act II scene ii was, as ever, another focus of attention. Almost all recognised the overall movement towards loneliness and isolation in the play; some considered the contribution political pressures made to this, often with detailed discussion of Maire's relationship with Yolland. Even Jimmy and Hugh are, as one candidate observed, "consoling themselves with drink and literature in the aftermath of 1798".

Q2(b)

A number of candidates interpreted 'strong' as English and 'weak' as Gaelic, charting the decline of the latter through the re-naming, the National Schools and economic pressures, a valid if somewhat limiting approach. Most ignored the implications of the word 'subtleties'. There were also the usual claims that Maire and Yolland transcend language in II ii, often without reference to the considerable ironies central to the scene. On the other hand, there were detailed and thoughtful discussions of Owen's parallel and contrasting translations of Lancey, which brought out the political and social power of language in a subtle way. The conversation about Tobair Vree prompted similarly interesting comments on language, culture and heritage. Some candidates explored the implications of the question with considerable sophistication ('Friel examines language as an ever-changing body of knowledge which allows human beings to communicate....however by referring to the necessity for it to change and avoid fossilising, he also in a way underlines its weaknesses.')

Churchill: *Top Girls*

Although only a few candidates attempted answers on this text, *Top Girls* continues to elicit an engaged response from many candidates. A number of answers suggested a degree of confidence about the background in the 1980s, but others seemed to be rather naïve about the socio-political background, which led to some uncertain generalisations. In both questions the candidates often seemed unfortunately to forget that the text is a play. Some technical vocabulary was used with this text (semiotics, lexis, intra-sexual) although candidates did not always seem very confident as to meaning and usage.

Q3(a)

This was the more popular question, and the one which was more effectively answered, often with flair and insight. Candidates explored with thoroughness the web of victimisations in the play although they seemed happier to discuss 'victims of men' than 'victims of each other'. All recognised the political and cultural purposes of the author, though somewhat fewer were able to link these closely with dramatic technique and effect. Less successful answers spent too long on the prescribed extract, focusing almost wholly on the conversation with Howard's wife, with little reference to Angie. More circumspect and thoughtful responses used the extract as a gateway to the play as a whole, noting broad structural effects and dramatic impact.

Q3(b)

The few candidates who attempted this question generally considered that Churchill presented ambition as a dark emotion. They did not illustrate their points with effectively chosen extracts and were inclined to generalise with rather vague comments about 'ceilings' for women in the commercial world, often unrelated to the abundant material in the play itself.

Williams: A Streetcar Named Desire

The overwhelming popularity of this text continues, and it is indeed very pleasing to see how candidates have so obviously enjoyed studying it. Most responses at least attempted to explore dramatic technique and impact. However, despite the real engagement of so many answers, it is also important to highlight in this report a few aspects of the less successful answers as these problems seem to be on the increase: the listing of Williams's dramatic techniques with little attempt to develop relevance; the exploration of the stage directions as if they were part of a novel; some rather simplistic contextualising of Blanche 'as a representation of Tennessee Williams's own sad life' (as one candidate put it); rather over-zealous attempts to use critical approaches without a firm idea of purpose ('a feminist reading of this play would say that...'). It needs to be emphasised that all of these ideas can be explored to some effect but the candidates need to be aware of the over-riding need for focus and direction in timed work, perhaps especially when (as is often the case with *A Streetcar Named Desire*) they have a particularly sound knowledge of the text and need therefore to prioritise effectively.

Q4(a)

This was an inviting question, and there was a wealth of material for discussion. Many of the responses showed real understanding in their analysis of the given scene, although some (as ever) spent too long on this, while others (rather more than before) dismissed the scene in a few perfunctory sentences. The former group often showed an appreciative grasp of Williams' dramatic technique, and at times anatomising not just the intensity but the complexity of the emotions on display. Choice and treatment of material from the rest of the play tended to be a discriminating factor. Confrontations between Blanche and Stanley were a common reference point, but there were refreshing considerations also of Mitch and his mother, and the linguistic care Williams lavishes on Blanche's memories of Allan. A number of candidates produced well-judged examinations of Stella - less vociferous than Stanley, less eloquent than Blanche, but still, as one candidate observed, "just as much a victim of the intensity of her feelings as her sister and her husband".

Q4(b)

In 4b, the first clause of the quotation received the most attention. Less successful treatments tended to itemise the individual feelings of the characters in a rather mechanical way. Similarly, some confined themselves to charting the downfall of Blanche. 'Decline' prompted a number of socio-historical readings, but seeing Blanche and Stanley merely as emblems of plantation culture and the new demotic industrialised America is almost inevitably limiting. Candidates in general did not explore the concepts of optimism and pessimism very effectively, requiring as they do a circumspect and balanced consideration of the whole play. Some sought to ground their assessment in the dramatic conclusion of each character, and the best recognised the ambiguities built into Williams's presentation - Blanche going to her incarceration with disdain for the values of those who have sent her, say, or the new life of the Kowalski baby wrapped in dangerous blue. As one candidate commented: "Eunice's philosophy that 'Life must go on' might be the play's final message, but it goes on with the same mixture of hope and failure as it always has."

Stoppard: *Professional Foul*

An insufficient number of candidates answered on this text to allow for any meaningful comment.

Edexcel Poetry Anthology (Section One: Post-1770)

As ever, this was easily the most popular text in the poetry section. There were a number of extremely perceptive answers, and the general level was pleasingly confident. However, it is worth stressing again that although some candidates develop effective comparative responses, this approach is not specifically required by the questions. As ever, it is the integration of language analysis and the exploration of a text's meaning which is the foundation of a fully achieved response. Several examiners noted that there were a number of extremely short essays in this series, covering no more than one point on each poem. There also continue to be many examples of candidates reproducing often irrelevant contextual material (which, perhaps they need to be reminded, is not assessed on this paper).

Q6(a)

There were some very knowledgeable answers here and poems generally were well selected, although the majority chose to write on the two named poems. A number of responses focused only on part of the question, choosing to consider the 'small, vivid details' rather than the other side of the given antithesis - 'general ideas'. Only the most successful answers touched on the ways in which the poems created their impact. Too many responses merely ran through a whole list of what they thought were 'small, vivid details', listing techniques that 'got the message across'. There was little evidence from a number of candidates of exploration or focus on what a 'small, vivid detail' actually is or, indeed, what a 'general idea' is either. Some more successful responses explored the use of small objects to represent "general ideas", such as Hardy's thrush.

