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Grade 12
NSC and SC Examination
Question Papers and Memoranda
English Home Language Paper 2 (Literature)
POETRY



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Prescribed Poetry

Title	Author	page
Remember	Christina Rossetti	2
First Day After the War	Kunene Mazisi	4
The Zulu Girl	Roy Campbell	5
Funeral Blues	W.H. Auden	7
Motho ke motho ka batho babang	Jeremy Cronin	9
A Hard Frost	Cecil Day Lewis	10
An African Thunderstorm	David Rubadiri	12
An African Elegy	Ben Okiri	14
somewhere i have never travelled	ee cummings	16
The Garden of Love	William Blake	17
Felix Randal	Gerard Manley Hopkins	18
Vultures	Chinua Achebe	19

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

REMEMBER – Christina Rossetti

1 Remember me when I am gone away,
 2 Gone far away into the silent land;
 3 When you can no more hold me by the hand,
 4 Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
 5 Remember me when no more day by day
 6 You tell me of our future that you plann'd:
 7 Only remember me; you understand
 8 It will be late to counsel then or pray.
 9 Yet if you should forget me for a while
 10 And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
 11 For if the darkness and corruption leave
 12 A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
 13 Better by far you should forget and smile
 14 Than that you should remember and be sad.

2.1 Account for the repetition of the word, 'remember' throughout the poem. (2)

2.2 Refer to lines 5–8: 'Remember me when ... then or pray.'

Explain what these lines suggest about the speaker's relationship with her loved one. (2)

2.3 Comment on the significance of the reference to 'the darkness and corruption' (line 11) in the context of the poem. (3)

2.4 Refer to lines 13–14: 'Better by far ... and be sad.'

Critically comment on how the speaker's tone in these lines reinforces the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

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10 And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
11 For if the darkness and corruption leave
12 A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
13 Better by far you should forget and smile
14 Than that you should remember and be sad.

1 Refer to lines 1–2: 'gone away, /Gone far away'.

How do these words set the initial mood of the poem? (2)

2 Explain what the use of the phrase, 'the silent land' (line 2) conveys about the speaker's state of mind. (2)

3 Refer to line 4: 'Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.'

Discuss the significance of this description in the context of the poem. (3)

4 The speaker of this poem is self-centred.

Do you agree with this statement? Justify your response by referring to imagery and/or diction. (3)

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the question that follows.

FIRST DAY AFTER THE WAR – Mazisi Kunene

1 We heard the songs of a wedding party.
2 We saw a soft light
3 Coiling round the young blades of grass
4 At first we hesitated, then we saw her footprints,
5 Her face emerged, then her eyes of freedom!
6 She woke us up with a smile saying,
7 'What day is this that comes suddenly?'
8 We said, 'It is the first day after the war'.
9 Then without waiting we ran to the open space
10 Ululating to the mountains and the pathways
11 Calling people from all the circles of the earth.
12 We shook up the old man demanding a festival
13 We asked for all the first fruits of the season.
14 We held hands with a stranger
15 We shouted across the waterfalls
16 People came from all lands
17 It was the first day of peace.
18 We saw our Ancestors travelling tall on the horizon.

In 'First Day after the War', the speaker focuses on the celebration of new beginnings.

With close reference to **diction**, **imagery** and **tone**, critically discuss the validity of this statement.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the question that follows.

THE ZULU GIRL – Roy Campbell

1 When in the sun the hot red acres smoulder,
2 Down where the sweating gang its labour plies,
3 A girl flings down her hoe, and from her shoulder
4 Unslings her child tormented by the flies.
5 She takes him to a ring of shadow pooled
6 By thorn-trees: purpled with the blood of ticks,
7 While her sharp nails, in slow caresses ruled,
8 Prowl through his hair with sharp electric clicks.
9 His sleepy mouth plugged by the heavy nipple,
10 Tugs like a puppy, grunting as he feeds:
11 Through his frail nerves her own deep languors ripple
12 Like a broad river sighing through its reeds.
13 Yet in that drowsy stream his flesh imbibes
14 An old unquenched unsmotherable heat –
15 The curbed ferocity of beaten tribes,
16 The sullen dignity of their defeat.
17 Her body looms above him like a hill
18 Within whose shade a village lies at rest,
19 Or the first cloud so terrible and still
20 That bears the coming harvest in its breast.

With close reference to the **diction**, **imagery** and **tone** used in this poem, discuss how the speaker explores issues of endurance and hope for the future.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

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 17 Her body looms above him like a hill
 18 Within whose shade a village lies at rest,
 19 Or the first cloud so terrible and still
 20 That bears the coming harvest in its breast.

.1 Refer to line 1: 'When in the sun the hot red acres smoulder'.

How does this line set the initial mood of the poem? (2)

.2 Explain what the word, 'flings' (line 3) suggests about the girl's state of mind. (2)

.3 Refer to line 11: 'Through his frail nerves her own deep languors ripple'.

Discuss the significance of this description in the context of the poem. (3)

.4 The concluding stanza offers visions of the future.

Do you agree with this statement? Justify your response by referring to imagery and/or diction. (3)

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the question that follows.

FUNERAL BLUES – W.H. Auden

- 1 Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
- 2 Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
- 3 Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
- 4 Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.
- 5 Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead
- 6 Scribbling on the sky the message He Is Dead.
- 7 Put crêpe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
- 8 Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.
- 9 He was my North, my South, my East and West,
- 10 My working week and my Sunday rest,
- 11 My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
- 12 I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.
- 13 The stars are not wanted now; put out every one;
- 14 Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
- 15 Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood;
- 16 For nothing now can ever come to any good.

The poem is an exploration of the speaker's reaction to his loss.

Discuss this statement with reference to **diction**, **imagery** and **tone**.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

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11 My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
12 I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong.

13 The stars are not wanted now; put out every one;
14 Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
15 Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood;
16 For nothing now can ever come to any good.

- .1 Account for the speaker's desire to 'Stop all the clocks' (line 1). (2)
- .2 Suggest a reason for the use of capital letters in 'He Is Dead' (line 6). (2)
- .3 Refer to line 9: 'He was my North, my South, my East and West'.
Discuss the effectiveness of this image in the context of the poem. (3)
- .4 Critically comment on how the images in the final stanza convey the speaker's attitude toward the death of his loved one. (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

MOTHO KE MOTHO KA BATHO BABANG – Jeremy Cronin
(A Person is a Person Because of Other People)

1 By holding my mirror out of the window I see
 2 Clear to the end of the passage.
 3 There's a person down there.
 4 A prisoner polishing a doorhandle.
 5 In the mirror I see him see
 6 My face in the mirror,
 7 I see the fingertips of his free hand
 8 Bunch together, as if to make
 9 An object the size of a badge
 10 Which travels up to his forehead
 11 The place of an imaginary cap.
 12 (This means: *A warder.*)
 13 Two fingers are extended in a vee
 14 And wiggle like two antennae.
 15 (He's being watched.)
 16 A finger of his free hand makes a watch-hand's arc
 17 On the wrist of his polishing arm without
 18 Disrupting the slow-slow rhythm of his work.
 19 (Later. Maybe later we can speak.)
 20 *Hey! Wat maak jy daar?*
 21 – a voice from around the corner.
 22 *No. Just polishing baas.*
 23 He turns back to me, now watch
 24 His free hand, the talkative one,
 25 Slips quietly behind
 26 – *Strength brother*, it says,
 27 In my mirror,
 A black fist.

- .1 Explain the significance of the 'mirror' to the prisoners. (2)
- .2 Suggest a reason for the reference to 'person' (line 3) and then 'prisoner' (line 4). (2)
- .3 Refer to lines 13–14: 'Two fingers are ... like two antennae.'
 Discuss the effectiveness of this image in the context of the poem. (3)
- .4 Refer to line 28: 'A black fist.'
 In your view, is this line an appropriate conclusion to the poem? Justify your response. (3)

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the question that follows.

A HARD FROST – Cecil Day Lewis

1 A frost came in the night and stole my world
2 And left this changeling for it – a precocious
3 Image of spring, too brilliant to be true:
4 White lilac on the windowpane, each grass-blade
5 Furred like a catkin, maydrift loading the hedge.
6 The elms behind the house are elms no longer
7 But blossomers in crystal, stems of the mist
8 That hangs yet in the valley below, amorphous
9 As the blind tissue whence creation formed.
10 The sun looks out, and the fields blaze with diamonds.
11 Mockery spring, to lend this bridal gear
12 For a few hours to a raw country maid,
13 Then leave her all disconsolate with old fairings
14 Of aconite and snowdrop! No, not here
15 Amid this flounce and filigree of death
16 Is the real transformation scene in progress
17 But deep below where frost
18 Worries the stiff clods unclenches their
19 Grip on the seed and lets our future breathe.

The poem describes how frost plays a role in the transformation of the landscape. By close reference to DICTION, IMAGERY and TONE, critically discuss the validity of this statement.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

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14 Of aconite and snowdrop! No, not here
15 Amid this flounce and filigree of death
16 Is the real transformation scene in progress
17 But deep below where frost
18 Worrying the stiff clods unclenches their
19 Grip on the seed and lets our future breathe.

.1 Refer to line 1: 'A frost came in the night and stole my world'.

What impression of the frost is created in this line? (2)

.2 Refer to line 3: 'Image of spring, too brilliant to be true'.

How do these words contribute to your understanding of the speaker's feelings? (2)

.3 Refer to lines 11–14: 'Mockery spring ...'/'aconite and snowdrop!'

Discuss how the imagery in these lines conveys the speaker's tone. (3)

.4 Refer to lines 17–19: 'But deep below ...'/'our future breathe.'

Comment on how these lines capture the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

AN AFRICAN THUNDERSTORM – David Rubadiri

1 From the west
 2 Clouds come hurrying with the wind
 3 Turning
 4 Sharply
 5 Here and there
 6 Like a plague of locusts
 7 Whirling
 8 Tossing up things on its tail
 9 Like a madman chasing nothing.
 10 Pregnant clouds
 11 Ride stately on its back
 12 Gathering to perch on hills
 13 Like dark sinister wings;
 14 The Wind whistles by
 15 And trees bend to let it pass.
 16 In the village
 17 Screams of delighted children
 18 Toss and turn
 19 In the din of whirling wind,
 20 Women –
 21 Babies clinging on their backs –
 22 Dart about
 23 In and out
 24 Madly
 25 The Wind whistles by
 26 Whilst trees bend to let it pass.
 27 Clothes wave like tattered flags
 28 Flying off
 29 To expose dangling breasts
 30 As jagged blinding flashes
 31 Rumble, tremble, and crack
 32 Amidst the smell of fired smoke
 33 and the pelting march of the storm.

.1 Refer to line 14: 'The Wind whistles by' and line 19: 'In the din of whirling wind'.

Suggest how the alliteration in these lines is used to describe the wind.

(2)

.2 Refer to line 10: 'Pregnant clouds'.

Explain what the word, 'pregnant' implies about the clouds.

(2)

.3 Discuss the effectiveness of comparing the approaching storm to 'a plague of locusts' (line 6).

(3)

.4 Refer to lines 16–23: 'In the village ... In and out'.

Critically comment on how the structure of these lines conveys the speaker's attitude toward the wind.

(3)

[10]

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 30 As jagged blinding flashes
 31 Rumble, tremble, and crack
 32 Amidst the smell of fired smoke
 33 and the pelting march of the storm.

