

**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA**  
**SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

**ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**MAY 2015**

**EXAMINERS' REPORT**

**MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE**  
**EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

**SEC ENGLISH LITERATURE  
MAY 2015 SESSION  
EXAMINERS' REPORT**

**STATISTICAL  
DATA**

The table below summarises the candidates' distribution of Grades:

**Distribution of Grades**

| <b>Grade</b>  | <b>2A</b> | <b>2B</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| <b>1</b>      | 131       |           | 131          | 5.0      |
| <b>2</b>      | 198       |           | 198          | 7.6      |
| <b>3</b>      | 523       |           | 523          | 20.0     |
| <b>4</b>      | 484       | 102       | 586          | 22.4     |
| <b>5</b>      | 236       | 167       | 403          | 15.4     |
| <b>6</b>      |           | 141       | 141          | 5.4      |
| <b>7</b>      |           | 125       | 125          | 4.8      |
| <b>U</b>      | 226       | 216       | 442          | 16.9     |
| <b>Absent</b> | 20        | 45        | 65           | 2.5      |
| <b>Total</b>  | 1818      | 796       | 2614         | 100      |

**PAPER 1  
SECTION A  
POETRY**

**General  
Comments**

The personae found in this year's unseen poem, who are simply known as "we", are left unidentified; this already sets the tone of mystery in the poem. The personae recall how on moving to the new environs of Miller's End, they daily came across the ominous figure of a woman totally dressed in black complete with a veil around her head. The personae give the impression that this woman is a ghostly apparition and they question a garden boy, later identified as Bill, about this mysterious figure. The boy informs them that she is no ghost but just old Ms Wickerby going on her daily errands to the shops. The personae decide to engage Ms Wickerby in conversation, and as they are talking they mention the young garden boy. The final twist in the poem is when Ms Wickerby informs them that the young boy had drowned one cold winter, some years before, in the same pool next to which they had met him. The poem leaves the reader guessing as to who the real ghost in Miller's End is and whether there could have been two. The content of the poem is undoubtedly accessible to both Paper A and Paper B candidates as is evident in the number of correct answers and the paucity of questions left unanswered.

**Specific  
Comments**

- 1 Many candidates sitting for Paper A and B were in a quandary about this question. Many opted for choice A (some of whom crossed it out and underlined choice B) and others opted for choice C. It became evident that candidates did not fully understand "personae" (probably being only familiar with the singular 'persona') which is a rudimentary element in literary analysis.
- 2 The majority of candidates answered this question correctly and there were few instances when this mark was not awarded.
- 3a Many answered this technical question correctly. There were some who came up with all sorts of numbers to quantify the syllables per line. Some candidates focused on the syllables of both lines, hence they incorrectly answered 14 syllables.

- 3b** The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- 3c** Many candidates opted to correctly point out that the regular number of syllables and regular rhyme scheme create a consistent rhythm. This represented a fast pace of reading for some and hence used the word “speed” while for others this reflected the sense of daily routine found in the poem.
- 3d** A good number of candidates wrote “four lines” as an answer, even managing to come up with the correct technical term ‘quatrains’. Others either misspelt the word or came up with different versions of the word which approximate its correct spelling, like ‘quadrants’ or ‘quartet’. The ones who failed to provide a correct answer mentioned punctuation, run-on-lines or concepts like length of verses.
- 4** Most candidates pointed out how the use of direct speech gives a more realistic feel to the poem and/or brings the characters to life. Weaker answers mentioned the fact that the ghosts or characters are talking to the reader.
- 5a** Most candidates answered correctly. Wrong answers were few and far between.
- 5b** This question proved tricky for many as they could not make the connection between the boy’s smile and the shining pool. Most referred to Ms. Wickerby and thought that the boy was making fun of her or that the boy was extremely happy. Few referred to the sinister connotations of this simile, in that Billy’s smile is being compared to the same pool in which he drowned.
- 6** Most candidates referred to the fact that the events are being presented in chronological order and stopped there. They did not go into more depth such as by mentioning that the words denote the passing of time, create suspense, and that there is a sudden twist of events.
- 7** Again this proved to be quite tricky as many failed to contrast the characters, for example ghosts/humans or observers/observed, choosing only to describe the characters individually.
- 8** Most answered in an approximate fashion without really coming to grips with the question. Focus was practically incidental most of the time. Many could not make up their mind who the ghost really was and some came up with wrong answers like Ms Wickerby was out looking for her lover, or that she had killed the boy. Most answers referred correctly to the fact that the poet prepares the reader to assume that Ms Wickerby is a ghost while in actual fact the real ghost is Billy...or is it? Some students gave an insightful answer as they referred to the fact that the poem leaves the reader with no clear answer and keeps him/her hanging. Some candidates did not even focus on the language used.

