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GCE

GCE English Language and Literature (6EL03/01)

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This unit comprises the examined component of A2 Language and Literature. Candidates are expected to apply their skills and knowledge of literary and linguistic concepts gained in the AS units, as well as wider reading, to explore varieties of language and literature. They need to synthesise their learning and make observations about how language works across a spectrum of written and spoken production. They choose one of four topic areas and answer two corresponding questions: one on an unseen extract in Section A and one on two prepared texts in Section B.

Section A involves the analysis of one unseen extract. Candidates are expected to present a continuous commentary on the writer's or speaker's choice of structure, form and language and draw conclusions on attitudes, values and ideas conveyed in the text.

Section B assesses candidates' knowledge of the contribution made by contextual factors to the understanding of either two chosen drama texts or two chosen poetry texts. Candidates are expected to compare writers' use of linguistic and literary devices.

General Observations

There was much to admire in this series. Candidates generally discussed the texts in terms of their generic features and how writers had shaped their material both lexically and syntactically. Many answers were very well-written and a large number of candidates were willing to examine a wide range of linguistic devices, linking them to implied values and attitudes. However, a number of exceptions struggled to get out of Band 1 for AO1, with misuse of terminology or incoherent expression. Discussion of structure, form and language was quite often restricted to superficial observations – for example, whether or not a text was written in a formal register.

Section B responses showed a willingness to address a range of contextual features. Candidates considered social, historical, biographical and literary influences and, in general, were successful in applying their knowledge to the demands of the question. There was a clear improvement in the discussion of stage/film versions of texts. *The Glass Menagerie* and *All My Sons* have each enjoyed at least two major productions this year and candidates were also able to refer to recent productions of *Translations* and *Betrayal*. No candidate was disadvantaged by not seeing a stage version but there were some perceptive analyses by those who had. Film versions of *All My Sons* and *Equus* were also discussed relevantly, although some candidates had memorised reviews of these productions and were determined to include quite lengthy quotations regardless of the question. So it is still worth bearing in mind that references to particular productions should be carefully selected in support of a relevant response to the question.

Poetry responses were in a minority and were often less successful. Candidates are advised to discuss them as poems and not as simple biographies. A significant number of answers discussed each poem in isolation with no attempt to compare or to integrate contextual material in a relevant manner. A large number of responses focused on the meanings of the poems instead of analysing a range of poetic and linguistic techniques, which resulted in a low mark for AO2.

SECTION A

Question 1

This question required candidates to write an extended critical analysis of an unseen extract corresponding to their choice of topic (A Sense of Place, The Individual in Society, Love and Loss or Family Relationships). A maximum of 10 marks at AO1 and 30 marks at AO2 were available. Family Relationships proved to be the most popular topic choice, whilst The Individual In Society was the least popular.

There was much to admire about many of the responses in this section and it was evident that the majority of candidates had prepared well for the unseen task. There was a considerable number of subtle, analytical responses to all the extracts and some very insightful, original answers. However, many candidates took a descriptive, narrative approach and produced thorough summaries of the content without addressing the tone or implied meanings. In the lowest band answers there was a tendency to copy out long quotations, list features and then assert that they showed attitudes and values without analysing precisely what these were.

Many candidates worked chronologically through the texts asserting that certain features were present simply to make texts easy to read or to relate to, without explaining precisely what the relationship between reader and writer might be. Many candidates suggested that texts with a high linguistic register were inaccessible to anyone under the age of eighteen who was not "upper class."

Timing was often an issue, with a significant number of answers either brief or unfinished. Lack of planning meant that some answers lost their critical focus. Well-planned answers were much more incisive and analytical.

Lower band answers were often characterised by an unsophisticated style of expression or misuse of basic terminology. Answers in the higher bands were characterised by short quotations, a good appreciation of purpose, thorough analysis, awareness of readership and a willingness to develop individual ideas.

Many candidates discussed Genre, Purpose, Audience, Language in that order. This is to be encouraged although lower band answers offered generalisations about the first three without specific detail or analysis.

