

Examiners' Report Summer 2007

GCE

GCE English Language and Literature (8179/9179)

Edexcel is one of the leading examining and awarding bodies in the UK and throughout the world. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers.

Through a network of UK and overseas offices, Edexcel's centres receive the support they need to help them deliver their education and training programmes to learners.

For further information please call our Customer Services on + 44 1204 770 696, or visit our website at www.edexcel-international.org.

Summer 2007

Publications Code UA 019127

All the material in this publication is copyright
© Edexcel Ltd 2007

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. The Spoken Word (6381/01) | 1 |
| 2. Desk Study (6382/01) | 3 |
| 3. Shorter Fiction Study (6383/01) | 5 |
| 4. Shorter Fiction Study (6383/02) | 9 |
| 5. Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes (6384/01) | 13 |
| 6. Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes (6384/01) | 17 |
| 7. Wider Reading (6385/01) | 21 |
| 8. Genre Studies (6386/01) | 31 |
| 9. Statistics | 35 |
| 10. Set Texts | 37 |

6381/01 The Spoken Word

Section A

Most candidates were able to write proficiently on this question, the majority demonstrating understanding of the differences between the two texts in terms of genre. Higher band responses were able to apply more aptly the appropriate linguistic/literary terms of reference to the material in question. There were relatively few candidates, however, who were able to read with insight the nuances of language and dynamics of interaction between the two characters of Text B. Candidates appeared to be more confident dealing with the transcript, and with identifying features of authentic speech. The challenge of the question (which most discriminates between higher and lower band responses) is the task of discussing features of the texts, rather than summarising the content of each extract - in other words, discussing relevant linguistic and literary features, not just identifying features. Some candidates still attempt to compare the use of features throughout their responses, which is not always a helpful approach. Comparison is not the focus of the task.

Many strong responses on Text A demonstrated awareness of context on register and lexical variation, compared the speakers, and noted the development or change in attitude or tone between the speakers. The dynamics of the conversation were often explored thoughtfully. On Text B, higher band responses clearly conveyed awareness of dramatic form and purpose, for example commenting on characterisation or tension. Some lower band responses typically provided little comment on Text B beyond the identification of one or two features of authentic speech. A significant number of candidates thought that Almasy is a woman (although referred to as 'he' in the extract) and that 'tart' was a spoken insult rather than a direction as to tone; some wrote about a third character called 'Cairo'.

Some candidates rely too heavily upon Grice's Maxims and demonstrate knowledge of these rather than understanding of how frameworks can be meaningfully applied to texts. There was not always a sense of candidates choosing an appropriate framework from a range available to them. The concept of 'face', for example, could have been useful here. There was a lot of speculation and judgemental comment about class and background; reference to 'standard English' and 'non-standard English' would have often benefited in this respect.

Section B

Candidates should be made aware that there is an expectation with (a) type questions that they make some attempt to address the language of the extract(s) provided where candidates omit to make reference to the language of the extracts they miss the opportunity to address the 'language' requirement of the question (and Assessment Objectives). There are still some responses which seem to be hybrid responses to both questions.

Q2(a)

This question was reasonably well done by many, although some candidates omitted to make any reference to one or other of the passages, and some who did address both did not detect much by way of contrast.

Q2(b)

This attracted some very good responses. There were some candidates who responded to the prompt quotation by discussing the audience in the theatre rather than characters in the play, whereas the question did make it clear what was meant by 'audience'.

Q3(a)

Relatively few identified Hero as the focus of the extracts for this question. Many moved fairly convincingly into applications of "noting". The better answers pursued these beyond identifying episodes from the plot to a thematic level discussion of appearance and reality, or comedy and tragedy. Some candidates had a lot to say about other possible significances and interpretations of the title but made no or very little reference to the interpretation proposed in the question or the extracts.

Q3(b)

This was a popular and very successfully question attempted by many. Higher band responses addressed both Beatrice's language and her function. The detailed knowledge of the play evident in some cases was extremely impressive.

Q4(a) and Q4(b)

Candidates struggled to demonstrate their understanding of the play. Few candidates were able to convey understanding of how the attitudes towards education in each extract relate to Wilde's satirical or comic purpose in the play as a whole. A number of responses seemed to be (inaccurate) paraphrases of the two extracts. Candidates also struggled to write about the language of either extract.

Q5(a) and Q5(b)

These questions were very popular. The best answers on 5(a) were able to analyse the extract sensitively and bring in other relationships in the play. The remainder sometimes made the briefest of references to the extract and went on to write accounts of the plot. 5(b) drew some well-informed discussions of Nora and Torvald but few could really write convincingly about 'complexity'. With both questions there was a tendency to concentrate on narrative and action and answers would benefit from more about dramatic techniques and language.

There were too few responses on The Rover and Trelawny of the Wells to provide meaningful feedback.

6382/01 Desk Study

The Desk Study Unit assesses the candidates' skill in comprehension, editing and summarising; their knowledge of audience and purpose and their ability to shape the pre-release source material to achieve a different outcome through the selection of appropriate genre, format and register. A separate commentary assesses their application of linguistic knowledge to justify the language choices they have made.

Task (a)

Task (a) required candidates to reshape pre-released material to produce text for an article on climate change to be included in a national magazine aimed at readers aged 19-20. Additional prompts embedded within the question gave opportunities to explore the political issues contained within the source materials in order to persuade the government to raise the issue to the top of the political agenda and to encourage young people to become involved in the debate. Bullets provided further focus in terms of audience and purpose.

This was a generally successful task which generated an inventive range of responses, some of an extremely high quality.

The scientific slant of the pre-release provided quite a challenge for some candidates and the weakest struggled to rework this effectively, especially to bullet 3 where the prompt to explore alternative sources of energy sometimes resulted in extended lists with very limited reworking of the source materials. The scaffolding afforded by the structure of the question (as in previous series) enabled all but a small minority to cover a reasonable range of source materials although the weakest struggled to fully assimilate the more technical information which in some cases resulted in awkward shifts in register/lapses in cohesion which proved to be something of a discriminator for Task A. The pre-release provided material that needed very careful selection - this afforded clear differentiation between candidates of different abilities.

A few weaker candidates struggled to decode the more complex elements of the source. Common areas of uncertainty include:

- 'Migrogeneration' is not the term for large scale wind farms
- Nuclear power is not a fossil fuel
- Cutting down rainforests does NOT emit CO₂

A significant differentiating factor in the responses was the degree by which the source material was reshaped or 'slanted' to task. Really good reading and absorption of the pre-release texts showed clearly in the selection, the editing, the organisation and the 'slant' towards audience and purpose.

At the higher levels of achievement students generated significant amounts of new text. They targeted the given audience with flexibility and imagination, often demonstrating their absorption of the subject matter with fluid movement over the source texts. Many managed to produce a viable article which had real engagement with the audience and a range of features suitable the given context. The best did not spend time on elaborate graphics, simply giving an indication of graphological content/layout and concentrating upon the text itself - adapting it appropriately and according to task. The best responses also conceded to the student voice/perspective embedded within the question and used this as a 'hook' to engage with and persuade their audience. Weaker candidates tended to

rely heavily on graphology and layout at the expense of content, many lifting the more complex sources (especially to bullet 3) and offering minimal reshaping - usually an extended list - which barely masked the fact that they had not fully decoded the information in preparation for the examination.

Task (b)

Task (b) asked candidates to comment on the language choices they had made in order to complete the first task.

The most successful candidates worked hard to produce a linguistic analysis. These offered a clear and focused justification of the choices they had made, giving clear and appropriate exemplification and applying linguistic terms and features with focus and incision. More able candidates contextualised their choices within the remit of the task, moving beyond the formulaic to stand back from their own work and reflect analytically on their approach.

Less successful were those responses that applied a system which spotted (and often exemplified) features but which went on to generate generalised definitions/comments which did not fully relate to the specific context or the choices candidates had made in order to fulfil the brief.

Many candidates made noteworthy points which lacked exemplification, thus failing to reveal their full understanding. Candidates with least security with analytical terms and frameworks tended to concentrate on describing their methodology rather than analysing their choices.

Overall some candidates were clearly better prepared for the commentary than others and the effectiveness of this preparation significantly impacted upon performance. Those with a good grounding in theory and terminology were keen to show off what they could do. Others simply described content and/or intention and let down some lively responses to the first task. In some responses the focus shifted significantly from Task (a) to Task (b) with the commentaries outstripping the achievement of the creative task due to the thorough and systematic teaching of analysis.

