



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



**CAMBRIDGE**  
International Education

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Level Higher 2 (2026)**

# **Literature in English (Syllabus 9539)**

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## **AIMS**

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Through the study of Literature in English, students will:

1. experience the joy of reading literature
2. appreciate diverse perspectives as well as negotiate the complexities and ambiguities in exploring universal human concerns
3. demonstrate the skills to critically analyse and evaluate literary texts
4. respond to literary texts with an understanding of genre and cultural contexts
5. communicate informed, sensitive and personal responses effectively and persuasively
6. develop a love for reading literature.

## **ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES**

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Candidates should be able to:

- AO1** make informed personal and critical responses to the texts, exploring connections between texts where appropriate, and account for their responses
- AO2** demonstrate how the literary context of the text informs their understanding of the text
- AO3** critically analyse and evaluate ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings
- AO4** clearly communicate the knowledge, understanding and insights appropriate to literary study.

## SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

Candidates will offer one compulsory paper (Paper 1) and one of the two elective papers (Paper 2 or Paper 3).

Candidates will receive the question papers in hard copy. A digital answer booklet will be provided with each question paper. Candidates are required to type their responses in the digital answer booklet.

For each paper, candidates will answer three questions in total: one question from each of the three sections. Each question is worth 25 marks.

The tables of specifications for the three papers are given below.

### Paper 1 Reading Literature

(3 hours, 75 marks, 50% weighting)

Section	Description	Marks
<b>Section A</b>  <b>Poetry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two</b> questions will be set, primarily focusing on response and comparison skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• Each question will require candidates to respond to and critically compare two unseen poems.</li> <li>• At least one of the questions will feature a Singaporean poem.</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> of the two questions.</li> </ul>	25 marks
<b>Section B</b>  <b>Prose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates will study <b>one</b> of the set texts.</li> <li>• <b>Two</b> questions will be set for each text, primarily focusing on response and analysis skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• One question will be an essay question and the other will be a passage-based question.</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> question on one text.</li> </ul>	25 marks
<b>Section C</b>  <b>Drama</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates will study <b>one</b> of the set texts.</li> <li>• <b>Two</b> questions will be set for each text, primarily focusing on response and analysis skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• One question will be an essay question and the other will be a passage-based question.</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> question on one text.</li> </ul>	25 marks

**Paper 2 Reading Literature featuring the English Romantic Period (1785–1832)**

(3 hours, 75 marks, 50% weighting)

Section	Description	Marks
<b>Section A</b> <b>Unseen Prose and Drama</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two</b> questions will be set, primarily focusing on response skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• One question will feature an unseen prose passage and the other will feature an unseen drama passage.</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> of the two questions.</li> </ul>	25 marks
<b>Section B</b> <b>The English Romantic Period (1785–1832)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates will study <b>two</b> of the set texts.</li> <li>• <b>Two</b> comparison questions will be set, primarily focusing on comparison and analysis skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> of the two questions, using the two texts they have studied.</li> </ul>	25 marks
<b>Section C</b> <b>Pre-20th Century Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates will study <b>one</b> of the set texts.</li> <li>• <b>Two</b> questions will be set for each text, primarily focusing on response and analysis skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• One question will be an essay question and the other will be a passage-based question.</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> question on the text they have studied.</li> </ul>	25 marks

OR

**Paper 3 Reading Literature featuring the Postcolonial Literature Topic**

(3 hours, 75 marks, 50% weighting)

Section	Description	Marks
<b>Section A</b> <b>Unseen Prose and Drama</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two</b> questions will be set, primarily focusing on response skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• One question will feature an unseen prose passage and the other will feature an unseen drama passage.</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> of the two questions.</li> </ul>	25 marks
<b>Section B</b> <b>Postcolonial Literature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates will study <b>two</b> of the set texts.</li> <li>• <b>Two</b> comparison questions will be set, primarily focusing on comparison and analysis skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> of the two questions, using the two texts they have studied.</li> </ul>	25 marks
<b>Section C</b> <b>Pre-20th Century Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates will study <b>one</b> of the set texts.</li> <li>• <b>Two</b> questions will be set for each text, primarily focusing on response and analysis skills (see 'Question Types and Specifications').</li> <li>• One question will be an essay question and the other will be a passage-based question.</li> <li>• Candidates will answer <b>one</b> question on the text they have studied.</li> </ul>	25 marks

## DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

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### PAPER 1: READING LITERATURE (3 hours)

Paper 1 is a compulsory paper designed to give students broad exposure to literary study. The texts set will be of recognised literary importance and significance.

#### Section A: Poetry

All unseen poems will be from works written originally in English after 1550. At least one of the questions will feature a Singaporean poem. Knowledge of the literary contexts of the poems or of other works by the named poets is not required in answers for this section.

#### Section B: Prose

In this section, candidates will study **one** of the following prose texts:

Julian Barnes: *Arthur and George*  
 Charlotte Brontë: *Jane Eyre*  
 Charles Dickens: *Hard Times*  
 Tan Twan Eng: *The Garden of Evening Mists*

#### Section C: Drama

In this section, candidates will study **one** of the following drama texts:

Thomas Middleton and William Rowley: *The Changeling*  
 Tom Stoppard: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*  
 William Shakespeare: *The Winter's Tale*  
 Sean O'Casey: *Juno and the Paycock* and *The Plough and the Stars* (Both plays are to be studied.)

