



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit**  
**State Examinations Commission**

**JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION 2006**

**ENGLISH**

**FOUNDATION LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT**

**ORDINARY LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT**

**HIGHER LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT**

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## 1. General Introduction

Junior Certificate English, in its present form, was introduced by means of a new syllabus in 1989 and first examined in 1992. It was offered at three levels, Higher, Ordinary and Foundation. Junior Certificate Higher Level English is presented for examination as two papers, each carrying 180 marks and given 2.5 hours per paper. Ordinary and Foundation Levels are both examined by means of one written paper. In each case the paper carries 360 marks and is given 2.5 hours. The option of a school based oral examination, conducted by the students' own teachers, worth 40 marks, remains, but no students availed of this option in the current year.

The Foundation Level consists of seven sections of which sections 1, 2 and 3 are compulsory. Candidates are required to answer any three of sections 4, 5, 6 and 7. Section 1 examines 'Reading', Section 2 – 'Personal Writing', Section 3 – 'Functional Writing', Section 4 – 'Drama', Section 5 - 'Poetry', Section 6 – 'Fiction', and Section 7 – 'Media Studies'.

The Ordinary Level paper is also divided into seven sections of which the first four are compulsory. The candidate is required to answer any two of the remaining three sections. As at Foundation Level, Section 1 examines 'Reading', Section 2 – 'Personal Writing', and Section 3 – 'Functional Writing'. Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 also examine 'Drama', 'Poetry', 'Fiction', and 'Media Studies'. However, Section 4, which is compulsory, varies from year to year, and may examine any one of 'Drama', 'Poetry', 'Fiction' or 'Media Studies'.

The Higher Level Paper One is divided into four sections, 'Reading', 'Personal Writing', 'Functional Writing' and 'Media Studies', each of which is compulsory. Paper Two examines 'Drama', 'Poetry' and 'Fiction'. The Drama section requires candidates to answer one question on an unseen extract from either a modified Shakespearean text or a modern text, which may also be adapted. Candidates are also required to answer one question on a play they have studied. Similarly, Section 2 requires candidates to answer one question on an unseen poem and one on poetry previously studied, while Section 3 requires candidates to answer one question on an unseen extract from fiction and one on a play or short story previously studied.

The following table shows the number of candidates taking the subject at each level over the past four years:

Year	2003		2004		2005		2006	
<b>Foundation</b>	2792	4.7%	2537	4.5%	2302	4.11%	2264	4.0%
<b>Ordinary</b>	19076	32.4%	18087	32.1%	17554	31.34%	17645	31%
<b>Higher</b>	37023	62.9%	35725	63.4%	36161	64.55%	37145	65%
<b>Totals</b>	58891	100%	56349	100%	56017	100%	57125	100%

## **2 Foundation Level**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Junior Certificate Foundation Level English Paper consists of seven sections each of which aims to test the candidate's knowledge of the syllabus at this level.

The sections are as follows: (2006)

- Section 1: Reading
- Section 2: Personal Writing
- Section 3: Functional Writing
- Section 4: Poetry
- Section 5: Fiction
- Section 6: Drama
- Section 7: Media Studies

The examination paper is marked out of a total of 360 marks, candidates are required to answer on six sections; Sections 1, 2, and 3 are compulsory sections. Candidates may then choose three Sections from the remaining four. Each Section is marked out of a total of 60 marks.

The following table shows the number of candidates taking the subject at Foundation level over the past four years:

#### **Junior Certificate English Foundation Level**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Candidates</b>
<b>2006</b>	2264
<b>2005</b>	2302
<b>2004</b>	2537
<b>2003</b>	2793

## 2.2 PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

The table below illustrates the performance of the candidates at Foundation Level in each of the grades:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>NG</b>
<b>2006</b>	10.4%	31.1%	38.6%	17.2%	2.2%	0.6%	0.0%
<b>2005</b>	10.0%	29.4%	40.6%	17.2%	2.1%	0.5%	0.1%
<b>2004</b>	9.0%	32.0%	40.8%	15.6%	1.9%	0.7%	0.1%
<b>2003</b>	12.5%	33.8%	36.4%	14.2%	2.5%	0.5%	0.1%

Candidates achieving grades in the E- range are usually those who have not completed a sufficient number of sections. In 2006 this accounted for 2.7% of all candidates at this level. In 2006 80% of the Foundation Level Candidates achieved a C+ Grade.

## **2.3 ANALYSIS OF CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE**

### **Section 1 Reading**

This is a compulsory section and performance on this section was of a high standard with candidates scoring an average mark of 52 ex 60. This section tests the candidates' ability to locate specific information in a piece of text. Section A is divided into 4 questions carrying 5 marks each. Parts B, C, D, and E all carry 10 marks. The most common error occurring in this section was in Part D, where candidates did not make reference to the specified part of the extract. Overall, as in previous years, this was a well-answered section.

Examiners reported that candidates found it easy to engage with this text perhaps due to their familiarity with the author, Roald Dahl, who was the subject of the text.

### **Section 2 Personal Writing**

Candidates are required to write one page on a topic chosen from a list of 8 topics. In 2006, the most popular options were "Summer Holidays", "My Best Friend" and "When I Leave School". Examiners report that this year's candidates produced much more in terms of content than in previous years. Examiners also noted that the standard of writing in terms of imaginative response and structure was much higher than in previous years.

**Common causes of low performance in this section are as follows:**

- Candidates choosing all of the titles and writing five or six lines about each
- Candidates writing only one paragraph which would be of a high standard, and then failing to continue the story.

Generally, candidates perform well at this level when writing in a narrative style. Part D - the conversation between the parent and teenager - generated interesting and amusing responses and candidates demonstrated a greater capability in using this format than in previous years.

### **Section 3 Functional Writing**

Candidates had a choice between A or B.

**A:** Candidates were required to write a report to be included in an information booklet for new students. Candidates responded successfully to this topic and produced well-structured and informative answers, demonstrating a familiarity with the required format.

**Common causes of low performance in this section are as follows:**

- Candidates failing to read the requirements for the question and writing about a football club etc.
- Candidates producing a letter or narrative piece rather than a report.

**B.** Candidates were required to write a letter based on the guidelines given in the question. Examiners report that the majority of candidates choosing this option achieved high marks. However, a significant number of candidates showed little knowledge of the letter format and produced a narrative or a report rather than the required letter.

**Common causes of low performance in this section are as follows:**

- Producing a piece of narrative rather than a report or letter
- Not answering the question asked
- Not using a letter format.

#### **Section 4      Poetry**

Examiners reported that this was a very popular section this year, unlike previous years where candidates tended to avoid the poetry section. Candidates engaged well with the poem presented to them and were able to articulate interesting opinions on both the mother and the poet, as required in Part D.

For Part E, where candidates were asked to write about a studied poem, the most popular choice, as in previous years, was *Mid-Term Break* by Seamus Heaney. This part was well answered, with candidates producing detailed commentary and some writing out the whole poem.

**Common causes of low performance in this section are as follows:**

- Part C: not answering the whole question
- Part D: some candidates wrote about a studied poem
- Part E: writing about the poem printed on the paper.

#### **Section 5      Fiction**

Candidates were required to read an extract and answer questions on it. They then had to answer on a studied Novel or Short Story. In general, examiners observed that this was a popular and well-answered section with very well developed responses to Part E. A small number of candidates were unable to answer Part B where candidates were required to specify the information contained in the posters. Overall, those choosing this section achieved high marks.

**Common causes of low performance in this section are as follows:**

- Using a poem for part E
- Outlining the plot of the novel rather than answering the question asked.

## Section 6 Drama

This section required the candidates to read an extract and answer questions on an unseen extract. They were also required to answer on previously studied drama.

This was the least popular option this year. Those choosing this option answered well in Parts A and B, but appeared to have difficulty with Parts C and D.

Part E required the candidates to write about a play or film they had studied. Once again *The Field* by John B Keane proved to be the most popular choice. However, examiners remarked that there seems to be an over reliance on Film, at the expense of the written text, in preparing candidates for this section of the paper. In general, candidates seemed to show great unfamiliarity with written dramatic dialogue. This trend has persisted over the past few years and explains, perhaps, the difficulties candidates have in responding to the extract from the unseen play. This was highlighted in Parts C and D, where candidates were unable to use the information in the extract to produce a correct response. Most candidates who chose *The Field* referred to the film rather than to the written text.

For Part E, candidates produced very limited responses, particularly when compared to the Fiction Section. Examiners felt that perhaps there was a greater unfamiliarity with this genre. In general, candidates produced a film review for Part E rather than the required response, further highlighting a lack of understanding of this genre and perhaps over-reliance on film.

### Common causes of low performance in this section are as follows:

- Parts A and B: mixing up the characters or simply writing out the whole of the extract
- Part C: This was a very poorly answered question. Most candidates were unable to produce more than “They don’t like each other”
- Part D: Candidates showed no understanding of “actions” and wrote about the language that the characters would use
- Part E: Outlining the plot rather than a scene which was exciting or sad.

A significant number of candidates could not explain why their chosen scene was either exciting or sad.

## Section 7 Media Studies

Examiners reported that this was a very well answered section of this year’s paper and that candidates engaged well with the visuals on Paper X which generated a greater level of response than in previous years.

Questions A and B were well answered by all candidates.

Question C provided a wide range of responses, demonstrating the candidates’ knowledge of this particular product.

Question D generated interesting responses. Examiners noted a definite gender bias in the responses.

Question E seemed to be poorly answered by candidates. As in previous years, candidates tended to respond only in terms of like or dislike. Some of the higher performing candidates attempted an analysis of colour, background etc. However, the majority of candidates appeared unable to articulate such a response.

## 2.4 CONCLUSIONS

- The Foundation Level English Paper is accessible to a wide range of students. The layout of the paper is clear and questions relating to sub-sections are clearly flagged. Examiners noted that candidates engaged well with the topics provided, and that both the length and standard of answering was pleasing.
- Section 1 as in previous years, was answered best. Even low performing candidates were able to score full marks on this.
- Section 2 was also well answered. In general the standard expected, as outlined in the Marking Scheme, was well met in this section. The majority of candidates appear to be more familiar with a narrative style than with a conversation format. However, this year, a greater number of candidates opted for the conversation topic. Examiners commented that candidates need more encouragement in developing their language skills in areas such as descriptive writing.
- Section 3, Parts A and B, were equally represented. This section was exceptionally well answered with candidates following the guidelines and producing some excellent reports and letters. There seemed to be a greater familiarity with these formats compared to previous years, and a high standard of language skills were demonstrated
- Section 4 was chosen by almost all candidates and they seemed to engage well with the poem. There was a high level of well-developed responses and personal opinions in relation to the mother in the poem. However, candidates appear to be studying a very restricted range of poetry, and demonstrate a disproportionate reliance on *Mid-Term Break* by Seamus Heaney. Some candidates, however, who wrote on other poems such as *Stopping By Woods* by Robert Frost and *New Boy* by Gareth Owen, produced excellent responses and indicated a great familiarity with a wide range of poetry. Some candidates attempted to use rap lyrics but were unable to articulate a response to the question asked.
- Section 5 tends to generate good responses from candidates at this level. *Goodnight Mr Tom*, *Harry Potter* and *Across the Barricades* featured strongly as the studied texts. Films such as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Titanic* also made an appearance, even if an incorrect one in this section. Candidates demonstrated great confidence in dealing with terms such as character and plot.
- Section 6 was the least popular option this year and a poorly answered section. Candidates demonstrated unfamiliarity with written drama and a poor understanding of concepts such as “actions”. They also found difficulty in finding reasons “why the families were always arguing”. An over reliance on film was evident. Popular texts in this section were *The Cay*, *The Field* and *Our Day Out*. Popular films were *Harry Potter* and *Romeo and Juliet*.
- Section 7, unlike in previous years, was very well answered and many candidates achieved high marks in this section. There were extremely well developed responses to the questions asked, particularly in part C, demonstrating the candidates’ familiarity with DVDs and Games and the advertising techniques used to sell them. Part E, as in

previous years, produced the least able responses. For this question, candidates are expected to demonstrate a basic understanding of the techniques of advertising. Candidates thus need to respond with reference to use of colour, visuals, style of writing, etc.

- In terms of accessibility, opportunity to succeed and flexibility in choice of questions the Foundation Level English Paper meets the needs of the candidates who take it. The paper is clearly laid out with clear instructions to the candidates in terms of how to phrase their response. The topics presented to the candidates are designed to engage them and to elicit a well developed response. Candidates are rewarded for their ability to communicate their ideas and to produce a personal response in a well-developed format at a level appropriate to Foundation English.
  
- At Foundation Level English, candidates tend to lose marks by:
  - Not answering compulsory sections of 1,2,3, but answering an extra question instead.
  - Not answering question E on 4,5,6 and 7
  - Presenting insufficient content in Sections 2 and 3
  - Using the incorrect part of Paper X
  - Not answering all questions on their chosen section.
  - Retelling the plot of novel, play, film or story of poem but not addressing the question asked.
  - Using the incorrect genre for Section E or Fiction, Poetry and Drama

## 2.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

- Familiarity with the layout of the paper would have helped some of those candidates who left out key sections and questions and were thus unable to benefit from the full range of marks available.
- Question E of Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 are often left out or misread by candidates. In general, these Sections will require more than just retelling the plot of the novel, film, play or an outline of the poem. Media Studies will usually involve some reference to the candidate's own experience i.e. favourite advertisement etc. Part E requires some analysis of how an advertisement, or other media text, is put together with a view to attracting a target audience.
- In Section 1 candidates should avoid misreading the question and presenting information from the wrong part of the extract or not giving all of the information asked.
- In Section 2 candidates should present at least one page, make use of paragraphs, have a range of vocabulary appropriate to Foundation Level, and have a clear sequence of events in their story.
- Candidates need to be clear that Section 3, the Functional Writing section, is not the same as Section 2. They should follow the guidelines given to help in producing a clear and articulate response.
- Candidates need practice in letter writing and to know the basic conventions such as:
  - Address
  - Date
  - Salutations
  - Layout
  - Formal/Informal letters
- Candidates need to have practiced a wide range of formats: reviews, reports, letters etc. Candidates need also to be aware that a review in Section 3 is not the same as the part E in the Drama Section.
- Candidates should have experience of a wide range of poems, and practice in articulating a personal response. Candidates need to be aware that answers requiring a response to a particular part of a poem should use only that part of the poem. For part E, it is important that candidates do not rely solely on one poem, as it may not be suitable for the question asked.
- Candidates should have experience of reading a wide range of Fiction. An understanding of key concepts such as character, relationship, setting and climax would greatly assist candidates in preparing for this section.
- In order to do well in the Drama section, candidates need to be familiar with written drama and analysis of the written dramatic text. Where film is used, the process of analysis and understanding of key concepts is also necessary. Candidates who present film as their studied text often just describe what they have seen, in the manner of a

film review. In their study of Drama candidates need to be made familiar with the following key concepts:

- Characters
  - Props
  - Costumes
  - Relationships
  - Key Scene
  - Tension/Climax
  - Gestures/Actions
- Candidates may also be required to discern the way in which a character might speak, or the tone of voice used or the actions or body language used in an extract. They may also be required to extrapolate from the text a concept such as the ‘setting’ and the effect this might have on a character or a group of characters.
  - The Media Studies section will require the candidate to be familiar with terms such as:
    - Product
    - Brand Name
    - Caption
    - Slogan
  - Candidates also need to be familiar with analysing advertisements using the language of media as appropriate at Foundation level. They will need to understand concepts such as
    - Target audience
    - Use of colour/copy
    - How an advertisement sells a product
    - Comparing similar advertisements.

