

**2002 HSC Notes from  
the Marking Centre  
English Extension 1**

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Published by Board of Studies NSW  
GPO Box 5300  
Sydney 2001  
Australia

Tel: (02) 9367 8111

Fax: (02) 9367 8484

Internet: <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

ISBN 174099 574 0

200378

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# 2002 HSC NOTES FROM THE MARKING CENTRE

## ENGLISH EXTENSION 1

### Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 course in English Extension 1. It provides comments with regard to responses to the 2002 Higher School Certificate Examination, indicating the quality of candidate responses and highlighting the relative strengths and weaknesses of the candidature in each section and each question.

It is essential for this document to be read in conjunction with the relevant syllabus, the 2002 Higher School Certificate Examination, the Marking Guidelines and other support documents which have been developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of English Extension 1.

### General Comments

In 2002, approximately 4225 candidates attempted the Extension 1 English examination.

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners may ask questions that address the syllabus outcomes in a manner that requires candidates to respond by integrating their knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying the course. This reflects the fact that the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through the study of discrete sections should accumulate to a more comprehensive understanding than may be described in each section separately.

The following Module and Elective breakdown shows the pattern and preferences for study:

- Module A had 2009 candidates of which the vast majority of 1635 responded to the ‘Crime Fiction’ elective. This was by far the most popular elective over the whole paper and represented approximately one third of the total Extension 1 candidature. 317 candidates studied ‘Revenge Tragedy’, while only 57 studied ‘The Essay’. This breakdown was similar to last year’s figures.
- Module B had 2022 candidates and therefore was similar in popularity to Module A but the breakdown between electives differed here. ‘The Individual and Society’ elective had 1137 candidates, while ‘Postmodernism’ had 659 respondents and ‘Retreat From the Global’ attracted 266.
- Module C again had an extremely small candidature of 194. Only 11 candidates responded to ‘Acts of Reading and Writing’, 30 candidates did ‘The Language of Sport’ while the remaining 153 candidates did ‘Gendered Language’.

Individual critical response questions for each of the electives in the paper allowed candidates to concentrate on meaningful aspects of their respective elective while the generic questions encouraged candidates’ creativity and imaginative responses.

Markers found that most candidates wrote well structured and detailed responses. The majority of candidates were well equipped to answer the questions and the vast majority of candidates understood what was required of them in their responses. Overall, the markers commented on the high standard of the candidates' responses and their seeming enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, the elective they had studied. There was concern though that a number of candidates were clearly struggling to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding at an appropriate standard for this demanding course.

The average length for the compulsory generic questions was approximately 8 pages, with a significant number of candidates often using a second booklet. For the individual elective questions that required a critical response most candidates wrote a minimum of 8 pages, usually extending into a second, or at times, third booklet. This year markers noted an improvement in candidates' time management in the examination with very few candidates running out of time for their second response. Only on rare occasions did candidates resort to using dot points or submit a rushed or incomplete response.

Markers felt this year's examination had a high degree of parity of questions across the modules as well as within the modules. Markers also felt that the instructions on the examination paper were clear, consistent and adequately repeated throughout the paper. Despite these clear instructions, however, there was a noticeable increase this year in the number of candidates who decided to answer a question outside of the module they had studied. These candidates did not satisfy the requirements of the examination.

In all these cases the candidates answered the correct specific question for their elective, ie the individual critical response question, but chose to answer a compulsory generic question from another module. Teachers need to carefully advise their candidates on the structure of the examination and its requirements. While the candidates may be very aware of the actual elective they have studied perhaps in an exam situation they became confused as they may have been unaware of the other modules offered for study. Consequently when they saw, for example, a generic question on 'genre', 'ways of thinking' or 'language and values' they may not have recognised that these are directly referring to other modules, and not just other aspects of the study of English, and that they should not have been responding to them. These 'illegal' scripts were, however, not discounted at the marking centre; they were marked by the Senior Markers according to the marking guidelines for the actual question the candidates responded to. However, these candidates clearly found it difficult to fully demonstrate their knowledge of the appropriate elective, which they had not studied, or meet all the marking guidelines for the question as they invariably wrote 'within or about' the wrong genre (question 1), wrote from the perspective of a character from a text from the wrong elective (question 5) or could not identify clearly examples from the electives in Module C for their debate (question 9).

Some notable trends became evident at the marking centre with respect to the candidates' selection of texts of their 'own choosing' required in the specific elective critical response questions, and this caused considerable concern for the markers. It was very evident to the markers of these questions that many good candidates limited the scope of their response by restricting their answers to include only one other text of their 'own choosing'. Candidates needed to show that they had investigated their elective thoroughly, read widely and immersed themselves in their elective throughout the year. Markers were looking for scripts that could structure a sophisticated and complex argument and candidates needed to show their extensive knowledge and informed opinion and interpretation. The better responses made careful and pertinent selections of texts of their 'own choosing' and usually referred to at least two other texts to support their personal responses. Markers advise

teachers to ensure their candidates have a range of texts they can choose from in order to present a complex and detailed analysis of their elective, relevant to the specifics of the question asked. Candidates should be discouraged from having only one ‘other text’ to refer to and use irrespective of the specific focus of the question.

The selection of texts of their ‘own choosing’ also became a discriminating factor in the marking. It was evident in the more sophisticated responses that candidates had individually and carefully selected ‘other texts’ that would develop their argument in an effective manner. These responses displayed diversity and a certain freshness in their originality and a personal engagement with the elective. Unfortunately, many candidates chose texts that had very tenuous or dubious connections to their elective, its rubric and the focus of the question, thus limiting their ability to support the requisite sophisticated and detailed response by way of their selected material. Other texts referred to may have been loosely relevant but were in cases not complex or substantial enough to support demonstration of a close and critical study of the relevant electives. Weaker responses also tended to treat ‘other texts’ superficially, relying on fleeting references to a text, or just a casual mention of a title or author, in support of their argument.

