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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/11
Poetry and Prose

Key messages

In successful responses, candidates:

- Devote roughly equal time to both sections of the paper.
- Sustain a clear focus on the key words of the question.
- Use relevant textual references to substantiate their arguments.
- Analyse sensitively and in detail the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

In less successful responses, candidates:

- Manage time inefficiently across the two questions, sometimes writing an excessively long first answer.
- Work through 'themes' candidates have studied regardless of the actual focus of the question.
- Have only a basic grasp of surface meanings.
- Make comments that are overly reliant on assertion rather than close analysis.
- Merely label writers' techniques without analysing them.

General comments

There was evidence of outstanding work this session especially in relation to ***Section A***, where candidates showed insight and individuality in their sustained explorations of poems. Examiners reported that some candidates wrote excessively long answers to their first question, which led to unfinished or rushed second answers. Candidates should recognise the need to manage time carefully across this 90-minute paper.

Some candidates began their answers with general introductions that did not address the question and ended their answers by repeating points already made within the main body of the answer. This is an unproductive use of candidates' time.

Textual knowledge

The most successful answers showed an extensive knowledge of the text, with candidates integrating concise textual references to support their ideas. In answers to extract questions, these candidates took advantage of the opportunities offered them by having the extract printed for them in the question paper. They selected relevant detail from the extract to support their ideas; they used the words in their direct quotations to probe critically the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

Less successful responses were often characterised by overly assertive comments with little textual reference. Some quotations were excessively long, with the link between quotation and comment unclear. Sometimes a vague phrase such as 'This shows…' followed a lengthy quotation. Again, this session, some candidates offered quotations that were abridged, with an ellipsis used to indicate words that had been omitted; often the omitted words were the very ones integral to supporting the comment made.

Focus on the question

The most successful answers sustained a clear focus on the key words of the question. Less successful answers demonstrated a clear understanding of the text but without achieving a clear focus on the question. This was evident in many answers to poetry or extract questions where candidates simply worked through the text in order, often at length and without careful selection of material that would address the question's key words.

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Some candidates began their answers by announcing a list of themes in the text, regardless of the thrust of the question. Candidates should appreciate that questions require their ideas to be tailored to meet the specific focus of the question; questions are not simply prompts for them to unload everything they know about the text.

Writers' effects

The most convincing responses sustained a critical analysis of the ways in which writers achieve their effects. These responses referred in detail to the printed text in poetry and prose extract questions and were able to select relevant material candidates had learned for prose general essay questions. Many candidates had memorised an impressive range of direct quotation which enabled them to explore in detail a writer's effects.

Less successful responses catalogued features such as enjambment, caesura and anaphora without close analysis of precise ways in which writers achieve their effects. The most assertive and least effective comments related to rhyme schemes which flowed or did not flow, and which slowed or increased the pace of the writing.

Personal response

The strongest answers explored with perception a wide range of relevant detail from the texts in answering the questions set. Less successful responses offered personal interpretations that were not adequately rooted in the detail of the text, lacking convincing support from the text.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Successful answers focused on the key words of, 'amends' and 'mysterious'. 'Amends' was addressed with examples from the poem of how the moon interacted materially and/or ethereally with nature, humankind, 'sleepers' and/or machinery. Consideration of 'mysterious' provided an opportunity to respond to Rich's effects in the poem which involved analysis of Rich's language of destruction and repair, soothing and amending and the effects of techniques such as personification, repetition and listing. Less successful answers tended to describe the journey of the moon in the poem, or dwell on its use of anaphora without relating this to the question. They struggled to respond to the keyword 'amends' and could not engage with ideas of repair and healing. They avoided responding to Rich's effects or could not grasp the tones in the poem. Some candidates asserted its environmentalism but were unable to pick out elements of the text which supported this reading.

Question 2

The most successful answers focused on the key phrase 'speaker's thoughts and feeling' with examples from the poem of how the speaker dealt with and experienced the 'Mid-Term Break'. These candidates addressed the speaker's role as an observer; especially of his parents' reactions to the event of his brother's death and return of the corpse. They responded personally to the possible reasons for the speaker's behaviour and reactions and how he manifested suffering and denial in the poem. Consideration was given to Heaney's imagery of time passing, innocence, flowers, death and the violence of his brother's accident. Some candidates also showed informed pathos and empathy for the speaker's age, family situation and the shocking nature of the 'Mid-Term Break'. Other answers generalised the speaker's journey through the events in the poem; they struggled to respond to the key word 'speaker'. Several candidates seemed not to understand the events or who had died in the poem.

Question 3

Though the poem is full of the bizarre imagery of dreams, we are told a great deal about what the persona hears, and better candidates were able to select and expound on sounds beyond the 'clanging' and the rhetorical questions. They were able to substantiate the sense of persecution through the verbs and the persona's vulnerability and sense of being mocked. Few picked up on the straightforward repetition of what 'I' and 'They' do but commented on the dismay expressed through the repetition in the last line. It would be helpful for teachers to encourage candidates to analyse the effects of writer's choices rather than simply

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identifying or naming them. There were, however, a few very competent responses to 'They cleave the doom of dreams, a blinding flame' and the general threat of violence. Some candidates were unable to connect the 'action movie' images to the despairing questions presumably provoked by loss and grief.

Question 4

This poem worked very well to provoke a range of levels of response, though it was mainly tackled by confident and well-prepared candidates. Most candidates were able to make some comment on the way in which the poet uses language, noting the impact of the exclamation mark, for example, and stronger answers explored the tone and balance of lines, if not the rhythm. The speaker's fortitude and defiance were well-supported with close textual reference in more successful responses, whereas less confident responses resorted to inaccurate generalisations on the condition of women in the seventeenth century. More successful answers were often characterised by their ability to make fine distinctions between different types of anger and their differing causes and effects, and to relate these to wider social expectations.

Question 5

This question elicited a wide range of personal responses to the text. Most candidates showed at least a basic level of understanding and were able to provide some support for their ideas; many were able to relate personally to the ideas presented and were clearly engaged with the poem. The strongest answers explored in detail the striking idea of presenting a lover with an onion as an expression of love rather than something commercially available, 'Not a cute card or a kissogram'. They explored how the metaphor of the onion covered different aspects of a relationship, providing much more depth than red roses or satin hearts. They also considered Duffy's interesting word choice, such as, 'fierce' and 'Lethal' in a love poem. The significance of the layout of the poem for providing emphasis to the ideas was often successfully commented upon.

Question 6

Many of the responses provided general comments on the descriptions of the teachers revealing that some were liked and some not. Paraphrasing of the poem was quite common. More developed answers commented on the feeling of regret and the more mature attitude of the speaker looking back on her schooldays. Some commented on the effects employed by Duffy such as identifying the teachers by brief allusions to their subjects, the use of 'you' rather than 'I' to draw the reader into the poem, the use of the present tense, and the integration of 'stock' phrases such as 'You won't pass' and 'You could do better'.

Section B

Question 7

A clear understanding was generally shown of the different aspects of Papa-Nnukwu's character. Most responses mentioned Papa-Nnukwu's good nature and discussions of death. They discussed Papa-Nnukwu's belief that his son was misled by the missionaries. Candidates could differentiate between his humour, relationships with family and religious beliefs. The text lent itself well to providing supporting evidence and candidates could comment on both a superficial and more thoughtful level. Stronger responses considered some of the effects apparent in the extract such as the description of Kambili's home with its, 'looming black gates and white walls', or the use of Kambili's viewpoint. Less successful answers misunderstood the light-hearted banter, became over-focused on Papa-Nnukwu's age and/or approaching death, or were hostile to his view of Catholicism. More successful answers responded thoughtfully and with a range of personal opinions about his differing relationships with his son Eugene and his daughter Ifeoma.

Question 8

There were very few responses and these tended to be quite general. Most recognised that Kambili was attracted to Father Amadi but failed to provide support or consider how Adiche conveyed the development of the relationship. In essay questions such as this, it is important to be able to provide concrete examples from the text. Stronger answers drew on specific episodes such as the football match to consider the way the relationship is portrayed as both personally plausible and socially/religiously impossible and related this effectively to the novel's presentation of what candidates regarded as Kambili's dysfunctional family.

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Question 9

Several candidates provided a synopsis of the novel with a brief consideration of St John's proposal of marriage and then compared Jane's love of Rochester to the love she felt for St John. Stronger responses contextualised the situation both in terms of the whole novel and with the mysterious cry that only Jane hears just as this dialogue finishes. They considered the differences between the two relationships: that of Jane with Rochester and that of Jane with St John. They also considered the fundamental differences in attitude that Jane and St John had towards this proposed marriage. The passage is especially rich in terms of the language used and the descriptions. It was pleasing that many candidates commented on not just St John's language but his body language and oppressive behaviour. Many noted that it was rather different to what would generally be expected from a clergyman. The frequent use of religious imagery and references to God were noted together with Jane's disturbed speech patterns.

Question 10

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 11

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 12

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Question 13

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 14

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Question 15

Successful answers, of which there were many, addressed the key phrase 'moving moment' with an evidence-based response to Ashima's confusion and Ashoke's task in this extract. They focused on the opportunities offered in the extract to explore why and how this was 'moving' and responded to the tension created by the dialogue of the telephone call and then the couple's conversation. These candidates considered Lahiri's effects including the use of Ashima's internal monologue, what is left out of the dialogue with Rana and the staged build-up towards the announcement of her father's death. Less successful answers tended to describe the events in the extract or provided a synopsis of the novel.

Question 16

The strongest responses again addressed the key words 'encourages' and 'sympathy' with focused examples of Gogol's challenges and suffering across the novel. They drew on relevant episodes and/or themes and/or narrative threads and/or characterisations that offered evidence for the offer of sympathy. Candidates successfully offered a personal response to Lahiri's presentation of being caught between or attempting to inhabit and satisfy two cultural traditions and ways of being as a means of explaining why Gogol needs sympathy. On the other hand, there were responses that did not score as highly because they tended to produce narrative-based essays. Candidates referred to his problem with his name and identity, the lesson on Gogol that he found so excruciating, his father's death and his failed relationships and stated that generally they were sympathetic without exploring how or why. The most successful answers produced a personal response to well-chosen aspects of Gogol's character development, drawing on evidence from across the novel to consider the fragility of his self-identity and the ways in which different elements of it (family, culture, relationships, profession) were bound up together.

Question 17

Very few candidates opted for this question. There was plenty of scope for dramatic moments in the passage but too many candidates only focused on Pi's thoughts and/or actions and neglected to mention the

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language used to create these. Candidates would happily pick out the 'walking the plank' image but not really examine the different levels of meaning to good effect. The irony of the humour was rarely considered.

Question 18

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 19

Most candidates found something 'memorable' to consider. There were Winston's conflicting emotions in his 'rash act' of missing an evening at the Community centre because of enjoying the inviting weather which, however, led to his anxiety about being caught by a patrol. Some candidates commented on the contrast between his strong belief that the proles would lead to an overthrow of the Party and the reality of their poverty and living conditions. There was a good range of effects from which to choose such as the sensory elements – sights, sounds and smells – and why these were important to him, and the threatening and intimidating questions posed by the patrols and the horror of the threat posed by the Thought Police. Successful answers picked out the proleptic irony of ominous details such as the 'rat-holes' and/or Winston's representation of the 'monstrous' women and made a personal response to the pathos of his memory of 'real' coffee. Some less successful answers read the Thought Police's questioning as actually happening.

Question 20

Mostly candidates chose two suitable moments and were able to explain why these moments were shocking. Stronger candidates were able to draw on details from the text to explore how Orwell's writing techniques enhance the element of shock. It is important that candidates know the text well in order to provide sufficient detailed support for the answer. Less successful answers were unable to pinpoint precise moments and wrote more generally about how enemies of the state were treated or how Winston was captured, imprisoned and tortured. The framing of this question also created some problems for markers in the case of several answers which wrote well but about only one single shocking moment.

Question 21

Candidates had clearly enjoyed reading this story and, generally, knew it well and were able to contextualise the passage. The conversation amongst the siblings makes clear that they do not have any expectation of a big legacy and none of them is keen to take care of their mother. Everything appears to be based on financial costs and there is no sense of any affection or love for the mother. The trio consider the strengths and weaknesses of each having their mother stay but at no point do they consider what their mother might actually want. Most candidates noted the frequent references to money, expenses and costs. Stronger responses were able to draw upon the ending of the story and comment on how in fact the 'broken' mother is in fact far from that state and is about to embark on a tour financed by the money she herself has earned. They also looked at other effects such as the symbolism of the 'cold' lunch and the fact that not all of them were sure of her age. Less successful answers generalised the children's response, while more successful answers were effective at identifying the ways in which individual grievances and rivalries were rehearsed in the conversation.

Question 22

Few candidates responded to this question and those who did tended to provide a rather narrative account of the journey, from which specific textual details were lacking. Stronger answers were able to explain the fascination that the children had for the reservoir and how this was intensified by the extended break from school and the idea of its being a forbidden place. These candidates also considered the visual descriptions of the journey, the landscape and the bull. Some looked at the children's squabbling and their inconsequential conversations with funny riffs on verses.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/12
Poetry and Prose

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- Use relevant textual references to substantiate their arguments.
- Analyse sensitively and in detail the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

In less successful responses, candidates:

- Manage time inefficiently across the two questions, sometimes writing an excessively long first answer.
- Work through 'themes' candidates have studied regardless of the actual focus of the question.
- Have only a basic grasp of surface meanings.
- Make comments that are overly reliant on assertion rather than close analysis.
- Merely label writers' techniques without analysing them.

General comments

There was evidence of outstanding work this session especially in relation to ***Section A***, where candidates showed insight and individuality in their sustained explorations of poems. Examiners reported that some candidates wrote excessively long answers to their first question, which led to unfinished or rushed second answers. Candidates should recognise the need to manage time carefully across this 90-minute paper.

Some candidates began their answers with general introductions that did not address the question and ended their answers by repeating points already made within the main body of the answer. This was an unproductive use of candidates' time; every sentence should contribute to a candidate's response to the question.

Textual knowledge

The most successful answers showed an extensive knowledge of the text, with candidates integrating concise textual references to support their ideas. In answers to extract questions, these candidates took advantage of the opportunities offered them by having the extract printed in the question paper. They selected relevant detail from the extract to support their ideas; they used the words in their direct quotations to probe critically the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

Less successful responses were often characterised by overly assertive comments with little textual reference. Some quotations were excessively long, with the link between quotation and comment unclear. Sometimes a vague phrase such as 'This shows…' followed a lengthy quotation. Again, this session, some candidates offered quotations that were abridged, with an ellipsis used to indicate words that had been omitted; often, however, the omitted words were the very ones integral to supporting the comment made.

Focus on the question

The most successful answers sustained a clear focus on the key words of the question. Less successful answers demonstrated a clear understanding of the text but without achieving a clear focus on the question. This was evident in many answers to poetry or extract questions where candidates simply worked through the text in order, often at length and without careful selection of material that would address the question's key words.

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Writers' effects

The most convincing responses sustained a critical analysis of the ways in which writers achieve their effects. These responses referred in detail to the printed text in poetry and prose extract questions and were able to select relevant material candidates had learned for prose general essay questions. Many candidates had memorised an impressive range of direct quotation which enabled them to explore in detail a writer's effects.

Less successful responses catalogued features such as enjambment, caesura and anaphora without close analysis of precise ways in which writers achieve their effects. The most assertive and least effective comments related to rhyme schemes which flowed or did not flow, and which slowed or increased the pace of the writing.

Personal response

The strongest answers explored with perception a wide range of relevant detail from the texts in answering the questions set. Less successful responses offered personal interpretations that were not adequately rooted in the detail of the text, lacking convincing support from the text.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The more successful responses were able to comment on the different perspectives within the poem whereas the least successful simply saw the content as a man waving whilst in water. Stronger responses saw beyond the man's 'larking' and noted the lack of understanding of his 'waving' for help, commenting on a tragedy that had lasted all his life. The strongest responses explored the repetition of the title, the implications of the repeated words 'too cold' and the words of the dead man compared with the words of the others.

Question 2

The poet's use of contrast between the free bird and the caged bird was noted in most responses, as was the sense of despair in the caged bird as opposed to the sense of freedom in the free bird. Stronger responses observed that the singing of the caged bird is 'fearful', explaining that the caged bird is a prisoner who longs for freedom. The strongest responses explored the structure of the poem and the contrasting imagery of freedom and restriction. These responses focused on the key word 'moving'. In general, this question attracted too many responses reliant on unsupported assertion.

Question 3

Most responses commented on the shortness of the time the speaker and his lover had together, on his feelings of being alone and on his grief now she is no longer there. Many candidates explored sensitively his sense of loss and lack of hope for the future. The strongest responses considered the contrast between repetition of 'a little time' and 'long, long years' and the contrasts within each stanza. Less successful responses tended to explain the content of the poem.

Question 4

Most candidates noted the speaker is bidding her husband a final farewell and the belief that all suffering with cease. Fewer showed a clear understanding of the idea of love resisting Death's power and her wish that her husband rejoice at her death rather than grieve. The most successful responses explored closely the tone of resignation, together with the effects of religious imagery and of rhyme. Less successful responses worked through the poem explaining the content.

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Question 5

There were only a few responses to this question. The best made some attempt to explore how the poem is made memorable through descriptions of autumn in England, use of sensuous imagery and the surreal quality of the images.

Question 6

Most candidates noted the one-sided nature of a conversation between parents and child reflecting on the latter's childhood. Most answers noted the parents' defensiveness towards the child's accusations which are not made explicit. Many described the parents' stance and words as a form of 'gaslighting', exploring the assertive and dismissive tone and the impact of short sentences, sometimes comprising one word. These responses focused on the key words 'strikingly portray'. Other less convincing responses took the parents' words at face value and offered a literal reading of loving parents talking to their child.

Section B

Question 7

Most candidates showed an understanding of the immediate context: Papa found dead at his office desk; Mama's confession of poisoning him; and Kambili's shock. Successful responses considered the different reactions of Jaja and Kambili and the sense of Papa's lingering hold over Kambili. The most successful responses focused on the key word 'powerful', exploring the presentation of Kambili's disbelief and the abruptness of Jaja's confession at this turning point in the novel. Less successful responses explained what is happening in the extract without using direct quotation to explore ways in which Adichie uses language.

Question 8

Most responses considered at least two different attitudes towards Christianity, with all candidates noting what they regarded as Papa's inflexible brand. Many considered the contrast in the ways Papa and Aunty Ifeoma regard their father. Fewer candidates mentioned Father Amadi. The strongest responses explored ways in which Adichie 'vividly portrays' the disturbing aspects of Papa's strict interpretation of Christianity and the more easy-going attitude shown by Aunty Ifeoma and the impact this has on Kambili and Jaja. Those candidates who had memorised quotations from the novel were better placed to support their ideas and to explore the writer's effects closely. Without quotation, many responses relied on unsupported assertion.

Question 9

Many candidates worked through the extract explaining what is happening but without showing an understanding of the immediate context: that Mason has arrived from the West Indies and visited his sister Bertha, Rochester's wife, who has attacked him viciously. The strongest responses did mention these details and were better able to explore deeper implications when considering what makes this 'such a powerful moment *in the novel*'. Some of the strongest responses explored the way the rising action is linked to the use of language in *bleeding, wild, feared, torn, bit,* and *tigress*.

