

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 8

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for the coursework assessment task.

The candidate was awarded **8 marks**.

Topic: “*The Cement Garden and Atonement by Ian McEwan. An exploration of the theme of growing up focusing on character, setting and narrative voice*”

Task

Both the chosen texts and the task are appropriate for study at Advanced Higher level, with the potential to elicit an effective response from a candidate

Knowledge and Understanding

The candidate shows some knowledge and understanding of some of the central concerns and a few details of the texts; however, some of the key events are not even mentioned. Jack is only presented in his relationship with his father, and only as a child imitating adult behaviour, which skews the presentation of the central relationships in *The Cement Garden*. There is an appropriate approach to the task in some places, but not consistently, and textual reference is similarly uneven – some sections are well referenced, others not.

Analysis

There is some attempt to analyse a limited range of literary techniques, but this shows weakness in the depth and sometimes relevance of the analysis. The dissertation starts off by looking at Jack and the death of his father, but the link to *Atonement*'s ending is not made relevant here.

The extensive quote of *Atonement* in paragraph two is not analysed, and the micro analysis of “head on encounter” is not helpful, and adds nothing to the argument. In paragraph three there is an attempt to distinguish between the levels of complexity of the language used by the narrators of both novels. Paragraph four looks at the characterisation of Jack, and the dissertation gets credit for this. Paragraph seven shows an attempt to compare Jack's and Bryony's lack of maturity when faced with challenging situations, but there is no analysis of technique or depth to the discussion.

The analysis of the “Trials of Arabella” shows an attempt to tackle “contrast” in discussing the discrepancies between the reality of adulthood and the fantasy of it; the section unhelpfully starts with the assertion that “setting” will be looked at as well as language, which it isn't. Setting is also not discussed in the subsequent analysis of Bryony and Jack's places “on the opposite side of the social ladder”; there is no reference to the text, nor does it contribute to the overall line of argument.

Evaluation

The evaluative stance is implicit with respect to the texts and the task. Overall, the dissertation is a repetition of the assertion that neither of the narrators, Jack

or Bryony, have grown up, with textual reference, which often remains unanalysed and unevaluated.

Expression

Expression is flawed and not what is expected at this level; throughout there are weaknesses in accuracy, use of structure, style and language (both in the writing of the dissertation as well as in the textual references). From the opening paragraph there are numerous errors in punctuation, expression and missing words, "The setting, narrative voice helps the development in their growing up but it also doesn't." Throughout, there is a lack of appropriate critical terminology, which has an impact on the strength of the argument.

Range: Overall, therefore, the dissertation meets many of the criteria set out in the 10-6 range, but not all of them fully.

Mark: 8