

LITERATURE (ENGLISH) (US)

<p>Paper 0427/01 Poetry and Prose</p>

Key messages

- Responses must answer the specific question set for either the extract or the essay and focus on this throughout.
- Effective and sustained analysis of language is essential, particularly in the passage-based questions.
- Detailed support from the text, either by short quotations or well-chosen references to words or phrases, is essential in all questions.
- Responses should show detailed knowledge of the text by ranging across the whole extract or poem in the passage-based questions and across as much of the novel or short story as is relevant in the essay questions.
- Candidates need to present a developed and well-structured response to the question.

General comments

Many candidates showed an encouraging engagement with the poems or prose text studied. Many candidates do, however, need to frame a developed and analytical response; some show a tendency to drop too readily into description, narrative or repeating the same points. There was frequently interesting and strong personal response, and this is to be encouraged, but quite often this was at the expense of a discussion of the details of language in the extract, which must always be the primary focus of any response and the key to higher marks.

Many candidates make a really promising beginning, with two or three relevant points, clearly explained and supported by the text, but then fail to take things further. Candidates should be helped to learn how to develop their points and consider the wide range of ideas available for analysis and discussion in each passage and essay. Responses should ideally range across the whole poem, extract or text, within the limits of the time given.

Passage-based questions on all texts were far more popular than the essay questions. These questions require a response which analyses the writing and language while remaining focused on the particular question. Often a brief reference or introduction to the context of the passage is helpful or, usually, necessary, but this should not be a lengthy retelling of narrative which occurs before and after the passage; this inevitably loses focus on the question and on the language of the extract. A good response will place the passage within the context of the novel enabling a consideration of how characters or situations change, for example, and enabling judgments to be made about the significance of the passage and how it will affect what happens afterwards.

Focus on language remains the single most important discriminator between the mark bands and is still the area in which many candidates struggle. For credit to be given for language points, candidates need to look at specific words or phrases, selecting pertinent words or short quotations. This is covered in the mark scheme by 'the way the writer uses language' or 'the way the writer achieves effects'. It is not sufficient just to identify figures of speech or important words without saying how and why these are appropriate and effective. Knowing the terminology of literary criticism without being able to apply it sensibly and effectively will not help the candidates to present a successful response. In the same way, generalised comments such as 'he uses diction and imagery to put his point across' without identifying the words and figures of speech or sometimes even the point, do not in themselves demonstrate any understanding, so cannot gain any credit for the candidate.

Quite often responses are trying to consider language used by the writer but instead fall into the 'supporting reference to the text' category of the mark scheme. This often shows knowledge and understanding of the text, and is sometimes an appropriate choice, but tends to be a much longer quotation covering several lines

of poetry or a longer sentence. These can have their place in an answer (though the rule is invariably 'the shorter the better'), but candidates who only select these lengthier references without also considering specific word choice and effects can only achieve marks in the lower bands. In the same way, large sections of narrative or description, also common, very often do show some knowledge, but will not be given very many marks on their own. It is worth emphasising that consideration of the language used by the writer and its effects is just as applicable to the essay question. If there is only 'reference to the text', which is all that narrative can be, the higher bands cannot be achieved. Some short pertinent quotations which have been learnt by heart will generally be useful and there is no substitute for this.

A few candidates tried to answer the essay question by using the extract or by conflating both questions as if they were one. The essay questions always stand alone and should be considered as a completely separate question to the extract. It would be helpful for candidates to be made familiar with the layout of the exam paper and the choices offered before encountering the real thing in order to avoid this kind of error.

There were, regrettably, some responses which suggested that candidates were unfamiliar with the poem or passage on the exam paper and were seeing it for the first time. This particularly applied to the poetry section where there were several examples of misunderstanding or questionable interpretation. The fact that the poem is there in front of the candidate, and therefore does not have to be 'learnt', should not lead to complacency or a belief that it does not need to be studied and discussed beforehand. Those candidates who had had the opportunity to spend time with others discussing possible interpretations and use of language were clearly distinguishable and, inevitably, gained much higher marks.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: POETRY

ROBERT FROST: *The Robert Frost Collection*

Question 1: *The Road Not Taken*

This was a very popular question and it was encouraging that all candidates understood that the difficult choice facing the narrator about which road to take had deeper implications. Weaker candidates simply said it meant he was describing a decision he had to take in real life. Stronger responses considered how having two seemingly attractive options is a common dilemma which we all have to face at some time; the long period of indecision and the final choice are worrying and often life-changing. The further analysis of which 'road' the narrator eventually took and its consequences was much less secure.