Question 10

There were relatively few responses to this question. The least successful responses interpreted the ending of the novel too broadly; several answers simply re-told the plot of the whole novel and ended with brief comment on the novel's happy ending. Stronger responses argued that by the end of the novel Jane holds the power in her relationship with Rochester, exploring Jane's tone of confidence and certainty.

Question 11

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 12

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Question 13

Candidates were generally able to place this scene in the context of the novel and expressed strong admiration for Catherine at this moment. Most noted her change of manner towards Mrs Penniman and commented on how she has developed during her European tour, quoting Catherine's statement that 'I am braver than I was'. Only a few candidates reflected on her misplaced faith in Morris or her undiminished fear of her 'more determined' and 'more terrible' father.

Question 14

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 15

Most candidates wrote with understanding about this key extract from the novel, and most were able to appreciate its significance within Gogol's search for identity. Successful answers identified his move from shyness to confidence, noting that by the end of this moment 'Nikhil' (unlike Gogol) was daring, sociable and charming. Some candidates explored how physical details and body language reveal Gogol's emotions; others noted that Lahiri uses syntax and direct speech to mirror his development, moving from clipped answers to the expansive fluency of his thoughts in the final paragraph. The least successful responses described the content of the extract without an awareness of its position within the overall novel.

Question 16

Although there were some very sympathetic responses to this question, some got bogged down in simply listing ways in which Ashima resists adapting to American life. A key distinguishing factor was whether candidates considered 'how far' it was true that Ashima longs for the past. Many noted Ashima's initial difficulties in settling into her new life, quoting her despairing statement 'I can not do this' after Gogol's birth, when she acknowledges that she will have to cope with her new life as a mother on her own. The Gangulis' adherence to traditions such as grandparents choosing the baby's name, and the rice ceremony, were also referred to in evidence. More nuanced responses went on to describe Ashima's gradual transition to a new more complex identity, symbolised by her final decision to spend half the year in Calcutta.

Question 17

There were many strong answers here with candidates finding plenty of material to comment upon. Some identified the heightened emotion throughout, as Pi moved from euphoria to terror and despair. Others argued how Martel's account of Pi's meandering thoughts distracted readers, turning their attention away from the ship and into a false sense of security, as they assume with Pi that 'salvation' is imminent. The most successful responses kept sustained a focus on 'powerfully dramatic', exploring the role played by varied syntax, changing pace and the use of dynamic verbs ('advancing', 'bearing down', 'looming'). Less successful answers gave narrative responses, disregarding the role of the writer.

Question 18

This question required a confident and accurate knowledge of this section of the novel; there were, however, some responses which showed confusion, as well as some which were mainly narrative. Stronger responses were able to identify the variety of Pi's feelings, including his distress at losing his family, his initial fear at realising Richard Parker is also on the lifeboat and his determination to survive ('I have a fierce will to survive'). In most answers, there needed to be a more secure grasp of textual detail to support points and to explore Martel's use of language.

Question 19

Most candidates were confidently able to place this extract in context and to appreciate its disturbing quality. Stronger responses commented on Parsons' delusions about himself and the Party and on the shock for the reader of discovering it was Parsons' nightmarish daughter who had denounced him, and the poignant absurdity of Parsons' pride in her for doing so. One candidate noted that Parsons failed to show any curiosity towards Winston or concern for him. Many candidates picked up the expression 'sagged round and round' to describe Winston's thought processes, but noted rather than explored it: others, however, observed that this vividly depicted Winston's ragged mental state. The most successful responses probed in considerable detail ways in which Orwell achieves his effects in this extract.

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Question 20

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 21

Many candidates approached this question with enthusiasm, showing understanding of the extract. They were able to identify Sharma's shortcomings; many picked up on Sharma's tendency to 'sigh' as an example of disrespect. Stronger responses acknowledged the way Sharma is presented as a manipulative character, ready to play the victim and gaslight his boss, with careful and relevant references to the text. They looked closely at the dialogue and use of language: 'Sharma sighed', Sharma's use of 'sir'; Sharma 'overwhelmed and defiant'. One candidate observed that Gupta 'slid away' to his office at the beginning, thus creating a contrast with Sharma, who showed no change in behaviour at all. Only a few candidates noted the boss's irony or detected the vein of humour that runs through the story.

Question 22

Most candidates who chose this question wrote about their admiration for Caroline as a woman who was able to defy contemporary expectations about a woman's role and the restrictions on their freedom. Only a few responses noted the actual details of Caroline's journey, as many candidates favoured a generalised feminist analysis of the story, very often Lacking convincing textual detail for support. By contrast, the most successful responses were able to draw upon an impressive command of detail that enabled them to focus on specific ways in which Laski encourages them to admire Caroline.

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Less successful responses:

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Some candidates began their answers with general introductions that did not address the question and ended their answers by repeating points already made within the main body of the answer. This is an unproductive use of candidates' time. There were a number of rubric infringements in this session and teachers are reminded to carefully explain these rules to candidates.

Textual knowledge

The most successful answers showed an extensive knowledge of the text, with candidates integrating concise textual references to support their ideas. In answers to extract questions, these candidates took advantage of the opportunities offered them by having the extract printed for them in the question paper. They selected relevant detail from the extract to support their ideas; they used the words in their direct quotations to probe critically the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

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Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most responses demonstrated good understanding of this poem and commented on the contrasting emotions and perspectives of the little boy and the father. The strongest responses understood the immaturity of the child and his manipulative actions, and explored the dilemma of the father, explaining his moral choices and showing how this made the poem so powerful. These responses made full use of the language possibilities such as the fairy-tale imagery and the impact of the last line. Many of these responses were able to consider different interpretations about parenthood and punishment and convincingly evaluate their own personal response to the boy. Less successful answers identified effective quotes but did not comment on how these were used for effect. Some did not comment on the fairy-tale references and a few only addressed the boy's feelings and perspectives with no consideration of the father. A few less successful answers took this as an opportunity to write in detail about their views on corporal punishment, at the expense of developing text-based points.

Question 2

Responses to this question reflected candidates' enjoyment of the poem. Most answers showed understanding of the family's poverty. The most successful responses appreciated the change in perspective in how the child and the adult viewed the 'mean' mother who had been struggling to keep things together without burdening her children with the details. These explored the symbolism of the water, not so plentiful then, though cascading now to the 'sybarite' in the present day. Stronger answers also commented on the closing sentiments with the implication that 'plenty' could include family and fun, which could never be restored. Some less successful answers became distracted by poet's appreciation of her siblings or listed literary devices without putting them in context. Because many candidates clearly enjoyed their study of this poem, there was a tendency to offer stanza-by-stanza commentaries rather than select material that focused on the key words 'conveys the speaker's thoughts and feelings.'

Question 3

Although rarely attempted, there were a few successful responses which showed understanding of the central ideas that the speaker was casting off his previous life and attempting to begin a new life. These were able to examine the language with insightful analysis of the voice of the speaker and effectively explore the imagery of violence and murder. Less successful answers understood there was some association with murder or suicide and a few thought that an actual murder had taken place.

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Question 4

Of the few who attempted this question, stronger answers looked at the vocabulary and the development of the paradoxes. Less successful answers did not always show understanding of the internal conflicts of the poet and struggled to respond to the language.

Question 5

Many candidates clearly enjoyed writing about this poem and nearly all considered the question, with a variety of responses and opinions – some sympathised with and some condemned the speaker. Some candidates took the view that the speaker was an outcast from society and was a victim of circumstance, meaning that the audience should feel sympathy automatically, without giving sufficient evidence to back up these views. Stronger answers merged the possible plight of the speaker with analysis of structure and language such as the symbolism of the snowman and ice. These explored the lack of moral compass of the speaker but recognised other issues as well in assessing their degree of sympathy. Weaker responses focused for too long on certain areas of the poem without a full exploration. Some were diverted by psychological diagnoses of the speaker's case (broken home and Mrs Thatcher) not given in the poem.

Question 6

Most candidates understood the problems with communication, the sense of alienation and the nostalgic remembrance of home. Many candidates made personal interpretations about this poem with varying degrees of supporting text. Stronger answers explored how the speaker invites others to 'imagine' the situation. More successful answers covered all areas of the poem whereas some of the less successful ones got stuck on repeating the same things such as the grim description of the living conditions or the barriers in communication.

Section B

Question 7

Candidates were generally focused on the question and showed knowledge and understanding of the text, especially of the central conflicts. They understood the differences between the two households, such as the relaxed atmosphere, the eating arrangements and approach to worship. Stronger answers linked this knowledge to the question and considered how Kambili and Jaja were surprised by these aspects. Some less successful answers ran out of things to say and tended to be narrative. Less successful answers did not comment on how Adichie used language to convey ideas.

Question 8

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 9

Candidates generally showed a clear understanding of this moment and were familiar with the novel although the death of Helen Burns seemed to elicit a wide range of responses. Some dealt with the moving scene presented in the novel. Some explored the long-lasting effects of Christianity and morality on Jane throughout the novel. Others accentuated the power of friendship and love which had been absent in Jane's life until then. Stronger responses evaluated how the moment was significant and moving, identifying points from the passage such Helen's selflessness, Jane's naïveté, their relationship, Helen's faith and death. These often commented on wider implications of the moment, explaining how Helen's death had a lasting impact on the development of Jane's character and her maturity. Stronger answers also noted writing features such as the setting, the religious quality of Helen's language and the dialogue. Less successful answers ignored the word, 'moving'. Some did not make as much use of the extract as they could have and wrote more generally about Jane and Helen.

Question 10

There were very few responses to this question. The better ones successfully chose two separate moments and were able to provide detailed examples, references and even quotations. One candidate had excellent recall of the scene with John, and explored in detail the characters and events, with conversations and

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descriptions of emotions and appearance. Most responses lacked specific recall, did not select two specific moments or merely narrated the scenes they picked, without any real interpretation.

Question 11

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 12

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 13
There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 14

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 15

Most candidates understood the conflict of Indian and American cultures and were able to make some meaningful comment about the implications of this and the dilemmas faced by the characters. They showed appreciation of the different generational expectations and compromises made by the adults. The best answers were able to clearly bring out the differences between the parents and their children and evaluated the extent to which the parents had adapted (or not) to American culture. Stronger answers were able to comment on writing features such as the references to cultural customs, rites and attitudes, tone, lists and brand name whereas less successful answers missed key inferences and did not comment on authorial choices.

Question 16

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 17

Most candidates demonstrated good knowledge of the novel and generally found relevant content in the passage to comment on Pi's thoughts and feelings. Stronger answers remained focused on the question and explored feelings such as his boredom, fears, night terror, increasing anxiety and his disorientation in the dark. These responses also commented effectively on aspects of the writing such as the descriptions of the light and dark, the sensual animal sounds and the symbolism of the buzzing flies. Some stronger candidates mentioned the moon and stars linking this to religion and faith and Pi's hope for survival. Less successful responses tracked through the passage with little evaluation or summarised what was happening. Some less successful answers were distracted by parts of the passage, such as the buzzing of the flies and spent too much time on this at the expense of addressing the question.

Question 18

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 19

Most answers revealed a clear and detailed understanding of the novel and its concerns and many focused on the disturbing nature of the aims of Newspeak, the passion of Syme and Winston's unease in the extract. Best answers appreciated the irony of Syme's eloquence in his description of the destruction of language. Close reading of the extract was well rewarded, vague readings less so, for example a misreading of 'pedant's passion' for 'pendant's passion' and commenting on jewellery. Less successful answers repeatedly made the same point about control or went off a tangent in describing the dangers of totalitarian states, frequently naming them and their rulers, past and present.

Question 20

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

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Question 21

There were only a few responses seen. Overall, they were general and defaulted to re-telling the story. Candidates commented on the characters and the morals but did not explore language or author's intent.

Question 22

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/21
Drama

Key messages

- The most successful responses showed sound knowledge of the text as a whole and understood the context of the set passages.
- Candidates who could refer to specific moments in the text or use direct quotations supported points effectively.
- Commenting fully on the effects of literary techniques is key to accessing the higher levels of achievement.
- The most effective answers are firmly rooted in appreciation of the drama genre.
- The most successful introductions briefly summarised three of four points that were then fleshed out in the main body of the essay.

General comments

The vast majority of candidates showed knowledge of and engagement with their set texts. The strongest responses considered on-stage effects such as lighting and sound as well as the dialogue and stage directions, showing awareness of drama as a genre and the play's effect on an audience. Some introductions to essays were still over-long, sometimes a side of writing and were entirely general with biographical information about the author and no reference to the question. This was particularly true of answers to questions on *The Crucible* where many essays began with a paragraph on McCarthyism. This wasted valuable time which would have been better spent on the passage itself.

A knowledge of context is important when writing about the passage-based questions. Several responses misplaced the passage from *The Crucible* as being from the end of the play and the passage from *Journey's End* as referring to the 'big attack' at the end of the play rather than to the raid before it. On the other hand merely writing about the context of the passage in the whole play is unhelpful.

To access the higher levels candidates are required to integrate much well-selected reference to the text. It is very common that responses do not include any direct quotations even from the passages. Some candidates referred to a number of lines from the passage leaving it to the Examiner to guess which part of those lines was meant. Some effective answers to the discursive questions were let down by an inability to give evidence for the points made. Learning some key quotations from the text would dramatically improve overall performance.

The ability to comment on dramatic and linguistic effects in context was a defining feature of strong answers. Many candidates could comment on, for example, the causes of tension in a passage by referring to the relationships or past history but not to the use, for example, of repetition, pauses, imagery, exclamation in the dialogue which created this tension.

The strongest answers to discursive questions selected a range of material from the text as a whole and supported points with quotation or very specific textual reference. A small minority of candidates are still using the discursive **Question (b)** to answer the passage-based **Question (a)**. The is clearly self-defeating. A reminder of the rubric before the candidates sit the examination might be advisable.

Several questions on the paper asked about the contribution of characters or events to the play's dramatic impact. These were answered well when candidates avoided character sketches or concentrating purely on themes and looked at the stage action, powerful dialogue or plot impact.

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Candidates who paid attention to the key words in the question such as: 'intriguing, strikingly, powerfully, disturbing, movingly' fared better than those who do not. Such terms are an invitation to look at the author's writing to create effects and taking up that invitation elevates the response.

There were very few brief answers. On paper 21 there were still a small number of rubric infringements where candidates answered two passage-based questions or two discursive questions or two questions on one text. Some candidate only answered one question instead of two. Candidates need to be reminded to write an accurate question number at the top of their answer.

Comments on specific questions

LYNN NOTTAGE: ***Crumbs from the Table of Joy***

Question 1

(a) This question was, in general, answered very competently. The strongest responses engaged with the dramatic effects including Ernestine breaking the fourth wall, the use of sound, the personification of death and the deliberate delaying of information. Most candidates commenting on the impact of Sandra's death (the banshee wail), the mysterious Father Divine and Ernestine's and Ermina's contrasting reactions and responses, commenting on the simile 'like a wild animal'. Less successful responses tended to narrate and show limited awareness of audience. There were some generalised comments about racism, with the assumption that the girls' school is predominantly white and that Ernestine and Ermina were bullied for their colour rather than their Southern ways and unsophisticated clothes.

(b) Successful responses to this question commented on the contrast between Godfrey's faith and Lily's Communism, the restrictions his beliefs placed on the girls, Father Divine being an obvious fake and Gerte as a moderating influence. Many commented effectively on the conflict caused by contrasting attitudes, the degree of success often depending on the level of support given. Less effective answers tended to write a character sketch of Lily without making this relevant to the question.

ARTHUR MILLER: ***The Crucible***

Question 2

(a) This question was answered by a large number of candidates. The most effective responses knew the context: that Proctor has seen Abigail alone, she has told him that the girls' behaviour is pretence and that Elizabeth is urging him to go to Salem to denounce her. Such responses showed awareness of Proctor's affair and its effect on the couple but concentrated on exploring how tension is created in the passage by the pauses, the stage directions, the interruptions and, in the strongest, the imagery. Less successful answers tended to do one or other of the above. Some wrote about the 'backstory' at the expense of looking at the passage, others wrote exclusively about the stage directions which was meaningless without explanation of the context. There were some perceptive and engaged responses but rather disappointingly some key images such as 'everlasting funeral marches round your heart' and ' your justice would freeze beer' were often unconsidered. Some strongly engaged responses commented on John Proctor 'gaslighting' his wife, making her feel guilty for his misdemeanour. The weakest responses misplaced the context as being at the end of the play or thought it was the moment where Proctor was confessing to the affair.

(b) Although most candidates knew that Putnam was wealthy and was accusing people of witchcraft for personal gain and that Ann blamed Rebecca Nurse for the loss of her babies, in general the question was not well-answered. The scenes in which they appear, such as their powerfully dramatic initial entrance and Putnam's treatment of Tituba were not referred to in any detail. Some mentioned the altercation with Giles Corey but most found it difficult to give concrete evidence for the relevant points made. Their initial role in the hysteria could have been more fully explored. In weaker answers there were some minor errors such as Ann miscarrying rather than giving birth to live babies who subsequently died but some candidates mistook Betty Parris for Ruth Putnam. Many responses would have been vastly improved by close reference to the text.

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R.C SHERRIFF*: Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) Most answers understood the disturbing nature of a plan for a raid with the certainty that several of the men (strong, keen youngsters) were going to die. Most criticised the Colonel for his attitude to casualties and his acceptance of the likely death of Raleigh and Osborne. Some saw his awkwardness in the pipe sucking, the pauses and his reluctance to speak to the men he is sending to die.

The strongest responses explored the writing more shrewdly and developed the deeper implications. Some saw the Colonel's excitement for the raid and keenness for success, and were sceptical of his comment that it 'may mean the winning of the whole war'. They were aware that he saw casualties in terms of numbers, not individuals. Some focused more on Stanhope, his quietness, which prompts the Colonel's 'it's no good getting depressed', how he forces the Colonel to do the right thing and speak to the men, the significance of Raleigh and Osborne's subdued 'murmur' knowing that they are facing their own deaths.

Less successful responses misplaced the context as the 'big attack', rather than the raid and thought the smoke bombs were German bombs not a smoke screen for the raid. Most had forgotten the significance of the Germans putting red rags on the wire. The satirical portrait of the Colonel was not understood, his words being taken at face value. The British repressed emotion subtext was more understandably not fully grasped. Some candidates wanted to write an essay about coping mechanisms, writing about the rum ration at the expense of spending time on the Colonel's insincerity and the suicidal nature of the mission.

(b) Candidates were adept at selecting relevant material such as Osborne's defence of Stanhope to Hardy, his warning to Raleigh that Stanhope had changed, his reading of Raleigh's letter and putting Stanhope to bed when he was drunk. The strongest answers could support points by close textual reference. Less successful answers wrote about these events in a general way without any direct support. The moving nature of the relationship was developed in the strongest answers particularly by referencing Stanhope's devastation at Osborne's death. Less detailed and engaged answers made no reference to 'movingly' at all.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 4

(a) Most candidates understood the serious elements of the passage. Malvolio's humiliation and desire for revenge was considered along with the extremity of his treatment. Some commented on the extent to which he deserved to be punished for his words to Feste and his arrogance towards Sir Toby, Fabian and Maria. Stronger answers looked at the entertainment factor of the truth being revealed and loose ends being tied up as satisfying to an audience. Many commented on Olivia's even handedness and sympathy for Malvolio, others on the humour of his self-delusion chiming in with some of the major themes of the play.

