A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EXAMINING OF POETRY IN THE ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE COURSE AT SENIOR SECONDARY LEVEL IN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SCHOOLS

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The study of poetry has become entrenched in most secondary school English syllabuses, including the English First Language Higher Grade syllabus of the Cape Education Department. This acceptance of poetry as a part of the formal academic programme has, however, been accompanied by a demand that could be considered contrary to the spirit of poetry: that an examination should conclude the study. The problem is exacerbated if this examination is set and controlled by an external body, since the nature and objectives of a standardised, mass examination frequently conflict sharply with the aims of studying poetry. The implications of such control over the examining of poetry go beyond this, however. These include the defining and narrowing of the course of study by means of lists of prescribed poems selected by a committee often far removed from the world of the candidates and the significant combined effect of these lists and the style of questioning adopted by the external examiners on methods of teaching. Furthermore, the influence of the external examination is not restricted to the final year of study; the approach to poetry during the entire senior secondary course (of three years) tends to conform to the pattern laid down by the final examination paper. This domination of the external examination over the study of poetry is acknowledged but not condoned. There is undoubtedly a need for further research into alternative ways of assessing a poetry course. In the face of reality, however, this study seeks to identify and analyse the many features of external control that influence the study of poetry; and to consider ways in which examinations in poetry can be devised, approached and used to the best effect in order to fulfil the aims of studying poetry. The most important of these aims are held to be the pleasure and enjoyment of personal engagement with a poem, where there is a meeting of minds, a generation and deepening of emotion and feeling, extension of awareness and stimulation of imagination.

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CHAPTER ONE

WHY STUDY POETRY?

1.1 The *raison d'être* for studying poetry at secondary school level

The voices raised in favour of poetry as a school study have been variously gentle, strident, emotively encouraging and urgent; but they have resounded consistently for more than a century. The wider subject under discussion has usually been the inclusion of Literature in the school curriculum but frequently poetry has been singled out for particular mention. As a result, poetry study as a subsection of Literature has become entrenched in the syllabus of schools where English is studied as a First (or Home) language.

Although Shayer makes the point that the reasons for studying literature in schools in Britain were "more taken for granted than precisely defined" (Shayer, 1972: 172), one can identify individual writers and official reports whose opinions influenced the thinking and aims of English teachers and policy-makers both in Great Britain and in other countries over the past century.

One of the earliest documented calls for poetry to be studied in the school classroom in Great Britain was made by Matthew Arnold. In a report written in 1871, he describes literature as "the greatest power available in education" and singles out poetry as a means of saving the middle and lower classes from the threatening forces of a rapidly industrialising nation (Mathieson, 1975).

Arnold's argument proposes that, apart from its redemptive potential, poetry also has a humanising influence:

> Good poetry does undoubtedly tend to form the soul and character; it tends to beget a love of beauty and truth in alliance together, it suggests, however indirectly, high and noble principles of action, and it inspires the emotion so helpful in making principles operative. Hence its extreme importance to all of us; but in our elementary schools its importance seems to me to be at present quite extraordinary.
>
> (Arnold in Smith, 1969: 224)

In his 1882 Report, Arnold recommends that a child be brought to "throw himself into a piece of poetry", an activity to be regarded as particularly creative and pleasurable.

There was an enthusiastic response to Arnold's urgent pleas for literature, including poetry, to become part of the school curriculum although discussion about it remained philosophical and general:

> Between 1900 and 1920 method writers usually referred passionately but rather vaguely to such things as 'truth, beauty and goodness' when discussing the purpose of school literature study, and although there was no shortage of opinion maintaining, first, that literature should be studied and second that it should be studied as literature and not as grammar, even the best writers on the subject tended to remain non-committal when the matter of purpose and benefits came up.
>
> (Shayer, 1972: 172)

Many of the early writers, such as Caldwell Cook (1917) and Sir Percy Nunn (1920), regard literature as central elements of the English classroom, emphasising its value as a means of fostering individuality in the students, while Sampson describes literature as a means of "refreshment, pleasure and consolation" that presents the "real challenging call of soul to soul" (Sampson, 1921: 122). Expressing ideas that could be regarded as almost ahead of his time,

he emphasises, however, that it will be a failure unless it is "in all senses, a 're-creation', an experience in creative reception" (Sampson, 1921: 106).

F.R. Leavis, one of the most influential English educators of the century, is considered to have been the leading figure responsible for establishing literature - and particularly poetry - in the school curriculum. In his writings on the value of English studies, Leavis holds strong opinions, based on the Arnoldian belief that there is a need to turn to poetry 'to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us' (Knight, 1979) and he is noted for his suggestion that the study of literature is an experience that involves the whole reader and significantly contributes to emotional, intellectual and moral development.

Later writers echo these sentiments, believing poetry to have power as an educating and 'civilising' force that can "save us from routine responses and the lazy comfort of tram-line thinking" (Gurrey, 1958: 123); to be "a positive aid to living" (Holbrook, 1961: 87); and to possess the unique quality of arousing a heightened sense of emotion (Whitehead, F., 1966). There are some who still argue as vehemently as Arnold for its centrality in the curriculum:

> As an article of faith, on which the rest of my case depends, I should nail this thesis to my chapter: that *the study of poetry ought to be at the very heart of English studies.*
>
> (Harrison, 1983: 87, *my italics*)

The strong beliefs held by the aforementioned writers have been given official recognition and endorsement in Great Britain by two of the landmark reports on the teaching of English: the Newbolt Report (*The Teaching of English in England*, 1921) and the Bullock Report (*A language for life*, 1975).

The view of literature presented in both Reports is very like that of Matthew Arnold: the humanising and unifying value of English and particularly of English literature. In the former report, the value of literature as a training of the emotions is emphasised, along with the belief that English literature should be offered as a substitute for the Classics, "a means of contact with great minds, a channel by which to draw on their experience with profit and delight, and a bond of sympathy between the members of a human society" (Newbolt, 1921: 15).

The Bullock Report, although severely criticised by some for its scant treatment of literature, and particularly poetry, sums up the attitude at the time:

> In Britain the tradition of literature teaching is one which aims at personal and moral growth, and in the last two decades this emphasis has grown. It is a soundly based tradition, and properly interpreted is a powerful force in English teaching. Literature brings the child into an encounter with language in its most complex and varied forms. Through these complexities are presented the thoughts, experiences and feelings of people who exist outside and beyond the reader's daily awareness. This process of bringing them within that circle of consciousness is where the greatest value of literature lies.
>
> (Bullock, 1975: 125)

It is true that more recent writers are tempering the fervour with which many previously spoke out in favour of the centrality of poetry in the English curriculum; and even an editor of Matthew Arnold's writing warns that some of the claims have been "embarrassingly overblown" (Garnett, 1989). Despite these sentiments, however, the study of poetry remains a part of the English curriculum of secondary schools.

Reasons offered for the continued inclusion of poetry in today's high school English courses frequently echo the sentiments expressed more than a century ago. Some see those who teach poetry as fulfilling the role of "preachers of culture" (Mathieson, 1975), or as the warriors that Leavis and Thompson (1933) declared were needed to take up arms against the pervasive influences of a commercial and scientific society.

Others choose to emphasise the emotional, imaginative and creative value of poetry, seeing it as a "vital creative force" (Baldwin, 1959: 6), or as a means of entering the "realms of gold" written of by Keats. The importance of poetry in the development of a deeper awareness of the world, other people and the individual himself - of providing an opportunity for nurturing a deeper understanding of humanity and reality - has been championed by writers such as Abbs (1969), Greene (1974) and Sweetkind:

> Every good poem is a unique, original treatment of human experience in artistic form. It not only gives us pleasure, helps us understand ourselves, others, and the world around us, but, in its very diversity, reveals the essential oneness of humanity.
>
> (Sweetkind, 1964: xi)

Fleming (1992) points out that the value of teaching poetry in schools is seldom questioned. Protherough even goes so far as to state categorically that "poems have become protected species in the syllabuses of most examination boards" (Protherough, 1986: 123).

When one considers South African education, Fleming's remark seems particularly pertinent: poetry as part of the English curriculum is rarely questioned and its right to a place in the curriculum is - and seems for several

decades to have been - taken for granted. If one seeks a *raison d'etre* for studying poetry in South African schools, one would possibly have to consider the concept of "cultural cringe", an expression used by the Australian writers Davis and Watson. They explain it as a phrase "which denotes what many see as an excessive deference to ideas and movements emanating from overseas, particularly from Britain and the USA" (Britton, 1990: 151) and go so far as to suggest that there is particular evidence of this in the teaching of English, where any changes have simply been an acceptance of overseas influences.

From the detailed study of the history and development of the teaching of poetry in South African schools made by Durham (1969), it is quite apparent that, until the mid-nineteen-sixties at least, the influence of British writers and syllabuses on this component of the English curriculum was considerable. The notion of cultural cringe in the English taught in South African schools is supported by Bakker (1985) in his comments on the influence of the Bullock Report on the compilation of English syllabuses.

1.2 **The general aims of teaching poetry**

From the more abstruse philosophical reasons why poetry is included in the English First Language syllabus, one can elicit certain *general* aims of the teaching of poetry in the present-day English curriculum. It must be acknowledged, of course, that the individual teacher will no doubt have his own general aims - and also, possibly, specific aims in the study of a certain poem with a particular group.

It would be well to preface such a consideration by bearing in mind the warning of Andrews (1991) that frequently the aims of teaching poetry are overstated and oblique. That this is so is allied to the strongly affective nature of such aims, which are inevitably expressed in words and phrases such as "appreciation", "insight", "enjoyment", "aesthetic development", "emotional sensibilities" and "critical discrimination".

It is generally agreed that poetry forms part of the English curriculum for reasons that are the antithesis of the practical and the utilitarian and that the teaching of poetry is intended to fulfil an aesthetic function.

Protherough (1986) sums up in three points what he calls "our priorities in approaching poetry":

> ... that all students should discover at least some poems to which they can respond with pleasure, that they should extend the range of poetry to which they can respond, and that they should develop the ability to 'criticise' the poems that they read (i.e. to talk and write perceptively about them).
>
> (Protherough, 1986: 127)

The priorities suggested by Protherough do not address the intensely personal experience of literature and the concomitant aims of development of awareness and feeling. If literature is seen as a "meeting of minds [that] modifies our personal understanding" (Dixon, J., 1979:46), then a further, very important, aim would be to provide students with the opportunity both to encounter other "minds" in the context of their own experience and to sharpen their awareness of their own worlds, other people and themselves as a result of that encounter.

In addition, since most (one would like to say all) English teachers are concerned with the development of feeling and imagination as well as intellectual growth, a most important aim of teaching poetry would seem to be to provide a counterweight to the practical and intellectual pursuits that dominate secondary school curricula and are demanded by the industrialised, bureaucratic society that Marcuse (1964) has called "one-dimensional". In their teaching of poetry, those who view the concept of teaching for feeling will surely aim to provide opportunity for the extension of perception and the development of the domains of emotion and imagination, so that pupils can become more aware of their feelings and "may also be able to develop new sorts of feeling" (Bantock, 1968: 77).

Purves (1990), an advocate of the reader-response approach to the teaching of literature, suggests that an important aim of teaching poetry is to do even more than this, however: it is actively to arouse a response in the pupils, to create in them a "sense of knowing, a sense of feeling, a sense of moving" (Purves, 1990: 15).

Undoubtedly, however, many teachers consider another, more prosaic aim to be far more important than any of the above: to cover the syllabus (to "do" the poetry that has been prescribed) and to help students to pass the final examination.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PROBLEM OF POETRY

2.1 Poetry as part of a formal curriculum

As a result of the campaigns fought for the acceptance of English - including English literature - as a fully-fledged school subject, it is now accorded a certain worth on school timetables and in the eyes of society but despite the admirable aims suggested by writers and in syllabuses and the widespread acceptance of the value of teaching poetry, it appears that few school pupils *and* adults find poetry appealing. Orwell does not mince words in this regard.

> It is no use pretending that in an age like our own, "good" poetry can have any genuine popularity. It is, and must be, the cult of very few people, the least tolerated of the arts.
>
> (Orwell, 1946: 111)

The study conducted in Britain by Yarlott and Harpin (1971-2) shows attitudes of indifference to and dislike of poetry and Andrews (1991) considers that there has not been much change since that study. Some writers, such as Benton (1986) and Burton (1970) suggest that poetry is massively rejected, possibly because of the frustration it holds for both pupils and teachers.

In a report compiled by the Department of Education and Science in Britain, *Teaching poetry in the secondary school*, (DES, 1987), concern is expressed about the unease some English teachers experience when faced with the challenge of teaching poetry. The inspectors who compiled this report suggest that this apprehension stems from a lack of genuine enthusiasm for poetry among teachers

themselves, the difficulty of choosing and presenting poetry (compared to fiction) and the apparent hostility to poetry among the pupils.

In South Africa, the position appears to be similar: poetry seems to have been unpopular for years.

> With the possible exception of the grammar lesson, the poetry lesson is the most unpopular in the English syllabus... Boys maintain that poetry is not manly enough for them, that with all its frills it appeals to girls. Yet few girls really enjoy and understand poetry.
> (Addison, 1969: 65)

In her study, Reid found evidence to suggest that many Standard 10 pupils went "into [their poetry lessons] bored and came out numb" (Reid, 1982: 85). Recent research, as yet unpublished, conducted by Borman (1992) among Standard 10 pupils suggests that there is an indifference to poetry that borders on a negative reaction. Respondents in her study rated poetry below short stories and a Shakespeare play; and those planning further studies in English actually rated poetry as least popular of the works studied in their final year at school. When asked to comment on why they had rated poetry as the "least liked" of the examined works, numerous pupils responded that it was "boring". It is interesting to note that those who had rated poetry as the "most liked" of the examined works frequently commented that they enjoyed writing poems of their own - suggesting that the enjoyment emanated from being creative rather than engaging with the texts written by others.

This unpopularity of poetry seems at variance with the personal enrichment afforded by poetry as well as the reasons why it is taught. Fleming (1992) acknowledges that poetry can be more remote and abstract than other genres and

one must accept that, in the present world of instant and easily acquired entertainment that is predominantly visual and aural, poetry seems less natural and less immediately accessible to many.

There could, however, be other reasons for its lack of support and popularity. In an article published in the *Times Educational Supplement*, Cox (1985) raises a valid point: that there is a lack of adult enthusiasm for poetry despite the fact that so many young people study poetry at school and in the universities. A reason he advances for this is that pupils do not write poetry enough themselves and expend most of their energy and study on formal appreciation of poetry. Herein lies a possible explanation for the fact that after school, people retreat from poetry: their experience of it at school has destroyed their interest in it or has misrepresented or distorted their impressions of what poetry is.

Cox suggests that activities associated with poetry at school are possibly inappropriate and contrary to the spirit of poetry. Possibly one of the most contentious of these activities is the writing of an examination: the necessity for pupils to be formally assessed at the conclusion of each year's study, which is one of the trappings acquired by English along with the status of inclusion in a formal curriculum. Kerr (1954) wryly points out that the nineteenth century believed in examinations and the twentieth century has suffered torments of doubt about them. This certainly seems to be the case in English, where loud voices are constantly raised in debate. Many feel that examinations run counter to the spirit of English and frequently lead to misplaced emphasis and a teaching method that is contrary to the aims of the subject. Stevens considers that examinations have had a significant influence on the development of English as a subject:

> At every level the study of English has grown up alongside - some would say in the shadow of - the examination system.
>
> (Stevens, 1970: 3)

Greatest concern appears to focus on the question of examining literature; and frequently poetry is singled out for particular discussion. The problem that exists is a very real one, pertinent to the survival of the inclusion of poetry in the curriculum.

In addressing this issue, both the Newbolt Report (1921) and the Bullock Report (1975) refer to the largely destructive effect of examinations on teaching methods and on pupils' attitudes towards poetry; and both Durham (1969) and Reid (1982) cite the influence of examinations as a factor in their respective considerations of reasons for the unpopularity of poetry in South African schools. In an elaborately contrived extended metaphor, Leonard suggests the extent to which examinations have become part of a commercial world that appears to have excised Literature from its rightful place in the Arts.

> I have already written ... that I see "English Literature" exams as central anti-creative rites in which Art is turned into property and students compelled to be witnessed in an act of acquisition. The property derived from the work of art is sold as a commodity to the examiner, who places a value on it and ultimately offers in return a bill of currency.
>
> (Leonard, 1988: 4)

However, despite the misgivings expressed and the chorus of adverse criticism, examinations in English - including those in poetry - have not been abolished. The Newbolt Report puts the matter regarding literature very succinctly:

> But for good or ill the examination system is with us. To exempt Literature alone from its scope would simply exclude the teaching of Literature from a number of schools.
>
> (Newbolt, 1921: 301)

Margaret Mathieson (1980) argues along the same lines for poetry, pointing out that even to adopt a less academic approach towards poetry or to exempt certain students from writing examinations would lower the status of poetry in the classroom and in the minds of students, their parents and society at large. This has implications for Cape Education Department syllabuses other than English First Language Higher Grade, but these are not under discussion in this study.

Andrews (1991) reiterates the sentiments of Mathieson, but also points out that to release poetry from the restraints of an examination holds further threats for its continued existence as a classroom activity: the concomitant freeing of teachers from the responsibility of having to include any poetry in their teaching, which could prove to be an opportunity that many teachers may seize, given that poetry appears to be regarded as a problem area of the English curriculum by so many teachers and pupils.

In addition to the rather cynical notion that the examination ensures that poetry remains part of the English curriculum, there are other reasons why poetry is likely to remain examinable. One cannot deny that for many teachers, an examination provides an over-riding justification for their work. In addition, the results obtained by the pupils can be used as an indication of the teachers' worth and competence. Society requires a certain standard of tangible, statistical evidence that the teacher is doing a good job and examination results provide this

evidence. Furthermore, when viewed in the light of society's demands, one can argue that external examinations create and preserve standards (Stevens, 1970).

Another argument in favour of continued examinations in poetry is advanced by Mathieson, who believes that the examination has a supportive function for average teachers who "find it difficult to generate classroom excitement" (Mathieson 1975: 216).

Thus, while much of the criticism levelled against the examining of poetry appears valid, the likelihood of abandoning examinations in poetry is remote: as Lemmer (1979) states, examinations are a "necessary evil", and it is on this assumption, therefore, that the ensuing study rests.

2.2 The constraints made by examinations on the study of poetry

2.2.1 *Conflict: aims of teaching poetry and examination practice*

> What has been said has obvious implications at the school level and much might be done if it were permitted, if there were teachers educated to do it, and *if the examination system were not allowed to get in the way.*
> (Leavis, 1943:137, *my italics*)

The comment made by Leavis pertains to an issue that is frequently raised: that of conflicting aims in the teaching and examining of poetry.

Frank Whitehead (1966) points out that the predictive nature of examinations is in direct conflict with educational values. Even if the aim of the course is couched in affective terms, and the classroom activities have been sincerely directed towards personal and imaginative responses and growth, the examination result

has to be expressed in statistical terms, requiring testing which is measurable - and thus which has to measure cognitive skills.

Coupled with this conflict is the difficulty of examining - indeed even of articulating - feeling, appreciation and sensitivity. The rubric may ask for a personal response but what is ultimately assessed is the ability to communicate that personal response.

> The problem of using an examination to test whether the stated objectives have been met, arises when one has to rely on the pupils' cognitive skills and writing ability to express affective and aesthetic experiences, which the objectives of the syllabus inevitably intended them to have experienced.
>
> (Dixon, C., 1985: 37)

Traditionally, examinations emphasise the product rather than the process. The effect this emphasis has on literature is a tendency to shift the focus away from poetry as an art, associated with emotion and pleasure, to information about poetry and rather trivial and superficial skills to which a marking scheme can be applied. Paffard is especially critical of this shift of focus, which he sees as a long-standing problem.

> The study of English in our education system got itself into a jam right from the start with its emphasis on knowledge about literature and trying to catch it in the cool web of critic-talk rather than on the making and performing as with art and music.
>
> (Paffard, 1978b: 55)

Consequently, it can be argued, literature examinations tend to bow to the demand for mechanistic, impersonal examination of technique, giving rise to the notion that literature "is more concerned with the acquisition of conceptual knowledge than with the development of the ability to respond with honesty and

in person to the call of the text" (Bakker, 1985: 159). The classroom aim might well be to develop students' capacity to *experience* poetry, but the examinations will in all probability test not only the students' knowledge of the content (or, even worse, the "message") of a poem but also of their ability to control abstract terms associated with poetry.

Furthermore, because it is so much easier to award marks for knowledge, examiners will tend to pounce eagerly on a poem that can be regarded as most suited to examination marking. Leonard (1988) describes this 'ideal' poem as something of a treasure chest, the delights of which the students will be asked to ferret out, hold up and identify. Invariably these "treasures" will take the form of figures of speech. Sometimes the examiner will find it convenient to point out a particular item and to ask the student to unwrap it. This type of activity is hardly conducive to a sincere emotional response: it is more often than not an opportunity for the well-rehearsed students to trot out the practised platitudes or to apply the memorised formulae and those who can do this best are rewarded with the best marks.

An examination of this nature merely demands what Holbrook (1967) terms "processed unloading", an activity quite contrary to the spirit of poetry:

> The mind, trained in 'rigorous disciplines', ceases to be 'open' and 'relaxed'. The student ceases to be able to allow doubts, uncertainties, disturbance in his own inner world, and so ceases to respond to literature in a creative way. He is defended by an intellectual approach - he no longer feels, and is no longer capable of being moved, or opened to fresh experience. He 'appreciates' rather than speaks of his true responses.
>
> (Holbrook, 1967: 128)

This has an unfortunate spin-off in the classroom where pupils are being prepared for this type of examining: lessons become poem-centred, poetry is regarded as a problem-solving exercise where there is a code to be cracked, and poems are worried and tugged at in lengthy verbal analyses that virtually shut the poems in on themselves.

The writers of the Bullock Report (1975) warn that if the assessment of literature is approached in the same way as that of a content subject, then the student will regard it as a science and a task. This once again raises the question of the acquisition of information rather than developing ability to make independent judgements, a comment made by the Lockwood Report (1964) on the examining of *language* but which is nevertheless relevant here as well.

Unfortunately, examinations in literature frequently tend to become purely academic and coldly analytical, affording no pleasure or delight to either examiner or student. Dyer gloomily sees the examiner as trapped in a distasteful situation:

> We as examiners, perhaps more than anyone, 'murder to dissect'; and one often does have the sense in dealing with exam papers that one is confronting rows and rows of portions of dismembered imaginative corpses, lined up neatly to be marked out of 4. This little verse may be old and obvious:
>
> *Fair spirit, shall I call thee bird*
> *Or but a wandering voice?*
> *State the alternative preferred*
> *And reasons for your choice.*
>
> but it gives an uncomfortably accurate reflection of the effect of examiners on the poetic imagination.
>
> (Dyer, 1977:43)

In addition, examinations usually impose time limits. Both Leavis (1943) and Holbrook (1967) are especially critical of the demand made on examination candidates to "beat the clock", which is absolutely inimical to the supposed invitation offered by poetry to an imaginative and personal response, a new and challenging experience.

