



General Certificate of Education

**English Language and Literature
6726**

Specification B

NTB6 Critical Approaches

Mark Scheme

2007 examination - June series

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NTB6

Assessment Objectives

In this paper candidates must communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insights gained from the combination of literary and linguistic study using appropriate terminology and accurate written expression (AO1).

There is special emphasis on the need to:

- respond with knowledge and understanding of texts of different types and from different periods, exploring and commenting on relationships and comparisons between them (AO2ii, weighting 7.5%)
- use and evaluate different literary and linguistic approaches to the study of written and spoken language, showing how these approaches inform their readings (AO3ii, weighting 5%)
- show understanding of the ways contextual variation and choices of form, style and vocabulary shape the meanings of texts (AO4, weighting 2.5%)
- identify and consider the ways attitudes and values are created and conveyed in speech and writing (AO5, weighting 2.5%).

MARK BOUNDARY DESCRIPTORS

These descriptors are intended as a general guide only. Any given script does not have to show all the features for its band, but should be placed on the 'best-fit' principle. Examiners should mark positively at all times, and reward any well-supported approach.

It is very important that examiners should use as wide a range of marks as possible in order to provide clear distinctions between different levels of achievement. Even a mark of 50 does not imply perfection.

Texts 7 and 8 are compulsory and there are penalties for rubric infringements if they are omitted. A paper that completely leaves out both unseen texts should not score higher than 25 in Question 1. A paper that misses out one of these should not score higher than 38 in the same question. Examiners should mark 'RI' (Rubric Infringement) at the top of the first page of the script.

Band 6

43 – 50

The best answers that candidates working at this level under examination conditions can be expected to produce

- script shows understanding of the ways the topic is presented in the texts chosen, making very good use of the unseen texts
- establishes and analyses in detail a number of interesting points of comparison
- explores the way attitudes and values are implied in both unseen and pre-release texts
- explores ways in which context can shape meaning
- explores and analyses such matters as genre, purpose and audience in both unseen and pre-release texts
- analyses formal and stylistic features
- analyses relevant features such as discourse or pragmatics
- confidently applies literary and linguistic theory to texts
- shows fluent, clear and controlled expression using precise critical terminology

Band 5

35 – 42

Good answers that display many of the qualities of the top band, but with some lack of consistency or thoroughness; more strengths than weaknesses

- script shows understanding of the way the topic is presented in most of the texts chosen, making substantial use of the unseen texts
- explores and explains presentation of textual material with frequent use of illustrative example
- establishes and develops several points of comparison
- explores the way attitudes and values are implied in most of the texts chosen
- shows awareness of the ways context and genre shape meaning
- is able to make comments on the form and structure of texts as well as vocabulary
- is able to make some competent use of literary and linguistic theory
- uses straightforward, clear English

Band 4

26 – 34

Answers in which there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Scripts that have merit but show very uneven treatment of the texts are likely to fall into this band. Comments may be implicit and under-developed in places

- script shows understanding of the way the topic is presented in some of the texts chosen, making some effective use of the unseen texts
- explains several points of comparison between texts
- responds to and explains implied attitudes and values
- identifies some relevant aspects of genre and context with supporting illustration
- chooses appropriate features of vocabulary or grammar for illustration and comment
- shows awareness of the methods of critical approaches with some competent use of technical terms
- reasonably accurate and clear use of English, with only occasional slips

Band 3

17 – 25

Answers that address the task but contain a number of weaknesses. Scripts that show superficial understanding may fall into this band

- script shows understanding of the topic and identifies or lists significant features, with some illustrated reference to the unseen texts
- makes some detailed comparisons between texts
- describes a variety of attitudes and values at a simple level
- describes some effects of context, possibly in general terms
- shows how texts demonstrate specific features of genre and supports this by illustrative reference
- identifies relevant features of vocabulary or grammar
- makes some reference to theory, which may be vague or inaccurate
- shows some familiarity with technical terms
- partly effective written expression; generally accurate but with flaws in fluency