### ELECTIVE PAPERS 2 AND 3 (3 hours each)

In addition to Paper 1, candidates take either Paper 2 or Paper 3. These two elective papers will share the same questions for Sections A and C but will have different questions for Section B. Paper 2 Section B focuses on a period of literary writing, whereas Paper 3 Section B focuses on a topic of literary significance.

#### Section A: Unseen Prose and Drama

All unseen prose and drama passages will be from works written originally in English after 1550. The unseen prose passages will be from fiction texts only. Knowledge of the literary contexts of the passages or of other works by the writers is not required in answers for this section.

#### Section C: Pre-20<sup>th</sup> Century Writing

H2 candidates will study one major work of Pre-20<sup>th</sup> Century writing to deepen their understanding and appreciation of literary texts of enduring significance. Knowledge of the literary context specific to the selected text is expected.

**For set texts with selected poems, please check the list in Appendix A before purchasing the texts.**

Candidates will study **one** of the following texts:

William Shakespeare: *King Lear*  
 Henrik Ibsen: *An Enemy of the People* (translated by James McFarlane)  
 Thomas Hardy: *The Mayor of Casterbridge*  
 Joseph Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*  
 Emily Dickinson: selection of poems (see list in Appendix A)  
 John Donne: selection of poems (see list in Appendix A)

**PAPER 2 SECTION B: THE ENGLISH ROMANTIC PERIOD (1785–1832)**

This section focuses on English writing from 1785 to 1832. The Romantic literature written in England during this period grew out of the domestic emotionalism of the literature of Sensibility in the late eighteenth century and was influenced by the social changes witnessed in Europe during this time. Regarded as a literary age of some of the finest poetry and prose written in the English language, this period features significant texts associated with ideas including, but not limited to, dreams, beauty, home, nature, creativity, and the individual.

**For set texts with selected poems, please check the list in Appendix A before purchasing the texts.**

Candidates will study **two** of the following texts:

John Keats: selection of poems (see list in Appendix A)  
 Percy Bysshe Shelley: selection of poems (see list in Appendix A)  
 Samuel Taylor Coleridge: selection of poems (see list in Appendix A)  
 Jane Austen: *Persuasion*  
 Ann Radcliffe: *The Mysteries of Udolpho*  
 Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein*

**PAPER 3 SECTION B: POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE**

This literary topic focuses on important Commonwealth literature written as a response to Empire. The selected texts explore ideas including, but not limited to, nationhood, ethnicity, identity, pluralism and transcultural experiences that feature in postcolonial literature.

**For set texts with selected poems, please check the list in Appendix A before purchasing the texts.**

Candidates will study **two** of the following texts:

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o: *A Grain of Wheat*  
 Chinua Achebe: *Anthills of the Savannah*  
 Rohinton Mistry: *Family Matters*  
 David Malouf: *Remembering Babylon*  
 Edwin Thumboo: selection of poems (see list in Appendix A)  
 Jean Rhys: *Wide Sargasso Sea*

**QUESTION TYPES AND SPECIFICATIONS**

The questions in the examination focus on three areas of skill – Response, Analysis and Comparison.

**(i) Response**

This is the candidate's ability to respond to either an unseen text extract, or a passage from a set text. In doing so, candidates will demonstrate the ability to analyse both the formal and stylistic features of the extract (AO1 and AO3). This skill is assessed in Sections A, B and C of Paper 1, and Sections A and C of the elective papers.

**(ii) Analysis**

This is the candidate's ability to write a critical analysis of the set texts they have studied. In doing so, candidates will demonstrate an ability to make an informed personal and critical response to the text as a whole (AO1, AO2 and AO3). This skill is primarily assessed in Sections B and C of both Paper 1 and the elective papers.

**(iii) Comparison**

This is the candidate's ability to critically compare and evaluate unseen texts (with regard to Paper 1) and the set texts they have studied (with regard to the elective papers). In doing so, candidates will demonstrate an ability to identify, compare and critically assess key features of each text (AO1, AO2 and AO3). This skill is assessed in Section A of Paper 1. For Papers 2 and 3, this is assessed with appropriate reference to the literary features of the period or topic covered by the paper (AO2) in Section B.

All of these types of questions will also require the candidate to organise and present information, ideas and arguments clearly and effectively (AO4). The candidate's grammar, punctuation, and spelling will also be taken into account.

**AREAS OF STUDY**

The study of Literature in English at H2 level should be seen as a process of critically examining texts.

In addition to the study of inherent stylistic features of texts, students should also explore the specific contexts that led to the production of these texts, as well as how readers and audiences relate to the texts. Students should engage with texts at various cognitive and affective levels. There are various approaches in engaging with literary texts, and the teaching and learning of A-Level Literature is grounded in the three areas of study: literary features, text and context, and language use.

**(i) Literary Features**

These include:

- The definition of a genre, the individual form of the text and its stylistic features.
- Study of how these features are used by authors, and to what effect, in the various texts, seen and unseen.

