

Examiners' Report
June 2012

GCE English Language & Literature
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Introduction

This unit comprises the examined component of A2 English 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.

Overall, the quality of responses was strong. The majority of candidates were well prepared for both sections of the paper, with the best demonstrating an integrated approach which helped them to tackle the unseen with understanding and confidence, and explore interesting and original concepts in relation to their set texts. Lower-scoring candidates tended to produce rather mechanical responses, spotting a range of features without actually analysing their significance in relation to the writers' attitudes or values.

Compared to previous series, fewer candidates decided to answer on different topic areas for each section: as has been mentioned in the past, sticking to the same topic for both sections should help candidates to plan their responses more efficiently. A greater number of candidates tried to answer the question in a relevant manner, rather than reproduce a rehearsed essay.

Section A

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 again proved to be the most popular topic choice whilst A Sense of Place was the least popular. On the whole, candidates had a sound understanding of a range of linguistic and literary terms and were able to approach the texts by applying concepts from an integrated approach. It seemed that fewer candidates compared to last year tried to simply 'feature spot' and were instead able to comment on effects, linking their analysis to attitudes, values and ideas. Lower-scoring candidates were sometimes tempted to define linguistic terms, rather than commenting on their effects in the context of the unseen passages. Generally, text and word level analysis was much stronger than sentence level analysis.

Structure could have been considered more frequently and more effectively: a few candidates knew what to look for and made specific, supported observations from examining their chosen passage; others simply made vague statements about short paragraphs being a feature of magazine articles.

A surprising number of candidates seemed to begin writing without reading their chosen unseen passage through to the end, and before they had worked out any impression of what it was saying. Candidates often came to realise that their impressions of the whole piece needed revision, but by then they were at the end of their time. It is vital that candidates read the texts thoroughly, and then organise their ideas, before beginning to write their responses.

A Sense of Place

Although the content of the A.A. Gill passage might be regarded as challenging for candidates to write about, it certainly had plenty to offer in terms of its evocation of place and its enthusiastic tone. The majority of candidates responded well to the range of linguistic and literary features employed by Gill to create a vivid picture of the Serengeti. They were able to discuss the way that Gill had used a range of visual and aural imagery, as well as a number of effective and entertaining metaphors. Answers which demonstrated close reading of the text, showed an appreciation of Gill's humorous approach, and analysed his use of cultural references were often rewarded with high marks. Lower-scoring answers tended to provide a list of features without analysing their significance within the passage. A number of these candidates also became distracted with assumptions about the writer's political views instead of remaining focused on the way that he represented this particular part of Africa. These candidates would have done well to remind themselves of the topic title for this extract and use this as a basis for their discussion. In other words, how effectively is the writer creating a sense of place here?

The Individual in Society

The extract from the magazine, *The Word*, presented candidates with the opportunity to analyse the writer's representation of the rock band, U2. Obviously, candidates were not expected to know much, if anything, about the band but they should have been able to discuss the writer's attitudes and the way that he presented the contrast between an artist's public image and his off-stage persona. Again, there were plenty of linguistic and literary features to be identified and discussed – the writer's skilful use of noun phrases, the semantic field of space, the use of active verbs, for example – and the majority of candidates had no problem identifying these. High-scoring candidates presented a synthesised analysis of this text, demonstrating an awareness of its relevance to the topic of *The Individual in Society*. Lower band responses, however, tended to settle for a rather mechanical approach, listing a range of linguistic features but omitting to explain their significance in relation to the article. A large number of answers considered the structure of the text, but focused mainly on the first half, choosing to say very little about the last few paragraphs; this made it difficult for them to examine the variety of ways in which the band's guitarist was represented by the writer. Some candidates wasted time deciding whether or not the writer was actually a member of the band, and a significant number of answers used the phrase "roar of applause" as a platform for a misguided discussion of the semantic field of animals.

Love and Loss

The unseen extract for this topic was taken from a book on television by the journalist, Stuart Jeffries. The majority of answers looked at the contrast between the "perfect" life of the TV couple and the unsatisfactory nature of the writer's own life during the 1980s. Those who scored highly were able to focus on the tone of the piece and to appreciate the critique of the "perfection" portrayed in certain TV series, as well as to analyse their enjoyment of Jeffries' self-deprecating depiction of his younger self. This provided an opportunity to discuss the writer's values and attitudes at some length.

Clichés were identified successfully, especially the hardwood floor "to die for", but it was a shame that so few responses appreciated the humour in the bugs speaking Latin and reading Nietzsche. There were some excellent comments on the writer's references to sound – for example, the painful sounds in "probably pinged into my face". Imagery was also discussed: the porcelain image was dealt with effectively in many cases, although the reference to Canute was not analysed by many.

Lower band answers tended to overlook the irony in the piece and displayed some judgemental rather than critical remarks.