Band 2

9 – 16

Answers that contain a significant number of weaknesses. Answers in this band may be very general or may summarise the texts

- script may show only general understanding by superficial description of the content of the texts, neglecting or making only superficial reference to the unseen texts
- makes only very obvious or general comparisons between texts
- identifies general attitudes and values in simple terms
- describes context in general terms
- identifies genre and purpose in general terms, possibly using pre-prepared lists
- may identify features of form or vocabulary without specific comment
- very limited or inaccurate use of critical terminology
- lapses in control of written English

Band 1

1 – 8

Answers in this band are likely to show fundamental weaknesses in understanding of the texts and of the task, with little evidence of study of English Language and Literature. Very brief responses are likely to fall into this band

- script may show little understanding of ideas concerning the topic in either the pre-release or the unseen texts
- makes brief and general comments on each text in turn without evidence of comparison
- likely to misunderstand or to ignore attitudes and values
- little awareness of the importance of context
- little awareness of genre, purpose or audience
- little awareness of differences of form, style and vocabulary between texts
- little or no use of critical terminology
- frequent lapses in spelling grammar and punctuation; may show lack of the control of language appropriate for this level.

For further guidance, listed under Assessment Objectives, refer also to the grids.

Unit: NTB6

Series: June 2007

1. Compare the ways in which ideas about mirrors and reflections are presented.

In your answer you **must** refer in detail to Texts 7 and 8 and to at least **two** other texts from the pre-release material.

In your answer you should:

- focus on how mirrors and reflections are presented
- make explicit comparisons between your chosen texts
- identify the attitudes and values expressed and implied
- support your claims by reference to relevant aspects of context and genre
- provide precise analysis of relevant language use.

(50 marks)

There are many valid methods of tackling this question. Candidates may use any line of approach that shows use of a framework or frameworks and that is supported by evidence from the texts. **Question 2** offers them an opportunity to explain their specific choice of method.

Texts may be compared in a variety of ways, for example the comparison may stress:

- mode
- purpose
- audience
- genre
- gender representation
- context
- style etc.

	Band 1 1 – 8 marks	Band 2 9 – 16 marks	Band 3 17 – 25 marks
	Rudimentary understanding and comparison – little evidence of language/literature study	Simple comparisons and understanding – attempts to summarise and states the obvious	Potentially interesting comparisons of ideas, but lacks development or clear support for claims
AO1	Muddled expression or very brief response	Simple expression	Impressionistic expression
AO2	Shows little understanding of ideas re: topic in texts. Makes brief/general comments on each text in turn	Summarises obvious content re: topic. Makes a few simple, general comparisons	Shows understanding of main ideas re: topic of mirrors and reflections. Makes some potentially interesting comparisons between texts
AO4	Little evidence of concepts re: context and genre. Little use of terminology for text analysis	Describes genre/context in simple terms. May identify and compare features of genre, rather than topic	Describes some aspects of genre and context. Potentially relevant quotes lack comment
AO5	Some misunderstanding of attitudes expressed	Identifies overt attitudes only	Understands attitudes expressed in general terms
			NB – Award top half of band for use of precise terminology in identifying features: <i>'archaic...elision...adjective ...interrogative'</i>

