



National
Qualifications
SPECIMEN ONLY

S824/77/11

**English
Literary Study**

Date — Not applicable

Duration — 1 hour 30 minutes

Total marks — 20

Attempt **ONE** part only.

PART A — POETRY — 20 marks

Attempt **one** question.

PART B — PROSE FICTION — 20 marks

Attempt **one** question.

PART C — PROSE NON-FICTION — 20 marks

Attempt **one** question.

PART D — DRAMA — 20 marks

Attempt **one** question.

You may not use the text(s) and/or writer(s) from your dissertation for this paper.

Write your answers clearly in the answer booklet provided. In the answer booklet you must clearly identify the question number you are attempting.

Use **blue** or **black** ink.

Before leaving the examination room you must give your answer booklet to the Invigilator; if you do not, you may lose all the marks for this paper.



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LITERARY STUDY — 20 marks

Attempt ONE part only.

PART A — POETRY

Your answer should take the form of a CRITICAL ESSAY appropriately structured to meet the demands of your selected question.

Attempt ONE question.

1. *'True wit is nature to advantage dressed*

What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.'

With reference to at least **three** poems, discuss the effectiveness of 'wit' in conveying the themes and main ideas of a particular poet.

2. With reference to at least **three** poems by a particular poet, discuss the effectiveness of the poet's use of nature and the natural world in the presentation of significant themes and ideas.

3. Modern poets sometimes use traditional verse forms such as the elegy, the dramatic monologue, occasional poetry and the sonnet to express their themes and ideas.

Discuss the effective use of 'traditional verse forms' in at least **three** poems by a modern poet.

4. *'Effective poetry emerges when a poet transforms his or her experience of the world into the universal experiences: love, loss, birth, death, regret . . .'*

Discuss the effectiveness of a poet's presentation of 'universal experiences' through the use of a range of poetic techniques. You should refer to at least **three** poems.

5. Discuss some of the ways by which poetry explores aspects of change. In your answer you should refer to at least **three** poems. You may refer to more than one poet's work in your response.

6. *'Romantic poetry is a project of cultural inquiry, national fantasy, and sociopolitical critique as much as a poetry of self and nature.'*

Discuss with reference to at least **three** poems by any of the Romantic poets. You may refer to more than one poet's work in your response.

OR

PART B — PROSE FICTION

Your answer should take the form of a CRITICAL ESSAY appropriately structured to meet the demands of your selected question.

Attempt ONE question.

7. *'The business of the novelist is to show the sorriest things underlying the grandest things, and the grandeur underlying the sorriest things.'*

Discuss with reference to any **two** nineteenth-century novels.

8. Discuss the thematic significance of the presentation of the minor characters in any **two** novels.

9. Discuss the thematic effectiveness of the use of setting in any **two** novels.

10. *'It is the alienation of the individual which pervades modern fiction.'*

Discuss with reference to any **two** modern novels.

11. *'Books break the shackles of time.'*

Discuss with reference to any **two** novels.

12. Discuss the effectiveness of narrative structure in at least **three** short stories.

13. *'The novel can deal unflinchingly with the social issues of the day.'*

Discuss with reference to any **two** novels.

[Turn over

OR

PART C — PROSE NON-FICTION

Your answer should take the form of a **CRITICAL ESSAY** appropriately structured to meet the demands of your selected question.

Attempt **ONE** question.

14. *'Travel Writing is often more of a journey of self-discovery for the writer than an evocation of place and experience.'*

Discuss the relevance of this quotation with reference to at least **two** non-fiction texts.

15. *'Humour allows the writer — journalist, travel writer, diarist, social commentator, autobiographer — to disarm and charm the reader; it is a weapon deployed to create sympathy and understanding.'*

Discuss the effectiveness of humour in the creation of *'sympathy and understanding'* in at least **two** non-fiction texts.

16. *'A writer reflecting on past events must first create the time and place, culture and society in which those events occurred.'*

Discuss the effectiveness of some of the principal means by which *'the time and place, culture and society'* have been created in at least **two** non-fiction texts.

17. *'Some texts provoke action; others simply call for reflection.'*

Discuss some of the ways by which at least **two** non-fiction texts attempt to influence the reader.

OR

PART D — DRAMA

Your answer should take the form of a **CRITICAL ESSAY** appropriately structured to meet the demands of your selected question.

Attempt **ONE** question.

