



Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCE English Language and Literature
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Introduction

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

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

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

Overall, the quality of responses was strong. 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. Less assured candidates tended to be descriptive, using terminology in a superficial way, and omitting to quote textual examples or explain the significance of particular features.

From a practical point of view, candidates must remember to answer both questions relating to their choice of topic (e.g. Family Relationships): some students answered on one topic in Section A and a different topic in Section B, others attempted to answer a particular Section B question with texts from a different topic, and there were a few who ignored the question completely and wrote about their topic regardless of the frame of the question. The paper is designed to help students to prepare themselves efficiently: they will have been studying a variety of texts relating to a chosen topic and this encourages them to focus on a range of relevant features, contexts and ideas; they should also save time and unnecessary stress by going straight to the relevant unseen passage at the beginning of the examination instead of reading through all four passages.

Question 1

A Sense of Place

The Isabella Bird extract provided candidates with an opportunity to discuss a wide range of literary and linguistic devices, as well as exploring a variety of strong opinions. In general, candidates responded positively to the form of the text and found plenty to say about the structuring of the piece and the writer's attitudes. Many enjoyed Bird's voice, using this characteristic as a chance to discuss specific linguistic features and their effects.

Most popular were the sophisticated lexis, the use of superlatives and the variety of sentence types to aid description.

Higher band answers analysed the writer's negative attitude to Marrakesh in detail but also recognised positive aspects and elements of humour. They were keen to explore cultural and historical references. As with many of the extracts there was some very impressive feature spotting, often with no discussion of content. Lower band answers neglected to look closely at the writer's detailed account and often missed the opportunity to explore her contrasting attitudes. They also tended to generalize their discussion of linguistic devices by using terms such as "posh" and "old-fashioned language", instead of employing more specific terminology.

The Individual in Society

There was much in this piece for candidates to appreciate and many responded favourably to the tone and style of the presentation of the obituary of a TV personality they obviously themselves felt warmly about. The humour was commented upon in considerable detail and more aware candidates were able to also identify the criticism of the reckless aspects of Irwin's behaviour.

Many candidates had enjoyed Steve Irwin's programmes and his death was still quite raw in their minds. Consequently, these students either thought the tone of the obituary was too flippant and disrespectful of someone whom they admired, or they thought it was just right as it reflected the man himself. Those who did not know the television personality wrote better responses as they could be more objective.

Higher band candidates were successful in understanding how the register of the obituary was respectful and ironic simultaneously, producing an integrated discussion of the material. There was plenty of effective discussion of the way embedded style and the use of direct speech created a vivid portrayal of Irwin. Also, many clear and detailed responses picked up on the use of loan words to evoke Irwin's voice and the change in tone of the piece, linking linguistic choices to the reader's possible attitudes towards Irwin. Lower band answers veered away from analysis to give personal opinions and accounts of Irwin's life. These candidates also struggled with the fact that this obituary appeared in *The Economist* and wasted time guessing how "typical readers" of this publication might respond to such an article.

Love and Loss

There was a wide range of responses to the Caitlin Thomas extract. A number of candidates understood the nostalgia and sense of regret in the piece, engaged with the writer's ironic tone, and analysed a range of linguistic and literary features. Higher band answers gave an integrated study of the relationship portrayed in the text, discussing Thomas's ambiguous attitudes and values. They appreciated the way she established a conversational tone through the use of parenthetical devices, explored the effects of alliteration and confidently discussed the significance of the extended metaphor of the bar as an altar. Lower-scoring candidates found this extract difficult and opted to describe the problematic relationship or embark on a discussion of the damaging effects of alcohol. Consequently, they missed the opportunity to examine the ironic nature of the piece and the author's assessment of her and Dylan Thomas's "half-baked" ideas of being part of the "Greats". There was also a tendency to engage in feature spotting instead of analysing the content in depth.

Family Relationships

The Morrison text was the most popular of the unseen extracts and it was encouraging to see a large number of excellent and detailed responses.

Many answers explored the significance of the autobiographical form, identifying a range of implied meanings and veiled criticisms.

Candidates understood the structure and the metaphor of the squash game and used it as a basis for analysing the nature of the relationship between the writer and his father. Many linked linguistic features to attitudes and values within the text, with high-scoring candidates demonstrating an appreciation of the humour and the wry tone of the piece. These responses also recognized a mixture of affection and exasperation in the writer's voice.

Lower band answers tended to give a descriptive commentary on the father/son relationship or made assumptions about what Morrison might be saying about student life. They also tended to approach the structure of the text by discussing each paragraph systematically, rather than developing an integrated evaluation of the relationship. Several candidates thought that Blake was a girl but did not follow the logic of this and discuss the father/daughter relationship, especially with regards to the squash game.

At AO1 successful responses were fluently-written and used embedded quotations to good effect. They confidently identified a wide range of linguistic and literary features, and were able to show how writers had used them to convey attitudes, values and ideas. Lower band answers identified linguistic or literary features but did not often apply them to an analysis of the writer's technique. Middle band answers were written fluently but sometimes lacked focus.

At AO2 successful responses explored a wide range of linguistic, literary and structural features. They often discussed writers' attitudes and values confidently and supported observations with appropriate exemplification. There was evidence of engagement with the text and candidates were willing to explore a 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.

In terms of ~~style~~ ^{variety} lexis, the writer has used a huge ~~amount~~ ^{variety} of verbs, ~~and~~ adverbs, ~~and~~ nouns, pronouns and adjectives to enliven the text, "choomped in half by a croc as he gave it a loving hug." This constant use of active verbs give it a slight rhythm and uses direct address to include the reader and create a colloquial and informal register, "If a poisonous snake didn't bite him in the first 30 seconds, he knew it was a rattie that ~~was~~ would settle in his hand and slither round his ~~own~~ neck like a tie." The writer also uses simile to give the reader connotations of reptiles that were what Steve Irwin looked at the most to elicit memories of his exploits.

The writer of this text uses syntax to give the structure of his writing a certain rhythm and flow that is easy to follow. The writer uses a lot of minor sentences to speed up the pace, "He got close, really close." This use of minor sentences makes it seem as though the tempo has sped up and imparts upon the reader, connotation of the fast and dangerous actions of the subject of the text e.g. his wrestling and capture of crocodiles and his

capturing of snakes and spiders. The writer also uses much complex sentences to lower the tempo of the text to list his influences and reference to his achievements and life, "At nine his father, a naturalist who had started a reptile park on Queensland coast, ~~taught~~ taught him to ~~set~~ stalk crocs at night and lug them out of the water." This complex

Sentence structure slows down the pace of reading and creates a more formal and solemn atmosphere for the readers.

To reinforce contextual factors in the text, the writer has used a wide variety of ^{grammar} lexis, syntax and contextual referencing. The writer uses a lot of lexis containing idioms and sociollect to establish himself of Australian, "booghead", "strine", "crivey", "mozzies", "clowning", "chundering". These all reinforce the context that the subject and writer are both Australian which is very pronounced and slightly patriotic in this text, "almost denigrating to John Howard as he called him "the greatest leader in the entire world". The writer uses references to the politician through reported speech and uses hyperbole to express his opinion of the deceased's ~~apparent~~ zeal towards the Prime Minister of Australia, it also informs us of the time in which it is set which is modern Australia in the 21st century.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate uses a wide range of vocabulary and writes with clarity of expression. Quotations are often used to support points. Although relevant concepts have been applied, some points are rather vague and undeveloped.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Make sure all key points are explored in depth.

In addition, the writer uses onomatopoeia to evoke the auditory image of the squash game using 'whoops' which helps the reader to imagine the scene. As well as this, he uses the lexical borrowing 'séances' to sound sophisticated in contrast with the other terms 'pettes and drugs' which are all joined by multiple conjunctions of ands to suggest that the list is ongoing, but also incoherent, possibly due to the drugs.

In terms of syntax, the piece is carefully constructed and full of complex and detailed sentences. To begin with, the writer uses the zeugma 'the whoops and ironies echoed' which starts by ~~start~~ us imagining the bull's sounds as a separate object, and we then expect another onomatopoeitic ^{concrete} noun, but instead the writer has juxtaposed an abstract noun ~~with~~ 'ironies' which describes the tone which the game has taken as the son is brutally beaten at his own sport. ^{which provides a suture contrast.} Furthermore, Morrison uses hypophora when he has quoted his father's own rhetorical question 'why not?' and he follows this with a syntactic pattern of answers, all beginning with 'why not...' followed by an exception such as 'except that this ~~is~~ was a man who... never had time for a holiday'. This use of hypophora increases the sense of a sardonic tone that strands the piece, but the patterning shows that there are plenty of reasons why not which could go on for a long time.

To continue on from the writer's sarcastic tone, he uses antithesis to describe the situation of the game in contrast with the previously stated expectations. This contrast offers the piece ~~some~~ more humour.

as we understand, the writer's plain and direct criticism 'he getting worse and he more confident' shows the clear ^{contest} between the two players. Also, the writer uses tripling to describe squash in his father's words, 'short, sweet and very active' giving us the positive image in which the game is described and understanding how the son was persuaded by his father to begin. It is also quite poetic and well written because we are offered alliteration 'short' and 'sweet', making the description better. The writer also goes onto use parenthesis, which could also be seen as a spontaneous speech feature, to add more detail in the middle of a shortened description, such as 'he had his (he claimed) played for twenty-five years'. That offers the reader a foreboding of the potential game being very long as the screams that it is apparent in the construction suggest the father has recently played. Again this also increases the sarcastic tone and offers the son's annoyance at his father's behaviour. Moreover, another spontaneous speech feature used, that can also be classed as syntax, is the use of a conjunction in the initial position, 'But as he craved...', which offers a clefty internal line, as well as the screams that is clear throughout. It also suggests an informal approach to his syntax as the sentence begins with a conjunction, meaning this notion could have been included in the previous sentence and it is a continuation from the same idea. Finally, the writer uses bathos in a subtle way to describe his father's personality at the beginning. The use of

bits, 'i bit of him went, the best for he' which starts of
positive and ends in a negative way 'up against a different
more competitive bit' sets the text up and establishes the tone to
be sarcastic and although there are good intentions, the outcome
is negative, which is reflected in the use of better.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This candidate writes with control, fluency and coherence. Expression is sophisticated and a wide range of terminology has been used accurately. The candidate has adopted an integrated approach to the task.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Discuss a wide range of features and their effects in an integrated fashion.

Here is an extract from a script that was awarded a Band 3 mark at AO2:

Isabella Bird has ~~acced~~ an evidently negative attitude on the conditions of ~~the Moroccan~~ Morocco as she uses superlatives such as 'filthiest', ^{'rughhest'} and 'the worst' to describe it. The negative lexis clearly shows that she ~~does not~~ is not used to these living conditions, being a 'European woman'. She uses ~~these~~ this to great effect as she is trying to create a vivid image in the reader's head of how bad the situation in Morocco is, with ^{a negative} ~~the use of~~ semantic fields, 'unspeakable vileness', 'deepens my horror' and her constant use of the modifier 'awful'.

^{to the Bible,}
The exophoric reference 'Abraham's sacrifice of Issac' shows that the writer is familiar with the old Testament in the Bible, thus showing ^{her} ~~that she is~~ religious beliefs, which is clearly shown when she speaks of the 'fanatical hatred to Christians', referring to herself.

The writer uses positive modifiers to emulate ^{items} ~~the~~ the luxurious but often does not mean it in a good way. She speaks of ^{an} 'brilliant' army ^{and} 'magnificent barb' but feels that it is 'far too much for [her]', ~~the text she~~ and is a 'terror for [her]'. This shows her attitude on such wealthy property and this is reinforced when she says

'a courtyard choked with orange-trees...' the lexical choice of the verb 'choke' ~~shows~~ suggests that she, herself is being 'choked' and she cannot describe how bad it is, properly, ~~or~~ which is emphasised by 'unspeakable vileness'. This shows that she is trying her hardest to describe everything but

is struggling, and the use of 'disguise' also adds to the devious tone, reinforced by 'secretly managed.'

The use of ~~syndetic~~ syndetic listing 'the rain ceased, and we left with camel, mule, donkey and horse and travelled her, 126 miles in six days' show that she feels that this journey is far too long and it is dragging on. ~~The~~

~~The~~ The writer used & dashes, ' -but ^{was} no more illness or fever' to create an insertion sequence to add to the conversational tone, to entertain and inform the audience ~~as~~ to ~~also~~ show that the audience is close to her, and they are ~~friend~~ ~~of~~ her 'friend'.

~~Overall, the writer uses many other devices to convey her attitudes values and ideas.~~

She speaks of having slaves with her, and this suggests ~~that~~ ^{she} her values, and believes that it's ~~a~~ the norm.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer demonstrates an awareness of structure and the effects created by various linguistic features but a number of points have been left undeveloped. As a result, the answer is observational, rather than analytical.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Spend planning time thinking of ways of adding detail to initial observations on the text.

In this autobiography written in 1993, Morrison appeals to the audience of people his age with similar parent and child relationships, sons of himself as a writer and perhaps even fathers who act in a similar way. The purpose of the ~~the~~ piece is to inform, but due to its satirical and humorous tone it is clearly ~~to~~ ^{ed} intended to be amusing and entertaining to the reader. The genre is an autobiography and this is apparent through the writer's use of anecdotes, first person narrative and description of memories.

This extract would probably make up a published book and is intended for personal reading.

The first thing to comment on is the structure of the piece. The writer uses the typical feature of an autobiography using a disrupted narrative so the ~~the~~ reader is intrigued by the first memory described, which is the audibly imagery of his father's snore making the room shake. The writer then contextualises his thoughts and memories evoked by this instance, that of a squash match, which is described in the first and second paragraphs. Then the writer returns to the moment of snoring which evokes the more generalised memory of his father's constant competition with his son, which is outlined in the first long complex sentence. The extract ends in the third paragraph, and interestingly this is the same number of games they play in squash, which could have been intentional. Furthermore, after analysing the ~~the~~ text, there is more detailed structural points to be mentioned such as the use of a syntactical shift. This is in the last paragraph as the writer aims to summarise the anecdote.

so uses a longer complex sentence, 'Why does he scheme ~~feel~~... the old one?' which is also rhetorical/question meant to evoke thought in the writer and the reader, ~~and it then~~ This is then followed by a simple sentence: 'I sink a little deeper into my Webster' which perhaps shows his final acceptance after the long drawn out ~~action~~, represented by the longer sentence, that is his father's constant competitive ness. In addition, the ~~writing~~ ^{Writer} uses syntactic patterning possibly to show the tension emanating that his father does of his son's actions. For instance 'I learned ^{water-} to ski; so did he' etc which shows many first person past tense clauses followed by a semi-colon (a small punctuation suggesting there is ^{distance} between them) and then his father's actions in third person. ~~and~~ This continues for half the paragraph and could be seen to represent the constant copying of his son.

The next section of the text I will analyse is the lexical choices the writer has used. For example, the son refers to his father as elderly, but not in a kind way, but in a ^a sarcastic and irritated tone, such as 'old bugger' which is a colloquialism and formerly a crude swear word, ^(possibly it still was in 1973) and ~~the~~ this suggests that he is elderly but also the writer finds him irritating, however it is not rude enough to cause offence and could be seen as a gentle chiding remark. Moreover, he writes his father's words and quotes the ~~his~~ term of endearment 'Mummy' which connotes that his father still refers to his wife in the presence of his child in a very child like way, reflecting Morrison's point that the father still infantilises him and treats him both as a lot younger.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The answer begins strongly and confidently. Genre, structure and syntax are discussed in a sophisticated, original way. The candidate takes a precise and incisive analytical approach throughout.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Try to begin your answer in a confident way, outlining the significant issues and features in your introduction.

Question 2

Yet again, this was the least popular of the four topics and the majority of answers related to the drama texts. Overall, candidates coped well with the wording of the question and were able to find plenty of examples of places that existed "in the mind": discussing the American leaders' view of the US in relation to the rest of the world (in *Stuff Happens*) and comparing this with ways in which Jimmy Jack, Hugh and Yolland perceived Ireland (in *Translations*).

Candidates understood that Ireland was changing and that characters could hold on to a fictionalised sense of the old country. There was a strong understanding of the play's relevance at first performance although some candidates gave lengthy essays on the Irish troubles rather than analysing language.

The best answers managed to relate Hugh's view of the Irish as a spiritual people and compare the "primitive" setting with the richness of their imaginations. Whilst most answers had something to say about the context of *Translations*, a considerable number of responses neglected to analyse relevant aspects of *Stuff Happens* in sufficient depth. Lower band candidates seemed overwhelmed with the enormity of the plays and wrote about a selection of characters, attempting to link them to the task and the contexts. However, in so doing, they did not always focus in enough detail on specific aspects of the plays in order to fully meet all the demands of the question. Poetry answers were able to tackle the question convincingly by exploring Hardy's nostalgic references, although there was often less focus on Betjeman's romanticised view of England. Higher band answers covered a range of social and biographical contexts, as well as analyzing the way that poetic devices created mood and a sense of place. Good answers were able to appreciate each poet's collection of work, rather than discussing individual poems.

The following extract is from an answer that was awarded a Band 2 mark for AO1:

The way that both Friel (*Translations*), and David Hare (*Stuff happens*) present places that exist more in the mind than in the physical world is through ~~the~~ ideology. Including ideological thought, principles and actions. Over both plays, there is an overarching dominant ideology, and a smaller, less powerful ideology that is both pushed back and ignored. In ~~the~~ *Translations* (1/5), the dominant ideology is that of definitive ~~and~~ colonialism, characterised by British values and attitudes, which overrule Irish ones. This is mainly portrayed through the character of Lancey. From the moment he is introduced into the play on page 32, Lancey is hostile to ^{Irishness} Irishness. Hugh politely offers him "a drop" and Lancey has no idea what that is, Hugh explains that it is a "meat refreshment" and Lancey again refuses. He in fact interrupts Hugh and

Says that "I'll say what I have to say ... as ~~briefly~~ briefly as possible. This short exchange ~~inadvertently~~ straight away convey's Lancey's ultimate ideology of his mission, and nothing else. He does not want to be around the Irish a moment longer than he has to.

On the other hand, his subordinate Yolland seems much more keen to interact with the Irish, and as a soldier by accident, does not just see them as a mission "Your countryside is - is - is - is very ~~beauti~~ beautiful". Owen then remarks that Yolland is a "committed Hibernophile," meaning somebody in love with the countryside of a rural country.

This exchange could easily be compared to similar goings on in *Stuff Happens* (SH), where we have the dominant ideology of George Bush and Donald Rumsfeld, which encapsulates 'American muscle' values, while we have Bush's subordinate, Colin Powell who does not necessarily push it forward, and seems very keen to explore other avenues, much like Yolland. Bush and Powell seem to be on a collision course for the duration of the play. From the American characters, Powell is the only one who has served in the military - he says "politicians make wars, young people fight and die in them" which is ironic, compared to Cheney, who is also in the 'war camp' who "achieved a total of 5 student deferments in order to ~~the~~ avoid being drafted to Iraq."

So because Powell knows the realities of war: a helicopter that fell to earth like an elevator with a snapped cable, and "I've fought in wars", he is less for a gung-ho all American attack, which is characterised by the others - "we've got the resolution, we've got the troops, let's go." Powell seems to be the only character that knows that Bush's ideology of "sending a message to any countries considering hostile actions towards the United States" is not real.

Indeed, Powell is proved right when widespread looting and pillage in Baghdad ensues, and the harsh realities of war are realised.

In SH, Hare presents a humanitarian ideology also. This is the minor ideology that I spoke of earlier, and in this case is characterised by Tony Blair. In the context of the Iraq war, Blair is presented as somebody who is keen to go into Iraq, but only for humanitarian reasons. His scenes of direct address, tone, and talks with Bush convey this. The resistance to colonialism in bts is presented as a resistance to imperialism in SH.

Tony Blair is ridiculed for his ideology. Cheney labels him as "good at the high moral tone", and as a "preacher" for his beliefs. P-113 is a good example of the way that Blair cares for the oppressed people on the streets of Iraq. His use of repetition, alliteration, and rhetorical questions in this speech are key. "What will the other states who tyrannise their people, the terrorists who threaten our existence" uses alliteration of the 't' sound, and "who will celebrate and who will weep". This speech was a strong presentation of Blair's positive, humanitarian ideology.

Because SH is based on interactions and events on a global political scale, it is only fitting that resistance to American ideology should come in a powerful, polemic speech, whereas, in bts, which is focused more on characters, resistance to the ~~dominant~~ dominant ideology is likely to come in the form of a person - and it does, in "Doalty Dan Doalty".

Friel presents Doalty as a playful character who is not very intelligent and is a little of a troublemaker. But he ~~is~~ is actively shown to resist the British. There is a description of Doalty on p.10. He is described coming in "brandishing a surveyor's pole". This idea makes Doalty seem young, powerful and ~~how~~ brave in that the use of the word 'brandishing' ~~is~~ is a word used to describe a weapon. It is as if Doalty is brandishing a sword, with which he uses to fight against the unfair oppression of the English, and their ideas - that Ireland should be renamed. Doalty is holding a sword which is a symbol that he is ready to fight, and much like Blair, he throws down the gauntlet to any challengers.



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Examiner Comments

The answer demonstrates a clear appreciation of the question and uses embedded quotations to support a range of points. However there is an absence of specific terminology and expression lacks sophistication in places.



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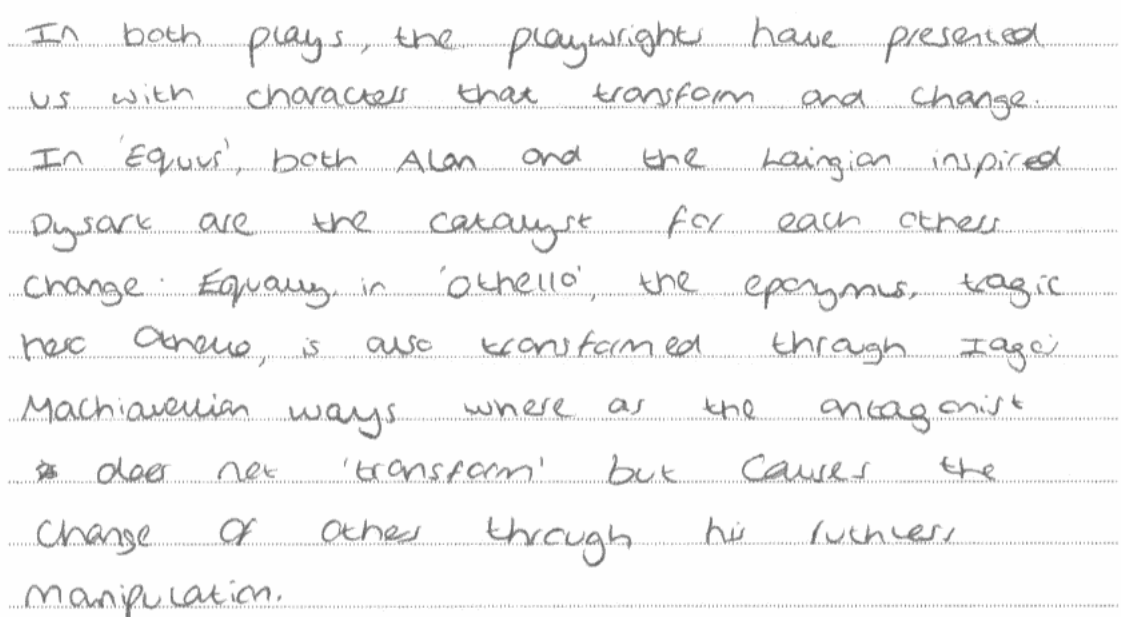
Examiner Tip

Ensure that linguistic and literary terminology is included in your discussion of key aspects of the set texts.

Question 3

There were some excellent responses to this gift of a question. In *Equus*, both Dysart and Alan were discussed energetically and in *Othello* the eponymous hero's change was easy to trace through the play. Some attempted, with success, to show the change in Desdemona from a bold young woman who challenged accepted mores to the acquiescent wife who even goes as far as to shield her husband from blame at the end. However, although a significant number of candidates mentioned Iago, they were not always confident in applying their knowledge of this character to the demands of the question. Many candidates engaged fully with the plays and the changing voice of the characters. For example, Othello's shift in register and move to prose and back to poetry allowed candidates scope for answering the question fully. Higher band answers were able to bring in their knowledge of social and historical contexts to support this feature of the text. There were plenty of strong comparisons made between Othello and both Alan and Dysart as changing characters, which afforded interesting and analytical discussion. Many students were able to effectively link Alan's voice to references to the consumer society in the original performances of *Equus*. Others brought in relevant aspects of psychology when examining the way Dysart's views and perceptions change throughout the play. Lower band answers tended to focus on characters' transformations but often omitted to explore the effects of stagecraft and audiences' likely reactions. Candidates who went for the poetry option seemed sometimes confused in their application of the framework of the question to Hughes' themes. In some cases they tended to fall back on standard deconstructions of *The Thought Fox* or *The Jaguar*, as an attempt to balance otherwise strong and perceptive commentary of Gunn's themes of the individual/society/religion and change. Some answers effectively discussed Eliot's poetry, especially when exploring the change in J. Alfred Prufrock through animal and insect imagery. Other answers, while overall fairly successful, seemed to stretch the application of the question across a number of poems from all three poets, resulting in a rather superficial discussion.

The following extract is from an answer that was awarded a Band 4 mark for AO3:



In both plays, the playwrights have presented us with characters that transform and change. In 'Equus', both Alan and the laingian inspired Dysart are the catalyst for each other's change. Equally in 'Othello', the eponymous tragic hero Othello, is also transformed through Iago's Machiavellian ways where as the antagonist ~~is~~ does not 'transform' but causes the change of others through his ruthless manipulation.

In 'Equus', Shaffer ^{initially} presents us with
with Dysart who begins to tell the story
of how he has changed due to the
event of Alan Strong. Dysart ~~communicate~~
~~through~~ ^{mainly} is presented to the audience
by his meetings with Hesther, encounters with
Alan and through soliloquies. It is through

the soliloquies when we can really see
Dysart transforming. He is in a high-
profession and begins in his first soliloquy
talking about his dream ~~and~~ ^{and} dignified
and professional, seen through the employment of
complex sentences, 'on either side of me stand...' and
the use of his Ancient Greek jargon, "Homeric", "mycenaean"
"red soil". However, ~~more~~ the content of his
dream (describing the dissection of children) implies
that his ~~for~~ views on his profession are
already beginning to change.

Similarly to this, in 'Othello' the protagonist
~~is a Moor~~ who although is in a unideal
state between ranked ~~lowly~~ due to his race
but highly due to his military status and
~~speaks~~ ^{speaks} shows Dysart's dignified and noble
lexis ~~at~~ in our first encounter with him,
^{he} and speaks in iambic pentameter blank
verse, "But that I love the gentle Desdemona".
~~However his~~ ~~transformation~~ This shows that
despite his race, he is very much in society.
However, due to Iago's manipulation, his

Lexis transform as his views on his wife
over her perceived infidelity^{change}. Venetian women
at the time were described to "open their

quivers to every arrow" which would have
caused more doubt^{in Othello's mind}. By Act 2 scene 3,
Othello has taken on the prose of Iago
as he is further changing. "And passion, having
my best judgement cellied" he is ~~being~~
transforming from a high-status and noble
military respected military General, to a
low status blackamoor.

Dysart's transformation is similar, from
a high-status Psychiatrist, to a confused
and ~~poor~~ lost middle-aged man. In Act 2
Scene 22, it is evident from Dysart's
disjointed utterance, ellipsis and rhetoric
self-interrogatives, "~~Why me? Why so intimately~~
~~me~~" that his views and self-beliefs
~~are being transformed~~. "So then, do I? ...
this is the feeling more and more with me -"
that his views and self-beliefs are being
transformed. And again, in his final
soliloquy the heavy use of exclamation,
"and the graphological feature of italics,
"All right! I'll take it away!" ^{emphasise} his
growing distress. This is how we are
~~left~~ with Dysart, knowing that he
has been transformed and is now

experiencing not only professional but personal turmoil which is placing him out of society.

This differs from 'Othello' because he actually experiences a full circle of transformations. From part outsider due to his race, accepted due to his military status, rejected due to his murderous crime but then 'transform' back into his dignified iambic pentameter speech at the end. "Like the base Indian threw a pearl away"



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Examiner Comments

This candidate shows some contextual understanding of both plays and attempts to make comparisons between the texts. However, points often tend to be descriptive, rather than analytical.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Keep the main concerns of the question in mind and analyse the significance of relevant contextual factors.

Question 4

Unlike the other three topic areas, this question had a significant number of responses to the poetry texts, which was encouraging to see.

In responding to the plays candidates engaged well with the two texts. *The Glass Menagerie* provoked some interesting discussion about which character suffered most through the relationships and there were some strong comparisons made with *Betrayal*. Higher band discussions of the latter text made interesting comments about the reverse structure of the plot and argued that the understated dialogue was a way of showing how the characters were suppressing their emotional pain. Candidates were assertive in their judgements and it was difficult to disagree with the student who said that “all the characters were ‘awful’, selfish and could not care less who they hurt”. There was also a willingness to discuss the dramatic features of the two plays and a great number of responses analysed the ways in which the playwrights created tension, particularly in the Venice scene in *Betrayal* and the “glass unicorn” episode in *The Glass Menagerie*. Candidates also made confident references to contextual factors, especially in terms of the production of the plays, and many included critical quotations to support their ideas. Lower band answers tended to lose sight of the question and made generalised comments about biographical contexts, such as Pinter’s affair with Joan Bakewell and Tennessee Williams’s sexual orientation.

There was also a surfeit of copied reviews which seemed tacked on to the responses rather than integrated within them. The question was well suited to poetry texts and there was some delightful work on Donne (*Batter my Heart* proving a universal choice), as well as a selection of other Metaphysical poets – for example, some answers referred to Herbert’s *The Collar* and the pain and suffering caused by loss of faith. Plath’s *Daddy* and *Morning Song* were often discussed but, although a significant number of answers analysed a variety of appropriate poetic features, candidates often focused on too much irrelevant contextual material. Lower band answers were often episodic rather than integrated: a paragraph or two on a poem/poet, then moving on to the next with little comparison; in fact, a large number of answers neglected to examine the differing time periods in which the texts were produced and the impact that this had on the poets’ ideas.

Question 5

This question was the most popular of the four in Section B and there were some very impressive responses to it. The best answers sustained a focused analysis and compared the texts throughout. Some adopted a model where they included a topic sentence on both plays, then followed it with detailed comparison and analysis of contextual features. A small number of candidates were confused by the wording of this question, believing it to be more relevant to the Love and Loss section, and chose to discuss their texts in relation to Question 4 instead. Consequently, they forfeited a large number of marks by not answering the question. However, the majority of candidates appreciated that the loss or departure of a loved one played a significant part in all the texts in this topic area, and they were able to cover a wide range of interesting points and textual features. Many drama answers drew detailed links between the endings of the two plays and were able to present an integrated study of these key moments, focusing on linguistic, literary and dramatic elements (e.g. the effects created by the sound of the door shutting in *A Doll's House* and the gunshot in *All My Sons*). Candidates felt comfortable bringing in contextual detail, namely attitudes towards women in nineteenth-century Norwegian society and the effects of the American Dream on people living immediately after the Second World War. However, it became quite frustrating to read a number of answers that referred to "Victorian society", when discussing Ibsen.

There were some references to reviews from critics but most answers focused on the reactions of original audiences; when this aspect was linked to the question, candidates performed well. The majority of candidates who had seen performances of both texts (some referred to the all-female production of *A Doll's House* this year in London) managed to apply their observations to the demands of the question in an integrated fashion. High-scoring candidates moved on from the obvious areas of study and wrote well about Mrs Linde's loss of her mother and Krogstad's loss of Mrs Linde in the past (making good use of the shipwreck imagery here). The word "impact" encouraged two different responses: on the one hand, those who considered the impact on the audience, thereby creating an opportunity to discuss context in an integrated fashion; and those who considered the impact on characters, which were usually descriptive answers. The question provided an ideal opportunity for poetry students to discuss the impact of bereavement in both texts. Candidates compared the Wife of Bath's attitudes to her husband's funeral with Harrison's feelings about the loss of his parents. Answers examined a range of emotions expressed by both texts and analysed relevant poetic devices. However, although there were some references to the status of women in Chaucer's time and Harrison's social background, there was a reluctance to explore contexts in sufficient detail.

The main impact Ibsen wished to have on his audiences in *A Doll's House* was through the protagonist, Nora's, departure, whilst Miller deals with several deaths in *All My Sons*, and this would have carried particularly strong messages for his post-war audiences. The structure of both plays helps to achieve their desired effects. In *ADH*, Ibsen employs dramatic irony by informing the audience through Nora's exchange with Mrs. Linde of her crime. Leaving some characters in the dark, particularly Helmer, is key to achieve the impact at the end. ^{Through} Having the knowledge that Nora does, Ibsen hopes to make the audience more sympathetic towards her, particularly in the last scene when Helmer displays his self-absorption. The audience is placed in Nora's position and may experience the same feelings towards his reaction. First of all, Ibsen uses demanding interrogatives and rhetorical questions in Helmer's speech 'What is this? Do you know what is in this letter?' to show the character's disbelief, followed by negative repetition and exclamatory statements 'No, no - it's impossible, it can't be true!' to show his ^{over-dramatised} ~~dramatic~~ despair and shock. Helmer then becomes angry and authoritative, as shown ^{with} imperatives 'stop being theatrical' and forceful demands 'Answer me!'. During ~~this~~ this dramatic display of emotions, followed by his blatant disregard for Nora in the repetition of the personal pronoun in

'I am saved!', Nora's character becomes silent, answering in monosyllabic statements 'Yes. It's been a hard fight.' This is in stark contrast with her previously excitable nature, where Ibsen filled her speech with exclamations, simple

lexis and intensifiers (e.g. 'Just a tiny bit!'), meaning the audience can sense the change that is taking place, and once she emerges with the symbolic play on words 'I've changed', it is clear that she has already made up her mind and left the relationship behind from then on.^{However,} Despite this deliberately crafted structure, gradually building up to Nora's departure,^{many of} Ibsen's late 19th century audiences would still have been shocked that a woman would leave her family, particularly her children. Although Ibsen places the children always off-stage to show Nora's quite lacking involvement with them, it was and ~~still is~~ ^{possibly} outrageous for a mother to neglect those duties, as is evident from the fact that Ibsen was pressured to write an alternative ending where she stays for the children.

Miller's structure in *AMS*, on the other hand, is quite different. He leaves the audience unaware of Larry, the beloved son's, fate till the end. Before this time, Miller has already raised questions in the audience's mind, about whether Keller was right to ship out faulty parts, ~~and~~ ~~whether or not they really is still alive~~. Being a post-war audience, ~~the essential point Miller wished to make~~ many of the play's viewers would have had mixed feelings about this, because

although the sentiment was very strong in America that a man provided for his family and family came first, there was also a notable patriotic feeling that society at large was 'All my Sons', as the title puts it. Miller's main point, that if one thinks only of their family unit at the expense of others, is enforced by leaving the knowledge of Larry's death till the end, when Keller and the audience find out at the same time. The fact that Keller then abruptly kills himself may

therefore be more shocking, leaving a ~~strong~~ strong impact in the audience's mind.

The theme of loss of a loved one is also presented in both plays with secondary characters. ~~Rank's~~ Dr Rank's sinister symbolism of black crosses to let the Helmers know when 'the final filthy process has begun' [note the repetition of the fricative consonant 'f' here to emphasise the disgust at death] ^{creates} ~~for~~ an especially dark atmosphere, particularly as he leaves two visiting cards when one would have sufficed, to be more ~~than~~ poignant. Rank's interest in his own illness ^{reflects} ~~represents~~ the Darwinism of the time ('I've been going through the backs of this poor body of mine'), therefore the character of Dr Rank foreshadows not only the significant other departure to come (of Nora), marking the end of an era, but the self-analysis that she will achieve. The way Dr Rank's death is received by the other characters is also interesting. Nora is completely set on still maintaining her fantasy world, although she knows on some level it is crumbling down. The stage

directions 'holds her hands to her ears', show how she physically tries to block out any misery from reaching her, and her short, bright exclamations and imperatives 'Nonsense! Cheer up! Laugh!' with positive connotations show her forced attempt to maintain her distorted view of reality. Her condemning ^{ation} of Dr Rank 'ugh, what a nasty way to talk!' ~~also~~ displays the childish utterance of disgust 'ugh', ~~also~~ demonstrating that she has still not matured at this point, and is not prepared to face unhappy consequences.

The twenty soldiers who Keller killed in AMS may be seen as secondary characters, although they are never present on-stage and ~~do not~~ only exist as ^{fictitious} ~~fictional~~

Ideas
~~characters~~ in the other characters' minds. This may be deliberate
as Miller wishes to convey one's duty to society, even if they
are 'strangers', through Chris' extreme morality and feeling
of devotion towards them. Many of Miller's audiences who were in the
war would have felt the same sense of loyalty. Miller uses



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Examiner Comments

This candidate provides a integrated response, demonstrating a well-developed understanding of the contexts in which the plays are received. The question is tackled in a confident manner, and a comparative approach is maintained throughout the answer.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Provide a balanced analysis of both texts, covering a range of relevant contextual comparisons.

The rhyming couplets in the life of Dath's prologue and tale are used to Chaucer's advantage. They alter the pace of delivery to reflect the ~~mood~~ feeling of the life and add conviction to her arguments. For example the slow pace of 'Experience, though noon excites ... is right ynogh for ne' is in stark contrast with the fast pace of her couplets when ~~she~~ she is angry. This tool is used by Chaucer to demonstrate the wife's cynical approach to the loss of supposed loved ones. An instance of this is in her dispute with Jankin when she ~~set~~ code switches to rhetorical and fast paced conversation exclaiming 'O, how shal we, false they?' The 'O' is intended to keep up the image of ~~a fast paced~~ conversation being reported whilst she gambles with her marriage to Jankin, the only husband that she has genuine love for. The form of this part of the ~~prologue~~ ^{prologue} is in keeping with the conclusion of the ~~tale~~ ^{prologue} tale. The wife's approach to ~~the~~ marriage is shown in her own actions with Jankin as she seeks marriage, but it is emphasised in the conclusion of the tale. The old lady is portrayed as the good and moral ~~character~~ ^{character}. She lectures the knight on 'gentleness', yet she seeks dominance in the marriage over all affairs. ~~She~~ The knight describes her in a triple negative: 'It wol nat been amended never no.' But then finds ~~her~~ himself manipulated by the moral character.

Harrison also portrays himself as having the moral highground and everything that is wrong is the fault of society. He blames the confines that society has placed on his mother as the cause of her denouncing his work as 'ruchy books'. This particular example is fascinating as Harrison tells of the impact this had on him. Although the relationship between ~~himself~~ himself and his mother seems to have repaired to an extent in the poem 'illumination', at this point it is in this poem it is flawed and Harrison tells of the anger that the impact ~~caused~~ of the loss of his mother caused. He directs this anger at his mother and religion with the vivid imagery of putting his book, 'Lover', in with her as she is cremated so that may 'both burn' and that is how she will 'meet your god'. Similarly in 'Turn' the death of his father did not seem to involve sorrow but anger at the hard life dealt his father and the lack of social mobility in the times when his father was a young man. The heteroglossic parentheses "(the



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate applies an understanding of a range of poetic features to the demands of the question. There is a detailed analysis of both texts, showing a sophisticated appreciation of both texts.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Make sure that you recognise the generic features of your prepared texts. In other words, when analysing poetry, you need to explore a range of relevant poetic features in response to the demands of the question.

Summary

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 proved to be the most popular topic choice (probably because of the drama texts available in Section B), whilst A Sense of Place was the least popular. All four extracts allowed for good differentiation and candidates managed to identify and discuss a wide range of features.

The vast majority of candidates were able to respond comfortably to the content of each of the four unseen extracts. They were clearly aware of the primacy of AO2 and were able to make relevant comments about how features of structure, form and language expressed the attitudes, values and ideas present in the texts. Lower-scoring candidates tended to focus mainly on lexis and the writer's more obvious opinions (often simplifying and exaggerating these) while higher-band candidates responded perceptively to subtleties of syntax, grammar and phonology as well. The most engaged responses were those on the Steve Irwin obituary and the Blake Morrison autobiography - probably because students enjoyed them and could relate to the content - but most candidates who wrote about the other two pieces found plenty to say and did not struggle to appreciate the key aspects.

Some students were confused by the epistolary form of the Isabella Bird extract and spent too much time making assumptions about the context in which she wrote the letter instead of analyzing the actual text.

Higher band answers discussed genre, audience and purpose with confidence and sophistication, linking them to the way writer's convey attitudes, values or ideas. However, a number of candidates focused too closely on these areas and neglected to analyse the writer's employment of linguistic and literary devices. For example, candidates suggested narrow and specific audiences for the texts (such as 17-21-year olds for Morrison's autobiography) and many were clearly confused with the fact that the obituary was published in 'The Economist', offering generalised assumptions as a result. A discussion of the way the audience is positioned in the text (e.g. the extent to which the reader feels sympathy with a writer or speaker) is often a more productive approach.

A detailed analysis of structure and language was demonstrated mainly by higher-band candidates. They were able to identify key features in an integrated and fluent manner. Lower-band answers tended to feature-spot or present limited observations, such as "this shows careful thought", or "this shows that the writer is clearly educated because they are using polysyllabic lexis". Some provided a definition of terms, rather than supply analysis on how those particular features functioned within the text. However, it is worth stating that the majority of the responses showed that candidates had been well prepared for this question.

Section B

This question required candidates to write a critical comparison of either two drama texts or two poetry texts, 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, 10 marks at AO2 and 40 marks at AO3 were available.

The majority of answers were on the plays. There were plenty of very good, engaged essays here, with candidates clearly aware of how to satisfy the requirements of AO3: they were comfortably able to compare the texts and contexts in an integrated fashion while, at the same time, ensuring that they answered the specific question. They made sure that their discussion of context was relevant and closely linked to the texts. Some candidates, however, struggled to get the balance right between answering the question and hitting all the AO targets. Some merely answered the question – sometimes quite well, admittedly – but failed to mention any of the contexts; some did the opposite, writing well about the plays and comparing them in an integrated way, but not in clear relation to the question (as if they were regurgitating prepared essays). Some spent too long on external, non-textual context (e.g. Pinter's private life, Plath's personal difficulties or Gunn's and Williams's homosexuality) and quite a few hardly said anything about language features. Unfortunately, some candidates forgot they were writing about plays and referred to "the reader" all the time, showing no awareness of theatricality. On the other hand, it was pleasing to find some references to recent stage productions or even recorded productions. With the poetry, it was a similar picture in terms of strengths and weaknesses (the Chaucer/Harrison and the Metaphysicals/Plath combinations produced some particularly effective responses). The majority of the poetry responses were rather disappointing in that candidates did not pay enough attention to poetic and linguistic features. A more intensive appreciation of the art of poetry – just as the drama candidates showed appreciation of theatrical technique – would have been well received by examiners.

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