**(ii) Text and Context**

- An appreciation of how the texts studied relate to the social, cultural and historical contexts in which they were created.
- Exploration of the ideologies, perspectives and assumptions that frame texts.

**(iii) Language Use**

- Use of language to communicate ideas in response to literary texts.
- Awareness of how writers use language to shape meaning and evoke responses to literary texts.



**SPECTRUM OF SKILLS**

Candidates should be equipped with the following skills to:

- (i) make informed personal and critical responses in the study of major, canonical and contemporary writers as well as established literary topics and periods
- (ii) demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the ways in which the historical and cultural contexts of text and writer inform the meanings in texts.
- (iii) analyse and evaluate critically the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings.
- (iv) communicate clearly knowledge, understanding, insights and perspectives appropriate to literary study.

Skills	Examples
(i) Make informed personal and critical responses in the study of major, canonical and contemporary writers as well as established literary topics and periods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make connections between their own ideas and experiences and those in the text</li> <li>• Reflect critically on the development of their own informed response</li> <li>• Comment on the ways in which both content and form shape the reader's response</li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of ways in which a text invites the reader to respond</li> <li>• Hone sensitivity to a variety of texts across genres and periods</li> <li>• Deepen appreciation of texts and broaden understanding of human experience</li> </ul>
(ii) Demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the ways in which the historical and cultural contexts of text and writer inform the meanings in texts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect a sensitive awareness of social, cultural, historical and literary influences in the creation of texts</li> <li>• Comment on ways in which characters, viewpoints, and situations convey the social conventions, beliefs and attitudes of individuals and groups in a particular society</li> <li>• Identify and interpret the ideas, viewpoints and values expressed in a text</li> </ul>
(iii) Analyse and evaluate critically the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meanings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the elements of literary genres</li> <li>• Analyse literary form including structure, setting, character, conflict, plot, methods of characterisation, and themes</li> <li>• Analyse stylistic devices including voice, persona, symbolism, irony, mood and tone</li> <li>• Analyse the use of language including register, diction, tone, imagery, and rhythm</li> <li>• Analyse the effects created by literary techniques</li> <li>• Present a sustained interpretation supported by appropriate and detailed references to texts</li> <li>• Present a critical comparison and make connections between two or more texts</li> </ul>
(iv) Communicate clearly knowledge, understanding, insights and perspectives appropriate to literary study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce informed literary essays that convey knowledge, insights and perspectives on texts</li> <li>• Show an ability to use literary terms appropriately</li> <li>• Present a clear and coherent argument in support of their ideas</li> </ul>

## **INSTRUCTIONS ON OPEN-BOOK EXAMINATION**

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The examinations are open book: candidates will be allowed to bring copies of their set texts into the examination room.

(a) Materials that can be taken into the examination room

Only non-electronic original texts (original published editions) should be taken into the examination venue. Candidates are only allowed to bring one hardcopy of each approved text. No photocopies or texts downloaded from the internet are allowed. No other materials, including critical works or study notes of any kind, should be taken into the examination venue. The use of dictionaries is not permitted.

(b) Underlining and highlighting of texts

Only underlining, highlighting and the use of vertical lines are permitted. Nothing else should be written in the texts except the candidate's name. Separate pieces of paper such as sticky notes and tape flags are not allowed.

(c) Folding and Flagging of Pages

Pages can be flagged with paper clips or by folding the page corners. Page numbers can be highlighted, underlined, or marked out with vertical lines. Any other kind of folding or flagging of pages in texts (for example, use of sticky notes or tape flags) is not permitted.

**APPENDIX A: POEMS SELECTED FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES**

Candidates should study the following:

**PAPER 2 SECTION B: THE ENGLISH ROMANTIC PERIOD (1785–1832)****John Keats: selected poems**

'Bright Star! Would I were steadfast as thou art'  
 'Hush, hush! tread softly! hush, hush, my dear!'  
 Isabella, or The Pot of Basil  
 La Belle Dame sans Merci. A Ballad  
 Lamia  
 'O Solitude! if I must with thee dwell'  
 Ode on a Grecian Urn  
 Ode on Melancholy  
 Ode to a Nightingale  
 Ode to Psyche  
 On First Looking into Chapman's Homer  
 On Peace  
 On Seeing the Elgin Marbles  
 On the Sea  
 The Eve of St Agnes  
 To – ('Time's sea hath been five years at its slow ebb')  
 To Ailsa Rock  
 To Autumn  
 To Fanny  
 To Leigh Hunt, Esq.  
 To Mrs Reynolds's Cat  
 To My Brothers  
 To Sleep  
 'When I have fears that I may cease to be'  
 Written in Disgust of Vulgar Superstition

