

Regional Group Meetings Spring 2011

A663/02

Prose from Different Cultures

Band Descriptors

Questions:

- Script A – 1b
- Script B – 1a

Notes on the Task

Commentary

**A663H: Prose from Different Cultures
Higher Tier Band Descriptors**

Answers will demonstrate:				
Band	Marks	AO4 ***	AO2 **	QWC
1	40-35	perceptive exploration and critical evaluation of a wide range of links between texts and their contexts and/or the significance of texts to readers in different contexts	sensitive understanding of the significance and effects of writers' choices of language, structure and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text is legible • spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate and assured • meaning is very clearly communicated
2	34-28	thoughtful exploration and evaluation of a range of links between texts and their contexts and/or the significance of texts to readers in different contexts	critical insight into the significance and effects of writers' choices of language, structure and form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text is legible • spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate • meaning is very clearly communicated
3	27-21	some attempt to explore and explain links between texts and their contexts and/or the significance of texts to their readers	good overall understanding that writers' choices of language, structure and form contribute to meaning/effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text is legible • spelling, punctuation and grammar are mainly accurate • meaning is very clearly communicated
4	20-14	some understanding of links between texts and their contexts and/or the significance of texts to their readers	understanding of some features of language, structure and/or form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text is legible • some errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar • meaning is clearly communicated for most of the answer
Below 4	13-7	some straightforward comments on links between texts and their contexts and/or the significance of texts to their readers	a little response to features of language, structure and/or form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text is mostly legible • frequent errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar • communication of meaning is sometimes hindered
	6-1	a few comments showing a little awareness of context-related issues	very limited awareness of language, structure and/or form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text is often illegible • multiple errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar • communication of meaning is seriously impeded
	0	response not worthy of credit	response not worthy of credit	

JOHN STEINBECK: *Of Mice and Men*

1 (a)

Crooks stood up from his bunk and faced her. "I had enough," he said coldly. "You got no rights comin' in a colored man's room. You got no rights messing around in here at all. Now you jus' get out, an' get out quick. If you don't, I'm gonna ast the boss not to ever let you come in the barn no more."

5

She turned on him in scorn. "Listen, Nigger," she said. "You know what I can do to you if you open your trap?"

Crooks stared hopelessly at her, and then he sat down on his bunk and drew into himself.

She closed on him. "You know what I could do?"

10

Crooks seemed to grow smaller, and he pressed himself against the wall. "Yes, ma'am."

"Well, you keep your place then, Nigger. I could get you strung up on a tree so easy it ain't even funny."

Crooks had reduced himself to nothing. There was no personality, no ego – nothing to arouse either like or dislike. He said, "Yes, ma'am," and his voice was toneless.

15

For a moment she stood over him as though waiting for him to move so that she could whip at him again; but Crooks sat perfectly still, his eyes averted, everything that might be hurt drawn in. She turned at last to the other two.

20

Old Candy was watching her, fascinated. "If you was to do that, we'd tell," he said quietly. "We'd tell about you fram'in' Crooks."

"Tell an' be damned," she cried. "Nobody'd listen to you."

Candy subsided. "No ..." he agreed. "Nobody'd listen to us."

25

Lennie whined, "I wisht George was here. I wisht George was here."

Candy stepped over to him. "Don't you worry none," he said. "I jus' heard the guys comin' in. George'll be in the bunk house right now, I bet." He turned to Curley's wife. "You better go home now," he said quietly. "If you go right now, we won't tell Curley you was here."

30

She appraised him coolly. "I ain't sure you heard nothing."

"Better not take no chances," he said. "If you ain't sure, you better take the safe way."

She turned to Lennie. "I'm glad you bust up Curley a little bit. He got it comin' to him. Sometimes I'd like to bust him myself." She slipped out the door and disappeared into the dark barn. And while she went through the barn, the halter chains rattled, and some horses snorted and some stamped their feet.

35

Either 1 (a) How does Steinbeck make this such a shocking moment in the novel? [40]

Or 1 (b) Explore the ways Steinbeck makes the ending of the novel so moving. [40]

Remember to support your ideas with details from the novel.

