Literature marking guide and response

External assessment 2023

Assessment objectives

This assessment instrument is used to determine student achievement in the following objectives:

1. use patterns and conventions of an analytical essay to respond to an unseen question/task

2. establish and maintain the role of essay writer and relationships with audiences

3. analyse perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places in a literary text

4. analyse the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpin a literary text and invite audiences to take up positions

5. analyse the effects of aesthetic features and stylistic devices in a literary text

6. select and synthesise subject matter to support perspectives in an essay response to an unseen question/task

7. organise and sequence subject matter to achieve particular purposes

8. use cohesive devices to emphasise ideas and connect parts of an essay

9. make language choices for particular purposes in an essay

10. use grammar and language structures for particular purposes in an essay

11. use written features to achieve particular purposes in an essay.

Purpose

This document consists of a marking guide and a sample response.

The marking guide:

- provides a tool for calibrating external assessment markers to ensure reliability of results
- indicates the correlation, for each question, between mark allocation and qualities at each level of the mark range
- informs schools and students about how marks are matched to qualities in student responses.

The sample response:

- demonstrates the qualities of a high-level response
- has been annotated using the marking guide.

Mark allocation

Where a response does not meet any of the descriptors for a question or a criterion, a mark of '0' will be recorded.

Where no response to a question has been made, a mark of 'N' will be recorded.

Marking guide

Section 1: Extended response

Criterion: Knowledge application

The response, for analysis of perspectives and representations:	M	The response, for analysis of the ways ideas underpin the literary text:	M	The response, for analysis of the writer's choices:	M
• examines relevant perspective/s or representations in the text • provides an authoritative interpretation of these perspective/s or representations	6	• examines how the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs • provides an authoritative interpretation of these cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs	6	• examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text • provides an authoritative interpretation of these stylistic or aesthetic choices	6
• examines relevant perspective/s or representations in the text • provides a purposeful interpretation of these perspective/s or representations	5	• examines how the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs • provides a purposeful interpretation of these cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs	5	• examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text • provides a purposeful interpretation of these stylistic or aesthetic choices	5
• examines relevant perspective/s or representations in the text • provides an interpretation of these perspective/s or representations	4	• examines how the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs • provides an interpretation of these cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs	4	• examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text • provides an interpretation of these stylistic or aesthetic choices	4
• examines relevant perspective/s or representations in the text • provides a summary of these perspective/s or representations	3	• examines how the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs • provides a summary of these cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs	3	• examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text • provides a summary of these stylistic or aesthetic choices	3
• identifies relevant perspective/s or representations evident in the text	2	• identifies cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs in the text	2	• identifies the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices in the text	2
• identifies some views or roles in the text	1	• identifies some ideas in the text	1	• identifies some choices of the writer in the text	1
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0	• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0	• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Criterion: Organisation and development

The response, for development:	M	The response, for selection and synthesis:	M	The response, for sequencing and organisation:	M	The response, for cohesion:	M
• provides a discriminating thesis that responds to the question/task • develops arguments to strengthen the thesis across the response • provides clear conclusions based on the arguments	5	• provides a well-considered selection of evidence from the text • uses this explicitly to strengthen arguments	5	• demonstrates logical sequencing of information and ideas in and between paragraphs	3	• uses cohesive devices to connect, develop, emphasise and transition between ideas within paragraphs and across the response	3
• provides a credible thesis that responds to the question/task • develops arguments to strengthen the thesis across the response • provides clear conclusions based on the arguments	4	• provides a well-considered selection of evidence from the text • uses this to support arguments	4	• demonstrates sequencing of information and ideas in paragraphs	2	• uses cohesive devices to connect and develop ideas	2
• provides a credible thesis that responds to the question/task • includes statements to support the thesis	3	• provides relevant evidence from the text • uses this in connection with arguments	3	• includes fragmented information and ideas	1	• uses some connecting phrases or words to link ideas	1
• provides a statement that responds to an aspect of the question/task	2	• provides evidence from the text • connects fragments of this to some ideas	2	• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0	• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0
• includes some statements on the literary text	1	• includes evidence from the text	1				
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0	• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0				

