

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2007**

LITERATURES IN ENGLISH

LITERATURES IN ENGLISH**CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2007****GENERAL COMMENTS**

The candidate entry for the Literatures in English examination continues to increase. The 2007 examination had a combined candidate entry (Units 1 and 2) of 3246, compared to the previous year's entry of 2692. The performance on this year's examination, the second testing of the revised syllabus, approximated the same pass rate as the previous year, but with fewer candidates gaining the higher passes.

There has been marginal improvement on Paper 02, the essay paper, of the examination, but there is still a great deal of room for improvement on some aspects of this paper. While candidates are gaining more marks for showing evidence of knowledge of genre, the performance on all Modules is basically about the same. However, in the area of knowledge, candidates are failing to demonstrate aspects of knowledge beyond thematic development and a few basic features of genre. In drama, theme, plot and characterization are emphasized to the general exclusion of knowledge of other generic features of drama, knowledge of literary devices and their function and knowledge of literary context. While many candidates are familiar with the conventions of the poetic genre, many fail to demonstrate knowledge of the prose genre at that basic level. In poetry, much more attention is given to symbolism, imagery and diction than to the other generic aspects of poetry. Nevertheless, there is evidence that many more candidates are exploring the range of poetic devices to their credit. On the Prose module, candidates are very keen to discuss theme, plot and characterization, but often ignore the other generic features. In both poetry and prose, candidates need to understand not just the terms associated with the generic features, but the ways in which writers manipulate the different features of each genre to achieve artistic effect. The ability to explain how different artistic choices reinforce an author's view on a particular issue is an important skill for candidates to learn; giving a list of features of the genre is not sufficient. In the prose genre, in particular, candidates often merely narrated the story or relevant sections of the story rather than produce analytic essays. Candidates will have to continue to improve their essay writing, question analysis and argumentative skills in order to improve their performance.

Candidates have been improving on their performance on Paper 01, including the Poetry module. However, all candidates must pay equal attention to both Papers in order to maximize their overall performance. Far too many candidates spend time re-writing the questions and far too many fail to attempt entire questions or parts of questions. Since the marks on Paper 01 are awarded for specific responses, failure to attempt a question results in an inability to score marks on that section or question. Candidates should also pay attention to how many marks are awarded for particular questions because they might lose too many marks when they fail to attempt questions with a higher weighting of marks. It is clear that students need to be given practice in time management under examination conditions. Some candidates spent far too long on the first module and seemed to have had difficulty completing the other modules. It is important, therefore, that candidates maximize their chances of doing well by giving due attention to both papers.

DETAILED COMMENTS**UNIT 1****Paper 01****Module 1 – Drama**

The questions on this dramatic extract tested candidates' ability to explain the ways in which meaning is conveyed through the playwright's choice of language, structural elements such as characterization, development of conflict, creation of suspense and features of drama such as stage directions. Generally, candidates demonstrated fair knowledge of the dramatic function served by entrances and

exits, or by stage action. Weaker candidates continue to have difficulty explaining the ways in which playwrights manipulate language and literary techniques such as irony to create dramatic effect.

Question 1

The first part of this question was satisfactorily handled. Weaker candidates were unable to explain the ways in which the opening introduces plot, character and dramatic conflict.

Question 2

Candidates scored full marks on this question.

Question 3

Candidates found this question straightforward and responded satisfactorily. Responses suggested that most candidates generally understood the ways in which stage directions reveal character, create suspense and advance plot. Weaker candidates continue to have difficulty explaining how dramatic techniques work.

Question 4

The question was generally well handled. Weaker candidates were unable to find two ways in which Leandre's entrance serves a dramatic function. While they were able to connect his entrance to plot development, they were unable to explain the ways in which the entrance also provides character revelation and manages the suspense that has been at the core of the extract.

Question 5

The first part of this question was well handled; the second part was not well done. Many candidates failed to understand the concept of irony and to explain its dramatic function in the extract.

Module 2 – Poetry

The questions in this module tested candidates' ability to recognize imagery, to comment on the significance of word choice (diction), to correctly identify literary devices and to evaluate the effectiveness of their use. Candidates' performance in this module continues to improve. Candidates seemed to relate well to the theme of the poem and that impacted positively on their responses. The knowledge of poetic elements continues to be an area of weakness and candidates' ability to make evaluative judgements on the use of these techniques is equally weak.

Question 6

Candidates performed well on this question.

