

N5

National Qualifications

2026

English

Critical Reading

Thursday, 30 April

Instructions to Candidates

Candidates should enter their surname, forename(s), date of birth, Scottish candidate number and the name and level of the subject at the top of their first answer sheet.

Total marks — 40

SECTION 1 — Scottish text — 20 marks

Read an extract from a Scottish text you have previously studied.

[For Section 1, only Part C — Poetry Text 4 is provided in this paper.]

Attempt ALL questions for this text.

SECTION 2 — Critical essay — 20 marks

Attempt ONE question from the following genre — Drama or Prose

[For Section 2, only Drama and Prose have been provided in this paper.]

You must clearly identify the question number you **[Braille page 2]** are attempting on your answer sheet.

Marks are shown in square brackets at the end of each question or part question.

An ow in the margin indicates a new question.

[Braille page 3] SECTION 1 — SCOTTISH TEXT — 20 marks

PART C — SCOTTISH TEXT — POETRY

Text 4 — Poetry

Read the poem below and then attempt the following questions.

Landscape and I by Norman MacCaig

Landscape and I get on together well.

Though I'm the talkative one, still he can tell

His symptoms of being to me, the way a shell

Murmurs of oceans.

Loch Rannoch lapses dimpling in the sun.

Its hieroglyphs of light fade one by one

But re-create themselves, their message done,

For ever and ever.

That sprinkling lark jerked upward in the blue

Will daze to nowhere but leave himself in true

Translation — hear his song cascading through

[Braille page 4] His disappearance.

The hawk knows all about it, shaking there

An empty glove on steep chutes of the air

Till his yellow foot cramps on a squeal, to tear
Smooth fur, smooth feather.

This means, of course, Schiehallion in my mind
Is more than mountain. In it he leaves behind
A meaning, an idea, like a hind

Couched in a corrie.

So then I'll woo the mountain till I know
The meaning of the meaning, no less. Oh,
There's a Schiehallion anywhere you go.
The thing is, climb it

Questions

ow 45. Refer to lines 1 to 8.

By referring to two examples of language, explain what we learn about the relationship between the speaker and nature. [4 marks]

[Braille page 5] ow 46. Refer to lines 9 to 16.

By referring to two examples of language, explain how the poet creates a clear impression of nature. [4 marks]

ow 47. Refer to lines 17 to 24.

By referring to two examples of language, explain what the speaker now understands. [4 marks]

ow 48. By referring to this poem and to at least one other poem by MacCaig, show how the poet explores important thoughts and/or feelings. [8 marks]

[END OF SECTION 1]

[Braille page 6] SECTION 2 — CRITICAL ESSAY — 20 marks

Attempt ONE question from the following genres — Drama or Prose.

You should spend approximately 45 minutes on this section

DRAMA

Answers to questions in this part should refer to the text and to such relevant features as characterisation, key scene(s), structure, climax, theme, plot, conflict, setting ...

ow 1. Choose a play which contains a theme or an issue that you find interesting.

By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the writer explores the theme or issue.

ow 2. Choose a play which contains a character who faces a difficulty or a difficult situation.

By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the writer explores this difficulty or difficult situation.

PROSE

Answers to questions in this part should refer to the text and to such relevant features as characterisation, setting, language, key incident(s), climax, turning point, plot, structure, narrative technique, **[Braille page 7]** theme, ideas, description ...

ow 3. Choose a novel or short story or work of non-fiction which contains a character for whom you feel sympathy.

By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the writer creates sympathy for the character.

ow 4. Choose a novel or short story or work of non-fiction which explores an important theme or issue.

By referring to appropriate techniques, explain how the writer explores this theme or issue.

[END OF SECTION 2]

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]