



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION 2005

ENGLISH

**ORDINARY LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT
HIGHER LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT**

CONTENTS

ORDINARY LEVEL

1. Introduction	3
2. Performance of Candidates	6
3. Analysis of Candidate Performance	7
4. Conclusions	15
5. Recommendations	16
6. Exemplar Material	17

HIGHER LEVEL

1. Introduction	28
2. Performance of Candidates	30
3. Analysis of Candidate Performance	31
4. Conclusions	44
5. Recommendations	45
6. Exemplar Material	47

LEAVING CERTIFICATE ENGLISH

ORDINARY LEVEL, 2005

1. INTRODUCTION.

The new syllabus for Leaving Certificate English was introduced into schools in 1999. It was examined for the first time in 2001. This report will treat of candidate performance in the Ordinary Level examination of 2005. Exemplar materials, demonstrating the standard applied in the different sections of the examination paper, are appended to the end of this report. These should be read in conjunction with the Marking Scheme 2005 (available at: www.examinations.ie)

The examination consists of two written papers. Each paper has an allocation of 200 marks making an overall total of 400. These papers are sat over the course of one day. Paper 1 has a time allocation of 2 hours and 50 minutes: Paper 2, a time allocation of 3 hours and 20 minutes. Total examination time available: 6 hours and 10 minutes.

Paper 1 (200 marks)

Paper 1 is divided into two sections – **Comprehending** and **Composing**.

Section I: **Comprehending**. This section contains texts for the purposes of testing the candidates' abilities to comprehend and to compose work in response to a range of tasks arising out of appropriately selected textual materials.

Section II: **Composing**. This section contains a series of options that are designed to test the candidates' abilities to compose material that reflects language study in the areas of information, argument, persuasion, narration and the aesthetic use of language.

Each of the two sections carries 100 marks.

Section I (Comprehending, 100 marks)

The paper carries a number of texts on a theme. In 2005, there were three texts on the general theme of *FREEDOM*. All texts contain visual material. Candidates are instructed to familiarise themselves with each of the texts before beginning their answers. A brief foreword to each text is included to facilitate this. Two questions, A and B, follow each text. Question A presents a short series of questions to probe the candidates' comprehension of the particular text. Question B requires candidates to complete a short functional task arising in a general way from the text. Genres, purposes and audiences are specified for these functional tasks. Candidates are required to answer one Question A on any of the three texts and one Question B on any other of the remaining two texts. Questions A and B carry an equal mark allocation of 50 marks.

Section II (Composing, 100 marks)

There is a range of composition titles (usually seven). Candidates are required to write on one. Genre, purpose and audience can be specified. 100 marks are allocated to the composition.

Paper II (200 marks)

This paper is divided into three sections, Section I: **The Single Text**; Section II: **The Comparative Study** and Section III: **Poetry**. This latter section is further subdivided into Unseen Poetry and Studied Poetry. There are specific requirements (outlined below) for each section.

Section I (The Single Text: 60 marks)

The list of texts is open to change from year to year. In 2005, there were nine Single Texts prescribed for study. Candidates must answer on one Single Text. There are both compulsory and optional questions set on each of the nine prescribed texts.

Section II (The Comparative Study: 70 marks)

Candidates are required to answer one question from this section. Four questions are set. These consist of two questions on each of two of the three comparative modes prescribed annually for study (see full list *English Syllabus* DES, par 6.4, page 18.). There are options within each question. The following two modes were presented in 2005:
Relationships and Social Setting.

Section III (Poetry: 70 marks)

Candidates are required to answer questions on an Unseen Poem, (20 marks). Candidates are also required to answer questions on one of four Prescribed Poems which are printed on the paper, (50 marks). There are both compulsory and optional questions set on each of the prescribed poems.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES.

A total of 19,173 candidates sat the examination at Ordinary Level in 2005.

The following table shows the breakdown of grades achieved by candidates in the years 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005.

Year	Total	A	B	C	C+	D	E	F	N.G.	E –
2002	21,460	8.3	30.6	37.2	76.1	20.9	2.5	0.5	0.1	3.1
2003	21,084	9.1	31.9	38.6	79.6	18.3	1.8	0.3	0.1	2.2
2004	20,311	8.3	30.3	39.4	78.0	19.2	2.3	0.5	0.1	2.9
2005	19,173	8.0	30.1.	39.1	77.2	20.0	2.2	0.5	0.1	2.8

3. ANALYSIS OF CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE.

General Comments.

1. The majority of candidates answered the correct number of sections and questions across both papers. A small number of candidates failed to complete all requirements. This is evidenced by candidates (i) omitting sections of questions and/or (ii) failing to answer a full section or (iii) presenting incorrect text choices for the Comparative Study on Paper II. In extreme cases, candidates did not attempt the second paper in the afternoon.

2. Four broad criteria are used to assess the candidates' work at the examination. These can be seen in greater detail in Appendix 1 of the Marking Scheme 2005 (available at www.examinations.ie). In general, candidates scored well under the first two criteria – Clarity of Purpose and Coherence of Delivery – but a considerable number routinely suffered under Management of Language and Mechanics.

PAPER 1 (200 marks)

SECTION I, COMPREHENDING (100 Marks)

The range of choice in the questions set on this section gave candidates scope to respond appropriately. Varying levels of ability to read, extract and incorporate relevant information in their answers were in evidence. While candidates often dealt effectively with individual texts, they did not seem to have developed their skills of critical and evaluative reading of *a wide variety of texts* – especially visual texts: and writing equally well in a *wide variety of forms and language registers*.

TEXT 1 *What Freedom means to me...*

This was the most popular of the three texts on the paper.

QUESTION A

The responses to question (i) showed that candidates could clearly identify a ‘soul-mate’ on the issue of freedom. Not all candidates stated *why* they could identify with one of the five views provided. Question (ii) was effectively handled. Question (iii) evoked a more complex set of responses: it seemed to address candidates’ views of themselves most directly. This question provided either the most lengthy or the briefest answers of the three. In general, candidates demonstrated their varying abilities to analyse, evaluate and support their views. The ability to handle material in a comparative manner was also somewhat in evidence. The weakest responses relied on transcription prefaced by minimal personal statements.

QUESTION B

This question asked candidates to write (i) a report for (ii) a specific purpose for (iii) a specified audience. While the purpose – advocating more freedom for senior students – and the audience – the school principal – might be considered familiar to candidates, the form of report writing appeared foreign. Most replies appeared in letter format.

TEXT 2 *Not so free...*

While not being as frequently answered as Text 1, answering here was clearly of a high standard.

QUESTION A

In both parts (i) and (ii) candidates showed abilities to (a) retrieve, (b) analyze and, (c) comment on material. In other cases, responses were overly reliant on transcription. The responses in part (iii) tended to be somewhat more elaborated. While some views expressed here could hardly be seen as neutral, they were expressed clearly with gusto and conviction and were, in their own way, revealing.

QUESTION B

Unlike the report form required in Question 1 B, the diary form required here was very

well understood and handled by candidates. The fruits of the candidates' imaginative engagement with Text 2 were clearly in evidence in their responses. The best writing was focused, engaging, and compact.

TEXT 3 *Images of Freedom*

This text consisted of a collage of six visual texts illustrating aspects of freedom. It was the text least chosen for answering by candidates.

QUESTION A

Question (i) was well but very briefly handled in the main. Question (ii) asked candidates to write a clear description of another image. Of the candidates who chose to answer on this text, very few managed to give the description required by the question. In question (iii) candidates found difficulty in suggesting another image for the collection.

QUESTION B

This question asked candidates to write (i) an advertisement (ii) to promote a holiday suggested by an image of their choice. Candidates (and there were very few) who successfully accomplished this task identified a target audience that their personally selected image *suggested to them*. These replies were composed effectively and persuasively in 'brochure-speak', demonstrating an understanding of the genre and how to write appropriately for its purpose. Less accomplished replies relied on narrative with little or no evidence of a 'promotional' (persuasive) register.

SECTION II, COMPOSING (100 marks)

Candidates were presented with seven options for their composition task. The composing tasks are intended to reflect language study in the areas of information, argument, persuasion, narration and the aesthetic use of language. Each of the seven options glances back to one of the printed texts in Section I on the paper. Candidates are free, however, to use any text on the paper, printed as well as visual, as a resource for their writing and/or

their own store of knowledge while answering in the composing section.

While all composition tasks were accessible to the overall cohort, some stand out as being more frequently invitational than others. The most frequent choice was number 7 – “*Write a short story beginning with the [above] phrase...For God’s sake do something...*”. This was followed in popularity by number 5 – “*Write a story based on any of the images in Text 3*”. Then, in varying degrees of popularity, number 3 – “*Write about the things that make you happy*”, number 2 – “*Write a personal account of what freedom means to you*”, and number 6 – “*Write about the time you felt embarrassed*”. The least chosen options were number 1 – “*Write an account of the importance of the mobile phone or any communications technology in your life*”, and number 4 – “*Write a speech you would give to a group of young people on the things that you think are important in life*”.

It is clear from the frequency of composition choices, that the majority of students are very familiar and comfortable with writing in narrative forms particularly the short story. This does not mean, however, that all narratives were equally well handled. Some showed excellent command of plotlines, critical moments, and had a sense of a beginning, a middle and an end. They were purposeful and coherent. The forward movement of the story was communicated with verve and confidence. Others tended to ramble aimlessly, showing little more than a tenuous hold over the elements that give substance to writing of this kind.

Compositions that called for writing from the point of view of the engaged “I”, for example numbers 2, 3 and 6 in the selection offered, were, in the main, well handled. In the best examples of this writing, candidates demonstrated considerable capacity in shaping this loosely autobiographical stance to good effect: the unique voice of the writer could be detected. By comparison to the narrative and the loosely autobiographical titles, neither the discursive (number 1) nor the rhetorical (number 4) options attracted many candidates. Where candidates drew on the printed or visual material on the paper, they did so intelligently and to some effect. In general, candidates whose composition skills

were well honed showed the benefit of wide, consistent and purposeful experiences both in reading and writing in all of the five language areas.