Family Relationships

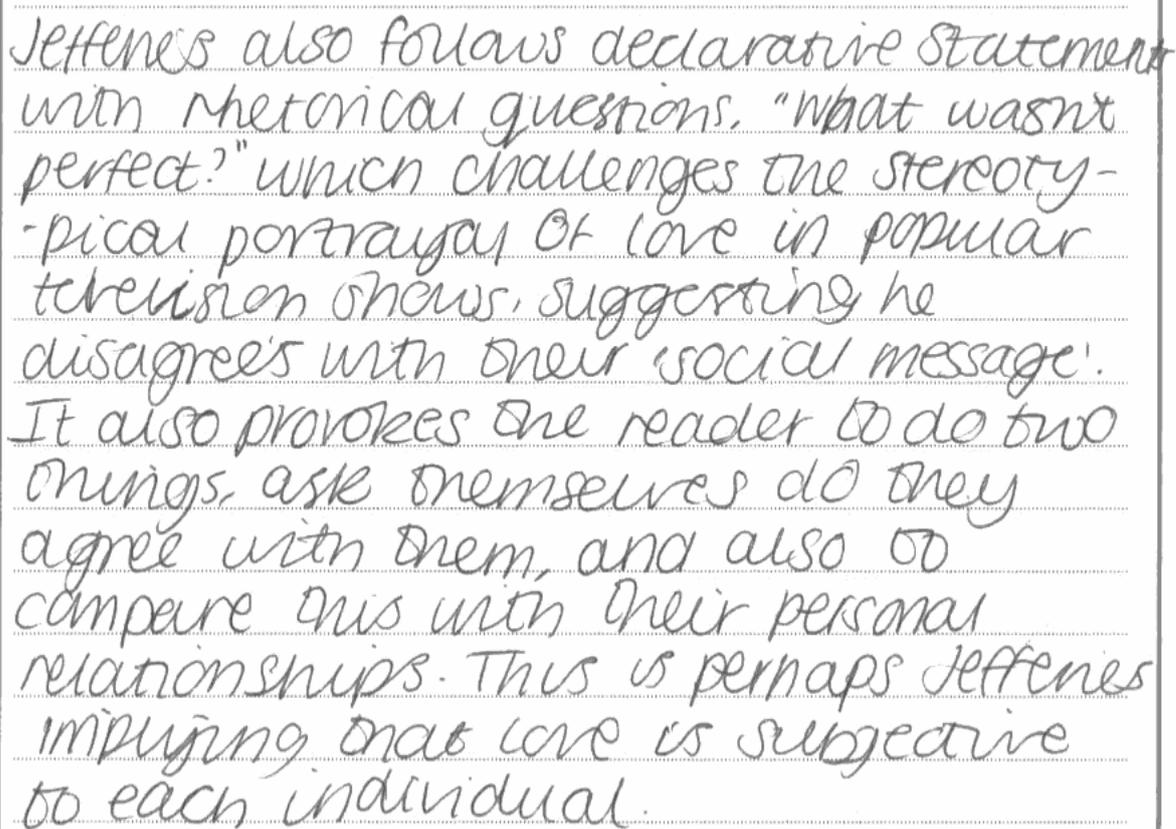
Many candidates found the topic of Obama's family accessible and interesting: most were well informed and could comment intelligently, understanding, for example, the significance of the parenthetical reference to the trouble caused by the name Hussein.

The most successful responses focused on the way the writer creates a contrast between the differing worlds and their attitudes and values, recognising the writer's intention to imply how Obama has reached where he is today because of, and to some extent in spite of, his family background.

High-scoring answers also started to probe some of the contradictions in Freedland's investigation – for example, the choice of Mama Sarah when she has had little to do with Obama; the ambivalent reference to the television; the fact that Freedland's view of Obama's African ancestry could be described as patronising, ambivalent, or partial, and is inevitably biased by his positive view of America as a land of opportunity. Many found Mama Sarah's attitude to the presidency as "just a job" especially noteworthy, but there were many different interpretations of her tone and meaning here. There was plenty of opportunity to use linguistic terminology in analysing this passage: candidates identified a wide range of linguistic features, such as syntactic parallelism, modifiers, deixis, listing, direct address, ellipsis and register. Lower band responses focused on what you would expect from a newspaper feature, with very little analysis of the extract itself. Some candidates misunderstood the tone of the article and felt that it was meant to be critical of, and undermine, Obama.

At AO1 high-scoring responses were written articulately, points were effortlessly supported by embedded quotations and candidates used a wide range of relevant terminology. Middle band answers were written fluently, but points were not always fully developed. Low-scoring answers showed lapses in expression and made limited use of terminology.

This is an extract from an answer that was awarded a Band 2 mark at AO1.



Jeffenes also follows declarative statement with rhetorical questions, "What wasn't perfect?" which challenges the stereotypical portrayal of love in popular television shows, suggesting he disagrees with their 'social message'. It also provokes the reader to do two things, ask themselves do they agree with them, and also to compare this with their personal relationships. This is perhaps Jeffenes implying that love is subjective to each individual.

The writer also puts a significant amount of stress on the contrasts between the homes of those in television programmes and his own home. He describes theirs as a 'domestic paradise' and his as 'a little box'. This strong imagery provokes a juxtaposition in the reader's head, perhaps implying that often a perfect relationship is often judged by one home.

His perhaps ~~more~~ most hard hitting claim is his analogy of HOPE. He uses figurative language 'waves of reality lapping over her ankles'; in order to portray to the reader that problems in relationships and family life occur, and that until one accepts this, they cannot be content.

The semantic fields of each description could not vary more.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

Expression is readable and succinct. The candidate has presented a clear and well-organised argument. Expression lacks sophistication in places and some points are expressed rather vaguely. Although the candidate has used relevant terminology, the range is rather limited.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Explain key points thoroughly, rather than settling for basic conclusions.

In ~~the~~ ^{the} extract from a piece of travel-writing by journalist A.A. Gill, he describes his time in the Serengeti, in Africa. The piece is written almost like a diary intended for publication, aimed at anyone interested in travel, Africa or fans of Gill's writing. The extract begins with spatial and temporal deixis of 'Tanzania, January 1998', which straight away tells the reader where he is, ~~giving~~ giving slight indication to what is to be expected. Gill uses compound ^{sensory} adjectives such as 'burnt-orange' to describe how the 'African sun plummets', the transitive verb 'plummets' almost personifies the sun, making sunfall seem appear fast - if you blink you've missed it. The sibilance of the adjective 'shimmering' juxtaposed with the proper nouns 'Serengeti', 'storms' and 'sun' also create a smooth flowing syntax to the opening of the piece. In the opening paragraph, alliteration is used frequently to describe what Gill can see: 'lazy late' and 'grassland the game' emphasises the amazing sights he is fortunate to see, which he makes very

clear he values highly as he mentions 'only [going] to Africa by armchair'. As a travel writer, it is made clear through positive and hyperbolic descriptions of the Serengeti that he adores and values his ability to travel, shown through metaphors such as 'electric storm' and the superlative 'perfect'.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer is written in an articulate and sophisticated manner. Quotations are carefully selected and skilfully embedded in the commentary. A wide range of relevant terminology is employed throughout.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Analyse a wide range of features and their effects in an integrated manner.

This is an extract from an answer that scored full marks at AO2.

Gill uses a play on words ~~throughout~~ throughout the second paragraph, with the repetition of the verb 'feem' then being replaced by the ~~repeated~~ alliteration of the ~~no~~ numerical lexis juxtaposed by with the noun 'two teams'. The syntactical patterning of 'those that eat and those that are eaten' ~~is~~ conveys to the reader Gill's belief in Nature's apparent 'survival of the fittest'. Africa is described as 'Attenborough

(country), Gill's 'intertextual and cultural' reference is of course to David Attenborough, Britain's wildlife documentary expert, who was awarded with knighthood for his services to documenting wildlife. Gill makes the assumption that his readership will be familiar, and possibly fans, of Sir David Attenborough.

