

Achievement Standard 90849

Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), using supporting evidence

ENGLISH

1.1

Externally assessed 4 credits

Understanding studied written texts

The exam

Achievement Standard 90849 (English 1.1) assesses your understanding of, and response to, written texts.

Written texts include the **novel, non-fiction, the short story, poetry/song lyric, print media, digital/online text** and **drama**, or a combination of these.

You should aim to write a concise and well-organised answer of no more than three pages in length in response to *one* of the questions offered.

Choosing a question

Spend some of your time **selecting the best question** to answer. If you have studied and revised thoroughly, you should be able to answer several questions from the options given. For example, information you have learnt about an important character could be used in a question on character, or structure, or language.

You can write about *one* or *more* written texts you have studied. If you choose to write about more than one written text, the texts can be:

- the same text type (e.g. two poems)
- different text types – inter-textual studies (e.g. a novel and a short story)
- by the same or different authors.

Answering a question

Question format helps guide your response.

- ‘Describe ...’ – you should outline how the specified ideas, style or language features apply to the written text on which you are answering (‘on the lines’ – straightforward material).
- ‘Explain ...’ – this part of the question prompts a more convincing and/or perceptive response (‘between or beyond the lines’ – material that shows engagement and developed thinking).
- Phrases such as ‘important in the text(s) as a whole’ indicate that you need to write about the ideas in the text(s) and/or the writer’s purpose, in the context of the question.

Answer both parts of the question in order to create a *balanced* answer.

Use clear, well-chosen points.

Back up your points with reference to relevant and specific evidence and examples from the text(s).

Relevant and specific evidence and examples could include:

- summaries of events
- descriptions of characters or places
- direct quotations of evidence from your studied text.

Achievement criteria

Show you know the text well and can make some points relevant to the topic in an organised written response.

Make clear points, relevant to the topic, some of which are linked to each other in an organised written response.

Make clear points showing insight or originality, which are linked, developed and integrated in an organised written response.

Achieved	Merit	Excellence
Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s) using supporting evidence	Show convincing understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s) using supporting evidence	Show perceptive understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s) using supporting evidence

Well-chosen evidence, with reference to relevant specific details from the text (including quotation).

The answer addresses questions selected from aspects of literary study as follows.

- Purposes and audiences.
- Ideas (character, themes, settings).
- Language (style, vocabulary, figurative language).
- Structures (beginnings and endings, parts and whole texts, narratives).

Study checklist

Following is a list of aspects of written text, most of which you will have covered during your studies. Exam questions could include any of these aspects. For example, a question on 'character/individual' in your studied written text(s) could ask about a character's personality, how the character develops, what challenges or difficulties the character faces, and so on.

It is also very important to be familiar with a text's themes and ideas as most questions will ask you to relate aspects such as character and setting to the text's important or 'key' ideas.

To ensure exam success, you should study and know well all aspects of the written text(s) you have studied.

NCEA Level 1 Questions

The following questions come from the most recent NCEA Level 1 English exams on written texts.

Note: Previous years' questions are always good to use for practice, but you should not expect exactly the same paper each year. You must be prepared to adapt to changes in styles of questioning.

In the exam you will be provided with a planning box and a number of pages of ruled lines for writing your answer to the Achievement Standard 90849 (English 1.1) question. You are advised to spend 60 minutes writing a concise essay of no more than three (3) pages.

The quality of your writing about written text(s) is more important than the length of your essay.

Using the TEER structure and the skills learnt in this chapter, write a range of practice answers of around three pages in length. You must support your ideas with specific, relevant examples and evidence from the text(s).

INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN IN THE EXAM

Write an essay on at least ONE **written text** that you have studied, in response to ONE of the questions below.

Advice and guidance are provided in the answers section (see page 87) on ways in which you could approach the topics.

1. Describe at least one **method** the writer used to engage the reader with the text.

Explain how this method helped to engage you.

Note: Methods could include characters, events, relationships, narrative point-of-view, language techniques, style, conflicts, or structure.

2. Describe a **key relationship** between two or more characters or individuals in the text.

Explain how this relationship helped you to understand at least one of these characters or individuals.

3. Describe at least one way that a **character or individual** changed in the text.

Explain how this change was important to the text as a whole.

4. Describe at least one **challenging setting** in the text.

Explain how this setting helped you understand an **important idea** in the text.