A Sense of Place

Some candidates struggled to appreciate the attitudes and values of this piece of travel writing, with some fairly superficial observations. Some understood that the religious and architectural lexis was important but misunderstood the register of the piece. However, some were able to appreciate the tone and made perceptive observations about the text, using their knowledge of the spoken word from AS level.

Higher scoring answers focused on the structure of the passage and discussed the way the tone and attitude changed towards the end. However, a large number of candidates, despite identifying a few linguistic features, missed the opportunity to examine a wider range of devices – for example, sentence constructions, parallelisms, idiomatic phrases, visual images and cultural references.

The Individual in Society

Some of the best answers in Section A were in response to the Ma Jian article. These showed sophisticated appreciation of the attitudes and values of the writer – exploring personal elements, as well as political issues. There was a strong grasp of devices used by the writer to depict government officials, contrasting with the way he portrayed his relationship with his son.

Higher band answers explored the significance of the reportage genre and used their knowledge as a platform for discussing key political and cultural concerns. These candidates also showed a good appreciation of the writer's manipulation of time and use of symbolism, and how these features contributed to the overall tone of the article. A significant number of responses appreciated the writer's use of irony, especially at the end of the extract. Many of these answers were a pleasure to read.

Love and Loss

The best responses to the obituary were perceptive about the generic features and were able to shape subtle answers about the way the text was structured.

Higher band answers remembered that this text was in the Love and Loss section and used this as an opportunity to explore the depiction of President Johnson's relationship with his wife. This proved fruitful when addressing values associated with gender and many candidates were able to link these with the writer's lexical choices. There were also some very perceptive discussions about the shaping of the text and how this established the reader's expectations.

Lower band answers tended to make generalised observations about the target audience of *The Economist*, suggesting that the majority of readers would be "upper class businessmen". This approach did not really help candidates to analyse the text in sufficient depth.

Family Relationships

The autobiography prompted some very descriptive accounts of the family's history which did not engage with the specifics of tone. There was plenty of opportunity for candidates to explore ways in which the writer created humour in this piece, as well as analysing social attitudes and values. Most candidates did not discuss the use of a shaped, literary narrative technique to re-create the Lord St. John story. Candidates were able to identify specific techniques – especially lexical choices – but did not engage fully with the positioning of the author in relation to the family. A number of answers quoted figurative expressions (such as "squirrelling away") but did not use these as an opportunity to discuss the overall tone of the extract.

At AO1 higher band responses were fluently-written and used embedded quotations to good effect. They confidently identified a range of linguistic and literary features by using appropriate terminology and exploring relevant concepts. Lower band answers identified linguistic or literary features but did not often apply them to an analysis of the writer's technique.

Here is an example of an answer that was awarded a Band 3 mark for AO1:

The writer's attitude towards Claudia is clear and ~~unchanging~~ consistent throughout the obituary. He uses many abstract nouns to create a sense of her caring and thoughtful nature that he is portraying; for example "love and orderliness", "grace and neatness." He always seems to use complimenting lexis towards her in pairs so that they parallel eachother, "love and orderliness" which adds emphasis to the complimentary tone.

~~The~~ The writer also portrays Claudia as a quiet and unimposing individual, a very significant example of this is where he uses a metaphor to compare her to a mouse which are thought of as silent animals with small voices. This image contrasts with the image that we would normally have of a "First Lady" who are nowadays seen as a symbol of dominance and often thought of with just as much importance as their Presidential husbands. This could reflect the attitudes of the era in which she lived as women were definitely viewed as being inferior to their husbands and to men in general.

Examiner Comment: This answer is written fluently, focuses on relevant features and uses appropriate terms. It was placed in Band 3 for AO1 but was not awarded full marks because it did not use a wide enough range of linguistic terminology.

The following script was awarded a low Band 2 mark for AO1:

Jian periodically makes references to his past using anecdotes "I too had run across the square in the sweltering heat". This ~~convey~~ helps to convey his values towards history and implies that it is also to do with childhood, & childhood makes up the process of ~~a~~ a persons history.

The language that Jian uses within his article acts as an 'aid' to exemplify his account. The use of premodifiers, ~~in one case such as~~ reveals that people aren't always happy with life / society. The "jubilant singing" in this case shows how happy one can be, but in contrast to "exuberant cries", the audience are made aware that society isn't fulfilling everyone's intentions.

