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91472



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## Level 3 English, 2016

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

2.00 p.m. Tuesday 22 November 2016  
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Respond critically to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence.	Respond critically and convincingly to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence.	Respond critically and perceptively to specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), supported by evidence.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

**Write ONE essay in this booklet.**

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

Merit

TOTAL

M5

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You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than 5 pages in length. The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay.

In your essay, discuss the extent to which you agree with your chosen statement. Respond critically to the statement by making a close analysis of the text(s).

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Begin your written text(s) essay here:

Statement number: 3

William Shakespeare - The Bard - arguably one of the most ingenious playwrights known to man. His work in *Romeo and Juliet* is full of hidden ~~thinner~~ messages, presented to us in any number of ways. However, because of this text, I would strongly agree that the most challenging ideas in a text are found in the detail.

The first detail that poses a challenging idea to the reader is that of Romeo not conforming to ~~typical~~ the expected male stereotype during the Elizabethan era. Many of the deaths in the text are due to men 'defending their honour,' or their family name. Both Benvolio and Tybalt die whilst doing so, and when Romeo refuses, Mercutio steps in to defend him instead: '...~~nothing but~~ good king of cats... nothing but one of your nine lives...' After Mercutio's witty promise to kill Tybalt in order to defend Romeo, he dies. In fact, literary critic Coppélia Kahn theorise that it is because of Verona's male dominated society, that the families feud exists in the first place, and thus is the cause of ~~the~~ death for ~~all~~ these young men. We, ~~also~~ however, see Juliet conforming to the expectations of the time as



she allows everyone to solve her problems for her, like when Romeo is banished: 'tell me not Friar that thou hearest of this, and if thy hai, tell me how may I remedy it.' What we see is a conflict between two major characters - one who conforms to societies expectations, and one who rebels against them. Perhaps it is from this detail, that Shakespeare was challenging the reader to question the stereotypes and expectations had on people, simply because of their gender. It is likely that Shakespeare, was adding to the revolution of the time where feudal order was being increasingly ~~changed~~ challenged - and was encouraging us to do the same. The idea that we should not have to act ~~by~~ a certain way because of gender is a strong idea in the text, and is something Shakespeare recognised - even when many in our 'progressive communities' don't.

Another detail in the text are symbols - one of the most important being poison. Poison represented the nature of the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets and the destruction it caused, as well as its role in the death of the lovers. 'sprung forth from the feud, a pair of star cross'd lovers take their life.' We are given insight into the feud when: 'poison, I see, hath been his timelless end.' This showed the reader that it was the feud that caused the bitter ending of death in the film, that whilst literally the poison killed Romeo, it was the families feud that drove the text to its tragic end. It also symbolised that the death of Romeo and Juliet would signal the



end of the feud itself. 'If thou were to take another infection to thy eye, the rank poison of old will die.' This is representing that a new infection is the death of their beloved children would bring an end to 'the poison of old.' - the feud. So the idea that Shakespeare is trying to portray, is that conflict is poison - it is destructive. The feud itself represents a decaying society, that our human care for one another has diminished. Ernest Harding said: 'art in a decaying society, if truthful, must also represent this decay.' This is exactly what The Bard has done, he took the conflict in his society and placed it into the text to be represented by the feud. It is something our more modern societies can learn from also - that conflict should always aim to be resolved, as it never ends in joy, or disaster.

A second detail we see by symbolism is that of stars. Stars in Romeo and Juliet represent fate. From the very ~~beginning~~ beginning of the text, the prologue warns us of the fate of the lovers: 'a pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life,' and later on in the text we are again reminded: 'a consequence yet hanging in the stars.' The idea in Elizabethan times was that the fate of all of us was held in the stars. So it was always the destiny or the fate of Romeo and Juliet to die - possibly to put an end to the feud between their families that has 'thrice disturbed the peace.' And their deaths did resolve the feud, as the families could empathise with each others pain. Even when Romeo tries to go

against his fate: '... thus I defy you stars,' he still ends up where he was destined to be. It seems the idea, that some may challenge with, that Shakespeare was trying to get across is that we cannot escape fate - ~~this is something~~ even if not 'fate' in the traditional sense, but even in today's society we are challenged to find our 'purpose' to give back to the world. The Stoics believed that human decision and action are according to a plan devised by God. In a Christian sense, this is still true today - we have each been given talents and gifts that allow us to be a part of a 'divine plan,' and eventually, through our decisions and actions, we find this place in His plan - our fate. This is the idea we can find through detail of stars in the text.

Romeo and Juliet is a play with many delights and hidden ideas. Often we are able to find these ideas within subtle detail in the text. Those most challenging ideas such as gender roles, ~~for~~ the poison of conflict and the idea of a divine purpose are all communicated to ~~use~~ the readers of the text, through subtle rebellion and symbolism.

**Merit exemplar 2016**

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Standard:</b>	<b>91472</b>	<b>Total score:</b>	<b>M5</b>
<b>Q</b>	<b>Grade score</b>	<b>Annotation</b>			
3	M5	<p>“Romeo and Juliet”</p> <p>There are some genuine ideas here that show engagement with the statement and with the text. The response lacks the depth of maturity or perception. It does not show “comprehensive” knowledge, but begins to develop an informed response. The candidate catalogues things like symbolism instead of weaving the evidence in seamlessly.</p> <p>The response displays a convincing argument in the way it explores details with some relevance, showing that the candidate can be discriminating with ideas.</p>			