Band 4 26 – 34 marks	Band 5 35 – 42 marks	Band 6 43 – 50 marks
Some valid comparisons and understanding, providing some precise support	Explores and develops comparisons, with knowledge and understanding in <i>most</i> areas	A consistent response to all chosen texts, supporting perceptive claims by precise reference to text and context
Generally clear expression, using some appropriate terminology	Clear, articulate expression, using a range of precise terminology	Clear, articulate expression, using precise terminology from language and literature study
Shows understanding of presentation of topic in texts. Makes some interesting comparisons between texts	Shows understanding of ways topic is presented in <i>most</i> texts chosen. Establishes and develops interesting points of comparison	Shows understanding of ways topic is presented in <i>all</i> texts chosen. Establishes and develops interesting points of comparison
Identifies some relevant aspects of genre and context. Supports claims mainly by reference to vocabulary choice/semantics	Shows awareness of ways context and genre can shape meanings. Goes beyond isolated words/phrases to make some comments on form and structure	Supports claims by awareness of links between text and context. Analysis of a range of relevant features, including discourse, pragmatics or syntax
Makes some response to implied attitudes	Explores ways attitudes are implied in <i>most</i> texts – weaker in one area May be stronger on prepared texts, or context and genre v text analysis	Explores ways attitudes are implied in unseen and chosen texts

Unit: NTB6

Series: June 2007

2. Explain the methods that you chose to compare the texts, and show how useful these were in contributing to your understanding of and response to the texts.

(20 marks)

This task mainly tests Assessment Objective AO3ii. The second grid lists some generally appropriate discriminators.

It is, if anything, even more important to use the full range of marks here, as otherwise the shorter scale may produce greater bunching and hence less real discrimination.

Reward generously those answers that:

- show clear and purposeful methods of critical approach
- recognise that different approaches may be appropriate for different kinds of text
- recognise that there may be valid alternative approaches to the same text.

	AO3ii
	Use and evaluate different literary and linguistic approaches to the study of written and spoken language, showing how these approaches inform their readings
Band 6 18 - 20 Discusses own approach and methods	Provides thoughtful account of approaches and methods used in own analysis. Shows understanding of a variety of literary and linguistic approaches. Evaluates usefulness of own choice methods
Band 5 14 – 17 Explains own methods used	Explains use of a range of methods. Indicates some purposeful reasons for own approach – which formed a starting point, were the most useful for particular texts, etc
Band 4 10 – 13 Detailed account of methods used	Provides a more detailed account of methods used in Task 1. Refers to a range of literary and linguistic terms. Shows some choice of methods for different types of texts
Band 3 7 – 9 Describes own use of a few aspects and features	Describes own method of comparing texts in Task 1. Refers to a limited range of terms re: context, genre and style. Little explanation of usefulness – ‘one size fits all’ approach to texts
Band 2 4 – 6 Mentions a list of terms	Includes general reference to some literary and linguistic approaches, aspects or features. Lacks clear understanding of the terms mentioned. Little explanation or evidence that they were used in Task 1
Band 1 1 – 3 Outlines basic procedure	Does not describe methods used in analysis of texts. May describe own process, eg reading, underlining, choosing texts. Or so brief that very little is said

INDICATIVE CONTENT

Text 1

Frightening Light – Nick Arnold

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

- written text giving factual scientific information about mirrors in general, their physical properties and manufacture
- broken up into easy sections for young audience.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- humour – ‘pain of death’ joke. Includes puns, ‘a few heated moments’, ‘bright, aren’t we?’
- attempts to be exciting and sensational – ‘frightening’, ‘murderous’, ‘horrible’.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- importance of graphology
- use of historical anecdote
- ancient use of mirrors for fortune telling.

Other comments on language features may include:

- some technical language – ‘total internal reflection’, ‘photons’
- highly colloquial – ‘great’, ‘bogie’, ‘cool scientist’
- use of ellipsis – ‘Bet you never knew!’
- short sentences, often subject-verb-object for simplicity, often begin with conjunctions
- direct address to audience ‘you’
- use of questions.