Criterion: Textual features

The response, for grammar and sentence structure:	M	The response, for language choices:	M	The response, for punctuation:	M	The response, for spelling:	M
• uses a range of grammatically accurate sentence structures to develop ideas	3	• uses vocabulary with discrimination to develop ideas • uses register appropriate to the role of essay writer with discrimination	4	• uses punctuation accurately and purposefully	2	• uses simple and complex words that are mostly spelt correctly	2
• uses grammar and sentence structures that may affect development of ideas, but meaning is still discernible	2	• uses suitable vocabulary to develop ideas • uses register appropriate to the role of essay writer	3	• uses punctuation with lapses that may affect fluency, but meaning is still discernible	1	• spells words in a way that fluency may be affected, but meaning is still discernible	1
• uses grammar and sentence structures that may have lapses that impede meaning	1	• uses vocabulary that may affect development of ideas, but meaning is still discernible	2	• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0	• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0	• uses vocabulary that may have lapses that impede meaning	1				
		• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0				

Sample responses

Sample response 1: *King Lear*

Knowledge application

Analysis of the ways ideas underpin the literary text

examines how the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs

provides an authoritative interpretation of these cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs

Analysis of perspectives and representations

examines relevant perspective/s or representations in the text

provides an authoritative interpretation of these perspective/s or representations

Organisation and development

Development

provides a discriminating thesis that responds to the question/task

develops arguments to strengthen the thesis across the response

provides clear conclusions based on the arguments

Cohesion

uses cohesive devices to connect, develop, emphasise and transition between ideas within paragraphs and across the response

Selection and synthesis

provides a well-considered selection of evidence from the text

In the play, Lear is destroyed because of his misplaced trust. Discuss.

In Shakespeare's *King Lear*, the inferior, ego-driven judgment of the titular character in matters of trust is directly responsible for his downfall. Lear errs in eschewing Cordelia's sincerity in favour of the fake idolatry of his other daughters, Goneril and Regan. He exacerbates this error by disregarding his Fool's warnings about his rash decision-making and, when ejected from his former realm into the wilderness, turns to the rambling philosophies of Poor Tom as a pathetic alternative to self-trust. Lear's eventual demise is ostensibly triggered by the death of Cordelia; however, a more accurate contention is that Lear is destroyed because of the poor judgments that ensue from his misplaced trust.

The play opens with Gloucester's portentous comment to Kent that Lear, who is planning to divide his kingdom, will do so with 'equalities [that] are so weighed'. This sets up a key trait: Lear's tendency to politicise matters that would better be left to the heart. His terrible decision to 'weigh' the division of his kingdom on false rhetoric clearly indicates his inability to correctly understand his daughters and place his trust accordingly. In addition, the fact that he feels he must divide the kingdom rather than rule himself because of a need to 'shake all care and business from our age' indicates a chronic lack of self-trust. His divisional blustering, masquerading as the need to turn to others for love, masks the real issue: that Lear cannot engage in honest self-appraisal. In matters of trust, he cannot even turn to himself.

As the scene develops, Shakespeare ensures that flattery ousts integrity. Lear decides to trust, without prompting, the syrupy claims of Goneril, who claims to love him 'more than word can yield the matter' and Regan who is 'made of that self mettle'. He is similarly quick to decry the honesty of his youngest daughter, Cordelia, who is determined to reject the 'glib and oily art' and respond to her father with the 'right fit', that is, with no more or less love than he deserves. In disclaiming 'all paternal care' for Cordelia, and in violently banishing Kent who advises against such rashness, Lear demonstrates both his lack of foresight and his inability or unwillingness to trust in those who dare to challenge the preset rigidity of his ideas.

Textual features

Language choices

uses vocabulary with discrimination to develop ideas

uses register appropriate to the role of essay writer with discrimination

Grammar and sentence structure

uses a range of grammatically accurate sentence structures to develop ideas

Spelling

uses simple and complex words that are mostly spelt correctly

Punctuation

uses punctuation accurately and purposefully

| Analysis of the writer's choices examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text

provides an authoritative interpretation of these stylistic or aesthetic choices | uses this explicitly to support arguments

Throughout

Sequencing and organisation

demonstrates logical sequencing of information and ideas in and between paragraphs | By the end of this abrasive opening scene, the circle of mistrust is complete: Lear has sided with treachery. In so doing, he has exiled sincerity and its quiet companion, love.

The unequivocal, inevitable patterning of Lear's misplaced trust continues. He accepts 'Caius' into his retinue, despite Kent's alter ego professing to own the very same qualities — including 'honest counsel' and delivering 'a plain message bluntly' — that Kent had. This clearly demonstrates Lear's inability to know who, or more significantly, how, to trust. When the Fool, as a flinty arbiter of truth, tries to point out Lear's iniquity using the metaphor of an egg and 'two crowns', Lear threatens to have him whipped. The Fool's response, that Lear has 'pared thy wit o'both sides and left nothing i'th'middle', proves to be prescient when Goneril and Regan both renege on their earlier professions of unqualified love and reject Lear's presence in their houses using the folly of his over-sized retinue as an excuse. By Act III, the pivotal point of Shakespearean drama, the king's misplacement of his trust has led, inevitably, to his exile onto a storm-blasted heath, where 'this tempest in my mind doth from my senses take all feeling'.