**Percy Bysshe Shelley: selected poems**

Adonais: An Elegy on the Death of John Keats  
 An Exhortation  
 England in 1819  
 Evening. Ponte a Mare, Pisa  
 'Far, far away, O ye / Halcyons of Memory'  
 Hymn to Intellectual Beauty (Version A)  
 Lines to – [Sonnet to Byron]  
 Lines: 'When the lamp is shattered'  
 Love's Philosophy  
 Mont Blanc (Version A)  
 Mutability  
 Ode to Liberty  
 Ode to the West Wind  
 'One word is too often profaned'  
 Ozymandias  
 Song of Apollo  
 Sonnet: 'Lift not the painted veil'  
 Sonnet: 'Political Greatness'  
 Sonnet: 'Ye hasten to the grave!'  
 Stanzas Written in Dejection, near Naples  
 The Cloud  
 'The flower that smiles today'  
 The Fugitives  
 To a Sky-Lark  
 To Jane: The Invitation  
 To Jane: 'The keen stars were twinkling'  
 To Jane: The Recollection  
 To Night

**Samuel Taylor Coleridge: selected poems**

[Pantisocracy]  
 Answer to a Child's Question  
 Constancy to an Ideal Object  
 Dejection: An Ode  
 France. An Ode  
 Frost at Midnight  
 Human Life  
 Kubla Khan: Or, A Vision in a Dream  
 Love  
 Ode to Tranquillity  
 Something Childish, but Very Natural  
 Sonnet composed on a Journey Homeward...  
 Sonnet to the River Otter  
 The Eolian Harp  
 The Keepsake  
 The Nightingale  
 The Pains of Sleep  
 The Rime of the Ancient Mariner (1834)  
 This Lime-Tree Bower, My Prison  
 To Nature  
 Work Without Hope

**PAPER 3 SECTION B: POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE**

**Edwin Thumboo: selected poems (from *The Best of Edwin Thumboo*)**

After the Leaving...  
Arts House, Smith Street, Chinatown, Singapore  
Catering for the People  
Christmas Week 1975  
Conversation with My Friend Kwang Min at Loong Kwang of Outram Park  
Double Helix, Promenade  
Durban: Poetry Festival 2003  
Father - IV  
Finger of the Cape  
Games  
Government Quarters, Monks' Hill Terrace, Newton, Singapore  
Island  
John  
Kangaroo Island  
May 1954  
Orisons  
RELC  
Sunshine and Shadow  
The Apostles, Cape Town  
The Exile  
The National Library, nr Dhoby Ghaut, Singapore  
The River  
The Way Ahead  
Today Once More  
Tuscan Sun Festival  
Ulysses by the Merlion  
Uncle Never Knew  
Vacating Bukit Timah Campus  
Visiting Mr. Dickson's Port, March '99  
Words Loop Again

**PAPERS 2 AND 3 SECTION C: PRE-20th CENTURY WRITING****Emily Dickinson: selected poems**

A Bird came down the Walk –  
 A Murmur in the Trees – to note –  
 A narrow Fellow in the Grass  
 A still – Volcano – Life –  
 After great pain, a formal feeling comes –  
 An awful Tempest mashed the air –  
 As imperceptibly as Grief  
 Because I could not stop for Death –  
 “Hope” is the thing with feathers –  
 I can wade Grief –  
 I cautious, scanned my little life –  
 I did not reach Thee  
 I dreaded that first Robin, so,  
 I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,  
 I have a Bird in spring  
 I have never seen “Volcanoes” –  
 I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –  
 I measure every Grief I meet  
 It was not Death, for I stood up,  
 My Life had stood – a Loaded Gun –  
 One need not be a Chamber – to be Haunted –  
 The Brain – is wider than the Sky –  
 The Mushroom is the Elf of Plants –  
 The Wind – tapped like a tired Man –  
 There came a Wind like a Bugle –  
 There’s a certain Slant of light,  
 This World is not Conclusion.  
 ’Twas the old-road – through pain –  
 What mystery pervades a well!  
 Wild Nights – Wild Nights!

**John Donne: selected poems**

A Fever  
 Air and Angels  
 A Nocturnal upon S. Lucy’s Day, being the shortest day  
 A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning  
 Break of Day  
 Elegy 5: His Picture (‘Here take my picture, though I bid  
 farewell;’)  
 Elegy 7 (‘Nature’s lay idiot, I taught thee to love,’)  
 Elegy 9: The Autumnal (‘No spring, nor summer beauty  
 hath such grace,’)  
 Elegy 15: The Expostulation (‘To make the doubt clear,  
 that no woman’s true,’)  
 Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 2 (‘As due by many  
 titles I resign,’)  
 Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 6 (‘This is my play’s  
 last scene, here heavens appoint’)  
 Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 7 (‘At the round  
 earth’s imagined corners, blow’)  
 Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 9 (‘If poisonous  
 minerals, and if that tree,’)  
 Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 10 (‘Death be not  
 proud, though some have called thee’)  
 Holy Sonnets: Divine Meditations 19 (‘Oh, to vex me,  
 contraries meet in one:’)  
 Love’s Growth  
 Song (Go, and catch a falling star)  
 Song (Sweetest love, I do not go)  
 The Anniversary  
 The Apparition  
 The Bait  
 The Canonization  
 The Dream  
 The Ecstasy  
 The Expiration  
 The Good Morrow  
 The Relic  
 The Sun Rising  
 The Undertaking  
 Twickenam Gardens

**APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR PAPER 1****Band Descriptors for H2 Paper 1 Section A**

The descriptors are intended as a guide to the likely characteristics of work in a particular mark band. It is not expected that all the listed characteristics will be present or that they will exist in equal proportions. It is essential that examiners exercise flexibility in mapping the descriptors to the work they are assessing.