Additional references were made to 'Easter Monday', 'My Last Duchess', 'An Arundel Tomb', 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' and 'The Darkling Thrush'.

Q6(b)

A number of responses explored the idea of manipulation of the reader as a way to examine 'forceful' in the quotation, sometimes through voice and persona. This was often successful, although it depended on the degree to which the candidate remembered that the statement focused on 'views or attitudes'. There was some use of literary theory although this was often limited to very general comments (as one candidate said writing on 'London' - 'A Marxist literary critic would argue that no one should suffer'). Some of the strongest arguments were those which focused on poems such as 'Remember' or 'Sonnets from the Portuguese XLIII', advancing the theory that gentle, intimate language could be just as affecting as "forceful" expression. A number of students challenged the assertion in a different way, arguing ideas and poetic technique over language.

Candidates chose a wide range of material, including 'London' ('discordant, evocative language' as one said) and 'God's Grandeur' ('intimidating and comforting at the same time'). There was quite a lot of evidence of inappropriate choices, although with a poem like 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', some very competent candidates were able to explore the way the language gave a 'powerful impression' through conveying the thought processes of the central character ('a study in failure'). Other poems used with varying degrees of success were 'Dover Beach', 'O What is That Sound', 'Prayer Before Birth', 'The Second Coming' and 'I Am', 'Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night' and 'My Last Duchess'.

Betjeman: *The Best of Betjeman*

Candidates clearly found Betjeman's poetry accessible and there were a number of excellent responses which developed sensitive arguments in response to both questions.

Q7(a)

Most of the responses showed good, in some cases excellent, knowledge of the poems and evidence of understanding and engagement. However, it was the balance needed between the two areas of the question that proved the biggest challenge to candidates. Many were adept at looking at 'colourful characters', identifying them and discussing how they are made colourful, but not so good at balancing that against place and saying whether this is equally important. Or, indeed, the other way round. Some candidates, for example, looked at 'Henley-on-Thames', 'Parliament Hill Fields' and 'Death in Leamington', writing in detail about place but largely ignoring character, a decision in part at least driven by the choice of material. The most successful responses did not try to look for the combined effect of character and place in one poem but took two different poems, one for each element, as, for example, 'Executive' and 'Parliament Hill Fields'. However, one candidate did argue quite effectively that Betjeman shows affection for landscapes with people, and that it is the human associations that give the settings their importance for him - using 'Treberthick' as the main example of this.

Q7(b)

With this question also, many candidates tended to focus on one aspect of the question often to the exclusion of the rest. Some candidates, however, chose poems well and were able to present a consistent argument, exploring the ideas of 'people's feelings' in conjunction with 'cold and detached voice'. Most candidates, in fact, argued that Betjeman was not cold and detached but only the top band really pursued

the meaning of the phrase. There was a wide range of poems chosen from throughout the anthology, although some of the material was not really appropriate. For example, 'Slough' was popular and generally used as an example of 'cold and detached' tone, but is, of course, a rather angry polemic. 'The Hon. Sec.' was sometimes chosen to illustrate an opposing view to that expressed in the statement.

The most popular poems, other than those mentioned above, were 'Death in Leamington', 'Devonshire Street, W1', 'Business Girls', 'In Westminster Abbey', 'On a Portrait of a Deaf Man' and 'Senex'.

Keats: *Selected Poems*

There were not many answers on Keats this series, but of those, both questions were equally popular. There were, in fact, a number of excellent answers, which focused effectively on the language and developed confident arguments. However, there were also a number of examples of essays which seemed to be 'catch all' responses, aiming to provide a template answer to almost any question. These answers tended to provide brief statements about the romantic imagination, negative capability, the theme of the transitory nature of life and so on, with little if any response to the specificities of the question.

Q8(a)

Candidates seemed by and large to have been very well prepared for answering on 'The Eve of St. Agnes', although the links to the other material chosen to support their comments on the given poem were not always so effective. Most candidates responded to the prompt for details of 'the physical world' but ignored the phrase 'intense involvement'. Some responses were (often rudimentary) adaptations of a previous essay on nature.

Popular choices of additional poems included 'To Autumn' and 'La belle dame sans merci'.

Q8(b)

This question inspired some very mature and sophisticated answers which displayed knowledge and understanding of a wide range of material and explored Keats's ideas with real confidence. Most focused clearly on beauty although the temptation to include autobiographical material of often dubious relevance proved too much for some.

Another temptation (much rarer) was the over-use of critical material, and indeed quotations from Keats's letters. Whilst pleasingly scholarly, such extensive use of this material has little place in an essay done in examination conditions.

Popular choices included 'To Autumn', 'Ode to a Nightingale', 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' and 'Bright Star, would I were steadfast as thou art'.

The Penguin Book of American Verse

As is often the case, candidates generally responded in an effectively engaged way to this minority interest text. However, a number of examiners commented on the rather forced ways in which particular poems were sometimes used, suggesting that their reading in the anthology had not been as wide-ranging as it might have been. Other examiners, however, commented that the candidates seemed to have enjoyed studying the poems and that they wrote with apparent enthusiasm and freshness.

It should be pointed out that a few candidates answered these questions using material from the Edexcel Anthology (Question 6).

Q9(a)

Most candidates showed some reasonably confident familiarity with their chosen poems and had some notion of the poets' methods/preoccupations. However, the interpretation of 'society they see around them' was frequently woolly with a sometimes rather limited grasp of the concept of 'outsider' as well, although some candidates - notably those who selected Lowell and Eliot - commented on the writer as a somewhat solitary observer of his world. A number of answers provided intelligent overviews but failed to follow up with any sufficiently detailed argument.

Material used included a range of poems from Whitman and Ginsberg (the better answers providing some linkage between the two) 'Theme for English B' (Hughes), 'Acquainted with the Night' (Frost), 'A Coney Island of the Mind' (Ferlinghetti), 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' (Eliot), 'Buick' (Shapiro), 'Out, Out' (Frost) and a number of poems by Sylvia Plath.

