

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

International GCSE
English Literature (4ET0) Paper 01

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4ET01: Drama and Prose/Summer 2011 Paper 1

Introduction

This English Literature examination successfully enables a wide range of candidates to show their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Drama and Prose texts they have studied.

This untiered examination is not too dissimilar to the legacy International GCSE. It lasts 1hr and 45mins; there are two sections to the paper, Section A – Drama and Section B – Prose.

There is a choice of two questions, character or theme.

The total number of marks available is 60.

Texts **are not** allowed into the examination.

Quality of Written Communication is assessed in this examination (in almost all cases, neutral to the band).

The cohort for this first series was much different than the legacy International GCSE 4360: almost double the number of 'home' candidates; however, there were still a significant number of overseas candidates taking this new specification. The entries, for both home and overseas, were larger than any entries for the legacy International GCSE.

Candidate choices – Texts

Many candidates opted for the familiar texts of *Romeo and Juliet* (1675 total entry) and *A View from the Bridge* (1949 total entry) from the Drama section and the also popular text *Of Mice and Men* (3312 total entry) from the Prose section of the paper. Many Home chose texts that are popular with GCSE.

Information for Centres

Most responses from candidates showed a clear focus and there was evidence of a successful learning style. Many sophisticated responses came from candidates who explored both the writer's craft and the historical/cultural context. Many students demonstrated a more than sound knowledge of essay structures: aspects of literature had often been taught thoroughly.

Most candidates answering Questions 1 and 10; *Romeo and Juliet* and *Of Mice and Men* did so extremely well. Candidates answering question 4: *A View from the Bridge* did so extremely well; 4b having the 'edge'. There was an awareness of the Sicilian code of honour, American law and betrayal between relationships.

Question 9 on the question of 'family life': *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* was also answered invariably well with candidates engaging with the contextual aspects.

Question 10 proved to be the most popular text, 10b being the favourite. Question 10b on the theme of 'dreams and dreaming' was answered invariably well with candidates engaging with the contextual aspects, often exploring Steinbeck's purpose as well as social observations of the period in time. Some examiners reported a concern for the misuse of the words 'negro' and 'nigger' in their responses, as if written in their own words, rather than a racist term, not using quotation marks.

Less focused responses came from Question 3: *An Inspector Calls*; often responses did not fully engage with the character of Sheila tending to focus too much on the Inspector. Equally, the responses to Question 8 on *19th Century Short Stories* produced weak responses; these did not fully or equally compare and contrast the characters.

The least popular texts were: *Our Town* (18 total entry!) and *19th Century Short Stories* (191 total entry).

Generally though, all examiners reported that many scripts had gained marks appertaining to the higher bands and that many scripts had gained full marks.

Sally-Anne Tapia-Bowes
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