Question 7

While most candidates were able to identify the active verbs, weaker candidates were not able to identify the effectiveness of the poet's use of these verbs. Stronger candidates were able to recognize that these verbs help to reinforce the power and force that define these women.

Question 8

The first part of this question was well handled. The second part of this question posed some difficulty for weaker candidates. While many candidates were able to identify the military images, they were unable to explain their effectiveness.

Question 9

Candidates responded well to this question. They were able to identify the effectiveness of the poet's word choice.

Question 10

Candidates performed well on this question. They were able to explain the ways in which the lines convey the force of these women as they battle to create educational opportunities for their children.

Module 3 – Prose Fiction

Candidates understood the extract and could speak clearly to characterization of the two sisters. Weaker candidates continue to have difficulty commenting on the effectiveness of literary devices.

Question 11

Candidates responded satisfactorily to this question. Weaker candidates tended to paraphrase the statement while stronger candidates were able to explain the use of the metaphor of shadow to describe the sisters' relationship.

Question 12

This question was well done. Candidates found the question straightforward and responded satisfactorily. Most candidates scored full marks.

Question 13

This question was well handled. Weaker candidates tended to confuse Sharada with Vasanta.

Question 14

Generally, candidates were able to identify the music imagery in the extract and were able to explain how these images are effective in conveying the differences between the sisters.

Question 15

This question was well handled. Weaker candidates tended to make comments on character that were unrelated to the stimulus given.

Paper 02

While the performance on the essays remains satisfactory in the area of knowledge, application of knowledge and in organization, many candidates still fail to score higher than average grades. Many candidates are not exploring the opportunities to gain higher scores by demonstrating a range of knowledge, by carefully constructing an argument or by presenting good models of expression. In the area of knowledge, some candidates referred to knowledge of genre or the writer's biographical, historical and social contexts in their answers, but many of them were still not synthesizing this information into a strong argument in response to the questions. Also, candidates need to formulate a proper introduction and conclusion to their argument. Outlining the argument in the introduction of an essay establishes, from early, a candidate's main thesis and provides a guide for the candidate to maintain focus throughout the essay. Also, it is often important to define the terms on which the argument rests. Many candidates often seem to write without planning or outlining. Too many candidates produce very inadequate introductions. Far too many candidates are not maximizing their marks by paying particular attention to the effective use of: thesis sentence, introduction, transition, paragraphing and conclusion. Also, too often, the language of candidates at this level remains pedestrian.

While there has been improvement on the Prose module with fewer candidates merely telling the story, more work has to be done on reinforcing the features of the genre. Carefully selected incidents from the plot should be used primarily as evidence to support an argument. Furthermore, elements of prose fiction beyond plot and theme should be given attention. Narrative point of view, characterization, setting, the use of various motifs, literary devices, styles of narration like interior monologue, stream of consciousness and satire might become significant aspects of the writer's

technique in exploring various issues. On the Poetry module, students should be guided not to treat poetry as merely sociology. Whenever some themes are highlighted in a question, candidates tend to ignore the fact that the writer has chosen a particular genre to articulate those concerns. A question about "the extent to which poetry represents the world as beautiful, terrible and astonishing" cannot ignore the poetic expression of these issues. Attention to the elements of poetry, literary devices and poetic forms, for example, should be given equal attention. In Drama, more focus needs to be given to objectives 2 and 3 of the Drama objectives. Candidates' ability to "assess how meaning is expressed through the playwright's choice of language, use of literary devices and stage conventions and manipulation of the structural elements of drama" is what is being tested. Much more emphasis has to be given to exercises that help the students develop critical judgements about literature.

Module 1 – DramaQuestion 1

The Drama module contains the text-specific questions in this Unit and these allow candidates to focus on particular aspects of the dramatic texts. This question was designed to test a candidate's ability to evaluate sources of dramatic significance in the play. Beyond the focus on deception, any recognition of the ways in which the playwright's choice of language, literary devices, structural elements and features of drama might create dramatic impact would have been credited. Essentially, the question required candidates to indicate the sources of dramatic impact. Is "deception" the main tool of dramatic impact or are there other sources of dramatic impact? While the responses were generally satisfactory, some candidates tended to focus too narrowly and missed opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge of genre. Also, more candidates can make use of their knowledge of the historical, political and social contexts of the plays in their responses to the question. Candidates need to develop the ability to explain the ways in which these features contribute to thematic and dramatic significance. More attention needs to be given to objectives 2 and 3 of the drama objectives.