A final problem associated with examinations rests with the teachers and examiners of poetry and arises from their academic education and literary backgrounds. Because those teachers and examiners themselves have come through the traditional channels of a literary education, they inevitably and often unconsciously view poetry and the study of it in that context (Protherough, 1986), seeing literature as part of the cultivation of scholarship. Thus conditioned, they tend to accept and perpetuate a form and style of examination that is familiar to them and yet is possibly not appropriate to the majority of pupils. Thus, although some or all of the above criticisms of examinations may be considered relevant, many English teachers will nevertheless accept the *status quo* and almost expect the examination to be true to the traditional, university approach, where the stress falls on the validity of the poet's perception of the world and the text is central to the study (Mathieson, 1985). It is possible that although many teachers may agree that, for the majority of pupils, the priority of a literary education should be the expansion of awareness and the education of imagination and feelings, they still expect the examination to have a strong intellectual component.

2.2.2 *The particular problems of the external examination*

The additional problem of an examination in poetry that is externally set and administered has evoked further strong criticism from several quarters.

> Any English master interested in education who has prepared a school certificate form knows the bitter feeling of waste ... Since the damage done to education by external, "standardising" examinations is so gross, obvious, pervasive and inescapable, the time has come to press firmly for their abolition.
>
> (Knights, 1933: 158)

It is true that a syllabus that is *externally* assessed does raise further problems. Firstly, an external examination demands a syllabus that almost always defines - and therefore narrows - the course of study, as can be seen in terms of lists of set texts (Protherough, 1986). The rationale for this has been pointed out by Dixon:

> When a large number of students answer the same question on the same text it is possible to make quite refined distinctions in placing them in rank order and grading them.
>
> (Dixon, J., 1979: 50)

The idea of literature being a "meeting of minds" is somehow strangely distorted when a distant, unseen committee decides which minds all students following a particular course are to meet, denying the teacher and the students the chance of personal selection and discovery:

> It is as if the student were given a cultural chaperone who decided which minds it was proper to meet. The chaperone's choice may be excellent, but one thing is certain: the students have no scope for learning to choose. They may well learn that texts chosen for them have a great deal to offer, but they will never learn this way how little or much there might be in the texts they themselves would choose.
>
> (Dixon, J., 1979: 50)

Inglis (1969) takes this even further in discussing the 'set' anthology, which, he considers, exerts undesirable pressure on the development of students' tastes and opinions, a sentiment expressed several years earlier in the Spens Report (1938), which urges the abolition of prescribed texts, believing that these do more to hamper a love of and interest in literature than to encourage it. It must be conceded that some teachers prefer texts to be prescribed, since this excuses them from the heavy responsibility of choosing poetry relevant to their pupils' lives. The Utopian situation, of course, is that the teacher will go beyond the set list and that the examiner should be able to assume that candidates come to the examination with extensive experience of poetry of a wide range. Unfortunately, in reality this is not the case. Lemmer (1979) makes the sober observation that most teachers concentrate on what is set to the exclusion of all else.

Secondly, the external examination tends to set a precedent and becomes not only the model for future examinations and tests but also begins to dictate the demands and expectations which pupils are prepared to meet. The questions of the external papers tend to become the established form and exert a strong influence on both the teaching and learning style. This is not necessarily to be condemned. If the examination is a test of what Evans (1951) calls "the right things", then its effect on what happens in the classroom could be extremely beneficial. Nevertheless, the examination paper tends to seize the initiative from the teacher, who, as Paffard (1978a) suggests, ultimately takes the examination by proxy.

The pressure under which teachers are placed is not to be underestimated. Success of pupils in an external examination brings recognition and glory to the teacher of those pupils and the English teacher disregards preparation for examinations at her peril. Thus there is a tendency to allow the examiner to usurp the power of the teacher and "strategies of pleasing the examiner take precedence" (Dixon, J., 1975:93). The enjoyment of engaging with a text is no longer of any significance as the teacher seeks to prepare students to answer questions that are "markable": students are *trained* to appreciate (a complete contradiction) and are drilled in "efficient examination packaging skills" (Jackson, 1984: 205), enabling them to write responses that meet the demands of a memorandum but that are patently second-hand and predigested. Lamentably, the students become passive recipients of information, relying on the teacher to provide them with packaged judgements and handy critical expressions (Widdowson, 1985). Instead of standing alongside the student in a spirit of exploration, as advocated by Bullock (1975), the teacher becomes the cohort of the student in a battle of wits against the examiner.

Thirdly, it is widely held that the externally-set examination frequently determines the way in which the subject is approached in the classroom. John Dixon (1979) suggests that examinations can become the goal of teaching to the extent that they replace the syllabus objectives when the methodology is planned. This feeling is supported by the research conducted by Barnes and Barnes (1984) into the 'versions' of English used in preparing pupils for examinations set by different examining bodies. They found that a strong relationship exists between

the style or mode of the examination for which the pupils are being prepared and the version of English adopted by the teachers.

This is evident not only in the final year in which the students sit for the external examination: the approach adopted for the entire course is usually strongly influenced by the need to acquire "examination-passing techniques" (Moody, 1971), denying any opportunity for creativity. It has also been suggested that examinations that are set in a particular pattern can encourage teaching in a set pattern (Dunning, 1966, and Dixon, J., 1966).

Because the teacher is aware of the cognitive demands being made by the examination, teaching style tends to be weighted heavily towards what Douglas and Dorothy Barnes (1984) call the "transmission mode" (tight teacher control, passive reception of authoritative pronouncements, concentration on details and localised meanings) rather than the "initiation mode", which allows students to respond personally, and to ask their own questions. All too often it is the teacher who engages in a dialogue with the text, rather than the individual student (Bakker, 1985).

Abbs warns about the limiting effect of adopting a single particular approach, such as the exclusive concern with practical criticism, which will result in students' living "solely submerged in the reflection and images of others" (Abbs, 1982: 61).

Possibly the best advice is that of Sampson, who dismisses the subject by remarking that "the best way of preparing for examinations in literature is not to prepare for them" (Sampson, 1921: 123) but it is a moot point whether many teachers heed this advice, although several students possibly do.

Unfortunately, the external examination is frequently an anticlimax for both the pupils and the teachers who have prepared them for it. There are two sides to this. Firstly, if the focus of poetry lessons has genuinely been affective development, examination candidates invariably find the examination has a different emphasis - probably on skills and information about the poem. On the other hand, if the external poetry examination is regarded by the teacher as a contest, with the examiner as the antagonist against whom teacher and pupils are pitted, then a great deal of time will have been spent developing the technique required to defeat the opponent. Consequently pupils may feel deflated if the examiner asks questions that prove the teacher to be a poor tipster and the hours of practice and memorising of combat tactics are to no avail. Even if the teacher has proved to be a skilful punter and the pupils are able to reproduce the conventional judgements and apply the technical skills, the lack of personal involvement will provide little satisfaction or stimulation.

An indicator of the influence of an external examination is the commercial industry that develops to help pupils (and possibly teachers) prepare for it. Large and small publishers have identified this potentially profitable niche in the market and there are numerous study aids of varying quality available wherever candidates are being prepared to sit for external examinations. Many educators condemn these strongly, seeing diverse dangers in their use and ready

availability. Widdowson, for example, regards them as "effective prophylactics against any personal contact with the text" (Widdowson, 1985: 185). It must be assumed that the principle of *esse est percipi* ("what exists is perceived") operates here and that decisions regarding the style of presentation and the contents of these study aids are based on the external examination papers. Thus a perusal of the study aids can give the researcher a fair idea of the perception created by the examination of what is important in the subject.

A final problem is the standardisation of assessment in an external examination. A mass examination necessitates a panel of examiners ("markers") which raises manifold questions regarding reliability. If the examination results are to be reliable, then there must be a high degree of uniformity amongst those examiners. Knights (1933) points out that the only way to standardise marking is to submit to a system of "markable" points that are immediately recognisable and that can be rigidly and objectively applied. Realistically, such points are facts and standardised opinions, effectively reducing the marking of the examination to a mechanical chore where there is no opportunity to distinguish between the good and the poor student. The memorandum should give an agreed scheme of marking for each question but if the questions are open-ended, as most English questions are (Chater, 1984) there is a real risk of intermarker disagreement which becomes a source of unreliability.

Because of the need for a standardised memorandum and also because the open-ended question is difficult to assess (particularly when the panel is working under the additional pressure of time), the temptation is surely for examiners to prefer to set questions that are overtly objective, deceptively so (couched as if they are

asking for a personal opinion but actually requiring a standardised opinion) or that are in some other way "markable". This undoubtedly influences the approach adopted by teachers in preparing their pupils for the external examination. Perceiving that pupils will be asked questions to which there will be "right" answers makes teachers reluctant to release their ownership of the poem; and there is a temptation to spend time on line-by-line exposition of the text, with the teacher elucidating what is regarded to be the proper response to the poem.

These numerous factors suggest that the influence of the external examination on the teaching of poetry is considerable. In effect, the examining body ultimately usurps control over both the curriculum and the teaching of it.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FORMAL ASSESSMENT OF POETRY

3.1 Some general principles

It has been stated already that this study makes no attempt to justify any examination in poetry but operates from the premise that poetry is part of an external examination.

A general principle of assessment is to test what has been taught. This cannot be easily applied to the examining of poetry, where a focus of classroom activity is appreciation - something that Paffard (1978a) suggests is caught rather than taught. Indeed, the Newbolt Report (1921) makes a strong distinction between examining literature and examining other subjects in the school curriculum and appeals to examiners to recognise this difference. Testing for knowledge about literature rather than ability to appreciate and discriminate will mean that the pupil will regard literature as a task. The Report warns that "testing contexts, meanings, parallels, allusions and so forth ... is *science* rather than art" (Newbolt, 1921: 307).

The most recent official report emanating from South Africa endorses this: the De Lange Report (1981) emphasises the need for examinations to complement the aims of a syllabus and recommends that more attention be devoted to the testing of literary insights, judgements and criticisms. To this end, the De Lange Report supports open-book examinations in literature.

In addition, a responsibility rests on the examiner to make the examination an experience that has educational value in itself and that gives teachers helpful educational guidance. While this may sound impossibly idealistic, one could strive to attain the objectives suggested by Evans:

> The examination should be a *lesson* of the best kind and should contribute to the child's understanding and appreciation of poetry, as well as affording an assessment of his response. It should be a continuation of good poetry lessons, for we should remember that poetry gives pleasure.
>
> There will always be some degree of tension in the examination, but if it detracts in any way from the child's enjoyment of poetry or increases his dislike of poetry it is a bad examination... The examination should not hinder, and if possible should actively help the best teaching of literature.
>
> (Evans, 1951: 25, 31)

A further principle of examining poetry is apparent in this quote from Evans: the examination should be a continuation of the learning experience. The examiner can go a long way to justifying his position if the questions are set in such a way as to advance the aims of the teaching of poetry and extend appreciation, in addition to evaluating how far the candidates have proceeded on the way from knowledge to understanding.

While it is acknowledged that examiners also labour under constraints and are bound by bureaucratic and other conventions imposed by the examining body, the examiner has an undoubted responsibility to keep abreast of innovations and developments in theories of education and teaching methods. In this context, the sentiments of the Newbolt Report are worth reiterating: that the teacher should

be constantly experimenting with methods and should be taxing the examiner, rather than allowing the examiner to set the pace (Newbolt, 1921).

The ideal examination in poetry would therefore be one that is not an anticlimax to a period of stimulating classroom study but one that would take the candidate at least a step further in his literary experience. It would involve the candidate and encourage a personal response rather than provide the stimulus to trot out a prepared or second-hand opinion; and would give a fair chance to the candidate who produces an imaginative and creative response rather than favour the candidate who has been given intensive coaching. Both the format of the examination paper and the actual questions set on the poetry should seek direct evidence of perceptiveness, understanding and ability to control language. In short, the examination should "testify to the full range of imaginative contemplation and reflection that a genuine encounter [with poetry] may give rise to" (Dixon, J., 1979: 66).

3.2 **Poetry examination questions: some options**

The style and format of an examination paper on poetry and the type of question asked are by no means standardised. Various options have been selected by different examining bodies.

The traditional method appears to have been a comprehension-type exercise where the primary aim was to test understanding of content. Another of the early styles of poetry examination was the setting of questions that demanded a memorising of text for the purpose of narrating theme and content. A

development of this was the question requiring identification of the context of selected gobbets and narration of relevant content.

Reference has already been made to the influence of Leavis and the Cambridge School in elevating the status of literature in universities and schools. One of the strongest traditions of the Cambridge School has been the discipline of close scrutiny of the text as advocated by I.A. Richards in his landmark volume, *Practical Criticism* (1929). Focusing attention exclusively on the text as an unchanging object of special value was also central to the New Criticism movement of the 1940s and 1950s in the United States (Sawyer, 1989). This approach to the study of poetry has come into schools via the university tutorial room, although not without its detractors. A sharp critic of this method in schools is Eliot, who virtually spearheaded the New Criticism movement:

> ... the deliberate attempt to grapple with poetry which is not naturally congenial, and some of which never will be, should be a very mature activity indeed; an activity which well repays the effort, but which cannot be recommended to young people without grave danger of deadening their sensibility to poetry and confounding the genuine *development* of taste with the sham acquisition of it.
>
> (Eliot, 1933: 35)

Despite such warnings, the influence of this approach to poetry extended into the examining of poetry in the form of the literary essay, by means of which practical criticism became recognised as a discipline that could be tested. This style of examining prescribed texts has come under severe attack, since it is what many commentators consider has led to mindless regurgitation of received responses and the aping of literary language memorised for the purposes of the examination.

> The traditional "literature essay" is unsuitable for almost all pupils. If they are required to confine themselves to a critical discussion of the work itself, they will almost certainly be confined also to repeating what a teacher has said to them, their own sense of the work being omitted.
> (Barnes in Owens and Marland, 1970: 288)

There have been various attempts to redress some of the shortcomings of the use of the literary essay as a means of examining prescribed texts. Many of the examining bodies in Britain have introduced the Unseen Practical Criticism paper, which removes the element of memorising of both text and packaged judgements and thus "bring(s) the ... study of literature closer to the function of criticism as it is understood by I.A. Richards" (Peet and Robinson, 1977: xi). This "unseen" question, however, generally still requires candidates to write an essay and has not, apparently, been received with wide acclaim. Dixon and Stratta (1985) are critical of examiners who have maintained the traditional approach of asking the student to adopt the typically 'university' stance of formal critical analysis. There have long been calls (Earnshaw, 1974; Dixon, J., 1979; Daw, 1986) for further reforms in the styles of examining, such as the use of open-book examinations or the provision of the prescribed text. (The option of coursework is also being introduced in Britain but this falls outside the scope of this study.)

Writers such as Rosenblatt (1978), Tompkins (1980) and Purves (1973 and 1990) have made urgent and eloquent calls for a radical shift of emphasis in teaching methods - and thus in the examination. This "reader-response criticism" moves away from close study of the text, where the focus is on articulating appreciation and critical awareness; instead the central focus is the experience of the reader with the text and pupils are required to articulate their responses to a poem:

> It's bringing a vision of what is read out into the open - sharing, baring, stumbling, formulating, changing, reflecting, and, above all, publicizing the response that the [response-centered] curriculum is all about.
> (Purves, 1990: 41)

Although response-based literature teaching has been widely endorsed, it has yet to gain popularity as an examination option. Probst (1984) acknowledges that it *is* difficult to test pupils' interactions with literature; but this does not suggest that response to a text by the pupil in the act of reading and the formulation of judgements about the significance of the work for the individual are impossible to examine. The shift in focus of teaching suggests the necessity to move away from the traditional method of testing, where the examiner also honours the pupils' own response to and feelings about a poem (Benton, 1984).

An approach that has been widely adopted by South African examining bodies is the contextual question. Here, the candidate is given the full text (or a part of it), followed by questions posed in such a way as to encourage the pupil to engage with the text (if it is unseen) or re-engage with it (if it has already been studied). The type of question set on such an extract has varied from the traditional comprehension questions to those requiring interpretation and imaginative reconstruction.

The contextual question certainly lends itself more readily to the response-based approach to literature , where candidates are invited to discuss their own responses to a text rather than focus exclusively on the "meaning in text".

In addition, the contextual question has been hailed as preferable for the majority of pupils in that it allows a more natural engagement with the text, requires less memorising and does move away from the invitation to produce a catalogue of technical devices and the mechanical reproduction of prefabricated ideas, with no genuine appreciation, sensitivity or enjoyment. This is not to say that the contextual question is a straightforward option, nor is it instantly successful or universally desirable.

In the choice of text and in the setting of the contextual question, the preferences and ideas of the examiner can colour the examination and effectively reduce its objectivity (Evans, 1951). In addition, the contextual question is not immune from all the weaknesses of the literary essay. Particularly in an external examination, it can be as restrictive as the literary essay, requiring the same definitive, accepted and standardised answers or the glib parroting of what the candidate has been taught is the 'right' answer - but in smaller units.

Use of the contextual question as an examination tool introduces an additional option regarding the material used in the examination: the given text could be unseen by the candidates or it could be selected from the poetry prescribed for study by the pupils during the course of the year. Similar problems to those encountered in the literary essay or "prac crit" can arise if prescribed poems are examined, where opinions need not be spontaneous but may simply be memorised information or received comments designed to please the examiner. There can be no guarantee that one is testing memory or appreciation.

On the other hand, the use of an unseen poem does test the pupil's ability to read with insight and to respond accordingly, rather than his ability to recall classroom discussions (Cooper, 1985). Thus, the unseen poem should be able to discriminate more effectively between the more and the less able reader.

> A student has mastered the process of responding if he responds surely and easily to a new selection, not if he remembers the teacher's lecture on the last selection.
> (Purves, 1990: 170)

In addition to this, Paffard (1962) argues that the unseen question is able to provide better evidence of appreciation, especially in an external examination, where it is generally impossible to distinguish between genuine and artificial accounts and personal response.

It is a contestable point, however, whether the unseen poem is a genuinely satisfactory way of examining poetry, *given the constraints of limited time and need for silence*. To expect a pupil to be imaginative and sensitive in those conditions is possibly demanding too much. In addition, as Fox and Merrick point out, "A poem rarely 'belongs' to its reader on one or two readings" (in Adams, 1982: 223). Dixon is cautious about accepting the unseen as a means of examining poetry, since the examiner is possibly expecting too much of the pupil by asking him to read a poem for the first time and to write on it almost immediately:

> ... even linguistically able students need freedom for the imagination to work in the early stages of encountering a poem. Rhetorical demands, or the call for explicit attention to 'diction', 'imagery' and so on seem likely to push the reader into regarding the poem as a linguistic object, rather than an imaginative encounter.
> (Dixon, J., 1979: 55)

Although Whitehead has warned that it will never be easy in an examination question to treat "a[n unseen] poem *as* a poem, and at the same time avoid offering an easy invitation to gush and waffle", he does support the concept and goes so far as to assert that the "key to the examining of 'literature' at all levels" lies in this direct testing of the pupil's ability to read and respond independently of classroom discussion and teacher guidance (Whitehead, F., 1966: 245).

There are practical problems associated with the use of an unseen poem. One of the more troubling of these is that it has to be fairly short and thus cannot assess the reader's staying power (Whitehead, F., 1965); in addition to which, examiners may be driven to seek rather obscure poems that will be genuinely unseen by the pupils (Paffard, 1978a). Peet and Robinson (1977) cynically comment that often the unseen poems are obscure for no reason except that they deserve to be.

Even in the case of an unseen poem, with the attendant advantages suggested by Whitehead, there is still a niggling doubt that the entire exercise of encountering a poem and writing about it in the academic style expected by many examinations is too sophisticated an activity for the majority of school pupils. Tunnicliffe (1984) believes that many examiners actually recognise this and that the unseen poetry question is frequently little more than a comprehension exercise.

The above considerations are options available to examiners in their general approach to examining poetry. What appears to emerge from studies of poetry examinations and examination questions is that no single approach has been found to be ideal or true to the aims of poetry study. Selection of a particular option

rests with each examining body; and while this selection may appear to be incidental, Protherough points out the considerable influence that it can have on pupils' perceptions and attitudes:

> Throughout the system ... students are picking up messages from the pattern of their examination questions about how they should read and study, about the kinds of knowledge that are seen as valuable for students of English, about the sorts of performance that are rewarded, and about the nature of 'progress' associated with literary studies.
>
> (Protherough, 1989: 170)

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EXTERNAL EXAMINATION OF POETRY IN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SCHOOLS

There can be a continuing and endless debate about the philosophy and aims of teaching poetry at school, but the onus of declaring the official policy falls on those who compile the syllabus. The policy for English First Language (Higher Grade), Senior Secondary Course of the Cape Education Department (CED) is stated generally in the *Global Aims* (Appendix 1) and specifically in the *Goals of Reading and Literature Study* (Appendix 2). These *Goals* are discussed in greater detail in Section B of the syllabus, the *Elucidation* (Appendix 3).

4.1 Aims, goals and official requirements

The influence of British thinking and curriculum design can be seen in the CED syllabus, especially in the aims to enrich, stimulate thoughts and feelings and develop understanding of pupils' own emotional and moral responses to life and the world around them. The strong emphasis on affective development is evident in words and phrases used in the *Goals of Reading and Literature Study*, such as "read with discrimination"; "empathetic understanding", "moral awareness" and "self-knowledge and self-understanding".

The reference to the developing of a capacity for "critical thinking" *as a goal* is also relevant, since it aligns this syllabus with the approach to poetry associated in Britain with Leavis (and his followers) and attributed to I.A. Richards.

A further point worthy of note is the prominent placing given to "enjoyment" and "pleasure from an active participation in literature": these goals are listed first, suggesting that the compilers of the syllabus rated them as priorities.

Unfortunately, running contrary to these commendable ideas is the *goal* of teaching pupils "knowledge of basic literary genres and the techniques appropriate to each", and the suggestion in the *Elucidation* that "literary appreciation can be deepened through a study of figurative language and some understanding of the elements of poetry". These most certainly could be construed by examiner and teacher as directives to teach (and examine) knowledge about literature and prosody and to drill pupils in mechanical skills. The *Elucidation* tempers the issue somewhat by emphasising that these aspects and literary features "ought to be studied in the context of prose and verse" and that "the knowledge gained should enhance pupils' responses to literature".

Despite this comment, the prominence given to technical terms and concepts could so easily become the focus of classroom study and, more particularly, examinable items. This could be regarded as a disturbing conflict within the goals of this syllabus.

There is no denying that information about poetry and knowledge of terms are useful and often necessary when responding to a text. In order to be able to talk or write about a poem, one needs to be conversant with the relevant technical terms (Burton, 1970) but simply because they are taught does not mean they have to be tested. In his argument in favour of a response-centred curriculum, Purves

advocates the need to keep "classificatory terms and critical descriptors" in a supporting role and points out the danger of over-emphasis of "critical language":

> There are a lot of terms that belong to the specialist and become part of his jargon but are unnecessary for most people... In one sense, education is the learning of these classificatory schemes, but too often the learning of the names of plants replaced looking at them, smelling them, enjoying them. The same thing happened to the teaching of literature.
>
> (Purves, 1990: 57)

The section listing the requirements for examinations makes it quite clear that in all three standards of the senior secondary course, Standard 8, 9 and 10, poetry must be examined. There is an instruction that examiners should look for "honest, personal responses, founded on a sensitive and intelligent understanding of the text". By scrutinising examples of the end-product, the final Standard 10 paper, one can possibly judge whether the external examiners have invited these responses or whether that comment is merely a rubric that appears on examination papers and remains no more than that.