Q9(b)

A number of candidates failed to consider important aspects of the question, such as 'forcefully', and there were examples of rather curious choices of material which caused some uncertain argument. In general, however, candidates seemed to enjoy writing about the language and were often engaged by the themes. Some examples of detail used were Ginsberg's use of slang and colloquial language mentioned as form of forceful language, Williams as an imagist poet ('by breaking words down he transmits their essence') and Plath's confessional style with particular reference to the juxtaposition in 'Daddy' of childish language and strong, startling imagery.

Selections of material included: 'Howl' and 'America' (Ginsberg), 'Daddy' and 'Lazarus' (Plath), 'TCB' (Sanchez), 'Acquainted with the Night' (Frost) and 'The Star-Spangled Banner' (Key).

Clarke: *Letter from a Far Country (from Collected Poems)*

There were comparatively few answers on this text.

Q10(a)

Many candidates used the prompt to write about life and death in the poetry, and although some failed to focus on the question at all, others made this a successful approach. Candidates had in general been well prepared and in some cases seemed determined to reproduce a full list of Clarke's poetic techniques, regardless of relevance.

Popular additional poems included 'Scything', 'White Roses', 'Jac Codi Baw', 'Miracle on St David's Day', 'Plums' and 'Friesian Bull'.

Q10(b)

This was the more popular question.

Overall the responses reflected a strong sense of the intensity of Clark's engagement with/response to her surroundings and of her drive to confront some of the darker features of the human condition and to struggle, through her language and technique, towards affirmation; implicitly, at least, to find the beauty "around her". There were some effective interpretations of 'beauty' - in nature, in people, in celebratory moments and in language itself. Generally essays had a clear grasp of the poet's vision of heritage and of how it informs her diction and selection of detail. Some interesting links were made with the Romantics. One candidate drew succinct parallels between the inspiration felt by Wordsworth to write 'The Daffodils' and the mute man in 'Miracle on St David's Day' being inspired to recite Wordsworth's poem, by seeing the daffodils as evidence of the power of nature's beauty, in turn inspiring Clarke.

Other poems used included 'Kingfishers at Condat' and 'Les Grottes'.

6392 Pre-1900 Prose

General

Candidates who do best in the examination first and foremost attend to and engage with all parts of the question. They make the best use of their limited time, selecting relevantly and purposefully from their texts. They keep the text central, not allowing historical and other information to crowd out the actual text. Candidates in the higher bands will offer tentative interpretations, which suggest awareness of alternative interpretations, while lower band candidates tend to base their arguments on personal opinions, and to be more assertive. Lower band answers on the whole focus on parts of the question rather than the whole, paying little attention to the terms of the question which might be more problematic. It is, though, rare to read an answer which is not a serious attempt to engage with and answer the question in however limited a way.

In closed book examinations, brief but aptly chosen quotation or close textual reference generally works well. Lower band answers do tend to include too much attempted textual quotation, with little attempt to select relevantly and appropriately, or they write at some distance from the text, making generalised comments, and failing to engage with the writer's presentation of the settings, characters and events. Higher band answers will respond directly to prompts such as 'reassures' and 'underlines' (1a), 'challenges' (1b), 'explores' (2a), 'savagely criticises' (2b), 'satirises' and 'criticises' (3a), 'reveals her preoccupation' (3b), 'condemns' (4a), 'reveals... his great concern' (4b), 'presents... as a symbol' (5a), 'presents... a surprisingly' (5b). They will focus on the ways that the writer has presented and organised their material, and reflect on how this might affect the reader. What discriminates between higher and lower band answers is a consideration of characterisation, not character.

Lower band answers very frequently provide much extraneous information, usually contextual material, not linked to their chosen question. Higher band answers on the other hand are able to select from their contextual knowledge that which is relevant and illuminating. They are also unlikely to make rather contentious assertions about the links between the events of a writer's life, and the text studied which lower band answers will often do.

The focus on context in this unit means that there will be particular areas to be explored which go beyond character or 'theme'. The writer's inferred attitudes and values are important here, so higher band candidates need to be able to show awareness of for example the effects of the deliberating structuring of events, of dialogue, of choice of language, of juxtaposition, of patterns of images, and how these reflect the writer's attitudes in their presentation of a fictive world.

Where candidates cite critics, they should engage with their views, rather than assuming they are absolute authorities. If they do introduce these critical opinions, they do need to demonstrate convincingly that they have understood the cited reading: in other words it is not introduced simply to meet, as they see it, the demands of AO4.

The following comments on individual questions exemplify and develop the points raised here.

Hardy: *The Return of the Native*

There is a tendency in many answers on this text to write about the heath, no matter what the question. Candidates need to keep relevant and focused on the particular topic, and not skew the question to fit some prepared ideas about the heath.

(a) Some candidates offered personal responses along the lines of 'I think Eustacia and Wildeve got what they deserved.' whereas others genuinely engaged with the question, exploring for example Hardy's manipulation of the tragic genre. There were many informed and thoughtfully worked-through approaches to the matter of the ending(s), drawing in contextual features of 'Victorian morality' linked to Hardy's own attitudes as revealed by his handling of character and plot. 'Harsh, indifferent and unjust' prompted controlled responses which kept 'ending' in mind. The best answers responded directly to the idea of reassuring the reader, and to 'stability'.

(b) Lower band answers provided some extremely simplified 'definitions' of the Victorian moral code (for example. 'The Victorians believed that sex did not exist') which tended to lead to rather simplistic verdicts on the morality of some characters. Some lower band candidates demonstrated a lack of control over their use of contextual information. In their eagerness to address AO5i, their tendency was to produce sweeping statements on context that added very little to their responses: 'The problem for Thomas Hardy was that he was writing in the Victorian era'.

There were some sophisticated appraisals in higher band answers of Hardy's own attitude to Eustacia, pointing up possible contradictions in his own attitudes about what she 'meant', and where he stood in terms of 'right' and 'wrong' behaviour. Again the tendency here was for weaker candidates to assert simplified views: for example, 'Eustacia's marriage was quite conventional in that she was hated by her mother-in-law.' Lower band answers simply re-described the marriages in the novel whereas higher band answers explored fully the contextual implications of 'conventional views' and carefully considered whether or not Hardy 'challenged' these.