Candidates' ability to evaluate the effectiveness of "the playwright's choice of language, use of literary devices and stage conventions and manipulation of the structural elements of drama" is being tested by these kinds of questions.

Question 2

This question required candidates to consider the significance of the title in relationship with the dramatic features of the play. Candidates were expected to evaluate the dramatic significance of the title, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Alternatively, the question left room for candidates to suggest that there were other sources of dramatic impact other than what was suggested in the title. Any consideration of the ways in which the title directed the audience to the structural elements of plot, theme and character development or related to stage action or drew attention to the use of stage conventions for dramatic impact would be credited. Again, much more use could have been made of extra-textual knowledge in these responses.

Question 3

Not many candidates chose this question, but those who did performed very well. Candidates were very good at discussing the dramatic significance of the character, Falstaff. Many could relate the portrayal of this character to structural elements of drama (plot and thematic development; character foil) and to stage action.

Question 4

This question was the least popular of the four questions on this module. Many candidates did not handle this question very well. Although the works of art on the Drama module will have the distinctiveness of dramatic features which implies staging, these works rely on literary language as well. Therefore, objective 2 of the syllabus which states, "students should be able to assess how meaning is conveyed through the playwright's choice of language and literary devices," is the objective that is being tested by this question. Therefore, candidates could have discussed, for example, Shakespeare's use of military language or the ways in which language is used for comic effect or even the general rhetorical features of various speeches (in asides or soliloquies) and the impact this kind of language

might have had on the dramatic impact of the play. Furthermore, the question created the space for candidates to argue that language was **not** the main source of dramatic impact. Other elements such as the carefully constructed plot or the use of stage conventions such as costume, sound effects and stage props were more significant in creating dramatic effect.

Module 2 – Poetry

This question foregrounded rhythm and imagery. In the responses to this question, which was less popular than question 6, many candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge of imagery, but were often imprecise about rhythm. Some candidates did not even know the difference between rhythm and rhyme. In very good responses, candidates discussed with ease and comfort the various ways in which metrical structure supported the rhythmic and thematic power points of the poetry. Also, many candidates, to their credit, did not limit their evaluation of "good poetry" to only the use of rhythm and imagery, they considered the range of devices available to the poet. Objective 3 of the syllabus needs constant emphasis in candidate-preparation: "explain how meaning is expressed through the poet's choice of language, literary devices, and structural elements commonly found in poetry, such as image, symbol, alliteration, assonance, metre, lineation, and rhyme" (page 9 of syllabus). In addition, use of relevant extra-textual information can be of great use in responding to the questions.

Question 6

For many candidates, this question was a popular choice and many found all three poets Margaret Atwood, William Wordsworth and Robert Frost very useful for discussing the poetic representation of the “world as beautiful, terrible or astonishing.” However, too many candidates were treating poetry as sociology and paid little attention to the “poetic elements”. For many candidates, the question allowed them to discuss various issues and their responses treated the question as primarily about theme. The stronger candidates had very nuanced responses that never ignored poetic craft. The “relationship between form and content” is at the heart of all the questions and candidates should not miss the opportunities given to discuss the means by which poets achieve artistic impact.

Module 3 – Prose FictionQuestion 7

Many candidates who chose this question demonstrated an understanding of “narrative technique” and “conflict.” For this question, *Brother Man* was the most popular text chosen and *The Meeting Point* the least popular. Although most candidates understood the key terms, many tended to ignore the specificity of the phrase “*conflict with society*”. While this question was satisfactorily done, weaker candidates ignored the part of the question that asked them to discuss “the extent to which” the statement was true. Again, candidates are denying themselves the chance to earn higher marks on application of knowledge by not making more discriminating arguments prompted by that phrase. In this regard, many candidates again missed opportunities to provide more nuanced discussions of the question. Some responses provided more in-depth analysis of one book than the other. Candidates should strive to give equal attention to each book in this two-book response. More practice in comparative essay writing is needed. Students should be encouraged to see how themes are developed by way of the resources of the prose genre. These questions require candidates to assess the relationship between narrative technique and theme, between form and content. Too many candidates are ignoring the fact that literature is an art form with distinctive features marking each genre. In addition, candidates need to develop their writing skills paying attention to diction, syntax and the use of transitions to connect their ideas.