Markers also noted that in some individual centres candidates all used identical material, drawing on the same ‘other texts’ in a formulaic manner. While each response is assessed individually markers clearly believed that the practice of whole classes using the same ‘other texts’ in the exam proved to be a great disservice to many candidates at this level of study as it prevented them from engaging in independent reading/viewing that could have enhanced the sophistication of their responses. Too often when candidates used the same ‘other texts’ they also had similar perceptions about the texts and regurgitated very generalised ‘dominant’ readings of them. This limited the candidates’ personal engagement with the texts and their responses lacked critical insight. Candidates were unable to provide informed personal responses to these texts or engage with them perceptively on an individual level. This was apparent as they often confused or had difficulty articulating their interpretation of these texts and struggled to relate them effectively to the rubric or question. Markers could not comment emphatically enough on the need for candidates in Extension 1 English to find their own ‘other texts’.

Markers were also concerned at the trend in some centres for candidates to refer to two prescribed texts and then use the other texts prescribed for their elective as texts of their ‘own choosing’. Most markers expressed their preference not to see this practice encouraged as it limited many otherwise good responses. In all electives the stronger responses came from those candidates who had engaged in their own research, investigation and wide reading and took ‘ownership’ of their elective, often evidenced by the personal tone and individual voice they used to articulate their response and interpretation of texts and electives. Markers felt this should again be emphasised and encouraged by teachers to their individual candidates.

Many of the questions on the examination paper included a stimulus statement (questions 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12) but a number of these (questions 2, 3, 4, 7, 10) did not absolutely require candidates to consider or respond in detail to the statement and this led to difficulties. Responses to such questions fell into three categories: those which embraced the statement, those which dismissed it, and those which ignored it. The wording allowed all three approaches. An unexpected issue is more challenging than the familiar, and many candidates will, understandably, avoid it if they can. Candidates who fell back on rote discussions, ignoring the possibilities in the question, tended to produce a plethora of worthy but dull responses, and it became difficult to distinguish between them. In the likelihood of such questions appearing in a future examination, markers feel candidates would be well advised to discuss thoroughly the issue or concept raised in the stimulus

statement. This may be more difficult than, as many candidates did, ignoring it completely and falling back on familiar, practised material, but it is a better approach for two reasons: firstly, the stimulus statements raise central issues which will sustain a complex discussion and, secondly, to do so is evidence of an agile, perceptive mind and a sense of intellectual curiosity, and these qualities tended to raise the candidates who engaged with the stimulus statement above the average and ordinary responses.

Markers noted the following strengths of the candidates overall:

- sound knowledge and understanding of the texts and their relationship to the module and elective rubrics; a good grasp of the focus and concepts implicit in the rubrics and echoed in the texts
- a variety of individual responses to texts; high level of engagement with texts
- obvious enjoyment of the texts and enthusiasm for their experiences in this course
- high standard of writing and literacy skills; clarity of expression; sophisticated structure of responses incorporating complexity and depth of ideas; well integrated textual references and quotes in support of arguments; sophisticated understanding and knowledge of appropriate conventions of form and styles required
- clear sense of candidate's own voice and individual response; 'ownership' of their work evident
- original and perceptive interpretations of texts and concepts; a strong awareness of context and values
- solid understanding of literary theory and historical background where relevant
- thorough and extensive independent investigation and wide reading/viewing evident
- insightful awareness and discussion of 'how' ideas, concepts and meaning are shaped in texts.

Markers noted the following weaknesses of some of the candidates:

- failure to engage with all aspects of a particular question; tendency to ignore specific focus of the question; no sense of a cohesive response to a specific question
- use of prepared, rote-learned or 'cloned' responses; poor adaptation of memorised responses to fit the specific question; mechanical reliance on prepared material
- difficulties with overall conceptualisation and expression of a coherent argument
- tendency to summarise and describe rather than analyse and interpret; some storytelling evident; neglect to show detailed and specific knowledge of the set texts
- problems with written expression, organisation of ideas and structure of responses
- misinterpretation or poor understanding of the rubrics and their relation to the texts studied; sense of having studied single texts rather than texts within an elective/module
- issues raised but not developed; poor integration or use of evidence in support
- lack of independent thinking or reflection about elective studied
- poor understanding of how meaning is shaped; inability to integrate analysis of a composer's techniques with analysis of ideas



## Comments On Specific Modules and Questions

### Module A: Genre

#### Compulsory Question 1

As so few candidates attempted the essay it is difficult to discern any real trends in their responses. The majority of candidates however had little trouble reworking the argument of one of the essays they had studied.

Question 1 elicited some highly imaginative and sophisticated responses from the candidates, particularly so in the crime fiction and revenge tragedy genres. Most candidates were able to write a sustained response and were advantaged by the free choice of style or form in the question.

Most candidates chose to write ‘within’ the genre. Candidates who had studied the essay genre found it very difficult to write ‘within’ the genre and provide a more ‘imaginative’ response, opting instead to write ‘about’ the genre, replicating in the majority of cases what seemed to be a planned essay response.

The overwhelming strength of the candidates was the fact that they had such an extensive grasp of the Module (and the three electives contained therein) and were able to demonstrate this through applying the insights, knowledge and skills they have acquired throughout the year in an ‘imaginative’ format. Candidates who wrote imaginatively (the majority) gave themselves the opportunity to demonstrate a deeper knowledge of the genre by employing its conventions in their own creative process.

