R E A S O N I N G

an introduction

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1

"Be reasonable", we are likely to say to another person, or to ourselves, in response to some remark or thought or proposed action that we believe to be unreasonable. But how are we to tell, or show, whether it is reasonable or not? We need to be able to engage competently in the activity of **reasoning**.

Serious reasoning is a **critical** (and so self-critical) activity, not to be confused with trying to persuade oneself or others, by whatever means may be "effective", to take a particular view. It distinguishes a proposed conclusion from the reasons (one or more) that have been offered by oneself or another for drawing it, and asks not only whether what is said in stating those reasons is true, but also whether or not it **justifies**, or even **necessitates**, the conclusion (and whether or not the conclusion might be justified on other available grounds). Hence come such critical questions or remarks as "Does that **follow**?" or "You haven't **shown** that" or "We need more evidence if we're to be **entitled** to say that."

How are we to learn to engage competently in the activity of reasoning, and to develop the mental powers that will make the activity more and more fruitful for ourselves and others? That word 'fruitful' deserves emphasis: yes, we are certainly concerned here with identifying conclusions and the adequate or inadequate reasons that we or others have given in their support, but also with forming and responding to hypotheses, testing them, and discovering whether or not they deserve to be regarded as true or at least probable. That a student, or a member of an association or company, can engage well in such reasoning is obviously important to that individual and his or her group: someone who cannot do so will hardly be creative or innovative, or be regarded as one of those who, as we say, "think for themselves".

In spite, however, of this fundamental importance of learning to reason, it has come to be widely neglected. In Victoria, for about four decades until 1983, students in years 11 and 12 had to prepare for all the several sections of the compulsory English examination, one of which was called "Clear Thinking". Many of those students had received when they began the earlier year (some of us were as young as fifteen) an excellent little book, still worth reading, by two Melburnians, Professor A. Boyce Gibson and Mr A.A.Phillips, called ***Thinkers at Work***, with such chapters as "The Art of Guessing" and "The Art of Testing". In the exam, candidates were given a passage about whose subject-matter they had no previous information, and in that passage there was a demonstrable lack of sound reasoning: some at least of the arguments presented were unsound. Usually the passage contained a number of persuasive devices, but the candidate was expected to be unimpressed by these, especially if occurring within unsound arguments. The study of "Clear Thinking" gave students (in my case, in 1951 and '52) a mental dimension not possessed by people who had not engaged in it, and very valuable for university and for life. Some university teachers in recent years have noted the weakness of many students when it comes to construction of their own arguments, and critical appraisal of them and of those of others.

Regrettably, some English teachers lacked confidence or satisfaction in guiding the study of "Clear Thinking", and it was replaced by "Presentation of an Issue", in which the focus came to be on "effectiveness" and often on identifying modes of persuasion, rather than on whether particular arguments were cogent. A cultural change has underlain this substitution: a move

away from being committed to fair-minded and objective criticism of claims and arguments, aimed at determining whether they deserve our acceptance, to the usually tacit, complacent or resigned accepting of a form of relativism and/or of self-assertion ("That's how I see it, anyway") and/or an assumption that "spin", plausible presentation of a point of view, is what matters or is inevitably practised.

In the twice-yearly examination which I set 58 times, with names from 'September 1987' to 'April 2017', for the Learningguild Certificate in Reasoning and Expression (an examination that people were encouraged to go on taking until they reached the A grade or at least an upper B), I maintained the "Clear Thinking" tradition. As can be seen from the five pairs of paper and report in Set B of the Sets of Documents at learningguild.org.au, in every one of the five sections of the paper reasoning is involved, but in Section 4 evaluation of arguments is specifically required. That section is called "**Factors and Arguments**".

This booklet includes, with the help of references, miniature introductions to six branches of **philosophy**: in Part 3 logic and epistemology, in 4 philosophy of science, and in 5 moral and political philosophy and philosophy of education. Philosophy is only **one** region of the **activity** we call reasoning, and we need of course to be engaged in numerous others; but, like the study of grammar, that of philosophy, valuable in itself, often helps in such engagement.