Examiners' approach to the assessment of work should always be positive, based on what the candidate has written and never on what she/he has not written. In other words, work should not be penalised for failure to make points or adopt critical approaches and styles predetermined by examiners. However, where a candidate's execution of his/her chosen approach involves significant errors or omissions, these will be noted and will legitimately influence the mark awarded.

The descriptors do not list every possible literary feature that may be identified by candidates, but candidates will be rewarded for detailed comment on language, form and style such as: structure, genre, diction, syntactical devices, register, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic patterns and dramatic qualities.

**22–25**

Very good work, showing discrimination and sometimes originality, in making an informed personal and critical response to the poems

Compares the two poems skilfully, and perhaps in original ways, moving between them with ease

Engages with the poems through detailed close analysis

Analyses with skill and discrimination ways in which the writers use poetic form, structure and language to create the meanings of the poems

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language with a mature judgement and clear focus on the question and key issues

Develops a seamless, coherent response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and critical terminology appositely and economically

Work in this band responds sensitively, perceptively and personally to the poems; it is often subtle, concise and sophisticated, with a style that is fluent and gives economic expression to complex ideas; at the upper end this work may be elegant and allusive

**18–21**

Proficient work, making an informed personal and critical response to the poems

Compares the two poems appropriately and skilfully

Engages with the poems through close analysis

Analyses with skill ways in which the writers use poetic form, structure and language to create the meanings of the poems

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form and style and language with constant reference to the question

Develops a coherent response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology appositely

Uses a style that is always clear, mostly fluent, capable of giving accurate expression to complex ideas

**14–17**

Competent work, making an informed critical response to the poems with some personal response

Compares the two poems in appropriate ways, though may discuss them separately at times

Makes a close analysis of the poems, at times simply following line by line

Analyses ways in which the writers use poetic form, structure and language to create the meanings of the poems

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form and style and language

Develops a structured response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology accurately and mostly appositely

Uses an effective style that is able to communicate clearly knowledge and understanding of the poems and the issues raised by poem and question, with only occasional lapses

**10–13**

Satisfactory work, making a response to the poems that shows sound knowledge and some personal response

Makes some comparison of the two poems, but tends to discuss them separately

Analyses the poems in a line-by-line fashion

Makes some analysis of ways in which the writers use form, style and language to create the meanings of the poems

Responds mainly in terms of narration of the main features of the poems – with some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set most of the time though with some digression; assembles relevant points into a simply structured response

Makes use of quotation and paraphrase and may use some critical terminology, with some misunderstanding

Uses a basic style that is able to communicate knowledge and understanding of the poems and the issues raised by poem and question, with only occasional obscurity

**6–9**

Uneven work, making a response to the poems that shows some understanding

Discusses both poems but does not develop the comparison

Makes appropriate references to the writers' uses of poetic form, structure and language with some analysis of the ways in which they create the meanings of the poems

Makes some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set at first, but tends to digress

Assembles points rather than analyses, tending to list points and make general assertions

Makes some use of paraphrase or quotation; limited reference to critical terminology

Uses a simple style, or possibly an over-complex style that succeeds most of the time in communicating knowledge and understanding of the poems

**1–5**

Some attempt to hold to poems and question, showing a simplistic approach to the task

The work is often brief, undeveloped, and exists as a series of points rather than as a line of argument

Expression is simple, technical errors are recurrent, and the work relies on narrative rather than analysis, although description is sometimes valid

**0**

To be awarded only where there is no evidence of any knowledge of, or response to the poems



### Band Descriptors for H2 Paper 1 Sections B and C

The descriptors are intended as a guide to the likely characteristics of work in a particular mark band. It is not expected that all the listed characteristics will be present or that they will exist in equal proportions. It is essential that examiners exercise flexibility in mapping the descriptors to the work they are assessing.

Examiners' approach to the assessment of work should always be positive, based on what the candidate has written and never on what she/he has not written. In other words, work should not be penalised for failure to make points or adopt critical approaches and styles predetermined by examiners. However, where a candidate's execution of his/her chosen approach involves significant errors or omissions, these will be noted and will legitimately influence the mark awarded.

The descriptors do not list every possible literary feature that may be identified by candidates, but candidates will be rewarded for detailed comment on language, form and style such as: structure, genre, diction, syntactical devices, register, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic patterns and dramatic qualities.