5. Describe at least one **memorable idea** in the text.

Explain why this idea was memorable to you.

6. Describe the **beginning** and the **ending** of the text.

Explain how the beginning and ending were connected.

7. Describe at least one **important object** in the written text.

Explain why that object was important.

8. Describe one **important decision** in the written text.

Explain how that decision changed at least one **important relationship or character**.

9. Describe at least one **important technique** used in the written text.

Explain how the technique created an **emotional response** in you.

Note: Techniques could include figures of speech, syntax, word choice, style, symbolism, structure, or narrative point-of-view.

10. Describe at least one **important technique** used in the written text.

Explain how this technique helped you to understand one or more **key ideas**.

Note: Techniques could include figures of speech, syntax, word choice, style, symbolism, structure, or narrative point of view.

11. Describe the **ending** of the written text.

Explain how this part of the text was predictable or unexpected.

12. Describe the **beginning** of the written text.

Explain how the beginning helped you to understand at least one **important aspect** of the text.

13. Describe a **key moment** that shocked or surprised you in the written text.

Explain how this moment was important to the text as a whole.

14. Describe at least one **challenge** faced by a character or individual in the written text.

Explain how this challenge helped you to understand the character or individual.

15. Describe a **character or individual** that you disliked OR admired in the written text.

Explain how your feelings towards this character helped you to understand the text as a whole.

16. Describe at least one **important place** in the written text.

Explain how that place helped you to understand an **important message** in the text.

17. Describe an **important conflict** in the written text.

Explain how the conflict helped you to understand an **important message**.

18. Describe at least one **idea** that changed your perspective (point of view) in the written text.

Explain how this idea changed your perspective.

Key points for success during the exam

- Choose a question that suits the text you have studied in class and that you have information and ideas on.
- Underline the key parts of the question and make sure you target all aspects in your answer. Use key words/phrases from the question within your answer.
- Plan how you will answer the question before you begin writing. List the key points you could mention. For each point, note examples from the text that you could refer to.
- Think about how best to order your points and plan your answer in the planning box provided.
- State the title and author of your text in your introduction.
- Divide your answer into paragraphs. Start each new paragraph with a topic sentence that summarises the main idea of the paragraph.
- Show you know your text well by making clear points and referring to key details such as characters, uses of language, structures and/or events from the text.
- The quality of your writing about the written text is more important than the length of your essay. Aim to show convincing and perceptive understanding in your writing – i.e. that you can read 'between the lines' and 'beyond the lines' – in order to gain higher grades.

Achievement Standard 90850

Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s), using supporting evidence

ENGLISH

1.2

Externally assessed 4 credits

Understanding studied visual and oral texts

The exam

Achievement Standard 90850 (English 1.2) assesses your understanding of, and response to, visual and/or oral texts.

Visual and oral texts include **film, digital/online text, drama production, television programme, radio programme, oral performance and graphic novel, or a combination of these.**

You should aim to write a concise and well-organised answer of no more than three (3) pages in length in response to *one* of the questions offered.

Choosing a question

Spend some of your time **selecting the best question** to answer. If you have studied and revised thoroughly, you should be able to answer several questions from the options given. For example, information learnt about an important character could be used in a question on character, or structure, or visual or oral techniques.

You can write about *one* or *more* visual or oral texts you have studied. If you choose to write about more than one visual or oral text, the texts can be:

- the same text type (e.g. two short films)
- different text types – inter-textual studies (e.g. a feature film and a short film, a film and a radio programme)
- by the same or different authors or creators.

Answering a question

Question format helps guide your response.

- ‘Describe ...’ – you should outline how the specified ideas, style or language features apply to the written text on which you are answering (‘on the lines’ – straightforward material).
- ‘Explain ...’ – this part of the question prompts a more convincing and/or perceptive response (‘between or beyond the lines’ – material that shows engagement and developed thinking).
- Phrases such as ‘important in the text(s) as a whole’ indicate that you need to write about the ideas in the text(s) and/or the writer’s purpose, in the context of the question.

Answer both parts of the question in order to create a *balanced* answer.

Use clear, well-chosen points.

Back up your points with reference to relevant and specific evidence and examples from the text(s).

