

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 7

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for each question of this course assessment component.

NB: the commentaries include references to the wording of the marking instructions for this paper.

The candidate achieved **28 marks**.

Section 1 Scottish Textual Analysis: “Basking Shark” by Norman MacCaig

Question 45 (2 marks available)

- ◆ **1 mark** for more basic comment on the word ‘slounge’: the shark’s ‘*slow arrival at the surface*’ as it is ‘*calm...not thrashing about*’, conveying the “relaxed movement of shark in its own element where he is the intruder”
(Total: 1 mark)

Question 46 (4 marks available)

- ◆ **1 mark** for more basic comment on the word ‘shoggled’: the speaker was ‘*unsettled by the experience*’, conveying the idea of being “shaken out of a comfortable mind-set”
- ◆ **1 mark** for more basic comment on the word ‘displaced’: the speaker ‘*forced him to reconsider*’ his thinking, conveying the idea of a “shift in his thinking”
- ◆ **1 mark** for more basic comment on ‘townee’, conveying the idea of “alienation from nature”, although there is no analysis of “decadent” as “self-derogatory”
- ◆ **0 marks** for limited comment on ‘centuries back’
(Total: 3 marks)

Question 47 (4 marks available)

- ◆ **2 marks** for more detailed/insightful comment on ‘*Swish up...clearer*’, conveying the speaker’s ‘*realisation of his relationship with living things*’: this links to the idea that “the initial confusion as a result of the encounter has led to greater clarity”
- ◆ **2 marks** for detailed/insightful comment on the question ‘So who’s the monster’, conveying the speaker’s realisation that ‘*the real thing to be scared of are humans*’: this links to the idea that “the speaker has been forced to rethink humanity’s superiority to apparently primitive beings”
(Total: 4 marks)

Section 48 (10 marks available)

Commonality (2 marks available)

- ◆ **0 marks** for limited comment on symbolism in 'Basking Shark'
- ◆ **1 mark** for comment on '*symbolism*' in 'Sounds of the Day': theme of loss conveyed through nature

Text (2 marks available)

- ◆ **0 marks** for limited comment on "room sized monster...matchbox brain" as comment does not adequately link analysis of imagery to wider thematic use of symbolism

Elsewhere (6 marks available)

- ◆ **0 marks** for limited comment on 'quietest fire' in 'Sounds of the Day' as the comment does not adequately link analysis of imagery to wider use of symbolism
 - ◆ **2 marks** for detailed/insightful comment on 'bangle of ice' in 'Sounds of the Day', conveying '*the painful nature of the parting*' and the idea 'that the feeling is inescapable, a constant reminder'
 - ◆ **1 mark** for more basic comment on symbolism of 'tourists clucking contentedly' in 'Assisi'
- (Total: 4 marks)**

Total for Scottish Textual Analysis: 12

Section 2: Critical Essay

Question 3 (20 marks available)

The candidate has chosen to write about the theme of betrayal in 'Othello', focussing on Iago's betrayal of Othello and how this results in tragedy for Othello and others.

In terms of knowledge and understanding of the text, the candidate's understanding is, overall, secure. The candidate identifies the extent of Iago's manipulation and the idea that his plan is successful because '*Iago's betrayal is concealed*' and that Iago takes pleasure in destroying Othello. The essay goes on to discuss the relationship between Othello and Desdemona and its '*newness*' and lack of '*prolonged trust*' which Iago exploits. The play's turning point is mentioned briefly and, within this discussion, there could have been more detailed textual evidence to explain the way in which Iago engineers the change in Othello. The contrast in Othello's behaviour after the turning point is then covered in a more detailed way. In the final section of the essay the candidate discusses the effect of the betrayal on Othello and briefly mentions the effect on the other characters. Less secure knowledge and understanding is demonstrated in the discussion of Othello believing he will go to heaven with Desdemona.

In terms of analysis and evaluation, there are points in the essay where the analysis is detailed. However, in some places, analysis is less detailed, for example comment on the play's turning point and analysis of the play's conclusion. The candidate demonstrates an engaged evaluative stance, although at times this is conveyed in a less sophisticated way, for example, '*The plot is key to the proceedings of the play*' and, '*Othello is annihilated – success for Iago!*'

Overall, this essay shows secure knowledge and understanding although understanding is slightly less secure in places. Analysis is also detailed overall but could have been more in-depth in places. There is a secure focus on the question. On balance this piece is categorised as secure but is awarded a mark at the lower end of the 18-16 range.

(Critical essay mark: 16)

Total for this paper: 28 (out of 40 available marks)