National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2011 Assessment Report

English Level 2

90377	**Analyse extended written texts(s)**
90378	**Analyse short written texts**
90379	**Analyse a visual or oral text**
90380	**Read unfamiliar texts and analyse the ideas and language features**

COMMENTARY

This was the final year for examinations to assess these achievement standards.

The majority of candidates wrote full responses to aspects of texts, showing the ability to analyse effectively. Most wrote more than the minimum word length set for each standard, allowing the development of ideas and appropriate use of text evidence.

Text choice was an important factor as affecting candidate results in the essay-based papers. The New Zealand Curriculum requires the use of an inquiry-based planning approach, relying on teachers' knowledge of students in order to choose appropriate texts for study. Candidates achieve well when teachers have chosen texts based on their students' interests, needs, and abilities.

Each essay-based standard report includes comments on the performance of texts in achievement; these are not full or conclusive lists or recommendations, and markers consider all texts for assessment.

The choice of question is noted as being equally important, and candidates are encouraged to read all questions before choosing one most appropriate to their knowledge, interest, and studied text. Most candidates responded to questions about theme and character. The study of texts should include a range of aspects of literature analysis, and so may integrate an awareness of the function of setting and the power of narrative voice, as well as language and structural choices made by text creators.

As in previous years, some candidates wrote essays that had been prepared to fit a question other than those offered. Candidates must deal directly to the topic chosen by framing a clear response to its key features. Across all standards, candidates who formed and justified clear opinions about aspect of texts achieved best.

STANDARD REPORTS

90377   Analyse extended written texts

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- responded to the key words of the question
- answered both parts of the question
- used relevant examples and quotations
- showed awareness of the purpose and effect of techniques chosen
- wrote a formulaic answer.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- wrote a response that was too brief
- did not address both parts of the question
- focused on plot

- used a prepared essay
- offered a simplistic response
- relied on a film version of an extended text.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- engaged with the text on a personal level
- showed some fluency and control of expression
- used structure effectively to address the question
- focused on the question throughout the response
- used appropriate quotations and close referencing
- showed some awareness of writer's purpose.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- wrote with flair and fluency
- showed insight beyond the text
- demonstrated extensive knowledge of the text
- contributed relevant material about author and context
- integrated apt quotation and referencing
- wove quotations effectively
- used an original viewpoint and insight
- responded to all aspects of the question.

OTHER COMMENTS

Most candidates matched a text to an appropriate question successfully. Those who addressed all aspects of the question achieved well.

Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, Measure for Measure, The Kite Runner, Mr Pip, Lord of the Flies, The Book Thief, Jane Eyre, To Kill a Mockingbird, My Sister's Keeper, Of Mice and Men, Krystyna's Story, The Road, The Secret Life of Bees, and *Montana 1948* were some of those texts that allowed candidates to respond well. These texts garnered responses that achieved at every grade, providing opportunities from basic to very sophisticated analysis.

Some more adult texts used – *The Colour Purple, Angela's Ashes, Pride and Prejudice, The Handmaid's Tale* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* – might more appropriately extend students at Level 3.

90378   Analyse short written texts

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- used key words from the question
- addressed all parts of the question
- wrote a structured response
- showed familiarity with the texts
- used some supporting evidence
- offered simplistic, often brief, analysis
- demonstrated some understanding of techniques and their purpose.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- wrote plot-based answers
- did not analyse sufficiently
- did not provide evidence for two texts
- showed no understanding of the key terms of the question
- used a prepared essay
- did not address both parts of the question
- showed poor understanding of techniques and their purposes.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- analysed evidence fully
- used examples and quotations to support an idea
- showed understanding of the whole text and how it had been crafted
- engaged with both texts, demonstrating sound knowledge of both
- drew on context and explained its relevance
- showed understanding of writer's purpose
- linked ideas to other parts or other aspects of the texts.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- wrote argument-driven rather than technique-driven essays
- imbedded detail and analysis into the argument
- analysed insightfully within and beyond the text
- used sophisticated language to write compellingly
- understood that the writer made specific crafting choices

- made thematic or stylistic connections between texts and between aspects of texts
- wrote an integrated and fluid response
- wove a wide variety of evidence into coherent arguments about the texts.

