

Japanese A: Language and Literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 13	14 - 29	30 - 43	44 - 57	58 - 71	72 - 85	86 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 28	29 - 44	45 - 59	60 - 71	72 - 85	86 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Most texts were appropriate, both in content and length, lines were properly numbered, and the guiding questions were provided as per the specifications with no numbers. This shows that teachers understood the requirements well. On the other hand, there were some texts that were not appropriately prepared, for instance those that were annotated with such information as the name of the book or provided too much yomigana next to kanji and even to hiragana in some case. Such information should not appear on the texts. Conversely there were also some instances of text with no line numbers at all, or those that were too challenging because they were too rich in content or were too long, all of which disadvantaged candidates.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Knowledge and understanding of the text or extract

On the whole, candidates showed adequate to a good knowledge of the work studied and they demonstrated appropriate analytical skills. This was not only the case with high performing candidates but also with weaker candidates. Some candidates presented

contextual knowledge irrelevant to the discussions, and others tried to explain what each sentence meant without much personal engagement with the text. For neither of these are marks awarded.

Criterion B: Understanding of the use and effects of literary features

Seeing a relationship between literary features and content/ideas/theme is at the heart of this criterion. However, there were not many candidates who managed to show evidence of this. Most candidates, including those whose overall performance was good, explained the meaning of their findings and the use of literary features without much connection to the text, or they simply listed the names of literary features with no further examination. Very few examined the organization of a text.

Criterion C: Organization

A commentary must have a clear structure such as an appropriate introduction, body and conclusion. The introduction plays an important role in regard to getting the views of the candidate about the text into perspective. However, very few candidates, this year, organized their commentary in this way. Many candidates stated the name of the work from which the extract was taken, the period in which the work was written, and the name of the author, then began their analysis. Furthermore, many did not use this information in their discussions. Many organized their examination of the text line by line or from the earlier lines to the later lines, thus the commentary lacked cohesiveness in terms of discussion points. Only a few candidates reached a meaningful conclusion. Candidates are encouraged to use more transition expressions, which could contribute to a clearer structure.

Criterion D: Language

In general all candidates delivered their commentary in the appropriate language register. Most candidates presented their response with a good degree of accuracy in grammar and sentence construction. Some candidates used casual words and English words a number of times, such as *sugoi*, *wazato*, *chanto*, *dekai*, *chicchai*, *ippai*. Candidates should avoid them as they are not appropriate in this context.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

As stated in “The range and suitability of the work submitted” section above, almost all texts were suitable. Although the procedures of Individual Oral Commentary (IOC) share many similarities to the IOC in Language A2, there are none the less significant differences and it must have been challenging for all the teachers involved to get their candidates prepared for the first examination of the new Language and Literature course. The followings are suggestions and recommendations to help both teachers and candidates to be better informed of the expectations.

- Encourage candidates to find a message of a text and how it is achieved
- Emphasize the relationship between content and literary features

- Provide plenty of opportunities to structure a commentary in an effective manner. Structure indicates its framework such as an appropriate introduction, body and conclusion, while organization indicates a logical development of ideas within that framework.
- It would be ideal if candidates can locate the extract within the whole work.
- Have candidates pay more attention to the kinds of words that are appropriate / inappropriate and give them as much practise as possible in class; for example using *ooki* instead of *dekai*, *bassui* instead of *passage*, *5 gyoume* instead of *line 5*. These are all certainly words that candidates should be able to use in this framework.
- Show candidates how transition expressions can be used effectively.

The suggestions below are for teachers during the exam.

- It is acceptable to ask what a candidate thinks of a work as a whole if only he or she has already discussed the extract sufficiently. Otherwise, it is more beneficial for a candidate to be asked a question about the extract.
- Please avoid talking too much while asking a question, as what you say may prompt the answer. Furthermore, a candidate needs some time to think about their response.
- Please avoid giving a new question after 15 minutes. An examiner will not listen to the recording after 15 minutes has lapsed.
- It is reasonable that a teacher acknowledges the response of a candidate. However, please bear in mind that teacher's acknowledgement sometimes extinguishes candidate's voice.
- Please give the opportunity for a candidate to explore his or her knowledge and understanding of the extract by providing a question until the maximum time is filled, even if the candidate makes a short commentary.
- Please set up the examination at a time when no noises will disturb the recording, such as a class period bell.

