



Cambridge Assessment International Education
Cambridge Pre-U Certificate

FRENCH (PRINCIPAL)

9779/04

Paper 4 Topics and Texts

May/June 2018

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 60

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the May/June 2018 series for most Cambridge IGCSE™, Cambridge International A and AS Level and Cambridge Pre-U components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

IGCSE™ is a registered trademark.

This syllabus is approved for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland as a Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate.

This document consists of **57** printed pages.

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptors for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Part I: Topics

Candidates are to attempt one question from Part I: Topics and will write their answers in the Target Language. The texts/films are to be studied primarily in cultural context (be it historical, political, social) as well as a literary/cinematic one.

Answers are to be marked out of 30 according to the criteria below:

- 20 for Content [AO3: 10 marks, AO4: 10 marks]
- 10 for Language [AO3]

This paper is intended to test candidates' knowledge and understanding of a topic and their ability to use this knowledge to answer questions in a clear and focused manner. A sophisticated literary approach is not expected (although at the highest levels it is sometimes seen), but great value is placed on evidence of a first-hand response and thoughtful, personal evaluation of what candidates have studied. Candidates may have been encouraged to depend closely on prepared notes and quotations: quotation for its own sake is not useful, though it will not be undervalued if used appropriately to illustrate a point in the answer. This applies to films as well as literary texts.

Texts and notes may not be taken into the examination.

Candidates will not tend to show all the qualities or faults described in any one mark-band. Examiners will attempt to weigh up all these at every borderline, in order to see whether the work can be considered for the category above.

Examiners will take a positive and flexible approach and, even when there are obvious flaws in an answer, reward evidence of knowledge and especially any signs of understanding and careful organisation. In the marking of these questions, specific guidelines will be given for each question, agreed by the examination team.

Part I: Topics – Content

18–20	Excellent	Excellent ability to organise material in relation to the question. Comprehensive knowledge of both texts/ films. Ability to look beyond the immediate material and to show good understanding of underlying themes.
15–17	Very good	Thoughtful and well argued response to the question. Thorough knowledge of both texts/ films. Detailed understanding and illustration of thematic and comparative issues.
12–14	Good	Well argued response to the question. Equally sound knowledge of both texts/ films. Good understanding and illustration of the thematic and comparative issues.
9–11	Satisfactory	Mainly relevant response to the question. Shows fair knowledge of texts/ films. Some understanding and illustration of the thematic and comparative issues AND/OR good understanding of texts/ films, but lacking detail. Stronger on one text/ film than on the other.
5–8	Weak	Uneven OR basic response to the question. Shows some knowledge and understanding of the texts/ films. Includes some relevant points, but development and illustration are limited. Contains padding AND/OR has some obvious omissions OR is largely narrative.
1-4	Poor	Little attempt to answer the question. Poor knowledge and understanding of the texts/ films. Insubstantial with very little relevance.
0		No rewardable content.

Part I: Topics – Language

10	Excellent	Almost flawless. Excellent range of vocabulary and complex sentence patterns. Good sense of idiom.
8-9	Very good	Highly accurate. Wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence patterns. Some sense of idiom.
6-7	Good	Generally accurate. Good range of vocabulary and some complex sentence patterns.
4-5	Satisfactory	Predominantly simple patterns correctly used and/or some complex language attempted, but with variable success. Adequate range of vocabulary, but some repetition.
2-3	Weak	Persistent errors. Simple and repetitive sentence patterns. Limited vocabulary.
1	Poor	Little evidence of grammatical awareness. Very limited vocabulary.
0		No rewardable language.