A discriminating factor in the marking was how effectively candidates used the opening statement, ‘Sometimes the best weapon is. . .’ provided in the question. The better responses used this stimulus conceptually to structure and organise their response, integrating it coherently throughout their piece of writing, while the weaker responses tended to just write it at the beginning of their response without considering its implications or ideas in any way eg, what is a weapon, and against what is it to be used. These candidates didn’t attempt to embed it in any way in their responses which often appeared to be ‘prepared’ imaginative responses. Candidates presenting ‘prepared’ responses found it difficult to write successfully for, in nearly all cases, the use of the opening provided was, at best, spurious. Some candidates did not use the opening provided and therefore did not score well in this section.

Chosen forms were numerous and varied. This was pleasing but where possible candidates should choose a form/media that they have expertise in. Most candidates selected an appropriate form to write in (eg narrative, film script, letters, or an oral text) but others limited their response by writing in a form that by its own conventions did not allow them to truly demonstrate their extensive knowledge of a genre (eg a letter to the editor). Some candidates also gave long and unnecessarily detailed introductions to set the scene or context. Diary entries and fairy tales were not used effectively and markers advise these forms should be avoided as they provide a limited scope for candidates to truly demonstrate their detailed knowledge and understanding of a genre, especially under exam conditions.

Candidates who tried to concentrate on sub-categories of the crime fiction genre found it particularly difficult to show the ideas of the genre. For example some candidates who used an

excessive amount of gore in their compositions, which may be consistent with some elements of crime fiction’s hybrids, did not allow them the scope to show an overall insight into the elective.

Strengths of candidates answering Question 1:

- the integrated and effective use of the opening provided in a sustained response
- the sense of fun that candidates had in subverting, appropriating and turning a genre on its head. This was often done through satire and humour
- demonstrated extensive knowledge and understanding of the ideas, values and conventions of each respective genre
- the use of experimental writing in composing for such ‘predictable’ genres, giving their responses freshness, flair and originality
- effective control of own language and writing
- selection of an appropriate form to write in
- ability to sustain the selected form while demonstrating their knowledge of the genre studied
- impressive length of responses
- compositions that assumed the ‘hard boiled’ voice persona were particularly effective
- the successful use of female personas and the voice of marginalised groups as the voice of the detective
- credible, and creditable, use of dialogue to further the narrative

Weaker responses to Question 1:

- failed to give their narrative an appropriate ending or conclusion, often leaving the reader ‘hanging’
- lacked sufficient planning and structure of ideas
- relied heavily on contemporary police television drama and feature films; often these were mere retellings or appropriations with little regard for effectiveness or originality
- used the opening stimulus ineffectively; writing ‘about’ the genre limited some candidates who chose that option as they could not construct a highly focussed thesis which incorporated the opening to be used
- introduced their ‘best weapon’ and then proceeded to abandon it, in favour of outlining the conventions and ideas of their particular genre
- used a profusion of dialogue as a way of fast forwarding the narrative exposition with little consideration as to how dialogue can be used to capture a particular voice or perspective and thereby indicate the values of the genre, which was one of the marking criteria
- had no trouble demonstrating their knowledge of the ideas and conventions of the genre, but the inscription of ideology (values) remained problematic for many candidates
- writing within the essay genre was often descriptive rather than analytical of the genre and its relationship with culture and context
- writing within the revenge tragedy genre in a modern context often merely retold recent newsworthy human interest stories (eg 11 September, Bali, Tampa Crisis, Afghanistan). These responses tended to become simple recounts which precluded candidates from showing their insights into the ideas and values and conventions of the ‘revenge tragedy’ genre. Whilst the outcome for respective characters within these compositions could be described as tragic, this does not automatically imbue these ‘tales’ with the ideals, characteristics and values of ‘revenge tragedy’
- were unable to allow their composition to speak for itself and included a little explanation, often giving a sense of a previous task which detracted from the formulation of a sustained piece of writing emanating from the stimulus provided

- focused almost exclusively on events and character but often without creating a sense of space and time. This was clearly evident when a specific setting was used (Paris, NY, LA) without any sense of authenticity being made clear to the markers
- contained a lot of technical difficulties (of syntax, spelling, punctuation, paragraphing); this prevented the candidates from displaying a highly developed control of language or any level of sophisticated writing.

### **Specific questions on electives, Questions 2, 3 and 4**

The questions on the specific electives provided candidates with a stimulus statement from which they could draw ideas and considerations, as well as a direct question inviting a more personal response and reflection on the genre they had studied. The better candidates tended to directly address the stimulus statement and synthesise their reflection on it coherently throughout their response. This became a clear discriminator in the marking as those candidates who engaged with the notions contained in the stimulus statement as well as the question's focus tended to sustain a more in-depth and complex argument. Markers strongly advised that for such questions in future examinations candidates should always acknowledge the stimulus material provided.

Disappointingly this year, for these critical response, or 'essay' type questions, there was evidence of a growing trend for whole centres to churn out the same 'prepared' response, and to use exactly the same related texts, interpretations, arguments and quotations. This is of concern to markers as such responses were often limited in scope and confused in their thinking and insights given into the genre studied. The planned, pre-prepared, rote-learned responses tended to remain in the C range of marks as candidates struggled to adapt them cogently to the specific question asked. It became evident to the markers that the candidates who composed synthesised, fresh responses to the specific question asked, drawing on their own choice of material, were invariably the better and more sophisticated responses.

Markers also felt that the selection of appropriate related texts was a discriminating factor. Some choices were poor or simply inappropriate and were not sufficiently substantial to allow candidates to write beyond the superficial.