### **Recommendations to Candidates**

- Candidates should
  - Read all of the instructions given on the exam paper.
  - Read all of the questions carefully.
  - As you do each question or part of a question, put a tick beside each part of the question on the paper so that you know you have not missed anything,
  - Some questions will ask, “What do you think” or “Did you like this poem/story”. Candidates should answer more than just yes/no – they must give a reason/opinion.
  - You will usually have to mention something about the poem or story when you are giving your reason.

### **Before the examination:**

Make sure you know:

- The name and author of the novel you studied
- The name and poet of the poem you studied
- The name and author of the play you studied/The name of the film
- Make sure you know and can describe the characters in the novel/play/film
- Make sure you know the important events in the novel/play/film
- Make sure you can describe the relationship between the characters.

- Make sure you can describe a picture
- Make sure you can describe an advertisement and that you know the correct words to use.
- Make sure you have practised giving your opinion on the novel, poem, film, play you have studied.
- Look at past papers so that you are certain what sections you must answer and what way the paper will look.

**During the examination:**

- You will have plenty of time to answer your Six Sections
- Make sure Sections 1, 2, and 3 are answered, these are compulsory
- Do not mix up when to use your novel/play/film/poem
- Where you see: Poetry - use your poem
- Where you see: Drama – use your play or film
- Where you see: Fiction – use your novel or short story
- Present your work as neatly and clearly as possible. Use as much paper as you need.
- Attempt all of the questions – even if you are not sure you are right.
- Read all of your questions carefully and tick each one off when you have finished answering it so that there is no chance you have forgotten something.
- Do not write your answers on the question paper, write them in your answer book.
- Check at the end of the examination and make sure you have:
  - Sections 1, 2 and 3 completed
  - And 3 other Sections.

## 2.6 EXEMPLARS OF STANDARD

The following is a selection of exemplar material from scripts of candidates who sat the Junior Certificate Foundation Level Paper, 2006.

These exemplars should be read in conjunction with the Examination Paper and the Marking Scheme utilized for the purposes of assessing candidates' answers.

These exemplars are reproduced as they were written.

Candidates' answers are typed in Italics.

### SECTION 1 READING

Parts A to D required the candidates to locate the correct answers in the extract.

#### Question E

**Which word would best describe Roald Dahl –  
Funny or Strange or Interesting?  
Give two reasons for your answer.**

#### Answer:

*I think the best word to describe Roald Dahl was interesting because it sounds like he had a different kind of childhood to most people by testing chocolate bars and being friendly with his dog chopper who loved chocolate as much as him. I also know he is interesting because in spring 2005 the Roald Dahl museum opened. The museum tells the story of his life, his family and his school days and if he wasn't interesting then that would not have been done.*

#### Marks awarded: 10 ex 10

This candidate fulfilled the criteria by giving his/her choice and then presenting a very well developed answer which made reference to the whole extract and was fully supported.

#### Answer:

*the best word to describe roald dahls is strang because he woud get rid of teachers and a sbjeck chocolate.*

#### Marks awarded: 4 ex 10

The candidate fulfilled the criteria in selecting his/her choice and giving one poorly developed fact as a reason rather than the required two reasons.

## SECTION 2 PERSONAL WRITING

### Question A When I leave school

#### Answer:

*When I leave school I am going to jump, jump out the door. Sing till I cant sing any more, put all my books in the bin run around til I fall down. When I fall down I will look up at the blue sky just looking at he planes going by keep the birds singing to me that I have no more school.*

*I go to the beech with my friend. on a Monday morning no class for me to sit on the strand day in and day out until its time to go home. As I walk passed the school I would think its funny all them years locked up there when I could be out and about doing nothing.*

*but one day my mam would sit me down. She look at me in the eye and say you are going to have to get a job. Why Why I would say why cant I have money of you anymore. You are too old you must pay your way at home help around the home. The next day I would go down to the shop near where I live. I asked them for a job they say Yes we know you. We see you just walking around. What made you think that you will do anything around here they said.*

*I will, I will I can do anything you ask me. Ok Ok, they said full time job I have. 9 to 5. That's grand, I said to myself.*

*My first day was the best day. I would do all most everything. All that week I work it was better than going to the beach. Then it would be pay day I will be getting £200. I can't wait till I leave school.*

#### Marks awarded:48 ex 60

Candidate engaged the reader from the outset. There is good flow and coherence in this piece of writing and the voice of the teenager is clearly heard. There is an ambitious use of descriptive writing in the opening paragraph.

#### Answer:

*Since I came into 1<sup>st</sup> year I've always loved history. When I leave school in 6<sup>th</sup> year I want to study history in college. I would be the first out of my family to go to college. History is a great subject. It is very interesting learning about the past. If I pass all my exams I would like to become a historian. I would like this job better than an archeologist because a historian can talk about stuff what happened in the past. you could also go round the world giving talks and people looking for advise. I think it would be a great job because you are helping people find out about the past and other interesting things.*

#### Marks awarded: 28 ex 60

The candidate demonstrated competency in writing about the title chosen. There is little development of the title and the candidate merely presents the facts of the topic he/she has chosen.

## Question D

**Parent:** *I've told you already! You're not going away with your friends!*

**Teenager:** *But everyone is going! It's not fair!*

**Write the rest of this conversation.**

**Answer:**

*P Well I don't care if all your friends are going or not*

*T why can't I go with them*

*P you don't like flying on planes*

*T yes I do. anyway, how do you know I was never on one.*

*P now see you are afraid of flying*

*T I am not afraid, stop trying to change the subject, you don't even need to give me money cause I have been saveing*

*P no way, after you have been saveing behind my back*

*T there has to be a reason why you wont let me go*

*P I will miss you to much*

*T ya you always say that you will miss me I don't care Im not staying here for 3 months without any of my friends*

*P Well we will get a boat somewhere for 3 months*

*T There must be a reason why you wont let me go on a plane*

*P what if there is?*

*T what's wrong this time*

*P member 5 years ago when you went over to spain to your daddy and you never got there, why was that?*

*T I never went on a plane to see my dad in spain cause you would never let me go over to see him. And you cried when I asked if I could!*

*P Because a few years ago I broght you on an airplane, put your seat belt on and I though everything went well but it didn't. The plane I put you on was the wrong one and went to japan. I thought I'd never see you again. I was never going to get you back.*

*T How did you put me on the wrong plane*

*P I don't know. But I didn't see you for 3 months and you were living on the treets and you were sick. At the time there was something over there that prison your memoirs*

*T Well who says that I will be silly enough to get on the wrong plane. sure I'll be with my friends.*

*P I'll think about it.*

*T But look can I just ask want took you so long to tell me about it.*

*P I don't know.*

*(In the end she ended up going but her mam ended up coming over with her and friend for the first few weeks)*

**Marks awarded: 56 ex 60**

The candidate competently fulfilled the criteria by using the correct format. There was a good attempt at using correct register for both parent and teenager and a good attempt at creating an imaginative reason for the mother's refusal to agree.

**Answer:**

*I've told you already! you're not going away with your friends.*

*But everyone is going. It's not fair!*

*On less you don't want to be grounded you will stay here*

*Please can I go to the disco with my friends*

*No because they always get into trouble*

*It's not my falt they get into trouble I don't get into trouble*

*where not talking about this anymore now go to your room*

**Marks awarded: 6 ex 60**

Candidate wrote about a disco rather than a weekend away. This candidate did not manage to provide a clear and coherent piece of dialogue about the topic provided.

**SECTION 3 FUNCTIONAL WRITING**

**Question A**

**Your school is preparing an information booklet for new students. You have been asked to write a Report for this booklet.**

**In this report you should:**

**Describe what your school looks like**

**Give some information about the subjects you can study in school**

**Give some information about clubs you can join or sports you can play at school**

**Describe something that is special about your school.**

**Answer:**

*My school looks like a maze. You can get lost very easily. Every classroom has a number. The walls are white and the doors are brown. The school is very old and we need new windows.*

*The subjects in my school are Woodwork: I woodwork you can make stuff like clocks, cd racks, tables etc. You can draw and paint picures.*

*computers: you can type and learn to use the internet.*

*Home ec: you can learn to cook*

*History: you can learn all about the celts, Vikings, stone age*

*English: you can read books and learn to write stories.*

*Information about clubs you can join*

*Football, all girls and boys can play football from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> year.*

*Basketball: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year*

*Lunch Club: you can stay in the school for lunch times if you live far away and you get your lunch and play games.*

*Adventure Club this is on after school and you play games like dodge ball and you go away on adventure weekends.*

*Something Special*

*you can get points in the back of your journal for full attendance wearing your uniform getting no notes and keeping journal clean. when you have full points you can buy stuff and go on special trips at the end of the year.*

**Marks awarded: 52 ex 60**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria outlined in the question and made competent attempts at presenting the information in a booklet format.

**Answer:**

*Lades and getalmen boys and girls. we can study the subjects we study is English mats iris ess and science wood work and the sports is fottball basc ball and tens pinpon and the bes thin about the school is it here you get the educasing*

**Marks awarded: 12 ex 60**

The candidate had great difficulty in communicating the facts in a clear and coherent manner and did not produce sufficient content to achieve a higher grade.

**Question B**

**Your best friend has been living in another country for a year. He/she is about to return home. Write a letter to let him/her know what has been happening at home.**

**In this letter you should:**

**Tell your friend what you have been doing lately**

**Describe what your other friends have been doing lately**

**Tell your friends about any changes in school**

**Let your friend know what has been happening in the area where you live.**

**Answer:**

*I long road  
Waterford  
7<sup>th</sup> June 2006*

*Dear James*

*I just heard you are returning home in a few weeks so I thought it would be nice to let you know what has been going on over here. I'm still at school studying for my exams, I think I'm going to pass most of them. I got a part time job in the shop at the corner of my road, it's not too bad because I get €200 a week. Nobody else has got a job, all the rest of the boys are still doing the same thing, hanging around on the corner all day.*

*We have a new English teacher in school. Her name is Ms Smith she's a lot better than Mr Brown. She never shouts at us and hardly ever gives homework. You will be pleased to hear there is no new people in our class so when you come home you will settle in straight away. You won't like the new dinners though, it's all healthy stuff now, salads and pasta.*

*Do you remember the barn where we all used to hang out? It's gone now and they are building houses there now, they look lovely. We also got a new skate-park down by the old church, it's always busy and we always meet new people down there but apart from that, everything is still the same over hear.*

*I have to go now so I can put this in the post, I don't know how long it will take to reach you but when it does, try and write back to me and let me know when you'll be back.*

*Hope to see you soon.*

*Your friend*

*Justin*

**Marks awarded: 60 ex 60**

The candidate fulfilled all of the criteria and used the letter format. The letter had coherency and a good command of language. The candidate used an appropriate tone throughout.

**Answer:**

*J Murphy  
Long road  
London*

*Dear William*

*Hope you are well I am looking forward to see you. The weather back here is great your family is great. I still go hunting every Sunday and I go cutting grass to make a bit of money for the picture. All my friends and me put the money together for a moto bike.*

*We get a new principal in school and she made good changes. The fields we used to go hunting are building houses now.  
see you soon  
love  
john*

**Marks awarded: 24 ex 60**

The candidate partially fulfilled the criteria and presented the information in letter format. The letter is poorly developed and lacks the coherency and flow to gain a higher grade. There is also very little content in order to award higher marks.

#### **SECTION 4 POETRY**

Questions A and B required the candidates to locate information in the poem.

##### **Question C**

**What kind of surprise will mother get? (Stanza 4)  
What do you think she will say or do?**

**Answer:**

*The surprise mother will get is a snake. I think she will say get out of here if you think you can have a snake, dog's bad enough. God no! they are too long, too skinny they could kill me or even you. that is what I think the mother would say.*

**Marks awarded: 10 ex 10**

The candidate described the mother's reaction based on her reaction to dogs in the poem.

**Answer:**

*Mother will get snake.*

**Marks awarded: 4 ex 10**

The candidate identified the surprise but did not provide a reaction.

##### **Question D**

**From your reading of the poem, describe the mother or the poet.**

**Answer:**

*I think the mother is a very houseproud mother who is always cleaning up or doing washing or something to keep busy. I think this because she complains about dogs leaving tracks on*

*the floor and doing disgraceful things on rugs. I also think Mother is a person who likes peace because she doesn't like the doggy snore.*

**Marks awarded: 10 ex 10**

The candidate gave an opinion clearly grounded in the poem and expressed this opinion in a coherent manner.

**Answer:**

*The mother is grumpy because she won't let him have a dog.*

**Marks awarded: 4 ex 10**

The candidate failed to capture the personality of the mother as indicated in the poem.

### **Question E**

**Think about a poem you have studied that described:**

**Something Cruel or A Sad person or A beautiful place**

**Name the poem and the poet**

**Tell the story of the poem**

**Explain why it was cruel or sad or beautiful**

**Answer:**

*The poem I have studied is called Mid Term Break by Seamus Heaney  
The poem is about a sad person and also very sad family but they all show it in different ways.  
The poem is about the death of a young boy who is killed by a car while the poet is at school.*

*When the poet comes home he is shocked to see his father crying on the footsteps of his house.  
The baby is happy to see him. The mother takes his hand but she doesn't cry  
she "coughs out angry tearless sighs" In the morning the poet goes to his brother's body.  
The poet gives us a sad but gentle image, he says "snowdrops and candles soothed the  
bedside". In the end of the poem we find out the age of the poet's brother when he says "he  
lay in his box as in his cot, a four foot box, a foot for every year.*

*I think this poem was very sad because it really showed the pain the whole family went  
through. In the end we find out the age of him it is even more sad he could only live till he  
was four. It is very sad to think how a family could suffer.*

**Marks awarded: 20 ex 20**

The candidate demonstrated competency in making reference to both imagery and language as appropriate to this level. The candidate clearly fulfilled all the requirements for this section.

**Answer:**

*The lake isle of inisfree  
I will arise and go now  
and go o inisfree  
it is nice and peaceful  
and birds whistle in the trees*

**Marks awarded: 4 ex 20**

The candidate did not fulfill the requirements of this section.

## **SECTION 5 FICTION**

Questions A to C required the candidates to locate information in the extract.

### **Question D**

**Do you think Mog had a good life?  
Give two reasons for your answer.**

**Answer:**

*No, I do not think that Mog had a good life. Mog was an orphan and never got the love a child should get from a mother and father. Mog was badly paid and had to work while he should have been in school with his friends.*

**Marks awarded: 10 ex 10**

This candidate gave an articulate response using evidence from the text and produced a well developed reason that demonstrated the candidate's understanding of being an orphan.

**Answer:**

*that he was an orphan and it was hard*

**Marks awarded: 3 ex 10**

The candidate failed to meet the criteria to provide 2 reasons to support their answer.