Question	Answer	Marks
	<p>Part I Topics: Indicative Content</p> <p>Questions are open to interpretation and, therefore, the following notes are not intended to be prescriptive but to give an indication of some of the points which could be made in response to each question. They are by no means exhaustive.</p>	
1	Intégration, exclusion, citoyenneté	
1A	<p>À votre avis, pourquoi l'intégration sociale paraît-elle si difficile ? Répondez en discutant des ouvrages étudiés.</p> <p>Film: <i>La Haine</i> (Kassovitz)</p> <p>The world of the housing estate, on the outskirts of the city, has encouraged, or forged, the isolationism of certain groups. Poor housing, discrimination, racism, condescension and a poor regard for authority are all elements which could be mentioned to illustrate obstacles to integration into society. The behaviour which is represented may not be surprising, (disputes, aggression, hostility, rioting, as well as crime – drug peddling, theft) as they grow out of enforced idleness, disaffection and a sense of social exclusion. The role of the police is not just to keep order, as far as they can, but at times it fuels the antagonism which Vinz, Said and Hubert experience (e.g. the breaking up of the barbecue, the treatment in the Paris police station). Anger and self-respect, together with an inability to adapt to unfamiliar social situations, for example, at the vernissage, prevent Vinz and Said from leaving their microcosm. Hubert represents a possible exit from the dead end of daily existence on the estate. He wishes to leave for a better life, but events run a different course: his gym is burned down in the riots, and having eschewed violence and police provocation, he finds himself holding the revolver at the end of the film. His role is a metaphor for the hopelessness of attempts at social betterment.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
	<p>Film: <i>La Désintégration</i> (Faucon)</p> <p>Candidates may take different approaches to the question. Some may interpret the actions of Ali, Hamza and Nasser as confirming the title's assumption, that there are obstacles to social integration. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the film portrays the majority of the Muslim community as being prepared to work hard and to assimilate into French society. Thus, discussion of the first generation of immigrants, the parents, show how they work hard, have built a life in France, even if their native tongue, Arabic, is still used in the home. Yasmina and Rachid also demonstrate that they are happy, well-integrated and fluent in French. The focus on Ali will bring out elements of frustration, anger, hatred and violence. Racism in French society is an unwillingness for others to integrate, and Ali's continued failure to secure work experience makes him an easy recruit for Djamel, who exploits his frustrations and convinces him that Islamic martyrdom is an appropriate response. Djamel's brand of Islam, of course, contrasts starkly with that of the imam and the majority of worshippers at the mosque. Djamel's comments, 'Cette société représente un danger pour vous' and 'Liberté, égalité fraternité entre blancs, et zéro musulman' are deliberately designed to exploit Ali's disappointments by misrepresenting society in Lille, and suggesting that integration is neither desirable nor possible. Candidates may comment that Hamza rejects his upbringing, converts to Islam and is so brainwashed that prepared to accept taking part in a suicide bombing; this underlines the potency of Djamel's message to vulnerable minds. Nasser, eminently more reasonable, decides to reject Djamel's instrumentalisation. There is little prospect of society being at one with itself when radical Islam is undermining rational thought.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
1A	<p data-bbox="316 248 730 282">Begag, <i>Béni ou le paradis privé</i></p> <p data-bbox="316 315 1313 786">Béni's attempted integration into French society is challenged by his father's attitude and by the overt racism he experiences in Lyons. As a second generation immigrant, Béni is pulled in two directions; he wishes to please his parents and respect their culture and traditions, yet he wishes to become fully integrated into the culture of the town where he lives. Integration, to some extent, will change his family identity. The father has no interest in integration; he thinks that the French are racist, and he wants his children to return to Algeria to marry and live, reflecting his Algerian heritage. Tension in the family is seen through Béni's eyes: <i>Je serai obligé de lui dire, à mon père, que la guerre d'Algérie est finie, qu'il faut sortir des tranchées, l'armistice est signé.</i> As far as the resolution of this tension is concerned, Béni chooses the country of his birth : 'Entre France et mon père, j'avais choisi la blonde.' France, the girl, becomes an object of desire, though she keeps him at arm's length, just as the country of the same name does.</p> <p data-bbox="316 819 1289 987">Intolerance and racism are present throughout the novel. In comments made by the teacher, the bouncer at the night club, Nick's mother, the policeman who call him Mohamed, even casual conversation overheard at the Gnoule bar: 'Si c'était moi que je dirigeais ce putain de pays, je les renverrai tous dans leur pays, les Gitans, à coups de botte dans le cul.'</p> <p data-bbox="316 1021 1313 1424">In school, he is the only pupil of North African origin, and is made to feel an alien: 'Mais il m'avait quand même traité d'étranger devant toute la classe. C'était toujours à cause de mon nom.' This book's novelty lies in Béni's determination to show to others that he is French and that he wants to be a French citizen, just like them. The enterprise makes him feel to be an actor (ce monde de comédien), leaving his identity behind: 'faut avouer que ça sert strictement à rien de s'appeler Ben Abdallah quand on veut être comme tout le monde'. There is a certain self-deprecating humour as he pushes this desire to pass as French to extreme lengths, as the episode with his hair illustrates. The picture at the end, however, is that his determination is not enough; he cannot be accepted as a Frenchman: he must accept that he will be seen as an Algerian by the local populace.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
1B	<p>Le comportement des personnages mérite-il votre admiration ou votre condamnation ? Expliquez votre réponse en vous référant aux ouvrages étudiés.</p>	
	<p>Film: <i>La Haine</i> (Kassovitz)</p> <p>Candidates may take a censorious line or a more sympathetic view of the attitudes and behaviour of Vinz, Said and Hubert. The question invites them to analyse the social framework of their lives as well as their individual traits. Their lives are set against a background of urban unrest, and to a large extent the film highlights social, economic and racial problems. The film can be interpreted in a ‘chicken or egg’ conundrum. Given their situation, it is not surprising that we see Vinz, Said and Hubert in arguments with reporters, in confrontations with police, failing to communicate or behave appropriately in the vernissage, clashing with skinheads. To what extent are they condemned to act as they do? Their anger and bravado, though, is nuanced by respect and great solidarity for each other, a sense of community with other locals and family, and a sense of pride. The condescending attitude of the journalist is found to be offensive, as well as suggesting the biased reporting of the media, which will colour judgements. Vinz is berated by his grandmother, and there is humour in the scene in which he goes shopping for her. Hubert has worked to transform a disused supermarket into a boxing gym for locals, but this project is destroyed in the riot. He hands money made from drug trading to his mother to pay the electricity bill. At the vernissage, it is he who strikes up conversation with the young women, showing his potential to bridge the gulf of the social divide. Most, if not all of the positives are reduced by violence, confrontation and crime to the hopelessness of a vicious circle of life on the estate. The graffiti ‘Le monde est à vous/nous’ reflects the emptiness of the promise of prosperity and the angry response of the estate dwellers who have not yet lost their self-respect.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
1B	<p>Film: <i>La Désintégration</i> (Faucon)</p> <p>Whilst there will be a tendency to focus on Ali as the central character, answers should also make mention of other characters in the film, either by way of contrast, or as foils for Ali. Ali has grown up in a second generation immigrant family, in which everyone else has found a job and is relatively content. He tries to get work experience and becomes increasingly frustrated with his lack of success. Other family members are supportive, but Ali's disappointment turns to anger, and his anger is channelled back at French society by Djamel. The film seeks to show how a good natured and sensible young man can fall victim to indoctrination and turn against his family: he visits his father in hospital, is worried about his mother going out, furthers his education, wants to find work. The psychological portrait may not appear well drawn, but is enough to enable the viewer to find Ali's transformation credible. Thus, he becomes a political pawn for Djamel, who organises a suicide attack on a NATO base, having used a twisted version of Islamic teaching to brainwash Ali, Hamza and Nasser. Answers will indicate what features are worthy of admiration (which might include Ali's ambition and repeated efforts to find a job, despite racism in the workplace) and give an assessment of what features are worthy of contempt (for example, Ali's rejection of his family, the suicide attack), arriving at a balanced judgement.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
1B	<p>Begag, <i>Béni ou le paradis privé</i></p> <p>Answers will analyse to what extent Béni's behaviour is positive and consider if there any actions which might invite adverse criticism. The key concerns will be his relationship to his family, and by extension how he views his identity, and how he responds to the other Lyonnais. At the beginning of the novel there are clear tensions between family tradition and the customs and culture of France. The initial disappointment about the Christmas presents fuels a desire to reject the father's authority and narrow-mindedness and be accepted by France and the French. He is conscious that his heritage will not endear him to France: 'Ben Abdallah et France ! Tout de suite ça sent l'agression, l'incompatible.' As a child, Béni is dismissive of his father's wisdom and experience. The rejection of Algerian brides for his children elicits a strong reaction from Abboué: 'Quoi ? c'est des Françaises que vous voulez, bande de chiens ! Vous voulez salir notre nom, notre race ! Allez, allez épouser des Françaises : quand vous pleurerez parce qu'elles vous auront traité de « bicou », vous reviendrez chez votre vieux qui comprend rien.' The father is happy in his identity, and knows that discrimination and racism are widespread in France. The rest of the book will prove to Béni that his father is right. Discussion of Béni's attempts to get himself accepted will consider whether he was wise, naïve or just disobedient in trying to play a role as a French boy, frequenting other French youth and desiring a girl, France. Whilst he finds little freedom in his own home, he finds discrimination from Mrs Vidal, that the cinema, from French youth who criticise him for going out with France. The acting role enables him to develop a sort of carapace which means he does not take the racial insults to heart. More sophisticated answers may see Begag's technique as a way of showing that the beur is not just a stock character stuck in his ways and culture, but that he should be taken on his own terms, as an individual. The acting metaphor is a way of holding up a mirror to French society, with humour and self-deprecation helping to moderate the overt criticism of French social attitudes towards Frenchmen of Algerian descent. His behaviour at the end of the novel, after he is not allowed into the night club, shows that he cannot appropriate another identity; he must be himself : 'je me suis baissé pour ramasser une boule de neige/.../J'ai frotté avec l'énergie qui me restait pour retrouver les bouclettes de mon cuir véritable'.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2	Visions de société	
2A	<p>Jusqu'à quel point ces ouvrages présentent-ils une image terrifiante de la société de l'avenir ?</p> <p>Film: <i>Delicatessen</i> (Caro and Jeunet)</p> <p>The post-apocalyptic world in which the film is set is one where survival is the only principle.</p> <p>The butcher and the postman represent the hard-nosed, insensitive and predatory nature of de-civilised man. All the inhabitants of the block of flats look up to and depend on the butcher for food and shelter. They fear him, too, as they do not wish to be his next victim. Standard behaviour is selfish, manipulative in an unremittingly grim atmosphere. The luring of odd-job men through a classified ad serves only to feed the tenants, as it soon becomes clear that the taboo of cannibalism has long been broken. The horror is compounded by the seemingly harmless butchery terms used in the shop: (de l'épaule, de la poitrine, du jarret).</p> <p>The standard areas of childhood fear are worked into the film. The camera shots of the film accentuate the reign of terror: close-ups of the butcher's rolling eyes whilst he sharpens his knives, or Julie's nightmare in which Louison is killed like a pig, are reminiscent of the horror of a fairy-tale ogre (le père Fouettard). The repellent, slimy, wet, batrachian world of Potin may be comic or lunatic. Black humour abounds: Granny being served at the butcher's counter; Robert Kube losing his leg to the butcher, as he goes downstairs after dark; the bizarre sounds in the building, including the 'voices' which Aurore hears. Aurore's multiple attempts at suicide underline the hopelessness of life. The nightmare scenario continues with the attack of the bizarrely attired troglodistes, despised by those who live in the building. Finally, the attack of all the tenants, baying for Louison's blood, in a climactic scene, portrays the baying hysteria of the mass.</p> <p>What accentuates the horror of the house is the contrasting naivety of Louison and the resistance, both in culinary and cultural terms, put up by Julie. Resistance to this oppressive and immoral society comes too in the shape of the vegetarian troglodistes. They offer a contrasting theme of hope and, finally, victory. The final scene, too, denotes the triumph of culture (music) and love which mitigates the overriding pessimistic and harrowing vision, and its clear parallel with occupied France in WW2.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2A	<p>Film: <i>Alphaville</i> (Godard)</p> <p>The film portrays a dehumanised world, in which mankind is in thrall to a totalitarian tyrant. Alphaville is a city controlled by a computer, Alpha 60, which persists in stating that its decisions are based on logic. Humans resemble automata. Emotions have been outlawed, as has the word 'pourquoi', speech and thought are restricted, and only words appearing in an ever-shrinking dictionary are permitted to be used. Conversations are generally banal, their absurdity accentuated by answers preceding the question. According to Dickson, those people who cannot conform are either executed or put in HLM (Hôpitaux de Longue Maladie). The city is unwelcoming in its architecture: it is full of neon signs, formulae, concrete, glass and labyrinthine corridors. The role of women is reduced to that of sex object (séductrice niveau trois), or executioner (in the swimming pool), and all women are tattooed with an identification number. Tranquillisers are freely available in hotel rooms. It is a world without art, poetry or conscience, a world of automata being steered towards war by Prof von Braun. The end of the nightmare comes in the form of Lemmy Caution, an Orpheus figure, who goes into this city on a mission, falls in love with Natascha von Braun, destroys the computer and its creator, and with it, Alphaville. It is not science which triumphs, but 'la conscience', poetry, civilisation. Answers will refer to the rebarbative elements which make up life in Alphaville, and consider to what extent overwhelming faith in technology and a wholesale desire to stupefy the senses and the brain paint a picture of an appalling future society of subservience and mindlessness.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2A	<p data-bbox="316 248 544 282">Barjavel, <i>Ravage</i></p> <p data-bbox="316 315 1310 551">The novel paints the picture of a future life, part utopia, part dystopia. Urban life is seen to be superior to life in the countryside. In 'la ville radieuse' men have been replaced by efficient machines. Indeed, man has become useless and to some extent surplus to requirements. Broader questions raised in the first part of the novel include the purpose of man's place, the overdependence on technology. The quality of life is superficially good, until technology ceases to function.</p> <p data-bbox="316 584 1315 819">Nobody is essential to work. The baristas, for example, are there simply for show; food is grown industrially. The novel shows how dysfunctional society had become. The fishermen, for example, would not dream of eating the fruits of their leisure hobby. The Institut d'électrothérapie mentale and the Dépiqueur treatment is a harsh reminder of how technology enabled the state to exercise a frightening degree of mind control over its citizens with its annual check up and dose of electric shock therapy for non-conformists.</p> <p data-bbox="316 853 1305 1021">Jérôme represents the hubris of power, wealth and self-absorption. He is the director of the all-powerful Radio 300; his only values revolve around money and influence, and he is of rare avidity. He relies entirely on others. When the catastrophe happens, his influence dries up, he ceases to appeal to anyone, including Blanche.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1055 1302 1525">Complete social breakdown is well illustrated in part two, where the law of the jungle is dominant. Episodes of violence, force and destruction follow in quick succession. Criminality and bestial behaviour are a threat to François's group, and it is François who is responsible for maintaining a degree of integrity: 'ils étaient loin de cette déchéance atroce. Ils n'avaient pas renoncé. Ils étaient encore des hommes.' However, he shows no pity, for example having prisoners executed. His establishment of a community (Retour à la terre) is not necessarily an earthly paradise. The regime is hierarchical and dictatorial in nature; the patriarch is priest, judge and leader. There is violent repression of any attempt to destabilise François's system, which rejects progress and machinery and outlaws money and commerce. It strives to remain mediaeval. The position of women is changed: they serve to grow the population, and subservient polygamy is the order of the day.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1559 1305 1659">Technology and knowledge prove to be the cause of the last act of violence and the death of the patriarch (by Denis); the vast experiment has failed – there is little message of hope; this is the death knell of civilisation.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2B	<p>Dans les sociétés évoquées dans ces ouvrages, l'individu n'a pas d'importance. Qu'en pensez-vous ?</p> <p>Film: <i>Delicatessen</i> (Caro and Jeunet)</p> <p>The dependency on the butcher for food and lodging in a post-war world does not encourage individual initiative. Indeed, everything is subservient to survival, and all the tenants are complicit in the cannibalism that holds sway. Julie, who falls in love with each new lured prey, the odd jobs men, and is a lone voice of reason and humanity, cannot stand up to the brutal reality of her father's regime. The parallels with behaviour during WW2 are clear, and they suggest a pusillanimous response to the Occupation by the nation, if not collaboration. Conversations between the butcher and the postman underline the animosity towards the 'other', the troglodistes and also point to the necessity of sticking together to ensure survival. It is the arrival of the Candide figure, Louison, with his unusual skills and magical Australian knife, who just escapes being a victim and whose individuality and essential 'goodness' save him and allow him to usher in a new age of culture, love and kindness. Of course, he would never have achieved this without the intervention of the troglodistes. Answers may take different stances with relation to the title, but there should be a degree of nuance.</p> <p>Film: <i>Alphaville</i> (Godard)</p> <p>The inhabitants, with whom Lemmy Caution has dealings, appear to be not fully functioning human beings. The members of the hotel staff are robotic, others respond to his request for information with peremptory gestures, not polite conversation. Women are reduced to playing the role of state employed prostitutes, who can be identified by a number tattooed on them. Alphaville is a city devoid of the key ingredient of individuality, emotion and consciousness. Alphaville has been set up as a paean to technology, where elements of choice or opinion are not welcome. Enquiry is frowned upon. Even 'pourquoi' has been replaced by 'parce que' and language can seem automatic, yet meaningless. At the institute of semantics, students slavishly make notes on the computer's lecture; at the gala performance, those who have shown individuality by not following orders and not conforming to type, are executed in the swimming pool. Natacha is the one exception to regain her own thoughts, and the person whom Lemmy saves. She makes the perilous journey from automaton to a woman who realises that she is in love and can express herself, fighting against the brainwashing which has lasted years. It is easy to succumb to the system, to fleeting pleasures which have no substance, as we see in Dickson's pathetic state in the cheap hotel. Von Braun shows the arrogance of dictatorship (through plans of empire on a cosmic scale), yet his control is boundless, as he requires citizens and visitors to be interrogated regularly by Alpha 60. The only hope for individuality is to maintain one's ability to think, as Lemmy teaches Natacha through reading Eluard's poetry and challenging her not to accept the lazy responses which the government feeds her nor swallow the tranquillisers which numb perception. The individual, in the city of Alphaville, is seen as a hindrance and a danger to the powers that be, therefore individuality should either be corrected (in the HLM) or eliminated.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