Text:	JOHN STEINBECK: <i>Of Mice and Men</i>
Question 1(a):	Chapter 3: <i>Crooks stood up from his bunk...to ...and some stamped their feet.</i> How does Steinbeck make this such a shocking moment in the novel?
<p>Notes on the task: This is one of the rawest moments in the novel: Crooks is moved (possibly buoyed up by ideas of freedom stirred up by the talk of the ranch) to stand up for himself and his rights; for once self-respect overcomes prudence and he pays the price. Many candidates will focus on Curley's wife's brutal treatment of Crooks, explaining the exact nature of her main threat, and commenting on her abusive tone and insulting address. More comprehensive responses will give considerable attention to Crooks: the pride and dignity that lead him to speak up and that are lacerated by her words; the act of self-abasement that he commits in response to her threats. Higher band answers may well be boosted by providing some social context – explaining how the racism and fierce hierarchical structure of ranch life allows Curley's wife to wield such power over the men. Such comments will allow candidates to access the higher bands in AO4. Curley's wife's behaviour is difficult to defend here – she's a much more sympathetic character in the next chapter – but sensitive responses may cite the frustrations building up in her, and her impulse to lash out when her overtures are repulsed. Answers at band 4 and above will use quotation effectively to illustrate Curley's wife's viciousness, Crooks' reactions (assertive then defensive) and, possibly, Candy's rather limp attempt to stand up for Crooks.</p>	

Text:	JOHN STEINBECK: <i>Of Mice and Men</i>
Question 1(b):	Explore the ways Steinbeck makes the ending of the novel so moving. Remember to support your answer with details from the novel.
<p>Notes on the task: There are many aspects of this final scene that tug at the heart strings: Lennie's incomprehension and helplessness; the overwhelming awfulness of what George has to do and the courage and control he displays in bringing himself to do it; the tense build up to the climax with its ironic (or not) religious overtones; the bathetic ending. Candidates may concentrate on Lennie's hopeless situation, remembering the baleful threat of the vicious Curley (who draws inexorably nearer) to 'shoot the guts outta that big bastard myself'. Comments linking Lennie with Candy's dog and the jungle law that condemns both should be well rewarded. Perceptive answers may well move away from a focus on Lennie's situation to a consideration of George's: the frustration and impatience with Lennie are all gone and are replaced by the grim resolve to do as he must, while ensuring Lennie knows nothing about it. There is determination, fear, guilt, and love in George's words, and effective answers should explore some or all of these emotions. The final captivating evocation of their 'little place', with which George distracts Lennie at the end of his life, is especially moving as it represents the collapse of all of their hopes – and perceptive answers may well make effective reference to Steinbeck's use of the dream motif to give a strong emotional force to his description of Lennie's last moments.</p>	

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Comments on Scripts A and B

Script A

This answer contains some band 1 writing. There is a 'sensitive understanding' of Steinbeck's purpose mostly in evidence in the first two paragraphs; comments about the significance of the dream, the cyclical narrative, the use of foreshadowing, the effects on the reader, and some of the observations about George's feelings demonstrate this level of response. The second half of the answer is not quite as good: the comments about the immediate aftermath of the shooting are not fully developed, particularly the analyses of the two quotations in the penultimate paragraph. So, the high level of response is not sustained; band 1 criteria (AO2) engaged but not fully met. This is a strong band 2 answer. Mark: 32.

A word on AO4: although there is no specific reference to the social context of the novel, there is a clear acknowledgement of it in the candidate's appreciation of why George had to kill Lennie; enough to satisfy the examiner that there is attainment in AO4.

Script B

The title is referred to at the start and there is accurate comment about how Curley's Wife treats Crooks and about his reaction. The expression throughout the answer is rather basic, but nevertheless 'shows understanding' of the characters and their motives. There is accurate comment about Candy in paragraph 2 with the selection of the most effective quotation as support. The linking of the three disadvantaged men is quite neatly put. There is some insight into Curley's Wife in paragraph 3. '*In a wrong manner*' is rather vague though and the conjecture at the end of the paragraph cannot gain much credit. The predator/prey analogy may be a little clichéd but it is accurate. Paragraph 5, about Curley's Wife and her husband, becomes relevant – there is some general comment about the quality of their relationship as evidenced by her reaction to Lennie breaking his hand. The penultimate paragraph has merit – the comment on the quote gets to the heart of it though it trails away. The conclusion does add a touch more understanding.

This is a straightforward answer showing some insight and picking up points steadily as it goes on, it 'shows understanding' of the dynamics of the confrontation and is placed in the top half of band 4. Mark: 19