(b) This question was generally answered in a satisfactory manner. Candidates knew that Sir Toby was manipulating Sir Andrew for financial gain, that he had no hope of marrying Olivia and that he is foolishly persuaded to challenge Cesario. The stronger answers included details such as him reputedly speaking three languages but not understanding 'pourquoi' and thinking that Maria was called ' Mistress Accost'. No-one was in any doubt of his foolishness but less successful answers narrated events with only generalised reference to the text.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

Question 5

(a) Most responses to this question showed understanding of the handkerchief's symbolism and the plot significance of it falling into Iago's hands. Strong responses commented on the impact Iago's lies have had on Othello's peace of mind and his rejection of Desdemona's ministering handkerchief as 'too little'.

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There was understanding of Emilia's wish to please her husband by giving him the handkerchief and of how fate was working in Iago's favour. Emilia's dramatic disquiet as to Iago's intentions was noted. The strongest answers explored the powerfully dramatic imagery in Iago's soliloquy, though few commented on its final four lines. Some answers spent rather too long on a discussion of Emilia and Iago's relationship at the expense of a secure focus on the question. Others made rather sweeping statements about Emilia betraying Desdemona and knowing Iago's intentions. She does not 'steal' the handkerchief as Iago has asked her, she finds it discarded and though she gives it to Iago she is as unaware of his machinations as everyone else. Most answers were lively and engaged but some recounted the plot rather than exploring the passage itself.

(b) Surprisingly few responses looked at the actual moment of Cassio's downfall when Iago persuades him to drink and incites Roderigo to provoke him, causing an uproar, a potential mutiny and the injury to Montano. This is followed by his humiliating dismissal by Othello and his agonising over his reputation. This central moment is powerfully dramatic onstage but seems to have been generally overlooked. Few also focused on the plot significance of Iago persuading Cassio to ask Desdemona to intercede for him thus igniting Othello's jealousy and rage. Most candidates outlined Iago's plot and saw that when Othello assumes Iago has killed Cassio, this triggers him to murder Desdemona. Responses often tended to focus more on Othello's jealousy or on Iago's motives than on the drama of Cassio's fall from grace.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/22
Drama

Key messages

- The question paper should be read closely and questions to be answered chosen carefully, to avoid changing to another question and wasting valuable examination time.
- Successful responses focused on the key words in the question and supported ideas with relevant, concise quotations which were analysed fully.
- Opening paragraphs should be brief and avoid lengthy socio-historical detail and lists of the writers' techniques to be addressed. Identifying technical terms and individual punctuation without consideration of the context and intended impact on the audience is an unproductive response to the set task.
- Successful answers to passage-based questions briefly contextualised the passage, selecting relevant material from across the whole passage and analysed both content and the writer's methods effectively.
- An awareness of the text as drama and an appreciation of the play on stage was a feature of the most successful answers.

General comments

Candidates demonstrated knowledge and enjoyment of their set text(s). The most popular texts across all syllabi were *Othello* and *Twelfth Night. The Crucible* was also popular but there were very few responses to *Journey's End or Crumbs from the Table of Joy.*

There was some excellent work seen. The most successful candidates showed detailed appreciation of texts and made perceptive comments on themes, characterisation and stagecraft. They demonstrated insight into the ways writers achieved effects, focusing closely on the key terms of the question. Textual knowledge was detailed, and these candidates were able to refer to, and quote from, texts effectively with brief, well-chosen quotations, which were fully analysed to consolidate the point being made. Less successful answers were often those where quotations were few, or too extensive, without being securely linked to the question or idea being expressed. Inert quotation is unlikely to achieve high reward as to achieve this, textual evidence should be evaluated and support the argument being made rather than be proof of mere recall.

An increasing number of candidates did not choose their question wisely and started an answer to one question then crossed it out and started another. Candidates should be encouraged to read the questions to the texts studied carefully and to make an informed choice. This will help to avoid wasting valuable time by changing question mid-examination. Whilst a short plan is also to be encouraged, there were some overly detailed plans, including which quotations to use, which were longer than the actual essay. With 45 minutes to write an essay these are unproductive approaches, and many resulted in some very brief answers.

Many candidates wrote lengthy, general introductions, summarising the plot, listing irrelevant social, cultural and historical detail or the techniques the writer had used. This, and the tendency to comment on punctuation including, commas, full stops and exclamation marks resulted in there being little to reward in some answers. Whilst there is something to be said about the tone indicated by the use of exclamation marks, and the use of dashes indicating tense pauses, commenting on them in isolation is meaningless: they need to be explored in context with consideration of their dramatic impact on the stage and not the page.

The performance of some candidates was undermined by the failure to focus on the precise terms of the question. Where the question required candidates to select two 'moments', some candidates wrote about too large a section and even full scenes of the play, or as seen in some less successful answers, across the whole play. The best answers made specific choices with well-selected textual evidence and a sharp focus on the chosen moments.

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The most successful answers wrote a brief introduction, focusing on the key terms of the question, for example, 'dramatic', 'revealing' or 'entertaining' and sustained a link to the question throughout their answer. When planning their response, candidates should highlight the key terms of questions and sustain a link to them throughout.

The ability to analyse linguistic and dramatic effects is key to successful responses. Whilst some candidates understood and used literary terminology correctly, for example foreshadowing and dramatic irony, there remains the tendency to point out terms, and particularly the use of punctuation, that is not explored in context or helpful in developing an argument constructively. Simply asserting the playwright uses a technique is unlikely to be rewarded: techniques identified should be relevant, supported, and the effects achieved analysed. It is unhelpful for candidates to be stating the obvious, that the writer uses, 'language', 'diction', dialogue, 'end-stopping' or 'caesura' to convey ideas.

Candidates need to remember that drama is visual and uses language that has an impact on an audience. The most successful responses demonstrated a constant awareness of the text as performance, referring to the 'audience' rather than 'reader' and the 'play' rather than 'novel', 'text' or 'book'. These were able to explore stagecraft and the authors' methods to convey the main concerns of their chosen texts.

There were some rubric infringements where some candidates answered on two passage-based questions instead of one passage-based question and one discursive. Time management was good with very few unfinished responses though there were many brief answers seen. Candidates are reminded not to refer to line numbers instead of quoting from the text and to remember to label their answers clearly, with the question number at the top of their answer.

Comments on specific questions

LYNN NOTTAGE: *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*

Question 1

(a) The few candidates who answered this question could identify Ermina's dissatisfaction and used the text to relate to her desire to assimilate with her environment, her feelings about her parent(s) and her desire to establish her own identity unrestricted by her sister and family. Only the best candidates understood that the forbidden music, meeting boys and going to parties were her ways of rebelling. Feelings were often identified but how they were 'dramatically' conveyed proved more difficult and the terms of the question rarely addressed. Consequently, some answers were narrative-paraphrase, and worked through the passage explaining, rather than analysing, the text and how the writer conveyed Ermina's feelings.

(b) This question was more popular than **1(a)**. A range of the family's struggles was understood including grief at Sandra's death, poverty, racism, Godfrey's over-reliance on Father Divine and the girls' struggles being forced to follow the latter's teachings. There were some successful comments on the word play of the title, with 'Crump' echoing 'Crumbs', suggesting that the family would continue to suffer in a society dominated by racism and only ever get crumbs from the white society in which they lived. There was also some detail to the girl's hatred of Gerte and the additional struggles the inter-racial marriage caused. However, very few explored the stresses and strains within the family. Weaker answers were narrative in approach with candidates struggling to recall specific textual material.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

(a) This was an extremely popular text and question. Responses to this pivotal scene in the play varied considerably. Most candidates were better on attempting to comment on 'dramatic' than showing their understanding of 'revealing'. There were also those who struggled to differentiate between what was revealing for the characters and for the audience. Weaker responses suggested that it was only at this point that the audience realised Abigail was a liar. The most successful answers understood the significance of Abigail's flight, the drama of Parris's fear, his hesitation and delay in telling Danforth his news, and his materialistic concerns. Danforth's dramatic reaction with his exclamations, repetition, and stage directions, 'alarmed… deeply worried', and his calling Parris 'a brainless man' were explored.

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The more successful candidates recognised it as the revelation to the audience that Danforth and Parris sense the downfall of the court, with the dramatic beginnings of the cracking and crumbling of an unjust regime. The deeper implications of Hale's changed views on prosecuting witches in trying to get Rebecca to confess so that she would not be hanged were also explored. The significance of the rebellion in Andover and Danforth and Hathorne's denial were understood. However, Parris's fear for his life was rarely understood with most candidates thinking he was still worrying about his reputation and his 'Thirty-one pounds.' The strongest saw that the audience would be pleased to see the truth coming out and would hope the court gets its comeuppance.

Weaker answers misplaced the context and were confused about Rebecca and Martha thinking they were witches and had confessed. Some felt sympathy for Parris's tears whereas those with greater knowledge and understanding felt that his tears were more for his loss of status and wealth. Some weaker candidates felt that the vanishing of Abigail and Mercy was 'dramatic' because only witches can vanish whereas the more successful responses considered their motives for running away, with some suggesting that it was Abigail who had left the dagger on Parris's doorstep. There were many answers which retold the passage or focused solely on dramatic techniques, for example, punctuation and stage directions, without exploring them in context or demonstrating what was happening at this profoundly dramatic point in the play to shock Parris and Danforth.

(b) There were fewer answers to this question. The most successful answers chose two suitable moments and explored them in detail focusing sharply on the question, the 'power of the belief in witchcraft', rather than narrating their selected moments and asserting this 'demonstrated the belief in witchcraft.' The best answers understood how Abigail manipulates the court's belief in the power of witchcraft to get what she wants as do others: people use it against those they hate or whose property they want. They saw how Salem's belief in witchcraft leads to injustice, to revenge and death.

Most candidates chose the 'yellow bird' moment in court, exploring how Abigail whipped up the girls into hysteria and the effects on the men, and the first scene with Tituba's interrogation and 'confession'. Other popular 'moments' were when either John or Elizabeth was arrested with some close detail to the 'poppet' incident.

Weaker answers were narrative, which, whilst showing some knowledge and understanding of the 'moment' did not fully address the terms of the question. A few candidates seemed to believe that witchcraft was real and had been carried out, for example, it caused the death of Ann Putnam's babies.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) Successful candidates argued it was a dramatically effective opening as it did not open as most audience members might expect a war play to begin; instead, it opens calmy with a cheerful song and with almost mundane, trivial conversation. Some recognised that Sherriff makes the opening dramatically effective by conveying the waiting around with some suggesting that Hardy's 'indefinite humming' reflected the uncertainty of the war and the cyclical nature of trench warfare. Surprisingly, few commented on Hardy's hearing the German preparations for the attack but those who did were able to explore how his speculation made the audience aware that it was expected to happen soon and related this to Osborne's shutting Hardy down. Better answers commented on what was revealed of the two men and how they were characterised. There was rarely understanding of Hardy's relief that Osborne had arrived for the changeover, and not Stanhope, or the sense that Stanhope might not be as friendly towards Hardy. Only the best answers understood the dark humour as a means of coping with death, fear, bombs landing and the imminent attack the men were expecting.

Weaker answers took the situation at face value, ignoring this as the opening to the play and commented on the problems of trench warfare, awful conditions of wearing wet socks, the dirt in the men's tea and not having clean water to drink. These answers summarised the passage with much misreading of the situation and the stage directions: for example, some suggested that the appearance of Osborne suggested he was old and would not be a pleasant character.

(b) Too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE*: Twelfth Night*

Question 4

(a) This was an extremely popular text and question. The passage elicited the entire range of answers, ranging from those showing critical understanding and an analysis of how the scene is entertaining to weaker answers where there was confusion over the plot and letters with some writing about the letter written for Malvolio. There was usually some understanding of how humour was created by the anticipation of the duel, foreshadowing, and dramatic irony usually being identified. Most recognised Sir Toby's ulterior and selfish motive and Sir Andrew's stupidity. The strongest answers engaged fully with the question and analysed how and why the language was amusing.

The most successful answers understood the context and the situational comedy. They knew what Sir Toby and Fabian were doing here and why: how they gull Sir Andrew for their own benefit and amusement. The best answers were fully aware of the ridiculousness of Sir Andrew's pursuit of Olivia and his naivety in falling for Sir Toby's ploys, the trickery, Sir Andrew's gullibility and that Cesario is a woman. They explored the text in detail, commenting on the language, such as the humour in the insult of 'dormouse valour'; others were able to relate 'accost,' to Sir Andrew's earlier misunderstanding with Maria. Some commented on 'manakin' and Sir Andrew being a puppet, often foreshadowing the fight being entertaining since through dramatic irony we know Viola also will be a weak fighter.

Weaker answers misread the moment with much confusion over characters thinking it was Malvolio who was being sent the letter and that 'Marry' was the object of Sir Andrew's desires; often Malvolio instead of Fabian and Sebastian instead of Cesario were used. Many of the weaker answers did not include any textual references from the extract, or copied extensively from the passage, and only mentioned 'entertaining' towards the end of their answers.

(b) Fewer candidates chose this question but there were many successful answers. This is a 'how far' question and candidates who argued both sides wrote more convincingly than those who argued that Malvolio either did, or did not, deserve sympathy. It allowed stronger candidates to show how well they could demonstrate their knowledge of the play to weigh up the evidence to arrive at a balanced conclusion. This question elicited some strong personal views: some felt that it was immoral to trick him since he was just doing his job, others felt he was to be pitied since he was shamed in front of Olivia, the one he loved. Some thought he was simply arrogant and cruel, and deserved what he got; most that he deserved the first trick but locking him up and convincing him he was mad was a trick too far and he did not deserve that. There were those who felt a genuine sympathy for the character and described his treatment as 'torture' and 'mental cruelty' and that whatever he had done, no-one deserved such treatment.

The best answers were able to select suitable material and quote accurately and gave a vivid description of Malvolio's character, with examples, to show why he was disliked; used some details of each trick to show why he deserved or did not deserve them and evaluated Malvolio at the end of the play, when he refuses to accept Olivia's apology and vows revenge, some arguing that he deserved the trick as he had learned nothing at all.

There were many weaker answers which narrated the plot or wrote a character profile of Malvolio with sweeping generalisations of his hypocrisy and cruelty. Others demonstrated general knowledge of Malvolio's role and actions but did not always use this information to address whether or not he deserved to be tricked. A few candidates did attempt to link their comments to the question in the final paragraph, but this was often a cursory comment stating, 'This makes me feel he deserved to be tricked.'

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE*: Othello*

Question 5

(a) This was the most popular choice of text and question this series. There was a wide range of answers to this question from a simple awareness of the situation to a full appreciation of Iago's malevolence and his and Roderigo's shocking revelation to Brabantio. The most successful answers focused on Iago and explored the power of his 'shocking' language and its implications for

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character and plot development. Most understood the racist, animalistic imagery, Iago's hypocrisy, and his intentions. Many candidates, however, based much of the response on Brabantio's reaction rather than the audience, which was relevant, but arguably less rich in material. Better answers understood the context and circumstances of this scene, in the street, in the dark with Iago hiding from sight and Brabantio being alarmed by what he hears and how he hears it. These answers showed critical understanding of the dramatic impact of Iago's introduction of Othello as the audience has not met him or Desdemona yet, so this is our first impression of them. Only a few really appreciated how shocking it is for a father to be woken to hear such news of his cherished daughter.

The shocking use of animal imagery was cited and understood by most candidates, although the 'Barbary horse,' 'neighing nephews and coursers' caused some confusion. The use of Roderigo by Iago here was not often examined, although the best answers considered this early glimpse of Iago's capacity for manipulation and deceit shocking.

Weaker answers tended to speculate on Desdemona's behaviour and link that to 'shocking' or they went beyond the passage to discuss how Othello wooed Desdemona or satisfied her father. These were too narrative, retelling or paraphrasing the text. Some did not know why Iago was doing this and spent too long on the attitude of patriarchs in Elizabethan times who treat their daughters as possessions. The weakest answers digressed and wrote about racism in Elizabethan times and in the Venetian state, losing focus on both the question and the passage.

(b) This was also a popular choice and another 'how far' question, allowing the best candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the text, and some of the more subtle presentations of Emilia, to support a balanced argument. Most said she was a submissive and obedient wife, as was expected at the time. Some debated whether she was more loyal to Desdemona, but most thought she was completely loyal to Iago until the end when she realises how he has tricked Othello. They were all able to explore Emilia and Iago's relationship a little, considering why she took the handkerchief and gave it to him – in order to please him and get something from him in return, for him to be pleasant to her or to show gratitude. She certainly thinks his desire for it is harmless. The better ones recalled the abuse she passively receives at the dock and her comments on infidelity. These answers explored her shock at the end when she discovers how Iago had played Othello, and her bravery in denouncing him and forfeiting her own life. Her repeated 'My husband' evidences her ignorance of his plans and her final defence of Desdemona and refusal to obey Iago were key details.

Less successful answers wrongly claimed that Emilia knew of Iago's plans. Most said that Emilia stole the handkerchief and did not question why he wanted it, making generalised comments that she would do anything for Iago because she loved him so much. This included sharing with Iago the information she had access to, so she was seen as complicit and supportive of him against Desdemona and Othello. A few candidates argued that Emilia was a feminist and lost sight of the question, so these were self-penalising.

The weakest answers relied on the handkerchief and sometimes, Emilia's final revelation of the truth. There was little supporting textual detail offered and they did not really understand Iago's treatment of his wife, nor how she tries to please him by following his instructions without question.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/23
Drama

Key messages

- Successful responses included introductions which avoided lengthy plot summaries and discussions of historical context and remained focused on the key words of the question. They also avoided listing techniques to be addressed in the introduction.
- Short, direct quotations from the text were the best method of supporting points. These references should be analysed fully.
- In passage-based questions successful responses contextualised the passage and then explored it fully, considering the effects of language and structure. References should be selected from the whole passage, including the ending.
- Successful discursive responses maintained a tight focus on the question and used precise textual references.
- Less successful responses identified literary terms and punctuation without considering their intended effect on the audience.
- An awareness of the text as drama and a personal engagement with the impact of the play onstage are essential in successful responses.

General comments

Overall, there was a sense of engagement with, and enjoyment of, the set texts and some excellent work was seen.

Successful responses showed clear knowledge of the set texts and were able to demonstrate critical understanding, showing insight into characterisation, stagecraft and language. They focused on key words in the question such as ‘striking’, ‘shocking’, ‘dramatic’ or ‘entertaining’.

Outlining a brief plan, underlining key words in the question and annotating the passage at the start of the exam time can help to avoid mis-readings and to maintain focus on the question throughout the response.

A sustained awareness that the texts are written to be performed onstage and their impact on the audience was a feature of successful responses. Referring to ‘audience’ rather than ‘reader’, and to ‘play’ rather than ‘novel’, ‘text’ or ‘book’ demonstrated this awareness. Some weaker responses summarised the plot and wrote detailed outlines of historical context with little or no focus on the question.

Briefly setting the passage in context at the start of the response is essential in helping to show understanding of the structure of the text. Often candidates wasted precious exam time writing lengthy introductions including such information as the religious background of Salem, military strategy in WW1 or lists of the writer’s techniques. It is very useful to teach the historical context of the play but focus during the exam should be on key words in the question, what is happening in the passage and an exploration of the writer’s methods in conveying his or her intentions to the audience. Brief well-selected references should be analysed fully.

Exploration of the use of techniques such as dramatic irony and foreshadowing was often successful. However, pointing out literary techniques with no exploration of their effects is unlikely to be rewarded. Similarly, referencing punctuation with no consideration of the effects in context is unhelpful in producing a successful response.