6383/01 Shorter Fiction Study

Although the creative option remained the more popular, there was a good proportion of critical essays. Several moderators felt that once again there was a slight overall improvement in the standard of work submitted. The very best work in Band 5 was exceptional: there were some impressively crafted stories and sophisticated critical essays that far exceeded the normal expectations of AS level achievement. The general level of literacy was pleasingly high. The understanding of the requirements of the unit was generally high, and in most cases there was a sense of genuine engagement with the stories studied, and with the original story or essay.

Few centres now need reminding that the title of the unit - Shorter Fiction Study - indicates the fundamental need to actually **study** the short story genre, and most have a good understanding of the concept of the integration of the literary and the linguistic in the whole specification. The use of terminology continued to improve this year. However, there are still some candidates whose approach is purely literary and who have no true linguistic focus in their commentaries or critical essays. Such candidates are now seriously disadvantaged if they cannot use linguistic terms accurately and confidently. A few centres are still over-rewarding these candidates, and as a result marks have to be scaled. Most of the few adjustments we had to make this year were because of a lack of linguistic focus. The other major reason for scaling was in cases where technical inaccuracy and weak expression had not been taken into account in the assessment.

One area where there is still room for improvement is AO5 - attitudes and values. Most centres do address this seriously, but there are some who appear to pay little attention to it. The focus needs to be on **how** attitudes and values are created, not just on what attitudes and values there are. There should be no difficulty provided that any original story has attitudes and/or values as a major aspect, and that any stories that do not have any element of attitudes and/or values are not studied in the first place. Critical essays and commentaries need to include some explicit consideration.

Several moderators reported that there was a wider range of stories studied this year, with many centres venturing beyond the set texts for the 6383/02 exam unit. Some good work arose from the study of stories by Gardam, Tremain, Lively, Byatt, Lawrence, Rhys, Chopin, Hemingway, among many others.

The Creative Option

The links made with the source texts studied have now become a strength of this option. In general in the commentaries there was some specific and detailed focus on the language of the source text(s), while the major focus remained on the candidate's own language choices. In only a very few cases did this become unbalanced, with too much on the source texts. In a few cases, candidates quoted unacceptable sources, such as 'Gulliver's Travels'. Alan Bennett's 'Talking Heads' should not be studied in this unit, as it is a drama text (and therefore suitable for 6384/01). The study of Chaucer (even in a modern verse translation) is not appropriate for this unit, as it is poetry and is a set text for Unit 5. It is not acceptable to update Shakespeare plays as short stories, as any study of drama as a source text is not allowed. The sources must be short stories, and nothing else. Candidates should not claim that their major inspiration came from a film (even if it is a film version of a story studied). They may get some ideas for plot or setting or character from something other than a short story, but the main inspiration or link must be with something studied from this genre, and no others should be mentioned in the commentary.

Carter's 'The Bloody Chamber' remained the single most popular text, and inspired some outstanding stories. Centres should try to prevent candidates from indulging excessively in lengthy graphic descriptions of sadistic or depraved practices involving murder, torture and rape, that have no artistic justification at all. Carter's own focus on sexuality and violence is much more subtle and grounded in the meanings of her fiction. Another weakness in response to Carter was in the oversimplification of a fairy tale kind of story. Pure pastiche of Carter is extremely difficult to bring off successfully, and many candidates seemed to think that all that was necessary was to stuff their writing with polysyllabic Latinate lexis that they often did not understand, and with masses of minor sentences. These approaches often resulted in total incoherence. Much the same was true of some pastiches of Poe, which were at times completely unintelligible.

There is no need to consider process, or the stages of drafting, or to explain the improvements that have been made to the story over time. Candidates should concentrate only on the final version they have produced.

The commentary must be placed after the story in the folder, not preceding it.

The Critical Option

There was a marked improvement in the wording of titles this year, with most having a clear language steer, though not always of AO5. It is difficult of course to incorporate all this into a single sentence, but two or more sentences for the title are perfectly acceptable. A few titles, however, were too broad or too difficult. Some were pitched at undergraduate level (a few would have been challenging for Ph.D theses), and some tried to cover too much, rather than narrowing the focus to a manageable level. A few were too narrow, and candidates, finding that there was little to say, often resorted to overly descriptive content-focused responses.

There were very few examples of excessively teacher-led approaches, and candidates appeared to have been given opportunities for individual choice and personal response, which is what we try to encourage.

There were fewer examples of candidates attempting to cover too many stories, and most restricted themselves sensibly to two or three (perhaps with brief cross-references to a few others in passing).

Some specifically linguistic points

- 'Oxymoron' has become a very popular term, but was rarely used correctly.
- The terms 'Anglo-Saxon' and 'Latinate' were often used with little understanding, and often meant little more than that a word was short or long.
- It would be helpful if single words (adjectives, adverbs, nouns, verbs, etc.) that are the focus of a linguistic point could be identified clearly if quoted in context - perhaps by underlining, or by bracketing the other words.
- Few candidates were able to say much about grammar or syntax in any meaningful way. Centres could usefully consider this area, perhaps looking at the structures of some phrases or clauses.
- A negative approach in commentaries should be avoided: eg 'I have not used any examples of...'
- If the term 'semantic field' is used, it should have some precision, rather than be used as an excuse for grouping any words together.
- Simple and minor sentences were often confused.

Other points

Some moderators noticed an improvement this year in the annotation of folders, with a greater awareness of the need to address all comments to the moderator. If there is no annotation, the moderator has no indication of the thinking behind the marks awarded.

Administrative Issues

It was good to see some improvements in some of the administrative processes, such as the need to send the highest and lowest folders. However, there were still cases where the recommendations made last year had been ignored, or were not acted upon, and therefore the same problems and issues still remained as in previous sessions.

If all centres could observe the following points, this would speed the moderation process, and lessen the burden not just on moderators but on centres themselves. Most centres acted very speedily when contacted by moderators, but they could save themselves the trouble by following the points below:

- The coursework front sheet must be signed by both candidate and teacher.
- Centres must send the work of their top and bottom candidates, whether or not they have been asterisked on the OPTEMS forms.
- The work of an absent candidate which forms part of the asterisked sample must be replaced by the work of another, comparable, candidate.
- The marks on the OPTEMS should match those on the coursework front sheets.
- If separate authentication sheets are included, they should be placed underneath the top sheet.
- Work should be fastened by staples or treasury tags, not paper clips. Plastic or cardboard folders should not be used. Please encourage candidates to number their pages.
- All details on the front sheets should be filled in, including word counts, centre numbers, candidate numbers, and ticks in the AO boxes. Missing centre or candidate numbers can create problems in identifying the folder. It is helpful if centres could use up to date versions of the front sheet, rather than those dated 2000 or 2001, which do not have the correct AOs.
- Folders should be sent in candidate number order, not in rank order. Centres should send only the asterisked sample, plus any additional work required such as the highest and lowest and any substitute coursework. Some centres sent all their folders to the moderator.
- Centres should ensure that folders are sent to the correct moderator, to arrive by the designated deadline, using ordinary first class post, and not by any method that requires a signature, such as Special or Recorded or Courier delivery.

6383/02 Shorter Fiction Study

The standard was broadly comparable to last year's. At the lower end of the scale there was again a slight improvement in knowledge of the texts, and in the use of detail to support points being made. Most answers were clearly expressed, and few had serious technical problems with accuracy.

To be successful in this unit candidates need to:

- Answer the question precisely in the terms in which it is asked, and any bullet points need to be fully addressed. Many answers lost focus on the question, or suggested that their writers would have preferred a different question to have been asked (such as the one set last year), and were unable to prevent their answer from straying into that territory.
- Display detailed close knowledge of the text, and should use brief quotations to support all points made. Some quotations were far too long, and long quotations were almost never analysed.
- Use literary and linguistic terminology, as appropriate, to make precise points about the writer's use of language.
- Ensure their answers explicitly address attitudes and values, as appropriate, and give some consideration to how these are conveyed by the writer.

Once again, all the questions guided candidates specifically towards a major focus on language and also to attitudes and values (AO5). The best answers showed an extensive knowledge of linguistic as well as literary terms, and were able to make precise and concise points, that were validated by brief quotations and use of appropriate terminology. Many answers, unfortunately, made little use of terminology at all. It is not enough merely to quote some words and to rely on the examiner to work out their possible relevance. It is necessary also to comment specifically on the effect of the language used. Some candidates tended to list some features used, with linguistic terms, but without any supporting evidence, and some found difficulty in using terms accurately, especially for basic word classes.

The examiners felt that all questions were equally accessible, and that for each text the demands of the (a) and (b) questions were roughly comparable.

Carter was by far the most popular text, but a significant number wrote on Joyce, while Scott Fitzgerald continued to increase in popularity, and there were many excellent answers on this text.

