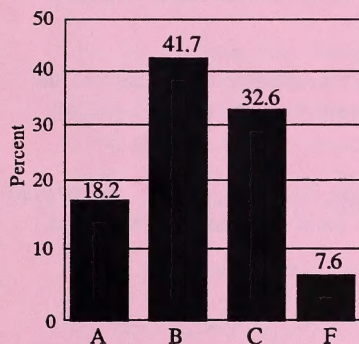


English 30

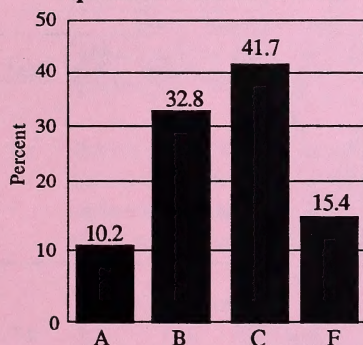
Diploma Examination Results

Examiners' Report for June 1994

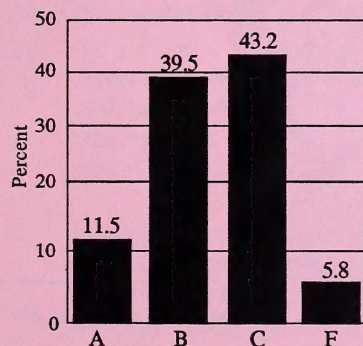
School-Awarded Mark



Diploma Examination Mark



Final Course Mark



The summary information in this report provides teachers, school administrators, students, and the general public with an overview of results from the June 1994 administration of the English 30 Diploma Examination. This information is most helpful when used in conjunction with the detailed school and jurisdiction reports that have been mailed to schools and school and jurisdiction offices. An annual provincial report containing a detailed analysis of the combined January, June, and August results is published each year.

Description of the Examination

The English 30 Diploma Examination consists of two parts: a written-response section and a reading section. Each part is worth 50% of the total examination mark.

Achievement of Standards

The information reported is based on the final course marks achieved by 14 526 students who wrote the June 1994 examination.

- 94.2% of these students achieved the acceptable standard (a final course mark of 50% or higher).
- 11.5% of these students achieved the standard of excellence (a final course mark of 80% or higher).

The competence of students achieving the standard of excellence in writing was impressive. However, the skills students at the acceptable standard demonstrated tended to be uneven; students showed ability on occasion to use language well, but this was not always sustained.

Provincial Averages

- The average school-awarded mark was 66.9%.
- The average diploma examination mark was 62.5%.
- The average final course mark, representing an equal weighting of the school-awarded mark and the diploma examination mark, was 65.2%.

Part A: Written Response

Part A: Written Response is written at a different time from *Part B: Reading*. Students are required to complete two writing assignments related to the same piece of literature. Both assignments assess a variety of reading, writing, and thinking skills.

Readers will find the results most meaningful in the context of the assignments and the scoring descriptors. The most useful starting place for reviewing these results is at the (3) **Satisfactory** level. Such work exceeds the pass mark of 50%. The scoring criteria are in the *1993–94 School Year English 30 Information Bulletin, Diploma Examination Program*, which is available in all schools.

The table below outlines the requirements for each assignment, the categories for scoring each assignment, the amount each category contributes to the total mark (parts A and B combined), and the percentage of students achieving at the various levels.

By comparing school and jurisdiction results to provincial results presented here, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students and, consequently, areas of potential strength and weakness in their programs.

Examination Blueprint and Percentage Distribution of Scores

Description of the Writing Assignment	Scoring Category	Proportion of Total Mark(%)	Percentage Distribution of Scores					
			(5) Excellent	(4) Proficient	(3) Satisfactory	(2) Limited	(1) Poor	Ins*
Minor Assignment The student is required to respond personally and thoughtfully to literature and to communicate clearly and effectively in writing.	Total Impression	12.5	2.2	21.6	56.1	17.5	1.5	1.0
Major Assignment The major assignment maintains a thematic connection to the minor assignment. The student is required to demonstrate an appreciation of literary works studied in class by discussing theme and the literary techniques that the author uses to support that theme. The student is also required to synthesize thoughts clearly and correctly in writing.	Thought and Detail	15.0	3.0	19.5	47.7	27.3	2.0	0.3
	Organization	7.5	2.8	19.6	58.4	18.0	0.8	0.3
	Matters of Choice	7.5	3.5	21.0	59.6	14.5	1.1	0.3
	Matters of Correctness	7.5	4.1	25.4	52.9	15.3	1.8	0.3

*Ins (Insufficient) is a special category that includes students who did not attempt the assignment, who wrote too little to evaluate, or who wrote answers that were completely off topic.