Several responses had a tendency to interject with personal stories related to the text but not relevant to the question, ‘I had a similar situation where I told a lie to my friends.’ Personal engagement with the text is important, but this type of lengthy anecdote distracted from the question and wasted valuable exam time.

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Time management was generally good, with very few brief or unfinished responses.

Comments on specific questions

LYNN NOTTAGE: *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*

Question 1

(a) Too few responses to this question were seen to make meaningful comment.

(b) Too few responses to this question were seen to make meaningful comment.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

(a) This question focused on a dramatic moment from the beginning of the play, allowing scope for discussion of the growing hysteria surrounding witchcraft and there was much to explore in the stage directions. The passage elicited the full range of responses.

The strongest responses showed good personal engagement with the passage and clearly understood the context, which meant that they were able to show more clearly their understanding of Parris's comments. They started by briefly contextualising the passage and worked methodically through the passage, analysing it in depth. They sustained a critical understanding of the attitudes towards witchcraft, characters' motivations, the conflict between Parris and the Putnams and the rising hysteria in Salem, all related to how the passage is shocking.

Many responses engaged with the shocking nature of the Putnams' eagerness to believe in witchcraft, in contrast to the strict religious society. Reference to stage directions and how they build tension in the scene was generally effective, such as comment on Mrs. Putnam's 'vicious certainty' that witchcraft is real.

Focus on Ann Putnam's desire to apportion blame for her babies' deaths and her excitement about the prospect of witchcraft with matter-of-fact reference to the Devil and of Tituba talking to the dead were features of stronger responses, as was discussion of Parris's prioritising concern for his own reputation over worry about his daughter.

Many less successful responses began by writing lengthy introductions about the society of Salem and/or McCarthyism in 1950s America. There was often no reference to the context (that Parris had caught the girls dancing the night before and had already sent for Hale) and so the extract was treated in isolation which often led to unsubstantiated claims. Many responses did not mention Parris's fear of being thrown out of Salem or the fact that he probably knows the reason for Betty's and Ruth's 'illness.' Some focused almost entirely on Ann Putnam or ignored sections of the extract.

Other less successful responses showed some misunderstanding of the degree of respect afforded to Parris by the community. There was also a lack of engagement with his concern for his own reputation above caring for his child and many responses confused Ruth and Betty. Weaker responses often made reference to stage directions but with little focus on 'shocking' and coverage of the passage was often limited.

(b) This question proved successful in engaging candidates effectively and resulted in many perceptive and insightful personal responses, with well-selected textual support.

Most responses presented a balanced view of Elizabeth-understanding that her 'coldness' is a result of her pain at her husband's betrayal but that she shows love for him when she lies in court. Many responses were well-developed and appreciated nuance of character, understanding that Elizabeth is not one-dimensional. They were able to successfully explore her development through

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the play. Many candidates' personal engagement was strong, and they expressed indignance at the way Elizabeth is treated by John and defended her staunchly.

The best responses looked closely at the text and provided relevant support. They focused on Elizabeth's admission that she must have been cold to have forced John to have an affair, but they also recognised her forgiving and understanding attitude at his death. Perceptive responses picked up on Elizabeth having to remind John about the Commandment of adultery and made careful reference to the stage directions.

Weaker responses misunderstood some quotations, for example about John finding his own justice and some wrote at length about whether John should have been forgiven. A small number of responses thought that Elizabeth is cold throughout the play. Many responses commented on Abigail's description of Elizabeth, which creates an impression of her even before we meet her, but few commented on why Abigail's description may be unreliable.

Surprisingly, many responses did not comment on how Elizabeth goes against her morals to lie in court in an attempt to protect her husband.

RC SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) This question focused on a truly 'dramatic' and 'revealing' moment of the play, with the subtleties only being clearly understood by the stronger responses. This passage highlighted that the attack was sending men to a certain death.

Many candidates contextualised the passage and some provided a little appropriate historical context. Stronger responses engaged with the dark humour and absurdity of the situation the soldiers are in.

Some responses commented on the restrained emotions of Stanhope and Sergeant-Major and the Sergeant-Major's diffidence in questioning Stanhope. Most responses commented on Stanhope's drinking and offering whisky to Sergeant-Major but saw this as a coping mechanism rather than an act of care.

In weaker responses many introductions were too long, outlining historical details of WW1. There was some misunderstanding that the orders were from Stanhope, rather than him responding to orders from above. There was some lack of engagement with Sergeant-Major's dawning realisation that the soldiers are doomed and with the subtleties of Stanhope's dilemma, his remarks and behaviour. Many responses repeatedly mentioned Stanhope's confidence, failing to engage with the fact that he understands the hopelessness of the situation, but is showing his leadership qualities by trying to bolster the Sergeant-Major's confidence.

Some candidates also missed the almost comedic portrayal of the Sergeant-Major, his repetition of the instructions, his brief answers, but his telling, simple question at the end and Stanhope's equally simple response 'We win the war.' The almost farcical nature of the scene was often not understood and these candidates missed the dark, satirical humour which highlighted the sadness and chaos of the planning in WW1.

(b) Candidates seemed to enjoy exploring the full range of opportunities this question made available. They showed empathy with the soldiers and the stresses they are under.

The best responses were quite wide-ranging with relevant textual support and there was some effective focus on the stress of waiting for action in war and of the uncertainty of the soldiers' lives.

Many stronger responses also looked at the stress of the imminent threat of death and of losing one's companions and they engaged with the additional stress put upon Stanhope by Raleigh's arrival in the trenches, causing a clash between his life at home and life at war.

Some responses picked up on the 'earwigs' being analogous to the soldiers but there was sometimes too much discussion of this.

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Many responses focused on the soldiers' coping mechanisms rather than outlining particular stresses of life in the trenches, but there was effective discussion of Stanhope's reliance on alcohol, Hibbert's 'neuralgia' and the fact he would rather be shot by Stanhope than die in battle, and Trotter's attempt to gain a sense of control by filling in a circle each hour.

Personal engagement with the question was often strong, and responses expressed sympathy for the soldiers and the lack of value placed on their lives. The word 'heart breaking' was often used to express the tragedy.

The weaker responses did not move beyond the obvious aspects of stress or coping mechanisms, such as Stanhope's drinking. They also thought that it was common to all the soldiers and suggested that every soldier was an alcoholic. These responses made general comments about life in the trenches but lacked detailed textual support and development. Very few responses discussed the stress of the contrast of life in the trenches and memories of home.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 4

(a) The most successful responses briefly contextualised the passage and engaged with Viola's feelings of confusion about the ring and her pity for Olivia, understanding the complications created by her disguise.

There was often a sense of personal connection with and empathy for Viola because we as the audience are aware of her true identity.

These responses showed understanding of Viola's gradual realisation that Olivia has fallen for Cesario, which was then followed by a clear response to her confusion about the implications of this, not only for herself but also for Olivia and Orsino. Only a few responses commented on the use of a long soliloquy to show Viola thinking through the implications of her situation. Many responses also made valid comments about the fickleness of love and the problems of love at first sight.

The idea of the plot being complex came through strongly, with many candidates quoting the last line of the passage.

Less successful responses did not contextualise the passage and did not identify Viola's speech as a soliloquy, believing that Malvolio is still on stage and that Viola is expressing her thoughts to him. Many candidates lost succinct engagement with the passage, drifting into paraphrase. These responses showed a lack of detailed commentary on language and seemed to struggle to engage with much of the language of Viola's soliloquy. Coverage of the passage often lacked thoroughness and there was some misunderstanding of the language. The theme of appearance and reality was often mentioned in passing, with no development or textual support. Few responses understood the subtlety of Viola's lie 'She took the ring of me' and there was often little focus on Malvolio's lines in the passage.

(b) This question allowed candidates to share their enthusiasm and enjoyment of the text, but sadly there was a shortage of strong responses to this question, with candidates struggling to identify two discrete moments or to pinpoint exactly why they were entertaining.

The best responses selected two clearly identifiable moments, described what happened and explained what made them entertaining, with reference to the action and clear focus on the language.

The majority of candidates chose to discuss the prank played on Malvolio as one of their 'moments', with some comment on Malvolio deserving a trick played on him due to his haughty manner. There was engagement with the character and some textual support.

Another popular 'moment' was the 'fight' between Sir Andrew and Cesario. The slapstick nature of the scene was enjoyed but there was often a lack of textual support.

Some candidates made effective responses to Orsino's introduction, with textual support often limited to the 'If music be the food of love' quotation.

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Many responses chose to discuss the humour of Sebastian fighting back when he is mistaken for Cesario by Sir Andrew, and Olivia stopping the fight

Weaker responses used little to no textual support from the chosen moments and tended to generalise when discussing the entertaining elements, leading to much paraphrase and narrative. The 'moments' themselves often stretched to whole scenes or across the whole play and there was a lack of sharp focus on specific events or language. Very few of these responses were well-developed and for many, understanding remained at a surface level. The moment of Malvolio being tricked was often chosen as a moment but rarely supported with textual detail and many responses mentioned the theme of appearance vs reality but lacked support and development of this area.

Some weaker responses used the passage from **Question 4a** to answer this question, despite the instruction on the question paper to avoid doing this.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

Question 5

(a) Successful responses identified the context and engaged with the intensity of Emilia's shock and anger at Desdemona's death and her challenge to Othello which reveals Iago's plot. They understood Desdemona's love for Othello and the loyalty shown in her attempt to protect him by denying that he killed her.

These responses engaged with the language of the characters; they recognised the juxtaposition of good and evil and the references to the racial overtones. There was focus on and understanding of the imagery of heaven and hell, with much comment on the 'angel/devil' contrast describing Desdemona and Othello. The strongest responses recognised the significance of Emilia's repeated 'My husband' in that it shows a growing realisation of her husband's plotting.

Most responses commented on Othello's use of 'whore' in contrast to Desdemona's innocence.

In weaker responses some candidates surprisingly seemed to have considered Desdemona's death too obvious to address and discussion of this was limited. Candidates often drifted from the task and passage and explored context in too much detail. Hence there was a great deal of irrelevant and general comment about men and women's roles in Elizabethan society. Analysis of the language of the passage was often lacking, e.g. black and white imagery. They made little or no reference to Desdemona's dialogue in the passage. There was some confusion between 'tense' and 'intense' in the question wording and many responses incorrectly interpreted the word 'Moor' as a racist term. Some responses dealt only with the first half of the extract and again, there was too much general, undeveloped comment on the theme of appearance vs reality.

(b) The most successful responses were able to focus on Desdemona's honesty and innocence and to express a sense of personal indignance as well as sympathy at how she becomes a victim of Iago's scheming. They explored the language of Heaven used to describe her qualities and understood her naivety and the lack of communication in her relationship with Othello, the more astute recognising the unwitting part played by Emilia in the handkerchief episode.

Stronger responses also expressed frustration that Desdemona does not defend herself against Othello's accusations and disbelief that she can be so selfless in her love.

Weaker responses struggled to engage with this question, tending to discuss Iago's plot and his manipulation of Othello rather than focussing in detail on Desdemona. These responses showed little engagement with the true horror of Desdemona's death, or even overlooked her death altogether, maybe thinking it too obvious to comment on. They also lacked engagement with the extent of her love for Othello or her innocence. These less successful responses struggled to recall specific textual material. Many responses digressed and wrote at length about the role of women in Venetian society but with little focus on the question.

Other weaker responses did not go beyond the obvious about how Desdemona is a victim of Iago's scheming. A small number of candidates used the extract from **Question 5a** as a way of showing sympathy, thereby not focusing on the complete text and limiting the scope of the response.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/31
Drama (Open Text)

Key messages

- The most successful responses showed sound knowledge of the text as a whole and understood the context of the set passages.
- Candidates who could refer to specific moments in the text or use direct quotations supported points effectively.
- Commenting fully on the effects of literary techniques is key to accessing the higher levels of achievement.
- The most effective answers are firmly rooted in appreciation of the drama genre.
- The most successful introductions briefly summarised three of four points that were then fleshed out in the main body of the essay.

General comments

The vast majority of candidates showed knowledge of and engagement with their set texts. The strongest responses considered on-stage effects such as lighting and sound as well as the dialogue and stage directions, showing awareness of drama as a genre and the play's effect on an audience. Some introductions to essays were still over-long, sometimes a side of writing and were entirely general with biographical information about the author and no reference to the question. This was particularly true of answers to questions on *The Crucible* where many essays began with a paragraph on McCarthyism. This wasted valuable time which would have been better spent on the passage itself.

A knowledge of context is important when writing about the passage-based questions. Several responses misplaced the passage from *The Crucible* as being from the end of the play and the passage from *Journey's End* as referring to the 'big attack' at the end of the play rather than to the raid before it. On the other hand merely writing about the context of the passage in the whole play is unhelpful.

To access the higher levels candidates are required to integrate much well-selected reference to the text. It is very common that responses do not include any direct quotations even from the passages. Some candidates referred to a number of lines from the passage leaving it to the Examiner to guess which part of those lines was meant. Some effective answers to the discursive questions were let down by an inability to give evidence for the points made. Learning some key quotations from the text would dramatically improve overall performance.

The ability to comment on dramatic and linguistic effects in context was a defining feature of strong answers. Many candidates could comment on, for example, the causes of tension in a passage by referring to the relationships or past history but not to the use, for example, of repetition, pauses, imagery, exclamation in the dialogue which created this tension.

The strongest answers to discursive questions selected a range of material from the text as a whole and supported points with quotation or very specific textual reference. A small minority of candidates are still using the discursive **Question (b)** to answer the passage-based **Question (a)**. The is clearly self-defeating. A reminder of the rubric before the candidates sit the examination might be advisable.

Several questions on the paper asked about the contribution of characters or events to the play's dramatic impact. These were answered well when candidates avoided character sketches or concentrating purely on themes and looked at the stage action, powerful dialogue or plot impact.

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Candidates who paid attention to the key words in the question such as: 'intriguing, strikingly, powerfully, disturbing, movingly' fared better than those who do not. Such terms are an invitation to look at the author's writing to create effects and taking up that invitation elevates the response.

Comments on specific questions

LYNN NOTTAGE: ***Crumbs from the Table of Joy***

Question 1

(a) This question was, in general, answered very competently. The strongest responses engaged with the dramatic effects including Ernestine breaking the fourth wall, the use of sound, the personification of death and the deliberate delaying of information. Most candidates commenting on the impact of Sandra's death (the banshee wail), the mysterious Father Divine and Ernestine's and Ermina's contrasting reactions and responses, commenting on the simile 'like a wild animal'. Less successful responses tended to narrate and show limited awareness of audience. There were some generalised comments about racism, with the assumption that the girls' school is predominantly white and that Ernestine and Ermina were bullied for their colour rather than their Southern ways and unsophisticated clothes.

(b) Successful responses to this question commented on the contrast between Godfrey's faith and Lily's Communism, the restrictions his beliefs placed on the girls, Father Divine being an obvious fake and Gerte as a moderating influence. Many commented effectively on the conflict caused by contrasting attitudes, the degree of success often depending on the level of support given. Less effective answers tended to write a character sketch of Lily without making this relevant to the question.

ARTHUR MILLER: ***The Crucible***

Question 2

(a) This question was answered by a large number of candidates. The most effective responses knew the context: that Proctor has seen Abigail alone, she has told him that the girls' behaviour is pretence and that Elizabeth is urging him to go to Salem to denounce her. Such responses showed awareness of Proctor's affair and its effect on the couple but concentrated on exploring how tension is created in the passage by the pauses, the stage directions, the interruptions and, in the strongest, the imagery. Less successful answers tended to do one or other of the above. Some wrote about the 'backstory' at the expense of looking at the passage, others wrote exclusively about the stage directions which was meaningless without explanation of the context. There were some perceptive and engaged responses but rather disappointingly some key images such as 'everlasting funeral marches round your heart' and ' your justice would freeze beer' were often unconsidered. Some strongly engaged responses commented on John Proctor 'gaslighting' his wife, making her feel guilty for his misdemeanour. The weakest responses misplaced the context as being at the end of the play or thought it was the moment where Proctor was confessing to the affair.

(b) Although most candidates knew that Putnam was wealthy and was accusing people of witchcraft for personal gain and that Ann blamed Rebecca Nurse for the loss of her babies, in general the question was not well-answered. The scenes in which they appear, such as their powerfully dramatic initial entrance and Putnam's treatment of Tituba were not referred to in any detail. Some mentioned the altercation with Giles Corey but most found it difficult to give concrete evidence for the relevant points made. Their initial role in the hysteria could have been more fully explored. In weaker answers there were some minor errors such as Ann miscarrying rather than giving birth to live babies who subsequently died but some candidates mistook Betty Parris for Ruth Putnam. Many responses would have been vastly improved by close reference to the text.

R.C SHERRIFF*: Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) Most answers understood the disturbing nature of a plan for a raid with the certainty that several of the men (strong, keen youngsters) were going to die. Most criticised the Colonel for his attitude to

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casualties and his acceptance of the likely death of Raleigh and Osborne. Some saw his awkwardness in the pipe sucking, the pauses and his reluctance to speak to the men he is sending to die.

The strongest responses explored the writing more shrewdly and developed the deeper implications. Some saw the Colonel's excitement for the raid and keenness for success, and were sceptical of his comment that it 'may mean the winning of the whole war'. They were aware that he saw casualties in terms of numbers, not individuals. Some focused more on Stanhope, his quietness, which prompts the Colonel's 'it's no good getting depressed', how he forces the Colonel to do the right thing and speak to the men, the significance of Raleigh and Osborne's subdued 'murmur' knowing that they are facing their own deaths.

Less successful responses misplaced the context as the 'big attack', rather than the raid and thought the smoke bombs were German bombs not a smoke screen for the raid. Most had forgotten the significance of the Germans putting red rags on the wire. The satirical portrait of the Colonel was not understood, his words being taken at face value. The British repressed emotion subtext was more understandably not fully grasped. Some candidates wanted to write an essay about coping mechanisms, writing about the rum ration at the expense of spending time on the Colonel's insincerity and the suicidal nature of the mission.

(b) Candidates were adept at selecting relevant material such as Osborne's defence of Stanhope to Hardy, his warning to Raleigh that Stanhope had changed, his reading of Raleigh's letter and putting Stanhope to bed when he was drunk. The strongest answers could support points by close textual reference. Less successful answers wrote about these events in a general way without any direct support. The moving nature of the relationship was developed in the strongest answers particularly by referencing Stanhope's devastation at Osborne's death. Less detailed and engaged answers made no reference to 'movingly' at all.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 4

(a) Most candidates understood the serious elements of the passage. Malvolio's humiliation and desire for revenge was considered along with the extremity of his treatment. Some commented on the extent to which he deserved to be punished for his words to Feste and his arrogance towards Sir Toby, Fabian and Maria. Stronger answers looked at the entertainment factor of the truth being revealed and loose ends being tied up as satisfying to an audience. Many commented on Olivia's even handedness and sympathy for Malvolio, others on the humour of his self-delusion chiming in with some of the major themes of the play.

(b) This question was generally answered in a satisfactory manner. Candidates knew that Sir Toby was manipulating Sir Andrew for financial gain, that he had no hope of marrying Olivia and that he is foolishly persuaded to challenge Cesario. The stronger answers included details such as him reputedly speaking three languages but not understanding 'pourquoi' and thinking that Maria was called ' Mistress Accost'. No-one was in any doubt of his foolishness but less successful answers narrated events with only generalised reference to the text.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

Question 5

(a) Most responses to this question showed understanding of the handkerchief's symbolism and the plot significance of it falling into Iago's hands. Strong responses commented on the impact Iago's lies have had on Othello's peace of mind and his rejection of Desdemona's ministering handkerchief as 'too little'.