#### 22–25

Very good work, showing discrimination and sometimes originality, in making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Analyses with skill and discrimination ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language with a mature judgement and clear focus on the question and key issues

Develops a seamless, coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the text, using quotation, paraphrase and critical terminology appositely and economically

Work in this band responds sensitively, perceptively and personally to the question set; is often subtle, concise and sophisticated, with a style that is fluent and gives economic expression to complex ideas; at the upper end this work may be elegant and allusive

#### 18–21

Proficient work, making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Analyses with skill ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language with constant reference to the question

Develops a coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates, where relevant, a good understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the text, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology appositely

Uses a style that is always clear, mostly fluent; able to give accurate expression to complex ideas

**14–17**

Competent work, making an informed critical response to the text with some personal response

Analyses ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language

Develops a structured response to the question

Demonstrates a sound understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with appropriate reference to the text – at times too much or too little, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology accurately and mostly appositely

Uses an effective style that is able to communicate clearly knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional lapses

**10–13**

Satisfactory work, making a response to the text that shows sound knowledge and some personal response

Makes some analysis of ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Responds mainly in terms of narration of the main features of the text – with some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set most of the time within a simple structure though with some digression into generality

Demonstrates, at times, some awareness of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports some points with appropriate reference to the text, using quotation and paraphrase mostly accurately – perhaps uses some critical terminology, with some misunderstanding

Uses a basic style that is able to communicate knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional obscurity

**6–9**

Uneven work, making a response to the text that shows knowledge of the text

Makes appropriate references to the writer's use of form, structure and language with some analysis of the ways in which they create the meanings of the text

Makes some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set at first, but tends to digress and lacks structure

May demonstrate, at times, some awareness of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context, but without understanding of how this relates to the individual text

Supports some points with reference to the text; relies mostly on assertion, with repetition; uses quotation and paraphrase at times, possibly not wholly accurate, at too great a length and without discrimination

Uses a simple style, or possibly an over-complex style that succeeds most of the time in communicating knowledge and understanding of the text

**1–5**

Some attempt to hold to text and question showing a simplistic approach to the task

The work is often brief, undeveloped, and exists as a series of points rather than as a line of argument

Expression is simple, technical errors are recurrent, and the work relies on narrative rather than analysis, although description is sometimes valid

**0**

To be awarded only where there is no evidence of any knowledge of, or response to the text

**APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR PAPERS 2 AND 3****Band Descriptors for H2 Papers 2 and 3 Section A**

The descriptors are intended as a guide to the likely characteristics of work in a particular mark band. It is not expected that all the listed characteristics will be present or that they will exist in equal proportions. It is essential that examiners exercise flexibility in mapping the descriptors to the work they are assessing.

Examiners' approach to the assessment of work should always be positive, based on what the candidate has written and never on what she/he has not written. In other words, work should not be penalised for failure to make points or adopt critical approaches and styles predetermined by examiners. However, where a candidate's execution of his/her chosen approach involves significant errors or omissions, these will be noted and will legitimately influence the mark awarded.

The descriptors do not list every possible literary feature that may be identified by candidates, but candidates will be rewarded for detailed comment on language, form and style such as: structure, genre, diction, syntactical devices, register, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic patterns and dramatic qualities.

Candidates are to be rewarded for evidence of wider reading, though not penalised for the lack of any such evidence.

**22–25**

Very good work, showing discrimination and sometimes originality, in making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Engages with the text through detailed close analysis

Analyses with skill and discrimination ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language with a mature judgement and clear focus on the question and key issues

Develops a seamless, coherent response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and critical terminology appositely and economically

Work in this band responds sensitively, perceptively and personally to the text; it is often subtle, concise and sophisticated, with a style that is fluent and gives economic expression to complex ideas; at the upper end this work may be elegant and allusive

**18–21**

Proficient work, making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Engages with the text through close analysis

Analyses with skill ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form and style and language with constant reference to the question

Develops a coherent response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology appositely

Uses a style that is always clear, mostly fluent, capable of giving accurate expression to complex ideas

**14–17**

Competent work, making an informed critical response to the text with some personal response

Makes a close analysis of the text, at times simply following line by line

Analyses ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form and style and language

Develops a structured response to the question

Uses quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology accurately and mostly appositely

Uses an effective style that is able to communicate clearly knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional lapses

**10–13**

Satisfactory work, making a response to the text that shows sound knowledge and some personal response

Analyses the text in a line-by-line fashion

Makes some analysis of ways in which the writer uses form, style and language to create the meanings of the text

Responds mainly in terms of narration of the main features of the text – with some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set most of the time though with some digression; assembles relevant points into a simply structured response

Makes use of quotation and paraphrase and may use some critical terminology, with some misunderstanding

Uses a basic style that is able to communicate knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional obscurity

**6–9**

Uneven work, making a response to the text that shows some understanding

Responds to the question set at first, while tending to digress

Makes appropriate references to the writer's use of form, structure and language with some analysis of the ways in which they create the meanings of the text

Makes some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Assembles points rather than analyses, tending to list points and make general assertions

Makes some use of paraphrase or quotation; limited reference to critical terminology

Uses a simple style, or possibly an over-complex style that succeeds most of the time in communicating knowledge and understanding of the text

**1–5**

Some attempt to hold to text and question, showing a simplistic approach to the task

The work is often brief, undeveloped, and exists as a series of points rather than as a line of argument

Expression is simple, technical errors are recurrent, and the work relies on narrative rather than analysis, although description is sometimes valid

**0**

To be awarded only where there is no evidence of any knowledge of, or response to the text

### Band Descriptors for H2 Papers 2 and 3 Section B

***In Section B, candidates must compare two texts, and must therefore give roughly equal weight to the two texts in their answer.***

The descriptors are intended as a guide to the likely characteristics of work in a particular mark band. It is not expected that all the listed characteristics will be present or that they will exist in equal proportions. It is essential that examiners exercise flexibility in mapping the descriptors to the work they are assessing.