Question 8

Candidates generally performed poorly on this question. Most candidates could identify intimate relationships in the novels, but failed to identify any non-intimate man/woman relationships. In *Clear Light of Day*, for example, many candidates ignored the sibling relationships across gender. Moreover, too many candidates ignored the word “representation” which is the cue to discuss the various narrative techniques that prose writers use to explore social issues. The syllabus highlights the genres/sub-genres of prose fiction, the elements of fiction and general literary devices that writers can manipulate to reinforce theme. There will be no question on this examination that will be primarily thematic. All questions will demand that candidates connect form and content as the syllabus requires. Teachers should ensure that discussions of themes are not separated from discussions of narrative form and technique. This question also asked candidates to “compare the representation” in both texts. In representing man/woman relationships, did both writers use the same resources of prose fiction and did their use of similar resources produce the same effect? Making evaluations about artistic production is at the heart of this examination; the question provided this kind of opportunity with the request to “compare.” Attention to this word would have helped candidates to produce comparative analyses rather than descriptions of relationships. Students should be encouraged to articulate their informed personal responses to literature and should be made aware of opportunities that questions provide for such personal opinion. The section of the question, “discuss the extent to which you agree,” provides such an opportunity.

UNIT 2**Paper 01****Module 1 - Drama**

Candidates found this extract interesting and responded well to the questions. The questions on this module tested candidates' ability to explain the ways in which meaning is conveyed through the playwright's choice of language, use of literary devices, use of structural elements such as characterization and use of features of drama such as stage directions. However, the ability to explain the significance of interjections and the way these contribute to dramatic effect was not always evident in candidates' responses.

Question 1

Most candidates were able to say that the stage directions provided an indication of the setting. Some candidates tended to discuss the importance of setting as a general dramatic convention, rather than on the ways in which the setting is important to the specifics of the extract.

Question 2

Both parts of the question were well handled.

Question 3

Candidates handled this question very well.

Question 4

This question was not well done. The question required candidates to assess the ways in which the playwright deploys interjection for effect. Candidates were generally unable to show how the interjections serve to reveal characterization or how they create comedic effect.

Question 5

This question was well done.

Module 2 - Poetry

Candidates performed poorly on this module. Many candidates afforded a clichéd interpretation of the poem as an indictment against madness, and did not recognize that the persona sees madness as a choice one makes. Stronger candidates related intelligently to the subject matter. The questions in this section tested candidates' ability to recognize poetic symmetry, to comment on the poet's use of symbolism and to correctly identify literary devices and to evaluate their effective use. Generally, candidates had difficulty describing the context of the poem. The inability to explain the effectiveness

of literary devices continues to be a weakness and, accordingly, candidates were unable to comment on the significance of these devices. This year, there was a fall in candidate performance in this module.

Question 6

Candidates responded poorly to this question and were unable to describe the situation described in the poem.

Question 7

Candidates performed poorly on this question. They tended to paraphrase the lines rather than explain the significance of the writer's choice of words such as "thin ages," "mad mind's release" and "vicious."

Question 8

Generally, candidates were able to identify two examples of repetition, but as in questions of this nature, the weaker candidates were unable to explain the effectiveness of this literary device.

Question 9

This question was not well done. Many candidates did not seem to know the concept of opposition and were, accordingly, unable to identify the images of opposition in the poem and to comment on the ways in which the poet juxtaposes ideas.

Question 10

This question was not well done. Candidates, having offered an erroneous interpretation of the poem, tended to read the last lines as a summary of madness. Stronger candidates were able to explain effectiveness in terms of thematic and/or structural importance to the poem.

Module 3 – Prose Fiction

Candidates responded positively to this extract and were able to explain the ways in which meaning is conveyed through narrative techniques. There has been some improvement in the analytical skills that are deployed in the answering of questions on this module.

Question 11

This question was well done. Most candidates scored full marks.

Question 12

Candidates found this question straightforward and were able to satisfactorily explain the appropriateness of the poet's use of these adjectives.

Question 13

Most candidates were able to identify what was being compared but the weaker candidates encountered difficulty when they attempted to explain the effectiveness of the comparison.

Question 14

This question was well handled by candidates and responses were both creative and insightful.

Question 15

This question posed a challenge for weaker candidates. Many of them did not pay sufficient attention to the requirements of the question and failed to recognize that they were being asked to identify the symbolism and explain how it connects to Oliver's recurring death wish. Many merely paraphrased the stimulus given.

