

Commentary criteria

EXCELLENT FIRST	Faultless understanding of the passage is demonstrated, and the commentary takes full account of its finer details. Excellent attention is given to all the categories outlined for a first-class performance; some observations will be highly sophisticated and may bring new insights to bear on the passage set. The commentary is impeccably structured, and demonstrates imagination and flair in its organisation of ideas. It is written in faultless English.	89+ The commentary will be clearly informed by secondary reading and will show a mature understanding of genre and of literary and cultural context in respect of the source text from which the passage is taken.
FIRST CLASS	<p>Very good understanding of the passage is demonstrated, and many of its finer details are well observed. The candidate shows an excellent awareness of the confines of the commentary exercise, and the commentary offers convincing and sometimes original insights in all of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure (a very clear overview of the thematic and formal features of the passage is given; analysis of its content is very well organised.) • Analysis of examples chosen is sophisticated and may be informed by secondary reading. • Imagery / vocabulary is scrutinised in detail. • Rhetorical and stylistic features (ie: simile, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, alliteration) are accurately identified and closely linked with the sense of the passage set. • Structural features (ie: paragraphing, organisation of ideas, changes of tense, repetition) are accurately identified and closely linked with the sense of the passage set. <p>In all, the commentary is extremely well structured and well argued, and is written in fluent and literate English.</p>	74 – 81: this grade indicates work of a very high quality . In addition to the proficiencies demonstrated in the categories outlined, the candidate will have a good understanding of the genre of the source text from which the passage is taken and a good understanding of the literary and cultural context in which it was written.
UPPER SECOND (2:1)	<p>Good understanding of the passage set is demonstrated, as is some awareness of its finer details. The candidate shows good awareness of the confines of the commentary exercise, and the commentary shows strengths in several of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure (a clear overview of the thematic and formal features of the 	65 – 68: A commentary in this band will demonstrate proficiency in most of the categories outlined. 62: A commentary in this band will

	<p>passage may be given; analysis of its content is generally well organised.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of examples chosen predominates over paraphrase. • Imagery / vocabulary is well observed. • Some rhetorical and stylistic features (ie: simile, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, alliteration) are identified and analysed. • Some structural features (ie: paragraphing, organisation of ideas, changes of tense, repetition) are identified and analysed. <p>The commentary is written in correct English.</p>	<p>demonstrate proficiency in some of the categories outlined.</p> <p>A commentary that has impressive signs of quality and flair may be pulled down from a I to a Ii because of significant inaccuracies in one of the categories outlined.</p>
<p>LOWER SECOND (2:2)</p>	<p>Adequate understanding of the passage set is demonstrated, whilst a number of its finer details are missed. The candidate shows awareness of the confines of the commentary exercise, but the commentary is of uneven quality and will be deficient in some of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure may be weak (insufficient overview of the thematic and formal features of the passage given; analysis of content is haphazard) • Analysis may be lacking (tendency to paraphrase examples chosen from the text) • Imagery / vocabulary may be insufficiently observed. • Rhetorical and stylistic features (ie: simile, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, alliteration) may be insufficiently observed. • Structural features (ie: paragraphing, organisation of ideas, changes of tense, repetition) may be insufficiently observed. <p>Some undue prominence may also be given to aspects of the text that are irrelevant to the passage set. There is a satisfactory grasp of grammar and syntax, but (especially at the bottom of this category) the use of English may tend to be simplistic or clumsy.</p>	<p>55-58: a commentary in this band will combine deficiencies in some categories with competency in others.</p> <p>52: a commentary in this band will show deficiencies in several categories, but will also demonstrate competency in some.</p>
<p>THIRD</p>	<p>Some limited and basic understanding of the passage set is demonstrated, but the commentary remains highly superficial and there are clear deficiencies in the close reading. Undue emphasis may be placed</p>	

	upon aspects of the text that are irrelevant to the passage set. The commentary is characterised by a lack of structure or organisation, errors of spelling and grammar and clumsy prose style. It will include several assertions that are factually wrong.	
HIGH FAIL (SUB-HONOURS)	Much of the passage remains misunderstood, leading to a deficient answer as a whole. The commentary will place undue emphasis upon aspects of the text that are irrelevant to the passage set, or will be factually wrong in many of its assertions. The commentary is characterised by a lack of structure or organisation, errors of spelling and grammar and clumsy prose style.	38: Very thin arguments or significant omissions may be offset by moments of clarity.
FAIL	No evidence of a basic understanding of the passage set. Completely irrelevant or ignorant work.	25 and below