- .1 Refer to line 9: 'Like a madman chasing nothing.'
 What impression of the wind is conveyed by this description? (2)
- .2 Suggest how the word, 'sinister' (line 13) contributes to the mood of the poem. (2)
- .3 Refer to lines 20–24: 'Women – /Babies clinging ... In and out/Madly'.
 Discuss how these lines convey the attitude of the women towards the storm. (3)
- .4 Refer to lines 30–33: 'As jagged blinding .../'of the storm.'
 Comment on whether these lines are an appropriate conclusion to the poem. (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

AN AFRICAN ELEGY – Ben Okri

1 We are the miracles that God made
 2 To taste the bitter fruit of Time.
 3 We are precious.
 4 And one day our suffering
 5 Will turn into the wonders of the earth.
 6 There are things that burn me now
 7 Which turn golden when I am happy.
 8 Do you see the mystery of our pain?
 9 That we bear poverty
 10 And are able to sing and dream sweet things
 11 And that we never curse the air when it is warm
 12 Or the fruit when it tastes so good
 13 Or the lights that bounce gently on the waters?
 14 We bless things even in our pain.
 15 We bless them in silence.
 16 That is why our music is so sweet.
 17 It makes the air remember.
 18 There are secret miracles at work
 19 That only Time will bring forth.
 20 I too have heard the dead singing.
 21 And they tell me that
 22 This life is good
 23 They tell me to live it gently
 24 With fire, and always with hope.
 25 There is wonder here
 26 And there is surprise
 27 In everything the unseen moves.
 28 The ocean is full of songs.
 29 The sky is not an enemy.
 30 Destiny is our friend.

- .1 Refer to line 8: 'Do you see the mystery of our pain?'
 Suggest a reason for the inclusion of the rhetorical question. (2)
- .2 Refer to line 9: 'That we bear poverty'.
 Explain what the word, 'bear' implies about the local people. (2)
- .3 Refer to lines 16–17: 'That is why ... the air remember.'
 Comment on the significance of the music's being 'so sweet' that it 'makes the air remember'. (3)
- .4 Refer to the final stanza.
 Critically comment on how the speaker's tone conveys the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

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 25 There is wonder here
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 27 In everything the unseen moves.
 28 The ocean is full of songs.
 29 The sky is not an enemy.
 30 Destiny is our friend.

- .1 Refer to line 3: 'We are precious.'
 Account for the use of the word, 'precious' in the context of the first stanza. (2)
- .2 Suggest a reason for the repetition of the word, 'And' throughout the poem. (2)
- .3 Refer to line 13: 'Or the lights that bounce gently on the waters?'
 Discuss the effectiveness of this image in the context of the poem. (3)
- .4 Refer to lines 22–24: 'This life is good ...gently/With fire'.
 Critically comment on the contradictory advice given to the speaker by the ancestors. (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond – ee cummings

1 somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond
 2 any experience, your eyes have their silence:
 3 in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,
 4 or which i cannot touch because they are too near
 5 your slightest look easily will unclose me
 6 though i have closed myself as fingers,
 7 you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens
 8 (touching skilfully, mysteriously) her first rose
 9 or if your wish be to close me, I and
 10 my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly,
 11 as when the heart of this flower imagines
 12 the snow carefully everywhere descending;
 13 nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals
 14 the power of your intense fragility: whose texture
 15 compels me with the colour of its countries,
 16 rendering death and forever with each breathing
 17 (i do not know what it is about you that closes
 18 and opens; only something in me understands
 19 the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)
 20 nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

- .1 Refer to lines 1–2: 'somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond/any experience'.

What impression of the speaker is created by the use of 'gladly' (line 1)? (2)

- .2 'Spring' (line 7) is the only word that is capitalised in the poem.

Explain the effect of this capitalisation in context. (2)

- .3 Refer to line 4: 'or which i cannot touch because they are too near'.

Discuss the significance of the paradox in this line. (3)

- .4 Refer to lines 17–19: '(i do not ... than all roses)'.

Critically comment on how the speaker's tone in these lines reinforces the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

THE GARDEN OF LOVE – William Blake

1	I went to the Garden of Love,
2	And saw what I never had seen:
3	A Chapel was built in the midst,
4	Where I used to play on the green.
5	And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
6	And 'Thou shalt not' writ over the door;
7	So I turn'd to the Garden of Love
8	That so many sweet flowers bore;
9	And I saw it was filled with graves,
10	And tomb-stones where flowers should be;
11	And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,
12	And binding with briars my joys and desires.

.1 Refer to line 1: 'I went to the Garden of Love'.

How does the word, 'Garden' create an expectation in the mind of the reader? (2)

.2 Refer to lines 3–4: 'A Chapel was ...'/'on the green.'

Explain the significance of these lines in the context of the poem. (2)

.3 Refer to lines 5–6: 'And the gates ...'/'over the door'.

Discuss how the diction in these lines contributes to the speaker's tone. (3)

.4 Refer to the final stanza: 'And I saw ...'/'joys and desires.'

Comment on how these lines convey the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

FELIX RANDAL – Gerald Manley Hopkins

1	Felix Randal the farrier, O he is dead then? my duty all ended,
2	Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and hardy-handsome
3	Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it and some
4	Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended?
5	Sickness broke him. Impatient he cursed at first, but mended
6	Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began some
7	Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom
8	Tendered to him. Ah well, God rest him all road ever he offended!
9	This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.
10	My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had quenched thy tears,
11	Thy tears that touched my heart, child, Felix, poor Felix Randal;
12	How far from then forethought of, all thy more boisterous years,
13	When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,
14	Didst fettle for the great grey drayhorse his bright and battering sandal!

.1 Refer to line 1: 'O he is dead then? my duty all ended'.

What impression of the speaker is created by this question? (2)

.2 Refer to line 3: 'Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it'.

Explain the effect of the repetition in this line. (2)

.3 Refer to line 9: 'This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.'

Discuss the significance of this line in the context of the poem. (3)

.4 The speaker presents two contrasting views of Felix Randal.

Critically discuss how these contrasting views convey the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the question that follows.

FELIX RANDAL – Gerard Manley Hopkins

1 Felix Randal the farrier, O he is dead then? my duty all ended,
 2 Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and hardy-handsome
 3 Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it and some
 4 Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended?
 5 Sickness broke him. Impatient he cursed at first, but mended
 6 Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began some
 7 Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom
 8 Tendered to him. Ah well, God rest him all road ever he offended!
 9 This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.
 10 My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had quenched thy tears,
 11 Thy tears that touched my heart, child, Felix, poor Felix Randal;
 12 How far from then forethought of, all thy more boisterous years,
 13 When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,
 14 Didst fettle for the great grey drayhorse his bright and battering sandal!

In 'Felix Randal', the speaker contemplates what he sees as significant aspects of the life and death of the farrier.

With close reference to **diction**, **imagery** and **tone**, discuss how the above statement is reflected in the poem.

Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 250–300 words (about ONE page).

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

VULTURES – Chinua Achebe

1 In the greyness
 2 and drizzle of one despondent
 3 dawn unstirred by harbingers
 4 of sunbreak a vulture
 5 perching high on broken
 6 bone of a dead tree
 7 nestled close to his
 8 mate his smooth
 9 bashed-in head, a pebble
 10 on a stem rooted in
 11 a dump of gross
 12 feathers, inclined affectionately
 13 to hers. Yesterday they picked
 14 the eyes of a swollen
 15 corpse in a water-logged
 16 trench and ate the
 17 things in its bowel. Full
 18 gorged they chose their roost

19 keeping the hollowed remnant
 20 in easy range of cold
 21 telescopic eyes ...
 22 Strange
 23 indeed how love in other
 24 ways so particular
 25 will pick a corner
 26 in that charnel-house
 27 tidy it and coil up there, perhaps
 28 even fall asleep – her face
 29 turned to the wall!
 30 ... Thus the Commandant at Belsen
 31 Camp going home for
 32 the day with fumes of
 33 human roast clinging
 34 rebelliously to his hairy
 35 nostrils will stop
 36 at the wayside sweet-shop
 37 and pick up a chocolate
 38 for his tender offspring
 39 waiting at home for Daddy's
 40 return ...
 41 Praise bounteous
 42 providence if you will
 43 that grants even an ogre
 44 a tiny glow-worm
 45 tenderness encapsulated
 46 in icy caverns of a cruel
 47 heart or else despair
 48 for in the very germ
 49 of that kindred love is
 50 lodged the perpetuity
 51 of evil.

.1 Refer to lines 8–9: 'his smooth/bashed-in head'.

What does this description suggest about the appearance of the vulture? (2)

.2 Refer to lines 22–29: 'Strange/indeed how ... turned to the wall!'

Explain what these lines suggest about love. (2)

.3 Refer to lines 32–33: 'fumes of/human roast'.

Comment on the effectiveness of the image in the context of the poem. (3)

.4 The central idea of the poem is reinforced by the speaker's use of unexpected contradictions.

Do you agree? Justify your response. (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION

Read the poem below and then answer the questions that follow.

VULTURES – Chinua Achebe

1 In the greyness
2 and drizzle of one despondent
3 dawn unstirred by harbingers
4 of sunbreak a vulture
5 perching high on broken
6 bone of a dead tree
7 nestled close to his
8 mate his smooth
9 bashed-in head, a pebble
10 on a stem rooted in
11 a dump of gross
12 feathers, inclined affectionately
13 to hers. Yesterday they picked
14 the eyes of a swollen
15 corpse in a water-logged
16 trench and ate the
17 things in its bowel. Full
18 gorged they chose their roost
19 keeping the hollowed remnant
20 in easy range of cold
21 telescopic eyes ...
22 Strange
23 indeed how love in other
24 ways so particular
25 will pick a corner
26 in that charnel-house
27 tidy it and coil up there, perhaps
28 even fall asleep – her face
29 turned to the wall!
30 ... Thus the Commandant at Belsen
31 Camp going home for
32 the day with fumes of
33 human roast clinging
34 rebelliously to his hairy
35 nostrils will stop
36 at the wayside sweet-shop
37 and pick up a chocolate
38 for his tender offspring
39 waiting at home for Daddy's
40 return ...
41 Praise bounteous
42 providence if you will
43 that grants even an ogre
44 a tiny glow-worm
45 tenderness encapsulated
46 in icy caverns of a cruel
47 heart or else despair
48 for in the very germ
49 of that kindred love is
50 lodged the perpetuity

51	of evil.
----	----------

- .1 Refer to lines 1–3: 'In the greyness/and drizzle of one despondent/dawn'.
How do these lines contribute to the mood of the first section? (2)
- .2 What do the words, 'cold/telescopic eyes' (lines 20–21) suggest about the nature of
the vultures? (2)
- .3 Refer to lines 30–35: 'Thus the Commandant ... his hairy/nostrils'.
Discuss the significance of this description in the context of the poem. (3)
- .4 The concluding lines, 'Praise bounteous/providence ... perpetuity/of evil' (lines 41–
51) offers options for human behaviour.
Do you agree with this statement? Justify your response by referring to imagery
and-or diction. (3)

[10]



Grade 12
NSC and SC Examination
Marking Guidelines
English Home Language Paper 2 (Literature)
POETRY



COMPILED BY BELINDA RETIEF – SES TS DISTRICT

Prescribed Poetry

Title	Author	page
Remember	Christina Rossetti	24
First Day After the War	Kunene Mazisi	26
The Zulu Girl	Roy Campbell	27
Funeral Blues	W.H. Auden	29
Motho ke motho ka batho babang	Jeremy Cronin	31
A Hard Frost	Cecil Day Lewis	32
An African Thunderstorm	David Rubadiri	34
An African Elegy	Ben Okiri	36
somewhere i have never travelled	ee cummings	38
The Garden of Love	William Blake	39
Felix Randal	Gerard Manley Hopkins	40
Vultures	Chinua Achebe	42

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS

'REMEMBER' – Christina Rossetti

- 1 The repetition highlights the speaker's desire to be remembered after her death as she fears being forgotten. Initially, she wants to be in her loved one's memory constantly. Later, she wants to be remembered only if it does not cause her loved one pain.

