

# LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

Papers 0486/01

Paper 1 (Open Books)

## General comments

Most texts were offered in sufficient numbers to justify general comment meaningful, though as usual certain texts were clearly more popular than others. In the drama section, *Macbeth* and *Streetcar* were most frequently encountered. In the poetry section, responses to the new CIE poetry anthology *Songs of Ourselves* far outweighed those to the Coleridge selection, though the numbers for the latter were certainly not negligible. One of the most pleasing aspects of the Prose section was to find that not everyone had gravitated towards *Lord of the Flies* (as some had predicted), and with the exception of the Richardson, there was significant work on all the other texts. It was gratifying to find some good engaged work on contemporary fiction like *The Siege*, for instance.

Examiners found little self-evident misunderstanding of the questions. There did seem to be very occasionally a problem on Paper 4 with the revised layout of the extract question (i.e. with the question printed before the passage rather than after it), in that a very few candidates seemed to miss the question before the printed extract and think that the task was the second question on the text. Even more oddly this happened in a very few cases on Paper 1 as well where confusion over layout can hardly be an excuse. But failure to address the task satisfactorily usually came from palpable lack of knowledge of the book. With *To Kill a Mockingbird*, for instance, some candidates did not seem to know that in the extract Scout was in a costume which did not allow her to see. Likewise, some were unable to locate the spot in the novel to which the empathic question referred and hence wrote as the very different Aunt Alexandra from earlier on in the novel. With *Macbeth*, *Streetcar* and *Great Expectations* (to mention three other of the most popular texts) some candidates seemed unaware that Macbeth was on his way to murder Duncan or that Stella was pregnant or that Wemmick's house was a refuge from Jaggers and London. In other words, particularly in the extract question, a knowledge of context is essential for the production of a good response.

An area where the Paper was particularly successful this year was in the empathic questions (i.e. the third task for each of the drama and prose texts). Many Examiners wrote about how much they had enjoyed the assumptions of Malcolm, Mrs Dudgeon, Stella, Ger, Celia, Nwoye, Jane Turner, even sometimes Marina, and Aunt Alexandra. Rather disappointingly, Piggy's turn of phrase proved sometimes more elusive, as did Beneatha's feisty personality. Colonel Hakim and Herbert Pocket were rarely attempted.

As always, the candidates' work brought much pleasure to the Examiners. Most reports spoke of the liveliness of a lot of writing, the confidence that many candidates showed when asked to conduct an argument, the willingness of many to engage with literary language and the comparative scarcity of answers which did not address the question directly. We are indeed blessed with a culture of teaching and study which produces work which rarely gives the sense of being a prepared essay which the candidate is trying to fit to the question. What continues to please is a pervading sense that many, indeed most candidates, appear to have enjoyed their reading, across the range of ability

Having said this, as always there were candidates who struggled to put together a coherent argument or who failed to support their ideas as instructed with detail from the text. It needs to be stressed to students that general assertions, no matter how viable, cannot receive high reward without evidence that the candidate has arrived at them from close reading of the text. As always, there were quite a few candidates whose knowledge of the text was clearly very partial and who were lost when asked to move out to matters not directly connected to one or two central characters or issues. For instance, with *Great Expectations* there were quite a few answers on Wemmick which showed only the haziest grasp of his role in the novel, as well as arguments on Magwitch's character which did not move beyond the opening chapters. Very occasionally an Examiner would come across a Centre where the candidates seemed to have very little idea of the scope of answers required at IGCSE level. Here most essays would hardly be called that, consisting of what effectively was a mere half page of random thoughts. Fortunately such cases were very rare.

Whilst the general consensus seemed to be that the work on drama was often good, there were some who still approached a play as if it was a novel, indeed sometimes actually referring to it as one. Often this was just a slip, but for others it was an accurate reflection of their response. In all the many attempted to look at authorial means, at imagery in poetry, at dramatic techniques in drama and means novelists and short story writers use to impress their readers. However, particularly in poetry there are still many who note a literary effect and then fail to make any attempt to analyse why it is so effective in those particular words. A few continue to place an emphasis upon the power of the punctuation (above all exclamation marks) which in most cases the piece cannot sustain.

The great majority of candidates seemed to have enough time to complete the paper and that there were few Rubric Infringements. Several Examiners commented on the fact that in some Centres candidates wrote *each answer* in a different answer booklet; this is *not* a requirement and we would strongly recommend not doing this for this syllabus.

### **Comments on specific questions**

*A Raisin in the Sun.*

#### **Question 1**

While answers usually were able to place the passage in the wider context of the play, Walter's demeanour was not often accurately explored. Some poorer answers were simply condemnatory of him. His sarcasm and bitterness at the end of the passage, for instance, was sometimes not grasped. The language was seldom probed, and features such as the repetition and short sentences were often overlooked.

#### **Question 2**

The best answers here usually managed to see something of the two possible approaches to Mama, though few were really inclined to see her as a villain. Most explored how in the end she was the one who held the family together and pointing out how at the end she adapted to the new situation. Most appreciated Mama's hard work and loving nature, and accepted her – at times – overbearing manner in controlling the family as a clear demonstration of her desire to help them in life.

#### **Question 3**

In general this was not very well done, although some highly personal responses were seen. Some had problems in deciding what Beneatha would think and could not easily relate her response to the previous conversation with Asagai. Sometimes the content was appropriate but the voice was not. In many answers Beneatha tended to sound more like some character out of a romantic novel than the vivacious and independent woman of the play; few captured her feistiness, and sometimes her complex state of mind was rather simplified.

*Cuba and Doghouse.*

#### **Question 4**

Most commented on the contrast between Val and Pats and the tension created by Pats's lack of response and the flying dog. The question differentiated quite sharply between those who could explore all the features the dramatist utilises here to make the moment memorable, including the humour of the last part, and those who could do little more than describe the events. There were rather more in the first group than the second.

#### **Question 5**

The relatively few answers that were seen on this question usually could well how class-ridden were their attitudes with, of course, the exception of Miss Arthur who is herself a victim of these attitudes. Some seemed to respond enthusiastically to the challenge of writing about teachers!

**Question 6**

There were some good and lively answers on this, charting very well the developing feelings of Gertrude in this episode, going from amazement at Pats stealing food to the horror and compassion Ger feels when she begins to piece together the reasons for this action. The best were able to capture Ger's lively way of speaking, but others found capturing her voice difficult.