CARTER: *The Bloody Chamber*

Q1(a)

The focus of the question was on Beauty's perceptions and attitudes. There were many good answers which kept to the terms of the question well and which covered all the aspects suggested. These knew the text thoroughly and explored well the changes in Beauty's perceptions. They were able to select relevant quotations effectively. They considered such features as the frequent switching of the narrative voice, the direct and free indirect thought, the direct speech, the evaluative adjectives, key nouns, verbs and adverbs, the imagery, the sentence moods, and the use of questions. There were some effective brief contrasts with 'The Tiger's Bride', focusing on the differences in attitudes and values.

Weaker answers tended to lose the focus on Beauty's perceptions, and strayed to a focus on the Beast's perceptions, or to her father's attitudes. Some were too much a narrative of the whole story, with little analysis of the language used. Some spent far too long on the first page or so of the story and then had no time to consider the ending, or even Beauty's return to the Beast.

Q1(b)

This was a very popular question and produced some very successful and engaged responses, which made sensible choices, with a focus on varied aspects and with an intelligent level of discussion which clarified exactly what they had found disturbing, which was usually a mixture of the story elements and the language used by Carter. There were some good answers on 'The Bloody Chamber', 'The Erl-King', and 'The Lady of the House of Love'. Large numbers wrote on 'The Snow Child' and this often worked very well when it was dealt with briefly and combined with another story (usually 'The Bloody Chamber'). When it was the only story considered, however, candidates often laboured to say enough, after they had identified the obvious taboo language. There is no denying that this is a disturbing story, but many answers seemed very formulaic, and some resorted to trying to explain the significance of the story rather than what was disturbing in it. Some weaker answers did not always choose wisely: some really struggled to argue convincingly that 'Puss-in-Boots' was disturbing.

MAUGHAM: *Collected Short Stories. Volume One*

There were not enough answers on Maugham to enable general comment in this report.

JOYCE: *Dubliners*

Q3(a)

'Clay' is a particularly difficult text, and the question asked candidates to consider what significance they had found in it. Not many answered very personally, but this was not seen as a fault. Good answers showed a very thorough knowledge of the text, and were able to cover all the major strands of the story, offering interesting ideas about the meaning, as well as exploring the variety of attitudes and values that are conveyed. As the story is so enigmatic or ambiguous, many different interpretations are possible, but few candidates seemed aware of any possible symbolic readings, or of any possible links between Maria and Ireland itself. Many did make effective links with overall themes of the book as a whole. Some wrote well on the contrasts between Maria's perception of herself and the attitudes of others to her, and a few offered a really perceptive analysis of Joyce's use of free indirect thought, which is very frequent in the story.

Weaker answers tended to narrate the story, without considering any significance at all, though most did attempt to explain the meaning of the items in the game where Maria is blindfolded.

Q3(b)

Although we were prepared to be very tolerant of candidate's interpretations of 'light-hearted or even funny' elements or aspects of stories, there had to be limits and some candidates unfortunately did not choose sensibly. It was virtually impossible to find light-hearted elements in some of the bleakest stories in the collection, but there are plenty in stories like 'The Boarding House', 'Grace', parts of 'The Dead', and some others. Many made a good case for humorous aspects in 'An Encounter'. The best answers explored very

successfully the effectiveness of some light-hearted aspects in some stories in providing contrasts to the surrounding darkness of context and meaning. Weaker answers often failed to identify clearly any really light-hearted elements.

MUNRO: *Selected Stories*

There were only a handful of answers on Munro, but there were a few very good answers to Q4(a) on the story 'Material', by candidates who knew the story well, and were able to provide telling illustrations, and to focus on the language. In the past, few candidates have managed to consider Munro's language closely, but there were several on Q4(a) and 4(b) who made a pleasing attempt to do so.

SCOTT FITZGERALD: *The Diamond as Big as the Ritz and Other Stories*

Q5(a)

There was an increase in the number of answers on Scott Fitzgerald, and some of them were of high quality. Many candidates knew the story 'May Day' very well and were able to focus sharply on the actual presentation and significance of Gordon Sterrett. Good answers covered all the bullet points, and were able to use terminology accurately to give examples of linguistic features such as the evaluative adjectives, the similes and metaphors, the key nouns and noun phrases, the patterns of lexis, and the antithetical lexical choices that showed the contrasts between Gordon and Philip. They also showed a well-informed awareness of the historical context of the immediate post-WW1 setting of the story.

Weaker answers tended to spend too long on the opening two or three pages of the story (the meeting with Philip), and then could not cover all the aspects of the question. Many did not consider the ending, and offered only brief comments on Gordon's relationships with Edith and Jewel.

Q5(b)

As with so many other (b) questions, choice of appropriate examples was crucial here. Some stories were more fruitful than others in providing examples of differences in social status. 'May Day' was perhaps the best of all, but 'The Diamond as Big as the Ritz' and 'The Ice Palace' produced some good answers. Successful answers maintained a focus on social differences and showed a clear awareness of the cultural and historical contexts. Weaker answers did not really focus on social differences, but often on differences between North and South, which was a different question.

Some ways in which candidates could improve their answers:

- In (b) questions think very carefully about the suitability of stories to illustrate the question. Consider a range and then choose the most suitable one(s).
- Avoid a long introductory paragraph that gives lots of general background information about the writer or the period but which makes no specific points about the question. (This is often a fault with answers on Joyce.)
- Spend a little time in working out precisely what the question is asking for.
- Do not quote too much, as this inevitably leads to a lack of analysis, and make sure that all quotations are analysed, using some appropriate terminology.
- Support all the points you make with appropriate quotations or close references from the text.

- Keep quotations as brief as possible: if there is only one word that is really significant, then quote only that one word, not the whole sentence in which it appears.
- Avoid just narrating the story, and avoid vague generalisations.
- Do not refer to the short story as a 'play' or a 'poem' or a 'novel'.
- Make sure that you include a focus on how attitudes and values are conveyed.

6384/01 Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes

Most of the work submitted for this unit was interesting to read, and some of it was a real joy. Many of the pieces were of publishable standard, showing flair and creativity of a high order. The majority of centres were able to make use of the flexibility offered by the unit, and at the same time to guide their candidates to fulfil its requirements. There were, however, some centres and some candidates who seemed unaware of exactly what is allowed or not allowed, and this report will seek to clarify some of these issues.

There seemed to be a slight increase in the number of purely factual or narrowly informative pieces (such as chapters from text books), even though last year's report warned specifically against these. All pieces submitted should have an individual voice offering an opinion, a viewpoint, an outlook, an attitude, etc., in order to address A05. Purely informative pieces cannot meet this requirement if they are totally dependent on factual researched material and are not lifted above this by any sense of an individual or distinctive voice. They must therefore be avoided.

There were also at least as many pieces this year as last that were too short. There is a requirement for pieces to be 'extended', and the norm should be about 1,000 to 1200 words for each piece. We have always allowed considerable flexibility here, however, and the two pieces need not be of equal length. The absolute minimum though remains at about 700. A few centres were allowing candidates to submit pieces that were barely more than 300 words, and were not penalising these in any way. The commentary cannot be allowed to compensate for brevity in the pieces: some commentaries were far too long. Fortunately the majority of centres observed the limits scrupulously.

Another issue that was strongly flagged last year was having two pieces in the spoken mode. The title of the unit is 'Writing for different audiences and purposes', and at least one piece must be clearly in the written mode. One piece can be spoken, such as a speech or a dramatic monologue, but not both.

We would strongly advise against offering three pieces. This is almost never satisfactory, for one piece is often far weaker than the others, and they all tend to be short, in order to keep within the requirements of word length.

Chapters of novels were very popular this year, and the best were clearly based on detailed study, usually of a range of novel openings. These usually showed a clear understanding of the need to offer a chapter, rather than the complete novel. However, there were some candidates who appeared to have studied some more short stories, which of course are not allowed in this unit, though they did not usually admit to this. Instead, they produced a piece of fiction that was complete in itself, just like a short story, and often let drop the word 'story' when discussing it in their commentaries.

Pieces must have a clear sense of purpose and audience: some pieces this year were very vague, and their writers had little sense of any particular purpose, or genre, or audience, or publication.

We are pleased to report that most of the work was assessed accurately with a good understanding of the criteria and of the marking grids, and on the whole not over-rewarding in Band 5. Very few candidates were awarded marks in Band 1, and not many in the lower reaches of Band 2. This reflected the generally sound understanding of the requirements and expectations of the unit that most centres now have. There were a few exceptions, however, such as folders that should have been soundly in Band 2 being given marks of 2 or 3.