## Question E

Think about a NOVEL or SHORT STORY you have studied.

Name the novel or short story

Describe a part where a character was Lonely or Afraid or Angry

Explain why this character was Lonely or Afraid or Angry

Explain what happened to this character at the end of the novel or short story.

**Answer:**

*The novel I have studied is called Roll of Thunder hear my Cry. by M Taylor  
The story is about a young black girl called Cassie Loagon who lives with her family in the South of America in the 1930's. Life was hard for them because they were hated by white folks.*

*There was a lot of times when Cassie was afraid. But one time more than others. She was with her brothers watching a lot of white people go to her friends house JJ in the middle of the night and pull him and his family out of the house they wanted to hang him.*

*Cassie was afraid because she thought they were going to hang her best friend and because it was a frightening situation.*

*It was nearly the end of the book when this happened to her friend but then Mr Jonson came to stop it all. Then there was a big fire in the fields and everybody had to go an put it out which stopped all the violence and cassie and her family were all safe together.*

**Marks awarded: 20 ex 20**

The candidate followed the requirements of the question and presented the information in a coherent manner and demonstrated a clear understanding of the question

**Answer:**

*the novel is harry potter.  
harry potter is afrid when the bascilus came afer him  
he was angry beause t riddle killed his parens  
he defetid the bakails and tom riddle harry was in hosabal for the day or to*

**Marks awarded: 6 ex 20**

The candidate attempted to follow the guidelines in the question but clearly did not have sufficient vocabulary to present well developed answers.

## SECTION 6 DRAMA

Questions A and B require the candidate to locate information in the text.

### Question D

Mr Smith     “You’re a fool, the worst neighbour I ever had”  
Mr Jones     “I’ll show you who is a fool”  
Mr Smith     “Just try it”

**Describe the actions that Mr Smith and Mr Jones would use in playing these lines?  
Give a reason for your answer.**

**Answer:**

*They are putting a fist up and pointing fingers at each other, they are doing this because they are angry and fighting.*

**Marks awarded: 10 ex 10**

The candidate made a clear attempt to describe individual actions and gave a valid reason for their choice.

**Answer:**

*they are using an aggressive action because they are giving out fighting*

**Marks awarded: 6 ex 10**

Candidate correctly identified the type of actions used but failed to fully develop their response.

### Section E

**Think about a play or film you have studied.  
Choose a scene which was either Exciting or Sad**

**Name the play or film  
Describe the scene  
Explain what made this scene either exciting or sad**

**Answer:**

*The play I studied is called Our Day Out By Willy Russell*

*The scene I picked is the one where the girl, carol is on the cliff and she wants to jump off because she hates her life and all she talked about is having a nice garden and a nice house.*

*Mr Briggs comes along and is not stric and talks to her nice and makes her want to come down by making a promise to do something nice. Carol comes down and is happy again.*

*The scene was sad because Carol only wanted a small thing and ordinary things not anything special but she did not get it and Briggs broke his promise.*

**Marks awarded: 16 ex 20**

The candidate fulfilled the question requirements and presented reasonably well developed responses to the question asked.

**Answer:**

*Buddy Song  
Buddy find out his dad was robbing he started crying  
It was sad because his dad cut his hand*

**Marks awarded: 3 ex 20**

The candidate failed to meet he basic requirements of the question. This candidate demonstrated very little understanding of the task required and was unable to articulate a clear response.

## **SECTION 7 MEDIA STUDIES**

Questions A and B required the candidates to locate information in the text.

### **Question C**

**Choose one of the advertisements Pages 2 and 3 of Paper X.**

**Where would you expect to see this advertisement?  
Give two reasons for your answer.**

**Answer:**

*I choose paper x page 3  
You would expect to see this advertisement in video shops because people would go who liked movies and because children would also go there and this ad looks like it's made mostly for children.*

**Marks awarded: 6 ex 10**

The candidate made a competent assessment of an appropriate location for the ad but was unable to fully articulate the reasons for this choice.

**Answer:**

*Ice Age 2 on the Tv  
Because I see it on Tv  
Because I heard it.*

**Marks awarded: 3 ex 10**

Candidate could not competently articulate the required response.

#### **Question D**

**Look at both advertisements.**

**Which advertisement do you think young children would like better?  
Give a reason for your answer.**

**Answer:**

*I think young children would like the advertisement better on page 2 because it plays on the weakness in all children by putting funny animals in a world which would attract both boys and girls. The one on page three would attract only girls and maybe only girls a little older.*

**Marks awarded: 10 ex 10**

A very well developed response for a candidate at this level demonstrating an understanding of the techniques of advertising.

**Answer:**

*Ice age 2 is funny so kids will like it.*

**Marks awarded: 3 ex 10**

The candidate's response is poorly developed and demonstrates no understanding of advertising.

#### **Question E**

**Look at both advertisements again.**

**Which advertisement do you like better?  
Give two reasons for your answer.**

**Answer:**

*I like the advertisement better on page 3 because of the colour they use really catches me, the purple looks very powerful and the orange very exciting. I like it too because of the buzz*

*words they use like “Save the world” that makes a strong statement and might encourage young girls to good things to help the planet.*

**Marks awarded: 20 ex 20**

An excellent response, well articulated and demonstrating an excellent understanding of media studies.. Ambitious use of language and structure for this level.

**Answer:**

*Ice Age 2 because funny look and I saw the film*

**Marks awarded: 6 ex 20**

The candidate fulfils the basic requirements of the question but fails to develop these responses or demonstrate an understanding of advertisement or articulate a well developed opinion.

### **3 Ordinary Level**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Junior Certificate Ordinary Level English Paper is comprised of seven sections each of which aims to test the candidate's knowledge of the syllabus at this level.

The sections in 2006 are as follows:

- Section 1: Reading
- Section 2: Personal Writing
- Section 3: Functional Writing
- Section 4: Poetry
- Section 5: Fiction
- Section 6: Drama
- Section 7: Media Studies

Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 are compulsory.

Candidates may choose any two from the remaining three sections.

Each Section is marked out of a total of 60 marks.

The examination paper is marked out of a total of 360 marks,

The following table shows the number of candidates taking the subject at Ordinary level over the past four years:

**Junior Certificate English Ordinary Level**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Candidates</b>
<b>2006</b>	17645
<b>2005</b>	17554
<b>2004</b>	18087
<b>2003</b>	19076

### 3.2 PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

Examiners considered the examination paper to be a fair assessment of candidates at this level. The layout was found to be clear and the texts appropriate. Overall the paper appealed to candidates and enabled them to engage with the examination questions successfully.

In general, examiners were positive in their comments on the performance of candidates. In particular, they reported that Section 1: 'Reading', Section 3: 'Functional Writing', Section 4: 'Poetry' and Section 5: 'Fiction' were well answered. The range of questions in each section provided candidates with the opportunity to achieve at various levels of discrimination, as indicated by the grade distribution in the table below.

**Junior Certificate English Ordinary Level - 2006**

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	NG	Candidates
<b>Number</b>	1349	5167	7396	3476	214	41	2	17645
<b>%</b>	7.6	29.3	41.9	19.7	1.2	0.2	0.0	100
<b>Summary</b>		C+ 78.8%		19.7%		E- 1.5%		

For comparison purposes, the following table also shows the grade distribution at the same level in the previous three years.

**Junior Certificate English Ordinary Level**

2003	19076	8.8	31.1	40.0	79.9	18.9	1.0	0.1	0.0	1.1
2004	18060	7.6	29.5	42.5	79.6	19.2	1.1	0.1	0.0	1.2
2005	17518	7.4	28.4	43.5	79.3	19.4	1.2	0.1	0.0	1.3
<b>2006</b>	<b>17645</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.5</b>

### 3.3 ANALYSIS OF CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

#### Section 1 Reading

Examiners described Section 1 as an excellent introductory section based on an engaging text, ideal in length and appropriate in difficulty.

- Most candidates scored maximum marks in Part A.
- Candidates occasionally failed to give two reasons as required in Part B.
- In Part C1, candidates had no difficulty in explaining the phrase ‘My emotions were running riot’.
- In Part C2, the phrase ‘being more single-minded than was fair to those close to me’ presented some difficulty.
- In Part D, candidates easily pinpointed the dream and the reality.
- In Part E, many asked five interesting and detailed questions.

#### Section 2 Personal Writing

Every title was attempted. The choice of essay titles offered candidates an opportunity to be openly creative and to display their writing skills. A variety of topics, approaches and narrative styles were evident. Many candidates wrote skilfully in the limited time available.

The most popular essay topics were

- *The greatest challenge I have ever faced*
- *In five years time*
- *Things that really annoy me*

Also favoured were

- *The view from the top*
- *Write a story which at some point includes the sentence: You have no messages*

Few attempted title D, *My computer*. However, examiners noted that this title produced essays commenting on the importance of the computer as a tool for communicating.

The least frequently attempted and most poorly answered essay was topic G, *Winter*.

Topic F, *According to a 2006 survey, children nowadays prefer gadgets to pets*, produced some amusing responses

Examiners commented that candidates who displayed evidence of essay planning (webs, skeleton plans etc.) wrote more coherent essays and scored significantly higher marks.

#### Section 3 Functional Writing

Candidates were required to write a letter or a speech in this section.

Option A – *Write a letter inviting Pat Falvey to give a talk to the students in your school* - received the greatest candidate response. Candidates were comfortable with the letter format and hence scored high marks in this section. They congratulated Pat Falvey, expressed delight

and pride in his achievement and invited him to their school. The ability to refer to the Reading Section was a valuable aid for many candidates.

Option B – a speech for or against the motion, *People today are rude and inconsiderate* – elicited answers of varying quality. This motion failed to engage many candidates. In the 2005 paper the debate option was linked to the reading section of the paper, which provided candidates with a valuable stimulus. For some candidates, making comprehensive and various points to support or argue the motion proved difficult. Those who were against the motion found it harder to provide convincing reasons. When attempted by weaker candidates, responses were too short and lacked development. Higher achieving candidates wrote well-developed, well-argued, coherent speeches.

#### **Section 4      Poetry**

Poetry, being a compulsory section this year, may have caused anxiety for candidates who would rather avoid this question. However, the poem provided was accessible and well suited to the cohort and questions on it were answered competently. Part A, proved a suitable ‘lead-in’ question – candidates selected quotations from different stanzas and gave reasons for their choice. In Part B, candidates selected who they believed, was responsible for the child’s isolation and could adequately support their choice. In Parts C and D candidates were able to make the initial selection. However, answers to *Why? Why not?* certainly discriminated between candidates.

In Part E there was less evidence of prepared answers with candidates responding specifically to the questions asked.

#### **Section 5      Fiction**

Examiners regarded the extract as being very appropriate for Ordinary Level candidates. The section presented candidates with a good opportunity to attain marks, with most candidates scoring full marks in Part A1 and Part A2.

In Part B candidates correctly identified what Mossie thought of Valentine cards. Responses tended to be brief and few candidates gave more than one point.

In Part C candidates had little difficulty in pinpointing different pieces of information to support their analysis of Mossie’s character and personality.

While candidates had no difficulty in selecting their favourite paragraph in Part D, they were unable to offer sufficient support for their choice. In providing reasons candidates tended to repeat the content of the paragraph rather than referring to any stylistic devices.

Part E was well answered. Candidates followed the prompts rather than summarising the studied text. The novel was the preferred genre.

## **Section 6      Drama**

The extract appeared to engage candidates of every ability – the nice brother / bad brother concept appealed to them. Nevertheless, although candidates did comprehend this section, they failed to gain as many marks here as they did in earlier sections since as the questions demanded more detailed analysis.

In Part A, insights into Billy's character were presented without enough supporting detail to gain full marks.

The diary entries in Part B highlighted the candidates' ability to comprehend the extract. Candidates identified Billy as being determined and excited about training a kestrel; they noted his complaints about his brother's treatment of him and recognised Billy's disappointment that his mother did not show more interest in his plans. Some candidates produced an actual diary entry as Billy: others produced objective third person accounts / prompts of what Billy might write in his diary.

In Part C, candidates merely stated that both boys, but especially Billy, had a good relationship with their mother. Candidates only gave scant evidence from the extract to support their answers. Few noted the dismissive element in the parent child relationship.

Candidates produced good attempts at dialogue in Part D. Many dialogues were amusing and the majority realistic. Many included stage directions, asides, exclamation marks, pauses and questions.

In Part E, the favoured option was a play. Examiners noted that candidates responded positively to the prompts. There was less evidence of a previous tendency to focus on storytelling. Candidates were willing to give their personal response when stating if they were satisfied or not with how the disagreement was settled.

## **Section 7      Media Studies**

This was the least favoured and most poorly answered of the optional sections on the paper. In general, the standard of answering was disappointing in this section.

In Part A, candidates selected the more eye-catching advertisement but failed to gain full marks for the reasons given for their selection.

In Part B1, candidates could locate the information from the advertisement, but in B2, they failed to give a coherent account of why they were / were not convinced by the advertisement.

In Part C, answers referred to the products rather than the techniques employed in the advertisements – layout, copy, image, target audience, etc.

In Part D, candidates only made general statements as to how to improve the message in either advertisement.

Part E elicited some excellent responses.

### **3.4 CONCLUSIONS**

- The majority presenting for the Ordinary Level were correctly entered at this level.
- The general standard of answering was good and candidates were rewarded for their efforts.
- Candidates performed best in Sections 1: Reading, Section 4: Poetry and Section 5: Fiction.
- The layout of the paper, the suitability of question wording, the allocation of time and the distribution of marks were appropriate for this level.
- Candidates at this level can readily locate / identify information required in texts. However, responses are deficient in support of their choices.

### **3.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS**

- Emphasis should be placed in the classroom on examination technique such as the appropriateness of answer length relative to mark allocations for questions.
- Higher achieving candidates, in particular, should be discouraged from answering an extra section, as this may lessen their chance of attaining a higher grade in the examination.
- Candidates should be encouraged to develop their answers further by drawing on multiple textual clues rather than relying on random text quotation to support their ideas and opinions.
- Candidates should be encouraged to practise planning responses (webs, skeleton plans, etc.) in order to obtain higher marks, particularly in the Personal Writing and Functional Writing sections of the examination.
- Candidates should be familiar with the terminology necessary to understand and answer questions, particularly in Drama and Media Studies.
- The technical aspects of language – spelling, grammar, punctuation, paragraphing and syntax – need to be addressed further.

### 3.6 EXEMPLARS OF STANDARD

The following is a selection of exemplar material from scripts of candidates who sat the Junior Certificate Ordinary Level English Paper, 2006

These exemplars should be read in conjunction with the Examination Paper and the Marking Scheme utilised for purposes of assessing candidates' answers.

The exemplars are reproduced as they were written.

Candidates' answers are typed in italics.

#### SECTION 1 READING

##### Question B

**From your reading of the passage, give *two* reasons why climbing Mount Everest is a very exciting adventure.**

**Answer:**

*I think climbing on mount Everest is a very exciting adventure because the way the writer describes his adventure and the moment he's about to cross the highest platform on earth. The language he uses in terms of the mountain. The emotions that the writer is feeling. "My emotions were running riot" I think it gives you a great description of how the writer felt as he was on Mount Everest and I think it would be a great experience for any person on earth.*

**Mark**            10 ex 10  
**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she expressed two relevant reasons why climbing Mount Everest is a very exciting adventure

**Answer:**

*To be able to make it so far the only Irishman. To know that he could do this.*

**Mark**            4 ex 10  
**Awarded:**

The candidate's answer did not wholly fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer required fuller expression of the two reasons for full marks.