**SECTION B  
PROSE**

**General  
Comments**

This year’s unseen prose passage starts with a boy waking up, trapped in a huge dark metallic lift which seems to be ascending towards an unknown destination. The whole passage deals with this anxiety provoking scenario with the boy’s hyper awareness of his new surroundings and finishes with the lift suddenly stopping and a pair of doors opening at the top allowing the bright light and his new life to come in. There is clear evidence (as in previous years) that the selected prose passage and the questions were not beyond the candidates. The answers suggest a very good understanding of the text not just at comprehension level. The responses also indicate that candidates understood the questions and were prepared in a manner that evidenced a degree of awareness of what critical engagement with a literary text is about. However, there

were instances where, despite knowing the answers, there seemed to be a general lack of discipline in wording responses in a manner that would help candidates earn more marks.

**Specific  
Comments**

- 1 The majority of the candidates answered this question correctly.
- 2a Most of the candidates answered this question in an acceptable manner. A number emphasised the overpowering presence of metal in the setting. Most indicated an understanding that the repetition of the word 'metal' underscores an unwelcoming environment.
- 3 Candidates showed no difficulty in identifying the two similes.
- 4 The majority of candidates selected phrases that worked towards creating the rich sensorial experiences in the passage. The main challenge seemed to be finding a phrase that alludes to a tactile experience. A number of candidates answered question 4 wrongly because they did not quote phrases but single words.
- 5 Candidates did not find it difficult to name the figure of speech but experienced difficulty in providing a good answer to the (b) part of the question. Few drew a link between the physical pain and the psychological tension.
- 6 A few candidates got this question wrong by suggesting that time was passing quickly. Most, however, mentioned the slow passage of time often adding that when one is not enjoying oneself, time seems to pass more slowly.
- 7 Candidates seem to have found this question rather taxing not because they did not sense that the short lines underline isolation and loneliness but because their focus was on the protagonist (and not the device). Furthermore, the candidates gave sketchy minimalistic answers that fell short/were lacking. The question asked candidates to comment on the effectiveness of line 33 and line 38. An answer that reads, 'Thomas feels/is alone.' cannot be considered as an incorrect answer, however, an answer that reads, 'The short lines contrast with the other paragraphs showing the sense of loneliness Thomas is experiencing.' is a much better answer. This is not because the second answer is longer or 'fuller' but mainly because the subject of the sentence (the concern) is the device employed by the writer rather than a concern with the protagonist.
- 8 There were a good number of answers to this question. Some answers specifically focused on the apparent dissonance between being born and standing up. Most answers were generally concerned with the line creating a sense of curiosity in the reader and/or with the fact that Thomas is embarking on a new experience in his life and therefore feels like he is being born again.
- 9 As expected there was a range of answers. Most were limited to a collation of quotes and a paraphrase of these same quotes. Such efforts are not particularly appreciated. The better answers included a clear concern with various elements that create a sense of imprisonment written in a coherent paragraph. Again, sometimes one gets the feeling that the difference between the average answers and the better ones is mainly determined by what the candidates foreground in the answer. Average answers were (generally speaking) concerned with Thomas while the better answers immediately suggested a concern with devices.