Senses are used, "filled with the sour smell of sweat" to describe the atmosphere of people's feelings. Jian portrays the idea that ones emotion ~~changes~~ has the ability to change others!

Examiner Comment: The candidate has applied relevant concepts and expressed ideas clearly but, although some appropriate terminology has been used, points needed to be developed in greater detail.

At AO2 high-scoring candidates demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the unseen extract, analysing attitudes, values and ideas in detail and making confident connections between features and their effects. They planned their answers carefully so that they could carefully analyse a range of features (such as the structure of the text and the writer's use of language) instead of commenting on the passage in a chronological fashion. Lower band answers showed an awareness of attitudes and values but tended to be more descriptive.

Here is an extract from a script that was awarded a Band 4 mark for AO2:

The use of backtracking in Jian's article shows his fondness for certain memories, such as the pride one would feel when "mounting the largest peaceful protest in history." The metaphor "square became the city's ~~[illegible]~~ pulsing heart" is used to ~~[illegible]~~ describe the ~~[illegible]~~ highthened atmosphere.

Whilst the sentence "a benevolent form of anarchy - noble, joyous and surprisingly orderly" clearly shows how he values the moment with pride.

His recollection of the "huge polystyrene replica of the Statue of Liberty" conveys the students' longing for freedom and democracy, using the statue as a symbol. When describing the Tiananmen Gate, the use of aggressive words and descriptions (blood-red walls) seems to link to Mao Zedong's tyranny. Whilst the importance of the walls as a historical sight is highlighted by their "covering" for "important repair work", in other words, to keep the public from desecrating them with "subversive slogans."

It is the arrogance of a "tyrant" and the devotion of his followers to only allow his portrait on display. Jian's use of the word "tyrant" clearly expresses his disdain towards Mao, whilst the lifelike description of his portrait ("pink, pudgy face") gives the reader a clearer idea of him. The question, "is he dead now?" seems typical of a young child, as is his response to the impactful answer his father gives

("his body is lying in that big building...") Jian constructs the backtracking in his article to connect his memories to his son's actions ("my son turned round and ran off towards an ice-cream stall ... I thought of how, in 1989, I too...").
This particular memory shows Jian's attitudes towards the protests, thus showing his value of the country's peaceful protesting ("I gave them the victory sign as they paraded past")

Examiner Comment: This candidate demonstrates a confident understanding of the writer's attitudes, especially when discussing the depiction of the protestors and government leaders. There is also a good appreciation of the way the structure of the text and language choices affect meaning. This answer would have been placed in the top band for AO2 if the candidate had analysed linguistic features in greater detail.

The following extract is taken from an answer that was placed at the top of Band 2 for AO2:

The ~~auther~~ writer immediately starts to portray their attitudes, values and ideas towards the place by creating a sense of feeling ~~apreheh~~ apprehensive about what she may see when she ~~'s~~ is there. By referring to ~~her~~ the author of her guide-book as using the metaphor "~~scraping~~ "scraped from the bottom of the barrel" she is suggesting that ~~h~~ the writer of the guide-book, ~~which~~ has used an inappropriate ~~word adjective~~ " word to describe the ~~setting~~ place. The guide-book refers to the place ~~as~~ by using the adjective "impressive" ~~wh~~ to which the writer ~~thig~~ this extract ~~re~~ uses the metaphor shown ~~et bea~~ above to state an opinion as fact as she says an impression "can be good or bad; so it let's him of nicely." Here the ~~auther co~~ writer conveys their attitudes towards the book and the place as it suggests she is not expecting to find much there as it could either be good or bad. By using the phrasal verb "lets him off" ~~sugges~~ shows the writer is using more informal lexis which also shows that this is a personal account of the place. ~~which~~

Furthermore, the ~~use of short~~ writer uses short sentences throughout the text to emphasise the scale of the Parma Cathedral and her opinion towards it. The tone changes quickly, through this usage from describing the outside of the Cathedral as "beastly" which creates an image of a horrible place from the outside, but changes ~~to~~ by the end of the extract to the writer using the expanded noun phrase "exceedingly pleasant heaven" to describe the interior. This shows that the writer's attitudes change towards the ~~place~~ Cathedral.