There was understanding of Emilia's wish to please her husband by giving him the handkerchief and of how fate was working in Iago's favour. Emilia's dramatic disquiet as to Iago's intentions was noted. The strongest answers explored the powerfully dramatic imagery in Iago's soliloquy, though few commented on its final four lines. Some answers spent rather too long on a discussion of Emilia and Iago's relationship at the expense of a secure focus on the question. Others made rather sweeping statements about Emilia betraying Desdemona and knowing Iago's intentions. She does not 'steal' the handkerchief as Iago has asked her, she finds it discarded and though she

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gives it to Iago she is as unaware of his machinations as everyone else. Most answers were lively and engaged but some recounted the plot rather than exploring the passage itself.

(b) Surprisingly few responses looked at the actual moment of Cassio's downfall when Iago persuades him to drink and incites Roderigo to provoke him, causing an uproar, a potential mutiny and the injury to Montano. This is followed by his humiliating dismissal by Othello and his agonising over his reputation. This central moment is powerfully dramatic onstage but seems to have been generally overlooked. Few also focused on the plot significance of Iago persuading Cassio to ask Desdemona to intercede for him thus igniting Othello's jealousy and rage. Most candidates outlined Iago's plot and saw that when Othello assumes Iago has killed Cassio, this triggers him to murder Desdemona. Responses often tended to focus more on Othello's jealousy or on Iago's motives than on the drama of Cassio's fall from grace.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/32
Drama (Open Text)

Key messages

- The question paper should be read closely and questions to be answered chosen carefully, to avoid changing to another question and wasting valuable examination time.
- Successful responses focused on the key words in the question and supported ideas with relevant, concise quotations which were analysed fully.
- Opening paragraphs should be brief and avoid lengthy socio-historical detail and lists of the writers' techniques to be addressed. Identifying technical terms and individual punctuation without consideration of the context and intended impact on the audience is an unproductive response to the set task.
- Successful answers to passage-based questions briefly contextualised the passage, selecting relevant material from across the whole passage and analysed both content and the writer's methods effectively.
- An awareness of the text as drama and an appreciation of the play on stage was a feature of the most successful answers.

General comments

Candidates demonstrated knowledge and enjoyment of their set text(s). The most popular texts across all syllabi were *Othello* and *Twelfth Night. The Crucible* was also popular but there were very few responses to *Journey's End or Crumbs from the Table of Joy.*

There was some excellent work seen. The most successful candidates showed detailed appreciation of texts and made perceptive comments on themes, characterisation and stagecraft. They demonstrated insight into the ways writers achieved effects, focusing closely on the key terms of the question. Textual knowledge was detailed, and these candidates were able to refer to, and quote from, texts effectively with brief, well-chosen quotations, which were fully analysed to consolidate the point being made. Less successful answers were often those where quotations were few, or too extensive, without being securely linked to the question or idea being expressed. Inert quotation is unlikely to achieve high reward as to achieve this, textual evidence should be evaluated and support the argument being made rather than be proof of mere recall.

An increasing number of candidates did not choose their question wisely and started an answer to one question then crossed it out and started another. Candidates should be encouraged to read the questions to the texts studied carefully and to make an informed choice. This will help to avoid wasting valuable time by changing question mid-examination. Whilst a short plan is also to be encouraged, there were some overly detailed plans, including which quotations to use, which were longer than the actual essay. With 45 minutes to write an essay these are unproductive approaches, and many resulted in some very brief answers.

Many candidates wrote lengthy, general introductions, summarising the plot, listing irrelevant social, cultural and historical detail or the techniques the writer had used. This, and the tendency to comment on punctuation including, commas, full stops and exclamation marks resulted in there being little to reward in some answers. Whilst there is something to be said about the tone indicated by the use of exclamation marks, and the use of dashes indicating tense pauses, commenting on them in isolation is meaningless: they need to be explored in context with consideration of their dramatic impact on the stage and not the page.

The performance of some candidates was undermined by the failure to focus on the precise terms of the question. Where the question required candidates to select two 'moments', some candidates wrote about too large a section and even full scenes of the play, or as seen in some less successful answers, across the whole play. The best answers made specific choices with well-selected textual evidence and a sharp focus on the chosen moments.

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The most successful answers wrote a brief introduction, focusing on the key terms of the question, for example, 'dramatic', 'revealing' or 'entertaining' and sustained a link to the question throughout their answer. When planning their response, candidates should highlight the key terms of questions and sustain a link to them throughout.

The ability to analyse linguistic and dramatic effects is key to successful responses. Whilst some candidates understood and used literary terminology correctly, for example foreshadowing and dramatic irony, there remains the tendency to point out terms, and particularly the use of punctuation, that is not explored in context or helpful in developing an argument constructively. Simply asserting the playwright uses a technique is unlikely to be rewarded: techniques identified should be relevant, supported, and the effects achieved analysed. It is unhelpful for candidates to be stating the obvious, that the writer uses, 'language', 'diction', dialogue, 'end-stopping' or 'caesura' to convey ideas.

Candidates need to remember that drama is visual and uses language that has an impact on an audience. The most successful responses demonstrated a constant awareness of the text as performance, referring to the 'audience' rather than 'reader' and the 'play' rather than 'novel', 'text' or 'book'. These were able to explore stagecraft and the authors' methods to convey the main concerns of their chosen texts.

Time management was good with very few unfinished responses though there were many brief answers seen. Candidates are reminded not to refer to line numbers instead of quoting from the text and to remember to label their answers clearly, with the question number at the top of their answer.

Comments on specific questions

LYNN NOTTAGE: *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*

Question 1

(a) The few candidates who answered this question could identify Ermina's dissatisfaction and used the text to relate to her desire to assimilate with her environment, her feelings about her parent(s) and her desire to establish her own identity unrestricted by her sister and family. Only the best candidates understood that the forbidden music, meeting boys and going to parties were her ways of rebelling. Feelings were often identified but how they were 'dramatically' conveyed proved more difficult and the terms of the question rarely addressed. Consequently, some answers were narrative-paraphrase, and worked through the passage explaining, rather than analysing, the text and how the writer conveyed Ermina's feelings.

(b) This question was more popular than **1(a)**. A range of the family's struggles was understood including grief at Sandra's death, poverty, racism, Godfrey's over-reliance on Father Divine and the girls' struggles being forced to follow the latter's teachings. There were some successful comments on the word play of the title, with 'Crump' echoing 'Crumbs', suggesting that the family would continue to suffer in a society dominated by racism and only ever get crumbs from the white society in which they lived. There was also some detail to the girl's hatred of Gerte and the additional struggles the inter-racial marriage caused. However, very few explored the stresses and strains within the family. Weaker answers were narrative in approach with candidates struggling to recall specific textual material.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

(a) This was an extremely popular text and question. Responses to this pivotal scene in the play varied considerably. Most candidates were better on attempting to comment on 'dramatic' than showing their understanding of 'revealing'. There were also those who struggled to differentiate between what was revealing for the characters and for the audience. Weaker responses suggested that it was only at this point that the audience realised Abigail was a liar. The most successful answers understood the significance of Abigail's flight, the drama of Parris's fear, his hesitation and delay in telling Danforth his news, and his materialistic concerns. Danforth's dramatic reaction with his exclamations, repetition, and stage directions, 'alarmed… deeply worried', and his calling Parris 'a brainless man' were explored.

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The more successful candidates recognised it as the revelation to the audience that Danforth and Parris sense the downfall of the court, with the dramatic beginnings of the cracking and crumbling of an unjust regime. The deeper implications of Hale's changed views on prosecuting witches in trying to get Rebecca to confess so that she would not be hanged were also explored. The significance of the rebellion in Andover and Danforth and Hathorne's denial were understood. However, Parris's fear for his life was rarely understood with most candidates thinking he was still worrying about his reputation and his 'Thirty-one pounds.' The strongest saw that the audience would be pleased to see the truth coming out and would hope the court gets its comeuppance.

Weaker answers misplaced the context and were confused about Rebecca and Martha thinking they were witches and had confessed. Some felt sympathy for Parris's tears whereas those with greater knowledge and understanding felt that his tears were more for his loss of status and wealth. Some weaker candidates felt that the vanishing of Abigail and Mercy was 'dramatic' because only witches can vanish whereas the more successful responses considered their motives for running away, with some suggesting that it was Abigail who had left the dagger on Parris's doorstep. There were many answers which retold the passage or focused solely on dramatic techniques, for example, punctuation and stage directions, without exploring them in context or demonstrating what was happening at this profoundly dramatic point in the play to shock Parris and Danforth.

(b) There were fewer answers to this question. The most successful answers chose two suitable moments and explored them in detail focusing sharply on the question, the 'power of the belief in witchcraft', rather than narrating their selected moments and asserting this 'demonstrated the belief in witchcraft.' The best answers understood how Abigail manipulates the court's belief in the power of witchcraft to get what she wants as do others: people use it against those they hate or whose property they want. They saw how Salem's belief in witchcraft leads to injustice, to revenge and death.

Most candidates chose the 'yellow bird' moment in court, exploring how Abigail whipped up the girls into hysteria and the effects on the men, and the first scene with Tituba's interrogation and 'confession'. Other popular 'moments' were when either John or Elizabeth was arrested with some close detail to the 'poppet' incident.

Weaker answers were narrative, which, whilst showing some knowledge and understanding of the 'moment' did not fully address the terms of the question. A few candidates seemed to believe that witchcraft was real and had been carried out, for example, it caused the death of Ann Putnam's babies.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) Successful candidates argued it was a dramatically effective opening as it did not open as most audience members might expect a war play to begin; instead, it opens calmy with a cheerful song and with almost mundane, trivial conversation. Some recognised that Sherriff makes the opening dramatically effective by conveying the waiting around with some suggesting that Hardy's 'indefinite humming' reflected the uncertainty of the war and the cyclical nature of trench warfare. Surprisingly, few commented on Hardy's hearing the German preparations for the attack but those who did were able to explore how his speculation made the audience aware that it was expected to happen soon and related this to Osborne's shutting Hardy down. Better answers commented on what was revealed of the two men and how they were characterised. There was rarely understanding of Hardy's relief that Osborne had arrived for the changeover, and not Stanhope, or the sense that Stanhope might not be as friendly towards Hardy. Only the best answers understood the dark humour as a means of coping with death, fear, bombs landing and the imminent attack the men were expecting.

Weaker answers took the situation at face value, ignoring this as the opening to the play and commented on the problems of trench warfare, awful conditions of wearing wet socks, the dirt in the men's tea and not having clean water to drink. These answers summarised the passage with much misreading of the situation and the stage directions: for example, some suggested that the appearance of Osborne suggested he was old and would not be a pleasant character.

(b) Too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE*: Twelfth Night*

Question 4

(a) This was an extremely popular text and question. The passage elicited the entire range of answers, ranging from those showing critical understanding and an analysis of how the scene is entertaining to weaker answers where there was confusion over the plot and letters with some writing about the letter written for Malvolio. There was usually some understanding of how humour was created by the anticipation of the duel, foreshadowing, and dramatic irony usually being identified. Most recognised Sir Toby's ulterior and selfish motive and Sir Andrew's stupidity. The strongest answers engaged fully with the question and analysed how and why the language was amusing.

The most successful answers understood the context and the situational comedy. They knew what Sir Toby and Fabian were doing here and why: how they gull Sir Andrew for their own benefit and amusement. The best answers were fully aware of the ridiculousness of Sir Andrew's pursuit of Olivia and his naivety in falling for Sir Toby's ploys, the trickery, Sir Andrew's gullibility and that Cesario is a woman. They explored the text in detail, commenting on the language, such as the humour in the insult of 'dormouse valour'; others were able to relate 'accost,' to Sir Andrew's earlier misunderstanding with Maria. Some commented on 'manakin' and Sir Andrew being a puppet, often foreshadowing the fight being entertaining since through dramatic irony we know Viola also will be a weak fighter.

Weaker answers misread the moment with much confusion over characters thinking it was Malvolio who was being sent the letter and that 'Marry' was the object of Sir Andrew's desires; often Malvolio instead of Fabian and Sebastian instead of Cesario were used. Many of the weaker answers did not include any textual references from the extract, or copied extensively from the passage, and only mentioned 'entertaining' towards the end of their answers.

(b) Fewer candidates chose this question but there were many successful answers. This is a 'how far' question and candidates who argued both sides wrote more convincingly than those who argued that Malvolio either did, or did not, deserve sympathy. It allowed stronger candidates to show how well they could demonstrate their knowledge of the play to weigh up the evidence to arrive at a balanced conclusion. This question elicited some strong personal views: some felt that it was immoral to trick him since he was just doing his job, others felt he was to be pitied since he was shamed in front of Olivia, the one he loved. Some thought he was simply arrogant and cruel, and deserved what he got; most that he deserved the first trick but locking him up and convincing him he was mad was a trick too far and he did not deserve that. There were those who felt a genuine sympathy for the character and described his treatment as 'torture' and 'mental cruelty' and that whatever he had done, no-one deserved such treatment.

The best answers were able to select suitable material and quote accurately and gave a vivid description of Malvolio's character, with examples, to show why he was disliked; used some details of each trick to show why he deserved or did not deserve them and evaluated Malvolio at the end of the play, when he refuses to accept Olivia's apology and vows revenge, some arguing that he deserved the trick as he had learned nothing at all.

There were many weaker answers which narrated the plot or wrote a character profile of Malvolio with sweeping generalisations of his hypocrisy and cruelty. Others demonstrated general knowledge of Malvolio's role and actions but did not always use this information to address whether or not he deserved to be tricked. A few candidates did attempt to link their comments to the question in the final paragraph, but this was often a cursory comment stating, 'This makes me feel he deserved to be tricked.'

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE*: Othello*

Question 5

(a) This was the most popular choice of text and question this series. There was a wide range of answers to this question from a simple awareness of the situation to a full appreciation of Iago's malevolence and his and Roderigo's shocking revelation to Brabantio. The most successful answers focused on Iago and explored the power of his 'shocking' language and its implications for character and plot development. Most understood the racist, animalistic imagery, Iago's hypocrisy,

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and his intentions. Many candidates, however, based much of the response on Brabantio's reaction rather than the audience, which was relevant, but arguably less rich in material. Better answers understood the context and circumstances of this scene, in the street, in the dark with Iago hiding from sight and Brabantio being alarmed by what he hears and how he hears it. These answers showed critical understanding of the dramatic impact of Iago's introduction of Othello as the audience has not met him or Desdemona yet, so this is our first impression of them. Only a few really appreciated how shocking it is for a father to be woken to hear such news of his cherished daughter.

The shocking use of animal imagery was cited and understood by most candidates, although the 'Barbary horse,' 'neighing nephews and coursers' caused some confusion. The use of Roderigo by Iago here was not often examined, although the best answers considered this early glimpse of Iago's capacity for manipulation and deceit shocking.

Weaker answers tended to speculate on Desdemona's behaviour and link that to 'shocking' or they went beyond the passage to discuss how Othello wooed Desdemona or satisfied her father. These were too narrative, retelling or paraphrasing the text. Some did not know why Iago was doing this and spent too long on the attitude of patriarchs in Elizabethan times who treat their daughters as possessions. The weakest answers digressed and wrote about racism in Elizabethan times and in the Venetian state, losing focus on both the question and the passage.

(b) This was also a popular choice and another 'how far' question, allowing the best candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the text, and some of the more subtle presentations of Emilia, to support a balanced argument. Most said she was a submissive and obedient wife, as was expected at the time. Some debated whether she was more loyal to Desdemona, but most thought she was completely loyal to Iago until the end when she realises how he has tricked Othello. They were all able to explore Emilia and Iago's relationship a little, considering why she took the handkerchief and gave it to him – in order to please him and get something from him in return, for him to be pleasant to her or to show gratitude. She certainly thinks his desire for it is harmless. The better ones recalled the abuse she passively receives at the dock and her comments on infidelity. These answers explored her shock at the end when she discovers how Iago had played Othello, and her bravery in denouncing him and forfeiting her own life. Her repeated 'My husband' evidences her ignorance of his plans and her final defence of Desdemona and refusal to obey Iago were key details.

Less successful answers wrongly claimed that Emilia knew of Iago's plans. Most said that Emilia stole the handkerchief and did not question why he wanted it, making generalised comments that she would do anything for Iago because she loved him so much. This included sharing with Iago the information she had access to, so she was seen as complicit and supportive of him against Desdemona and Othello. A few candidates argued that Emilia was a feminist and lost sight of the question, so these were self-penalising.

The weakest answers relied on the handkerchief and sometimes, Emilia's final revelation of the truth. There was little supporting textual detail offered and they did not really understand Iago's treatment of his wife, nor how she tries to please him by following his instructions without question.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/33
Drama (Open Text)

Key messages

- Successful responses included introductions which avoided lengthy plot summaries and discussions of historical context and remained focused on the key words of the question. They also avoided listing techniques to be addressed in the introduction.
- Short, direct quotations from the text were the best method of supporting points. These references should be analysed fully.
- In passage-based questions successful responses contextualised the passage and then explored it fully, considering the effects of language and structure. References should be selected from the whole passage, including the ending.
- Successful discursive responses maintained a tight focus on the question and used precise textual references.
- Less successful responses identified literary terms and punctuation without considering their intended effect on the audience.
- An awareness of the text as drama and a personal engagement with the impact of the play onstage are essential in successful responses.

General comments

Overall, there was a sense of engagement with, and enjoyment of, the set texts and some excellent work was seen.

Successful responses showed clear knowledge of the set texts and were able to demonstrate critical understanding, showing insight into characterisation, stagecraft and language. They focused on key words in the question such as ‘striking’, ‘shocking’, ‘dramatic’ or ‘entertaining’.

Outlining a brief plan, underlining key words in the question and annotating the passage at the start of the exam time can help to avoid mis-readings and to maintain focus on the question throughout the response.

A sustained awareness that the texts are written to be performed onstage and their impact on the audience was a feature of successful responses. Referring to ‘audience’ rather than ‘reader’, and to ‘play’ rather than ‘novel’, ‘text’ or ‘book’ demonstrated this awareness. Some weaker responses summarised the plot and wrote detailed outlines of historical context with little or no focus on the question.

Briefly setting the passage in context at the start of the response is essential in helping to show understanding of the structure of the text. Often candidates wasted precious exam time writing lengthy introductions including such information as the religious background of Salem, military strategy in WW1 or lists of the writer’s techniques. It is very useful to teach the historical context of the play but focus during the exam should be on key words in the question, what is happening in the passage and an exploration of the writer’s methods in conveying his or her intentions to the audience. Brief well-selected references should be analysed fully.

Exploration of the use of techniques such as dramatic irony and foreshadowing was often successful. However, pointing out literary techniques with no exploration of their effects is unlikely to be rewarded. Similarly, referencing punctuation with no consideration of the effects in context is unhelpful in producing a successful response.

Several responses had a tendency to interject with personal stories related to the text but not relevant to the question, ‘I had a similar situation where I told a lie to my friends.’ Personal engagement with the text is important, but this type of lengthy anecdote distracted from the question and wasted valuable exam time.