**PAPER IIA**

**SECTION A  
DRAMA**

**Specific  
Comments**

- 1 Most candidates who chose this question had good and focused answers. Many spoke about Malvolio and Sir Toby's character with confidence and also gave a good account of the trick.
- 2 A popular choice among candidates who opted to answer questions about this text. Many gave confident and erudite answers in that they showed clearly, and with good examples, that *Twelfth Night* can be described as a comedy not only because of its comic elements and scenes but because of the "happy ending" in this play.
- 3 Very few students opted for this question. The answers were adequate enough but not remarkable. The few who wrote about this question made an appropriate choice of soliloquies and gave a detailed analysis of the content.
- 4 This was one of the less chosen questions for this play. Most candidates fared well, showed good knowledge of the play and provided adequate discussion.
- 5 The small number of candidates who answered this question did well, showing adequate preparation. Most discussed the relationship between Antonio and Bassanio and a few referred to Jessica and Shylock. The better answers included various examples of loyalty in the play.
- 6 This was the most chosen question about *The Merchant of Venice*. The best answers brought out the complexity of the characters while weaker students stopped at their respective evil and goodness. Most answers were acceptably valid. Some answers focused only on contrast and others gave a character study with no attempt at showing similarities and differences.
- 7 This was the least chosen question about *Macbeth*, with answers ranging from very good to very weak. The weaker answers referred to the encounter with the witches and failed to answer the questions. Others failed to discuss the implications of the exchange and narrated events without focusing on the questions.
- 8 By far the most chosen question about this play. The weak answers lacked focus and failed to mention important points, with the weakest simply paraphrasing some events. There were some very good answers that gave a very thorough analysis of the theme but a good number of answers, though good, did not go beyond the examples referred to in the question.
- 9 Another preferred question about this play. The best answers delved into a deep discussion of Macbeth's insecurity as it develops throughout the play. The weak essays were unfocused and merely summarised some scenes from the play. Most candidates were not able to select the relevant moments in the play when Macbeth's insecurity is shown.
- 10 Only a few students chose this question. Many answers failed to bring out the real significance of the song in *A View from the Bridge*. They just narrated the instance when this song featured in the play. The few who answered this question were generally able to relate the lyrics to Eddie's feelings.
- 11 Not a popular choice. Only a few candidates succeeded in explicating Alfieri's important role in the play. Weaker candidates gave more importance to Eddie and gave a

summary of his role. Most answers were not satisfactory. Some simply gave a summary of the play whereas others lacked focus.

- 12 This was the most chosen question about this play. However, only a few really came to grips with Alfieri's important role in this question. The best answers showed depth and understanding of the play as the theme of Justice lies at the heart of it.
- 13 This was the most popular question about *The Play of Kes*. The answers were mostly valid, however the weaker ones failed to bring out how Kes acts as a symbol. They referred to the question without really making the connection and ended up with a summary of the plot. Most answers showed a good knowledge of the play.
- 14 Many candidates gave adequate answers. The best essays brought out the themes of the play, for example, teenage pregnancy and family conflict which make this drama a popular one. This was quite a popular choice and candidates were able to account for its popularity as, as teenagers, they were able to identify with conflicts between parents and teens as well as the problems presented by teenage pregnancy.
- 15 A question which brought out how the social background of the main characters in *The Play of Kes* and *Dear Nobody* plays such an important role in both plays. Essays were of a mixed quality. While there were a few good answers that were strong on both plays, a good number had no concept of social background and simply gave a summary of both plays. Others fared adequately with regard to *The Play of Kes* but completely lost focus when it came to *Dear Nobody*.

## SECTION C PROSE

### General Comments

- Candidates need to read the questions well and be sensitive to the focus of the question they opt for (for example a focus on character traits rather than simply writing about characters in question 7).
- A clearer effort to move from narrative to foregrounding argumentation is required (for example a focus on democratic society, freedom, shelter, fostering in question 17).
- There needs to be more discipline in the selection of content (for instance some candidates could have made better choices in their selection of short stories when writing about Roald Dahl's collection).

### Specific Comments

- 1 This question was attempted by only one candidate.
- 2 Only a couple of candidates attempted this question. The efforts were basic and rather limited.
- 3 Question not attempted.
- 4 By far the least attempted question about Dahl's stories. The marks ranged from adequate to very good, the latter managing to write a detailed analysis of the quote revolving around the central conflict. Some candidates could support their answer with valid quotations.
- 5 Quite a popular question about this collection of stories. The candidates who opted for this question demonstrated a range of abilities. The usual pitfall was the irresistible tendency to let story telling become the intention in the answer. The better essays focused on the vital difference between possessing a lot of money and possessing knowledge/class/friendship/good breeding/respect.