Text 2

‘Views in the Looking Glass...’ – Barbara Stengel

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

- written text for a relatively specialised adult audience
- discusses information about the mirrors in a specific work of art
- explains the symbolism of this use of the mirror.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- the mirror reflects and records an important family moment
- placing of subject in an intellectual framework – ‘...references the temporal qualities of human life’, ‘...temporal and eternal symbolism’, ‘...a vanitas symbol conveying the transitory nature of mortal humans’.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- obviously readers need previous knowledge of a specific painting
- the artist himself appears in the reflection as a witness to the occasion
- evaluative piece which assumes some technical knowledge of art criticism in general – ‘Heiltumfahrten’, ‘vantage point’, ‘picture plane’
- cultural allusions to ‘...the deadly sins of pride and lust’
- mirror is discussed in a context of wider historical symbolism – ‘...philosophy of the Renaissance’.

Other comments on language features may include:

- long paragraphs
- high level vocabulary –‘consummation’, ‘temporal’, ‘conversant’, ‘vanitas’
- use of ‘one’ as a pronoun
- ‘thus’ as a connective is unlikely to occur in speech.

Text 3

‘Mirror, Mirror, Off the Wall’ – Jason Love

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

- written exploration of the writer’s psychological state, mirror gazing as obsession
- first person narrative, personal experience.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- confessional tone, but a desire to present this lightly
- humour - word play of title, allusions to Michael Jackson, ‘...used The Force’, ‘how ambivalent I was toward his mother’
- shows awareness of audience in explaining technicalities – BDD.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- website format
- American spelling –‘endeavors’, ‘neighbor’ – and syntax - ‘all of my photographs’
- use of spacing for emphasis
- title refers to fairy story, other allusions to contemporary culture, Julia Roberts, Lao Tzu.

Other comments on language features may include:

- many of the short sentences generate tension as well as contributing to conversational effect
- colloquial language – ‘shrink’, ‘bad trip’ and elliptical structures ‘Couldn’t go 10 minutes’
- unexpected coinage –‘spermhood’
- use of figurative language – ‘...took back my brain’, ‘...titan of all attacks’, ‘...some strange expression of pi’
- use of dialogue, with psychiatrist and self
- paradox –‘...less time in front of the mirror, and more time looking’.

Text 4

‘Mirror’ – Sylvia Plath

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

poem

- unusual viewpoint in that the speaker is the mirror
- the real subject is the woman’s ageing, shown by the mirror - shift marked by caesura, ‘A woman bends over me’.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- inanimate object personified – ‘Whatever I see I swallow’, ‘eye of a little god’, ‘part of my heart’
- mirror stressing its own objectivity and incomprehension of the woman’s concerns – to the mirror she is no more interesting than the wallpaper
- woman has no name, simply female identity
- woman’s reaction is emotional – ‘tears’, ‘agitation’.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- unusual use of language requiring some concentration from the reader, riddle-like opening
- description of the room as ordinary, possibly feminine, the wall is 'pink, with speckles'; setting of daily domestic life, 'Each morning'.

Other comments on language features may include:

- free verse
- relatively formal – no elisions
- use of present tense
- use of figurative language – 'lake', 'drowned', 'like a terrible fish'
- emotive vocabulary of the woman's reaction 'tears', 'agitation'.

Text 5

The Picture of Dorian Gray – Oscar Wilde

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

- written literary text, primary purpose is entertainment
- there are effectively two mirrors here, the 'curiously carved' one and the picture itself, the 'mirror of his soul'
- the picture that reflects inner reality is the key element in a horror story
- the fantasy has a moral level, as the image represents the protagonist's evil life.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- obvious morality
- poetic justice
- focalised on Dorian's reactions.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- typical novelistic narrative using description and dialogue
- nineteenth century text, some dated language – 'visage', repeated use of the noun 'beauty' in describing a male character (?); some inversions, 'Nor, indeed, was it the death of Basil Hallward...'; use of a lamp
- social class of protagonist, friendship with 'Lord Henry', establishment with servants.

Other comments on language features may include:

- uses free indirect speech for exploration of emotions
- highly coloured language
- use of questions for dramatic urgency
- switch to dialogue indicates change of focus
- suspense – full implications revealed only in the last sentence.

