

Assessment Report

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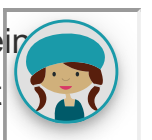
Part A: Commentary

Across the assessments, many candidates showed evidence of thoughtful consideration of texts, studied and unseen. Areas of strength included attention to detail of language and ideas, and the use of evidence appropriate to specific standards.

Areas of weakness included insufficient attention to the intent of the language and demands of the chosen statements in 91472 and 91473, and the questions in 91474.

To improve grade outcomes, more knowledge regarding the 'aspects' specified for English in the *New Zealand Curriculum* would be helpful. For example, clear understanding of what 'structure' or 'setting' means in this context would help candidates to produce better answers when they select a statement or produce a response that addresses these aspects.

Further, grade outcomes are likely to improve through the enhancement of candidates' proficiency in organising ideas. For example, there is benefit in being able to show a clear understanding through the crafting of an introduction that



frames an argument rather than merely introduces the studied text . An introduction that includes a lengthy plot summary or bibliographic or historical information with no clear relevance to the intended argument is of little benefit.

For 91472 and 91473, candidates are well served by selecting a statement they understand and can explore in depth. For example, statements such as those that point to differences or development within a text require comparison or connection. Candidates who convert this kind of focus into a structured argument are likely to achieve well. Unfortunately, some candidates appear to be lightly repackaging material structured around the requirements of other standards, which tends to result in a general response of dubious relevance to the statement selected.

Some candidates used the space for planning effectively. Other candidates' planning took the form of a mini essay which was largely repeated rather than developed in the response itself.

Many responses were over-long. This was often a product of redundant evidence in the form of plot recall rather than carefully selected evidence to support an argument. Consequently, some candidates demonstrated breadth of knowledge at the expense of depth. Changing this emphasis, perhaps through more effective planning, has the potential to enhance achievement in all three standards.

Part B: Report on standards

91472: Respond critically to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence

Examinations

The examination included eight statements from which candidates were required to select one in order to make a critical response to a studied text. The statements addressed a range of 'aspects' as identified in the *New Zealand Curriculum*, such as language, purpose, structure and ideas.

The assessment specification sets out the expectation that a critical response will take the form of an argument, communicated clearly and coherently through a structured written answer that follows the conventions of an essay format. Evidence should be in the form of relevant detail which may include quotation. Each statement provides candidates with opportunities for evaluation by

accounting for how and why a text is valuable in educative, meaningful, or other terms.

Observations

Focus on the specified aspect, as expressed in the statement and framed in an argument, is vital for Achievement at Merit and Excellence levels. The selection of supporting evidence rather than wholesale dumping of detail or plot recall supports higher achievement. While many candidates clearly knew their studied text(s), achievement was impeded where textual detail, not argument, framed the core of the response.

Sophisticated long texts such as *Othello* and *1984*, and poetry, such as by Janet Frame and Carol Ann Duffy, often produced solid results. In other cases, responding to contemporary song lyrics led to responses of less substance, and candidates who wrote on many stories or poems tended not to do so well.

Many candidates seemed to be regurgitating their research (especially the critical lens task), writing a version of their internally assessed Achievement Standard 91479 (3.8) regardless of the statement they were addressing.

When ideas were not synthesised, no coherent argument was produced. Presumably these responses were the result of rewriting a version of the internal Achievement Standard 91478 (3.7).

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- addressed all parts of their chosen statement
- established a line of argument in their introduction
- used relevant evidence to support their thinking
- provided a basic analysis of how the text conveyed meaning relevant to the statement
- structured their ideas into clear paragraphs
- referred back to the statement in the conclusion
- provided some links to the topic and showed some critical thinking
- demonstrated a straightforward understanding of the text
- responded to the statement in a simple manner with some evidence

- gave a personal response or ‘critique’ at the end of each main paragraph.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not address their chosen statement
- responded to a text that was too simplistic
- did not select relevant evidence to support their thinking
- wrote plot-based responses
- did not analyse how the text worked to convey ideas
- tried to twist the question to fit a rote-learned response.

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

- addressed all parts of the chosen statement
- established a clear line of argument in their introduction
- offered convincing and / or detailed analysis and explanations of how the text conveyed meaning for a purpose
- structured their ideas in a logical format, often by building on their ideas
- used selected textual evidence and / or critical material to support their argument, often weaving it in
- went beyond the text to demonstrate wider relevance of ideas, or to comment on humanity or society
- began to make judicious observations about the ideas discussed
- discussed the aspect or text in the context of the time of the text’s publication / author / society.

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

- chose a statement that worked well with their text and were able to fully express the depth of their understanding
- addressed all parts of their chosen statement fully
- took an original approach
- framed their line of argument succinctly in the introduction
- structured their points to build a persuasive argument, using terminology accurately and with confidence
- wove insightful, relevant evidence into their argument
- showed perceptive engagement with the text and the idea
- articulated their thinking with sustained accuracy and / or flair that made it interesting to read
- wrote with confidence and maturity, often without the need for signposts.