2

Let us first consider factors, and then, in Parts 3 and 4 respectively, two types of argument. I shall illustrate some points by referring to the Annexure, where the particular Section 4 that was part of the September 1993 exam is reproduced, followed by a revised version of the corresponding section of the report on that exam. Paper copies of many exam papers and reports before 2014 are available, and reports related to many of the exams, and thus Learningguild can offer resources even wider than those referred to in the last-but-one paragraph above for anyone who wants to develop his or her powers of assessing arguments and developing sound ones.

Often, when we are rightly dissatisfied with reasons given for adopting a view, and so with an argument, **one or more relevant factors have been left out of account, and/or one or more have been exaggerated or given an exaggerated importance**.

So, for example, the imagined speaker Ian in September 1993's Section 4 rightly values measurement and calculation, indispensable in many areas of life, but does not consider whether there are not areas (for example, our judgments about another's trustworthiness, as well as the depiction of character in a "film, or play, or painting, or book") where we can make reasoned judgments when no measurement or calculation could decide the matter. Thus Ian fails to look for and identify the factors (e.g., vividness, credibility, originality, insight) that might here appropriately be taken into account, and misplaces the importance to be attached to measurability and/or calculability. One mark of the careful reasoner is that he or she is not blinkered, not suffering from tunnel vision, but **alert to a wide range of factors**, one or more of which, or its importance, may easily be unrecognized, ignored or underestimated – or exaggerated. That alertness is needed, one might say, everywhere: consider politics, legal practice, military and police behaviour, business, philosophy, history, educational theory, study, medicine, sport, and indeed marital or partnered life and that of a family.

One form exaggeration can take is distortion or caricature. Ian suggests that a preference for one film, etc., rather than another is just a matter of personal taste, similar to a liking for oysters. As is common with those who use an analogy as part of their exaggeration, he has not shown that his is an appropriate one. He abusively portrays "people [who] get degrees in literature" as doing no more than "dressing up their preferences in elaborate language". The language of some of them might in fact turn out to be straightforward, considered, defended or defensible, and concise.

3

In learning to assess **arguments**, and not just by looking for factors ignored or wrongly estimated, it is valuable to master the correct use of some terms and devices used in the discipline called logic, which is largely concerned with the analysis and assessment of arguments, with reference to their form and/or some aspects of their content. The reasons given for a conclusion are often called premises, and **the premise or premises and the conclusion drawn rightly or wrongly on that basis form an argument.** (Someone arguing for a particular view might offer several arguments, and a conclusion of one might be used as a premise in subsequent arguments.) Critical responses mentioned or offered, in the Annexure, to Ian's remarks are concerned with **the evaluation of arguments**: we may say of arguments that they are sound or unsound, cogent or lacking in cogency, or (depending on the nature of the argument) **valid** or **invalid**, or **strong** or **weak**. The adjectives 'valid' and 'invalid' are applied to arguments called **deductive**, in which it is claimed that to accept the premise(s) and not accept the conclusion would be self-contradictory, and the adjectives 'strong' and 'weak' to **non-deductive** arguments, where the premises are not claimed to necessitate the conclusion in that way but to provide **support** for it. Strength and weakness admit of degrees; validity and invalidity do not.

Like a proposition (see below), an argument, as we are here using the word, may be simply an object of thought on the part of one person or more: what makes it an argument is the combining of two, or (often) three, or more propositions with the claim that one of these, called the conclusion, does or would necessarily follow from, or is or would be justifiably drawn, from the assertion of the other or the combination of the others.