Candidates might refer to the repetition as reflecting the imperative tone to create a forceful and urgent appeal. They might also comment on how the repetition emphasises the depth of love the speaker feels for her loved one.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- 2 The lines suggest a close, intimate relationship where plans are made for a shared future. The lines also allude to the active role the loved one plays in the plans; this possibly suggests his significant role in the relationship. The speaker's reminder to her loved one that a time will come when he will not be able to 'counsel' or 'pray' for her suggests that he offers her guidance, support, advice and comfort.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- 3 Darkness suggests death and the unknown. It conveys her fear of death and a sense of foreboding of the desolation/despair that her passing might bring. The word, 'corruption' refers to the dreadful physical effects of illness which may alter the body; it also refers to the decay of the body after death. The speaker is concerned that witnessing the harsh physical manifestations of the illness will leave a sad memory (3)

of what she used to be. This might lead to a distorted image of her that would bring pain to her loved one. It is for this reason that she would rather he forget her.

[Award 3 marks only if 'darkness' and 'corruption' are discussed.]

- 4 A reconciliatory, consoling and comforting tone is used. The speaker is at peace with her impending death and separation from the physical world. The two contrasting ideas, 'forget and smile' and 'remember and be sad', help to reinforce the tone of acceptance. The speaker wants her lover to be happy and continue to live a fulfilled life and not be melancholic when he remembers her.

[Award 3 marks only if the tone and central idea are fully discussed.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS

'REMEMBER' – Christina Rossetti

- 1 The speaker's impending death, anticipated by these words, creates a melancholic/sombre/sad/sorrowful mood. /This mood creates a sense of loss and finality.

Candidates might refer to the repetition and use of long vowel sounds that create a sad mood.

[Award 2 marks only if mood is discussed.] (2)

- .2 'the silent land' is used euphemistically for death/the afterlife. She might be fearful/apprehensive of the unknown and the isolation she might experience. /She might be fearful of being alone and forgotten. The speaker might also see death as mysterious and eerie. Alternatively, she might see it as a peaceful escape from her pain.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- 3 This image signifies the speaker's suspended state/state of limbo. She knows that she is going to die yet tries to prolong her life for as long as possible. For her, death is merely a 'half turn' away. However, her innate strength/determination enables her to turn toward life in order to remain with her beloved for as long as she can.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- 4 [Candidates should recognise that a mixed response is the most appropriate response as the speaker's feelings undergo a change in the course of the poem.]

The speaker's concern with self is evident when she commands her beloved to remember her after she dies ('Remember me when I am gone away'). She implores him to remember her when he can no longer discuss their planned future together ('Remember me ... you planned'). The use of the 'I' pronoun indicates her self-absorption.

(3)

However, in the sestet, her focus shifts from her selfish need to be remembered to a concern for her beloved's happiness ('Better by far ... be sad'). The use of 'you' and the transitional 'Yet' reflects this change in attitude.

[A cogent 'Agree' or 'Disagree' response is unlikely; however, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks only if reference is made to imagery and/or diction.]

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWER

'FIRST DAY AFTER THE WAR' – Mazisi Kunene

Use the following points, among others, as a guideline to marking this question.

Responses might differ, depending on the candidate's sensitivity to and understanding of the poem.

Refer to page 42 for the rubric to assess this question.

The poem is a celebration of the end of apartheid and of new beginnings.

- The poem deals with excitement and the desire to tell people about the dawn of a new era, which suggests a fresh start and is a symbol of hope and change.
- The wedding metaphor symbolises celebration. It is the beginning of a new life and a time of peace and harmony. The reference to the 'songs' at the 'wedding party' conveys joyous celebration.
- The allusion to freedom illustrates the lifting of the restrictions and oppression of the apartheid era. This is cause for jubilation.
- 'Then without waiting we ran to the open space' conveys the people's excitement. Their joy is spontaneous, unrestrained and boundless. They erupt in celebration.
- The word, 'suddenly' suggests that the ending of oppression and subsequent unification are unexpected pleasures to be celebrated.
- The end of the war, together with the eradication of suffering, is met with great festivity and jubilation.
- Words like 'calling', 'shook', 'demanding' and 'shouted' are forceful. They convey the people's enthusiasm and determination to enjoy the occasion. They are unable to contain their joy, which is expressed in wild actions.
- The use of the onomatopoeic word, 'ululating' conveys the sound of the people's spontaneity and expression of ecstasy and elation. The word is associated with traditional forms of African celebration.
- The repetition of 'we' emphasises the coming together of people who were previously divided. This is reinforced by their holding hands – a gesture of intimacy and comfort. There is a sense of harmony, ubuntu and accord. A common humanity is celebrated.
- Because of the celebratory mood, people demand the 'first fruits of the season'. The occasion is so great that only the best will do. It is also an expression of gratitude for blessings bestowed.
- The announcement of the advent of democracy is shared with all. The spirit is so infectious that people 'came from all the lands' to join the unification.
- Even the ancestors join the celebration. They are proud and 'travelling tall'.
- The tone initially is one of disbelief that oppression has come to an end, then restrained joy, followed by ecstatic celebration, jubilation and pride. The tone might also be

celebratory/enthusiastic/excited.

[A cogent 'Invalid' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]
[Credit valid alternative responses.]

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWER

'THE ZULU GIRL'– Roy Campbell

Use the following, among other points, as a guide to marking this question.

Responses might differ, depending on the candidate's sensitivity to and understanding of the poem.

- Refer to page 42 for the rubric to assess this question.
- Despite the oppression and hardship experienced by the tribe, there is a sense of optimism for a better life in the future.
- The image, 'the hot red acres smoulder' indicates the harsh conditions under which the workers labour. The sun is so intense that the landscape appears ready to burst into flames.
- The reference to the 'gang' suggests that its members have no identity/individuality and work under compulsion.
- 'Sweating' further communicates their discomfort and the intensity of the heat.
- 'Flings' describes the frustration/exasperation experienced by the girl as well as her defiance of the system under which she labours.
- Her child's being 'tormented by flies' reinforces the impression of unhygienic and unbearable working conditions.
- In stanza 2, the harshness of the environment is intensified: there is little shade offered by the thorn-trees; the area is smeared with the blood of ticks – 'ring of shadow ... ticks'.
- The girl searches the child's hair for ticks, emphasising the unpleasant conditions under which she lives.
- The intimate bond between mother and child allows the latter to imbibe not only nourishment but also her thoughts and feelings.
- While he 'grunts' in satisfaction, the mother's emotions 'ripple' through his 'frail nerves'.
- Her 'languors ...sighing' might imply her partial acceptance of her current state.
- The mother is proud of the heritage which she imparts to her son - 'old unquenched unsmotherable heat'.
- Although her tribe has been 'curbed' and beaten, they retain their 'dignity'. They are a fierce warrior nation that will not be quelled.
- The comparison of the mother to a hill suggests her shielding and protecting her child and, by implication, her tribe.
- 'The first cloud...in its breast' foreshadows the uprising of the people against their oppressors.
- The girl and her son represent the potential of her nation to liberate itself.
- 'The coming harvest' indicates the ultimate victory of the people when they reap the fruit of their uprising and overthrow their oppressors.
- Initially, the tone is sympathetic to the plight of the girl.
- It changes to awe at the immense strength and endurance of a downtrodden nation.
- There is a tone of optimism for a better future.

[10]

POETRY CONTEXTUAL QUESTION – SUGGESTED ANSWER**‘THE ZULU GIRL’ – Roy Campbell**

- .1 The mood is oppressive because of the extreme heat and discomfort experienced by the girl and the labourers.

[Award 2 marks only if mood is discussed.] (2)

- .2 The girl is part of a gang of labourers working under extreme conditions, and this action can be viewed as exasperated and an act of defiance against authority. The girl is exhausted by her physical activity and her exhaustion is compounded by having to carry her child while she works.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The act of breast feeding not only provides nourishment for the child but also transmits to him the mother's feelings and attitude. The word, 'languors' suggests that the mother is weary and despairing of the situation in which she finds herself. Alternatively, it might be suggested that there is a sense of calmness, at least for the present. Her innermost emotions are conveyed during this time of intimacy.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas well discussed OR three distinct ideas.] (3)

- .4 YES.
The mother represents the two options the oppressed people of South Africa have. As the 'hill', she 'looms' over them, protecting her people who are 'a village ... at rest', implying that they will remain quietly accepting of their position. Alternatively, she is 'the cloud', bringing a 'terrible' storm which will result in a 'coming harvest'. This implies the rising up of the people against their oppressors.

OR

NO.

[A 'No' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks only if reference is made to imagery and/or diction.]

(3)

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWER**'FUNERAL BLUES' – W.H. Auden**

- Use the following points, among others, as a guideline to marking this question.
- Responses might differ, depending on the candidate's sensitivity to and understanding of the poem.
- Refer to page 42 for the rubric to assess this question.
- While the speaker may be exploring his feelings of grief and hopelessness at the loss of his loved one, the incongruity between the everyday images the speaker refers to undercuts the intensity of this outpouring of grief. Credit reference to the satirical element.
- 'Blues' music is usually sombre and mournful. In the title, the word conveys the speaker's despair and sorrow.
- The death of the speaker's loved one is so momentous that he feels the world cannot continue as it is.
- His inconsolable grief is conveyed by his instruction to stop time and silence all sounds of daily life. This reflects his need for routine and normal life to be halted as a sign of respect for his loved one and as an acknowledgment of his sorrow.
- The 'muffled' drums create the mournful and solemn feeling that expresses the speaker's grief. The 'moaning' of the aeroplanes announcing that 'He Is Dead' echoes his pain.
- The speaker's loss is so overwhelming that he feels a public acknowledgment must be observed by the 'public doves' and 'traffic policemen'.
- This elevates the status of the deceased to that of a public figure deserving of such recognition.
- The inclusion of the four compass points emphasises that the deceased meant the world to the speaker. He gave the speaker direction and was a source of guidance, comfort and security.
- The command to 'dismantle' the stars, moon and sun is unrealistic, yet it poignantly conveys the speaker's despondency.
- 'My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song' reinforces the idea that the speaker led a fulfilled life because of his loved one; they shared all aspects of their lives.
- Now, without him, the speaker's life is empty and he feels bereft. The repetition of 'my' emphasises his devastating sorrow and highlights the intimacy they shared.
- The line, 'I thought that love would last forever: I was wrong', underpins the despair the speaker feels when he is confronted with the reality of death.
- He is suddenly made aware that the love they shared was finite. He sees no hope for the future and life has lost its meaning.
- The speaker wants the entire universe to come to an end. All sources of light need to be extinguished because, to him, everything is dark and depressing.
- He wants all aspects of nature to disappear as it is now inconsequential to him.
- The speaker's tone is devastated/grief-stricken/distraught/sad/mournful.
- Candidates might refer to the tone as satirical, by pointing out that the speaker's flippancy accentuates his pain.
- [Accept valid alternative responses.]