Examiner Comment: The candidate refers to the writer's attitudes but does not analyse them in any detail. There is a tendency to generalise and repeat certain ideas. The candidate would have scored higher marks by analysing the way the writer has established voice and tone in this text.

SECTION B

Question 2

Candidates answered mainly on *Translations* and *Stuff Happens*. They knew the context of both plays but did not always explore them theatrically; this might have helped to focus on the question. Discussions of *Translations* tend to focus on the historical setting of the play but there is also an opportunity to consider the era in which the play was written and the political tensions which influenced Friel's writing. There were quite a few rehearsed answers about tragic heroes and some factual inaccuracies; a significant number of candidates referred to the fact that the English were changing the place names in Northern Ireland and that the play was written in 1984. Some candidates lost sight of the key terms of the question and were determined to answer questions which had not been set. A greater number of answers showed a more confident knowledge of *Stuff Happens* and candidates were able to discuss the way individuals are influenced by America as a nation. The best answers were able to integrate all the AOs seamlessly and answer in original and stimulating ways, drawing fascinating parallels between the two plays in terms of stagecraft and context. Less assured answers tended to be descriptive and neglected to analyse the ways that these plays have been critically received.

There were quite a few poetry answers but very few wrote about the pieces as poems; they were treated as autobiographies which just happened to have some poetic features. Candidates seemed to find Betjeman's ironic tone difficult to discuss and many of the answers wrote two separate answers and then drew the points together at the end. Candidates often made fascinating observations about the poems but left these undeveloped.

Question 3

Many candidates were able to draw interesting and original comparisons between the drama texts and make convincing points about a range of pressures such as fear of cuckoldry and the consumer conformity of the 1970s, although one candidate did claim that *Equus* was a critique of Thatcherite values. Stage directions, or lack of them, were discussed in detail, as were the confined societies portrayed in the plays. Candidates were able to make interesting observations about the way Shaffer used stagecraft to represent social values and were therefore rewarded at AO2.

Poems were less successfully discussed, although there were some honourable exceptions. Candidates seemed less secure on contextual features or chose to ignore them altogether. Overall, Gunn's poems were analysed more confidently than Hughes's poetry. There were some very superficial comments on Eliot: candidates were able to explain what they thought the poems might mean but there was little discussion of the writer's choice of poetic features. With careful thought and planning, candidates would have been able to discuss Eliot's use of imagery, his experimentation with forms to suggest anxiety and unease, and the way he was responding to the "madness" of the First World War.

Question 4

This question prompted some of the most outstanding answers in the whole series. The best responses were able to integrate comparison, analysis and personal response, backed up by insightful discussions of the similarities and differences in stagecraft, to reveal the selfishness of the characters. There were some very fruitful

discussions of the economic/social backgrounds to both plays and the extent to which the characters insulated themselves from the real world. Lower band answers tended to be very descriptive, retelling the stories in great detail, treating the characters as real people, and often making no reference to the writers or the contexts of the plays.

Answers on the poetry showed plenty of contextual knowledge but the relevance of the material was not always clear. Poems were discussed individually but there was little evidence of comparison. In general, candidates seemed to find it difficult to draw relevant links between Plath and the Metaphysical Poets. There were some honourable exceptions to this with a small number of responses engaging fully with the specific demands of the question.

Question 5

This was the most popular choice and candidates are to be congratulated on some excellent observations about the context of the plays, with some subtle analyses of how stagecraft (especially symbolism) was used to convey the family values. Insightful parallels were drawn between Joe and Torvald, especially in relation to their use of language to assert their power over their families and to show how they were attempting to uphold society's values. Candidates also drew interesting comparisons between Nora and Kate as part of a discussion of the way women's roles are portrayed in both plays. There was also some excellent analysis of context in relation to family values and the pressures from society.

There were very few poetry answers for this topic. Whilst the question invited candidates to analyse a range of social expectations, responses tended to focus on meaning. As with the other three topic areas, there was a tendency to ignore the poetic techniques employed by writers, and candidates had difficulty establishing comparisons between the texts and their contexts.