Text 6

Richard II – Shakespeare

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

- written text for oral delivery in performance
- Richard refers in a related metaphor to ‘...the very book indeed/ Where all my sins are writ’. The mirror is to show him his own fortune
- complex presentation: mirror is stage prop, which first features as symbol of Richard’s fragile kingship; he comments on the way his appearance has not changed in spite of his loss of status; Bolingbroke then uses it as a symbol of Richard’s histrionics; Richard in turn shifts the meaning, saying the mirror cannot reflect the real inner grief.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- power play between Richard and Bolingbroke (soon to be Henry IV, hence addressed as ‘King’ here)
- tragic tone, Richard’s sense of loss
- fickleness of followers
- Bolingbroke’s lack of sympathy.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- play using verse dialogue
- historical
- some archaic language; verb forms ‘hath’, ‘dost’; pronoun ‘thee’.

Other comments on other language features may include:

- blank verse dignifies characters and produces intensity
- exceptionally rich in figurative language and word play; ‘flattering glass,/Like to my followers’, face ‘like the sun’, ‘brittle glory’, reflection as ‘shadow’
- use of questions.

Text 7 - Compulsory

Echo and Narcissus – Bulfinch

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

- written text
- this mirror is *literally* the means of narcissism
- the mirror is a magic pool, with elements of fantasy; its function is to punish a heartless lover by making him suffer unrequited love, so the fate of Narcissus metaphorically *reflects* that of Echo
- informative text, for educational use – cultural explanation of a myth familiar in various literary contexts
- narrative also presented as entertainment with descriptive detail and dialogue.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- mirror gazing is damaging and a sign of weakness, the suffering here self-inflicted
- Narcissus’s decline is a punishment for cruelty, but also an occasion of sorrow, ‘The nymphs mourned for him’
- portrait of male beauty; typical male activity ‘hunting’
- Bulfinch consciously edits out sexuality and violence but this inevitably remains a somewhat effeminate portrait – seeing his image ‘he thought it was some beautiful water-spirit’, ‘tears fell into the water’, turns into a flower.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- original source is Ovid (opening of this extract is in fact a fairly literal translation)
- historical features of language – vocabulary not in common current use ‘resorted’, ‘hither’, ‘smote their breasts’, ‘entreat’; inverted word order of ‘Hither came one day’
- allusive – ‘Bacchus’, ‘Apollo’, ‘Stygian’
- reference to antique customs - pastoral shepherds, funeral pile
- myth now familiar in modified form in modern psychology.

Comments on other language features may include:

- emotive modifiers ‘clear’, ‘fresh’, ‘beautiful’, ‘bright’, ‘beloved’
- similes – ‘like silver’, ‘like the locks of Bacchus’
- although some sentences have several clauses, the syntax is straightforward; frequently uses ‘He’ as a first word.

Text 8 - Compulsory

Transcript

Comments on presentation of topic (AO2) may include:

- spontaneous speech, very informal
- mirrors are real ones, or reflections in a shop window
- speakers are aware of narcissism as a psychological phenomenon
- investigation of attitudes to looking leads to general conversation on appearance and dressing for an audience.

Comments on attitudes and values (AO5) may include:

- some shame at being seen to look vain or narcissistic
- humour – ‘packing your bits away’, considerable laughter
- looking in the mirror suggests serious issue of self-preservation
- contrast in attitudes to appearance between the two speakers – ‘I really care what other people think I look like and you don’t care what other people think you look like’.

Comments on genre and context (AO4) may include:

- friendly relationship of speakers, turn-taking has many overlaps; potential insults accepted without offence – ‘I can tell this by the way your feet are black’
- everyday context, ‘work’, ‘Waitrose’
- Ali’s bizarre fashion sense still reflects a particular era – ‘denim hotpant shorts’.

Other comments on language features may include:

- non-fluency features, repeated ‘like’
- taboo language ‘shit’, ‘crap’
- slang ‘man’
- grammar, ‘me and Cat’.