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWER**'FUNERAL BLUES' – W.H. Auden**

- .1 The clocks indicate normality and the passing of time. By stopping the clocks, he wants other people's normality to cease so that they can relate to his situation. The death of his loved one is so momentous that he feels the world cannot continue. It was tradition to stop the clocks from ticking when someone in the house had died. The speaker wants the world to acknowledge the death of his loved one.

[Award 2 marks for any one idea well discussed OR any two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

- .2 The capital letters indicate the importance of the loved one in the speaker's life and emphasise the intensity of the grief he is experiencing./It creates the impression that the person who has died is a person of significance within society and thus deserving of outpourings of public grief./Capital letters draw the reader's attention to the stark finality of death.

[Award 2 marks for any one idea well discussed OR any two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

- .3 The deceased was like the points on a compass to the speaker. He provided him with guidance and played a significant role in the speaker's life. The image is effective because, like a compass, the deceased was dependable and one on whom the speaker could always rely. Now that he is dead, the speaker feels lost and without direction. The four compass points emphasise that the deceased was an important part of every aspect of the speaker's life.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

- .4 The speaker is devastated/distraught/despondent because he sees no future. He wants the entire universe to come to an end. All sources of light need to be extinguished because to him, everything is now dark and depressing. He wants all of nature to disappear as it is now inconsequential to him. The hyperbolic statements emphasise the intensity of his pain at the death of his loved one.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWER**‘MOTHO KE MOTHO KA BATHO BABANG’ – Jeremy Cronin**

- .1 The mirror is used as a means of communication and allows the prisoners to bond with one another. /The mirror is a reminder that there is no direct contact between the prisoners, and reinforces their isolation and deprivation.

[Award 2 marks for any one idea well discussed OR any two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

- .2 In ‘person’, the speaker acknowledges the humanity of the man before referring to his institutionalised state. However, in ‘prisoner’, the authorities merely view him as a criminal who has no worth. The prisoner is dehumanised by the authorities.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

- .3 The ‘antennae’ are the two fingers used for communication. The description is effective because the wiggling fingers are like moving feelers. Just as insects move their antennae, using them as a sensory organ, the prisoner wiggles his fingers to show he is being watched. Candidates might refer to the ‘antennae’ being compared to radio/TV antennae that are necessary for the reception communication signals.

[Award 3 marks for any ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

- .4 YES

The poem is about togetherness/ubuntu/solidarity/power in spite of the oppression caused by apartheid policies. The black fist is a symbol of freedom, human rights and solidarity. It is an appropriate conclusion to the poem because the prisoners have been incarcerated as a result of their political activity to champion human rights. The fist is a reminder that the people’s human rights have been violated but the people will not give up the fight against oppression. The solidarity of the prisoners is conveyed by the fist.

[A cogent ‘No’ response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWER**'A HARD FROST' – Cecil Day Lewis**

Use the following, among other points, as a guide to marking this question.

Responses might differ, depending on the candidate's sensitivity to and understanding of the poem.

Refer to page 42 for the rubric to assess this question.

- VALID
- The speaker depicts a winter's morning that has been transformed into an image of spring by the harsh winter frost. Despite spring's early arrival being an illusion, the frost plays a powerful transformative role in nourishing new life below the surface of the ground.
- The appearance of the landscape is altered by the arrival of the frost. The word, 'changeling' suggests that a secret, magical exchange has apparently occurred overnight.
- 'Stole' conveys the speaker's surprise when he views the unexpected transformation.
- The patterns created by the frost are compared to spring flowers. This gives the false illusion that spring has arrived.
- The frost glistens like diamonds and crystal in the sun, but this brilliance will not last as the dreariness of the winter will soon return. This is simply a temporary transformation of the landscape.
- The reference to 'Mockery spring' reinforces the superficiality of the scene by suggesting the deceptiveness of the frost.
- The white frost coating the countryside is compared to a 'raw country maid' wearing a beautiful bridal outfit. The rural environment temporarily exhibits a beautiful, refined appearance, but once the frost has melted, the winter scene will once again be revealed. The superficiality ('bridal gear') will return to the reality of average looking ('old fairings').
- The current landscape is one of 'flounce' and 'filigree': it is overly ornamented. Once the frost melts, it will prove to have been unnatural and overdone/excessive.
- While the surface appears fairylike, the real transformation is happening below the surface. Although the frost seems to have a frozen hold over the clods of earth, its grasp is slowly being released and the seeds of the true flowers will be set free.
- The personification effectively conveys the grip the frost has over the soil: it is like clenched fist which is slowly opening.
- The frost has produced an image of the beauty of a spring morning. However, the beauty of 'the real transformation' is in progress 'deep below', not above the surface. The advent of spring is already underway, even though it is still winter.
- Once spring arrives, it will result in a 'permanent' transformation of the landscape.
- Initially, the speaker's tone is one of admiration and amazement because the scene he views is so surprising. However, his tone might be disapproving when he describes the temporary nature of the 'bridal gear' and the frost as mocking people with the illusion of spring's arrival.
- He condescendingly refers to the 'filigree' and 'flounce' of the scene.
- Finally, the speaker's tone reveals his awe of and respect for the power of nature and spring in the last three lines of the poem.
- [A cogent 'Invalid' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]
- [Accept valid alternative responses.]

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'A HARD FROST'– Cecil Day Lewis**

- .1 The personification/comparison of the frost to a thief is disturbing: it suggests that the frost works silently and stealthily, taking that which does not belong to it.

[Award 2 marks for one idea well discussed.] (2)

- .2 While the speaker is delighted at the transformation of his world from the bleak harsh landscape of winter, he is equally pensive in that he knows that this transformation is temporary/effectively illusory.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The winter landscape is metaphorically compared to a plain/an unattractive country maid who is transformed on her wedding day by her bright and beautiful bridal outfit. Her beauty is short-lived since after her wedding she will return to her old self, as will the landscape after the frost has melted. The speaker's tone is of disappointment that this beauty is short-lived, and perhaps, he is disparaging of the frost's trickery.

[Award 3 marks only if tone is discussed.] (3)

- .4 The speaker looks forward to the new cycle of life as the frost nudges the earth to release the seeds that will sprout in Spring, which will signify an end to the hardships of winter. The transformation in nature might possibly be equated to transformation in the life of people who experience hardship but can still look forward to a future that has the potential for a better life.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas/interpretations well discussed.] (3)

[10]

'AN AFRICAN THUNDERSTORM' – David Rubadiri

- .1 The use of 'wind whistles' conveys the shrill, high-pitched, piercing sound of the wind as it speeds by. The 'din of whirling wind' conveys the rapid, swirling, spiralling movement of the wind. The sound is deafening.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 The clouds are heavy, rounded in shape and full of rain. The clouds will release the rain, which will be life-giving, just as a pregnant woman brings life into the world when giving birth. Pregnancy is a symbol of fertility, as is the rain which contributes to the fertility of the land.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The image is effective because a plague of locusts overwhelms the landscape and is an unstoppable force, like the wind and the approaching storm. Like a plague of locusts, the storm is widespread and darkens the sky. The image also conveys the relentless progress of the storm, and the destructive power it will unleash. The storm might destroy the fields and crops as locusts do. The image effectively conveys man's helplessness and vulnerability to the ravages of nature.

Candidates might refer to the image being a Biblical allusion and the significance thereof.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 The short, abrupt lines indicate that the wind unexpectedly twists and turns. The lines also convey the panicky movement of the women because of their fear of the wind. The enjambment conveys the swirling, continuous movement of the wind which rushes by at great speed. The screams of the children spiral in the twirling wind. The speaker is afraid of the wind because it is unpredictable, dangerous, relentless and destructive.

Candidates might refer to the speaker being in awe of the power of the wind.

[Award 3 marks only if structure and attitude are fully discussed.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS

'AN AFRICAN THUNDERSTORM' – David Rubadiri

- .1 The impression is that the wind is unpredictable/out of control and dangerous, bringing with it chaos and disruption.

[Award 2 marks for one idea well discussed.] (2)

- .2 'Sinister' has connotations of something that is evil, frightening and destructive. The mood is oppressive, ominous and foreboding.

[Award 2 marks only if mood is discussed.] (2)

- .3 The women's panicked state and anxiety reflect their fearful attitude toward the storm. Their rushing about gathering their possessions and their children creates a sense of urgency. The children's having to cling to their mothers' backs intensifies the agitation of the mothers and their determination to protect their children. They dread the havoc that the storm might cause.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 The conclusion is **appropriate** because the title creates the expectation that the poem is about a thunderstorm. The poem's focus is on the build-up to the storm. By focusing on the elements of the wind and the clouds, the speaker gives them a significance and power of their own. They are the harbingers alerting people to the approach of the storm. The lightning flash and the rumbling thunder create tension as the reader anticipates the final eruption of the storm. Candidates might see the thunderstorm as an extended metaphor for the destructive effects of colonialism. Credit such responses on their merits. Candidates might suggest that the conclusion is **not appropriate** since the storm does not actually break, despite its build-up having been described throughout the poem. It ends anti-climactically.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'AN AFRICAN ELEGY' – Ben Okri**

- .1 The rhetorical question emphasises the inexplicable nature of the people's reaction to their suffering. The mystery lies in their ability to 'sing and dream sweet things' despite their hardship. The speaker is puzzled by their magnanimous reaction.

Candidates might refer to the reaction of the people's being paradoxical as they are able to express joy despite their pain. (2)

- .2 The local people's problems are a burden which they put up with without anger. They endure and tolerate their hardship without distress or annoyance. They are accepting of their suffering and are prepared to live with it. The word conveys the extent and relentlessness of their suffering.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The music is gratifying/rewarding/pleasurable/harmonious. It is significant because it is an expression of the people's optimistic attitude to life. The air 'remembers' because people are aware of the music even after it has ended. Its impact on the surroundings resonates and the feeling of upliftment endures. Candidates might refer to the sounds carried by the air as being a reminder of the close spiritual connection between nature and the ancestors. (3)

- .4 The tone is optimistic/contemplative/meditative/thoughtful. The speaker is in awe of the magical quality of nature and life. He focuses on the promise of a better life and the need to be in harmony with our world. The speaker's tone reflects his amazement at the people's faith and endurance. The message of the poem is that Africans are eternally hopeful in spite of hardship. They are able to find positives even in difficult situations.

[Award 3 marks only if the tone and central idea are fully discussed.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'AN AFRICAN ELEGY' – Ben Okri**

- .1 The word conveys how valuable, special and unique the African people are./ They endure hardship without complaint and remain hopeful. The speaker praises and motivates the people to remain optimistic.

[Award 2 marks for one idea well discussed OR any two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

- .2 The word, 'and' conveys the never-ending suffering. One problem is compounded and followed by another. There is no respite for the people. The repetition also conveys the people's resilience. They remain optimistic and never become despondent. The word also suggests that when the people are released from their suffering, there will be multiple rewards.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.]