A number of candidates lost sight of the text as a construct and consequently limited their answers by offering little more than opinion based on personal response: 'Wildeve had no right to be running around the heath after Eustacia!'

Shelley: *Frankenstein*

In a number of responses to both questions there was an imbalance between text and context, with focus on the novel struggling against mini-biographies of Shelley and accounts of her milieu. An excess of context is often ill-related to the point being made, and often ill-understood. Some candidates failed to embed their contextual knowledge in their responses to the text itself, making, instead, often wild statements of half-remembered facts:

'At the time Shelley was writing, there was a lot of grave-digging about.'

Or '... Cornelius Agrippa who wrote about scientific experiments using electricity'.

(a) Many responses did not get much further than explaining the causes of loneliness and isolation, followed by largely narrative accounts of the consequences, applying largely to Frankenstein and the Creature, and sometimes to Walton. Candidates would then apportion blame or justification, with most being very clear that Frankenstein is bad, and the Creature is good, but made bad by Frankenstein. Some candidates argued that Frankenstein's upbringing was too soft, and this made him bad, others that it was a model upbringing and that means he is ungrateful/perverse.

Weaker responses tended to look only at the Creature here. Better answers engaged thoughtfully with moral development, as in 'Isolation does not stop the Creature from knowing the difference between right and wrong. However, it may have prevented it from developing a conscience.' The best broadened their scope to examine Victor and Walton as well as to compare them with other characters. Lower band answers never really engaged with 'moral development' where higher band ones discussed Shelley's perspective and the narrative forms she used to convey the development of her characters.

At the other extreme, some arguments were rather abstract and generalised. Candidates should know, if quoting or referring, that Marx, for instance, is not a literary critic, and Shelley was not influenced by him. ('Shelley was influenced by Marxist. Marxist said that...'). Better candidates showed a sophisticated - and sometimes interestingly expressed - grasp of the text, and appeared to have read, and to understand, quoted sources.

(b) Some very good answers here made distinctions between 'science' and 'knowledge', and focused closely on 'misuse'. The best responses considered Frankenstein's academic and intellectual background and drew in carefully selected and relevant information on scientific breakthroughs and controversies of the period as context - as well as considering 'knowledge' as broader learning for example the impact of the Creature's self-education and the metaphorical idea of Walton's 'voyage' of self-discovery. Efforts were made to differentiate 'savage criticism' of science per se from scientific malpractice and they used the text carefully to explore Frankenstein's motivation, and the chasm between ideal and reality. Candidates across bands seized on topical parallels, in most cases appropriately and economically, but with weaker answers moving too far away from the text and offering dissertations on the morality of cloning and IVF treatment rather than any literary analysis. Some weaker responses tended to go for the 'life story' approach to 'presentation'.

Good answers here argued convincingly that Shelley uses Elizabeth and Clerval as models for the positive aspects of learning and went on to explore her presentation of these characters as 'natural' as compared to Victor's 'unnatural' experiments and so on.

Austen: *Emma*

In response to both questions on this text candidates are inclined to make assertions about the methods used by Austen, without offering any evidence for their claims. An examiner commented: 'There were too many breezy, eloquent, second-hand, references to, for example, "Austen's trademark satirical style", without any attempt to explain in detail, if at all, how this was created.' Austen's use of 'free indirect discourse' was pointed out by many, though with very little attempt to demonstrate, or define, or comment on its possible effects. One very good answer argued that a characteristic of this narrative method was that it invites the reader to both sympathise and judge.

Another characteristic of answers on *Emma* is the tendency for candidates to distort the question, or even disregard it, so that they can write a seemingly prepared essay on Emma's own development.

Although there was some supported comment on Austen's techniques, there is still not enough evidence that candidates are comfortable with exploring or analysing the writer's structural choices.

(a) Good scripts defined 'values and conventions' successfully, blended knowledge of the social context into their answers, and attempted to explore Austen's satirical purpose and technique. The best responses here considered Austen's overall intentions and looked at the novel in its generic context in terms of social satire or as a comedy of manners. As well as defining the key contextual term 'values and conventions', they attempted to make some distinction between them. They also distinguished between 'satirises' and 'criticises', understanding and clarifying the differences between the two terms.

Many better responses both defined 'satire' and demonstrated Austen's own particular approach to it through examples set in the broader context of social criticism. They had a firmer grasp of 'values and conventions', a phrase which tended to be shunted around weaker essays with little attempt to distinguish between the terms or to show how or through whom they operated in the novel. Despite that, lower band candidates seemed to 'sense' that the contention was correct, but still ended up with just a series of character sketches based around likeable and less likeable characters, with some examples of satirical comments from Austen.

Candidates who recognized that satire can shade from light to dark profited from explorations of Austen's comedic methods - while candidates across bands made much of the centrality of Mr Knightley as 'moral benchmark'. A number of essays took the Raymond Williams 'Donwell (stability/harmony) v. Highbury (instability/disorder) line', but this approach tended to be at the expense of (or rather subordinate to) focused answers to the question. This shows once again that the best answers keep the text, and the question, central.

(b) As an examiner commented: 'A number of weaker candidates were determined to transform "single" to "married" as quickly as possible. This rather redirected or unbalanced their responses - with some asserting right from the start that the novel was "about" marriage - and so their essays would be "about" that too'. A number of potentially higher band scripts gave proficient sketches of the three main single characters, then ran out of steam, with limited AO3 particularly. Weaker candidates failed to get away from paragraph after paragraph taking each female character in the book and writing a potted character profile, which may or may not have focused on the key terms of the question.

However, candidates across the bands were able to give structure and direction to their work: Harriet's comment to the effect that Emma may be another Miss Bates in the making provided the stimulus for some productive examination of these three characters. Most essays brought in Jane and Mrs Elton to widen the discussion of 'role and status' and looked at the steps toward and the reasons for marriage rather than letting that topic take over most of the essay.

Good answers engaged fully with 'role and status', providing some very perceptive answers. The best responses broadened their scope to consider Isabella Knightley and to look at status by exploring the fate of Mrs Bates since widowhood. The weakest focused more or less entirely on the character of Emma herself.