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Time management was generally good, with very few brief or unfinished responses.

Comments on specific questions

LYNN NOTTAGE: *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*

Question 1

(a) Too few responses to this question were seen to make meaningful comment.

(b) Too few responses to this question were seen to make meaningful comment.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

(a) This question focused on a dramatic moment from the beginning of the play, allowing scope for discussion of the growing hysteria surrounding witchcraft and there was much to explore in the stage directions. The passage elicited the full range of responses.

The strongest responses showed good personal engagement with the passage and clearly understood the context, which meant that they were able to show more clearly their understanding of Parris's comments. They started by briefly contextualising the passage and worked methodically through the passage, analysing it in depth. They sustained a critical understanding of the attitudes towards witchcraft, characters' motivations, the conflict between Parris and the Putnams and the rising hysteria in Salem, all related to how the passage is shocking.

Many responses engaged with the shocking nature of the Putnams' eagerness to believe in witchcraft, in contrast to the strict religious society. Reference to stage directions and how they build tension in the scene was generally effective, such as comment on Mrs. Putnam's 'vicious certainty' that witchcraft is real.

Focus on Ann Putnam's desire to apportion blame for her babies' deaths and her excitement about the prospect of witchcraft with matter-of-fact reference to the Devil and of Tituba talking to the dead were features of stronger responses, as was discussion of Parris's prioritising concern for his own reputation over worry about his daughter.

Many less successful responses began by writing lengthy introductions about the society of Salem and/or McCarthyism in 1950s America. There was often no reference to the context (that Parris had caught the girls dancing the night before and had already sent for Hale) and so the extract was treated in isolation which often led to unsubstantiated claims. Many responses did not mention Parris's fear of being thrown out of Salem or the fact that he probably knows the reason for Betty's and Ruth's 'illness.' Some focused almost entirely on Ann Putnam or ignored sections of the extract.

Other less successful responses showed some misunderstanding of the degree of respect afforded to Parris by the community. There was also a lack of engagement with his concern for his own reputation above caring for his child and many responses confused Ruth and Betty. Weaker responses often made reference to stage directions but with little focus on 'shocking' and coverage of the passage was often limited.

(b) This question proved successful in engaging candidates effectively and resulted in many perceptive and insightful personal responses, with well-selected textual support.

Most responses presented a balanced view of Elizabeth-understanding that her 'coldness' is a result of her pain at her husband's betrayal but that she shows love for him when she lies in court. Many responses were well-developed and appreciated nuance of character, understanding that Elizabeth is not one-dimensional. They were able to successfully explore her development through

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the play. Many candidates' personal engagement was strong, and they expressed indignance at the way Elizabeth is treated by John and defended her staunchly.

The best responses looked closely at the text and provided relevant support. They focused on Elizabeth's admission that she must have been cold to have forced John to have an affair, but they also recognised her forgiving and understanding attitude at his death. Perceptive responses picked up on Elizabeth having to remind John about the Commandment of adultery and made careful reference to the stage directions.

Weaker responses misunderstood some quotations, for example about John finding his own justice and some wrote at length about whether John should have been forgiven. A small number of responses thought that Elizabeth is cold throughout the play. Many responses commented on Abigail's description of Elizabeth, which creates an impression of her even before we meet her, but few commented on why Abigail's description may be unreliable.

Surprisingly, many responses did not comment on how Elizabeth goes against her morals to lie in court in an attempt to protect her husband.

RC SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) This question focused on a truly 'dramatic' and 'revealing' moment of the play, with the subtleties only being clearly understood by the stronger responses. This passage highlighted that the attack was sending men to a certain death.

Many candidates contextualised the passage and some provided a little appropriate historical context. Stronger responses engaged with the dark humour and absurdity of the situation the soldiers are in.

Some responses commented on the restrained emotions of Stanhope and Sergeant-Major and the Sergeant-Major's diffidence in questioning Stanhope. Most responses commented on Stanhope's drinking and offering whisky to Sergeant-Major but saw this as a coping mechanism rather than an act of care.

In weaker responses many introductions were too long, outlining historical details of WW1. There was some misunderstanding that the orders were from Stanhope, rather than him responding to orders from above. There was some lack of engagement with Sergeant-Major's dawning realisation that the soldiers are doomed and with the subtleties of Stanhope's dilemma, his remarks and behaviour. Many responses repeatedly mentioned Stanhope's confidence, failing to engage with the fact that he understands the hopelessness of the situation, but is showing his leadership qualities by trying to bolster the Sergeant-Major's confidence.

Some candidates also missed the almost comedic portrayal of the Sergeant-Major, his repetition of the instructions, his brief answers, but his telling, simple question at the end and Stanhope's equally simple response 'We win the war.' The almost farcical nature of the scene was often not understood and these candidates missed the dark, satirical humour which highlighted the sadness and chaos of the planning in WW1.

(b) Candidates seemed to enjoy exploring the full range of opportunities this question made available. They showed empathy with the soldiers and the stresses they are under.

The best responses were quite wide-ranging with relevant textual support and there was some effective focus on the stress of waiting for action in war and of the uncertainty of the soldiers' lives.

Many stronger responses also looked at the stress of the imminent threat of death and of losing one's companions and they engaged with the additional stress put upon Stanhope by Raleigh's arrival in the trenches, causing a clash between his life at home and life at war.

Some responses picked up on the 'earwigs' being analogous to the soldiers but there was sometimes too much discussion of this.

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Many responses focused on the soldiers' coping mechanisms rather than outlining particular stresses of life in the trenches, but there was effective discussion of Stanhope's reliance on alcohol, Hibbert's 'neuralgia' and the fact he would rather be shot by Stanhope than die in battle, and Trotter's attempt to gain a sense of control by filling in a circle each hour.

Personal engagement with the question was often strong, and responses expressed sympathy for the soldiers and the lack of value placed on their lives. The word 'heart breaking' was often used to express the tragedy.

The weaker responses did not move beyond the obvious aspects of stress or coping mechanisms, such as Stanhope's drinking. They also thought that it was common to all the soldiers and suggested that every soldier was an alcoholic. These responses made general comments about life in the trenches but lacked detailed textual support and development. Very few responses discussed the stress of the contrast of life in the trenches and memories of home.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 4

(a) The most successful responses briefly contextualised the passage and engaged with Viola's feelings of confusion about the ring and her pity for Olivia, understanding the complications created by her disguise.

There was often a sense of personal connection with and empathy for Viola because we as the audience are aware of her true identity.

These responses showed understanding of Viola's gradual realisation that Olivia has fallen for Cesario, which was then followed by a clear response to her confusion about the implications of this, not only for herself but also for Olivia and Orsino. Only a few responses commented on the use of a long soliloquy to show Viola thinking through the implications of her situation. Many responses also made valid comments about the fickleness of love and the problems of love at first sight.

The idea of the plot being complex came through strongly, with many candidates quoting the last line of the passage.

Less successful responses did not contextualise the passage and did not identify Viola's speech as a soliloquy, believing that Malvolio is still on stage and that Viola is expressing her thoughts to him. Many candidates lost succinct engagement with the passage, drifting into paraphrase. These responses showed a lack of detailed commentary on language and seemed to struggle to engage with much of the language of Viola's soliloquy. Coverage of the passage often lacked thoroughness and there was some misunderstanding of the language. The theme of appearance and reality was often mentioned in passing, with no development or textual support. Few responses understood the subtlety of Viola's lie 'She took the ring of me' and there was often little focus on Malvolio's lines in the passage.

(b) This question allowed candidates to share their enthusiasm and enjoyment of the text, but sadly there was a shortage of strong responses to this question, with candidates struggling to identify two discrete moments or to pinpoint exactly why they were entertaining.

The best responses selected two clearly identifiable moments, described what happened and explained what made them entertaining, with reference to the action and clear focus on the language.

The majority of candidates chose to discuss the prank played on Malvolio as one of their 'moments', with some comment on Malvolio deserving a trick played on him due to his haughty manner. There was engagement with the character and some textual support.

Another popular 'moment' was the 'fight' between Sir Andrew and Cesario. The slapstick nature of the scene was enjoyed but there was often a lack of textual support.

Some candidates made effective responses to Orsino's introduction, with textual support often limited to the 'If music be the food of love' quotation.

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Many responses chose to discuss the humour of Sebastian fighting back when he is mistaken for Cesario by Sir Andrew, and Olivia stopping the fight

Weaker responses used little to no textual support from the chosen moments and tended to generalise when discussing the entertaining elements, leading to much paraphrase and narrative. The 'moments' themselves often stretched to whole scenes or across the whole play and there was a lack of sharp focus on specific events or language. Very few of these responses were well-developed and for many, understanding remained at a surface level. The moment of Malvolio being tricked was often chosen as a moment but rarely supported with textual detail and many responses mentioned the theme of appearance vs reality but lacked support and development of this area.

Some weaker responses used the passage from **Question 4a** to answer this question, despite the instruction on the question paper to avoid doing this.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Othello*

Question 5

(a) Successful responses identified the context and engaged with the intensity of Emilia's shock and anger at Desdemona's death and her challenge to Othello which reveals Iago's plot. They understood Desdemona's love for Othello and the loyalty shown in her attempt to protect him by denying that he killed her.

These responses engaged with the language of the characters; they recognised the juxtaposition of good and evil and the references to the racial overtones. There was focus on and understanding of the imagery of heaven and hell, with much comment on the 'angel/devil' contrast describing Desdemona and Othello. The strongest responses recognised the significance of Emilia's repeated 'My husband' in that it shows a growing realisation of her husband's plotting.

Most responses commented on Othello's use of 'whore' in contrast to Desdemona's innocence.

In weaker responses some candidates surprisingly seemed to have considered Desdemona's death too obvious to address and discussion of this was limited. Candidates often drifted from the task and passage and explored context in too much detail. Hence there was a great deal of irrelevant and general comment about men and women's roles in Elizabethan society. Analysis of the language of the passage was often lacking, e.g. black and white imagery. They made little or no reference to Desdemona's dialogue in the passage. There was some confusion between 'tense' and 'intense' in the question wording and many responses incorrectly interpreted the word 'Moor' as a racist term. Some responses dealt only with the first half of the extract and again, there was too much general, undeveloped comment on the theme of appearance vs reality.

(b) The most successful responses were able to focus on Desdemona's honesty and innocence and to express a sense of personal indignance as well as sympathy at how she becomes a victim of Iago's scheming. They explored the language of Heaven used to describe her qualities and understood her naivety and the lack of communication in her relationship with Othello, the more astute recognising the unwitting part played by Emilia in the handkerchief episode.

Stronger responses also expressed frustration that Desdemona does not defend herself against Othello's accusations and disbelief that she can be so selfless in her love.

Weaker responses struggled to engage with this question, tending to discuss Iago's plot and his manipulation of Othello rather than focussing in detail on Desdemona. These responses showed little engagement with the true horror of Desdemona's death, or even overlooked her death altogether, maybe thinking it too obvious to comment on. They also lacked engagement with the extent of her love for Othello or her innocence. These less successful responses struggled to recall specific textual material. Many responses digressed and wrote at length about the role of women in Venetian society but with little focus on the question.

Other weaker responses did not go beyond the obvious about how Desdemona is a victim of Iago's scheming. A small number of candidates used the extract from **Question 5a** as a way of showing sympathy, thereby not focusing on the complete text and limiting the scope of the response.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/41
Unseen

Key messages

- Candidates should make full use of the reading time to ensure they have a secure understanding of the surface narrative of their chosen text.
- Deeper implications are appreciated through exploration of descriptive language and its emotive effect on the reader.
- Listing devices and terminology does not attract marks; candidates need to develop responses to the writer's effects.
- Personal response includes a critical understanding of why the writer wrote the text.
- All the Assessment Objectives for Literature in English are addressed holistically in this paper, and good answers are well-written, concise and make an argued response to the whole text.

General comments

This is a well-established paper and most centres who enter candidates for it clearly have a good understanding of its requirements. The standard is generally high, and often outstanding. Centres and candidates realise that this is an opportunity for candidates to communicate their own understanding of the texts in their own voice. Examiners do not expect a 'standard' response and are very willing to explore texts with candidates and meet them on the interpretative ground they choose.

Examiners see a full range of levels of ability. The best responses are quite outstanding in their maturity and critical sensitivity. Weaker responses usually have their own merits, although there are always a few candidates who struggle with literal understanding of the texts, misread details or have limited tools for literary analysis. Centres choose to prepare candidates for Unseen texts and are expected to make full use of the resources on the school support hub. Past papers in November, March and June across the three variants, and the accompanying Examiner reports, are a valuable resource.

Texts can be short poems or extracts from longer poems, and prose extracts from novels, short stories and literary non-fiction. They are likely to use descriptive language, imagery, voice and viewpoint in creative and emotive ways. Texts can be drawn from any century or culture: they reflect the diversity of Literature in English. They will not be texts in translation but might be creative reworkings of other literatures. The majority of texts are contemporary. In the case of the poetry texts in November 2022, the poems were very contemporary indeed, being creative responses by a range of writers in different parts of the UK to the global pandemic of spring 2020. As this paper encourages personal response to the writing, many candidates enjoyed seeing writers responding imaginatively and in unusual ways to the creative possibilities for reflection brought by the pandemic. All three poems dwelt on positive benefits, for the writers, of the period of isolation. However, candidates always have a choice: they can choose prose passages instead of poetry, and if they find the subject matter or the very subjective nature of poetry uncomfortable, the prose passages in this session all presented strong characterisation alongside vivid description of unusual and extreme, but historic, scenarios.

Knowledge of the text needs to be demonstrated through frequent, brief and illuminating quotation (AO1) in order to show understanding of the surface narrative. Although this strand may appear to be more straightforward, it is essential for success. Candidates need to write about the whole text, and be aware of its development, signalling those shifts in meaning and tone through judicious illustration. Candidates can help themselves by making full use of the 20 minutes suggested for reading the paper, by dividing the text into different sections, to aid paragraph planning, and, before beginning to write, highlighting descriptive details, word choices, images and perhaps sound effects which they particularly want to explore more closely. They should consider how the text develops and note changes in tone or viewpoint between the beginning of the text and its ending. It is surprising to find misunderstandings of meaning or situation which are explained in

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the introductory rubric of the text. The short introduction will explain who characters are and as much of the situation as is necessary for basic understanding, while possible confusions of literal meaning are clarified here and in any footnotes.

Understanding of the text needs to be demonstrated, for higher marks, at more than one level of meaning. Literature involves the construction of different layers of meaning; the surface meaning is not the whole story. Understanding comes from the relationship between the writing and the reader: the reader helps to make meaning through an emotive response to the language of the text. Thus, a deeper understanding of the period of isolation in the pandemic was that it gave freedom to nature, gave us new ways to communicate or allowed the isolated or vulnerable to assert their importance in new ways. Experiences of oppression could be seen as creative or exciting if you can share them with others who support you or turn your sense of irony against your oppressors. At the higher levels, the levels descriptors ask for a *critical* understanding of why the writer wrote the text and what they might wish their readers to feel.

The writer's techniques may include imagery (different kinds of comparison and visual effect), rhythm (whether through verse or prose syntax), sound effects (including the choice of words) and voice or viewpoint. These techniques are common to both poetry and prose. Both present a mood to the reader through the tone of the writing, which is communicated through the choice of poetic or narrative voice and the viewpoint they adopt, which may be an ironic one, at variance with what we might initially expect. Candidates achieve marks at higher levels through some response to the way the writer uses language, and the more detailed and sensitive the commentary on the effects of the writing on the reader, the higher the mark awarded.

Personal response to the text is not purely subjective. At a higher level, personal response is, as we have seen, guided by the writer's language choices, so it is integral to the candidate's interpretation of the text, and not a separate element that is added at the end. The stem question, in bold, is a 'how' question, encouraging response to techniques, but also invites a personal response to their viewpoint or attitude towards the subject matter. The bullet points that follow, while not compulsory, do guide candidates through different parts of the text, exploring first impressions, developments through language and narrative or tonal shifts, and personal response to the way the end of the text makes us reflect on what we have read.

Good answers have a brief introduction which provides an overview of the text as a whole, showing a candidate has achieved some understanding of the subject matter and its meaning before writing, and a focused conclusion which gives a personal response to the emotional world the writer has created through use of language, form and structure.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Examiners reported seeing some highly successful responses to 'Two Metres'.

Many candidates commented on the title 'Two Metres' and linked it to the structure of the poem. Many suggested that the division of the poem into two-line stanzas symbolised the imposition of the 'two-metre rule' that people observed during the pandemic. Better answers construed this as reinforcing the main ideas of the poem, creating, for some, a feeling of division and separation that contributes to the general theme and tone of the poem. Several also commented on the use of enjambment and the feeling of 'never-ending' isolation as suggested by the first half of the poem.

Most candidates followed the prompts in the bullet points and were able to recognise that, in the first five stanzas, the poet uses the language of a writer to establish her solitary existence as a hardworking author whose work appears to have earned her some recognition, but that now she is largely 'forgotten'. Many candidates misread the word 'deference', in the third stanza, for 'defence' or for 'difference' and this sometimes skewed their reading of the poet's state of mind.

The first bullet point was generally tackled with some success, with most candidates understanding that the isolation of the poet was by choice. However, a significant number, despite the prompts in the bullets, thought that the isolation was due to lockdown and even relatively confident candidates were sometimes confused by the term 'hostage'. Most candidates commented on the opening statement 'Mostly I was silent', with some candidates interpreting this as a result of 'shyness' or as a hallmark of an introvert, others inferred 'mental instability' which often led them to misinterpret the poet's state of mind towards the end of the poem where some speculated that her 'homicidal thoughts' were triggered by her isolation. More careful readers

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understood the figurative image of the poet identifying herself as 'a fiction' and as an 'outline', both of which ideas suggested some sense of a lack of reality in her existence perhaps linked to her profession as a writer.

The concluding line of the fifth stanza 'I was an exemplary hostage' was widely understood in terms of the poet's confinement which seems at this point to be self-imposed or at least not disagreeable to the poet, with the word 'roamed' suggesting to many candidates that she had some space to roam in. Her description of herself as an 'exemplary hostage' who offered no resistance to her isolation also confirmed the impression, that many candidates formed, that she behaved well in 'captivity'. The purpose of the poet's isolation was revealed to be conducive to her writing and being 'alone in a room' held no terrors for her. However, and despite the prompts, a fair proportion of candidates did not notice that the beginning of the poem deals with the poet's isolation before the pandemic and they wrote about the first five stanzas as if the poet was recalling 'lockdown'. This initial misunderstanding invariably led to further misinterpretations of the latter part of the poem.

Many candidates grasped the contrast between the first part of the poem and the second, understanding that the tone changed with the idea of freedom. Overall, candidates dealt less successfully with the second bullet point, with only the more able tackling it in meaningful detail. More confident candidates were able to interpret the repetition of 'here is' as the speaker finding and claiming an identity. However, some were confused by the imagery and related the idea of space in simple terms back to the previous idea of confinement ('alone in a room').

Candidates who clearly understood the poem and some of the deeper meaning could recognise that the poem is unusual because the persona felt set free by the restrictions rather than confined. Candidates who did not understand the difference between the poet's life before/during the pandemic showed only surface level understanding of the meaning. Those who did understand it made developed comments on the 'name/breath/stride/body/moving with space around it.' These phrases were recognised as words that connote power and confidence and a part of what made the response to the pandemic 'strikingly unusual', linking back to the question.