Some comments on specific genres:

Dramatic monologues should have stage directions and a clear setting, especially if Bennett is cited as the source studied. Something also needs to happen in them, such as a major revelation to the audience, or to the speaker. It is not enough to create personas who then proceed to unburden themselves of their personal worries, concerns, feelings, or traumas in a totally disorganised and unstructured manner, and the monologue must not just be an opportunity for the candidate to indulge in personal introspection. There must be some kind of structure and development. Above all the monologue must be seen as a piece of drama, performed to an audience. Some 'monologues' this year had a surprising amount of dialogue, and would have been better presented as drama scripts for two or more actors.

Speeches need to have a clear sense of context. Candidates should think of the place, the occasion, and the audience present, as well as the purpose and content of their speech. Some this year were too much like discursive or persuasive essays, with no personal voice, and with much unassimilated material, and would have been better reworked as magazine articles.

Reportage should be about something that is happening or has happened. 'What I can see from my bedroom window' may be a first-person account, but is hardly likely to impress an audience.

Travel writing continues to produce some of the best and some of the weakest writing. It is helpful if candidates have a clear understanding of the kind of publication they are targeting. Some candidates, for example, claimed to be writing for the Sunday Times colour supplement, while their writing was full of expressions like 'My dad said...' or 'Me and my brother...'. Too many pieces were really accounts of the candidate's holiday or weekend out, and accounts, however honest, of drunken behaviour or of upset stomachs resulting from excessive drinking or unaccustomed local food, are unlikely to meet the criteria for travel writing in most publications.

Film Scripts: a script consisting largely of instructions to camera is not appropriate: the main focus must be on the dialogue between characters. Some candidates were failing to distinguish between the different requirements for Media Studies and for English Language.

Opening chapters of novels for children are best avoided.

Reviews: it is not appropriate to offer two reviews - eg a film review and a concert review - even if it is claimed that they are for different audiences and publications. Candidates should write in two distinctly different genres. It could be acceptable, however, to offer two reviews as one piece: for example, reviews of two or three films or two or three books would provide an authentic single piece, but a film review and a book review could only be regarded as two pieces.

Advertisements: a collection of unconnected advertisements is not acceptable. However, an advertising campaign with very closely related pieces, might be. We are looking for extended writing, though, and advertisements are probably best avoided altogether.

Some centres had not noted our request last year for greater clarity and detail on the front sheet about the nature of the pieces. A mere title, especially an enigmatic one, is not enough. The nature of the pieces should be clearly indicated, with brief details of

what they are in terms of genre, audience and purpose. In many cases moderators had to read the commentary first in order to discover what kind of piece was being offered.

The commentary

The general standard of the commentary continued to improve. The best showed an impressive knowledge of linguistic and literary terminology and a confidence in using terms to make precise points. Any candidates who do not attempt some detailed analysis of their own use of language are seriously disadvantaging themselves, though there was a tendency in a few centres to over-reward them. The commentary does still remain a major discriminator for the unit.

There should be only one commentary: too many candidates are writing two, and these tend to be far too long, and do not contain any comparative element. The commentary should follow the pieces in the folder, not precede them.

The commentary should provide some evidence of the study of source materials or texts. The main focus in the commentary of course must be on the language of the candidate's own texts, not on that of the source texts, but some brief consideration of genre and stylistic conventions and of a few examples of language features in the texts studied would help to enlighten comments on the candidate's own writing. In a few cases there were inappropriate sources cited, such as Conrad's 'The Heart of Darkness' as the source text for travel writing.

Administrative Issues

It was good to see some improvements in some of the administrative processes, such as the need to send the highest and lowest folders. However, there were still cases where the recommendations made last year had been ignored, or were not acted upon, and therefore the same problems and issues still remained as in previous sessions.

If all centres could observe the following points, this would speed the moderation process, and lessen the burden not just on moderators but on centres themselves. Most centres acted very speedily when contacted by moderators, but they could save themselves the trouble by following the points:

- The coursework front sheet must be signed by both candidate and teacher.
- Centres must send the work of their top and bottom candidates, whether or not they have been asterisked on the OPTEMS forms.
- The work of an absent candidate which forms part of the asterisked sample must be replaced by the work of another, comparable, candidate.
- The marks on the OPTEMS should match those on the coursework front sheets. The mark in the top right hand box should be the final centre mark, and this must be changed if an original mark has been altered as a result of internal moderation. The box must not be left empty. It is not there for the external moderator to fill in.
- If separate authentication sheets are included, they should be placed underneath the top sheet.
- It is helpful if folders include a bibliography that accurately lists materials or texts that have been studied.
- Work should be fastened by staples or treasury tags, not paper clips. Plastic or cardboard folders should not be used. Please encourage candidates to number their pages.

- All details on the front sheets should be filled in, including word counts, centre numbers, candidate numbers, and ticks in the AO boxes. Missing centre or candidate numbers can create problems in identifying the folder. It is helpful if centres could use up to date versions of the front sheet, rather than those dated 2000 or 2001, which do not have the correct AOs.
- Folders should be sent in candidate number order, not in rank order. Centres should send only the asterisked sample, plus any additional work required such as the highest and lowest and any substitute coursework. Some centres sent all their folders to the moderator.
- Centres should ensure that folders are sent to the correct moderator, to arrive by the designated deadline, using ordinary first class post, and not by any method that requires a signature, such as Special or Recorded or Courier delivery.

The most popular genres in June 2007 were:

Travel writing
 Speeches
 Dramatic monologues
 Chapters (usually opening chapters) of novels
 Magazine articles
 Autobiographies
 Film Reviews
 Newspaper articles
 Music Reviews
 Theatre Reviews
 Diaries
 Sports reporting/writing
 Written interviews
 Scripts for TV or film
 Editorials
 Letters
 Other reviews (of art exhibitions, restaurants, games, etc.)

6384/02 Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes

The texts on the position and situation of governesses in the nineteenth century were very accessible to candidates and succeeded in engaging their interest, and stimulating them to produce some interesting writing.

Good advice to candidates is to read the source material very carefully, noting the details that could be incorporated into the writing task, and any features of style that could be adopted and later commented on in the commentary. The other vital requirement is to read the actual task very carefully, and more than once. There are usually several strands, and the bullet points offer a mixture of information, instruction and assistance. None of them can be ignored.

Task a(i)

This asked for a letter from a recently appointed governess in the nineteenth century to her brother or sister, about her experiences and feelings. Candidates were asked to write in modern English. The intention was not to require a letter in nineteenth century style, as no style model was provided, but to provide some leeway for candidates to interpret this as they saw fit. The clear instruction was given to avoid an excessively informal style. Most candidates responded very well to this and produced a style that gave strong impressions of nineteenth century formality, without having to worry about absolute authenticity. Only a small minority wrote in a very colloquial modern day style.

Strengths in answers included:

- a clear sense of the audience - the brother or sister - often with well directed questions about their home life and the rest of the family
- evidence of wide reading of nineteenth century style texts, with ambitious use of lexis and syntax
- a reasonable proportion of educated, polysyllabic, low-frequency words
- varied sentence patterns, but with a high proportion of compound or complex structures
- appropriate selection of details from Texts A and B, covering all the areas specified in the question (routine, duties, the children subjects taught, the house, the employer(s), other members of the household)
- clear conveying of feelings, reflections and attitudes to the new life
- appropriate additions, if attempted; there were some well imagined examples of the children's naughty behaviour
- clear markers of a personal letter, with appropriate superscription and subscription

Weaknesses in answers included:

- poor expression
- technical errors including lack of control of punctuation and sentence structures, and inaccurate spelling
- using excessively colloquial language, or language that was inappropriate, such as calling the children 'a bunch of aliens' (the 'little monkies' or 'dunces' of Text B worked well and did not need changing)
- writing from the point of view of a modern governess in the 21st century (even though candidates were clearly instructed to imagine themselves as a 19th century governess)

- introducing inappropriate anachronisms in their 19th century style writing, such as referring to Key Stage 2, paper aeroplanes and even Playstations
- inappropriate shifts in viewpoint resulting from unassimilated use of the source material: eg 'Many women wanted to find work as a governess'
- not using a letter format at all, and therefore lacking any sense of an audience
- inappropriate subscriptions, such as 'Yours faithfully', 'Yours sincerely' or 'Yours truly' (sic)
- using the date '2007', and putting post-codes in the address
- inappropriate use of the material: there were several references to the 'asylum that awaits me' (this after only a few weeks in post). Any reference in this letter to Martineau's inquiry into the proportion of governesses in lunatic asylums seemed ill-considered. Another example of failing to think through the time scale was: 'Mrs..... has already produced 5 of her eventual 13 children.'
- misunderstanding the source material: several candidates were under the impression that the governess went to other homes to teach children, or that she stayed with a family, but then went off to a school to teach
- being tempted into an exclusive focus on an inappropriate relationship with the master of the house, as suggested briefly at the end of Text A, or perhaps from knowledge of 'Jane Eyre', resulting, in a few cases, in a romantic piece of fiction, with no mention of any duties, or of any children to look after.