*As You Like It*

**Question 7**

There were some good answers which had some sense of Rosalind's sense of fun, but the general standard was moderate. There was almost no awareness of gleeful audience interaction: candidates found it difficult to show what was entertaining about the passage and quite frequently answers hardly got beyond narrative. A few clearly had little grasp of the context, and 'significant' was rarely addressed in any meaningful way.

**Question 8**

Again there was some good work seen, but the general standard was not very high. Too many candidates had few ideas beyond thinking the Court bad and the Forest good, completely ignoring the tribulations of life in Arden. Better answers appreciated that Shakespeare gives us a more complex situation than the Forest being some unblemished utopia.

**Question 9**

The very few that did take up the task found it hard to convey Celia's personality, her humour and her sense here of being alone.

*Macbeth*

**Question 10**

This was a very popular question and it was often done very well. Many candidates charted in detail how the atmosphere was built up both in setting and dialogue. It helped if the candidate knew that Macbeth was on his way to murder the king. A few tried to make this scene into part of the process that decided Macbeth on his action and, of course, as a result misinterpreted much. It was noticeable that a number did not grasp the coded message which Macbeth is passing to Banquo just before the latter's exit. It was also interesting how very few probed Banquo's guilt in not bringing his suspicions to the surface either here or later.

**Question 11**

As was to be expected, this was another immensely popular task. What was really pleasing was the fact that there were relatively few answers which could be classified as straight character sketches. Nearly all tried to argue a case and nearly all looked at the proposition from a number of angles. Most were not willing to advance the thesis that Macbeth was simply destroyed by others. In this task a candidate needed to use the text in some detail and a number of answers advanced coherent arguments without that detailed textual support and as a result failed to achieve as well as they might. The scope of some answers was very thin indeed, barely producing more than an outline of an answer and rather too many stopped at the point where Lady Macbeth persuades her husband to murder the King.

**Question 12**

There were some really impressive assumptions of Malcolm as he reveals the suspicious man he has had to become after his father's murder. Of course, it was crucial to know the context and the scene that is to follow this moment. Those that did not were, of course, immediately in the gravest difficulties but more often Examiners read work which created splendidly Malcolm's conflict of emotions as he wrestles with the dilemma posed by Macduff's arrival.

*The Devil's Disciple***Question 13**

Most managed to convey something of the dramatic situation of Richard's imminent trial and apparent certain death, coupled with Judith's anguish. What few fathomed, however, were the scene's ironies and the consequent humorous tone which they produce. Sometimes, alas, this was because the candidate knew the play so little as to think that Richard reciprocated Judith's immature romantic feelings.

**Question 14**

Candidates often saw Dick's wit and sardonic humour and appreciated the irony of his being a better man than his relatives. The key here was the phrase 'dramatically compelling'. A number of candidates conveyed his charisma by exploring in detail some moments where he has a real dramatic impact. Other not so impressive efforts tended to simply describe his qualities.

**Question 15**

This empathic task gave some candidates a great opportunity to catch the vituperative Mrs Dudgeon's bitterness and bile to good effect. In some scripts it was noticeable how candidates had internalised her particular obsessions. The voice was often quintessentially hers, much to the pleasure of Examiners.

*A Streetcar Named Desire***Question 16**

This was a very popular question and was usually answered at least at a level of competence, sometimes significantly better. However, some Examiners found a lack of detailed probing of the extract, in which, for instance, there was some general understanding of the more obviously aggressive side of Stanley, but not as here of the man who cares for his wife. Some answers clearly did not have a grasp of basic details such as Stella's pregnancy being somewhat pertinent to the end of the passage.

**Question 17**

As so often in tasks like this, the best were those who at least attempted to see that there were different perspectives. Most were inclined to sympathise with Blanche, sometimes rather too much. Many paid no attention to the fact that Williams makes the audience understand if not approve of Stanley's attitude towards her and also perceive just how destructive, superior and disdainful she can be towards other people.

**Question 18**

There were some very good assumptions of Stella, capturing her apprehension at the imminent arrival of her sister, her equivocal feelings towards her elder sister, and her pretensions and what she thinks will be the likely response of Blanche to her home and to Stanley. Some, though, found her simplicity and voice difficult to capture, giving her also too much knowledge as to why her sister was suddenly descending upon her.

*Coleridge, Selected Poems***Question 19**

There were some good answers here that explored with evident engagement the ways in which Coleridge conveys his feeling towards his child. There were some very good responses to the natural imagery in the extract's second section; unfortunately, many others overlooked this part. A minority produced a run-through of the poem without much reference to the question and some did little more than paraphrase and quote without attempting to look at the language in any way. Most, however, at least commented upon the poet's tenderness. A few brought in detailed contextual biographical detail - which is not required by the syllabus - at the expense of focusing on the writing's expression of feelings.

**Question 20**

The problem here was the limited range of many of the answers. Most answers referred to the early part of the poem, and could comment on Christabel's beauty, but some never progressed beyond that. It was surprising how many ignored the father's actions at the end of the poem. Some candidates spent most of their answer delineating Geraldine.

**Question 21**

Generally, the impression was that candidates had really enjoyed and engaged with *The Rime*. Most answers made a sensible choice of an episode and many attempted to explore what made it frightening. Once again there was sharp differentiation between the many who analysed language to show why the words conveyed fear and fright and those who just described the situation or simply paraphrased the poetry. The most popular choice was the spectre-bark. There were some splendid answers from candidates who were able to look at the language in detail while still conveying an imaginative and personal response. In other answers points of detail were often misinterpreted (the light shining through the ribs of the ghost ship) or ignored (the skin as white as leprosy).

*Songs of Ourselves*

**Question 22**

There were many good answers on *Storyteller* which conveyed vividly the way the poetry evokes the woman's power. There was some particularly good work on some of the central images of the poem; the way the story was spun, for instance, evinced some very insightful comment. There was also some significant misunderstanding at times which almost suggested that some candidates were writing in effect on an unseen poem in the examination. Some, for instance, thought that the audience was exclusively made up of children. Some were content to give a general account without becoming engaged in anyway with the detail of the poetry.

**Question 23**

Here *Plenty* was done better than *The Old Familiar Faces*. Candidates found no difficulty in grasping the essence of the former but then found it difficult to pick up the subtle shifts in language and structure which constitute its development. There was much more evidence of engagement with Dixon's poem. Here there were some delicate responses to the sad regret at the centre of the poem as well as often insightful exploration of the way the words and images evoke the poverty of the family's life and the lack of understanding of the mother's plight. Some missed the importance of the drought both as an actuality and as a symbol and not too many explored the wonderful description of the mother's smile and the way it metamorphosed in later times. Also, some failed utterly to grasp the bittersweet quality of the poet's memories, thinking that she was simply pleased now to have escaped poverty.