(2)

- .3 The lights and gentleness of the image convey the people's sense of hope, optimism and forgiveness. In spite of their hardships, the people see and appreciate the beauty around them. They remain tolerant and are not bitter. The word, 'bounce' conveys lightness. The people are able to set their burdens and suffering aside and appreciate nature and the goodness in their lives.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

- .4 The speaker is advised to live life 'gently'. He should be kind, have compassion and show sensitivity and understanding. However, he is also urged to live life with 'fire'. He should be spirited/passionate, never surrender and stand up to oppression. This advice is uplifting and inspiring because it encourages people to live life to the full while not allowing their animosities to overpower their humanity.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.]

(3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond' – ee cummings**

- .1 The speaker is enthusiastic about, and open to, the new possibilities in his life. Although it is the unknown, the anticipation fills him with excitement. He welcomes the thought of the adventure and looks forward to the experience.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 By capitalising the word, the importance and power of Spring is recognised. Spring is the giver of life and transforms the winter landscape into something of beauty. Like Spring, his beloved has transformed him by bringing love into his life.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The speaker's inability to touch something despite its nearness is contradictory. His feelings for his beloved are 'too near' to his heart/an intimate part of him and he is reluctant to expose himself as he is afraid that his love makes him vulnerable/defenceless to potential heartbreak and pain.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 The speaker's tone is of admiration/awe/wonder/reverence. He finds it amazing that her mere presence can overwhelm his senses, thoughts and emotions. The expression in her eyes conveys the intensity of her love for him. The unusual connection the speaker makes between the senses suggests that even without words, there is communication and understanding between the lovers. The description conveys the idea of love's being inexplicable, mysterious and spiritual. There is no logic to explain why his beloved is able to exert absolute power over him yet instinctively he is willing to accede to her.

[Award 3 marks only if the tone and central idea are discussed.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'THE GARDEN OF LOVE' – William Blake**

- .1 The reader will expect the speaker to enter an area/state of being that is open, free and beautiful. It is a place of peace and tranquillity. /The allusion to the Biblical Garden of Eden creates the expectation of spiritual perfection and natural beauty.

[Award 2 marks for one idea well discussed.] (2)

- .2 The Chapel should have offered a joyful experience. However, the speaker is indicating how the Chapel and, by implication, organised religion has intruded on his pleasant, carefree childhood memories. The line indicates Blake's disapproval of the invasive and destructive nature of authoritarian religion.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The words, 'gates' and 'shut' have connotations of restriction and loss of free will. In addition, they suggest a lack of welcome. The admonition, 'Thou shalt not' alludes to the Old Testament/Ten Commandments which forbade certain behaviours and reinforces the sense of restriction. This accounts for the speaker's indignant/angry/disappointed/dismayed tone.

[Award 3 marks only if tone is discussed.] (3)

- .4 Instead of life flourishing ('flowers'), the garden is now associated with death as it is filled with 'graves' and 'tomb-stones'. The priests in black gowns are like sinister figures on patrol. These lines reflect the speaker's criticism of authoritarian religion's depriving one of joy. He sees such religion as cruelly restrictive ('binding with briars my joys and desires') of individual freedom and fulfilment.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas/interpretations well discussed.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'FELIX RANDAL' – Gerard Manley Hopkins**

- .1 The speaker appears to be unaffected because the question is asked in a matter-of-fact, detached manner. He has been expecting the news because Felix Randal has been ill for a long time./He fulfilled his duty as a priest by comforting the farrier during his illness and might feel relieved that Felix Randal's suffering is at an end. Credit responses that suggest the speaker is saddened.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 The repetition conveys the slow/gradual and on-going decline that illness has on Felix Randal. It is both physically debilitating and emotionally draining. It emphasises his yearning to regain his former strength.

(2)

- .3 The statement indicates the intense nature of the relationship that has developed between the speaker and Felix Randal. The speaker realises that in as much as he has comforted Felix, he has also gained compassion and solace from Felix. Initially, he displayed sympathy for Felix's illness but as he ministers to him, he becomes more empathetic. [Credit valid alternative responses.]

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 The central idea of the poem is that all people, despite their physical strength, are vulnerable and susceptible to illness and suffering. Felix Randal once possessed great power and energy and was respected by others for his strength, as well as his active, lively and energetic character. However, the illness reduces him to a weak and helpless man, reliant on others. Felix at first rails against his illness, but in time, with the help of the speaker, he finds comfort in his faith and comes to accept his fate as inevitable.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – ESSAY QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWER**'FELIX RANDAL' – Gerard Manley Hopkins**

- Use the following, among other points, as a guide to marking this question.
- Responses might differ, depending on the candidate's sensitivity to and understanding of the poem.
- Refer to page 42 for the rubric to assess this question.
- The speaker expresses admiration for the manner in which the farrier lived. He was a 'big-boned' and 'hardy-handsome' man who required brute strength to perform his job. He worked with great force at his 'random grim forge' as he hammered the horseshoe into place.
- The speaker imagines him standing powerful and grim at the fire as he prepared the drayhorse's 'sandal'.
- In life, Felix Randal was a productive individual, lively and 'boisterous'. He was respected for his work and 'powerful amidst peers'. This contrasts with his being described as a 'child' when his health is compromised by disease.
- The focus then shifts to Felix's physical decline. The speaker notes how the farrier was debilitated by illness. The 'mould' that was so strong and powerful lost its shape as the farrier faded away ('pining, pining') until his thoughts became confused ('reason rambled').
- In stanza 2, the speaker realises that his ministering to Felix had the effect of making Felix more accepting of his plight. Despite Felix's initial frustration and impatience ('impatient he cursed'), he became more tolerant ('a heavenlier heart began').
- Realising Felix's death is imminent, the speaker prepares Felix by 'tend[ing] to him' and offering him the sacrament of the Holy Communion ('sweet reprieve and ransom'), which carries the promise of forgiveness and a new life. He offers him the final rites ('Being anointed') in order to prepare his soul for its release.
- Through this process, the speaker forges a bond of compassion and trust with Felix. The speaker registers with melancholy/tenderness that Felix reconciled himself to his fate in a truly Christian manner.
- The speaker comes to the realisation that he has become more compassionate/empathic as a result of his association with Felix.
- Stanza 3 focuses on the sympathetic relationship of the two men. 'This seeing the sick endears them to us' indicates that an intimate bond developed between the two men.
- The speaker eased the pain and discomfort that Felix experienced ('My tongue had taught thee comfort'). Felix's tears touched the speaker's heart and this accounts for the latter's sense of loss and mourning at his death.
- The tone is initially detached/dispassionate/unaffected/matter-of-fact but shifts to being contemplative, grieving and compassionate.
- [Credit valid alternative responses.]

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'VULTURES' – Chinua Achebe**

- .1 The vulture's bald head exposes its misshapen, unnatural-looking head. It is perceived as a revolting/repulsive/disgusting looking creature.
[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)
- .2 These lines suggest that love can exist even in deathly circumstances. It can suppress any sense of the horror of the scene by avoiding/ignoring the horror/harsh reality which surrounds it.
[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)
- .3 The image of a 'human roast' is particularly shocking: human beings are being incinerated and the smell of burning flesh lingers in the air. The image emphasises the cruelty of the concentration camps. The smell of burning flesh that clings to the Commandant's nostrils is a disturbing reminder of how the persecuted were incinerated in the camps. It is effective because it conveys the inhumane treatment of human beings and how the Commandant regarded it as a natural part of his day – incinerating human flesh is like cooking a roast. The sense of evil is intensified by the imagery of cannibalism. In his view, there is nothing unusual about it.
[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)
- .4 AGREE. Just as the disgusting vultures are capable of affection and tenderness, the Commandant, in spite of his cruelty and evil perpetrated on a daily basis, is loving and caring. The contradiction between the disgusting appearance and the eating habits of the vultures is juxtaposed with their intimate behaviour toward each other. It is a shocking revelation to the reader because it is so unexpected. The actions of the Commandant at work are juxtaposed with his actions on the way home. It is astounding that someone who is so callous can be capable of such fondness and consideration. The contrasting actions and emotions are alarming and make the reader question the ability of good and evil to live side by side. Candidates might refer to the paradoxes being well-established in our consideration of the nature of evil and its co-existence with the more appealing human possibilities.
[A cogent 'Disagree' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]
[Credit valid alternative responses.]
[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

[10]

POETRY – CONTEXTUAL QUESTION SUGGESTED ANSWERS**'VULTURES' – Chinua Achebe**

- .1 The grey and dreary dawn contributes to the down-hearted/dull/gloomy and hopeless mood.
[Award 2 marks only if mood is discussed.] (2)
- .2 As scavengers, the vultures keep their kill within their sights. Their eyes are cold and calculating with the added advantage of long- distance vision that ensures the protection of their spoils. 'Cold' might also suggest that they are ruthless.
[Award 2 marks only if a discussion of both 'cold' and 'telescopic' is offered.] (2)
- .3 The Commandant ends his day like any ordinary worker returning to his family after work. However, this Commandant has not had an ordinary day at work in that he has been directly involved in the atrocious sins committed against a huge number of people.
This description signifies mankind's inhumanity toward their fellow beings; this is similar to how animals function. The vultures feed their bodies to survive, causing destruction and suffering in the process, while man kills in order to satisfy his selfish desires.
[Award 3 marks for two ideas well discussed OR three distinct ideas.] (3)
- .4 YES.
The Commandant, who is referred to as the 'ogre', has an element of goodness for which one needs to be grateful - 'Praise bounteous providence'. His humanity is seen as a 'tiny glow worm' which suggests that he has the potential for love. However, the reference to the 'icy caverns of a cruel/heart' creates a sense of despair as it is too little to transform the evil 'lodged' within him. Thus he will continue to perpetrate evil.
OR
NO.
[A 'No' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]
[Award 3 marks only if reference is made to imagery and/or diction.] (3)

[10]

Criteria	Exceptional	Skilful	Moderate	Elementary	Inadequate
CONTENT	6 – 5	4	3	2	1 – 0
6 MARKS Interpretation of topic. Depth of argument, justification and grasp of text.	-In-depth interpretation of topic. -Range of striking arguments; extensively supported from poem -Excellent understanding of genre and poem.	-Shows understanding and has interpreted topic well -Fairly detailed response -Sound arguments given, but not all of them as well motivated as they could be -Understanding of genre and poem	-Fair interpretation of topic -Some good points in support of topic -Some arguments supported, but evidence is not always convincing -Basic understanding of genre and poem.	-Unsatisfactory interpretation of topic -Hardly any points in support of topic - Inadequate understanding of genre and poem.	-No understanding of the topic -No reference to the poem -Learner has not come to grips with genre and poem.
STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE	4	3	2	1	1 – 0
4 MARKS Structure, logical flow and presentation. Language, tone and style used in the essay	-Coherent structure -Arguments well-structured and clearly developed -Language, tone and style mature, impressive, correct -Virtually error-free grammar, spelling and punctuation.	-Clear structure and logical flow of argument. -Flow of argument can be followed -Language, tone and style largely correct	-Some evidence of structure -Essay lacks a well-structured flow of logic and coherence -Language errors minor; tone and style mostly appropriate.	-Structure shows faulty planning -Arguments not logically arranged -Language errors evident -Inappropriate tone and style.	-Poorly structured. -Serious language errors and incorrect style.



