

# UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

International General Certificate of Secondary Education

## MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2006 question paper

### 0486 LITERATURE (ENGLISH)

0486/03

Paper 3, Maximum raw mark 20

These mark schemes are published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. They show the basis on which Examiners were initially instructed to award marks. They do not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began. Any substantial changes to the mark scheme that arose from these discussions will be recorded in the published *Report on the Examination*.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the *Report on the Examination*.

The minimum marks in these components needed for various grades were previously published with these mark schemes, but are now instead included in the *Report on the Examination* for this session.

- CIE will not enter into discussion or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

CIE is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2006 question papers for most IGCSE and GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level syllabuses and some Ordinary Level syllabuses.

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### Grade descriptors

The descriptors are an attempt to guide Examiners to an understanding of the qualities normally expected of, or 'typical' of work in the band. They must not be interpreted as hurdle statements. Together with the marking notes specific to the passage/poem set for that exam, they form a means of general guidance. However, as is emphasised later in the Marking Notes, the photostats taken from work produced in the examination will be the principal means by which we shall standardise the marking. Also, please note that the grade equivalents are notional. Precise thresholds will be determined by the Awarding Committee in the light of the available evidence.

Band 9	0-1	The answer does not meet the criteria for a mark in the higher band. A clear U answer.
Band 8	2-3	Candidates will – Show just a very little awareness of ....
Band 7	4-5	Candidates will – make a few straightforward points about....
Band 6	6-8	Candidates will – make some straightforward points about... show a little understanding of
Band 5	9-11	Candidates will – begin to develop a response..... show some understanding of....
Band 4	12-14	Candidates will – make a sensible response.... show reasonable understanding of.... show a little awareness of the way language works.
Band 3	15-17	Candidates will – make a considered, sustained response.... show clear understanding of .... show some awareness of the way language works....
Bands 1/2	18-20	Candidates will – sustain a perceptive, convincing response show extensive understanding respond sensitively to the way language works

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## Guides to assessment

- The first thing to note is that we shall meet a wide range of candidates in this examination. We must be prepared to use the range of marks available. This particularly applies to the top band; it should be quite normal to award full marks to an essay; bear in mind that the mark range (0-20) is relatively tight. We are not looking for the perfect answer, whatever that might be!
- In this syllabus we aim to encourage the candidates to make some personal response to their reading. That means that, while we may have legitimate expectations of the ground most answers may occupy, we must at times be prepared to meet the candidates on their chosen ground.
- We must try at all times to tease out what the candidate is trying to say to us. We must recognise that it is possible for a candidate whose technical command of English is limited, but whose language still manages to communicate understanding, to receive high marks. Nor should we reward fluency and display of literary terms if we feel that there is little evidence of such understanding. Of course, those who have linguistic capabilities of a high order are more likely to be able to convince us that they have insight, but please remember that we are looking for literary response, and must be careful to reward insight and to avoid over-valuing fluent expression. Other areas of IGCSE assess the latter very well.
- It is vital that we constantly remind ourselves that this is unseen work and we should not be overcritical of an occasional false note or misunderstanding. We are marking the quality of the process of engaging with literature, and not merely assessing the accuracy or otherwise of the conclusions reached. Above all, we should be alert to any response to the affective power of the words, however it might be expressed.

## Marking notes

This is a working document; it is not exhaustive; it does not provide 'correct' answers. The marking notes can only provide 'best guesses' about how the question will work out, and it is subject to revision after we have looked at a wide range of scripts. The comments on the individual grades are intended to add flesh to the descriptors in the generic mark-scheme.

## General notes on the task

The question is designed to assess the candidates' response to the tone of the writing. It is hoped that good candidates will be able both to respond to the frustrations of Conrad's position when faced with two irritatingly unreasonable officials, impervious to his appeals to reason, and still to recognise the humorous tone of the narration.

Nevertheless, we must be open to whatever balance between sympathy and amusement the candidate finds appropriate as long as it is supported by reference to the writing. It would be perfectly feasible for a candidate to feel nothing for Conrad or to feel that the situation is so appalling that laughter is unkind.

The best marks should be reserved for those who not only respond to the situation as described, but are also able to respond to the tone of the piece and how features of the writing establish the tone. Thus, progression through the bullet points should help them to explore the more complex aspects of the question.

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### **Marks 2-3**

Candidates will show a very little awareness of the situation on the passage but there will be virtually no reference to the way it is written or to the pathos or humour.

### **Marks 4-5**

There will be a very elementary awareness of what the passage is about and some disjointed comments on it. Answers in this range will often be very brief.

### **Marks 6-8**

Candidates will show a little understanding of the frustrations of Conrad's position, though perhaps not how they are aggravated by the responses of the meter maid and the tow truck driver *and/or* they will make an elementary response to some of the humour.

They may show this through paraphrase or by selecting relevant details without commenting on them directly. In this category also, understanding might be seriously flawed in places or there may be few or no references to the words in the passage. Sometimes the candidate's conclusions will be difficult to support.

### **Marks 9-11**

There will be clear signs that candidates have begun to respond at an elementary level to either the frustrations of Conrad's position *and/or* the humour of the piece. There may be flaws in understanding of detail and there may be an inclination to paraphrase or select detail without useful accompanying commentary. Somewhere in the essay there should be some attempt to touch on the material suggested by at least two of the bullet points. .

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### Marks 12-14

A basic understanding of the situation and characters should be secure. There should be a reasonable understanding of what makes Conrad frustrated *and* some response to the humour of the passage. We should expect the material suggested by at least two of the bullet points to be considered to some extent. There will be a rudimentary response to the language of the extract with reference, for example, to the language of the dialogue or to the language used to describe one of the characters. Comments on such matters will be, however, very basic in this range.

### Marks 15-17

There should be a clear understanding of the frustrations of Conrad here, not only because of the general situation, but the aggravation caused by the responses of the two officials and the bystanders. There should also be a response to the humour in the writing. Candidates will choose their own ground here. Nevertheless we might expect a response to the material suggested by each of the bullet points. For secure marks in this range, there should be well focused and developed responses to the language in the extract, both in the descriptions and the dialogue.

### Marks 18-20

There should be real evidence of response to the tone of the passage. One might expect here an awareness of the intricacies of the sources of Conrad's frustration, the grotesque characters, the helplessness of his pleas for understanding, the absence of lateral thinking by the officials and the way the narration is told from Conrad's perspective. We should be able also to see a developed response to the humorous language in the characterisations and the way the whole narration is presented.

For the very highest marks, we might also expect an overview, a rationalisation of the candidate's personal position, and an awareness of how the passage can provoke sympathy and laughter at the same time, with perhaps a distinction made between what it is they are laughing at and why they feel sympathy for him.