

Higher English: Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation, Critical Reading and Portfolio–writing

Overview of Understanding Standards resources

This document provides an overview of what Understanding Standards resources are available for Higher English: Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation, Critical Reading and Portfolio–writing which may be useful in supporting marking and moderation.

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation – 2019

Candidate	Question number	Marks	Comments
A	2	2/4	Insufficient analysis of 'list'. Basic comments on word choice.
A	4	2/3	Basic understanding shown. Satisfactory use of own words.
A	6	0/3	Insufficient understanding at Higher level demonstrated in candidate's response.
A	9	2/5	One area of 'disagreement' identified plus appropriate evidence.
B	1	2/2	Acceptable own words explanations.
B	2	3/4	Three basic points of analysis.
B	5	4/4	Mix of basic and insightful analytical comments.
B	6	3/3	Full marks – three basic points demonstrating understanding.
B	7	4/4	Imagery and sentence structure question. Marks awarded: imagery 3 (including one 'insightful' comment), sentence structure 1.
C	4	1/3	Candidate relies on words from the passage and shows insufficient understanding at Higher level in two of the response's three bullet points.
C	6	2/3	Second and third bullet points of candidate's response essentially repeat first bullet point.
C	9	5/5	Three points of 'disagreement' identified plus detailed/insightful evidence.
D	6	3/3	Detailed and insightful own words explanation.
D	7	4/4	Detailed and insightful analytical comment.

Candidate	Question number	Marks	Comments
D	9	3/5	Two points of 'disagreement' identified. Appropriate evidence to support these points.

Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation – 2017

Candidate	Question number	Marks	Comment
4	2	3/4	Three basic points of analysis.
4	6	2/3	Basic analytical comments (including onomatopoeia).
4	7	2/2	Full marks for 'development of writer's argument' question. Detailed/insightful comment.
4	9	4/5	Three points of 'agreement' correctly identified. One mark for appropriate use of supporting evidence.
5	3	2/2	Full understanding shown for 'explain' question.
5	4	2/4	Detailed/insightful analysis of imagery.
5	6	3/3	Mix of basic and detailed/insightful analysis.
5	7	2/2	Detailed/insightful comment on 'development of writer's argument'.
5	8	3/4	Mix of basic and insightful analysis.
5	9	4/5	Three points of 'agreement' correctly identified. One mark for appropriate use of supporting evidence.
6	2	4/4	Four basic points of analysis.
6	4	4/4	Mix of basic and detailed/insightful analysis for sentence structure and imagery question.
6	5	4/4	Four basic points of analysis.
6	6	1/3	One basic comment plus limited comments which don't address the question.
6	7	1/2	Basic comment on 'development of writer's argument.'
6	9	4/5	Two points of 'agreement' correctly identified. Two marks for detailed/insightful use of supporting evidence.

Candidate	Scottish text	Scottish text marks	Critical essay	Critical essay mark	Total	Comments
1	<i>The Slab Boys</i>	16/20 Final question – 6/10	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	17/20	33/40	Detailed/insightful comment for question 2 of Slab Boys. Critical essay 'secure' in all aspects. Firm example of 18–16 mark range.
2	<i>The Telegram</i>	12/20 Final question – 6/10	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	14/20	26/40	Detailed/insightful comments in response to final question of Scottish text. Critical essay 'clear in all respects.'
3	<i>The Cone-Gatherers</i>	18/20 Final question – 10/10	<i>O Captain! My Captain!</i>	20/20	38/40	Detailed/insightful comments for questions 30, 31 and 32 of Cone-Gatherers. Thorough and perceptive critical essay – full marks.
4	<i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>	19/20 Final question – 10/10	<i>The Crucible</i>	18/20	37/40	Full marks for final question of Scottish text (including one detailed/insightful comment). Detailed analysis of character and structure in critical essay.
5	<i>In Mrs Tilscher's Class</i>	12/20 Final question – 6/10	<i>Death of A Salesman</i>	11/20	23/40	Detailed/insightful comment on 'The Way My Mother Speaks' in response to final question, and in question 39. Critical essay is a good example of 12–10 mark range.
6	<i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>	13/20 Final question – 5/10	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	15/20	28/40	Four basic points for question 21 of Scottish text. Two examples of detailed/insightful comments in final question. Clear understanding of text and selection of evidence in critical essay.
7	<i>Last Supper</i>	11/20 Final question – 4/10	<i>A Hanging</i>	12/20	23/40	Detailed/insightful comments in questions 41 and 42 of Scottish text. Adequate understanding, analysis and evaluation demonstrated in critical essay.
8	<i>Men Should Weep</i>	19/20 Final question – 10/10	<i>My Last Duchess</i>	16/20	35/40	Unpicking of marks in lengthy response demonstrated for final question of Scottish text.

