

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship English 2022

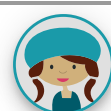
Standard 93001

Part A: Commentary

Candidates who were successful in this examination wrote with an authentic voice. Their scripts were refreshing and delightful to read. The success often came about through the way they ‘attacked’ the statement and also in the personal voice that they used that showed deliberate and confident engagement with the texts and with their thesis. This is not to be confused with personal response – while a little of this is useful at times, it is enjoyable to read when the marker can ‘hear’ the voice of a candidate who has a genuine sense of literature and the layers of complexity around each genre.

A degree of thought and originality is required beyond that of a Level 3 essay – the argument is key, not the text. It was concerning that a significant number of candidates did not understand what a non-fiction text was and chose to base their answer on novels possibly studied in class. In Section B, statements are intended to draw out discussions on a particular genre, and some attention should be paid to what goes into that genre that makes a work what it is.

While it is wonderful to see candidates enjoying – and even revelling in – using the terminology of language features, it is worth noting that there are no bonus points for referring to “academic” language features such as “asyndetic listing”, “zeugma”, or “epistrophe” when they are not used to further an argument. While



these are sound and sophisticated rhetorical terms, they are no guarantee of a Scholarship – especially when used inaccurately.

It is gratifying to see evidence of considerable teaching and learning of sophisticated vocabulary, and candidates will benefit from further practice and exemplification (in writing and during class dialogue) of how to use such vocabulary accurately, in an appropriately nuanced way.

Some candidates did not quite understand what was meant by ‘language’ in Statement 14, and they wrote about literature. Further exploration of what is meant by ‘language’ would benefit candidates. Similarly, some candidates did not know what was meant by ‘interactive texts’ in Statement One and wrote using inappropriate or irrelevant texts.

Synthesis is the key to a confident argument. This should be seen in all three sections. The response to Section C, where the candidate is asked to consider a range of texts, should be where language and literature is seen to be linked, or ideas within or between the texts opposed in some way. Less-successful candidates tended to write three essays in one on individual texts.

At this level, fluency and accuracy are expected, and so is formal reference to writers’ names. It was too common to find candidates referring to Sam Brookes as “Sam” through their argument. If the candidate is unsure of the gender of their writer, they will find it safer to use gender-neutral terms like “the writer”.

Legibility was a problem with some scripts. Poor handwriting is an impediment to fluency and coherence, both of which are required to score at Scholarship level. The quality of each essay is far more important than quantity of words. Candidates would benefit from further teaching and learning around judicious selection of the most pertinent details to support a focused argument.

The study of English language and literature appears to be in a good place. Many candidates wrote delightful, incisive, and at times witty essays that were a pleasure to engage with. An argument or an essay that is arresting often originates from a candidate who is passionate about their text and writes like an expert on the literature they love.

Part B: Report on performance standard

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with **Outstanding Performance** commonly:

- showed enjoyment of and enthusiasm towards the statement and chosen texts
- agreed or disagreed with part of the question or statement, or re-worked it to become more meaningful and truer to their appreciation
- defined the terms of the statement (sometimes implicitly), rather than presuming there is only one interpretation of concepts – for example, how a text could have a “mean streak” or what constitutes “substance” in a text
- displayed control of their argument, meaning the reader felt in safe hands throughout
- displayed a rich and thorough command of language and grammar
- articulated original thinking
- explored statements from different sides and with depth throughout the entirety of their essays
- presented essays that were powerful: interesting, perceptive, and imaginative in their ideas
- incorporated a wide vocabulary and wrote fluently and accurately.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- responded to all sections and all parts of the statements
- wrote with purpose, with a sense of audience and structure
- referred to literary texts at Level 8 of the *New Zealand Curriculum* – while some Level 6 texts were used to supplement an argument, texts at Level 8 encouraged higher-order thinking and analysis
- addressed the statement clearly with a thesis that was developed throughout the essay
- discussed their texts with a synthesised approach
- wrote with a voice that was lucid and sophisticated (i.e. a Level 3-style essay structure was avoided in favour of a more sophisticated thesis-driven response)
- interacted with the statement to create a thesis statement rather than just repeating it frequently through their argument
- in Section A, balanced their discussion of Text A and Text B, devoting equal importance to both texts in their argument

- personalised their essay by bringing something that was clearly not prepared or pre-taught to their response; often this was achieved by a close engagement with the statement or proposition.

Candidates who were **not** awarded Scholarship commonly:

- did not address the statement or key words
 - reconstituted a Level 3 essay and bookended it with fleeting reference to the statement
 - made little use of critical language, especially in Section A
 - in Section B, used texts of the wrong genre
 - did not synthesise answers
 - avoided giving a definitive response and wrote 'around' the statement
 - demonstrated a limited range of academic vocabulary
 - used a limited range of texts, commonly just the ones they studied at Level 3, rather than referring to a broad range
 - demonstrated shortcomings in writing structure, style, and accuracy
 - demonstrated a superficial understanding of texts
 - summarised or paraphrased texts without connecting them to the chosen statements.
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