Dickens: *Hard Times*

(a) The extent to which candidates engaged with key terms of the question served to discriminate between candidates. Better answers responded firmly and directly to 'condemns' as strongly suggesting the author's own attitudes; they also examined the word 'progress' offering possible different definitions. Weaker candidates simply listed instances of cruelty and suffering in the novel. The best answers engaged with the premise of the question and argued convincingly that it was not Dickens's intention to provide political solutions, and explored the novel by looking at features of genre such as satire and melodrama.

Some good responses approached this question from very different angles: a few took a Christian/redemptive line, seeing Stephen's death as a 'reward', the victim as definite candidate for heaven. Others centred their responses on Dickens' anti-union stance, arguing pro or con, sometimes quite convincingly. Instance were selected of 'cruelty, injustice and the abuse of power' detailing how feelingly and passionately Dickens presented their victims and examining the various 'fates' assigned to them. Personal suffering was seen to stand for large-scale injustices within the Victorian social structure, and there was some consensus that Dickens flagged up issues rather than setting out an agenda for reform. This tended to lead to agreement with the 'suffering and sacrifice' part of the question, though many balanced this against the world of the circus and the 'Sissy story'.

Some thoughtful and well-informed answers argued variously for, against and even-handedly for the topic. The very best answers avoided a simplistic denunciation of Utilitarianism, and argued that Dickens's position is that Utilitarianism was misused, misinterpreted or wilfully misrepresented to suit the purposes of those in power, and to justify the social conditions that Dickens condemns.

(b) The majority of responses addressed the issue of 'pessimism', selecting and examining evidence to support this. There was some excellent work on grim or grotesque imagery which effectively justified the term 'overwhelmingly'. Many candidates took issue with 'overwhelmingly pessimistic' and cited Sissy who 'is resilient against fact' and symbolises affirmative qualities, the Circus folk as a whole, and the changes evidenced in the Gradgrind father and daughter as an argument against it.

Many candidates used this question to launch perceptive and analytical responses to the novel. A wide range of characters was examined and many answers looked at Dickens's structural choices, arguing for example that he uses Bitzer to launch his attack on the negative aspects of utilitarian thinking or that his idealization of Sissy weakens this attack and so on. There was lots of evidence of genuine engagement with the novel and a pleasing sense that candidates could incorporate their contextual knowledge into their arguments rather than, as can happen, offering stand-alone accounts of utilitarianism or biographies of JS Mill.

Some thoughtful and clear arguments opposed the topic, and others showed good linking of reference to comment, as in "A fire with nothing to burn" suggests that Louisa is not lacking in emotion, but has a passion she cannot express'. Some answers were strong on opinions and judgements, but lacked close textual support.

James: *Washington Square*

(a) There was a range of responses to this question and most of them did focus on parental tyranny rather than any other kind. The notion of 'symbol' was not so clearly engaged with, and a number of responses skipped 'the house' and headed straight for 'parental tyranny'. However lucid and/or authoritative such an approach might be, it avoids a key part of the question. Lower band answers produced charge-sheets of offences against Sloper, though many recognized a laudable 'protectiveness' about the man. A few responses set about demolishing the premise of the question by asserting that Sloper was in fact an excellent father doing his very best to save his daughter from the clutches of the villain Morris - any unhappiness was entirely Catherine's fault for being such a feckless and ungrateful daughter. The best answers did tend to explore the significance of setting - furniture, scale, colour - and of course considered both the characterisation and utterances of Sloper, along with James's own 'voice', aware of the presentational complexities and the thin line between 'protectiveness' and 'tyranny'.

A significant number of candidates used this question as a platform for their prepared 'Dr Sloper' essay and consequently failed to address the question. However, there was some detailed and perceptive comment on such features as the 'white marble steps', the relative coldness of the house, and the sacrosanct nature of the study, invaded deliberately by Morris.

(b) Some candidates opted for this question then chose to ignore the 'large and growing city' element. Others gave only the sketchiest idea of what this might mean or how it might be of some significance. Many of the same candidates concentrated on 'limited world' and gave character sketches of its inhabitants and visitors. The very best 'set' the house and the Square's 'limited world' in the city's historical context of change and development, linking this to the presentation of 'old' and 'new'-minded characters in terms of social behaviour, moral qualities and sense of 'culture' evident in the novel. These also clearly addressed the terms 'inward-looking' and 'limited', ranging through the text for ample evidence of both.

Even those candidates who did not engage with the concept of 'a large and growing city' did explore thoroughly the idea of 'inward-looking' in relation to Catherine's experience in particular. The notion of 'inward looking' was treated in a variety of ways: for example geographical, rooms in the house, James's style of narration, personalities and life histories.

Some arguments were consistent, but lacked supportive reference, depending on vague assertions as to 'James' excellence as a writer' or his 'excellent use of punctuation' without any practical case being made for either.

6394/02 Modern Prose

All texts received a full range of answers from the candidates. We were slightly surprised to observe that *Howards End* received more responses than the perennially popular *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*. The other three texts are less popular but still have a following and those who provide responses to *Alias Grace*, *The Bell*, and *Things Fall Apart* often write with interest, enthusiasm and often impressive textual knowledge.

The majority of scripts were marked by open for the first time and examiners have generally responded positively to this development. We would just urge centres and candidates to ensure that they write clearly and in a dark coloured ink as faint, small or unclear writing is even more difficult to decipher on screen than in a hard copy.

Some features of lower band answers

The first thing we look for in an answer is a literary approach. This is embedded in AO1. There is reference to appropriate terminology in the generic marking grid. We then hope to find a level of engagement with the proposition and question in order to find evidence of an argument to assess AO4.

The following extract shows a candidate attempting, not entirely successfully to engage with the (a) question on *Alias Grace*:

This novel could be examined by arguing from different perspectives, such as scientifically and spiritualism. In the novel Atwood includes both of these themes, however from a reader's point of view, Atwood confuses the reader as she does not make it clear whether the novel is written in a scientific way.

Although the candidate refers to genre and the author and is therefore aware of the literary nature of the task, the approach is tentative and the engagement with the proposition might even be a misreading one, leading down a wrong track.