Note: The shaded portion represents the percentage of students who achieved or exceeded a (3) **Satisfactory** level of performance.

Examiners' Comments

Minor Assignment: Reader's Interpretation of Literature

For the 1994 year, the *Minor Assignment: Reader's Interpretation of Literature* was revised, both in terms of the requirements of the assignment itself and in the Scoring Criteria used by markers in evaluation. Students are addressed as *readers* who will provide their own interpretation of the effectiveness of detail in the given selection in the context of the thematic topic.

The excerpt from Nino Ricci's *Lives of the Saints* offered many examples of people's ambivalent or contradictory responses to the idea of leaving their small Italian village to go to Canada. Students were asked to select details that were effective in illustrating the nature of people's responses to dreams, goals, or ideals. Students' responses were evaluated on the basis of the thoughtfulness of selection and discussion of details, and the clarity of written expression. Students generally had no difficulty selecting details that illustrated the nature of people's responses to dreams, goals, or ideals.

Students achieving scores of **(4) Proficient** and **(5) Excellent** were perceptive and focused in their personal interpretation of the reading passage. They were often able to "explain" their choices as required by the assignment by effectively integrating details from the excerpt and details from their own experiences. Often these students responded to the writer's tone of affection in their own responses. Writing at this level was fluent and controlled.

Those students achieving a **(3) Satisfactory** selected appropriate details, which they supported clearly by referring to the passage.

A very small percentage of students failed to make any discernible reference to the reading selection and received an **Insufficient**. Students' careful reading of the assignment and of the Guidelines for Writing is essential. Students must be reminded that markers are looking for evidence that each student is responding to the reading selection within the context of the topic.

Major Assignment: Literature Composition

The topic of dreams, goals, or ideals was accessible and was applied to a wide variety of literature. Most students appeared to have made some thoughtful choices in preparing to write, and successfully met the challenge of shaping, adapting, or manipulating the topic into a focused discussion.

Students who achieved overall scores of **(4) Proficient** and **(5) Excellent** tended to recognize that dreams, goals, and/or ideals are the basis of the central tension in literature. These students presented insightful observations about the way authors reveal character by examining their responses to dreams, goals, and/or ideals within the literary context.

Students who achieved overall scores of **(3) Satisfactory** had no difficulty selecting literature in which characters were influenced, usually to their detriment, by dreams, goals, or ideals. These students often suggested that focusing on reality was much more beneficial than pursuing dreams. Some students interpreted the assignment as requiring a three-part examination of human pursuits and went to some trouble to differentiate between dreams, goals, and ideals. Students should be reminded that the presence of the word "or" in a list invites them to make a choice.

Question-by-Question Results

Question	Key	Difficulty*
1	C	80.7
2	C	46.0
3	C	58.5
4	B	80.6
5	A	68.3
6	D	52.9
7	C	70.1
8	A	81.6
9	D	90.3
10	B	64.5
11	B	63.4
12	B	63.6
13	C	67.3
14	C	34.4
15	D	70.1
16	B	56.7
17	A	79.7
18	B	70.7
19	D	77.4
20	B	73.9
21	A	86.4
22	C	85.9
23	D	42.5
24	C	42.1
25	B	67.0
26	A	60.0
27	C	81.7
28	D	59.5
29	A	69.1
30	C	56.2
31	D	76.8
32	A	56.7
33	D	70.4
34	B	65.8
35	C	65.7
36	B	80.8
37	D	51.7
38	D	83.8
39	B	72.1
40	A	81.5
41	D	57.0
42	C	38.0
43	C	67.4
44	D	51.0
45	A	65.9
46	D	52.3
47	B	37.3
48	B	54.4
49	C	59.2
50	A	66.6
51	D	74.7
52	A	67.1
53	A	66.3
54	C	69.7
55	B	44.9
56	A	53.6
57	A	77.5
58	C	61.5
59	B	64.8
60	A	46.7
61	D	69.1
62	A	49.2
63	D	66.4
64	A	64.5
65	D	68.2
66	B	60.7
67	D	31.2
68	B	65.4
69	B	71.6
70	C	45.3

*Difficulty—percentage of students answering the question correctly

Part B: Reading

The table at the left shows question-by-question results and the keyed answers. Parallel tables in the school and jurisdiction reports show the percentage of students who selected each alternative. By comparing school and jurisdiction results to provincial results presented here, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students and, consequently, areas of potential strength and weakness in their programs.