Lapses – some of them serious – in the more formal elements of writing such as paragraphing, syntax, punctuation, etc. militated heavily against candidates' capacity to benefit to the maximum from their work.

PAPER 2 (200 marks)

SECTION I: THE SINGLE TEXT (60 marks)

A list of nine texts is prescribed and candidates answer on one.

In general, answering on the Single Text represented the best examples of candidates' capacities on Paper II and in some cases over both papers. There were many instances where knowledge, insight and expressive capacity met to good effect. There was a sense of intimacy with the text: answers were purposeful and coherent: statements made and opinions advanced were supported by apt and accurate references.

The range of texts prescribed for any one year contains many examples of different genres from different eras that have the potential to excite different ranges of responses depending on the learning and teaching context. In a number of cases, perhaps the delicate art of matching single texts with the known ability of the pupils could be a little more refined.

Where candidates had to write letters, diary entries, or otherwise imaginatively enter into the world of their texts through other avenues, they did so with relish. They were able in great measure to adopt the 'voice' of various characters and speak in the appropriate language registers that bring these to life. The writing of book reviews for specific purposes, or the making of speeches at specific occasions, were less well managed.

Exercises in evaluations, critical commentary and critical analysis were brief. Fewer candidates opted for these exercises by comparison with those taking more informal exercises as outlined above.

SECTION II, THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 marks)

Of the three comparative modes prescribed for 2005, **Relationships, Theme and Social Setting**, two were examined. These were **Relationships and Social Setting**.

The Comparative Study offers candidates an opportunity to read a number of texts (usually three) through a selection of different modes. Through these modes candidates can learn to understand, appreciate and critique different elements not only in the worlds of the texts themselves, but similar and/or different elements as they relate to their own personal and/or social situations.

Questions set on the selected modes in 2005 were in two parts. The first part (a) focused on the relevant mode, i.e. **Relationships** or **Social Setting** in relation to **one** text: part (b) broadened the concern to incorporate a comparison of the mode written about in (a) with the mode as illustrated in a second text. In this year's examination, questions on the **Relationships** mode were more frequently answered than those on **Social Setting**: and then question 1 more so than question 2. While answering in part (a) was focused and coherent, the answering in part (b) continues to pose problems. The problems are not problems of knowledge: there is clear evidence of that. There was clear evidence that candidates understood the prescribed modes in relation to their studied texts. Indeed, the majority of answers in section (a) showed candidates to be purposeful and coherent in their handling of the tasks set. They experienced little or no difficulty in showing their knowledge of individual texts and in responding to them. The problems in part (b) relate to shaping the answer in such a way that the act of comparing elements of each text is

made obvious, made explicit to a reader and, at the same time, is clearly moving towards some kind of conclusion.

Essentially part (b) is asking candidates to adopt an approach to writing whose base is ‘*on the one hand...but / and on the other...*’ Even though there have been considerable improvements in the standard of answering on this section since the first examination in 2001, many candidates are still inclined to treat part (b) as if it were an opportunity to write about another text on its own.

Fewer responses were flawed by the inclusion of the Single Text already presented. Of more concern, however, was the number of candidates who presented material that was no longer on the prescribed list for the examination of 2005. It must be noted that errors of this kind can have a serious impact on the overall grade achieved by the candidate in the examination.

SECTION III, POETRY (70 marks)

A UNSEEN POEM (20marks).

The unseen poem presented candidates with an opportunity to show their ability to read, analyse, and respond to a text being encountered, perhaps, for the first time. To assist with reading 'at sight', candidates were briefly led into the text by a short foreword. This is a practice similar to that which guides the reading of texts on Paper I. Questions asked candidates to consider the ‘world of the poem’ and to identify the poet’s feelings on an issue.

Despite the focused nature of the foreword, candidates found it hard to come to grips with the task of describing the nature of ‘world of the poem’. The marking scheme (please see General Remarks in *Marking Scheme 2005*, Section III, p28 for further details) specifically caters for the widest variety of responses to questions on texts in this section. When candidates were asked to respond to *how* and *why* questions, they experienced

difficulty and tended to rely on paraphrase. This made it difficult for them to show evidence of their understanding of the way a poem works, or to make a case for their responses as readers.

B PRESCRIBED POETRY (50 marks)

The poems examined this year were as follows:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| A | <i>Shancoduff</i> | by Patrick Kavanagh |
| B | <i>Piano</i> | by D.H. Lawrence |
| C | <i>Last Requests</i> | by Michael Longley |
| D | <i>What were they like?</i> | by Denise Levertov. |

By far the most popular choice was Poem A, *Shancoduff* by Patrick Kavanagh. This was followed closely by Poem C, *Last Requests* by Michael Longley. *Piano* and *What were they like?* made up the relatively small remainder. Where answering was excellent, it is clear that candidates enjoyed the studied poetry. Responses to direct questions (A 1(a), B 1(a), D 1(b) for example) were confident, well supported by reasons and reference: responses to more searching questions (A2(i), B2(i), C2(ii) for example) displayed a layered understanding of the text that is evidence of having achieved a sustained acquaintance with the material

Even though the majority of responses were based on Kavanagh and Longley, not all responses were of equal quality, coherence or assurance.

4. CONCLUSIONS.

- The breadth of choice in questions in all section of the examination gave scope to the widest possible range of candidates at this level.
- In general, candidates demonstrated their varying abilities to analyse, evaluate and support their views in all sections of the paper.
- The best writing in all sections was focused, engaging and well shaped.
- Reading and writing about visual texts are important capacities in the increasingly image-saturated nature of contemporary society. Candidates would benefit from a greater development of these capacities.
- The majority of candidates can demonstrate competence as writers of narrative forms. A more expansive capacity with a greater variety of forms such as reports; speeches; discursive writing, argumentative writing etc. would also be desirable.
- The more formal elements of structuring language are in need of attention.
- In general, answering on the Single Text can represent the best examples of student capacities. In this section there was clear evidence of candidates' knowledge of and response to texts. A similar standard of knowledge and expressive capacities in relation to other texts, the studied poetry, for example, would be most welcome.
- Time management is an issue for some candidates.
- The choice of texts for Comparative Study needs very careful attention. Presenting texts that are not prescribed for the current year will adversely affect the candidate's overall achievement in the examination.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

A number of priority areas are being recommended for close attention in the context of learning and teaching in preparation for the examination. These are –

- the focused acquisition and development-through-use of a range of **language management skills** to include those skills that pertain to the development of **visual literacy**
- the cultivation of in-depth understanding and appreciation of the **studied poetry** and the development of capacities to express responses clearly
- the considered choice of texts for study in the comparative manner needs to be made within the required specification of **prescribed comparative texts** set for each examination cycle (see relevant DES circular letters M2/03 for 2005: M2/04 for 2006 and M2/05 for 2007 for necessary details).

6. EXEMPLAR MATERIAL – ORDINARY LEVEL.

The following exemplars have been transcribed exactly as the candidates wrote them. It is worth noticing that material originally handwritten can appear to be very short when presented in word processed form.

A brief commentary on the item appears after each exemplar.

EXEMPLAR 1

**Paper 1
Section I – Comprehending
Text 2, Question A**

- (i) From your reading of paragraphs 2 and 3, how does the writer feel about his situation? Support your answer by reference to the text. (15)**

The writer feels embarrassed and terrible about his situation. The writer portrays this very well. He uses negative words to sum up how he is feeling – ordeal, agony at our embarrassment. The author’s use of language sums up how he is feeling about his situation

The writer feels isolated and abused. He is being treated as a second class citizen. He is not given the dignity of being spoken to – the warder grunted and pushed us. This is the way animals would be treated in transit but not humans. The author feels separate from other human beings – we stood out sharply from other people. The writer feels awful and like an animal or a slave, but at the end of paragraph three he feels a sense of relief that this inhumane situation has ended – at last a railway official found us seats. The ordeal is now over and ‘at last’ emphasises the relief that the author now feels.

To sum up how the author feels. He feels embarrassed, stressed, isolated and cannot wait to get off the train.

Total	Award
P+C (9)	9
L+M (6)	6
15	15

- (ii) What impression of life in prison do you get from the writer’s account in paragraphs 5 and 6? (15)**

From my reading of paragraphs 5 and 6 on work strikes me – time. In prison the writer feels like everything is dragged out – we got an hour and a half for meals that took five minutes to eat. Everything is stretched out and I get the writer’s sense of boredom – time

was soon to have little or no meaning for me. He became a robot sticking to the same routine. We see the writer's sorrow on his first day in prison when the sun was shining – I felt the heat of the sun against my cell and with nothing to do I got into bed. The writer paints a vivid image in my head. While the sun is a metaphor for life, it can reach him even though he is behind bars and in bed.

The author paints a sombre and painful picture of prison life. It is so bad that all he can do is – I get into bed and thought miserably about three long years ahead. We see that the writer has to get his mind out of the present and think about the future. We also get the impression of how bad medical services are when somebody gets sick. – we are locked up in a sick cell until the doctor saw us hours afterwards. The author implies how bad the service is by the word – hours – and it doesn't portray a healthy picture.

Total	Award
P+C (9)	9
L+M (6)	6
15	15

Comment:

Excerpt chosen to illustrate -

- an exceptional level of language awareness:
- a considerable ability to shape sentences and deploy the more formal elements of writing:
- excellence sustained over two full pages of official answer book
- an example of Grade A1.

EXEMPLAR 2

Paper 1

Section 1, Question B.

A Prisoner's Diary.