- 6 A good number of candidates opted to answer this question, and the chosen stories were in their majority appropriate choices. The most favoured stories were *The Way up to Heaven* and *Mrs Bixby and the Colonel's Coat*. The stark difference between the husband and wife was vividly portrayed by most candidates, although a few failed to focus on contrast. The highflyers provided valid quotes which enhanced quality. Other sets of characters were the landlady and Billy Weaver and the umbrella man and the mother. Although the contrast was wrung out laboriously by some, the general outcome was acceptable. Another group of candidates contrasted singular characters from two separate stories – this offered ample space for excessive narrative unless candidates were careful enough to strike a balance.
- 7 One of the major shortcomings in the candidates' answers for this question was that they were primarily concerned with characters rather than character traits. The most popular characters in focus were Napoleon, Squealer, Boxer, Mollie and Clover. The introduction and the conclusion were indispensable tools and gave an impressive effect to some of the essays.
- 8 Many candidates preferred to answer this question and most candidates performed acceptably well. The most obvious response highlighted the fact that hard work without intelligence and blind following of the pigs' leadership is harmful to a constructive and healthy society. Many candidates knew the novella inside out and were able to quote with ease. All the quotes were in context.

Sometimes, candidates need to step back from giving too much background knowledge which has no relevance to the set question.

- 9 The candidates were spoilt for choice as the novella offers multiple instances of trust and mistrust; disloyalty, particularly the pigs' betrayal of the whole farm; Squealer's propaganda and the appalling destruction of faithful Boxer. The candidates fared well in general, combining very good expression with the right personal analysis.
- 10 This was the least popular question about *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. Although the role of Maria was made quite clear by some, the essays were mostly written at face value, in that the maid was always associated with Bruno's family and was not considered their equal. However, she is the link between Berlin and Auschwitz for Bruno, and offers a comfortable and 'safe' transition. Most candidates offered little analysis and some focused on the plot and failed to mention significant points like Maria's association with loyalty, fear, responsibility and trust within the household.
- 11 Very few candidates managed to write an impressive essay dealing with contrast in this novel. Most essays dealt with the urge to narrate, and offered little analysis. Not surprisingly, such essays obtained a basic mark. On a more positive note, other students managed to pinpoint enough instances which shed light on the contrast between the horrors of the Holocaust (namely the jailing and eventual killing of the Jews, including the climax at the end) and the willingness to do good (Bruno's innocence and eagerness to help Shmuel and others in need).
- 12 The most obvious item of clothing that comes to mind in this book is the Jew's striped prison garment and this leads to Shmuel. A popular question, with the most common element of discussion being the prison clothes and the Nazi uniforms; another stark difference is the dirty versus the neat and clean, and the person wearing them. Very few candidates ventured as far as to discuss higher order thinking by looking at Pavel's and Maria's outfits from different perspectives.
- 13 The majority of candidates answering on *Private Peaceful* attempted this question. Generally speaking, the answers were valid but also rather limited. Candidates focused on the possession of property or occupying a rank in the army as pertinent to the characters in power, like Hanley and Grandma Wolf; the weaklings being the Peacefuls

because of their apparent unlucky stars. Very few candidates offered detailed responses which deserved a high mark.

- 14 A very straightforward essay which proved popular with most candidates. Unfortunately, the bulk of entries spiralled uncontrollably in the vortex of the good old narrative. A leap in quality definitely requires more personal response and mature linking of arguments and plot.
- 15 There were two distinct kinds of responses to this question. A number of answers were rather limited, bland and hardly offered any essential depth. Other answers were rather good with some even mentioning the sense of 'feudalism' and its implications, the role of women in society and the attitude towards people with a disability in the community.
- 16 By far, the most popular question on Naidoo's novel. Such an essay lends itself to storytelling and this is often a safe haven for the average candidates who do not experiment too often and too eagerly. The majority of essays scored well. The highest achieving essays offered structure with the use of discourse markers which gave the content a good quality. The average essay was valid and incorporated a few quotes which gave depth to the analysis. Most essays showed understanding of bullying in all its forms, especially Marcia and Donna's physical and emotional bullying and the Brass Buttons' bullying of the Solaja family.
- 17 Unfortunately, the majority of responses to this question were rather limited and mostly narrative. Very few candidates opted to specifically dedicate paragraphs in their answer to issues of freedom, democracy, shelter and fostering among others.
- 18 One of the most chosen questions and in general, very straightforward. Most candidates did not provide an impressive answer but showed relevant knowledge of the role of the media, mainly journalism (*Speak*), TV (*Mr Seven o'Clock*) and freedom of expression in Nigeria and England. The essays were generally fluent and the set question was kept in focus; the usual lapse into narrative was more contained.