In my logic textbook *Wonder and Reason*, which Learningguild published in 1996, I presented two arguments concerning safe or unsafe bikes and brakes that did or did not work, and the **forms** of those arguments. Here I do so again**.** Think of the letters *p* and *q*, familiar in logic, first as **abbreviative** (for 'the bike is safe' and 'the brakes work' respectively) and then, as one primarily does in logic, as **abstractive**, so that one can ask whether the argument-form is valid or invalid whatever particular words might (consistently) be used in place of the letters. The dash (–) stands for 'it is not the case that', and is best read as 'dash'. The capital letter P stands for 'Premise', and 'Con', under the line, for 'Conclusion'.

(i) P1 If *p*, then *q*
P2 *q*
Con *p*

(ii) P1 If *p*, then *q*
P2 –*q*
Con –*p*

One of those argument-forms is valid, the other invalid. Which is which? You can work that out without appealing to any knowledge you have of bikes and brakes, or even without trying out any substitution of words for the two letters. Apply the test of whether it would or would not be self-contradictory to accept premises of those forms and decline to accept the conclusion. (i) If one accepts that if *p* then *q*, and that *q*, is it self-contradictory to decline to accept, on that basis, that *p*? (ii) If one accepts that if *p* then *q*, and that –*q*, is it self-contradictory to decline to accept, on that basis, that –*p*? (How would you explain the meaning of 'If' and its difference from 'If and only if"?) I call a judgment of the form 'If *p* then *q*' a judgment of **hypothetical inferability**, when (as with our bike-brakes example) it makes the claim, called a modal one, that it **could not** be the case that *p* without its also being the case that *q*. Thus it makes an assertion about what would be strictly inferable in a hypothetical case. Such strict statements are needed if we are to have valid arguments using 'if', 'if … not' or 'unless'.

Whether they are being used abbreviatively or abstractively, such letters as *p, q* and *r* should be given a consistent use, and that is to fill the place of what I call **statementile locutions**: sets of words and/or numerals etc. that are being or **could be** used to make a complete statement. Neither the letter *p* nor the letter *q* stands in for an actual statement in 'If *p* then *q*'. The asserter of a hypothetical statement of such a form is not stating either that *p* or that *q*.

A useful (indispensable?) word in this context is 'proposition'. Propositions are mental objects capable of being shared, e.g. in the discussion of them, and of being true or false (often it is not known which), that are generally expressible (not always easily) in more than one set of words. The normal way of referring in English to a proposition is by a noun clause beginning with the conjunction 'that': so we may speak, abbreviatively or abstractively, of the proposition that *p*, or simply say 'that *p*'. It makes for confusion to use the locution 'the proposition *p*' or '*p* is true' (where the letter *p* does not grammatically fill the place of a statementile locution), instead of 'the proposition that *p*' and 'it is true that *p*'. Anyone who would like to pursue these matters is invited to look for the book *The Development of Logic* (1962), by the Oxford logicians William and Martha Kneale and read the numbered paragraphs on pp. 49-51. On hypothetical statements (there called conditional ones), pp. 135-8 are admirable, with their imagined remarks in the context of the annual boat race between Oxford and Cambridge. These passages are too little known to most logicians, who are often too little concerned with "what we would say when" (J.L.Austin of Oxford) and how best to explain it. They are a good introduction to one area of philosophy. So is the paper by Professor Gilbert Ryle (also of Oxford) called "'If', 'So' and 'Because'". It brings out the intimate relations between the ordinary uses of those three conjunctions, and is included in his *Collected Papers,* Vol. II.

The importance of the need for care in the use and interpretation of the letter *p* and of the form 'that *p*' is too little recognized in another area of philosophy, called epistemology: the study of knowledge, belief and related matters. I know that *p*, where 'that *p*' is abbreviative for the **fact** that my house has the number 23; someone else may believe that p, where 'that p' is abbreviative for the **proposition** that the house has that number; a third person may think, even be sure, that he knows that its number is 25, where 'that *p*' represents a **candidate-fact** known by me to be no fact at all. As the Cambridge philosopher G.E.Moore pointed out in his *Philosophical Papers*, it is not good English to say "I know that proposition" to mean anything

more than that one is familiar with it. Nor can one say 'I believe that fact'. So knowledge is not, as many philosophers have told their students, a superior kind of belief. One may of course, as with house numbers (think of other examples), move from belief that *p* to knowledge that *p*; but then one no longer **believes** that *p*.