Task a(ii)

This was attempted only by a few candidates, but produced some very good answers. Whereas in Task (i) candidates were allowed to take a positive or negative attitude, or a mixture of the two, here the requirement was for a critical letter from the employer conveying only negative feelings or attitudes about the governess. Provided that the source material was studied carefully, there were plenty of suggestions there about possible failings in the governesses employed, and it was not too difficult to imagine a few more.

Most answers had a strong personal voice and created an effective persona for the male or female employer. There was generally a good sense of audience, with the friend being genuinely consulted for advice or consolation, and plenty of evidence produced of the governess's failings or peccadilloes or more serious incompetence. A few male personas confided a developing romantic interest in the governess, but this was less appropriate here than in the first task, as it tended to conflict with the requirement to take a negative attitude to the governess.

There were similar strengths in answers as for Task (i), and there were fewer weaknesses, though points on style and the use of the letter format apply here too. Most managed a suitably formal style well, but some tried a little too hard, and some expressions or words jarred at times. A letter that started 'Dear my most faithful loyal and wise friend' was likely to struggle to find an appropriate level of formality.

Task b

The Commentary

The commentary remained a major discriminator, as in previous years. Many centres had clearly developed a high level of analytical skill in their candidates, who were able to discuss their own language choices perceptively and with sharp focus, using a wide range of literary and linguistic terminology to make precise points. A minority of candidates, however, seemed almost completely unprepared for a linguistic analysis of their own

writing, and were reduced to making vague generalisations, or offering merely descriptive accounts of the content of their letters, with virtually no use of any technical terms. There were often huge discrepancies between the mark for the writing task, and that for the commentary. Some candidates were still adopting the 'what I could have done better had I had more time' approach, which never gains any credit, and a few tried to analyse the language of the source material rather than their own writing.

Some specific points on the commentary:

- It was not enough to assert that a 'formal tone' had been adopted: it was necessary to provide evidence and proof of how this had been achieved. Candidates needed therefore to have some clear knowledge about markers of formality, and then to quote some examples that they had used.
- There was some confusion about audience. Some claimed that the target audience for their letter was anyone interested in the Brontes or Victorian writers, and some said that their letter could be used in history text books as a secondary source.
- All points made must be supported by quotations from the candidate's writing.
- Quotations were far too long: they should be as brief as is necessary to make a point; often a single word is enough.
- There was no point in listing linguistic features that were not illustrated: eg 'I used grammar, syntax, semantics...' etc.
- There was some confusion between the written and the spoken mode. Some claimed, for example, that a superscription like 'Dear Emily' was phatic language. 'Phatic' is a term best reserved for spoken language. Worse was the claim to have used 'filled pauses': these would be totally inappropriate for a letter.
- Discussing the 'choice' of first person narrator at length was not appropriate, as the choice was imposed by the task.
- Some candidates focused on their use of punctuation rather than their syntactical structures.
- Many used the term 'ellipsis' for a series of dots. If nothing has been omitted these are best referred to as 'suspension marks'.

6385/01 Wider Reading

There were fourteen texts on the paper with a choice of two questions on each. The established format is that question (a) gives a specific focus and invites candidates to discuss their reading of a text in light of this. Question (b) directs candidates to an extract and invites them to select other material from the whole text to discuss. Both questions require a demonstration of knowledge of the whole text and have specific prompts to encourage a combined linguistic and literary approach.

Requirements of the Assessment Objectives

The key element of this unit is the integration of linguistic and literary approaches to the texts. Central to this is the study of the varied uses of language in literature, that is, investigating literary texts through a linguistic lens while still recognising literary techniques and concepts. Both literary and linguistic approaches are required, not in equal competencies but in an application of both strands of knowledge as appropriate depending on the nature of the text. Every question contains a linguistic prompt and a literary prompt and there is always an evaluative element.

AO2ii requires candidates to demonstrate their comprehension of the writer's intended meanings using linguistic and literary evaluations, showing an awareness of the contexts.

AO4 is concerned with the dynamic nature and shaping of the text. Candidates need to show how meaning is conveyed by the structure and development of the text, and by the language features and range of techniques used. The linking of form to function is crucial here and candidates must be able to explain the effects achieved by the writer.

AO3ii examines the candidate's use of linguistic and literary approaches through analysis and a discriminating use of linguistic and literary terminology.

AO1 looks for an engaged, evaluative and balanced response which completely answers the question using a careful selection of material to discuss. Like AO3ii this will involve an appropriate use of technical terms.

General Comments

Approach: most candidates seemed clearly focussed on the integrated nature of the Specification. Centres are to be congratulated for applying suggestions of previous examiners' reports and for guiding candidates to a more seamless integration of literary and linguistic knowledge. Where candidates had command of the integrated frameworks, the results were both interesting and quite impressive given the limits of a timed exam.

The majority of candidates seemed really engaged with their texts and wrote thoughtfully and reflectively. The best answers were personal, engaged and often concise, with precise use of terminology and quotations and a real sense of how language works in literature. Knowledge and understanding of genre was generally impressive and indicates a genuine link between different aspects of the Specifications. For example, questions on the plays give the opportunity to employ knowledge of spoken language features and demonstrate an awareness of dramatic techniques and effects. However, some candidates are still too focussed on the literary aspects of the texts and need to strike a more balanced approach. The analytical and well argued literary responses are not as successful as they could be

because they do not satisfy the linguistic elements of the AOs. A detailed, systematic linguistic analysis is needed for AO4 and AO3ii achievement.

Lower band answers do not interpret the question accurately and write down what they know regardless of the question. These approaches lead to a narrative and explanatory response which often relies on quotations without accompanying analysis. Candidates should be encouraged to read the question carefully, highlight and consider the key words and phrases and then select material accordingly.

Candidates should start with a relevant, evaluative point and avoid introductory paragraphs which re-state the terms of the question and make general statements. The best answers made critical points straight away, selected material carefully, integrated knowledge of contexts where relevant, used brief, contextualised quotations and were discriminating in their application of analytical frameworks and technical terminology.

Many candidates are listing linguistic terminology indiscriminately at the expense of evaluation. Technical terminology must be used with discrimination, it does not replace close reading and analysis. Assertion of general points rather than detailed analysis is a key discriminating factor in all responses. For example, when writing about the structure of Milton's *Sonnet XVI*, a comment like: "*The octave presents a problem which is resolved in the sestet*" without evaluating the nature of the problem and the solution, will not achieve a high band reward. Similarly, in Chaucer responses a statement such as: "*This is an example of prolepsis*" by itself does not make a critical point. Candidates must always link form and techniques to effects and purposes. In general, *hyperbole* and *imagery* are over-used and often inaccurately; *hyperbole* is not just any expression of emotion, and *image / imagery* are too often used to mean anything descriptive or visual. *Oxymoron* was widely used, again, to mean *contrast*, and as a synonym for *juxtaposition*. *Connotation*, *onomatopoeia* and *syntax* are also frequently not used appropriately.

There were fewer candidates answering questions on the Anthology for both sections of the paper this year but there are still some. Centres are reminded that this is the **Wider Reading** unit and when candidates answer question 4 and question 11 on the Anthology, they need to be aware of the dangers of taking a similar approach to each and the increased risk of repetition.

Rubric: candidates were as usual well prepared on the format of the paper, but there were more infringements than last year. There continues to be a problem with some candidates' treatment of the questions on *The Poetry Anthology*. There were instances of those who had answered the post-1770 questions but used pre-1770 poems, and vice versa. There were a number of rubric infringements in Q2 with a lot of discussion of *Sonnet XVI* followed by other unrelated poems from the *Anthology*. Other *Anthology* candidates answered Q3a on the *Metaphysical* poetry. Centres need to remind candidates that rubric infringements of this kind can result in a loss of marks.

Contexts: knowledge of these should only be included when relevant to the question and the argument being presented. Higher band answers focus on analysis and integrate contextual comments when appropriate. Less successful responses include contextual and biographical detail as background information without relating it to the question or the evaluation of the text.

Time management: most candidates achieved a good balance and answered both questions fully and in a coherent, well structured manner. Some candidates made over-elaborate plans which reduced the time spent on the answers, while others appeared to have spent too much time selecting their own choice of poem(s) in the poetry questions.

There are also those who write too much, at the expense of cogency and quality. Candidates need to be aware that a detailed, concise answer is what is required.

The most popular texts were: *Translations*, *The Merchant's Tale*, *Oleanna*, and *Surfacing*. There were a number of responses on *The Edexcel Poetry Anthology*, Plath, Lessing, *Eight Metaphysical Poets* and the Nichols anthology. There were also a few responses to the Milton, Pope, Stoppard and Barnes questions.