Examination Blueprint

Part B: Reading has a value of 70 marks, one for each multiple-choice question. Each question is classified in two ways: according to the curricular content area being tested and according to the thinking (process) skill demanded by the question. The examination blueprint illustrates the distribution of questions in June 1994 according to these classifications.

Classification by Course Content	Classification by Thinking Skills			Total
	Literal Understanding	Inference and Application	Evaluation	
Meanings	2, 61	1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 28, 30, 31, 37, 42, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, 63	3, 6, 23, 25, 36, 70	32 Items (23%)
Critical Response	13, 18	14, 21, 24, 43, 57, 58, 59, 62, 66, 67	12, 26, 27, 29, 33, 34, 40, 44, 45, 48	22 Items (15%)
Human Experience and Values	51	32, 38, 53, 55, 56, 60, 65, 69	22, 35, 39, 41, 54, 64, 68	16 Items (12%)
Total	5 Items (4%)	42 Items (30%)	23 Items (16%)	70 Items (50%)

Subtest Results**

Results are in average raw scores.

Total Part B: 44.8 out of 70

Course Content

- Meanings: 20.6 out of 32
- Critical Response: 13.9 out of 22
- Human Experience and Values: 10.6 out of 16

** Readers are cautioned **not** to compare subtest results because the subtests are not of equal difficulty. Instead, readers should compare these provincial subtest results with their own school subtest results.

Examiners' Comments

Standards

During the marking session, a committee of five classroom teachers of English 30 reviewed *Part B: Reading* to determine whether the standards embedded in the readings and questions were appropriate and fair. Committee members commented that the reading selections were challenging, particularly in terms of length, but balanced in terms of reading difficulty and general subject matter appeal.

Many students and teachers commented on the timeliness of the first selection and the humour of the final selection.

Detailed Discussion

The following table gives results for eight multiple-choice questions. For each question, statistics are provided for three student groups. A review of student responses to these questions may offer a meaningful glimpse of English 30 students' reading performance.

Percentage of Students Correctly Answering Selected Multiple-Choice Questions

Student Group	Question Number							
	23	24	37	42	47	55	60	70
All Students	42.5	42.1	51.7	38.0	37.3	44.9	46.7	45.3
Students achieving the standard of excellence (80% or higher, or A) on the whole examination	67.7	74.4	74.3	82.9	70.7	84.5	79.9	72.3
Students achieving the acceptable standard who received between 50% to 64%, or C on the whole examination	34.7	32.0	45.8	23.6	27.4	32.1	37.2	39.0

The eight questions referred to here all require students to have identified the tone of the related passages. The results suggest that the ability to recognize writer's tone (attitude toward subject matter and reader) correlates highly with success on both *Part B: Reading* and *Part A: Written Response*.

23. In lines 33 to 52, the author implies that a "true response to life" (line 43) is characterized **mainly** by

- A. artistry
- B. moral stamina
- C. religious piety
- D. selflessness

24. The author's ironic predictions regarding happiness in the modern world are directly alluded to the

- A. "The sister-in-law of a friend of Dr. Johnson was imprudent enough once to claim in his presence that she was happy" (lines 1–2)
- B. "The pursuit of happiness, included along with life and liberty in the American Declaration of Independence as an inalienable right" (lines 12–13)
- C. "The Gadarene swine were doubtless in pursuit of happiness when they hurled themselves to destruction over the cliff" (lines 21–22)
- D. "When Pastor Bonhoeffer was taken off by his Nazi guards to be executed . . . his face was shining with happiness" (lines 48–49)

37. The narrator responds to his mother's disappearance (lines 1–11) with

- A. anguish
- B. optimism
- C. excitement
- D. resignation

42. In the village, the news of the war's ending produces a general atmosphere of

- A. peace
- B. dismay
- C. abandon
- D. uneasiness

Questions 23 and 24. In the essay *Happiness*, Malcolm Muggeridge maintains a fine line between mockery and moralizing. His use of words such as "imprudent" (line 1) and "our present preoccupation" (lines 7–8), indicate that he is critical of modern behaviour. Generally, students indicated that they were sensitive to the author's stance. The average difficulty for this set of questions was 68.4%. Questions 23 and 24, however, proved very difficult with just over 42% of all students responding correctly to each. Both questions required students to understand not only that the author is critical of the "pursuit of happiness," but also that he recommends responding to life as it is ("true response to life") rather than pursuing a merely human notion of what it should be.