4

Most of the arguments we meet in ordinary life are non-deductive, with strength or weakness in varying degrees. If, for example, we wonder if a particular bike is safe, it is appropriate to perform a number of tests, not just of the brakes, and then at some point we might fairly argue that we had performed, without any unfavourable outcome, a sufficient range of tests to enable ourselves to be rationally confident of the bike's safety. Non-deductive arguments of that kind are known as **hypothetico-deductive**, and have three stages. First there is the wondering if *p*, and the decision that the hypothesis that *p* deserves to be tested (against evidence already or not yet available, and/or its coherence with our other beliefs, one or more of which may themselves need to be tested). Second comes the formulation of implications of the hypothesis (propositions that would have to be true if it were true, so that one can say 'If *p*, then *q*, and *r*, and *s*, …'), and enquiry into whether *q*, and whether *r*, etc. If we can be sure that one of these implications is false, then we can employ a deductive argument of the second and valid pattern above, and can conclude that our hypothesis, at least in its present form, is false. That itself is progress. If, however, we go on finding that our implications are true, we must not go in for a series of invalid arguments of the first form above, but may be able, in a third stage, to mount a strong argument, not itself deductive, that we have exposed our hypothesis to such a battery of testing, without its being shown to be false, that we may reasonably, if tentatively, believe it to be true, or at least the best available so far. Here of course one must be acquainted with relevant factors in the area concerned; and one cannot exclude absolutely the possibility that further testing, perhaps of some previously unconsidered implication, might show one's hypothesis to be false. Karl Popper (1902-94), originally from Austria, explained investigation of the kind he called hypothetico-deductive in that way. Google 'Famous Scientists Karl Popper', and notice what prominence the words 'falsify' and 'falsifiability' had for him. His view has been widely regarded as illuminating the nature of scientific reasoning at its best; but I would say that it is appropriate to **any** area of thought (or practice). Argument by *reductio ad absurdum*, in which a proposition is claimed to have an absurd implication, is analogous and can occur in many fields.

The strength or weakness of a non-deductive argument, then, is related to factors rightly considered or wrongly ignored. Ian's argument that any preference for one film, etc., over another is like one for soup rather than oysters is weak because he has left out of account what might reasonably be meant by 'sensitive' or 'expert' as descriptions of those he scorns. He does not consider whether one factor he does note, that "fashion changes", justifies the conclusion that aesthetic judgments are merely expressions of fashion or could not be independent of it. He has not tested his view by saying, for example, "If literary criticism is just a matter of fashion or personal taste, then no good reasons have ever been given for preferring the tragedies of Shakespeare to the melodramatic plays of Seneca", and then enquiring into whether such reasons have been or could well be given.

5

Finally, like John Stuart Mill (see *Liberty*, Chapter 2, and especially the seventh paragraph, beginning "When we consider …"), I emphasize how important it is in all fields of reasoning to look for opportunities of **discussion**. So often we need discussion to bring to our attention factors we have not thought of. So often without discussion it may not occur to us to think of questioning, as Plato insisted, some assumption (i.e. some unexamined belief we have previously taken for granted). Through taking part in good discussion we can learn a great deal about how to reason soundly and fruitfully. Both Mill, who kept clear of any university, and another 19th-century English liberal, T.H.Green of Oxford, deserve to be read by anyone who wants to explore moral and/or political philosophy, or the philosophy of education, and/or simply to study good examples of reasoning. For Mill, seek the OUP paperback edition of *Liberty*, *Utilitarianism*, *Representative Government* and *The Subjection of Women*, and go especially to *Liberty* Chs 1-3, after reading the editors' introduction. From Green, in *Works* Vol. III, near and at the end, there are two lectures, "Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract" (1881) and "On the work to be done by the new Oxford High School for boys" (1882). Copies of those are available from Learningguild.

