

## SECTION A: Voices in 20th- and 21st century texts

Read Text A on pages 4–5 and Text B on page 6 of the source booklet before answering Question 1 in the space provided.

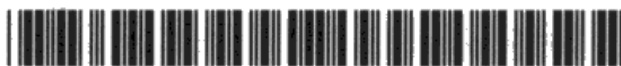
- 1 Compare the ways in which the writers create a sense of voice as they reflect upon Paris and its influence on the author Samuel Beckett, who lived there.

In your answer you must consider linguistic and literary features, drawing upon your knowledge of genre conventions and context.

(25) 2301

Text A is a printed newspaper-based article (reproduced online) with the purpose to inform about the lifestyle of a famous writer, Samuel Beckett. On the other hand, Text B is a printed book-form travelogue with the purpose of informing and entertaining its audience – who happen to be fans/followers of Theroux, and general readers of travelogues with an interest in the international world. The audience of text A is readers of the 'Irish Times', fans/followers of Samuel Beckett as well as John Calder.

Both texts create a witty ~~voice~~ through the sustained intensity of linguistic choices and literary features, producing a voice that is, in text A, reminiscent and reflective, and in text B, frustrated, almost sarcastic and witty with a gaily mocking undertone. Calder, in text A, makes use of balanced clauses to illustrate the bitter-sweet relationship with the writer Samuel Beckett. '...who could not



understand why their academically brilliant son... but preferred to be penniless'. The exhortative positive pre-modifier 'brilliant son' shows Calder's appreciation for Beckett's work, despite the undeniable fact that he cannot believe in himself. This is balanced skilfully with negative adjectival phrasing 'penniless', depicting how the article is rife with the thematic development of relief and regret; happiness tinged with sadness. Calder also makes use of continuous multi-complex sentences with subordinate clauses, 'which had arrested most of his friends' to create a semi-formal register - demonstrating that Paris is a complex city, with the interchanging of formal and semi-formal register. Perhaps this could indicate the effect that Beckett has upon Calder's life, with his lack of enthusiasm and apathy. On the other hand, Text B makes use of passive voice 'were met by a bus' to show Thorne's utter disappointment of the city. This establishes a tone of unappreciation. Though, the logical linear structure allows Thorne to skilfully interact with the audience and headships by acting as a tour guide, 'The centre of Paris is a masterpiece of preservation'. This allows the writer to strategically strengthen the tension between writer and



audience. Furthermore, text B makes use of location names and inter-cultural references to show an assumed knowledge of the audience - indication of those who are likely to read this account.

'... same in outer London' reiterates Theroux's disapproval of the city, continuously comparing it with London may make the writer feel closer to home.

Calder excellently makes use of quadratic structure for rhetoric effect in 'there he took part in the resistance'... working as his book'. This necessity for elongated syntax and complicated sentence structure bound together by conjunctive forms shows the sheer complexity that Beckett has lived. Clearly, Beckett has lived a long, enduring and eventful life, though some of it hasn't been how he had initially planned. Calder's use of linguistic devices show the Paris has had a negative influence upon Beckett - showed in his aversion and lack of energy towards life. This establishes a sombre undertone, a warce in the vice that has been created. This is further supported by the use of reversed syntax 'A total pessimist...', indicating Paris has ruined Beckett's enthusiasm for being alive. This is similar to the high specificity of language choices in Theroux's



travelogue. Theroux permeates the extract from his travelogue with a lexicon drawn from blackness, disgust and dismay with 'grimmer', 'wet black' and 'deeper'. This demonstrates a direct link to Calder's article because there is almost a causal relationship established through the use of lexical fields and maintained through pathetic fallacy - the actions, behaviour and beliefs that Beckett has now internalised 'nothing against happiness, but personally had no talent for it' is the result of Paris' influence on him. This presents to the audience a notion of dramatic tension/irony because ~~France~~<sup>Paris</sup> is hailed continually as an elegant city with ripe charms of romantic appeal. However, the two texts act in synergy to completely subvert this stereotype.

What adds to the realism in text A is the use of direct speech 'I wouldn't go so far as that', adding to the reminiscent, retrospective account and overall voice that is produced. Furthermore, Calder hints at an oblique contextual reference to the deteriorating relationship between Beckett and his family as a result of 'his well-to-do Protestant business family'. This provides the interpretation that Beckett may have had a struggling start in life and it is the influence of this that has resulted in his total



indifference Calder sentimentally concludes his article on an anecdote that perfectly captures Beckett's legacy. 'Beckett is claimed by both France and Ireland', shows that Beckett was so blind to his own talent and ability to write. The article therefore ends on a positive, candid sentence that, Calder may hope, to convince the world of Beckett's talent and writing capacity - after all, they were 'very close friends'. This establishes an emotive voice, with reference to text A's audience who, no doubt, share the same emotional sentiment for a man who died not realising his own talent, 'which he handed over without comment, after expecting me not to like it, but I always did'.

Text B doesn't share the same emotive distinctive character as Text A, however it does instead make use of a wry, perhaps idiomatic sense of humor '(!family enough) Samuel Beckett used to live in one of those 'blocks of flats'. Theroux enhances his use of voice (that is appalled at the abhorrent sites of the much romanticised French capital) with the use of reported direct speech, 'Is this Paris? Is this France?' This rhetorical question adds to Theroux's and Calder's negative portrayal of Paris by incorporating a rich sense of realism, further



accentuated by the use of humor and word stereotyping in 'gay Paris'.

The two texts differ accordingly in their purpose and respective audience and even belong to different media all together, however they act in a unique synergy that depict the negative influences Paris has had upon writer Samuel Beckett. Though, text A demonstrates much more of a cohesive focus on depicting and accurately illustrating the life of Beckett, whereas, Theroux's travelogue doesn't share that identical purpose.