A reading of this syllabus makes it clear that a poetry examination is compulsory in Standard 8 and 9; but because these are set and assessed internally, teachers are obviously at liberty to be as creative and progressive as they like. The reality, however, is that, because the Standard 10 examination is set and assessed externally, it is this paper that tends to determine not only how poetry is taught in Standard 10 but how it is taught and examined from Standard 8.

For the purpose of the final Senior Certificate examination, an official list of *Prescribed Books* is circulated to all schools in the CED. The convention for some years was that an anthology was prescribed for a Standard 9 class, which

wrote an internal examination on a selection of poetry from that anthology. The following year, in Standard 10, the class studied a different selection from the same anthology for the final Senior Certificate examination. Until 1992, a list of poems for study in Standard 9 was provided. In 1992, however, there was a welcome change of policy: the choice was left to the teacher in Standard 9, with the express instruction that at least 800 lines are to be selected, "not more than two-thirds of which may be contemporary", and that the selection is not to include the poems already prescribed for Standard 10 in the following year.

4.2 Poetry prescribed for the CED Senior Certificate Examination, 1982 - 1991

As has already been pointed out, an external examination usually demands that a set list of texts is prescribed, upon which the examination can be based. In each year, the list is compiled from the prescribed anthology. The observation made by Longhurst (in Widdowson, P., 1982) *apropos* the O and A level syllabuses is relevant here too: no justification is ever offered for the selection of the particular range of texts.

A brief discussion of the various anthologies prescribed for the Senior Certificate examination over the period 1982 - 1991 is relevant at this point, since such prescription does restrict the examiner in his choice of seen text for examination.

In the past ten years, only five anthologies have been prescribed. Two have been prescribed three times: *The Wild Wave*, compiled by Houghton-Hawksley and Eaton (1982) and *Inscapes*, compiled by Malan (1969); one has been prescribed

twice: *The Living Tradition*, compiled by Tyfield, Nicol and Rumboll (1979); and two have been prescribed once each: *Pattern and Voice*, compiled by John and Dorothy Colmer - the only non-South African compilers (1981); and *The Oak and the Peach*, compiled by Olver (1984). The observations made by Jones in his survey of anthologies used in British schools have some relevance here too:

> The editor is typically an ex-teacher, examiner, adviser, headmaster: unlikely to be a figure of any literary standing.
>
> (Jones, 1983: 45)

The preface or introduction of each of these anthologies leaves one in no doubt that the anthologies have been compiled with the school market in mind (some of the compilers have openly acknowledged this), endorsing another of the findings of Jones: that the typical 'school' anthology (Jones calls this a "Third Order anthology") is what he calls "distributive" (Jones, 1983), typically produced by an educational publisher and aimed directly and exclusively at the school market. Such anthologies share the common and unmistakable aim of selecting from the tradition of English poetry a corpus that satisfies the highly specific requirements of a lucrative and captive market segment that, in some cases, is further specified according to age-group and level of ability.

Perusing the contents of the anthologies prescribed by the CED, one concludes that the school market requires the canon of English literature from about the mid-sixteenth century to the present, comprising poetry predominantly by males and showing preference for the shorter lyrics.

It is noteworthy, however, that, while the compilers of these anthologies have indubitably selected the required canon of traditional poetry, the preface or introduction to each anthology suggests that there has been a deliberate inclusion of material that has not yet received the nod of acceptance from prescription committees. This gives these anthologies a strange ambivalence: they are pandering to the historically-perceived requirements of the examining bodies but are also affording the opportunity for alternative and new material to be prescribed. A disturbing feature is that both the prescriptions committee and the examiners seem to have been reluctant to make much use of material outside what has become the traditional corpus.

For example, the lengthy first section (pages 3 - 70) of *The Oak and the Peach* consists of South African poetry. (Olver explains that the "oak" of the title represents the traditional mainstream poetry of Britain, the United States and the Commonwealth, while the "peach" represents the poetry from Southern Africa.) In 1986, the year this anthology was prescribed for Standard 10, only three poems by South African poets were prescribed for study, one of which (*City Johannesburg*) had been prescribed from another anthology (*The Wild Wave*) in 1984. It must be noted here that the examiner did select one of these three poems, Plomer's *The Wild Doves at Louis Trichardt*, as one of the examined seen texts.

A further example of failure to exploit the stated purpose of an anthology can be found in *Inscapes*: in the Introduction, the compiler, Malan, takes pains to explain the division of his anthology into two parts:

> Surely young people should be introduced as completely as possible to the poetry of their own time? If it is not part of the purpose of English teachers to encourage senior pupils to read and to experience - and to write - modern poetry, then it certainly ought to be.
>
> We hear so many people - English teachers not least - complain of the modern adolescent's lack of 'sensibility', his inability to 'experience', his spiritual poverty; then we look at the poems we give him to read, and at least one reason is apparent. Look at the language in which he is being spoken to. Look at the contexts with which he is being presented. Too few poems in standard anthologies speak his language or exist in the context of the world he is living in. Surely one's sensibilities and awarenesses are developed out of and from the experiences one has, from the world in which one lives, *first*, before one assimilates the spiritual experience of a more remote age.
>
> (Malan, 1969: ix)

In the three years that this anthology has been prescribed, poems from Part Two have been set for study but not one of them has been selected as one of the seen texts in the examination, despite the compiler's strongly worded feelings that these are poems to which pupils can more easily and naturally respond. The argument to counter this criticism might well be that since the anthology is prescribed in Standard 9 and 10, there is ample time and scope for the teacher to make full and varied use of the anthology but it has been suggested several times already in the course of this dissertation, the Standard 10 examination tends to set the tone of other examinations and influences the approach in the classroom. If the examination helps to decide the range of poetry held to be "serious" in schools (Leonard, 1988), then the message coming through from the Standard 10 set lists and the final external examination would seem to be that the traditional canon of literature is most certainly the central focus of poetry study at school level.

In 1986, *New Inscapes* was published, with an entirely new Part Three added to the original. Obviously no poems were set from this new section when the anthology was prescribed for 1987: the list of set poems for 1987 was published in November 1985. It is nevertheless of interest that in the Introduction to the new edition, the compiler expresses concern regarding the selection of poetry for school study:

> I still worry about the imbalance discernible in the prescriptions of some examining bodies; these still seem to favour pre-twentieth century verse. I can't feel this to be a right judgement ...
>
> (Malan, 1986: ix)

Malan then follows this comment by reprinting part of the original *Introduction* from the 1969 edition, commencing with the paragraphs quoted above.

The prescribed anthology that differs significantly in the selection of poetry is an Australian one, *Pattern and Voice*. John and Dorothy Colmer appear to have made a deliberate effort to include, along with the accepted English canon, more contemporary work, particularly work written by Australians.

That some of these anthologies have been compiled with a view to being prescribed for study culminating in an examination is also clearly evident in what is included over and above the poems selected for inclusion. *The Oak and the Peach* and *Pattern and Voice* have notes on genre and/or glossaries of literary terms and each has a section at the back of the anthology that is clearly directed at pupils, giving advice and help in approaching the study of poetry in preparation for an examination of a literary critical nature. The first edition of *The Living*

Tradition (published in 1946) had notes but these were omitted from later editions.

Inscapes does not have formal notes but has two sections of general commentary about the compilation and the philosophy underlying it, one aimed at teachers and the other at pupils. *The Wild Wave* has no formal notes but in its foreword gives the teacher some ideas about how to enliven poetry lessons.

For reference purposes for teachers, *The Oak and the Peach* is by far the most detailed, giving bibliographies, lists of relevant articles that appear in *Crux*, the journal on the teaching of English published by the Foundation of Education, Arts and Science, lists of anthologies (especially those containing South African poetry) and sources of cassettes and recordings of poetry-readings.

Despite the fact that different anthologies are prescribed, there appears to be a very definite preference for certain poets and even for particular poems. Although *Pattern and Voice* offers a refreshingly different and varied range of poetry and - as has been mentioned before - *The Oak and the Peach* has a wide range of South African poetry, there is very little difference in the prescribed lists year after year.

The prescription of poems for the Senior Certificate examination over the period 1982 - 1991 verifies the findings of Barnes and Seed (1981) in their survey of the prescriptions of British examining bodies: there has been a tendency to impose a limited - in this case a strongly British imperial - culture on the pupils. The traditional English canon (up to the mid-twentieth century) is, without doubt, held to be the important focus of study for the final examination. Apart from Owen,

Eliot, Auden and Dylan Thomas, twentieth century poets make what could be termed random appearances on the set lists. The prescribed poems also tend to endorse the rather cynical comment made by Andrews that prescribed poems are frequently those which are read in a "reflective (often melancholy) mood" (Andrews, 1991: 3) and could account for some of the comments elicited by Borman's research (1992), where pupils said that they found the set poetry "boring", "morbid" and "monotonous".

Mention has been made of the different approach taken by John and Dorothy Colmer in *Pattern and Voice*. What is astounding about the selection from this anthology prescribed for study for the final examination in 1986, is that the only twentieth century poets that appear on the list are three of the 'favoured' ones, Owen, Auden and Eliot, as well as Brooke, Hardy and Betjeman, all of whom appear on lists set on other anthologies. It is a great pity that the scope offered by the anthology was not accepted as a challenge to introduce other material to the pupils in their final year of poetry study. It could well be argued that, when this anthology was prescribed for study, it was up to the teachers themselves to make use of the broad range of the material it provided. The fact remains, however, that the prescriptions committee is making it quite clear that for the 'serious' study of poetry (towards a final examination), there is a standard list of classics. It would appear to be a clear case of the situation described by Carter and Long:

> ... conservative examining bodies shuffle around a small number of classics which they have accepted as deserving the attention of all learners.
>
> (Carter and Long, 1991: 42)

This not only restricts the study and conceivably reduces the appeal of poetry to learners but also restricts the examiner, who cannot explore the possibilities of setting an examination on non-canonical texts, even if he would like to do so.

Poets most frequently prescribed for study have been Owen (at least one poem prescribed for every year of the ten years under survey); Browning, Eliot, Keats, Shakespeare and Yeats (at least one poem prescribed for nine of the ten years); Donne and Wordsworth (at least one poem prescribed for eight of the ten years); and Auden, Blake, Tennyson and Dylan Thomas (at least one poem prescribed for seven of the ten years). The trend appears to be to prescribe one poem of a particular poet, in itself a contentious issue, since this could create in a pupil's mind an impression that all the poet's qualities are summed up by that prescribed poem (Protherough, 1986). There have been exceptions to this trend, notably in 1982, when four Shakespearean sonnets and four poems by Dylan Thomas - one of which was used in the examination - were set from *The Living Tradition* and in 1983, when three poems by Hopkins and three by Owen were set from *Inscapes*.

The single poem set most frequently (but examined only once in the period of study) is Browning's *My Last Duchess*, set eight times. Yeats's *The Wild Swans at Coole* was set six times in the ten years but was not examined during those years. One is led to wonder what it is about these two poems that makes them appear with such regularity on prescribed lists. It may be that they are regarded by the prescriptions committee as examples of poetry that Leonard describes as a the "treasure chest of valuables ... most of which are wrapped in figures of speech" (Leonard, 1988: 4), making them eminently suitable for teaching about poetry.

For all this adherence to a core of favoured names and texts, it must be pointed out that an analysis of the total number of poets whose works have been prescribed for study over the past ten years shows a clear majority of twentieth-century poets (thirty-three of the fifty-eight poets). Nineteen of these are British, three are poets from the United States of America and nine South African. The remaining two are from Australia and New Zealand. Apart from showing a singular lack of representation from other cultures, this analysis shows the scant regard accorded to South African poetry by those who compile the lists. The attention given to South African poetry by the examiners will be considered in a later section.

In an article in the *Weekend Post* of 11 April 1992, a Cape Town publisher, Douglas Skinner, deplores the lack of interest that English-speaking South Africans have in this country's writers and poets. One could possibly find the roots of this apathy towards - or possibly even rejection of - South African poets in the trifling consideration given to them by the country's examining bodies. Doubell (1990) avers that a text that is prescribed acquires a status, which suggests that, until examining bodies accord such status to South African poetry, it is unlikely that the work of local poets will be held in the same regard as that of poets from Britain and the United States.

A final point of importance here is the considerable control wielded by the prescriptions committee over the study of poetry. It has already been mentioned that, while the ideal may be to regard the prescribed list of poetry merely as the compulsory "core", the reality is that the prescribed list of poems constitutes the entire poetry curriculum in the Standard 10 year. Thus the prescriptions

committee is imposing its selection (for reasons that are never divulged to the teacher in the classroom) on all CED candidates, with no consideration for any diversity of background, interest or developmental stage of the pupils, nor any apparent regard for whether the poems have, as Winifred Whitehead feels they should, "some degree of relevance to the candidate's own real or imaginative life" (Whitehead, W., 1957: 150-1).

4.3 Analysis and discussion of the CED poetry examination, 1982 - 1991

The ensuing analysis is undertaken in the spirit of the exhortation made by Knott:

> In English teaching certainty can all too readily turn to narrow overconfidence; ease to a languid tedium. It is necessary to question oneself and each other ... constantly.
>
> (Knott, 1985: 108)

The study will consist of looking at the style and format of the poetry examination written by English First Language Higher Grade pupils over the past ten years, the selection of poems examined, the types of questions asked and the allocation of marks for these questions. Copies of the relevant sections of the examination papers may be found in Appendix 4. In 1982 - 1985, papers were also written in March, as part of the so-called "Supplementary examinations" but these are not included in this study. Because both the November and the subsequent March examination papers were set by the same examiner, it is felt that, for the purposes of this research, the style of questioning is adequately represented by the November examination. The November examination is written by all who have entered as English First Language Higher Grade candidates and thus is the paper

that is more widely disseminated and used as a model by teachers and candidates of subsequent years.

In the course of the analysis, reference will also be made to the examiners' reports for the period. These reports are written by the examiners and distributed as internal departmental documents to schools during the course of the year following the relevant examination, for the benefit of teachers and their pupils. The rationale for considering examiners' reports lies in the comment made by Tunnicliffe that the

> ... inescapable chasm between poetry in the classroom and as examination fodder is seen more clearly if one reads between the lines of examiners' comments, published annually ...
>
> (Tunnicliffe, 1984: 190)

4.3.1 *The style and format of the examination*

The style and the format of the poetry examination are the same in each of the papers set from 1982 - 1991. Neither of these is formally laid down by the syllabus but the present format appears to have become an accepted convention that could be attributed to a particular examiner of the late nineteen-seventies. It is, apparently, within the power of each examiner to alter the format of the examination paper but this power has not been exercised to any noticeable degree.

Poetry constitutes Section A of the prescribed literature paper (Paper One). In the given time of three hours, candidates are required to answer questions from four sections of this paper: the poetry, a Shakespeare play, a novel and an "open section", usually an anthology of short stories. These four sections, representative of the year's literature study, carry an equal number of marks (30)

and a choice of question is given in each section. The time allocation for this examination is, as has been said, three hours; thus the candidate has forty-five minutes in which to read the questions in each section, make an appropriate selection of question and formulate and write the relevant answers or responses.

Section A (Poetry) differs from the other sections of the examination paper in that in this section, the questions are all of the contextual type: either the full text of the poem or part of the text is given, upon which several short questions are asked. In the other sections of this paper, candidates are given a choice of question type: contextual or essay.

Poetry is obviously included in the general rubric stated at the beginning of the paper, the relevant instructions regarding answers being:

"LENGTH OF CONTEXTUAL ANSWERS: Aim at conciseness and relevance. Be guided by the number of marks allocated"; and, from 1984,

"PERSONAL OPINION: Do not hesitate to give your personal opinion frankly. The examiners will judge your answers on the competence with which they are expressed and the understanding of the books or poems which they reveal."

Such encouragement of an open and personal response is both enlightened and true to the aims of the study of poetry and of the syllabus. It is possibly idealistic, however, bearing in mind the constraints of a mass examination being evaluated by a team of examiners who are required to achieve a high degree of uniformity, so that marks can be standardized and the final results are reliable.

Much will also depend on the questions asked - whether, in fact, they allow for some personal opinion or whether they channel the candidates' thinking so that the answers are bound to conform to the standardised opinions. Travers warns about this:

> A response is personal when it genuinely arises in and belongs to the individual concerned, when it is truly felt as part of that person's experience, and not merely registered by the mind as a piece of information about a work.
>
> (Travers, 1982: 55)

A further difference between Section A (Poetry) and the other sections is that candidates are required to answer two questions: a compulsory "unseen poem" for 10 marks and one of two questions based on the prescribed poetry, each having a mark allocation of 20. This makes considerable demands on the candidates in many different ways. In forty-five minutes the candidate is obliged to encounter and engage with an unfamiliar text (without the opportunity of reading it aloud), answer questions on it and then move on to make a choice between two questions, where he has to re-engage with a poem - sometimes more than one poem - studied during the year and make personal and sincere responses to it. In setting the examination paper, the examiner is obviously very conscious of this and such pressure of time is surely a reason why certain poems, or poems (or extracts) of a certain, restricted length are chosen. Awareness of time constraints facing the candidates must also affect the nature of the questions asked and the length of answers required.

It is highly likely that such restrictions and inhibitions dictate a certain style of examination and type of question that, apart from making the examination predictable, are not always in the spirit of a natural, personal or creative response.

4.3.2 *Choice of texts for the examination*

(a) *The Unseen Poems*

The unseen poems set for the period under study are listed in Appendix 5.

Much has already been written in the first part of this dissertation about the advantages and disadvantages of setting unseen poetry. A closer analysis of the poems set in the compulsory "unseen question" verifies many of the findings of studies conducted in Britain.

The poems chosen tend to be short (ranging from eight lines to a maximum length of eighteen lines). This has the advantage of limiting reading time but a short poem is not necessarily a poem that invites rapid, spontaneous engagement. Brevity, particularly in poetry, is not an indication of simplicity or accessibility. The examiners appear to have selected short poems that do not have complex or obscure meanings, however. In contrast to the deeply reflective poetry set for study, these unseen poems are more narrative in style, expressing a thought or an emotion that most candidates would probably be able to comprehend or identify with *in normal circumstances*.

It should, however, be borne in mind that these poems are being encountered silently and individually, which could be quite different from the pupils' classroom encounters with poetry, where texts have probably been read aloud and encountered in a class or group discussion at a reasonably leisurely pace. The examination-room atmosphere and code may militate against a natural response, particularly if one agrees with Doughty that silence acts as a barrier between the reader and the text:

> We want to stress that poetry is speech before it is text. Poems have to be spoken, and listened to, before they are talked about. There are very few poems that do not gain from being spoken, when a pupil is to meet them for the first time.
>
> (Doughty in Owens and Marland, 1970: 202)

The strong aural qualities of several of these unseen poems, such as *Parlour-piece*, *One step backward taken*, *Thunder and lightning* and *Up-hill*, would not be as easily appreciated by having to be read silently.

While the subject-matter of the poems does not appear to be beyond the average South African adolescent, it is not necessarily immediately apparent. For example, it is debatable whether candidates would readily comprehend the denotation of "parlour" in Hughes's *Parlour-piece*, although this would not necessarily preclude an understanding of the poem by most.

The majority of the poems are highly visually or emotionally descriptive, with vivid - usually metaphorical - imagery. The extended metaphor is common to three of them (Heaney's *Scaffolding*, Frost's *One step backward taken* and Rossetti's *Up-hill*). While it has been suggested in this discussion that pupils

would probably find the selected unseen poems readily accessible, the metaphorical implications of the three poems mentioned above could well be missed in the tension of the examination room and the candidate's awareness of the need to hurry through the questions in order to complete the paper in the given time. There is no time to pause and reflect when a simple mathematical calculation will show the candidate that he has fifteen minutes to read and answer the questions on this unfamiliar text. Consequently, engagement tends towards the superficial: some candidates possibly do not even read the text more than once before pressing on to the questions posed on it. These reservations are borne out by the 1986 examiner's report: the sole comment on the unseen poetry question of that year is that "few candidates understood the unseen poem". The unfortunate candidates did not have time to grapple with it and come to an understanding of it!

Apart from Rossetti's *Up-hill*, all the unseen poems are by twentieth-century poets, mostly contemporary poets. This is in sharp contrast to the poetry studied in the classroom, where, although twentieth-century poets are given considerable exposure, the emphasis is on poetry written prior to the nineteen-thirties. There is, however, the same preference for the work of British poets: only one (*Coal*) is by a South African poet (Guy Butler) but neither the subject-matter nor the diction of the poem is typically South African.

None of the poems set is by a poet studied by pupils during the course of the year in which the examination is written, although *Up-hill* and *Boy at the Window* both appear in the anthologies set for study in their respective years. This is interesting, as the examiner must clearly have accepted that the poems might well

not have been 'unseen' by some pupils, had the teachers used the anthologies freely. If this were to become the usual practice, it could introduce an added element of lottery into the examination, where teachers might be tempted to skim the prescribed anthology for short poems in order to give their pupils a possible advantage by 'seeing' - and even studying - the unseen poem: a most undesirable practice that would make a mockery of the reasons why an unseen poem has become part of the structure of this examination paper.

Tunnicliffe (1984) suggests that examiners of unseen poems are obliged to find poems that are examinable and unknown to the pupils first, and that are good poetry second. There certainly appears to be a type of poem regarded as suitable for examination: short, descriptive lyrics by twentieth-century (male, British) poets. While the unseen poems in the period under study cannot be fairly described as mediocre examples of the poet's craft, a different set of criteria certainly appears to operate in the selection of those poems. There is little similarity between the unseen poetry and that commonly found in the corpus of literature selected for 'serious' classroom study.

(b) *The Set Texts*

It has already been acknowledged that examiners are restricted in their choice of text by a list in which they may have had initial input but have certainly not had the final say. The examiners nevertheless do have a choice within that list and their selection of texts could well give some indication as to what they believe to be important - an attitude that could have a significant effect on classroom study (Madaus, 1988).

A further constraint is one that has been placed on the examiner by the format of the paper: candidates are given a choice of answering one of two questions on the set poetry. Therefore there is a need to strike a balance between these two questions and to ensure that in as many respects as possible these two questions are equal. The selection of text is most certainly a factor in determining whether questions are equally difficult and discriminating.

The texts set in the ten examination papers under study are given in Appendix 6. Several common factors can be deduced from this analysis.

Firstly, the tendency is to select two or three poems for the examination. On three occasions, four poems are set. The length or genre of a poem has no bearing on whether it is selected for a full twenty-mark question or not. For example, on several occasions a sonnet is set as only part of a twenty-mark question (such as Shakespeare's *Sonnet 116* in 1984, on which there are questions worth only 10 marks); but on other occasions a sonnet is set as the only text in the question, for the full 20 marks (such as Shakespeare's *Sonnet 65* in 1988).