The often narrative approach seen in lower band answers can waste time in telling rather than analysing. This candidate is attempting to show how Leonard Bast was a victim of the women in *Howards End* (4b):

In this chapter at one point Helen says to Leonard 'We were told the Porphyrian's no go,' here it is evident that Helen has been getting herself involved with no business of her own but Leonard's. This vexed Leonard but later on took up the advice given. It was the wrong decision....

There is some very limited comment on what Helen has done but the approach is narrative and the expression imperfect.

Although they are not the lead AOs we also look for some sense of context (AO5ii) as well as language form and structure (AO3). The same answer on *Howards End* offers a fairly rudimentary awareness of context:

...this also is evident that they are challenging society as she is verbalising her own opinion and as it was Edwardian England this wasn't very usual as men gave their opinions.

At least there is an awareness of context, however limited the expression of it.

The above illustrations come from Band 2 answers.

Some features of higher band answers.

Writing of the highest quality done under examination conditions never ceases to delight us. A wholly literary approach usually indicates an answer of the first rank:

Achebe presents the culture as a spiritual and magical society. He achieves this by using powerful imagery

'Okonkwo's fame had grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan.'

Along with his he uses a lot of word pictures that shake up detailed images in readers' minds and helps us to visualise its meaning.....

....Through Achebe's inclusion of proverbs and songs translated, he captures and conveys the rhythms, structures and beauty of the language. It also emphasises the oral tradition in the society which, which was a vital method of passing on history and customs due to Africa in that time being a pre-literate society.

This approach typifies a high achieving answer in that a literary approach, close engagement with language, a sense of context and an analytic manner are woven together and consistently hit all the AOs in band 5.

An opening section from a *Howards End* answer demonstrates an immediate focus with a personal approach that is unusually welcome:

Forster presents the Wilcoxes in 'Howards End' as an upper-middle class pompous family in an almost comic way. They are associated with symbols of modernity, change and progress such as the motor-car. Throughout the novel, the Wilcoxes, although living in Howards End, have no connection with it or with the countryside, as represented by the hay. The hay fever that they all have (bar Mrs Wilcox) serves to represent the hostilities towards what old England represents.

The literary approach, including the reference to symbols, some of which pervade the whole novel, suggest a whole text approach and the suspicion might think of the characters as real people is avoided by the reference to 'presents'. There is an awareness of contexts and the approach suggests that a strong personal response will emerge.

de Bernières: *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*

1 (a)

This was a predictably popular question. The key discriminators in ensuring a full answer to this question were the ability to provide an overview of the relationship. There was some tendency to adopt a narrative approach and to concentrate on the chosen chapter and Chapter 11 with less attention to key moments later in the text and in particular Mandras's two returns from the war, Pelagia's astonished realisation that he is illiterate and his attempt to rape her and his death. Many dealt with the last of these scenes with some insights drawing attention to the imagery of the dolphins and the seas associated with Mandras leading to a consolatory view of his returning to the elements associated with him in more optimistic times. Some candidates noted, to

their advantage, the benefits and insights gained from a second reading. Engagement with language, the references to myth and epics, and the range of narrative techniques employed, distinguished better answers from more narrative or purely character based approaches, dealing with little more than action, plot and description.

1 (b)

Better answers on this topic showed impressive ability to engage with the key words in the proposition such as 'optimistic' and 'sentimental'. An ability to show understanding and detailed evidence characterised such answers. A more list-like approach was noted in lower band answers and we were disappointed that some answers relied on accounts of chapters that had featured in earlier questions irrespective of their relevance such as "The Great Big Spiky Rustball" and "Snails". Many candidates dealt with Chapter 19 "L'Omosessuale (6) but not all dealt with the ways in which language and the narrative voices are used here and elsewhere. Effective discussion and focus on the specific words in the proposition are, as so often, very important and often quite detailed textual knowledge is not always used as effectively as it might be.

Atwood: *Alias Grace*

2 (a)

This was not a hugely popular question but one which provided a range of interesting answers. The discussion of what might have been scientific is filtered through the narrative voice, here and elsewhere and should therefore figure in a good answer. Many candidates were able to do this, and to make interesting cross references to Dr Jordan's own application of his experimental scientific methods when dealing with Grace. Other references included the botched abortion that killed Mary Whitney. Mostly these scientific procedures were seen in the context of nineteenth century knowledge and procedures. Many assumed that Grace and Jerome had collaborated on a well-planned deception of the audience in the hypnotism scene and provided evidence for this view. An ability to engage with the narrative and the presentation of the material through language were other characteristics of higher band answers.

2 (b)

Much depended on the ways in which 'reconstruct' was interpreted. We enjoyed and rewarded answers which dealt with the roles that women were obliged to play in order to survive, showing impressive awareness of contexts regarding the situations women found themselves in during the nineteenth century. References to clothes and 'jellyfish women' showed how women were required to conform to standards set down by men. Another feature of good answers was the engagement with the ways in which Atwood 'creates' situations and how she presents them. We are always delighted when candidates challenge the proposition with insights and evidence, although less accomplished answers sometimes merely rely on character studies of Grace and Mary, without much awareness of the characters as constructs. Whilst not ignoring these key characters, mentioning Rachel, Nancy, Lydia, the Governor's wife, and Mrs Alderman Parkinson (of course presented by reference to their husbands) and even Grace's mother all featured in answers and this was of course not only acceptable, but one way of showing wide textual knowledge.

Murdoch: *The Bell*

3 (a)

There were some most interesting and often very personal answers on this topic which much engagement with the ways in which Murdoch presents this highly ambiguous character. Examination of the proposition was often exploratory with attention given to 'presentation' with a fully literary approach. The chosen extract with its use of James's derogatory comments, the use of flashbacks, seeing Nick through a range of different perspectives often providing interesting, fully engaged debates. His relationship with Michael and the presentation of him alongside Catherine were also profitable lines of inquiry. Character studies or retelling of the story were characteristic of lower band answers. The contexts of attitudes to sexual morality in the nineteen fifties tends to follow, perhaps inevitably a well trodden path, but there were also some useful and enlightened 21st century takes on the subject.