Paper 02

As in Unit 1, Paper 02, the performance on Unit 2, Paper 02 remains about the same as last year. In the Drama module, where candidates are required to answer the questions with reference to two books, they will not score very high marks if they only write on one book. In respect to the Poetry module, there is evidence that candidates are not paying sufficient attention to craft. Even when theme is highlighted in a question, that does not mean that candidates should ignore aspects of poetic craft. The same comment is applicable to the Prose module. Candidates must pay attention to the directive of questions that helps them to focus on the matter of artistic representation. Not enough reference is being made to the elements of prose fiction such as narrative point of view, characterization, setting, structure, motif and use of literary devices that provide a writer with tools for representation.

Students should be given exercises to help them improve their writing which is often pedestrian. At this level, clarity of expression and even elegance in writing is expected. When candidates take contrary positions to ones articulated in the question, they often find room for less clichéd responses and for offering their personal responses to and critical evaluations of literature. Many more candidates need to be encouraged to make use of the opportunities created by the questions to offer their unique informed perspectives on literary production.

Module 1 – DramaQuestion 1

This question required candidates to examine the relationship between thematic revelation and dramatic features. Candidates performed satisfactorily on this question. While most candidates could discuss with confidence plot and characterization, many failed to adequately examine the other dramatic features. Many candidates, even when they considered the other dramatic features such as stage conventions, experienced difficulty in establishing a relationship between the dramatic elements and meaning. The ability of candidates to assess the dramatic impact of a playwright's use of the structural elements of drama was crucial for doing well on this question. Candidates need to be able to explain the crucial relationship between form and content and theme and style.

Question 2

An opposition is set up in the question between "complex characterization" and "complicated plots" in this question. It would seem that dramatic power is achieved by one and not the other. This kind of dichotomy is difficult to maintain and the question provided a wonderful opportunity for varying arguments about what really is the source of dramatic impact in the two plays chosen. Candidates were given an opportunity to suggest other factors beside the two ("complex characterization" and "complicated plots") that contribute to the dramatic impact of the plays. Any attention to objectives 1, 2 or 3 should have provided ready answers to the question. More attention to question analysis and to the significant features and elements of drama will help candidates to respond more effectively to such questions.

Module 2 – Poetry

Question 3

This question represented the first of four specific questions on Paper 02. Most candidates performed creditably, but they did not take full advantage of gaining higher grades with this question. While most candidates identified thematic evidence of various struggles of Caribbean people, they failed to explain the ways in which the hurricane motif provided an excellent trope to represent these issues.

Many candidates spent most of their time outlining the various kinds of struggle or narrating the content of the poems, but failed to explain the effectiveness of Senior's use of the hurricane motif. Alternatively, they could have explained the effectiveness of other motifs such as the garden motif used throughout the collection. Teachers must engage in exercises that force candidates to make connections between poetic technique and theme. They should also be warned about discussing thematic issues in isolation and treating poetry as merely history or sociology; they should not ignore the artistry of poetry. Objective 3 of the poetry objectives needs to be emphasized. The ability to "explain how meaning is expressed through the poet's choice of language, literary devices, and the structural elements commonly found in poetry such as imagery, symbol, alliteration, assonance, metre, lineation and rhyme" needs to be demonstrated to maximize marks. Some of the more capable candidates identified these other features of the poetic genre that they saw engaged by Senior to explore the struggles of Caribbean people.

Question 4

This question required candidates to engage with poetic craft by directing attention to the story-telling technique in Olive Senior's poetry. Many candidates who chose this question did not examine as thoroughly the various kinds of story-telling techniques: the use of narrative point of view, character creation, plot structure, creation of suspense and strategies of demonstrating an awareness of audience. Many of the story-telling techniques of the oral tradition could have been discussed as well: proverbs, picong, back chat (asides)... . Beyond these story-telling elements, are there other features that help to make her poetry distinctive? This is really the question: in your opinion, what makes Senior's poetry distinctive? Expanding the response to include other elements of poetic genre would also have been an effective way to respond to the question.

Question 5

The performance on the questions on Martin Carter was much better than the performance on the questions on Olive Senior. Many candidates who attempted this question were able to avoid the theme/poetic technique divide because the question emphasized this relationship. Finally, we are seeing candidates disagreeing with the proposition of the question and creating room for good arguments. Many candidates were able to correctly discuss both the themes of Martin Carter's poetry as well as features of his poetic craft (symbolism, imagery, metaphor and tone), while at the same time engaging with the question of whether there is a sense of hopelessness in his poetry.