## PAPER IIB

### SECTION A DRAMA

#### Specific Comments

- 1 Only a small number chose to answer this question and they adequately referred to the trick played on Malvolio and Viola's disguise.
- 2 A very small number answered this question but essays were acceptably valid.
- 3 Very few answered this question and the chosen characters were generally Viola and Orsino. Answers were mostly good.
- 4 Very few opted for this question and gave adequate answers on Shylock's character and role.
- 5 Most chose to answer about Love and Hate with answers being focused and mostly valid. Most concentrated on the theme of Racism in connection to hatred while when writing about Love/Friendship, candidates chose to focus on the characters of Bassanio and Portia, and also Bassanio and Antonio.
- 6 Answers were adequate and generally referred to Portia and Nerissa's disguise and how they tricked their husbands.

- 7 A preferred choice, with a number of essays keeping only to the scene from which the question's quote was taken. Weaker answers were out of focus completely, others gave sketchy answers and some focused solely on Lady Macbeth.
- 8 Another popular question about *Macbeth*. Many candidates failed to focus their response and make the connection with the whole nation. Others simply referred to this point at the conclusion of their summary of the plot.
- 9 The most favoured question. Weaker answers involved paraphrase. Most answers were limited to Macbeth's encounters with the witches and ignored the word "scenes" in the question. However, examiners were impressed with the overall quality of Paper B essays dealing with this play.
- 10 Not a popular choice among candidates. Some adequate answers were given. The clashes mostly referred to in the essays included those between the cultures of Sicily and America, between the brothers, and between Eddie and Beatrice.
- 11 The most chosen question about *A View from the Bridge*. The best essays outlined the characters of Marco and Rodolfo very well. Weaker students were superficial in their discussion and stopped at summarising the plot.
- 12 Not the most chosen essay question. The best essays brought out the importance of Alfieri's role. Some others lacked depth. There were very few really weak answers on this text.
- 13 A good number of candidates opted for this question and most answers showed adequate knowledge of the text. Weaker answers tended to give a succinct summary of the events without making an effort to find meaning.
- 14 Once again many candidates seemed to choose this question and most answers scored adequately and focused on the teenage relationship and its outcome and/or the relationship between Chris and his mother and/or that between Helen and her mother.
- 15 A popular choice as the theme is probably very tangible to the candidates' reality. Most gave good answers. Weaker ones restricted their answers to Jud. Examiners seemed to agree that this text proved to be beneficial to students as the themes motivate them to make an extra effort to empathise with literature, thus making it relevant to them.

**SECTION C  
PROSE**

**General  
Comments**

- The candidates should read the questions thoroughly before attempting the answer. Certain mistakes can be avoided.
- It is also worth noting that there was a considerable improvement in Paper B candidates' knowledge of the major texts. There were very few candidates who did not attempt the answers when compared to previous examination sessions.
- Candidates are encouraged to structure their essays instead of writing a dense chunk without head or tail. A number of Paper B answers tend to be a single block paragraph. This should not be.

**Specific  
Comments**

- 1 Only a couple of candidates attempted this question. The answers were below the desired level.
- 2 Very few candidates attempted this question. The answers were at best limited to narration and not really exploring notions of horror such as the creation of life in secret, the obsession and the suffering and how things eventually turn out horrifically wrong.