#### **Revenge Tragedy:**

The better candidates for this question were able to pull together the many strands of their elective and genre: a discussion of revenge, the development of the tragedy component of the genre, context, values and features of the genre. Markers were impressed with the quality of the A – B range scripts, with the discriminating factors tending to be the depth of discussion and breadth of argument, less focus on values in the B-range and how effectively candidates engaged with the stimulus statement. A-range scripts included appropriate, original choice of own texts which were effectively analysed and integrated into the discussion. C-range scripts were predictable, often prepared responses, which candidates manipulated to fit the question and were consequently more limited in scope.

#### **Crime Fiction:**

As with Revenge Tragedy, the A-B range scripts in Crime Fiction were sophisticated responses, referring to a range of elements and aspects of the genre. These scripts also tended to address the aspect of crime fiction's 'teasing-out of order from disorder' as a crucial element of its appeal and popularity. C-range scripts tended to take a very chronological approach and struggled to present a complex or sophisticated argument, with many discussions simplistically equating the popularity of a specific text with the 'enduring popularity of crime fiction'. The average scripts spent too much

time on context at the expense of answering the question. For example, *The Hayes Code* and *The Big Sleep* as a ‘star vehicle’ for Bogart and Bacall were given too much time and space in the critical responses. Indeed, many candidates wrote in great depth about the romance element of the film at the expense of any discussion of crime fiction, film noir etc. Candidates who focused on context often did so at the expense of textual detail. Candidates needed to demonstrate a sound knowledge of the conventions and techniques in the texts, not just context.

#### The Essay:

‘The Essay’ as an elective seems to be more manageable, with clearly defined conventions and clear arguments being presented in each of the set texts. Although this elective does not have a large candidature, and so it is difficult to note trends, many of the responses to this question were somewhat ‘tradesmanlike’, reflecting what appeared to be a fairly methodical and conservative approach to the study of this genre. The candidates’ selection of other texts also reflected fairly traditional forms and examples of the essay and markers felt candidates needed to be encouraged to consider and investigate more broadly the newer adaptations and more contemporary forms of the essay, in a range of mediums.

#### Strengths of candidates answering Questions 2, 3 and 4:

- knowledge of genre, its defining characteristics and genre theory
- sound and detailed knowledge of the conventions of the specific genre studied, and the ideas and values associated with the genre
- solid understanding of the history and evolution of the genre and its subversions, adaptations
- ability to compose detailed, comprehensive responses that cited clear textual references in support of arguments and integrated elements of the question
- ability to synthesise material with sophistication; ability to discuss a range of texts in an integrated manner
- awareness of ‘how’ meaning is shaped in texts and ability to discuss features of texts
- appropriate selection and effective use of texts of ‘own choosing’ to demonstrate their complex knowledge and understanding of the genre; originality in text selection and relevance to discussion of genre
- sound control of language and length of responses
- ability to engage with the specifics of the question, including the stimulus statement provided

#### Weaker responses to Questions 2, 3 and 4:

- lacked sophisticated expression and complexity of thought; were poorly structured
- didn’t engage with requirements of the question or had difficulty synthesising all the parts; ignored the stimulus statement
- tried to adapt prepared answers to fit the question; regurgitated prepared answers thereby failing to respond to unique elements of the examination question
- had less control of their own language and written expression
- found it difficult to conceptualise genre and text detail beyond the superficial
- used fleeting references to other texts rather than substantial analysis or other texts selected were irrelevant
- listed conventions of the genre with an example; described conventions rather than analysed them or just gave a chronological overview

## Module B: Texts and Ways of Thinking

### Compulsory Question 5

This question was well worded and unambiguous. The invitation to be ‘imaginative’ was commendable but led some candidates, particularly those who had studied Postmodernism, to create responses which not only lacked a credible character perspective but also overlooked the instruction to address the ways of thinking from their elective.

The selection of the character was crucial in this question as some candidates were restricted by their choice. A candidate’s selection of the character whose perspective they would convey had bearing on the quality of the response. It was difficult to sustain the narrative voice of one of the Kerrigan’s from *The Castle* for instance, while at the same time addressing the ‘Retreat From the Global’ rubric in any depth. Markers advised that candidates need to be aware that despite the appeal of Langton’s *Pride and Prejudice* and Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, for the Individual and Society elective, for example, James’ *Portrait of a Lady* or Gaskell’s *North and South* arguably provided more opportunity to analyse appropriate ways of thinking through one of their characters; character studies of Nora did not.

Candidates needed to come to the examination prepared to discuss or make reference to any of their texts. Some candidates also selected a character from an additional text, and not from a ‘prescribed’ text as the question instructed. Candidates need to be clearly aware of the parameters of the course and the terminology defining them. This may also account for the fact that many of the ‘illegal’ scripts responded to Question 5, using a character from the prescribed texts set for either Module A or Module C.

It was pleasing this year to see the increased number of candidates presenting for the Extension 1 course and examination, but at the same time, it was disturbing to see that some candidates appeared to lack the necessary skills to deal successfully with this question which required them to convey the perspective of a character, select a suitable form, address appropriate ways of thinking, deal with the compulsory ‘Who says your way is right?’ beginning, be imaginative and use language effectively. Markers advise schools to ensure that candidates are fully aware of the demands of this course and the standards candidates will need to achieve to do well.

The better candidates dealt well with the complex demands this question made. The A- B range responses exhibited remarkable skill in selecting a suitable character perspective and form of writing, while integrating the idea established in the beginning statement throughout the response, often with reference to philosophical or critical works. They were also able to construct an imaginative response which demonstrated fine control of the resources of language under examination conditions.