Question 6

Many candidates seized upon the general nature of this question and used whatever they had prepared to respond satisfactorily to the question. By focusing on aspects of poetic language such as tone, symbolism, diction, imagery, oxymoron, repetition, puns, motifs and exaggeration, many were able to discuss the significant themes of Carter's poetry. This question that required candidates to discuss the relationship between Carter's poetic craft and his exploration of various social issues was fairly well done.

Module 3 – Prose Fiction

Question 7

Good performance was seen in the responses to this question that required candidates to evaluate the centrality of plot development to a story. Candidates demonstrated correct knowledge of terms such as “conflict” and “resolution” and could connect elements of plot to other features of the genre. While many candidates chose *The Sun Also Rises* for this question, *The Power and the Glory* was used more effectively to engage the issue of narrative resolution. However, not all candidates responded to the question of what is at the heart of a work of fiction. Responding to this part of the question would have allowed many candidates to express their informed personal response of what they see as the significant core of works of fiction. How central is “conflict and resolution” to fiction? The more sophisticated responses engaged with the other narrative techniques of characterization, motifs, setting and symbolism as significant features of these narratives.

Question 8

While this question was satisfactorily done, on the whole, many candidates concentrated more on the writers’ use of symbolism in general rather than on the symbolism of the title. Not many candidates could discuss the link between the titles of these works of fiction and the other generic features of the novels. This would therefore compromise their performance in the area of knowledge. Also, the opportunities for more refined arguments are often avoided by most candidates and this suggests that they need more practice in developing their own informed responses to literature and in building confidence in making judgements on artistic expression.

Paper 03 – Internal Assessment for Units 1 and 2

The performance on the Internal Assessments this year was similar to last year’s. The samples show evidence that candidates are enjoying these activities that provide room for their critical judgement, informed personal response and creativity. It was apparent from the submissions that candidates enjoyed the assignments. The art pieces of specific scenes were well done and the dramatic adaptation, through live performance, was also well done. However, the explanatory texts did not always provide the evaluative dimension required to score high marks. This explanation should provide reasons for artistic choice of the director and the dramatic effectiveness of such choices or an evaluation of the performance. In this discussion, evidence of knowledge of generic features would be crucial for scoring high marks. Too many candidates can only list features without sufficient analysis of their effective deployment in the piece of art. However, sometimes the problem was related to the passage selected that was often too short and without sufficient evidence of features of the genre to generate full responses. A careful selection of appropriate passages for an activity like this one will help students in their close-reading skill, so necessary for Paper 01. Also, teachers need to be careful that the assignments set are able to fulfill the objectives of the syllabus. Topics chosen must allow for the exploration of the themes and stylistic features of each genre. Length, complexity and appropriateness in light of syllabus objectives must be considered. Teachers need to continue to be vigilant about plagiarism but should always provide the evidence and explanation when such an example is included in the sample. Candidates must be reminded of the word limit of 1500-2000 words.

In some cases of the critical responses to a review, excellent review articles of appropriate length and quality were selected that provided candidates with the opportunity to offer reasoned arguments and informed personal responses. Candidates were able to find room to agree and disagree with different aspects of these articles, using textual evidence to support their claims. The weaker responses tended to merely summarize the critical essay/review without any evaluation of the critic’s argument or any reference to the characteristics and features of the genre. Other responses sometimes lost focus on evaluating the essay and began discussing the poems studied, but not as a means to challenge or support the critic’s ideas. Some candidates still seem to have difficulty in offering “informed” opinions on these critical essays. Students should be encouraged to identify the source of the review.

Some schools/teachers are not paying enough attention to the requirements of the syllabus. Here are a few reminders:

1. The syllabus stipulates the use of “prescribed” texts for assignments.
2. It is the detailed commentary (of 1500-2000 words) that is marked out of 48 not the reinterpretation or other creative pieces.
3. Teachers should ensure that if students are given the highest marks in each category their assignments are excellent in nature.
4. Some teachers are not adhering to the stipulation of sending 5 samples. Some send two or three even when they have 8 or 15 candidates doing the examination. Some send in 2 of 3 even though the rules say all should be submitted if there are fewer than 5 candidates.