CHAUCER: *The Merchant's Tale*

This was the second most popular text and it elicited some excellent answers from candidates again this year. The richness of the poem lends itself well to the demands of this paper in terms of its literary and linguistic requirements, and candidates of all abilities are able to write with some confidence about it. Most responses showed engagement and interest in the text, and there was much awareness of provenance, context, and multiple narrative voices. The discriminating factor was whether candidates could analyse literary features and apply some linguistic analysis rather than quote without commentary. Part of the specification's requirement is to demonstrate understanding of a text's socio-cultural-historical contexts. The use of distinctively modern terms such as *feminist* rather undermines that aim, as in "*The Merchant is anti-feminist*" or "*Proserpine is known as a feminist*". Candidates would demonstrate a more subtle understanding by using less modern culture-specific terminology. There are still too many of the responses referring to the text as a '*play*'.

Q1(a)

This was a very popular question - three times as many as Q1b with a wide range of responses. The best ones used the courtly love conventions to structure their answers and also brought in the fabliaux elements to show how Chaucer was able to subvert the genre. They were attentive to the distinctions between Chaucer's, the Merchant's and Januarie's perspectives, and how this is conveyed through linguistic choices. Many candidates wrote impressive answers which confidently considered the humorous effects of subverting courtly love in the Damyan / May relationship as well as looking in detail at the humour to be gained in the Merchant's creation of the lustful character of Januarie. They were able to show how the lexis of the narrator suggested a cynical attitude, and most were able to find evidence to back up the reference to "crude". There was generally a clear understanding of the dual narration and its implications. Lower band answers relied too much on a narrative approach, giving explanations, the listing of features and assertion of relevance by repeating the wording of the question. For example, by dwelling on Januarie's motivations for marriage, and speculation about the motives of May and Damyan, which were not particularly evaluative.

Q1(b)

There were some excellent answers which did exactly as asked, creating a well-balanced response which examined the extract in detail and related it to the denouement. Other responses paid superficial attention to the extract before moving on to look at the ending of the tale. There were some outstanding responses which were able to use the context of the extract to show differences in lexis and style, and there were also quite a few references to courtly love prompted by the wording of Q1a. Most candidates were able to discuss the comedy element of the question but lots were observational, with detailed paraphrases of some very long copied out quotations. There were too many narrative accounts of the episode, and although there were references to rhetorical features, these were too often only identified rather than evaluated.

MILTON: *Selected Poems*

There were only a few answers here but they were generally impressive, the best using biographical information in a highly selective way.

Eight Metaphysical Poets

There were a limited number of responses on this text but candidates showed some strong engagement with the poems and a sound knowledge of the metaphysical nature of the work. There was some sustained, pertinent analysis which engaged with the demands of the questions.

Q3(a)

The sub-text behind "great demands" here was generally not grasped, with some candidates writing about the difficulties a modern audience might have in grasping archaic language and references, and showing insufficient awareness of what might be described as the more general, intrinsic demands of the poems. Many candidates took the question to mean 'difficult to understand' or just 'incomprehensible'. They ignored the wording of the question and listed as many features they could find, with some even asserting that these features made the poems easy to relate to. Others were able to discuss the difficulty for modern readers of the contexts and also discussed the syntax and punctuation in a very coherent way. '*Conceit*', though widely used, was rarely defined very clearly or understood in detail.

Q3(b)

There were not many answers on this question but the responses were much better and candidates were able to select their material carefully. The free choice of extra poem was mainly one of: *A Valediction*, *The Good-Morrow*, *The Sun Rising* and *To His Coy Mistress*. Most had been well-taught and were able to construct convincing arguments.

EDEXCEL ANTHOLOGY: *Pre -1770 Section*

There were some genuine, personal responses to these poems that investigated the texts with great sensitivity and awareness of subtext. The better answers brought the texts to life. It is also the case that too many responses tended to be either rather literary in focus at the expense of any linguistic analysis, or, in some cases, were accounts of poems that had densely described the linguistic form but did not give enough indication of how the poems work as poems. This was sometimes also true of candidates who wrote quite fully about literary *form*, but in doing so ignored content. Clearly there needs to be more of a balance.

Q4(a)

This was a very popular question and the best answers were confident with the poems and showed awareness of the different approaches taken by each poet to represent different articulations of time. The highest bands responses also presented very detailed readings in which the analysis of language and form was original and related closely to their effects. A number of candidates ignored the prompts in the question, and gave observational answers with a listing of features and assertions of general relevance. They tended to keep repeating the wording of the question, listing various features to justify their comments. Too many candidates structured their answers around a narrative account of each poem in

turn, paraphrased quotations and then wrote out the wording of the question as a conclusion.

Q4(b)

There were plenty of very good answers here especially those which avoided unassimilated biographical material. The best were able to show the different ways the writers used the discipline of the verse form as a means to be very emotional and confessional in a public poem. Many were good at recognising and discussing a change in tone / voice of the poems. There was also a good awareness of gender roles in Wyatt's poem. Some very astute answers made impressive points about the nature of private / intimate poetic expression, and considered the ways in which Milton subverted these conventions. Some candidates were able to draw fascinating parallels between the two writers while also highlighting their profound differences. There were candidates who copied out Milton and Wyatt's life stories and then listed a few language features.

POPE: *The Rape of the Lock*

Though there were only a few responses on this text, they were well prepared and quite engaged.

Q5(a)

There was a small number of responses to this question but there were some very articulate answers with a high degree of personal engagement. Form was related thoughtfully to the function of the poem, and candidates seemed to engage well with the Pope's overall critique. Most were able to show how the poem's dual effect was achieved and contextual information was generally at the service of the argument rather than an optional extra. Some took a highly literary approach and did not deal with the specifics of the language.

Q5(b)

This was less popular than 5(a) but the few who attempted it were able to give entertaining and lively accounts of the extract with clarity of expression and well-structured answers which focused on the question.

FRIEL: *Translations*

This was the most popular text this year and there were nearly three times more responses to the first question than the second. Nearly all students showed some contextual knowledge of the play and had quite a detailed knowledge. The best responses integrated the analysis of linguistic and literary techniques effectively and there were many interesting readings of the play. In 6(b) quite a number of candidates tended to focus on the relationship part of the task and didn't address the second part sufficiently, or at all. Examiners reported that in quite a significant number of responses there was too little discussion of linguistic or dramatic features, and rather limited use of technical terminology.

Q6(a)

This was generally well answered showing engagement and enjoyment of the text. The best candidates showed a good integration of textual analysis and awareness of contexts.

They focused on the dramatic use of linguistic features as well as on the writer's crafting of the drama. Most candidates were able to discuss the importance of naming but were less successful in addressing "how successfully" and the dramatic aspects. The question focused on language and many candidates discussed language as a theme without analysing it thoroughly, which meant that relevant comments on language were often too generalised.

Q6(b)

Responses here were often differentiated by the candidate's ability to discuss and analyse the text beyond the extract. Many used their knowledge and understanding of spoken discourse and conversational structures to discuss the dramatic presentation of the two brothers, and these were the best answers. These also had a clear and sensitive understanding of the structuring of the play. The interplay of political and private life between the two brothers posed some problems of understanding for other candidates who often tended to focus on the characters, not linking their discussion to the play as a whole. A narrative approach was adopted by too many candidates who could identify language features but not develop any evaluation or discuss their dramatic impact.

MAMET: *Oleanna*

Both questions elicited discussion of the shifts in power as the play progresses as well as a lot of personal response, usually very positive. Lower band answers often focussed on telling the story of the play while higher band responses noted linguistic features of speech and analysed discourse using the terminology studied in Unit 1.

Q7(a)

Generally there was close textual analysis of the text and interpretations were possible as candidates chose appropriate examples and quotations of the linguistic features of discourse. Candidates adopted different views in this question and whilst most agreed with the quotation, some decided that you could take sides. Both kinds of response used close analysis of the text to find evidence for their standpoint and linguistic analysis was good especially in exploring character and how dramatic effects were created. There were some interesting explorations of concepts in relation to contemporary contexts. Other responses tended to be quite narrative, commenting on the power struggle between John and Carol. Most were able to identify language features but appropriate comment on effects was often missing.

Q7(b)

Good responses often displayed a sound knowledge of the text and of the historical and social setting. Candidates engaged with the shifting patterns in the relationship and power and there was a clear understanding of the purpose of the play and its underlying themes as well as the significance of its form within the drama genre. The most successful responses demonstrated a good linguistic awareness in their discussion of language and power, and the shaping of the dialogue was confidently evaluated by many candidates who were clearly engaged by the end of the play. Others were less successful in linking the dramatic changes in language and action at the end to the rest of the play, choosing instead to explain the development of the relationship between the two characters and how this changed.