The entire poem is about ambiguities and few candidates addressed this. Firstly, the question of which road is the most attractive and which road is most used: Frost contradicts himself when in Line 7 he says the 'other' road 'wanted wear' (which means it was less worn, not that he personified it as wanting to be walked on, which was a common error), but then in Line 10 writes that they were worn 'really about the same'. Candidates were, perhaps unsurprisingly, often confused about the first part of the poem or attempted to simplify his thoughts, saying, incorrectly, that he took the 'easiest option' or the 'most popular one'. More careful reading and analysis were required.

The second ambiguity lies within his declaration that he wanted to come back another day but that this was highly unlikely. The 'sigh' could be interpreted as both one of regret or, in fact, relief about the decision made. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the final line and his comment that his decision 'has made all the difference' needed careful consideration. Does this mean that he has taken risks which have made his life more of an adventure and exciting or that his life would have been better if he had chosen the more popular route? Only the strongest candidates tackled this ambiguity, which is central to an understanding of the poem, made clear by its placing as the final thought and line.

There was strong personal response on the importance and difficulty of taking decisions which will probably have a big impact on your life, but this needed to be related more closely to the poem and to Frost's language. Candidates tended to wander away from the focus of the question, Frost's thoughts and feelings, or to simplify these without looking at the subtleties and ambiguities of this extremely well-known poem. Many candidates did try, commendably, to focus on language, but this was too often an analysis of the rhyming pattern, or number of lines in the poem followed by a generic comment which did not add anything to the response e.g. 'the structure is rhyming which makes the poem flow nicely and is easy to read' or 'the use of commas and caesura help us to understand what Frost is thinking.' This type of comment will not earn the candidate any credit.

Question 2: *An Old Man's Winter Night*

Far fewer candidates attempted this question, presumably drawn to the very familiar poem for **Question 1** instead. All candidates were able to make a few observations about the old man being lonely or alone, though only stronger candidates seemed to understand that these are not necessarily the same thing at all. All commented also that he seemed to be very old, with some personal response directed towards the difficulties of managing on his own in an apparently large house. Most responded to his loss of memory and the problems that this would cause for him, but without precise reference to the poem. As such, the responses fell into the lower bands, which reward a 'basic understanding', 'some understanding' or, occasionally, 'understanding with some 'deeper implications'.

For higher marks, much more precise detail and quotation from the poem were needed, combined with analysis of the language used, rather than general comments with only a little textual support. For example, candidates could have usefully commented on Frost's use of 'light' and 'dark' imagery, with the house as a sanctuary from the dark. The ending of the poem, where the old man is able to sleep, at ease from his life, is also important. This would have given more focus to the question, which asked for comment on how he is 'movingly' portrayed, which was often only briefly mentioned.

Songs of Ourselves Volume 2, from Part 1

Question 3: *Winter Song*

All candidates understood that this was narrated by a woman who would do anything at all for her lover, would make immense sacrifices to prove her love, no matter how much it made her suffer. The most popular example given was 'I would in exile go/To regions of eternal snow' but few went beyond quoting this. Some analysis on what it would mean to leave your home permanently or live in perpetual winter would have raised the response. Many then ignored the rest of the poem; higher marks can only be achieved if points range across the poem in order to develop the answer. Comment was needed on the images and extreme diction used to portray the harsh environments she would endure for him and the contrasting comforts she hoped to provide.

Several candidates thought that the hunting of the stag symbolised her love chasing another woman, but this is an unlikely and unconvincing interpretation, particularly as she is happy to give him the 'hunter's spear' to catch it! Few responses went beyond the 'some relevant comments' level, which was surprising given that there are many possible examples of her 'moving' commitment and adoration.

Question 4: *Surplus Value*

Far fewer candidates attempted this question and responses varied considerably. Stronger responses were able to illustrate the awful deterioration in the living conditions of the brother-in-law brought about by changes at work over which he had no control. Some detailed his comfortable and happy family life followed by the loss of the Harley and the cabin, and the best went on to show that the real damage was to his 'pride' as 'the scars grew deeper now, and inward'. Weaker candidates struggled to understand the 'boom and bust' economic and political reasons for the change in his circumstances, though all were able to give examples which evoked sympathy for him.