Imagine you have been sentenced to life in prison. Write a diary entry for each of your first three days as a prisoner. (50)

Day 1

I have only been here for a few hours and all ready I feel the loneliness. It is so quiet and boaring and the smell would knock you down. Tea is in an hour so ill find out what the food will be like, lovely im sure.

Day 2

It was a long night last night listening to men shouting and the guards shouting back at them. Its going to be along day how am i going to stick this, I had my tea last night and my breakfast this morning and the food is horrible.

Day 3

Last night there was a bit of action there was two men locked up for murder, better stay away from them. The smell is still here. The smell is after attractng mice now too their was two of them in my room last night. The days are long and the nights are longer im going to crack up.

Comment:

- Diary form understood: episodic character well conveyed.
- Use of colloquialisms adds to register.
- Some lapses in management of language and mechanics, sentence formation and punctuation.
- One well spaced full page of official answer book.
- Grade C3 (56%)

Total	Award
P 15	9
C 15	9
L 15	8
M 5	2
50	28

EXEMPLAR 3

Paper 1

Section II – Composing

3. “I love the soothing sound of water against the boat, the clear blue sky, and me at peace with myself.” (TEXT 1)

Write about the things that make you happy.

Happy? What is being happy sometimes one little thing can ruin your happiness forever, well at that one moment you think it can. Is being happy the dame for everyone or is it totally different? Do you know someone is happy when they smile at you or are they just smiling at you because you’re staring at them. I’m confused.

for me...I have a number of thing’s that make me happy when Im ~~you~~ having a bad day and I ~~you~~ hear that beep on ~~you~~ my phone. Its a text message. When it’s my boyfriend saying “Jus txtin to say Hi!!” at that moment you know someone care’s and this bad day isn’t so bad after all. When your Mum pull’s the cover’s off you and pull’s back the

blinds and your thinking I cant face this school today. Then a little bit of sun shine's on your face its a warm hot summer's day and you can wait to walk to school in that weather

(Your Mum take's yo)

Saturday my Mum takes me shopping and I find the perfect outfit and im thinking, I don't look too bad a all. On the way home we stop in the drive(through) for a Burger King and im starving. My nanny is sitting on the sofa watching Winning Streak with a smile on her face, "Did you get anything nice love"? I smile back at her and then sit down beside her (at tel)l and tell her all about my new outfit.

Sometimes I like to sit in my house and do nothing at all, eh well except sing to the new Jlo song in the mirror. Then sit in front of the T.V. all day its just me the remote and my two friends Ben and Jerry (my ice cream) Other time's my friends and I go dancing or just relax with a video. Whatever it is I love to see us all together, were some bunch of girls. When I ring one of my mates when im down and I know she will always's be there for me.

I thing about my future and I know my Mum is going to be proud of "her little girl." That I am going to help people feel better about them selves you can't put the feeling into word's. Walking down the street and I pop a Euro on two into the charity box, knowing that that could make a difference in a third world country or a starving child. That they could benefit from something I wouldnt even miss.

Reading my favourite book or listening to my favourite Cd. (My) the effect that book's have on your mind and soul are exciting. Pretending in my mind that I was Cathy on the Moores and that someday I would find my Heathcliff. Feeling music pumping in your vein's and in your soul and knowing once you press that button on your Cd player your can escape reality just for a while.

When I like being me or when I go down stair's and m dog jump's on top of me and lick's my face (continusly) continuously. When Im bringing him for a walk and then make it home in time for my favourite programme to start just before the rain.

Looking upon all these thing's Ive realised you shouldn't take thing's for granted. To live everyday to the full and the tiny tiny things can brighten up your day if you see them for what they are.

Comment:

- Candidate writes from personal enthusiasm in a familiar register.
- New material frequently introduced maintains purpose and coherence.
- Flaws in language management: repeated errors in mechanics.
- Four and a half pages of official answer book.
- Grade B2 (76%)

Total	Award
P 30	25
C 30	25
L 30	20
M 10	6
100	76

EXEMPLAR 4

Paper 2

Section II – The Comparative Study

A 1 (b) Compare the relationship that you have already described in part (a) above with a relationship from another text. Refer to each text to support the points you are making

[In (a) the candidate described the relationship between Cathy and Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte]

Strictly Ballroom by Baz Lurman
Scott and fran

In Strictly Ballroom Scott and fran relationship blossom's over a period of time as they are only meet as teenagers whereas in Wuthering Heights Heathcliff and Catherine have grown up together. I found in Wuthering Heights the Catherine and Heathcliff can only be together in death whereas in Strictly Ballroom they are together in life./ Social status is both common in these texts in Wuthering Heights Catherine cannot marry Heathcliff as he has no ranking in society whereas in Strictly Ballroom Scott dancing with fran would be frowned upon and unheard of as fran is not a professional dancer like Scott./ In both texts the both couples find a way to escape from reality in Wuthering Heights Catherine and Heathcliff play on the moore's in Strictly Ballroom Scott and fran dance after hours in the studio. Both Catherine and Heathcliff were married to other people whereas in Strictly Ballroom / Scott and fran were unattached. When looking at Wuthering Heights and Strictly Ballroom there are both heroes in each text. In Wuthering Heights we have Heathcliff the brooding domineering male whereas in Strictly Ballroom we have the typical hero Scott the graceful boyish ballroom dancer.

In studying Both Wuthering Heights and Strictly Ballroom I found that relationships are very important in each text. We can safely say that in both Wuthering Heights and Strictly Ballroom the basis of Catherine's and Heathcliff and Scott and Frans relationship is love. Even though these texts are completely different we can still find some of the same aspects and similarities.

Comment:

- The comparative approach is evident throughout. Statements are loosely justified by implication.
- Despite many lapses in management of language and mechanics, the material is coherent

- One and three quarter pages of official answer book.
- Grade C2 (62%)

Total	Award
P 12	9
C 12	7
L 12	7
M 4	2
40	25

EXEMPLAR 5

Paper 2

Section II – The Comparative Study

A 1 (b) Compare the relationship that you have already described in part (a) above with a relationship from another text. Refer to each text to support the points you are making

[In (a) the candidate described the relationship between Rachel and Book from the film *Witness* directed by Peter Weir (1985)]

In of mice and men George and lennie have a good Relationship. It was very unusuall for two people to teavell together from ranch to ranch working. George really cared for lennie and kept him out of troble as much as he could. They were totally different people the same as Rachel and Book despite of what people taught about them they looked out for each other. Comparing of mice and men and the relationship between George and lennie to witness's relationship with Rachel and Book They both had to make sacrifices George had to shoot lennie in the end because he was a threat to other peoples safety and book had to leave Rachel in the amish world to get on with his own life back in the city. In the two comparative course's witness and of mice and men The two relationships didn't last but they had to do what they did for the better of everyone.

Comment:

- Some comparative material – sacrifice is stated but remains under explored.
- Despite many lapses in management of language and mechanics, the material is coherent
- One page of official answer book.
- D3 (42%)

Total	Award
P 12	6
C 12	5
L 12	4
M 4	2
40	17

EXEMPLAR 6

Paper 2: Section III – Poetry Unseen Poem

- 1 What kind of world is being described in this poem? Refer to the poem in your answer

An unpolished world is being presented to us in this poem. The imagery I get from this poem is a poor town. The family have to push their belongings on a squeaking cart. The family seem less fortunate – like the street, they carry their everyday thing with them nothing out of the ordinary. The world seems very busy as there is no grass in Terry Street it reminds you of a city or town where people haven't the time to be watering grass or planting seeds. If there was grass on Terry Street, it died as it was intended to.

Total	Award
P+C(6)	6
L+M (4)	4
10	10

2. How, in your opinion, does the writer feel about the family that is leaving Terry Street? Refer to the text of the poem in your answer.

The writer tells us that they will not miss the little boy's mischief which means that he could of known the boy or the family well. Also were the poet say's "That man, I wish him well. I wish him grass." This indicates that the poet knew the man as a friend or respected him because he say's in the poem that he wish's him well in life. Also were it say's "I wish him grass" this could be a metaphor for that the wish's better for the man. The poet is wishing that the man will have a better life where he is going.

Total	Award
P+C(6)	5
L+M (4)	4
10	9

Comment:

- Response in 1 is clear and well worked through.
- Candidate states opinion in 2: awkwardly worked through. Some lapses in mechanics.
- Grade A1 (90%)

EXEMPLAR 7

Paper 2

Poem A – Shancoduff

- 1(a) How does the poet show that he likes Shancoduff, his home place?
Support your answer by reference to the poem. (10)**

In the first stanza Kavanagh states “lots wife would not be salt if she had been incurious as my black hills that are happy”. In that first line the reference to lots wife gives the hills a sense of mortality or even a human quality. The next line Kavanagh calls them “my” black hills are “happy”. The words “my” and “happy” show that he has a great affection for them. Again in the first line of the second stanza Kavanagh refers to them as “my hills”. This shows he not only has affection for them, but. He is protective of them. In the same stanza Kavanagh uses fantastic hyperbole when he describes the hills “They are my Alps and I have climbed my Matterhorn”.

In this Kavanagh has a great quality. He has love for the seemingly unlovable. In reality Kavanagh’s hills are watery and not suitable for agriculture, yet he loves them.

Total	Award
P+C (6)	6
L+M (4)	4
10	10

- (b) Where in the poem does he show that life in Shancoduff can be harsh?
Support your answer by reference to the poem. (10)**

With Kavanagh’s great use of hyperbole saying that his hills “They are my Alps and I have climbed my Matterhorn” we are brought back to the harsh reality with the three perishing calves under the forth of the Rocksavage. “With the sheaf of hay for the three perishing calves under the Big forth of Rocksavage”.

Kavanagh’s hills are north facing. “Eternally they look north towards Armagh”. This means they would have been subjected to all the elements ie wind, rain and snow. The reality of how harsh Shancoduff is explained by the following line “The sleety winds fondle the rushy beards of Shancoduff while the cattle drovers sheltering in the Featherna Bush”.