2B	<p data-bbox="316 248 544 282">Barjavel, <i>Ravage</i></p> <p data-bbox="316 315 1305 719">Candidates may comment on Barjavel’s powers of characterisation in the novel to argue that, apart from François, Blanche and Seita, individuals do stand out. On the other hand, they may compare the society of la Ville radiieuse and that of la Provence. Paris as a city in which technology has replaced man in many ways; the role of man is generally unimpressive. The technological wonders which have been wrought are to the detriment of the individual’s quality of life in French society. There is no clearer indication of this than the government’s desire to eradicate any form of non-conformist behaviour and thought through the Dépiqueur treatment. Technology enabled the state to exercise mind control over its citizens with its annual check-up and dose of electric shock therapy, to ensure that traits of individuality were not allowed to develop.</p> <p data-bbox="316 752 1305 954">When electricity fails and machines can no longer operate, the city dwellers do not know how to behave and many perish in the ensuing fires. The focus is on crowds, then gangs of survivors. The individual is occluded in the surge of the masses and the law of the jungle. Man cannot live alone; he is a social animal. However, principles of education, sharing and respect are quickly forgotten in times of danger.</p> <p data-bbox="316 987 1305 1256">Seita is not well drawn, but is noteworthy as the face of power, wealth and manipulation as the manager of Radio 300. He appeals to Blanche’s desire for fame and easy money, though his baser motives are apparent in his telecommunication with her, when he emerges from the telescreen to pursue the naked Blanche in her bedroom. The catastrophe removes his power base and system of patronage; he turns out to be indistinguishable from the masses. Blanche serves as François’s companion and the link between the two societies.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1290 1321 1794">Answers may consider the community in Provence in different ways. When Blanche and François finally reach Vaux, having escaped the dehumanising capital, now in ruins, they become the vehicle for the author to show that key values, which had been lost in technological Paris, are essential to man and society – the love of the earth, effort, courage, pride and love of the family. On the other hand, François emerges as leader of the community, but individuals merge into the mass. Just as individuals did not play a significant role in the technologically advanced society, the hierarchy and strict laws of François’s non-progressive regime do not promote initiative or individuality. Blanche may be his favourite wife, but is only one of seven. Learning is disapproved of (books are burned), and the focus is on reproduction and farming – for the benefit of mankind in general. All are subservient to the new system, devised by François. If a rare individual does emerge briefly, it is Denis, who goes against the established regulations and surreptitiously invents a machine and ultimately kills the Patriarch, his father.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
3	Les Voyages	
3A	Jusqu'à quel point les personnages sont-ils présentés comme des victimes innocentes ? Expliquez votre réponse en vous référant aux ouvrages étudiés.	
	<p>Film: <i>Code inconnu: récit incomplet de divers voyages</i> (Haneke)</p> <p>The film portrays quite a number of victims and victimisers, without it being necessarily clear which way round the roles are, as the film is shot in such a way as to permit mutually contradictory interpretations. Thus, determining innocence or guilt remains a matter of argument and point of view. Victimisation may take a variety of forms, including personal, ethnic, and national.</p> <p>Answers will include some or all of the following characters and their roles and experiences in the film: the film actress Anne, her boyfriend Georges the photographer, Maria the Romanian beggar, Amadou the music teacher. The fragmented narrative allows for a number of different interpretations of the different characters' 'journeys' and their interconnectedness. Further, discussion may allude to attitudes to truth and falsehood which combine with different narrative voices reflecting the varied perceptions of events and life.</p> <p>The film comprises a cross section of cultures, contrasting attitudes and prejudices in a way which forces one to review examples of social interaction, justice, and the (non) functioning of codes in society. To discern victimhood, innocence and the role of belligerent is made deliberately opaque. Haneke's aim is to challenge the traditional unifying force of a clear narrative thread. He is, perhaps, more concerned with ways of perception that create the illusion of unity than offering a clear message.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
3A	<p data-bbox="316 248 740 282">Van Cauwelaert, <i>Un aller simple</i></p> <p data-bbox="316 315 1302 651">The choice of narrative as an autobiographical account of his adventures may influence how the reader reacts to the events narrated, for the narrator may colour or be less than objective about the way in which events are portrayed. The theme of the book is for Aziz to find an identity, a family, have roots, become someone. For Jean-Pierre, it is to find his identity and admit his shame/guilt. The two titles suggested, 'l'attaché humanitaire' and 'le bagage accompagné' are redolent with irony; they are suggested by one character, but are, in the end, applicable to both as their roles are reversed. 'C'est moi, m'a-t-il expliqué. Enfin : c'est vous, dans le roman, le bagage accompagné.'</p> <p data-bbox="316 685 1310 1525">Aziz has an unusual upbringing, and seems to be the victim of circumstances. As a baby, he is orphaned and brought up by gypsies. His identity is uncertain, and he is furnished with false papers. He is rejected by the milieu he grows up in, as the episode with Lila demonstrates. Subsequently, he faces deportation because of his papers and, as he appears to be an illegal immigrant, is assured, ironically, that he will be repatriated to Morocco. These events are something over which he has no control. The whole adventure in Morocco is based on an administrative mistake. During the flight, Jean-Pierre confides in Aziz his humiliation in his failed love life and the shameful episode concerning his parents. 'J'ai abandonné mon sol, moi aussi. J'ai renié mon milieu, mes origines. Et depuis tout va mal'. Aziz, on the other hand, responds with lies and mystifications, thus he dupes the somewhat naif Jean-Pierre with a fabricated story about Irghez as he plays the part of a Moroccan. Candidates may explore the extent to which Jean-Pierre becomes a willing victim in pursuing the objective of reaching Irghez, as well as the extent to which Aziz wants to give Jean-Pierre a zest for life to the man who has entered into his imagination. After all, it is in the arms of Valérie that Jean-Pierre comes to terms with being ashamed of his parents, of coming to terms with his childhood and adolescence and his failed relationship with Clémentine. Indeed, it is in the desert that Jean-Pierre comes to confuse présent and past, the Atlas mountains and Lorraine, Irghez and Uckange, Valérie and Agnès. The final scene, too, shows that Aziz identifies with Jean-Pierre's life, living with Jean-Pierre's parents. Is he the instigator of the whole story or simply an innocent beneficiary?</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
3A	<p data-bbox="316 248 683 282">Semprun, <i>Le Grand voyage</i></p> <p data-bbox="316 315 1310 618">The title invites consideration of those characters who fell foul of the Nazi or Pétainist regimes. The depiction of many civilians who were deported to Buchenwald were victims of racial hatred and political intolerance. Much of the book concentrates on the deportees and prisoners, who have done nothing to merit torture, famine and death. Discussion may be nuanced by consideration of braver souls who join the resistance and who put their lives on the line out of patriotic fervour or political commitment. The narrator, for example readily admits to being an active member of the resistance and transporting explosives to Semur-en-Auxois.</p> <p data-bbox="316 651 1310 887">During the Occupation in France and in the camp in Buchenwald, the range of behaviour, attitudes and relations is varied, and the circumstances of war shine a particularly harsh light on them. There is a numbness and seeming neutrality about a number of the conversations and meetings, reflecting the painfulness of memory and the absurdity of existence. Friendship, companionship is juxtaposed with betrayal (e.g. the double agent in the Resistance group).</p> <p data-bbox="316 920 1310 1458">The meeting with the Jewish woman in a Paris street shows the effects of persecution of a minority, innocent victims. The woman says that nobody ever helped her, thereby condemning the society of the time. The role of local administration does much to accentuate the sense of victimhood. At the préfecture de police for renewal of his residence permit, the narrator is belittled and insulted by a little Napoleon who calls him 'un rouge espagnol' and sends him unjustifiably to back of the queue. This very much echoes the treatment by the occupying force. At the Longuyon camp de repatriement he is asked stupid, insensitive questions and is not allowed the money or cigarettes given out to those returning to France. In the first instance, the narrator may not be innocent – he is, after all, a communist; in the second, he is an unwitting victim of administrative procedure. Another reading of the title might bring to mind the episode of the girls from the Mission de France, who had no idea of Nazi brutality and inhumanity, symbolised by the crematorium at Buchenwald, and whose naiveté or ignorance is tellingly evoked.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
3B	<p>Quels jugements sur la société ressortent de ces ouvrages ?</p> <p>Film: <i>Code inconnu: récit incomplet de divers voyages</i> (Haneke)</p> <p>There is considerable latitude for interpretation of the film. The film, with its fragmented format, includes different social classes, ethnic and racial groups, and nationalities and contains themes of expansion, inclusion, dispersal, the real versus the fictional.</p> <p>In the urban environment, there is ample potential for conflict, e.g. Jean throws a piece of scrap paper in Maria's lap thereby provoking Amadou's indignation. The aggressive behaviour in the metro sees Anne accused of being arrogant and a snob; the viewer does not know whether her behaviour confirms this, and she is racist, or is it her Arab accusers who are invoking racism and looking for a fight? Her lack of response to the crying child of her neighbours might indicate that she does not seek confrontation, or is it the case that she fails to show social responsibility?</p> <p>Society is thus represented as fragmented, there is little sense of community. Haneke looks to show principles of exclusion and marginalization; it selects points of social alienation and the failure of communication. The social 'codes', like the door code, are not working.</p>	
	<p>Van Cauwelaert, <i>Un aller simple</i></p> <p>A number of approaches could be taken here, including looking at some or all of: identity, social justice, family relationships, male-female relationships; regional differences (Paris, Marseilles, Uckange).</p> <p>Valérie is key to the development of both J-P Schneider and Aziz. In contrast to the men, she is at ease with herself and her surroundings, and she is the literal and metaphorical guide, a muse, initiating them into adventure and passion. The journey is towards a non-existent place (Irghiz), but she introduces culture, activities, and common sense in the journey of self-discovery for the two men. Answers may also examine the portrayal of three women who, by contrast, leave both men feeling sad and unfulfilled for different reasons: Clémentine, Agnès, Lila. The structure of the novel forges an ironic distance between the reader and events; there is an interplay of true/false, illusion/reality, and the games that the author plays suggest an approach which is not a straightforward criticism of society. Aziz is unsure of his identity (as is the reader) : even his official ID showing his origins is a forgery. The urban environments (Marseilles, Lorraine, Paris) contrast with the desert scenes and deliberately generate misunderstandings which are at the heart of the plot; for Jean-Pierre a stifling environment where he cannot communicate properly with his parents or with women; <i>J'ai renié mon milieu, mes origines</i>). Marseilles is represented as an opportunity for fraternity, crime, stolen goods, gang rivalries; Paris as an aloof (snobby) environment where career success is linked with success in relationships; Lorraine is 'home' and represents simplicity, family values, as well as the civilisation under threat, i.e. the Lorraine steelworkers who will lose their jobs.</p> <p>Candidates will select their own angle and illustrate their points with appropriate reference to the text.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
3B	<p>Semprun, <i>Le Grand voyage</i></p> <p>Analysis of social comment will reflect national and political attitudes in France and Germany and especially how society functions during wartime. The journey is a means of coming to terms with the horror of the past and the inhumanity of the Nazi regime, the behaviour of local citizenry in France and Buchenwald. Political commitment other than obeisance to Nazi ideology, is outlawed as German armies spread across Europe. After losing the fight against Franco, the narrator is interned for being a communist (un Rotspanier), then deported to Buchenwald. The range of behaviour, attitudes and relations depicted are varied, and the circumstances of war bring out some of the harsher side of humanity. Friendship and companionship are juxtaposed with betrayal, for example the double agent in the Resistance group. Contempt, scorn, even hatred, are evidenced by the treatment of prisoners by soldiers and German civilians or by reactions of some French villagers. Condemnation of tacit support is illustrated by the episode where the narrator visits the woman whose house overlooks the camp and who feigns ignorance of events. War brings out selfishness, as Ramaillet exemplifies; he receives food parcels in prison, but does not share them with other prisoners. Antisemitism is rife, both in school and in the camp. Brutality is evident in the camp, obviously, and elsewhere, eg torture in Auxerre, the Pole beaten to death between Auxerre and Compiègne by sentries. Candidates may comment on war-time France and post-war society.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
4	Représentations de la femme	
4A	<p>Avez-vous de la compassion pour les femmes représentées dans les deux ouvrages que vous avez étudiés ? Expliquez votre réponse.</p> <p>Film: <i>Persepolis</i> (Satrapi, Paronnaud)</p> <p>The film is highly critical of patriarchal society, the consequences of the Iranian revolution, as well as sexism towards women in general. It is a tale of freedom v confinement, western v Iranian society, told through the eyes of a child, which establishes an atmosphere of naiveté (in Marjane) and develops sympathy within the audience.</p> <p>On a personal level, Marjane has not had the best start in relationships: from her first boyfriend turning out as gay, to walking in on her boyfriend cheating on her on her birthday, to divorcing her first husband three years into the marriage, Marjane's encounters with men often end in failure.</p> <p>Marjane has mixed perceptions of women in Iranian and western societies; there are rebellious and conformist strands in tension. Her mother and her grandmother, the two major female influences in her youth, represent female independence and identity to which she aspires. Marjane has a romanticised view of her grandmother, the moral compass in her life, who encourages her independence when she decides to divorce, and reminds her of the sacrifices made to fight for rights and justice in Iran. Her mother also encourages her to become independent, educated and cultured, and to value the key importance of education for a woman in a misogynistic society. Emotion and sympathy are inevitably part of the viewer's reaction.</p> <p>The Islamic revolution may well have been a reaction to the Shah's style of government, but for women, it heralded the compulsory wearing of the veil, a symbol of Islamic religious law, Iranian culture (arguably), and a confirmation of their repressed status in Iranian society.</p> <p>The film also explores the theme of female friendship, as Marjane first becomes distanced from, then regains a sense of unity with, Iranian women, once she distinguishes those who still try to maintain a sense of personal identity, notwithstanding the veil.</p> <p>Societal and personal morals, beliefs, hopes, fears and desires, along with political oppression and contrasting social freedom for women, are all interwoven themes in the film which will colour the viewer's assessment and reaction to Marjane's story.</p> <p>Answers will identify some or many of these aspects and present a considered analysis with appropriate reference to the film.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
4A	<p>Ernaux, <i>La Femme gelée</i></p> <p>There may well be different approaches in answering this question. Some answers may side with the narrator in seeing womanhood not as an emancipation, but rather as a series of constraints imposed by society which prevent a woman from feeling free. The influence of de Beauvoir gives her a sense of pride and ambition in her feminism. Even as an educated woman, she sees life before marriage as a period of freedom to do what one wants. She endures pressure to get married, and once married, to have children. Marriage itself is seen as an opportunity to bring a sense of balance into her life, to stop her self-questioning. However, it proves to be a restriction. Her life is spent doing household chores, looking after babies, not enjoying emancipation. Others may see her as a successful academic and mother who is rightly concerned about women's place and role in French society. Freedom is seen as not just freedom to have relationships, but also the excitement of ideas at university: 'L'aventure, ma chance, ma liberté'. In some ways, she might be seen as wanting to have her cake and eat it: freedom and family appear as opposites.</p>	
