

X115/303

NATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS
2009

FRIDAY, 15 MAY
11.05 AM – 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 behaves in an obsessive manner.
Describe the nature of the character's obsessive behaviour and discuss the influence this behaviour has on your understanding of the character in the play as a whole.
2. Choose a play which you feel is made particularly effective by features of structure such as: dramatic opening, exposition, flashback, contrast, turning-point, climax, anticlimax, dénouement . . .
Show how one or more than one structural feature employed by the dramatist adds to the impact of the play.
3. Choose from a play a scene which significantly changes your view of a character.
Explain how the scene prompts this reappraisal and discuss how important it is to your understanding of the character in the play as a whole.
4. Choose a play set in a society whose values conflict with those of a central character or characters.
Describe this difference in values and discuss how effectively the opposition of values enhances your appreciation 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** or **short story** which deals with true love, unrequited love or love betrayed.
Discuss the writer's exploration of the theme and show to what extent it conveys a powerful message about the nature of love.
6. Choose a **novel** or **short story** with a central character you consider to be heroic.
Show how the heroic qualities are revealed and discuss how this portrayal of the character enhances your understanding of the text as a whole.
7. Choose a **novel** in which the setting in time and/or place is a significant feature.
Show how the writer's use of setting contributes to your understanding of character and theme.
8. Choose a **novel** in which there is an incident involving envy or rivalry or distrust.
Explain the nature of the incident and go on to discuss its importance to your understanding of the novel 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 an **essay** or a **piece of journalism** in which you feel that the writer's style is a key factor in developing a persuasive argument.
Show how the writer's presentation of the argument is made persuasive by his or her use of techniques of non-fiction.
10. Choose a **full-length work** of **biography** or of **autobiography** in which the writer presents the life of her or his subject in a positive light.
Show how the writer's style and skilful selection of material contribute to this positive portrayal.
11. Choose a **non-fiction text** which exploits the humour of particular situations and/or incidents.
Show how the writer's use of humour creates interest in the subject matter.

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 explores one of the following emotions: anguish, dissatisfaction, regret, loss.
Show how the poet explores the emotion and discuss to what extent he or she is successful in deepening your understanding of it.
13. Choose **two** poems which explore the experience of war.
Discuss which you find more effective in conveying the experience of war.
14. Choose a poem in which contrast is important in developing theme.
Explore the poet's use of contrast and show why it is important in developing a key theme of the poem.
15. Choose a poem which depicts a particular stage of life, such as childhood, adolescence, middle age, old age.
Discuss how effectively the poet evokes the essence of this stage of life.

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*** in which two characters are involved in a psychological conflict which dominates the text.
Show how the film or programme makers reveal the nature of the conflict and explain why it is so significant to the text as a whole.
- 17.** Choose from a **film** an important sequence in which excitement is created as much by filmic technique as by action and dialogue.
Show how the film makers create this excitement and explain why the sequence is so important to the film as a whole.
- 18.** Choose a **film** or **TV drama*** which evokes a particular period of history and explores significant concerns of life at that time.
By referring to selected sequences and to the text as a whole, show how the film or programme makers evoke the period and explore significant concerns of life at that time.
- 19.** Choose one or more than one **film** which in your opinion demonstrate(s) outstanding work by a particular director.
By referring to key elements of the text(s), show why you consider the work of this director to be so impressive.

*“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 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.
- 21.** Consider some of the changes in language which have occurred as a result of lobbying by pressure groups such as feminists, multi-cultural organisations, faith groups . . .
By examining specific examples, discuss to what extent you feel that clarity of communication has been affected by such changes.
- 22.** Consider the use of persuasive language in the promotion of goods or services or a campaign or a cause.
By examining specific examples, evaluate the success of the language in achieving its purpose.
- 23.** Consider the technical language associated with a sport, a craft, a profession or one of the arts.
By examining specific examples, discuss to what extent you feel such language leads to clearer communication.

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]

[BLANK PAGE]

[BLANK PAGE]