Relevant and specific evidence and examples could include:

- summaries of events
- descriptions of characters or places
- direct examples or evidence of visual and/or oral language features – such as dialogue, camera shots, sound, costuming, props, lighting and other examples.

Achievement criteria

Show you know the text well and can make some points relevant to the topic in an organised written response.

Make clear points, relevant to the topic, some of which are linked to each other in an organised written response.

Make clear points showing insight or originality, which are linked, developed and integrated in an organised written response.

Achieved	Merit	Excellence
Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s) using supporting evidence	Show convincing understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s) using supporting evidence	Show perceptive understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied visual or oral text(s) using supporting evidence

Well chosen, reference to relevant specific visual/oral details from the text (including quotation of dialogue, description of visual/oral techniques).

The answer addresses questions selected from aspects of literary study as follows:

- Purposes and audiences.
- Ideas (character, themes, settings).
- Language features of visual/oral texts (cinematography, editing, special effects, dialogue/oral language, narration, sound effects, ambient sound).
- Structures (beginnings and endings, parts and whole texts, narratives).

Study checklist

Exam questions on visual and oral texts will ask you to discuss how a director or creator deliberately uses visual and oral techniques to convey important ideas through a text's character, setting, and structure.

You will need to be very familiar with the **important ideas** and the **visual and oral language features** of the studied text(s) and how they relate to each other.

You will also need to study and know well all aspects of the visual or oral text(s) you have studied, such as character, structure, setting and themes. Exam questions could include any of these aspects. For example, a question on 'structure' in your visual or oral text(s) could ask about how the text starts or ends or about an important or powerful event or moment in the story.

Task 1: Study checklist – what do you know?

Following is a list of aspects of visual and oral text, most of which you will have covered during your studies.

Review your visual or oral text study materials (e.g. class notes, study guide, revision notes), and use this checklist to reveal the aspects of oral and visual text that you have studied already and those you need to do more work on.

Note that some aspects may not be relevant to your studied visual or oral text(s). Always ask your teacher for guidance.

Paragraph 2	
Paragraph 3	
Paragraph 4	

► Step 3: Using the TEER structure, write your own answer on your own paper

A model answer is provided in the answer section (see page 92) on the film *Bend it Like Beckham* directed by Gurinder Chadha.

Answering questions about setting

The setting is where events happen (place) and when they happen (time). It also includes the circumstances that form the background against which the characters or individuals live and act. For example, if the film is set in a dystopian future, then the setting would include aspects of how the world became this way, social relationships between humans and machines, and physical descriptions of the environment.

Questions typically focus on how the setting influences the events or affects the characters, etc. Depending on the text, the setting can be important or unimportant.

Task 9: The setting of your text(s)

Consider the visual/oral text you studied in class and complete the table below. Use your own paper if you have studied more than one text.

Setting aspects:		Details from text(s)	Visual/oral language features used to help reveal setting:
Place setting	Country		
	City/town		
	Important places where action happens (e.g. a school, a farm, etc.)		
Time setting	Century/decade/year		
Background circumstances	Things happening around that time that influence or appear in text		

Question Three: Narrative prose

In this passage, the writer describes a tavern and its owner.

The Waystone Inn

It was night again. The Waystone Inn lay in silence, and it was a silence of three parts.

The most obvious part was a hollow, echoing quiet, made by things that were lacking. If there had been a wind it would have sighed through the trees, set the inn's sign creaking on its hooks, and brushed the silence down the road like trailing autumn leaves. If there had been a crowd, even a handful of men inside the inn, they would have filled the silence with conversation and laughter, the clatter and clamour one expects from a drinking house during the dark hours of night. If there had been music ... but no, of course there was no music. In fact there were none of these things, and so the silence remained.

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Inside the Waystone a pair of men huddled at one corner of the bar. They drank with quiet determination, avoiding serious discussions of troubling news. In doing this they added a small, sullen silence to the larger, hollow one.

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The third silence was not an easy thing to notice. If you listened for an hour, you might begin to feel it in the wooden floor underfoot and in the rough, splintering barrels behind the bar. It was in the weight of the black stone hearth that held the heat of a long-dead fire. It was in the slow back and forth of a white linen cloth rubbing along the grain of the bar. And it was in the hands of the man who stood there, polishing a stretch of mahogany that already gleamed in the lamplight.

