

# 2015 NCEA Assessment Report

English Level 2 91098, 91099, 91100

## Part A: Commentary

Comment on the overall response of candidates to 2015 examinations for all achievement standards covered by this report.

For essay-based standards, those students who presented a concise argument were generally rewarded with positive grades. A brief but developed argument is more likely to achieve than numerous descriptive examples which do not further a case. Five pages is a recommended maximum length.

Questions are developed from the curriculum and as such cover aspects such as purpose and audience, ideas, structure, and language features. Students who expect and only prepare for a specific element of one of those aspects, such as symbolism, may find themselves at a disadvantage.

In the close-reading standard, formulas such as PILATES can be useful to scaffold students into an approach. However, this can mean focus on the formula to the detriment of addressing the question.

## Part B: Report on standards

### 1. Assessment Report for 91098: Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence

<b>Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wrote a response to the question rather than a prepared response</li> <li>used the key words from the question</li> <li>displayed a reasonable understanding of the text and authorial purpose.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wrote a plot-based response</li> <li>failed to engage with the question</li> <li>answered beyond the scope of the question (for example, discussed details from the whole text when the question focused on the end)</li> <li>described rather than analysed</li> <li>showed insufficient understanding of the text</li> <li>provided no evidence.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Merit</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understood the question</li> <li>developed ideas around the question using relevant evidence from the text</li> <li>explained why language features were used</li> <li>wrote essays which had a clear shape and direction</li> <li>showed a clear understanding of authorial purpose and the effect on the reader.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Excellence</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wrote fluently in a formal style using sophisticated vocabulary and varied syntax</li> <li>had a strong thesis running through the essay with a sense of an integrated argument</li> <li>included reflective comments that showed complexity which developed rather than repeated an argument.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Standard specific comments</b></p>	<p>Choosing the right question was very important- some answers would have worked better if framed around a different question.</p> <p>Beyond the text comparisons need to be interwoven and appropriate.</p> <p>Responding to one text, even one poem or short story, often produced a better response than covering multiple texts. Students who responded to two or more texts often provided more examples of an identical argument as opposed to developing the nuances of each text.</p> <p>Popular texts included The Road, The Lord of the Flies, Macbeth, The Book Thief, The Kite Runner, and War Poetry (Pope, Owen and Sassoon).</p> <p>There were several texts that students found more challenging because they struggled to analyse and respond to them at the level required for Level 2. These included: "Die Trying," and "Whale Rider."</p>
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## 2. Assessment Report for 91099: Analyse specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s), supported by evidence

<p><b>Achieved</b></p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• answered both parts of the question, using key words in the opening paragraph</li> <li>• wrote a formulaic answer that mentioned aspects of the question but did not fully engage with those aspects</li> <li>• made statements that covered the "how" requirement of the question</li> <li>• understood the key words of the question</li> <li>• knew the text well.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Not Achieved</b></p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wrote a response that was too brief</li> <li>• wrote a plot summary</li> <li>• used a prepared essay</li> <li>• addressed or only understood one part of the question</li> <li>• described rather than analysed</li> <li>• misunderstood key words, e.g. "structure", "motif".</li> </ul>
<p><b>Achieved with Merit</b></p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engaged with the text on a personal level</li> <li>• showed some fluency and control of expression</li> <li>• used structure effectively to address the question</li> <li>• kept the focus of the exam question throughout the essay</li> <li>• used appropriate quotations and/or close referencing</li> <li>• showed some awareness of director's purpose and the viewer's response</li> <li>• responded to the question by exploring the deliberate use of film techniques.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Achieved with Excellence</b></p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wrote with flair and fluency</li> <li>• showed insight beyond the text</li> <li>• demonstrated extensive knowledge of the text, as well as bringing in relevant material about the director and the social/historical context</li> <li>• integrated analysis of film techniques</li> <li>• used an original viewpoint and explored possibilities of meaning</li> <li>• fully understood and responded to all aspects of the question</li> <li>• presented more original and thought-provoking ideas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Standard specific comments</b></p>	<p>Question 1, related to 'motifs' proved problematic for some candidates who had prepared and were determined to use a symbolism answer. Teachers need to make sure candidates recognise the dangers of going into the examination with such a limited approach.</p> <p>There was a wide range of texts, but fewer contemporary ones. Texts that candidates responded well to included:</p> <p>Imitation Game, Little Miss Sunshine, Lars and the Real Girl, The Dark Horse, Schindler's list, The Pianist, Secret life of Walter Mitty, Invictus, Children of Men,</p>