	<p>Sagan, <i>Bonjour tristesse</i></p> <p>Youth, jealousy, and hedonism combine in Cécile's adventure. On the one hand, her behaviour appears self-indulgent and immature, showing her possessive and manipulative nature. She is happy for Elsa to be in the house, as she does not represent a threat to the carefree holiday Cécile is enjoying. Cécile reacts badly to Anne's arrival and attempt to change her behaviour and resents Anne's influence on Raymond. After all, Anne is cultured, intelligent, and is successful in business. She brings a more principled way of living and through her, the others become more aware of the shallowness of their lives. Cécile sets about trying to split up Anne from her father, and this ends tragically. These are all elements which can be used to justify why Cécile appears to be a rather unlikeable, spoilt brat. Answers might go on to consider the role of the father too, and how this has a bearing on Cécile's development and attitude. Clearly, the father shows little desire to take responsibility for Cécile and does not play the traditional role of mentor and advisor. There is a distinct lack of moral compass and no concern for Cécile's long term education prospects. This might offset some of the antipathy which some might feel toward Cécile. Some candidates may choose to see the text as a <i>roman d'éducation</i> in which the women who surround Cécile offer alternative future paths for her.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
4B	<p>Analysez l'influence du milieu social sur l'identité des femmes dans ces ouvrages.</p> <p>Film: <i>Persepolis</i> (Satrapi, Paronnaud)</p> <p>Marjane's childhood is marked by family members who were in political opposition to the Shah. The overthrow of the monarchy leads to the establishment of the Islamic Republic. This is followed by pictures of waves of suppression, women being forced to cover their hair, arrests, escapes from the country and executions. The Revolution starts to consume its children: For example, Anouche, Marjane's uncle, a political prisoner under the Shah, is executed. (Much store is set by social class, and concern that status may be lost is the reason that Ebi does not emigrate after the Revolution.)</p> <p>Marjane's conflict with various representatives of the regime leads her parents to send her abroad. In Vienna, she experiences solitude, homesickness, racism, and at the same time, adolescence, the joy of first love and disappointment. A rebellious girl from Iran, Marjane finds herself at home with the class troublemakers. Back in Iran, Where Marjane shows a lack of thought or integrity, she is taken to task by her grandmother. She accuses a nearby male bystander of harassing her to avoid a potentially difficult time during a police check. Responsibility is a watchword for individuals in a repressive regime, and all the more important, Marjane can make the connection between the sacrifices of family members and the fate which might befall the young man she accused.</p> <p>Marjane struggles to accept how her European acquaintances perceive her culture. Frustrated by their preconceptions of Iranians as barbaric and ignorant, she introduces herself at a party as being French, thereby denying her heritage and identity. This ploy backfires, as does her attempt to fraternise with young men in Vienna. There is a conflict between her identity as an Iranian and her desire to be socially and politically free to act. Her return to Tehran after her time in Vienna is not easy; the city has been devastated by the war and the government has stifled political discussion by imprisoning and executing activists. The contrast with social and political freedom in Europe is brought out by Marjane's experience at university; Marjane soon kicks against the restrictions imposed on them and soon begins to challenge the authorities. This increasing frustration of living under a repressive regime where social freedoms are much more limited, especially for women, leads to disappointments and frustration (a failed marriage and divorce). Ultimately, her second exile in Paris, sees Marjane as someone happy in her Iranian identity, ready to lead an independent life.</p> <p>Answers may also consider the other female characters, especially the grandmother and mother.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
4B	<p>Ernaux, <i>La Femme gelée</i></p> <p>The influence of de Beauvoir gives her a sense of pride and ambition in her feminism. Even as an educated woman, she sees life before marriage as a period of freedom to do what one wants. She endures pressure to get married, and once married, to have children. Marriage itself is seen as an opportunity to bring a sense of balance into her life, to stop her self-questioning. However, it turns out not to be the case. Rather than a new freedom, reality does not follow the intellectual construct: ‘on s’enlise doucement... intellectuellement, il est pour ma liberté.’ Pregnancy puts her own studying for the CAPES on hold and her existence is being drawn into another ‘engrenage’. Household chores are not shared, she feels that life is une marche vers la mort. Ultimately, life is not the exciting perspective which de Beauvoir suggested; family life is described as a simulacrum. ‘j’ai l’impression de courir après une liberté qui m’échappe tout le temps.’ She does not wish to be like the people around her, and her disappointment with the promised benefits of education is palpable: ‘Naïveté de ma mère, elle croyait que le savoir et un bon métier me prémuniraient contre tout, y compris le pouvoir des hommes.’ In the book, the height of freedom and happiness occurs in Paris, at the university. Sexual freedom appears with the advent of contraception. The narrator has no thoughts of marriage (a fate worse than death) or children (‘moi je n’imaginai jamais la maternité avec ou sans mariage’.) Her family put pressure on her to marry, and married life, together with moving to a provincial town, Annecy, to find work, make her lose her zest for life. Her own identity has been subsumed by conventional family life: ‘une marche vers la mort’. Other figures are often characterised as stuck in a rut (e.g. teenagers with babies, university friends who want to settle down with a partner, the inhabitants of provincial towns.)</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
4B	<p data-bbox="316 248 639 282">Sagan, <i>Bonjour tristesse</i></p> <p data-bbox="316 315 1300 551">The story is set during the summer holidays on the Riviera, when the bourgeois are at ease; the social world is a cycle of easy living, night clubs, hedonism. The framework, then, is quite different from the standard life of workaday Paris. The female characters in the novel are defined in part by their relationship with men. Raymond seeks validation through women, and he plays a pivotal role in determining the changing relationship between Elsa Mackenbourg, Anne Larsen and Cécile.</p> <p data-bbox="316 555 1252 651">Cécile is brought up by her widowed father in a carefree, hedonistic environment. Family structure is lacking, and the father delegates many decisions to Cécile (e.g. schooling).</p> <p data-bbox="316 685 1316 1491">Indeed, Raymond is charming, affectionate and has thoughts only for other women. He leaves Cécile to do as she pleases. Elsa, Raymond's mistress, is attractive and full of joie de vivre, but contributes little other than fun and keeping Raymond happy by means of her sensuality. Once her beauty fades under the intense sun, Anne is guaranteed to supplant her. Anne is in some ways the antithesis of Elsa, having 'aisance, ironie, autorité. In the Cannes Casino, she is at ease: 'Tous les charmes de la maturité semblaient réunis en elle, ce soir-là.' She is described as 'divorcée et libre' and represents the independent woman who has her own funding and her own mind. She also has a certain idea of social norms, illustrated by her attempt to get Raymond to marry her, or by her attempt to try and introduce a degree of hierarchy in the father-daughter relationship. She develops the role of a second mother for Cécile, inviting her to eat more, to study more and to make her aware of potential pregnancy risks when Cécile is caught with Cyril. She talks to Cécile about 'devoir' and is concerned about moral, social and family obligations. For Anne, what is important in life includes sincerity, proper attention to others and longer lasting relationships; that is, the opposite of Elsa. One of the features of the novel is a reconsideration of traditional moral norms. Both Mme Webb and Anne fail in their attempt to educate Cécile in valuing depth of feelings, fidelity, and responsibility. However, it is Elsa's style of living which Cécile chooses in the end: lack of seriousness, setting the importance of money over everything else; she seeks lack of effort, a life of ease, the ephemeral. It is a teenager's jealousy and desperate need of attention which is allowed to gain the upper hand.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
5	L'Exil	
5A	<p>Pourquoi les personnages principaux doivent-ils faire preuve de courage et de détermination ?</p> <p>Film: <i>Incendies</i> (Villeneuve)</p> <p>The film traces the life story of Nawal Marwan through love, death, tragedy, geopolitical turmoil and religious conflict, political engagement, captivity, torture and exile. Her twins, Jeanne and Simon, know little of her early life, and it is their search which reveals the extraordinary courage and determination of their mother.</p> <p>The background of armed conflict, religious rivalries, destruction and death, set the context of her life. After the loss of her lover and her child, she shows resolve in taking the advice of her grandmother and starting afresh. She becomes a political activism in the university, working on the student newspaper. She is an idealist, somewhat naive, but her experience of war (the murder of bus passengers at a checkpoint, the desolation at the destroyed orphanage) do not undermine her political engagement; she wants to avenge the death of her son by the militant Christian militia (or so she thinks) and coolly carries out an order to assassinate the chief warlord. As a prisoner, Nawal becomes known as <i>la femme qui chante</i>, her singing a sign of her defiance and inner strength. The fifteen years of interrogation, torture and rape do not break her, as her former warder confirms. She agrees to emigrate to Canada with her twins, despite the fact that they are a constant reminder of her experiences in prison. She is successful in making a new life for herself. Her silence about her life in the Middle East is a testimony to her strength and determination to start a new life in exile. It is only when she comes across her first son (in Canada) that the suppressed emotions and pain resurface and her courage fails her.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
5A	<p>Film: <i>Inch'Allah dimanche</i> (Benguigui)</p> <p>The film evokes themes of exile, the clash of cultures, problems of integration, and eventually the transition to <i>métissage</i>.</p> <p>Ahmed has worked hard as an immigrant worker; although he has lived in France for 10 years, he is afraid of the French, an overhang from colonial times and French domination. He takes out his sense of humiliation on Zouina. He barely talks to his wife and does not want her to leave the house because he can control her at home.</p> <p>Zouina leaves her home country with its known customs, culture and language behind in order to join her husband in France. Zouina experiences extensive isolation: home life is stifling and she suffers abuse and humiliation from her husband and mother-in-law. Nicole understands her prisoner status. The neighbouring Donze family is unwelcoming; they illustrate the small-minded attitudes and prejudice towards immigrants. Isolation is amplified by language problems by her limited knowledge of French and the fact that the adults are illiterate. Zouina 's escalating rebellion is evoked through listening to radio programmes, e.g. <i>Le jeu des mille francs</i>; she has questions about French culture; her anger towards her mother in-law starts with carrot throwing and grows. Physical violence (the fight with Mme Donze) shows the strength of frustration growing; her rebelliousness leads her to leave the house on three Sundays in a row.</p> <p>Tensions arise because of the French social order, so different from the Algerian. (women's place in society/home is much freer in France, the mother-in-law's attitude; even the visit to Malika turns out to be disastrous, and she chases her away because she is afraid. The encounters with neighbours are unhelpful: The Donzes represent narrow-mindedness, prejudice, religious hypocrisy.</p> <p>Emerging feminism and freedom are marked through friendship with Nicole, a divorcée. It is she who lends her books and introduces cosmetics and perfume to Zouina, reminding her that her body belongs to her. Zouina's reaction is one of ambivalence, but tries on the make-up. This helps mark the beginning of a new life and a break with the past become clear when she takes on responsibility for her position and asserts herself. Later, she shows independence in refusing Mme Manant's help . There is also a change in Ahmed, when, for the first time, he tells off his mother and sides with his wife.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
5A	<p>Nancy Huston, Leïla Sebbar, <i>Lettres parisiennes: Histoires d'exil</i></p> <p>The two writers leave their homeland and settle abroad. Both have links to France and it is the courage of starting a life in a new country as well as the determination to become writers. Huston and Sebbar describe writing as a land or territory, a place of one's own, and Sebbar defines exile as the very foundation of her being. Each writer explores the meaning of language in her life – both speak more than one language -, particularly as it relates to childhood and loss. The authors struggle with the distinction between their two identities (Canadian-French, Algerian-French) which have social, cultural educational and linguistic strands. Other themes include the construction of the correspondents' self through writing; mobility, perhaps fluidity or instability, as vital elements; and exile and difference, not so much isolation and alienation, as freedom. The sense of exile for these authors reflects their elective migration, and the exhilaration – and frustrations – of living between and across cultures.</p> <p>Leaving one's country of birth carries the risk of losing a part of oneself, but also brings with it the possibility of self-determination, – the writer is who she chooses to be.</p> <p>There is gain and loss. They are always connected to different people across different cultures, measuring degrees of alienation and assimilation, and it is this exoticism which is exhilarating and enables them to be creative. 'tu ne peux pas te réconcilier avec toi-même que dans le croisement'. As Sebbar remarks, her condition is intimately bound to her profession : 'Ce silence de l'exil... Il me faut, à chaque instant, si je ne veux pas mourir d'ennui, de désert, de vide, de mutisme, découvrir ou inventer de l'histoire.' It is not just the courage to plough her own furrow and be independent, her courage to observe people up close also has social implications: Sebbar garners her inspiration from standing alone at the counter in Parisian cafés, a habit which often attracts comments from the male clientele, as women generally do not do this.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
5B	<p>Analysez l'importance des relations familiales dans les œuvres que vous avez étudiés.</p>	
	<p>Film: <i>Incendies</i> (Villeneuve)</p> <p>The family unit is one of the key themes in the film: it provides the moral, historical and emotional framework, and the revelation of the family truth has all the shock of an Oedipal tragedy. Nawal Marwan's story begins in a country riven with sectarian conflict with an illicit and forbidden love affair with Wahab, a Muslim. Honour is key to family harmony in the Middle East. As she has brought shame on the family by having a relationship with a Muslim, she is forced to leave her family home, give up the baby and goes to live with her uncle in Daresh. This theme of the family dishonoured reappears when Jeanne visits her mother's village and the other women tell her she is not welcome. The final and most chilling element in the family's dishonour is the revelation of the identity of the twin's father and the circumstances in which they were conceived. In fact, all Nawal's children represent a constant reminder of the political and religious sectarianism in the country, as well as being a cause of guilt and shame. The broken family provides one of the themes running through the film. It is the search of a mother for her son during the war. This is mirrored in the twins' search for hitherto unsuspected family members (brother, father). Only when the family is reconstituted, and all the children are aware of their past, that the extent of forbidden love is revealed, yet love and respect for Nawal, their mother, are cemented.</p>	
	<p>Film: <i>Inch'Allah dimanche</i> (Benguigui)</p> <p>The film portrays the tensions of family life in a reunited immigrant family. Zouina is quiet, rebellious, isolated; she represents the raw experience of immigration. She is nostalgic for Algeria, especially as she has left her mother behind. Ahmed, her husband, is authoritarian, conscientious, somewhat inept, under the thumb of his mother; he can be violent towards his wife (e.g. he hits her for letting the police in the house).</p> <p>Aicha is the mother-in-law, suspicious, domineering; she threatens to get rid of Zouina and find a replacement; her attitude represents old-fashioned, traditional Algeria.</p> <p>At the family reunion at St Quentin station, Ahmed appears undemonstrative, gives his wife a fleeting kiss, says nothing to his son. Until the end, he devotes his attention to his mother, rather than his wife. The force of old Algeria can be seen too in Aicha, a powerful figure, who is cruel and domineering; she orders Zouina around. Aicha was abused in her youth and perpetuates a system of abuse; thus, she represents the burden of tradition. The family, for most of the film, is seen through its Algerian construct as a force for conservatism, patriarchal control and non-integration, in tension with French social norms and behaviour.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
5B	<p>Nancy Huston, Leïla Sebbar, <i>Lettres parisiennes: Histoires d'exil</i></p> <p>The family informs and has determined both outlook and creativity in these two writers. There are a number of references to their childhood and parents, that is to their formative years. As far as their status as mothers and wives is concerned, there are few references to their husbands (identified only by an initial) and only limited consideration of their children and family holidays, often seen as an obstacle to writing.</p> <p>Huston's relationship with her parents (who divorced when she was young) may well account for her lack of interest in, or attachment to, her native Canada and the English language. She had few qualms about leaving North America and her family to settling in Paris to write in French. For Huston, motherhood is a source of inspiration for her writing; it can also be a source of difficulty in combining the roles of mother and writer. When leaving the daughter with a nanny so that she has time to write, she is met with criticism from her acquaintances 'un immense réseau de culpabilisation'. While breastfeeding, she cannot have her creative writer's den. Raising Léa is in one sense a fulfilment, but also creates problems- not just post-natal depression but also 'perte d'identité' through inability to write. The name Léa is also a link with her past: it serves to spark memories of Huston's former Jewish lovers in NewYork.</p> <p>Sebbar's childhood has high exilic resonance: With an Algerian father deciding to marry a French woman, tension of identity and belonging was assured. Distance from normal society was underlined by the fact that he was a teacher in the French colonial system. By disseminating the language and culture of the colonizer, he further cut himself off from his own origins. ('...j'ai hérité, je crois, de ce double exil parental une disposition à l'exil, j'entends la, par exil, à la fois solitude et excentricité.' The upbringing was without religion, as both parents were hard left activists and had rejected their own religious upbringing. ('On vivait dans u lieu clos, institutionnel, et en marge, dans une sorte de communauté curieuse, républicaine et laïque.') The war of Independence leads to her father using Arabic increasingly, which changes him in her eyes. This made her more aware of the importance of the language of her mother, and her mother tongue, French. As an adult, she carries on the family tradition of teaching ('j'étais un bon colonisé. Comme mon père'). Her childhood in Algeria and the family's forced departure from it remain a source of inspiration for her writing. We learn little of her husband, D., other than he dislikes life outside the city, as does Leila, so when visiting her mother in the Dordogne countryside, he locks himself away to work. Her writing, not her family, is clearly at the forefront of her thoughts in these letters. Her two sons demand attention and take her away from her writing, but also represent a further distancing from her own childhood: '...avec des garçons, mes fils, je n'irais pas en Algérie parce qu'ils seraient si loin de moi'. There are no family reunions with her siblings in the Dordogne, perhaps accentuating her sense of isolation and the need to write.</p> <p>Answers will identify some or many of these aspects and present a considered analysis with appropriate reference to the text.</p>	