Both Mill and Green wrote about liberty or freedom (the words are normally used synonymously), and the value or cost of the presence or absence of these for persons, groups and states, in the past and in their own time (as in ours). They agreed in advocating a wide range of freedom from the state's or other people's control ("negative liberty"), but Green's concept of freedom included what he called positive freedom (genuine opportunity to develop one's faculties) and he saw it as a major responsibility of government to remove obstacles to such opportunity, especially among those suffering the most serious deprivations. He was more communitarian than Mill, who put more emphasis on individuality. The two agreed on the urgent need to bring to an end the long and various subjection of women. Would you agree that this statement of Green (in "Liberal Legislation …", on p.371) deserves to be accepted as foundational both for moral philosophy (also called ethics) and for political?

> When we measure the progress of a society by its growth in freedom, we measure it by the increasing development and exercise on the whole of those powers of contributing to social good with which we believe the members of the society to be endowed ….

Much reasoning (including much philosophy) is usefully described as, in a broad sense, **analytical**: so the writings referred to above in the paragraph naming the Kneales and others. Much is also **expository**, critical, again in a broad sense, often of notable writers. Some, like much of Mill's and Green's, is **normative**, concerned with what we **ought** to say or indeed to do or to be. So, in philosophy of education, we may ask how we ourselves, and/or some others, use the word 'education' (not, misleadingly, what "**the** concept of education" is!), and/or examine the work of some good writer(s) on education, and/or ask what for good reasons **deserves** to be prominent in it.

Green, in the first paragraph of the Oxford High School lecture, gives a striking partial answer to that last question. It is to learn, through efficient primary and secondary education, both "[to] read well enough to have free access to the literature of [one's] own language" and "[to] write it clearly and correctly". Do you agree? (The questions may arise: "Am I having, or have I yet had, such an education, at schools or anywhere else?" and "Should I seek it?".)

Annexure

Section 4 of the September 1993 examination for the Learningguild Certificate in Reasoning and Expression

4. FACTORS AND ARGUMENTS

(Recommended time: 30 minutes)

First read the following passage (let us suppose that the speaker or writer is a man named Ian), and then answer the three questions below.

> How can people say that one film, or play, or painting, or book, is "better" than another, unless they mean that more people like it and go to see it, or buy it, even at a high price? You can measure something's impact and popularity, but not its "merit".
>
> Let's turn away with a smile when we hear that one so-called critic (or writer, etc.) is more sensitive or expert than another: these things are all a matter of taste, and, as the old saying has it, it's no good disputing about tastes – you like something, I don't; you'll go and see that film, I prefer this one; you enjoy oysters, I'll ask for soup.
>
> Of course there'll always be people who try to distinguish themselves from the rest of us by saying that their tastes are superior to ours – they are the elitists, who despise mere popularity and high sales. But they have no way of showing that their preferences deserve more attention than anyone else's. And of course fashion changes, and those elitists are soon out of date.
>
> I'm amazed that people get degrees in literature for dressing up their preferences in elaborate language. If you're not measuring or calculating, I say, you shouldn't get a degree for whatever you're doing. You might enjoy reading, and explaining your reactions to what you read, just as other people may enjoy playing golf or joke-telling; but no one suggests there should be degrees in golf or joke-telling.

i) Summarize Ian's central claim in one sentence.

ii) In about 150-200 words, examine Ian's presentation of his view, concentrating on what he says and considering to what extent, if at all, he has justified his view.

iii) What do you yourself say about the issue Ian raises? (Give reasons for the view you present, and include at least one illustration. Again, about 150-200 words would be appropriate.)

