
A-LEVEL POLISH

7687/2: Paper 2 Writing
Report on the Examination

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General overview

All of the questions on the paper were attempted and they all enabled students to demonstrate some level of understanding of the work and some degree of success in their critical and analytical response to the question chosen. However, with some works, students showed a marked preference for one question over the other. For the literary texts, by far the most popular were *Tango* by Sławomir Mrożek (with over 500 entries) and *Panny z Wilka* and *Brzezina* by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz (with approx. 200 entries). For the films, the most popular was *Katyń* by Andrzej Wajda (with over 500 entries). The totals for all the other questions were in the tens rather than the hundreds.

On nearly all questions, on average over 45% of answers were in the excellent or good bands for AO4: knowledge of texts and films was accurate and detailed and was used to good effect to defend and support judgements made. The overall impression was that students had engaged with their study and enjoyed the questions they chose.

There was clear evidence that, where students had taken time to prepare and plan their answers, this was reflected in the quality of the response produced. The process of planning allows for the specific focus of the question to be considered and for knowledge to be organised around a number of key points that are relevant to that question. Essays where detailed planning had not occurred tended to be recycled versions of essays written previously, which may or may not be fully relevant to the question chosen.

Students should make it clear at the start of their answer which one of the two questions they have chosen and this information must be shown in their answer booklet. In some cases there was simply the number of the work (e.g. 1 or 5) and no indication of which of the two options for *Tango* and *Katyń* had been selected. It should also be noted that, where a film version of a text has been viewed, this is not always sound evidence to use in support of points made as there are often more or less significant differences between film versions and the original books (e.g. in *Tango* or *Popiół i Diament*).

Section A: Observations on specific questions

Questions 01.1 and 01.2

Tango was by far the most popular literary text chosen by the students. Around 33% of students opted for question 01.1 and approximately 67% for 01.2. Students who chose question 01.1 showed good knowledge and understanding of the play, very good critical and analytical thinking and great creativity. From the many alternative titles suggested by the students, there were some impressively original ones like: *Wojna cywilna*, *Świat bez zasad*, *Chaos i życie w wolności*, *Rodzina w rozsypce* or *Czym jest ta idea?* Unfortunately, some students, instead of supporting the title chosen, decided to summarise and only refer to the new title in the introductory and summative sections of their essays.

The students who chose 01.2 also displayed a very good knowledge of the book, which they accurately applied to the question. Students saw responsibility for Artur's death in Artur himself, Edek, Eugeniusz, Artur's parents and Ala. The distribution of characters chosen was equal. The least attention was given to Eleonora. However, Edek was often presented superficially, and many students referred to Edek's being guilty only for the actual act of killing Artur.

In many cases, they supported their opinions and views with relevant and appropriate evidence from the text and demonstrated excellent or good evaluation of the issue.

There were occasionally factual errors like:

1. Often Eugeniusz was wrongly referred to as Artur's grandfather instead of calling him uncle.
2. Edek was a neighbour and he shot Artur.

Questions 02.1 and 02.2

Question 02.2 (85%) was more often chosen than 02.1 (15%). Those who selected 02.1 correctly described and evaluated family relationships between Stanisław and Bolesław in *Brzezina*. Some students also evaluated father-daughter relationship between Bolesław and Ola. Only occasionally the relationship between Stanisław and Ola was interpreted and justified. *Panny z Wilka* was harder in this aspect as it mainly referred to the relationships between sisters from Wilko who are not the main characters in the book.

Question 02.2 required the analysis and evaluation of the loneliness presented in the novels. The majority of students correctly analysed Stanisław, Bolesław and Wiktor. Some of the students also examined Ola's or sisters from Wilko's loneliness. Those who were well prepared and planned their essay, went on to justify their views and conclusions consistently and supported them by relevant and appropriate evidence from the texts. In some cases, the essays focused more on the past question about passing and death rather than loneliness.