Total	Award
P+C (6)	6
L+M (4)	4
10	10

- (c) **On balance, do you think that Shancoduff would be a likeable or a harsh place to live in? Give a reason for your answer. (10)**

I think Shancoduff would be quite a harsh place to live. The first line suggests that Shancoduff is in darkness or in shade. “My black hills have never seen the sun rising.” The first line of the second stanza suggests that Shancoduff feels the brunt of the elements ie wind, rain. The phrase “shillings of March” suggests the mountain faces the wind, rain, storms that are associated with the month of March. The images of the “three perishing calves” and “cattle drovers” sheltering in the bush support the conclusion that Shancoduff is a windy miserable place.

Total	Award
P+C (6)	6
L+M (4)	4
10	10

- 2.(ii) **“They are my Alps and I have climbed the Matterhorn...”
Why, in your opinion, does Patrick Kavanagh refer to the Alps and the Matterhorn in this poem? (20)**

Kavanagh uses great hyperbols when comparing his “hills” to the Alps and the Matterhorn. The reason he makes the comparison is because he is extremely proud and has true affection for them and what better way to describe your hills than compare them with the with the biggest mountain an highest peak in the world. The size of the comparison shows us the reader just really how much he loves his hills.

In reality Kavanagh’s hills are very watery and really unsuitable for agriculture. Like I mentioned before Kavanagh has this great quality of loving the unlovable i.e. the hills

Total	Award
P+C(12)	12
L+M (8)	8
20	20

Comment:

- Candidate shows a depth of familiarity with the poem.
- Candidate is comfortable using the language of ‘talking about poetry’ to express views, insights and feelings about it.
- Two and three quarters pages of official answer book.
- Overall an A1 (100%)

EXEMPLAR 8

Paper 2

Poem C – Last Requests

1(a) How does Michael Longley feel about his dying father. Give a reason for your answer. (10)

I think the poet is sad that he never got to know his father better before he died. I think he is sad that he never truly understood him. I think this because he thought his father blew him a kiss but actually he was asking for a woodbine and the poet had brought him peppermint and grapes. In the last line he says I couldn't reach you through the oxygen tent. I think he couldn't reach his father in life. He didn't understand why he smoked which was what killed him in the end because he was in an oxygen tent.

Total	Award
P+C (6)	5
L+M (4)	4
10	9

(b) Here are some phrases that might describe the poet's father:

- *he has great courage*
- *he is a war hero*
- *he has a sense of humour*

Explain which one is closest to your impression of him. (10)

I think the phrase that describes him best is he is a war hero. I think this because obviously he was high in command in the army. He had a batman. He also nearly died fighting for his country but he says 'heart contradicting' as an epitaph. He fought off what was surely close to dying and survived.

Total	Award
P+C (6)	4
L+M (4)	3
10	7

(c) What picture of the life of a soldier do you get from this poem? Refer to the poem in support of your answer. (10)

from this poem I think we see life as a soldier as being very harsh and cruel things like the batman going to rob him when he thought he was dead shows how desperate things must have been. He also talks about the constant smoking and all the soldiers that were lost in the war it must have been very hard to lose all those people that you were close to and he still must be remembering them to the day he died

Total	Award
P+C (6)	4
L+M (4)	3
10	7

2.(i) Do you think *Last Requests* is a good title for this poem? Explain your view. (20)

Yes I think Last Requests is a good title for the poem, Because that is really what the poem is about. The last requests of soldiers before thy die was a woodbine and the last request of the poet's father was a soldier was a woodbine. This showed us how little the poet understood his father by the fact that he brought him peppermints and grapes;

Total	Award
P+C(12)	8
L+M(8)	5
20	13

Comment:

- Candidate is familiar with the poem.
- Some lapses in management of language and mechanics are evident.
- One and a half pages of official answer book.
- Overall a B3 (72%)

LEAVING CERTIFICATE ENGLISH

HIGHER LEVEL, 2005

1. INTRODUCTION.

The syllabus for Leaving Certificate English was introduced to schools in 1999 and was examined for the first time in 2001. This report treats of candidate performance in the Higher Level examination of 2005. Exemplar materials, demonstrating the standard applied in the different sections of the examination paper, are appended to the end of this report. These should be read in conjunction with the examination papers and marking scheme for 2005, which are available to download from the website of the State Examinations Commission at www.examinations.ie.

The examination consists of two written papers. Each paper has an allocation of 200 marks making an overall total of 400. These papers are sat over the course of one day. Paper 1 has a time allocation of 2 hours and 50 minutes: Paper 2, a time allocation of 3 hours and 20 minutes. Total examination time available: 6 hours and 10 minutes.

Paper 1 (200 marks)

Paper 1 is divided into two sections – **Comprehending** and **Composing**.

Section I (Comprehending, 100 marks)

The paper contained three texts on the general theme of *ORDINARY LIVES*. Candidates were instructed to familiarise themselves with each of the texts before beginning their answers. Two questions, A and B, followed each text. The Question A tested the candidates' comprehension of the particular text and the Question B required candidates to manage a short functional task that was purpose and audience specific. Candidates were required to answer a Question A on one text and a Question B on a different text. In this paper the Questions A and B carried an equal mark allocation of 50 marks.

Section II (Composing 100 marks)

Candidates were required to write one composition from a choice of seven titles. 100 marks were allocated to the composition.

Paper II (200 marks)

This paper was divided into three sections, Section I **The Single Text**, Section II **The Comparative Study**, and Section III **Poetry**. Each of these sections was to be attempted. Candidates were required to answer on Shakespearean Drama, either as a Single Text or as an element in the Comparative Study.

Section I (The Single Text, 60 marks)

Five Single Texts were prescribed for study. Candidates were required to attempt a question on one of these Single Texts. Two questions were set on each of the texts.

Section II (The Comparative Study, 70 marks)

Candidates were required to answer one question from this section. Four questions were set, two on The General Vision and Viewpoint, and two on Literary Genre.

Section III (Poetry, 70 marks)

Candidates were required to answer one question from a choice of two set on the Unseen Poem. The mark allocation was 20 marks. Candidates were required to answer one question on Prescribed Poetry. One 50-mark question was set on each of four poets.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES.

A total of 32,351 candidates sat the examination at Higher Level.

The following table shows the breakdown of grades achieved by candidates in the years 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005.

Year	Total	A	B	C	C+	D	E	F	N.G.	E –
2002	31,537	9.8	27.1	39.5	76.4	22.1	1.3	0.1	0.0	1.4
2003	32,376	9.9	26.6	39.8	76.3	22.4	1.2	0.1	0.0	1.3
2004	32,471	10.6	27.7	39.0	77.3	21.3	1.2	0.1	0.0	1.3
2005	32,351	10.1	26.6	39.3	76.0	22.0	1.7	0.1	0.0	1.8

3. ANALYSIS OF CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE.

Criteria for Assessment

In the course of the examination candidates were required to engage with a number of language tasks in a variety of genres. Assessment sought to reward efficient and energetic language use in a variety of contexts and styles. To this end, discrete criteria for assessment were employed in the evaluation of the responses to the set tasks. It is important to bear in mind that the same criteria were employed in assessing candidate output in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. Therefore, the efficiency of the candidates' handling of language was of significance in both the Language Paper and the Literature Paper. This reflects the aims of the Leaving Certificate syllabus which are to develop in students: "a mature and critical literacy... a respect and appreciation for language used accurately and appropriately... a competence in a wide range of language skills..." and "an awareness of the value of literature."¹

Four generic criteria for assessment, either applied discretely or in combination, were applied to each task set in the examination papers.

As outlined in the Marking Schemes, the four criteria were:

- Clarity of Purpose (P) 30% of the marks available
- Coherence of Delivery (C) 30% of the marks available
- Efficiency of Language use (L) 30% of the marks available
- Accuracy of Mechanics (M) 10% of the marks available

In one important sense this arrangement of the criteria could be said to be hierarchical, i.e. a piece of work written by a candidate, which lacked a clear sense of the task in hand or which was so poorly sustained or developed scored, poorly in the areas of language use. Efficiency and accuracy of language use were rewarded only in so far as they were *appropriate to the delivery of the task*.

¹ *Leaving Certificate Syllabus, English*, 1998, Department of Education & Science, downloadable from its website www.education.ie

PAPER 1 (200 marks)

SECTION I, COMPREHENDING (100 marks)

TEXT 1, *An Ordinary Life*

QUESTION A

This question was a popular choice and candidates responded positively to both the text and the tasks.

(i) ***Comment on the appropriateness of the title.***

There was general agreement that it was a suitable title. Candidates referred to the passage in support of their views citing Margaret Ann's job as a domestic servant, her commonplace life, and the ordinariness of Thomas as a person. Some argued that it would not be ordinary today but was ordinary for the time in which it was set.

(ii) ***Your impressions of Thomas Hind and Margaret Ann?***

Candidates had much information in the text on which to base their answers and this contributed to many excellent attempts.

(iii) ***Did the description of the market bring it to life for you?***

Candidates showed obvious engagement with the busy atmosphere of the market and agreed that the description did indeed bring it to life for them. Better answers addressed features of descriptive writing in their treatment of the description and its effectiveness in bringing the market to life.

QUESTION B

Three diary entries over a series of Saturday evenings...

This was the most popular Question B chosen by candidates. They appeared to enjoy using the diary format and choosing a style that tried to reflect the spirit of Margaret Ann's character and of the period as they are revealed in the text.

Candidates who were less successful neglected to relate their diary entries either to the character of Margaret Ann or to the material in the text.

TEXT 2, *Ordinary Lives in Wartime*

QUESTION A

(i) ***Which image makes strongest impact on you?***

Image 1 was a very popular choice appearing to engage the candidates' sympathies most strongly. Each of the other images also frequently produced detailed and sensitive responses.

