

2015 NZ Scholarship Assessment Report

English

Report on performance standard

Scholarship with Outstanding Performance	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chose a statement they could respond to and clearly understood • engaged with the statement, keeping to a sophisticated central discussion and establishing clear parameters for the ensuing argument • showed ‘freshness’ of response in working with their own readings and their reinterpretation of the chosen statement • were driven by the statement and not by the text • mounted vigorous and confident responses with zest, wit, acumen and panache • brought relevant and focused knowledge of texts to support their response • synthesised information • showed personal insight and independent, critical thought about text and genre • formed strong, well-supported conclusions about texts in relation to the statement • structured fluent discussion which moved from reference or quote to applied readings or analysis • wrote with flair, sophistication, and eloquence • sustained the ability to write well across the whole paper. <p>Section A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dealt with both content and crafting of the two texts in a focussed and balanced discussion • explored unfamiliar passages with consistent and cohesive perceptive analysis, receptive to nuance and author’s intention • applied their knowledge of crafting methods in a relevant and productive way to draw out the purpose or ideas of writers • produced a response which was independent and creative, offering original insights. <p>Section B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focused their response on the statement • chose texts which allowed for development of the discussion • responded with a clear understanding of the genre • developed and supported a cogent and effective thesis with the judicious selection of references from the start • demonstrated the ability to reconsider, rework and even refresh learned materials and familiar texts so that materials were brought cogently and judiciously to support chosen topic. <p>Section C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focused their response on the statement • demonstrated a powerful independence and conviction of thought • combined consistent and cohesive breadth and depth in their discussion • used specific and appropriate details of the well-chosen text(s) • sustained their discussion in a perceptive and engaging way • showed a high level of integrated synthesised response.
Scholarship	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selected appropriate statements • included critical analysis in their response • wrote solid essays which were fluent and well-constructed • engaged with the statement in their response

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chose appropriate texts and terminology • structured discussions with supporting and relevant reference • showed personal insight and independent thought • formed strong, well-supported conclusions about texts. <p>Section A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made reference to purpose, techniques and meaning in both given extracts • showed understanding of techniques and their use • compared elements of the texts and discussed similarities and differences • provided creative and cohesive responses <p>Section B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responded to the statements • took time to wrestle with the statement and understand it in their terms rather than assuming that the meanings were given • chose appropriate texts • used their understandings and experience of texts and genres to shape developed and linked discussion. <p>Section C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responded to the statements • recognised with a degree of discrimination the thrust of the statement, producing relevant and fluent discussion. • included textual evidence fluently, selecting details rather than summarising.
Other candidates	<p>Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not pace their work across the paper, spending too much time on one section and rushing/leaving out other sections • were unable to respond to the statement and redirected materials to pre-worked /essays • did not fully engage with the statement • lacked a sense of personal voice or ownership of argument • worked at a superficial level of understanding of the statement • offered literal responses rather than analytical • lacked a clear command of their chosen texts and readings • wrote literary essays that were not fluent or lucid. • used too many texts or ill-chosen texts • produced work which was unbalanced and lacked the scope to provide Scholarship level responses. <p>Section A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misunderstood the unfamiliar texts, or did not compare the texts in any way • were too focused on spotting effects or their absence • resorted to paraphrased commentaries rather than analysis • relied on explanation and repetition • did not develop and structure a coherent discussion • made general assumptions about genre and shaped their discussion by this, rather than what they actually found in the texts • were inaccurate in knowledge and identification of language features. <p>Section B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pieced together passages of pre-worked materials rather than adapting or responding to the given statement. • often included extraneous reference, detail or quotation which did not pertain to the chosen statement, extensive plot summaries • could not move beyond particular studied/prepared “past-essay” areas of a text or texts, producing generic genre related discussions.

	<p>Section C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misunderstood the thrust of the statements, without using knowledge of texts or their own reading experience • retained 'pocketed' discussion of individual texts or authors without blending their readings/responses in a relevant discussion • were unable to show or develop a personal response or engagement.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>The exam continues to provide evidence that there are some very able thinkers and writers who can construct lively and sophisticated responses in exam conditions with sustained eloquence and call on a wide ranging experience with literature in a variety of forms. It is refreshing to see the wide ranging exposure to texts and the genuine engagement and enjoyment so many candidates have with them.</p> <p>Examiner's Advice</p> <p>A familiarisation with the Assessment Schedule which clearly indicates the steps is advisable.</p> <p>For candidates to succeed at this level they need five key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a tool kit of techniques • academic writing skills • a background of detailed text knowledge including wide independent text reading • a real interest and engagement with various ideas and texts • an understanding of themselves and the position they hold as a reader. <p>The tool kit needs to consist of a thorough knowledge of literary terms and grammatical techniques. Candidates need to practise these skills. The skills need to be developed so they can be used with confidence and accuracy and applied to all responses.</p> <p>Academic writing skills will also require practise. Candidates need to be able to write academic discussions on unfamiliar topics within an exam time frame. It is clear that while many candidates know their material and write well, more practise in non-prepared academic writing would be beneficial. A particular focus on the structuring of arguments is required.</p> <p>Detailed text background is as essential as selecting the appropriate exam statement for those text(s). Texts chosen for class study must permit a degree of analysis and discussion appropriate to the level of statements in the examination. It is not the range and quality of the text that is necessarily the issue. What is of crucial importance is that subsequent study and discussion allows candidates to respond appropriately in the Scholarship exam. A thematic approach to a year's English course coupled with a personal reading programme could facilitate this. The need is for students to engage with the question and then use the texts they have at their disposal to support their stance.</p> <p>Ideas are fundamental. Candidates' responses need to engage with the statements, and then advance their own take on what that means. The evidence of independent thought and the creative response is vital.</p> <p>Responsive Reader: Candidates who respond well are those who have a real understanding of where they are, what the world is all about, and how people respond to it. Responses at this level need to include more than just – plot, character, theme. What is required is a deeper or more intense understanding. This can include appropriate literary theory; the position of the reader; the position of the text in time and the inter-relation of that text to others. This development of an independent perspective is critical at this level. The interest and engagement with the argument and the genuine development of an argument with supporting details is crucial.</p> <p>In an examination of this type and standard, time is of the essence. It is vital that candidates avoid expository introductions and generalised discussions. Candidates would be better served by immediately dealing with the statement and how they perceive it, setting the parameters for the development of the argument and then enforcing this with well-chosen textual details.</p>