Further comments

- A few extracts came only with questions on the content. Please provide two different types of questions as stated in the Guide (p.60).
- Please write on the form why a candidate was awarded a mark for each criterion, not what a candidate said
- It is not necessary to send the notes used by the candidate.

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 17	18 - 20	21 - 24	25 - 30

The range and suitability of the work submitted

In general, the instructions were followed, the forms were filled appropriately, and audio files uploaded without problems. However, many texts were difficult to read because the copy was not clear enough, the text was sent horizontally, and/or the font was too small. Please take care that the documents uploaded are also of good quality.

Most texts were suitable for individual oral but some texts were difficult for the candidates as there were not enough significant points to discuss. The guiding questions were generally suitable but some were merely reading comprehension questions or questions about the text as a whole. A very few teachers did not include one question about stylistic features.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Knowledge and understanding of the text or extract

Excellent candidates focused their commentary on analyzing the text/extract itself and elaborated on the text in the context of the whole work only when appropriate. They also interpreted the context rather than explaining what was happening in the text/extract. Weaker candidates tended to mention the theme of the work as a whole without sufficient references to the text/extract.

Criterion B: Understanding of the use and effects of literary features

Excellent candidates could analyze the effects of the literary features, and mentioned how the tone, atmosphere, and mood of the whole text/extracts were created. However, many candidates often mentioned the stylistic devices line by line without referring to their effects on the whole text/extract. Weaker candidates tended to list the stylistic devices without effects.

Criterion C: Organization

Most candidates managed to structure their commentaries with an introduction, body, and a conclusion. A few excellent candidates presented their commentaries with well-organized structure, but most candidates explained the text/extract line by line which was not effective.

Criterion D: Language

Almost all the candidates were fluent and comfortable in using appropriate register and style with good degree of accuracy and grammar and sentence construction. While excellent

candidates used formal and abstract words and literary terminology with confidence, weaker candidates presented their commentaries with repetitions and self-corrections. A few weak candidates also did not speak clearly, which may have been caused by their nervousness.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

It is important for the teacher to select appropriate texts/extracts which include significance in terms of context and language features. Some texts were too difficult and some were too simple. During the discussion, some teachers appropriately asked the candidate to elaborate on and further explain the significance of their ideas when the candidate did not show critical thinking skills. However, teachers sometimes asked questions on aspects which the candidate already covered, requiring them to repeat it again. This does not help the candidates. It is important that teachers are thoroughly prepared for the discussion.

Higher level written Tasks

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 18	19 - 23	24 - 28	29 - 33	34 - 40

General comments

The syllabus requirements for Task 2 appeared to be unclear to teachers. All teachers should review the Guide and the Teacher Support Material, and to contact the IB if they have any questions about the requirements.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Most of the tasks submitted as Task 1 were pastiche based on novels. A few showed an authentic approach to describing or elaborating on settings and characters without contradicting the authors' style or intentions for the original works. Regarding Task 2, there were generally a number of issues, including many formal essays based on a single article without any references or acknowledgments. Many also lacked precise enough connection to the prescribed questions published in the Guide.

A few of the more successful tasks submitted as Task 2 included work such as an essay of critical response to a chapter of "Media and Japanese" with detailed analysis and substantive remarks, persuasive analysis of AD message "Ii Kuni Tsukuro", and an essay explaining the effective usage of "Japanese Onomatopoeia" referring to a cartoon.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Task 1

Criterion A: Rationale

In most of the tasks, a clear explanation and understanding of the literary aspects were demonstrated in both HL and SL. There were very few, if any, tasks exceeding the maximum word count of 600 characters.