(ii) ***The introduction as an interesting portrayal of Jenny's life?***

This was generally well handled by candidates although some tended to paraphrase the passage. Candidates who selected relevant details and used them to illustrate their opinions fared better.

(iii) ***What impression do you have of how lives are touched by war?***

Some candidates experienced greater difficulty here in directing their attention to a combination of introduction and photographs. The better answers were grounded in strong personal responses to the material in the text.

QUESTION B

A letter proposing 'Best War Photograph of the Year'

A popular choice, the main focus was on image no.1. Candidates often wrote convincingly on their chosen image. Many used persuasive language indicating their consciousness of audience/reader in the task. Less successful candidates tended to drift from the photograph into a generalised discussion of war. Some excellent answers dealt with the technical merits of their chosen image.

TEXT 3, *Public Lives*

QUESTION A

(i) *How is Jerry Philips's attitude to the rock star, Eva Maguire, revealed?*

This question was handled well by candidates. Most found that there was a positive attitude to Eva Maguire and used a wide range of illustrations from the text to support their views.

(ii) *Does the superstar lifestyle appeal to you?*

Attempts here were good. Candidates engaged in a spirited way with the text and the question. While many saw the advantages of the lifestyle, they also expressed reservations about it.

(iii) *Do you find the style of writing appealing?*

In general, candidates found the style appealing. Those who had the appropriate vocabulary handled this question well referring to the language, descriptions, quotations, etc. in illustration of the writing's appeal. Less successful attempts tended to centre on a more generalised discussion of the content.

QUESTION B

Write a proposal/memo to your editor...

This was the least popular of the B questions. Many candidates engaged genuinely with this task and attempts here were often excellent. A wide range of celebrities from politicians to sports stars featured. Many candidates were very familiar with their chosen celebrity and this gave strength to their performances in the task. The format of the proposal/memo was generally handled well and the persuasive element was addressed by most. Less successful answers were less clear as to why they wanted to interview the celebrity.

SECTION II, COMPOSING (100 marks)

Examiners reported positively on candidates' engagement with their chosen tasks. They also noted a clearer understanding of appropriate language register and were satisfied with the range of tasks set. As in previous years, the short story option continues to be the most popular. There was some evidence to suggest that a small minority of candidates relied overmuch on prepared material in this section.

1. *Personal essay on a recent event or series of events...*

Most essays referred to major world events such as the Asian Tsunami, The Twin Towers and the war in Iraq. Many demonstrated a personal engagement with world events and a number showed political insight and awareness. Some candidates chose to focus on events that directly touched their own lives – personal relationships, school and family matters, and so on.

2. *Today's obsession with the rich and famous...a speech*

This was very popular with candidates who seemed to enjoy the contemporary nature of this title. Rhetorical elements and persuasive techniques were features of many attempts. A good sense of audience was often achieved.

3. *An ordinary person whose life...will inspire others....a competition entry*

This was chosen by relatively few candidates. Compositions which identified a person whom the candidate found truly inspiring scored highly. Less successful attempts often tended to focus on the 'life' of the person without any focus on why it 'will inspire others.'

4. *The hope that things will be better for the next generation – a personal essay*

This was not a popular choice of composition. Many attempts focused at length on difficulties in our present world as a prelude to a commentary on their hope for the next generation. This was a valid approach and gave rise to successful compositions.

5. A personal essay. The part other people's expectations play in our lives.

Quite a popular choice and many who chose it had good scope to vent their feelings on matters about which they felt strongly. Examiners noted that some candidates demonstrated confusion between the genre of the personal essay and the third person narrative.

6. A talk on the importance of not taking life too seriously.

Not a popular choice. The most successful attempts showed an ability to construct convincing arguments as to why it is important not to take life too seriously. Many candidates seemed to enjoy this task and demonstrated a keen awareness of audience.

7. (a) A short story suggested by one or more of the images in TEXT 2

The images appeared to be powerful stimulants to the candidates' creativity and some fine individual examples of the short story genre were encountered by examiners. However, some less successful stories revealed candidates' lack of sensitivity to narrative shape and lack of awareness of the audience/reader.

OR

7. (b) A short story suggested by the two houses in TEXT 3

The nomination of the two houses from TEXT 3 offered a challenge to candidates to which they responded well. Many stories were fresh, with good development of plot and character. As in (a) above, less successful stories revealed candidates' lack of sensitivity to narrative shape and lack of awareness of the audience/reader.

PAPER 2 (200 marks)

SECTION 1, THE SINGLE TEXT (60 marks)

As in former years, the great majority of candidates answered the Shakespeare as their single text. Of these, almost all opted for *Hamlet* rather than *As You Like It*. Examiners reported a handful of candidates failing to answer on Shakespeare at all (i.e. in Section 1, The Single Text, or Section 11, The Comparative Study). For an account of the assessment procedure followed in such cases, please see Appendix 4 of the Marking Scheme for Leaving Certificate English published on the website of the State Examinations Commission, www.examinations.ie

Examiners reported that candidates seemed well prepared for answering on Single Text questions. Successful answers were more grounded in and displayed a thorough familiarity with the studied texts. That said, an over-reliance on unfocused narrative frequently characterised the less successful attempts.

Of the other Single Texts, *Wuthering Heights* and *Silas Marner* were most popular. Very few candidates chose to answer on *Amongst Women* or *As You Like It*.

A WUTHERING HEIGHTS – Emily Brontë

(i) *Heathcliff deserves the sympathy of the reader...*

This was the more popular of the two options. Candidates argued with passion and energy in response to Heathcliff's character. Good use of textual knowledge was noted by examiners.

(ii) *A clash between two worlds.....*

This was generally well answered although some examiners noted that while the notion of 'two worlds' was addressed clearly and illustrated well, the idea of a 'clash' was not addressed so competently.

B SILAS MARNER – George Eliot

(i) *The story has magic, leaving the reader feeling good about people...*

This question was rarely attempted. Those who did attempt it seemed well able to explore the magic of the text.

(ii) *Godfrey Cass, a better man than Dunsey...*

This proved to be a less popular option than (i). Candidates made perceptive comparisons between the two brothers. Examiners commented positively on the use of focused narrative in answers to this question.

C AMONGST WOMEN – John McGahern

(i) *Moran loves his sons, but.....*

Although attempted by very few candidates, answers were noted as engaging with both the text and the question in a clear and well-focused manner. There was little evidence of unfocused narrative.

(ii) *Unlike the men, the women in Amongst Women...*

This question was more popular than (i) and was generally handled well.

D HAMLET – William Shakespeare

(i) *The appeal of the play for a twenty-first century audience...*

This was the less popular of the two options, being answered by about one third of candidates who chose Hamlet as a Single Text. Most knew the play well and could argue the appeal of many aspects of the play to a modern audience. While the play's themes featured strongly in many answers, other dramatic features of the play, such as spectacle, atmosphere, action-packed story, etc. were also mentioned by candidates.

Examiners also noted that a significant number of candidates chose to refer to a performance of the play that they had seen.

(ii) *We admire Hamlet's weaknesses and strengths...*

This was by far the more popular of the two options. Candidates readily recognised Hamlet's weaknesses and strengths and in their answers maintained a good focus on

these broad aspects of his complex character. Many wrote most cogently in particular when treating of their admiration for Hamlet's strengths and used apt reference and quotation. The ability to express admiration for a weakness came less readily to some, but in these answers the admiration was often implicit, being seen in the candidate's energetic and focused treatment of the weakness.

Focused narrative was employed a good deal, and to effect, in many answers. Candidates who wrote generalised character sketches without reference to their own take on Hamlet's weaknesses and strengths were less successful than those who addressed the 'admire' element of the question.

SECTION II, THE COMPARATIVE STUDY (70 marks)

Examiners reported that candidates appeared to be well prepared for answering on the comparative study. The comparative essay seems to have been mastered by the great majority of candidates who appear to be in control of the material studied and are able to engage with the similarities and differences between texts. Answers demonstrated variety, originality, and thought.

The General Vision and Viewpoint was the more popular of the modes and candidates opted by a big majority for the global (70 mark) question.

Examiners mentioned that a small minority of candidates had some difficulty with forming a clear concept of **The General Vision and Viewpoint** and so lost focus in their answers. This led to their pointing out broad similarities between storylines and failing to qualify the points made in terms of the mode.

A very broad range of texts was encountered by examiners. A film was included as a comparative text in the majority of answers.

A THE GENERAL VISION AND VIEWPOINT

1. *Each text presents an outlook that may be bright or dark...* (70 marks)

Examiners noted many excellent responses to this question which showed enthusiasm for the task and real engagement with the texts studied. The invitation to respond to the outlook of the text in the terms ‘bright or dark’ appeared to assist candidates in establishing a clear focus for the comparison.

There was some small evidence of candidates using a studied Theme instead of dealing with the overall vision. These tended to fare less well.

2 (a) *With reference to one text write a note on general vision and viewpoint and how it is communicated to the reader.* (30 marks)

While many candidates were clear as to the general vision and viewpoint of the text some found it more difficult to deal with ‘how’ the vision was communicated. The majority, however, were able to demonstrate the ‘how’ and some examiners noted fine responses here when candidates were dealing with techniques used in film and drama.

(b) *Compare the general vision and viewpoint in two other texts...* (40 marks)

Answers here were excellent when clearly focused on the mode and on the comparing task. Most candidates found this part of the question more straightforward and handled it very well.

B LITERARY GENRE

1. *Write a talk to students in which you explain the term Literary Genre* (70 marks)

Candidates were well prepared for questions on this mode. While some found it difficult to grasp the concept of ‘genre’ and how stories are told, the majority showed good understanding of the mode and could sustain a coherent and purposeful response. Many

candidates took on the invitation to address an audience and this more often than not enhanced the quality of the answer.