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The man had true-red hair, red as flame. His eyes were dark and distant, and he moved with the subtle certainty that comes from knowing many things.

The Waystone was his, just as the third silence was his. This was appropriate, as it was the greatest silence of the three, wrapping the others inside itself. It was deep and wide as autumn's ending. It was heavy as a great river-smooth stone. It was the patient, cut-flower sound of a man who is waiting to die.

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Source (adapted): Patrick Rothfuss, *The Name of the Wind* (London: Gollancz, 2011), p. 1.

a. Select (✓) ONE language feature the writer uses to describe the setting.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adjectives | <input type="checkbox"/> Onomatopoeia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alliteration | <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metaphor | <input type="checkbox"/> Repetition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Minor sentence(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Simile |

Give an example of this language feature from the text.

b. Explain how the writer develops a particular atmosphere. You might consider:

- how structure is used
- how the inn and its owner are compared.

Support your answer with quotes and examples of language features from the text.

Answers and explanations

Achievement Standard 90849 (English 1.1)

Understanding studied written texts

1.1 Task 4

p. 11

Example question	Question analysis	
Describe at least one important conflict in the written text. Explain how the conflict helped you understand at least one key idea(s).	This question has two parts: Describe an important conflict. Explain why the conflict helped me understand at least one key idea.	Information required: Details of the important conflict. What at least one key idea is in the text and how the conflict helped me understand the idea (or ideas).

General focus of paragraph	
Paragraph 1	Describe an important conflict in the text.
Paragraph 2	Describe at least one key idea in the text and explain the first reason that the conflict helps you understand the key idea. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Paragraph 3	Explain a second way in which the conflict helps you understand the key ideas in the text. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Paragraph 4	Explain a third way in which the conflict helps you understand the key ideas in the text. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Conclusion	Pull your ideas together, focusing on your main idea.

The short story 'The Sniper' by Liam O'Flaherty is based around the conflict between 'the sniper' and his 'enemy'. The sniper is a Republican, one of the groups involved in the Irish civil war, or 'Troubles', which lasted throughout the first half of the twentieth century. This conflict is used by O'Flaherty to show the true reality of war.

One key idea in 'The Sniper' is the extent of damage to society that is caused by a civil war. The shocking discovery that the Republican sniper makes at the end of the story emphasises the

idea that civil war can tear families apart, causing brothers to kill each other. The Republican sniper is in no doubt that his brother would have killed him if he could have. During their conflict, the sniper has thought of his opponent as his 'enemy'. Families are not only torn apart, they turn into mortal enemies who will try to kill each other because of a political belief.

The conflict between the two snipers also helps us understand how brutal and bloody civil wars are. The Republican sniper kills the driver of an enemy armoured car and a civilian, 'an old woman, her head covered by a tattered shawl,' who tries to tell the armoured car driver of the sniper's location. The sniper has no regard for the sex or age of his victims and shows no remorse when shooting the old woman. She is an 'informer' and must die.

Another way the conflict helps us understand key ideas is that the way the Republican sniper acts during the battle with the Free Stater sniper shows us the effect of war on personality. The sniper is described as 'fanatical'. He has 'cold' gleaming eyes and 'the face of a student, thin and ascetic'. The civil war has made this young man almost less than human. Republican ideas are more important than anything else and he will kill for them. After he kills his enemy, he feels briefly 'bitten by remorse', but this is presented as weakness, caused by the wound and 'the long summer day of fasting and watching on the roof'. Feelings of remorse are soon laughed off as he swigs from his whiskey flask.

O'Flaherty's story uses conflict between two brothers to show readers the shocking reality of civil war in which families and society are destroyed for the sake of political and religious beliefs. (E)

1.1 Task 6

p. 14

Example question	Question analysis	
Describe the most important relationship in the written text. Explain how this relationship influences events.	This question has two parts: Describe the most important relationship in the text. Explain how this important relationship influences events.	Information required: Details of the most important relationship. Details of how the relationship influences events in the text.

General focus of paragraph	
Paragraph 1	Describe the most important relationship.
Paragraph 2	Explain the first way the relationship influences events. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>

Paragraph 3	Explain the second way the relationship influences events. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Paragraph 4	Explain the third way the relationship influences events. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Conclusion	Pull your ideas together, focusing on your main idea.

