

Assessment Report

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Part A: Commentary

In 91098 and 91099, the most successful candidates engaged with their chosen question and wrote a focused essay, showing independent thinking. Some essay questions are phrased in a general way to make them accessible, for example, “readers’ emotions”. The best candidates unpacked these broad terms and crafted an essay around a more specific interpretation of the question. Candidates who ignored key parts of the question did not achieve highly.

In 91100, most candidates seemed to find the texts accessible. The most successful candidates addressed the questions directly and in depth.

Candidates are reminded of the statement in the assessment specification, ‘The quality of the candidate’s writing is more important than the length of their essay. Candidates should aim to write a concise essay of no more than five pages in length’. Teachers should note that in the *New Zealand Curriculum* the Level 7 Achievement Objectives in English state that students will “show a discriminating understanding...” and further teaching and learning around this could be of benefit.

Part B: Report on standards

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

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote a straightforward answer in an essay style response
- incorporated key words from the question in their response, often only in the introduction or conclusion
- linked their response to the selected question, although not always presenting a cohesive argument
- repeated the connection to the idea rather than developing it
- began to analyse and unpack evidence
- referred to techniques / language features
- showed an awareness of the author's purpose
- explained what happened, rather than analysed the text fully
- gave surface level interpretations
- showed some engagement with the text.

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

- showed knowledge of the text but demonstrated little understanding of it
- produced plot summaries
- did not interpret or develop ideas
- misinterpreted or misunderstood the questions or parts of the questions
- ignored the question
- were repetitive, and did not give specific evidence
- wrote about connections to the text rather than the text itself
- used rote-learned essays with no link to the question.

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

- showed engagement and personal appreciation of the text
- demonstrated convincing understanding of author's purpose
- analysed techniques with some depth of understanding
- showed a convincing understanding of the author's crafting for a particular purpose
- used a range of specific evidence
- made connections about ideas that went beyond the text
- began to integrate elements of the text, e.g. a character was developed through language, setting and conflict
- integrated quotations, supporting ideas consistently
- wrote clearly and fluently included judgement statements.

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

- showed a genuine, often passionate, personal engagement with the text
- used language that indicated a perceptive understanding
- wrote integrated responses using correct and precise terminology
- incorporated techniques into a discussion that interpreted texts and ideas
- connected deeply with their texts, understanding both the author's purpose and the crafting involved in delivering the message
- responded to the question specifically, with confidence and knowledge
- established a focused, literate commentary throughout the essay
- displayed both high level literacy and thinking skills adapted to the question
- sustained the idea(s) sufficiently
- understood irony and aspects that created mood / tone which contributed to the "perceptive understanding"
- linked text ideas to similar issues in other texts / outside in contemporary society, focusing on ideas rather than a generic issue
- presented a sustained reflective discussion, drawing conclusions and making judgments.

Standard-specific comments

Question choice remains a key factor in success and further teaching and learning around this important skill will benefit candidates.

Popular texts and authors that worked well included *The Great Gatsby*, *Othello* and other Shakespearean texts, *Lord of the Flies*, *Mr Pip*, *The Things They Carried*, Carol Ann Duffy, *The Book Thief*, *The Road*, and *The Messenger*.

It was pleasing to see a good number of new texts being studied. These include *Kitchen* (Banana Yoshimoto), *Station Eleven*, *The Power*, *Vultures*, and *Kidnapped*. It was also pleasing to see a range of contemporary Māori and Pasifika writers being studied, including Kathy Jetnil Kitjner, Tayi Tibbles, and Glen Colquhoun.

Some candidates found it difficult to reach the required depth for Level 7 of the *New Zealand Curriculum* with texts such as *Ka Kite*, *Bro*, *THUG*, and contemporary song lyrics.

Markers commented that they felt some candidates reused material from internal assessments, re-working them to fit one of the questions. Such an approach disadvantaged candidates because the question was not addressed closely enough.

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

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote a formulaic response
- understood the key words of the question but did not unpack their implications
- addressed the key words of the question, not necessarily in a balanced way
- demonstrated straightforward handling of terminology
- lacked attention to the wider purpose of their text
- gave responses driven often only by dialogue (some candidates referred to one main film shot)
- wrote lots of description at the expense of analysis

- made poor question choices and did not read the question properly.

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

- made poor questions choices and did not address one or more parts of the question
- lacked fluency to convey ideas well enough
- did not including language features
- presented rote-learned essays that did not address the question
- misunderstood key words, e.g. structure, setting, theme and purpose
- described rather than analysed the details in the text
- wrote far too little.