Shorter lyrics are preferred, possibly because these do not require as much reading time. There are occasions, however, when the candidate is given the entire text of a longer poem, such as Marvell's *To his coy mistress* (in 1983), Eliot's *The journey of the magi* (in 1985), Mann's *In praise of the shades* (in 1990) and Hardy's *The hunchback in the park* (in 1991). While it is preferable to give the full text if the pupil's engagement and response are to be meaningful, the time required for reading and re-involvement with the text becomes a problem in the examination situation. One can justify the choice of a longer text, given in

full, where that is the sole text on which the 20 marks of the question are set. This is the case in the 1983, 1990 and 1991 papers. However, in 1983, the question was set on the full text of *To his coy mistress* and Donne's *The good morrow* (also printed in full), making the question exceptionally demanding in terms of time and imaginative response.

While selection of the full text studied appears to be the more common practice, there is no obvious pattern in the ratio between the number of lines provided and the total number of marks awarded for the questions on that poem or extract. For example, although the full text of Marvell's *To his coy mistress* appears on the paper in 1983, the questions set on it are worth 11 marks; while in 1991, twenty-four of the forty-six lines of the poem are given, with questions worth the full 20 marks set on those lines.

Where two poems are set in one question, there is seldom any common theme or link between them. On several occasions, it is almost as if the examiner has wanted to test as many poems as possible in the paper and has effectively set separate questions. This could be considered desirable by those teachers and pupils who have spent a great deal of time and effort in line-by-line analysis of the set poems during the year, and feel that the examination should be as broad a test of the work covered as is possible. While the examiner's motives may well be commendable in that he is attempting to give pupils a fair chance of responding to as many of the set poems as possible, this practice of combining two completely unrelated poems in one question is undesirable. In an extremely limited time, the pupil has to read two extracts, think himself into each and respond sincerely and naturally. This is surely contrary to the nature of poetry

and certainly the enjoyment of it. It is making poetry an object of comment rather than inviting a sensitive or emotional response.

The only occasion when there is a genuine comparison between two poems set in a single twenty-mark question is in the 1982 paper, where Wordsworth's *Composed upon Westminster Bridge* and Eliot's *Preludes* (I and IV) are set. In 1983, Marvell's *To his coy mistress* is coupled in a question with *The good morrow* by Donne, but only 10 of the 20 marks are awarded for questions that require candidates to make comparisons between various aspects of the poems. On several occasions, however, the poems set in a single question are completely unrelated in theme, genre, style and period. In 1984, for example, question 3A consists of the entire text of *After the opera* (Lawrence), while the text of question 3B is Shakespeare's *Sonnet 116.* These rather strange combinations are more the custom than the exception, other unusual pairings being in 1985, question 3 (six lines from Shelley's *Ozymandias* and three stanzas of Hardy's *Drummer Hodge*); and in 1986, question 3 (two stanzas from *The Tiger* by Blake and the full text of Owen's *Anthem for doomed youth*). It underlines the artificiality of the examination when an examiner splits questions in this way and seems to turn the questioning into a series of 'gobbets', where the pupil is given little opportunity to re-engage with a text, to re-enter into some sort of meaningful encounter with it and to re-create and extend imaginative response to it - in the given time. Responses are more likely to be superficial mimicking of received interpretations or judgements, as candidates merely glance at the given text or extract and move on mechanically to answer the questions in an objective and uninvolved way. Further evidence of how this attitude is invited and

encouraged by the questions will be considered in a later section of this discussion.

In the past ten years, only two poems have been set twice: Marvell's *To his coy mistress* and Eliot's *Preludes*. The full text of *To his coy mistress* is given in 1983 as part of a question, while in 1991, twenty-four lines are printed and the full twenty marks are set on those lines. Since this is also one of the more frequently set poems (prescribed five times in ten years), it seems that both the prescriptions committee and the examiners regard this poem as 'teachable' and 'examinable'. In 1982, *Preludes* I and II are examined and in 1987, *Preludes* I and IV are examined. The fact that on both occasions only part of this poem is selected as the given text suggests that the poem lends itself to an examination as an object of linguistic or semantic interest rather than a development of a theme, where each stanza makes a particular and different contribution.

The sonnet is certainly a favoured genre for examinations. In eight of the ten years under study, the sonnet appears as one of the examined texts. One could possibly expect a sonnet to be examined in a year such as 1982, when nine sonnets were prescribed; but in 1984, the single sonnet prescribed for study appears on the paper. A possible reason could be that it lends itself to the present style of examination because of its length, although this argument is not always valid: in 1985, only six lines are set on Shelley's *Ozymandias*. The sonnet obviously has other features that make it such popular examination material, not least of which is the fact that certain technicalities about its form or prosody can be tested. This tendency to select the sonnet for examination

assuredly does not go unnoticed by the teacher who is concerned about preparing the pupils to jump through the examination hoops successfully.

Poets favoured for examination appear to be Shakespeare (examined in 1984, 1987 and 1988), Wordsworth (examined in 1982, 1986 and 1990) and Eliot (examined in 1982, 1985, 1987). A possible reason for the popularity of the first two is that both poets wrote sonnets that are regularly prescribed. As has been suggested above, the diction and imagery of Eliot's poetry could explain why it is a popular choice of examiners using the present style of questioning.

It is significant that in every year except 1983, at least one poem by a modern (twentieth-century) poet is set. The actual choice of poem reflects the weighting of the prescribed list: most of the examined poems are pre-1930. The only two South African poets whose work is examined are Plomer and Mann, in consecutive years (1989 and 1990), which suggests that the inclusion of indigenous poetry was the personal choice of a particular examiner. This suggestion is made in the full awareness that the anthology set in 1989 was *The Oak and the Peach*, which, as has been discussed already, offers a wide range of South Africa poetry. However, only three South African poems were set from that anthology, which is no more than were prescribed from other anthologies in previous years. It is acknowledged that the prescribed lists do offer little choice of indigenous poetry and the implications of this have already been discussed. The scant attention given by examiners to both contemporary and South African poetry is disturbing. Apart from spurning an opportunity to ask pupils to respond to poetry that is possibly more relevant or more familiar to them, or that is closer to their experience, the examiners are also conferring a certain status on

the "classic" texts in the eyes of the pupils. This has further significance when one considers the influence that the examination has on the central focus of and the attitude towards the teaching of poetry.

In his survey conducted for the National Association for the Teaching of English, *Criteria of success in English*, (1966), John Dixon remarks that the choice of poem or extract is only half the battle: the questions set on the poem are crucial if the examination is to be considered effective.

4.4 Analysis and discussion of the questions set on poetry

The setting of contextual questions is a demanding exercise for the examiner. Good questions will range across levels of reading, giving scope for candidates to show knowledge, understanding and critical and personal response. They will be phrased in such a way that they do not allow shapeless, vague answers; but at the same time, they will avoid being so prescriptive and narrow that they do not give the candidate any personal space.

What is under scrutiny here is whether the examiners set questions that are true to the aims of the study of poetry and of the CED syllabus, and to what extent the examiners observe the principles of examining poetry discussed in an earlier section of this dissertation. Aspects of particular interest are firstly, whether the questions are set in such as way as to take candidates a step further in the learning process by providing opportunities for active participation in the examination room encounter with the texts; and secondly, whether the questions give candidates scope to express and extend their imaginative reading and response.

What is tantamount is the extent to which the examination fosters an enjoyment of poetry.

The questions set on both the unseen and the prescribed poetry are similar in that they consist of a series of sub-questions, usually out of two to four marks, on a given text. Where the mark allocation is higher, it is generally fairly obvious how the examiner intends to subdivide the question during the marking. Therefore for most of this section, the questions on the unseen and the prescribed poetry will be discussed simultaneously. Before commencing a detailed analysis, however, it is necessary to identify and briefly consider some significant differences between the questions on the unseen and the prescribed poetry.

4.4.1 *Basic differences between questions on the unseen and prescribed poetry*

One of the differences in the style of questions asked on the unseen poem is that in 1982 and 1983, candidates were given a choice of answering the short questions or of writing a "critical appreciation" of the poem. One of the problems of this latter type of question is its open-endedness, which makes a detailed memorandum virtually impossible. Thus the markers or "sub-examiners" are obliged to mark the responses on a more subjective impression; whereas, for the marking of the short questions, a detailed memorandum can be given as a guideline. The subjectivity of the assessment reduces the reliability of the examination, which was possibly one of the reasons why the "appreciation" option was abandoned from 1984.

Purves (1990) holds firm opinions about the demanding nature of the critical appreciation, considering it to require numerous adult skills. It is likely that the CED examination offered the "critical appreciation" alternative as an opportunity for the more able pupil to write more freely in response to the poem and to exercise those "adult skills" effectively. However, personal experience as a sub-examiner of this paper showed that all too frequently this more challenging alternative was selected by the weaker candidates, who offered garbled paraphrases of the poem peppered with vague comments about "poetic beauty", and who consequently fared very poorly.

Another difference already pointed out is that the unseen poetry has a total allocation of 10 marks. This does not give the same scope as the 20 marks at the examiner's disposal in the prescribed poetry questions. In fact the limitation of 10 marks, coupled with a time allowance of approximately fifteen minutes for reading, experiencing and writing a response, is possibly too great to do justice to any poem, or to assess the extent to which a candidate can respond with judgement and sensitivity. The examiner does not have enough scope to follow Winifred Whitehead's suggestion:

> Questions set on poetry should be concerned with the total experience of the poem and the way in which the various elements contribute to the final effect; they should not isolate elements as though their effectiveness belonged only to their immediate context.
>
> (Whitehead, W., 1957: 152)

Although the general format of the sub-questions is similar, the few sub-questions on the unseen poem are generally out of 2 (and in 1990 and 1991, even 1), while the individual questions on the prescribed poetry frequently have a mark

allocation of 3, 4 or more, allowing for wider discussion. The unseen questions thus seem to require very brief answers, bearing in mind the comment from the 1981 examiner's report: "Pupils and teachers should note that the paper operates on a basis of two marks per one good point". This probably makes for ease and reliability of marking but does not give the perceptive or sensitive candidate much scope. Consequently, it is doubtful whether the unseen question, as set at present, discriminates between pupils very effectively.

4.4.2 *The wording of the questions*

The way in which a question is worded frequently establishes a relationship between examiner and candidate; and conveys something of the examiner's attitude towards the examination and his expectations of the candidates. By his wording, the examiner also indicates whether he is genuinely interested in eliciting a candidate's personal response and giving creative space, or whether he is testing the candidate's knowledge about the poem and the ability to articulate that knowledge.

In the examination papers under study, there is a preponderance of what Bakker calls "instruction words that are connotatively laboratorial" (Bakker, 1985: 90): the type of command one expects to find on examination papers where cold, clinical information is required. The most common of these are: *identify, show* and *explain*, although one examiner even uses *point out*, as if the poem is being subjected to analysis under a kind of microscope.

Examples include:

- Identify *one* poetic technique in the last line and show how it gives emphasis to this irony.
  (1985: question 3A(c))

- Identify one poetic technique that contributes to the effectiveness of this line.
  (1986: question 1(c)

- Show how the speaker's feelings undergo a change in the course of the octave.
  (1983: question 3(a)(i))

- Show how the poet has used a sustained metaphor to illustrate his theme.
  (1982: question 1(a))

- Show how the use of different speakers here heightens the impact of the narrative.
  (1986: question 2B(d))

- Show how the Duke's cynicism and self-control are given emphasis by two techniques in the last 5 lines of the extract. Make clear references to the text.
  (1987: question 2.1.3)

- Show how rhetorical questions help to convey the speaker's state of mind in the three quatrains. Refer to one example from the text to illustrate your answer.
  (1988: question 2.5.1)

- From line 11 to line 18 Pope uses an extended metaphor. Explain what is being compared to what in this metaphor.
  (1989: question 2.5)

- Explain why "These two sat speechlessly".
  (1984: question 1(a))

- Point out any one way in which an onomatopoeic effect has been created in line 7.
  (1990: question 3.2)

Commands such as these tend to strip the examination of personal interest and give little indication that individual response is being invited - or is considered of any value. Indeed, they convey a message to the candidate that the examiner seeks to test the extent to which the candidate can display certain skills and abilities. A further impression given by this wording is that the text is there to be subjected to detailed and objective scrutiny. Purves is very critical of this type of approach, since he believes that a poem should not be read in the same way as an informational text and that it is essential to preserve "the aesthetic nature of the text" and to treat "the work of literature as literature, not as a treatise on whales" (Purves, 1990: 46).

Baldwin (1959) is also opposed to examiner's impersonal vocabulary, believing that phrases such as "state (or give) your reasons" imply that evidence is about to be assessed, whereas a word such as "defend" is more personal and puts pupils on the spot more reasonably, giving the impression that the examiner is accepting that the pupil will be confident - and has every right to be confident - of his opinions.

The instruction to "give reasons ..." is used only once in the papers under study:

- Would this poem 'work' just as well, and make just as much sense, if the person at the window were an adult and not a child? Give the reason(s) for your answer briefly but clearly.
  (1990: question 1.6)

While curt and rather impersonal diction does appear to characterise the CED poetry examination questions, there are occasions when the examiners adopt the more cordial and inviting vocabulary of *comment on, discuss* or *suggest.* This

style of questioning seems to be more open and intimates a move towards a willingness to accept a wider range of responses.

Examples include:

- Comment on the choice of the word 'rage'.
  (1988: question 2.2.1)
- Select one image from each poem, quote it, and discuss its effectiveness.
  (1982: question 3(b)(ii))
- Suggest why this contrast is emphasized.
  (1987: question 2.2.2(b))

What is regrettable is that there are so few questions phrased in this way. There are no examples at all in the 1985, 1989 and 1990 papers; and in all ten papers under review, there is the meagre total of thirteen questions with such wording.

A possible reason for the dearth of this type of question is suggested by the 1987 examiner in his report, where he remarks that candidates "often give mere paraphrases of the material on which they should be commenting". Other examiners' reports (notably those on the 1984 and 1990 papers) repeat this criticism of the tendency of candidates simply to paraphrase and exhort teachers to teach pupils to lead evidence more effectively.

The style of questioning that is most informal and personal can be found in some of the questions in the 1986 paper. The examiner adopts a friendly and conversational tone, addressing the candidates and inviting their response, although he is actually fairly prescriptive about the answer he requires:

- 'I listened, motionless and still' (line 13).
  In an earlier version of the poem, line 13 read:
  'I listened till I had my fill'.
  Which do you find more suitable?
  Explain your answer by referring to
  (i) word choice and
  (ii) rhythm.
  (1986: question 2A(b))

- The last stanza is a repetition of the first (not provided) except for the use of 'Dare' instead of 'Could'. What, in your opinion, is the significance of this change?
  (1986: question 3A(b)).

This informal style is by no means consistent in that paper or in the other papers (1983, 1984, 1989, 1990 and 1991) where the second person pronoun is used in the questioning. The examiner changes register at random, although the 1986 examiner adopts an informal style of questioning more frequently than the other examiners.

Another of the examiner's conventions that Baldwin (1959) criticises is the instruction that answers should pay 'close reference to the text'. He considers that its intention is to avoid what examiners call "wool". While this injunction might prevent unnecessary rambling in support of an opinion, Baldwin feels that it also turns the examination into a type of jigsaw puzzle, where the candidate tries to find the piece of the poem that the examiner requires as the perfect fit. Baldwin's criticism is possibly rather harsh: this close scrutiny of the text is in line with the approach of F.R. Leavis and the Cambridge School. Therefore, if this is the approach that is being adopted by examiners, then the instruction does have the advantage of encouraging candidates to read and become involved with the text, rather than to write a response based on memory of material that has been studied for the examination or of vaguely recalled opinions and

interpretations handed down during the year. The CED examiners occasionally require candidates to support their answers by referring to the text. One such occasion is in the 1987 paper, when this seems to be appropriate, as the question is based on an extract from (not the full text of) Browning's *My last duchess*:

- Show how the Duke's cynicism and self-control are given emphasis by two techniques in the last five lines of the extract. Make clear references to the text.
  (1987: question 2.1.3)

The instruction to refer to the text will possibly convey to the candidates that what is being tested is an ability to discuss the use of poetic techniques in specific lines rather than to discuss the content of the poem or to recall received opinions of techniques used by Browning throughout the poem.

The final consideration in this section is the extent to which the wording used by an examiner can indicate the stance he has taken regarding the interpretation of the poem. In their study of examination papers set by British examining boards, Barnes and Seed (1981) are critical of questions where the candidate is told what to think regarding the interpretation and then is asked verify that interpretation. In effect, the candidate is expected to confirm what the examiner thinks. Such closed questions can frustrate the good candidate, who finds his responses stunted by the examiner's intrusive questioning. This style of questioning can be found in several of the CED papers, either where the examiner gives his opinion, or where he asks candidates to verify the appropriateness of images or lines that *he* finds appropriate. The candidates are not left to give their own interpretations or to select what they see as appropriate.

Examples are:

- There is a tone of condemnation in the poem. By referring to his use of repetition and rhyme show how the poet accomplishes this.
  (1984: question 2B(a))

- Why does the word 'grope' (line 8) more effectively indicate a change in the speaker's attitude than, for example, the word 'reach'?
  (1985: question 1(b))

- Suggest why the image of the 'White / Village' is particularly appropriate here.
  (1987: question 1.2)

- Why would, say, 'the frosty glare' be a less effective way of conveying an unflattering picture of the teacher than the actual wording in lines 4 - 5, i.e. 'the frost he carried round with him in every glare'?
  (1988: question 1.4)

- The question and answer contained in the final stanza highlight the poet's central concern by focusing on contrasting ideas. Show how he achieves this by referring to his use of sound effects such as assonance, metre and rhyme.
  (1988: question 3.4)

At a Conference of Teachers of English held in Grahamstown in 1963, Professor Wayne Booth suggested that questions (on a literary passage) of the "how" and "why" variety are preferable to the "what". The above examples are assuredly questions that ask "how" and "why" and at face value are to be commended; but they are not inviting a discussion based on personal ideas or interpretation. Seldom are candidates invited to give their opinion freely or to find an aspect of the poem that *they* feel is appropriate, as in:

- How appropriate is the word "strained" (line 8) in terms of the poem as a whole?
  (1984: question 1(d))

- How appropriate is the metaphor in line 6, ' ... the wrackful siege of battering days"?
  (1988: question 2.4)

One of the problems of asking candidates for opinions regarding the appropriateness of aspects of prescribed poems (as in the latter example above) is that the examiner cannot be sure that the response will be genuinely personal or a glib, second-hand jotting. In truth, it is probably not realistic to expect a genuine response if one asks candidates in a public examination to discuss whether a word or phrase is appropriate, since the reaction will no doubt be that, since the examiner has selected the word or phrase for comment, it *must* be effective or appropriate.

4.4.3 *Multiple-choice (objective) questions*

Brief comment must be made at this point about a further method of questioning that was first introduced into the CED poetry examination in 1990: the multiple-choice question.

The actual style of these more objective questions varies:

- Which one of the following words best describes the tone in which this poem's speaker addresses God?
  humble / demanding / argumentative / hostile / anguished / complacent / negative
  (1990: question 2.6)

- In line 16, the word "thirty" is better than "twenty" or "forty" would have been because
  (Write down just the letter of your choice.)
  (a) it fits the poem's rhythm better.
  (b) it fits the poem's rhyme-scheme better.
  (c) it adds aural impact via alliteration.
  (d) thirty is a multiple of three, a "magic" number.
  (1991: question 2.6)

- "... nobody chained him up." (line 12)
  Which does this suggest the hunchback was treated with - respect, kindness, indifference, or fear?
  (Write down just the one word of your choice.)
  (1991: question 3.2)

The value of the multiple-choice question as a purely objective way of testing in most subjects cannot be disputed. It should produce the most reliable results, since there is no subjectivity in the marking (Kerr, 1954) and the marking of such questions is undoubtedly quick and does not put the examiner under the stress of having to evaluate and weigh up a response in the light of the guidelines given in the memorandum. Gronlund (1981) points out that the multiple-choice question is particularly useful for testing knowledge of specific facts, principles, methods and procedures as well as the ability to identify application of facts and principles, interpret cause and effect relationships and justify methods and procedures: most of which are strongly related to the testing of content subjects. It is significant that he does not mention that multiple-choice items are able to test appreciation or personal response.

Although Hirschorn (1976) considers that the multiple-choice question can test knowledge as well as comprehension, insight and application, and suggests that it has a place in all subjects and all standards, this is not an opinion that is supported by Sawyer, Watson and Adams:

> It can be stated quite categorically that there is little place for multiple-choice tests in the English classroom ... and very little higher-order thinking is involved in the whole exercise.
>
> (Sawyer, Watson and Adams, 1989: 126)

In multiple-choice questions, the examiner specifically requires only one of the words given or the relevant letter corresponding to the selected option. Candidates do not have to justify their selection and are given no space for personal response in such questions. One of the most serious shortcomings of this type of question in a poetry examination is, in fact, that the alternatives can

be restricting (Dixon, J., 1966). In addition, it is yet another way in which the examiner can impose his own feelings about the poem on the candidates and demand that they bear him out unconditionally.

Sometimes the alternative that appeals to the candidate is simply not given. The subsequent response then becomes part of the examination game, where the candidate gives the judgement he thinks is expected of him or attempts to "arrive at a 'right' answer by a series of tricks; to say what will please, rather than what is actually felt" (Yarlott, 1968: 152).

A variation of the multiple-choice question relevant to this criticism - and which may make unfair demands on candidates, possibly even driving them to trot out hypocritical responses - is where they are restricted by the examiner's list of items and are then required to justify their choice:

- Which one of the following words best describes the style of this poem's first 18 lines? Briefly support your answer with evidence from the text.
  abstract / informal / involved / elegant / pompous
  (1990: question 3.1)

In his study of the testing of poetry by means of a purely multiple-choice examination or a purely open-ended examination, Choppin (1969) found little evidence to suggest that multiple-choice questions *per se* measure anything different than open-ended questions *per se*. This suggests that there is little reason to include multiple-choice questions in a poetry examination, apart from the speed and ease of marking they afford.

4.5 Analysis of mark weighting per question type

The purpose of this part of the analysis is to investigate the number of marks allocated to particular activities in each of the poetry examinations, in order to ascertain whether examiners are emphasising, favouring or giving scant regard to certain aspects or activities.

4.5.1 *Classification of questions*

In order to carry out this analysis, the questions set on the texts are grouped according to the activity required of the candidate. The categories are very broad, for the sake of convenience and brevity, and the classification of the questions into the categories is inevitably subjective. Because the official memoranda are not available, it has been necessary to write a memorandum for each of the examination papers in order to carry out the analysis. This has been especially necessary because some of the questions combine activities required of candidates; and some arbitrary decisions have had to be made concerning the allocation of marks within certain subsections. Thus the classification of questions and the actual analysis of weighting are based on an interpretation that may not concur with that of the original examiners. The classification is devised mostly from the ideas of Purves (1979).

The detailed analyses of the questions set on the unseen and the set poetry are given in tabulated form in Appendix 7 and Appendix 8 respectively. The figures represent the actual number of marks (out of the total of 40) allocated to each of the four activities in each of the ten papers under review. For purposes of

comparison, the number of marks has also been converted to a percentage of the total. This percentage is given in brackets.