## Question D

**In paragraph 5, Pat Falvey tells us that he had stepped “from dreamland into ... reality”.**

**What was the dream? What was the reality?**

**Answer:**

*His years of dreaming his dream was to climb Mount Everest because he wanted to do this for much of his life. The reality was that this was actually real and he was actually standing on top of the “highest platform on earth” after all his years of dreaming and planning he finally got what he wanted.*

**Mark** 10 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer identified what was the dream and what was the reality

**Answer:** *It was waiting to do it and the reality was doing it*

**Mark** 4 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate's answer did not wholly fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer required fuller engagement of the rubric for full marks.

## SECTION 2 PERSONAL WRITING

### Question F

**According to a 2006 survey, children nowadays prefer gadgets to pets. Imagine that you are one of the pets on page 4 of paper X. Write about your reasons for leaving home.**

**Answer:**

*My name is Patch. I am a dog on my travels with my best friend Fred. He's a fish. He's so easy to talk to. I know your probably thinking he's a fish they only have a ten second memory, but he's my pal. That other little creature is Marcy the mouse. We have our disagreements now and then because she is so stubborn, but I'll live, if you know what I mean.*

*Well enough of them. As I said I am on my travels leaving home like it's all because of my owner Alan, he's so full of it. Well we got along grand when I was a young lad and as I grew a bit older he would give me a fair bit of attention, but on birthdays and Christmas I would be left in the corner to play with wrapping paper. You cannot resist the wrapping paper with all the beautiful colours and... Em in anyway it's all these new gadgets and gizmos that gets on my nerves and many peoples back. In the old days people would rather bring their dogs for a walk, feed their fish, but no, all these new stereo systems, DVD's, PS2's, it's unbelievable the amount of money they spend on these gadgets.*

*My owner Alan just bought a new set of decks, you know he's a D.J. or a least is trying to be. The noise is excruciating when your trying to get a lie-in in the morning. Even his parents are at it. They love his decks, and his father is on the computer day and night. His little sister Megan, yes her as well! She always played with Marcy, that's the mouse. She got an I pod for her birthday, never takes the thing out of her ears.*

*That was it. We decided to leave. If they we're not going to give us attention then we*

*were leaving home. We gathered our belongings together and I left a note to Alan saying, “ Dear Alan, Marcy, Fred and I have decided to leave you. It just wasn’t working out with all those gadgets around us. You never gave us a chance.*

*Goodbye . Yours sincerely, Patch, Fred and Marcy.”*

*And now here we are on our way down the highway with fear in our eyes of who will get knocked down first, or end up arguing with a cat while they are all sitting at home enjoying the comforts of living in a house. Well forget them, who needs humans. Not me, no way.*

*“Patch”, says Fred. “Yes” says Patch. “lets go home”, says Fred.*

**Mark** 55 ex 60

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for awarding of marks in that he/she displayed a good sense of the task set.

**Answer:**

*If I was a pet living in a house with someone who preferred gadgets I would leave home. I would leave home because I wouldn’t be loved. I would be just left at home watching my owner play with his new gadgets. I would leave home because my owner will have forgotten to feed me or clean out my house because they spend all their time playing with their new gadgets. I would break free someday and leave home because I wouldn’t be loved or get any attention or have anyone or anything to play with. I would just leave home.*

**Mark** 22 ex 60

**awarded:**

The candidate did not entirely fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in so far as his/her answer described key impressions, experiences in a very general way which showed a limited ability to write on the topic. Spelling and punctuation was good.

### SECTION 3 FUNCTIONAL WRITING

#### Question A.

Write a letter inviting Pat Falvey (who climbed Mount Everest - see Section 1, READING) to give a talk to the students in your school.

You should include in your letter

- when you would like Mr Falvey to come
- why you have chosen him

Answer:

*Girl's Comprehensive School  
17 Barrytown  
Dublin  
(01) - 1234567*

4/1/06

*Dear Mr. Falvey,*

*I am writing to you on behalf of my class. We have been studying your work and what you have accomplished in your time. My class would like you to attend our school for a day to talk to us about your accomplishment.*

*My class admire you and your work and we would appreciate if you could come to the address above for a guest speech.*

*You will be greeted at the door by a student who will give you a tour. Then to the class room to give a speech and answer questions. Light refreshments will be accompanied.*

*We would all be grateful if you could come to our school. The 'phone number and address is above for your reply.*

*Thank you very much.*

*Yours sincerely,*

**Mark** 47 ex 60  
**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer displayed a good sense of the task set

**Answer:**

*Dear Mr. Falvey I would like to invite you to our post primary to talk about your journey up the highest mountain in the world. All the students want to hear how exciting it is to have climbed the mountain and come back down. I have chosen you I am a big fan.*

*Yours sincerely,*

**Mark** 26 ex 60  
**awarded:**

The candidate's answer did not wholly fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer did not fully engage with the tasks set by the question.

## Question B FOR OR AGAINST

You have been chosen as a member of the Class Debating Team. The motion for debate is:

*People today are rude and inconsiderate.*

You need to

- **decide whether you are for or against the motion**
- **think about the points you are going to make**
- **plan the order in which you will make them**

Now write your **SPEECH** in full.

### Answer:

*Ladies, and gentlemen and fellow students I am here today to talk about people today that are rude and inconsiderate. People today care nothing about anyone only themselves. They do not care what they say to people which might be very rude and might hurt the persons feelings. They say it because they think that they are better than everyone else and that it will make them look good if they call people names and jeer them. People today especially young people will shout at you across a street to call you names to make themselves look cool while all they are doing is making a fool of themselves. They never think about what they are about to say, they just blurt it out which might hurt some ones feelings.*

*People today will just walk all over you. If you are walking on a footpath they will practically push you out of the way to get past instead of just saying excuse me. This is extremely rude and inconsiderate. They will do this especially to old people because maybe they are slow at walking or unable to get around well. This is awful to see because when we get older we will not want to be treated the way old people are today. If someone drops something they will not even help the person. This is a very rude and impolite thing to do. I think that these people should be taught some respect.*

*People today like to leave people out because maybe they are different or strange looking. This is very inconsiderate and a very mean thing to do. I know that there are people out there not rude, but the majority of them are rude and inconsiderate. I think that this is clearly shown in the points that I have just read out. I urge you to agree with this motion that people today are rude and inconsiderate.*

*Thank You.*

**Mark**            56 ex 60  
**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer displayed a very good sense of the task set and was coherently written in an appropriate register.

**Answer:**

*I am against the motion because not everybody is rude and inconsiderate. The point I'm trying to make is like this, you can't judge a book by its cover. Fair enough, there are a lot of people rude and inconsiderate but not everybody is like, because most of the people are nice and respectful to other people.*

**Mark**

**awarded:** 23 ex 60

The candidate did not fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she required much fuller engagement with the task set in order to achieve full marks

**SECTION 4: POETRY****Question A**

**What words or phrases throughout the poem suggest that the child was isolated or unpopular? Explain why you have chosen these words or phrases.**

**Answer:**

*The words or phrases the child uses throughout the poem that suggests the child was isolated or unpopular are: "played by myself", "alone", "I hated dolls and I hated games", "birds flew away", "hid behind a tree", cried out "go away". The phrase played by myself I chose as it tells us she has no friends. "Alone" because she had no one and felt alone. "hated dolls and hated games" because there is no one to play with so she would feel isolated and unpopular. "Birds flew away", I choose this because she is alone, no one played with her, not even animals, she felt nothing liked her. "Hid behind a tree", "Go away". She didn't want anyone near her because she felt isolated and unwanted.*

**Mark**

10 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she provided appropriate evidence elicited from the poem

**Answer:**

*"I played by myself in a corner of the schoolyard all alone." I have chosen this phrase because it explains best how the child was isolated or alone*

**Mark**

**awarded:** 4 ex 10

The candidate did not fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she required fuller explanation of the chosen words or phrases

**Question D**

**Would you like to have this child as your friend?**

**Why? Why not?**

**Answer:**

*I would like to have the child as a friend so I could play with him, build up his confidence, encourage him to talk to new people and to make new friends and to feel a better person.*

)

**Mark****awarded:** 10 ex 10

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer displayed a good sense of the task set

**Answer:**

*No. I wouldn't because he wouldn't be fun to play with because he doesn't like dolls or games.*

**Mark****awarded:** 4 ex 10

The candidate did not fulfil the criteria for the awarding of full marks in that he/she required to develop his/her explanation of attitude.

**SECTION 5 FICTION****Question C**

**From your reading of this passage, what sort of boy do you think Mossie is?**

**Answer:**

*From my reading of this passage I think Mossie is an intelligent boy but doesn't have the slightest clue about love. He disagrees with love, thinks it is too slushy and I get the mpression that he hates girls and doesn't want anything to do with them.*

**Mark**

8 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she provided evidence elicited from the passage as to what sort of boy Mossie is.

**Answer:**

*Smart boy, does not like getting messed around.*

**Mark**

3 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate did not fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she required fuller explanation or expressed opinion.

**Question D**

**Choose a paragraph in the text which you like best. Explain why you have chosen this paragraph.**

**Answer:**

*I like paragraph three as it is extremely descriptive and refers to the heart that it can never be broken. Literally. Yet Mossie is a little immature as he does not sense that it can be broken by love. "Hearts couldn't long for anything", yet once again he does not see what his admirer means, 'I long for your love'. I think it is a sweet and meaningful passage.*

**Mark** 10 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she provided adequate explanation for chosen paragraph

**Answer:**

*I like paragraph five because it was very funny when he was asking what SWALK was.*

**Mark** 4 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate's answer did not wholly fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that his/her answer only gave a general outline

## **SECTION 6 DRAMA**

### **Question B**

**Basing your answer on your reading of the scene, write what you think Billy would put in his diary entry that night.**

**Answer:**

*Dear Diary, Today Jud nearly broke my arm because I wouldn't tell him where the kestrel's nest was. He got it out of me anyway. He is gone out to find a 'bird' of his own. He really annoys me. I'm reading a book on falconry and am going to train a kestrel. I think it will really help. Write soon. Billy.*

**Mark** 9 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she displayed a good sense of the task set.

**Answer:**

*That he is going to get a young kestrel tonight and bring it home and train it.*

**Mark** 4 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate did not fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she required more detailed answer

### **Question D**

**Write the dialogue (about 10 lines) which could have taken place between the two brothers when Jud returns home several hours later that night.**

**Answer:**     *Jud    I'm home! (crashes in the door)*  
                  *Billy  I'm trying to sleep Jud! Be quiet!*

*Jud I have one of those kestrel things in my jacket want to see?*  
*Billy Don't lie Jud! Now shh I'm trying to sleep ( Billy hears a chirp and jumps up)*  
*Billy Don't hurt it. Give it here!*  
*Jud (Passes the bird and says) a present from me to you.*  
*Billy Really? Why?*  
*Jud Well I'm not all that bad, just take it.*  
*Billy Thank you Jud. What will we name it?*  
*Jud Keith, the kestrel!*

**Mark** 10 ex 10  
**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she displayed a good sense of the task set

**Answer:** *Brother We are getting a young kestrel*  
*Jud No ye are not*  
*Brother Yes we are*  
*Jud Ye don't know anything about them*  
*Brother Yes we do*  
*Jud No ye don't*  
*Brother We are going to get the kestrel*  
*Jud You don't have a clue about them*  
*Brother I know more than you*  
*Jud No you don't*

**Mark** 4 ex 10  
**awarded:**

The candidate did not entirely fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in so far as his/her answer did not display a good sense of the task set

## **SECTION 7 MEDIA STUDIES**

Examine carefully the advertisements on pages 2 and 3 of Paper X. Then, answer the questions.

### **Question A.**

**Which of the two advertisements do you find more eye-catching? Give reasons for your answer.**

### **Answer:**

*I find the advertisement on page 3 is more eye-catching because there is a lot more colour, the picture is big so it's eye-catching. The writing you are what you eat, the slogan is big and bold black writing, so it really catches the eye. Lead a Muller Life, the logo Muller is an eye-catching red warm colour and the writing big and bold*

**Mark** 10 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she expressed relevant reasons for the advertisement they chose as eye-catching

**Answer:**

*The first advert because it is colourful and the writing is bigger*

**Mark** 4 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate did not fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she required fuller expression of the rubric for full marks.

**Question C.**

**Describe one way in which the two advertisements are alike or unlike?**

**Answer:**

*There unlike because the first ad is not detailed enough not scientific, just pictures of candy and a boy. It is more fun. The second advertisement is full of colour, catches the eye it gives you information on good bacteria more scientific it has guidelines to being full of vitality. It uses good language and colours. The colour blue is fresh.*

**Mark** 10 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate fulfilled the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she identified and described why the advertisements are unlike

**Answer:**

*There is more writing on the first one. There is more pictures on the second one.*

**Mark** 3 ex 10

**awarded:**

The candidate did not fulfil the criteria for the awarding of marks in that he/she did not relate fully what influenced his/her answer

## **4. Higher Level**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Junior Certificate Higher Level English is examined by means of two papers.

Paper One and Paper Two each carry a total of 180 marks

Paper One is comprised of four sections each of which is compulsory and aims to test the candidate's knowledge of the syllabus at this level.

The sections are as follows:

Section 1: Reading, which is marked out of 40 marks

Section 2: Personal Writing, which is marked out of 70 marks

Section 3: Functional Writing, which is marked out of 30 marks

Section 4: Media Studies, which is marked out of 40 marks

Paper Two consists of four sections each of which is compulsory and aims to test the candidate's knowledge of the syllabus at this level.

Section 1: Drama, which is marked out of 60 marks

Section 2: Poetry, which is marked out of 60 marks

Section 7: Fiction, which is marked out of 60 marks

The examination is marked out of a total of 360 marks,

The following table shows the number of candidates taking the subject at Higher Level over the past four years:

<b>Year</b>	<b>2003</b>		<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>		<b>2006</b>	
<b>Higher</b>	37023	62.9%	35725	63.4%	36161	64.55%	37145	65%

## 4.2 PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

Candidates dealt well with the Higher Level examination and, for the most part, the 2006 Junior Certificate Higher Level English papers suited the candidate cohort that presented. At times though it was clear that candidates were choosing to answer sparingly, even minimally, rather than seeing questions as invitations to explore the territory they had studied and to express the breadth and depth of their learning and understanding.

It is always impressive to see the competence and skill of which candidates are capable when challenged by searching questions. This is typically reflected in many substantial, though not necessarily long, answers given at this level.

Within the context of this pleasing response, however, it is necessary to sound a quiet warning about the continued rise in the uptake by candidates at this level. It is evident from the table below that Higher Level English continues to draw candidates who might be better advised to attempt the Ordinary Level. Such candidates' answering was characterised by difficulties of expression, poor command of conventions, absence of insight, and seriously underdeveloped answers

The following table shows the percentage of candidates achieving grades A – N/G in the 2006 examination and in the examinations of the three previous years.