Section B: PROSE

MAYA ANGELOU: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

Question 5

This was a popular question and all candidates could recognise some of the dramatic moments in the extract. There was a wide choice, including 'the screams', 'feeling the blood slip down to my buttocks', 'sticky death', her father's anger, and how she 'made plans for (her) death and will'. The strongest responses were able to articulate Maya's overactive imagination of the outcome of her situation but also recognised the anti-climax at the end which so disappointed Maya, when all she received was an 'extra-long Band Aid'.

The main weakness was a lack of context: candidates did not seem to be aware of who Dolores is and why the fight had occurred, which hampered their answer from the start. Showing an understanding of the context of an extract is a feature of better responses.

Although candidates were able to show some understanding with suitable quotations, there tended to be a lack of an organised response which would have demonstrated how Angelou wanted to build up the dramatic impact. This might have been constructed using key language quotations in the following way:

- The words used in the first paragraph to show the response to Dolores cutting Maya: 'screams...rage'.
- Maya's reaction to this: 'breathing difficult', 'excitement, apprehension, release and anger'.
- Daddy Bailey's reaction: 'angrily slammed', 'What the hell is this?'
- Maya's surprising acceptance of and desire to die: 'serenity', plans for my death and will', 'my soul would escape gracefully', 'surrendered myself to oblivion'.
- The anti-climax: 'the wound had begun to clot', 'an extra-long Band Aid'.

Question 6

Too few responses seen for meaningful comment.

JENNIFER DONNELLY: *A Northern Light*

Some candidates confused **Questions 7 and 8**, writing about what the extract makes you feel about Pa, despite the fact that they are clearly two different questions and also that there is an explicit instruction not to use the extract printed for **Question 7** when answering **Question 8**. It is worth repeating that candidates must be made familiar with the layout and requirements of the paper, otherwise they will inevitably be unlikely to gain much credit for their answers.

Question 7

Those who did write about the extract while focusing on the correct question were able to identify some of the main significant points:

- Mattie's acceptance at College despite her self-doubt and difficult home circumstances; she is genuinely talented.
- The huge problem of telling her father and getting him to agree.
- The realisation that she will never be able to accept the place.
- Her lack of money and the promise made to her mother
- Miss Wilcox's reaction

Better responses commented on the metaphor of a cow crying for her calf to illustrate Mattie's despair at having 'something beautiful' only 'to have it snatched away'. There was some strong personal response to Mattie's hopeless situation and the unfairness of it. All candidates needed to focus more explicitly on the 'moving' part of the question.

Question 8

Too few responses seen.

BARBARA KINGSOLVER: *The Bean Trees*

A similar problem to *A Northern Light* occurred here, where **Questions 9 and 10** were muddled together. However, this time the confusion was caused and exacerbated by candidates' lack of knowledge about the names of the characters. The extract from the very beginning of the novel concerned Missy (who later changes her name to Taylor) while the essay question concerned Mattie (the garage owner who later gives Taylor a job and plays such a large role in the novel). Many candidates failed to read carefully and, quite apart from using the essay question to apply to the extract, assumed that Missy and Mattie are the same character. Secure knowledge of the layout of the paper and knowledge of the text would have prevented this error.

Question 9

The main weakness in answering this question was the lack of context or, often, any sense that there was knowledge of the text. Very few candidates referred to Missy as the younger version of Taylor or how the Hardbines became the example which caused her to leave home, fearful of ending up the same. There was little sense of the irony that Missy/Taylor in fact ends up working (for Mattie) in a tyre shop.

The question asks: 'Explore how Kingsolver makes this such a striking opening to the novel.' – which clearly requires candidates to consider future events. However, most just treated the question and extract as if they were writing about the opening to any novel. This led to candidates commenting on the incongruous accident which caught readers' attention immediately, that Missy and her mother have a good relationship, that Missy (the narrator and hence clearly the main character) seems a likeable person and therefore that it would be good to read more about her. All of these are valid points, but they need to be linked to the wider novel and the implications for Missy, not least why she decides to change her name.

Question 10

No responses seen which focused on the correct character.

JOHN STEINBECK: *The Wayward Bus*

Questions 11 and 12: Too few responses for meaningful comment.

STORIES OF OURSELVES

Question 13

This was a popular question and most candidates focused on the ways Ming's victory was so vividly conveyed to the reader. A few lapsed into narration but most were able to consider Highsmith's methods and also showed a good knowledge of the story as a whole. This is a good example of how context is important: it was essential to bring in the past conflicts between Ming and Teddie in order to successfully discuss this climax to their battle for Elaine's love.