In one of the many ironies of the play, Lear is assisted at this point by Gloucester, who will also perish because of misplaced trust, an indirect result of the actions of his treacherous, bastard son, Edmund. Gloucester can set aside Lear's bombast and continue to love him by providing him with shelter and trying to protect the king from an impending assassination plot. Lear offers Gloucester a begrudging level of trust but also finds a new accord with Edgar's fabrication, Poor Tom, valued as a 'noble philosopher' who may shed some light on the inexplicable treacheries of the common world. While this may temporarily gladden Lear's heart, it is also a sign of his inability to look within and see that his arrogant determination to conjoin himself with those who are least deserving has been the major source of his downfall.

Throughout the play, Lear has been obtuse to love, sincerity and truth. The pathos of this situation is exemplified when he re-joins the blinded Gloucester and realises that these two men, both formerly powerful, now victims of their own moral sightlessness, can now do little more than 'wawl and cry' on 'this great stage of fools' (Act 4, Scene 6). From this point on, Lear's destruction is assured; the decisions made in Act 1 Scene 1 will have their final consequence. His howl at Cordelia's death is accompanied by the terrible knowledge that he 'might have saved her' had he trusted in her initial declaration of love.

Lear is destroyed because of his misplaced trust. In privileging the disingenuousness of Goneril and Regan, and rejecting, harshly and violently, the truths of Cordelia and the Fool, | |

| | | the old king places himself on a slippery slope to doom. Had Lear known himself better, this progression could have been halted. Instead, he is left with nihilism, a kingdom and family destroyed and himself with no more to do than gaze in vain at the deathly pale lips of his beloved daughter. | |

Sample response 2: *Mrs Dalloway*

Peter Walsh's relationship with Clarissa Dalloway is a key aspect of the novel.

To what extent do you agree with this interpretation?

Virginia Woolf's stream-of-consciousness novel *Mrs Dalloway* offers readers the opportunity to step into the full life of its characters by depicting their memories and impressions over a day in London. Despite this apparently unrestrained approach, the novel is not without structure. Narrative drive is provided by Clarissa's preparations for her party but also, significantly, by Peter Walsh's philosophical wrestle with the love for Clarissa he continues to feel but struggles to understand. Walsh's love is a key aspect of narrative coherence in the novel that allows Woolf to interrogate the fickle obsessions that come with romance and desire.

Peter Walsh first appears in Clarissa's memory as a bit player, possibly present, though never confirmed, at 'the most exquisite moment' of her life, when 'Sally kissed her on the lips'. Soon after, however, he arrives at her house after five years away in India and the pattern and nature of their past entanglement is revealed. Peter's abrupt resolve to see Clarissa belies his weaknesses; he is an insecure man, critical of others, uncertain, even at 53 years of age, of his place in society. For her part, Clarissa associates Peter with qualities such as being 'sentimental' and 'civilised' and summarises him, upon appearance, as 'exactly the same … the same queer look'.

Reflecting this lack of development, Peter remains trapped in an emotional flux; still broken-hearted that Clarissa never married him — his grief rising 'like a moon' — but irritated by her choice of a 'Conservative husband' and determined to show her that he too can be successful in matters of love. Like a rebounding adolescent, he tells her that he is in love with Daisy, 'a girl from India' who is married with children, as if this fact alone will prove his worthiness to Clarissa and convince her that he is capable of, and ready for, love. In effect, Peter is trying to provoke guilt in Clarissa as a precursor to her possibly reversing the error that was made in that 'terrible summer' many years before when she rejected him. He assumes that integrity in love manifests through its persistence beyond negative or contravening circumstances, such as Clarissa's wrongful marriage to placid, even-tempered Richard, and his own failed relationships. Conversely, Clarissa is jealous of Peter's affair but her interest in him is heightened by the realisation that 'he has that … he is in love'. Her impulsivity and Romanticism enlarge this interest; she is reminded of and impressed by her own capacity to 'make the moon rise' and swiftly shifts her assessment of Peter as someone who is 'masterly

| Analysis of the writer's choices examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text

provides an authoritative interpretation of these stylistic or aesthetic choices | **Throughout**

Sequencing and organisation demonstrates logical sequencing of information and ideas in and between paragraphs | and dry and desolate'. She begins to hope, irrationally, that he will take her with him but Peter cannot; he is too uncertain. The arrival of Clarissa's daughter, touted as 'my Elizabeth', is a stark reminder that Clarissa's marriage has brought with it the entireties of other lives and Peter responds with inelegant immaturity to her presence. Clarissa becomes, once again, conventional and cold, and he begins to obsess on their history, that 'she refused me'.