(a) *Comprehension questions*

These questions test ability to elicit facts from the poem as well as the ability to articulate an understanding of the plain sense of the text, or of particular lines, phrases and words as they appear in the given extract. They also test pure recall of the content of other parts of the poem that may not be provided in the examination. An advantage of the comprehension-type question in an externally-assessed examination is that the expected answer(s) can be fairly specifically stated in a memorandum, suggesting that such questions can produce standardised - and therefore more reliable - results than more open-ended and subjectively-assessed questions.

While it can be relevant to test whether a candidate understands the line of thought and the semantic aspects of a poem, few questions of this type require engagement with the text *as a poem*: similar questions can be asked of a prose passage. Many comprehension questions pertain to diction, where attention is focused on the meaning and connotations of words and phrases. A few require candidates to paraphrase. Baldwin (1959), who believes that a good examination paper demands a certain amount of creative thought from the candidate, is sharply critical of requiring pupils to perform such activities as expressing images in their own words or paraphrasing sections of poems.

Examples of comprehension-type questions are:

- What are the *Old bridges* referred to in line 8?
  (1982: question 1(a))

- In the second stanza of *The Good Morrow* the speaker celebrates the power of love. Using your own words, name two of the special characteristics of love mentioned in this stanza.
  (1983: question 2(c))

- What sort of physical danger is the speaker in?
  How does he save himself?
  (1986: question 1)

- What is meant by "twas all one!"? (line 1)
  (1987: question 2.1.1)

- The argument of this poem may be outlined in two sentences, the first a question and the second the answer to the question. Formulate these sentences in your own words.
  (1988: question 2.1)

In the unseen poetry, comprehension questions constitute a range of 0% to 40% of the 10 marks and in the set poetry, a range of 12,5% to 32,5% of the 40 marks. In a Higher Grade paper, one would expect questions of this type to make up less than a third of the total. Thus this analysis suggests that most of the papers do have an acceptable percentage of this category, although in some years (notably 1983 and 1991) the percentage is rather high in the set poetry.

The disadvantage of too high a proportion of questions of this type is that it gives the examination overtones of an exercise in reading and comprehension of language, instead of providing an opportunity for candidates to engage imaginatively with the texts, to make critical judgements or to show any individual thinking about the poems, especially the prescribed poems. Because the answers can be found in the given text or are an objective recall of the detail of parts of the poem not printed, this type of question does not discriminate between the candidate who is able to re-engage with and respond personally to the

text, and the candidate who has possibly not developed the ability to respond with sensitivity and judgement to poetry during the course of study.

It is, however, reasonable to expect at least some representation of comprehension questions. Whether the poem being examined is unseen or has been studied, there is much to be said for Abbs' belief that a reader should enter a text innocently and be allowed an experience before being obliged to formulate opinions (Abbs, 1983). A comprehension question is a useful way in which to lead the candidate into a consideration of the poem, and the 0% of comprehension questions in 1984 and 1991 suggests that the examiner does not guide the candidate into the encounter with the unseen poem, a point discussed in more detail in a later section.

(b) *Interpretative questions*

These questions require an understanding of more than the plain or denotative meaning of the text as presented: they demand higher-order thinking, as they test comprehension of ideas and relationships that are implied by the text. The candidate is asked to consider the work as a whole, to make inferences about the text, to deduce and respond with sensitivity to themes as well as to the language of poetry and to perceive any underlying or symbolic meaning.

Examples of this type of question are:

- What does the phrase *of the ages* (line 18) add to the theme of the poem?
  (1982: question 2(d))
- What effect is created by "Pale cool tea"? (stanza 2)
  (1984: question 1(c))

- 'And *strange-eyed* constellations reign
  His stars eternally.' (lines 17, 18)
  How is this apparent contradiction reconciled in terms of the poem as a whole?
  (1985: question 3B(c))

- How might the 'sight of Proteus rising from the sea' (line 13) and the sound of 'old Triton blow(ing) his wreathéd horn' (line 14) help the poet to feel 'less forlorn'? Explain as clearly as you can.
  (1990: question 2.1)

In both the unseen and set poetry sections of almost all the papers, this category constitutes the highest percentage of marks. In the questions on the unseen poetry, the weighting is particularly high: in seven of the ten papers at least 60% of the marks are awarded for interpretation. In 1991, there are no questions of any other type (although the wording does at first suggest that some of the questions could be analytical). In the questions on the prescribed poetry, the interpretative questions constitute at least 40% of the marks in seven of the papers. The lowest weighting is 22,5% in 1984, when there is an exceptionally strong bias towards the literary critical element (the category discussed next). This suggests an imbalance of questions in that year.

Because interpretative questions demand insight into the work as a whole and the ability to make connections and deductions based on the factual details of the poem that are not stated explicitly in the poem, they can well be considered to be higher-order questions. Especially in the unseen poetry question, these questions should be able to discriminate between the weaker and the stronger candidates. In the prescribed poetry, interpretative questions will frequently expose the candidate who enters the examination having merely learnt the "content" of the poem or who has used a study guide to ascertain only a summary of the line of

thought in order to establish the 'right responses' to questions on the meaning of the text.

Because of the dominance of this type of question, however, many teachers see it as their duty to provide their pupils with interpretations of the set poems. This tends to encourage a method where the teacher usurps ownership of the poem (Andrews, 1991) and expends more and more energy 'going through the text' to ensure that the pupils reach a full understanding of it and all its nuances (Charlesworth in Thompson, 1969). The examiners' reports actually seem to encourage this *teaching* of poems: the 1986 examiner blandly states that "the teaching of this poem [*Sir Patrick Spens*] was evidently neglected" and, commenting on the answers on Blake's *The Tiger*, remarks that the "quality of the answers depended on how well the poem had been taught". He complains of the many "simplistic interpretations" of the symbolic significance of the Lamb and the Tiger in the poem. The 1987 examiner reports that "The most obvious example of inadequate teaching occurred in 'My Mistress' Eyes ...', as very few candidates understood what it was really about. Question 3.1.2 clearly revealed that Shakespeare's sonnet, against the background of love sonnet conventions, had not been taught properly".

It is possibly the extensive testing of interpretation that strikes fear into many pupils, making them feel so insecure or apprehensive about these demands of the poetry examination that prospective candidates provide a ready market for study guides that give them the comfort of ready information about the 'accepted' interpretations. Reference in examiners' reports to the quality of the teaching of poems can also create anxiety in teachers, who begin to feel that they are taking

the examination by proxy (Paffard, 1978a); and one cannot discount the likelihood that this drives some teachers to turn for resource material to the neatly-packaged interpretations provided by study guides. A glance through locally-produced study guides such as the *College of Careers* guides and *Guidelines* certainly suggests that they have responded to the demands of the market by presenting commentaries written from a strongly interpretative and literary critical base. Thus it is not certain whether interpretative questions on the prescribed poetry are testing ability to draw inferences or whether they are testing ability to recall teacher or study guide interpretations.

Unfortunately, these questions are also bound by the restrictions of the external examination and the need for a standardised memorandum for the purposes of mass marking, where "markable" points are specified. Thus the candidates are being tested rather than asked to share their ideas about the poem. Even though the nature of some of the questions may preclude detached regurgitation of remembered information, the candidates could feel pressed to select established views that will be perceived by somebody else as being 'right' (Protherough, 1986).

(c) *Analytical questions*

This is a category used by Purves (1979) to classify such critical activities as the consideration of how the work is made, of its parts, of how the parts add up to form a whole and of the relation between language, form and authorial voice. For the purposes of this study, the term is used to classify questions that test pupils' knowledge and understanding of critical terms (including features of

genre) as well as pupils' ability to apply critical theory: to interpret, determine and assess how poets make use of literary and prosodic devices. The questions thus require pupils to analyse the technical features of the poem, in the context of a wider understanding of the poem as a whole - or at least of the given extract. Thus in some of these questions there is an overlap with the interpretative questions. In this analysis, every effort has been made to be consistent in decisions where there is such overlap but it is acknowledged once again that inevitably this classification is subjective.

Burton makes the point that poetry has its own "grammar" that can help "to expedite and sharpen any discussion of a poem" (Burton, 1970: 123) and it is generally agreed that knowledge and use of literary terms can be useful when articulating a response to a poem. Few would argue that an understanding of the principles of devices such as metaphors and rhythm is fundamental to an appreciation and enjoyment of poetry. Dixon believes that

> ... it is important to assess the extent of the pupils' knowledge of these aspects of poetry, for only if they understand the artistic use of poetic devices can they deepen their understanding of poetry.
> (Dixon, C., 1985: 132)

Questions pertaining to practical critical techniques surmise an approach to poetry that is strongly aligned to that of the Anglo-American Cambridge School-New Criticism, where attention is focused exclusively on the text, including its form and structure. The rationale for such questions appears to be that, since one cannot teach or talk about a poem without being able to converse about its separate parts, it therefore seems appropriate to test pupils' ability to do this on their own. Examples are:

- Consider how the structure (form) of Wordsworth's poem contributes to its impact on the reader.
  (1982: question 3(d))

- *The Good Morrow* is written largely in pentameter, *To His Coy Mistress* in tetrameter. How does the metre affect the general mood or feeling of each poem?
  (1983: question 2(d))

- The poem ends with a rhyming couplet. What particular impact is made here by this device?
  (1984: question 3B(b)(ii))

- 'Whole capes caked off in slices' (line 7)
  Identify one poetic technique that contributes to the effectiveness of this line.
  (1986: question 1(c))

- "'Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
  Nothing beside remains."
  Identify *one* poetic technique in the last line and show how it gives emphasis to this irony.
  (1985: questions 3A(c))

- 'And each slow dusk a drawing down of blinds' (line 14). What is especially appropriate about the poet's use of:
  (i) rhythm and
  (ii) imagery?
  (1986: question 3B(d))

- Lines 3 and 4 are not only a paradox but also an example of antithesis. Show in what way they are
  1 paradoxical
  2 antithetical
  (1989: question 2.2)

These questions frequently use technical jargon, usually without explanation or definition. On other occasions, the examiner is obviously expecting the candidate to include the term in the answer. The last example quoted above is problematic. It could be considered a test of the terms (a question of knowledge *about* literature) rather than of the pupils' ability to respond to the impact of the given lines. In his report on the 1989 examination, the examiner suggests that

the ideal would be for pupils to have learnt by the end of Standard 9 the technical devices associated with poetry, which seems a clear message to teachers that there is a gap in the pupils' knowledge of terms. Whether or not this would send teachers scuttling to compile lists of terms and appropriate definitions for their pupils to memorise is debatable but feasible.

Should this suggestion be taken too literally by teachers and acted upon with excessive vigour, the concomitant shift from a response to poetry to academic knowledge about poetics would be contrary to the spirit of poetry, to emotional response and to the enjoyment of engaging with a poetic text. The syllabus does suggest that it is possible to deepen literary appreciation through a study of figurative language; but the wisdom of virtually instructing teachers to embark on what would possibly be a purely mechanical and sterile exercise for many pupils is questionable.

The message regarding the need for candidates to know terms almost as cognitive items is stressed by the 1989 examiner, who also complains that "question 2.4 revealed considerable ignorance of the basic *facts* of versification" (my italics). Other examiners also call for more attention to this aspect of literature study: for example, the 1988 examiner complains that "metre seems to be little known". While there is no doubt that because the analytical question assumes a shift to a more critical stance, it presupposes the use of jargon, it would be prudent to heed the advice of Purves (1990) that literary terms should be used to frame and support responses, but not to build them.

There are some questions where the examiner avoids the use of literary jargon:

- 'On tubs of thunder, fists of rain
  Slog it out of sight again.'
  Select an example of the poet's use of sound effects in these lines and show how it contributes to the meaning.
  (1987: question 1.3)

- Certain consonantal sounds feature prominently in certain parts of this poem.
  What are the two consonantal sounds that occur most prominently and noticeably in stanza 2?
  What is the effect that those two sounds create or reinforce?
  (1989: questions 3.4.1 and 3.4.2)

This practice is quite acceptable in the first of these examples, since it is giving candidates some freedom in their response. The second example, however, is unnecessarily clumsy and one wonders why the examiner did not simply phrase the question to include either 'onomatopoeia' or 'alliteration'. From the report on that paper, it would seem that the examiner's wording contributed to a poorly answered question, since he complains that "many candidates were only dimly aware of the prominent aural elements in an intensely aural piece of onomatopoeic music; some did not even know what a consonant is".

The percentage of analytical questions in the unseen poetry ranges from 0% to 30% (this latter weighting is in only two papers, 1982 and 1987). The most frequent allocation is but 2 marks, or 20% of the total. In four of the papers, there are no analytical questions, bearing out the earlier suggestion that the unseen poetry questions are sometimes treated almost as a prose passage.

The weighting in the set poetry ranges from 12,5% in 1991 to the very high 52,5% in 1989. Mention has already been made of the imbalance in 1989. The low 1991 weighting (12,5%) is an exception in that it has an unusually high

percentage of comprehension questions. In seven of the papers, analytical questions constitute 30% or more of the marks.

The sharp contrast between the weighting of analytical questions on the unseen and prescribed poetry raises various questions in the mind of this researcher, not least of which is why the examiners seem to prefer *not* to ask candidates to consider technicalities when encountering a poem on their own but test them extensively in poems that have been studied for the examination. If analysis is considered almost as important to test as the interpretation of prescribed poetry, then it should be assumed that these skills have been learnt during the course of study and can be tested, yet they are not. The reason may well be that the examiners concur with the assertion of Eliot (1933) and Purves (1990) that technical analysis is a mature and sophisticated activity and are consequently reluctant to demand candidates to indulge in "critic-talk" without prior guidance. This, in turn, makes one question the justification for the strong emphasis on analytical questions on the prescribed poetry.

A major problem with the questioning of technicalities is that it invites academic rather than personal, imaginative response or genuine appreciation. It is, as Knight (1983) suggests, seeking an analytical appraisal rather than any critical appreciation of the text. In addition, especially because this is an external examination, there is a significant additional element to consider: there must be a memorandum that indicates the right response to the questions, so that there is no guarantee that the answers given by candidates are honest or spontaneous perceptions or whether they are simply the unwrapping of pre-packaged judgements.

The spectre of a memorandum specifying standardised answers to both interpretative and analytical questions tends to encourage the transmission teaching method criticised by writers such as Barnes and Barnes (1984) and Davies and Stratton (1984); and which Bugeja (1992) calls "explication", a method that does little justice to poetry and affords little enjoyment:

> Explication stifles them [students]. Basically such students cannot understand why they have to keep opinions or feelings out of their interpretations; after all, a poet wants to stimulate ideas and emotions in the reader, right? So why doesn't the English teacher?
> (Bugeja, 1992: 34)

The answer to Bugeja's question could well be, "Because the English teacher is preparing students to present standardised opinions for an external examination."

There are many dangers inherent in a methodology that prepares pupils for an examination in which it is assumed that there is a literary critical "right response". One of these is that the teacher can become elitist, allowing pupils little opportunity to share their ideas and feelings during the poetry lesson; and instead, trying to induce in them a response that approximates the teacher's own 'sensitivity' (Mathieson, 1985). This approach is justified by teachers who share the opinions of those who suggest that literary criticism is a mature and sophisticated activity and that heavy emphasis on the literary-critical type of question makes excessively taxing intellectual demands on pupils (Paffard, 1962b).

(d) *Reader-response questions*

The questions that fall into this category are the most open-ended of all. They invite candidates to share their feelings about the text, to express the personal associations the text evokes and to discuss issues they find relevant or significant during and after their engagement with the text.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to cite any examples of this type of question from the examinations that form the focus of this study. While there are some questions that appear at first glance to be inviting reader response, closer consideration of them shows that they are restrictive and are turning the candidate back to the text. Most of them are either asking for an interpretation or for analytical appraisal.

Even where candidates are asked to "discuss" or "comment on", they are directed to specific features (words, phrases or images) of the text and are asked about the appropriateness of these features to the poem. Genuine reader-response questions give the initiative to candidates to articulate and discuss their own feelings, thoughts or opinions about the poem and its relevance to their own experience or attitudes. It is possible to set a reader-response question that confines discussion to specific lines or aspects of the text; for example, by giving an alternative version and asking which of the two versions the candidate prefers. The given alternative would *not* be an earlier version of the poem that the poet himself edited (as in 1986: question 2A(b)), since the candidate would feel obliged to support the 'final' version.

An occasion that lends itself to reader-response questions arises in the papers where two poems with similar themes have been set and that invite comparison of personal response (such as 1982: question 3 and 1983: question 2). In both papers, however, the examiners elect to ask for comparisons of the more traditional literary critical nature, focusing exclusively on the text.

A possible reason for the absence of such questions is the problem that to invite approximately eight thousand candidates to give a personal response moving outwards from the text rather than to set a question tied closely to the text makes a standardised memorandum virtually impossible. The feeling could also be that such questions tend to elicit unnecessarily long and verbose answers, irrespective of the number of marks allocated - an aspect that constitutes poor examination technique and which examiners find vexing, judging by what is written in their reports. The 1989 examiner is particularly critical of such over-writing, warning that "writing 31 lines in answer to a 4-mark question is a sign of ineptitude, will not impress any marker, and is likely to be counterproductive".

The frustration suffered by examiners because of the way candidates respond to such questions is explicitly stated by a CED examiner writing in an unpublished *Report on English First Language HG Literature Papers* compiled in May 1990 for a meeting of the Joint Matriculation Board. While he endorses the need to encourage personal-response questions, he suggests that examiners are reluctant to set too many of these because they share his experience where candidates were generally unable to make a personal response of any worth.

In addition to the apparent reluctance of the examiner to set questions that he feels candidates are not able to answer well, the external examiner also needs to keep a tight rein on what constitutes an acceptable answer in order for the team of sub-examiners to award marks that are consistent. Thus there are occasions when the examiner appears to set a question that invites personal response but phrases it in such a way that the candidates are confined to a narrow answer by being given specific directions regarding how to go about their discussion. For example:

- Discuss the image in the last two lines of the poem, showing,
  (i) that you understand the comparisons implied
  (ii) and that you see the relevance of this image to the theme of the poem.
  (1983: question 3(c))

This question masquerades as the type of creative or personal response question commended above; but is in fact little more than a comprehension question and is classified as such in the present analysis.

4.5.2 *Concluding comments on this analysis*

Apart from the avoidance of reader-response questions, there does not appear to be any particular trend in the weighting of question types in these papers, since it fluctuates from year to year. There is a tendency for examiners to allocate the fewest marks to comprehension questions and the most marks to interpretative questions.

Although the percentage of analytical questions is higher than that of interpretative questions in only three papers, in most of the examinations there is a relatively small difference between the number of marks allocated to those two

types of questions. This suggests that examiners consider these types of questions to be of similar importance. The combined figures of the interpretative and analytical questions indubitably show that the CED examiners adopt a strongly literary critical approach to poetry. With the exception of the 1991 paper, questions of the interpretative and analytical type together constitute at least 70% of the mark allocation. In 1986 this combined weighting is as high as 87,5%. It would thus appear that the CED examiners are still firm disciples of the Cambridge School-New Criticism.

4.6 **Organisation and development of questions**

Earlier in this dissertation, Evans' assertion (1951) that the examination should be a continuation of good poetry lessons is quoted. One of the ways in which the examiner can attempt to achieve this is in the organisation or development of the questions he asks on a text so that candidates are led to a greater understanding and appreciation of the poem being examined:

> Ideally, ... questions should expand response: just as a pebble dropped in a pool produces a series of encompassing concentric circles, so relatively simple interpretative questions should initiate a progressively broadening concern with specific techniques, and their effects, attitude, intention, tone, feeling and finally the pupils' overall response.
>
> (Lemmer, 1979: 60)

In the examinations under review, this advice is only partially heeded. In the unseen poetry section, the examiner is sorely hampered by the 10-mark allocation, which gives him very little scope to ask questions that develop understanding and response. Remarkably, however, in several of the papers,

there is evidence of attempts to set questions that are "progressively broadening". In addition, many of the examiners have followed the advice given by Lemmer in an appendix to the same article, that the first question of any contextual should be a "chicken-feed type" question, designed to build confidence and to guide the candidate into a closer study. Indeed, the examiners appear to be extremely concerned that candidates are approaching the unseen poem in conditions not conducive to natural engagement with a new text. (This notion has already been discussed in the section on the choice of unseen poem.) A notable example of this examination practice can be found in the 1990 paper, where the first question set on Wilbur's *Boy at the window* is:

- Who is the 'he' referred to in line 2?
  (1990: question 1.1)

Some candidates would regard this almost as a trick question, believing that far more must be required in the answer than an echoing of the title of the poem.

This type of first question is fairly common in the unseen poetry, although in some years it is not as straightforward as that quoted above. Sometimes the first question helps the reader to grasp another level of a poem, to move immediately into interpretation - suggesting that the examiner believes the candidate needs this sort of assistance in the tension of the examination room and the flurry of the start of the three-hour marathon. In 1989, the examiner seems to be nudging the candidate into an understanding of the metaphorical implications of the poem in the first question:

- Explain what 'the whole long day' and 'that inn' represent in the above poem.
  (1989: question 1.1)

The 1982 examiner has the same intention in mind in his first question but opts for a more technical approach that is arguably less successful in eliciting the required answer:

- Show how the poet has used a sustained metaphor to illustrate his theme.
  (1982: question 1(a))

The wording of this question has already been discussed. At this point, it does, however, seem pertinent to indicate that, as *the first question of the examination*, this would surely create in the mind of the candidate the perception that this paper demands a detached and formal tone and a stilted style.

In some papers, the first question on the unseen poem does not guide the candidate into an engagement with the text: on the contrary, it virtually pitches him headlong into a linguistic assessment of the poem. The following is the most extreme example of this style:

- What aspect of sentence structure in the opening line enables the speaker to achieve an aloof or distanced effect?
  (1988: question 1.1)

This type of question is placing far too much emphasis on intellectual competence, far too early in the encounter.

In the 1982, 1985, 1986 and 1987 papers, the questions are set in such a way that they nudge the candidate into an understanding of the essence of the poem. The questions unavoidably rush the candidate through the poem, sweeping very broadly across lines and images in sequence, usually concluding with a general question that requires the candidate to look back at the whole poem.

In 1983 and 1984, the questions do not follow the same sequence as the lines of the poem. The first question of both of these papers focuses on the second of the two stanzas. Although this is obviously done to help candidates interpret the poems more easily, it does not give the unsophisticated reader a chance to come to terms with the poem in his own way. However, having pushed candidates into the required interpretation of the poem, the examiners do then follow a sequence of questioning that promotes understanding of the given texts.

The 1989, 1990 and 1991 questions on the unseen poetry hardly move beyond an interpretation of the text to consider the *poetry*. They take candidates through the poems from line 1 to the end, eliciting responses designed to test ability to read and interpret the text. There is no broadening concern with the effects (personal or academic) of the poet's expression.

While most of the questions on the unseen poetry do follow some sort of sequence and development, this cannot be said of the questions on the set poetry. It seems that the examiners operate from a completely different supposition in these questions. The type of questions asked and the organisation of these clearly shows that the examiners expect candidates to recognise the given text and immediately to be able to answer fairly sophisticated questions about it.