Many candidates misinterpreted or were unable to develop a deeper analysis of the final section of the poem which involved the reaction of the 'man on the street'. Very few candidates recognised this phrase as a common cliché for 'Everyman'. Most candidates were able to recognise the description of social distancing – the 'stepping aside'/'two metres' etc. but this was often the point at which unnecessary information about the pandemic was inserted rather than a focus on the way the poet is presenting the man as some sort of antagonist. Only more confident candidates appeared to understand the wider significance of the persona's encounter with the 'man', and they wrote variously about how the pandemic, while empowering the persona, appeared to somehow have emasculated the 'man.' Some suggested that in pre-pandemic times, this man had apparently exercised some masculine prerogative to be deferred to by a lone female pedestrian, but 'now' kept both wife and children close within his orbit and observed the new order in the 'space-time distortion'. More astute candidates noted the shift in tenses and the 'volta' of 'But now'.

More confident candidates were able to comment on the use of the words 'parades' and 'arena' associated with the 'man', some suggesting a military display of masculinity while others identified a sense of flamboyant showmanship in the 'man' before having to 'give' the persona 'two-metres'. Others felt that the poet's focus on the man's family emphasised the speaker's aloneness and highlighted how unhappy she was, which somewhat undermined the powerful sense of freedom and empowerment that comes through, in the latter part of the poem, where the persona, seems to reclaim and assert her identity.

Candidates with a clear understanding of the poem realised that the 'man' was more emblematic than individual. A handful of candidates wrote effectively about the simile of 'his gaze jangling like keys'. For example, they recognised that the word 'jangling' has an onomatopoeic effect mirroring the way the keys move and make sound. More than one candidate suggested that the nervous movement of the man's 'gaze' was so extreme that the persona could almost 'hear' his eyes looking at her. A few even suggested that the action of 'key-jangling' is a typically 'masculine' act of passive-aggressiveness and that this hostility was being transmitted by the uncomfortable gaze.

The most frequently seen impediment to success in dealing with the poem was where candidates wrote speculatively, without grounding their analysis in the text. Many candidates expressed their personal experience of the global pandemic, some at length and always at the expense of close textual analysis. In these answers, candidates gave an exposition of the global pandemic while scarcely making reference to the text. Other candidates gave very personal accounts of their experiences of the pandemic. Some responses were self-limiting by how brief they were.

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Question 2

The prose was popular this series and attracted many excellent responses.

Most candidates appeared to have read the introductory material as well as the bullet points and their understanding of the context of the passage helped to inform their answers. Some candidates recognised that the narrator was an 'adult' reflecting on his experiences as a child and they commented on the huge impact that Big Kit had had on him, as a little boy, to make his memories so vivid. These candidates interpreted the story as being factual. Others assumed that the story was a fiction but noted that the language used by the narrative voice oscillated between childish 'my supper was stolen, and my wooden bowl cracked' and the sophisticated, 'Rooks would be found eviscerated' and identified this as a feature of the *bildungsroman* style of narrative. Better candidates stuck with this discovery and noted that even in the course of this relatively short passage, the 'little boy' has already begun his development from pitiful victim to a boy with a future and the prospect of a 'a great big life'.

The environment of the sugarcane plantation was understood by some but not all candidates and some wrote with empathy for the little boy who was enslaved at the age or five and cruelly persecuted on his arrival in the 'brutal hut', named 'Kit's hut'. Some commented on the fact that 'Kit' had to be 'someone to reckon with' as the 'hut' was named after her as if she was the owner – elevating her status above that of the other slaves. Most candidates wrote about the line, 'I loved her and feared her' then confidently selected details about the way the narrator was treated on arrival at the hut until 'Big Kit' stepped in with 'Not this one,' and 'she said softly'. Stronger candidates also focused on the language used to describe the setting such as 'brutal hut' and 'dead palm tree' to explore the negativity of the narrator's surroundings until the intervention by Big Kit.

The description of 'Big Kit' and in particular the similes 'inexorable as a breaker' and 'as though she were a boneless rag' led to some detailed and effective analysis of the imagery used to present the powerful impression of 'Big Kit' and the impact that she had on the narrator and those characters around her. After the initial first impression of Kit, candidates also commented on the positive impression that is created of the character with details of how she offered a 'bowl of mash', promised him a 'great big life' and told him stories which opened up his imagination.

Some perceptive readings were seen when candidates focused on the sensory experience that the narrator conveys. In the second paragraph, candidates noted that the boy experiences pain: 'struck hard', 'staggered and could not hear', 'talons biting into my arm'. Later, and throughout the passage, better answers commented upon the frequency with which the sound of Kit's voice is mentioned: 'I first heard Big Kit's voice', 'softly', 'murmured', 'starting to laugh', 'curses', 'murmur in her sleep, in the low, thick language of her kingdom', 'whispering', 'humming strange songs', 'murmur some incantations, her voice husky', 'I loved that voice, its rough music', candidates who remarked upon this suggested that the narrator is enchanted by her voice that literally 'stops' him in his tracks, making him 'stand, listening in wonder', these candidates concluded that Big Kit was able to use her voice to perform a sort of 'magic' to charm the narrator and make his life on the plantation more bearable.

Other candidates noted the kinaesthetic imagery surrounding Big Kit, 'some monstrous charge of energy', 'poured towards us', 'tossing her aside', 'forcibly took food', 'tearing up the earth', 'flesh rippling', 'scorched fury', 'wrecking more than she reaped', 'I crush the antelope with my hands', noting how the sheer power of Kit's movements were able to convey the powerful impression that Big Kit made on the narrator.

Most candidates used the bullet points as guidance, although fewer were able to distinguish between bullet point 2 and bullet point 3. Most candidates tackled the first bullet point with some success, understanding that Big Kit saved the narrator. Many also recognised the contrast in her character and were able to support these ideas with reference to 'softly' and 'monstrous'. Some were a little confused at the violence of Big Kit's reactions against the grandmother and drew conclusions about Big Kit's brutal nature. Others only focused on the sharing of mash and concluded that Big Kit was kind. Generally, most candidates came to some sort of conclusion about why the narrator formed a bond with Big Kit. Some of the more able candidates discussed her appearance in detail, focussing on the imagery of the 'breaker' as representing Big Kit as a force of nature, as well as the 'orange eyes' as evidence of her animalistic and unusual nature.

The second bullet point was more problematic. Many candidates simply seemed to avoid looking at stories about Kit, which are less clearly delineated in the text than her own spellbinding fictions. While some of those who did attempt this bullet point were distracted by the idea of witchcraft and came to simple conclusions about the fear Big Kit inspired, others showed some developed insight, identifying ideas of respect and power, especially over the 'strong smith's apprentice' although some failed to appreciate what a 'smith' might

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be. The more able responded with sensitivity about Big Kit's own losses (crying out in her sleep) and came to sensitive, thoughtful conclusions about how she, maybe, needed the narrator as much as he needed her.

Most candidates tackled the third bullet point with some success, showing understanding that Big Kit's stories prompted growth in the narrator's imagination. Many attempted detailed analyses with a focus on 'wonder' and 'marvel'. Several were able to contextualise and see the significance of Big Kit in terms of slavery.

The most able candidates found ample opportunity to discuss the imagery in this extract, delivering some detailed analyses. There was some lovely interpretation about the 'magic' that Big Kit represented through mention of the witchcraft, her stories changing with the moon and her 'glistening' physical appearance. Several candidates made links to the 'world I could not imagine' by considering the context of the narrator's position as a slave, giving him 'witness' to the outside world and therefore seeing this as hopeful that he would one day see this world.

A number of candidates pointed out that the fact that we are reading about Big Kit suggests that the narrator did indeed enjoy a' life of many rivers' and that his story is a testament to the positive influence that Big Kit made on him as a boy, and which remains with him as a man.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/42
Unseen

Key messages

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- Deeper implications are appreciated through exploration of descriptive language and its emotive effect on the reader.
- Listing devices and terminology does not attract marks; candidates need to develop responses to the writer's effects.
- Personal response includes a critical understanding of why the writer wrote the text.
- All the Assessment Objectives for Literature in English are addressed holistically in this paper, and good answers are well-written, concise and make an argued response to the whole text.

General comments

This is a well-established paper and most centres who enter candidates for it clearly have a good understanding of its requirements. The standard is generally high, and often outstanding. Centres and candidates realise that this is an opportunity for candidates to communicate their own understanding of the texts in their own voice. Examiners do not expect a 'standard' response and are very willing to explore texts with candidates and meet them on the interpretative ground they choose.

Examiners see a full range of levels of ability. The best responses are quite outstanding in their maturity and critical sensitivity. Weaker responses usually have their own merits, although there are always a few candidates who struggle with a literal understanding of the texts, misread details or have limited tools for literary analysis. Centres choose to prepare candidates for Unseen texts and are expected to make full use of the resources on the School Support Hub. Past papers in November, March and June across the three variants, and the accompanying Examiner reports, are a valuable resource.

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Knowledge of the text needs to be demonstrated through frequent, brief and illuminating quotation (AO1) in order to show understanding of the surface narrative. Although this strand may appear to be more straightforward, it is essential for success. Candidates need to write about the whole text, and be aware of its development, signalling those shifts in meaning and tone through judicious illustration. Candidates can help themselves by making full use of the 20 minutes suggested for reading the paper, by dividing the text into different sections, to aid paragraph planning, and, before beginning to write, highlighting descriptive details, word choices, images and perhaps sound effects which they particularly want to explore more closely. They should consider how the text develops and note changes in tone or viewpoint between the beginning of the text and its ending. It is surprising to find misunderstandings of meaning or situation which are explained in

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the introductory rubric of the text. The short introduction will explain who characters are and as much of the situation as is necessary for basic understanding, while possible confusions of literal meaning are clarified here and in any footnotes.

Understanding of the text needs to be demonstrated, for higher marks, at more than one level of meaning. Literature involves the construction of different layers of meaning; the surface meaning is not the whole story. Understanding comes from the relationship between the writing and the reader: the reader helps to make meaning through an emotive response to the language of the text. Thus, a deeper understanding of the period of isolation in the pandemic was that it gave freedom to nature, gave us new ways to communicate or allowed the isolated or vulnerable to assert their importance in new ways. Experiences of oppression could be seen as creative or exciting if you can share them with others who support you or turn your sense of irony against your oppressors. At the higher levels, the levels descriptors ask for a *critical* understanding of why the writer wrote the text and what they might wish their readers to feel.

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Personal response to the text is not purely subjective. At a higher level, personal response is, as we have seen, guided by the writer's language choices, so it is integral to the candidate's interpretation of the text, and not a separate element that is added at the end. The stem question, in bold, is a 'how' question, encouraging response to techniques, but also invites a personal response to their viewpoint or attitude towards the subject matter. The bullet points that follow, while not compulsory, do guide candidates through different parts of the text, exploring first impressions, developments through language and narrative or tonal shifts, and personal response to the way the end of the text makes us reflect on what we have read.

Good answers have a brief introduction which provides an overview of the text as a whole, showing a candidate has achieved some understanding of the subject matter and its meaning before writing, and a focused conclusion which gives a personal response to the emotional world the writer has created through use of language, form and structure.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Many candidates took the opportunity to explore family relationships and problems in communicating both before and during the pandemic through 'Home Schooling Week Two, Lie-Ins Increasing', part of a sequence of poems published by the Welsh poet Clare E. Potter during the global pandemic.

This was the more popular of the two questions and most candidates were able to engage with the question and text, showing some personal response to the relationship between mother and child and often drawing from their own experiences of lockdown. Many responses fell within the middle range of marks: stronger answers were those which engaged analytically in close analysis of the poet's language to explore the effects of literary devices in detail, and then achieve a deeper understanding of layers of meaning. Good responses are alert to ambiguity and evaluate different possible meanings rather than closing down interpretation too quickly. Weaker responses tend to stick to a single narrative without looking at how relationships, communication and problems develop and change. More focus on individual language choices would have helped mid-range candidates to achieve the higher levels.

There was a range of response to the mother-child relationship, with many seeing it as intimate and close and others seeing it as violent and dysfunctional. Most attempting the poem appreciated that the mother was stressed and that she had a close bond with her child, emphasised by the choice of the intimate word 'snuggled' to express their contact during lockdown. They appreciated that the child had a history of anger caused by learning difficulties. Some thought that either the mother or child had a physical disability. Middle-range candidates identified a nostalgic tone in the comparison of then and now. Higher-range candidates addressed the metaphor of entangled dreams and ideas ('the last of the night thoughts tangled in my hair'), which they related to lockdown and the pandemic and the diary-style title. Weaker candidates carelessly

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assumed lockdown was in the distant past and got confused by the time frame, although the title and first words of the poem are a very strong steer. Middle-range and above took up the references to pregnancy and time to relate the structure of the poem to stages of growth towards a maturity implied by the child's speech and growing size ('your legs are as long as mine now'). There were interesting comments on the internal rhyme of 'door' and 'four', relating it to the later reference to singing into the mother's mouth as a reference to the child's innate musicality and resistance to formal education. This was close to the 'home schooling' spirit of the poem, which emphasises personal relationships over structured learning.

In the second stanza, most understood that this stanza portrayed the past history of the mother-child relationship and noticed the enumeration of different ways to communicate through the active participles ('writing' … 'singing' ... 'banging'). Some emphasised anger, others subversion or even creativity. Most saw frustration in the volcano metaphor as the child's rage 'erupted' when the right words did not come, or when messages were not understood. Fewer applied this to difficulties in communication more generally, although the poet clearly makes this move by repeating the word 'Now' and refocusing on the immediate problems of communication in a world where most people could only meet virtually. The repetition certainly suggested to candidates that the poet felt the need to adopt a different strategy. The best related 'now' and 'we have to recalibrate, /adjust' to the need for mutuality and compromise during a pandemic. Those in the top levels related 'tune in' and recalibration to the technology of the pandemic, especially social media, and made a link to implicit criticism of electronic communication in the final stanza. Middle band responses and above saw self-deprecation in the mother, while weaker answers speculated that she had been neglectful.

The third stanza was usually the discriminator. Most interpreted the direct speech of the child as a rejection of e-learning. Higher-level answers weighed up the metaphoric implications and responses in the top two bands related the child's question to its growth, the compromise the poet was looking for, triumph in self-discovery and articulate communication. The best saw a parallel between the mother in the first and child in the third stanzas: sleepless, solving a problem. The very best dwelt upon the implications of the daughter leaving the snuggle, and 'warmth of our holding' to make a first step to independence.

Candidates wanted to reflect on the effects of lockdown for themselves, making observations such as 'even the youngest of minds are impacted by the lockdown'. Stronger responses thought about this in relation to the ways in which the child in the poem learns, relating the tangible 'real pages' to the need for human contact and the importance of 'touch' as a form of communication. One candidate felt that 'there has to be a physical connection with both the book and the people involved for there to be successful communication'.

The question and bullet points helped to guide candidates, with most candidates able to consider the child's difficulties in communication and how this is portrayed. Some candidates, noticing the child's progress, felt that 'home schooling was paying off'. The child 'finally achieved the mother's dream of being able to be on the same page'. Generally, candidates sympathized with the child and their frustration, with one candidate describing our minds as 'investigators that yearn to solve or understand the outside world'.

The bullet point about the final lines of the poem led to interesting responses, often distinguishing good answers. Most candidates understood the unexpected nature of the child's final question, with some commenting on its placement at the very end of the poem (creating a 'lingering thought') and the fact that it is the only dialogue used. It's seen as 'a revelation of some sort' or even that 'the child has had an epiphany'. The final lines are, according to one candidate, the child trying to tell the mother that 'there's more to life than bookish knowledge, and more challenges they had to face in the real world'. However, an alternative interpretation was that the question might have been 'a literal rebellion against reading books and learning how to read'.

Stronger candidates recognised that the poem itself was a form of communication and were able to look critically about the way the poet used language to communicate, with comments on the poem's 'introspective tone' and the ability of touch 'to transcend time and communicate emotions'. Examiners commented with pleasure on responses which showed critical appreciation of the musicality of verse, its sensory qualities, and the tone of the speaker.

Question 2

Just under 40 per cent of candidates chose to write about the prose, which was an extract from *The Noise of Silence*, a novel by Julian Barnes about the life of Dmitri Shostakovich. Candidates seemed to enjoy the question's focus on terror and readily engaged with the context of an oppressive government, with some drawing comparisons to Orwell's *1984*.

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Almost all candidates seized upon the composer's boast as a sign of dedication to his craft; the weaker left it at that but middle level appreciated it was a just façade, and a form of performance rather than the reality which the composer admits to himself later in the paragraph. A lot of the weaker candidates thought the composer had actually been tortured, which led to contradictions and confusions: it is better to as clear as possible about the sequence of events before beginning to answer the question. Middle range and stronger scripts discussed the repetitions of 'yes' and the coldness of the plosive alliteration 'business-like bullet to the back of the brain', relating it to terror. Only the best answers discussed narrative point of view and voice and the implied sophistication of the composer's internal thoughts. He clearly views himself and his own thoughts and actions, as well as those around him, with irony and scepticism.

The text's abstract reference to 'Power' bewildered weaker candidates, some thinking this was a person or a name. Careful reading of the question and bullet points should have prevented this. Stronger responses considered the fearful implications of personification and anonymity. The complex language in this section mystified many; only the strongest answers appreciated the reference to propaganda ('euphemisms designed either to publicise or conceal those facts') and the Orwellian rewriting of history. There were lots of interesting comments on the two types of composers ('alive and frightened' and 'dead'), the best appreciating the dark humour which they related to the composer's creativity. It undermines the 'foolish' defiance of his earlier boast. Not many commented on the composer's consciousness of growing older and more disillusioned with 'youth's incorruptibility' and 'conviction', but most understood that his music and talent were now 'completely irrelevant', as Power had no interest in art or metaphor.

In response to the second section of the passage, weaker candidates deplored the composer's alcohol dependency, applauded his family warmth and were pleased that he was let off. Stronger responses commented on his light head for drink, his focus on his work, his humour ('the Grape Cure') and resignation. They appreciated a stoic, yet terrified approach to 'perhaps the last two nights of his life'. Many noted the 'dismal, grey' imagery associated with the Big House and the cliffhanging promise of future interviews ('his First Conversation'), which the best related to totalitarian regimes and techniques of terror. The strongest answers commented on the reference to the river ('which would outlast them all') and the curt and contemptuous language and behaviour of the guard, as a personification of 'Power'. The best related the non-appointment to the tactics and smugness of an all-powerful state, or the irony of the disappearance of 'Interrogator Zakrevsky' who might himself be heading for a 'business-like bullet'. Strong candidates noticed that the language of Power was purely factual, avoiding any such references to nature, imagery or irony.

There were some particularly interesting comments on Power's (and the composer's) relationship with the truth: 'The phrase, 'Power knew only facts' suggests that his words of defiance were not a fact and would therefore hold no ground against Power'. Stronger candidates enjoyed writing about the character of Power, often noticing the personification or anonymity of Power. It was seen as 'robot-like and systematic'. One candidate noted the contrast between Power's 'coldly robotic' approach and the composer's work which is 'all about emotions'. Power is described as 'an entity that destroys and disregards all forms of emotions and sticks to the facts, being played the right way'.