Examiners' approach to the assessment of work should always be positive, based on what the candidate has written and never on what she/he has not written. In other words, work should not be penalised for failure to make points or adopt critical approaches and styles predetermined by examiners. However, where a candidate's execution of his/her chosen approach involves significant errors or omissions, these will be noted and will legitimately influence the mark awarded.

The descriptors do not list every possible literary feature that may be identified by candidates, but candidates will be rewarded for detailed comment on language, form and style such as: structure, genre, diction, syntactical devices, register, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic patterns and dramatic qualities.

#### **22–25**

Very good work, showing discrimination and sometimes originality, in making an informed personal and critical response to the texts

Compares the two texts skilfully, and perhaps in original ways, moving between them with ease

Analyses with skill and discrimination ways in which the writers use form, structure and language to create the meanings of the texts

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language with a mature judgement and clear focus on the question and key issues

Develops a seamless, coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the literary context of each text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the texts, using quotation, paraphrase and critical terminology appositely and economically

Work in this band responds sensitively, perceptively and personally to the question set; is often subtle, concise and sophisticated, with a style that is fluent and gives economic expression to complex ideas; at the upper end this work may be elegant and allusive

**18–21**

Proficient work making an informed personal and critical response to the texts

Compares the two texts appropriately and skilfully

Analyses with skill ways in which the writers use form, structure and language to create the meanings of the texts

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language with constant reference to the question

Develops a coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates, where relevant, a good understanding of the literary context of each text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the texts, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology appositely

Uses a style that is always clear, mostly fluent; able to give accurate expression to complex ideas

**14–17**

Competent work, making an informed critical response to the texts with some personal response

Compares the two texts in appropriate ways, though may discuss them separately at times

Analyses ways in which the writers use form, structure and language to create the meanings of the texts

Evaluates the effects of the writers' use of form, style and language

Develops a structured response to the question

Demonstrates a sound understanding of the literary context of each text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with appropriate reference to the texts – at times too much or too little, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology accurately and mostly appositely

Uses an effective style that is able to communicate clearly knowledge and understanding of the texts and the issues raised by texts and question, with only occasional lapses



**10–13**

Satisfactory work, making a response to the texts that shows sound knowledge and some personal response

Makes some comparison of the two texts, but tends to discuss them separately

Makes some analysis of ways in which the writers use form, structure and language to create the meanings of the texts

Responds mainly in terms of narration of the main features of the texts – with some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers’ use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set most of the time within a simple structure though with some digression into generality

Demonstrates, at times, some awareness of the literary context of each text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports some points with appropriate reference to the texts, using quotation and paraphrase mostly accurately – perhaps uses some critical terminology, with some misunderstanding

Uses a basic style that is able to communicate knowledge and understanding of the texts and the issues raised by texts and question, with only occasional obscurity

**6–9**

Uneven work, making a response to the texts that shows knowledge of the texts

Discusses both texts but does not develop the comparison

Makes appropriate references to the writers’ uses of form, structure and language with some analysis of the ways in which they create the meanings of the texts

Makes some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writers’ use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set at first, tends to digress and lacks structure

May demonstrate at times some awareness of the literary context of each text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context, but without understanding of how this relates to the individual text

Supports some points with reference to the texts but relies mostly on assertion, with repetition; uses quotation and paraphrase at times, possibly not wholly accurately, at too great a length and without discrimination

Uses a simple style, or possibly an over-complex style that succeeds most of the time in communicating knowledge and understanding of the texts

**1–5**

Some attempt to hold to texts and question, showing a simplistic approach to the task

The work is often brief, undeveloped, and exists as a series of points rather than as a line of argument

Expression is simple, technical errors are recurrent, and the work relies on narrative rather than analysis, although description is sometimes valid

**0**

To be awarded only where there is no evidence of any knowledge of, or response to the texts

### Band Descriptors for H2 Papers 2 and 3 Section C

The descriptors are intended as a guide to the likely characteristics of work in a particular mark band. It is not expected that all the listed characteristics will be present or that they will exist in equal proportions. It is essential that examiners exercise flexibility in mapping the descriptors to the work they are assessing.

Examiners' approach to the assessment of work should always be positive, based on what the candidate has written and never on what she/he has not written. In other words, work should not be penalised for failure to make points or adopt critical approaches and styles predetermined by examiners. However, where a candidate's execution of his/her chosen approach involves significant errors or omissions, these will be noted and will legitimately influence the mark awarded.

The descriptors do not list every possible literary feature that may be identified by candidates, but candidates will be rewarded for detailed comment on language, form and style such as: structure, genre, diction, syntactical devices, register, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic patterns and dramatic qualities.

