

Regional Group Meetings Spring 2011

A663/01

Prose from Different Cultures

Band Descriptors

Questions:

- Script C – 1a
- Script D – 1a

Notes on the Task

Commentary

**A663F: Prose from Different Cultures
Foundation Tier Band Descriptors**

Answers will demonstrate:				
Band	Marks	AO4 ***	AO2 **	QWC
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 assured • meaning is 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
5	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	6-1	a few comments showing a little awareness of context-related issues	a few comments showing a little 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
	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 framin' 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) What do you think makes this such a powerful moment in the novel?

You should consider:

- how Curley's wife reacts to what Crooks says
- how the men react to her
- the words and phrases Steinbeck uses.

[27]

Or 1 (b) What makes the ending of the novel so moving?

Remember to support your ideas with details from the novel.

[27]

Text:	JOHN STEINBECK: <i>Of Mice and Men</i>
Question 1(a):	<p>Chapter 4: <i>Crooks stood up from his bunk... to ...and some stamped their feet.</i></p> <p>What do you think makes this such a powerful moment in the novel?</p> <p>You should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how Curley's wife reacts to what Crooks says • how the men react to her • the words and phrases Steinbeck uses.
<p>Notes on the task: The most straightforward bullet to handle is the first, and many candidates will effectively illustrate Curley's wife's cruelty by explaining the nature of her threat and quoting her intemperate language. To achieve band 4 (AO2) answers will need to show awareness of the <u>effects</u> of Steinbeck's choice of words, which involves successful use of quotation to illustrate points made. The way Crooks deflates so quickly when Curley's wife laughs at his threats and substitutes much more potent ones of her own, shows that she has all the power in this situation. Effective answers may well explain why that should be: Curley's wife may be female, and of less consequence because of it, but Crooks is black and Candy is old and crippled and so both are firmly placed at the foot of the social hierarchy. In particular, the way the justice system tended to operate in relation to black men accused of interfering with white women is relevant here, and reference to that will demonstrate understanding of social context (AO4). It is hoped that candidates will show sympathy for Crooks here – his treatment is particularly brutal, especially as we know he is a proud man. Answers that offer some empathy for Curley's wife based on her frustration and loneliness should be rewarded.</p>	

Text:	JOHN STEINBECK: <i>Of Mice and Men</i>
Question 1(b):	<p>What makes the ending of the novel so moving?</p> <p>Remember to support your ideas with details from the novel.</p>
<p>Notes on the task: In Foundation Tier answers we should expect an element of narrative and some candidates will read the question as an invitation to write about the events leading up to Lennie's present predicament. However, this is only marginally relevant and more credit can be given to an explanation of why George decides it is better for Lennie to die, taking into account the character of Curley and the harsh way situations tend to be resolved in these parts (cf. the killing of Candy's dog). Most answers will make reference to the way George distracts Lennie with a final description of their 'little place', and the religious symbolism attaching to it may be explored by more able candidates. Effective responses may well focus as much if not more on George than on Lennie, describing his courage and determination, and his sensitivity in orchestrating events so that Lennie dies instantly and happily unaware of what is happening. Pointed reference to the anti-climactic comments of Slim and Carlson at the end should also be well rewarded.</p>	

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Comments on Scripts C and D

Script C

The script starts well making reference to the question. The second sentence is weaker. It is accurate about Crooks – *'acts very big'* is rather basic but the expression improves in writing like *'shows incredible courage showing off what he is like inside'* which also covers AO4. The use of *'outer shell'*, *'powerful speech'* and *'backfiring'* also conveys some insight into Crooks character and the consequences of his behaviour. The candidate continues to employ colloquial but telling phrases in describing Curley's Wife's actions: *'calls the shots'*; *'comes right back at him'* and there is some merit in the comment about *"Listen, Nigger."* The answer continues to pick up points on Curley's Wife's attack and Crooks's response with effective language comment on the use of *'whip'*. *'Seemed to make him shrink and shrink'* is also effective. There follows some similarly accurate comment on Lennie's behaviour. There is a good summing up of Curley's Wife – *'fiery and fierce'* – and also of Crooks.

This is the kind of Foundation Tier script which, whilst rather rough and ready in terms of grammar and expression, sticks to the question and shows 'understanding' and 'response' reaching the top of band 4. Mark 18.

Script D

This essay has qualities that tend toward the top of band 4 but they are not sustained enough and it achieves lower in band 4. It is an example of script which would probably be awarded grade D but with some improvement could achieve grade C. It comments accurately on *'Nigger'* and links to the social context. It is effective on the change in Crooks's behaviour and the way the atmosphere alters when Curley's Wife comes into the barn. This standard is maintained initially into paragraph 2, but then loses some focus towards the bottom of the page. The third paragraph is uneven: there is effective comment on *'scorn'* but not so much on *'averted'* although the use of *'alert'* and *'vulnerable'* is better. So, an essay that is clearly band 4; if at the top it would be in contention for grade C, but it falls back because of the uneven quality of the comment. We mark positively on what the answer contains, not negatively on what is missing; but if there had been some material, of the standard of what is best here, about, for example, Crooks's reaction, or Lennie's or Candy's reactions to Curley's Wife, then it would be moving towards grade C. The script is lower band 4. Mark 15.