Close examination shows a distinction between the sub-questions on a single text for the full 20 marks and those where two texts have been set for the 20 marks. In the former, there is generally some development, usually where the first question focuses on the text as a whole or on a more general interpretation, for example:

- State in your own words the view of poetry expressed here.
  (1982: question (a)(i))

- The argument of this poem may be outlined in two sentences, the first a question and the second the answer to the question. Formulate these sentences in your own words.
  (1988: question 2.1)

- Compare the themes of these poems.
  (1982: question 3(a))

When the initial question is of the type quoted in the examples, the tendency is to set questions that focus attention on the text in a fairly logical order (usually following the order of the lines of the poem). However, there is no apparent attempt at a development of involvement with the sense of the poem and the techniques employed. Most frequently, the examiner selects aspects or features of the text as they occur in line or stanza sequence, bearing out the opinion that examinations push readers into regarding the poem as a linguistic object, rather than an imaginative encounter (Dixon, J., 1979).

This treatment of the text as an object for linguistic assessment is very much more apparent in the questions that are split into an A and a B section, especially where the poems are completely unrelated in period, form and theme. The papers from 1984 to 1987 are particularly weak in the development of questions, largely because those examiners chose to subdivide questions. In doing this, the examiner creates for himself the restraints of the unseen poem, limiting himself to between 8 and 12 marks on a poem or an extract. In questions that have such a low mark allocation, there is no opportunity for the examiner to provide lead-in questions or to help the candidate to re-engage in any meaningful way with the text.

There is a definite trend in these subdivided questions: in the A section, there is some attempt to assist a development of thought in the questions but without exception, the questions on the extracts in the B section simply dismember the text, making random jabs at isolated items in the extracts, with little regard for the poem (or even the extract) as a whole. These questions, more than any others on the paper, invite mechanical and detached responses and work actively against the widely-held aims of the teaching of poetry and the stated aims of the CED syllabus. Furthermore, examination of this style is the converse of the notion that the examination should "testify to the full range of imaginative contemplation and reflection that a genuine encounter [with poetry] may give rise to" (Dixon, J., 1979: 66).

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS

This analysis has raised many issues regarding the examining of poetry, particularly by external examination boards; furthermore, in the course of the dissertation, several comments and suggestions have been made. To repeat these would be labouring the point.

At present there is much speculation about inevitable changes and amendments to the structure of South African education, which will undoubtedly include a reconsideration of curricula and the requirements to be laid down for the awarding of school-leaving certificates. The status, objectives and syllabus of English First Language appear to be particularly uncertain. Such is the value of the study and enjoyment of poetry that it is hoped that in the new education system in this country, English poetry will still be accorded a place in the secondary school curriculum. The following recommendations are offered on the assumption that poetry will continue to be part of the English First Language curriculum. It must be pointed out that, while the external examination has been the focus of this study, these recommendations do not pertain *only* to the external examination of poetry.

1. ***Change the approach to poetry study at school level.***

It is imperative that the grip of the rigorous Cambridge School-New Critical approach to the study of poetry (favoured - and thus encouraged - by recent Senior Certificate examination papers) be loosened. It must be acknowledged that it is appropriate only for the relatively few school-pupils who will become students of English at universities and there seems little value in adopting an approach that demands intellectual analysis in preference to providing pupils with opportunities to experience and develop a capacity for feeling. If the aims of teaching poetry and of the syllabus are to be achieved, an approach to the teaching and examining of poetry based on reader-response criticism is strongly recommended. It is an approach that will induce the majority to appreciate and enjoy poetry and will extricate the study of poetry from its present academic niche.

2. ***Give teachers individual responsibility over the study of poetry and the examination or assessment of that study.***

Viewed in the light of the *raison d'etre* for including poetry in a school English curriculum, the ideal approach would be to abolish the external examination in poetry and replace it with internally-set and assessed examinations, or with moderated coursework. Thus the selection of poems and the approach to the study of poetry would rest entirely with the individual teacher. At first, not all teachers would feel comfortable having to shoulder this responsibility; necessitating in-service courses that will not only provide guidelines regarding the administration of a poetry programme within the parameters set by an external

moderator; but will also serve as refresher courses aimed at exposing teachers in the field to different approaches to poetry study.

Such courses and workshops would be especially necessary if the dominance of the Cambridge School-New Critical way of treating texts is to be broken. Although Doubell (1990) suggests that this approach to poetry study is no longer dominant in university English courses, there are numerous teachers of English whose undergraduate experience of poetry was exclusively of the Leavis tradition. Having been educated in that traditional mode, these teachers have based their teaching of poetry on their own experience of poetry study and have had no reason to adapt or alter their methods to suit the demands of the external examinations. Consequently, they would probably be reluctant to adopt a different approach, especially one which they may hold to be less academically demanding. In-service training and workshops could help such sceptics to see the value of alternative approaches to the study and examination of poetry.

3. ***Allow teachers to have more influence over the external examination of poetry.***

It is unlikely that such a revolutionary change as transferring complete power over the poetry curriculum to teachers will be implemented. The external examination has become a virtually inescapable part of the education system and thus one needs to consider ways in which the examining of poetry, controlled by an external body, can be approached without compromising the aims of the study of poetry. If teachers were to take the advice of the writers of the Newbolt Report (1921), they would be taxing the external examiner by constantly

experimenting with different approaches to the teaching and examining of poetry throughout the secondary school course, rather than taking the lead from the external examiners.

This suggests a need for much greater and more meaningful contact between examiners and teachers. Present communication is restricted to formal comment on the examination paper after it has been written and before the scripts are marked and annual examiners' reports. Immediately after the examination has been written, teachers are able to submit comments on the paper through official and impersonal channels. Some months after the examination, the CED circulates reports in which anonymous examiners expound their views on the standard of answers of the previous year's candidates, comment favourably or unfavourably on the quality of the teaching of poetry as reflected in the responses given by the candidates and curtly catalogue weaknesses and problem areas to be addressed by teachers preparing candidates for the next examination. There is no opportunity for any real dialogue between teachers and examiners on pertinent issues such as the objectives of the poetry examination, the format of the examination and the relevance of the style of questioning to classroom activity. In addition, memoranda are regarded as confidential documents, which leaves teachers to decide on (and sometimes to make arbitrary guesses about) the "right" answers and the allocation of marks within questions. While it is accepted that there are practical difficulties in establishing personal contact between an examiner and all the English teachers of the province, there could nevertheless be some more meaningful and direct channels of written communication. A more open, two-way interchange of ideas between teachers and examiners would enable

examiners to be informed about methods being adopted in classrooms and in internal examinations; conversely, this would give examiners the opportunity to make teachers aware of their philosophy and objectives in the setting of the external poetry papers.

4. ***Make greater use of teachers in selecting an anthology and drawing up a list of prescribed poems.***

It is suggested that the present system of a faceless committee handing down its list of poems for compulsory study be abandoned and more teacher-representation be given to the committee that makes the *final* selection. It is acknowledged that teachers and teacher organisations are represented on prescriptions committees; but there is insufficient general awareness of the composition of the various committees. In addition, the final decision apparently does not rest with a committee on which teachers are strongly represented. Invitations to suggest anthologies and selected poems from those anthologies should be regularly issued to heads of English departments in all schools, to give all English teachers a voice in the selection of material that they would consider appropriate for their pupils.

Drawing from a wider range of opinion (instead of from officials and teachers co-opted to a committee for reasons not always related to interest in poetry) could result in an injection of new ideas with regard to the anthology selected for prescription, as well as the production of a list of poems closer to the experience and the world of the pupils who are to encounter those poems.

5. ***In the selection of prescribed poems, ensure that there is a balance between the major literary periods and contemporary and indigenous poetry.***

Prescriptions committees should guard against the tendency to prescribe different anthologies and yet make a virtually standard selection of poems or works by a particular poet every year. An anthology should be selected because it offers something unique and fullest possible use should be made of that aspect of the anthology. If it is evident from teachers' recommendations that there is a corpus of 'great poems' worthy of repeated study, these should constitute only a percentage of the prescribed list, allowing for a strong emphasis on contemporary and indigenous poems, particularly those suggested by teachers.

In addition, if the initial response to a request for recommendations does suggest a list of 'great poems', this should not be regarded as sacrosanct or permanent. There seems little to be gained in setting the same poems every year or the same cycle of poems over a particular period without taking into serious consideration the response of both teachers and pupils to the prescribed poetry. Therefore, at each decision-making session, the prescriptions of the previous year should be reviewed, based on feedback from teachers in the classrooms.

The recommendations suggested thus far imply long-term planning and changes of departmental or bureaucratic policy that could take time to implement. It is possible, however, to effect immediate changes within the *status quo*:

6. ***Set the examination in such a way that the paper is in accord with the aims of the study of poetry.***

Examiners could do much to ensure that the examination paper is true to the aims of teaching poetry and of the syllabus. The inclusion of an appeal for a personal response in the general rubric to the paper has no value unless there *are* some questions that give candidates scope to express *their own opinions*. This does not require a patronising approach to the candidates; nor does it demand that examiners set questions that are aimed at the weak or that avoid challenging the pupils on a lexical level. It also does not suggest that poetry should be used simply as a stimulus for an open response that is, in effect, a piece of creative writing.

What is needed is a shift of emphasis from the present focus on comprehension and analysis to enjoyment and personal comment *arising from engagement with the text*. In this way, examiners could play a vital part in promoting and encouraging alternative teaching methods and could make positive use of their influence over teaching methods.

There is no denying that asking questions that allow for a subjective response will make the assessing of poetry more demanding if the present format of the examination is retained. This is not sufficient reason for the abandoning of the invitation, however; nor does it mean that standards of precision in pupils' responses or of marking need be compromised. The onus will fall on the examiners to be creative both in their approach to the examining of poetry and to the devising of a system of evaluation that will be true to the aims of poetry and

that will satisfy the demands of standardisation. Examining bodies will have to be alerted to these added responsibilities so that the remuneration of the examiners and their marking teams is commensurate with the demands of their respective functions.

7. *Adapt the present format and style of questioning.*

While it is recommended that the present approach of examining by means of contextual questions be continued, there are several ways in which the format of the paper and the style of questioning should be changed.

7.1 Division of poetry section

If the prescribed literature examination remains unchanged in terms of time limit and marks allocated to the poetry section, it is suggested that a change in the approach to the unseen / prescribed poetry questions be considered. The present reduced status of the unseen poetry section should be addressed, in order to exploit the advantages of testing ability to read and engage a poem independently. Equal marks could be allocated to each of the two sections, allowing for greater scope in the choice of the unseen text and the questions set on it. Such a change has several positive implications. Firstly, if candidates are able to spend more time on the unseen poem, the examiner need not feel obliged to select a lyric of restricted length. Secondly, with more marks at the disposal of the examiner, the questions set on the unseen text could be more exciting, stimulating and challenging than a series of short comprehension and interpretative questions. Furthermore, in the selection of the unseen poem, examiners could consider the

possibility of selecting a text that is related in some way to the prescribed poetry - either another (unseen) text of a poet whose work has been studied during the year or a poem that has a similar theme to one or more of the poems on the prescribed list.

7.2 Selection of textual items

In the prescribed poetry section, it is suggested that examiners include only one poem in a single question and that the full text of the poem be given. In this way, candidates will be spared the difficulty of re-engaging with completely different texts in a limited time. In addition, this will enable examiners to set questions that allow for development of thought or feeling, instead of calling for fragmented answers of a strongly linguistic or technical nature.

If more than one poem is selected in a single question, then the texts should be related in some way, preferably in theme, and the questions should focus on the similarity and contrasts apparent in the two poems. This opens the way for meaningful comparisons and articulation of personal response.

7.3 Development and wording of questions

The principles of setting contextual questions as suggested by Lemmer (1979) should be fundamental to the setting of all poetry examination questions in the unseen and prescribed sections. Candidates should be led into a re-engagement with the poem, rather than be required in the first questions to recall learned

responses to the finer aspects of the text or to make an immediate, intellectual assessment.

In addition, examiners should phrase questions in a way that does justice to the nature of poetry and to the type of response being invited. The diction used by the examiner should communicate clearly to the candidate that reader-response and personal judgement are of more consequence than the demonstration of acquired or practised skills, or the objective, clinical presentation of correct information about the given text or about poetry.

7.4 Weighting of types of questions set on a particular text

There should be a balance of the type of questions set on poetry, allowing feelings to count at least as much as intellect. While questions of an interpretative nature may be regarded as useful indicators of intellectual ability, it should be borne in mind that most frequently these questions test the *teaching* of the poem (or the memory of a study guide) rather than an understanding of the text or an appreciation or enjoyment of poetry. Consequently, interpretative questions should be balanced with those that give the candidates the opportunity to articulate something about the impact of the text on them as individuals and to consider what it is in the poem that causes the effect it has on them.

7.5 Approach to use and knowledge of poetic jargon

Use and knowledge of the jargon of poetry should not be a primary objective, neither should it be directly tested. Although in classroom discussion, technical terms associated with poetry may well be introduced and used in the framing of responses, there is little to be gained in asking for the identification and explanation of poetic and figurative terms or of examples of these. Jargon is part of the verbal equipment of the specialist and assists in the concise expression of a response to a text; but it is possible for pupils to express similar ideas to the critic without using any jargon at all. In addition, care should be taken to avoid falling into the trap of phrasing the examination question without reference to jargon, while the expected answer actually demands a knowledge of or use of technical terms.

Final comment

Ultimately, what is being sought is a way of examining poetry that puts poetry and not academic justifications first. Both the preparation for and the writing of the examination should be true to the broad aims of the study of poetry. Space must be given for a meeting of minds, the generation and deepening of emotion and feeling, the extension of awareness and the stimulation of imagination. The need to acquire and demonstrate skills and to know the right responses should never be allowed to supplant the pleasure and enjoyment afforded by personal engagement with poetry.

APPENDIX 1

Extract from Cape Education Department syllabus:

SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE: ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE

Global Aims of the course

1.1 To encourage the natural enthusiasm, vitality, spontaneity and originality of pupils through their active participation in meaningful language activities.

1.2 To enrich pupils' ideas, to stimulate their thoughts and feelings and to develop their understanding of themselves and their own emotional and moral responses to life and the world around them, so that they may live more fully, consciously and responsibly.

1.3 To develop pupils' ability to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings effectively through language.

1.4 To develop pupils' ability to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings effectively through language.

1.5 To help pupils develop the language skills which contribute to effective expression and communication.

1.6 To assist pupils in using material from other subjects in developing comprehension, note-taking and writing skills. (English across the curriculum)

APPENDIX 2

Extract from Cape Education Department syllabus:

SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE: ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE

Reading and Literature Study

3.1 GOALS
That pupils
3.1.1 gain enjoyment from and skill in reading
3.1.2 appreciate literature and read with discrimination
3.1.3 develop the capacity for critical thinking about, and the ability to form and express their own views on literary works
3.1.4 expand their experience of life, gain empathetic understanding of other people and develop moral awareness
3.1.5 increase their self-knowledge and self-understanding
3.1.6 gain some knowledge of basic literary genres and the techniques appropriate to each
3.1.7 develop some understanding and appreciation of their literary heritage
3.1.8 study literary works from Southern Africa as well as the rest of the English-speaking world, and translations of other world literature if appropriate.

3.2 PRESCRIBED WORK
The following works are prescribed:
3.2.1 Standard 8
Three books must be studied; only two will be examined. The poetry selection must be one of the works studied.
A. Poetry (25 to 30 poems or approximately 300 lines of poetry)
In addition, at least two of the following:
B. a play by Shakespeare
C. a novel
D. a substantial work or body of work (see 3.2.4.2 below)

3.2.2 Standard 9
Three works must be studied and examined; not more than one from each section.
A. Poetry (25 to 30 poems) or approximately 800 lines of poetry, not more than two thirds of which may be contemporary.
In addition, at least two of the following:
B. a play
C. a novel
D. a substantial work or body of work (see 3.2.4.2 below)

3.2.3 Standard 10
Four works must be studied and examined; one from each Section.
A. Poetry (25 to 30 poems or 500 to 600 lines, which indicate development in English poetry. The poems prescribed for study in Standard 10 must be different from those prescribed for Standard 9 in the previous year.)
B. a play by Shakespeare
C. a major novel
D. a substantial work or body of work.
(See 3.2.4.2 below)

3.2.4 NOTE
3.2.4.1 Works of Southern African origin (novels, short stories, plays, poems or films) should be encouraged.
3.2.4.2 Under Section D, in addition to the traditional genres (novels, short stories, plays, etc.), other works, e.g. selections from the works of a specific poet or poets, film, may be prescribed.

APPENDIX 3

Extract from Cape Education Department syllabus:

SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE: ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE

1) Preamble to the *Elucidation of the syllabus;*

2) Full text of *Elucidation : Reading and Literature Study*

PREAMBLE: SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE

Teachers must note that, with the exception of items actually specified for teaching or examining in either Standard 8, 9 or 10, the contents of both the *Syllabus* and the *Elucidation of the Syllabus* must be treated at the level of competence that may reasonably be expected of pupils in the standard being taught. Teachers should be aware that items in the syllabus should be applied at progressively higher levels of competence.

Consequently, the teaching of any aspect of the Senior Secondary Syllabus must be adapted to the needs of the pupils and based on contexts of a readability and maturity level appropriate to the standard concerned. This implies that the syllabus has not been designed to be divided into separate "packages" for each of the three years.

Although the *Syllabus* itself is of manageable length, the *Elucidation of the Syllabus* is very wide-ranging and is designed to allow for considerable enrichment material which need not necessarily be examined. Teachers are advised to make constant reference to the *Elucidation* in order to ensure that they adapt the basic syllabus to the needs and abilities of their pupils. It is not necessary or even desirable to attempt to implement *all* of the *Elucidation* during the course, but regular reference to and study of the guidance it contains will help English teachers to teach this course satisfactorily.

READING AND LITERATURE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Pupils may respond strongly to literature in which they see their own experiences reflected, but they must also be encouraged to extend their experience through facing ideas and feelings which are new to them, in order to develop an understanding of the world around them and an awareness of their own potential.

In the study of literature all aspects of the Syllabus (listening, speaking, reading, writing and language study) are engaged in a meaningful context.

Reading skills must continue to be developed to enable pupils to cope with the more sophisticated demands made by literature and in all subjects.

STUDY GUIDELINES

Wide reading, as well as the intensive study of a limited number of books, should be the basis of the course. In addition to the study of prescribed literature, every pupil should read as widely as possible (including some non-fiction) during the three-year course. Pupils should read an increasing range of material and acquire some knowledge of the distinctive features of major genres. The teacher must give guidance to the pupils in their choice of voluntary reading but encourage them to become increasingly independent in choosing books.

The poetry course should continue to provide pupils with a widening and deepening experience of different poetic forms from different periods.

At this level it may be desirable to read a number of poems by one poet. However, the study of poetry, rather than of poets, should be the basis of the poetry course.

While consideration should continue to be given to dramatic presentation and audience participation, the study of plays based on their literary merit should become an increasingly important aspect of drama in Standards 8, 9 and 10.

The emphasis should be on full-length plays, particularly Shakespearean, although extracts may be considered desirable to bring pupils into contact with a wide range of material. Whenever possible, pupils

should see worthwhile stage productions. Suitable films and recorded material should be used where appropriate.

Through discussion and writing pupils should develop a critical and discerning attitude towards television and film and should be encouraged to explore ideas and make judgements in regular class discussion and in the writing of reviews and analyses. While it may be valuable to introduce pupils to the language of filming and film criticism, this should be explored *only* in so far as it increases the pupils' understanding and appreciation of film.

3.1 GOALS (See also 4.1.3)

3.1.1 If teachers can help pupils to find enjoyment in reading they will have done them a lasting service. Without some pleasure from and active participation in literature, the other goals cannot be achieved effectively. Enjoyment of and interest in reading (including literature, leisure reading, and other subjects across the curriculum) depend upon the teaher's guidance and the development of the pupils' reading abilities. Vocabulary, comprehension and study skills are particularly important. In this respect, the teacher's enthusiasm and example play a key role. The developing of comprehension and study skills as well as vocabulary, enables pupils to read more effectively and heightens their enjoyment of reading.

3.1.2 Reading of novels, plays, poems, and experience of the mass media, should be seen within a continuum. The study of prescribed literature should give the pupils a frame of reference and a basis for judging their experience with other fiction and for responding to leisure reading and film viewing with greater insight and discrimination. Thus the gulf that so often separates the prescribed literature from voluntary reading and viewing may be bridged.

3.1.3 Works which will help pupils to observe, to discriminate and to see relationships, should be studied. As pupils learn to think and to feel, they will read more effectively. Frequent opportunities must be provided for pupils to discuss and evaluate ideas with one another and with the teacher. Personal responses and interpretations should be encouraged provided that opinions are substantiated by valid evidence from the text. The basic literary or technical terms that enable the pupils to describe with insight and to evaluate with cogent comment should be introduced when necessary.

Emphasis should be placed on the development of the pupil's ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate rather than on the mere reproduction of another person's response or opinion.

Pupils must be acquainted with the techniques of quotation, and must be trained in the use of the present tense sequence conventionally used in English for such discussions and analyses.

The comprehension skills listed under 5.1.1 to 5.1.6 in the Syllabus are of particular relevance here as well.

3.1.4 Literature can stimulate pupils to question and to redefine for themselves their assumptions, attitudes and values. It can also open their minds and hearts to new ideas and sensations.

Because literature explores people's lives and gives insight into their motives, values and feelings — insight not easily obtained from everyday encounters with others — it can increase the pupils' awareness of other people. Cultures differ in values, customs and world view, and acquaintance with the literature of other cultures can help pupils understand such differences.

3.1.5 By responding to literature and through vicarious involvement, pupils may learn more about themselves.

The ordering of experience accomplished linguistically by a writer can produce in the readers some ordering of their own experiences and attitudes: as a result they may acquire more self-knowledge, a clearer perspective on and insight into their own situations, motivations and choices.

3.1.6 Literary appreciation can be deepened through

- a study of figurative language
- an awareness of different literary styles and techniques
- the identification of types of literature, e.g. fables, myths, novels, historical fiction, science fiction, ballad, sonnet, short story, comedy, tragedy, satire
- an awareness of literary features, such as structure, milieu, character, setting, style, theme, plot, point of view
- some knowledge of conflict, suspense, climax, tone and irony
- some understanding of the elements of poetry , e.g. metre, rhyme and rhythm.

It must be emphasized that aspects and literary features such as those listed above ought to be studied in the context of prose and verse. The knowledge gained should enhance pupils' responses to literature.

3.2 Criteria for the selection of prescribed work:

- Work prescribed for study should lend itself to the achievement of the stated goals.
- The work should meet the intellectual and emotional needs of the pupils concerned, broaden their horizons, increase their capacity for critical thinking and heighten moral awareness.
- The work should be potentially enjoyable.
- The language, style, content, theme and intellectual quality should be worthy of study.
- Form, structure and technique should not be too difficult for the age group concerned, although the work should be challenging enough to extend talented pupils.
- The principle of progression should be taken into account to ensure continuity between year levels and adequate preparation for the following year.