Criterion B: Task and content

Almost all candidates made good use of course materials. Although the choice of text types was mostly appropriate, it should be noted that the theme of the original work was not reflected in some of the creative works.

Criterion C: Organization

There were very few, if any, works that exceeded the maximum word count of 2,000 characters. The tasks were on the whole appropriately organized for the text type chosen.

Criterion D: Language and style

In many of the tasks, there were inappropriate as well as inaccurate use of language and typing errors which obstructed the flow of writing and observed meaning.

Task 2

Criterion A: Outline

In many of the tasks submitted for Task 2, the outline was too long without focus. Short key sentences would be better suited to clearly highlighting the particular focus of the task.

Criterion B: Response to the question

Many of the tasks were based on a single article and tended to show a superficial understanding of both topic and text, with responses that were not adequately supported by references. The ideas were often repetitive without much personal interpretation.

Criterion C: Organization and argument

Many of the arguments were not developed logically to support their conclusions.

Criterion D: Language and style

Most of the candidates demonstrated accuracy in the use of language, but there were a few who used inadequate vocabularies and sentence constructions.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should advise candidates to use a wider range of text types based on Parts 1 and 2.

Prior to submitting their tasks, candidates should read and revise their work in order to avoid unnecessary errors as this will lead to possible deductions of marks.

Standard level written Task

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

General comments

Although a wide variety of text types are introduced in the Guide, teachers seemed to encourage the use of the same text types, such as the pastiche. It is recommended teachers think beyond these obvious choices and find innovative ideas with the candidates.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Most of tasks demonstrated the candidates' clear understanding of the course materials which covered a wide range of texts in different forms, styles and registers. There was a wide range of written tasks, mostly comprising of a pastiche (as a first chapter or a sequel), a diary, a letter based on novels and a few magazine articles or blogs based on the study of Parts 1 and Part 2. There was some instances of a formal essay, which is not appropriate for the SL written task. In such cases, the candidate unfortunately is limited in terms of how many marks they can score against Criterion B, even if it is excellently written.

There were some excellent tasks and creative ideas such as "How to create a Web site" based on the study of Media Literacy, "The dangerous pitfall of AD Naming as shown in Zero Manifestation of Products", a newspaper column explaining for foreigners the Japanese use of ambiguous expressions with substantive analysis of the Japanese culture, and a presentation of an AD regarding a fictitious product. There were also some excellent literary tasks, such as a pastiche in which the content reflected deep insight and understanding of the themes and relationships among characters.

Candidate performance against each criterion

The performance of SL candidates against each criterion was very similar to that of candidates in HL Task 1. Please see HL Task 1 section above for details.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Please see HL section above.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20

General comments

This year, the IB provided a genkoyoshi type paper for candidates in Japanese. As these papers have fewer squares than the conventional genkoyoshi paper, some responses covered well over 10 pages. Centres may want to consider using the conventional IB answer booklets instead for writing their comparative textual analysis so that the number of pages does not have to be so long.

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Some candidates did not comment on the purpose and the possible contexts, such as cultural, temporal, relation to audience, etc.

Many candidates did not comment on stylistic features of the texts fully, such as how language, structure, tone, technique and style are used to construct meaning. Weaker candidates often listed the stylistic features line by line, and failed to mention the effects of stylistic features on the reader. There were some cases of candidates listing literary terminology and elements without analysis of the content.

Most candidates did not mention the structure of the texts at all.

Many candidates found it difficult to organize their commentaries by elements of comparison, and presented their comparative analysis with a summary of one text and the other without effective structure for comparison.

Incorrect use of kanji and/or a lack of kanji were a common problem. There were too many hiragana words which should have been written in kanji at Group 1 level.