Part II: Texts

Candidates are to attempt **one** question from Part II: Texts and will write their answers in English as these texts are to be studied primarily from a literary point of view.

Answers are to be marked out of 30 according to the criteria below:

- 25 for content [AO3: 10 marks, AO4: 15 marks]
- 5 for structure [AO3]

Examiners will look for a candidate's ability to engage with literary texts and to produce answers which show knowledge, understanding and close analysis of the text. A more sophisticated literary approach is expected than for answers to Part I. Great value is placed on detailed knowledge and understanding of the text; on the construction of an argument which engages the terms of the question and on a close and sophisticated analysis of sections of the text pertinent to the terms of the question. Candidates may have been encouraged to depend closely on prepared notes and quotation: quotation for its own sake is not useful, although it will gain credit if used appropriately to illustrate a point in the answer.

Texts and notes may not be taken into the examination.

Candidates will not tend to show all the qualities or faults described in any one mark-band. Examiners will attempt to weigh all these up at every borderline, in order to see whether the work can be considered in the category above.

Examiners will take a positive and flexible approach and, even when there are obvious flaws in an answer, reward evidence of knowledge and understanding and especially any signs of analysis and organisation.

In the marking of these questions specific guidelines will be given for each essay, agreed by the examination team.

Part II: Texts – Content		
23–25	<i>Excellent</i>	Excellent ability to organise material in relation to the question. Comprehensive response with an extensive number of relevant points targeting the terms of the question with precision. Displays detailed knowledge and sustained analysis.
19–22	<i>Very good</i>	A thoughtful and well argued response to the question. Includes a large number of relevant points, well-illustrated. Displays thorough knowledge, good understanding and analysis of the text.
15–18	<i>Good</i>	A well argued response to the question. Includes a good number of relevant points, most of which are developed and illustrated. Some limitations of insight, but a coherent approach.
11–14	<i>Satisfactory</i>	A mainly relevant response to the question. Shows fair knowledge and understanding of the text. Includes a fair number of relevant points not always linked and/or developed.
6–10	<i>Weak</i>	An uneven OR basic response to the question. Shows some knowledge and understanding of the text. Includes some relevant points, but development and illustration are limited. Contains padding AND/OR has some obvious omissions OR is largely narrative.
1–5	<i>Poor</i>	Little attempt to answer the question. Only elementary knowledge and understanding of the text. Makes very few relevant points and even these are largely undeveloped and unsubstantiated. OR a response which makes hardly any attempt to address the terms of the question but which displays a basic general knowledge of the text.
0		No rewardable content.

Part II: Texts – Structure

5	<i>Very Good</i>	A well structured and coherent piece of writing, with ideas and arguments clearly linked throughout. All paragraphs well constructed. Includes a comprehensive introduction and conclusion.
4	<i>Good</i>	A clear structure, with logical presentation of ideas. Most paragraphs well constructed. Includes an adequate introduction and conclusion.
3	<i>Satisfactory</i>	Some success in organising material and ideas into a structured piece of writing. A reasonable attempt to paragraph but weakness in introduction and conclusion.
2	<i>Weak</i>	Some attempt to organise material and ideas into a structured piece of writing. Many single-sentence paragraphs or no attempt at paragraphing. Organisation of ideas not always logical.
1	<i>Poor</i>	No attempt to organise material and ideas into a structured piece of writing. Incoherent. Ideas introduced in no apparent order.
0		No rewardable structure.