APPENDIX 4

Copies of Section A (Poetry),
Cape Senior Certificate, Paper One:
1982 - 1991

1982

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the front cover of your answer-book, after the word "Subject"-

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 24 pages

PLEASE TURN OVER

Time: Three hours

INSTRUCTIONS: CHOICE OF QUESTIONS

(i) Answer Section A (Poetry) as specified in the instructions to that section.

(ii) Answer a further 3 questions, one from each of Sections B, C and D. At least one of these must be a *contextual* question and at least one must be an *essay* question.

ARRANGEMENT OF ANSWERS: *Begin each section on a new page. Do not write headings for your answers. Write only the question numbers.*

LENGTH OF ESSAY ANSWERS: *600 words, i.e. approximately two pages at eight words to a line.*

LENGTH OF CONTEXTUAL ANSWERS: *Aim at conciseness and relevance. Be guided by the number of marks allocated.*

PRESENTATION: *Accuracy in grammar, spelling, punctuation and general presentation will count in your favour.*

For errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation in the contextual questions, a candidate may be penalized by a deduction (up to a maximum of one-third) from the mark to be given.

SECTION A (POETRY)

Answer Question 1 (10 marks) and either Question 2 or Question 3 (20 marks)

1. Unseen Poem

Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions which follow:

Scaffolding

Seamus Heaney

Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;

Make sure the planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.

And yet all this comes down when the job's done
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.

So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be
Old bridges breaking between you and me

Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall
Confident that we have built our wall.

(a) Show how the poet has used a sustained metaphor to illustrate his theme. (4)

(b) What are the *Old bridges* referred to in line 8? (2)

(c) What is the speaker's predominant feeling? (2)

(d) Comment on the significance of the structure (form) of the poem. (2)

/10/

OR

Write a critical appreciation of the poem. /10/

PLEASE TURN OVER

Tyfield, Nicol, Rumboll: *The Living Tradition*

2. Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions that follow:

IN MY CRAFT OR SULLEN ART

In my craft or sullen art
Exercised in the still night
When only the moon rages
And the lovers lie abed
With all their griefs in their arms,
I labour by singing light
Not for ambition or bread
Or the strut and trade of charms
On the ivory stages
But for the common wages
Of their most secret heart.

Not for the proud man apart
From the raging moon I write
On these spindrift pages
Nor for the towering dead
With their nightingales and psalms
But for the lovers, their arms
Round the griefs of the ages.
Who pay no praise or wages
Nor heed my craft or art.

DYLAN THOMAS

(a) (i) State in your own words the view of poetry expressed here. (6)

(ii) Show how the words *Exercised* (line 2) and *labour* (line 6) help to support this view. (2)

(b) Justify the choice of the following words:

(i) *sullen* (line 1)

(ii) *common* (line 10)

(iii) *spindrift* (line 14) 3 x 2 = (6)

(c) (i) What is the tone of *the towering dead With their nightingales and psalms?* (2)

(ii) What is the speaker's attitude to *the lovers?* (2)

(d) What does the phrase *of the ages* (line 18) add to the theme of the poem? (2)

/20/

OR

3. Read the following poem and excerpt carefully and answer the questions that follow:

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

September 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

(from) *PRELUDES*

I

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps.

II

The morning comes to consciousness
Of faint stale smells of beer
From the sawdust-trampled street
With all its muddy feet that press
To early coffee-stands.
With the other masquerades
That time resumes,
One thinks of all the hands
That are raising dingy shades
In a thousand furnished rooms.

T.S. ELIOT

(a) Compare the themes of these poems. (4)

(b) (i) Compare the poets' feelings or attitudes to their subjects. (2)

(ii) Show how their contrasting attitudes are reflected in their imagery. Select one image from each poem, quote it, and discuss its effectiveness. (6)

(c) To what extent has Eliot depended on sensuous imagery (i.e. imagery involving the five bodily senses) to create the effect he seeks? Discuss, with specific reference to the text. (5)

(d) Consider how the structure (form) of Wordworth's poem contributes to its impact on the reader. (3)

/20/

PLEASE TURN OVER

1983

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the front cover of your answer-book, after the word "Subject"-

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 20 pages

Time: Three hours

INSTRUCTIONS: CHOICE OF QUESTIONS

(i) Answer Section A (Poetry) as specified in the instructions to that section.

(ii) Answer a further 3 questions, one from each of Sections B, C and D. At least *one* of these must be a *contextual* question and at least *one* must be an *essay* question.

ARRANGEMENT OF ANSWERS: *Begin each section on a new page. Do not write headings for your answers. Write only the question numbers.*

LENGTH OF ESSAY ANSWERS: *500 words, i.e. approximately two pages at eight words to a line.*

LENGTH OF CONTEXTUAL ANSWERS: *Aim at conciseness and relevance. Be guided by the number of marks allocated.*

PRESENTATION: *Accuracy in grammar, spelling, punctuation and general presentation will count in your favour.*

For errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation in the contextual questions, a candidate may be penalised by a deduction (up to a maximum of one-third) from the mark gained.

SECTION A (POETRY)

Answer Question 1 (10 marks) and *either* Question 2 *or* Question 3 (20 marks)

1. Unseen Poem

Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions which follow:

Coal

The coals glow, giving to you and me
Sun's warmth stored a million years ago
In days when evolution's latest effort
Was the ten-ton reptile in a tepid sea.

I wonder if we ever shall evolve
Beyond the simple beauty of this hour:
You, drying your hair before this ancient heat
And I, aware of your primaeval power.

Guy Butler

(a) Why is the *beauty of this hour* regarded as *simple*? (line 6). In answering this question, take into account the meaning of *ancient heat* in line 7, and *primaeval power* in line 8. (5)

(b) What does the mention of *the ten-ton reptile* (line 4) contribute to the poem? (2)

(c) What attitude (feeling) is conveyed in the question

I wonder if we ever shall evolve
Beyond the simple beauty of this hour:?

Explain briefly. (3)

/10/

OR

Write a critical appreciation of the poem (10 - 15 lines).

/10/

AND

PLEASE TURN OVER

Robin Malan: *Inscapes*

2. Read the following poems and answer the questions that follow:

To his coy mistress

Andrew Marvell

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze.
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest.
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long preserv'd virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life.
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

The good morrow

John Donne

I wonder by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we lov'd? Were we not wean'd till then?
But suck'd on country pleasures, childishly?
Or snorted we in the seven sleepers' den?
'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be.
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desir'd, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone,
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown,
Let us possess one world, each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears.
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two better hemispheres
Without sharp North, without declining West?

What ever dies, was not mixt equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love so alike that none do slacken, none can die.

(a) In these poems both speakers are addressing their lovers. Show clearly, by careful reference to the text, that the poems differ in:

(i) the speakers' intentions (2)

(ii) the feelings that motivate the speakers. (4)

(b) In *To His Coy Mistress* the speaker uses argument to persuade his lover. Outline three steps in his argument. (3)

(c) In the second stanza of *The Good Morrow* the speaker celebrates the power of love. Using your own words, name two of the special characteristics of love mentioned in this stanza. (4)

(d) *The Good Morrow* is written largely in pentameter, *To His Coy Mistress* in tetrameter. How does the metre affect the general mood or feeling of each poem? (4)

(e) Humour plays an important role in *To His Coy Mistress*.

(i) Quote and explain an example of humour. (1)

(ii) Show why it is appropriate to the poem. (2)

/20/

3. Read the following poem and answer the questions:

God's grandeur

Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent:
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

(a) (i) Show how the speaker's feelings undergo a change in the course of the octave. (2)

(ii) Account for this change. (4)

(iii) Show how this shift in feeling is reflected by changes in *imagery* and *rhythm* in the course of the octave. (8)

(b) *God's Grandeur* is a Petrarchan sonnet. Show how Hopkins has used this form. (2)

(c) Discuss the image in the last two lines of the poem, showing

(i) that you understand the comparisons implied (2)

(ii) and that you see the relevance of this image to the theme of the poem. (2)

/20/

1984

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the front cover of your answer-book, after the word "Subject" -

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 20 pages

PLEASE TURN OVER

SECTION A (POETRY)

Answer Question 1 (10 marks) and *either* Question 2 *or* Question 3 (20 marks)

1. Unseen Poem

Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions which follow:

Parlour-piece

With love so like fire they dared not
Let it out into strawy talk;
With love so like a flood they dared not
Let out a trickle lest the whole crack.

These two sat speechlessly;
Pale cool tea in tea-cups chaperoned
Stillness, silence, the eyes
Where fire and flood strained.

Ted Hughes

(a) Explain why "These two sat speechlessly". (2)

(b) How effective are the images of fire and flood, used in stanza 1, in describing their situation? (4)

(c) What effect is created by "Pale cool tea"? (stanza 2) (2)

(d) How appropriate is the word "strained" (line 8) in terms of the poem as a whole? (2)

/10/

2. Read the following poems carefully and answer the questions which follow:

2.A The Sun Rising

Busy old fool, unruly sun,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows and through curtains call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
Late school boys, and sour prentices,
Go tell court huntsmen that the King will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams, so reverend and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long;
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and tomorrow late tell me,
Whether both th'Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those Kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

She'is all states, and all princes, I,
Nothing else is.
Princes do but play us; compared to this,
All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy centre is, these walls, thy sphere.

John Donne

2.A (a) What is the poet's attitude towards the sun in the opening stanza? (3)

(b) Show why the imagery in the line "I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink" (line 13) is particularly appropriate. (3)

(c) How does the metaphor "She'is all states, and all princes, I," (line 21) convey the poet's feelings about love? (3)

(d) From line 25 there is a marked change in the poet's argument and tone. What is the effect of this on the poem as a whole? (3)

2.B London

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry
Every black'ning Church appalls;
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born Infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

William Blake

2.B (a) There is a tone of condemnation in the poem. By referring to his use of repetition and rhyme show how the poet accomplishes this. (4)

(b) What is being suggested by the images, "black'ning Church" and "Marriage hearse"? (4)

/20/

OR

3. Read the following poems carefully and answer the questions which follow:

3.A <u>After the Opera</u>

Down the stone stairs
Girls with their large eyes wide with tragedy
Lift looks of shocked and momentous emotions up at me.
And I smile.

Ladies
Stepping like birds with their bright and pointed feet
Peer anxiously forth, as if for a boat to carry them out of the wreckage;
And among the wreck of the theatre crowd
I stand and smile.

They take tragedy so becomingly.
Which pleases me.

But when I meet the weary eyes
The reddened aching eyes of the bar-man with thin arms,
I am glad to go back where I came from.

D.H. Lawrence

3.A (a) (i) In what way does the poet regard himself as being different from the other theatre-goers? (2)

(ii) How is this difference emphasised in each of stanzas 1, 2 and 3? (2)

(b) There is a change of tone in stanza 4.

(i) Identify this change. (2)

(ii) Comment on how *and* why the imagery in this stanza contrasts with that of the previous stanzas. Refer to the text. (4)

3.B Sonnet 116.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixèd mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

William Shakespeare

3.B (a) "It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;"

Identify two comparisons contained in the above lines, and say why each is effective. (6)

(b) (i) How convincing do you find the poet's argument in lines 13 and 14? (2)

(ii) The poem ends with a rhyming couplet. What particular impact is made here by this device? (2)

/20/

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HG
(FIRST PAPER)

025

1985

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the front cover of your answer-book, after the word "Subject" -

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 19 pages

PLEASE TURN OVER

SECTION A (POETRY)

ANSWER QUESTION 1 (10 marks) AND EITHER QUESTION 2 OR QUESTION 3 (20 marks)

1. UNSEEN POEM

Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions which follow:

CHILDHOOD

I used to think that grown-up people chose
To have stiff backs and wrinkles round their nose,
And veins like small fat snakes on either hand,
On purpose to be grand.
Till through the banisters I watched one day
My great-aunt Etty's friend who was going away,
And how her onyx beads had come unstrung.
I saw her grope to find them as they rolled:
And then I knew that she was helplessly old,
As I was helplessly young.

Frances Cornford

(a) Why is it ironic that the speaker 'used to think' that:

(i) 'grown-up people *chose* to have stiff backs and wrinkles...' (line 1)

(ii) 'On purpose *to be grand*' (line 4)? (4)

(b) Why does the word 'grope' (line 8) more effectively indicate a change in the speaker's attitude than, for example, the word 'reach'? (2)

(c) In what ways do the last two lines provide an effective conclusion to the poem? (Mention two points) (4)

/10/

PLEASE TURN OVER

T. Tyfield, K.R. Nicol, F.C.H. Rumboll, (ed.)

THE LIVING TRADITION

2. Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions which follow:

JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

'A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.'
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation,
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky.
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued

And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

T.S. ELIOT

(a) 'They rejoiced with exceeding great joy' (Matthew II verse 10).

(i) This is the only biblical reference to the emotional reactions of the 'Three Wise Men'. How does this feeling compare with that expressed by the speaker in Eliot's poem? Refer to each of the poem's three sections in your answer. (6)

(ii) For Eliot, the journey involves far more than 'exceeding great joy'. In what ways is this conveyed in lines 33 to 39? (6)

(b) 'The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.' (lines 4,5)

Show how and why this landscape changes in the course of the second section. (6)

(c) Why does the speaker call his people 'alien' (line 42)? (2)

/20/

OR

3. Read the following poems or extracts carefully and answer the questions which follow:

3.A. from Ozymandias

And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

3.A. (a) What does the inscription (lines 2,3) on the pedestal reveal of Ozymandias's attitude to others? (2)

(b) 'look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
'Nothing beside remains.'

What irony is conveyed in these two lines? (4)

(c) Identify one poetic technique in the last line and show how it gives emphasis to this irony. (4)

/10/

PLEASE TURN OVER

3.B

DRUMMER HODGE

I

They throw in Drummer Hodge, to rest
  Uncoffined - just as found:
His landmark is a kopje-crest
  That breaks the veldt around;
And foreign constellations west
  Each night above his mound.

II

Young Hodge the Drummer never knew -
  Fresh from his Wessex home -
The meaning of the broad Karoo,
  The Bush, the dusty loam,
And why uprose to nightly view
  Strange stars amid the gloam.

III

Yet portion of that unknown plain
  Will Hodge forever be;
His homely Northern breast and brain
  Grow to some Southern tree,
And strange-eyed constellations reign
  His stars eternally.

Thomas Hardy

(a) What contrast in tone is there between the opening two lines of the *first* stanza (They throw...) and those of the *third* stanza ('Yet portion...')? (4)

(b) What effect is created by words such as 'kopje' and 'Karoo'? (2)

(c) 'And *strange - eyed* constellations reign

His stars eternally.' (lines 17, 18)

How is this apparent contradiction reconciled in terms of the poem as a whole? (4)

/10/

PLEASE TURN OVER

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HG
(FIRST PAPER)

034

1986

CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the front cover of your answer-book, after the word "Subject" -

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 18 pages

PLEASE TURN OVER

SECTION A (POETRY)

ANSWER QUESTION 1 (10 marks) AND EITHER QUESTION 2 OR QUESTION 3 (20 marks)

1. UNSEEN POEM

Read the following poem carefully and answer the questions which follow:

ONE STEP BACKWARD TAKEN

Not only sands and gravels
Were once more on their travels,
But gulping muddy gallons
Great boulders off their balance
Bumped heads together dully
And started down the gully.
Whole capes caked off in slices.
I felt my standpoint shaken
In the universal crisis.
But with one step backward taken
I saved myself from going.
A world torn loose went by me.
Then the rain stopped and the blowing
And the sun came out to dry me.

Robert Frost

(a) (i) What sort of physical danger is the speaker in? (2)

(ii) How does he save himself? (2)

(b) What further dimension to the poem (other than physical) is suggested in lines 8 to 11 ('I felt...from going') ? (4)

(c) 'Whole capes caked off in slices" (line 7)

Identify one poetic technique that contributes to the effectiveness of this line. (2)

/10/

PLEASE TURN OVER

Colmer and Colmer (ed.) : PATTERN AND VOICE

2. Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions which follow:

2.A. from THE SOLITARY REAPER

Will no one tell me what she sings? -
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago;
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?
Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending; -
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

William Wordsworth

(a) What do the 'unhappy, far-off things' (line 3) and the 'Familiar matter of to-day' (line 6) speculated about have in common? (2)

(b) 'I listened, motionless and still' (line 13).
In an earlier version of the poem, line 13 read:
'I listened till I had my fill'.

Which do you find more suitable?
Explain your answer by referring to (i) word choice (3)
and (ii) rhythm. (3)

PLEASE TURN OVER

2.B. from SIR PATRICK SPENS

The first line that Sir Patrick read
A loud laugh laughed he;
The next line that Sir Patrick read
A tear blinded his eye.

Oh who is this has done this deed,
This ill deed done to me,
To send me out this time of the year
To sail upon the sea?

Make haste, make haste, my merry men all;
Our good ship sails the morn.
Oh say not so, my master dear,
For I fear a deadly storm.

Late, late yestreen I saw the new moon
With the old moon in her arm,
And I fear, I fear, my master dear,
That we will come to harm...

Oh our Scotch nobles were right loth
To wet their cork-heeled shoon,
But long ere all the play were played
Their hats they swam aboon.

(c) Suggest why Sir Patrick first laughed and then cried. (4)

(d) Show how the use of different speakers here heightens the impact of the narrative. (4)

(e) How is an ironic effect created in the last stanza of the extract? (4)

/20/

OR

PLEASE TURN OVER

3. Read the following carefully and answer the questions which follow:

3.A. from THE TIGER

When the stars threw down their spears
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake

(a) 'Did he who made the Lamb make thee?' (line 4)

(i) What is the tone of this question? (2)

(ii) Suggest why the 'Lamb' is linked with the 'Tiger'. (4)

(b) The last stanza is a repetition of the first (not provided) except for the use of 'Dare' instead of 'Could'. What, in your opinion, is the significance of this change? (4)

3.B. ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons.
No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, -
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Wilfred Owen

(c) For what reason does the poet compare death on the battlefield with death in more normal circumstances? (4)

(d) 'And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds' (line 14). What is especially appropriate about the poet's use of

(i) rhythm (3)

and (ii) imagery? (3)

/20/

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HG 036
(FIRST PAPER)

1987

Time: Three hours

CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the front cover of your answer book, after the word "Subject" -

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE

(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 19 pages.

PLEASE TURN OVER

SECTION A (POETRY)

ANSWER QUESTION 1 (10 marks) AND EITHER QUESTION 2 OR QUESTION 3 (20 marks).

1 UNSEEN POEM

Read the following poem carefully and carry out the instructions which follow.

Thunder and Lightning

Blood punches through every vein
As lightning strips the windowpane.

Under its flashing whip, a white
Village leaps to light.

On tubs of thunder, fists of rain (5)
Slog it out of sight again.

Blood punches the heart with fright
As rain belts the village night.

James Kirkup

1.1 'Blood punches .....' (line 1 and line 7)

1.1.1 What emotions are evoked by the storm? (2)

1.1.2 Suggest why the poet should have used 'punches' instead of a word such as 'pumps'. (2) [4]

1.2 'Under its flashing whip, a white
Village leaps to light'

Suggest why the image of the 'white / Village' is particularly appropriate here. [3]

1.3 'On tubs of thunder, fists of rain
Slog it out of sight again.'

Select an example of the poet's use of sound effects in these lines and show how it contributes to the meaning. [3]

/10/

PLEASE TURN OVER

R. Malan (ed.) : INSCAPES

2 Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions below.

2.1

from: My last Duchess

Robert Browning

Sir, 'twas all one! .....
... She thanked men, - good! but thanked ...
Somehow - I know not how - as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech - (which I have not) - to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, 'Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark' - and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
- E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive...

2.1.1 What is meant by ''twas all one!'? (line 1) (2)

2.1.2 What do the following lines reveal of the Duke's character?

(a) ....Even had you skill
In speech - (which I have not)..... (lines 6, 7) (2)

(b) ..... I choose
Never to stoop..... (lines 13, 14) (2)

2.1.3 Show how the Duke's cynicism and self-control are given emphasis by two techniques in the last 5 lines of the extract. Make clear references to the text. (6) [12]

2.2

from: Look, stranger

W.H. Auden

Here at the small field's ending pause
Where the chalk wall falls to the foam, and its tall ledges
Oppose the pluck

And knock of the tide,
And the shingle scrambles after the sucking surf,
And the gull lodges
A moment on its sheer side.

Far off like floating seeds the ships
Diverge on urgent voluntary errands;
And the full view
Indeed may enter
And move in memory as now these clouds do,
That pass the harbour mirror
And all the summer through the water saunter.

2.2.1 How does the means of description in lines 3 to 5 help you to share the poet's experience of the quality/nature of the sea sounds below him? (4)

2.2.2 The movements of the ships and clouds (lines 12 - 14) appear to be contrasted.

(a) Quote the two words which make this contrast clear. (2)

(b) Suggest why this contrast is emphasized. (2) [8]

/20

OR

3 Read the following carefully and answer the questions which follow.

3.1

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun

William Shakespeare

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red:
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
I grant I never saw a goddess go, —
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

PLEASE TURN OVER

3.1.1 Each statement in the first 12 lines concerning his beloved's qualities is based on a comparison.

(a) What do these comparisons have in common? (2)

(b) Why are these comparisons likely to cause a surprised or even shocked reaction in the reader? (2)

3.1.2 In what way do the last 2 lines of the poem depart from the preceding 12 lines in terms of

(a) tone? (2)

(b) argument? (2)

(c) form? (2) [10]

3.2

from: Preludes

I

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways.
Six o'clock.
The burnt-out ends of smoky days.
And now a gusty shower wraps
The grimy scraps
Of withered leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps.
And then the lighting of the lamps.

IV

His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block,
Or trampled by insistent feet
At four and five and six o'clock;
And short square fingers stuffing pipes,
And evening newspapers, and eyes
Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world.

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

3.2.1 In the first of the 'Preludes' there is an emphasis on the ugliness and dirty squalor of an urban wasteland. Show how line 4 ('The burnt-out ends of smoky days') helps to create the feelings of waste and oppression that permeate the poem. (4)

3.2.2 In an essay, 'The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism' Eliot wrote: 'the essential advantage for a poet is not to have a beautiful world with which to deal; it is to be able to see beneath both beauty and ugliness; to see the boredom, and the horror and the glory.'

Show how the 'boredom', 'horror' and 'glory' are communicated in Prelude IV. (6) [10]

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PLEASE TURN OVER

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HG
(FIRST PAPER)

037

CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

1988

Time: Three hours

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the cover of your answer book, after the word "Subject" -

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 17 pages.

SECTION A: POETRY

ANSWER QUESTION 1 (10 marks) AND EITHER QUESTION 2 OR QUESTION 3 (20 marks)

1 Unseen poem

Two Views of a Teacher — David Jackson

Used to vinegary eyes,
to board dusters smashed at talking heads,
the stabbing finger, the acid voice,
the frost he carried round with him
in every glare.

But not to the stooped back
coochy-cooing a scriking pram.
Not to those strange arms
open to a four o'clock wife.