Grade 12

NSC and SC Examination

Question Papers

English Home Language Paper 2 (Literature)

UNSEEN POETRY



COMPILED BY BELINDA RETIEF – SES TS DISTRICT

GRADE 12 ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE UNSEEN POETRY QUESTION BANK 2015–2019**Unseen Poetry**

Title	Author	page
Drought	Dennis Lefebvre	2
Blessing	Imtiaz Dharker	4
Autumn	Douglas Ridley Beeton	6
Seed	Paula Meehan	8
The Face of Hunger	Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali	10
Wishing Leaves	Wayne Visser	12
Nightsong: City	Dennis Brutus	14
Exodus	Don MacLennan	16
Two Birds	David Farrell	18
Riding in the New York Subway	Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali	20
Western Civilization	Agostinho Neto	22
Touched by an Angel	Maya Angelou	24
The Lonliness Beyond	Sipho Sepamla	26

NOVEMBER 2019

DROUGHT – Denys Lefebvre

1	Heat, all pervading, crinkles up the soil;
2	A deathly silence numbs the molten air;
3	On beds of rivers, islands scorched and bare,
4	Warm scavengers of wind heap up the spoil;
5	And wide-eyed oxen, gaunt and spent with toil,
6	Huddled together near some shrunken pool –
7	Pant for the shade of trees and pastures cool;
8	Lashing their tails at flies they cannot foil.
9	Whilst overhead, the sun-god drives his way
10	Through halting hours of blinding, blazing light,
11	Until his shining steeds a moment stay
12	And disappear behind the gates of night.
13	And still no rain. A cloudless, starlit sky
14	Watches the veld, and all things droop and die.

5.1 Refer to line 1: 'Heat, all pervading, crinkles up the soil'.

What impression is created of the heat in this line? (2)

5.2 Refer to line 6: 'Huddled together near some shrunken pool –'.

Explain what this line suggests about the oxen. (2)

5.3 Refer to line 4: 'Warm scavengers of wind heap up the spoil'.

Discuss the effectiveness of the imagery in the context of the poem. (3)

5.4 Refer to lines 13–14: 'And still no ... droop and die.'

Comment on how the diction in the last two lines conveys the overall mood of the poem. (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2019

BLESSING – Imtiaz Dharker

1 The skin cracks like a pod.
 2 There never is enough water.

 3 Imagine the drip of it,
 4 the small splash, echo
 5 in a tin mug,
 6 the voice of a kindly god.

 7 Sometimes, the sudden rush
 8 of fortune. The municipal pipe bursts,
 9 silver crashes to the ground
 10 and the flow has found
 11 a roar of tongues. From the huts,
 12 a congregation: every man woman
 13 child for streets around
 14 butts in, with pots,
 15 brass, copper, aluminium,
 16 plastic buckets,
 17 frantic hands,

 18 and naked children
 19 screaming in the liquid sun,
 20 their highlights polished to perfection,
 21 flashing light,
 22 as the blessing sings
 23 over their small bones.

5.1 Refer to lines 1–2: 'The skin cracks ... is enough water.'

What does the image in these lines suggest about the environment? (2)

5.2 Explain what the word, 'silver' in line 9 suggests about the water. (2)

5.3 Refer to lines 12–17: 'every man woman ... frantic hands'.

Discuss how the mood is conveyed in these lines. (3)

5.4 In this poem, water is given spiritual significance by the speaker.

Do you agree? Justify your response. (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2018

AUTUMN – Douglas Ridley Beeton

1	Patterns of old green-gold trees,
2	Patterns of aloes dipped in blood;
3	The khaki veld hums, a long singing
4	Late-noon dream. And I shall come
5	Up to the house and its purple shades,
6	And talk to my father, and he will
7	Tell me of the world that has been,
8	And I shall tell him of the world
9	That is wrong, wrong, and I
10	Shall think that he is wrong, old and wrong
11	But when I emerge into the khaki veld
12	And feel the fine air stabbing out at me,
13	And the night that is sweeping up
14	Across the world, I shall sometimes
15	Think that he is right, young and right.

- 5.1 How does the description of the landscape in the first stanza support the title of the poem? (2)
- 5.2 Refer to lines 3–4: 'The khaki veld hums, a long singing/Late-noon dream.'
- Explain how these lines convey the mood of the first stanza. (2)
- 5.3 Comment on the effectiveness of the image in this line. Refer to line 13: 'And feel the fine air stabbing out at me'.
- Comment on the effectiveness of the image in this line. (3)
- 5.4 By referring to the poem as a whole, discuss the change in the speaker's attitude toward his father. (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2018

SEED – Paula Meehan

1 The first warm day of spring
 2 and I step out into the garden from the gloom
 3 of a house where hope had died
 4 to tally the storm damage, to seek what may
 5 have survived. And finding some forgotten
 6 lupins¹ I'd sown from seed last autumn
 7 holding in their fingers a raindrop each
 8 like a peace offering, or a promise, 9
 9 I am suddenly grateful and would
 10 offer a prayer if I believed in God.
 11 But not believing, I bless the power of seed,
 12 its casual, useful persistence,
 13 and bless the power of sun,
 14 its conspiracy with the underground,
 15 and thank my stars the winter's ended.

Glossary: ¹lupins – flowering plants

5.1 Refer to lines 2–4: 'I step out ... the storm damage'.

Explain what these lines convey about the speaker's state of mind. (2)

5.2 Refer to lines 13–14: 'and bless the ... with the underground'.

Suggest why the speaker uses the word 'conspiracy' to describe the relationship between the sun and the soil. (2)

5.3 Refer to lines 5–8: 'And finding some ... or a promise'.

Discuss the effectiveness of the imagery in these lines. (3)

5.4 The speaker identifies with the seed.

With close reference to the poem, critically discuss the validity of this statement. (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY MARCH 2018

THE FACE OF HUNGER – Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali

1	I counted ribs on his concertina chest:
2	bones protruding as if chiselled
3	by a sculptor's hand of Famine.
4	He looked with glazed pupils
5	seeing only a bun on some sky high shelf.
6	The skin was pale and taut
7	like a glove on a doctor's hand.
8	His tongue darted in and out
9	like a chameleon's
10	snatching a confetti of flies.
11	O! child
12	your stomach is a den of lions
13	roaring day and night.

5.1 What impression of the boy is suggested by 'concertina chest' (line 1)? (2)

5.2 Explain the significance in the context of the poem of the capital letter in 'Famine' (line 3). (2)

5.3 Refer to lines 8–10: 'His tongue darted ...'/'confetti of flies.'
Comment on the effectiveness of the image in context. (3)

5.4 Refer to stanza 2: 'He looked with ...'/'sky high shelf'
and stanza 5: 'O! child ...'/'day and night.'
Critically discuss how the speaker conveys his attitude towards the plight of the hungry. (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2017

WISHING LEAVES – Wayne Visser

1	We sat upon the bench that autumn night
2	And basked beneath the moon's cool silver light
3	While waves of traffic lapped the park's green shore
4	And squirrels rushed to fill their acorn store
5	A gust of wind set off a whispered sigh
6	Among the trees that leaned against the sky
7	We listened hard to catch their secret words
8	Between the chirping chatter of the birds
9	Then as we turned our faces to the moon
10	Our hands entwined, our hearts in sync, in tune
11	We felt the fingers of the silken breeze
12	And made our wishes on the falling leaves

5.1 What impression does the word, 'basked' (line 2) create about the couple? (2)

5.2 Refer to stanza 2.

Discuss the speaker's attitude toward nature. (2)

5.3 Refer to line 3: 'While waves of traffic lapped the park's green shore'.

Comment on the effectiveness of this image in the context of the poem. (3)

5.4 The mood of the final stanza enhances the central idea of the poem.

Do you agree with this statement? Justify your response. (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2017

NIGHTSONG: CITY – Dennis Brutus

1	Sleep well, my love, sleep well: the harbour
2	lights glaze over restless docks, police cars
3	cockroach through the tunnel streets;
4	from the shanties' creaking iron-sheets violence like a
5	bug-infested rag is tossed and fear is immanent ¹ as
6	sound in the wind-swung bell;
7	the long day's anger pants from sand and rocks;
8	but for this breathing night at least, my land,
9	my love, sleep well.

Glossary: ¹immanent – ingrained, inevitable

- 5.1 What impression does the word, 'restless' (line 2) suggest about life on the docks? (2)
- 5.2 Account for the speaker's use of the word, 'cockroach' (line 3) to describe the police cars. (2)
- 5.3 Refer to line 5: 'violence like a bug-infested rag'.
Comment on the effectiveness of this image in the context of the poem. (3)
- 5.4 The title of the poem is ironic.
To what extent do you agree with the above statement? Justify your response with reference to the poem as a whole. (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY MARCH 2017

EXODUS – Don MacLennan

1 The sun has wrecked another day
 2 pawing ash and dust into the sky:
 3 now evening convalesces¹ timidly.

4 By secret signal from a star a wild, erratic
 5 exodus of bats fountains into the silky air
 6 with delicate chewing sounds and squeaks.
 7 Dangling in the air above are fixed square
 8 prognathous² faces alert to sonic boom.
 9 They mount the draining dark,
 10 with jointed leather wings
 11 flapping like manganese³ fish.

12 They've hung like fetuses all day
 13 in iron darkness suspended above
 14 their awful dung. Skinny little birds
 15 of death thrown onto the huge
 16 savanna are eating out tonight in
 17 twilight crammed with manna⁴.

Glossary: ¹convalesces – recovers; recuperates
²prognathous – having a projecting lower jaw or chin
³manganese – greyish-white metallic appearance
⁴manna – God-given food

- 5.1 What impression of the day is created by the use of the word, 'ash' (line 2)? (2)
- 5.2 Refer to line 5: 'a wild, erratic exodus of bats'.
 Describe how this line contributes to the mood in the second stanza. (2)
- 5.3 Refer to lines 14–15: 'They've hung like fetuses all day/in iron darkness'.
 Comment on the appropriateness of the imagery in these lines. (3)
- 5.4 Refer to lines 17–20: 'Skinny little birds ... crammed with manna.'
 Critically discuss how these lines convey the speaker's attitude toward the bats. (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2016

TWO BIRDS – David Farrell

I

1 Punched out of the sky by a BB pellet
 2 the sparrow I mended as a boy
 3 ignorant of Darwin
 4 carted its splint like a veteran
 5 drank hugely from a dropper; began one
 6 morning to throb like a valve
 7 and freed, groped up the air
 8 beat over beat, accelerating
 9 circled once and chopped away cleanly
 10 as a salute.

II

11 Fear pistoned the wagtail I found
 12 washed down by a thunderstorm
 13 banging shocked from brick to brick on the stoep
 14 till I scooped it up:
 15 pounding wet in my fist as a plucked out heart.
 16 A live jewel in cotton wool
 17 all afternoon the body strummed in silence
 18 except when it hacked wildly at the dropper:
 19 my nearness polished the flat eyes with hate
 20 and experience stretched the ready neck
 21 as I nursed the wagtail into its death –
 22 for knowledge, after all, fitted both of us for nothing else.