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

- showed some fluency and control of expression
- kept their focus on the demands of the question
- used evidence throughout the essay
- showed awareness, though not always consistently, of the director's purpose and manipulation of the viewer
- responded to the question by analysing the deliberate use of language features
- understood the implications of the key words in the question
- made at least three distinct and convincing points within their essay.

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

- supported their examples with a sustained range of language features
- demonstrated extensive knowledge of the text, as well as the social / historical context, plus relevant details about the director
- displayed both an originality of thought and a stylistic flair in their expression
- established a strong thesis on the question and sustained discussion on this
- displayed a skilful integration of examples and language techniques

- made effective evaluative statements with perceptive links made beyond the text.

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.

Question choice remains a key factor in success, and further teaching and learning around this important skill will benefit candidates.

Higher-level responses tended to far exceed the recommended word count, particularly in the web-based version of the assessment.

However, the same issues were seen in both the paper- and web-based responses, with candidates not fully answering the question, and showing a lack of understanding of the key words in the question. Candidates should make sure they should read the question carefully – for example in Question 2, some candidates chose multiple emotional moments, rather than focusing on one.

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

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- identified a range of relevant isolated techniques and linked them to the writer's purpose
- considered a section of the text in depth, rather than looking at the text holistically
- identified relevant text references as evidence of understanding the text and question
- identified language features accurately within the evidence
- explained evidence in relation to the question
- explicitly and/or implicitly acknowledged author purpose, ideas, themes
- mentioned the significance or importance of the text's ideas
- showed surface level engagement with the texts, perhaps through personal experience in relation to the text or observations of society

- showed some awareness of the relationship between author and reader
- wrote formulaic structured responses, often repetitive.

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

- made little or no reference to writer's purpose
- misunderstood the key ideas in the text
- identified limited techniques with generalised explanations of intended effects
- summarised the texts
- identified important text references (e.g. quotations or paraphrased sections) though were not linked to an idea or author's purpose
- had vague explanations that did not explain the meaning of the language technique
- did not explain selected evidence in relation to the question or idea or purpose, or paraphrased the evidence.

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

- discussed how language techniques worked together to enhance impact
- noted changes in tone or writer focus
- articulated the writer's purpose clearly
- addressed the question directly
- used evidence from across the text, making links between sections of the text and making links between quoted evidence
- analysed the language techniques used in relation to the question, author's purpose, and key ideas / themes
- showed an awareness of tone, changes in tone or meaning in the text
- showed awareness of the impact on the reader's understanding
- went beyond the text through discussion of messages, revealing traits of society and humanity
- followed a clear structure, with emphasis on evidence and explanation
- wrote fluently using a range of sentence starters, precise diction and appropriate connecting words.

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

- analysed the texts in detail, discussing technique combinations and commenting on the text as a whole
- went beyond the text without forcing relevance
- appreciated the subtle impacts of language techniques used and made regular comments linking impact to the writer's purpose
- made original interpretations / comments that were supported with evidence and were not afraid to offer more than one interpretation
- addressed the question clearly with emphasis on purpose of the text and its impact on the reader
- selected and wove evidence carefully from across the text into the response
- integrated identification of language features accurately into the response
- discussed their awareness of the writer's structure for each text type
- discussed connotations, implied meanings, and inferred meanings of evidence selected
- built an argument from the opening statement to the closing remarks
- wrote confidently and fluently, using sophisticated and precise vocabulary.

Standard-specific comments

Candidates seemed to find the texts used this year accessible.

Candidates sitting the web-based examination tended to write a greater amount than those completing their examination on paper. This did not necessarily translate into higher quality responses. Across both modes, there were plenty of candidates who wrote a lot but didn't end saying much. Lengthy introductions including the title of the text and the author are not necessary. Candidates can achieve all levels of achievement in the space provided – those who used supplementary paper often added no extra value to their response.

Teachers should note that the *New Zealand Curriculum* Level 7 Achievement Objectives in English state that students will “show a discriminating understanding...” and further teaching and learning around this could benefit candidates.

Candidates ought to consider the meaning of the text as a whole before analysing the techniques within the text.

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Previous years' reports

[2019 \(PDF, 118KB\)](#)

[2018 \(PDF, 134KB\)](#)

[2017 \(PDF, 57KB\)](#)

[2016 \(PDF, 246KB\)](#)