Question	Answer	Marks
	<p>Part II Texts: Indicative Content</p> <p>Questions are open to interpretation and, therefore, the following notes are not intended to be prescriptive but to give an indication of some of the points which could be made in response to each question. They are by no means exhaustive.</p>	
6	Racine, <i>Britannicus</i>	
6A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Explain Junie's dilemma and analyse Britannicus's reaction. Comment on any other features you consider important.</p> <p>The scene is a miniature tragedy and a play within the play. The dramatic irony is pushed to its paroxysm since Junie has just been given orders by Néron to repudiate her lover Britannicus whilst he is watching and listening to everything she says. Failure to do as he ordered will mean that Britannicus dies. The emperor dominates the entire scene by his invisible presence. His passion and jealousy towards Britannicus, to whose sister Octavie he is married, and who is a rival supported by his mother Agrippine to defend her own interests, are expressed in this sadistic and morbid activity of enjoying the cruel part played by Junie towards her lover, who is both bewildered and distrustful as a result. The contrast between apparent composure of the lines uttered by Junie and the numerous exclamations and interrogations ('Quoi!') emanating from Britannicus is striking. Every word uttered by Junie is loaded with heavy potential consequences and the concealed warnings given by her are not lost on the audience: 'Ces murs mêmes, Seigneur, peuvent avoir des yeux; Et jamais l'empereur n'est absent de ces lieux.' As in the <i>Arabian Nights</i>, speech is synonymous with survival but this time, the stratagem devised by Junie/Scheherazade is not aimed at saving her own life, but that of her lover's from Néron/Sheriar. The tension is further heightened by the fact that Britannicus is disclosing the alliance mechanism to Junie whilst expressing his disbelief at her behaviour. The next time they meet in Act III will be truly alone and this will result in Britannicus's arrest by the Emperor's guards.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
6B	<p>Discuss the many types of love depicted in <i>Britannicus</i>.</p> <p>Love manifests itself in as many ways as there are objects in the play. The most obvious and pure example is the requited love between Britannicus, son of the late emperor Claudius and Messalina, stepbrother of the emperor Néron, and Junie, a descendant of Augustus. This makes Britannicus a rival politically and sentimentally in the emperor's eyes. Love is declined in passion and jealousy in his case and catalyses his ruthless and cruel side which later culminates in his rival's assassination. Agrippine embodies love for one's son, a maternal love which is, in her case, tantamount to her love for power. Her losing her hold over Néron pushes her to disclose her real motives in Act III. As befits tragedy, real and pure love is not rewarded in the play, as Octavie, the emperor's wife, is shunned and dismissed, as Junie is compelled to repudiate her lover, and as Néron's filial love has turned into a nascent solipsistic megalomania. Pure forms of love such as filial love and maternal love collapse when it comes to lust for power and when the survival instinct takes over. As a consequence, rationality turns into irrationality, stability into instability, virtue into vice, love into hate, loyalty into deceit, and desire and passion make way for sadism and death.</p>	
6C	<p>To what extent can Néron be described as a « <i>monstre naissant</i> »? Support your view with reference to the text.</p> <p>The play is about the nascent evil within Néron, the birth of a monster. Racine presents the spectator with the dialectic of innate and acquired (or nature and culture), as the spectator witnesses the metamorphosis of the emperor, who, for the first time in three years since he seized power, has broken free of his mother's influence. The play starts with the first manifestation of his irrational being, triggered by his abducting Junie. This triggers a full-blown conflict between him and his formidable mother Agrippine, whom he is openly defying for the first time in his life, and leads to the release of his inner violence as well as catalyses a deadly and perverted streak in his personality. The potential « <i>monstre naissant</i> » (Preface) has now become a reality and the play is the very narrative charting this development whereby, as Britannicus points out before being arrested, « Néron commence à ne se plus forcer ». In his attempt to satisfy his desire, namely to seduce and marry Junie, despite her requited love for Britannicus, Néron subconsciously unlocks his sadistic and obsessive mind, and erodes the dichotomy between public and private life as he progressively and successfully puts his plan in action. It culminates in the first major crime of his reign: the assassination of Britannicus. The latter's death marks the freedom of the Emperor from his tutelage (Agrippine/Burrhus) and from a concerted political order which had prevailed until then. It ushers in a new era, the unfettered freedom of the despot, who destroys and kills at will and whose rushed and dangerous decisions are encouraged by unprincipled and Janus-like advisers (Narcisse). The struggle between good and evil therefore permeates the whole work and its crux is the Emperor, who is the seat of the defeat of moral values. The end of wisdom, reason, civilisation and concord leaves a blank canvas where whim, treason, violence and discord can now fester.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
7	Voltaire, <i>Zadig</i> and <i>Micromégas</i>	
7A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Focus on the hero's plight and the significance of his journey. Comment on any other features you consider important using elements from both <i>Zadig</i> and <i>Micromégas</i>.</p> <p>Zadig, a victim of the King's devastating jealousy, has just left Babylon, following a tip from the Queen Astarté, with whom he has fallen in love. He is on the run towards Egypt and this episode is one of many which compose his journey from innocence to experience. The beginning of the passage focuses on the stars and the constellations, a probable reference not only to the Enlightenment but also to the immensity of the universe and, in comparison, to the relative insignificance of the Earth ('la terre [...] n'est en effet qu'un point imperceptible dans la nature'). The use of the verb 'anéantir' and the noun 'néant' in the same sentence here is reminiscent of the use of the noun 'anéantissement' in Chapter VI of <i>Micromégas</i>. The contradiction between the expectations and the reality generates an irony which is also akin to that in <i>Micromégas</i>, where the eponymous hero, together with the Saturnian, journey on Planet Earth and realise how small and petty its inhabitants are: 'des insectes se dévorant les uns les autres sur un petit atome de boue' could have applied to them too. In both cases, the heroes are naïve yet very perceptive. The ridiculous aspect of this 'image vraie', which discloses the scathing irony of Voltaire, is in direct opposition with Zadig's aspiration towards a 'philosophie sublime'. He is, like <i>Micromégas</i>, the discerning hero of 'les Lumières' as evidenced by the choice of rational verbs ('Il jugea', 'il eut considéré'); he is also extremely sensitive ('Il vit', 'il se sentit pénétré de compassion'), which triggers his instinctive reaction to free this lady at the mercy of a violent man. Contrasts abound in this passage whose narrative rhythm is extremely alert and which oscillate between love and hate, sublime and ridiculous, vast and small, order and disorder, appearance and reality. The lady, whose physical appearance reminds Zadig of Astarté, will usurp the throne as Queen Missouf thanks to that resemblance, and will be ruthless. This episode is yet another example of the hero's virtue leading to disaster and challenges the reader's expectations on Providence and destiny.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
7B	<p>Consider the narrative techniques used in <i>Zadig</i> and <i>Micromégas</i>.</p> <p>Both works are first and foremost <i>contes</i> – and not novels, a genre which Voltaire denigrated for its apparent lack of verisimilitude. They represent, however, a heightened reality, a succession of episodes, of adventures and narratives, that follow one another without any obvious logic, and yet, at the end, all fall into place, in a victory of order over chaos, of logic over absurdity, of cunning over ignorance, of reason over passion, of tolerance over fanaticism. The other tradition used in the two works is that of the <i>voyage philosophique</i>: the external journey becomes an internal journey and the physical meanderings of the heroes take on a metaphysical twist. Both eponymous heroes' trajectories are animated by the same mission, which is also the main interrogation for Voltaire: that of how to achieve happiness by the use of reason. The various tribulations of <i>Micromégas</i>, which are not as varied as <i>Zadig</i>'s, aim to refute the anthropomorphic model. Both works incorporate dialogues, whose role is central for Voltaire to distil his ideas, narration, philosophical treatises, fantasy, imagination and reality. On top of those, <i>Zadig</i> is a tapestry of many hues: the Oriental tale, the magic of the <i>Arabian Nights</i> and the story for the sake of the story all confer on it the dimension of a literary patchwork. Both works aim to show their heroes as proponents of an intellect which helps them discern good and evil in life. They both demonstrate, in the end, that, if reason were used more often, the world would be a better place; but, for Voltaire, it could be much worse, and one needs to accept 'le monde comme il va' (to quote the title of another <i>conte</i>).</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
7C	<p>To what extent do Zadig and Micromégas develop as characters in the course of the <i>contes</i>?</p> <p>The two eponymous heroes are exiles: Zadig because he has fallen in love with the Queen and has been obliged to escape Babylon, and Micromégas, because of his alternative opinions. They both embark on a centrifugal journey, to the peripheries: for Zadig, it is Egypt and beyond; for Micromégas, as his oxymoronic name indicates, it is a tour of the universe, a cosmic journey to Planet Earth and Saturn. They are both extremely perceptive and creatures endowed with reason and intellect. They both use their faculty of judgement to make sense of any situation. This enables Voltaire to use their outsiders' viewpoint to criticize, satirise and helps him resort to his idiosyncratic irony. In both characters, there occurs a realisation of things, a movement from innocence to experience, with some disillusionment, but it is difficult to talk about conventional character with a conventional development, as a <i>picaro</i> for instance. The two <i>contes</i> are more analyses of man and his traits, rather than the psychological journey of two conventional heroes. Zadig is far more prone to experiencing some anguish than Micromégas since his actions are so numerous and, as a result, since all his good, generous, noble and just deeds are systematically followed by disastrous consequences. Virtue, until the very last episode of the <i>conte</i>, never seems to be rewarded. Micromégas is rather indifferent to his plight: his knowledge is derived from empirical philosophy and he sees travelling as a way of broadening his horizons. His trajectory towards the path to reason is never really shaken, contrary to Zadig's, whose sense of justice and trust in Providence is tested until it is recompensed at the end. The only character who struggles with his initial beliefs when confronting them with reality is the Saturnian.</p> <p>Candidates may also note that largely, both characters are functions, platforms for Voltaire's philosophic ideas.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
8	Zola, <i>Thérèse Raquin</i>	
8A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Analyse the techniques used by Zola to create an atmosphere and its significance. Comment on any other features you consider important.</p> <p>The opening tableau of the novel takes the reader into the shady world of the Passage du Pont-Neuf and paves the way for the tragedy to come. Although the scene is set in the 19th century and in the then decadent and fashionable Latin Quarter, one ventures in this permanently dark alleyway at one's own peril. The statement « le passage du Pont-Neuf n'est pas un lieu de promenade » acts as a reminder or a caveat to any intrepid wanderer. The Passage oozes dirt, decrepitude, dereliction and oblivion and a gamut of smells and stenches reinforce its disgusting aspect. It contributes to shaping the lugubrious atmosphere where the story is about to evolve. Senses such as smell but also sight (<i>On y voit</i>) and taste (<i>âcre</i>) are summoned in this most detailed description. Space and time are also affected by this intrinsic morbidity and structural obscurity. Death is present in the sinister exhalations of the « caveau » (vault) and the squalor is declined in many adjectival hues (from <i>ignoble</i> et <i>sinistre</i> to <i>salie</i> and <i>noir de crasse</i>). All colours have faded or are a poor <i>ersatz</i> of the original, further degraded by the use of the derogatory suffix « âtre » (in <i>jaunâtre</i>, <i>verdâtre</i>, for instance). The description oscillates between extreme realism and the dubious presence of the uncanny. Terms such as <i>étrangement</i> and <i>bizarres</i> add another disturbing dimension, where personification is rife (the wall is akin to a skin covered in the scars of leprosy), and culminates in the fact that it is a potential crime scene (« coupe-gorge »). The lexical field of repulsion (<i>horrible</i>, <i>ignoble</i>) employed by the omniscient narrator serves to exacerbate the sense of confinement (<i>étroit</i>, <i>muraille</i>) which will be experienced by the protagonists in the Raquin shop, with its devastating consequences. It forces the reader into a violent and claustrophobic world.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
8B	<p>Discuss the importance of the senses in the novel. Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>The novel teems with references to the five senses: Zola himself reminded the reader in his Preface of the need for precision and the entomologist's approach in order to chart temperaments and observe the mechanisms of social determinism. The physicality of the descriptions in which the lovers/murderers (Thérèse and Laurent) appear summon the senses of sight, touch, hearing, taste and smell. This is the case, for instance, when they first meet: the two barely speak but the physical impact of their first encounter triggers an addiction which will bear devastating consequences. Senses are prevalent in the murder scene as Camille is drowned after managing to bite off a morsel of flesh from Laurent's neck; at the morgue scene, where Laurent fantasises the presence of the dead man; in bed with Thérèse, where they can both enjoy their new freedom but instead, are hindered by the perceived presence of the dead Camille. The couple's animalistic and atavistic tendencies have now become empty and morbid. The bestial desire which acted as a catalyst for their liaison has given way to 'la chair morte', a reference both to the Camille's corpse and to the lack of lust between the two. Sensuality defines the two protagonists as it brings them together, causes them to plot the death of Camille and this total absence of rationality also signals their lack of preparation after the murder and, later, their doomed relationship. One sense is given particular importance: sight. It is what governs their fateful relationship, through its peaks and troughs, when they first meet and later, when they get married, Thérèse realises that the sight of Laurent's body is repugnant to her. The eyes tell many words and silent communication is constant in the narrative as Zola relies on the reader to fill in the gaps. Sight can be literal and metaphorical, purely physical and also metaphysical as in the case of hallucinations. Eyes and what they see can be distorted by the imagination, as is the case with the eyes of François the cat, whom Laurent sees as the embodiment of his guilty conscience and as an accusatory figure. Sight is the last sense mentioned in the novel as Madame Raquin, who has been paralysed after her stroke, has but her eyes to see and express herself. She realises the lovers' crime and all her judgement is then expressed in her gaze. Akin to 'des morceaux de métal', her eyes become weapons. Like a mirror held to reflect their horrible deed, they precipitate the couple's demise, deciding to commit suicide to put an end to their self-inflicted torture. The aunt then watches the couple die in the closing scene, and continues to watch them for the following twelve hours.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