There is a maximum of 10 marks available for AO1 and successful responses expressed ideas in a fluent manner, using a wide range of appropriate linguistic and literary terminology.

The following extract is from an answer that was placed at the top of Band 2 for AO1:

Both playwrights use a variety of literary and linguistic techniques in order to present individuals who are motivated by selfishness. Williams presents the selfishness of Amanda through her frequent use of exclamatives such as 'I cannot control the output of diseased minds or people who cater for them - but I won't allow such filth brought into my house!'. Additionally she is seen to use many imperatives, such as 'Come back here, Tom Wingfield!'. Both of these show Amanda's selfishness, as they represent her inability to listen or to talk things through rationally. Both of these qualities imply a selfish person as she is unwilling to listen to the

opinions of anyone but herself.

Pinter also uses a variety of language techniques and literary devices in order to show the selfishness of his characters. This is seen through his use of adjacency pairs at the beginning of the play, where both Emma and Jerry are reluctant to reveal too much emotion "How's everything?' 'Oh, not too bad'. This phatic talk symbolises their selfishness as they are unwilling to put each other at ease, for fear of making themselves vulnerable.

Examiner Comment: The candidate has a good appreciation of the demands of the question and has written a clear, relevant answer. Linguistic features have been identified but points need to be explored in greater depth in order to merit a Band 3 mark at AO1.

This extract is taken from an answer that was awarded a mark at the bottom of Band 2 for AO1:

not required. Moreover, it is further evident that within the relationship between Bush and Blair, Bush is the figure of authority. We see this when Blair calls Bush, "...Yes. It's all very good, I agree. It's mostly good. But there's one issue I need to raise". The contrast between the pre-modifying adjectives 'very' and 'mostly' allow the audience to acknowledge that Blair is not content with something. He then states his concern, "...seeking out bin Laden. I'm sure you've also been told that just a few days ago, we found him. We tracked him... we were ordered to pull out", the audience must feel that Blair is being dictated by the figure of authority, Bush, because the sole purpose of invading Afghanistan was to locate the commander of the largest terrorist activity in history

however by letting him go due to "an operational "decision" seems absurd. The non-finite verb "seeking" implies that the British special forces were doing their job, and the finite verb "found" implies the job is done however if we contrast this to the verbs "recieved" and "ordered" insignificantly implies Britain have no authority to make decisions, and Blair must follow the commands of Bush.

Examiner Comment: This answer has used a few appropriate terms but is not entirely focused on the demands of the question. The candidate has adopted a descriptive approach and has relied quite heavily on quotations. Expression is not always fluent.

There is a maximum of 10 marks available for AO2 and successful responses were able to show a good appreciation of possibilities offered by dramatic and poetic forms, make sophisticated comments about structure, and effectively analyse writers' use of language.

This extract from the top band answer shows the candidate's ability to analyse the way writers' attitudes and values are conveyed by drama texts:

Both 'Doll's House' and 'All my sons' are naturalistic plays where the playwrights reflect the original audience. Both playwrights use microcosm in order to show this realism; in All my sons Keller's backyard is a microcosm of post-war America. The 'closely planted poplars which lend the yard a secluded atmosphere' is a symbolism of how America ~~deliberatlel~~ deliberately isolated itself from other countries during the In Doll's House the house itself is a microcosm of 19th century patriarchal society. Both playwrights chose a domestic place to show to the audience that it happens to each single one, yet only you don't notice because you are inside the situation.

In Doll's House Ibsen shows how male were clearly valued in society as they had more power. We see this gender struggle as he uses diminutives when calling Nora 'is that my little squirrel' we it is clear that the relationship they have is rather more like daughter & father instead of husband and wife. As the play progresse we also see her refers to herself as an 'it' - 'we call it a spendthrift'. Many women from the original audience would see themselves in Nora's character, as women were often treated as objects in patriarchal society.

In All my sons Keller is also parallel to Torvald as he uses diminutives to call Ann 'listen kid'. Although, Keller is at the same age as Ann's father in both plays we only see males using diminutives on females, This shows that male values matter in society.