- 5.1 How does the word, 'Punched' (line 1), contribute to your understanding of what happened to the sparrow? (2)
- 5.2 Explain what the word, 'groped' (line 7), conveys about the sparrow's movement. (2)
- 5.3 Refer to line 17: 'all afternoon the body strummed in silence'.
 Explain the appropriateness of the image in the context of the poem. (3)
- 5.4 Refer to lines 20–21: 'and experience stretched ... into its death –'.
 Discuss the paradox in these lines. (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2016

RIDING IN THE NEW YORK SUBWAY – Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali

1 I walked down the stairs
 2 leading to a gloomy labyrinth of a subway¹
 3 where I boarded one of the rattling caskets²
 4 that slithered like a metal snake in the dark,³
 5 its exterior painted with grotesque
 6 figures of zombies and gargoyles³
 7 the interior was the canvas for graffiti artists

 8 I sat with wooden-faced commuters,
 9 who uttered no word
 10 and flashed not even a flicker of a smile
 11 only their bodies spoke –
 12 the silent language of tombstones
 13 in a crowded city cemetery.

Glossary: subway¹ – underground railway line
 caskets² – coffins
 gargoyles³ – sculptures of monstrous creatures

5.1 Refer to lines 1–2: 'I walked down ... of a subway'.

What impression of the subway is created in these lines? (2)

5.2 How do the words, 'zombies and gargoyles' (line 6) contribute to the mood of stanza 1? (2)

5.3 Is the reference to 'graffiti artists' (line 7) in keeping with the rest of the poem? Justify your response. (3)

5.4 Critically discuss how the words, 'caskets' (line 3), 'tombstones' (line 12) and 'cemetery' (line 13) contribute to the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY 2016

WESTERN CIVILIZATION – Agostinho Neto

1 Sheets of tin nailed to posts
 2 driven in the ground make
 3 up the house.

4 Some rags complete the
 5 intimate landscape.

6 The sun slanting through cracks welcomes
 7 the owner

8 After twelve hours of
 9 slave labour breaking rock
 10 shifting rock breaking rock
 11 shifting rock fair weather wet weather
 12 breaking rock
 13 shifting rock

14 Old age comes early.

15 A mat on dark nights is
 16 enough when he dies
 17 gratefully
 18 of hunger.

- 5.1 What impression of the house is created in lines 1–3: 'Sheets of tin ... up the house'? (2)
- 5.2 Refer to 'breaking rock/shifting rock' in stanza 4: 'After twelve hours ... shifting rock'.
 Explain the effect of the repetition of these lines. (2)
- 5.3 Refer to lines 4–5: 'Some rags complete/the intimate landscape.'
 Explain how these lines contribute to the mood of the poem. (3)
- 5.4 Refer to lines 4–5: 'Some rags complete/the intimate landscape.'
 Explain how these lines contribute to the mood of the poem. (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2015

TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL – Maya Angelou

1 We, unaccustomed to courage
 2 exiles from delight live coiled in
 3 shells of loneliness until love leaves
 4 its high holy temple
 5 and comes into our sight to
 6 liberate us into life.

7 Love arrives and in its train come
 8 ecstasies old memories of
 9 pleasure ancient histories of pain.
 10 Yet if we are bold, love strikes
 11 away the chains of fear from our
 12 souls.

13 We are weaned from our timidity
 14 In the flush of love's light
 15 we dare be brave And
 16 suddenly we see that
 17 love costs all we are
 18 and will ever be. Yet it is
 19 only love which sets us
 20 free.

- 5.1 Account for love described as leaving from a 'high holy temple' (line 4). (2)
- 5.2 What change in outlook does the word, 'Yet' (line 11) introduce? (2)
- 5.3 Refer to lines 12–13: 'love strikes away ... from our souls'.
 Comment on the effectiveness of the diction used in these lines. (3)
- 5.4 Refer to lines 14–16: 'We are weaned ... dare be brave'.
 Critically discuss how these lines reinforce the central idea of the poem. (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY MARCH 2015

THE LONLINESS BEYOND – Sipho Sepamla

1 Like raindrops pattering
 2 They come singly and in pairs
 3 Then as a torrent the rush of feet
 4 Shuffles onto platforms
 5 Dragging the last strains of energy.

6 I've seen hearts palpitating
 7 Behind a single maskless face
 8 Tired from the hurrying of a city Spirits
 9 maimed by commands.

10 I've heard the clicks of tongues
 11 Laughter rising above the grouse of mouths
 12 That never rest
 13 From grinding complaints.

14 Like sheep herded into a kraal
 15 They crowd numbered coaches
 16 Hopeful of a safe landing.

17 I've watched the multitudes rub shoulders
 18 And I've wondered what they do
 19 With the loneliness beyond;

20 I've seen throngs of people
 21 Disappear into little holes of resting
 22 And I've pondered what might be happening
 23 With the loneliness beyond.

- 5.1 Explain what the words, 'pattering' (line 1) and 'torrent' (line 3) convey about the movement of the people. (2)
- 5.2 What is suggested by the description of the face as 'a single maskless face' (line 7)? (2)
- 5.3 Refer to lines 17–19: 'I've watched the multitudes ... the loneliness beyond'.
 Explain how the irony in these lines makes a comment about modern society. (3)
- 5.4 Refer to line 21: 'Disappear into little holes of resting'.
 Critically discuss how the image in this line reinforces the mood of the poem. (3)

[10]



Grade 12

NSC and SC Examination

Unseen Poetry Marking Guidelines

English Home Language Paper 2 (Literature)

UNSEEN POETRY



COMPILED BY BELINDA RETIEF – SES TS DISTRICT

Unseen Poetry

Title	Author	page
Drought	Dennis Lefebre	2
Blessing	Imtiaz Dharker	4
Autumn	Douglas Ridley Beeton	6
Seed	Paula Meehan	8
The Face of Hunger	Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali	10
Wishing Leaves	Wayne Visser	12
Nightsong: City	Dennis Brutus	14
Exodus	Don MacLennan	16
Two Birds	David Farrell	18
Riding in the New York Subway	Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali	20
Western Civilization	Agostinho Neto	22
Touched by an Angel	Maya Angelou	24
The Lonliness Beyond	Sipho Sepamla	26

NOVEMBER 2019

DROUGHT – Denys Lefebvre

- .1 The heat is so overwhelming/unforgiving/harsh/destructive and dries out the soil so it appears wrinkled. The line conveys the devastating impact the heat which is inescapable and leaves an arid landscape.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 The oxen crowd together in their desperation to gain access to the limited water in the 'shrunken pool'/The oxen cluster together because they derive comfort from one another; it is also their way of trying to escape the heat.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The wind is compared to scavengers because it is blowing up the soil and the remnants of plants. The wind scrounges, rummages and gathers the last remains of vegetation in the same way in which a vulture picks a carcass clean. The image emphasises the lack of vegetation in the area as a result of there being no water. The wind is seen as hostile because it exacerbates the effect of the drought.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 The overall mood of the poem is of despondency. The speaker recognises that everything is at the mercy of the drought. The use of 'still' suggests that it has been a prolonged drought and people are filled with misery and despair. The 'cloudless' sky reinforces the mood of desperation because there is no sign of relief. As a result of the lack of rain, nature wilts and plants die. One is left with a feeling of hopelessness.

[Award 1 mark for identification of mood.]

[Award 3 marks only if both the diction and mood are discussed.] (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2019

BLESSING – Imtiaz Dharker

- .1 The image suggests that it is so dry that the earth has become dehydrated and has 'cracked' or shrunk, leaving gaps in its surface. It implies that the area is drought-stricken.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 2 'Silver' suggests that the water is clean and sparkles in the sunlight. In addition, silver is precious metal, which suggests that the water is a precious commodity; it is valuable and something to be treasured.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The sudden bounty of water has created a mood of jubilation/ exuberance /excitement among the people who have come from all over to share in the spoils. The lack of punctuation in 'every man woman/child' emphasises the chaotic gathering of people, and the word, 'butts' suggests how they are pushing and shoving to get near the water. The listing of a variety of receptacles in which to hold the precious water and the use of the word, 'frantic' also convey the urgent /desperate mood.

[Award 3 marks only if mood is fully discussed.] (3)

- .4 AGREE

The title, 'Blessing' alerts the reader that the water is an offering from a 'kindly god'. For the people who live in this deprived environment, it is as though a 'god' is easing their suffering by bestowing on them a gift of water. They gather around the burst pipe with the same reverence as a congregation attending a prayer service. The water has a cleansing and purifying effect on them. There is the suggestion that it has the same uplifting effect as the sound of a congregation or choir singing in a church.

[A cogent 'Disagree' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2018**AUTUMN – Douglas Ridley Beeton**

- .1 The leaves of the trees reflect the warm, golden colours of autumn. The 'khaki veld' appears drab, dull and dry. The aloes, which bloom in autumn, stand in bright contrast to the plainness of the landscape.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 'Hums' is a soft-sounding word which suggests the mellow and relaxed mood of the time of day when the busyness has calmed down. There is a feeling of calmness and laziness. The drawn-out sounds of 'long' and 'noon' convey a mood of tranquility and peacefulness. 'Dream' suggests that it is a time of reflection and nostalgia.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The image of the night air 'stabbing' is effective because it suggests that the speaker suddenly aware of the coldness of the night which is sharp and acute. The change in temperature is so intense and severe that it is piercing and painful.

Candidates might refer to the effectiveness of the cold air as having pricked the speaker's conscience and having alerted him to his judgemental attitude toward his father.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 Initially, the speaker is dismissive of his father's outlook and feels his father is old-fashioned and that his opinions are out-dated and irrelevant. The speaker's attitude is that his father is narrow-minded and not prepared to think about the future or consider his son's views. He believes his father is stubborn and uncompromising; the father's repetition of 'wrong' suggests his stubbornness.

However, the speaker is reminded of the changes that nature undergoes and his new-found awareness of the majesty and vigour of nature modifies his attitude toward his father. He is prepared to be more accepting and accommodating of his father's opinions.

[Award 3 marks only if the change in the speaker's attitude is discussed.] (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2018

'SEED' – Paula Meehan

- .1 The word, 'gloom' implies that the speaker is despondent/depressed/sad. The reference to a 'house where hope has died' suggests that she has experienced loss/suffering and as a result feels dejected and despairing. Her view of the house reflects her sense of misery.

Candidates might suggest that the speaker's state of mind is optimistic/hopeful by referring to her stepping out into the garden from the 'gloom'.

[Award 2 marks for any one idea well discussed OR any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 The word, 'conspiracy' suggests plotting/scheming/colluding/working together in secrecy. It conveys the idea that the sun and the soil are working to bring about new life/nourish and germinate the seeds.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 Personification: The petals of the flowers are compared to 'fingers'. They are holding precious raindrops which will help to nurture life. The imagery conveys gentleness/fragility/tenderness after the harshness of the storm.

OR

Simile: The raindrops are like a 'peace offering'/gift because they bring the promise of new life. There is a sense of optimism/hope because there is harmony/balance between the seasons.

[Credit valid alternative/mixed responses.]

[Award 3 marks for any ONE image well discussed OR a brief description of both images.] (3)

- .4 VALID

Like the seed, the speaker has survived adversity/hard times. The seed is effortlessly/casually able to survive the harshness of winter. It has lain dormant and with the coming of spring the seed rejuvenates. Like the seed, the speaker is tenacious; she has persevered and feels that there is hope in a new beginning.

Candidates might argue that the speaker, lacking faith in God, places her faith in nature's ability to survive and renew itself. Nature fills her with optimism.

