

**X270/12/02**

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NATIONAL  
QUALIFICATIONS  
2014

THURSDAY, 1 MAY  
11.05AM – 12.35 PM

ENGLISH  
HIGHER  
Critical Essay

Answer **two** questions.

Each question must be taken from a different section.

Each question is worth 25 marks.



**Answer TWO questions from this paper. Each question must be chosen from a different Section (A–E). You are not allowed to choose two questions from the same Section.**

**In all Sections you may use Scottish texts.**

**Write the number of each question in the margin of your answer booklet and begin each essay on a fresh page.**

**You should spend about 45 minutes on each essay.**

The following will be assessed:

- the relevance of your essays to the questions you have chosen, and the extent to which you sustain an appropriate line of thought
- your knowledge and understanding of key elements, central concerns and significant details of the chosen texts, supported by detailed and relevant evidence
- your understanding, as appropriate to the questions chosen, of how relevant aspects of structure/style/language contribute to the meaning/effect/impact of the chosen texts, supported by detailed and relevant evidence
- your evaluation, as appropriate to the questions chosen, of the effectiveness of the chosen texts, supported by detailed and relevant evidence
- the quality of your written expression and the technical accuracy of your writing.

### **SECTION A—DRAMA**

*Answers to questions on drama should address relevantly the central concern(s)/theme(s) of the text and be supported by reference to appropriate dramatic techniques such as: conflict, characterisation, key scene(s), dialogue, climax, exposition, dénouement, structure, plot, setting, aspects of staging (such as lighting, music, stage set, stage directions . . .), soliloquy, monologue . . .*

1. Choose a play in which a central character experiences rejection, isolation or loneliness.  
Show how the dramatist makes you aware of the character's situation and discuss how it adds to your understanding of character and/or theme in the play as a whole.
2. Choose a play which features one of the following conflicts: traditional values versus modern thinking; duty versus self-interest; delusion versus self-awareness.  
Show how the dramatist presents this conflict and discuss how it affects your response to the play as a whole.
3. Choose a play in which the opening scene establishes important elements of mood and/or character.  
Show in detail how these elements are established in the opening scene and discuss how this contributes to your understanding of the central concern(s) of the play as a whole.
4. Choose a play in which the setting in time and/or place is an important feature.  
Show how the dramatist exploits aspects of the setting in a way which enhances your understanding of the central concern(s) of the play as a whole.

## SECTION B—PROSE

### *Prose Fiction*

*Answers to questions on prose fiction should address relevantly the central concern(s)/ theme(s) of the text(s) and be supported by reference to appropriate techniques of prose fiction such as: characterisation, setting, key incident(s), narrative technique, symbolism, structure, climax, plot, atmosphere, dialogue, imagery . . .*

5. Choose a **novel** in which loyalty or bravery or trust plays an important part.  
Show how the writer explores the idea in a way which adds to your understanding of the central concern(s) of the text.
6. Choose a **novel** in which the vulnerability of a central character is apparent at one or more than one key point in the text.  
Explain the situation(s) in which the character's vulnerability emerges and discuss the importance of the vulnerability to your understanding of character and/or theme in the text as a whole.
7. Choose a **novel** in which a character makes a decision which you consider unexpected or unwise or unworthy.  
Explain the circumstances surrounding the decision and discuss its importance to your understanding of character and theme in the novel as a whole.
8. Choose a **novel** or **short story** in which ideas and/or characters and/or incidents appear to be designed to shock the reader.  
Explain what you find shocking about the text and discuss to what extent this enhances your understanding of the text as a whole.

### *Prose Non-fiction*

*Answers to questions on prose non-fiction should address relevantly the central concern(s)/ theme(s) of the text and be supported by reference to appropriate techniques of prose non-fiction such as: ideas, use of evidence, selection of detail, point of view, stance, setting, anecdote, narrative voice, style, language, structure, organisation of material . . .*

9. Choose a **non-fiction text** in which the writer's own personality emerges as a significant feature.  
Show how the style of writing conveys a sense of the writer's personality and discuss to what extent this is important to your understanding of the key idea(s) of the text.
10. Choose a **non-fiction text** which, in your opinion, deals with a fundamental truth about human nature.  
Show how the writer's presentation of key ideas enhances your understanding of this fundamental truth.
11. Choose a **non-fiction text** which is written in the form of a diary or a journal or a letter.  
Discuss to what extent the writer's exploitation of specific features of the chosen form is important in conveying the key idea(s) of the text.