Examiner Comment: By referring to aspects of the stagecraft, this answer shows an appreciation of the generic features of the texts. There is also acknowledgement of values and attitudes, although the candidate needed to explore these in greater detail in order to gain a Band 3 mark for AO2.

The following answer was awarded a Band 2 mark for AO2:

Pinter created a scene of conflict between Jerry and Robert where selfish desires to keep things secret ~~jeop~~ jeopodise a friendship. In scene two the use of Jerry exclamative and interrogative Speech 'But you didn't know for certain, did you? You didn't know!' reveals the emotion of betrayal between ~~fri~~ friends. Further more, Jerrys accusation of Roberts selfishness in not telling him ~~he~~ knew about the afair, 'you knew you bastard', 'Why didn't you tell me?' ~~supports~~ creates the view that Pinter's ~~created~~ theme of secrecy was motivated by a selfisiness.

Amanda, ~~a Char~~ the character in Williams play, ~~is~~ could be suggested ~~seem to have~~ to be manipulative and controlling. Her dramatic and highly emotive speech 'I wanted to find a hole in the ground and hide myself forever', ~~could be argued to reveal~~ support this view.

Furthermore, from the audiences perspective, we can see how Amandas ideaect allows her to controll the situation. Ultimatly highlying a selfisin feature of her character.

Examiner Comment: This answer shows acknowledgement of structure, characterisation, values and attitudes, but points are not developed in sufficient detail. Although the candidate has referred to the reverse chronology of the plot, the significance of this feature is not discussed in any meaningful detail. This answer tends to demonstrate understanding of key features rather analyse their significance. Consequently, such a response should be awarded a mark in the middle of band.

With 40 marks out of 60 on offer for AO3, it is vital that candidates draw close links between their two chosen texts and demonstrate a confident knowledge of a range of contextual factors. Higher band answers showed a sophisticated appreciation of the contexts of production and reception and made original comparisons between the two texts. However, there was quite often a tendency to describe contextual elements without applying them to the demands of the question or linking them to relevant aspects of the texts. Some candidates tended to favour one text over the other and consequently wrote an unbalanced answer, reducing the opportunity to draw worthwhile comparisons.

The following answer was awarded a Band 6 mark for AO3:

In All my Sons and Doll's House both character commite a bakeo. In All my sons, Keller selling ~~an~~ defective airplane parts was a huge bakeo that society seen as an unforgiveable crime. From the begining of the play we see Keller's interest in money - 'you mean he'll make a living out of that?'. The interrogative utterance shows ~~his~~ Keller's interest in money; as the play progresses, ~~we understand that as~~ we also see that his business means a lot to him and that he shows affection to his family through money. Many people from the original audience would understand Keller's ~~beh~~ interest towards the money, as they themselves must have

also gone through the ~~great~~ ~~depress~~ Great Depression, so they are aware of the importance of money.

Nora's actions was seen as a huge taboo; ~~in~~ society at the time restricted women to their domestic sphere, they were not allowed to work, in fact it was illegal in some states for a married woman to work. 'It was me who signed Father's name' the declarative forgery would leave the original audience shocked. In this act we see the conflict between the family relationship and the external society - 'isn't a wife entitled to save her husband's life?'. The rhetorical question adds ~~imperat~~ tension to the situation, where Nora shows that her family matters to her more than the ~~external~~ society values and norms; which 'takes no account of motives'.

In All my Sons Keller's actions seem to be parallel to Nora's. ~~so~~ His excuse for his taboo actions was that it was for his family as he states to Kate - 'you wanted money, so I made money'. The collocation in the syntax makes it seem as if he fulfilled what his family wanted; this shows the ~~a~~ extend that people would have gone to for money during the Great Depression. Throughout the play it ~~seems~~ Keller's himself does not know what he did wrong, he believed that his actions was justified because it was for his family. 'I'm his father and he is my son, and if there's something bigger than that I'll put a bullet in my head'. Miller uses the chekhov's gun technique, to foreshadow to the audience

~~what will happen as the play develops~~ the ~~climax~~ ending of the play.