**Question 24**

This question proved rather difficult for a number of candidates. Answers were often very badly balanced. It was common for Examiners to find Angelou's *Caged Bird* (by far the most popular choice) dealt with in detail (and enthusiastically) and the second poem chosen dismissed in one paragraph. Instead of looking at some images, some candidates felt that they had to deal with everything in the poem, particularly its message, and hence were rushed for time. Conversely, others did not place the images they were probing in any sort of context so that the poet's point never emerged. This was very evident in responses to *Rising Five*. In *Before the Sun*, examiners were occasionally surprised by some of the symbolic meanings with which the poem had been invested by some candidates, who sometimes tried to impose a straitjacket of metaphors on the poem which lacked conviction because they were not supported by compelling or plausible textual references.



*Things Fall Apart***Question 25**

This was by far the most popular question on the text, and Examiners found that it was very frequently done well. Candidates used the detail of the extract to chart Okonkwo's character very accurately indeed. The most effective answers were usually those that set his personality against his own background and the customs of his clan. Possibly because the extract was so central to study of the novel, there were few really weak responses.

**Question 26**

There was very little work on this, perhaps because the other tasks were more obviously central and hence more appealing to candidates. Some deployed impressive knowledge of the whole novel to inform their responses.

**Question 27**

This was one of the most successful empathic tasks on the Paper. Candidates had clearly identified strongly with Nwoye's predicament and the courage of his decision to walk away from his father and hence Examiners found much of work which movingly conveyed the young man's gentle personality, and answers which revealed pleasing knowledge of the text with content really in keeping with the novel's style. A few answers entirely missed the point by making him a vindictive young man.

*Great Expectations***Question 28**

Most candidates were able to make sensible comments about the nature of Wemmick's home and what it showed about the delightfully eccentric side to his personality but quite a lot did not grasp the significance of it being a miniature fortress and refuge and hence missed an important aspect of Dickens' vision.

**Question 29**

Most were inclined to be highly sympathetic and see Magwitch as a victim, though as usual in this kind of task, the most impressive work was that which did recognise that Dickens makes the violent side of the man very real. There was a tendency to focus too much and sometimes entirely on the early part of the novel and relations with Compeyson. Few saw that Dickens does allow us to understand the adult Pip's fear of the man, at least during the early days of his return.

**Question 30**

There were few answers on this task and, whilst some were successful, candidates generally found it difficult to get beyond narrative and to find a convincing voice for this loveable man.

*The Siege***Question 31**

This passage was full of undercurrents and therefore quite demanding. Hence, it was encouraging how many candidates handled it well, conveying in some detail the way the two are cautiously feeling their way to conveying their growing attraction towards one another. Conversely, it was a passage which demanded close reading and an understanding of context. One or two candidates, for instance, thought that Alexei had been to the dacha. Some clearly did not understand what Anna had been doing prior to her meeting him.

**Question 32**

Given the range of choice, the answers to this task were variable. Most made relevant choices and there was some highly evocative work, but others thought that too few probed the detail of Dunmore's writing to convey the vividness with which these aspects of the siege were conveyed.

**Question 33**

The few who attempted this in the main caught something of Marina's mixture of desperation at the the man she loves and almost anger at his lack of the will to live.

*Lord of the Flies*

**Question 34**

Most of the many who did this question realised that this was the seminal moment when fear in the shape of the beast came to the island. There were some very good responses which accurately charted in the greatest detail the way the meeting gradually turns against Ralph. The best answers picked out crucial moments in Golding's writing such as the decline in the laughter and the description of the gradual darkening and cooling of the setting. At the other end of the scale, some candidates had little grasp of the context, whilst a few concentrated totally on the devices of the passage without making any link to the content.

**Question 35**

Most candidates attempted to conduct an argument and some were strikingly successful in exploring the issues of leadership which the novel raises, recognising Ralph's qualities in trying to do something that was always going to be profoundly difficult in the circumstances. Rather too often, though, it has to be said that the quality of argument was a very simplistic interpretation of the author's intentions. Some argued that Jack was a better leader apparently on the basis that he successfully led the children down the path to becoming savages, completely missing such things as, for instance, the author's final biting irony that Jack's setting fire to the whole island unintentionally achieves one of Ralph' main aims of rescue. A number of answers were stuck in simple character sketch mode, until a belatedly focused last paragraph along the lines of "Thus we can see that Jack is the better leader" – an approach which does not lead to a mark in the higher bands.

**Question 36**

Most answers showed a clear knowledge of the circumstances and hence achieved at least reasonable reward but some struggled to capture Piggy's way of speaking and at times even of thinking. Piggy may be intelligent but he does not think or speak like the adult intellectual some made him into. Also blindness and his fear were also often absent.

*Travels with My Aunt*

**Question 37**

Few attempted this. Those that probed the passage conveyed rather well the negative first impressions, though still managing to bring out that even here all was not lost. The weaker candidates made little response to the detail of the passage, writing generally about what he would find in South America.

**Question 38**

This produced a good deal of lively argument and most were of the opinion that at last Henry was beginning to live. It is a tribute to Greene's powers of persuasion that a number seemed to leave all moral scruples behind and not even consider that there might be another side to the proposition.

**Question 39**

Not many found to their liking the prospect of assuming the personality of this suave but ruthless policeman. Those that did certainly captured for the most part his shrewdness.

*To Kill a Mockingbird***Question 40**

This was often done very well. There were some startlingly good answers which placed the passage firmly in context and then charted the way Lee makes the reader as bewildered as the protagonists and builds the tension through some dramatic writing in which the qualities of sound and touch become paramount. Other answers made little of the reader's momentary lack of understanding, simply recounting what was happening from a later perspective. Others seemed to have very little knowledge at all, not knowing, for instance, that Boo Radley was involved in the extract.

**Question 41**

Quite a few candidates found it difficult to maintain focus in the task. There were some who managed to centre their answer in the trial and to link it to the wider issues of the novel very well indeed. However, others wrote general essays on racism in the Southern States and virtually ignored the trial. Conversely, there were those who did little more than narrate certain features of the trial with very sparse conclusions.

**Question 42**

As has already been said, some failed to grasp the precise moment in the novel at which they must write and hence portrayed an Aunt who was much more hostile to Scout than she would have been after the tea party. However, there were some very good assumptions of this formidable and ultimately worthy woman expressed in her usual downright tone of voice.

*The Getting of Wisdom***Questions 43, 44, 45**

Far too few answers were seen on this novel to make general comment appropriate.