Only a few candidates could do all of this at a sophisticated level, but most managed it to a commendable degree. Unfortunately many candidates approached the examination with pre-prepared responses which did not adapt easily to the specific question on the paper. Some of these were ‘creative writing’ pieces with little or no reference to the paradigms.

It is also unfortunate that some candidates who had written responses to the corresponding 2001 question during the course of their study felt they could use this response, with superficial cosmetic changes, to answer a different question in 2002.

The best responses from candidates who chose to answer using Browning or Heaney for their textual reference were among the most competent overall and certainly the most imaginative; however, once again reference to the appropriate ways of thinking was sometimes scant. Less competent responses using ‘Tollund Man’ or ‘Punishment’ for a character perspective indicated that in some cases Heaney study might have been approached as text study only – an approach which can overlook context and the rubric. It was, though, interesting to see some particularly able candidates who had studied the ‘Retreat From the Global’ elective using some of the insights of postmodern thinkers and writers to address their own rubric.

Candidates need to be warned that length is not necessarily synonymous with quality; 8-10 pages of carefully constructed and written pages are far more productive than 20-24 pages heavy with repetitive rambling.

In contrast to the 2001 candidature, a number of the poorer responses this year were produced by candidates who had studied the ‘Postmodernism’ elective. Some of these had interpreted the paradigm to mean ‘anything goes’ and the result was an often disastrous pastiche of intrusive authors, gender changing, shrieking abuse, self-reflexivity, grand and minor narratives, multiple endings and a truly remarkable series of visitations by celebrated representatives of popular culture. It is recognised that it is not easy to write a postmodern text under examination conditions; however any text, postmodern or otherwise, needs to have enough coherence to be followed by a well-intentioned reader familiar with the genre.

Markers were also not impressed to see many candidates presenting for Extension 1 who misspelled the names of characters from their texts, the names of authors on whose work they are drawing, or the names of philosophical movements.

Strengths of candidates answering Question 5:

- selection of an appropriate character
- sound insights into character and dynamics of personality and their perspective
- ability to render and sustain the voice and perspective of the character
- demonstrated sophisticated understanding of ways of thinking and relevant paradigms
- integration of character’s perspective and exploration of ways of thinking
- sound knowledge of the individual text studied reflected through character’s perspective
- sophisticated control of language and use of appropriate conventions for form they wrote in.

Weaker responses to Questions 5, 6 and 7:

- failed to provide detailed textual references to establish and enhance their character’s perspective
- did not use the opening provided or struggled to cohesively integrate it into their response
- tended to present pre-prepared or planned responses with superficial attempts to adapt it to the specific question
- had a poor understanding of how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts
- showed a superficial knowledge of texts and characters
- lapsed into recount; some storytelling
- were marred by language flaws and spelling errors; showed lack of control in the use of language.

### Specific questions on electives, Questions 6, 7 and 8

These questions were sufficiently straightforward to allow candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the rubric and of their elective. The wording of the questions was clear and unambiguous.

Most candidates met the requirements of the questions in terms of texts to be discussed. However despite evidence of a strong contextual understanding of how concepts and ways of thinking are expressed in texts, far too many candidates referred to only one text of their own choosing and others used another prescribed text (beyond the two prescribed texts stipulated in the question) as their only text of own choosing. In the majority of instances this practice tended to limit the scope of the candidate's response and prevented many from giving an individual or insightful response to the question. Others sometimes chose inappropriate texts eg *Mansfield Park* as a postmodern text and *Anna's Story* as a text for the elective 'Individual and Society', which particularly explores 19<sup>th</sup> century ways of thinking. At times such aberrations were particularly prevalent in whole centres.

The discussion and explanation of techniques was an important requirement for each question. While not explicitly stated in the questions, it is clear in the examination rubric and candidates need to be advised to pay close attention to the dot points in the rubric as well as the specifics in the questions. Consequently many candidates failed to give techniques adequate attention or focus in their analysis of texts and how ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts. Even candidates who did discuss techniques often did so as an addendum to the discussion of concepts and could not effectively integrate how composers used techniques to present ideas and shape meaning.

Candidates were clearly more successful when discussing ideas. Weaker responses, however, tended to provide a low level, or superficial level, of textual analysis. At times these responses were more descriptive than analytical, relying on recount or retelling of the story to present their argument. Candidates often did not demonstrate an understanding of the overriding paradigms or concepts behind the ideas. In other cases, some candidates engaged in marginally relevant historical contextualising without directly addressing the specifics of the question.

In this section of the examination, which required a more straightforward critical response, many candidates still felt they could just use a pre-prepared 'essay' and make minor adjustments to it to fit the specific question. In the majority of cases this kept candidates in the C-range as they failed to engage fully with the complexities of the question and elective studied.

The Individual and Society:

This was by far the most popular elective in this module.

Those candidates attempting 'The Individual and Society' question were able to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of how 'we still respond to the experience of the individual then'. The selection of texts of their own choosing was a discriminating factor in this question. Again this year, many candidates used related texts that were either not composed in the specific historical period or could not be appropriately linked to the historical period. While some contemporary texts may be appropriate, such as Carey's *Oscar and Lucinda*, candidates must show how they directly relate to the ways of thinking of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in the texts. Candidates who use contemporary texts which merely provide a perspective of an individual and society are doing themselves a disservice unless they can clearly show how the selected text demonstrates the focus for study in this elective and the designated historical period.

#### Postmodernism:

Markers noted that many of the weaker responses to this question tended to rely heavily on quoting critics and regurgitating some sort of treatise on the theory of postmodernism without making any attempt to adapt their knowledge to the specifics of the question or consider the ‘interest’ factor. The better responses showed a complex and sophisticated understanding of postmodernism and were able to provide a strong personal response that reflected their engagement with the course and their study of postmodernism. The weakest responses indicated that these candidates were struggling with the very basic concepts underpinning postmodernist theory and were confused and inarticulate in their discussion of it.