[A cogent 'Invalid' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR any three distinct ideas.] (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY MARCH 2018**THE FACE OF HUNGER – Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali**

- .1 The phrase suggests that the boy is so thin and emaciated that his ribs stick out and resemble the folds of a concertina. He is poverty-stricken and hungry.

[Award 2 marks for one idea well discussed.] (2)

- .2 Famine is being personified as it draws attention to the suffering of the boy. It is a powerful presence governing his life.

Candidates might refer to the idea that the boy becomes the material that is sculpted into an art piece titled 'Famine', almost like a stereotypical representation of the concept.

[Award 2 marks for one idea well discussed.] (2)

- .3 The simile compares the flickering movement of the boy's tongue to a chameleon's way of eating. The reference to 'confetti' suggests that food, for the chameleon is abundant as the flies appear to be plentiful in this poverty-stricken/unhygienic area. The image reinforces the boy's longing for the enticing food that is out of his reach and suggests the dehumanisation of the boy. It is effective in conveying the devastating impact of hunger.

[Award 3 marks for two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 The 'sky high shelf' implies that the means of the boy's survival are out of reach. Food is available in his society, but not for him. This is indicative of the speaker's sense of injustice at the divisions that exist in his society.

The impoverished child's growling stomach ('den of lions/roaring') is an indictment on lack of concern shown by the privileged who allow such a situation to persist ('day and night'). The speaker's compassion/sympathy is evident in his exclamation, 'O! child'.

[Award 3 marks only if reference is made to both stanzas.] (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2017

WISHING LEAVES – Wayne Visser

- .1 The word, 'basked' suggests warmth, cosiness and contentment. It suggests that they are relaxed and enjoying each other's company and the romantic ambience of the moonlight.

[Award 2 marks for two relevant and distinct ideas.] (2)

- .2 The speaker's attitude is one of admiration/appreciation. Nature seems secretive / conspiratorial making him feel excluded from its mysteries. He might also associate with delightful romantic mystery. The various and contrasting elements of nature are also appreciated.

[Award 2 marks only if the speaker's attitude is discussed.] (2)

- .3 'waves of traffic lapped': Traffic is usually seen as intrusive, but the comparison to 'waves' effectively transforms the image into one of freshness, pleasantness and peacefulness. It might also refer to the ebb and flow of the traffic around the park.

OR

'the park's green shore': The park is compared to an island with a 'green shore'. This effectively portrays the couple as being set apart and inhabiting a tranquil world of their own.

[Credit valid alternative responses.]

[Award 3 marks for any ONE image well discussed OR a brief discussion of each of the images.] (3)

- .4 YES.

The central idea is about how people try to recreate the harmony and oneness of nature in their relationships. The mood in stanza 3 is peaceful/tranquil, which is consistent with the gentleness/tenderness the couple have achieved in their relationship. 'Our hands entwined, our hearts in sync' suggests that the couple share a close emotional connection. The sense of peaceful co-existence they enjoy echoes the balance in nature.

OR

NO.

A 'No' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks only if both the mood and the central idea are discussed.] (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2017

NIGHTSONG: CITY – Dennis Brutus

- .1 The word, 'restless' suggests a constant mood of unease because of the dangerous environment. The docks are a hive of activity, even at night, and there is continual movement/busyness.

[Award 2 marks only if the element of danger resulting in unease is identified.] (2)

- .2 The word suggests the staccato-like movement of the police cars as they manoeuvre through the area. This contributes to the image of the police cars' lurking in the streets. It might refer to the number of police cars in the area. The image is very disparaging of the police since cockroaches are generally regarded with disgust.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 Violence in the city is compared to a 'bug-infested rag', which implies that it infused itself into the lives of the people to such an extent that there is no escape. The image suggests the speaker's disgust with the sordid and ugly conditions of life in the city. The city has become infected with the disease of violence.

[Award 3 marks for three ideas OR 3 marks for two ideas well discussed.] (3)

- .4 Agree.

A song tends to be associated with celebration and a 'nightsong' in particular might be associated with a lullaby. However, this poem deals with the sordid underbelly of life in a city. It focuses on issues of violence, fear and poverty.

The poem is actually a lament.

[A cogent 'Disagree' response is unlikely. However, treat all responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks for three ideas OR 3 marks for two ideas well discussed.] (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY MARCH 2017

EXODUS – Don MacLennan

- .1 The word, 'ash' suggests that the day has burnt out and come to an end. The impression is the sky has turned grey/gloomy as the light fades at twilight.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 The mood is chaotic/frenzied because of the sudden activity of the bats as they leave the cave. Their movements appear to be unpredictable and uncontrolled. The air is alive/filled with various sounds associated with the bats.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 The bats are suspended upside down from the roof of the cave, similar to foetuses. The bats are curled up in a protected position in the darkness of their caves which are like wombs. The 'iron darkness' suggests that the darkness is impenetrable and enveloping. The image is appropriate because it conveys the isolation of the bats from the outside world until they are ready to emerge from the darkness and safety.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 The description, 'skinny little birds of death' conveys an unfavourable impression of the bats. The speaker has a disparaging attitude toward the bats, regarding them as repulsive creatures. They are opportunistic, taking advantage of the darkness to prey on the unwary. The speaker regards the bats as benefitting from the abundance of food available. Bats are traditionally seen as evil/demonic.

[Some candidates might suggest that there is some sympathy for the bats. Credit such responses on their merits.]

[Award 3 marks only if the response includes a critical comment on the speaker's attitude.] (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2016

TWO BIRDS – David Farrell

- .1 The word 'Punched' makes it clear that sudden force/violence was applied to cause the bird to fall from the sky.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 The word suggests that the bird moves clumsily and uncertainly as it has not flown for a while because of its injury. Its movements are hesitant and awkward as it re-acquaints itself with flight.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .3 'Strummed' refers to the playing of a stringed instrument. It conveys the quivering and/or throbbing of the bird's tiny body, possibly from the fearful beating of its heart. The word usually refers to sound but here the movement is paradoxically silent. It is appropriate because it conveys the intense beating of the bird's heart, emphasising its anxiety and fragility.

[Award 3 marks for any two ideas well discussed OR three ideas.] (3)

- .4 Nursing implies healing; however, despite his comforting presence, the bird dies. He nurses the bird while acknowledging its impending death.

OR

Nursing implies nurturing and feeding; in this case, the speaker's act of trying to save the bird by feeding it results in the bird's being over-fed and contributes to its death.

OR

The speaker comforts and cares for the bird as he prepares to kill it in order to prevent it from experiencing further pain. The speaker reveals a compassionate nature, yet is moved to violence as he does not want to see the bird suffering.

[Award 3 marks only if the paradox is clearly discussed.] (3)

[10]

MAY JUNE 2016

RIDING IN THE NEW YORK SUBWAY – Mbuyiseni Oswald Mtshali

- .1 The subway is a dark/dull/dingy/depressing space. People might get lost in all the confusing passageways.

[Award 2 marks for any two relevant and distinct points.] (2)

- .2 The sombre/dark/heavy mood is reinforced by the reference to dreadful monsters.

[Award 1 mark for the characterisation of the mood and 1 mark for the reference to 'zombies and gargoyles'.] (2)

- .3 Yes. The reference is appropriate because the speaker suggests that the graffiti artists are lawless individuals' intent on vandalising and causing chaos. They feel as disconnected from their environment as the silent commuters do.

OR

No. Through their art, the graffiti artists display creative spirit and vitality. They bring colour to the scene and are in stark contrast to the 'wooden-faced commuters'.

[Award 3 marks for three ideas OR 3 marks for two ideas well discussed.] (3)

- .4 All these words have connotations of death, which links to the central idea of individuals living a 'death-like' and emotionless existence. Life appears to have sapped them of vitality, resulting in 'wooden-faced', silent individuals. They appear to be isolated from one another. They are the living dead.

[Award 3 marks for three ideas OR 3 marks for two ideas well discussed.] (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY 2016

WESTERN CIVILIZATION – Agostinho Neto

- .1 The house is described as little more than a shack made from a few sheets of tin attached to a rudimentary. It is a dwelling for very poor people. (2)
- .2 The repetition effectively recreates the monotonous rhythm of the working lives of the very poor. The repetition suggests the back-breaking manual labour in which they are engaged and evokes a sense of the hardship and suffering they endure.
[Award 2 marks for any one idea fully explained.] (2)
- .3 The mood is dejected/bleak/depressing/marked by a sense of hopelessness as indicated by the image of 'rags' and their 'intimate' (intensely close) relationship to the workers' living space
[Award 1 mark for an identification of mood and 2 marks for a discussion.]
[Credit valid alternative interpretations of 'the intimate landscape'.] (3)
- .4 The poem ends on a note of grim irony as the oppressed worker is presented as being The poem ends on a note of grim irony as the oppressed worker is presented as is also ironic as the poem is about the barbaric effects of the supposed Western civilization.
[Award 3 marks only if the tone in stanza 6 and the title are fully discussed.] (3)

[10]

NOVEMBER 2015

TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL – Maya Angelou

- .1 Love is an elevated concept. It has connotations of the sacred and of being out of reach. Love is something to which we aspire.

[Award 2 marks for a clear understanding of the image.] (2)

- .2 The initial outlook is that we are too afraid to dare to grasp at love/to allow love to enter our lives. We lack the courage. The word, 'yet' suggests that we should make use of the opportunity to permit love to free us from our self-imposed restrictions. (2)

- .3 The word, 'chains', has connotations of fetters/shackles and strongly enhances the concept of 'fear' as a restrictive/limiting/constrictive force. The onomatopoeic effect of the word 'strikes' reflects how love is powerful enough to break the 'chains of fear'.

[Credit responses that offer religious interpretations.]

[Award 3 marks only if candidates have referred to specific examples of diction.] (3)

- .4 The central idea of the poem is that love gives us the courage to free ourselves from isolation and loneliness. The word 'weaned' suggests that love empowers us to reach a level of maturity/independence. This enables us to find the courage to bask in effect/the glow of love.

[Award 1 mark for the central idea of the poem and 2 marks for discussion.]

[Credit valid alternative responses.] (3)

[10]

FEBRUARY MARCH 2015

THE LONLINESS BEYOND – Sipho Sepamla

- .1 The word, 'pattering' suggests individuals arriving at random. It also conveys the haste with which they are moving. This gradual arrival of people culminates in a 'torrent' which implies a rush/an overwhelming number of people. (2)
- .2 The masses are so emotionally pulverised by their circumstances that they are too tired to disguise their true feelings. Their raw emotions are evident. The words suggest a lack of individuality because the people experience the same sense of hopelessness/exhaustion/despair. (2)
- .3 It is ironic that, even though many people are crowded together, the speaker sees their loneliness. This suggests that being part of a crowd does not bring comfort/is not reassuring/does not guarantee an escape from loneliness. Even in the midst of a crowd people still experience a sense of separation/ alienation and aloneness since they are surrounded by strangers. (3)
- .4 The mood is oppressive/bleak/lonely/despairing. People retreat into 'holes' like animals seeking security/comfort. Their places of rest are dark and gloomy; hence there is no promise of revival. They only 'rest' in their 'holes', therefore their homes give only temporary respite from what is the main focus of their lives: work. Describing their homes as 'little holes' intensifies the claustrophobic aspect of the mood. Their isolation and vulnerability are emphasised. The image successfully reinforces the bleak mood of the poem. (3)
- [Award full marks only if the candidate includes critical evaluation.] (3)

[10]