18. *'The great tragedies stamp themselves on the imagination through a series of powerful theatrical images in which the whole meaning of the play can sometimes seem to be compacted.'*

Discuss the effectiveness of theatrical imagery in conveying meaning with reference to any **two** tragedies.

19. *'Concealment and discovery are central to any drama.'*

Discuss the structural and thematic significance of *'concealment and discovery'* in any **two** plays.

20. Discuss the effectiveness of staging, lighting and sound in the dramatic presentation of the central concerns in any **two** plays.

21. *'Drama explores the local and the universal . . .'*

Discuss some of the principal means by which a playwright explores the *'local and the universal'* in any **two** plays.

22. Discuss the use of humour to explore the central concerns of any **two** twentieth century plays.

23. Discuss how the opening scene establishes important elements of character in any **two** plays.

[END OF SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER]



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Marking Instructions

These marking instructions have been provided to show how SQA would mark this specimen question paper.

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General marking principles for Advanced Higher English – Literary Study

Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.

- (a) Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (b) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.

Marking instructions for each question

The marking instructions indicate the essential idea that a candidate should provide for each answer. Candidates gain marks for their knowledge, understanding, analysis and evaluation of the texts selected for the question.

- First read the essay to establish whether it achieves minimum requirements for technical accuracy, and whether it is relevant to the question. There may be a few errors, but they should not impede understanding. If the essay does not achieve minimum standards, award a maximum of 9 marks. Award up to full marks where the essay communicates clearly at first reading.
- Assessment should be holistic. There are strengths and weaknesses in every piece of writing. Focus as far as possible on the strengths, taking account of weaknesses only when they significantly detract from the overall performance.
- Candidates may display ability across more than one band descriptor. It is important to recognise the closeness of the band descriptors and consider carefully the most appropriate overall band for the candidate's performance.

Once that best fit is decided:

- where the candidate's response fully meets the standard described, award the highest available mark from that band range
- where the candidate's response just meets the standard described, award the lowest mark from that band range
- otherwise, award the mark from the middle of the band range.

Marking instructions for all questions

	Marks 20–19	Marks 18–16	Marks 15–13	Marks 12–10	Marks 9–6	Marks 5–0
Knowledge and understanding The literary study demonstrates:	- comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the texts - a full and relevant exploration with sustained consideration of the implications of the question - extensive use of textual evidence to support an argument which is clearly focused on the demands of the question	- secure knowledge and understanding of the texts - a relevant exploration which demonstrates secure consideration of the implications of the question - extensive use of textual evidence which clearly supports the demands of the question	- broad knowledge and understanding of the texts - a relevant and thoughtful approach to the question - use of textual evidence which is relevant to the demands of the question	- knowledge and understanding of the texts - a relevant approach to the question - use of textual evidence to address the demands of the question	- limited knowledge and understanding of the texts - a limited approach to the question - limited textual evidence to support the demands of the question	- very little knowledge of the texts - very little attempt to answer the question - very little textual evidence
Analysis The literary study demonstrates:	relevant analysis of a task-appropriate range of literary techniques and/or features of language which skilfully strengthens the line of argument	relevant analysis of a task-appropriate range of literary techniques and/or features of language which strengthens the line of argument	relevant analysis of a range of literary techniques and/or features of language which supports the line of argument	analysis of a range of literary techniques and/or features of language	limited analysis of literary techniques and/or features of language	very little analysis of literary techniques and/or features of language

	Marks 20–19	Marks 18–16	Marks 15–13	Marks 12–10	Marks 9–6	Marks 5–0
Evaluation The literary study demonstrates:	a committed, clear evaluative stance with respect to the texts and the question, and skilfully based on precise evidence discussed within the response	a clearly identifiable evaluative stance with respect to the texts and the question and securely based on evidence discussed within the response	a discernible and relevant evaluative stance with respect to the texts and the question and based on evidence discussed within the response	an evaluative stance with respect to the texts and the question but may demonstrate some weakness in relevance	limited evaluation with respect to the texts and/or lacks relevance to the question and/or evidence	very little evidence of evaluation and/or supporting evidence
Technical accuracy The literary study demonstrates:	at least minimum competence for technical accuracy which includes few errors in the use of structure, style, language and/or literary terminology				significant errors in structure, style, language and/or literary terminology	

[END OF SPECIMEN MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]

Published: October 2025

Change since last published:

Changes in the general marking principles in the marking instructions.