#### Retreat From the Global:

This was the least popular elective in the module and the rubric still seems to be causing some confusion and difficulties for candidates. Again this year weaker responses tended to oversimplify the relationship between the local and the global, with many candidates still considering this elective only in terms of ‘global - bad’ and ‘local - good’. Many candidates also had difficulty coming to terms with the notion of ‘sentimentally’ contained in the stimulus statement of the question and chose to ignore it completely or tended to misinterpret it. The selection of texts of their own choosing was also a discriminating factor in this question. A number of candidates chose to use, for example, brief magazine or newspaper articles, items retrieved from the internet or other texts which were often not complex or substantial enough to develop a strong argument or effectively discuss the composer’s techniques.

#### Strengths of candidates answering Questions 6, 7 and 8:

- strong understanding of the theoretical principles underlining the various elective statements and rubrics, especially postmodernism
- extensive knowledge of the context/text relationship
- able to deal with more sophisticated concepts
- appropriate selection and effective use of texts of own choosing
- ability to write lengthy, well structured and sustained responses
- presentation of sophisticated arguments with substantial evidence
- engaged with the stimulus statement and specifics of the question
- close analysis of texts and how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts
- clear understanding of composer’s techniques
- high literacy levels and sophisticated control of language.

#### Weaker responses to Questions 6, 7 and 8:

- included inappropriate, unsuitable or irrelevant texts of own choosing
- had difficulty relating their knowledge and understanding of their elective to related texts – tended to treat them separately
- experienced difficulty with structuring an integrated response
- inadequately discussed ‘how’ paradigms are developed in texts; failed to define concepts discussed;
- rarely centred their responses around the context for the elective, the discussion of context was often reductive, focusing on simplistic notions (especially for ‘the individual and society’ and ‘retreat from the global’)



- lacked any discernible argument; made generalisations
- relied on storytelling and recounting of plot or narrow text study without connection to context or the specifics of the question
- had difficulty adapting comments to the specific question, often relying on planned, prepared responses.

## **Module C: Language and Values**

### **Compulsory Question 9**

This was the least ‘popular’ Module and was attempted by only 194 candidates in total. Consequently it is difficult to discern a lot of trends in the candidates’ responses but the comments below are a reflection of the markers’ overall impressions.

Candidates generally did not take the opportunity to be creative with this question. Very few candidates created a persona in order to develop a stimulating debate. Few candidates argued their case in a clear, structured manner and rarely were engaging rhetorical devices used. It would appear from the quality of the responses that candidates were unfamiliar with the conventions of debating, or the possibilities of the form.

It was evident that these candidates also had little understanding of values and even when such an understanding was demonstrated it was rarely supported by close reference to the language which conveyed the values.

In many cases, candidates did little more than re-write their essays in response to this question. Markers were actually able to recognise the repeated responses as in many instances candidates provided exactly the same arguments, texts and examples over two questions. While each script is marked individually it was evident that many candidates in this module were unable to adapt their knowledge and understanding to the appropriate form and specific focus of the question.

The better scripts were able to create a persona, use a range of rhetorical devices and demonstrate an understanding of language and values, using close references to texts. Unfortunately, scripts of this calibre were uncommon.

### **Specific questions on electives, Questions 10, 11 and 12**

Acts of Reading and Writing:

Only 14 candidates attempted this question. The question was very fair and enabled the candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the elective. Candidates clearly enjoyed the theoretical aspects of this elective and were able to write about these with confidence and clarity. They were able to apply theory to the texts studied, particularly to Manguel’s *A History of Reading*, and Calvino’s *If on a winter’s night a traveller*.

This elective clearly enables capable candidates to extend themselves and to engage with ideas. Particular strengths of the candidates of this elective included a highly developed control of language and a sophisticated appreciation of values and how language shapes meaning.

Markers noted that some candidates did not provide sufficiently detailed, specific references to the language of the prescribed texts, that others relied too heavily upon academic articles and ideas, rather than close engagement with the texts or specific textual references.

### The Language of Sport:

Only 30 candidates attempted this question.

Generally, this question was not handled well. The better responses were able to integrate references to the stimulus statement, but the majority of candidates ignored this, often writing what appeared to be pre-prepared responses.

The documentary, *When We Were Kings* tended to be handled quite well. Only a limited number of stories from *The Picador Book of Sports Writing* were referred to. *A Good Walk Spoiled* and *The Games* were not popular texts.

Few candidates were able to deal successfully with the idea of ‘the gap between what sports commentary expresses’ and ‘what sport is meant to value’. Many candidates made sweeping generalisations about the question. The analysis of language tended to lack any degree of sophistication.

Teachers and candidates need to ensure that a clear understanding of the language and values of sport is reached. Evidence of closer textual analysis is essential. It must be stressed that the emphasis of this module is upon language and values.

Few candidates were able to successfully demonstrate their understanding of the elective through detailed analysis of appropriate related texts. In many cases candidates did not have a range of appropriate texts to draw from or refer to. While there is a plethora of sports writers and sports commentators in the mass media, candidates must ensure their selection of other texts are substantial and worthy of close analysis in order to support an argument they wish to make with regard to language and values.

### Gendered Language:

Although this was the most popular elective in this module, a small candidature of only 153 attempted this question. Again the A-range scripts used the stimulus statement to inform their response to the question. The better responses discussed both limitations and possibilities, while the average to weaker responses tended to focus only upon limitations.