Candidates mentioned a wide range of methods employed in the delivery of stories, e.g. narrative techniques, character, setting, atmosphere, etc.

2 (a) *Powerful images and incidents are features of all good story-telling.*

How does the above statement apply to one text.... (30 marks)

This option was chosen by few. They fared well. Less successful answers tended to list images and incidents without addressing how they contributed to telling the story.

(b) *Compare the way images and incidents are features of good story-telling...* (40 marks)

Some candidates showed ability to adapt their experience of comparing in this mode and address the specifics of the statement (images and incidents). Less successful answers tended to list the elements of literary genre without completing the task and making valid comparisons.

SECTION III, POETRY (70 marks)

A UNSEEN POETRY, (20 marks)

Examiners noted that candidates found the poem very accessible and that the questions elicited positive and engaging responses.

1 (a) *Do you like the world the poet describes in the poem?* (10 marks)

In general, candidates responded enthusiastically to the world of the poem. Some failed to read the question closely and said simply why they liked the poem, thus, in certain cases, losing focus.

(b) Choose an appealing line or two.... (10 marks)

Candidates found no difficulty choosing their favourite line but some had difficulty in being specific as to why they found it appealing.

2. A personal response to the poem..... (20 marks)

This was the less popular of the options. Examiners noted varying levels of performance here. There was some excellent engagement with the poem on a personal level and as a literary text. Some candidates however did not appear able to express their response in a coherent or structured way.

B PRESCRIBED POETRY (50 marks)

Examiners noted that candidates continue to demonstrate wide personal engagement with the prescribed poems. Answers were most successful where candidates made good use of the text to reinforce a point of view or response. Answers continue, in the main, to be original and fresh.

1. The appeal of Boland...

The second most popular poet. The 'appeal' aspect of the question was well handled by most. Candidates responded enthusiastically to the poems.

2. The impact of Dickinson's poetry...

This proved the most popular poetry question. Candidates demonstrated a warm appreciation of both the personality of Dickinson and of her poetry. The best answers managed to balance their treatment of Dickinson's personality with the quality of her writing. Very well answered.

3. *The feelings that T.S Eliot's poetry creates...*

Not a popular option but examiners report meeting some excellent answering on Eliot. Some examiners noted a tendency to discuss the poems without reference to the feelings created by them in the reader.

4. *Introducing the poetry of W.B. Yeats...*

This was the third most popular choice. Many good responses were met with in answers to this question. A good knowledge of the poetry was demonstrated by candidates and the quality of engagement was excellent.

4. CONCLUSIONS.

- Examiners report that this year's examination was fair and encouraged candidates to respond openly to a wide variety of texts and tasks
- The theme of Paper 1, *Ordinary Lives*, was expressed admirably in both written and visual texts and provided material that candidates found both interesting and challenging.
- In answers to questions on the style of writing in two of the reading passages it was noted that some candidates had difficulty in illustrating their responses.
- Candidates were generally well prepared for answering on Paper 2.
- Answering on Shakespeare's tragedy (this year, *Hamlet*) as the Single Text is still almost universal.
- Examiners noted that candidates had a good knowledge of their chosen Single Texts and could illustrate well from them. While unfocused narrative is still a minor problem with some candidates, the use of focused narrative did, when employed judiciously, enhance an answer.
- In the Comparative Section, examiners were impressed by candidates' competent handling of the task in general and by how they had mastered the notion of comparing texts. The mode of General Vision and Viewpoint was very popular.
- Candidates responded well to this year's Unseen Poem. In some cases specific reference to the poem was absent and an unreferenced assertion resulted.
- The Prescribed Poetry was answered with the now customary engagement and enthusiasm.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

- While the overall quality of composing was of a very high standard, it is important that candidates feel confidence in their own abilities to write original material in response to tasks set. All candidates might be encouraged to read as widely as possible and to practise writing in a wide variety of genres.
- While the quality of personal response is important for many of the tasks given in the examination, there is also a need to stress close, objective reading of the question so that all its implications are fully recognised.
- It is advisable to encourage candidates to spend a little time thinking before writing. It is important that candidates try to form an approach to a set task before immersing themselves in it totally. This is not to suggest long and elaborate plans. A brief reflection on the terms of the question is often sufficient to alert the candidate to the full implications of that question.
- Candidates who wish to write compositions in the form of short stories would benefit from a short study of the genre by reading and analysing a number of examples. Too often a candidate writes a short story that is limited in scope to that of a simple anecdote which is lacking in narrative shape or any awareness of the reader's presence.
- When reading examples of the short lyric in preparation for Unseen Poetry, candidates should give time to consideration of 'how' the poem is said as well as giving attention to 'what' is being said.
- Candidates should be encouraged to follow their hearts in responding to the Unseen Poem. A negative response to a short lyric is as valuable as a positive one, once the response is based in the text and has the ring of conviction about it.

- Some attention might be given to candidates' understanding of the Comparative mode, The General Vision and Viewpoint. Quite a number of candidates had a very general notion of it and some confused it with the Theme of the work. Such an interpretation limits the meaning of General Vision and Viewpoint to only one of its elements.
- While sound text-based knowledge of the poetry is a virtue in an examination, it is still essential to encourage candidates to make the poems their own by valuing the integrity of their own personal responses.

6. EXEMPLAR MATERIAL – HIGHER LEVEL.

N.B. Candidates' work is typed as written, except where, because of ambiguity arising from the hand-written script, it has been edited to indicate the likely meaning. Square brackets are used to indicate where such editing has occurred.

A brief commentary on the item appears after each exemplar.

EXEMPLAR 1

Paper 1

Section 1 – Comprehending

Text 2, Question A

(i) Which of the four images on page 4 makes the strongest impact on you? Give a reason for your answer. (15)

Of the four images shown, image two makes the strongest impact on me. I believe this is due to the superficial normality of the scene. A man and a woman dancing, a young boy to one side looking on. Both the contents of the photograph and the framing – the couple are not in the centre – imply to me a photograph that could have been taken by a friend or family member, a candid shot from a wedding or similar social event. But the gun hanging by the man's side adds a new dimension to the scene. Not only does it give a wider context in terms of situation, it also implies that the soldier is always on alert. That even when dancing with a woman, he must always be ready in case he is called on to fight and kill again.

Marks awarded ex 15²: 14

Comment:

- Excellent points made, clear engagement with 'impact'
- Some errors in expression, but shows clear understanding of the task

(ii) Do you think that the introduction to the collection of images is an interesting portrayal of Jenny's life as a news photographer? Give reasons for your answer. (15)

I do think the introduction to the collection of images is an interesting portrayal of Jenny's life as a news photographer. She describes how she got involved in the profession – how an interest in covering 'foreign stories' led her to war, and how she has

² Marks for P, C, L, M are shown discretely only when marking ex 50 marks or higher. In all other cases a combined mark taking the discrete criteria into account is awarded.

learned about war from experience, unlike the rest of us, who learn from what we are told. And she tells where she has been, behind the lines, tiptoeing around both major international conflict and ‘practically invisible’ conflicts the rest of the world know nothing about. She has been places the rest of the world only see on television, and heard stories that give another side to the politicians’ reassurances. She has been to ‘nasty corners’ of the world, but cared enough to return. And that is what I find truly interesting.

Marks awarded ex 15: 11

Comment:

- Makes some valid points
- Response lacks development and becomes repetitive – coherence of delivery is flawed

(iii) “I learned about war... [but] I was more interested in what was going on behind the scenes.” From your reading of the introduction and the photographs, what impression do you have of how people’s lives are touched by war? (20)

I think people’s lives are touched deeply and irrevocably by war. From the photographs we can see young people whose lives have been changed by these conflicts. In photo four, a woman, who, to my eyes, looks quite young, casually shoulders a gun, her stance speaking volumes of aggression and bravado. In photo one a young man cradles his baby son. For all we know, this could be the first time he has seen the boy. And as he returns to the front, it could also be the last. But he stands like any father proud to show off his child. In photo two, a man and a woman dance together in a moment of rest, but the weapon he carries shows there can be no moments of complete rest in an area of conflict. But the introduction tells us that though these people’s lives are touched by war, they still retain their hospitality, being ‘embarrassingly’ welcoming to a photographer there to showcase their tragedy. Though their lives are marred by conflict, they still retain their sense of humanity and kindness.

Marks awarded ex 20: 19

Comment:

- Coherent argument making good use of the text
- Competent, controlled expression

EXEMPLAR 2

PAPER 1

Section 1 - Comprehending

Text 3 Question B

Imagine that as a reporter for a local newspaper you plan to interview a celebrity of your choice. Write a proposal/memo for the editor of your newspaper in which you explain why you want to interview this celebrity and giving an outline of the areas you hope to explore in the course of the interview. (50)

*F.A.O. John Sinclair, editor Dublin Weekly News
From: Alex West, reporter Culture/Living
Re: Next celebrity interview*

John,

For my next interview, I'd like to take Alan Rickman. I know he hasn't anything out at the moment, but he has several large releases scheduled for this Autumn and I think we're more likely to get an interview if we go now.

In the interview, I'd like to discuss the following areas:

(i) His theatrical background

Rickman started off in theatre. I'd like to get his thoughts on both his theatrical experiences and also what he thinks of the current state of west end theatre. Does he think it's overrun with musicals and American imports? Is there a reason he chose to do his last stage production in New York as opposed to London? And (remembering that he is said to have not enjoyed his run as 'Anthony') did he enjoy the production? Would he like to do any more Coward plays? Are there any more theatre roles he'd really like to try his hand at?

(ii) His work in Independent and British film

Rickman has worked extensively in independent film productions, particularly in Britain. Does he enjoy these experiences? Does he prefer film to theatre? Have there been any productions he's especially proud of his involvement in? Are there any that he regrets doing? Any that he regrets not doing? What does he think about the recent success of some actors he's worked with on these productions (i.e. Clive Owen)? Does he rate the British film industry as a real competitor with America?

