

Assessment Report

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Part A: Commentary

Successful candidates had a very good understanding of their studied industry/genre and developed well-structured, well-supported arguments in response to a chosen statement.

Less successful candidates often tried to use rote-learned material, paying little or no attention to their chosen statement.

Part B: Report on standards

91248: Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between a media product and its audience

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- maintained good question focus, marrying the material they had studied to their chosen statement, although at times including detail that was irrelevant
- interpreted the question in a very broad way
- demonstrated a clear understanding of the nature of the relationship between the media product and a defined target audience
- provided specific evidence from the media product that helped to demonstrate a relationship between the product and the audience that was relevant to the chosen statement.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- presented rote-learned responses that had little connection to their chosen statement
- did not correctly interpret the demands/focus of their chosen statement
- did not provide enough specific supporting evidence
- demonstrated a basic understanding of a media product, but did not develop a discussion or argument, often writing much less than half of the suggested maximum
- focused mainly on describing the media product itself, without focusing on the relationship of the product with a specific audience.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- explained how and/or why a relationship between a media product and its audience operated
- provided thorough, accurate evidence such as demographic/psychographic information and/or media audience theory to establish the nature of the relationship between audience and media product
- maintained good question focus throughout the essay, using the key words of the question to frame their response
- attempted to discuss consequences of the relationship, but lacked the convincing critical thinking and evidence needed for Excellence.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- provided thorough, convincing, often varied evidence (including theory, statistics, academic, and other articles, as well as judiciously chosen

evidence from the media product and the creators of the product, to support the discussion of wider consequences)

- paired the evidence with a well-argued analysis to establish the link between the relationship between a media product, its audience, and a consequence (the perspective on the consequence often demonstrated perceptive, original, critical thinking)
- used their chosen statement to develop an argument that clearly responded to the statement
- showed a more nuanced awareness of the complexity of the relationship between a media product and its audience, as opposed to using generalised or more simplistic cause and effect statements when discussing the wider consequences.

Standard specific comments

Candidates chose a range of good media products to use featuring interesting relationships with their target audiences, providing a wealth of primary and secondary material for the candidates to build a thorough, critical response. As in 2019, *Stranger Things* was probably the most popular media product and tended to work well. Those candidates who presented responses very closely aligned to the argument and evidence provided in previous E8 exemplars, often lacked the critical understanding needed to generate a higher grade. It is important that 'tried and true' products such as *Stranger Things*, *Burka Avenger*, *Al Jazeera*, and *Aroha Bridge* are augmented and freshened up each year with new material that demonstrates evidence of candidates having undertaken a thorough, in-depth study of the media product, and its relationship with an audience.

Many candidates attempted to discuss consequences of the relationship between a media product and its audience. However, simple cause and effect explanations were not enough. They needed to show an understanding of the subtleties of the relationship, and use verifiable, specific evidence as support. Theory such as Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* and the *Uses and Gratifications* theory were commonly used but tended to be more useful in establishing why the relationship existed between a media product and its audience (a requirement for Merit), as opposed to how this relationship led to a wider social, cultural, political, industry, or economic consequence.

Strong Excellence candidates distinguished themselves from others by presenting their own original, well-reasoned takes on the consequences of the relationship between a media product and its audience.

91251: Demonstrate understanding of an aspect of a media genre

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- made some simplistic links between the audience and the change in the genre, without any real attempt to look at why or how the change in audience affected the genre
- defined an aspect of genre in simplistic terms, such as “second-wave feminism” but, again without discussing how it affected the genre
- addressed the chosen statement and supported their response with some evidence
- used some media theory but did not demonstrate understanding of the theory, or how it might apply to the chosen statement or to the media texts being used as examples.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not respond to a statement
- relied on pre-learned material and were unable to adapt / change it to address their chosen statement
- presented a close reading of individual texts without discussing them in terms of genre.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- made a clear link between the development in the genre (with relevant examples) and changes that occurred in the audience
- made frequent reference to the statement, integrating it naturally into the response rather than ‘tagging it on’ at the end of paragraphs

- used the statement to frame the response and to explain the chosen aspect of genre
- focused on an aspect of genre and the genre itself rather than on close reading of a small range of specific texts
- attempted, in some cases, to use theory but did not necessarily make clear its relevance to the argument being presented.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- discussed the statement and its relevance for the genre, giving clear and relevant details from within the genre and from secondary sources, to develop an argument
- discussed implications/consequences of the statement in relation to the chosen genre
- demonstrated a clear understanding of genre in general and a detailed understanding of the genre they were discussing
- provided relevant and detailed evidence to support the discussion of implications and impact.

Standard specific comments

Many candidates seemed to be using repetitive, prescriptive frameworks to structure their writing. When candidates use such scaffolds, particularly if they seem to have been developed from previous years' exemplars, they are likely to be disadvantaged. The enjoyment of reading an Excellence script comes from the independent insight evident in a candidate's response to a 'new' statement. It is difficult to develop that independent insight with material that has been pre learned and rigidly scaffolded.

Many candidates provided long descriptions of a genre's 'phases' or 'cycles' by describing a media text for each phase or cycle. Often, by the time this was done, they had written well over 1000 words, leaving little or no room for independent thought. Many candidates managed only a short reference to their chosen statement at the beginning or end of each (seemingly rote-learned) paragraph. Some examples included: the Slasher Genre: *Psycho* and then *Halloween* and then *Scream* and then...; the Horror Genre: *Nosferatu* and then *Them!* and then *Psycho* and then *Halloween* and then...; the Teen Genre: *Rebel Without a Cause* and then *The Breakfast Club* and then *Love Simon*...; and the Dystopia Genre: *Metropolis* and then *Blade Runner* and then *The Hunger Games* and then....

The 91251 standard asks for candidates to discuss a specific genre and its audience rather than making vague generalisations about media texts/genre and society. Statements such as, “*The teenage film genre was not the same back in 1956 as it is now – the audiences receiving it helped the genre change to become more relevant*” is a truism that could be said of any media text compared to any other media text from a different time period.

Similarly, writing about the change in representation of African American people in the Coming-of-Age genre (using *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Reality High*), and claiming that the BLM movement has meant more openness in casting diversity, is arguably true of all genres. Candidates are advised to provide specific discussion relating this sort of claim to the genre itself, or evidence to support such assertions.

Candidates who write about generic features of media texts such as setting, music, technology, etc risk writing generic descriptions of changes, rather than describing a development specific to a genre.

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Previous years' reports

[2019 \(PDF, 302KB\)](#) [2018 \(PDF, 118KB\)](#) [2017 \(PDF, 46KB\)](#) [2016 \(PDF, 216KB\)](#)