1.1 What aspect of sentence structure in the opening line enables the speaker to achieve an aloof or distanced effect? [2]

1.2 Why are 'vinegary' (line 1) and 'acid' (line 3) appropriate words for describing the teacher in the opening stanza? [2]

1.3 The speaker refers to 'eyes', 'finger', 'voice' and 'back' rather than to the teacher himself. What does this reveal about the speaker's perception of the man? [2]

1.4 Why would, say, 'the frosty glare' be a less effective way of conveying an unflattering picture of the teacher than the actual wording in lines 4 - 5, i.e. 'the frost he carried round with him in every glare'? [2]

1.5 What does the word 'strange' (line 8) indicate about the speaker's attitude at this point? [2]

/10/

PLEASE TURN OVER

2 Read this poem and then answer the questions that follow.

Sonnet 65 William Shakespeare

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea
But sad mortality o'ersways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wrackful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
O fearful meditation! Where, alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back,
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O, none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

2.1 The argument of this poem may be outlined in two sentences, the first a question and the second the answer to the question. Formulate these sentences in your own words. [4]

2.2 '...this rage...' (line 3)

2.2.1 What is 'this rage'? (2)

2.2.2 Comment on the choice of the word 'rage'. (2) [4]

2.3 What does Shakespeare hope to stress by comparing beauty's 'action' (line 4) to that of a flower? [3]

2.4 How appropriate is the metaphor in line 6 '... the wrackful siege of battering days'? [3]

2.5 This sonnet conveys contrasting attitudes.

2.5.1 Show how rhetorical questions help to convey the speaker's state of mind in the three quatrains. Refer to one example from the text to illustrate your answer. (4)

2.5.2 What change in tone is brought about by the rhyming couplet? (2) [6]

/20/

OR

3 Read this poem and then answer the questions that follow.

The Send-off Wilfred Owen

Down the close, darkening lanes they sang their way
To the siding-shed,
And lined the train with faces grimly gay.

Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray
As men's are, dead.

Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp
Stood staring hard,
Sorry to miss them from the upland camp.
Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp
Winked to the guard.

So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.
They were not ours:
We never heard to which front these were sent.

Nor there if they yet mock what women meant
Who gave them flowers.

Shall they return to beatings of great bells
In wild train-loads?
A few, a few, too few for drums and yells,
May creep back, silent, to still village wells
Up half-known roads.

3.1 What state of mind is expressed by

'...darkening lanes they sang...' (line 1)

and

'...faces grimly gay' (line 3) ? [4]

3.2 What gives line 5, "As men's are, dead', its particular impact in relation to the previous line? [4]

3.3 'Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp
Winked to the guard.' (lines 9, 10)

'So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.
They were not ours:' (lines 11,12)

What implications are conveyed by the above pairs of lines? [4]

3.4 The question and answer contained in the final stanza highlight the poet's central concern by focusing on contrasting ideas. Show how he achieves this by referring to his use of sound effects such as assonance, metre and rhyme. [8]

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HG
(FIRST PAPER)

CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

1989

Time: Three hours

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the cover of your answer book, after the word "Subject" -

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 22 pages.

SECTION A (POETRY)

Answer Question 1 (10 marks) and either Question 2 or Question 3 (20 marks).

1. Unseen Poem

UP-HILL

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you waiting at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labour you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come.

Christina Rossetti

1.1 Explain what

1.1.1 "the whole long day" (line 3) and

1.1.2 "that inn" (line 8)

represent in the above poem. [2 + 2]

1.2 What is conveyed by the statement that the road's course is "up-hill all the way" (line 1)? [2]

1.3 The poem is made up of questions and answers, two to each stanza. Briefly substantiating what you say in each case, describe the tone of

1.3.1 the questions

1.3.2 the answers. [2 + 2]

2.

from AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM

A little learning is a dang'rous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanced, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So pleased at first the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But, those attained, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthened way,
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

Alexander Pope

2.1 "A little learning..." Judging by lines 1-6, does the poet seem to be talking about learning in general — i.e., all knowledge — or is he writing about one particular branch of learning? Support your answer by means of two references to textual evidence. [3]

2.2 Lines 3 and 4 are not only a paradox but also an example of antithesis. Show in what way they are

2.2.1 paradoxical (3)

2.2.2 antithetical. (2) [5]

2.3 The word "first" is used three times in lines 5-14. What is being stressed by this repetition? [2]

2.4 In each of lines 1, 11, 12, 13 and 17 the poet has slightly shortened a word by replacing a letter with an apostrophe. Why has he done this? [2]

2.5 From line 11 to line 18 Pope uses an extended metaphor. Explain what is being compared to what in this metaphor. [4]

2.6 "Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!" (line 18)

2.6.1 What is the effect created by the repetition of the words "hills" and Alps" in this line? (2)

2.6.2 What is the significance of the change from "hills" to "Alps" in this line? (2) [4]

/20/

OR

3.

THE WILD DOVES AT LOUIS TRICHARDT

Morning is busy with long files
Of ants and men, all bearing loads.
The sun's gong beats, and sweat runs down.
A mason-hornet shapes his hanging house.
In a wide flood of flowers
Two crested cranes are bowing to their food.
From the north today there is ominous news.

Midday, the mad cicada-time.
Sizzling from every open valve
Of the overheated earth
The stridulators din it in—
Intensive and continuing praise
Of the white-hot zenith, shrilling on
Toward a note too high to bear.

Oven of afternoon, silence of heat.
In shadow, or in shaded rooms,
This face is hidden in folded arms,
That face is now a sightless mask,
Tree-shadow just includes those legs.
The people have all lain down, and sleep
In attitudes of the sick, the shot, the dead.

And now in the grove the wild doves begin,
Whose neat silk heads are never still,
Bubbling their coolest colloquies.
The formulae they liquidly pronounce
In secret tents of leaves imply
(Clearer than man-made music could)
Men being absent, Africa is good.

William Plomer

3.1 Stanzas 1-3 deal with three different stages of the day. Does stanza 4 refer to the same time of day as stanza 3 or not? Support your answer with evidence drawn from the text. [3]

3.2 Stanzas 1, 2 and 3 all end on a similar emotional note. What common factor do you notice in the feeling or atmosphere of lines 7, 14 and 21? [3]

3.3 There is a contrast in feeling and atmosphere between stanzas 1-3 on the one hand and stanza 4 on the other. Describe this contrast as accurately as you can. [4]

3.4 Certain consonantal sounds feature prominently in certain parts of this poem.

3.4.1 What are the two consonantal sounds that occur most prominently and noticeably in stanza 2? (2)

3.4.2 What is the effect that those two sounds create or reinforce? (2)

3.4.3 What is the consonantal sound most prominent and noticeable in lines 23-26? (1)

3.4.4 What is the effect it creates or reinforces? (2) [7]

3.5 End-rhyme occurs only once in this poem — in its last two lines. Explain how the effect of this unusual use of rhyme helps to convey the poem's meaning. [3]

/20/

PLEASE TURN OVER

037

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HG
(FIRST PAPER)

1990

Time: Three hours

CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the cover of your answer book, after the word "Subject" -

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
(FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 21 pages.

SECTION A (POETRY)

Answer Question 1 (10 marks) and either Question 2 or Question 3 (20 marks).

1. Unseen Poem

Boy at the Window

Seeing the snowman standing all alone
In dusk and cold is more than he can bear.
The small boy weeps to hear the wind prepare
A night of gnashings and enormous moan.
His tearful sight can hardly reach to where
The pale-faced figure with bitumen eyes
Returns him such a god-forsaken stare
As outcast Adam gave to Paradise.

The man of snow is, nonetheless, content,
Having no wish to go inside and die.
Still, he is moved to see the youngster cry.
Though frozen water is his element,
He melts enough to drop from one soft eye
A trickle of the purest rain, a tear
For the child at the bright pane surrounded by
Such warmth, such light, such love, and so much fear.

Richard Wilbur

1.1 Who is the "he" referred to in line 2? [1]

1.2 Give two reasons why the boy can hardly see the snowman. [1 + 1]

1.3 What expression does the boy think is on the snowman's face, judging by lines 7-8? [2]

1.4 Why is the snowman content to be outside? [1]

1.5 What is ironic in the fact that both figures in the poem are shedding tears? [2]

1.6 Would this poem 'work' just as well, and make just as much sense, if the person at the window were an adult and not a child? Give the reason(s) for your answer briefly but clearly. [1 + 1]

/10/

2.

The World Is Too Much With Us

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

William Wordsworth

2.1 What is the difference between 'The world' (line 1) and 'Nature' (line 3)? Explain. [3]

2.2 What is the mood and atmosphere created in lines 5 and 7? (Answer as sensitively and fully as you can. A one-word answer will not earn full marks.) [3]

2.3 How might the 'sight of Proteus rising from the sea' (line 13) and the sound of 'old Triton blow(ing) his wreathèd horn' (line 14) help the poet to feel 'less forlorn'? Explain as clearly as you can. [3]

Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord

Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend
With thee; but, sir, so what I plead is just.
Why do sinners' ways prosper? and why must
Disappointment all I endeavour end?

Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend,
How wouldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost
Defeat, thwart me? Oh, the sots and thralls of lust
Do in spare hours more thrive than I that spend,

Sir, life upon thy cause. See, banks and brakes
Now, leavèd how thick! lacèd they are again
With fretty chervil, look, and fresh wind shakes

Them; birds build—but not I build; no, but strain,
Time's eunuch, and not breed one work that wakes.
Mine, O thou lord of life, send my roots rain.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

2.4 What is the effect upon the speaker's emotions of the spring-time beauties and energies mentioned in lines 9-12? Describe his response to the springtime as accurately as you can. [3]

2.5 Hopkins makes extensive use in this sonnet of run-on lines or enjambement. Comment on the effect that this device has on the mood or atmosphere of the poem. [3]

2.6 Which one of the following words best describes the tone in which this poem's speaker addresses God?

humble / demanding / argumentative / hostile / anguished / complacent / negative [1]

2.7 This question refers to both the sonnets printed above.

Wordsworth and Hopkins have both used the Petrarchan or Italian sonnet form. In this form the rhyme-scheme makes for a natural break after line 8, with the poem falling into a two-part structure of octave and sestet. To what extent do you find this break or change after line 8 in each of the sonnets above? Answer separately in answers numbered

2.7.1 on Wordsworth's poem

and

2.7.2 on Hopkins's one. (2 + 2) [4]

/20/

OR

3.

In Praise of the Shades

Akudlozi lingay'ekhaya
No shade fails to go home
Zulu proverb

Hitching across a dusty plain last June,
down one of those deadstraight platteland roads,
I met a man with rolled-up khakhi sleeves,
who told me his faults, and then his beliefs.
It's amazing, some people discuss more
with hitchhikers than even their friends.

His bakkie rattled a lot on the ruts,
so I'm not exactly sure what he said.
Anyway, when he'd talked about his church,
and when the world had changed from mealie-stalks
to sunflowers, which still looked green and firm,
he lowered his voice, and spoke about his shades.

This meant respect I think, not secrecy.
He said he'd always asked them to guide him,
and that, even in the city, they did.
He seemed to me a gentle balanced man,
and I was sorry to stick my kitbag
onto the road again and say goodbye.

When you are alone and brooding deeply,
do all your teachers and loved ones desert you?
Stand on a road when the fence is whistling.
You say, 'It's the wind', and if the dust swirls,
'Wind again', although you never see it.
The shades work like the wind, invisibly.

And they have always been our companions,
dressed in the flesh of the children they reared,
gossiping away from the books they left,
a throng who even in the strongest light
are whispering, 'You are not what you are,
remember us, then try to understand.'

They come like pilgrims from the hazy seas
which shimmer at the borders of a dream,
not such spirits that they can't be scolded,
not such mortals that they can be profaned,
for scolding them, we honour each other,
and honouring them, we perceive ourselves.

When all I ever hear about these days
is violence, injustice, and despair,
or worse than that, humourless theories
to rescue us all from our human plight,
those moments in a bakkie on a plain
make sunflowers in a waterless world.

Chris Mann

3.1 Which one of the following words best describes the style of this poem's first 18 lines? Briefly support your answer with evidence from the text.

abstract / informal / involved / elegant / pompous (1 + 1) [2]

3.2 Point out any one way in which an onomatopoeic effect has been created in line 7 ('His bakkie rattled a lot on the ruts'). [2]

3.3 Both the bakkie-driver and the poet maintain that the shades are active 'even in the city' (line 15) and 'even in the strongest light' (line 28). Explain why the word 'even' has been used like this in connection with either the city or strong light. (Make it clear which of the two you are dealing with.) [2]

3.4 Why does the poet mention that the bakkie-driver seemed a 'balanced' man (line 16)? [2]

3.5 Bearing in mind the contents of lines 1-18, why does it seem natural for the poet to begin his description of the shades by using the image of the wind blowing through a fence or raising dust? [2]

3.6 Why are the shades described as 'whispering' their words (line 29) rather than 'saying' them? [2]

3.7 Explain in your own words as fully and clearly as you can the words the shades whisper in lines 29-30: 'You are not what you are, / remember us, then try to understand'. [3]

3.8 Does the poet regard the bakkie-driver's belief in his shades as one of the 'humourless theories' mentioned in line 39? Support your answer by means of reference to the last stanza of the poem (lines 37-42). (1 + 2) [3]

3.9 Who or what are 'the shades' referred to throughout this poem? [2]

/20/

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HG (FIRST PAPER)

CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

1991

Time: Three hours

SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

Write on the cover of your answer book, after the word "Subject"

ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE (FIRST PAPER)

This examination paper consists of 25 pages.

SECTION A (POETRY)

Answer Question 1 (10 marks) and either Question 2 or Question 3 (20 marks).

1. Unseen Poem

Conquerors

By sundown we came to a hidden village
Where all the air was still
And no sound met our tired ears, save
For the sorry drip of rain from blackened trees
And the melancholy song of swinging gates.
Then through a broken pane some of us saw
A dead bird in a rusting cage, still
Pressing his thin tattered breast against the bars,
His beak wide open. And
As we hurried through the weed-grown street,
A gaunt dog started up from some dark place
And shambled off on legs as thin as sticks
Into the wood, to die at least in peace.
No one had told us victory was like this;
Not one amongst us would have eaten bread
Before he'd filled the mouth of the grey child
That sprawled, stiff as a stone, before the shattered door.
There was not one who did not think of home.

Henry Treece

1.1 "... all the air was still" (line 2)

In the context of the poem as a whole, is this line peaceful and pleasant or disturbing and ominous?
Explain your choice briefly but clearly. [2]

1.2 The simile "legs as thin as sticks" (line 12) suggests that the dog's legs are not only thin but also ... .
(Supply the missing word or words.) [1]

1.3 "... to die at least in peace." (line 13)

Comment on the force of the words "at least" in this phrase. [2]

1.4 In line 18 the speaker and his companions are depicted as
warriors/ travellers/ husbands and fathers/ patriots/ potential deserters.

1.4.1 Write down your choice from the above list. (1)

1.4.2 Explain your choice briefly but clearly. (2) [3]

1.5 Explain what is ironic in the title of this poem. [2]

/10/

Now do either Question 2 or Question 3 for a further 20 marks.

2. from **To his coy mistress**

ANDREW MARVELL

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze.
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest.
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity...

2.1 Explain how the references to the Ganges and the Humber form part of the poet's argument in lines 1-20. [2]

2.2 "I ... would complain." (lines 6-7)

What would the speaker be complaining about? [2]

2.3 "For, Lady, you deserve this state..." (line 19)

Explain the meaning of the words "this state" here. [2]

2.4 Judging by lines 13-20, would the lady be justified in describing the speaker's feelings for her as "just physical"? Explain. [2]

2.5 Lines 1-20 employ a great deal of exaggeration. Comment on the <u>purpose</u> of the exaggeration in EITHER lines 1-12 OR lines 13-20. [2]

2.6 In line 16, the word "thirty" is better than "twenty" or "forty" would have been because

(Write just the letter of your choice.)

(a) it fits the poem's rhythm better.
(b) it fits the poem's rhyme-scheme better.
(c) it adds aural impact via alliteration.
(d) thirty is a multiple of three, a "magic" number. [1]

2.7 Which one of the four reasons listed in the previous question explains why the word "thirty" in line 16 is better than the word "three" would have been? (Again, write down just its letter.) [1]

2.8 What is the emotional effect of

2.8.1 the phrase "at my back" in line 21? (2)

2.8.2 the phrase "deserts of eternity" in line 24? (2) [4]

2.9 Are lines 23-24 another example of exaggeration, like so much of lines 1-20? Explain briefly. [2]

2.10 This poem comprises three sections. The above extract gives the first, and the beginning of the second. Sum up in your own words the essence of what Marvell goes on to say in the third section of this poem. [2]

/20/

OR

3. ## The hunchback in the park

DYLAN THOMAS

The hunchback in the park
A solitary mister
Propped between trees and water
From the opening of the garden lock
That lets the trees and water enter
Until the Sunday sombre bell at dark

Eating bread from a newspaper
Drinking water from the chained cup
That the children filled with gravel
In the fountain basin where I sailed my ship
Slept at night in a dog kennel
But nobody chained him up.

Like the park birds he came early
Like the water he sat down
And Mister they called Hey mister
The truant boys from the town
Running when he had heard them clearly
On out of sound

Past lake and rockery
Laughing when he shook his paper
Hunchbacked in mockery
Through the loud zoo of the willow groves
Dodging the park keeper
With his stick that picked up leaves.

And the old dog sleeper
Alone between nurses and swans
While the boys among willows
Made the tigers jump out of their eyes
To roar on the rockery stones
And the groves were blue with sailors

Made all day until bell time
A woman figure without fault
Straight as a young elm
Straight and tall from his crooked bones
That she might stand in the night
After the locks and chains

All night in the unmade park
After the railings and shrubberies
The birds the grass the trees the lake
And the wild boys innocent as strawberries
Had followed the hunchback
To his kennel in the dark.

3.1 The poem stresses that the hunchback comes to the park as early as he can and stays there as long as he is allowed to. What does this suggest about his existence? [2]

3.2 "... nobody chained him up." (line 12)

Which does this suggest the hunchback was treated with – respect, kindness, indifference, or fear?

(Write down just the one word of your choice.) [1]

3.3 In the light of lines 27-29, explain the reference to "the loud zoo of the willow groves" in line 22. [3]

3.4 Mention any <u>one</u> contrast between the truant boys and the hunchback that is established in lines 25-29. [2]

3.5 How do the boys see the hunchback? [2]

3.6 What is it about the hunchback that causes everyone else in the park to ignore him? [2]

3.7 "Made all day until bell time..." (line 31)

In what sense do you understand the first word of this line? [2]

3.8 "A woman figure without fault..." (line 32)

Who or what is this "woman figure"? Explain as clearly as you can. [2]

3.9 In what sense do the things mentioned in lines 38-40 "follow" the hunchback to the place where he sleeps? [2]

3.10 This poem contains several echoes of the story of the Garden of Eden in the book of Genesis. Mention any <u>one</u> of them. [2]

/<u>20</u>/

APPENDIX 5

UNSEEN POEMS SELECTED FOR EXAMINATION, 1982 - 1991

YEAR	TITLE	POET
1982	SCAFFOLDING	SEAMUS HEANEY
1983	COAL	GUY BUTLER
1984	PARLOUR-PIECE	TED HUGHES
1985	CHILDHOOD	FRANCES CORNFORD
1986	ONE STEP BACKWARD TAKEN	ROBERT FROST
1987	THUNDER AND LIGHTNING	JAMES KIRKUP
1988	TWO VIEWS OF A TEACHER	DAVID JACKSON
1989	UP-HILL	CHRISTINA ROSSETTI
1990	BOY AT THE WINDOW	RICHARD WILBUR
1991	CONQUERORS	HENRY TREECE

APPENDIX 6

PRESCRIBED POEMS SELECTED FOR EXAMINATION, 1982 - 1991

YEAR	POEM	POET
1982	*IN MY CRAFT OR SULLEN ART*	DYLAN THOMAS
	COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE	WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
	PRELUDES	T.S. ELIOT
1983	*TO HIS COY MISTRESS*	ANDREW MARVELL
	THE GOOD MORROW	JOHN DONNE
	GOD'S GRANDEUR	GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS
1984	*THE SUN RISING*	JOHN DONNE
	LONDON	WILLIAM BLAKE
	AFTER THE OPERA	D.H. LAWRENCE
	SONNET 116	WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
1985	*JOURNEY OF THE MAGI*	T.S. ELIOT
	OZYMANDIAS	PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY
	DRUMMER HODGE	THOMAS HARDY
1986	*THE SOLITARY REAPER*	WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
	SIR PATRICK SPENS	ANON
	THE TIGER	WILLIAM BLAKE
	ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH	WILFRED OWEN
1987	*MY LAST DUCHESS*	ROBERT BROWNING
	LOOK STRANGER	W.H. AUDEN
	SONNET 130	WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
	PRELUDES	T.S. ELIOT
1988	*SONNET 65*	WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
	THE SEND-OFF	WILFRED OWEN
1989	*AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM*	ALEXANDER POPE
	THE WILD DOVES AT LOUIS TRICHARDT	WILLIAM PLOMER
1990	*THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US*	WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
	THOU ART INDEED JUST, LORD	GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS
	IN PRAISE OF THE SHADES	CHRISTOPHER MANN
1991	*TO HIS COY MISTRESS*	ANDREW MARVELL
	THE HUNCHBACK IN THE PARK	DYLAN THOMAS

APPENDIX 7

WEIGHTING OF QUESTION TYPES

UNSEEN POETRY

QUESTION TYPE	COMPREHENSION		INTERPRETATIVE		ANALYTIC-SYNTHETIC		READER-RESPONSE		TOTAL
YEAR	MARKS	%	MARKS	%	MARKS	%	MARKS	%	
1982	3	(30)	4	(40)	3	(30)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1983	2	(20)	8	(80)	0	(0)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1984	0	(0)	8	(80)	4	(40)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1985	1	(10)	7	(70)	2	(20)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1986	4	(40)	4	(40)	2	(20)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1987	3	(30)	4	(40)	3	(30)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1988	2	(20)	6	(60)	2	(20)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1989	2	(20)	8	(80)	0	(0)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1990	4	(40)	6	(60)	0	(0)	0	(0)	10 (100)
1991	0	(0)	10	(100)	0	(0)	0	(0)	10 (100)

APPENDIX 8

WEIGHTING OF QUESTION TYPES

SET POETRY

QUESTION TYPE	COMPREHENSION		INTERPRETATIVE		ANALYTIC-SYNTHETIC		READER-RESPONSE		TOTAL
YEAR	MARKS	%	MARKS	%	MARKS	%	MARKS	%	MARKS %
1982	9	(22,5)	17	(42,5)	14	(35)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1983	12	(30)	12	(30)	16	(40)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1984	10	(22,5)	13	(32,5)	17	(42,5)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1985	11	(27,5)	19	(47,5)	10	(25)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1986	5	(12,5)	18	(45)	17	(42,5)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1987	8	(20)	20	(50)	12	(30)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1988	6	(15)	19	(47,5)	15	(37,5)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1989	10	(25)	9	(22,5)	21	(52,5)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1990	11	(27,5)	18	(45)	11	(27,5)	0	(0)	40 (100)
1991	13	(32,5)	22	(55)	5	(12,5)	0	(0)	40 (100)

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