Asyndetic listing is used when A. A. Gill says 'the gnarly buzzcut, acacias, the purple sky, the oily, putrescent sun that slide across the horizon'. The asyndetic list makes the 'exotically beautiful light' he is describing seem never ending, yet at the same time ~~is~~ fast-paced, as if he has no time to take a breath as he is so excited by what he is seeing. It is clear Gill admires and values Africa's beauty, made clear by the use of the superlative 'most' juxtaposed with the premodifying adverbs 'exotically' ~~used to describe the 'beautiful light'~~ and 'used to describe the 'beautiful light'' to describe the 'light'.

Gill also educates his readers, stating facts such as 'the Serengeti stretches from northern Tanzania E. into Kenya'. ~~He also uses the word~~ ~~when~~ when talking about wildebeest, he states declaratively 'Wildebeest are God's extras', showing he possesses religious values, ^{made apparent} through the religious lexicon of 'God's'. Gill also

appreciates 'wildebeest's only defence being 'statistics' - he values their safety in numbers and family values, shown when he tells his readers 'they even arrange to calve all at the same time in the same place.' The ~~qualifier~~ premodifying qualifier 'even' shows Gill's amazement at this fact, ~~also~~ emphasised by the syntactic patterning and repetition of the adjective 'same'.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The candidate has adopted an analytical approach throughout, covering a wide range of literary and linguistic features, and exploring the writer's attitudes and values in an integrated fashion. S/he has explored a wide range of ideas in a confident, well-informed and sophisticated fashion.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Try to combine your discussion of a writer's attitudes and values with an analysis of language and structure.

At AO2 successful responses explored a wide range of linguistic, literary and structural features. They often discussed writers' attitudes and values in a sophisticated manner and supported observations with appropriate exemplification. These answers demonstrated an enthusiastic engagement with the text and candidates were willing to explore a wide range of challenging ideas. Lower band answers usually focused on a few relevant attitudes and values. They showed awareness of linguistic or structural features and tended to work through the passages chronologically. This approach often resulted in a descriptive discussion of the content.

This is an extract from a script that was awarded a Band 4 mark at AO2.

The newspaper extract by Jonathon Freedland is a multi-purpose text. The first purpose, to inform, is suggested through the use of declarative sentences such as 'He is the grandson of a man who grew up among people who wore animal skins'. This purpose also fits the genre of the extract as this is the main function of newspapers. The second purpose is to entertain. This is shown through the use of direct speech from Mama Sarah. 'She described it as "just a job"'. This is humorous to readers as being the president is generally seen as a prestigious role which holds great power over the rest of society, and therefore by naming it as 'just a job', Mama Sarah is comparing it to the everyday life of the average citizen. The final purpose of the text is to describe: 'a small house, three rooms under a pale-blue corrugated iron roof'. The ~~repeated~~ repeated use of premodification allows the writer to express further information to the reader, enabling them to understand the situation and surroundings in further depth.

The genre of the extract is also expressed through the use of factual information. 'the 90-minute drive north'. This is a typical feature of a newspaper article and further develops the informative purpose. The audience of the extract is public and unknown, however it could be suggested that they would be those who are

Interested in either politics, or in Obama himself.

The majority of the extract describes Obama's grandfather, and one of his three wives, Mama Sarah. The very first paragraph describing his grandfather's past uses a complex sentence. 'that grandfather went on to become a cook for the British Army and later a domestic servant, while his son finished secondary school by correspondence course, had four wives, eight children and died an early death, caused by drink and depression: the use of a complex sentence could be symbolic of the complexity of his grandfather's life during this time, with many large events taking place. It could also be seen to be a reflection of time with the length of the sentence symbolising the time frame for the events listed. ~~the~~ In reference to his grandfather, Obama is described as 'the grandson of a man who grew up among people who wore animal skins'. This provides contrast between Obama's lifestyle, and that of his ancestors which emphasises his achievements within the political system.

The next few paragraphs are mainly used to describe the last remaining wife of Obama's grandfather. Freedland uses listing to describe Mama Sarah's work 'she grows maize, sweet potatoes, beans and cassava' this suggests that she works hard to

produce a variety of products. The nature of her work also suggests that she leads a simplistic lifestyle, which again contrasts against Obama's. When describing her house, it is suggested that Mama Sarah values family very highly. 'Her living room is decorated with family pictures, including ~~one~~ a shot of Barack.' By surrounding herself with pictures of her family, it is suggested that she feels comfortable with the presence of her loved ones around and is proud of them. It is earlier mentioned that she had only met Barack a few times, however she has placed him on the wall with the rest of her family, suggesting that she considers him as close as others. It goes on to say that she will be flying to the US to see Obama inaugurated, however Freedland notes that 'it won't be her first trip to the US. she saw Barack sworn in as senator'. By making trips to see Obama, it is suggested that she would like to build a relationship with him, and is proud of his achievements.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate clearly understands the article and begins the answer strongly. S/he is prepared to analyse a range of language features and applies concepts in a confident manner. On the whole, s/he has a good appreciation of the writer's attitudes and use of humour. However, some points lack focus and the discussion of Mama Sarah loses sight of the writer's treatment of the subject matter.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Remain focused on the way the writer uses a range of techniques to create effects.

As we would expect from most magazines, the register is 'informal', there is no formality in motorcycling races which means the text would be informal with many elements of colloquialisms "doing a runner". The second paragraph continues on to begin with "That's a fantastic runner" The prolepsis 'fantastic' gives us a sense of the writer's enthusiasm, about what is happening, the cohesion between the paragraphs carries on until paragraph four, where "Dave Evans" acts as a discourse marker and a shift in the topic. The writer assumes that the audience have an understanding of who 'Dave Evans' is, but carries on to describe him in a very praise-worthy fashion. "He's known like no other" This simple sentence is enough to let the reader know that the writer is very admiring of "Dave Evans". He does not need to use any fancy, figurative language to express his admiration, he only uses a simple sentence which makes a huge impact. The use of many simple sentences in the text of the magazine show us that the writer himself is a person of 'simple taste'. In the fifth paragraph, the writer carries on to speak about Dave Evans, and about his background, which could mean the writer had a secondary audience in mind, people who were not familiar to Dave, or those who were new readers. He describes Dave as having a "massive identity crisis!" because he was born in "Essex to Welsh parents and moved to Dublin at the age of one".

perhaps this complicated life is too much for the writer to handle/take into account as he seems to express very simple ideas in the text from the way he praises Dave to the way he talks about his motorcycle experiences.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer does not reveal a confident understanding of the text. The candidate misses significant issues and makes a number of inaccurate assumptions, based on a misreading of the text.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Read the text carefully and check the accuracy of your assertions.