(iii) His directing experience

After 'The Winter's Guest' does he have any more plans to direct? If not, any reason? If so, anything in particular, of just on the lookout for anything that grabs him? If he goes direct again, are there any people he'd particularly like to work with?

(iv) Work in mainstream Hollywood

He has been involved in several major Hollywood films, most notably 'Die Hard' and 'Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves'. Does he enjoy the mainstream American film industry? Is he proud of his involvement with these films? Does he plan to do more 'Blockbusters', or is he going to remain in smaller-budget productions?

(v) Harry Potter

Does he read the books? Does he feel typecast as a villain? Is he proud of his involvement with the 'Harry Potter' series? If the rest are made, will he continue to appear? What does he think of the child actors? Which of the four films has been his favourite to work on?

(vi) Upcoming projects

Rickman has several projects in the pipeline including 'Perfume, the story of a killer'. What other projects is he involved with? Does he enjoy working with Dustin Hoffman? What does he think of 'method acting'? Does he have any plans for a break, or will he continue working? At nearly sixty, does he think he'll stop any time soon?

(vii) RADA

Rickman is currently vice-president of RADA, the most prestigious acting school in Britain. Why did he get involved with the school? Does he enjoy his work there? What does he think of RADA detractors, who say the school is old-fashioned? How long does he plan on remaining there?

That's what I've got planned though I've a little research yet to do. I really think we should go after him for as soon as possible. By the time 'Harry Potter' is released he'll most likely be unavailable. If there's any questions, just contact me and I'll try to fill you in.

Yours sincerely,

Alex West

(Culture/Living)

P 15		15
C 15		15
L 15		15
M 5		05

Mark awarded ex 50: 50

Comment:

- Captures and sustains appropriate register very effectively
- Has clear direction, structure and argument

EXEMPLAR 3

Paper 1

Section 2 – Composing

“...celebrity culture has gone too far...” (TEXT 3)

Write a speech in which you attempt to persuade an audience that today’s obsession with the lives of the rich and famous has gone too far.

“Michael Jackson means more to me than my family.” It’s a shocking statement. It this person really being serious? Yes he is, and there many more like him camped outside a California courtroom at this very moment. When somebody can make that kind of statement about a singer he’s never met, it tells us worrying things about how celebrity-obsessed we have become as a generation. And whilst Michael Jackson’s obsessive fans may be the extreme end of the spectrum, celebrity culture fascinates us all.

But can we really use this as an example of the dangers of Celebrity worship? After all, for every Jackson obsessive in L.A. there are dozens of people who just bought the CD. How can we say when this obsession with celebrity has gone ‘too far’? Because Michael Jackson is an extreme case, a one-off, surely he couldn’t be a reasonable example?

But while that is true, it’s not the whole story. Jackson’s fans are suddenly on the radar because of the court case, but many other celebrities have fans just as devoted. One need only turn on MTV to see a host of shows to cater to their obsession. From interviews with stars to looks around their home much of a star’s publicity is now focused on the person rather than the work. Many celebrities now have clothing and make-up lines, so fans can ‘look like J. Lo’. And in the most worrying and extreme of cases, as in MTV’s ‘I want a famous face’ undergo invasive surgery to gain the looks of their idol.

What is most worrying about these cases is that the rise in obsession has been so gradual that many have not noticed. There have always been gossip magazines, ‘Heat’, ‘Now’ etc., but over the past few years, their size, and range of titles published, has increased dramatically. Three new titles alone have been launched since January. People are now so obsessed with ‘celebrity’ that they will pay several times for the same stories and the same pictures.

But who’s fault is it? The celebrities themselves? Yes and no. Whilst many celebrities do deliberately court the spotlight, there are just as many who do their best to avoid paparazzi and gossip journalists.

So, if not the celebrities themselves, then who? Can we blame the journalists? Again, yes and not. Yes, they do take the photographs, write the stories and print the magazines, but they would not do so if the magazines didn’t sell.

So is it our fault? Us, the public consumers of gossip? Once again, yes and no. Yes, we buy the magazines, but we are often encouraged by various ‘celebrities’ who otherwise would lose a good deal of their fame. We consume, but our appetites are wetted by the celebrities who pose and give salacious interviews, desperate for a little longer in the spotlight.

It is here that we find the mainstay of celebrity culture. The ‘C-list’ celebrity, both the leading purveyors and main victims of celebrity culture. A C-list celebrity is someone

who is famous for none of the usual reasons for fame. By the time they are anointed 'celebrities' by the gossip press, the initial reason they arrived in the spotlight is normally forgotten. Was it a 'never got started' music career? A successful one, but decades ago? A relationship with a bigger star? An alleged affair with a married one? A month or so later, who can remember? And this is where the vast majority of magazine-filler comes from. These people, given a taste of fame, attempting to prolong their famous life by any means necessary. So they pose for 'raunchy' photoshoots, discuss the minutiae of their sex-lives in the press, and finally appear on celebrity reality television.

These shows – 'Celebrity Love Island' and others are by now a mainstay of television schedules. The word 'Celebrity' always features in the title, despite the fact that many participants illicit only comments of 'Who?' from their audiences. The fact is, many of these celebrities are famous for doing reality TV. Reality TV has created more celebrities than anything else, and its participants know it. They enter in droves, hoping they've got the right blend of 'quirkyness' to guarantee a spot presenting reality TV for the rest of their lives.

At the end of the day, celebrity culture has gone too far. Too far in its enshrinement of celebrities, too far in its encouragement of those desperate enough to buy into the myth. And in this respect it is also damaging. Damaging to the minor celebrities desperate to hang on for just a little bit longer – at any cost, damaging to the people who believe liposuction and breast implants to look like Britney Spears will make them more successful or a happier person, and damaging to the hundreds of fans outside that L.A. courthouse, convinced that following a celebrity is more important than getting on with the rest of their lives.

P 30	27
C 30	27
L 30	26
M10	08

Total mark awarded ex 100: 88

Comment:

- Topical, lively piece of persuasive writing
- Very good sense of addressing a young audience
- Good use of rhetorical techniques
- Well structured

EXEMPLAR 4

Paper 1

Section 2 – Composing

“...the hope that things will be better for the next generation.” (TEXT2)

Write an article for a newspaper or magazine, outlining your vision of a better future.

Sir – back in 1967 President Kennedy stated: we have the ability to wipe hunger from the face of the world...we need only the will.’ Thirty eight year later we still lack ‘the will’ and have no indication of changing. How can the governments of the world explain let alone justify this. There are many problems in the world which I treuly hope will be completely solved for the next generation. Ranging from war to drugs and everything in between. However as far as I can see the first thing that must be done, the first step on this ladder of improvement must be to feed the people. There is enough food in the world for every single person to be nutrishisly fed. Then why do 890 million people go to bed hunger tonight?

There is no excuse for this, or no reason why it should happen. If we want to make things better for the next generation, in my view we must all stand up and amplify the voices of those who’s voices arent listened to. The first part of my vision for a better world is one in which no one dies from lack of food. Every juman life is so precious how can we stand by while they are being lost in there thousands due to a lack of ‘will’ on the parts of the major governments in the world.

The second part of my ‘vision’ for a better future for the next generation would be the hope that they will not have to experience the horror of war, anywhere in their world during there life time. Espically for reasons such as religious belief’s. the fact that people are at war, losing their life due to religious divides baffles me, and seems to contradict the whole idea and purpose of religion. Imagine a world with no war...this is a definite hope for the future! One that my [may] seem unrealistic at times but one aht is truly attainable with a lot of hard work and compromise.

Another part of my vision of a better future for our next generation would be the elimination of drugs from the face of the earth. So many young people lose and ruin their lives due to drugs and I would love to see all the drug dealers of the world put behind bars until they have learned the error of their ways. All the drug producing factories etc. destroyed.

In my opinion the key to the problems of the world lie in education. If we teach our youth, the next generation of the world about equality, the fact that war solves no problems and rarely leads to anything but more war, and to that drugs is nothing but bad news. This may seem like obvious stuff, however if this information is given in new ways to the child of our world, ways in which it will really hit home I believe that my vision of the future is definately attainable. So without doubt there is hope that things will be better for the next generation.

P 30	17
C 30	14
L 30	15
M10	06

Total mark awarded ex 100: 52

Comment:

- Tries to address the task and has some valid ideas
- Ideas are not always focused and developed
- General clumsiness in management of language
- Sentence construction and mechanics are flawed

EXEMPLAR 5

Paper 2

Section 1 – The Single Text – Hamlet

In your opinion, what is the appeal of the play, *Hamlet*, for a twenty-first century audience? Support the points you make by reference to the text. (60)

In my opinion, there are many different ways in which ‘Hamlet’ appeals to a twenty-first century audience. Though the setting, plot and language may be centuries old, the themes of the piece are universal and the character of Hamlet still resonates today.

Though the setting of a royal court sometime previous to the 1600s and the plot involving ghosts and vengeance may seem archaic to someone unfamiliar with the text, the themes explored in the play are universal, and still have relevance in the modern world.

One of these themes is that of duty to family. Hamlet’s quest is driven by his father’s story – of his own murder – and his request – to avenge his death. As he bids Hamlet “Remember me”, he charges Hamlet with the task of ‘fixing’ the situation – which Hamlet is originally reluctant to do “Oh cursed spite / that ever I was born to set it right.” Whilst the specifics of the situation are unlikely to occur again, almost everybody has at some point been placed in a situation where they found duty bound to assist a family member, whether at their own asking, as with the ghost, or through another’s implication, as when Claudius asks Laertes “Did you love your father?”