*Into the Wind***Question 46**

On a basic level this task was done well. Nearly all grasped the substance of the extract and accurately charted the child's misunderstandings and rising resentment. The main differentiator was the degree to which the candidate responded to the humour, showing how O'Connor's adoption of adult phraseology for childish perception was at the centre of the amusement. Those that missed this struggled to show what was amusing about it all.

**Question 47**

This was not a very popular question and in certain cases it could be seen why in that some candidates were distinctly uncertain of the precise situation and relationships in *A Stranger from Lagos*. The responses to *Samphire* were usually more successful, though some did not really bring out what a truly dreadful overbearing bully of a man the woman had married or see the depth of her desperation.

**Question 48**

There were some splendid assumptions of Jane Turner, who really brought alive the bitter sweetness of her moment of revenge and something of her characteristic sense of irony. Others clearly had not quite grasped the essence of her situation and had her bemoaning her loss of any hope of engaging Collier's attentions. Most gave some sense of Jane's revenge; fewer appreciated her accompanying misery.



# LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

Paper 0486/02

Coursework

## General comments

In the main, Centres' handling of the revised portfolio requirements went well, but there are some areas which did cause concern and where clarification is necessary. Some Centres took no note of the syllabus requirement that candidates writing on poetry should cover two poems and that likewise those writing on short stories should look at two stories. (See Appendix B of the syllabus booklet.) Centres must take note of this requirement in future. The guidance in the syllabus offered over assignment length is designed to encourage Centres to convey to their candidates that for an assignment to receive high reward it is not necessary to write at great length. However, it was obvious that some Centres had been treating the comment about what constituted an acceptable length as a mandatory limit and not as a suggestion. Moderators noted that there was evidence of internal pressure on candidates to count words and to end assignments abruptly in order to keep below 800 words. It may be that the difficulty of writing in depth on two short stories or two poems within the suggested range may have led to the ignoring of the rubric in this instance. *It cannot be emphasised too strongly that no piece of work will be penalised per se for its length and that candidates whose enthusiasm and insight leads them to have much to say should be encouraged to write at the length which their material demands.*

There was also apparently some confusion over the relation between the coursework texts and those on the current syllabus. A few Centres seemed to think that because candidates are now allowed to write an assignment on one text which is also being prepared for Paper 1, the second text had also to be from the current syllabus list. This is not the intention of the allowance at all and, of course, offers the temptation for a candidate to offer material on both instead of just one of the coursework texts in the Paper 1 examination and hence to breach the requirements of text coverage in the examination as a whole. Fortunately, many Centres clearly still use coursework for the important purpose of encouraging wider reading, getting their candidates to offer two assignments on texts which are not on the current syllabus. In this instance, of course, there can be no worries about duplication in the examination paper, as is the case when there is only one assignment on a current syllabus text.

Otherwise, it was mainly business as usual on matters of moderation and assessment. External moderators spoke of the general accuracy of Centres' internal assessment of their candidates. There was as usual the occasional need for some scaling but it was very rare to find that any major shift was required. The presentation of the folders was usually meticulous, with the external Moderator receiving considerable assistance from the extensive comments in the candidate record card and from the annotation of the assignments. Also, the choice of texts and the formulation of tasks received general approval.

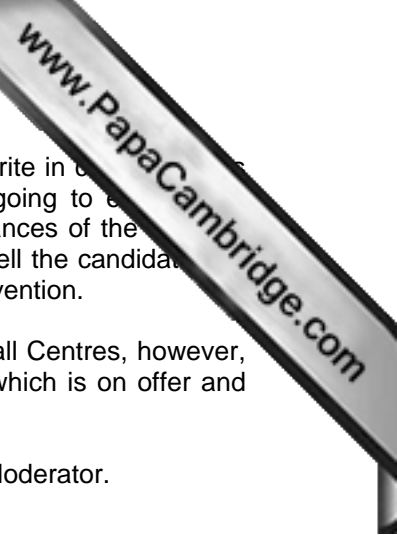
However, in a few cases the standards of presentation were not acceptable: assignments were barely attached to folders and/or the record of the internal moderation was missing as was the bottom copy of the mark sheet. Sometimes assignments had no title and the candidate record card teacher comment section had the very briefest of comments (if any). On more technical matters, there is still a tendency in some Centres to fill the candidate record card with assessment of the candidate's personality rather than the work in the folder. The language of the assessment should show, and does not always, that the assessment criteria have figured in the awarding of a mark and grade.

Task setting was generally satisfactory. Where there have been criticisms from external moderators, these are mainly on two fronts. One is that the tasks are sometimes not focused enough. It is now rare to find candidates simply heading their assignment with the title of the text. However, sometimes tasks are simply rooted in character and theme at the expense of stimulating candidates to explore how the writer creates compelling literature. This can have important effects since failure to build this into the task can mean that able candidates are not encouraged to go down roads which will ensure that their ability to respond to literature becomes apparent. The second main criticism was that it was still rather too common to find in empathic tasks a failure to provide, related to the text, specific parameters of time and place in which the voice of the character is expected to operate. This almost inevitably means that vital stimulus is not provided

for the best work. It was amazing how often candidates were given a diary entry to write in a text when the last thing the character would be doing is writing in a diary. If one is going to expect the imagination of the candidate, then the task has to be fully embedded in the circumstances of the text or play. This is also important because otherwise there can be very little to show how well the candidate has entered the world of the text. The empathic mode is anything but an exercise in pure invention.

The above comments should not be taken as a general criticism that is applicable to all Centres, however, and, indeed, overall the Moderators continue to be impressed by the range of work which is on offer and congratulate the IGCSE Centres that do this coursework component.

As usual, every Centre receives a short report on its own coursework from its external Moderator.



# LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

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Paper 0486/03

Alternative to Coursework (Unseen)

## General comments

Many of the answers were a delight to read because of their maturity and the freshness of their engagement with the words of both the poem and the prose.

Candidates seemed to find the new format of the paper to their liking, and the allocation of an extra twenty minutes was well used by the great majority. However, all Examiners were at pains to point out that this additional time was more usefully used for the processes of reading, choosing and planning than for writing at greater length, which can be counterproductive. It was gratifying to find that the take up of the poetry and prose questions was evenly divided. It did not seem that Centres had advised their candidates to concentrate on one form rather than the other.