8C	<p>Examine the development of the character of Laurent in the course of the novel. Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>Laurent is first and foremost the outsider in the story: he is a friend of Camille's, a minor clerk who is brought by him to the Raquin household once they have settled in Paris and who dabbles with painting in his spare time. He has an immediate impact on Thérèse who has never seen a real man before ('elle n'avait jamais vu un homme'), and he then becomes a rival to Camille. She is instantaneously drawn to such a virile character that is the exact antithesis of her husband. His neck, 'large et court, gras et puissant' is a phallic attribute that epitomises his sexual appetite and represents the sheer attraction he exerts over Thérèse. He is later described as a 'bête fauve', an animal only interested in the satisfaction of his physical needs, be they eating, drinking, sleeping or fornicating. He is the sorry embodiment of the Darwinian principle of the survival of the fittest who opts for the pleasure principle (rather than the reality principle). In the run-up to the murder, he seems extremely powerful and fearless, intent on getting rid of Camille, who has become the intruder in the extramarital liaison between Thérèse and Laurent. Camille's death reveals the contradictions at the heart of Laurent's character: the piece of flesh that the drowning man ripped off his neck triggers a two-pronged change. The scar on his neck ('le sang qui lui montait au cou') signals the end of his sexual appetite and a sort of emasculation. It also represents the metaphorical scarlet letter which reminds him constantly of his crime and prevents him from the catharsis he was expecting to experience in killing Camille. The irony lies in the artistic catharsis that ensues: his works are obsessed with Camille and gain in accuracy as item progresses. Instead, it shows a moral and paranoid coward, who imagines the corpse of Camille everywhere he goes, in his sleep and his paintings, which prevents him from reaching the state of apathy that he was seeking so ardently. Fear dominates the character of Laurent after the murder, a fear which he reads in the eyes of François the cat and in the gaze of Madame Raquin. A far less complex character than Thérèse, much more irrational and instinctive, fascinated by death (as evidenced in the scene at the morgue), his only way of escaping is by resorting to violence against himself (his scar), against her, the cat and finally by committing suicide.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
9	Modiano, <i>Dora Bruder</i>	
9A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Assess the significance of the narrator's feelings towards his father. Comment on any other features you consider important.</p> <p>This passage is an illustration of how fragmented the narrative of <i>Dora Bruder</i> is, as many temporal levels are intertwined, and the distinction between the narrator and the author is often blurred. The novel turns the narrator/author into an investigator whose quest for the past of Dora Bruder leads him to a more personal quest as her past mingles with his own. In this case, this enterprise of reconstituting Dora's difficult life during the Occupation with her parents triggers the memory of his own visit to his father in hospital. His searching for her birth certificate required him to go to the Palais de Justice. His inability to find 'escalier 5' reminds him of the day when he sought to pay an impromptu visit to a father with whom he had been estranged since his teenage years. The focus on the first person pronoun reminds the reader of the hyperactivity of the narrator and of the variety of feelings he is experiencing at a crucial moment. The tentative strategy (« Je finissais par douter ») of finding the exact location and the person in question can mirror the narratorial strategy of resurrecting the past. Senses and memory form its integral part (« Je me souviens »). Places always remind the narrator of other events, closer or more distant in history, and, in a circular fashion, bring the reader back to the initial quest. In this case, the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital, where the father was being treated, used to be a detention centre for women during the eighteenth century. For the narrator, that conjures up the plight of L'Abbé Prévost's doomed heroine, Manon Lescaut, and, via the use of the verb 'déporte', heralds the fate of Modiano's eponymous (and equally doomed, for other reasons) heroine, Dora Bruder.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
9B	<p>How does Modiano present the Occupation in the novel? Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>Reality and fiction are intermingled in the narrative. The quest for Dora Bruder's past, her life during the Occupation, where she lived with her parents, which school she attended, her wanderings around Paris, her running away, her arrest, her return to her mother after her father's arrest, her final deportation, are the prism according to which history is represented. The narrator/author insists on the fact that recomposing one's own past is a very difficult task as many lacunae still exist, so, in the same manner, resurrecting Dora's past, a young girl born in 1926 and deported in 1943, is even harder. Details of everyday life in Paris and of the suffering of its people during the Nazi Occupation abound: from the requirement to wear the Star of David to the curfew, to the Résistance by 'les amis des Juifs', these people who wore the Star of David in support of their Jewish friends, to the quoting of official accounts by the Préfecture de Paris, and finally to the letter of Robert Tartakovsky from Drancy to his family before being deported to Auschwitz, just like Dora and her father Ernest. Objectivity and subjectivity are inseparable as the mind of the narrator reminisces, fills the gaps and restores a past using his imagination to complete (and empathise with) Dora's and her father's experiences. Modal verbs and adverbs are legion as well as expressions of uncertainty and doubt: 'peut-être', 'J'ai l'impression', 'Il devait penser que...' or 'J'ignorerai toujours'. The past (one of the <i>leitmotive</i> being 'Je me souviens') is doomed to be partial and incomplete. Representing history is part of a wider and absolute mission for Modiano, that of pitching memory against oblivion.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
9C	<p>Discuss the notion of identity as depicted in the novel. Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>The writing of a biography for Dora Bruder during the Occupation first takes the reader on a voyage in Paris at a particular point in history. It also takes the narrator/author investigating the life of an unknown woman not only on her journey as a Jew but also on to his own. Resurrecting the past of someone who used to live in the same city, used to walk down the same streets, who was Jewish and young as he once was, leads inevitably to self-introspection and association. In the case of this novel, a sort of ‘auto-fiction’, the realisation of the existence of common traits between Modiano and Dora is constant: their Jewishness and the rejection of their father by the French and German authorities, their running away from boarding school, her arrest by the <i>milice</i> and his at the request of his own father. Her very patronym, ‘brother’ in German, may also act as a subconscious catalyst for a young brother who died when Modiano was fifteen years of age. Echoes abound in the narrative and, when official documents have been quoted <i>in extenso</i> by the narrator, like the letters written by Parisian Jews to the Préfet, asking why, as French men, they should feel threatened, or the police account of Dora’s arrest a few months after her running away, the narrator injects his own hypotheses into the story, and, as a biographer would, empathises with his characters, with Dora first, then with Ernest, her father. He imagines what she may have done, may have thought, and may have decided to do as well as how she may have spent the months alone. The use of the pronoun ‘nous’ when reflecting on the reasons behind the narrator’s and Dora’s running away epitomises this ability to merge with the characters. Identifying with the characters is one of the strategies of the narrator/author. His investigation leads him to forge his own (plural) identity via the prism of the other: Dora.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
10	Mauriac, <i>Thérèse Desqueyroux</i>	
10A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Analyse the importance of the character of Jean and his influence on Thérèse. Comment on any other features you consider important.</p> <p>Jean is in many ways the outsider in the novel: a Portuguese-born Jewish young man, he does not belong to the closed French bourgeois society formed by the de La Traves and the Desqueyroux family. However, he appeals to Thérèse physically and spiritually, as she wishes she could spend much more time with him. He represents a sort of temptation. Her subversiveness, which she traces back to her childhood and school years, is titillated by his conception of life ('vivre dangereusement'). His outlook on family and people gives her a different perspective : 'il rajeunissait étrangement ceux que je croyais un peu connaître'. The first-person narration is interspersed with asides from the heroine, who comments on what Jean has catalysed in her and who compares the then and the now: a journey towards self-discovery and a conscious quest for the spiritual and a meaning to his existence. The fact that he declares that he was never 'pur' casts a doubt over his ability to match reality with his principles. The heroine also doubts his ability to be thorough and committed, as evidenced by her interrogations on his 'clartés': 'étaient-elles en somme si admirables?' Her disillusion is compounded by her awareness as an adult now: '... je crois bien que je vomirais aujourd'hui ce ragoût'. 'Ragoût' and 'vomir' emphasize a double contrast, between the terrestrial and the ethereal, between different types of register and past and present. This passage encapsulates the heroine's introspective development. She has noticed Jean's superficiality (his ability to broach one thousand topics in a short space of time, for example) towards ideas and potentially towards other human beings. She therefore oscillates between contrasting emotions, between her naive idealisation and her cold pragmatism.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
10B	<p>Examine the theme of guilt as depicted in the novel. Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>The novel starts with Thérèse leaving the court of justice after being cleared of trying to kill her husband Bernard. The verdict was influenced by false witness statements which the Larroque family (the heroine's) orchestrated with the agreement of Bernard's side of the family to avoid any scandal since M. Larroque is a local politician and since the Desqueyroux are a prominent family in the Landes. That may have contributed to Thérèse's insouciance during the trial. The fact is that she never considers her act as a crime: 'Moi, je ne connais pas mes crimes. Je n'ai pas voulu celui dont on me charge.' On the trip back home, she is already thinking about 'préparer sa défense' for when she next speaks to Bernard. Her legal innocence is followed with her sentencing by the family judge, namely her husband. She is, in the eyes of both sides of the family, guilty as charged (her father nearly disowns her) and she becomes, to all intents and purposes, a prisoner in her own home. The family's sense of justice, the politics of religion and the importance of 'sauver la face' to avoid public dishonour govern the new stage of Thérèse's relationship and life with the de la Traves, her husband and her daughter. The Desqueyroux family implements a punitive conception of Christianity involving her isolation and her being banned from seeing her daughter. This strategy of retaliation is based on fear and threats, given that 'la peur est le commencement de la sagesse', according to Bernard. Furthermore, the impossibility to communicate with him precludes any hope of forgiveness on his part. The very idea of a confession in the heroine's mind triggers the longest section of the book, namely the analepsis on her childhood and her (op-)position towards French bourgeois society. Guilt is a major theme in Mauriac's fiction (and life) and it is noteworthy that the narrator hopes for the redemption and absolution of his heroine in his Foreword. The reader is also encouraged to feel this way in the novel, where one finds only two occurrences of the word 'coupable' (both used not by Thérèse, but by the narrator and Bernard) whereas 'innocent' and 'innocence' appear nine times.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
10C	<p>How clear are Thérèse's motives for poisoning her husband? Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>The novel is an exploration of the question ('les mille sources secrètes de son acte') and offers an illuminating insight into Thérèse's psyche. Hers is a complex character who refuses to confront past and present responsibilities. When it comes to the motives behind her attempt at poisoning her husband Bernard, how much depends on her will to rebel against her social class, her husband and what he represents, and 'l'esprit de famille' (the original title of the novel)? After all, Mauriac later described his novel as 'un roman de la révolte'. On top of her contradictory psychological features and the evil streak in her personality, the <i>milieu</i> in which she has been evolving since she was born provides clues: it is a closed and hypocritical bourgeois society, where materialistic aspirations and landowning objectives; dynastic marriages are the rule. Within it, Bernard – and behind him, his mother, Mme de la Trave – makes her feel like a prisoner in her own home, an instrument to perpetuate his race, a trophy to brandish at mass every Sunday. Communication between the two is impaired and their emotional distance only increases as time goes by. Whilst Bernard was ill, his mistake in doubling the dose of arsenic without realising it leads the heroine unto the passive path of attempted murder. Her inability to consider the decision to continue to double the dose of the poison as a crime shows the limits of her self-avowed responsibility and potentially attenuates the very concept of criminal intention. The opportunity to continue with the excessive doses of arsenic acts both as a catalyst for her own self-destructive tendencies and as the crystallisation of her (until then) suppressed revolt. The return of the repressed provides the reader with a tangled web of origins for the heroine's motives, from the social determinism and Catholic conventions to the liberating influence of Jean Azévédo on her psychology, to Bernard's role as husband and judge. His behaviour towards Thérèse results in her isolation, first metaphorical before the attempted murder, and literal after, which she violently rejects. The interplay between various points of view and the personal pronouns orchestrating the narrative also contributes to furthering a shifting subjectivity; even the <i>non-lieu</i> following the trial sweeps aside potential objectivity. At the end of the novel, Mauriac leaves the 'hasard' (the final word of the novel) rather than God or Providence to guide his heroine towards her untrammelled and long sought-after emancipation.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
11	Maupassant, <i>Bel-Ami</i>	
11A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Analyse Duroy's first visit to the headquarters of the <i>Vie française</i>. Comment on any other features you consider important.</p> <p>Georges Duroy, a dashing and opportunistic former soldier, chanced upon an old friend from his time in the infantry at the beginning of the novel. Forestier has now become a respected journalist who leads 'Les Echos' section at <i>La Vie française</i> newspaper and invites Duroy to come and submit the first instalment of his new chronicle entitled 'Souvenirs d'un chasseur d'Afrique'. His first foray into the building is akin to an initiation in many ways: the terms used are telling ('introduire/pénétrèrent') as he is an outsider waiting to be shown the ropes and eager to witness the rituals and <i>modus operandi</i> of the daily. Duroy has to wait for a long time before realising that he needs to ask for Forestier specifically. He is a passive observer in this passage alternating description, narrative and dialogue: he only speaks once, to count the score established by Forestier with his toy ('cinquante-six') whilst all the other lines are uttered by Forestier and another journalist. Maupassant plays on the striking contrast between the expectations of the hero (and the reader) before being granted access to the editorial room, and the damning reality: nobody is working and instead, they are all playing a game of cup-and-ball. One can imagine that one is as surprised as Duroy who watches the scene without the narrator explaining his reactions. What we see is what he sees: the bilboquet scene is the most visual and striking tableau. Men are lined up in a room and are concentrating on scoring as highly as possible. The healthy emulation is what seems to be their only priority. They all have a toy (variously called 'un instrument/un joyau/la chose') and it is easy to see the sexual connotations of such a game where one needs to plant a ball on a spike to win. An exclusively male game, it is about (virile) prowess and a hierarchy amongst the journalists is established according to the players' dexterity. Duroy will unsurprisingly be extremely skilful in the game and will later inherit Forestier's bilboquet, as his arm is too weak to use his. The newspaper, rather than imparting information to the outside world, seems totally closed and cut off from reality. The public is dismissed from its organisation and it only seems to serve its own interests.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