Muggeridge used the analogy of the Gadarene swine to suggest that "false" responses to life will bring not happiness, but destruction (24. C).

Just over 67% of the students who achieved the standard of excellence (80% or higher, or A) on the whole examination chose the correct answer, D, on question 23. Of those students who achieved the acceptable standard on the whole examination only 34.7% answered Question 23 correctly. More of this group, 42.7% chose alternative B, missing the idea that Muggeridge believes that selflessness is the "truest" response to life.

Questions 37 and 42. Both of these questions require students to recognize that the author is recreating a childhood experience to achieve a humorous affect. Lines 1 to 11 of the passage present an essentially literal description of the household chaos. When he describes anything "out of sight" as being "a long way off" and his mother's "disappearing" to visit his father (lines 2–3), the reader must appreciate that the author is establishing the point of view of a "naive" narrator. Readers who fail to appreciate this might assume that chaos would cause anguish (37. A). Of those students who selected "anguish," 35.8% failed the whole examination (Parts A and B). Lines 14 to 19 of the passage describe a small child's reveling in the freedom from rules and discipline. Later, even the schoolhouse is on fire (line 64). So, the "resignation" of 37. D is mock resignation and the "abandon" of 42. C is reckless, but happy.

47. The Earl of Surrey's **most cutting** use of irony is

- A. "Thou art a proud traitor, priest" (line 9)
 - B. "Whilst your great goodness, out of holy pity,/ Absolved him with an axe" (lines 22–23)
 - C. "Your goodness, / Since you provoke me, shall be most notorious" (lines 47–48)
 - D. "Now, if you can blush and cry 'guilty,' cardinal, / You'll show a little honesty" (lines 65–66)
-

55. Cardinal Wolsey acknowledges the basis of his downfall with the words

- A. "A long farewell to all my greatness!" (line 113)
 - B. "My high-blown pride" (line 123)
 - C. "Weary and old with service" (line 125)
 - D. "Never to hope again" (line 134)
-

60. In the third stanza the speaker suggests that

- A. her experience is not unusual
 - B. her life has been a tragic waste
 - C. women are unappreciated
 - D. women are unique
-

Question 47. This question proved to be one of the most difficult on Part B. Students were challenged by the difficulty of reading the tone of Cardinal Wolsey's speeches. In this scene, he begins speaking arrogantly as he is accused of treachery. His arguments are self-righteous, his tone contemptuous. In the soliloquy that ends this scene, Wolsey admits that he has fallen from greatness, as Lucifer fell, and that he is now "weary and old with service."

His accusers, also, each attack in a slightly different tone, depending on how each has been wronged. In the lines referred to in **47. B**, the Earl of Surrey mocks Wolsey's "great goodness" in forgiving his father-in-law by having him beheaded.

Question 55. This question reflects Cardinal Wolsey's change of tone as he admits, now sincerely, that he has become a victim of his "high-blown pride."

Question 60. The difficulty of this question (46.7% of all students chose the right answer) may come from the fact that students misunderstand the tone of the speaker. Perhaps they considered her comments as complaints when they are actually comments on the reality of her experience and of the experience of many other older women.

70. The gravity of Mrs. De Ropp's fate is confirmed **mainly** by

- A. "eyes a-blink at the waning daylight" (line 123)
 - B. "silences which fell in quick spasms" (lines 133–134)
 - C. "bore a heavy burden into the house" (lines 137–138)
 - D. "while they debated the matter" (line 140)
-

Question 70. The short story "Sredni Vashtar" is a masterpiece of restraint and understatement. The reader must soon realize that the writer's sympathy is entirely with ten-year-old Conradin. The use of the word "effete" to describe the doctor is an indication of the writer's attitude to him as well to Mrs. De Ropp, who "endorses" the doctor's opinion.

The table on page 5 shows that students who achieved the standard of excellence on the whole examination (parts A and B) fared significantly better than students who achieved the acceptable standard (parts A and B) on these eight questions. However, the results on many other questions would also indicate that understanding the tone of a text is a definite factor in reading success.

For further information, contact Gail Gates, Mary Lou Campbell, or Elana Scraba at the Student Evaluation Branch, 403-427-0010.