The Report (revised) on Section 4 of the September 1993 exam

In all other sections at least three out of the four candidates gained a B mark: in this one there were three C marks (CB, C, C--) and a "Jb", i.e., "Just below C". Part of the reason for this difference was the relative difficulty of the theme, of clearly describing the defects of the passage, and of articulating one's own view, particularly if a candidate did not have much experience of the arts or humanities. One important attribute of a person with a valuably wide education is intelligent acquaintance with quite a broad range of fields of study. Hence one should not be surprised to find some issue of scientific or historical methodology presented, or misrepresented, in a passage, quotation or question set for critical attention in a Learningguild exam paper. In this way our papers can have some of the value of the kind of General Studies paper that has been used in Britain as an encouragement to senior secondary students to move out of a narrow specialism. (Anyone is welcome to ask me for copies of two papers set in Britain for the Joint Matriculation Board, at Advanced Level, in 1962.) To study some of our papers, and in connection with each the corresponding report, using, at least at first, the five pairs in Learningguild's Documents Set B, is one way of enlarging one's general education.

The fundamental reason, however, for weakness in answers here was lack of practice in answering questions of the kinds typically set in Section 4. One needs (as in general for participation in fruitful argument or discussion) to be practised in summarizing someone else's claims (or, as here, central claim), and in distinguishing and engaging in the two activities of criticizing fairly the other's arguments and presenting one's own view of a matter with relevance and without exaggeration. A tall order. As well as Section 4 of our papers and reports, one could gain much by seeking out and closely reading three areas of the fifth book (1961: for students then called fifth- and sixth-formers, in years 11 and 12) in R.Ridout and K.G. McGregor's series *English for Australian Schools*. Go to Chapter 12, called "Clear Thinking" (see especially the opening quotation, from A.C. [Camo] Jackson), and to two sections of public exams in Victoria in 1960, one, for year 11, concerning a passage in defence of apartheid (p.292f) and the other, for year 12, concerning one in defence of White Australia (p.301f).

Those who have gone or in future go into what is called a tertiary or post-tertiary or doctoral course, or attempt a thesis, without a developed skill in reasoning of the kind required in "Clear Thinking" (as part of the compulsory English subject) of all students in Victoria in years 11 and 12 from c.1943 to 1983 have or will have been undernourished. Unless they get that training for themselves, preferably with some guidance from a person familiar with it, they are unlikely, in universities or employment or their personal lives, to engage in the best kind of enquiry, which is critical, fair, thorough, and constructive, and often analytical and normative (see the last-but-one paragraph on p.7). Attention to persuasive writing and modes of it is no substitute. About the time of this September 1993 exam, I came across an extraordinary example of praise by English teachers for a student's supposed persuasiveness: he was praised for

> presenting opposing arguments in a manner that makes them appear problematic and doubtful and then presenting [his own] arguments as unproblematic and certain.

The makers of that comment appear to have had no idea that in argumentative prose, as in serious debating, or in honest thought, you should seek to do justice to your opponent's arguments and therefore at least to present them fairly. The "Clear Thinking" tradition needs to be made widely known and appreciated and, in updated form, given new life.

As a guide, and without suggesting that answers of quite this standard can be achieved in an examination, I prepare the ground for, and provide, model answers for each of the three questions.

i) Here one needed to say that Ian was rejecting the very idea of merit or superiority as applied to films etc., though he says in the first sentence that people who use the word 'better' might mean no more than is conveyed by 'more popular'. The candidate who represented the claim by "Superiority cannot be measured by popularity, exclusiveness, or any other means" thereby implied as Ian's view that there was such a thing, though it could not be **measured**. So also the one who wrote "Basically, it is almost impossible to measure the intrinsic value or merit of things." Nor was Ian claiming that "The value of a product of art is not to be measured in accordance with the number of people who appreciate it", for he was rejecting the very idea of value in this field. The fourth candidate began with "The central claim of Ian is that science is the only genuine or sound cultural activity because what it produces can be measured …". Given the first two paragraphs of para. 4, Ian is committed to that view or one like it, but he does not directly express it here.

