

## Assessment Report

# Level 2 English 2017

Standards [91098](#) [91099](#) [91100](#)

### Part A: Commentary

In 91098 and 91099, candidates who showed engagement with the text(s) and the essay question were rewarded. Candidates' responses were generally focused and concise and the best responses showed independent thinking and a clear awareness that the text(s) is a deliberate construct.

The essay questions are developed from the four aspects specified in the curriculum: purpose and audience, ideas, language features and structure. Candidates who narrowly prepare to answer on only one aspect are likely to be disadvantaged. A small but significant number of candidates chose an essay topic that was not well suited to their chosen text(s). Careful and considered question selection will benefit many candidates.

In 91100, candidates engaged positively with the texts provided, with the majority of candidates completing the whole paper. Those who responded with in-depth analysis were rewarded; the quality of the response is more important than the quantity of language features identified.

Candidates are managing well with these recent changes in examination format and direction:

- the questions or statements are more specific and targeted
- a smaller range of questions or statements to respond to in the essay standards.
- wording of some questions varies from previous years
- guidance given to write concise essays.

Expected outcomes:

- fewer candidate responses are pre-learned or pre-prepared essays
- candidates have better opportunities to choose the most suitable questions, and are rewarded with better grades
- candidates respond well to different question formats for Unfamiliar Text
- more candidates write essays within or about the suggested length
- the published exemplars, especially for Merit and Excellence, continue to provide good examples of succinct and well organised essays.

### Part B: Report on standards

## **91098: Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence**

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- selected a suitable question for their chosen text(s)
- understood the selected question
- addressed the question directly and clearly
- structured their essay with clear introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion, often with 1 point or example per paragraph
- addressed all parts of the question, sometimes unevenly
- provided relevant details from the text(s) to support their points
- showed some understanding, often implied, of the author's purpose.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not address the question
- did not understand what key words in the question meant (eg "structured," or "human nature")
- presented an essay that had been pre-prepared and memorised
- showed limited understanding of the text
- described rather than analysed an aspect of the text
- wrote brief, simplistic responses
- did not show sufficient command of English writing skills to communicate a clear argument.

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

- demonstrated comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the text
- showed some independent thinking
- maintained a well-structured, focused argument that closely addressed the chosen question
- developed their argument with a range of carefully selected ideas and supporting evidence
- convincingly analysed the evidence they presented using correct terminology
- showed a clear understanding of the author's purpose and its effect on readers
- wrote fluently and coherently, showing control of language.

Candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence commonly:

- wrote a confident, fluent and articulate argument, often using sophisticated and precise vocabulary
- engaged maturely with the text(s), often in an original way
- maintained a strong thesis throughout their essay
- integrated a wide range of carefully-selected ideas and supporting evidence
- included analysis that showed complexity and developed the argument further rather than repeating it.

### **Standard specific comments**

Question choice was a key factor in success. Most questions were well handled but some candidates misunderstood important words in the questions. A surprising number of candidates misunderstood the term "setting."

Candidates' responses were more focused and more concise than in recent years. Candidates are demonstrating their ability to unpack the Achievement Objectives in *The New Zealand Curriculum*, particularly the need to "show a discriminating understanding."

There was still a significant number of pre-prepared responses. Such essays rarely achieve highly because they do not address the question.

Popular texts and authors that worked well included:

*The Book Thief, Mr Pip, Lord of the Flies, The Kite Runner, Wilfred Owen, Jasper Jones, Katherine Mansfield, To Kill a Mockingbird, Macbeth, Carol Ann Duffy, Montana 1948, The Road, Bulibasha.*

Some texts did not allow candidates to reach the required depth for Level 2. These included: *The Help, The Hunger Games.*

Beyond the text comments are encouraged, however the response should primarily focus on addressing the question. Any discussion of wider contexts should be relevant and framed by the question, the text and the author's purpose.

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## **91099: Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s), supported by evidence**

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- selected a suitable essay question for their chosen text(s)
- understood the selected question
- addressed both parts of the question, using its key words in the response
- wrote a straightforward three-point essay with appropriate evidence
- at least referred to the "how" part of the question, using a limited number of language features accurately, often relying heavily on dialogue
- described in detail, rather than analysed.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not understand the question or its intention
- wrote a brief essay which did not address the question
- used a pre-prepared essay that did not address the question
- relied on summarising or describing the text
- did not support points with evidence or analysis
- did not show sufficient command of English writing skills to communicate clearly.