	A	B	C	C+	D	E	F	N/G
<b>2003</b>	7.9	29	41	77.9	20.5	1.5	0.1	0
<b>2004</b>	11.4	27.1	38.4	76.9	21.2	1.8	0.1	0
<b>2005</b>	10.3	26.9	38.8	75.8	22.2	1.6	.1	0
<b>2006</b>	11.4	28.5	37.7	77.6	20.8	1.5	.1	0

## 4.3 ANALYSIS OF CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

### PAPER 1

#### Section 1: Reading (40 Marks)

The reading passage, 'In Praise of Goldfish', from the RTE 1 radio programme "Sunday Miscellany" was accessible and well suited to the abilities of the candidates.

**1. Why does the writer recommend a goldfish as a pet? Support your answer with evidence from the first paragraph of the passage.**

Answering to this question was generally very good. The target paragraph was short and the information required easily accessed. At higher levels of performance candidates provided a well-structured answer supported by suitably edited quotation or reference.

**2. What historical facts about goldfish do you learn from reading this passage?**

The passage provided much information though candidates had to determine what was historical fact and what was not. At lower levels of performance candidates tended to provide unedited lists of mixed information. At higher levels of performance candidates edited the passage to produce a clear set of correct, historical facts which were presented in a suitably structured answer.

**3. The author is dismissive of the idea of a cartoon based on the traditional animosity between cats and fish. Do you agree with him? Give reasons for your answer, based on the third paragraph of the passage.**

This question, which called on candidates' critical and analytical faculties, drew a mixed range of answers. At lower levels of performance candidates tended to provide no more than a blunt statement of agreement or disagreement with the author, without supporting their view by reference to the text. At higher levels of performance candidates were able to make a leap of the imagination into the fantastic world of cartoons and present their answers in the form of well supported argument for or against the author's view as documented in the question.

**4. Did you find this passage entertaining? Give reasons for your answer.**

It was a passage with significant detail and a quirky and ironic style. It proved accessible to candidates of all abilities and stimulated some very good answering at the higher performance levels. The most common defect in answering lay in the failure to exploit the text. Better answering was characterised by concise understanding and the ability to select from the passage in an appropriate manner.

## **Section 2: Personal Writing (70 Marks)**

This section offers candidates their best opportunity for a creative and personal response. As is the case every year, some candidates demonstrated marvellous ability in imaginative and stylish writing. Weaker answering was characterised by monotonous narrative, unrelieved by pace or dynamics.

The range of titles drew a good response, with each title being selected. The relative popularity of each title is given in the comments below.

The frequency of errors of grammar, punctuation, idiomatic usage and appropriateness of register was also of concern. The emergence of the mobile phone and the rise of text messaging as a popular means of communication would appear to have impacted on standards of writing as evidenced in the responses of candidates. Expertise in text messaging and email in particular would appear to have affected spelling and punctuation. Text messaging, with its use of phonetic spelling and little or no punctuation, seems to pose a threat to traditional conventions in writing.

### **1 The pet (real or imaginary) that I would most like to keep.**

A popular choice which drew a wide range of real, imaginary and fantastical pets in response.

### **2 The talking goldfish.**

Another popular choice, perhaps drawing on the thematic link with the reading passage which had gone before.

### **3 Fictional characters I would like to meet.**

A less popular choice. Most candidates drew inspiration from studied texts. However, some who chose this topic seemed well read, especially in history, culture and the arts.

### **4 A day in my life that I would like to relive.**

A popular choice which drew a very wide range of response. The title did prompt some attempts which suggested that candidates were depending on prepared or memorised answers. While candidates should prepare through regular practice it seems ill advised that they would replace regular practice with memorisation of stock answers.

### **5 Write a composition including the line, “It had been a lot of hard work and had taken ages but, in the end, it was worth the effort.”**

Again a popular choice which produced many well written answers. Candidates were careful to include the line given in the title in the course of their writing.

### **6 Everyone deserves a second chance.**

Another popular choice with many and varied responses. The diversity of scenarios and plots was impressive.

**7 Look at the picture on Page 1 of Paper X, which accompanies this examination paper, and write a composition inspired by it.**

This title, based on a picture of a dog with coiffed hairstyle, drew few responses. Of those who did attempt it some wrote very well. It is often the case that high performing candidates welcome the challenge of an unusual or bizarre title to stimulate their imagination.

**8 Write a speech for or against the motion: ‘Having a job during the school year is bad for Second Level students.’**

Most candidates avoid the speech option. Invariably it is those candidates who have had experience of writing and delivering speeches who do well on this option. The title this year, however, appealed to more than the usual minority. Good answering was characterised by a sound knowledge of the rhetorical style and well fashioned personal response in presenting and illustrating the argument.

**Section 3: Functional Writing (70 Marks)**

This section assesses the syllabus requirement of competence in social literacy. Harmony between the content to be communicated and a form of expression appropriate to the audience being addressed characterises good answers in this section. Functional writing is an acquired skill and must be taught and learned. While answering was broadly satisfactory there are continuing grounds for concern with regard to the ability of candidates to write well in a variety of specific functional styles. During their study of the Junior Certificate English course candidates should have the opportunity for frequent practice of writing in a variety of formal situations.

Both questions proved more or less equally popular in this section.

- 1. A national newspaper has organised a ‘Person of the Year’ award. Write a letter to the editor nominating the person you think is most deserving of this award. You should explain why you think this person deserves the award.**

Although the content of answers was usually well selected, many answers were poorly structured and inappropriately expressed. Many candidates chose relatives as their nominees, which led to passionate, even if poorly argued and poorly structured, proposals. Better answering was characterised by well-structured and well-argued work, indicated by a clear introduction, a well-developed argument, and a clear, concluding statement.

- 2. Most books and DVDs have a short blurb on the outside of the back cover. Typically this is a brief text which describes and praises the plot, characterisation, acting, etc. Write such a blurb for any book or DVD of your choice.**

Candidates adapted well to the challenge of writing a blurb, and had few problems in producing broadly relevant answers. Concise and brief answers fared best. Weaker answers tended to go on at length without clear purpose.

#### **Section 4: Media Studies (40 Marks)**

The Media Studies section invites candidates to analyse, interpret and respond critically to different examples of Media texts. In discussing these texts candidates need to be sure to ground their views in the texts themselves. Too often opinion is baldly stated without the grounds for that opinion being demonstrated by reference to the relevant elements of the text under discussion.

- (a) This advertisement - for the 1999 National Ploughing Championships - provides the reader with very little written text. Much of what the advertisers want to communicate is conveyed visually. What do you think is communicated about the event by the picture?**

The picture prompt showed the furrowed brow of an elderly farmer beneath the peak of a tweed cap. While most candidates correctly identified it as such some were inspired to extraordinary and surreal interpretations of the image. All answers giving a clear and well-supported interpretation of the picture were accepted. .

- (b) Do you think this advertisement is effective in promoting the event? Explain your answer with reference to the advertisement.**

This question proved to be a good discriminator between candidates. At lower levels of performance unsupported statements of opinion typified answers. At higher levels answers showed awareness of the techniques of advertising which were correctly identified in the text and appropriately commented upon.

## **PAPER 2**

### **Section 1: Drama (60 Marks)**

Candidates answering the drama section are expected to interpret the word ‘play’ as either a stage play or screenplay. Drama is dynamic and comes alive when performed on stage or screen. Candidates, therefore, are expected to understand the written text of the play as a work which comes alive in performance. A fundamental awareness of stagecraft is expected, and is rewarded, where appropriately expressed, in answering. Well-prepared candidates bring their experience of performed drama to their responses.

Both options – ‘Shakespearean’ and ‘Other Drama’ – proved popular this year and many candidates demonstrated a clear capacity to understand, analyse and respond to the unseen extracts from each play.

**(A) Shakespearean Drama - 'The Winter's Tale'**

The general standard of answering was satisfactory. However, a significant number of candidates attempted all three options in question one on the Shakespearean extract, where the rubric required that only two of the three should be attempted. While candidates are not penalised for attempting all three questions, they could surely do better by dividing their time and attention across the two required answers.

**1. What impression do you get of the old shepherd *or* the son from this extract? Support your answer with reference to the text.**

Answering was generally good, though a small number of candidates made the mistake of answering on both characters instead of on one. At higher levels of performance candidates used the extract well, editing, analysing and explaining it as they wrote.

**2. Basing your answer on evidence from the above extract how do you think the old shepherd's life and that of his son will be changed as a result of discovering Perdita and the box.**

This question seemed to challenge candidates more than the first. At lower levels of performance answering tended to offer one single quotation from the text and to interpret that literally. At higher levels of performance answering was more comprehensive and thorough in its approach. Quotations and references were well selected, interpreted and used. Candidates showed awareness of the whole extract in answering.

**3. If this extract is to be staged and you are in charge of sound effects OR lighting, write an account of *how* and *why* you would use particular sound effects OR particular lighting effects in this drama. Support your answer with reference to the text.**

This was the least popular option. Answers ranged from random reference to stage directions in the extract to close reading of the dramatic text with insightful suggestions for appropriate theatrical effects.

**(B) Other Drama - 'Everyman'**

This option was most popular with those who also answered on a non-Shakespearean play as their studied text. Three questions were offered on the extract from which candidates were required to answer any two.

**1. What do you learn about the character of Everyman from this scene? Support your answer with reference to the text.**

Candidates were well able to provide a synopsis of the character of Everyman. At higher levels of performance answering was well supported by selective reference to the text.

- 2. Imagine you are Bisi or Companion or Poor Neighbour. Briefly describe the type of life you lead, based on evidence from the above extract.**

This question asked candidates to write a creative response based on one character as presented in the extract. At higher levels of performance answering was characterised by the ability of candidates to draw from the text and to add to it by penning a clear character portrait. At lower levels of performance candidates wrote vague answers with little or no reference to the extract. They also tended to write on more than one of the characters.

- 3. This extract is to be staged and you are the Director. How would you direct this scene with reference to one of the following:**

- (a) Gestures by the actors**
- (b) Costume/Dress to be worn by the actors**
- (c) How the characters should speak their lines.**

This was the least popular option. At higher levels of performance candidates showed knowledge and awareness of stagecraft, and were able to provide stage directions with relevance and insight. At lower levels of performance answers tended to confuse the three options (a), (b) and (c) and to write with little reference to the extract.

## **Q2. Studied Drama**

In this section candidates are required to answer on a text which they have studied as part of their coursework. They may use either a Shakespearean or modern text in response to either of the two questions on offer. Questions 1 & 2 were more or less equally popular though Q.2 tended to yield better quality answers.

- 1. Consider a character from a play you have studied. Choose a significant time of either good luck or bad luck which this character experiences.**

- (a) Briefly describe this experience of good luck or bad luck.**
- (b) Discuss how the character deals with it in the play.**

At higher levels of performance candidates broke this question down into its component parts and wrote well-structured responses. At lower levels candidates wrote broad, vague answers without dealing with the various elements of the question in a systematic way. In responding to part (b) there was a tendency to rely on mere plot summary rather than to argue an interpretation of the play showing the characters dealing with luck.

- 2. “Plays teach us lessons about life.”**

**Choose any play you have studied and explain how it has made you aware of any one of following: Love or Death or Conflict or Harmony. Explain your answer by reference to your chosen play.**

While apparently broad in its scope this question drew better quality answering overall. At higher levels of performance candidates were well able to relate ‘lessons about life’ to the play they discussed.

## Section: Poetry (60 Marks)

### Question 1: Unseen Poetry

The unseen poem on the paper, 'Van Gogh's Yellow Chair', by Mark Roper, proved an accessible and popular choice. There was a great variety of responses as candidates took up the challenge of personal interpretation. The multi-layered, open nature of the poem stimulated many personal and well argued interpretations.

- 1. "I would love to sit  
in the yellow chair  
in the painting..."**

**What is so appealing about Van Gogh's yellow chair, according to the speaker? Explain your answer with reference to the poem.**

This was the more popular option. Better answering addressed the literal meaning of relevant lines as well as suggesting interpretations inspired by the imagery. At lower levels of performance answering was vaguely focused and struggling to find something to say.

- 2. In your own words explain what is being said in the last three stanzas.**

This question called for an interpretation of the last three stanzas. At lower levels of performance answering concentrated on unsure summary. At higher levels of performance answering provided a convincing interpretation of the lines in question.

- 3. What is your favourite image from the poem? Explain your choice.**

Generally, there was substantial answering in response to this question. Too many candidates, however, simply selected an image and declined to explain their choice.

### Question 2: Studied Poetry

- 1. Take any poem you have studied which deals with wishes *or* thoughts.  
(a) What are the poet's main wishes OR thoughts in the poem?  
(b) Describe how *either* the imagery *or* the language of the poem contributes to the poet's expression of his/her thoughts or wishes. Explain your answer with referenceto the poem.**

Some candidates failed to adapt their chosen poem to the demands of the question and offered mere summary of the studied poem or commentary that was, at best, vaguely relevant. Candidates should be aware that responses of this kind do not attract high marks. More satisfying answering showed candidates able to adapt the content of their chosen poem so as to provide sharp and focused answers to the questions set.

2. **If you could invite a poet of your choice to your school, whom would you choose?**  
**(a) Explain your choice of poet with reference to the poet's work.**  
**(b) Choose your favourite poem by this poet and explain why you like it so much.**

This question was generally well answered though some candidates wrote an invitation to the poet rather than an appraisal of his/her work. (Close reading of the question is essential). Many candidates, however, wrote a critical analysis of their chosen poet's work with wide-ranging, appropriate referencing.

### **Section 3: Fiction (60 Marks)**

#### **Question 1: Unseen Text**

The text provided, from the novel 'Stone Cold' by Robert Swindells was accessible to candidates. Its simple and direct narrative ensured that candidates had no great difficulty in engaging with the text.

1. **Link says he is one of the 'invisible people'. Do you agree with him? Explain your answer by reference to the extract.**

At higher levels of performance answering focussed on the levels of interpretation of the word 'invisible'. At lower levels, answering tended to provide little more than a simple summary of Link's daily life with the concept of invisibility being largely ignored.

2. **Does the character of Link appeal to you? Explain your reasons with reference to the text.**

A popular question which drew candidates into the text. At higher levels of performance answering focused on both the attractive and unattractive aspects of Link's character and expressed a personal view on Link's way of life. At lower levels, answering focused unduly on descriptions of Link's lifestyle without attempting to assess its appeal.

3. **"Settled for the night? Well maybe, maybe not". Basing your views on what you have found in the text, why do you think Link might have said this?**

Another popular question which drew a wide range of response. At higher levels of performance answering was characterised by insightful editing of the extract in search of material to support the required explanation. Such answering was also well structured. At lower levels, the extract was merely scantly perused

#### **Question Two: Studied Fiction**

In this section candidates were offered a choice of two questions of which they had to answer one. Each question offered the option of selecting either a novel or a short story as the subject of the answer. The vast majority of candidates chose a novel, rather than a short story.

In terms of the answers supplied by candidates, question 2 seemed to prove both more difficult and popular than question 1.