Section B

There were some impressive responses in this section, especially to Question 4 Love and Loss and Question 5 Family Relationships. Candidates seemed very confident in addressing contextual factors and linking them to the task. The capability of candidates to fully answer the question, construct an argument, as well as comparing their texts in detail throughout the response, seems to have improved from previous years. Some of the comparative points that candidates made were particularly impressive in their insight and relevance to the task.

However, there were still a number of candidates who, despite demonstrating a very good understanding of the texts and having detailed contextual knowledge, approached the question from a purely literary perspective. Some answers had little or no linguistic analysis. More successful responses integrated language and literature terminology with appropriate concepts and, at the higher end, candidates used terms fluently with confidence and precision. Lower-scoring answers were at times very mechanical and context was presented in a section of its own, rather than being presented in an integrated fashion.

Question 2: A Sense of Place

Yet again, this was the least popular of the four topics and the majority of answers related to the drama texts. There were some excellent responses to this question, especially on *Translations* and *Stuff Happens*. High-scoring candidates gave detailed consideration of contextual factors and applied them skilfully to relevant aspects of the plays – for example, commenting on the parallel between the dates in which *Translations* was written and its historical setting.

Successful responses came to terms with the idea of places being associated with fear, and used this as a platform for exploring the different ways that the writers used a range of dramatic techniques to represent fear and its effects. There were some particularly interesting discussions of the different ways that stagecraft was used to create atmosphere in the two plays. Lower band answers tended to write descriptive answers, focusing on characters and making general references to fear. These answers relied heavily on general discussions of wider social and historical contexts, instead of applying these features to the specific demands of the question. They also had difficulty drawing comparisons between the texts, often settling for the identification of one or two superficial links. A significant number of answers lacked linguistic analysis; it seemed that candidates had forgotten that they were also meant to be analysing the way writers use language to convey their ideas.

In relation to the poetry texts, higher band candidates thought carefully about their choice of poems in order to present a convincing argument. They identified a wide range of appropriate poetic devices, compared the work of the two poets in a detailed manner and managed to refer subtly to a variety of relevant contextual influences. Low-scoring responses often provided a descriptive summary of a narrow range of poems. Contextual references were often vague and there was little attempt to draw meaningful comparisons between the two collections.

Question 3: The Individual in Society

For this topic area there were many developed essays that examined the search for purpose within the historical context. Many answers analysed language well, especially in the Shakespeare text. There were some interesting links made between the two texts and some thoughtful insights. Most responses looked at the key characters and their perceived purpose in the plays, analysing Iago's evil intentions, Othello's thwarted purpose to be accepted in Venetian society through military prowess and marriage, Dysart's failed purpose and, to some extent, Alan's failed attempt to be like a 'normal' teenager.

Answers often paralleled Alan and Othello or Othello and Dysart; many paired Dysart with Iago, which worked to some extent, but caused some forcing. Dysart provided the most fruitful character with many sympathetic studies combining linguistic and literary analysis in a very effective way (for example, when discussing his dream). Some explorations of Alan were also effective, with many language features to discuss in relation to commercialism, television, and the language of religion, ritual and ceremony.

Students were divided between those who saw Othello as having a purpose as a general, which he lost on arrival in Cyprus, leading to chaos within, and those who saw him as without a purpose in Venice, because of his race, and gaining purpose only when he was apprised of Desdemona's supposed infidelity. There was a great deal of rather futile description and narration of Iago's motivelessness. However, there was better analysis of his language, sometimes carefully linked to purpose.

The least successfully addressed area of the question was "the world in which they find themselves", as many candidates simply took the question to be about the characters, not their relationship with their worlds. Higher band answers dealt very well with the cultural contrast between Venice and Cyprus, or with attitudes to psychiatry and the commercialisation of society in *Equus*.

There were only a few poetry answers in this section. Candidates coped confidently with the wording of the question and had no problems finding appropriate poems to illustrate their responses. Contextual references focused mainly on biographical information, rather than considering relevant social and historical contexts. Analysis of the texts concentrated on a range of poetic features, but there were few references to linguistic devices.

Question 4: Love and Loss

For those studying the plays, this question seemed to be a gift. The best answers made much of the reverse structure of *Betrayal* and a significant number managed to deal well with the framing of *The Glass Menagerie* as a memory play – showing how this was a structural representation of relationships ending in disappointment. Although there was mention of a variety of stage effects (the fire escape, legends, Laura's glass menagerie), surprisingly few answers analysed their significance in relation to the terms of the question. There seemed to be a surprising resistance in candidates to Williams's extravagant metaphorical style, with few appreciating his poetic portrayal of disappointment. Middle to lower band responses showed a considerable tendency to tell Laura's story, in particular to narrate the whole of the scene with Jim. High-scoring candidates produced well-informed and perceptive writing about the portrayal of sexual liberation in *Betrayal*, discussing the disappointment for individuals who thought they could enjoy relationships without consequences. A significant number of candidates noted the difference in approach of Jerry and Emma to their affair, as well as considering the greater emotional investment and potential for hurt for Emma. The more astute answers moved

outwards to consider Robert's understated disappointment with his marriage and the failure of his friendship with Jerry. There was some excellent analysis of the suitability of Pinter's distinctive dialogue for the theme of disappointment. This did lead a few candidates to query whether Pinter could actually write about joy or pleasure, by noting the clichéd and minimalistic nature of Jerry's expressions of love and passion for Emma in the final scene. Several answers suggested that Pinter's own experiences disabled him from writing positively about relationships at all but fewer candidates, this series, settled for a generalised discussion of his affair with Joan Bakewell.

