

Folder 1

Original Writing

Fiction: 18

Non-fiction: 18

This work is an impressive example of a top band folder. Although there is a thematic connection between the two pieces, they take a very approach to the topic and, in the case of the fiction writing, there is a willingness to be formally experimental without ever losing sight of the reader. The narrative voice is sustained and there is a clear sense of a writer using specific literary and linguistic techniques for a defined purpose. The shifts in register are well-handled and at no point does the writing become self-indulgent. In fact, the ability to produce multiple registers is one of the strengths of the piece. It is also worth pointing out that the candidate has used graphological features in a constructive and relevant manner.

The non-fiction writing is an assured piece of work which used generic conventions and a confident tone to produce a well-structured and very readable piece. This is also a good example of how to use paragraphing and effective transition in a journalistic piece. (It is also a reminder that there is no need for “articles” to be set out in columns or to include other features which distract from the content.) The theme of mental health in young people has been a very popular choice of topic and the combination of literary and non-fiction approaches fulfils all the criteria to place this work in the top bands. This candidate’s work is a very good example of a full mark folder. It meets each requirement of Level 5 in both the original writing and in the commentary. The generic requirements of two very different pieces of work are dealt with confidently and the candidate’s control of the material is evident throughout.

Commentary

24

There is a clear sense of genre, purpose and audience in the original writing and this is supported by a commentary which offers a sophisticated rationale, as well as acknowledging the influence of the stimulus texts. The primary stimulus texts are offered as a thematic starting point and the candidate’s reading of a range of journalism is evident throughout the non-fiction. There is a clear sense of audience here and the candidate is aware of how the writing might influence its readers. The candidate has also cited other influences from their wider reading and used terminology appropriately and always with discussion of effect.

This folder is offered as an example of work which is assured and analytical, and which can reasonably be awarded full marks.

Total: 60

Folder 2

Original Writing

Fiction: 16

Non-fiction: 18

This is an example of a folder which also belongs in the top bands and has many strengths. The fiction work is a secure and often effective piece in the third person which uses conventional narrative techniques in a controlled manner. There is no sense of over-writing and the descriptive work is always at the service of story and character. The influence of Hosseini is evident here and there is a clear sense of audience. The fiction work is sufficiently assured to be placed in Level 5. The non-fiction piece is an excellent example of an opinion piece which shows a candidate who is confident in using generic conventions and has shaped their well-researched material in a convincing manner. As with folder 1, the structure and use of paragraphing are a particular strength and the candidate has benefitted from reading a range of journalistic material.

Commentary

19

The commentary is a secure and detailed piece of work which shows an awareness of genre, purpose and audience and makes discriminating connections between the stimulus texts and the original writing. Terminology is used appropriately and there are specific examples of analysis which discuss how meaning has been shaped. It is particularly strong at word level and lexical analysis is often highly detailed. (There is, however, little discussion of syntax.) Some of the conclusions about literary and linguistic choices are not sustained or fully developed enough to place the work in the top band but there is enough to justify a mark at the top of Level 4.

Total: 53

Folder 3

Original Writing

Fiction: 15

Non-fiction: 15

The original writing here is a very good example of work which has clearly been influenced by personal experience but which also has a clear sense of genre, purpose and audience. It is also worth pointing out that the choice of stimulus texts is a good example of how to find two multi-layered texts which fulfil the specification criteria and are linked in an interesting way. The literary writing uses personal experience as a starting point but then moves into what is clearly fictional territory. Here the influence of “Oranges are not the only Fruit” is evident. The candidate has created a convincing narrative voice and the writing is often controlled and effective.

The non-fiction writing is a good example of work which shows a secure understanding of genre and is able to maintain an appropriate tone throughout. The candidate clearly understands the need to balance convincing, well-researched argument with direct address to the audience. The work is well structured and handles shifts in register with confidence.

Commentary

15

This is a well-organised commentary which acknowledges the influence of the stimulus texts and gives specific examples to support this. It discusses the requirements of genre, purpose and audience although some of the analysis of effect is not fully sustained and some of the conclusions are descriptive and observational. The writing is accurate and the use of terminology is always appropriate and detailed. The commentary belongs at the border between levels 3 and 4. There is enough awareness of context to place the work in level 4 but some of the analysis of language is descriptive and observational, which would place it in level 3. This folder was chosen as an example of work which requires careful internal moderation and an understanding that the work does not fulfil all the Assessment Objectives equally.

Total: 45

Folder 4

Original Writing

Fiction: 11

Non-fiction: 9

This is a potentially interesting folder which has a fascinating premise and starting point. However, much of the work is under-developed. The fiction does use a clear first-person narrative voice and there is plenty of effective descriptive writing. However, there is also what seems to be a reliance on cliché and a sense that the work needs several more drafts and attention to detail before it is ready for submission. Genre and purpose are not immediately apparent from the non-fiction writing and the fact that this is a blog is only apparent in the commentary. The blog does not always seem secure about its intended audience and although there is much to enjoy here, there is little sense of control in the writing.

Commentary

11

The commentary is also something of a mixed bag. There are insightful comments but the approach is often observational and descriptive. The conclusions about the effect of specific lexical choices are generalised and there is little discussion of syntax or the shaping of the whole text. The candidate has identified “London” as their theme and it would have been advisable to refine this to offer a more specific (or wide-ranging) focus. There are some useful comments about the influence of source texts but these are not fully integrated into the discussion of the candidate’s own writing.

Total: 31

Folder 5 Additional work

Original Writing

Fiction: 14

Non-fiction: 14

This supplementary folder has been included as an example of an enjoyable and personal submission which has many excellent qualities. There is a secure idea of genre, purpose and audience in both pieces as well as a pleasing range of writing. The fiction piece is typical of many submissions this year. The candidate is clearly engaged by the topic and there is a strong sense of narrative voice. However, there are stylistic points where the candidate has used anachronistic expressions or there is a lack of control in the writing. These are balanced by the quality of the research and the attempt to create a convincing narrative. The non-fiction piece is also typical of many pieces in this style where the quality of the research goes some way to make up for the relative lack of re-shaping of the material. This is evident in the lack of effective paragraphing and transitioning compared with other non-fiction pieces already seen. However, there is much to admire and reward in this work.

Commentary

16

The commentary does focus on specific details and terminology is used appropriately. The candidate has attempted to identify a range of linguistic and generic features and has offered some detailed readings of these. There is a tendency to identify and describe the content, asserting its effect on the reader. However, this is a commentary which was chosen as an example of work which could be awarded a mark in the lower half of level 4 as it fulfils a range of assessment objectives

Total: 44