Stronger candidates were able to choose and comment upon the 'vivid' language: the repetition of 'Hatred ran in his veins. Hatred burned his eyes' as an example of Ming's extreme feelings towards Teddie, for example. Better responses were always more focused on the detail and language than on telling the story, though Ming's cunning and determination to hang on to Teddie and cause his death, even though he himself was hurt, was a feature of many responses.

Most candidates, understandably and correctly, chose to comment on Teddie as 'big prey', and how this is almost the wrong way round. Ming was able to defeat a much more powerful enemy. The best responses took this further, commenting on the comparison Ming makes to killing a bird, which reminded the reader that he is actually just a cat.

There was also some excellent response to Highsmith's use of Ming's senses as he enjoyed his victory: 'the smell of blood under his own teeth' and 'the aroma of his victory'. The conclusion to the story, and the victory, was conveyed by Ming's satisfaction: he 'purred with content' and 'settled himself with paws tucked under him', both emphasising that he is, after all, still just a cat who had, nevertheless, managed to kill a man! The story ends with Elaine's 'tones of love', which was all that Ming wanted and confirmed his complete victory over Teddie.

Question 14

Too few responses for meaningful comment.

LITERATURE (ENGLISH) (US)

Paper 0427/02
Drama

Key messages

A clear focus on the question over three or four main points makes a good answer when points are developed clearly and supported with detailed reference to the play, preferably in the form of brief quotation from the text.

Answers to passage-based questions benefit from briefly establishing the context of the passage at the start, and continuing over three or four key points supported by carefully selected, relevant material from the whole passage.

Good responses to discursive questions develop a focused answer over three or four relevant points which are supported by the most appropriate material from the whole play.

A strong personal response which is supported by direct reference to the text boosts answers at all levels.

The most successful answers acknowledge the genre of the text by analysing relevant dramatic features such as: character actions and dialogue, stage directions and likely audience response.

General comments

Most candidates showed a good understanding of their set text. They often empathised with characters which was evident in their strong personal responses to Hally in *'Master Harold' ...and the Boys*, to Bottom and the plight of the confused lovers in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and to Big Mama in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Good answers showed how the author encouraged a particular personal response through their writing.

Many candidates improved their responses to questions by referring to the text to provide support for their comments. The strongest answers made clear how the reference linked to the point they were making, and also to the question asked. Some answers included textual reference without such development, so that it was often unclear whether the text had been understood.

Candidates who knew their set text well were able to establish the context of the passages in passage-based questions, which often led to an understanding of its significance in the play, or of its deeper implications. For example, knowledge of the context of the passage from *'Master Harold' ...and the Boys* enhanced understanding of Hally's anger towards his alcoholic father. Knowing that Lysander was the recipient of Puck's love potion before the passage from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* helps to explain why Hermia is so bewildered by his sudden love for Helena. Before the passage from *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Big Mama had received news about her husband's good health, which helped to explain her exuberance. Good answers addressed the question clearly over a range of three or four key points and made a selection of the most appropriate parts of the passage with which to support the points. They showed clearly how quotations supported the answer and made a response to features of drama such as the action on stage or characters' dialogue.

Responses were varied to the second question on each text, the discursive question. Where candidates addressed the question by covering a range of three or four main points and supported them with detailed textual reference, they were successful. The best answers included a response to the writing and dramatic features and addressed the question directly. For example, an answer to a question on what the author 'makes you feel' about a character needed to include the candidate's feelings; or a question on two moments that 'you find particularly moving' needed to include why the candidate found them moving.

Candidates need to know the format of the examination. Most candidates followed the instructions and answered one question on the play they had studied, either a passage-based question or a discursive question, but a few candidates answered several questions on different texts. These answers were brief and showed a limited understanding of the texts.

Comments on specific questions

ATHOL FUGARD: *'Master Harold' ...and the Boys*

Question 1

Strong answers gave a brief context to the passage by stating that Sam is angry with the way Hally has spoken disrespectfully of his father. They often suggested that they had some sympathy with Hally's intense emotions, because Hally has made clear the impact of his father's alcoholism on his life. Perceptive answers recognised Hally's desire to vent his anger on Sam in the passage, shown in his swearing at Sam, and several candidates expressed understanding of Hally's anger because he felt so helpless to resolve his father's problems, but they also acknowledged that Hally would not make his situation better by alienating Sam, who has shown his loyalty to Hally's family over many years. Many candidates condemned the way Hally deliberately pulls rank over Sam by reminding him of his lowly status as servant, and tries to provoke Sam with his racist attitudes. Perceptive answers praised Sam's sensitive attempts to stop Hally going too far, but also recognised that Sam felt that the point at which 'somebody is going to get hurt' would soon be reached and felt that Hally would do well to take Sam's advice to 'stop before it's too late'. The best answers explored the way Fugard conveys Hally's anger in the dramatic interaction between the two, with parries and thrusts like a fight. Some answers needed to establish the context of the passage more firmly, and needed to support their comments with detailed textual reference. Others needed to give a personal response in a direct answer to the question, by stating what Fugard made them feel about Hally at this moment.