- 1. Choose a novel OR short story that has a strong sense of place *or* setting.  
a) Describe this place *or* setting.**

In general, candidates handled this question well. When attempted, the concept of setting was well understood though most responses chose to comment on 'place'. At lower levels of performance candidates tended to write little more than summary lists of places referred to in their chosen text.

- b) How is this place *or* setting important in the novel or short story you have chosen? Support your answer with reference to the novel or short story.**

Many found this discussion challenging. Only at higher levels of performance were candidates able to integrate the role of place or setting into the broader themes and values of their chosen text.

- 2. From a novel OR short story you have studied, choose a character you would *either like to be or not like to be*. Explain your choice of character with reference to your chosen text.**

This proved to be a very accessible question giving opportunities for description, analysis and personal viewpoint. Most candidates were able to write substantial answers based on their personal preferences.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSIONS

- Candidates dealt well with the Higher Level examination and, for the most part, the 2006 Junior Certificate Higher Level English papers suited the candidate cohort that presented. At times though it was clear that candidates were choosing to answer sparingly, even minimally, rather than seeing questions as invitations to explore the territory they had studied and to express the breadth and depth of their learning and understanding.
- The breadth and balance of questions on this year's papers invited broad and telling responses from a great number of candidates.
- Most candidates coped admirably with the demands of the Higher Level examination. While some produced exceptionally impressive answers, there was some evidence that a significant number of candidates need to further develop their proficiency in the basic elements of personal expression through writing.
- The fact that over 77% of candidates received a C+ grade in the 2006 examination indicates that much that is good is being done by way of teaching and preparation for the examination.
- Candidates who excelled indicated that they had had a real grasp of style and genre coupled with much experience of writing for themselves. In many cases, however, candidates seemed unduly reliant on short sentences, simple tenses and a limited vocabulary.
- The emergence of the mobile phone and the rise of text messaging as a popular means of communication would appear to have impacted on standards of writing as evidenced in the responses of candidates taking the exam. Expertise in text messaging and email is affecting spelling and punctuation in particular. Text messaging, with its use of phonetic spelling and little or no punctuation, seems to pose a threat to traditional conventions in writing.
- Higher Level English continues to attract a number of candidates who might be better advised to attempt the Ordinary Level. Such candidates' answering was characterised in many instances by difficulties of expression, poor command of conventions, absence of insight, and underdeveloped answers
- At the lower end of performance candidates' answering was significantly marred by a lack of personal response which was probably due, in some cases, to the practice of drilling prepared, rote answers.

## 4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

- The Junior Certificate English Syllabus stresses the importance of the three literacies: personal, social and cultural. It is essential that candidates be taught and practiced in each of these.
- In sections such as Functional Writing candidates are expected to compose and express their ideas in a style or genre appropriate to their purpose. Good layout, sentence structure and paragraphing are all functions of this purpose. They are best acquired through studying good exemplars, good teaching and frequent practice in the art of writing.
- If candidates are to achieve their potential in this examination, they will need to have a grasp of the fundamentals of English grammar, spelling, punctuation and syntax.
- Concepts such as register, idiom and genre need to be addressed further and students need to be given frequent practice in producing a range of styles and genres if they are to be able to produce required formats under examination conditions.
- Students need to be introduced to the examination papers and their rubrics. Each year a minority of students squander their chances by failing to follow the instructions on the papers. Answering several options, where only one is required, probably militates against the candidate achieving the best result, and is not consistent with good time management as an examination technique.
- Students should
  - Listen to language in as many and different ways as you can. Listen to more than one radio station to hear the variety of ways in which people speak, and how their manner of speaking changes as different subjects are presented.
  - Speak the language in different ways. Search out contexts in which you have to speak to people formally as well as informally. Take time to converse. Observe the different ways people speak and try to understand why they do so. Get involved in activities such as public speaking, debating or drama as a means of widening your spoken expression.
  - Read, widely, enjoyably and often. Read a daily paper - free, if you call into your local library. Read magazines, books, and instruction sheets that come with appliances and gadgets. Savour the styles of different writers.
  - Write every day; rewrite often. Write drafts and select from them for a final version. A good style is usually the result of lots of practice in selecting one word, one phrase, or one paragraph over another. Learn to know why you make these selections; do the practice to acquire the style.
  - Take time to learn about the grammatical rules and conventions of the language. Ask your teacher to explain points of grammar which puzzle you. Experiment with tenses. You don't have to be stuck with present, past and future. Other tenses can add clarity and subtlety to your writing.
  - Take particular care with spelling and punctuation. English written in your examination answer book will be more complex and varied than that used for

texting on your mobile phone. Good spelling and well-used punctuation add clarity and precision to your writing.

- Read the instructions on your examination papers closely. Answer what you are asked to answer.
- Revise your work, especially when writing your examination answers. Most people make mistakes when pressed for time. You want to be sure that what you have written is what you meant to write.

## 4.7 EXEMPLARS OF STANDARD

These exemplar answers have been taken from candidate scripts and are reproduced as the candidates wrote them. They have been neither edited nor corrected. They are reproduced, in typed italicised format.

### Paper 1

#### Section 1: Reading

##### Question 1.1

**Why does the writer recommend a goldfish as a pet? Support your answer with evidence from the first paragraph of the passage.**

**Answer:**

*From reading and examining the passage I feel the writer recommends goldfish as a pet because they create little stress or anxiety when it comes to caring for them. Goldfish are contempt with being fed on a daily basis which is obviously an easy task as it merely involves dropping a few pellets of food into its bowl. Because goldfish are often neglected by their young owners the care of it generally falls on the shoulders of the parents. Goldfish take up little time in the busy schedule of parents resulting in the writer recommending them as a household pet.*

*As well as this without needing to be continuously walked like a dog or let out like a cat goldfish can be considered as easy pet to care for. This is another reason I feel that the author recommends them as a pet.*

*“Compared to a dog, which needs walking, or a cat which needs to be let out, a goldfish is very much a low maintenance affair.”*

**Comment:**

A well-written answer which opens with a defining statement and continues to make five points in support of the argument that goldfish make ideal pets and then concludes with a quotation in support. The points are clearly made. Allowing for minor errors (‘contempt’ for ‘content’; number confusion between goldfish [plural] and ‘a pet [singular]) which are uncharacteristic of the high standard of work demonstrated in the answer.

**Marking:** Grade A, 9 ex 10

## Question 1.2

**What historical facts about goldfish do you learn from reading this passage?**

**Answer:**

*The historical facts we learn from reading this passage is that goldfish originally came from China. The goldfish came to Europe around the 18<sup>th</sup> century from China and other parts of Asia by having them shipped to Europe by slow moving sailing ships.*

*Soon after the goldfish arrival in Europe many goldfish breeders had developed many different types of goldfish in Europe and created habitats for them to swim around in. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century these wonderful creatures were one of the most popular in the whole World and that remains the same today.*

**Comment:**

This answer contains a number of historical facts taken from the passage, though there were more on offer for a more comprehensive answer. The expression is generally fluent though there is some limitation in the sentence structure. The answer reads as a string of facts, not yet formed into a single coherent answer as required by the marking scheme.

**Marking:** Grade 'B', 7 ex 10

## Question. 3

**The author is dismissive of the idea of a cartoon based on the traditional animosity between cats and fish. Do you agree with him? Give reasons for your answer, based on the third paragraph of the passage.**

**Answer:**

*No I don't agree with him I think that traditional animosity is just a bit of fun. No harm ever comes to the participants envolved although the best is done to try and hurt each other. The fun involved is seeing the cat fail so many times and the mouse or fish to get away with it by playing a trick on the cat. I think that the author may think that the animosity isn't giving a good example to the kids however I think that its funny to see this. Not everything in life is friendly and great and I think that the cartoon shows this.*

**Comment:**

Much of what is stated is vague and poorly referenced to the passage or the demands of the question. Reasonable attempt at the beginning, but tails off.

**Marking:** Grade D, 5 ex 10

## Question. 1.4

**Did you find this passage entertaining? Give reasons for your answer.**

**Answer:**

*Yes I did find the passage entertaining because in the first two paragraphs the writer tells us the facts but they also tell us some personal accounts that improve the amusing aspect of the story. Likewise in the third paragraph the writer tells us that one of her fish had passed away to replace it they got a cat. This paragraph is funny because after the sad entrance the writer goes on to make it amusing by telling us that even though cats and fish are enemies there entertainment potential has never been exploited. The last three paragraphs are different as the first is serious about the history the second is serious but quite entertaining because of the personal accounts and the last one is basically a funny story. This is why I found the passage entertaining.*

**Comment:**

A good answer showing well-structured presentation. Nevertheless, it relies heavily on statement without development and clarification. Defining entertainment and explaining what is funny are difficult tasks at the best of times. Nonetheless this answer could have gone further in identifying and clarifying the entertaining and humorous elements of the writing.

**Marking:** Grade B, 7 ex 10

## Section 2 Personal Writing

**“A day in my life that I would like to relive”.**

**Answer:**

*Me : “ Im roasting, im about ta pass out”*

*Martina :I no. I was thinkin’ we could go shoppin’ today cause you no David well he asked me to go out with him to the dinner dance you no he’s nominated and everythin’ so I need to look gorgeous and I have no clothes that match that type of evening.*

*Me :ah martina you no I want to go to the beach today sure its my only day off this week and its meant to rain next week so come on be fair.*

*Martina :be fair! This is the most important thing ever and you don’t even care. If this was you I’d be happy for you but you can’t be happy for no-one. Can you ?*

*Long silence*

*Martina : look im sorry lets go to the beach and sure I can borrow your clothes. Alright? Fair?*

*Me: are you sure?*

*Martina: ya sure I will look better anyway with a bit of tan.*

*At the beach .....*

*Martina: well im going in its too hot just lying here. It'll be grand 'n' cool in there. You comin'?*

*Me: you try and stop me!!*

*We went for a long swim that day and around six we decided to make our way back as the sky was changing grey and angry looking. The sea was getting quite aggressive aswell because the waves were crashing against the cliffs and were very overthrowing. It all seemed to be heading for a storm. From where we were we couldn't see all that many on the beach except for two men. I looked behind me and saw no trace of Martina. I suddenly panicked and called for help. She was nowhere to be seen. I was so scared. The two men came to my distress call and when I told them what happened one went back to the shore and called for paramedics where the other went to find Martina. I was so scared.*

*The man swam and dived down to fry and find her but all the time he failed to. At this stage I was a wreck as it suddenly just lashed rain and the sea was getting more and more aggressive. I thought we'd never find her until the man shouted. "HERE, HERE". I swam as fast as I could, although I couldn't see the man because the rain hurt my face, I had it sqzeed up, I could here his voice. I then found him, holding Martina in his arms. We swam as fast as we could while carrying Martina and all I coulod think of was that it was my fault that she was here and that this wouldn't have happened if we were shopping. In the distance I could here the ambulance. It finally arrived after what seemed ages.*

*The paramedics couldn't get a pulse and then it occred to me Martina had problems with her heart and its even harder for her to be resusitated. I had lost all hope of ever talking, laughing of even fighting with my best friend again, until the she started spluttering and coughing. My heart just lifted with delight and the joy of seeing her awake again.*

*When we got to the hospital I had to stay in the waitng room which seemed like hours. Martina's parents Michael and Noreen, then arrived. That was nearly the worst part as I had to go through th whole ordeal again. Noreen just broke down into tears. The nurse then came in.*

**Comment:**

An interesting answer which starts as a dialogue and then confusingly becomes a narrative. It is unclear how the story relates to the title which asks candidates to write about a day they would like to relive. The basic storyline is clear though unfinished. The narrative proceeds at a constant pace. Errors of grammar, spelling and expression are problematic.

**Marking:** Grade C, 38 ex 70

## **“The pet I would most like to keep”**

### **Answer:**

*The Crocodile*

*“The pet I would most like to keep?” repeated John, running a hand over his stubbly head.*

*“A crocodile”.*

*“A crocodile? Here in Dublin? It’s too cold!” I laughed.*

*“I didn’t say I would get one, you tool”” he responded.*

*“C’mon, this is boring! Let’s go kick a football around or something!” I whined. John’s room smelt like a rubbish tip, and looked like it had been through the Blitz.*

*“Okay” he said.*

*John is my best mate and he is completely mental. If he’s not blowing out amplifiers with his guitar, he’s blowing up his sister’s Barbie dolls with fireworks. That’s probably why I should have realised that he would do something like this. He blames me for putting the idea in his head despite the fact you would need a bicycle pump if you wanted to put an idea in his brick brain. I blame him for being an eejit. You can blame who you want.*

*It was a sunny day as I strolled to John’s house after school. I couldn’t hear any fireworks or see any globs of melted plastic. Something was very wrong. I finally reached his house and rapped on the door.*

*“Here, 50 Cent, stop your rappin’ and get in ! The doors open.” I stepped in to the hallway, a dark contrast to the bright light outside.*

*“John”” I shouted.*

*I ran up the stairs two at a time. Thumpthumpthumpthumpthumpthump. His mother wasn’t here otherwise I would be out the front door and flat on my face. I walked carefully up to John’s door. The door squeaked slowly as I swung it open. I couldn’t see John.*

*Something burst from his closet and leaped at me. I screamed.*

*“Wake up.”*

*A voice sang through the smoke.*

*I groaned and pulled myself to my feet.*

*“Sorry. I thought it’s chain was shorter than that.”*

*Chain?*

*I looked in the closet. A toothy grin shone out.*

*No. I banged my head too hard.*

*“I call him snappy because he my sister’s Barbies.”*

*“You cannot be serious.” I sighed.*

*“No, it ate all of them,” said John. “It coughed up a head.”*

*“Not the Barbies. You have a crocodile!” I shouted.*

*“Where did you get the crocodile” I questioned.*

*“Argos catalogue” said John.*

*“Hah. Better question. Why did you get one?”*

*“It was just lying there.”*

*“When are you getting rid of it?”*

*“Why get rid of it? It can eat Baz!”*

*Baz was the stereotypical thug of our area.*

*“And no one would notice?” I said innocently.*

*“No one would care,” grinned John.*

*I looked at the crocodile again. It was four foot of green scales, teeth, claws and other sharp bits.*

*“Why not buy a hamster?” I said.*

*“Hamsters can’t through a table leg,” he replied.*

*I noticed his desk was a bit lopsided.*

*“I’ll bring him into school.”*

*“WHAT?” I shouted.*

*“If I leave him here he might eat the cat.”*

*“What if he eats a person at school?”*

*“I’ll see you on the bus.”*

*I sighed. At least tomorrow would be interesting.*

*I saw John at the bus stop. No crocodile. He set his bag down on the pavement and opened it very carefully. He threw a string of sausages inside and closed it quickly.*

*The bag began thrashing about like two cats fighting in a bin. Or a croc fighting with a string of sausages.*

*“You didn’t.”*

*“Of course I did. I am a man of honours!” smiled John.*

*“Bring it home” I said suppressing my need to roundhouse kick that smile off his face.*

*“It will be fine. I promise.”*

*“Just don’t let him out.”*

*“What if he needs to stretch his legs?”*

*“What if he eats Mr Ford? We’d get detention for the rest of the year.”*

*“Fine” John said, rolling his eyes.*

*The bus, noisy dirty and old, pulled up.*

*“This is it” I said.*

*This IS it,” he grinned.*

*Naturally the minute we got to class John let it out. “Why are you late?” boomed Mr Ford.*

*Mr Ford is the kind of person who hates kids yet still becomes a teacher. As he glared at us his nostrils flared and we could see the tufts of wiry hair stick out. His bald spots shined at us as if he whole body nostril hair and bald spot included was trying to intimidate. His anger came off him in waves.*

*“The exhaust pipe fell off the bus” I ventured.*

*“No excuse. I’ll have your journals now!” I noticed how his grin looked exactly like Snappy’s.*

*As I sat down I realised that everyone was very quiet. I followed their eyes to the crocodile who was stealthily making his way towards the teacher’s desk.*

*I mouthed a message to John – Do something!*

*“Ah I see our latecomers are now having a conversation!”. Mr Ford stepped briskly towards us, missing Snappy’s tail by inches. While Mr Ford berated us Snappy lay down under the teacher’s desk, his scales blending with the horrible itchy carpet. Mr Ford wheezed as he sat down. Snappy looked at his leg with a gleam in his eye. John threw a ring of sausages to the croc. It chewed them up gracefully.*

*For the next three hours Mr Ford could have dressed up as a clown and inflate a rubber glove with his nose and no-one would have noticed. All eyes were on Snappy as he ate string after string of sausages. At 11, we took him to the river and made him make his way home.*

*“Why didn’t you we just let him take a chunk out of Ford?” said John.*

*“Because if we did, we would have to clean up the mess,” I replied.*

*Touché*

### **Comment:**

A well-written essay with a distinctive personal style. The witty conversational phrases are well balanced against the structured, easy narrative. This writer knows what he/she is doing and manages to captivate the reader who has a sense of the uniqueness of this piece.