In addition, some of the handwriting was very poor, causing difficulties for the examiner in reading their responses.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

In general, the candidates were well prepared for demonstrating their understanding of the similarities and differences between the texts. They were able to mention the common themes of the texts as well as the differences between the text types. Most candidates were good at identifying the various stylistic features in the texts. All the candidates had a clear structure including introduction, body, and conclusion, and used appropriate register and style. Most candidates were able to use a wide range of vocabulary and expressions.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Section A

Section A invited candidates to compare two texts about volunteer work which was a topical theme since the devastating earthquake and tsunami which hit Japan in 2011. Section A was the more popular choice, and most candidates handled this pair of texts well. The candidates demonstrated good understanding of the common theme, similarities and differences in the texts with references, and they were confident in identifying possible contexts, audience, and purpose appropriately. However, many of the organization and development of their comparative analysis were not effective.

Some candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of the use and effect of stylistic features in Text 1 in a persuasive manner. They identified its narrative writing style including humour, which eases the serious nature of the topic. These candidates also analyzed the effective use of katakana words and embedded dialogue in the sentences.

Excellent responses to Text 2 mentioned volunteer work in relation to dignified act of women, and analyzed the effects the quote from “Shushogi”, a code of behavior by Zen Buddhism, and the metaphor of swan on the reader. These candidates also examined the language devices which created atmosphere and tone, and related those to the author’s social status and position, and compared this with Text 1.

Weaker candidates showed only superficial understanding, and listed literary terminologies and elements without much analysis of the content. Many candidates failed to analyze the structure of the texts.

Section B

Both texts concerned itself with tree, firewood and mountain. Text 3 focused on privatization of nature, and Text 4 on description of beautiful and serene nature.

Most candidates demonstrated good understanding of the common theme, noting similarities and differences between the texts.

Excellent candidates captured the mood and atmosphere of Texts 3 and 4 appropriately, and understood that the effects of the careful use of these linguistic devices. These candidates used

quotations and gave thoughtful comments on both texts. Some candidates further identified the respective target audiences appropriately with references to the texts. However, most candidates did not discuss their contexts and purposes sufficiently.

Weaker candidates wrote a summary of the texts and did not make adequate comparisons. Almost all weak candidates found Text 3 challenging, and did not understand its meaning and message well, which consequently hampered some of their comparisons. They did not analyze the stylistic features of the texts sufficiently. They also tended to explain the text and their impressions of it rather than their interpretation, and showed little awareness of the structure of the text.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should guide and train their candidates to:

- mention clearly the text type and purpose, and the possible contexts of the texts.
- provide concrete and appropriate references from the text in order to make their analysis persuasive.
- avoid writing lengthy summaries of the texts and generalizations. Candidates should not quote long phrases and sentences without analysis.
- focus on effects of stylistic features in a meaningful way. It should not be simply a list of all the stylistic features in a text and their terminology.
- explain how the text's structure supports its purpose or contributes to its meaning.
- structure a well-balanced comparative commentary on both texts within a pair.
- use allocated exam time effectively by planning an outline and proof-reading at the end.
- practise more kanji in order to improve accuracy and to widen vocabulary.
- practise hand-writing more often.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 2	3 - 5	6 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20

General comments

Please see HL section.

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

For many candidates, it was difficult to examine possible contexts with convincing references from the text.

Many candidates did not demonstrate depth of analysis on the use and effects of stylistic features. It was still challenging for most candidates to show awareness of how stylistic features of a text are used to construct meaning, even though they could identify the features themselves.

It appeared difficult for most candidates to organize their textual analysis effectively. Some candidates explained the text line by line rather than by elements of analysis.

Incorrect use of kanji and/or a lack of kanji presented a serious problem. There were too many hiragana words which should have been written in kanji at Group 1 level.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Overall, the candidates showed understanding of the content of both texts well, and were very good at identifying the text types and possible target audiences with reference to the texts.

They were also well able to identify the stylistic features and to mention the terminologies for these devices.

Almost all responses had a proper introduction, body, and conclusion.

Most candidates had a good range of vocabulary and expressions, and were able to articulate their ideas and thoughts with good accuracy and clarity. They used appropriate register and style for the task.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Text 1

The article was about the sudden surge in popularity of a professor of education who is famous for his soft and feminine speech and his unconventional way of reaching out to a wider audience.