The most important relationship in the text 'Spider' by William Taylor is the one between Spider and his beloved piano. Spider shares a special bond with the piano, which is recognised by Bea McKenzie, Spider's piano teacher. Spider devotes a great deal of his time to practising his chosen art form and never complains about it, which displays his commitment.

Spider sacrifices a lot of the usual habits teenagers indulge in, for example 'having a social life'. Spider hardly ever goes out, and has very few close friends. But this doesn't seem to bother him. Spider sacrifices playing rugby in order to focus entirely on the piano. Although rugby meant a lot to Spider, he realises that without making sacrifices he wouldn't have been able to achieve such a close bond with his piano, and this is how one of the main themes, that of sacrifice, is revealed. Spider says, 'I am doing what I have to do. As I say, to do what I want to do, I've got to run those miles.'

Spider shares such a close relationship with his piano his mates consider him a bit 'woosy', particularly Bryson Brown. Spider gets given a hard time by Bryson because Bryson thinks he should be following something manly, like rugby. Bryson then makes it his duty to teach Spider how to be a 'real man', and consequently takes him out to town on his birthday to all the popular strip clubs. While they are at one particular club, Spider discovers, to his absolute horror, that his mother is the star attraction. Had Bryson not felt the need to make Spider more 'manly' and banish his piano-playing habits, Spider would never have found out about his mother's secret.

Because Spider is so devoted to practising the piano, he tends to isolate himself from the real world and the people around him. His school principal, Miss Simmonds, also allows him the time off school to continue to practise, particularly before his final performance in the Helene Goldman Piano Competition. Spider practises so much that his tutor, Bea McKenzie, has to force him to have a break and get out for a while. Spider doesn't seem to notice how isolated he has become because he is so devoted and committed to playing his piano.

Spider's relationship with his piano plays an extremely influential part in him winning the Helene Goldman Piano Competition. While the other top three finalists were all very talented piano players, they did not share the same passion that Spider had while he was performing. The incredible amount of time Spider had spent practising the piece of Beethoven he performed was clearly evident in his performance. Because he knew the piece off by heart, bar by bar, note for note, he could give a much more passionate performance. All he wanted to do was share with the audience a favourite piece of music, composed by his idol, Ludwig van Beethoven. (E)

1.1 Task 8

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Example question	Question analysis	
Describe the setting of the written text. Explain why this setting is important to the characters.	This question has two parts: Describe the setting of the text. Explain how the setting is important.	Information required: Details of the setting (time and/or place). Explanation of why the setting is important in the text (could affect plot, characters, etc.).

General focus of paragraph	
Paragraph 1	Describe the setting of the text.
Paragraph 2	Provide first reason that the setting is important. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Paragraph 3	Provide second reason that the setting is important. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Paragraph 4	Provide third reason that the setting is important. <i>Write a Topic sentence containing your main point, provide an Explanation, use Examples and evidence and explain their Relevance to your main point.</i>
Conclusion	Pull your ideas together, focusing on your main idea.

In the novel *Goodnight Mister Tom* by Michelle Magorian, the setting plays an important role. The novel is set against the backdrop of World War II. It is set in England during 1939 and 1940. Most of the action takes place in a village called 'Little Weirwold'. Little Weirwold is a country village. It has a close-knit community, where everyone knows everyone. It is a very happy, friendly, bright and welcoming village. A second important location within the setting is that of London. London is the total opposite of Little Weirwold. London is war-torn and Willie, the main character, sees it as a cold, dark and violent place.

The setting is important in that it gives a sense of credibility to the story. People know about World War II, therefore they are able to believe the story when it talks about bomb raids and the children being evacuated into the country to be safe. The main character, Willie, is one of the children who are evacuated. It is because of the war that Willie is removed from his mother and experiences, for the first time in his life, a warm and loving environment.

Willie's experiences in the country village of 'Little Weirwold' allow him to grow and develop as a person. When he was living with his mother in London she abused him physically, mentally and emotionally. He lived in fear and often wet the bed as a result. His mother even sends a leather belt with Willie when he is evacuated so that the family he stays with can also discipline him. As a result of the abuse, Willie is withdrawn, alone and scared when he arrives at Mr Tom's house. The warmth and friendly atmosphere of Little Weirwold help Willie to become more confident and to enjoy life. He makes friends and eventually stops wetting the bed. He feels loved and secure.