

# X115/303

---

NATIONAL  
QUALIFICATIONS  
2007

FRIDAY, 11 MAY  
10.50 AM – 12.20 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 which has a theme of revenge or betrayal or sacrifice.  
Show how the dramatist explores your chosen theme and discuss how this treatment enhances your appreciation of the play as a whole.
2. Choose from a play an important scene which you found particularly entertaining or particularly shocking.  
Explain briefly why the scene is important to the play as a whole and discuss in detail how the dramatist makes the scene so entertaining or shocking.
3. Choose a play in which a character makes a crucial error.  
Explain what the error is and discuss to what extent it is important to your understanding of the character's situation in the play as a whole.
4. Choose a play in which the relationship between a male and a female character changes significantly.  
Show how the relationship between the two characters changes and discuss to what extent this illuminates a central idea of the play.

## 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 a character reaches a crisis point.  
Explain briefly how this point is reached and go on to discuss how the character's response to the situation extends your understanding of him/her.
6. Choose **two short stories** in which aspects of style contribute significantly to the exploration of theme.  
Compare the ways in which stylistic features are used to create and maintain your interest in the central ideas of the texts.
7. Choose a **novel** with an ending which you found unexpected.  
Explain briefly in what way the ending is unexpected and go on to discuss to what extent it is a satisfactory conclusion to the novel.
8. Choose a **novel** or **short story** in which one of the main characters is not in harmony with her/his society.  
Describe the character's situation and go on to discuss how it adds to your understanding of a central concern of the text.

### *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 work of **non-fiction** which deals with **travel** or **exploration** or **discovery**.  
Discuss to what extent the presentation of the text reveals as much about the writer's personality and/or views as it does about the subject matter.
10. Choose a **biography** or **autobiography** in which the life of the subject is presented in an effective and engaging way.  
Show how the writer uses techniques of non-fiction to achieve this.
11. Choose an **essay** or **piece of journalism** which appeals to you because it is both informative and passionate.  
Explain what you learned about the topic and discuss how the writer's presentation conveys his/her passion.

**[Turn over**

## 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 there is a sinister atmosphere or person or place.  
Show how the poet evokes this sinister quality and discuss how it adds to your appreciation of the poem.
13. Choose **two** poems on the same theme which impress you for different reasons.  
Compare the treatment of the theme in the two poems and discuss to what extent you find one more impressive than the other.
14. Choose a poem in which there is effective use of one or more of the following: verse form, rhythm, rhyme, repetition, sound.  
Show how the poet effectively uses the feature(s) to enhance your appreciation of the poem as a whole.
15. Choose a poem involving a journey which is both literal and metaphorical.  
Discuss how effectively the poet describes the journey and makes you aware of its deeper significance.

## 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**\* the success of which is built on a rivalry or friendship between two characters.

Show how the film or programme makers construct the characters and discuss how the rivalry or friendship contributes to the success of the text.

- 17.** Choose a **film** in which music makes a significant contribution to the impact of the film as a whole.

Show how the film makers make use of music, and go on to explain how its contribution is so important relative to other elements of the text.

- 18.** Choose a **film** or **TV version** of a stage play or of a novel.

By referring to key elements of the film or TV version, explain to what extent you think the film or programme makers were successful in transferring the play or novel to the screen.

- 19.** Choose a **film** or **TV drama**\* in which setting and atmosphere contribute more than plot to your appreciation of the text.

Justify your opinion by referring to these elements of the text.

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

[Turn over

## 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 or written language of a particular geographical area. (This could be, for example, a village, a city, or a larger area of the UK.)  
Identify what is distinctive about the language and evaluate the effects of these distinctive usages on the communication of the people of that area.
- 21.** Consider the language of popular entertainment in the 21st century—in TV, radio, music, magazines, for example.  
Describe how the idioms and vocabulary popularised by the entertainment industry influence the everyday speech of the younger generation. Discuss to what extent these usages enrich everyday communication.
- 22.** Consider the language of persuasion employed in a commercial, political, social or personal situation.  
Identify and discuss the effectiveness of several ways in which the language you have chosen attempts to be persuasive.
- 23.** Consider the language typical of any particular vocational or interest group with which you are familiar.  
To what extent are the specialist terms and idioms typical of this group a barrier to the ability of the general public to understand the communication? How necessary do you think these terms and idioms are for effective communication within the group?

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]

**[BLANK PAGE]**

**[BLANK PAGE]**