STOPPARD: *Jumpers*

There were not many responses on this text this year but there were some good ones which demonstrated engagement with the philosophical propositions and the dramatic techniques the playwright employs. They were equally able to analyse dramatic and linguistic techniques. In Q(b) higher band responses were able to discuss characters as metaphors for wider society and analysed the stagecraft in relation to the question. Lower band responses often veered from the focus of Archie and used their time to discuss all characters' roles.

PLATH: *Selected Poems*

A limited number of candidates studied this text but for both questions they chose appropriate poems which were discussed with genuine personal engagement.

Q9(a)

Good answers were very well engaged and were able to be analytical and explore keenly the creation of terror through lexical choices, rhythm and tone. The close focus of this question on terror enabled candidates to concentrate on the analysis of the language and make links between themes and context. There were generally good textual references and a sound understanding of Plath's motivations. Candidates also distinguished very well between the speaker's terror and the readers', though sometimes 'terror' was taken as meaning strong feelings. There was limited analysis in some responses which often included too much biographical information. A checklist approach was often used by lower band candidates and many of the responses did not address the prompt 'effectiveness'.

Q9(b)

There were far fewer responses to this question. The strong ones linked tone and structure contrastingly with the power of nature and explored the speaker's attempts to control her perception of nature through these. The best answers took thoughtful issue with the idea of encouraging the reader to share. Those who responded to it with most success were aware of having to discuss Plath's use of literary and language techniques, and these candidates were able to evaluate effectiveness in terms of conveying purpose. Lower band answers tended to neglect verse form and focus instead more on language and imagery although sometimes the discussion of imagery was quite vague and unfocused. As in the previous question, this also brought a number of responses which were overly biographical.

NICHOLS: *The Fat Black Woman's Poems*

A limited number of candidates answered on Nichols but it was clear that there had been some good personal engagement with the text.

Q10(a)

There were some good responses here which engaged clearly and well with the poet's creation of rhythm, mood and tone through linguistic and poetic choices. A number of higher band responses showed a thorough understanding of the contexts and their relevance, demonstrating a thorough and insightful analysis. Some of the less successful answers interpreted 'versatility' to mean changes of content - poems about lots of different things, or to mean expressing different attitudes. Lower band answers lacked a full understanding of Nichols' poetry, its concerns and contexts, and though there were generally effective textual references, linguistic analysis varied in quality.

Q10(b)

The best responses engaged with both the narrative and oral elements in the question and were able to explore the poems thoughtfully. In other cases candidates observed the effect of the poetic techniques and devices but their analysis was often not linked closely to the question or evaluated in depth. Lack of knowledge of the oral tradition was also evident here; candidates could identify the different voices of the poems but lacked an understanding of the oral tradition to inform their analysis.

EDEXCEL ANTHOLOGY: *Post -1770 Section*

Q11(a)

Most responses to this question grasped what the question was asking them and commented on how their chosen poems created a speaker and listener relationship. The most successful of these chose the dramatic monologue material and then analysed the literary and linguistic techniques while exploring the character behind the voice. There were appropriate examples of literary and linguistic techniques/devices given, but there is still a tendency for answers on the *Anthology* to be too literary in approach. Lower band answers spent a lot of time trying to define the elusive listener, ending up almost inevitably with the reader. A number of candidates did not recognise the opportunities to draw on their learning in the Spoken Word unit.

Q11(b)

Higher band responses took into account the contexts and conventions of portraying nature, making relevant references to these and relating them to the themes and issues of the poems. These candidates' responses were engaging and demonstrated a full understanding and appreciation of the texts studied. The less successful answers showed a limited awareness of context and were either descriptive or gave a superficial analysis. For example, they only identified 'nature imagery' and didn't extend beyond the 'flow' of enjambed lines or vowel sounds.

ATWOOD: *Surfacing*

Q12(a)

Some very good responses here which reflected a clear understanding of how themes relate to the structure of the text and how images create coherence. There were also interesting evaluations of unreliable narrating. There were many candidates who explored the themes and issues of feminism and nature with insight and had a very good grasp of how these are developed by the writer. Other answers tended to focus more on the themes without linking them to an analysis of language and other did the complete opposite, providing plenty of analysis of language without linking it very effectively to the themes it constructs. There was still a tendency for the focus to be on literary rather than linguistic techniques.

Q12(b)

Many of the responses to this question demonstrated a sound understanding of the novel's themes and issues as well as a thorough analysis of linguistic and literary features. Candidates were able to give a detailed analysis and interpretation of the extract and were then able to comment on how it linked with the rest of the novel. Higher band responses examined the themes of language, feminism and nature in relation to the development of the narrator. They explored how an empathy is created for the narrator

despite her lack of reliability and how language and narrative features are used to create the reality of an experience. The less successful responses were often glad that the narrator seemed to be 'sane' again, and then wrote down what they knew about the novel as whole.

BARNES: *Flaubert's Parrot*

There were only a few responses on this text and of those the candidates who understood the multi-layering of texts did well. They evaluated the language and literary features in great detail, and explored the aspects of genre, the presentation of Braithwaite and the key themes effectively.

LESSING: *The Memoirs of a Survivor*

Q14(a)

Most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of this text as well as of the role and importance of the narrator, and they made effective use of textual references and links. There was good deployment of both literary and linguistic terminology although in a few responses these were not closely explored or analysed. The responses gave a reasonably detailed analysis of the text, identifying key issues and showing awareness of the genre of the novel as dystopian. Some candidates found it difficult to address the 'social contexts' element of the question. These seemed to find it easier to focus on either the presentation of children or on social contexts without addressing the narrative techniques.

Q14(b)

There was much interesting commentary on narrative perspective and on the relationship between the narrator and Emily. There were also some very perceptive points about social structures and personal relationships as well as about language and its social value. A few candidates tackled the magical realism elements which was very encouraging.

6386/01 Genre Studies

General Comments

Candidates engaged with all of the texts and found substantial material to comment on in both questions. The range of texts chosen enabled candidates to use their knowledge gained from the study of other modules of the course. In contrast with previous years there was an increased sense of confidence and enjoyment when dealing with the pre-20th century texts and there was a real sense of engagement with any spoken word aspect of the texts. Both questions seemed to produce a good range of responses across the range of abilities, with candidates at all levels able to relate to the texts in some way. More successful answers were able to make a range of comparisons across genres and comment in detail on specific aspects of the texts.

Q1

This question linked three texts with the theme of isolation. Text A inspired some perceptive analysis, with the poetic aspect of the writing identified and discussed in higher band answers. Many appreciated the richness of the language although not all could discuss its effects with precision. There was engagement and empathy for Mortimer in pursuit of his creative talent, together with an appreciation of the humour in his comments. Some did comment on the cross-genre nature of this text, seeing the blending of personal memoir and travel diary, although less confident candidates struggled with the idea that this was not like a conventional diary ie, written with date headings on separate days and intended for a wider audience than the author.

Text B captured the imagination of many candidates, with the use of direct speech making it both dramatic and more accessible. Higher band answers were sensitive to the shifts in tone and were able to contrast the contribution of More's wife with the wider ethical debate concerning More himself. This text also contributed a wealth of material for A05 comment, with the more perceptive exploring the overt attitudes and values attributed to More through the dialogue, and the implied attitudes and values of Roper as the biographer. In addition a number of candidates did comment on the historical/political climate of the time which could have inhibited Roper's freedom of expression.

Text C encouraged debate and empathetic exploration of Hargreaves's motivation and the tragedy of her death. Assumptions made regarding the prior knowledge of the audience were acknowledged and related to the market for the book. Answers in higher bands gave some rich textual analysis. Many candidates seemed able to relate to this text on a personal level, some even began their analysis with this extract. Many used the motto to inform their views on the author and examined the text as a personal journal which was probably written with the intention of reaching a wider audience than the writer herself.

Q2

The theme of love and separation clearly interested many candidates, making this question marginally more popular than Question 1. Text D, the letter, produced a particularly high standard of analysis with the historical aspect proving not to be a barrier but, in fact, acting as a springboard for discussion of attitudes and values related to context. The majority of candidates responded with genuine sympathy and interest to Lady Brilliana's letter although a few became distracted by the context and embarked on a discussion of gender/power frameworks and the changing role of women in society, diverting to the sociological rather than the stylistic aspects.