11B	<p>'Bel-Ami is about power'. To what extent is this borne out by your reading of the novel? Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>The novel charts a rake's progress: Georges Duroy, an <i>arriviste</i>, climbs the echelons of French society using his main weapon, namely his advantageous physique. The opening scene clearly signals his unique power of attraction over women. His first objective is to make money and the opportunity arises to write a chronicle for his friend Charles Forestier's newspaper. He is progressively thrown into the world of the 'Tout-Paris' and ends up becoming head of 'Les Echos' section after Forestier's death. He is also able to make full use of his chameleon-like ability to adapt and gets to be familiar with the salons and circles of power whilst taking advantage of Madeleine Forestier's (his first marriage) vast network. Journalists, politicians and businessmen all devise their stratagems to become even richer. This is the case with the Morocco expedition, which is plotted by the Minister Laroche-Mathieu and M. Walter, the owner of <i>La vie française</i>. Duroy is privy to these secret negotiations between the two men thanks to one of his mistresses, Mme Walter, who discloses the deal in progress to him and encourages him to invest money so as to reap the dividends. Georges then becomes Baron du Roy De Cantel and uses Mme Walter to further his own agenda, not journalistic but political this time. The ending of the book, which focuses on the Assemblée Nationale which Du Roy can see on the other side of the River Seine from the Eglise de la Madeleine at his wedding with Suzanne Walter, leaves the reader in no doubt that it is his wish to become a politician, just like the all-powerful MP M. Walter. Power in all its facets is the substance of <i>Bel-Ami</i>, for instance in politics, in the press, in love and between the sexes. It is also about who wields this power and, as a consequence, who exerts influence. In this respect, the five women who correspond to the five stages of Bel-Ami's rise all represent a different type of influence: Rachel, the seductive prostitute, Mme de Marelle, the bohemian socialite, Madeleine Forestier, the skilful <i>politicienne</i>, Mme Walter, the respectable Catholic and her daughter Suzanne, a naive instrument to launch his career in politics.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
11C	<p>Analyse the significance of the role and character of Madeleine Forestier. Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>Madeleine Forestier is the dominant female character in the novel. She is one of the five women who, as stepping stones, or staging posts, orient Duroy's irresistible ascent into Parisian society. She plays both a crucial and instrumental role in making Duroy, after also having made Forestier, her husband, and her lover, the politician Laroche-Mathieu. The reader is amused to witness what Duroy does when coming to ask for help with the writing of the first instalment of his chronicle for the <i>Vie française</i> newspaper, namely that Madeleine is dictating his articles to her husband. She will do the same with Duroy. She is a ghost writer, a <i>politicienne</i> and a fiercely independent lady. Even after her wedding with Duroy following the death of her husband, she continues to lead her life according to her own timetable. She is a character who elicits in Duroy both a sense of threat and mystery. His uncovering of her liaison with Larroche-Mathieu is her lowest point; yet, this does not seem to destabilise or affect her as she speaks to the policeman about his job after being caught red-handed in bed with the Minister. She remains enigmatic to both the reader and Duroy and it is only when he takes her to his parents' home in Normandy that one learns of her past, of her humble background and the fact that she was orphaned very young. In this respect, she has things in common with Duroy, whom she enables to be much richer after he claims half of her wealth following the <i>constat d'adultère</i>. Duroy needs a certain amount of time to shed his image of 'Monsieur Forestier' amongst his colleagues, which he only manages to do after divorcing her. She is a rare positive female character in Maupassant's fiction, ready to reinvent herself, highly manipulative and fascinating.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
12	Anouilh, <i>Antigone</i>	
12A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Analyse the dialogue between Antigone and her nurse and what it reveals about the character of the heroine. Comment on any other features you consider important.</p> <p>This scene is a one-sided conversation between Antigone and her nurse: it prefigures the nature of the eponymous heroine's relationship with others. Her difficulty to communicate with others is illustrated here. She purposefully provokes the nurse and lets her believe that she left the Palace during the night to go and see a lover (whilst she has a fiancé, Hémon). The choice of term ('mon amoureux') symptomatic and perhaps a subconscious reference to the family's doomed and hugely dysfunctional history. The dramatic irony stems from the fact that the public knows that she has in fact been to see her brother's corpse, Polynice, to pay her respects and try to bury him properly. Her face expressions, as depicted in the stage directions, constitute clues for the audience and chart her increasingly sombre mood. Throughout the nurse's sarcastic and infantilising comments (« c'est du joli, c'est du propre »), the spectator learns about the heroine's childhood and her anticonformist reflexes. The rest of the play will show that Antigone will come to epitomize the defense of idealistic principles and will be anything but the « hypocrite » that she is accusing of being. The nurse's threat to report her to her uncle, King Créon, has far-reaching potential consequences which contribute to the dramatic effect of the scene : her quest for posthumous justice for Polynice openly defies his edict not to tamper with her brother's body, considered as a traitor in Thèbes, and is a crime punishable by death. The nurse's emotional lines constitute the bulk of this dialogue of the deaf, where she deplores her incapacity to prevent the development of her mistress into an apparently unreliable and dishonest person. The language she uses befits her low status: it is lively and prosaic, colloquial and entertaining by its sheer idiosyncrasy. It has a contrapuntal effect in a scene full of an overall sense of foreboding. It involves the audience through the vernacular use of the second person pronoun, and the anaphora of ça, it colours the exchange between her and Antigone as it lapses at times into plain inaccuracy (« Un garçon que tu ne peux pas dire à ta famille »). A variety of contrasts shape the scene: lies and truth, past and present, childhood and adulthood, love and hate, life and death. At the end of it, Antigone talks in terms that are veiled to her nurse (but not to the audience) about her real motive and asks for her sympathy, thereby indirectly eliciting the audience's and heightening the tension at the heart of the play. She is already displaying her stoical resignation towards her tragic fate.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
12B	<p>‘Antigone is more about power than authority’. Discuss. Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>Power and authority are at stake in the longest scene of the play, during the clash between Antigone and her uncle Créon, between a subject prepared to sacrifice her life for a cause dear to heart and the authoritarian ruler. At the start of the conflict is the decision not give a proper burial to her brother Polynice, who has been branded a traitor and has been turned into an example in Thèbes, and whose cadaver is rotting for everyone to see after the years of turmoil and the internecine war between him and his brother Étéocle. Antigone, as the prefix indicates, is the sole challenger of the royal edict. The opposition between the two main characters first turns to the advantage of Créon: ready to hush the scandal by offering to eliminate the three Guards who witnessed Antigone's actions, he is made to feel powerless by her determination, her individualism and rebellious willpower. Créon is unable to save her from herself and attempts to manipulate her emotionally, by disclosing to her what her brothers were like in reality. This very nearly succeeds, as Antigone, swayed by this disturbing revelation, is about to leave the stage and embrace her life as a princess ready get married to Hémon, Créon's son. This is a temporary victory for the King as he then opens up and lets his guard down, by talking about living according to social conventions and mentioning the term ‘bonheur’. This triggers Antigone's absolutist stance: her uncompromising attitude extends to rebelling against conformity and not playing the social game; by doing that, she removes both power and authority away from Créon. She has the upper hand and her idealism is reminiscent of Hugo in <i>Les mains sales</i>, whilst Créon's pragmatism is akin to Hoederer's. By her decision to reject his orders, Antigone questions his authority and introduces both political and social discord. Créon becomes this self-described ‘roi bafoué’ as he questions his own authority and power in a moment of sincerity that turns into a sign of weakness: ‘Un matin, je me suis réveillé roi de Thèbes. Et Dieu sait si j'aimais autre chose dans la vie que d'être puissant...’</p> <p>Antigone's absurd gesture jeopardises his power and her sarcasm signals to him and the audience the inevitability of her transgression and ushers in her own death sentence: ‘Vous êtes trop sensible pour faire un bon tyran.’ At the end of the play, Antigone has won the battle with Créon: ‘Vous êtes le roi, vous pouvez tout, mais cela vous ne le pouvez pas.’ She is brought to a cell, where she hangs herself. Her powerful rebuttal of her uncle's <i>Weltanschauung</i> has forever challenged his now obsolete authority. The loss is compounded by the double suicide of his son Hémon (in his presence), and Eurydice, his wife.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
12C	<p>« Dire oui ou dire non »: to what extent is this alternative central to the whole play? Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>Assent and dissent are the key postures in the play, as epitomised at first by King Créon and his niece Antigone, respectively. From the moment when his decision not to bury her brother Polynice has been made, the heroine repeatedly says no and refuses to accept the status quo. Her blind idealism is also synonymous with her absolutist self-assertion as a free and independent spirit, for whom having a choice is to continue to have a choice to refuse to be limited by narrow alternatives. Dissent towards power as represented by her uncle, is also assent towards choosing one's own course of life, and, therefore, one's death. There is indeed something stoical and heroic about accepting the tragic consequences of one's actions, namely to try and bury her late brother's corpse despite the official ban. In this respect, in the same way that assent can also be attributed to Antigone, dissent can characterise Créon too: in a symmetrical fashion, the alternative 'dire oui ou dire non' reflects his own dilemma not only as a person, as a father, a husband, an uncle but also as a statesman. He disparagingly declares to Antigone that, in her case, 'c'est facile de dire non.' Accepting his position as ruler of Thèbes, rejecting any rebellion will result in vetoing any counterproposal and quashing any attempt at disrupting the political and social order. Antigone pursues her teenager's tormented binary vision of the world until her death, in direct opposition to Créon's more flexible approach: for him, the conjunction of coordination 'ou' is not always exclusive and compromises are at times possible so as to reach happiness. This is a concept totally alien to his niece and which pushes her to go ahead with her radical decision. Their mutual dissent results in one common tragic assent, the acceptance of death as the only way of breaking this Gordian knot.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
13	Beauvoir, <i>Les belles images</i>	
13A	<p>Write a commentary on the following passage. Describe Laurence’s state of mind and analyse her relationship with her mother. Comment on any other features you consider important.</p> <p>This passage occurs after a clash between the heroine Laurence’s mother, Dominique, and Gilbert Mortier, the richest man in France. He has now married a much younger lady, and, in retaliation, Dominique sent her a letter to smear his name. Dominique has just been picked up by Laurence at her flat, where Gilbert physically (perhaps sexually) and verbally assaulted her. Laurence decides to take her mother out for a meal, away from the stifling Parisian society. The point of view is that of the heroine, who experiences a sort of epiphany as she is full of ‘un émoi mystérieux’ at the sight of nature and the cycle of seasons. It is a poetic moment in a novel based around the fierce consumerism of the jet-set; it is a descriptive pause in the narrative during which time and space have come to a standstill. The hustle-and-bustle of the metropolis in the distance triggers in the heroine who is sensitive to this harmony a sense of communion and the foreboding of a new beginning. This is perhaps to intimate a new start for her mother but also for her, as she is constantly on a quest for happiness and identity. The return to reality after this daydream happens when Dominique is back at the table. She is a larger than life character, powerful yet very vulnerable when she suffers a blow from fortune, in the shape of Gilbert’s double betrayal (breaking up and marrying someone much younger). Her social and family reputation is everything, hence her instruction to Laurence not to mention it to her other daughter Marthe, her husband (whom she never divorced) and Laurence’s husband. She remains a very endearing character as the reader empathises with her, despite her questionable behaviour towards Patricia, Gilbert’s new wife. The text displays how formidable a mother she can be and the awkwardness of her relationship with her daughter, who is fully aware that she does not know how to best help her. The reversal of the roles is also noteworthy as the daughter is striving to comfort and reassure her mother in her latest plight.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
13B	<p>To what extent does the novel criticise consumer society? Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p><i>Les belles images</i> is set in the 1960s, at a time when the ‘Trente Glorieuses’, a period of sustained economic growth and prosperity, is in full swing. The novel follows a tranche of French society, the upper middle-class, whose wealth and position rely on the capitalist system. At its pinnacle stands Gilbert Mortier (whose patronym means ‘concrete’, which may refer to building an empire and which might also refer, ironically, to his lack of sensitivity and his ruthlessness). He is one of the richest men in the country and a typical technocrat for whom capitalist values are fundamental to progress and represent the future. The description of his ostentatious office is particularly fitting as it seems an apt reflection of this vain billionaire. His <i>Weltanschauung</i> is shared with Jean-Charles, the heroine Laurence’s husband. In an argument he has with her, this architect opines that the future, not the present, will bring ‘la civilisation de l’abondance’ and satisfy the needs of the masses. This is where Beauvoir is at her most acerbic in the novel: this privileged stratum of society invents rational justifications to continue to be part of the elite and benefit from the status quo. The criticism directed at the ‘haves’ is first made by the ‘have nots’: a friend of Laurence’s daughter and a colleague of Laurence’s, Mona, come from modest backgrounds and they are the only voices in favour of the underprivileged; the attacks on the ‘société de consommation’ (as defined by Baudrillard) are led by Laurence’s father and her lover Lucien: both agree on the fact that man has been crushed by technology, by machines, and that ‘tout le mal vient de ce qu’il a multiplié ses besoins alors qu’il aurait dû les contenir’; it is during cocktail parties that Beauvoir satirically exposes the snobbery, the excesses, the superficial and materialistic obsessions of the jet set <i>milieu</i> in which the heroine evolves. Laurence is part of this consumerist society as she works for a big advertising agency whilst being fully aware of its shortcomings and striving to reach what her father calls man’s ‘vérité perdue’.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
13C	<p>Discuss the role and character of Laurence. Support your answer with reference to the text.</p> <p>Laurence is the heroine and the upper middle-class world described in the novel is seen through her eyes. This aspect generates a certain amount of sympathy and identification on the part of the reader. Her significance derives also from the complexity of her character. She is insecure and fragile ('Qu'est-ce que les autres ont que je n'ai pas?'), practises self-introspection frequently, battles her anorexic tendencies and suffers from bouts of depressive crisis. She, like her domineering mother Dominique, plays a role in society and her public persona is at odds with her private persona. On the outside, she leads a happily married life with her husband, Jean-Charles, and two young children. She enjoys her executive job in an advertising agency in Paris in the 1960s. The book traces her constant quest for happiness, her fraught relationship with her mother and charts her disappointments: she does not know why she married Jean-Charles and she has a lover, Lucien. Her self-analysis results in her acute awareness of her feelings and mental blocks. She knows she should be supporting her mother through her ordeals but fails to do so; her disappointment with herself is followed by her disillusionment with her father, whom she idealises and then feels distant to him, in a self-assessed Oedipal movement. His company on a Greek trip and his decision to live with Dominique again (even after their divorce) at the end of the novel leave Laurence bitterly unimpressed. Her character oscillates between ideals and principles, naivety and lucidity. Her questions about how to best raise her first-born daughter Catherine remind her of her own upbringing and the harrowing question of responsibility. The stream-of-consciousness passages, her asides, her questions and monologues, her silences and detached irony provide a touch of humour and an illuminating insight into the mind of this rounded character.</p>	