Students, as in previous years, seemed hampered by a limited selection of studied poems for this topic, so this meant that their arguments were often contrived. *Daddy* was the perennial Plath favourite, and this worked if the candidate kept the question in focus – there is plenty of disappointment here, even if it is manifested in anger rather than sorrow. Candidates could refer to images and discuss the use of sounds (for example, German, repetition, rhythm). *Spinster* was another choice that could work – there were one or two insightful and precise discussions of Plath's creation of a wintry setting and much reference to pathetic fallacy – but, in general, students tended to simplify and trivialise the poem. However, the Metaphysical Poets were far less well treated. A few answers simply tried to use whatever poems they happened to have studied or revised.

Question 5: Family Relationships

Again, this question was a gift for the Ibsen and Miller plays and there were inevitably some excellent responses. Candidates were especially good on the settings establishing a restrictive atmosphere – for example, they looked at the symbolic significance of trees in both plays. High-scoring answers also analysed the relationship of Torvald and Nora in terms of language, gesture, movement and costume, and then compared this to Miller's representation of the relationship between Joe and Kate Keller. Minor characters such as Krogstad, Christine, or Jim Bayliss, figured effectively in many answers. The best responses drew in significant aspects of political and social influences, especially with *All My Sons* and the effects of the war on Joe's attitudes and behaviour. These candidates also presented interesting observations on the conflicting pressures of the family and society, and their damaging effects on the individual.

Some candidates drew perceptive parallels between the plays in terms of heredity, money and reputation.

Surprisingly, candidates were quite often less accurate with their references to contextual influences on *A Doll's House* – they seemed confused and vague about the historical period and many still seem oblivious to the fact that this is a Norwegian play – there is still a tendency to refer to Victorian society when discussing this play. Lower band candidates relied upon narrative descriptions of the play, often lacking the terminology to provide a precise analysis of the texts. They also tended to bolt on contextual points, without really showing a grasp of how or why these were important to theme, production or reception.

Again, the poetry texts were less popular for this topic area but candidates still coped well with the terms of the question. High-scoring answers made relevant choices, provided detailed analysis and used appropriate terminology.

One excellent analysis of *The Wife of Bath* looked at the restrictions she felt in her marriages and in society, her resolution with the final marriage and her skill with refuting misogynistic religious arguments – even showing a correct appreciation of the effects of rhyming couplets. This candidate did argue, quite sensibly, that the Wife might have

thought she had got the better of society, but in effect Chaucer's comedy to some extent undercuts her triumph. Another answer was not able to separate the Wife from Chaucer, and so missed some of the subtleties of his characterisation.

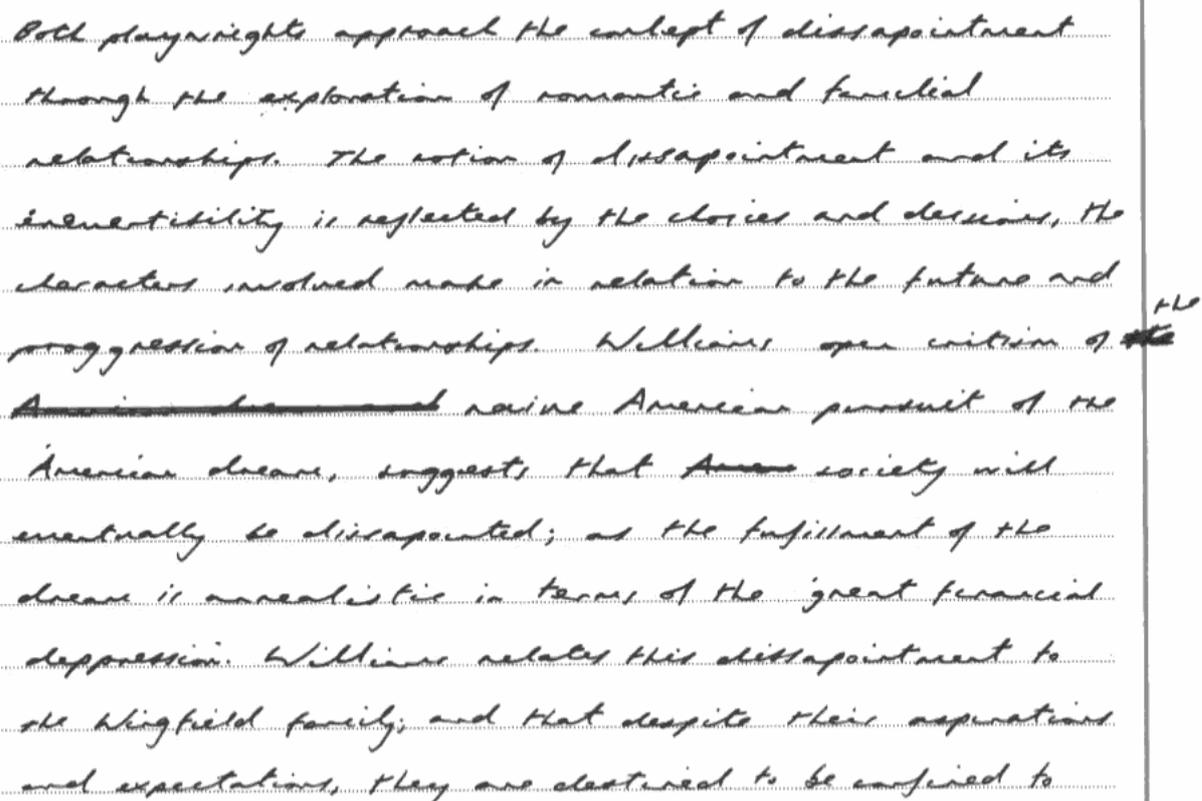
Family restrictions in Harrison's poetry were interpreted by candidates as relating to class, education and language. Most candidates explored the obvious feeling of restriction experienced by Harrison in relation to his father's attitudes, his education and social background. They also recognised the father's on-going need for the mother after her death as an obstacle to happiness. There were some good discussions of the use of language by Harrison to demonstrate being trapped by accent and dialect.

There is a maximum of 10 marks available for AO2 in Section B and successful responses were able to engage fully with attitudes, values and ideas of the texts, as well as showing a confident appreciation of possibilities offered by dramatic and poetic forms. They made sophisticated comments about structure, and analysed linguistic and literary devices effectively.