Text E proved to be a surprising discriminator, probably due to its mixed-genre nature and its perceived density: many less successful answers commented on the difficulty of this text, citing the Italian place names and the word 'dysentery' as a barrier to modern readers. Although the 20th century period of the text was acknowledged, some less secure candidates explained its apparent complexity by claiming that Sobel was attempting to write in a style suitable for the 17th century to reflect the time in which Galileo was living. However, more perceptive answers exploited the mixed-genre nature of the text to inform their analysis, commenting on the way in which Sobel had employed the approach of a fiction text to make the book accessible to her readers, and those who analysed in depth probed the text for quoted speech and commented on the effects achieved eg, noting the metaphorical use of 'felled'.

Text F prompted many candidates to write about the impact, immediacy and possible commercial motivation behind the writing. This text may have been the deciding factor for many who attempted this question. Lower band answers were enticed into re-telling the events in a narrative manner rather than analysing the extract. The best answers sustained a close analysis of the text's features, sifting the language of the text to explore its effects linked to the genre.

Comments on specific aspects of this year's responses.

Fewer candidates spent time noting what had been omitted and time management had improved dramatically, giving evidence of careful preparation for timing and organisation of answers. Most candidates possessed a good vocabulary of technical terms but some were inclined to sprinkle them liberally: in particular the concept of semantic field was over-used. Disappointingly, many candidates are still unsure about the distinctions between simple, compound and complex sentences, yet they seem drawn to a discussion of sentence complexity when there are many other interesting features worthy of comment.

The concepts of metaphor, imagery and personification suffered frequent misinterpretation and over-application, and the identifying of alliteration is an on-going problem, with many candidates unable to distinguish between deliberate use of alliteration as a technical device and incidental alliteration eg, 'partridge pie' was frequently cited as an example of strategic use for effect. 'Olde English' appears with regularity as a label for the language of any pre-20th century texts: better answers identified some lexical items as 'archaic', often acknowledging that they would, of course, have been in common usage for the contemporary audience. Other candidates used the equally appropriate phrase of 'unfamiliar to a modern audience'.

The tendency to add a concluding paragraph outlining 'how my knowledge/study of Language-Literature has helped me' has fortunately declined and candidates are now confident enough to let the work speak for itself.

In general, accuracy has improved, with fewer grammatical and spelling errors.

Most answers were coherent, well sequenced and clearly paragraphed and more fluent responses employed effective grammatical links to achieved cohesion.

Conclusion

The majority of candidates revealed an impressive level of confidence and maturity in dealing with a variety of unseen texts in two hours.

Centres should be congratulated on their expert preparation of candidates for this unit. As a synoptic unit this paper has worked well in enabling candidates to synthesise and integrate their knowledge and skills and to write from a personal viewpoint.

Many candidates seemed to have performed at their best, demonstrating skilfully the knowledge gained from two years of study.

There were some impressively fluent, sophisticated answers in higher bands which were stimulating to read.

Statistics

Unit 1: The Spoken Word (6381)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 100 | 67 | 58 | 49 | 41 | 33 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 90 | 72 | 63 | 54 | 45 | 36 |

Unit 2: Desk Study (6382)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 100 | 35 | 31 | 27 | 23 | 20 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 120 | 96 | 84 | 72 | 60 | 48 |

Unit 3a: Shorter Fiction Study (6383/01)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 50 | 40 | 34 | 29 | 24 | 19 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 90 | 72 | 63 | 54 | 45 | 36 |

Unit 3b: Shorter Fiction Study (6383/02)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 50 | 33 | 29 | 25 | 21 | 18 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 90 | 72 | 63 | 54 | 45 | 36 |

Unit 4a: Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes (6384/01)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 50 | 40 | 34 | 29 | 24 | 19 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 90 | 72 | 63 | 54 | 45 | 36 |

Unit 4b: Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes (6384/02)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 50 | 37 | 32 | 27 | 23 | 19 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 90 | 72 | 63 | 54 | 45 | 36 |

Unit 5: Wider Reading (6385)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 100 | 71 | 64 | 57 | 50 | 44 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 90 | 72 | 63 | 54 | 45 | 36 |

Unit 6:Genre Studies (6386)

| Grade | Max. Mark | A | B | C | D | E |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Raw boundary mark | 50 | 35 | 31 | 27 | 24 | 21 |
| Uniform boundary mark | 120 | 96 | 84 | 72 | 60 | 48 |

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 LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (8179/ 9179)

Set texts

Range of reading

'English Literature' includes American and Commonwealth writing, and significant works in translation may also be included. The set texts are drawn from a range of historical periods between 1370 and the present day, and candidates are required to study a range of texts, which must include:

AS • a range of literary and non-literary texts, including a minimum of two texts covering two literary genres (prose, poetry and drama) one of which must have been published before 1900. The non-literary texts must include both spoken and written language.

A2 • a wider range of literary and non-literary texts, including two additional literary texts and at least one text published before 1770 ensuring coverage of prose, poetry and drama. The additional non-literary texts must include both spoken and written language.

The following texts are set for this specification:

Unit 1: The Spoken Word (Closed Text)

Section A: Unprepared Analysis

This section will consist of an unseen extract which may involve a transcription of spoken language.

Section B: Pre-1900 Drama Unit

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

- Shakespeare: *Henry V*
- Shakespeare: *Much Ado About Nothing*
- Wilde: *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- Ibsen: *A Doll's House*
- Aphra Behn: *The Rover*
- Pinero: *Trelawny of the Wells*

Candidates study one of the above texts.

Unit 2: Desk Study

This unit sets pre-released textual material for writing tasks.

Unit 3a: Shorter Fiction Study

There will be a free choice of text for this unit.

Unit 3b: Shorter Fiction Study (Open Text)

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

- Angela Carter: *The Bloody Chamber* (Vintage ISBN: 0099588110)
- W Somerset Maugham: *Collected Short Stories Vol. 1* (Mandarin ISBN: 074930345X) or *Collected Short Stories Vol. 1* (Vintage ISBN: 0099287390)
- James Joyce: *Dubliners* (Penguin ISBN: 0141182458)
- Alice Munro: *Selected Stories* (Vintage ISBN: 0099732416)
- F Scott Fitzgerald: *The Diamond as Big as the Ritz and Other Short Stories* (Penguin Popular Classics ISBN: 0140622381). All stories in this volume are

prescribed.

Candidates study one of the above texts.

Unit 4a: Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes

There will be a free choice of at least two texts selected from a variety of literary and non-literary sources for this unit.

Unit 4b: Writing for Different Audiences and Purposes

Candidates will be given two texts as stimulus material. The texts will be drawn from literary and non-literary material.

Unit 5: Wider Reading (Open Text)

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

Section A: Pre-1770 Poetry

- Chaucer: *The Merchant's Tale*, editor Hussey (CUP ISBN: 0521046319)
- Milton: *Selected Poems* (Dover ISBN: 048627554X)
- Dalglish (editor): *Eight Metaphysical Poets* (Heinemann ISBN: 0435150316)
- *Edexcel Poetry Anthology* (Section Two)
- Pope: *The Rape of the Lock* (OUP ISBN: 0198319584)

Candidates study one of the above texts.

Section B: Modern Literature

Drama

- Friel: *Translations* (Faber ISBN: 0571117422)
- David Mamet: *Oleanna* (Methuen ISBN: 0413626202)
- Tom Stoppard: *Jumpers* (Faber ISBN: 0571145698)

Poetry

- Sylvia Plath: *Selected Poems*, editor Hughes (Faber ISBN: 0571135862)
- Grace Nichols: *The Fat Black Woman's Poems* (all four sections) (Virago ISBN: 0860686353)
- *Edexcel Poetry Anthology* (Section One)

Prose

- Margaret Atwood: *Surfacing* (Virago ISBN: 0860680649)
- Julian Barnes: *Flaubert's Parrot* (Picador ISBN: 0330289764)
- Doris Lessing: *Memoirs of a Survivor* (Flamingo ISBN: 0006493254)

Candidates study one of the above texts.

Unit 6: Genre Studies (Closed Text)

This unit will focus on unprepared texts and extracts. Students will be required to read and understand the stylistic features and characteristics of both whole texts and extracts from the following areas: a) travel writing; b) letters, diaries and journals; c) biography and autobiography; d) speeches; e) reportage; f) scientific writing. Examples of suggested texts for this unit are given in the list of *Textbooks and Other Resources* on page 37 of the Specification.

Further copies of this publication are available from
Edexcel Publications, Adamsway, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 4FN
Telephone 01623 467467
Fax 01623 450481
Email publications@linneydirect.com
Order Code UA 019127 Summer 2007

For more information on Edexcel qualifications, please visit www.edexcel.org.uk/qualifications
Alternatively, you can contact Customer Services at www.edexcel.org.uk/ask or on 0870 240 9800

Edexcel Limited. Registered in England and Wales no.4496750
Registered Office: One90 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH