

Examiners' Report  
January 2012

GCE English Literature 6ET01 01

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January 2012

Publications Code US030436

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## Introduction

6ET01 aims to test candidates' subject knowledge and skills. The unit applies Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 3 but it should be noted that AO3 appears only in Section B and is worth a total of only 20 of the 100 marks. So the emphasis is on AOs 1 and 2: this means that candidates are mostly being assessed for clarity and development of argument, application of literary terminology, and understanding of how writers' choices of language, form and structure affect meaning and the reader's response.

This January we saw much evidence that candidates had enjoyed their study of English Literature and had engaged keenly with their set texts. The excellence of many Section A scripts showed that candidates had also developed the ability to make observations about an unseen text and then develop those observations into perceptive points about the use and effect of a range of features used by writers.

Some candidates would benefit from better time-management and planning strategies, advice about which can be found at the end of this report. The vast majority, however, demonstrated considerable "grace under pressure", and some produced work that was hugely impressive in its substance and sophistication.

### Section A – Unseen Poetry and Prose

This part of the examination offers candidates a choice of response. Two unseen texts are set – one poem and one prose extract, followed by three short answer tasks. Candidates choose one or the other text to answer on. The question is worth 20 marks and assesses AO1 (10 marks overall) and AO2 (10 marks overall).

For AO1 examiners are looking for an exploratory approach to the writer's choice of language and the effects of these choices on the reader. We are happy to acknowledge literary points made even if the precise literary term is not used (e.g. 6 line stanza as opposed to sestet).

For AO2 examiners are looking for insightful comment on specific poetic or narrative methods and their effects.

Once again, the vast majority of the candidates opted to answer the questions on the unseen poem. We were able to differentiate a wide range of achievement from the responses received to both unseens. We are concerned to provide unseen material that is accessible to the whole candidature and, although the poem and prose passage provided challenges, they were considered to be accessible at a variety of levels.

It is expected that candidates will spend about 35 minutes on this section, so highly polished answers are not anticipated. Candidates should, however, avoid inappropriate colloquialisms such as "the overall vibe".

The answer booklet provides candidates with ample space for their answers. We did find that the most successful candidates were those who contained their answers within that space: their writing was concise and pertinent. Those candidates who wrote at greater length were often straying into repetition and irrelevance.

On the subject of repetition, it is worth reminding candidates that they should avoid duplicating material in their answers, e.g. making a point in the (a) answer and then making the same point again in (b) or (c). One way of avoiding this is to take a quick preview of the three questions before beginning to write: if the (a) question asks for comment on language choices and the (b) question is about the presentation or use of setting, then it would be wise to avoid commenting on the writer's choice of language for describing setting in the (a) answer.

## **Question 1**

The poem set was *How to Leave the World that Worships should* by Ros Barber. A sonnet about leaving behind the world of faxes, e-mails and deadlines, it clearly struck a chord with many of the candidates sitting in an examination room, and much of the response to the poem was heartfelt, insightful and, at times, inspired.

### **Question 1 (a)**

The instruction here was to discuss the use and effect of rhyme. The best way to do this is to write about the rhyme in this particular poem, not about rhyme in poetry in general. Many candidates were alert to the use of half-rhyme and this was useful in correctly identifying the rhyme scheme. Mere identification, however, will attain only a Band 1 mark. The best responses focused on what the rhyme *does* in the poem. Many candidates, for example, noted how the change in the rhyme scheme mirrored the change in the tone of the poem; others commented on the effect of the final couplet in bringing a sense of contented completion to the sonnet.

**Answer ALL parts of the question.**

- 1 Poetry: Read Text A on page 2 of the Source Booklet and answer the following questions.

There are a number of key features that we bear in mind when we consider poetry.

- (a) Rhyme is often considered to be an important feature in poetry.

Discuss the use and effect of rhyme in this poem.

(AO1 = 5)

In the first stanza of this poem, rhyme is used in an irregular fashion. The poet uses half rhymes such as 'shelves' and 'else' and words which have no rhyming partners at all, as well as full rhymes such as 'sleep' and 'sheep'. This conveys the meaning of the stanza, how in breaking the monotonous routine of commercial life, we will begin to find reason and clarity, as described in the second stanza. This stanza has a regular rhyme scheme of ABABCC, and expresses feelings of clarity, understanding and the natural world in opposition to the manmade problems which we are faced with. This regularity of rhyme makes the reader feel more comfortable with the second stanza, a persuasive technique from the writer to 'leave the ~~the~~ world that worships should'.



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Examiner Comments

1(a) This candidate has gone beyond identification of rhyme to make a number of good specific points about the use and effects of rhyme in this poem. This is a secure Band 2 response.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

1(a) Be specific. Look at some examples of rhyme in the poem and focus your answer on how they are being used and what effect they have. Remember that there are a number of possibilities: it is not about getting the "right" answer.

## Question 1 (b)

Candidates here were asked to explore the effects of two examples of imagery. The best answers did precisely that. Some candidates complicated the task by ranging across several images in a rather general way, perhaps because there were so many images to choose from. But clarity and focus are important qualities here and the most successful candidates made a clear selection of two images and analysed how each one worked. Some linked their two choices but this was not necessary for a high mark. Most candidates are familiar with imagery but some limited their attainment by truncating the image, e.g. "burst and flash like fireworks", and some offered only vague comment, e.g. "It enables the reader to visualise what the poet is writing about." There was, however, widespread knowledge of metaphors and similes; of the latter, many candidates wrote with insight about the e-mail image, with perceptive comment on the effect of "panicked" and "tiny". By homing in on individual words like this, candidates can attain a better mark.

(b) Poets often make use of imagery.

Using **two** examples from the poem, explore the effect of imagery.

(AO2 = 5)

Ros Barber has written this poem to be full of imagery. The imagery of 'deadlines burst [ing] and flash [ing] like glorious fireworks' gives the reader a sense of how the urgency of the deadline builds similarly to the way fireworks build up energy before they are fired, and how 'glorious' it will be when they are ignored. Another interesting piece of imagery used is that of when 'distant drivers queue like sheep.' This gives the reader the impression that the narrative voice considers people who sit in traffic jams as mindless, and uses this simile to dehumanise them, as sheep follow each other around without thought. The ~~persona~~<sup>poet also</sup> uses imagery to personify phones 'ringing themselves to sleep', a pun on the word 'sing' making the phones out to be (imitate) childlike.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

1(b) This response scored 5 marks without the third image! The candidate quotes each image in full and goes straight to the task of exploring the language in each and explaining the effect.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

1(b) Only two examples are required but quote them fully and then look at how specific words create the image and its effect.

## Question 1 (c)

There has clearly been some effective teaching about the "voice" of a poem. The vast majority of candidates knew exactly what was meant by the term and how to analyse it. There were many good descriptions of the voice, such as, "at once authoritative and soothing"; but a key quality here was the ability to suggest how the language, form and structure of the poem created the voice. The poet's choice of the repeated imperative "Let", and the direct second person address in the sestet, were often combined with insightful comments on language choices.

(c) In poetry, voice is created in different ways.

Using your knowledge of poetry, comment on the voice in this poem and the ways in which it is developed.

(AO1 = 5, AO2 = 5)

In this poem, the <sup>form and</sup> structure tells us much of the voice. It is written in sonnet form, traditional as there are 8 lines then 6. The iambic pentameter also gives the reader a view <sup>of</sup> ~~into~~ the voice. The <sup>iambic</sup> pentameter gives the poem a conversational tone, and sonnet form makes the reader see that this is written to help them, as

traditionally, the sonnet is the structure of a love poem. The voice encourages the reader to break from the mould, and to ~~open~~ find sanctuary in the natural world, the 'sky', the 'air', the 'waves'. These are all ~~perfect~~ <sup>receptive</sup> images, they juxtapose with the 'fireworks' and 'emails fly[ing] like panicked, tiny birds'. This relaxation is also supported by the instruction to 'breathe'. This imperative is used to command the reader to stop for a few moments and appreciate the meaning. The fact that the 'sky' carries a message in 'telegram' form shows a harking back to previous life, perhaps when things were less hectic. Although the sky is 'wordless' it is 'immense' and 'understood' - the sky is telling the reader to be who they are and to cast away the chains of manmade life. However, there is a chilling undertone, the poem never once breaks from the iambic pentameter. Perhaps this means that the reader will never be totally free, constricted to the forming rhyme scheme and regular meter. They will ~~be~~ always be conforming in some way.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

1(c) The candidate explores how the voice is created in a number of ways: through the poem's metre, language and grammatical choices. It is well written with appropriate use of terminology.

## Question 2

The prose extract set was from *The Moon and Sixpence* by W. Somerset Maugham. Although it did not elicit the passionate responses that we saw to the poem, there were nevertheless some excellent answers.

### Question 2 (a)

The question on language offered candidates something of a carte blanche but there emerged definite favourites in the words and phrases chosen for comment, such as "desolation", "unearthly silence" and "sickly sweet smell". Candidates who wrote in detail on these had to be careful not to repeat themselves in responding to 2(b). Many candidates chose the simple word "it" given to Ata in reference to her dead child, and there was comment on the animal-like picture of Ata rendered by the word "haunches".

2 Prose: Read Text B on page 3 of the Source Booklet and answer the following questions.

(a) Novelists use language choices to create interest.

Identify and comment on the effect of the writer's use of language choices in this extract.

(AO1 = 5)

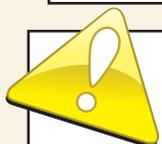
The first sentence of this passage is: 'Everywhere was desolation.' The reader is immediately drawn to the word 'desolation' as it creates an image of despair which sets the tone of the extract. The bush is described as 'encroaching' which suggests that nature the power of nature which could also be referring to the fatal disease of leprosy that Strickland is suffering from. The word 'snatched' is used to describe how the people obtained the land which suggests conflict between man and nature, which could again be referring to the disease that the man has and representing the power that nature has over man. All this creates a slightly mysterious ambience which interests the reader as the outcome is unknown. Near the end of the extract the writer comments on the woman's expression: 'Then at last she smiled.' The word 'smiled' is significant as it contrasts to the previous language of despair and melancholy and sets a new tone of potential hope.



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Examiner Comments

2(a) The candidate homes in on a number of specific words and writes perceptively about their meaning and effect. The only drawback is that the examples chosen tend to be about setting and they are used again in the candidate's response to (b) limiting attainment in that question.



**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Tip

You won't get credit for repeating the same points, so have a quick look at all of the questions before you begin your answers and avoid using material in (a) that might be more relevant to (b) or (c).

### **Question 2 (b)**

The instruction here was to identify and comment on the use of setting in the extract. Attention to the precise wording of the task is always important and many candidates here limited their mark by merely writing about how the setting was created, offering nothing about its use by Maugham.

### **Question 2 (c)**

Candidates responded enthusiastically to the richness of theme in the extract, although at times the meaning of "theme" was applied too loosely. Death, isolation, illness and love were all popular choices, and there were many excellent commentaries on the shift in our perception of Ata as her initial hostility towards the doctor is replaced by the expression of her "superhuman love" for Strickland.

## **Question 3**

### **Section B - Poetry**

In this section AOs 1, 2 and 3 are applied. We are looking for candidates to show a knowledge and understanding of at least two poems from their studied selection, and to demonstrate the ability to make connections between them in a clear argument that responds to a given proposition.

There was an overall solidity of knowledge and purpose, with most candidates showing engagement with the poems and familiarity with the elements of literary study. A noticeable few structured their answers around poetic effects, the first paragraph imagery, the second alliteration, and so on. This approach, clearly with AO2 in mind, often made it difficult to construct an argument sufficiently coherent to score highly on AO1; some focused so intently on effects that the subject matter of the poem became very misty indeed. Of course, AO3 is the dominant AO in this section: candidates could to a great extent meet the requirement to show understanding “of different interpretations by other readers” by sustaining their response to the proposition. The other strand of AO3, connecting the poems, is normally handled with skill. There were few candidates who wrote about one poem and then the other without attempting to make connections.

### Question 3 (a)

Responses were generally focused and appreciative. MacNeice, Sweeney and Edward Thomas made regular appearances, suggesting that candidates are marrying poem to question with care. Candidates appeared to enjoy responding to this question, many exploring home as a concept as well as a physical location. Lower band answers tended to work through an accumulation of examples of poetic technique, without any attempt to pull these together in an argument, or make a comparison of texts. Some candidates identified techniques, but either moved quickly on or made very broad comments. Some candidates seemed to be reworking essays on loneliness or death with just a nod to "survival". It is worth remembering that a sharp, consistent focus on the terms of the proposition will help candidates to develop a relevant argument for AO1 and show understanding of interpretations by other readers for AO3.

### Question 3 (b)

Candidates who looked at contrasts *between* as well as *within* poems tended to attain the higher bands for AO3. There seemed to be a fairly even balance in numbers of responses selecting each of the named texts as a starting point for discussion, with appropriate selection of additional poems. Some stronger responses successfully explored terms from the proposition ("effective use", "most successful", "better emphasise"). The concept of the use of contrast proved a little tricky at times. Better answers began by clearly defining the areas of contrast, e.g. outdoors/indoors, adults/children, death/survival.

CONTRAST	WHAT MAKES HOME IMPORTANT		
Plan:	Lang	Form	Stru
Charles Lamb	'Ghoul-like... round the haunts' of his childhood' → connection to the dead and lost → home was important.	contrast past participle 'had' → delves into the past → draws parallel with present	'caesura' → see what he missed. Had, had not
I remember, I remember.	alliteration in my spirit 'pleas in the leathies then'	Form. → rhyme scheme 'ABAB ABCBDEE' → half-rhyme 'son' 'jest'	two ideologies.

Both Charles Lamb in 'The Old Familiar Faces' and Thomas Hood in 'I remember, I remember remember' grieve the loss of their childhood home. Lamb portrays himself as a lonely and heartbroken man, reminiscing through old, joyous memories that have now come to pass. Therefore he makes a contrast between his adolescent home that held excitement, to his home now: a desolate wasteland. Hood also makes a contrast between his home at present and his home now, again, increasing the grief he feels; mourning happier times.

Hood uses alliteration when describing how his 'spirits flew in the



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**Examiner Comments**

Focus is immediately established here on the use of "contrast". At the same time, the two chosen poems are already being compared. It is a sound, clear opening.



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**Examiner Tip**

It was obvious in marking this script that the time spent by the candidate in drawing up a brief plan was time well spent.

## Question 4 (a)

The approach to the proposition was a discriminator here. A significant number of responses struggled with the notion of poems being "terribly innocent or even naïve" and instead wrote about the "innocence" of Nature; lack of clarity about the terms then limited discussion and exploration. Other candidates felt obliged to find evidence of poets being naïve or innocent in unlikely places, which again posed problems with relevant discussions. Better answers were structured clearly to make a comparative discussion of two poems, e.g. Beeny Cliff and Poplars, considering how aspects of naivety and innocence might or might not be displayed through attitudes to nature, use of language, form and structure.

I don't think that poems about land are innocent and naïve. "After Reading a Letter Proposals for Building a Cottage" is a seemingly innocent and idealistic poem about a perfect cottage. However, the poem <sup>reveals a darkness in its presentation of humanity</sup> is not ~~totally innocent~~. "Beeny Cliff" starts off as an innocent and naïve poem but in the final two stanzas this innocence has gone due to the death of Hardy's wife. "As the Team's Head Brass" is a poem with a rather an innocent first appearance but with a second meaning. ~~which suggests~~ "Proposals for Building a Cottage" begins very innocently; and "Beside a tunnel build my bed, With stubbles covered o'er."

The language here is simple and the rhyme 'a.b.a.b' rhyme scheme is too. This reflects the simplicity of ~~the~~ Clare's vision. All he wants is simple and natural things; "Let Broad oaks o'er its chimney spread." ~~the~~ The poet uses alliteration of 'w' sounds ~~to~~ which sound soft and lyrical; "I love the sparrow's ways to watch" Also the sparrow here represents the innocence and simplicity of this poem. Each line is short and

imagery was of jewels which were not eternal and the nature reflects his bitterness of this.

'As the *Trams Head-Brass*" contains the seemingly innocent image of the "fallen elm" which is like the natural "oak" images in Clare's poem. However, this elm has "fallen". This poem was written about the war and this tree could symbolise the soldiers. This poem is the only one of the three which contains dialogue. ~~marks~~ therefore the feeling of natural innocence is dispelled by the war symbols such as the "horse" and even the "brass flashed" could symbolise the shot of a gun or flash of a knife.

All three poems have an air of innocence but ~~more~~ when you look closer at the <sup>devices</sup> ~~symbolism~~ used, ~~and~~ their innocence and naivety are replaced by foreboding or even the bitterness of losing a loved one.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The first and last pages of this candidate's response show a firm grasp of the issues raised in the question's proposition. By discussing the poems in relation to the terms of the proposition, the candidate was able to construct an interesting argument (AO1) that responded to another reader's interpretation (AO3) while comparing (AO3) the poets' use of language, form and structure (AO2).



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Carefully read the proposition that precedes the task and make sure that you have understood exactly what it is saying.

## Question 4 (b)

Frost was a popular choice here: his demotic accessibility coupled with his craftsmanship and thematic richness seems to bring out the best in candidates. Higher band scripts included confident exploration of various types of "larger truth", supported by a range of textual reference. The term "obsessive" was sometimes problematic, especially for responses in the lower bands but there were some lively counter-arguments, including one which concluded: "If anyone is to blame for an obsessive search for a larger truth it is the reader who analyses every feature of the poem to the point where one sometimes forgets to enjoy the poem for what it essentially is."

As well as connoting philosophical and inner thoughts, ~~the~~ 'Desert Places' and 'Crossing the Water' also suggest ~~an~~ emotion and a lack of emotion which both speakers experience directly. Robert Frost describes the snow, using pathetic fallacy which truly represents the speaker's feelings: 'A blanker-expression of benighted snow

With no expression, nothing to express.'

Strong, positive adjectives, 'blanker' and 'benighted' clothe the snow with characterful detail; perhaps Frost feels that land deserves recognition; it reflects the soul. This emphasis on 'expressionless' snow ~~ref~~ suggests the speaker's ~~most~~ isolation from the world - disconnected from himself and his emotions, he feels like he has 'nothing to express'. The repetition of the idea 'expression' gives the snow a meaning into which the speaker finds a sense of his own thoughts - he cannot feel any joy or love, and is almost 'numbed' by the snow and by the world, causing him to reflect inwardly into his soul's emotionless state.

'Crossing the Water' also suggests a feeling of fear and isolation: 'The spirit of blackness is in us, it is in the fishes.

A snag is lifting a valedictory, pale hand;'

The speaker connects herself with the colour 'black'. This 'blackness' suggests, fear, death, and absence of life. Plath feels like death has invaded and polluted her mind and emotions, reflecting the imagery

of water's spread and the 'black' shadows of trees. The 'valedictory, pale hand' is ominous; it infers that something unknown and evil is guiding the boat towards death. The adjective 'valedictory' ~~is ambiguous as~~ suggests the power and victory



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Examiner Comments

There is a real sense of exploration here, rooted in textual detail. The candidate has the confidence to offer various possibilities of interpretation.



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Examiner Tip

Words like "perhaps" and "suggest" are indicative of an exploratory approach. Through your own use of language, try to show a spirit of inquiry in your approach to the texts.

## Question 5 (a)

Larkin featured heavily here, often with both the Toad poems. Baillie was also prominent in responses that supported the proposition while Hughes and Sisson were often used to challenge it. The open nature of this question enabled candidates to select a range of poems as a starting point for discussion. There were some interesting and textually well-grounded explorations that went beyond simply demonstrating work to be bearable or not. There were also some informed discussions this year on *The Chimney Sweep*, although a few candidates still missed Blake's ironic intent. At least one otherwise competent essay failed to make the leap between comment and exploration by quoting relevant examples of imagery without developing the point made: "The respect created in *Father* is stimulated by the use of a metaphor - 'Shabby and powerful as an old bus'." This was not followed through by any analysis of how this effect is created.

to bond: 'The old and young, the weak and strong', everybody takes part in work. However, in 'The Chimney Sweeper' Blake portrays work as the doom for the young children and likewise the first line sets the tone: 'When my mother died I was very young'. This creates an ~~idea~~<sup>essence</sup> of foreboding and reinforces the fact that work for the young children is unbearable. Also, the repetition of 'weep' could in part symbolise 'sweep' which is what the children do continuously rather than having a stable childhood. 'Hay Making' differs to this greatly and shows how even the children take part and play a role in their bearable work which is the source of the community's happiness: 'A troop of children o'er the lawn', the children are

coming with lunch for the more physical workers and this brings great relief and glee to the older people. Although the people work very hard and are tired by lunch, they are still plucky in their attitude to work, and ultimately happy. In contrast, the attitude to work



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### Examiner Comments

This candidate is making clear and developed points about the differences in the portrayal of children at work.



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### Examiner Tip

Contrasts are indicated at the start of each paragraph: "However", "differs to this greatly", "In contrast".

## Question 5 (b)

Candidates generally wrote confidently and with interest about the physical aspect of work. Higher band answers were able to move confidently between texts, supporting discussion with a range of detailed reference. There was evidence of good preparation, again with some sound appreciation of *The Chimney Sweep*, some contrasting the misery of the sweeps with the mood and vigour of the sheepshearers in Paterson's poem.

"Poets can seem to suggest that work which involves physical exertion is the best and most honest kind".

- Haymaking
- *The Chimney Sweeper*
- *The Forge*

Baillie's "Haymaking" depicts an ~~off~~ idyllic agricultural scene ~~that~~ heavily influenced by ~~the~~ Romanticism. The farming community hard at work are free from encroaching industrialisation, and their harvest merits them all. Whereas this scene presents work as a wholesome, unifying experience, Blake's "Chimney Sweeper" carries a thinly-veiled outrage at the treatment of children in Victorian Britain. Their forced labour, and the religiosity of those who romanticised them at the time, are abrasively attacked in a masterful social commentary. "The Forge" is Seamus Heaney's <sup>simultaneous</sup> celebration of the blacksmith's ancient art, and a justification for his choice to leave his family's long-standing tradition of manual labour to become a poet. He elevates and praises the smith's work in order to compare the ~~two~~ seemingly disparate professions.

"Haymaking" is a full-on celebration of the old English rural lifestyle. Written in blank verse, set in personae and suffused with archaic language - "bedight"..."athwart"... "swathway" - it presents manual work as a gift, a unifying experience which



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Examiner Comments

Although Blake's "The Chimney Sweeper" is incorrectly set in Victorian Britain, this overview of the three poems is effective in establishing the candidate's strategy for answering the question. The strategy is a good one of discussing poems that present both sides of the argument.



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Examiner Tip

Getting the choice of poems right is a big step towards a successful answer. Don't feel that you have to agree with the proposition

## **Question 6 (a)**

### **Section C - Prose**

In this section, only AOs 1 and 2 are applied, with AO2 dominant, so we are looking for candidates to show a grasp of the language and narrative methods used by authors. This should be done within a clear and developed argument that maintains a focus on the given proposition.

Understanding of the text as construct was almost universal. The novels had evidently elicited engaged responses, and the vast majority of candidates were making more or less developed comments on the purposeful choices of the authors. We do advise candidates who take the b) option that using the prescribed extract as a starting point really does give their response a sharper focus.

This was the more popular choice, one which might have taken candidates by surprise, but virtually none dismissed the prompt and stuck comfortably to the women. While there was an element of scrolling mechanically through the characters in lower band answers, there was also much evidence of creative thinking on the hoof, as it were, and probably the most successful treatments considered the male characters as influences on Jane's development. Overall, candidates demonstrated enjoyment and engagement in responding to this question, supporting discussion with appropriate reference. A few candidates were diverted into a discussion of male/female relationships in the historical context at the expense of close focus on the texts. Several potentially good answers devoted so much time to discussing John Reed that they were clearly truncated when it came to discussing Rochester and St John, and sometimes failed to include the second text at all. Just as it is important for candidates to manage their time in the examination as a whole, it is also important to make sound judgements in balancing the time spent on various parts of a question.

"The Main Interest of this novel is to be found in its Male Characters." Explore the methods which writers use to present their characters.

Throughout "Jane Eyre", the feelings and actions of the male characters are explored in depth, particularly in relation to their treatment of female characters. This is also true of "Wide Sargasso Sea", which offers a more personal insight into Rochester's character by using a first person narrative.

One of the most striking examples of male violence and repression is on page 13 of "Jane Eyre". After the young John Reed "strikes" Jane, he states "... You are a dependent... you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg..." Here, John is asserting his position of authority, and is a symbol of male patriarchal power, repressing Jane because she is "dependent" on the good will of others, due to her position as a female orphan, with no inheritance. He goes on to say "I'll teach you to message my bookshelves:

for they are mine; all the house belongs to me", further reinforcing his position of entitlement because, regardless of age, he is a male heir.

Jane's response to John's attack is that she was "accustomed to John Reed's abuse", which shows the submissive and subservient position of women in relation to men, and implies this behaviour is normal. After Jane verbally cries out "You are like the Roman emperors...", she is chastised

by Mrs. Reed and described as a "fury", a word traditionally associated with women to depict them as inhuman, bestial figures. The description "four hands were immediately laid upon me, and I was borne upstairs", particularly the word "borne", dehumanises Jane and portrays her as cargo, or a slave. This is an example of how male oppression of women is so ingrained into Victorian society, that patriarchal values are also upheld by women, here, by Mrs. Reed. The labelling of Jane as a "fury" and her incarceration in the Red Room, a symbol of patriarchal constraint, is foreshadowing of Rochester's imprisonment of Bertha, whom he labels as "Mad".

Another figure of male oppression is Mr. Brocklehurst. He is described as a "tall black pillar", a public symbol of patriarchal power. His violence is institutional; he uses the Bible, and written word and law, to repress women and deny them of human rights. On page 74, he states,

"... My plan in bringing up these girls is... to render them hardy, patient, self-denying." This statement, particularly "self-denying", is analogous of the male desire to repress fiery passion and emotion in women, to gain control. He goes on to state "I have a Master to serve who is not of this world", an example of men hiding behind written word, and manipulating authoritative texts like the Bible, as an excuse to oppress women.

Where men are unable to exert control, they

become overwhelmed, and either flee, or create some forced form of control. In "Wide Sargasso Sea", Rochester is unable to control the passion and sexual "fire" of Antoinette. The transition into Rochester's narrative in part 2 is in itself a silencing of Antoinette, it feels like an intrusion. Rochester's narrative here is riddled with feelings of being oppressed and overwhelmed. He laments like "everything is too much", "extreme green", and "brilliantly coloured, very strange" express Rochester's feeling of suffocation in the West Indies, in contrast to the ordered, moderate climate and society of Europe. Rochester's disorientation is also crystallized on p.66. He is walking through forest, and imagines he sees a "paved road". This image of the road shows how the wilderness is alien to Rochester, and he imagines a return to ~~the~~ civilization and order. The fact he "does not recognise Baptiste at first" shows how he is losing his sense of reality, becoming delirious.

In "Jane Eyre", when we first encounter



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**Examiner Comments**

In the first three pages of this script, which scored full marks, the candidate brings in the second text almost straight away to help establish the argument; then brings it in again on page three to develop a point. The commentary on male characters is analytical with plenty of textual detail.



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**Examiner Tip**

As you plan your response, think of two or three points where you could use your second text to develop the argument.

### Question 6 (b)

There were considerably fewer responses to 6b than to 6a. Lower band answers struggled with the concept of "narrative voice", asserting its presence rather than exploring ways in which writers create it. This was a particularly good example of the point made above, that candidates do need to follow the instruction to use the prescribed extract as a starting point for discussion.

Jane Eyre was originally published as an autobiography. Therefore, the fact that it is narrated ~~in the~~ so retrospectively in the first person was incredibly important to Brontë. ~~Therefore the~~ The separation between the adult narrator Jane and Jane as a child, or young woman, is ~~extremely~~ highly instrumental in creating a more credible atmosphere around the story of the bildungsroman of a girl gaining maturity as she passes the various trials in her life. However, whether the narrative voice makes the novel "striking" is debatable. It would perhaps be more apt to describe the effect of the narrative voice as making the novel more believable, and therefore more intriguing for the reader.

During the extract, ~~the~~ the narrator directly addresses the reader twice, even asking the reader the rhetorical question, "You have not quite forgotten little Adèle, have you, reader?". This direct address happens many times in the novel, but far more frequently towards the end. This reminds the reader ~~that~~ of the separation between Jane as the retrospective narrator and ~~Jane~~ the younger Jane, as well as anticipating the end of the novel. The sense of closure created here by the



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Examiner Comments

After establishing the argument in the first paragraph, this candidate goes to the prescribed extract which immediately gives the argument a sharper focus.



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Examiner Tip

Use the prescribed extract at the start to get your argument up and running. Then you can move on to look at other parts of the texts

## Question 7 (a)

Many responses to Brighton Rock showed a good level of engagement and anatomised the ambivalence in the representation of Pinkie. Candidates were generally comfortable in addressing the notion of "the criminal mind", but exploration of authorial method was a key differentiating factor. One included some interesting comment on the use of foils, e.g. Spicer, which defines Pinkie through his treatment of him. Most of the better essays used A Clockwork Orange as the second text. Some of those using Lies of Silence found it difficult to identify clearly aspects of the criminal mind as presented in the novel.

the perspective Greene writes in, the reader can see he doesn't quite believe it himself due to the hesitation in his mind: ' - a man'.

Similarly, Burgess writes 'A Clockwork Orange' from the perspective of Alex. Before undergoing the ~~techniques~~ techniques of Dr Brodsky, Alex likes, to many readers horror, to see pain-infliction and blood: 'then out comes the blood, my brothers, real beautiful'. The depiction of Alex's mind ~~relays~~ <sup>relays</sup> to the reader of the undistinguishable evil and lack of moral sense Alex has, which easily relates to Pinkie who is selfish and has no understanding of socially acceptable behaviour.

Largely through setting and events, Greene is able to portray Pinkie, and the whole gang's, criminal mind. For example when Pinkie and Spicer are on the pier, apart from the pathetic yallow perhaps incriminating foreshadowing and doom, the way Pinkie 'carries' the

vitriol bottle shows clear evil roots: 'one hand holding Rose's ~~area~~, the other ~~up~~ on the vitriol bottle in his pocket'; his mind is twisted; criminal Alex, in 'A Clockwork Orange', is also subject to setting in order to relate to thoughts and feelings. After Alex escapes and



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**Examiner Comments**

This candidate's commentary focuses effectively on the authorial methods used by Greene and Burgess to present the criminal mind. It is also a good example of how to use the second text to develop the argument.



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**Examiner Tip**

Remember that for Section C, AO2 is dominant, so make sure that your argument considers the authors' use of language and narrative methods.

## Question 7 (b)

The direct invitation of the task here led to quite thorough discussions of the writer's craft. Higher band answers responded enthusiastically to the invitation to use the extract as a starting point, balancing discussion of authorial technique and reader interest while ranging across both texts for detailed reference. Weaker responses tended either to focus almost entirely on the extract or ignore it. Some answers piled up examples of imagery and symbolism without clear connecting arguments. Many candidates were well-informed, however, and able to discuss the contributions of selected examples to the novel's success. Again, the more successful answers were those using *A Clockwork Orange*, although some very good candidates connected Moira's desire for status to that of Pinkie, and commented on the symbolism of the "dark currents of the river". Some good analysis was made of the Garden of Eden reference in the venom of the vitriol and the snake-like connotations of the hissing bottle.

The "romantic tune" is symbolic of Pinkie's hatred for love and his "bitter virginity". By using the word "venom" Greene is symbolising The Garden of Eden. The Boy is the venomous snake who is tempting Eve (Rose) to bring down all of mankind, in Rose's case just ruin her life along with others. This symbolism interests the reader as it creates understanding and meaning.

'A Clockwork Orange' is less symbolic than 'Brighton Rock' but Burgess does use imagery to enthrall its readers. The dystopian novel highlights immense violence and Burgess describes it in such a way that horrifying images occur: "that made the old veck start moaning a lot then, then out comes the blood, my brothers, real beautiful". By using Alex as the first-person narrator the reader gets to be at the front of the action the whole time. This gives the reader an immense amount of imagery and interest. Alex describes the whole violent scene in order including every detail, this is shown through the repetition of "then". The blood is described as "real beautiful" so the reader gets the image that there is a lot of bright red, oozing blood. By giving every detail of the situation the reader is able to imagine it very clearly in their minds. This makes the novel enthralling.

Greene uses symbolism and imagery from the very beginning of his novel: "(he) shone his face to the crowd as it uncoiled endlessly past him, like a twisted piece of wire, two by two". Fred is in danger and is being hunted down. Greene uses snake imagery to enhance the danger Fred's in



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

There is some close examination here of how Greene and Burgess create imagery and symbolism, and sound comment on effect. This means that the writer's craft is being discussed in detail, with evaluation of its success in engaging the reader.



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Examiner Tip

Be evaluative. The propositions that precede the task do mostly offer an evaluative judgement to which you are invited to respond.

## Question 8 (a)

There was thoughtful and focused consideration of the way the themes of *Pride and Prejudice* are pertinent to a modern reader. The best answers began by clarifying the concept of timelessness but varying degrees of sophistication emerged in addressing the notion. A few candidates interpreted "timeless" as "time-flies-when-you're-enjoying-a-novel"; others tried to build an essay around the idea of the novel being timeless because the action occurs on different days. These candidates did inevitably limit themselves. Candidates at all levels attempted to maintain focus on narrative method.

The term 'timeless' will be chiefly explored in two ways in this essay: firstly, with reference to chronological time, and secondly, with regards to the 'timelessness' of the themes discussed in both Austen's '*Pride and Prejudice*' and Fowles's '*The French Lieutenant's Woman*'.

The use of chronological time in Austen's novel is distinctly linear, meaning that time flows in the traditional, one-way fashion as in reality. The conventional passage of time, as readers are used to, allow readers to immerse themselves fully in Austen's world, feeling as if they follow her characters through their lives as it progresses. This is aided by the fact that we have Elizabeth as the novel's main focaliser: we follow her 'story' throughout\*, and so commiserate and identify closely with her, allowing us to further immerse ourselves in her world. We are privy to her innermost thoughts, as in "She read, with an eagerness which hardly left her power of comprehension, and from impatience of knowing what the next sentence might bring". Evidently, we are given glimpses into her mind, and are made aware of her

emotions and reasons for them. This reinforces the feeling that readers have that we are there, next to her, a silent and invisible participant in the linear course of events. The novel, and its events, feel real to us, and in being something that we feel a part of, allows us to identify with it regardless of the period in which we read it. To readers, there seems to be little difference between now and a hundred years ago; we understand and know what is going on, and so the novel appeals regardless of the very obvious societal differences present in the novel compared to today.

In contrast, chronological time in Fowles's 'The French Lieutenant's Woman' is far from linear. While it certainly begins that way, readers are nonetheless repeatedly prevented from fully immersing themselves into the world that Fowles constructs — there are constant reminders of the differences in time periods: "After all, it was only 1867.", "the future of the aeroplane, the jet engine, television, radar". Fowles's continuous mention of clearly chronologically displaced items prevents readers from being drawn too far into Charles's world, affording readers emotional distance from characters. The lack of a main focaliser also augments this 'reader-distance'.

Despite Charles being the character that we are granted the most insight to, much of this insight is clear authorial comment, as in: "Laziness was, I am afraid,

Charles's distinguishing trait." These authorial comments prevent readers from forming any close emotional bonds to Charles (or any other character), and hence affords readers the knowledge and constant reminder that they are reading a novel set in the Victorian period. Though readers know that the setting of Austen's 'Pride and Prejudice' differs very much from their society, the lack of chronological 'jamming' of sorts, à la Fowler, allows the illusion of <sup>chronological</sup> timelessness. ~~that he bars from the start, yet~~ ~~despite the~~

Beyond simply examining the chronological sequences of both novels with regards to timelessness and the 'timeless' quality of novels, let us now look at the issues that the novels discuss. Both novels touch upon the issues of <sup>economic</sup> class difference, social class differences and gender inequality. The issues raised are all entirely relevant even today, and allows us as readers to identify with them. That being said, both novels raise the above issues in very different ways, which will now be explored.

Austen mainly touches on ideas of gender inequality and social class differences in her text. She advocates the idea that women are free to choose their own husbands (as in Chapter 19, where Elizabeth rejects Collins), and that women should be able to inherit (implicitly, through Collins as well). These issues are raised on a 'small scale', brought up within the context of family, and hence are made to seem like very 'personal' matters. Readers take strong personal stances on these issues because of

this, and hastily identify with the issues at hand. The issues raised, chiefly communicated through Elizabeth, are 'taken in' by the reader as 'theirs', and with these issues still existing today, make the novel seem timeless.

The timeless quality of 'the French Lieutenant's Woman' is a little more elusive. Because we are never allowed to fully commiserate and identify with Charles, the issues that he faces — social roles, identity (defining yourself — seem more distant to us. Fowles also describes them in broader contexts, frequently referencing 'Disraeli' and 'Gladstone', thrusting many issues onto a national, larger scale. Readers are aware that ideas raised apply to society at large (rather than the microcosmic view of *Pride and Prejudice*), and extend beyond the individual. Ideas and arguments ~~to~~ put forward are also loftier — Fowles frequently mentions existentialism and other social theories — which, as readers know, are beyond a single character. Fowles's issues seem to be like an umbrella over society, versus Austen's toothpick umbrella in a martini glass. Despite this, Fowles's issues are a great deal closer to home and more 'modern' in outlook; readers readily accept and identify with it, ~~regardless~~. The unanswered enigma that is Sarah just as effectively conveys timelessness as the intelligence ~~and~~ ~~and~~ we see through Elizabeth's.

Elizabeth's "intelligent eyes" that we get to see out from allow the sense of timelessness; as previously elaborated on, we feel closer to her and identify with her despite the knowledge that she 'lives' over a century in the past. Sarah's gaze, the key unsolved puzzle in Fowles's novel, does this as effectively. The unsolved mystery keeps readers from all periods guessing and asking, searching for answers long after the novel ends. In this way, the novel is indeed timeless.

As we have seen, 'timeless' can be conveyed in a variety of ways. Austen's novel succeeds because of her ability to immerse her readers in the world she conjures, regardless of era or period in which it is read. The issues of gender and social class that she raises are also perennial ones, and ones that we as readers closely identify with. Her characters are relatable and close to our hearts, 'people' that we can relate to, and understand and feel for even through the years. In contrast, Fowles's emotional distancing of reader and character, as well as his raising of great social issues and debates are all very much in contrast to Austen's methods, but nevertheless is equally 'timeless' (despite breaks in chronology). Though both novels are extremely different, both possess timeless qualities. Austen's realist novel, particularly, stands out for effectively capturing her reader and drawing them into

the world she has created. She does so through her characterisation and use of setting; her descriptions of setting in particular ("Pemberley House, situated on the other side of the valley", "large, handsome, stone building") provide readers with ~~stuat~~ contextual realism — in being able to 'see' the environs that the characters are in, readers feel more like a part of it.

In conclusion, Austen's success is indeed her novel's timelessness, despite the varied methods that we can see where this timeless quality can be elicited as well, as in Fowler's 'The French Lieutenant's Woman'.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

In this response, which scored full marks, the candidate begins by defining the key term in the proposition. This sets up a very interesting response to the proposition



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It isn't always necessary to define the key terms of the proposition but certainly by addressing them you ensure that your response is focused right from the start.

## Question 8 (b)

Many candidates supported the notion that *Pride and Prejudice* is "rooted in the female world" but rejected the notion that only women can enjoy presentations of femininity, insisting that the core themes of the novel – such as marriage and the difficulty of moral judgement – are universal. Some candidates let socio-historical context get in the way of literary criticism. There were some heartfelt essays, some a little tongue in cheek, from those who clearly had not much enjoyed *Pride and Prejudice* and felt strongly that it was a book only women could enjoy. This was perfectly valid, but candidates often struggled to demonstrate its validity by detailed reference to the text, omitting focus on narrative method. Some responses were merely extended personal opinion – "this novel is all about women having fun and that is all they do" – with little sense of the construction of a critical essay on literature. There were some strong counter arguments: "the growth and development of Darcy and Elizabeth and their relationship is arguably more important and interesting than how certain females behave in the novel." Higher band answers adopted a balanced approach, taking advantage of the freedom for exploration offered by the question as a whole.

In the novel 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen, the significance of ~~the~~ the female attitude is explored in depth throughout. In the section ~~from~~ from pages 35 to 37, the influence of women and the significance of the female world is exposed, ~~however~~ however arguably it is the action of the men in this section which adds to the narrative and thematic aspects of the novel, ~~thus~~ thus appealing to a wider audience. ~~Similarly~~ Similarly, while the narrative of the novella 'The Yellow Wallpaper' is based in the mind of the female narrator, it is not so much based on the femininity than the loss of sanity, this again appealing to an audience much wider than simply women; its deep exploration of dark themes can be relevant to a widespread audience.

In the extract, we are exposed to the views of Miss Bringley and Miss Hurst, and become hugely aware of their misjudgement ~~and~~ and prejudiced attitudes. Austen uses vocabulary suggesting a profoundly prejudiced and negative attitude - 'she has nothing, in short, to recommend her' - not only to add to the theme of misjudgement,

but also to further their own characterisation; they are continuously portrayed as being judgemental and ~~jealous~~ <sup>jealous</sup>. Thus Austen uses their speech, and severely judgemental attitudes, to further the narrative. Similarly, there is a strong sense of misjudgement in the novel 'The Yellow Wallpaper', but this time it is based upon the actions of the male in the novel, John, rather than the actions of the females. John does not understand the depth of his wife's ~~his~~ condition, and again this is portrayed through language and speech.

but primarily this is done indirectly, through the thoughts of the narrator: 'John laughs at me, of course, but one expects that in marriage'. The misjudgement on the ~~part~~ part of the male in this story opposes the view that the ~~female~~ female world is fully misjudgment and prejudiced, therefore not ~~based~~ based solely on the female world.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

In the first two pages of this script, the candidate offers a clear response to the proposition, uses the prescribed extract as a starting point of the argument, and brings in the second text to develop the argument.

### Question 9 (a)

Wuthering Heights continues to engage candidates in a close and creative way. The ambivalence of the presentation of many characters was addressed here, and there were interesting discussions of how this was achieved through narrative viewpoint and technique. Many candidates discriminated, perhaps implicitly, between 'like' in life and 'like' in literature. A few scripts limited discussion to one main character but, overall, candidates considered authorial method across a broad range in the main text and made appropriate reference to the second. Lower band responses got little further than commenting on the opening pages, and some others listed and commented on characters in a limited way. Higher band responses showed a confident grasp of technique, as in not only referring to the Chinese box technique, but also defining it and demonstrating how Bronte employs it, and to what effect - "facilitating the presentation of characters both in the past and present from different perspectives, providing us with the reasons for Heathcliff's relentless pursuit of revenge while enabling us to detach our sympathy from him."

Some parts of the book she is wild and strong but in others she is weak and pathetic; she marries a man she doesn't love and makes this so obvious to poor Edgar that when Heathcliff comes back she throws herself at him making it very unjust for both men. She also becomes weaker by the end of the book making her pathetic to the reader.

Celie in the Colour Purple does the opposite she is pathetic at the beginning of the book but towards the end you admire her courage.

Catherine is naive and gets herself into a mess but this is not her fault as she does not know the world outside her perfect ThruskCross Grange, she is a likeable character as she is sweet although cruel to Hareton at their first encounter.

Nettie is also a likeable character as she is positive, very clever and loyal to her sister over so many years of being apart and getting her replies.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is a lower band response because its commentary is entirely narrative and descriptive. There is no sense of a writer crafting these characters.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Make sure that you keep a consistent focus on the writers. It's a good sign if you are referring to them by name frequently in your essay

### Question 9 (b)

Many candidates forged a valid link between fate and the supernatural in *Wuthering Heights*, sometimes developing their arguments by comparing the methods used in their second text. Some of the most successful responses analysed language and structure in an exploration of the ways in which certain characters were linked to the house *Wuthering Heights*, understanding the notion of being "fated" to survive in it or own it. Some who chose this question had difficulty in utilising the terms of the question to produce sustained criticism.

A further way in which writers develop the theme of fate is through the structure of the novels. "*Wuthering Heights*" is split into two volumes which could be symbolic of the first and second generation. Another interpretation may be that it is Heathcliff's reason for revenge, and then him taking revenge. This is effective because it is fate which brought him to the Heights and in which the novel unravels. A further effective structural element is the use of cycles. It can be argued it is fate which drew Catherine and Hareton together like her mother and Heathcliff, to repeat history. Another example is the cycle of humiliation, as Heathcliff was humiliated by Hareton's father he feels it only right to reciprocate this behaviour onto

Hareton.

Similarly, in "*The Color Purple*" the novel is cleverly structured to hear Nettie's voice in the middle to provide a change for the reader. But Walker has been criticised for the overall structure of the novel, the ~~beginning~~ beginning of trouble, middle full of conflict and fairytale ending. They say the ending was too "happy" and unrealistic.



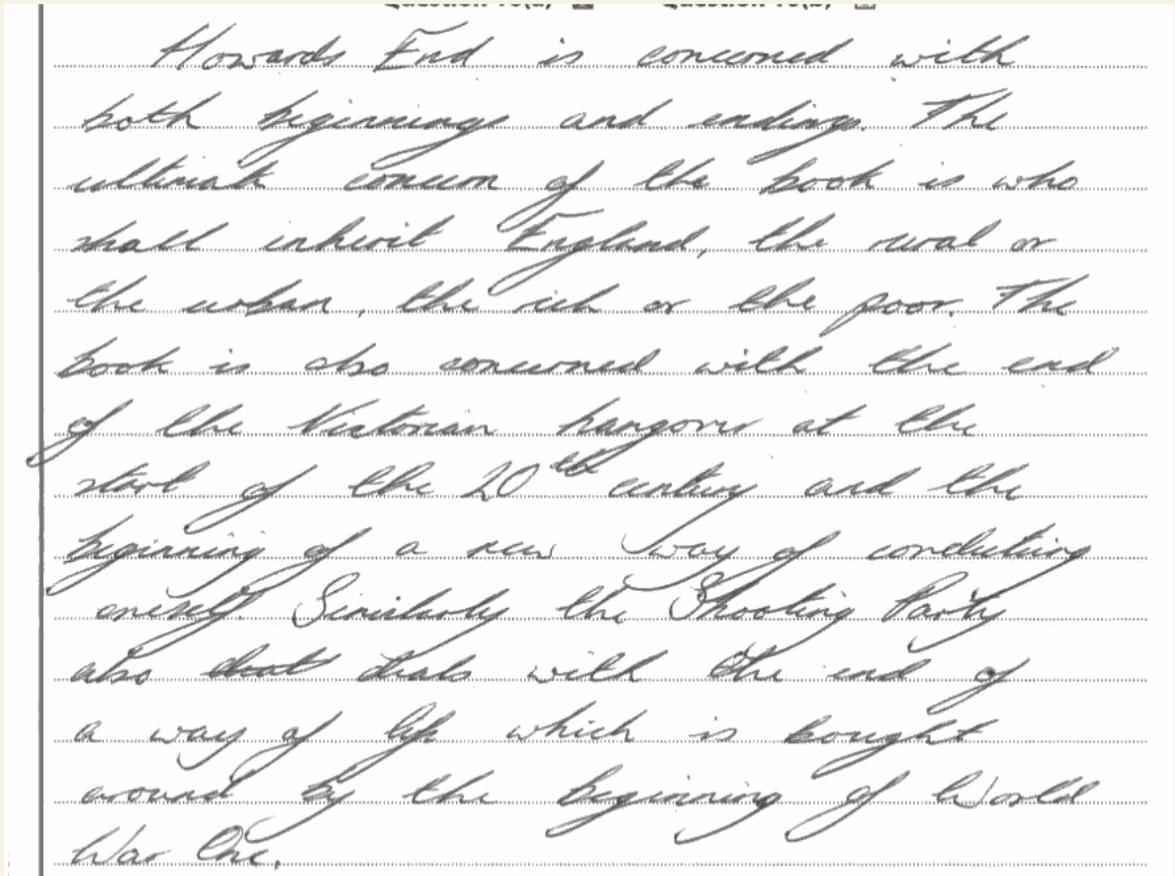
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Examiner Comments

This is a good example of how to discuss the structure of a novel in a way that is relevant to the task.

### Question 10 (a)

Some candidates considered only the first and last stretches of the novel, but most addressed the ambiguity between the two terms, and the majority recognised the social and historical concerns of the novel without getting bogged down by context. There was some lack of precision in determining endings and beginnings.

The most successful responses analysed the ways in which the texts reflected the beginnings and ends of eras, not simply narrative episodes. One very able candidate referred to the "constant reference to the tides of London and the 'continual flux'." There was also analysis of the beginnings of social and cultural diversity in *Howards End*, and a couple of candidates made thoughtful observations about the implications of the title *The Remains of the Day*.



*Howards End* is concerned with both beginnings and endings. The ultimate concern of the book is who shall inherit England, the rural or the urban, the rich or the poor. The book is also concerned with the end of the Victorian hegemony at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of a new way of conducting oneself. Similarly the Shooting Party also deals with the end of a way of life which is brought around by the beginning of World War One.

At the end of Howard's End  
we see two new beginnings, the  
Schlegels moved into Howard's End  
and Helen and Leonard Bast's son  
playing with the next Tom. Helen and  
Howard's child is Fanny's hope for



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The candidate's focus on the terms of the proposition is really sharp right from the start.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Make the examiner see straight away that you are focused on the question or task.

### **Question 10 (b)**

Some candidates worked relevantly through ironic situations, e.g. Leonard's death by literature, showing clear engagement with the text. One compared the irony of situations in *Howards End* with the "dramatic irony" running through *The Remains of the Day*, analysing the use of a first person narrator. This candidate offered perceptive analysis of the given extract, examining the way in which the reader finds out the truth at the same time as Mrs Munt. Another candidate explored the painful irony of Helen's well-intentioned interfering.

## Paper Summary

This is perhaps an appropriate moment to say a few words about timing and planning. It is, of course, up to centres to advise their candidates about how long to spend on each section, and it is up to candidates then to make those decisions in the examination. There seems to be broad agreement that 35 minutes should be spent on section A, and 50 minutes for each of section B and C. So time-management is an important quality, and we advise candidates to resist the temptation to carry on with that section B response for just another 10 minutes because they really know those poems so well and the question is right up their street! We frequently realise when marking scripts that a candidate has run out of time and it is usually because they spent too long on one or both of the other questions.

If candidates feel that time is tight, it is all too easy to eschew a plan for their section B and C responses. We do, however, strongly advise candidates to spend five of those minutes mapping out their response. They should see it not as a *waste* of their time, but as an *investment* of it. Now that candidates do all of their rough working in the answer booklet, we do get to see the full range of planning strategies, from those who dive straight in without any plan at all to those who perhaps spend too long on a detailed synopsis of their response. It is noticeable that the best scripts tend to be by the candidates who have plotted a middle course between those two extremes.

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