

9ELO 03 Commentaries Summer 2017

FOLDER 1

Original Writing

Fiction: 17 Non-fiction: 15

This folder was chosen as a good example of a candidate choosing a popular topic but ensuring that the work was supported by some ambitious wider reading and research which had a clear influence on the outcomes. The fiction is a focused short story which explores the theme of obsession in an appropriately elevated tone. The candidate's wider reading is obvious here and although it might be argued that the style is almost too ornate, this is ultimately a matter of personal taste and is addressed in the commentary; the candidate has deliberately used archaisms to achieve a distancing effect. What is not in dispute is the candidate's engagement with the task and the control of theme and structure. The theme is developed through the whole piece and although there are some slips and awkward expressions, these are very minor points when the whole piece is considered and the ambition of the writing deserves to be rewarded.

The contrast with the non-fiction work is also worth noting. The candidate has taken the theme and established a distinctive style and although the audience for this is clear from the piece itself, it would be advisable to be very clear precisely where the work is likely to be published. This point is also not fully explored in the commentary. However, the overall effect is impressive. As with the fiction, there are some individual examples of slightly awkward expression but these should not detract from the overall quality of the writing.

Commentary: 22

The commentary is an example of a candidate who has integrated the various requirements of the assessment objectives and attempted to evaluate the influence of their wider reading. The candidate has achieved a happy balance between acknowledging this influence and focusing on how they have shaped their own material. Linguistic terminology is used appropriately and discussion of technique is always related to effect. There is precise analysis of specific linguistic and literary choices. The candidate offers a sophisticated whole-text reading of their own work. The bibliography is exemplary.

The candidate has offered a helpful description of the work on the front sheet and centre has given an overview of the assessment. The centre's annotations are also useful for the moderator.

Total mark: 54

FOLDER 2

Original writing

Fiction: 12 Non-fiction: 11

This is another example of a popular choice of theme and is a good example of what might be described as a mid-range folder. The candidate has attempted to establish a clear narrative voice and there is some awareness of narrative conventions. The writing is often effective in developing the theme, particularly where description is used as a starting point for characterisation.

Paragraphing and transitioning is used effectively and the candidate is clearly in control of the material. There is good use of syntax for effect.

The non-fiction work is also well-handled and having a clear genre and very specific audience is always recommended. The candidate has used lessons learned from Unit 1 in terms of authentic speech conventions and the text is structured to ensure that the audience is always in mind. The tone is also appropriately managed and the paragraphing demonstrates that the delivery of the speech is an important consideration.

Commentary: 16

Again, the commentary in this folder is typical of many that were seen in the last series. Although the approach is sometimes observational and descriptive, there is a secure sense of context and some precise comments about genre, purpose and audience are offered. This is where a clear view of context is always to be recommended. Terminology is used precisely and there is a continual attempt to discuss the effect of specific linguistic choices, although some of the analysis is not sufficiently developed to move the work higher up the mark bands. The tendency to explain places this at the low end of level 4, together with the secure awareness of context. However, the focus is always on how the candidate has shaped the material and it is encouraging to see some discussion of syntax although this is not fully explored. Unfortunately, the candidate did not offer a bibliography. This was a common issue and centres are advised to ensure that candidates meet all the requirements of the specification.

Total mark: 39

FOLDER 3

Original Writing

Fiction: 10 Non-fiction: 9

This folder was chosen as an example of some of the problems faced by moderators in terms of the choice of tasks. There is much to admire in this submission and the fiction writing is often effective. The candidate has given careful consideration to narrative technique and the use of specific details helps to create a sense of authenticity. The work clearly fulfils all the requirements for Level 3. However, there is not enough precision and control of the material to move the work into a higher band. The problem arises with the choice of the non-fiction writing. By writing an obituary which was clearly meant to have been produced in 1967, the candidate has moved into the realm of fiction; this is less of a problem than in past series but there are still candidates who choose to write as though they are in the past. In such cases, it is advisable to choose a genre such as a reflective article perhaps acknowledging the anniversary of an event and offering a modern perspective. The mark for this piece rewards the candidate's use of appropriate generic features but it could be argued that it does not meet the requirements of audience and function. This is the highest mark that such a piece can reasonably be awarded. Centres are advised to comment on issues such as this in their annotations or summative remarks.

Commentary: 14

Although the commentary is slightly hampered by the selection of the non-fiction task as the precise nature of its context cannot be discussed in a meaningful way, there is still a lot of detailed discussion of the shaping of the material at both word and sentence level. The influence of the stimulus texts is acknowledged. The candidate has used knowledge gained from 9ELO/01 when discussing idiolect and there is a sense of the cohesiveness of both texts. The commentary clearly belongs at the top of Level 3.

Total mark : 33