First Example

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

This is an extract from an answer that was placed in Band 3 at AO1.



Both playwrights approach the concept of disappointment through the exploration of romantic and familial relationships. The notion of disappointment and its inevitability is reflected by the choices and decisions, the characters involved make in relation to the future and progression of relationships. Williams' open criticism of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~American dream~~ naive American pursuit of the American dream, suggests that American society will eventually be disappointed; as the fulfillment of the dream is unrealistic in terms of the 'great financial depression'. Williams relates this disappointment to the Wingfield family; and that despite their aspirations and expectations, they are destined to be confined to

the "live like conglomerations of cellular living units" the pro-modifier reflects connotations of entrapment, suggesting the inevitability of their circumstances. Contrastingly Pinter highlights the culmination of this disappointment at the beginning of the play, which as a result of its innovative structure is at the end of Jerry and Emma's adulterous relationship. 'Betrayal' highlights the disappointment stimulated by the breakdown of relationships, whether they are romantic or platonic. Pinter explores the gender issues present in the 1970's and the changing expectations of marriage, Pinter ~~in fact~~ reflects

~~that the emotional~~ ^{He suggests} upon the selfish motif of many of the characters ~~and~~ that the true disappointment is stimulated by the realisation that their individual desires can no longer continue. This is unlike ~~Butt~~ Williams who presents his characters, as though they reflect on the consequences of their actions depending on the impact of on their family.

Williams presentation of disappointment as a result of romantic relationships is most evident through the presentation of Laura. Williams explores the notion that Laura was inevitably going to be disappointed by the 'gentleman caller'. Like Williams elaborate use of stage directions reflects the inevitability that Laura will ever be trapped in the apartment. The exclamatory utterance "I'm all right. I stopped, but I'm all right" suggests that she is destined to never leave. ~~Laura's~~ ~~Williams~~ ~~collection~~, Williams incorporation of the breaking of the glass menagerie, is reflective of the inevitability that Laura is to be disappointed.

result of romantic relationships is most evident through the presentation of Laura. Wellman explores the notion that Laura was inevitably going to be disappointed by the 'gentleman caller'. Since Wellman's elaborate use of stage directions reflects the inevitability that Laura will ever be trapped in the apartment, the exclamatory utterance "I'm all right, I slipped, but I'm all right" suggests that she is destined to never leave. ~~her~~ ~~disappointment~~ ~~with~~ ~~her~~ ~~manager's~~ ~~collection~~, Wellman's incorporation of the breaking of the glass managerie, is reflective of the inevitability that Laura is to be disappointed.

"They suddenly bump into the table, and the glass piece or it falls to the floor: ~~this is the end of~~

Since suggests that this was her "favorite piece of glass", the abstract noun "favorite" highlights this preference. The breaking of the glass suggests that she will eventually be heart broken, as eventually we find out she is leading to disappointment.

Ananda is presented as a character who is unsatisfied with her reality as a single parent in financial difficulty, therefore she indulges in her past days of "Blue Mountain, the hyperbole "sometimes there were it enough chairs to accommodate them all" reflects this indulgence. However the presentation of Ananda's eagerness ~~to~~ ~~see~~ for Laura to be married is a symbol of inevitability, ~~to~~ suggesting that Laura will never be married. Ananda portrays her disappointment at the news that Jim was married, through the declarative "That's right, now that you've had such fools of ourselves, the effort, the preparations, all

the expense', the triplet emphasises Amanda's disappointment and is reflective of Wilkins' typical style.

Pinter's realist approach presents the concept of disappointment, as if it is a universal feeling. The presentation of three generic individuals suggests that Pinter is, in fact writing with the motif of exploring human condition. Pinter explores the impacts of romantic and platonic relationships on an individual's feelings of disappointment.



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Examiner Comments

Despite the odd error, the candidate expresses ideas and interpretations in a fluent manner, employing a wide range of relevant terminology and applying concepts in an integrated fashion.



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Examiner Tip

Remember to use a wide range of linguistic and literary terminology in this section of the exam.

Second Example

This is an extract from a script that was awarded a top band mark at AO2.

The plays *Stuff Happens* and *Translations* express and present fear in association to certain places, those being a literal place, place in society, ~~the~~ and place in the mind. This fear is portrayed through the dramatic techniques, characters and context of the plays.

Both plays are about past events, performed to a modern audience at the time of production. The events are directly related to the time and social situation of the audience, meaning the plays express fears in the past and play on the fears of the audience. *Stuff Happens* follows the events leading up to the Iraq invasion, combining non-fiction and private fictional events created by Mare. *Translations* ~~refers~~ refers back to an historical event in Ireland, directly linking it to the current social situation of the 1980's audience and the trouble in Ireland following the events of the play.

In *Stuff Happens* Mare presents places in the world with fear, such as the obvious fear created from the 9/11 attack. Mare shows the fear created by the attack and shows how it acted as a trigger,

or perhaps an excuse, for America to start war. ~~Written~~ In ~~the~~ ~~one~~ one of the monologues interlinked by Hare, expressing current views, the Brit in New York uses the quote "America changed." ^(p92) It is true that America did change as a result of 9/11 and Hare shows this throughout, but the point Hare seems to be making is that the fear and attitudes of the public was changed, but ~~not~~ not the American Government. Through the use of Hare's fictional private events he makes the politicians appear un-fearful through their rather laid back attitude, even after the devastating event "I could eat a baby through the bars of a crib" (Rumsted, p22). The way they all stop for lunch with a relaxed atmosphere seems inappropriate for the situation. Rumsted's character's metaphor used by Hare here also characterizes him here as brutal. The symbolic use of the puzzle by Hare ~~also~~ suggests "Bush sits with Laura assembling a puzzle" suggests that Bush is more concerned about building an image of himself and his family during the time of devastation. Hare creates the idea that 9/11 creates the fear needed as an excuse to invade Iraq, and also for America to do what they want. Hare uses the fictional private conversation ~~in~~ in scene four where the characters discuss the invasion of Iraq, before the 9/11 attacks "Now let's move on - Iraq." (p12, Bush). There is also the anaphora running through the play "war on