The wording of the invitation to use the bullet points has been carefully constructed and will be standard in future examinations. Most candidates used the points to determine the structure of their essays. However, a few confident candidates were able to construct their own arguments in answer to the question in bold and used the bullet points only as a final check to ensure that no major areas of enquiry had been inadvertently omitted. This approach is what the Examiners would prefer, as a more slavish approach can both stultify the candidate's personal response and/or produce rather disjointed answers. However, they do acknowledge that less secure candidates might be advised to use them more rigidly. Whatever the approach, candidates should remember that it is the question in bold is that they are supposed to be answering and the bullet points are only included as a guide.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

This poem was challenging and allowed a variety of interpretations. The Examiners were pleased with the vigour with which most candidates accepted the challenge and had the confidence to embrace the ambivalences in the poem. Some candidates who had had first-hand experience of war or displacement, had an acute understanding of the pessimism subsequent to war, and many were conscious of the struggle of the country's people to overcome poverty while governance was otherwise preoccupied.

The weakest answers started off with a preconception that, if the woman had picked up an abandoned baby, she must be a 'heroine'. They then scarcely examined the words of the poem, but spun a eulogy on the selflessness of the woman, extracting from the poem a neat, but shallow, moral lesson. Many other candidates, who had paid attention to the words, refused to believe that the woman's outlook on life could be as bleak as it appeared on the surface. Thoughtful candidates were perplexed by the seeming disjunction between the action of the woman and her thoughts. They explained it in a variety of ways, most of which were extremely interesting. Some argued that it was a woman's instinct to pick up the child which defied reason. Some argued, very legitimately, that her motives were very selfish from the start. Some argued that she was trying to persuade herself that it was an act of stupidity. Whatever interpretation the candidate pursued, the best answers were fully conscious of the devastating effect of war on the woman's outlook, and stronger candidates often noted changes or developments of thought and tone as the poem progressed. Some were censorious at the end, as they became aware of the 'me, me, me' of the last stanza, but others, while not sentimentalising the situation, were much more sympathetic to her instinctual desire for self-preservation.

In the final analysis, as ever, it was the candidate's response to the language of the poem which counted. How closely he or she was able to respond to the force and meaning of the poem. Many responded sensitively to the negative verbs the woman used to describe the child's behaviour, and to the similes 'like a lead/Heavy as the dead' as expressions of the metaphorical weight both of the burden she carried and possibly of other wartime experiences. Disappointingly, only the best candidates commented on the structure of the verse, the questions at the start of the first three stanzas followed by the weary statement at the beginning of the fourth, the heaviness of the curtailed final line of each stanzas and the rhyming structure, particularly the grimly pervasive 'ed' sound which reaches its climax in the deadly monosyllabic final two lines. The many candidates who quoted 'die or let loose' in isolation clearly did not appreciate the effects of the enjambment on this occasion.

It is difficult for candidates to comment on versification without getting bogged down in irrelevant technicalities. There is little point, for example, in describing a familiar regular rhyme scheme for its own sake. Here, however, the verse structure really did affect the way the reader feels about the woman and was particularly relevant to the second part of the question. Candidates might be encouraged to let the poem sound in their heads. This might have helped them, for example, appreciate the effect of the stressed syllable at the beginning of the last two lines, the effect of the shortness of the last line, the monosyllables and the rhymes echoing those earlier in the poem. This is without exhaustive training in metrical analysis which is mostly unnecessary at this level.

## Question 2

As with **Question 1**, the weakest answers were those from candidates who started out with the most rigid preconceptions. In this case, some candidates assumed that the father must be right, because, as he said, he 'knows something of men', while others assumed the opposite, that Catherine must be right because this was her 'true' love. It is impossible to tell, from the passage in isolation, what the intentions of Mr Townsend are, and the question did not make this an issue. Some candidates were clearly aching to know whether he was genuine or not, but rightly did not make this a major discussion point in their essay. That said, the Examiners are very aware of cultural differences in the candidature's views about the position of a father's authority in a family; so, for example, if candidates argued that he was automatically bound to have his daughter's best interests at heart simply because he was her father, the Examiners accepted this as a suitable base from which to begin their investigation. Actually, in Henry James's novella from which the passage was taken, Mr Townsend is indeed an unsuitable husband for Catherine, but a careful reading of the extract allowed most candidates to see that while the father may have been right his treatment of her was cold, patronising and intimidating.

There were good responses to Catherine's timidity with plenty of careful reference to the text to support this point of view. Many also applauded her stubborn refusal to allow her admirer to be defamed by her father. The more challenging aspect of the question was to explore the doctor's treatment of his daughter. The most perceptive saw the extent of his manipulative behaviour. Many, taking at face value some of his statements and rhetorical questions at the end of the passage particularly, argued that he was essentially kind-hearted. Of course, such approaches were not rejected out of hand. In these cases, candidates had answered the question directly and used the text to substantiate their conclusions. But, more searching candidates dug more deeply and explored the changing patterns of his behaviour, at times seemingly generous-spirited and warm, at other times cold. Still more successful answers took the final step of reconciling these apparent discrepancies and developing a cohesive interpretation of the father-daughter relationship.

In the final analysis, it was the attention to detail which characterised the best answers. Some very good candidates made a lot of the body language of Catherine, her 'averted eyes' and the way she 'detached herself'. The references to the doctor's eyes 'so fine and cold' and his 'sharp, pure eye' were also noted by the better candidates. Stronger candidates explored the nuances of the dialogue, noting the layers of irony in the father's speech and the hesitations in Catherine's attempts at diplomatic prose.

All the Examiners were impressed by many of the answers to the task. There was much less unproductive narrative than was common some years ago, and much more pointed, focused commentary.

# LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

Papers 0486/04

Paper 4 (Closed Books)

## General comments

Most texts were offered in sufficient numbers to justify general comment meaningful, though as usual certain texts were clearly more popular than others. In the drama section, *Macbeth* and *Streetcar* were most frequently encountered. In the poetry section, responses to the new CIE poetry anthology *Songs of Ourselves* far outweighed those to the Coleridge selection, though the numbers for the latter were certainly not negligible. One of the most pleasing aspects of the Prose section was to find that not everyone had gravitated towards *Lord of the Flies* (as some had predicted), and with the exception of the Richardson, there was significant work on all the other texts. It was gratifying to find some good engaged work on contemporary fiction like *The Siege*, for instance.