Question 2

There were too few answers to this question to make comment appropriate.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Question 3

Good answers established the context of this passage: Puck has applied love potion to both Lysander and Demetrius, who both now love Helena, who then believes they and Hermia are mocking her. Hermia is bewildered and turns her anger on Helena. There is much that is dramatic in this moment. Strong answers considered three or four points in detail, such as: the conflict between Demetrius and Lysander as they fight over the girl they both now love; Helena's sarcasm and hurt as she thinks she is the butt of a cruel joke; Hermia's confusion and hurt as her lover, Lysander, unexpectedly declares undying love for Helena; and finally the humour of the conflict between Hermia and Helena, who threaten violence but make do with increasingly amusing insults. The best answers made a response to the power of the writing by analysing the drama in detail, and often considered its humour. They commented on Lysander's exaggerated declarations of love for Helena, as well as his insults to Hermia, or how Hermia's confusion is initially conveyed in her heartfelt appeals to Lysander, which change to anger and insults towards Helena. Some answers needed to establish the context of the moment at the start and support their comments with selected reference to the passage. Others needed to address 'powerfully' in the question by responding to the writing in more detail. A few needed to show a better understanding of the passage.

Question 4

Answers to this question often showed candidates' enjoyment of the text in a strong personal response to Bottom. Good answers based their comments on three or four key moments from the play, such as: Bottom's over-enthusiasm and misplaced self-confidence as an actor in the Mechanical's own play when he makes a bid to perform all the parts himself, and then the humour of his performance as Pyramus as he speaks directly to Theseus, and his melodramatic 'death'. The moment when Puck has transformed Bottom literally into an 'ass' was also explored, with the humour arising from his not knowing why his fellow Mechanicals are scared and run away. Most answers also considered the humour of Bottom's scenes with Titania, with the origin of the humour lying in the incongruity of the beautiful fairy queen loving an 'ass'. The best answers focused firmly on how Bottom entertains the audience by exploring his character and actions and used detailed reference to his language to support comments, such as his errors when giving the Fairies orders, or

how he confuses words while acting. Some candidates only referred to Bottom's episode with Titania, and so limited the range of their answers. Others needed to explore the drama of Bottom's appearances and needed to use more detailed textual reference to support their points.

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*

Question 5

Good answers stated the context of the passage; that the family has gathered and the party for Big Daddy has started. Strong answers considered several of the family relationships in the passage and used detailed reference to the text in support. They considered Maggie's desire to have some fun by turning the music on, but how her failing relationship with her husband is shown as Brick ignores her request, and how he is 'unengaged' from the other characters and is losing himself in alcohol. Big Mama's larger-than-life character is dramatically shown in her unstoppable entrance 'like a charging rhino' who 'bears down' on Brick in an over-exuberant greeting of her favourite son, whom she addresses with infantile, repeated phrases such as 'my precious baby!' and 'Oh, you bad boy, you...'. She shows her concern for Brick by telling him to put his glass down, but he shows his detachment from her by drinking the alcohol down instead. Gooper shows his materialism by ensuring everyone knows that he bought Big Daddy the expensive hi-fi and shows his envy of Brick by trying to draw the family's attention to his faults of disobedience and alcoholism. Big Daddy reinforces his relationship with his family as their head by his direct order to turn off the music which is instantly obeyed and his hurtful joke at Big Mama's expense which everyone laughs at. The best answers made a direct response to the powerful drama, often by exploring Big Mama's exuberant actions, a result of her happiness at Big Daddy's good health, and contrasting this with his harsh treatment of her. Others focused more on how Brick's passivity is conveyed. There was profitable analysis of the stage directions which often make revelations about the characters, such as how Big Mama 'giggles, grotesquely', which conveys why Big Daddy despises her. Some answers limited the range of points they made by only commenting on one or two characters. Others needed to develop comments to show understanding of deeper implications or use detailed reference to the passage to support their points. A few misunderstood some of the passage, such as thinking that Brick dutifully obeyed Big Mama and the two enjoyed a close mother-son relationship.