**Marking:** Grade A, 68 ex 70

### Section 3: Functional Writing

#### Question 1.

A national newspaper has organised a 'Person of the Year' award. Write a letter to the editor nominating the person you think is most deserving of this award. You should explain why you think this person deserves the award

Answer:

*31, The Rise,  
Ballybeg,  
Co. Donegal,  
7<sup>th</sup> June 2006*

*The Editor,  
The Irish Times,  
O'Connell st.  
Dublin 4.*

*Dear Editor,*

*I am writing to you to nominate Bob Geldoff for the 'Person of the Year' award that your newspaper will be awarding.*

*I nominate Bob Geldoff for the award because of his outstanding charity work. Bob Geldoff single-handedly organised the Live Eight concerts around the world and spear-headed the campaign to end third world debt. Without his efforts in raising the awareness of third world debt the results of G8 summit might not have been as good as they were. I believe that we should show him are thanks for achieving such a goal by presenting him with this 'Person of the Year' award.*

*I hope you agree with my nomination of Bob Geldoff and give him this award showing him are support of what he is doing.*

*Yours Faithfully,  
Sean Bloggs*

#### Comment:

This is a well-written letter. The formal layout is correctly applied although the actual spacing of the elements of the letter is unduly compressed. Candidate nominates his subject and presents reasons in support. Some errors (e.g. 'are' for 'our') detract slightly from an otherwise accomplished piece of writing.

**Marking:** Grade A, 27 ex 30

**Question 2.** Most books and DVDs have a short blurb on the outside of the back cover. Typically this is a brief text which describes and praises the plot, characterisation, acting, etc. Write such a blurb for any book or DVD of your choice.

**Answer:**

*Book:                    The diary of a crush: Kiss and make up  
                                  By Sara Manning*

*We are back with Edie again for her difficult love live. As we find out what kind of mishaps and upsets that love brings to her again. One tuff time with Dylan wasn't enough...*

*Final at last they have come to their senses. Everything is going smooth with Edie and Dylan. This is before devilishly evil Mia cases it to mess it up. Edie meets this new girlfriend of Dylan's while she makes a new boyfriend with her brother Carter.*

*Edie goes through tissues over Dylan but will they get back together?  
Is the end of their Dylan and Edie love affair? Who will Edie choose? Find out in the second instalment of the diary of a crush.*

**Comment:** this answer works well as a blurb though it contains numerous errors of spelling, usage and expression. It is hard to tell if some of the errors are intended as evidence of the contemporary and hectic lifestyle of the protagonists of the story.

**Marking:** Grade C, 18 ex 30

#### **Section 4: Media Studies**

**Question (a)** This advertisement - for the 1999 National Ploughing Championships - provides the reader with very little written text. Much of what the advertisers want to communicate is conveyed visually. What do you think is communicated about the event by the picture?

**Answer:**

*I think that the picture conveys what the National Ploughing Championships is about in the way that I think that the picture is of a man's forehead. The furrows above the man's eyebrows could represent the furrows in the ground that are the result of the ploughing of the ground during the championships. Also, the man's hair and eyebrows could represent the hedges on either side of the land in use for the ploughing championships, thus showing that every competitor in the championships have their own personal limits, but also that there is a limit to the number of people that is possible to compete in the championships due to the lack of space available to the organisers of the competition.*

**Comment:**

A content rich answer which is marred by limitations of structure and expression. The candidate offers a string interpretation of the picture but does so in a paragraph that is too compressed.

**Marking:** Grade B, 16 ex 20

**Question (b) Do you think this advertisement is effective in promoting the event. Explain your answer with reference to the advertisement.**

**Answer:**

*I believe this advertisement is very good as it contains all the information needed. The advertisement shows us what is going to be happening at this event. It also gives details on the date and venue of the event. The picture contains most of the information as it shows you the top of a farmers head but with the features describing a field that has been ploughed.*

**Comment:**

This answer promises more than it delivers. It would benefit from a clearer statement supported by explicit reference to the advertisement.

**Marking:** Grade C, 12 ex 20

## **Paper 2**

### **Drama**

#### **From Shakespeare's 'A Winter's Tale'**

#### **Question 1.**

**What impression do you get of the old shepherd *or* the son from this extract? Support your answer with reference to the text.**

**Answer:**

*From this extract, I get the impression that the son is a cautious character. I feel that he is cautious because as soon as he has found his riches, he quickly decides that he needs to do a good deed, like burying the mans body, to make sure that god does not take his riches away from him. I also get the impression that the son has lived a simple life because he seems to be very scared of the storm, giving the impression that he has not seen one before. I also get the impression that the son is cowardly. This is shown to me by the fact that the boy knows that the man is being eaten by a bear, yet he does not decide to help him in any way.*

**Comment:**

The candidate makes three solid points supported by implicit reference to the supplied extract. The structure of the answer is compressed and would benefit from being expanded into separate paragraphs with the addition of more specific reference to, or quotation from, the extract.

**Marking:** Grade 'B' at 11 ex 15

## Question 2.

**Basing your answer on evidence from the above extract how do you think the old shepherd's life and that of his son will be changed as a result of discovering Perdita and the box.**

**Answer:**

*The Old Shepherd will have to be a father to the young girl and take care of her as will the Son. This will involve getting up in the middle of the night; feed her and all the other things that you have to do for a child.*

*They are no longer going to be shepherds, "We need no longer tend to sheep", but are going to live of the riches and are also going help people with there problems "and we'll do good deeds on't".*

**Comment:** this brief answer combines conjecture in the first paragraph with direct interpretation of the text in the second. For consideration of higher marks it would need to be developed at greater length with further reference to, and interpretation of, the supplied text.

**Marking:** Grade C, 10 ex 15

## Section (B) Other Drama - 'Everyman'

### Question 1.

**What do you learn about the character of Everyman from this scene? Support your answer with reference to the text.**

**Answer:**

*I learn that Everyman is a man of great money and deals with problems by using money. He pays to have a girl to like him.*

*He is very formal and probably a busy person. "Let her go and buy what she desires and let her heart be happy when she comes." (Everyman to companion)*

*Everyman comes a cross, as a person that gets what he wants. He may have be split when he was young and come from a back round of rich people. He believes that being rich makes the person more up class and smarter that lower class poor people. "You foolish man."*

*Everyman doesn't want to seen as a push over. He seems greedy and a man of low respect for other people. This is way he pass off to be a hard working man. He has a companion that sucks up to him and tells him he is great and smart. "But we rich people lead a hard life.*

**Comment:** While the answer does include suitable reference to the extract provided, the references are not as well exploited as they could be for the sake of clarity of argument.

**Marking:** Grade C, 10 ex 15

## Question 2.

**Imagine you are Bisi or Companion or Poor Neighbour. Briefly describe the type of life you lead, based on evidence from the above extract.**

**Answer:**

*I am poor neighbour though I was not always poor. I was once well off and I used to live comfortably in a pretty house in a good neighbourhood. I used to mingle with my rich neighbours and I was no different from my neighbour Everyman, a rich cocoa plantation owner and debt collector. Life was good until my business began to feel the pressure, prices for my produce began to fall and soon I was in debt. I was driven out of my pretty house and forced to live in squaller like so many of my fellow Africans. I now lead a hard life with no money and I struggle to provide for my family. I only wish that the rich in the world would open their eyes and their pockets and the world would be a fairer place. Some measly coins from one rich man to another poor man in nothing when the rich man still keeps his fortune. Why don't they see this injustice in the world, or perhaps they're just too greedy to acknowledge it.*

**Comment:** A very well written answer which goes to the heart of Poor Neighbour's life and predicament. The answer draws from the supplied text but reads very well into the character in question. It works well as a rebuttal of Everyman's arguments on how much hard work is involved in being rich.

**Marking:** Grade A, 15 ex 15

## Question 3.

**This extract is to be staged and you are the Director. How would you direct this scene with reference to one of the following:**

- (a) Gestures by the actors
- (b) Costume/Dress to be worn by the actors
- (c) How the characters should speak their lines.

**Answer:**

*how the characters should speak their lines*

*The actors should be stereotypical, poor neighbour should dress in rags, be dirty, skinny and lanky. His voice should speak in a rat like tone, high-pitched, but begging and nervous. However, poor neighbour should not be loved or felt sorry for. The crowd should not gather an opinion of him from this scene.*

*Everyman should dress in fancy purple, his physique muscular, with a clean shaven beard. His posture perfect and everything about him should be perfect. Not in the good way do, kind of to perfect. Down inside him there should be a sinister thing, like he would hurt people to be considered popular.*

**Comment.**

While the answer is a bit brief it does contain some good insights into how the scene might be staged. The treatment of Poor Neighbour is more thorough than that of Everyman.

**Marking:** Grade B, 11 ex 15

## Question 2. Studied Drama

1. Consider a character from a play you have studied. Choose a significant time of *either* good luck *or* bad luck which this character experiences.
  - (a) Briefly describe this experience of good luck *or* bad luck.
  - (b) Discuss how the character deals with it in the play.

### Answer:

1(a) *The play that I've studied is "Romeo and Juliet" by William Shakespeare. One character who experiences bad luck throughout the play is Romeo. This is because of the theme that Romeo and Juliet are fated to die to end the feud between their families, which is first introduced in the prologue when it is said, "Two star-crossed lovers take their life". This shows again when in Act 1 Scene IV, before he goes to the party where he meets Juliet, he has a premonition that a chain of events will start that will lead to his death. He says, "My mind misgives some consequence hanging in the stars...That will expire the term of a despised life enclosed in my breast."*

*Romeo's luck starts to go wrong when in Act 3 Scene 1, he kills Tybalt when he has just been married to Juliet an hour ago. When he realizes what he has just done, he says "O, I am fortune's fool!" Because of his actions, he is banished from Verona, which means he can't be with Juliet. This leads to Juliet being arranged to marry Paris, since she had been weeping since Romeo was banished and her parents became worried. Also, after Romeo leaves after their wedding night, Juliet has a premonition as well and sees Romeo dead in a tomb, which is exactly what will happen at the end. When Juliet goes to the friar for help, he gives her the poison, which she takes. However, the messenger taking the friar's letter for Romeo is held up in a house infected with plague, and instead Balthasar gives him the news that Juliet is dead. Romeo then goes to Juliet's tomb, where Juliet wakes a minute too late to stop Romeo from committing suicide. The friar again reminds us of fate when he tells Juliet, "A greater power than we can contradict has thwarted our intents." Finally, Juliet kills herself, and the feud is ended when the parents see their children are dead. Again, fate is mentioned one last time by the prince who says to them, "See what a scourge is laid upon your hate, that heaven finds ways to kill your joys with love."*

1(b)*Romeo tries to deal with his bad luck throughout the play, but is never successful since the idea of fate is that your future cannot be changed. First, after he is banished, he goes to the friar for help, where he is "blubbering and weeping" on the floor. The friar tells him to wait in Mantua for news, and that he'll find a way for Romeo to see Juliet. However, he gets the news of the "death" of Juliet from Balthasar and the friar's letter never arrives. At this point, he realises fate is conspiring against him and says "Is that so? Then I defy you, stars!" He buys the poison and heads to Verona to go to Juliet's tomb and commit suicide. Again, before he takes the poison, he says, "Now I will shake the yoke of inauspicious stars from this world-wearied flesh," not realising that this is exactly what fate wants him to do.*

### Comment:

This answer is comprehensive in its scope though uneven in its argument. The first paragraph provides a clear opening statement and an introduction to the concept of bad luck. The second paragraph balances plot summary with interpretation of bad luck as the hand of fate in the young lovers' lives. Overall, however, a full treatment of the questions asked.

**Marking:** Grade A: 14 ex 15 + 12 ex 15 totalling 26 ex 30 for the full question.

**2. “Plays teach us lessons about life.”**

**Choose any play you have studied and explain how it has made you aware of any one of following: Love or Death or Conflict or Harmony. Explain your answer by reference to your chosen play.**

**Answer:**

1 (a)

*The Field, by John B. Keane, deals with the topic of conflict. Indeed, conflict is at the very heart of the play, not just conflict over land, but conflict of the conscience of Leamy Flanagan. It is this conflict that makes the play very interesting.*

*The most obvious conflict, which forms the play’s basic plot, is the Bull McCabe’s battle to get the field of the title, which he believes he is entitled to. When an outsider, William Dee, arrives and tries to obtain the field for himself, the Bull becomes angry, and he and his son Tadhg attack Dee and inadvertently kill him.*

*The Bull believes that the field is rightfully his, and disapproves of Dee’s plan to build a factory on it: “’Tis a sin to cover grass and clover with concrete!” This is why he fights for it, going so far as to beat a man to death for it.*

*The authorities are unable to touch the Bull, as he has bullied the townsfolk into remaining silent, and herein lies the most interesting conflict of the play – the ideological conflict between the Bull and Maimie and Leamy Flanagan. The Bull manages to blackmail Maimie into silence: “Your husband may be blind, but the Bull McCabe knows your comings and goings like the back of his hand.”*

*He also manages to threaten Leamy: “There’s men around here would think nothing of putting a bomb up against the door of a public house.” But there is a conflict within Leamy, as he believes that he should go to the Gardaí with information about the Bull, but Maimie dissuades him: “The Bull McCabe won’t suffer... but it’s you Leamy who will suffer, because you’ll be different... an outcast.”*

*At the end of the play we see Leamy silently struggle with his inner demons, but eventually he symbolically begins to clear things off the table of the pub. Presumably, this is the way he stays.*

*There are a variety of conflicts in the play, but the Bull wins them all, through violence, blackmail and threats. He conflicts with authority a number of times, not only when Dee’s murder is investigated, but also with regard to the donkey he and Tadhg killed. The Sergeant attempts to investigate, but is laughed at and scorned: “There’s more thought of donkeys in this world than there is of Christians.”*

*The Bull McCabe is the victor of *The Field*. He gains his field, and gets away with murder, quite literally. He does all this at the expense of everyone else. The Bull’s conflicts are many, and he triumphs in them all.*

**Comment:**

A well-written answer: good content, structure and expression. It addresses the question directly and deals with a series of points, clearly made, in discrete paragraphs. While the writer’s awareness of conflict may be implicit to the answer, it is nonetheless clear in the arguments presented for conflict as a central theme in the play.

