

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

International General Certificate of Secondary Education

MARK SCHEME for the November 2005 question paper

0486 LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/03

Paper 3 (Alternative to Coursework)

Maximum mark 20

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were initially instructed to award marks. They do not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began. Any substantial changes to the mark scheme that arose from these discussions will be recorded in the published *Report on the Examination*.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the *Report on the Examination*.

The minimum marks in these components needed for various grades were previously published with these mark schemes, but are now instead included in the Report on the Examination for this session.

- CIE will not enter into discussion or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

CIE is publishing the mark schemes for the November 2005 question papers for most IGCSE and GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level syllabuses and some Ordinary Level syllabuses.

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General notes

The questions should be marked as a whole.

We must allow the candidates to articulate their own responses to each of the characters. While we have much sympathy with the hapless Warren, many candidates might feel as much impatience with him as Alice and her father seem to. Similarly, they might be impatient with the indulgent mother. The conclusions of the candidates are not as relevant to their ultimate grading as the attention to detail and sensitivity to language which they draw on as they reach their conclusions.

There is much material for the candidates to select from an answer to both questions. We should not, therefore, be expecting comprehensive use of the evidence before awarding very high marks.

Perhaps differentiation will arise from the relative ability of candidates to explore the way Plath has written this section of her story. The most perceptive will realise that she has made Alice the central character and shown primarily *her* perspective on the other members of the family. Yet our sympathies are not necessarily with Alice who has been depicted as a rather jealous, spiteful girl.

Marks 2-3

Candidates will show a very little awareness of what the extract is about. There may be a very basic reaction to one or two of the characters.

Marks 4-5

Candidates will make the odd reasonable, basic comment about one or two of the characters but without support. They might select a relevant quotation about them without accompanying comment. There will be a limited overall understanding demonstrated.

Marks 6-8

There should be a broad understanding of the situation in the extract. There will be a few straightforward points made about two or more of the characters. However, there will be little personal response evident. The points made will generally be factual, i.e. Warren is always crying; Alice kicks Warren viciously, the mother takes Warren's side. There will often be a tendency to paraphrase in this mark-range or to string together quotations without acknowledgement and without commentary. There may be serious errors of understanding.

Marks 9-11

There will be much clearer responses to the four characters, but not much indication of how Plath's writing has made the candidate feel this way. We might get selective paraphrase or reasonably chosen detail woven into a narrative contrived by the candidate, but which does not answer the question directly.

The second question might be answered with reference to some of the actions of the characters, the kick, the crying, the comforting, the father's playfulness, but in this mark-range, we will not expect the candidates to explore the fabric of the writing.

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Marks 12-14

Here we might expect to read clear responses to each of the characters, whatever they might be, with rudimentary explanations of how the candidates have made up their minds. Any signs of more searching development of such material will probably suggest that the candidate will deserve a mark in the 15-17 range. However, there might be a substantial number of candidates who perform much more convincingly on the first question than the second, and, if there is little indication that the candidate has been unable to appreciate, at a fairly elementary level, the distinctive style of Sylvia Plath, we might have to keep such answers in the 13-14 range.

For evidence of the way language works, we should expect a comment or two about, for example, Plath's use of colours, as for example, in her description of Warren: "Warren's hair was gold and soft too, the colour of dandelions, and his skin was the colour of his glass of milk." Or the similes used to describe the powerfulness of the father in the first two paragraphs. We should only expect the most rudimentary exploration of these at this level.

Marks 15-17

There should be a clear understanding of the nexus of relationships depicted in the poem. There will probably be the germs of an understanding that much is seen from Alice's perspective, but candidates in this range might not be able to see the implications of this. There might be a reasonably extended examination of the way the father is described and why Alice adored him so much. There might also be an exploration of the way Warren is depicted and the contrast between his eating habits and his father's. We should expect an exploration of the depiction of at least three of the characters in this way.

Throughout, we might expect an awareness of the way Plath is working in this extract. This may be the main distinguishing characteristic of work in this range. We should reward any awareness of the strong, physical nature of the descriptions, and the way the relationships between Father and Alice on the one hand and Warren and Mother on the other are expressed through the way they physically interact with each other.

Marks 18-20

It should be clear to candidates in this mark-range that Alice is both scornful and jealous of Warren. She hates him because he has been as good as gold all day and, most particularly, because her mother told her father so. That is why she kicks him viciously under the table. Perceptive candidates will also note her devious nature, that she stares innocently at her plate while she kicks him, and that she knew he never tattled on her. There are many such nuances to explore and it should not be difficult to identify those candidates who have engaged thoroughly with the way the characters have been depicted here. It will also probably be plain that much is seen from Alice's perspective, while Plath has presented her as far from perfect in her attitudes and behaviour.

There are many features in the writing for candidates to explore and we must remember that it is not possible for them to cover every aspect. We must not be looking for inclusiveness but for perceptiveness in dealing with the areas they have chosen to discuss. We might particularly reward those who see some of the variety of ways that Plath uses to make vivid the relationships between the characters: the vividness of the descriptions of physical interaction, the dialogue, the almost comic depiction of Warren crying, Alice's physical reaction to the quasi-religious scene of Warren in his mother's arms. Candidates in this mark-range are likely to go further than in the 15-17 range, in their ability to analyse Plath's narrative techniques. Above all, we should look for a sense of engagement with the writing.

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Table of mark band generic criteria

0-1	The answer does not meet the criteria for Grade G.
2-3	Candidates will – show just a very little awareness of...
4-5	Candidates will – make a few straightforward points about...
6-8	Candidates will – make some straightforward points about... show a little understanding of
9-11	Candidates will – begin to develop a response... show some understanding of...
12-14	Candidates will – make a sensible response... show reasonable understanding of... show a little awareness of the way language works.
15-17	Candidates will – make a considered, sustained response. show clear understanding of ... show some awareness of the way language works.
18-20	Candidates will – sustain a perceptive, convincing response. show extensive understanding. respond sensitively to the way language works.