#### 22–25

Very good work, showing discrimination and sometimes originality, in making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Analyses with skill and discrimination ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language with a mature judgement and clear focus on the question and key issues

Develops a seamless, coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the text, using quotation, paraphrase and critical terminology appositely and economically

Work in this band responds sensitively, perceptively and personally to the question set; is often subtle, concise and sophisticated, with a style that is fluent and gives economic expression to complex ideas; at the upper end this work may be elegant and allusive

#### 18–21

Proficient work, making an informed personal and critical response to the text

Analyses with skill ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language with constant reference to the question

Develops a coherent argument relevant to the question

Demonstrates, where relevant, a good understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with detailed, pertinent reference to the text, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology appositely

Uses a style that is always clear, mostly fluent; able to give accurate expression to complex ideas

**14–17**

Competent work, making an informed critical response to the text with some personal response

Analyses ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Evaluates the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language

Develops a structured response to the question

Demonstrates a sound understanding of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports with appropriate reference to the text – at times too much or too little, using quotation, paraphrase and some critical terminology accurately and mostly appositely

Uses an effective style that is able to communicate clearly knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional lapses

**10–13**

Satisfactory work, making a response to the text that shows sound knowledge and some personal response

Makes some analysis of ways in which the writer uses form, structure and language to create the meanings of the text

Responds mainly in terms of narration of the main features of the text – with some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set most of the time within a simple structure though with some digression into generality

Demonstrates, at times, some awareness of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context

Supports some points with appropriate reference to the text, using quotation and paraphrase mostly accurately – perhaps uses some critical terminology, with some misunderstanding

Uses a basic style that is able to communicate knowledge and understanding of the text and the issues raised by text and question, with only occasional obscurity

**6–9**

Uneven work, making a response to the text that shows knowledge of the text

Makes appropriate references to the writer's use of form, structure and language with some analysis of the ways in which they create the meanings of the text

Makes some attempt at evaluation of the effects of the writer's use of form, style and language – possibly with some misunderstanding

Responds to the question set at first, tends to digress and lacks structure

May demonstrate, at times, some awareness of the literary context of the text – in terms of period/theme/genre/historical context, but without understanding of how this relates to the individual text

Supports some points with reference to the text; relies mostly on assertion, with repetition; uses quotation and paraphrase at times, possibly not wholly nor accurately, at too great a length and without discrimination

Uses a simple style, or possibly an over-complex style that succeeds most of the time in communicating knowledge and understanding of the text

**1–5**

Some attempt to hold to text and question, showing a simplistic approach to the task

The work is often brief, undeveloped, and exists as a series of points rather than as a line of argument

Expression is simple, technical errors are recurrent, and the work relies on narrative rather than analysis, although description is sometimes valid

**0**

To be awarded only where there is no evidence of any knowledge of, or response to the text

**APPENDIX D: EDITIONS USED FOR SETTING QUESTIONS**

**Note:** These are not prescribed editions. However, Centres may wish to consult this list before deciding which editions their candidates should purchase.

**Paper 1 Reading Literature**

Author	Title of Book	Publisher
Julian Barnes	<i>Arthur and George</i>	Vintage
Charlotte Brontë	<i>Jane Eyre</i>	Penguin
Charles Dickens	<i>Hard Times</i>	Penguin
Tan Twan Eng	<i>The Garden of Evening Mists</i>	Canongate
Thomas Middleton and William Rowley	<i>The Changeling</i>	OUP
Tom Stoppard	<i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead</i>	Faber & Faber
William Shakespeare	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Collins (ed. Alexander)
Sean O'Casey	<i>Three Dublin Plays</i>	Faber & Faber

**Papers 2 and 3 Section C: Pre-20th Century Writing**

Author	Title of Book	Publisher
William Shakespeare	<i>King Lear</i>	Collins (ed. Alexander)
Henrik Ibsen	<i>An Enemy of the People</i> (translated by James McFarlane)	Oxford World's Classics
Thomas Hardy	<i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i>	Penguin
Joseph Conrad	<i>Heart of Darkness</i>	Penguin
John Donne	Selected Poems (from <i>The Complete English Poems</i> )	Penguin
Emily Dickinson	Selected Poems (from <i>The Complete Poems</i> )	Faber

**Paper 2 Section B: The English Romantic Period (1785-1832)**

Author	Title of Book	Publisher
John Keats	Selected Poems (from <i>Selected Poems</i> )	Penguin
Percy Bysshe Shelley	Selected Poems (from <i>Selected Poems and Prose</i> )	Penguin
Samuel Taylor Coleridge	Selected Poems (from <i>The Complete Poems</i> )	Penguin
Jane Austen	<i>Persuasion</i>	Penguin
Ann Radcliffe	<i>The Mysteries of Udolpho</i>	Penguin
Mary Shelley	<i>Frankenstein</i> (1831 text)	Penguin

**Paper 3 Section B: Postcolonial Literature**

Author	Title of Book	Publisher
Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o	<i>A Grain of Wheat</i>	Penguin
Chinua Achebe	<i>Anthills of the Savannah</i>	Penguin
Rohinton Mistry	<i>Family Matters</i>	Faber & Faber
David Malouf	<i>Remembering Babylon</i>	Vintage
Edwin Thumboo	Selected Poems (from <i>The Best of Edwin Thumboo</i> )	Epigram
Jean Rhys	<i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i>	Penguin