terror' which Hare uses as a non-fictional aspect, but also uses it with his opinion on why Bush kept ~~repeating~~ repeating the phrase in speeches "That's good. That's vague." (p23, Rumsted). This is suggesting that the American government are keeping what they say to the fearful public vague, allowing them to do what they want as long as it is part of "the war on terror". ~~This~~ The ~~abrupt~~ reaction of the US to ~~the~~ 9/11 is comparable in ~~stiff~~ Translations to the English's reaction to the disappearance of Youand. They use what they portray as fear to the Irish as what could be seen as an excuse for attack, "Commencing twenty-four hours from now we will shoot all live stock in Ballyberg" (p80, Loney). Friel uses a change in Loney's character to portray the effects of one violent event. The English are seen by the audience as un-reasonable with their response, punishing ~~everyone~~ everyone for the actions of what is suggested to be the Donnelly Twins, a symbolic representation of the IRA in the 1980's. This is Friel suggesting a point that the violent acts ~~in~~ from the IRA in 1980 will only ~~result~~ result in mass violence everyone included. This is similar to the effect of 9/11, where the whole of Iraq and Afghanistan were punished, even innocent civilians. The abrupt change of Loney's approach also suggests Youand's disappearance acts as an excuse to stop edging carefully around

what is actually the invasion of Ireland, comparable to the approach of the US government in *Shuff Happers*.

In *Translations* Friel presents Ireland as the place with most fear in the play, relating to the feelings of an Irish audience in 1980. The use of setting is particularly important, ~~as the text~~ put clearly across by Friel in the opening stage directions, "The hedge school is held in a disused barn". The audience of 1980 know hedge schools no longer exist, so they immediately see a struggling community. The symbolism of the semantic field on entrapment "wooden posts and chains" suggests the repression of Ireland and its weakness. Friel used the same setting throughout, suggesting that the characters are trapped in Ireland due to its reluctance to change. Friel also expresses the vulnerability of Ireland, emphasizing the fear created when the English retaliate, but also Friel's personal fear for the people of Ireland in 1980. The characters all seem to be at a disadvantage in some way, for example Manus with a limp and Sarah with a speech impediment. Friel is suggesting through this that Ireland's reluctance to change will lead to ~~the Irish~~ the Irish to be vulnerable and at a disadvantage, urging the audience of 1980 to change their views in the ~~chaos~~ chaos. The way Harvey silences Sarah through the use of fear

communicated the loss of Ireland voice "Who are you? Name!" (p81, Nancy). Again Friel is expressing his own fear for the people of Ireland and that they will be silenced again in the 80's as they have in the past. This is comparable to the loss of voice in *Stuff Happens* through the use of fear from characters ~~etc~~, such as Bush, Remotfeld and Cheney. The way Bush refuses to communicate creates an uncomfortable fear for the character he is conversing with, for example Mare's creation of the private discussion between Bush and Blair. Bush's silence and un-cooperative replies "Sure" leads Blair to stutter and become unsure of himself "And in Britain - in other parts of the world - that means the UN.", shown here by Mare's use of phrase in parentheses and disavowal marker. Blair is also clearly fearful of Bush's actions and the effect on himself, despite his attempts to communicate his advice to Bush. This is shown by Mare after the un-cooperative conversation that ~~blair~~ undermines Blair, by the press conference where Bush un-fearfully goes against everything Blair has just said "The policy of my government is the removal of Saddam." (p. 44, Bush). Mare creates fear shown by Blair through stage directions "Blair look, horrified" (p44). Although Mare begins the play characterising Blair as ~~scared~~

stupid, cowardly supported by Rice, he develops his character in to someone quite sinister, using fear to manipulate. This is shown through Nare's conversation between Bush and Colin Powell, where he manipulates him in to compressing his views "We know exactly how strong it is." The direct sentence stops Powell from responding negatively, instead passively agreeing "Yes we do." This is also shown by characters such as ~~the~~ Cheney and Rumsfeld at the point when they become dogs let off a leash, attacking Powell "Because you ~~are~~ ~~some~~ ~~nuts~~" "No. No, Colin. It's different for you." This is shown here by Blair through the ~~the~~ nasty, attacking comment.

Although Frier clearly represents the fear and vulnerability of Ireland, Nare ~~the~~ doesn't mention the fear caused in the most impactable country until the end, Iraq. Here he uses a monologue shaped with ~~the~~ pathos, from an Iraqi exile "Our dead are uncourted." The ending monologue really expresses the devastating fear causes in Iraq by the war. This communicates to the audience how they themselves may have forgotten the fear of the vulnerable place, and also ~~shows~~ contrasts against the reference by characters to Iraq as an

objet, not civilisation.



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Examiner Comments

This answer shows a good grasp of the attitudes and values of both plays. The candidate has covered a range of generic features in a confident and integrated manner.



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Examiner Tip

Make sure that you analyse a wide range of generic features (e.g. stagecraft, characterisation) when considering the attitudes and values of the plays.

Third Example

The following extract is taken from an answer that was awarded a Band 1 mark at AO2:

With 40 marks out of 60 on offer for AO3 in Section B, 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, applying the relevant details to the demands of the question. They gave a balanced discussion of both texts and key points were explored in an integrated manner. Lower band answers referred to contextual details but did not always apply them to the demands of the question. They also found it difficult to make a wide range of comparisons between the two texts.

Here is an extract from an answer that was awarded a Band 4 mark at AO3.

This is a view Dyzart has is similar to that of R.D. Laing. He believed that mentally ill people weren't ill. They were geniuses. Us 'normal' people just couldn't comprehend it. Psychiatry and Laing were very popular in the 70's (when the play was written) and the audience would have recognised Laing's views in Dyzart.

Another character created in the shape of another man's view was Shakespeare's Othello Iago. Iago is the perfect Machiavellian character. A character who is devious and evil to get what he wants; promotion. Cassio was promoted over him by Othello so Iago sought to bring both of them down and gain promotion himself. So Iago devised a plan to exploit Othello's tragic flaw. * I read on from the next star then come back to here)

Aristotle's view of a the perfect tragedy had to have a hero with a tragic flaw. The Elizabethan/Jacobean audience shared this idea and could spot a tragedy occurring. Subtle subtle hints such as Othello saying 'I fear it will not last' when explaining how

how happy he is & is foreshadowing for what lies ahead.