The presence of Peter Walsh and the continuance of his feelings for Clarissa are a reminder that the past necessarily shapes, or at least intrudes upon, the present. Woolf's rendition of time as non-linear is exemplified by the relationship of Clarissa and Peter; it begins in childhood, flourishes without formal consolidation, endures separation and threatens resumption across many years, exemplified by Peter's rhetorical question: 'Why couldn't she let him be?' Crucially, neither Peter nor Clarissa recall their love as a sequence. Rather, it is memory-based, a series of impressions that float in and out without the constraints of narrative order or logic. Stylistically, Peter's love for Clarissa is a key aspect of the novel that showcases Woolf's desire to depict life as messy, irrational and unhinged; existent despite time, not because of it.

In line with this, Woolf provides further interesting perspectives on love. As the day develops, Peter's memories of Clarissa at Bourton, where he once declared his passion, become paramount. He realises that he continues to admire 'her courage; her social instinct' and that the fault for the failure of their relationship probably lay with him; 'he was absurd'. Woolf uses Peter Walsh's yearning to demonstrate the human desire to revisit, review and, within the most secret niche of the heart, regather a lost love. Peter's plaintive call of 'Why couldn't she let him be?' is rich with irony: Woolf suggests that love, once experienced, will never depart. It is, as Peter notes at the end of the novel, both a 'terror' and 'ecstasy … that fills me with extraordinary excitement'.

Peter Walsh's love for Clarissa Dalloway provides Woolf's novel with the grounding of universality. Clarissa's comfortable, bourgeois existence is disrupted and impassioned as her old lover returns and the ardour of youth is, if not recaptured, then certainly readdressed. Woolf deploys the relationship to ignite questions about the reliability of memory: can the recall of an abstract notion such as love be an accurate rendition or is it necessarily coloured and recoloured by the passages of time and experience? Whatever the answer, it is clear that structurally and philosophically, Peter Walsh's love is a key aspect of this powerful and provocative novel. |

Sample response 3: *Wuthering Heights*

Knowledge application	Organisation and development	To what effect does Brontë contrast the two settings in the novel?	Textual features
Analysis of the ways ideas underpin the literary text examines how the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs provides an authoritative interpretation of these cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs **Analysis of perspectives and representations** examines relevant perspective/s or representations in the text provides an authoritative interpretation of these perspective/s or representations	**Development** provides a discriminating thesis that responds to the question/task develops arguments to strengthen the thesis across the response provides clear conclusions based on the arguments **Cohesion** uses cohesive devices to connect, develop, emphasise and transition between ideas within paragraphs and across the response **Selection and synthesis** provides a well-considered selection of evidence from the text uses this explicitly to support arguments	Emily Bronte's novel *Wuthering Heights* is considered by many to be a timeless tale of love between the anti-hero Heathcliff and his beau, Catherine Earnshaw. Ultimately, Bronte uses this relationship to explore the concepts of true love, family dynamics, the destructive nature of revenge and social class. The settings of Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights are significant because Bronte uses these locations as an extension of the characters' personalities and desires to highlight the contrasts of families, social class, love and suffering, and revenge and forgiveness. The contrast of the two locations heightens and drives the intergenerational conflict that haunts the characters in the novel. The location of Wuthering Heights serves as an extension of Heathcliff's brooding and sinister nature. In the opening pages of the novel, Lockwood describes Wuthering Heights as 'tumult' and 'grotesque'. The manor is isolated, blustery and in a state of disrepair, as are its inhabitants. When Lockwood first meets Heathcliff, this parallel is highlighted in his description of the owner of the house as a 'dark-skinned gypsy', 'morose' and 'inhospitable', positioning the reader to see the desolate Wuthering Heights manor as an environmental metaphor for Heathcliff. Establishing this metaphor early on allows Bronte to construct Wuthering Heights as a location of suffering and despair; the outward gothic decay of the manor aligns with the internal struggles of its inhabitants. More so, Wuthering Heights serves as Heathcliff's prison of torment, more than his home. The gothic location of Wuthering Heights enhances the brooding, mysterious and deranged nature of Heathcliff. The opening chapter is significant in establishing this, along with the ongoing contrasts of the novel's time and place. Lockwood initially describes the beauty of the country and 'despairs of the desolation' between Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange but by the end of the chapter, after experiencing the isolating impact of Wuthering Heights and the misanthropic nature of its owner, he is happy to return to the warmth of Thrushcross Grange. Bronte goes to great lengths to establish the manor of Wuthering Heights as an inhospitable, brooding and isolated place, devoid of love and happiness, and characterises Heathcliff in a parallel way. Just as Wuthering Heights serves as an environmental metaphor of its occupants, such is true of Thrushcross Grange. It is the literary foil for Wuthering Heights, a warm, light and sophisticated location. Unlike 'wuther', which refers to a stormy and blustery landscape, 'thrush' symbolises the beauty of nature and the surroundings. Bronte also uses Thrushcross Grange to enhance the representations of social class, values and attitudes. While the occupants of Wuthering Heights are shown as dark and unsophisticated, particularly Heathcliff and a young Cathy, in contrast the	**Punctuation** uses punctuation accurately and purposefully **Language choices** uses vocabulary with discrimination to develop ideas uses register appropriate to the role of essay writer with discrimination **Spelling** uses simple and complex words that are mostly spelt correctly **Grammar and sentence structure** uses a range of grammatically accurate sentence structures to develop ideas