Examiners found little self-evident misunderstanding of the questions. There did seem to be very occasionally a problem on Paper 4 with the revised layout of the extract question (i.e. with the question printed before the passage rather than after it), in that a very few candidates seemed to miss the question before the printed extract and think that the task was the second question on the text. Even more oddly this happened in a very few cases on Paper 1 as well where confusion over layout can hardly be an excuse. But failure to address the task satisfactorily usually came from palpable lack of knowledge of the book. With *To Kill a Mockingbird*, for instance, some candidates did not seem to know that in the extract Scout was in a costume which did not allow her to see. Likewise, some were unable to locate the spot in the novel to which the empathic question referred and hence wrote as the very different Aunt Alexandra from earlier on in the novel. With *Macbeth*, *Streetcar* and *Great Expectations* (to mention three other of the most popular texts) some candidates seemed unaware that Macbeth was on his way to murder Duncan or that Stella was pregnant or that Wemmick's house was a refuge from Jaggers and London. In other words, particularly in the extract question, a knowledge of context is essential for the production of a good response.

An area where the Paper was particularly successful this year was in the empathic questions (i.e. the third task for each of the drama and prose texts). Many Examiners wrote about how much they had enjoyed the assumptions of Malcolm, Mrs Dudgeon, Stella, Ger, Celia, Nwoye, Jane Turner, even sometimes Marina, and Aunt Alexandra. Rather disappointingly, Piggy's turn of phrase proved sometimes more elusive, as did Beneatha's feisty personality. Colonel Hakim and Herbert Pocket were rarely attempted.

As always, the candidates' work brought much pleasure to the Examiners. Most reports spoke of the liveliness of a lot of writing, the confidence that many candidates showed when asked to conduct an argument, the willingness of many to engage with literary language and the comparative scarcity of answers which did not address the question directly. We are indeed blessed with a culture of teaching and study which produces work which rarely gives the sense of being a prepared essay which the candidate is trying to fit to the question. What continues to please is a pervading sense that many, indeed most candidates, appear to have enjoyed their reading, across the range of ability

Having said this, as always there were candidates who struggled to put together a coherent argument or who failed to support their ideas as instructed with detail from the text. It needs to be stressed to students that general assertions, no matter how viable, cannot receive high reward without evidence that the candidate has arrived at them from close reading of the text. As always, there were quite a few candidates whose knowledge of the text was clearly very partial and who were lost when asked to move out to matters not directly connected to one or two central characters or issues. For instance, with *Great Expectations* there were quite a few answers on Wemmick which showed only the haziest grasp of his role in the novel, as well as arguments on Magwitch's character which did not move beyond the opening chapters. Very occasionally an Examiner would come across a Centre where the candidates seemed to have very little idea of the scope of answers required at IGCSE level. Here most essays would hardly be called that, consisting of what effectively was a mere half page of random thoughts. Fortunately such cases were very rare.



Whilst the general consensus seemed to be that the work on drama was often good, there were some who still approached a play as if it was a novel, indeed sometimes actually referring to it as one. Often this was just a slip, but for others it was an accurate reflection of their response. In all the many attempted to look at authorial means, at imagery in poetry, at dramatic techniques in drama and means novelists and short story writers use to impress their readers. However, particularly in poetry there are still many who note a literary effect and then fail to make any attempt to analyse why it is so effective in those particular words. A few continue to place an emphasis upon the power of the punctuation (above all exclamation marks) which in most cases the piece cannot sustain.

The great majority of candidates seemed to have enough time to complete the paper and that there were few Rubric Infringements. Several Examiners commented on the fact that in some Centres candidates wrote *each answer* in a different answer booklet; this is *not* a requirement and we would strongly recommend not doing this for this syllabus.

### **Comments on specific questions**

*A Raisin in the Sun.*

#### **Question 1**

While answers usually were able to place the passage in the wider context of the play, Walter's demeanour was not often accurately explored. Some poorer answers were simply condemnatory of him. His sarcasm and bitterness at the end of the passage, for instance, was sometimes not grasped. The language was seldom probed, and features such as the repetition and short sentences were often overlooked.

#### **Question 2**

The best answers here usually managed to see something of the two possible approaches to Mama, though few were really inclined to see her as a villain. Most explored how in the end she was the one who held the family together and pointing out how at the end she adapted to the new situation. Most appreciated Mama's hard work and loving nature, and accepted her – at times – overbearing manner in controlling the family as a clear demonstration of her desire to help them in life.

#### **Question 3**

In general this was not very well done, although some highly personal responses were seen. Some had problems in deciding what Beneatha would think and could not easily relate her response to the previous conversation with Asagai. Sometimes the content was appropriate but the voice was not. In many answers Beneatha tended to sound more like some character out of a romantic novel than the vivacious and independent woman of the play; few captured her feistiness, and sometimes her complex state of mind was rather simplified.

*Cuba and Doghouse.*

#### **Question 4**

Most commented on the contrast between Val and Pats and the tension created by Pats's lack of response and the flying dog. The question differentiated quite sharply between those who could explore all the features the dramatist utilises here to make the moment memorable, including the humour of the last part, and those who could do little more than describe the events. There were rather more in the first group than the second.

#### **Question 5**

The relatively few answers that were seen on this question usually could well how class-ridden were their attitudes with, of course, the exception of Miss Arthur who is herself a victim of these attitudes. Some seemed to respond enthusiastically to the challenge of writing about teachers!

**Question 6**

There were some good and lively answers on this, charting very well the developing feelings of Gertrude in this episode, going from amazement at Pats stealing food to the horror and compassion Ger feels when she begins to piece together the reasons for this action. The best were able to capture Ger's lively way of speaking, but others found capturing her voice difficult.

*As You Like It*

**Question 7**

There were some good answers which had some sense of Rosalind's sense of fun, but the general standard was moderate. There was almost no awareness of gleeful audience interaction: candidates found it difficult to show what was entertaining about the passage and quite frequently answers hardly got beyond narrative. A few clearly had little grasp of the context, and 'significant' was rarely addressed in any meaningful way.

**Question 8**

Again there was some good work seen, but the general standard was not very high. Too many candidates had few ideas beyond thinking the Court bad and the Forest good, completely ignoring the tribulations of life in Arden. Better answers appreciated that Shakespeare gives us a more complex situation than the Forest being some unblemished utopia.

**Question 9**

The very few that did take up the task found it hard to convey Celia's personality, her humour and her sense here of being alone.

*Macbeth*

**Question 10**

This was a very popular question and it was often done very well. Many candidates charted in detail how the atmosphere was built up both in setting and dialogue. It helped if the candidate knew that Macbeth was on his way to murder the king. A few tried to make this scene into part of the process that decided Macbeth on his action and, of course, as a result misinterpreted much. It was noticeable that a number did not grasp the coded message which Macbeth is passing to Banquo just before the latter's exit. It was also interesting how very few probed Banquo's guilt in not bringing his suspicions to the surface either here or later.