3 (b)

This question was the more popular of the questions on *The Bell* and there was often an impressive level of debate and some ability to engage with the abstract concepts of morality and sin. The awareness of contexts was rather better managed with useful and quite knowledgeable views on the expectations of married women in the nineteen fifties. Many writers felt highly sympathetic to the portrayal of Michael in the novel and are able to discuss his own moral dilemmas with commendable maturity. Engagement with issues concerning religion and morality were often well handled. We noted engagement with the pejorative language of the time such as 'pansy'. The more favoured approach was to show agreement with the proposition although most readers of the novel see Dora as a highly sympathetic figure, which they manage to convey without denying her status as an adulteress and possible seducer of Toby. Mrs Mark gets rather short shrift and neither Paul nor Mr Mrs Mark received much sympathy. The Straffords were often totally ignored by a surprising number of candidates. We noted the liberal use of the literary term *free indirect discourse* often indiscriminately and incorrectly used. Lower band answers are hidebound by narrative, often focusing on little more than Michael's story, not engaging with language or the issue of how sexual morality is presented.

Forster: *Howards End*

4 (a)

The series of epithets applied to the Wilcoxes benefited from full exploration from a limited number of candidates but the ability to do so was rewarded appropriately. The balance between both sides of the proposition was comparatively rare but the ways in which the Wilcoxes are presented was often a clear focus to the writing. An exploratory, literary and analytical approach with some attention to the novel's structure was a welcome approach. There was sound knowledge, and effective use of the contexts of the Victorian/ Edwardian eras to show where the Wilcoxes were placed in the worlds of industry, commerce and the empire. Exploration of the role of marriage was rather more unevenly handled. Examiners expressed concern over the rehashing of character studies of the Schlegels, Wilcoxes and Basts, hence ignoring the question as set. Some answers concentrated on Charles more than his father. Some effective defences of Henry, as seen through Margaret's eyes in particular were welcome. Factual errors over the responsibility for, and even the cause of, the death of Leonard cause concern.

4 (b)

This was by far the more popular question on *Howards End*. There was much debate on the proposition with some slightly eccentric reasoning to show that Paul had been destroyed by his encounter with Helen early in the novel as well as some rather convoluted discussion on exactly who was responsible for Leonard's series of misfortunes. The better answers really engaged with the topic and were able to show, by reference to a range of key scenes how the women operated, many, quite effectively, disagreeing with the proposition. The hint to engage with the ending of the novel was taken up by many candidates and again the variety of readings provided much interest, showing, for example that what has happened to Henry and the situation he finds himself in at the end of the novel shows genuine development of character and is immensely to his benefit.

Achebe: *Things Fall Apart*

5 (a)

There were some often highly impressive answers to this question with some effective analysis within a literary and critical response with detailed textual support. We saw some thorough discussion of the conflicts presented in the question. We enjoyed reading the responses to how in particular Achebe incorporates the Igbo language into his narrative and uses different forms of language to show the clash of cultures that is one of the central concerns in the novel. The awareness of the contexts, central to an appreciation of *Things Fall Apart*, is often very firmly embedded in the best answers. Conrad and Joyce Cary were the main recipients of adverse comment on the historical literary presentation of Africa and this has clearly been embedded into the teaching of the novel. This can seem fairly predictable, however relevant. Attitudes to post-colonialism seem to be very clearly understood and well presented in many answers. Less well integrated answers regard the contexts as very much an after thought (or they get a perfunctory mention in the introduction) and often take a list-like approach, doing little more than describe the African way of life.

5 (b)

We looked for, and in higher band answers received, a balanced approach to both sides of the proposition taking a whole text approach. Reference to the novel's structure, (the three books and their respective lengths for example) was often used to illustrate answers. The ability to engage with 'presents and contrasts', 'communal activities' and 'individualism' often led to a sustained literary approach to the question. When candidates merely give examples of Ibo communal activities and values, or deal with characters such as Okonkwo and his father and son, they tended to be more limited in their approach with emphasis on character study, narrative and description than analysis. The focus on specific sections in isolation rather than seeing it as an entity was another feature of lower band answers.

Statistics

Unit 1: Drama and Poetry (6391)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	100	66	58	50	43	36
Uniform boundary mark	120	90	80	71	62	53

Unit 2: Pre-1900 Prose (6392)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	33	29	25	21	17
Uniform boundary mark	90	68	61	54	45	36

Unit 4a: Modern Prose (6394/01)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	44	38	33	28	23
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

Unit 4b: Modern Prose (6394/02)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	32	27	22	18	14
Uniform boundary mark	90	70	61	52	43	34

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE

ENGLISH LITERATURE (8180/ 9180)

Set texts

Range of reading

'English Literature' includes American and Commonwealth writing. The set texts are drawn from a range of historical periods between 1370 and the present day, and candidates are required to study a **minimum of eight texts**, which must include:

AS • a minimum of four texts covering prose, poetry and drama, including one text by Shakespeare and at least one other text published before 1900

A2 • a minimum of four further texts, covering poetry, prose and drama, including at least one text published before 1770 and at least one other before 1900.

Teachers are reminded that it is desirable to extend students' reading beyond that covered at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

The following texts will be set for this specification:

Unit 1: Drama and Poetry (Open Text)

Section A: Drama

The following prescribed editions of the texts will be set in January 2006, June 2006, January 2007, June 2007, January 2008 and June 2008:

- Aphra Behn – *The Rover* – (New Mermaids ISBN: 0713639415 or New Mermaids ISBN: 0713666714)
- Brian Friel – *Translations* – (Faber ISBN: 0571117422)
- Caryl Churchill – *Top Girls* – (Methuen ISBN: 0413554805)
- Tennessee Williams – *A Streetcar Named Desire* – (Penguin ISBN: 0141182563)
- Tom Stoppard – *Professional Foul*, from '*Every Good Boy Deserves Favour/Professional Foul*' – (Faber ISBN: 0571112269)

Section B: Poetry

- *Edexcel Poetry Anthology* (Section One)
- John Betjeman – *The Best of Betjeman* (poetry only) – (Penguin ISBN: 0141184329)
- John Keats – *Selected Poems* – (Everyman ISBN: 0460878085)
- Geoffrey Moore (editor) – *Penguin Book of American Verse* – (Penguin ISBN: 0140585788)
- Gillian Clarke – *Letter from a Far Country* – (from '*Collected Poems*' by Gillian Clarke, Carcanet ISBN: 1857543351)

The following section is prescribed for study: *Letter from a Far Country* – all the

poems in this section beginning with the 'White Roses' and ending with 'The Water Diviner'.