- 3 Only a small number of candidates attempted this question. The answers suggested the need to empathise with the creature, his appearance and the fact that he is essentially transformed into a monster by circumstances. The candidates attempting this question did write about two episodes that show these ideas to some degree.
- 4 Maybe the least chosen question about Dahl's collection of stories. The problem with essays about Dahl's stories is that the candidates simply embark on a narrative trail and become insensible to critical engagement. Although this question suggests a possible sequence of events which lead to the well-deserved ending, very few candidates succeeded in dedicating a few lines about how the plan backfires on Boggis.
- 5 A very popular question. The answers were mostly narrative but the content was valid and could not be penalised. A few essays were a welcome breath of fresh air in that both content and expression were very valid.
- 6 Mrs Bixby, Mrs Forster, Billy Weaver and other characters found their prime spot in this essay. Apart from the first three whose decisions are either favourable or detrimental to their destiny, other choices of characters were not always so clear cut. Hence, candidates struggled to pinpoint any plausible connection with the set question, fading abysmally into comforting paraphrase. The rest did manage to reach a reasonable standard, which is commendable.
- 7 A popular choice. The usual hazard is the constant narrative and exaggerated detail which chokes any chance of critical analysis. In general, though, most essays were focused and acceptable, and some even submitted a longer response than expected.
- 8 Another preferred question. Answers showed a good understanding of the roles of the dogs and the sheep in the novel.
- 9 The least popular question most probably due to the fact that candidates might not have fully processed the term 'universal roles'. Nevertheless, those who did attempt this question did mention salient points like corruption, loyalty and trust but very few answers ticked all the boxes. Most essays offered factual information but little personal contribution.
- 10 Many opted for this question in which the candidates were expected to bring forth the idea of the bonding which happens naturally between the two boys, after their unplanned meeting. Candidates were expected to mention the fact that Bruno becomes 'part' of the compound. It was not enough to mention that Bruno found a friend, and they died together. Very few candidates mentioned complex points like human nature and fewer still failed to conceive a basic explanation.
- 11 On the whole, the answers offered little response. Although the theme of fear is pivotal in the novel, some candidates only skimmed the idea of the prison camp and the cruelty of the Nazi soldiers, with very little original attempts at other shades of fear which are abundant in the novel.
- 12 The least popular of all three questions. Although there were many points worth considering, the average answer focused on only one or at most, two aspects mainly Kotler's cruel nature and behaviour towards Pavel or Shmuel.
- 13 Only a few candidates attempted this question. The responses were generally very limited and the most popular choices were the Colonel and Sergeant Hanley.
- 14 This question was not too popular either. The theme of guilt was presented in a valid manner especially in relation to the cause of the protagonist's father's death; very few

stretched their discussion further. As in most cases, the writing was limited and very basic.

- 15 Most candidates seemed to find this question within their reach. Answers were basic although undeniably valid. Most candidates managed to select one incident from both the life in England and the battlefield, and the stronger candidates demonstrated better expression and structure.
- 16 This was an interesting essay in which candidates offered a decent assessment on Sade from the moment of her mother's murder to her arrival in England with all its emotional and psychological turmoil. The ideas were there although the weaker candidates stumbled over proper expression.
- 17 Most answers were acceptable but unfortunately some were too sketchy. Some candidates seemed enthusiastic to write about a few aspects in the novel which show kindness towards the children. The distinction between low achievers and high achievers is mostly always the expression of ideas and essay structure.
- 18 As opposed to past examination sessions, candidates were careful to adhere to the given instructions and focus on two (not one or three) specified characters. As a result, the work was more succinct although some answers were superficial or inaccurate.

## PAPERS II A & B

### SECTION B POETRY

#### General Comments

In the Poetry section, all candidates sitting for Paper IIA and IIB were asked to choose from three essay questions based on the selection of poems from the poetry anthology entitled *The New Dragon Book of Verse* as indicated in the syllabus. In Paper IIA, candidates chose to mostly answer question 1 while the majority of those sitting for Paper IIB chose to answer question 3.

This year there were less candidates who did not attempt the poetry section. Some answers in the Paper IIB option showed not only thorough knowledge of the poems but also a well structured and coherent analysis. Having said that, there were other attempts in both paper options which clearly showed that the candidates were not prepared for the examination and wrote irrelevant information.

The quality of the candidates' answers to the poetry essay questions ranged from an excellent analysis of texts to mediocre summaries. One must point out that overall the quality of the essays was better than in previous years. This is surely because the set texts were carefully presented, explained and analysed in class. However, it is very sad to note that some candidates chose to write about poems which are no longer in the syllabus. It is therefore advisable to make sure that the right texts are analysed.

Attempts which were awarded high marks were those which showed significant knowledge of the texts being analysed, engagement with the question given and thorough and well structured analysis supported by relevant quotations.

Essays which were awarded average marks were those that had more focus on content narration rather than analysis of the language used, had weak expression and contained some inaccuracies. There were also attempts which showed that the candidates did not know how to structure a literary essay. These essays were awarded low marks. The tone in these essays was didactic and the essays themselves lacked any trace of analysis.

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A good number of candidates simply narrated or summarized the poems showing partial or total disregard for the question set. Furthermore, many failed to discuss the tools/devices poets use to convey their message. This was the most common mistake of both Paper IIA and IIB candidates. A good number of Paper IIB essays were also characterized by poor paragraphing, syntax, punctuation as well as problems with coherence, with a number of essays consisting of two completely separate paragraphs summarizing the poems chosen without linking the content to the title chosen.

*Chairperson*  
*2015 Examination Panel*