| Analysis of the writer's choices examines how the writer's stylistic or aesthetic choices shape the text

provides an authoritative interpretation of these stylistic or aesthetic choices | Throughout

Sequencing and organisation demonstrates logical sequencing of information and ideas in and between paragraphs | occupants of Thrushcross Grange throughout the novel are warm and of good moral character and high social standing. The description of Thrushcross Grange being 'beautiful … splendid' and 'carpeted with crimson, and crimson-covered chairs', contrasts greatly with Wuthering Heights, by positioning readers to see it not only as superior in grandeur and beauty but also as warm and welcoming. The same is true of its occupants, while Wuthering Heights begins as a home with a fractured family and cruel masters, Bronte uses Thrushcross Grange to invite readers to view the Linton's as a more stable and loving family.

Bronte aligns setting with the narrative structure of Catherine and Heathcliff visiting Thrushcross Grange to highlight the prejudice of social class. Catherine Earnshaw is welcomed into the warmness of Thrushcross Grange by the Lintons, while the 'bastard, scoundrel' Heathcliff is chased away, into the darkness of the moors, without any care given to his wellbeing. This symbolism demonstrates their difference in social structure and division of love and hate. Interestingly, although Heathcliff remains a savage and untameable force, by staying with the Lintons at Thrushcross Grange, Catherine emerges an upstanding young lady, emphasising the social significance of the manor and the desire to possess. Ultimately, this representation does not change. In later years, the upper-class Lockwood rents Thrushcross Grange from Heathcliff and although Heathcliff is now the owner, he is still an inhabitant of the decaying Wuthering Heights and seen by Lockwood as inferior in standing.

Just as Wuthering Heights is inseparable from the character of Heathcliff, Thrushcross Grange cannot exist without Edgar Linton. Here Bronte uses the contrast in setting to highlight and deepen the character foils of Linton and Heathcliff. Linton as a character is the antithesis of Heathcliff. Linton is described as having a 'face brilliant with delight', 'sweet' and 'gentle'. The foil of Linton's character being bright and inviting aligns with the foil of Thrushcross Grange, described as 'gold' and 'shimmering with … beauty'. Bronte develops this parallel further when she uses the storyline of Linton and Catherine's marriage and occupation of Thrushcross Grange as a window into the life that Heathcliff desires. Linton has married Heathcliff's paramour, is of good social standing, has known and shows kindness and has everything that Heathcliff longs for. This is highlighted by Linton himself when he says to Heathcliff, 'your presence [at Thrushcross Grange] is moral poison … of the worst consequence'. Ultimately, Bronte develops Thrushcross Grange to not only contrast characters but also as a symbol for Heathcliff's desires and revenge. It becomes the personified symbol of everything Heathcliff has ever wanted. But the words of Linton are true and Heathcliff does not belong at the Grange. His presence is poison and his intrusion results in Cathy dying and the happiness of the Grange's occupants being destroyed. | |

Ultimately, Heathcliff cannot have what Thrushcross Grange represents and is doomed to occupy the dark and isolated Wuthering Heights.

Wuthering Heights is a timeless tale of desire, suffering and unfulfilled love. Bronte ties together this complex story of intergenerational families through contrast, multiple narrators and time, but at the core of the story are the key locations of Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights. The contrast of these settings allows Bronte to build an environmental literary symbol that matches not only the moods and temperaments of the characters but also becomes an extension of their being.