Most candidates made extensive references to Tannen, but often confused gender roles with gendered language. Closer reference to the language of the texts is required and a greater understanding of the rubric and focus of the elective would assist candidates to move from discussing stereotypical gender roles and behaviour to a more complex understanding of how language may define gender and values.

*Elizabeth* was handled well by many candidates. This year candidates engaged with the language of film in more detail, and more successfully, and were able to discuss this logically. Candidates need to be encouraged, though, to find and analyse their own scenes, rather than relying heavily upon classroom instruction which was evident in the responses with candidates from many centres using identical shot examples, dialogue references and quotations to support identical arguments and discussion.

*Twelfth Night* was used widely but not very successfully. Little attention was given to detailed analysis of language on the whole with candidates focusing more on the characters, gender behaviour and attitudes and the disguise of gender. Once again there was considerable confusion

between gendered language and gender roles. If this text is to be used successfully teachers must direct their candidates to discuss the use of gendered language and values in much more depth.

Tranter's *Floor of Heaven* was used by only a few candidates.

Some candidates were able to find suitable related texts and discussed the use of gendered language competently but it was clear that many candidates relied heavily on texts that had been distributed and/or studied in the classroom. This practice led to fairly predictable, uninspiring essays that regurgitated predictable interpretations and analysis with candidates demonstrating little original insight into their elective. In many cases this disadvantaged candidates, as they did not always have a strong grasp or knowledge of the intricacies and complexities of their own arguments and textual references cited in support.

Strengths of candidates answering Questions 10, 11 and 12:

- clear understanding of the rubric and focus of the module and specific elective
- ability to demonstrate their understanding of the correlation between language and values
- selected appropriate texts in support of their arguments
- provided close textual analysis with detailed textual references
- ability to compose a sustained response; integrating stimulus statement and question
- synthesis of range of suitable and engaging material
- thoughtful and insightful commentary on language and how it shapes meaning
- highly articulate and demonstrating sophisticated control of language

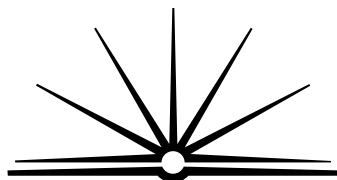
Weaker responses to Questions 9, 10 and 11:

- were more descriptive than analytical in the responses
- demonstrated a limited understanding of the elective and module rubrics, particularly the correlation between language and values; confusion between 'values' and 'valuing'
- lacked depth of analysis; commentary on texts often superficial or generalised discussion; some storytelling and recounting evident
- relied on prepared, planned essays and made clumsy attempts to adapt their material to the specific question
- had problems articulating how language shapes meaning
- selected inappropriate related texts or texts which did not allow them to develop their argument fully
- summarised content or discussed ideas only
- for 'Gendered Language' often a discussion of gender differences and behaviour rather than an analysis of the language

# English Extension 1

## 2002 HSC Examination Mapping Grid

Question	Marks	Content	Syllabus outcomes
<b>Module A: Genre</b>			
1	25	Genre	H1, H2, H3, H4
2	25	Revenge Tragedy	H1, H2, H3, H4
3	25	Crime Fiction	H1, H2, H3, H4
4	25	The Essay	H1, H2, H3, H4
<b>Module B: Texts and Ways of Thinking</b>			
5	25	Texts and Ways of Thinking	H1, H2, H3, H4
6	25	The Individual and Society	H1, H2, H3, H4
7	25	Postmodernism	H1, H2, H3, H4
8	25	Retreat From the Global	H1, H2, H3, H4
<b>Module C: Language and Values</b>			
9	25	Language and Values	H1, H2, H3, H4
10	25	Acts of Reading and Writing	H1, H2, H3, H4
11	25	The Language of Sport	H1, H2, H3, H4
12	25	Gendered Language	H1, H2, H3, H4



**B O A R D O F S T U D I E S**  
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## **2002 HSC English Extension — Module A Marking Guidelines**

## Module A

### Question 1

*Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sophisticated ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the chosen style or form</li><li>Demonstrates with flair and insight the way ideas, values and conventions associated with the prescribed genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity and originality, in a style and form appropriate to the genre, purpose, audience and context, and using the opening provided</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows substantial ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the chosen style or form</li><li>Demonstrates with insight the way ideas, values and conventions associated with the prescribed genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity in a style and form appropriate to the genre, purpose, audience and context, and using the opening provided</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sound ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the chosen style or form</li><li>Demonstrates sound ability to express the way ideas, values and conventions associated with the prescribed genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays competent control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the genre, purpose, audience and context, and using the opening provided</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows some ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the chosen style or form</li><li>Demonstrates some ability to express the way ideas, values and conventions associated with the genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays satisfactory control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the genre, purpose, audience and context</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows limited ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the chosen style or form</li><li>Demonstrates limited ability to express the way ideas, values and conventions associated with the genre can be expressed</li><li>Displays limited control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question, in a style and form which may not be appropriate to the genre, purpose, audience and context</li></ul>	1–5

