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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 2010/01

Paper 1

General comments

The standard of performance varied widely. There was a high proportion of fragmentary scripts showing only the sketchiest of knowledge and a considerable number of rubric infringements. Some candidates seemed unaware of the requirements of the course and had not studied the right section of the anthology of poetry or offered more texts than was necessary, thus diluting the quality of their grasp of the texts. By contrast there were some strong performances across some whole Centres.

Texts which did not produce any answers and which therefore will not be commented upon were *The Mosquito Coast* and *'Master Harold'...and the Boys*. There were very few answers on *Fiela's Child*, *The Grass is Singing*, *Twentieth Century Short Stories* and *Touched with Fire* so it is not possible to make any generalisations about those texts either, other than to say answers were almost all very slight both in knowledge and response.

Centres are reminded about the changes to the scheme of assessment for this syllabus for the 2004 examination.

Comments on specific questions

Twelfth Night

Question 1

Candidates generally had no difficulty in placing the extract and the material for the question was well known. There was a certain lack of attention to the number of marks carried by each section and some candidates lost marks by answering only briefly in **(d)**, **(f)** and **(g)**. There is still some confusion about the difference between a mood, or feeling, and a characteristic; where marks were lost in these sections, that was usually the reason. There was also a tendency to repeat the same characteristic in **(g)** rather than to try to find two different ones.

Question 2

- (a)** This section did not cause candidates any particular difficulty. They generally understood the situation clearly, though occasionally went into too much detail about what had gone before, telling the story of the whole of the play so far. Better answers focused on the extract and responded directly to Viola's predicament. Weaker candidates as ever gave opinions about rather than responses to her, their answers being characterised by 'I feel that Viola is...'
- (b)** This question puzzled a lot of candidates. They frequently said that Orsino deserved her because he was of the same or higher rank and missed the point that he appears shallow in his understanding of love and quickly changes his affections at the end of the play when he discovers that she is a woman. Better answers commented on his behaviour in more detail and contrasted it with Viola's selflessness in serving him.

Question 3

This question produced better responses. Candidates were generally able to range fairly widely through the play and to examine a variety of incidents involving Sir Toby and the others. Though some answers seemed pre-prepared, and there was a certain over-reliance on narrative in weaker answers, many candidates showed genuine enjoyment of the gulling of Malvolio, for example.

Jane Eyre

Question 4

Unusually more candidates offered this **Section A** text than the Shakespeare and they had apparently enjoyed their study of it. They knew the early part of the book well and generally tackled the question quite confidently. The same comment as for **Question 1**, that there was sometimes a disregard for the number of marks carried by the sections, applies, as does the comment regarding the meaning of 'characteristic'.

Question 5

- (a) This section produced some clear and well supported responses, though there was little *detailed* exploration of the passage.
- (b) The material for this section was well known and there was a good deal of reference to the early incident when Jane is hurt by John Reed and confined to the Red Room. There were very strong adverse responses to the Reed family in general but particularly to Mrs Reed.

Question 6

Though candidates had no difficulty in grasping the question, most answered in very general terms, referring for example to Jane's acquisition of knowledge, which means that she can become a governess, as well as to her gaining of self-confidence and fortitude. Most answers would have been enhanced by reference to more specific details. Though candidates recognised the importance of Helen Burns and of Miss Temple, very few went into any detail of their influence on Jane.

Animal Farm

Question 10

This text was studied by almost every candidate and almost all attempted this question.

- (a) Candidates clearly understood that the incident is important because it represents the total breakdown of the ideals that were represented by the Revolution, that Napoleon is established as a ruthless dictator, and that his brutality is now unrestricted. Most made the point that even in Jones's time animals had not been slaughtered so savagely, and that this is by their own kind. Answers were differentiated by the extent to which they responded to the terrifying qualities of the incident.
- (b) Candidates generally wrote clearly about the occasions when other commandments were broken and about the ways in which the pigs adapted them, but only better answers actually addressed the question of how they were able to get away with it because of the stupidity and illiteracy and blind obedience of the other animals.

Question 11

This was the least popular of the three questions and tended to produce thinner answers.

Question 12

Many candidates merely produced two character sketches for this question. They were generally relevant but more successful answers probed more deeply into the ways that Squealer ensures Napoleon's success as, in his own negative way, does Benjamin. Good answers were, of course, characterised by plenty of supporting detail.

All My Sons

This text was a popular choice and while some answers were thin and sketchy, the better ones showed a real attempt to engage with it.

Question 19

- (a) Most candidates understood the significance of this moment in the play; that Kate finally is driven to reveal Keller's guilt in the shipment of the faulty machine parts. Better answers were characterised by examination of the impact of this revelation on Chris and on the audience. Unfortunately, not many candidates showed the contribution of the stage directions to the effect of the scene.
- (b) There were two clear parts to this question. Most candidates had no difficulty in remembering what happens: the showdown between Chris and Joe, Chris's escape, Joe's suicide. More successful candidates made a good response to Chris and tried to evaluate both his and Joe's behaviour.

Question 20

This was a much less popular question and candidates generally found it hard to refer to more than the opening scene of the play to support their ideas about these two characters.

Question 21

Better answers to this question showed how the generally benign atmosphere of the opening scene is disturbed by the gradual introduction of elements suggesting underlying conflict, such as the fallen tree, the references to Larry, the arrival of Anne. Although the level of knowledge of the play was generally good, many candidates stopped short at the description of the happy, relaxed atmosphere.