Students study **one** text from Section A and **one** text from Section B.

Unit 2: Pre-1900 Prose (Closed Text)

The following texts will be set in January 2006, June 2006, January 2007, June 2007, January 2008 and June 2008:

- Thomas Hardy – *The Return of the Native*
- Mary Shelley – *Frankenstein*
- Jane Austen – *Emma*
- Charles Dickens – *Hard Times*
- Henry James – *Washington Square*

Students study **one** text.

Unit 3a/3b: Shakespeare in Context (Open Text)

Penguin Shakespeare editions specified above must be used.

Unit 4b: Modern Prose (Open Text)

The following texts will be set in January 2006, June 2006, January 2007, June 2007, January 2008 and June 2008:

- Louis de Bernières – *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* – (Vintage ISBN: 0749397543 or Vintage ISBN: 0099422042 (now out of print))
- Margaret Atwood – *Alias Grace* – (Virago ISBN: 1860492592)
- Iris Murdoch – *The Bell* – (Vintage ISBN: 0099283891)
- E M Forster – *Howards End* – (Penguin ISBN: 0140111603 or Penguin ISBN 014118213X)

The following text will not be available for examination after January 2006:

- *R K Narayan – *The Man Eater of Malgudi* – (Penguin ISBN: 0140185488)

Additional text for Unit 4b Modern Prose

The following prescribed edition of the text will be set in January 2006, June 2006, January 2007, June 2007, January 2008 and June 2008:

- Chinua Achebe – *Things Fall Apart* – (Heinemann ISBN: 0435121626)

Students study **one** text.

The following texts will be set in June 2006, June 2007 and June 2008:

- *Henry V* – (ISBN: 0140707085 or 0141013796 (*new edition expected in 2006*))
- *Antony and Cleopatra* – (ISBN: 014070731X or 0141012285)
- *The Winter's Tale* – (ISBN: 0140707166 or 0141013893)
- *Much Ado About Nothing* – (ISBN: 0140707093 or 0141012307)
- *Hamlet* – (ISBN: 0140707344 or 0141013079)

Unit 5: Poetry and Drama (Open Text)

The following texts will be set in June 2006, June 2007 and June 2008:

Section A: Pre-1770 Poetry

- Chaucer and Hussey (editor) – *The Merchant's Tale* – (Cambridge University Press ISBN: 0521046319)
- Milton – *Selected Poems* – (Dover ISBN: 048627554X)
- *Edexcel Poetry Anthology* (Section Two)
- Dalglish (editor) – *Eight Metaphysical Poets* – (Heinemann ISBN: 0435150316)
- Alexander Pope and Elizabeth Gurr (editor) – *The Rape of the Lock* – (OUP 0198319584)

Section B: Post-1770 Poetry

- Tennyson – *Selected Poems* – (Penguin ISBN: 0140445455)
- Yeats – *Selected Poems* – (Everyman ISBN: 0460879022)
- Carol Ann Duffy – *Selected Poems* – (Penguin ISBN: 0140587357)
- Philip Larkin – *The Whitsun Weddings* – (Faber ISBN: 0571097103)
- The *Heinemann Book of Caribbean Poetry* selected by McDonald and Brown – (Heinemann ISBN: 0435988174)
- Heaney – *New Selected Poems* sections: from 'Death of a Naturalist', from 'Door into Dark', from 'Wintering Out', from 'North' – (Faber ISBN: 0571143725)

Section C: Pre-1770 Drama

- Shakespeare – *Othello* – (Penguin Shakespeare ISBN: 0140707077 or 0141012315)
- Marlowe – *Dr Faustus (Text A)* – (New Mermaids ISBN: 0713632313 or New Mermaids ISBN: 0713667907)
- Webster – *The Duchess of Malfi* – (New Mermaids ISBN 0393900665 is now out of print, but may be used, or New Mermaids ISBN 0713650613 or New Mermaids ISBN: 0713667915)
- Congreve – *The Way of the World* – (New Mermaids ISBN: 0713639431 or New Mermaids ISBN: 0713666625)
- Farquhar – *The Recruiting Officer* – (New Mermaids ISBN: 0713633492 or New Mermaids ISBN: 0713633492)

Section D: Post-1770 Drama

- Sheridan – *The Rivals* – (New Mermaids ISBN: 0713631511 or New Mermaids ISBN: 0713667656 from September 2005)
- Walcott – *The Odyssey* – (Faber ISBN: 0571168566)
- Peter Shaffer – *Amadeus* – (Penguin ISBN: 0140481605)
- Timberlake Wertenbaker – *Our Country's Good* – (Methuen ISBN: 0413737403)
- Oscar Wilde – *Lady Windermere's Fan* – (Penguin Popular Classics ISBN: 0140621733)

Candidates study **one** text from either Section A or Section B and **one** from either Section C or Section D.

Unit 6: Criticism and Comparison (Closed text)

Section B: Comparison

The following texts will be set in June 2006, June 2007 and June 2008:

1 The Comic Perspective: *Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen and either *Emma* Jane Austen or *Larry's Party* Carol Shields

2 The Tragic Perspective: *Wuthering Heights* Emily Bronte and either *The Return of the Native* Thomas Hardy or *Petals of Blood* Ngugi wa Thiong'o

3 Divided Societies: *North and South* Elizabeth Gaskell and either *Hard Times* Charles Dickens or *Atonement* Ian McEwan

4 Broken Communications: *The Tempest* William Shakespeare and either *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Edward Albee or *Translations* Brian Friel

5 Nature and the Imagination: *The Prelude Books 1 and 2* William Wordsworth and either *Selected Poems* John Keats or *Selected Poems* Edward Thomas

6 The Social Observer: *Songs of Innocence and Experience* William Blake and either *Best of Betjeman* (poetry only) or *Selected Poems* W H Auden

Candidates study the first named text within the chosen theme and compare it with one other listed text. Equal treatment should be given to both the chosen texts.

NB students who answer a question on unprepared poetry in Section A must answer a question on either drama or prose texts in Section B, and students who answer a question on unprepared prose in Section A must answer on either drama or poetry texts in Section B.

*Texts marked with an asterisk will be withdrawn after the examination series indicated.

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