Most candidates understood the content of the article appropriately, and identified the text type and the target audience.

Excellent candidates understood the real reasons for his popularity and the message of the text. They examined the use of language in the article by referring to the many short and noun-ending sentences, the numerous numbers, and quotes used in this article. Some candidates analyzed the structure of the article very well, including the image and layout of the photo.

Weaker candidates understood the general content of the article well but their responses consisted of a summary of the text, and their discussion on how the stylistic features of the text were used to construct meaning was superficial and unconvincing.

Text 2

This text was about observation of nature such as birds, seeds, and plants in the author's garden. The author was the winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1965. With its simple description of what is happening in the garden, the author is gently critical of development. It is written using very simple language which creates a serene and peaceful atmosphere at the first impression.

Almost all the candidates understood the context and purpose of the text. Excellent candidates carefully examined the use and effects of the word-choice, which is simple, precise, direct, succinct, and objective. They further referred to many words written in hiragana instead of kanji, no use of "I", and the lack of expressions of his emotions and opinions in the text. Weaker candidates, however, were not able to grasp the effects of the simple language on the reader and missed the author's nuanced way of conveying the meaning.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Please see HL section.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 22	23 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

There are mainly three major difficulties that were apparent in the candidates' essays. First, there were not many candidates who successfully included the contexts of the works studied in their response to the question. Second, whereas characterization and theme were often discussed because they are usually directly related to the question selected, stylistic features

such as structure, style and techniques were often missed out although the text they referred to offered plenty of opportunities for exploration. This type of analysis would enhance the quality of the essays. Third, some candidates neglected to closely examine the expectations of the question selected before they began to writing.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most candidates appeared to have appropriate knowledge and understanding of the works. The majority of candidates were well prepared as to how to demonstrate their understanding of the themes, in particular.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Many candidates choose questions 1, 4, and 5, the most popular one being question 5.

Question 1: Most candidates appropriately responded to the question; many started from the point of view that it is the themes of a work that touch a reader beyond "time" and "space". Good to excellent essays had relevant textual references and managed to link the analysis of the context and stylistic features to the discussion of content, while weak essays simply presented the themes followed by summaries of the works. They omitted the reasons why or why not the work impresses a reader. They also sometimes presented inaccurate knowledge of the works. Whereas most candidates responded to the "time" aspect in the question, very few reacted to the "space".

Question 2: Very few chose this question. Candidates who responded to this question developed their discussions by looking at the gender of either the narrator or the characters in the works.

Question 3: Very few chose this question. All candidates related descriptions of the scenes to the themes of the works. Some selected scenery descriptions, while others select descriptions of key scenes.

Question 4: All candidates stated that contrastive characters are used to enhance the themes of the works and they tried to develop their discussions by presenting two contrastive characters and their link to the themes. Successful essays included appropriate descriptions of how contrasting characters were presented, brief explanations of the themes of the works, and analysis of how the contrastive characters and the themes were linked. Furthermore, in excellent essays, the context of the works and stylistic features were well integrated into the discussions. Some candidates were not aware that they were expected to compare the characters, and therefore compared the person with a thing. Some responses which discussed more than two characters as contrastive were less successful because the description of their contrasts were not sufficiently detailed, or, secondly, because most of the discussions were dedicated to the analysis of the themes or, finally, because the link between the contrastive characters and the themes was not synthesized. In relation to this question, many candidates spent much time analyzing the characters and the themes and not enough

time examining the context of the works and the stylistic features.

Question 5: Candidates appeared to find this question easy to work on as none misinterpreted the question. However, while it is the case that all candidates analyzed how freedom is described in the works in response to the question, there were quite a number of essays that lacked persuasiveness due to a shortage of textual references. Good essays described how freedom is seen in the works using a few effective examples, involving the larger context of the work.