**Question 11**

As was to be expected, this was another immensely popular task. What was really pleasing was the fact that there were relatively few answers which could be classified as straight character sketches. Nearly all tried to argue a case and nearly all looked at the proposition from a number of angles. Most were not willing to advance the thesis that Macbeth was simply destroyed by others. In this task a candidate needed to use the text in some detail and a number of answers advanced coherent arguments without that detailed textual support and as a result failed to achieve as well as they might. The scope of some answers was very thin indeed, barely producing more than an outline of an answer and rather too many stopped at the point where Lady Macbeth persuades her husband to murder the King.

**Question 12**

There were some really impressive assumptions of Malcolm as he reveals the suspicious man he has had to become after his father's murder. Of course, it was crucial to know the context and the scene that is to follow this moment. Those that did not were, of course, immediately in the gravest difficulties but more often Examiners read work which created splendidly Malcolm's conflict of emotions as he wrestles with the dilemma posed by Macduff's arrival.

*The Devil's Disciple***Question 13**

Most managed to convey something of the dramatic situation of Richard's imminent trial and apparent certain death, coupled with Judith's anguish. What few fathomed, however, were the scene's ironies and the consequent humorous tone which they produce. Sometimes, alas, this was because the candidate knew the play so little as to think that Richard reciprocated Judith's immature romantic feelings.

**Question 14**

Candidates often saw Dick's wit and sardonic humour and appreciated the irony of his being a better man than his relatives. The key here was the phrase 'dramatically compelling'. A number of candidates conveyed his charisma by exploring in detail some moments where he has a real dramatic impact. Other not so impressive efforts tended to simply describe his qualities.

**Question 15**

This empathic task gave some candidates a great opportunity to catch the vituperative Mrs Dudgeon's bitterness and bile to good effect. In some scripts it was noticeable how candidates had internalised her particular obsessions. The voice was often quintessentially hers, much to the pleasure of Examiners.

*A Streetcar Named Desire***Question 16**

This was a very popular question and was usually answered at least at a level of competence, sometimes significantly better. However, some Examiners found a lack of detailed probing of the extract, in which, for instance, there was some general understanding of the more obviously aggressive side of Stanley, but not as here of the man who cares for his wife. Some answers clearly did not have a grasp of basic details such as Stella's pregnancy being somewhat pertinent to the end of the passage.

**Question 17**

As so often in tasks like this, the best were those who at least attempted to see that there were different perspectives. Most were inclined to sympathise with Blanche, sometimes rather too much. Many paid no attention to the fact that Williams makes the audience understand if not approve of Stanley's attitude towards her and also perceive just how destructive, superior and disdainful she can be towards other people.

**Question 18**

There were some very good assumptions of Stella, capturing her apprehension at the imminent arrival of her sister, her equivocal feelings towards her elder sister, and her pretensions and what she thinks will be the likely response of Blanche to her home and to Stanley. Some, though, found her simplicity and voice difficult to capture, giving her also too much knowledge as to why her sister was suddenly descending upon her.

*Coleridge, Selected Poems***Question 19**

There were some good answers here that explored with evident engagement the ways in which Coleridge conveys his feeling towards his child. There were some very good responses to the natural imagery in the extract's second section; unfortunately, many others overlooked this part. A minority produced a run-through of the poem without much reference to the question and some did little more than paraphrase and quote without attempting to look at the language in any way. Most, however, at least commented upon the poet's tenderness. A few brought in detailed contextual biographical detail - which is not required by the syllabus - at the expense of focusing on the writing's expression of feelings.

**Question 20**

The problem here was the limited range of many of the answers. Most answers referred to the early part of the poem, and could comment on Christabel's beauty, but some never progressed beyond that. It was surprising how many ignored the father's actions at the end of the poem. Some candidates spent most of their answer delineating Geraldine.

**Question 21**

Generally, the impression was that candidates had really enjoyed and engaged with *The Rime*. Most answers made a sensible choice of an episode and many attempted to explore what made it frightening. Once again there was sharp differentiation between the many who analysed language to show why the words conveyed fear and fright and those who just described the situation or simply paraphrased the poetry. The most popular choice was the spectre-bark. There were some splendid answers from candidates who were able to look at the language in detail while still conveying an imaginative and personal response. In other answers points of detail were often misinterpreted (the light shining through the ribs of the ghost ship) or ignored (the skin as white as leprosy).

*Songs of Ourselves*

**Question 22**

There were many good answers on *Storyteller* which conveyed vividly the way the poetry evokes the woman's power. There was some particularly good work on some of the central images of the poem; the way the story was spun, for instance, evinced some very insightful comment. There was also some significant misunderstanding at times which almost suggested that some candidates were writing in effect on an unseen poem in the examination. Some, for instance, thought that the audience was exclusively made up of children. Some were content to give a general account without becoming engaged in anyway with the detail of the poetry.

**Question 23**

Here *Plenty* was done better than *The Old Familiar Faces*. Candidates found no difficulty in grasping the essence of the former but then found it difficult to pick up the subtle shifts in language and structure which constitute its development. There was much more evidence of engagement with Dixon's poem. Here there were some delicate responses to the sad regret at the centre of the poem as well as often insightful exploration of the way the words and images evoke the poverty of the family's life and the lack of understanding of the mother's plight. Some missed the importance of the drought both as an actuality and as a symbol and not too many explored the wonderful description of the mother's smile and the way it metamorphosed in later times. Also, some failed utterly to grasp the bittersweet quality of the poet's memories, thinking that she was simply pleased now to have escaped poverty.

**Question 24**

This question proved rather difficult for a number of candidates. Answers were often very badly balanced. It was common for Examiners to find Angelou's *Caged Bird* (by far the most popular choice) dealt with in detail (and enthusiastically) and the second poem chosen dismissed in one paragraph. Instead of looking at some images, some candidates felt that they had to deal with everything in the poem, particularly its message, and hence were rushed for time. Conversely, others did not place the images they were probing in any sort of context so that the poet's point never emerged. This was very evident in responses to *Rising Five*. In *Before the Sun*, examiners were occasionally surprised by some of the symbolic meanings with which the poem had been invested by some candidates, who sometimes tried to impose a straitjacket of metaphors on the poem which lacked conviction because they were not supported by compelling or plausible textual references.

*Things Fall Apart***Question 25**

This was by far the most popular question on the text, and Examiners found that it was very frequently done well. Candidates used the detail of the extract to chart Okonkwo's character very accurately indeed. The most effective answers were usually those that set his personality against his own background and the customs of his clan. Possibly because the extract was so central to study of the novel, there were few really weak responses.