	<p>Shutter Island, Black Swan, Crash, Green Mile, Pursuit of Happiness, Into the Wild, The Talented Mr Ripley, Saving Private Ryan, The Hurricane, Blind Side, Strictly Ballroom, The Great Gatsby, Gran Torino, The Social Network, Mona Lisa Smile, North Country</p> <p>There were several texts that candidates found more challenging because they struggled to analyse and respond to them at the level required for Level 2. These included: 'Jaws', 'E.T', 'The Godfather', 'The Help', 'The Outsiders'.</p> <p>In some cases the candidates simply did not appreciate the text in a mature way or see the relevance to themselves. These texts included: 'Thelma and Louise', 'Desert Flower', 'Dead Poets' Society', and 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'.</p>
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### 3. Assessment Report for 91100: Analyse significant aspects of unfamiliar written text(s) through close reading, supported by evidence

<b>Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acknowledged the question in their answer, though often to a limited extent</li> <li>• showed some understanding of the text</li> <li>• provided a thin connection between technique(s), example(s) and idea(s)</li> <li>• briefly explained techniques</li> <li>• used some analysis related terminology</li> <li>• tended to discuss techniques in isolation</li> <li>• included limited personal response to the text.</li> </ul>
<b>Not Achieved</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• did not address the question.</li> <li>• did not connect techniques to a relevant idea within the text</li> <li>• gave generic definitions of technique(s) as opposed to discussing how the technique(s) contributed to the text in question</li> <li>• did not provide examples to support their comments</li> <li>• summarised the text without referring to techniques or ideas</li> <li>• showed little understanding of the text</li> <li>• wrote very brief or incomplete answers.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Merit</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• addressed the question with a clear focus</li> <li>• showed a confident knowledge and understanding of techniques</li> <li>• analysed how techniques created ideas and/or effects, unpacking in some detail how the technique(s) worked</li> <li>• showed some awareness of the author's purpose and deliberate crafting of the text</li> <li>• showed a clear understanding of the text</li> <li>• made connections across the text</li> <li>• wrote fluently.</li> </ul>
<b>Achieved with Excellence</b>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysed and interpreted the text with originality</li> <li>• demonstrated insight in their explanation of the key ideas, techniques and examples and how these work together</li> <li>• integrated discussion of techniques with the discussion of the author's purpose, often linking two or more techniques together</li> <li>• made perceptive observations about key ideas</li> <li>• engaged with the text through insightful personal comment</li> <li>• demonstrated a clear, mature understanding of the ideas in the text, often going beyond the text, linking the ideas to other contexts and understandings</li> <li>• discussed ideas beyond the text and acknowledged either their personal response to it and/or made a link to human experience</li> <li>• showed a mature and confident understanding of the writer's purpose and craft, as well as the text as a whole.</li> </ul>

<b>Standard specific comments</b>	<p>Candidates engaged positively with the texts provided, often showing engagement with the ideas.</p> <p>Candidates must focus on the demands of the given question, rather than focusing solely on techniques used with no connection to the question itself.</p> <p>The bulleted list provided under each question, is designed to remind them of what is important to include in their response. The bulleted list should be integrated into an answer. Those who approached the bullet points as three separate questions often struggled to score well.</p> <p>At Level 2, students must analyse how techniques work to achieve a certain purpose. Candidates should go beyond listing techniques apparent in the text and extend into a discussion of how they individually or collectively create certain effects.</p> <p>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 is desirable.</p> <p>Some candidates write lengthy and redundant introductions. They should be encouraged to engage the question and begin their analysis as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Candidates should be encouraged to attempt all three questions as even one or two marks for a question may push them over the line when combined with the other two questions.</p>
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