Critical Reading – 2017

Candidate	Scottish text	Scottish text marks	Critical essay	Critical essay mark	Total	Comments
5	<i>The Cone-Gatherers</i>	19/20 Final question – 9/10	<i>The Second Coming</i>	17/20	36/40	Good example of poetry critical essay from 18–16 mark range. Secure in all aspects.
6	<i>Valentine</i>	18/20 Final question – 8/10	<i>Lord of the Flies</i>	11/20	29/40	Detailed/insightful comments in question 37 and in final question of Scottish text. Good example of 12–10 mark range for critical essay on Lord of the Flies.
7	<i>Basking Shark</i>	12/20 Final question – 4/10	<i>Othello</i>	16/20	28/40	Two detailed/insightful comments in question 47 and one in final question of Scottish text. Reasonably secure essay on Othello.

Critical Reading (Scottish text) – 2015

Candidate	Scottish text	Scottish text marks	Comments
1	<i>War Photographer</i>	17/20 Final question – 8/10	Detailed/insightful comments in responses to questions 40 and 41.
2	<i>The Cone-Gatherers</i>	10/20 Final question – 6/10	Two detailed/insightful comments in 'elsewhere' section of final question.
3	<i>Men Should Weep</i>	17/20 Final question – 8/10	One detailed/insightful comment in both 'extract' and 'elsewhere' section of final question, also one in question 11.
4	<i>The Slab Boys</i>	14/20 Final question – 6/10	Detailed/insightful comment on 'use of humour' for question 3.

Critical Reading (Critical Essay) – 2015

Candidate	Critical essay	Critical essay mark	Comments
1	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	12/20	Critical essay on borderline of 15–13 and 12–10 mark ranges.
2	<i>Death of a Salesman</i>	20/20	Thorough and perceptive critical essay. Strong focus on 'American Dream'.
3	<i>A Hanging</i>	17/20	Genuine engagement. Secure focus on demands of question. Comfortably in 18–16 mark range.
4	<i>Death of A Naturalist</i>	14/20	Clear knowledge and understanding shown in response to question on 'form and structure'.
5	<i>Macbeth</i>	10/20	Borderline critical essay. Adequate focus on demands of the question.
5	<i>Shutter Island</i>	16/20	Media essay on film (the focus is on 'lighting and sound'). Secure focus on demands of the question.
7	<i>The Rabbit Catcher</i>	20/20	Thorough and perceptive response on poem by Sylvia Plath.
8	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	14/20	Question on scene involving moment of conflict. Clear focus on scene 10 from the play.

Portfolio–writing – 2020

Candidate	Title	Broadly creative/broadly discursive	Mark	Comments
1	My Tennis Identity	Creative	8	Personal/reflective piece – feelings and experiences explored with an adequate sense of reflection and involvement.
2	The Christmas Season	Creative	8	Memories explored with adequate reflection.
3	Lesson on guitar, experiences for life	Creative	11	Clear sense of personality comes across in the writing. Good example of 12–10 mark range.
4	Happiness is Egg Shaped	Creative	10	Example of personal/reflective writing in which there is clear involvement, for the most part. Occasional suggestions of 9–7 mark range but does enough to be placed in 12–10 range.

Portfolio–writing – 2019

Candidate	Title	Broadly creative/broadly discursive	Mark	Comments
A	How Music Broadens The Mind	Discursive	9	Some evidence of clear engagement with topic but expression and structure are predominately ‘adequate’ rather than ‘clear.’
B	Moorman	Creative	8	Short fiction which is a good example of all aspects of 9–7 mark range.
C	In the Jaws of the Grand Dragon	Creative	13	Sensitive and witty personal/reflective piece. Strong sense of writer’s personality and of the experience described.
D	Why Zoos Should be Endangered	Discursive	11	Good discursive example of 12–10 mark range.
E	Having a Bad Day	Creative	11	Piece in Scots. Imaginative fiction. Clear structure and expression.
F	I Don’t Mean To Be Dramatic But...	Discursive	12	Clear piece of writing (which is confident at times) discussing the place of drama in the Scottish curriculum.
G	Ophelia	Creative	15	Short fiction with detailed characterisation and creative use of structure.
H	Cyberchondria	Discursive	15	A strongly-argued, well-informed and confident piece of writing on the subject of online medical information.

Portfolio–writing – 2015

Candidate	Title	Broadly creative/broadly discursive	Mark	Comments
1	Technology: our servant or master?	Discursive	8	Discursive piece which is adequate in the following areas: understanding of topic, use of research, structure, and linguistic features.
2	There's no place like home school...	Discursive	11	Discursive writing on subject of home schooling. Good example of 12–10 mark range.
3	Plastic Lives	Discursive	13	Discursive writing on issue of use of plastic bags. Sustained and committed line of thought.
4	Lost but not forgotten	Creative	12	Short fiction. Clear creative qualities.
5	Scarred	Creative	15	Short fiction – dual narrative. Skilfully handled.
6	Can I be Bothered?	Creative	14	Personal reflective piece – strong and confident expression.
7	The Claus of a Predator	Discursive	15	Broadly discursive piece written without reference to external sources. Strong attention to purpose and real understanding of audience. Confident use of language, adopts a 'mock gravitas' style.
8	Let Me Count the Ways	Creative	15	Prose monologue in Scots. Strong creative qualities. Skilful command of genre.
9	Porphyria Speaks	Creative	15	Poem. Skilful creation of persona. Dramatic monologue, in the style of/in response to Browning's 'Porphyria's Lover'.