One could answer:

> Ian claims that, while we can measure the popularity of a book or work of creative art, any judgment about its so-called "merit" is nothing more than an expression of taste or preference.

ii) I could have helped candidates by adding "Do not let your answer to this question overlap extensively with your answer to the next." However, the words 'concentrating on what he says' were there. Asked whether Ian has justified his view one must not confuse that question with whether his presentation of it would be "effective", i.e., such that it is likely to be persuasive. The fundamental point to bring out is that Ian fails to examine what theatre critics and other commentators actually do, but is content to assert without argument that no more is involved than popularity and taste, and to describe critical activity in "loaded" terms, often called pejorative.

Two candidates went through Ian's remarks, one of them with attention to their persuasiveness, but neither attended sufficiently to what was wrong with them considered as argument. There was confusion between claims and arguments, and the familiar spelling mistake:

> Ian's presentation, although very successful in gaining my sympathy, is not a good arguementative piece, as his arguements, although very clear, are not justified properly, or supported well.

That writer also confused demonstration with illustration:

> He does demonstrate his point well in [the second] paragraph by using analogy ….

Another candidate, with a nice use of the subjunctive, was scornful of the last paragraph:

> … that is not worth commenting on, except to suggest that Ian read some books on the philosophy of art. Perhaps that will rid him of his tunnel vision.

Better to indicate what it is that the writers of such books characteristically do to bring out merits and demerits.

Here is an answer (178 words), in which I "concentrat[e] on what [Ian] says and [consider] to what extent, if at all, he has justified his view", while also drawing attention to those features of the passage that suggest that he is not concerned to put a careful argument:

> Ian has assumed, and merely asserts, what he would need to argue for, i.e., that there is no more to what is called aesthetic appreciation than mere taste or liking, and that anything that includes no measuring or calculating does not deserve a degree.
>
> To say that claims to expertise in artistic or literary matters should be met with only a smiling rejection and the label 'elitist' is not to provide argument but to express scorn that has not been justified.
>
> Ian rightly observes that "fashion changes", but that does not show that no critical judgment is better than any other.
>
> In the final paragraph he caricatures what is involved in literary criticism ("dressing up their preferences in elaborate language", and even "explaining your reactions to what you read"), as though the literary critic is doing just that. Some so-called criticism may be of such types, but *abusus non tollit usum*: the misuse of a thing does not show that it has no proper use.
>
> In short, because he has not examined careful talk (imagined if not actual) about that for which literary or artistic merit is claimed, Ian has done almost nothing to justify the view he presents.

iii) Some good points were made here: that the ability to appreciate works of art can be developed and deepened, and that Ian would have to reject also politics, philosophy and religion, since these are not fields that primarily involve measurement or calculation.

One candidate defended a relativist view, denying that any culture or cultural pursuit could be judged superior to any other. But cricket may be judged superior to bear-baiting, because in the former acute and sustained pain is not deliberately inflicted, as well as because of the range and complexity of the goods it offers.

The only responses to the instruction to provide "at least one illustration" were one candidate's drawing on his experience in coming to appreciate classical music and another's distinction between golf and the history of golf. If at least one illustration is asked for, the marker has to look for it and the candidate is unwise to make no attempt to provide one.

A suitable answer (187 words):

> We need to look at criticism of books, plays, etc., at its best. Such criticism can reveal interconnections in and qualities of a work which are likely to escape the notice (or the understanding) of an untrained observer. Helen Gardner, in *The Business of Criticism*, offers the torch as the symbol for the critic: he or she shows us what we might otherwise miss.
>
> Thus the critic of Robert Browning's poem *My Last Duchess* may draw our attention to how the themes and language given to the Duke display his studied and cultured arrogance, and his loveless impatience with the Duchess whose murder he has arranged, and so the elegance that moral evil may wear.
>
> A reviewer of the TV series *Civilisation*, or the film *The Music Teacher*, may enable us to understand more of the features of that combination of music, theme and visual display that we have found so moving.
>
> Although there are changing fashions of likes and dislikes in the arts, it remains possible to distinguish better and worse examples within a genre, and even to show that some genre now out of favour had merits that have escaped recent notice.