Question 6: This question was often misinterpreted. The most common error in the analysis was omitting to state who the narrator was or to simply see him or her as the author. A few more examples of mistaken interpretations were: “the effect of the work on the reader” instead of “the effect of the narrator on the work” or “the effect of the narrator on the theme” instead of “the effect of the narrator on the reader”. Good essays clearly stated the role of the narrator followed by a thorough examination of his/her role supported by several effective textual references. They also examined the effects the narrator has on the reader and how this in turn affects the interpretation of the work.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

It is recommended teachers develop a few activities through which candidates learn:

- how to interpret the questions accurately
- how to use the contextual knowledge of the works
- how to select the support facts and textual references
- how to structure an essay, and how to organize ideas.

The following are some further notes that teachers may find useful when teaching future candidates:

- Illegible letters cannot be read by the examiner and therefore is disadvantageous for candidates.
- A ballpoint pen, not a pencil, must be used for security reasons as well as the fact that scripts are now scanned and marked electronically.
- More cases of inappropriate use of genkoyoshi are observed this year. Candidates should consider why they are selecting the genkoyoshi over horizontal examination paper, if they make this choice. It is not compulsory to use genkoyoshi and therefore if they are unsure of the conventions of writing on genkoyoshi then they may use the standard horizontally lined paper.
- Kanji seemed more problematic this year than in the past. Excessive use of hiragana instead of kanji affects the mark on Criterion E.

- The characteristics of literary genres deserve more emphasis.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 22	23 - 25

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

There was a considerable number of candidates whose essays were unbalanced in the sense that the two works were not really analyzed proportionally and that, for example, the point of view was discussed only for one work. Writing about stylistic features and including the context of the works in function of the topic were a challenge for many candidates. At standard level, correct use of language, punctuation, and vocabulary often appeared to be a challenge.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most candidates showed good knowledge and understanding of the works they studied in class. Some candidates displayed very good skills for integrating stylistic features in their discussion in relation to the question.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Many candidates chose questions 1 and 5, the most popular one being question 5.

Question 1: For many candidates, this question proved to be a demanding one as it led to rather superficial conclusions such as “Murakami is well known to the world and (I) read his book both in Japanese and English, so the statement of the question proves to be true”. Good to excellent essays were characterized by relevant textual references and an integrated analysis of context and stylistic features. Whereas most candidates responded to the “time” aspect in the question, very few reacted to the “space”.

Question 2: Very few candidates chose this question. Most who did tended to respond with rather unfounded speculations about how ‘women’ or ‘men’ would react, with superficial statements such as “women understand the female feelings better, so women will understand the meaning of the tears of the female character”. However, stronger candidates utilized the context of the work and analysed the stylistic features to reach a comprehensive conclusion.

Question 3: Very few choose this question. Weaker candidates only summed up their ideas without much discussion, while stronger candidates succeeded in analyzing the descriptions of the scenes coherently and logically.

Question 4: Most candidates developed their response by presenting the two contrastive characters and the theme of the works. Less successful responses failed to provide a clear description of how two characters are contrasted and did not make the link in terms of how these characters affect the interpretation of the works. More successful candidates managed to explain and show, with concrete references to the text and to the context of the works, how the two contrastive characters affected the way the reader interprets the works.

Question 5: Candidates appeared to find this question easy to work on as none misinterpreted the question. However, while all candidates analyzed how freedom is described in the works, there were quite a number of essays that lacked persuasiveness due to the incoherency of the arguments and a shortage of textual references. Weaker candidates did not get much further than summing up examples of freedom in the works. Good essays described how freedom is seen in the works using a few effective examples, together with references to the context of the works and analysis of stylistic features.

Question 6: This question was often misinterpreted. A few examples of mistaken interpretations were: “the effect of the reader on the work” or “the effect of the narrator on the theme” instead of “the effect of the narrator on the reader”. Good essays clearly stated the role of the narrator followed by a good examination of his/her role supported by a few good textual references. They also integrated the context of the works and stylistic features.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Please see HL section above.