The theme of family is also still highly relevant in modern times, in fact, with divorce rates steeply on the rise, never has the idea of ‘family’ been more relevant. Initially, Hamlet’s dislike for Claudius is unrelated to his father’s murder (though the line “Oh my prophetic soul” implies he had considered it), but he is still vehement in his hatred of the new king – particularly in comparison to his father “Hyperion to a satyr”. Purely from Hamlet’s words, we are presented with a thoroughly negative view of the new king, though at this point, little evidence from the play supports this point of view. All Claudius’ attempts to befriend Hamlet, or act in a fatherly manner [manner] are met with hostility and coldness. The ideas explored in this theme are still as relevant as ever.

And lastly, the theme of revenge still has as much relevance and appeal as ever. Whilst we may not seek revenge in the same manner as in Elizabethan times, the idea of revenge is still relevant. The lengths to which the three avengers in the play, Hamlet, Laertes and to a lesser extent Fortinbras are willing to go to gain revenge still holds a large appeal for a modern audience. The deception and deceitfulness practised by the characters in these endeavours – particularly those of Claudius and Laertes in their attempts to poison Hamlet, are still as relevant as always – one need only watch any soap opera on television to see these themes and actions still being used to great effect for the entertainment of the masses.

The second reason I believe the play ‘Hamlet’ still has appeal in the twenty-first century is because of the character of Hamlet himself. He is not a shining, perfect hero, but a character with deep flaws and a tendency towards unlikable behaviour. Though he is described to us by Ophelia and Horatio, arguably the only innocent characters in the play as being a “just man” and in possession of a “noble mind” and other good qualities – duty to his father and philosophical and educated mind, one often overshadowed by his

neuroses, anger and cruelty. His is neurotic concerning his father's death and mother's remarriage, unable to speak reasonably on the subject, and damning all women on the basis of his mother's failings "frailty thy name is woman" This neurosis also drives him to violence and anger, particularly in his conversation with Gertrude in her bed chamber. Many productions feature him assaulting Gertrude in this scene, holding her roughly and forcing her to look where he instructs. His anger also causes Polonius' death as he kills him without knowing who he was, and finally he says he shall "lug the guts into the neighbour room" and "noble mind" referenced earlier has surely been "o'er thrown." Finally, his cruelty to Ophelia shows great callousness. He has made many "offerings of love" to her, but his mind coloured by his mother's sins, he cannot see her purity, only the "frailty" he now believes is inherent in all women. Not only does he ignore her next advances, he denies ever loving her "not I, I never gave you aught", and abuses her verbally, calling her a future "breeder of sinners" and tells her to "get thee to a nunnery."

Though Hamlet has his strengths, his weaknesses make him more appealing as a character, and along with the universal themes within the play, this is what makes the play 'Hamlet' still appealing to a twenty-first audience.

P18	17
C18	14
L 18	16
M 6	05

Total mark awarded ex 60: 52

Comment:

- Well structured answer, good focus on the task
- Effective use of illustration from the text
- Points might be developed more fully on occasion
- Some flaws in expression and mechanics

EXEMPLAR 6

Paper 2

Section 2 – The Comparative Study

A. The General Vision and Viewpoint

‘Each text we read presents us with an outlook on life that may be bright or dark, or a combination of brightness and darkness.’

In the light of the above statement, compare the general vision and viewpoint in at least two texts you have studied in your comparative course. (70)

For the purpose of this essay I will be comparing The Playboy of the Western World by JM Synge (PB), Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë (WH) and Strictly Ballroom directed by Baz Luhrmann (SB). In each of the three texts the characters are faced by trials and tribulation of life. It is through their dealing with them that we are presented with a dark or bright outlook on life.

In (PB) the overall outlook on life is dark. The characters are unkind, uncaring and selfish. Although there is a bright patch in the love affair of Pegeen Mike and Christy Mahon and also many humorous moments we can't escape from noticing the underlying dark harsh world, which remains unchanged by the events of the play. In complete contrast we have (SB). This is most definitely a film with sunshine bright angle on life. Although darkness does exist in the film, in the form of the corrupt president Barry Fife good wins out in the end. The opposite is the case with (WH) which is most definitely a dark novel yet again containing moments of happiness. Like when Mr Earnshaw dies Nelly overhears Catherine and Heathcliff consoling each other, ‘the little souls consoling each other with better thoughts than I could have hit on.’

From the beginning of (PB) [we] get a very dark, pessimistic view of life. We meet Pegeen who is preparing for her wedding. We rapidly realise that Pegeen does not love her fiancé Shawn Keogh nor even like him. She is only marrying him because the choice in the area is extremely limited. How could she love Shawn Keogh, he is a meek cowardly individual afraid of his own shadow. ‘I'm afraid of Father Reilly.’ In the beginning of (SB) contrasts hugely to that of the (PB). We are introduced to the heightened artificial, fantastical world of ballroom dancing in a mockumentary style. Shirley Hastings speaks to the camera about the tragedy of Scott dancing new steps. We are given flashbacks of the event. Although it does show pessimism due to the shallowness of the characters there is definitely an air of humour about it. All that is important to these people is winning. ‘Scott: I just want to know what you thought of the steps. Liz: I don't think. I don't give a shit about them. We lost.’ On a much heavier and realist level WH darkness and pessimism is part of the fabric of (WH) from the beginning. Mr Lockwood the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange visits Wuthering Heights the home of his new landlord Heathcliff. He receives a gruff welcome from Heathcliff whilst he unchains the gate. Lockwood notes the harshness and rawness of the landscape. Which is a prime example of pathetic fallacy on Brontë's part. Catherine herself even refers to ‘My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath, a source of very little delight but necessary. Nelly, I am Heathcliff.’

In each of the three texts a new character enters each of which have contrasting effects on the respective worlds they enter. In (PB) the young handsome Christy Mahon enters. He brings excitement and live [life] into this dark harsh corner of the world. He is a new romantic figure whom Pegeen falls madly in love with. He too loves her deeply. For a time this pessimistic sad world is brightened. For the first time we see Pegeen truly happy. 'and to thinkgs its me Christy Mahon taling sweetly. And I the fright of seven towns over for my biting tongue.' In (WH) similarly we have the entry of a male, Heathcliff. He has hugely contrasting effects on the world he enters. He inspires undying pure love with Cathering whilst simultaneously fuels utter hatred in Hindley, due to jealousy. Contrastly totally to the previous two in (SB) we have a female, Fran, who enters the film. She is a beginner dancer of Spanish origin. She has a completely positive effect of the film. She teaches Scott 'a life lived in fear is a life half lived.' She gives him the belief that they can dance their own steps and over come the corrupt dance federation. They achieve these and in doing so they release Doug and Shirley who 'lived their lives in fear'.

(PB) ends darkly espically for Pegeen who loses the lover of her life. 'Oh I've lost his surely I've lost the only true Playboy of the Western World.' With perhaps the except of Christy who becomes a new man and who heads home to Munster as 'King of all fights' the world is left unchanged. Most definitely a place with a dark outlook on life. Contrasting wholly is (SB) which ends on an extremely positive note. Fran and Scott falll in love, the corrupt Barry Fife is exposed and everyone dances to the song 'Love is in the Air'. A truly bright ending, (SB) being quite similar to (WH) in this incidence. There is finally the happy union of the ancient Lintons and Earnshaws in the marriage of young Cathy and Hareton. There is also comforting sense that Catherine and Heathcliff are finally together. 'They's Heathcliff and a woman yonder.'

Therefore I believe that yes indeed each text we read does present us with an outlook on life. However after studying the three texts on my comparative course I conclude that no text can be fully optimistic, bright or pessimistic dark. It is a complex combination of both.

P 21	18
C 21	16
L 21	14
M 07	05

Total mark awarded ex 70: 53

Comment:

- Clear and sustained engagement with the task
- Candidate structures the answer in a careful, coherent fashion
- Some points might have been developed more fully
- Some flaws in language control

EXEMPLAR 7

Paper 2

Section 3 – Prescribed Poetry

‘The appeal of Eavan Boland’s poetry.’

Using the above title, write an essay outlining what you consider to be the appeal of Boland’s poetry. Support your points by reference to the poetry of Eavan Boland on your course.

The poetry of Eavan Boland (b1944) has infinite appeal to people of all ages. She has a unique ability to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary. She has a constant inquiring (questioning) mind, she too has a moral quality in her voice which demands a response. The essence of Boland’s appeal is the fact that she relates to everyone due to the universality of the topics of her poems.

In the poem ‘Child of Our Time’ Boland describes how a child has lost his life in the Dublin bombings. She doesn’t merely, if merely is an appropriate word here, describe the sadness of the loss of life she takes the adult world to task for letting this happen. Boland blames the negligence of the adult world for exposing not only this child but all our innocent children to danger due to their problems. She raises it to the universal, she uses the phrase ‘we who should have’ therefore accepting and issuing the blame. She then turns the poem into a rally cry to protect all our children ‘you dead sleep in a world your last sleep has awoken.’

‘The Warhorse’ is another example of how Boland takes an everyday ordinary event and rises it, making us think, turning it into an extraordinary insight into some aspect of our life. In this poem a stray horse enters her estate and walks down her road. He does not cause much harm. Boland mentions how she sighed relief when he passed by her house. A natural human emotion, however Boland then compares this to the republic’s uncaring, ambivalent attitude towards the troubles in Northern Ireland. Boland then forcefully condemns this. Boland very cleverly uses war images throughout the poem to convey the message ‘innocent coinage of earth’.

In ‘Famine Road’ Boland is dealing with the abuse of power by those in authority. I believe Boland’s appeal is so great because she takes simple things we can all relate to. In this poem we are faced with a barren woman, she is told to ‘keep a good home’ and carry on gardening and so on. Her futility is compared to the peasant Irish back in 1847 building.

P 15		08
C 15		06
L 15		07
M 5		03

Total mark awarded ex 50: 24

Comment:

- Good introduction identifying source of appeal
- Lacks depth and development of ideas
- Very little engagement with the text of the poems