**Marking:** Grade A, 26 ex 30

### Question 1: Unseen Poetry

1. “I would love to sit  
in the yellow chair  
in the painting...”

**What is so appealing about Van Gogh’s yellow chair, according to the speaker? Explain your answer with reference to the poem.**

**Answer:**

*It seems to me that Van Gogh finds his painted chair to be appealing because there is nothing bad in the picture. It isn’t that he finds the chair to be perfectly painted (it does look very realistic though) but that it is a metaphor for his imagination. He can imagine himself to be sitting in it without any troubles in a beautiful summer’s day, where the ‘day’s air is like water in which small noises swim’. He also seems to think that it’s the only real painting where in his imagination there is nothing bad going to occur, where a ‘shadow lies like a shy animal in a corner’*

**Comment:** this answer, taking Van Gogh as the speaker, offers a clear statement about the appeal of the chair, developed and supported by reference to the poem. The final sentence including quotation is obscure and doesn’t quite communicate its meaning.

**Marking:** Grade A, 14 ex 15

2. In your own words explain what is being said in the last three stanzas.

**Answer:**

*Van Gogh is emphasizing the fact that it is both his imagination and that it is real to him. He talks about ‘having crossed the great divide’ and how he imagines that there would be a world in it’s own right in it.*

**Comment:**

This answer is too brief to do justice to the ideas which are introduced in it. It would benefit from a slightly longer discussion and interpretation of the lines of the three stanzas in question.

**Marking:** Grade C, 9 ex 15

3. What is your favourite image from the poem? Explain your choice.

**Answer:**

*My favorite image is “I would sit there safe from harm safe from all surprise” This is my favorite image as it he wants to be cushioned from reality and feel safe. It is very hard to feel completely safe in this world so he wants to run away from his problems to do so.*

**Comment:**

This is a brief answer though it does offer a substantial comment on a chosen image. The interpretation given tends to the literal and does not explore the (metaphorical) concepts of ‘harm’ and ‘surprise’. The final sentence is close to paraphrase of the previous one.

**Marking:** Grade ‘C’ at 10 ex 15

## Question 2: Studied Poetry

Take any poem you have studied which deals with wishes *or* thoughts.

(a) What are the poet's main wishes OR thoughts in the poem?

(b) Describe how *either* the imagery *or* the language of the poem contributes to the poet's expression of his/her thoughts or wishes. Explain your answer with reference to the poem.

**Answer:**

*A poem I have studied which deals with wishes is, "The Lake Isle of Inishfree" by WB Yeats.*

*In this poem Yeats expresses his wishes to be back in his native county of Sligo and on the Island of Inishfree, "I will arise and go now and go to Inishfree" The imagery in the poem contributes greatly to the poem because Yeats uses very strong images to express his longing to be in Inishfree and to be away from the buzz of city life.*

*A particular image that I think is very powerful is the image of the Island being so silent that the only thing to be heard is the birds singing and the lake water hitting the shore, "the lake water lapping against the shore". The use of alliteration in this sentence is very effective in my opinion.*

**Comment:**

An answer which is good only in parts. The relevance of the answer to 'wishes' is not immediately obvious. The answer remains very much at the level of literal interpretation.

**Marking:** Grade C, 8 ex 15

**2. If you could invite a poet of your choice to your school, who would you choose?**

**(a) Explain your choice of poet with reference to the poet's work.**

**(b) Choose your favourite poem by this poet and explain why you like it so much.**

*(a) If I could invite a poet of my choice to my school it would be Seamus Heaney. Heaney writes with a distinct emotion which grasps the reader. He writes about things we can all relate to e.g. Mid Term Break. Heaney is a poet I greatly admire because his poems are always the most mind boggling but they can create a clear image of. He writes with a certain enthusiasm in his poems. I like the way in Mid-term break, he writes about a very personal experience, the death of his younger brother. Heaney's willingness to talk about such experiences is very appealing to the reader you know the emotions he is writing about are real compared to some poets.*

*(b) My favourite poem by Seamus Heaney is Mid Term Break. In Mid Term Break Heaney writes of a very personal experience, the death of a younger brother. Heaney writes from the perspective of a young boy who is still in shock and doesn't quite understand the enormity of the situation. I like the way Heaney uses alliteration to describe the sinuous ringing of bells, "knelling classes to a close".*

*My favourite aspects of Mid Term Break is the images it creates. Heaney describes the scene at the house very accurately. The platitudes of the neighbours, "it was a hard blow", and incongruous laughing of the baby. "The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram." Heaney captures the frustration of his mother at the injustice of the situation by using*

adjectives, “angry, tearless sighs.” Like any young boy the reality of the death doesn’t hit Heaney until he sees the body, up until then his brother is referred to as “the corpse”. The emotion of the poem really shone through when Heaney wrote about the four foot box. “he lay there as in his cot”, emphasising how young and babyish his brother was Heaney repeats the line adding “a foot for every year”. In that simple line Heaney captures all his emotions.

**Comment:**

Both answers read well and display insight and understanding in their response to the questions asked. Answer (a) provides several reasons for inviting Heaney with reference to his very popular poem, “Mid Term Break”. It could have been more specific in relating its key points to examples from Heaney’s poems.

**Marking:** Grade B, 12 ex 15

Answer (b) is based on Heaney’s ever popular ‘Mid Term Break’. The points made are perceptive and show insight into the theme and technique of the chosen poem. There is a slight uncertainty in the reference to alliteration. The candidate could have explained the technique (alliteration) by identifying its use and effectiveness in the chosen quotation.

**Marking:** Grade A, 14 ex 15.

**Question 2. Studied Fiction**

**1. Choose a novel OR short story that has a strong sense of place or setting.**

**a) Describe this place or setting.**

**b) How is this place or setting important in the novel or short story you have chosen? Support your answer with reference to the novel or short story.**

**Answers:**

(a) *The novel I chose is ‘Goodnight Mister Tom’ by Michelle Magorian. The place where it is set is called ‘Little Weirwold’ it is down in the country of England. It is quiet a small village it has small bungalo house, shops, a train station, a church hall and a local school. The roads are made of cobbled stones. The houses ar bungalo’s with a front and a back garden it would have a kitchen, a sitting area and maybe 1 or 2 bedrooms, The shops are all in a line, there is more or less everyshop there is a taylors, a supermarket and a art shop and many more. The train station is opposite the shops and will bring you to London etc. The church hall is where the mass is and where the quoir practises. The local schools is for everyone local and there are 3 teachers and around 50 students.*

(b) *The place is important in the novel ‘Goodnight Mister Tom’ by Michelle Magorian because when Willie comes to Tom an evacuee from London. He is very shy because of his mother because she used to beat him. He comes to know ‘Little Weirwold’ fairly well. He has his bedroom in the atic of the bungalo, he makes alot of friends and spends time with them in school and out playing on the fields that surrond ‘Little Weirwold’. He loves his school and particulary one teacher but he doesn’t get into her class because he doesn’t know how to read or write but Tom and Willie work hard and he finally gets into her class. He also gets new clothes in the shops and is fond of the art shop but Tom’s dead wife Rachael used to love art*

*and he hasn't been able to go into the artshop since she died 40 years ago. For Willie's birthday he gets Willie paint and paper from the shop and then Willie has great fun painting the scenery of 'Little Weirwold'.*

**Comment:**

Both of these answers are written primarily as summaries of the content of the book. In part (a) this works better as the question calls for a description of place or setting. In part (b) the question calls for interpretation of the content of the earlier answer. These answers score better on the first than on the second part. Part (b) does not go much beyond a plot summary.

**Marking:** Grade C, 9 ex 15 plus 7 ex 15, totalling 16 ex 30

**Question 2:**

From a novel OR short story you have studied, choose a character you would *either* like to be or not like to be. Explain your choice of character with reference to your chosen text.

**Answer:**

*I would not like to be Tom Robinson from the novel To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee. Tom Robinson is a black man living in Alabama. He is crippled. What happens to him over the course of the novel is one of the most despicable things you will ever read about. Tom is accused of raping Mayella Ewell even though his being crippled makes that impossible and even though there is a world of evidence pointing at Bob Ewell actually beating her, Tom is found guilty and is executed. There is no case at all, it's simply the word of a black man against that of a white man and even though Bob Ewell is as Atticus calls him "trash", he still wins. Atticus is one of the very few people who stands up for Tom and tries to help him. He tells his children "I could not go to church and worship if I had known I hadn't done everything I could to help that man" by the end of the novel we see that Atticus's wisdom has been passed to Scout and that she understands Atticus "you know I think there is only one kind of folks. Folks" Tom Robinson was judged purely on the colour of his skin. As this story develops we see the lazy rural Façade crumble and walls of prejudice and racism being built and reinforced. Atticus tells his children "You can shoot all the bluejays you want, but it's a sin to kill a mockingbird". Bluejays are well known pests and bullies among birds and in contrast to that mockingbirds only sing and do no harm. This is the metaphor for the story. Boo Radley and Tom Robinson are mockingbirds. They both do no wrong but bad things seem to happen to them all the time. Many references are made to this metaphor such as character names like Tom Robinson and the Finch family which are also bird names. After the ordeal involving the lynch mob at the jail, Mr. Underwood writes in the local paper that attacking a cripple is like killing a mockingbird which is also a reference to this moral. In conclusion, Tom Robinson is wronged when he did nothing wrong and I would not like to be him.*

**Comment:**

The answer, though containing many valid and interesting facts, only sporadically addresses the crucial issue of explaining *why* the writer would not like to be the chosen character. The answer has appealing introductory and concluding comments, but it fails to stay focused on the question asked throughout the body of the answer.

**Marking:** Grade C, 19 ex 30

## APPENDIX 1:

### Table of Texts Featuring in Higher Level English 2006

The syllabus for Junior Certificate Higher Level English details the scope, breadth and balance of the intended teaching programme. This document is now easily accessible on the NCCA website, [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie). While the syllabus allows for – indeed calls for – wide exposure to a variety of linguistic and literary experience, it seems that preparation for the examination often focuses on only a small core of texts. These are detailed in the table below.

**Table of texts, by order of popularity, as they feature in answering to Junior Certificate Higher Level English 2006. Percentages refer to the frequency with which these texts occurred in candidates' answers. The 2006 table shows little variation over similar tables for recent years.**

<b>Shakespearean Drama</b>		<b>Author</b>	
Romeo & Juliet	William	Shakespeare	43.1%
The Merchant of Venice			42.3%
Julius Caesar			10.6%
Macbeth			2.4%
Twelfth Night			0.8%
The Tempest			0.8%
			100.0%
<b>Modern Drama</b>			
The Field	J B	Keane	71.7%
Our Day Out	Willie	Russell	6.7%
Shadow of a Gunman	Sean	O'Casey	5.0%
Sive	J B	Keane	3.3%
Riders to the Sea	J M	Synge	1.7%
Lovers	Brian	Friel	1.7%
Totally over to You	Mark	Ravenhill	1.7%
Philadelphia Here I Come	Brian	Friel	1.7%
Pot of Broth		Yeats	1.7%
All My Sons	Arthur	Miller	1.7%
Cal	Bernard	McLaverty	1.7%
Juno & The Paycock	Sean	O'Casey	1.7%
<b>Poetry</b>			
Mid Term Break	Seamus	Heaney	18.2%
Dulce et Decorum Est	Wilfred	Owen	17.0%
The Lake Isle of Innisfree	W B	Yeats	14.2%
He Wishes for the Cloths..	W B	Yeats	8.0%
The Daffodils	William	Wordsworth	5.1%
Digging	Seamus	Heaney	5.1%
The Early Purges	Seamus	Heaney	4.5%
Base Details	Sigfried	Sassoon	4.0%
Blackberry Picking	Seamus	Heaney	2.8%
Epic	Patrick	Kavanagh	2.8%
When all the others	Seamus	Heaney	2.3%
But You Didn't	Merrill	Glass	2.3%
The road not taken	Robert	Frost	2.3%
Followers	Seamus	Heaney	1.7%
Funeral Blues	W.H.	Auden	1.7%

On Raglan Road	Patrick	Kavanagh	1.1%
Vegetarians	Roger	McGough	1.1%
Tich Miller	Wendy	Cope	1.1%
The Thinness of Ice	Liz	Loxley	0.6%
Playground Blues	Adrian	Mitchell	0.6%
Sep-13	W B	Yeats	0.6%
In Memory of my Mother	Patrick	Kavanagh	0.6%
In Memory of my Father	Patrick	Kavanagh	0.6%
Child	Sylvia	Plath	0.6%
Down by the Sally Gardens	W B	Yeats	0.6%
Christmas Childhood	Patrick	Kavanagh	0.6%
			100.0%

### Fiction

To Kill a Mockingbird	Harper	Lee	31.8%
Roll of Thunder	Mildred	Taylor	19.2%
Of Mice and Men	John	Steinbeck	13.9%
Goodnight Mr Tom	Michelle	Magorian	9.9%
The Pearl	John	Steinbeck	4.0%
Lord of the Flies	William	Golding	3.3%
The Cay	Theodore	Taylor	2.6%
Holes	Louis	Sachar	2.0%
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night	Mark	Haddon	2.0%
A Kestrel for a Knave	Barry	Hines	2.0%
Private Peaceful	Michael	Mapungo	0.7%
The Summer of My German Soldier	Bette	Green	0.7%
Light on the Snow	Anita	Shreve	0.7%
Northern Lights	Philip	Pullman	0.7%
Across the Barricades	Joan	Lingard	0.7%
Animal Farm	George	Orwell	0.7%
Huckleberry Finn	Mark	Twain	0.7%
First Confession	Frank	O'Connor	0.7%
Benny & Omar	Eoin	Colfer	0.7%
The Outsiders	S. E.	Hinton	0.7%
The Diary of Adrian Mole	Sue	Townsend	0.7%
The Catcher in the Rye	J D	Salinger	0.7%
The Machine Gunners	Robert	Westall	0.7%
The Silver Sword	Ian	Serallier	0.7%
			100.0%

Work presented for examination is almost certainly a mere sample of what is more widely met in the classroom. Nevertheless, the dominance of two Shakespearian texts, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Merchant of Venice* (85.4%) and of one modern text, *The Field* (71.7%), combined with similarly narrow – even if less striking – options across Poetry and Fiction, raises the question of whether the inclusive aspirations of the syllabus – as a vehicle for the promotion of broadly grounded personal, social and cultural literacy – are being best met at this level.