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

- wrote a coherent, focused response that wholly addressed the question
- wrote responsively, showing an appreciation for how they were positioned to respond to the events, characters and ideas
- referred to a range of language techniques and provided detailed analysis
- showed an awareness of the text's purpose and the audience's response
- responded to the question by convincingly analysing the deliberate use of techniques
- made relevant connections beyond the text and commented with their own judgments and reflections.

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

- wrote fluently, in an engaging style with sophisticated vocabulary and a sense of personal voice
- wrote essays which showed a comprehensive appreciation of the text as a whole, weaving their analysis of the chosen aspect through a discussion of how the text develops
- fully understood the question and used their response to show that understanding, with skilful integration of examples and language techniques
- debated and critiqued the ideas in the text, or the merits of the film's crafting

- used language features confidently and judiciously to support the argument. Technical analysis was not always extensive, but was carefully-chosen and apposite.
- adopted an original viewpoint and explored multiple interpretations and/or nuances of meaning.

### Standard specific comments

Many candidates discussed film as if this text type is no different from written texts. Candidates relied heavily on dialogue as a language feature.

The term “language features” is used in the essay questions because that is one of the four aspects of English as detailed in *The New Zealand Curriculum*. The Assessment Specifications provide for a list of some commonly used visual and oral language features.

Popular texts that worked well included:

*Into the Wild, Nightcrawler, Saving Private Ryan, The Piano, Tsotsi, North Country, The Constant Gardener, Whiplash, Gladiator, The Hurt Locker, District 9, Gran Torino, True Grit, Ex Machina, The Dark Horse, The King’s Speech, Children of Men and The Dark Knight.*

Less successful films included:

*A Beautiful Mind, Good Will Hunting, The Blindside, Slumdog Millionaire and Rear Window.*

It was gratifying to see that in spite of a vast number of responses on *V for Vendetta* and *The Shawshank Redemption*, a number of new texts were used, including: *The Imitation Game, Suffragette and Hidden Figures.*

Markers noted that some texts seem very bleak for candidates at this level. E.g. *American History X, Twelve Years a Slave.*

## 91100: Analyse significant aspects of unfamiliar written text(s) through close reading, supported by evidence

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- addressed the question using key words
- showed some understanding of the text
- supported their thinking with appropriate evidence
- provided a thin connection between technique(s), example(s) and idea(s)
- briefly explained techniques
- used some analysis related terminology
- tended to discuss techniques in isolation.

Candidates who were assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not address the question
- summarised the text without referring to techniques or ideas
- did not connect techniques to a relevant idea within the text
- did not provide examples to support their comments
- showed little understanding of the text
- wrote very brief or incomplete answers.

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

- addressed the question with a clear focus

- showed a confident knowledge and understanding of techniques
- analysed how techniques created ideas and/or effects, unpacking in some detail how the techniques worked
- showed a clear understanding of the text
- showed some awareness of the writer’s purpose and deliberate crafting of the text
- made connections across the text
- wrote fluently.

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

- analysed and interpreted the text with originality or insight
- demonstrated insight in their explanation of key ideas, techniques and examples and how these works together
- demonstrated a clear, mature understanding of the ideas in the text, often going beyond the text, linking the ideas to other relevant contexts
- discussed ideas beyond the text and acknowledged either their personal response to it and/or made a link to human experience
- appreciated the choices made by the writer and how they impacted the reader’s understanding / experience of the text
- presented an integrated discussion that valued the text as a whole.

### **Standard specific comments**

Candidates engaged positively with the texts provided, with the majority of students completing the whole paper.

At Level 2 candidates must discuss how techniques individually or collectively work to achieve a certain purpose. It is important that candidates relate their discussion directly to the question posed in the examination and that they focus their discussion on the techniques employed by the writer.

The number of techniques mentioned in an answer is less important than the quality of discussion attached to each technique; fewer techniques and more analysis of how they work in the context of the text and in relation to the question will advantage candidates.

## **English subject page**

### **Previous years' reports**

[2016 \(PDF, 0KB\)](#)

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