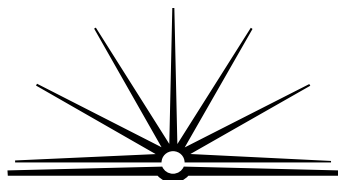
## Module A

### Questions 2, 3, 4

*Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically considers values expressed in chosen texts and the different ways in which the quality of the texts of the genre are influenced by the generic conventions</li> <li>• Shows sophisticated evaluation of the features and conventions and appeal of the genre</li> <li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explores values expressed in chosen texts and the different ways in which the quality of the texts of the genre are influenced by the generic conventions</li> <li>• Shows an advanced ability to evaluate the features and conventions and appeal of the genre</li> <li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows awareness of the values expressed in chosen texts and understands the different ways in which the quality of the texts of the genre can be influenced by the generic conventions</li> <li>• Provides a considered response that attempts to evaluate the features and the conventions and appeal of the genre</li> <li>• Writes an extended composition, displaying competent control of language to express ideas, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledges that texts can be influenced in different ways by their generic conventions</li> <li>• Describes, in what may be an undeveloped response, some of the features and conventions and appeal of the genre</li> <li>• Writes a composition, displaying reasonable control of language to express ideas, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers limited understanding that texts can be influenced in different ways by their generic conventions</li> <li>• Displays limited ability to describe the features and conventions and appeal of the genre, possibly as undeveloped personal opinions</li> <li>• May display some control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question, in an inadequate style</li> </ul>	1–5



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## **2002 HSC English Extension — Module B Marking Guidelines**



## Module B

### Question 5

*Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sophisticated ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating highly developed understanding of ‘ways of thinking’</li><li>Demonstrates with flair and insight the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity and originality, writing from the perspective of a character and using the opening provided</li></ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows substantial ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating skilful understanding of ‘ways of thinking’</li><li>Demonstrates with insight the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity, writing from the perspective of a character and using the opening provided</li></ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows sound ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating competent understanding of ‘ways of thinking’</li><li>Demonstrates sound ability to express the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays competent control of language to express ideas, writing from the perspective of a character and using the opening provided</li></ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows some ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating satisfactory understanding of ‘ways of thinking’</li><li>Demonstrates some ability to express the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in the prescribed texts</li><li>Displays satisfactory control of language to express ideas</li></ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows limited ability to compose a sustained text demonstrating limited understanding of ‘ways of thinking’</li><li>Demonstrates limited ability to express the ways in which ideas have shaped and are reflected in texts</li><li>Displays limited control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question</li></ul>	1–5

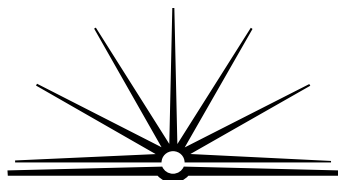
## Module B

### Questions 6, 7, 8

*Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically considers the issues and how effectively these concepts are expressed in the chosen texts</li> <li>• Shows sophisticated appreciation of how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li> <li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explores the issues and explains clearly how effectively these concepts are expressed in the chosen texts</li> <li>• Shows an advanced ability to appreciate how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li> <li>• Sustains an extended composition displaying skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows awareness of the issues and comprehends how these concepts are expressed in the chosen texts</li> <li>• Provides a considered response to how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li> <li>• Writes an extended composition displaying competent control of language to express ideas, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognises some issues and demonstrates a limited comprehension of how these concepts are expressed in the chosen texts</li> <li>• Describes, in what may be an underdeveloped response, how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts</li> <li>• Writes a composition displaying reasonable control of language to express ideas, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers limited understanding of the issues with an elementary awareness of how they are expressed in the chosen texts</li> <li>• Displays limited ability to describe how particular ways of thinking have shaped and are reflected in texts, possibly as undeveloped personal opinions</li> <li>• May display some control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question, in an inadequate style</li> </ul>	1–5



**B O A R D O F S T U D I E S**  
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## **2002 HSC English Extension — Module C Marking Guidelines**

## Module C

### Question 9

*Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows sophisticated ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li> <li>Demonstrates with flair and insight the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li> <li>Displays highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity and originality appropriate to the purpose</li> </ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows substantial ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li> <li>Demonstrates with insight the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li> <li>Displays skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity appropriate to the purpose</li> </ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows sound ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li> <li>Demonstrates sound ability to express the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li> <li>Displays competent control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose</li> </ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows some ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li> <li>Demonstrates some ability to express the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li> <li>Displays satisfactory control of language to express ideas in a style and form appropriate to the purpose</li> </ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows limited ability to compose a sustained text consistent with the conventions of the nominated style or form</li> <li>Demonstrates limited ability to express the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values as understood from the prescribed electives in Module C</li> <li>Displays limited control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question, in a style and form which may not be appropriate to the purpose</li> </ul>	1–5

## Module C

### Questions 10, 11, 12

*Outcomes assessed: H1, H2, H3, H4*

#### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically considers the issues in the proposition and critically explores and evaluates the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in chosen texts</li> <li>• Shows sophisticated appreciation of values and the processes of valuing inherent in language</li> <li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying highly developed control of language to express complex ideas with clarity, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	21–25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explores the issues in the proposition and evaluates the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in chosen texts</li> <li>• Shows an advanced appreciation of values and the processes of valuing inherent in language</li> <li>• Sustains an extended composition, displaying skilful control of language to express complex ideas with clarity, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	16–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows awareness of the issues in the proposition and understands the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in chosen texts</li> <li>• Provides a considered response that attempts to show the values and the processes of valuing inherent in language</li> <li>• Writes an extended composition, displaying competent control of language to express ideas, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	11–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognises the issues in the proposition and acknowledges the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in chosen texts</li> <li>• Describes, in what may be an underdeveloped response, some of the ways in which values and the processes of valuing are inherent in language</li> <li>• Writes a composition, displaying reasonable control of language to express ideas, in an appropriate style</li> </ul>	6–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers limited understanding of the issues in the proposition and of the ways in which language shapes and reflects culture and values in chosen texts</li> <li>• Displays limited ability to describe ways in which values and the processes of valuing are inherent in language, possibly as undeveloped personal opinions</li> <li>• May display some control of language to express ideas that may have limited relevance to the question, in an inadequate style</li> </ul>	1–5