**Question 26**

There was very little work on this, perhaps because the other tasks were more obviously central and hence more appealing to candidates. Some deployed impressive knowledge of the whole novel to inform their responses.

**Question 27**

This was one of the most successful empathic tasks on the Paper. Candidates had clearly identified strongly with Nwoye's predicament and the courage of his decision to walk away from his father and hence Examiners found much of work which movingly conveyed the young man's gentle personality, and answers which revealed pleasing knowledge of the text with content really in keeping with the novel's style. A few answers entirely missed the point by making him a vindictive young man.

*Great Expectations***Question 28**

Most candidates were able to make sensible comments about the nature of Wemmick's home and what it showed about the delightfully eccentric side to his personality but quite a lot did not grasp the significance of it being a miniature fortress and refuge and hence missed an important aspect of Dickens' vision.

**Question 29**

Most were inclined to be highly sympathetic and see Magwitch as a victim, though as usual in this kind of task, the most impressive work was that which did recognise that Dickens makes the violent side of the man very real. There was a tendency to focus too much and sometimes entirely on the early part of the novel and relations with Compeyson. Few saw that Dickens does allow us to understand the adult Pip's fear of the man, at least during the early days of his return.

**Question 30**

There were few answers on this task and, whilst some were successful, candidates generally found it difficult to get beyond narrative and to find a convincing voice for this loveable man.

*The Siege***Question 31**

This passage was full of undercurrents and therefore quite demanding. Hence, it was encouraging how many candidates handled it well, conveying in some detail the way the two are cautiously feeling their way to conveying their growing attraction towards one another. Conversely, it was a passage which demanded close reading and an understanding of context. One or two candidates, for instance, thought that Alexei had been to the dacha. Some clearly did not understand what Anna had been doing prior to her meeting him.

**Question 32**

Given the range of choice, the answers to this task were variable. Most made relevant choices and there was some highly evocative work, but others thought that too few probed the detail of Dunmore's writing to convey the vividness with which these aspects of the siege were conveyed.



**Question 33**

The few who attempted this in the main caught something of Marina's mixture of desperation at the the man she loves and almost anger at his lack of the will to live.

*Lord of the Flies*

**Question 34**

Most of the many who did this question realised that this was the seminal moment when fear in the shape of the beast came to the island. There were some very good responses which accurately charted in the greatest detail the way the meeting gradually turns against Ralph. The best answers picked out crucial moments in Golding's writing such as the decline in the laughter and the description of the gradual darkening and cooling of the setting. At the other end of the scale, some candidates had little grasp of the context, whilst a few concentrated totally on the devices of the passage without making any link to the content.

**Question 35**

Most candidates attempted to conduct an argument and some were strikingly successful in exploring the issues of leadership which the novel raises, recognising Ralph's qualities in trying to do something that was always going to be profoundly difficult in the circumstances. Rather too often, though, it has to be said that the quality of argument was a very simplistic interpretation of the author's intentions. Some argued that Jack was a better leader apparently on the basis that he successfully led the children down the path to becoming savages, completely missing such things as, for instance, the author's final biting irony that Jack's setting fire to the whole island unintentionally achieves one of Ralph' main aims of rescue. A number of answers were stuck in simple character sketch mode, until a belatedly focused last paragraph along the lines of "Thus we can see that Jack is the better leader" – an approach which does not lead to a mark in the higher bands.

**Question 36**

Most answers showed a clear knowledge of the circumstances and hence achieved at least reasonable reward but some struggled to capture Piggy's way of speaking and at times even of thinking. Piggy may be intelligent but he does not think or speak like the adult intellectual some made him into. Also blindness and his fear were also often absent.

*Travels with My Aunt*

**Question 37**

Few attempted this. Those that probed the passage conveyed rather well the negative first impressions, though still managing to bring out that even here all was not lost. The weaker candidates made little response to the detail of the passage, writing generally about what he would find in South America.

**Question 38**

This produced a good deal of lively argument and most were of the opinion that at last Henry was beginning to live. It is a tribute to Greene's powers of persuasion that a number seemed to leave all moral scruples behind and not even consider that there might be another side to the proposition.

**Question 39**

Not many found to their liking the prospect of assuming the personality of this suave but ruthless policeman. Those that did certainly captured for the most part his shrewdness.

*To Kill a Mockingbird***Question 40**

This was often done very well. There were some startlingly good answers which placed the passage firmly in context and then charted the way Lee makes the reader as bewildered as the protagonists and builds the tension through some dramatic writing in which the qualities of sound and touch become paramount. Other answers made little of the reader's momentary lack of understanding, simply recounting what was happening from a later perspective. Others seemed to have very little knowledge at all, not knowing, for instance, that Boo Radley was involved in the extract.

**Question 41**

Quite a few candidates found it difficult to maintain focus in the task. There were some who managed to centre their answer in the trial and to link it to the wider issues of the novel very well indeed. However, others wrote general essays on racism in the Southern States and virtually ignored the trial. Conversely, there were those who did little more than narrate certain features of the trial with very sparse conclusions.

**Question 42**

As has already been said, some failed to grasp the precise moment in the novel at which they must write and hence portrayed an Aunt who was much more hostile to Scout than she would have been after the tea party. However, there were some very good assumptions of this formidable and ultimately worthy woman expressed in her usual downright tone of voice.

*The Getting of Wisdom***Questions 43, 44, 45**

Far too few answers were seen on this novel to make general comment appropriate.

*Into the Wind***Question 46**

On a basic level this task was done well. Nearly all grasped the substance of the extract and accurately charted the child's misunderstandings and rising resentment. The main differentiator was the degree to which the candidate responded to the humour, showing how O'Connor's adoption of adult phraseology for childish perception was at the centre of the amusement. Those that missed this struggled to show what was amusing about it all.

**Question 47**

This was not a very popular question and in certain cases it could be seen why in that some candidates were distinctly uncertain of the precise situation and relationships in *A Stranger from Lagos*. The responses to *Samphire* were usually more successful, though some did not really bring out what a truly dreadful overbearing bully of a man the woman had married or see the depth of her desperation.

**Question 48**

There were some splendid assumptions of Jane Turner, who really brought alive the bitter sweetness of her moment of revenge and something of her characteristic sense of irony. Others clearly had not quite grasped the essence of her situation and had her bemoaning her loss of any hope of engaging Collier's attentions. Most gave some sense of Jane's revenge; fewer appreciated her accompanying misery.