[Turn over for Section C on Page four

## SECTION C—POETRY

*Answers to questions on poetry should address relevantly the central concern(s)/theme(s) of the text(s) and be supported by reference to appropriate poetic techniques such as: imagery, verse form, structure, mood, tone, sound, rhythm, rhyme, characterisation, contrast, setting, symbolism, word choice . . .*

- 12.** Choose a poem in which the poet presents an apparently ordinary situation or event in an extraordinary way.

Show how the poet does this in such a way as to add to your understanding of the poem as a whole.
- 13.** Choose a poem in which the poet creates a distinctive voice and/or credible persona.

Show how the poet creates the voice and/or persona, and discuss how this adds to your understanding of the poem as a whole.
- 14.** Choose a poem in which **two or more** of the following techniques significantly enhance the impact of the poem: rhyme, rhythm, sound, imagery.

Show how the poet's use of your chosen techniques enhances your understanding of the poem as a whole.
- 15.** Choose a poem which you find emotionally unsettling or intellectually challenging.

Show how the poem elicits the response from you and discuss how it contributes to your understanding of the central concern(s) of the poem.

## SECTION D—FILM AND TV DRAMA

*Answers to questions on film and TV drama should address relevantly the central concern(s)/ theme(s) of the text(s) and be supported by reference to appropriate techniques of film and TV drama such as: key sequence(s), characterisation, conflict, structure, plot, dialogue, editing/montage, sound/soundtrack, aspects of mise-en-scène (such as lighting, colour, use of camera, costume, props . . .), mood, setting, casting, exploitation of genre . . .*

- 16.** Choose a **film or \*TV drama** which presents a mainly bleak vision of life.

Show how the film or programme makers convey the bleakness and discuss to what extent you feel the text offers any optimism.

- 17.** Choose a **film or \*TV drama** in which the true nature of a central character is gradually revealed.

Show how the film or programme makers present the gradual revelation and discuss how this added to your appreciation of the text.

- 18.** Choose a **film or \*TV drama** which presents an individual or community under threat.

Show how the film or programme makers convey this threat and discuss how the way in which the threat is responded to is important to your understanding of the text.

- 19.** Choose from a **film** a sequence in which a tense mood is created through at least two key filmic techniques such as mise-en-scène, montage, soundtrack . . .

Show how the film makers use these techniques to create a tense mood in the sequence and discuss the importance of the sequence to your appreciation of the text as a whole.

\*“TV Drama” includes a single play, a series or a serial.

**[Turn over for Section E on Page six**

## SECTION E—LANGUAGE

*Answers to questions on language should address relevantly the central concern(s) of the language research/study and be supported by reference to appropriate language concepts such as: register, jargon, tone, vocabulary, word choice, technical terminology, presentation, illustration, accent, grammar, idiom, slang, dialect, structure, point of view, orthography, abbreviation . . .*

20. Consider the spoken language of a specific geographical area.

Identify some of the characteristics of the language of your chosen area and discuss to what extent it enriches community life.

21. Consider aspects of language which change over time, such as slang, idiom, dialect . . .

Identify some of the changes and discuss to what extent you feel these changes contribute towards possible problems in communication between different age groups or generations.

22. Consider aspects of language within a specific interest group.

Identify aspects of language which are typical of this group and discuss to what extent these aspects of language operate to the advantage of its members.

23. Consider the language of television programmes **or** radio programmes **or** magazines **or** websites which are aimed at an audience defined by such features as shared cultural or leisure or political interests.

Identify some of the characteristics of the language and evaluate its effectiveness in communicating with its target audience.

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]

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