In Doll's House we see how Nora's miracle conflicts with the society expectations and male value. Helmer makes it clear to Nora that society won't accept what she asked for therefore he followed the social norms, 'nobody sacrifices his honour for the one he loves' - 'hundreds and thousands of women have'. Ibsen ~~give~~ reflects the audience and the gender struggle, many women from the original audience would had affected/touched by what Nora said. Ibsen shows to the society that their expectations of how a women sacrifices so many things whereas a man wouldn't sacrifice anything. We see how Nora has changed as her tone is more abrupt and forceful.

In Doll's House we also see how Nora leaving Helmer and her children, which was a huge taboo ~~off~~ conflicted with society at the time. As patriarchal society women who were restricted to their domestic sphere, had the duty to raise the children & follow their husband's order. 'First and foremost, you are a wife and a mother. We see after Nora become the symbolism of the revolutionary woman she uses the same symbol but - 'first and foremost, I'm an individual'. This would have left the audience shocked; when she '[Rises]' it is also a symbolism that she can stand up to herself and she will not be Torvald's 'doll' anymore but an 'individual'.

Examiner Comment: This answer shows a developed understanding of the contexts in which both plays are produced and received. The candidate has considered audience responses and has made comparisons between the two texts. Contextual knowledge is applied to the demands of the question and the candidate has adopted

an integrated approach when examining key points. This answer was not placed in the top band for AO3 because points could have been analysed in a more sophisticated and detailed manner.

The following answer was placed at the top of Band 4 for AO3:

'desire'. At this point in the play, society seems irrelevant in comparison to passion, and Alan able to ignore the pressures exerted upon him, ~~[illegible]~~ although, one might argue, it ~~is~~ is through attempting to escape the pressures of society, this passion grew for Alan in the first place. This contrasts with Othello, in which we are introduced immediately to the 'pressures' and 'expectations' of society by the Machiavelle Iago, although, arguably, the audience immediately recognises him as a

machiavel and chooses to disbelive them. Indeed ~~scabrous tongue~~ Shakespeare's initial lexical choice of taboo bestial copulation, refering to Othello's and Desdemona's inter-racial relationship (old black ram tupping your white ewe) is vital in Othello's latter deterioration of character. Although the audience may choose to disbelieve what Iago is saying in light of his machiavelian tendancies, Othello is later oblivious to these and therefore manipulated by these very pressures.

A key scene with Equus in which the pressures of society are made explicitally obvious is Act 1 Scene 15 (the shop scene). Not only does it examine the demands of society on the individual but through the exclamative mood, constant sound ('background murmering'), consistant use of brand names, and specific targeting on Alan, (the individual) as well as his frequent appologies, it also

examines the effect of this consumerist attitude on him and therefore his mental stability. Throughout this scene Alan get's increasingly frustrated, eventually loosing his temper, Shaffer chooses him finally reply to these demands by shouting back at the customers, perhaps showing Alan's lack of understanding and acceptanance of the preassures of society?

Throughout Othello, Othello's specific idiolect grows increasingly more violent. One might argue adopting Iago's somewhat barbaric lexis, he shifts from the inital flowing and elegant langage ('noble' 'grace' 'loved') to violent and threatening words and phrases ('begrimmed and black' 'knives' 'poisen or fire or suffocating streams') showing specifically how the preasures exerted on him by his perception of society through Iago has truly not only changed his character, but his very way of thinking. Clearly affectining his mental stability.

Examiner Comment: The candidate attempts to establish a range of comparisons between the two plays and presents an integrated discussion. There is clearly a solid understanding of contexts – see, for example, the references to the consumerist society in *Equus* – but contextual knowledge is often implied, rather than discussed explicitly. This means that key points are not always fully developed.

General points for centres to bear in mind when preparing for future examination series:

- Candidates should organise their discussions around key aspects of the unseen texts, rather than present a chronological commentary.
- Candidates need to analyse aspects of genre in greater detail (e.g. reportage, travel writing) and link these to the reader's likely expectations.
- Candidates need to develop detailed knowledge of a wide range of contextual factors when answering the Section B question.
- Candidates need to ensure that they apply their knowledge of the set texts to the demands of the question.
- Candidates need to ensure that they make explicit (rather than indirect) references to contexts.
- Candidates need to give equal weight to both of their chosen texts.
- Candidates need to explore and analyse a variety of relationships between texts.

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