Candidates were sometimes perceptive about the composer's art and attitude, offering sympathetic readings to the composer's 'lose-lose situation'. They seemed to understand that 'his artistic integrity had no value when it came to the Russian leaders'. There was a tendency towards narrative summary; however, in stronger responses this was well-supported by careful selection of textual details to show detailed understanding and engagement. The acts of defiance and the vodka were both seen as 'different ways to forget' about Power's threats. One strong candidate saw the vodka cure as an extended metaphor: the composer's weakness – his weakness for vodka – is an advantage, as lying down and being passive is the only way to survive.

The final encounter was read in various ways, with some weaker candidates not wanting to engage with the anticlimax or not fully understanding its implications. Stronger candidates recognised that any relief for the composer was only temporary, with some nice comments about the setting: approaching the Big House was 'like walking into a trap', and 'the dismal 'grey' shows that all colour has drained from the composer's world'. Overall, many candidates understood and seemed to enjoy commenting on how the events in the passage show 'how fear can change a man'.

In response to both texts, candidates clearly relished the opportunity to write about texts relevant to the times they are living through, not just the pandemic but the isolation and uncertainty that have arisen from both this and troubling times in the world at large. They enjoyed engaging with literary texts that raise questions about human values and priorities.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/43
Unseen

Key messages

- Candidates should make full use of the reading time to ensure they have a secure understanding of the surface narrative of their chosen text.
- Deeper implications are appreciated through exploration of descriptive language and its emotive effect on the reader.
- Listing devices and terminology does not attract marks; candidates need to develop response to the writer's effects.
- Personal response includes a critical understanding of why the writer wrote the text.
- All the Assessment Objectives for Literature in English are addressed holistically in this paper, and good answers are well-written, concise and make an argued response to the whole text.

General comments

This is a well-established paper and most centres who enter candidates for it clearly have a good understanding of its requirements. The standard is generally high, and often outstanding. Centres and candidates realise that this is an opportunity for candidates to communicate their own understanding of the texts in their own voice. Examiners do not expect a 'standard' response and are very willing to explore texts with candidates and meet them on the interpretative ground they choose.

Examiners see a full range of levels of ability. The best responses are quite outstanding in their maturity and critical sensitivity. Weaker responses usually have their own merits, although there are always a few candidates who struggle with literal understanding of the texts, misread details or have limited tools for literary analysis. Centres choose to prepare candidates for Unseen texts and are expected to make full use of the resources on the school support hub. Past papers in November, March and June across the three variants, and the accompanying Examiner reports, are a valuable resource.

Texts can be short poems or extracts from longer poems, and prose extracts from novels, short stories and literary non-fiction. They are likely to use descriptive language, imagery, voice and viewpoint in creative and emotive ways. Texts can be drawn from any century or culture: they reflect the diversity of Literature in English. They will not be texts in translation but might be creative reworkings of other literatures. The majority of texts are contemporary. In the case of the poetry texts in November 2022, the poems were very contemporary indeed, being creative responses by a range of writers in different parts of the UK to the global pandemic of spring 2020. As this paper encourages personal response to the writing, many candidates enjoyed seeing writers responding imaginatively and in unusual ways to the creative possibilities for reflection brought by the pandemic. All three poems dwelt on positive benefits, for the writers, of the period of isolation. However, candidates always have a choice: they can choose prose passages instead of poetry, and if they find the subject matter or the very subjective nature of poetry uncomfortable, the prose passages in this session all presented strong characterisation alongside vivid description of unusual and extreme, but historic, scenarios.

Knowledge of the text needs to be demonstrated through frequent, brief and illuminating quotation (AO1) in order to show understanding of the surface narrative. Although this strand may appear to be more straightforward, it is essential for success. Candidates need to write about the whole text, and be aware of its development, signalling those shifts in meaning and tone through judicious illustration. Candidates can help themselves by making full use of the 20 minutes suggested for reading the paper, by dividing the text into different sections, to aid paragraph planning, and, before beginning to write, highlighting descriptive details, word choices, images and perhaps sound effects which they particularly want to explore more closely. They should consider how the text develops and note changes in tone or viewpoint between the beginning of the text and its ending. It is surprising to find misunderstandings of meaning or situation which are explained in

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the introductory rubric of the text. The short introduction will explain who characters are and as much of the situation as is necessary for basic understanding, while possible confusions of literal meaning are clarified here and in any footnotes.

Understanding of the text needs to be demonstrated, for higher marks, at more than one level of meaning. Literature involves the construction of different layers of meaning; the surface meaning is not the whole story. Understanding comes from the relationship between the writing and the reader: the reader helps to make meaning through an emotive response to the language of the text. Thus, a deeper understanding of the period of isolation in the pandemic was that it gave freedom to nature, gave us new ways to communicate or allowed the isolated or vulnerable to assert their importance in new ways. Experiences of oppression could be seen as creative or exciting if you can share them with others who support you or turn your sense of irony against your oppressors. At the higher levels, the levels descriptors ask for a *critical* understanding of why the writer wrote the text and what they might wish their readers to feel.

The writer's techniques may include imagery (different kinds of comparison and visual effect), rhythm (whether through verse or prose syntax), sound effects (including the choice of words) and voice or viewpoint. These techniques are common to both poetry and prose. Although poetry has a particular focus on structure and form, prose is just as carefully written and can use similar descriptive techniques. Both present a mood to the reader through the tone of the writing, which is communicated through the choice of poetic or narrative voice and the viewpoint they adopt, which may be an ironic one, at variance with what we might initially expect. Candidates achieve marks at higher levels through some response to the way the writer uses language, and the more detailed and sensitive the commentary on the effects of the writing on the reader, the higher the mark awarded.

Personal response to the text is not purely subjective. At a higher level, personal response is, as we have seen, guided by the writer's language choices, so it is integral to the candidate's interpretation of the text, and not a separate element that is added at the end. The stem question, in bold, is a 'how' question, encouraging response to techniques, but also invites a personal response to their viewpoint or attitude towards the subject matter. The bullet points that follow, while not compulsory, do guide candidates through different parts of the text, exploring first impressions, developments through language and narrative or tonal shifts, and personal response to the way the end of the text makes us reflect on what we have read.

Good answers have a brief introduction which provides an overview of the text as a whole, showing a candidate has achieved some understanding of the subject matter and its meaning before writing, and a focused conclusion which gives a personal response to the emotional world the writer has created through use of language, form and structure.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A significant majority of candidates chose to answer **Question 1** on the poem 'Equinox' by Gillian Clarke, written in response to the pandemic in March 2020. The focus of the question was on the natural world and its transformation, celebrating the change of the seasons and nature's capacity to reassert itself as human beings retreated into restriction and lockdown. The quality of response was high with many truly outstanding answers. The poem's subject matter, its concise form and clear movement and structure, together with its density and richness of language and poetic features, clearly appealed to candidates and encouraged much excellent close reading and analysis.

Almost all candidates showed knowledge (AO1) of the scenario described and how the absence of human activity has allowed other sights and sounds to take over the world. Candidates are reminded, however, of the primary importance of careful, attentive reading of the text in the face of the natural pressures felt in an examination situation. A surprisingly high number of candidates read the streets as being 'careless' rather than 'carless' as it is in the poem. While most answers were not materially affected as a result of this misreading, some candidates found themselves going down a not particularly helpful interpretative route. Most candidates recognised that the cleaner atmosphere created by the falling away in traffic pollution has given a new-found freedom to the display, flights and songs of birds. Strong answers showed a clear understanding (AO2) that the poet implicitly welcomes the changes which she sees happening all around her and the shifting of priorities. She celebrates nature and the sense of healing and liberation felt, with cleaner air bringing fresh breath – both literal and metaphorical – to both her and the reader.

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Strong answers manifested a critical exploration of the language (AO3) used to describe the scene in the opening stanza. Some registered the direct and dramatic note of charged expectancy struck by the first word 'Tonight'. Most candidates focused on the connotations of 'a world remade' with its suggestion of the scale and depth of the transformation taking place. An implicit sense of excitement and drama is enhanced by the use of the present tense both here and throughout the poem, while the brevity and simplicity of the firmly end-stopped sentences of the first two lines further works to that effect. The majority of candidates commented on the element of personification in 'Silence treads the streets', with really strong answers exploring the particular connotations of the verb here and how it contributes to the aural picture of hushed quiet created. Almost all candidates focused to a greater or lesser extent on the depiction of the red kite and its flight and there was much very good work on the metaphorical connotations of 'sailing' and of 'his flame ablaze on blue' with its dramatic and vivid use of colour imagery. There was recognition of the energised, affirmative force in the alliterative pattern of 'flamboyant', 'flame', 'fork' and 'flexing'. In the second stanza, a grand sense of scale was again found in its opening 'Miles above in the high air', while the repeated and rhetorically emphatic use of 'over' at the start of the next lines and of the subsequent tricolons were seen as adding to the suggestion of an expansive, global vista or panorama. Many candidates commented on the connotations of 'vault' while for some the use of the word 'heaven' suggested the presence of the divine, something linked intrinsically to nature or to a world of purity beyond Man's tainting, destructive powers.

The particularly dramatic opening to the third stanza with the poet's exclamatory injunction to the reader to 'Listen!' drew much excellent critical and interpretative comment (AO4). Some candidates saw this as the poet simply inviting the reader to attend carefully and attentively to the sounds around them and to truly appreciate the quiet beauty of this changed world. Others registered a more impatient, imperative note, a sense of urgency and perhaps also a sense of frustration with humankind's failure up to this point to listen properly to the sounds of the earth. The registering of this tone was often a part of a broader interpretative stance which placed the poem within the context of a climate crisis or 'emergency'. Some candidates saw both celebration of nature's 'rebirth', yes, but also an implicit warning as to the possibly transient nature of such healing if humankind were to go back to its old ways. There was a danger here of candidates being drawn into broader polemical comment or into a relating of their personal experience of lockdown and there were certainly some examples of a drifting away from a focus on the text. When, however, such readings were firmly rooted in comment on the words of the poem, much highly impressive, stimulating and persuasive work was achieved. This was evident, for example, in an unpicking of the apparent paradox of a 'clean new silence/that is not silent' or in the observation of the delicate, fragile nature of the wind, the petal and the leaf. The latter's 'opening' was sometimes connected to the page's 'turning' and suggestions of metaphorical new beginnings, new lives, a new chapter in the story of the world, and of mankind, perhaps. The use of the pronoun in 'we can breathe again' was seen as having real force, indicating our shared, collective experience of throwing off our suffocating shackles and living more easily once again. Similarly, the final line 'your breath, mine' was seen as suggesting a profound intimacy between poet and reader, one both physical and also one which pointed to a profound communality of interest between the two, and by extension, between the rest of humanity. Where candidates were able to discern the highly charged nature of this brief, simple line or the manner in which it pivots around the poised hesitation of the comma at its heart, it was clear that sensitive, perceptive literary appreciation of the highest order was at work.

Question 2

A little over a third of candidates chose to answer **Question 2** based on an extract from the novel *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. The quality of response was generally high with a considerable number of very good answers. The focus of the question was on the Count's thoughts and feelings about Anna. Most candidates showed knowledge (AO1) that Anna is a once-fashionable film actress who has lost status and fallen on hard times. Somewhat surprisingly, very few candidates commented on the oddness, perhaps, of a member of the nobility working as a hotel waiter and that he, one might presume, has shared something of Anna's fall in social and material standing. While not picking up on this aspect did not disable most responses in any way, such a recognition might have aided an early grasp of the implicit empathy between the two characters which can be seen developing by the end of the passage.

The great majority of candidates certainly showed understanding (AO2) of the Count's keen interest in Anna and his close observation of her from the moment she enters the restaurant. There was the recognition that he finds her intensely attractive and that, given what appears to be his detailed background knowledge regarding her recent past, he is something of a 'fan'. Many candidates commented on what they saw as his almost obsessively close observation of her clothes, demeanour and physical appearance, and how he scrutinises the course of her meeting with the young director. Strong answers tended to focus on the Count's thoughts on the director and the manner in which he treats Anna from his shamefully late arrival to the final brusque 'brush off' of his rushed departure. Such a focus initiated much engaged personal interpretative response (AO4) with many candidates registering an implicit sense of the Count's sympathy for the rudeness

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of her treatment and a number sensing also a sharp sense of jealousy as well as critical judgement in terms of his feelings towards the youthful director.

There was much close focus on the features and qualities of the writing (AO3) and relatively few scripts fell into the trap of straightforward narrative paraphrase or re-telling. Almost all candidates commented on some of the details of the initial presentation of Anna from the flamboyant 'red sleeveless dress' and 'high-heeled shoes' to her 'perfectly charming manner', the 'sparkle in her eye' and her 'ready laugh'. Comments on such details were invariably enhanced if candidates recognised in an explicit manner that, while written in the third person, the story is told from the Count's perspective. Such a recognition gave extra weight to observations such as that Anna was 'the very image of patience' in terms of underscoring the depth of the Count's admiration for her, for instance. There is an implicit sense of his sympathetic reaction to the contrast between what he sees as her still 'radiant' looks and how her 'smile and shoulders drooped' in disappointment and humiliation. Strong scripts manifested a clear understanding that everything to this point has just been an act on Anna's part. It is perhaps no coincidence that the writer chooses to remind us that she is an 'actress' just at this very moment and some highly perceptive candidates pointed to the sad irony of another failed performance on the part of the one-time star. The manner in which she 'passed a hand across her brow' was seen as a gesture of fatigue and quiet desperation. Likewise, there was some excellent work on how the writer presents the moment when Anna meets the 'gaze' of the Count and, again, how thoughts and feelings – here an attempt to hold on to her dignity and self-respect, perhaps – are suggested through a series of physical gestures, how she 'drew back her shoulders, raised her chin and strolled toward the staircase'. The very strongest scripts were able to show an appreciation of the metaphorical or symbolic import of her failure to 'master the art of ascending the stairs alone' and all that is suggested about the poignant contrast between the past times of fame and adulation and her present, seemingly lonely life.

The ability to analyse how a writer uses dialogue, whether to create a moment of drama or to develop characterisation, is often something of a discriminator and so it was the case here. Strong scripts tended to show that candidates were attuned to the various tones present in the characters' verbal interplay, as in the sad, rueful and at times sarcastic comments of Anna. Surprisingly few candidates perhaps made direct reference to the drily humorous nature of some of her remarks. There are elements of comedy throughout the extract, in fact, of course, whether that be in the presentation of the arrogant young director or the business of the Count spilling water over the guest, the latter being something that many candidates did indeed discuss well. Strong scripts brought out clearly how the dialogue reflected a growing understanding and warmth between the two characters and a mutual rather than one-sided attraction, perhaps. Some candidates were able to detect the flirtatious undertone which might be seen as running through their exchange. A focus on Anna's 'first genuine smile of the evening' underscored the contrast between this conversation and the 'performative' one with the director observed earlier. The most impressive and insightful scripts, moreover, continued this idea of the theatrical with a discussion of the writer's presentation of the 'little *mise-en-scene'* of the hotel room with its various 'props' (intended for an act of seduction?). The fact that all these were prefaced with comically insistent repetition by the epithet 'small' only added to the sense of pathos and the extent of Anna's fall in fortunes. The Count, however, takes up the offer which the director had earlier declined. As ever, candidates are strongly advised to carry their analysis right through to a focus on the final lines or moments of the text and what is suggested in terms of the closing note or mood. In the balanced, reciprocal harmony of the two characters' toast 'To old times', and Anna's amused laugh, there might be seen not just a nostalgia for past times lost, but also the hint of bright and consolatory new beginnings.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/05
Coursework

Key messages

In successful responses, candidates:

- show a detailed knowledge of the deeper implications of texts
- tailor their answers to a carefully worded task
- integrate relevant, concise references to support ideas
- analyse in detail and sensitively the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

In less successful responses, candidates:

- have only a basic understanding of surface meaning
- write at excessive length, labouring and repeating points, and lose focus on the task
- make general assertions
- list techniques without close analysis
- offer pre-learned 'themes' rather than personal responses to the task.

General comments

There was much evidence of coursework of a high standard this session, where candidates showed a personal and evaluative engagement with texts. The strongest assignments showed that candidates had taken the opportunities offered by coursework: close study of their texts, purposeful drafting and editing of their critical analysis, and careful presentation of the final drafts of their assignments.

There were fewer instances of syllabus infringements, for example, where candidates entered assignments dealing with only one poem or short story or with a single discrete extract from a prose or drama text. The syllabus requires that assignments refer to the whole text or, in the case of poems and short stories, at least two poems or short stories.

The most successful assignments sustained a clear focus on a carefully worded task designed to enable candidates to meet the descriptors of the highest levels. Such tasks direct candidates to consider ways in which writers achieve their effects. Tasks which do not do this have the effect of constraining candidates' performance.

Some responses showed a detailed knowledge of the text, sometimes at exhaustive length, but lacked a clear focus on the task. As has been observed before, this is an unproductive approach common in many poetry assignments where candidates work through the poem offering a line-by-line commentary, without a close focus on the actual task. Centres should remind their candidates that an advantage of the Coursework component is that it encourages skills of editing and redrafting. Candidates should be taught the skill of selecting material carefully in a way that directly addresses the task; every sentence should contribute to the unfolding argument.

As in previous sessions, the most convincing and persuasive essays sustained a critical engagement with the ways in which writers achieve their effects (Assessment Objective 3), relating their points to the task. By contrast, less successful assignments often commented discretely on connotations of specific words without relating them to their use in the text. This may be a consequence of candidates following an overly rigid framework (such as PEE).

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Several centres submitted empathic responses, with most providing the necessary information: the name of the character and the precise moment in the text that the interior monologue takes place. The most successful responses captured a convincingly authentic voice for the chosen character and moment.

Guidance for teachers

This guidance, which appeared in the June 2022 report, is still relevant for future coursework submissions.

Guidance on task-setting can be found in the Coursework Handbook, which stresses the importance of **(a)** wording tasks that direct candidates explicitly to explore the ways in which writers achieve their effects and **(b)** avoiding command words which are insufficient such as 'Describe' and 'Explain'. Teachers within the centre should together discuss the appropriateness of proposed tasks before they are given to candidates. This enables any problems with proposed tasks to be resolved before it is too late.

There follows a reminder of what constitutes both good practice in the presentation of coursework folders:

- Start each assignment with the full wording of the task. In the case of empathic responses, the chosen character and moment should be clearly stated as this allows the Moderator to determine how successfully the candidate has addressed the task.
- Use focused ticking in the body of the text to indicate valid and thoughtful points, together with concise marginal and summative comments which relate to the wording of the levels descriptors.
- Provide a brief explanation on the assignment or cover sheet in cases where marks are changed during internal moderation. Such purposeful annotation aids transparency and contributes to the robustness of the assessment as it enables a centre to justify its award of marks.

The following examples of unhelpful annotation should be avoided: excessive ticking (e.g. of every paragraph or every line); hyperbolic praise of work of indifferent quality; labelling by assessment objective. Simply putting the supposed relevant AOs in the margin is of very little benefit to any subsequent reader, as it does not reveal the *extent* to which a particular assessment objective has been addressed; instead, more specific reference should be made to the relevant levels descriptors.

Most centres carried out administration efficiently. The cover sheet (or individual record card) should be secured by treasury tag or staple which allows easy access to candidate work. Plastic folders are an unwelcome distraction. In well-administered centres care had been taken to:

- include all candidates on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form
- transcribe totals accurately across the various documents.

All centres are advised to include a clerical checking stage in their moderation procedures before submitting their paperwork to Cambridge. This check should be carried out by a different person from the one who completed the Coursework Assessment Summary Forms and Mark Sheets originally.

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