Another way Othello tries to fit in to feel his life has purpose is through his language. Audiences and the Venetian society society in the play would have shared the view that 'moors' are simple beings incapable of expressing themselves properly. Othello Othello seems to try very hard in showing he can speak eloquently with many many speeches throughout the play. He also tries to play down his lexical prowess by saying 'Rude am I in my speech'. As if to say he cannot ~~exp~~ express himself in the way someone with authority ~~see~~ needs to be able to ~~to~~ and he speaks like the stereotypical 'moor'. To see a black man speaking so eloquently would have ~~surp~~ surprised the audience. ~~See~~ Especially as we are given a rather crude picture of Othello in the beginning of the play by Iago and Roderigo.

Whereas Othello uses his language to express himself for acceptance, Alan uses his as a barrier ~~and~~ which distances himself further from society making him a lonely individual. The use of taboo language (Fuck off) when Dycart demands the truth on whether he did 'stick it in' Jill and the singing advertising jingles when he ~~lost~~ met Dycart stops Dycart from understanding Alan his twisted obsession with horses and why he blinded 6 six of them. Alan's main purpose in life is to serve Nugget which is why he cares not for the brutalities of a court

case (where he also sang the jingles) or for Dysart and his methods to 'cure' Alan.

I believe the main reason Alan thinks his purpose in life is because his life is filled with conflict. His parents argue constantly with one being a religious fundamentalist and the other ^{an} atheist marxist sick of the ~~can~~ capitalist society and craves a communist one. There is even conflict in Frank's views as he runs a printing business making pos posters for adverts which is a major part of capitalism. Also Alan is banned from watching ~~teve~~ television (although his mother secretly lets him) but works in ~~an~~ a shop full of electronics and T.V sets. ~~That~~ constant the only consistent thing in Alan's life is conflict. Also the fact that a picture of ~~grouse~~ picture of Jesus was in his bedroom was changed to one of a horse warped his mind into thinking horses ~~was~~ (Latin word for horse is Equus) are god-like creatures or God's themselves.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This candidate has demonstrated sound contextual knowledge, but it is sometimes tacked on to the discussion, instead of being applied to the demands of the question. Comparisons are made between the texts, but not in an integrated fashion.



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Examiner Tip

Make sure that contextual details are relevant to the question and linked closely to the texts.

Fourth Example

This is an extract from an answer that scored full marks at AO3.

The symbol of the tree in ADM with 'fruit still clinging to its branches' ^{symbolises} ~~shows~~ Kates continual hope for her son, this however is one of the main restrictions Chris experiences in the family. In Act II Chris is distressed 'sawing off tree, leaving the stump standing alone' this shows his progression of being a truth bringer in the play and desire to move on. This is further evidenced through his metaphor 'we're like a railroad station waiting for a train that never comes in' bringing to light the family's inability to carry on with normal life. In ADM suicide is a key symbol shown through the deixis of Krogstad's utterance 'most of us think of that' which is important in showing the extent to which social expectation cripples people, italics emphasise the idea of it being an unacceptable idea in the context of the wider social family. The tarentella is another key symbol as it shows the

social expectation of women to play a role in being 'all dressed up' - one that conforms to the social face. This is a metaphoric reference to Nora's statement 'I'm taking off this fancy dress' in Act III showing how she is shedding the need to conform to the restrictions of a woman and their 'duty to your husband and children', it is important that these are roles dictated by men in showing the hierarchy of non-regional society. Nora's pious reply 'it does' to Helmer's 'you're dancing as though your life depended on it' foreshadows the ending of Act III where [the heavy sound of a door being slammed] is heard... which is a dramatic

a door being slammed is heard.] which is a dramatic device to show how Nora has escaped and Helmer is left in the lurch as Nora is finally the one to close the door.

Contextual factors are important in both plays; for example in ANS war profiteering is a key issue shown through Jim's utterance 'money, money - money - money - money' the repetition of the word turns it into almost a mantra which reveals the attitudes of Americans in the war of being totally absorbed by the profit they could gain. The repetition empties the word of its meaning by reducing it to thoughtless sound which implies that the deaths in the war were for nothing. Larry's death in the war is the reason

behind Kate's mental fragility; 'you can't explode this in front of her' is in keeping with the ~~the~~ plays convention of a tragedy by showing the damage George intends to do as retribution for Kate's wrong. Use of the word 'explode' shows the violent lexicon of the war invading ordinary life and hence its impact on the characters. ~~The~~ Deixis in Chris's utterance 'that kind of thing always pays off' shows his inability in reality to want to deal with his mother's delusion about Larry; 'pays off' introduced the idea of a debt which is particularly linked to society.

In ANS Ibsen play was so controversial that he was forced to write an alternative German ending which shows how the restrictions of the wider society extended far beyond his plays. Nora's utterance 'first and

Moreover, in an individual's backchannels Helmer's
lexis showing her gaining control and also implies
that social restriction is gender based through the
word 'individual' which has no gender. ~~Now~~ A
lexical field of a child's house is created 'Daddy's child',
'play-room', 'child-wife', children - 'my child' to
show how every area of the family is restricted even
in Nora's relationship with her children.

In conclusion the final suicide of Keller and Kate's uterine
'forget now. Live' with its mirror sentences implies

a final breaking away from Keller's restriction on her life.
Similarly in *ROM* Nora finds freedom through leaving
her family and children - in neither plays is the
result of the restrictive effects of the family without
cost. The playwrights use the setting, language, symbols
and contextual factors to condemn their contemporary
societies.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has demonstrated a consistently detailed and comparative approach to the task. S/he has analysed, evaluated and made incisive observations in an integrated and articulate manner.



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Examiner Tip

Select contextual material according to the demands of the question and try to link it to appropriate linguistic and generic features.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Think about the positioning of the audience of the unseen text, rather than making generalized comments about age or gender.
- Explore the effects created by linguistic or literary features.
- When reading through the unseen text, try to decide on the central theme (or idea) and use this as a basis for analysing the various techniques that a writer uses to convey his/her message.
- When answering the Section B question, try to use a wide range of linguistic terminology.
- When discussing plays, analyse the effects created by dramatic features (e.g. characterization, dialogue, stagecraft, and set).
- When discussing poetry, analyse the effects created by poetic features (e.g. form, rhyme, rhythm, imagery, voice).
- Make sure that contextual references are relevant to the question and closely linked to the texts.

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