OTHER COMMENTS

In this standard, a thorough understanding of the ideas behind the texts chosen allowed candidates to discuss the effectiveness of techniques. Those who used this understanding to construct a coherent argument achieved well.

The works of several authors were successfully analysed by candidates, including poetry or short stories by Carol Anne Duffy, Sylvia Plath, Maya Angelou, and Wilfred Owen. An increased number of local texts were used to effect, including those by Owen Marshall, Janet Frame, Fleur Adcock, Katherine Mansfield, Lauris Edmond, Witi Ihimaera, Hone Tuwhare, J K Baxter, Glen Colquhoun, and Karlo Mila.

Texts that offered students the best opportunities to achieve well were those whose content was accessible and promoted some challenging thought. Texts with adult or disturbing content are not suitable for use in this standard.

90379   Analyse a visual or oral text

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- chose a question appropriate to their interest and the text
- referred to the key ideas in the question
- used specific examples from the text
- organised their material around the question
- discussed how techniques worked and discussed their effects.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- wrote plot-based responses
- ignored the visual or oral nature of text
- used pre-constructed material.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- explored ideas within the context of the question
- provided clear links between the examples used and the questions
- considered directorial purpose
- used content knowledge to develop points in depth.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- wrote confidently and showed an engagement with the text
- explored many facets of an idea or concept, showing perception and insight
- went beyond the text in a sensitive manner
- demonstrated awareness of the impact of the visual or oral nature of the text
- interwove quotations into their essays
- offered new or unusual slants on ideas or concepts.

OTHER COMMENTS

A wide variety of film texts were used to complete this standard; in general, these were action and drama films.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Into the Wild, Slumdog Millionaire, Gattaca, In My Father's Den [R16], *Atonement, V for Vendetta, The Shawshank Redemption* [R16], *Amelie*, and *Children of Men* [R16] were some of the most commonly used film texts that offered the potential for success. (Films rated R16 are not permitted for anyone less than 16 years of age.)

90380   Read unfamiliar texts and analyse the ideas and language features

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:
- addressed each question
- identified one or more language technique used
- proposed an explanation of the effect of the technique(s)
- explained substantial ideas in the texts
- provided text evidence to support explanation
- demonstrated some understanding of the overall purpose of the texts
- produced structured answers in full sentences
- effectively used the support offered in the question booklet.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were awarded Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:
- did not refer to or answer the question
- showed evidence of having misread the meaning of the texts
- did not identify language techniques
- recorded lists of techniques without formulating answers to questions
- did not identify the effect of techniques
- did not link identified techniques to the meaning or purpose of the texts.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:
- identified techniques
- explored the effect of techniques on the texts
- used specific examples from the texts to support answers, often weaving these examples into responses
- identified ideas and linked these to techniques identified
- showed awareness of the intended audience and the viewpoint of the writer
- grasped the overall purpose of the texts
- used controlled and expressive language
- structured answers around the question and support statements.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:
- explored a range of techniques including style and diction choices made by the writer
- linked techniques to messages in the texts
- developed a clear personal response to significant ideas in the texts
- interpreted writers' purposes
- wrote a clear, structured response using accurate language.

OTHER COMMENTS

The most able candidates developed insightful answers, demonstrating understanding supported by evidence and the analysis of the forms and meanings of texts. They explained the effects of language techniques, and investigated the relationship between writers' purposes and the reader's role in making meaning. Bullet-point answers were not constructed well enough to allow the development of complete responses.

Some candidates named and gave examples of sophisticated language devices and techniques but did not connect their knowledge to the key ideas in the texts. Preparation for this standard requires a balanced approach so that awareness of the central aspects of texts is developed.