Rarely, students took two novels as one and mixed the plot and characters.

Questions 03.1 and 03.2

Neither of the questions proved to be significantly more popular. However, there were some differences in the performance of students, with around 50% achieving in the excellent or good band for AO4 in question 03.2 and approx. 35% in question 03.1.

In question 03.1 students correctly referred to Maciek Chelmicki as a representative of the Columbus Generation, Antoni Kossecki as a representative of the concentration camp victims and Stefan Szczuka as a representative of the Communist Party. Not many referred to Janusz Kotowicz or Alicja Kossecka as the representative of the youth or women. However, many students successfully described the plot and analysed chosen characters, though not many made a clear summary so as to analyse the whole of Polish society and the groups within it.

For question 03.2 there were some good or very good answers comparing similarities and differences between Maciek and Szczuka. Many students presented both of them as devoted patriots who fought for Poland and wanted to rebuild the country. They also evaluated the impact of World War II on both characters. However, not many saw the generational differences between both protagonists, e.g. Szczuka's experience in the Great War and its impact on his ideology.

Section B: Observations on specific questions

Questions 04.1 and 04.2

Both questions were approximately equally popular (04.1 = approx. 55% and 04.2 = approx. 45%), however the performance on the second one was higher than on the first one (by 20%). On average, over 50% of answers in 04.2 achieved in the excellent or good band for AO4.

There were some well written analyses of the young generation presented by Kieślowski. Most of the students presented and evaluated three versions of Witek's life with the reference to supporting characters like Czuska, Marek or members of ZSMP. In some cases, the students did not write about the whole generation but rather about Witek only, which resulted in lower marks.

Question 04.2 was also well answered. Many students showed good knowledge of the film with views and conclusions usually supported by relevant and appropriate evidence. However, many lacked knowledge of the historical background of the film, e.g. the impact of post-war events like Poznań 1956, March 1968 or strikes in the 1970s that influenced Witek's fate. Some students argued that history did not have an impact on Witek and his fate was purely his choice or a coincidence, which occasionally was supported by good evaluation and justification.

Questions 05.1 and 05.2

Around 54% of students achieved a score in the excellent or good band for 05.1 and around 47% for 05.2. Most of the students who chose question 05.1 showed a good or very good knowledge and understanding of the film and issues presented. Many referred to religious symbols correctly analysing the meaning of crucifix, rosary beads or the Lord's Prayer. Some students supported their views and conclusions by relevant evidence, however many just summarised the plot without deeper analysis of the meaning of these symbols in Polish culture and tradition.

Question 05.2 was by far the more popular of the two (approx. 85% chose this question). Many students agreed that *Katyń* is or can be seen as a historical film and they presented good or very good knowledge of the film. Many supported their views with accurate and detailed evidence, e.g. dates – 1st and 17th September 1939, April-May 1940 or April 1943. Sometimes, they muddled 1940 as the date of the military and intelligentsia arrest with 1943 when the Nazis announced the discovery of mass graves in the Katyn Forest. Very often students referred to Wajda's personal reason to make *Katyń* (his father) and to diaries written by prisoners that were the base for the film. Not many referred to original propaganda videos included in the film.

There were many answers that simply referred to women presented in the film (Specimen Paper question), which unfortunately did not respond to the question. Occasionally, students summarised the plot of the film without any reference to the issue in the question. Some students argued that *Katyń* is not a historical film and presented accurate evidence to support their view.

Assessment Objective 3

In general the language presented by students was good, with rich vocabulary, complex structures and good spelling. There were occasionally some spelling errors, however, particularly in words with either rz or ż, ch or h, ó or u. Occasionally there was the wrong gender or person in the verb conjugation or wrong case in the noun or adjective descension. Very often, the students wrote names of characters, places or nations in the lower case, e.g. polacy, niemcy, artur. The students also struggled with the descension of places, e.g. Katyń – w Katynie or Wilko – w Wilcu.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.