Question 6

The choice of moment was free for candidates to make, dependent on their personal response to what they found 'particularly moving'. Candidates needed to know the text well to make appropriate selections. Chosen moments included: Maggie talking to Brick of her loneliness and her poverty as a child, Big Mama's distress when Big Daddy tells her what he thinks of her 'fat old body', or when Brick's friendship with Skipper is revealed. Good answers showed candidates' understanding of the chosen moments within the play, and the deeper implications of the moments. They also referred to the text in detail to consider how Williams dramatically makes the moments moving through interaction between characters, often involving conflict or heightened emotion, shown in aggressive or extreme language or in actions intended to hurt or provoke. Other answers needed to refer in more detail to their chosen moments and to analyse them rather than simply narrate what happens. Some needed to ensure they answered the question by making clear what is moving about their moments and why they were particularly moved by them. A few answers were limited by exploring one moment instead of two.

LITERATURE (ENGLISH) (US)

<p>Paper 0427/03 Coursework</p>

Key messages

Successful responses:

- show a detailed knowledge of texts
- select relevant material to meet the requirements of the task
- substantiate their arguments with relevant, concise references to the text
- analyse in detail and sensitively the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

Less successful responses:

- have an insecure or limited knowledge of texts
- write exhaustively and lose focus on the task
- make assertions which are not substantiated
- list writers' techniques without close analysis
- offer pre-learned 'themes' rather than personal responses to the writing.

General comments

There was evidence of coursework of a high standard this session, where candidates showed both sensitive engagement with, and enjoyment of, the texts they had studied; this was a testament to the hard work of both candidates and teachers in another challenging year.

In successful assignments, candidates selected relevant material from the text to address the task that had been set. Some less successful responses showed a detailed knowledge of the text, sometimes at considerable length, but needed to address more directly the specific requirements of the task. In many poetry assignments candidates worked through the poem offering a line-by-line commentary, without organising their material in a way that focused on the task. These candidates should have taken advantage of re-drafting to sharpen the focus of their assignments.

The most convincing essays sustained a critical engagement with the ways in which writers achieve their effects (Assessment Objective 3), relating their points to the task. Less successful assignments often commented discretely on connotations of specific words without relating them to their use in the text; others simply logged or explained features such as anaphora, caesura and enjambment in poetry essays, regardless of the focus of the task.

Some centres submitted empathic responses, with most providing the necessary information: the name of the character and the precise moment in the text that the interior monologue takes place. The most successful responses captured a convincingly authentic voice for the chosen character and moment, and they were recognisably rooted in the world of the text.

Guidance for teachers

This section on guidance is re-printed from the June 2021 report.

Guidance on task-setting can be found in the Coursework Handbook, which stresses the importance of **(a)** wording tasks that direct candidates explicitly to explore the ways in which writers achieve their effects and **(b)** avoiding insufficiently challenging command words such as 'Describe' and 'Explain'. Teachers within the centre should together discuss the appropriateness of proposed tasks before they are given to candidates. This means that any problems can be resolved early in the course.

There follows a reminder of what constitutes good practice in the presentation of coursework folders:

- Start each assignment with the full wording of the task. In the case of empathic responses, the chosen character and moment should be clearly stated. This is important since it allows the Moderator to determine how successfully the candidate has captured an authentic voice for the character at the specified moment.
- Use focused ticking in the body of the text to indicate valid and thoughtful points, together with concise marginal and summative comments which relate to the wording of the level descriptors.
- Provide a brief explanation on the assignment or cover sheet in cases where marks are changed during internal moderation. Such purposeful annotation aids transparency and contributes to the robustness of the assessment as it enables a centre to justify its award of particular marks. It is, therefore, not appropriate to send clean (i.e. unannotated) copies of assignments.

The following examples of unhelpful annotation should be avoided: excessive ticking (e.g. of every paragraph or every line); hyperbolic praise of work of indifferent quality; labelling by assessment objective. Simply putting the supposed relevant AOs in the margin is of very little benefit to the Moderator as it does not reveal the *extent* to which a particular assessment objective has been addressed; instead, more specific reference should be made to the relevant level descriptors.

Most centres carried out administration efficiently. Cover sheets (individual record cards) were secured by treasury tag or staple which allowed easy access to candidate work. In these centres care had been taken to:

- include all candidates' details on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form
- transcribe totals accurately across the various documents.

All centres are advised to include a clerical checking stage in their moderation procedures before submitting their paperwork to Cambridge. This check should be carried out by a different person from the one who originally completed the Coursework Assessment Summary Forms and Mark Sheets.