91473: Respond critically to specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s), supported by evidence

Examinations

The examination included a range of eight statements from which candidates were required to select one in order to make a critical response to a studied text. The statements addressed a range of the 'aspects' identified in the *New Zealand Curriculum*, including purpose, structure, ideas, and language. In this context the assessment specification gives as examples of language features such as cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, production design, sound, performance, and rhetorical devices. Thus, it should be noted, while visual language is an important form, it is not the only one available for discussion.

The assessment specification sets out the expectation that a critical response will take the form of an argument, communicated clearly and coherently through a structured written answer that follows the conventions of an essay format. Evidence should be in the form of relevant detail which may include quotation. Each statement provides candidates with opportunities for evaluation by

accounting for how and why a text is valuable in educative, meaningful, or other terms.

Observations

Many of the chosen texts allowed students to genuinely engage and show that they had learned something valuable. Newer texts, such as *Parasite*, *Mad Max: Fury Road* and *Arrival* produced effective responses although *American Beauty*, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Blade Runner* and *The Matrix* were still popular and helpful. Candidates found other texts such as *The Truman Show* and *Little Miss Sunshine* did not lend themselves to developing deep responses. Candidates should ensure that they write about film as a visual text by demonstrating some understanding of the director's purpose and the crafting.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- approached their chosen statement through limited frameworks
- understood the core of the statement and addressed it to some degree
- understood the statement at face value
- explored the crafting of the text in simplistic ways
- made use of evidence to support their points (although sometimes this became a plot summary).

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not respond directly to their chosen statement
- did not understand some of the key words used in the statement, such as 'structure' and 'setting'
- did not offer a response that developed ideas sufficiently at Level 8 of the New Zealand Curriculum
- tried, unsuccessfully, to make evidence from other assessments fit their chosen statement.

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

- took time to consider the opportunities offered by their chosen statement
- displayed a confident understanding of the text
- evidenced a wider appreciation of the way directors craft texts
- understood wider implications of issues and ideas presented in the text
- used evidence judiciously to support the points being made.

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

- appeared to enjoy exploring the topic
- presented perceptive and mature ideas about the text itself and provided a frame for these by addressing the nuances of the statement
- offered original interpretations
- wove insightful, relevant evidence into their argument
- showed an understanding of how the text related to their own frames of reference in ways that were thoughtful and engaging.

91474: Respond critically to significant aspects of unfamiliar written texts through close reading, supported by evidence

Examinations

The examination includes two unfamiliar texts and three questions, one for each text and one requiring a comparison of both. The assessment involves candidates applying a knowledge of ‘aspects’ (as specified in the *New Zealand Curriculum* and the Achievement Standard) to an analysis of how these are used in the texts. Those who did not refer to aspects, despite showing good understanding of the text, were disadvantaged.

Observations

Achievement is a consequence of a candidate’s response to all three questions. Many candidates wrote stronger answers for Question One. A more managed approach to the paper would ensure coverage of Questions Two and Three. Evidence from the text(s) is expected as an element of answers to all questions.

Some responses were generalised discussion of events in the world without the link to the text.

Ongoing teaching of comparison will support candidates to access Question Three.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- attempted all three questions
- identified aspects accurately and exemplified them
- incorporated the keywords on the idea into their answer
- attempted to unpack language features superficially
- began to give a critical answer to the question, identifying key parts of the text supported by relevant detail and examples
- gave a relevant but sometimes unbalanced or limited explanation to address the question
- relied on a summary, showing only a superficial understanding of the text
- relied on content from the passages as the basis of their argument
- wrote significant amounts of literal analysis
- focused on sections of the text rather than seeing the text as a whole.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not address the questions
- did not identify aspects with supporting relevant comments
- provided few examples to support their responses
- showed a limited understanding of the texts or how they related to the questions
- discussed personal experiences or real-world issues that were not relevant to the idea or the text(s) or were not linked explicitly to the ideas or the text(s).

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

- identified aspects of the text that were relevant to the question
- provided a valid and convincing discussion of aspects, with at least one example and a relevant comment for each aspect
- explained how and why an aspect was used by the writer
- answered the question specifically and provided a range of supporting evidence
- wove relevant quotations into their answer
- explained the development of ideas within the texts
- made convincing links to human nature and the wider world and began to connect beyond the text in a meaningful way, bringing this discussion back to the text
- attempted to explain how the aspects of the texts linked together for a common purpose
- wrote their responses using a clear structure, tracing the development of ideas throughout the text.

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

- performed consistently across all three questions
- identified at least two aspects of the text and commented perceptively on them in each answer
- embedded relevant and concise examples within discussions
- wove the question into every part of each answer to create a coherent and cohesive whole
- analysed and discussed how techniques were combined for effect with a sophisticated and / or perceptive critical explanation, addressing the way the author created meaning throughout the text
- offered perceptive insights in some or all the questions
- explicitly discussed the author's purpose

- explored different viewpoints and insights presented by the author to perceptively demonstrate understanding of the author's purpose
- provided an original and dynamic personal response to the question, presented as a balanced argument.

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