



GCE English Literature

Paper 1: Poetry

Section A: Post-2000 Specified Poetry

Summer 2017

Exemplars – Responses

Question 1 - Script 1

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: **Question 1** ☒ **Question 2** ☒

In both poems, the poets display the innate bonds between parents and children. In "Genetics", Morrissey shows the more biological, inevitable bond; whereas, in "Another Day Has Passed" Simmonds shows the emotional bond.

Morrissey conveys the idea that no matter how far apart children and parents may be, they are bound to one another by "genetics".

"But in me they touch where fingers link to palms"

Morrissey portrays a sense of "togetherness" through physical aspects. She suggests that their bond is built on unconditional love by saying although the parents "may sleep with other lovers", "at least I know their marriage by my hands". This implies that she is physical evidence that her parents did love each other once upon a time, even if they no longer do, she is a product of their love/marriage so the parents are still ~~bound~~ bound to

each other.

On the other hand, Simmonds suggests that children are their for the sake of the parents so they can live through them.

~~"The baby who is forever being shaped, rearranged"~~

"The baby who is so heavy with other people's hopes"

This perhaps could be implying that the parents shape who the child will become from a young age. The parents decide what they want for their child and raise them accordingly. The bond in this poem is shown to be a lot less loving in comparison to "Genetics".

In "Genetics" the child is shown to look up to the ~~their~~ parents as good rolemodels.

"My father's in my fingers, but my mother's in my palms. I lift them up and look at them with pleasure".

The palm is the base of the hand which holds everything together ~~the~~ (the mother) and the fingers control everything (the father). She "lifts them up" as if

they're on a pedestal and she "looks at them with pleasure", almost in admiration, aspiring to be like them.

Although "they may have been repelled to separate lands, to separate hemispheres", "my body is their marriage register". Marriage is meant to be a life long promise of commitment. This shows us that her parents may be from 2 separate worlds but they joined together and became one when they made her.

In contrast, Simmonds highlights the separation and weakness of the bond between the parents and the child. "She has nobody to call her own, the baby who is forever being shifted, rearranged". This highlights the isolation and neglect of the child, implicating the relationship was bad. A baby's first bond should be with their parent but this baby seems to be alone; the constant "shifting" of the baby could be implying she is perhaps in foster care which is why the bond is missing.

"Whose scalp must be combed of cradle

cap, the baby who has exactly no memories."

Childhood memories are said to be the best memories a person can hold. This baby has "exactly no memories", she has done nothing that she can remember, illustrating clearly the absence of the parental bond which will affect her later on in life. *

The two poems show two contrasting childhoods based on the bonds made with the parents. The first being a happy child idolising her parents in "Genetics" and the second being a troubled/neglected child who hasn't properly formed any bonds in "Another Day Has Passed".

* In "Another Day Has Passed" there is no rhyme scheme and it is only one long stanza. It gives the poem a monotonous tone, conveying sadness. In "Genetics" there is not a consistent rhyme scheme but the repetition of "hands" and "palms" gives the poem some rhythm, suggesting happiness and consistency. The poem is made up of triplets then it ends in a quatrain, suggesting order

of the parents marriage with the final
addition (her) completing the relationship.

Question 1 - Script 2

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: **Question 1** ☒ **Question 2** ☒

Both Morrissey and Simmonds throughout their poems are able to present the bonds between parents and children through the inclusion of natural imagery and the theme of distance.

Since Morrissey presents the bond between parents and children through the ~~poetry~~ portrayal of a child being the production of a marriage of love. ~~The~~ Immediately, the reader notices the image of hands being repeated throughout. Not only does this explore the genetic bond between the parents and child, but it also shows the nurturing aspect of the relationship. Morrissey may have included this imagery of ^{the} specific body parts in order to present the gentle and calming nature of the upbringing the child endured. Additionally, ^{reference to Oshane} the hands may ^{be} to reflect on the sense of giving and receiving love as hands can often be connected to the theme of offering.

Additionally, the poet uses religious imagery to portray the bond that the parents & once had

through marriage and how that special interconnection between the two past lovers is conveyed through the child. The child's hands 'shape a chapel where a steeple stands', ^{allow for the} ~~this~~ "specific acknowledgement ^{and it} of the religious bond of marriage" shows that even a love that doesn't last eternally can still produce wonderful things. Or perhaps, Morrissey wants the reader to understand that the purity of their once love can be ~~also~~ passed down to the child so that it can remain present for eternity, even though ^{the love} ~~it is through~~ and sense of affection has now been displaced through a different type of bond.

Kathryn Simmons presents a pure connection of love between a parent and their child. The poet uses certain descriptions of the baby to show this type of enthrallment and compassion. The phrase 'holds me with her blue eyes' shows the immediate connection the two have. Not only does ^{Simmons} ~~Kathryn~~, like Morrissey, present the genetic nature of the child, she also portrays a sense of captivity. Eyes can be seen as 'doorways to a soul', therefore, I believe Simmons wants the reader to believe that the parent has become entrapped by the purity and

wholeness of the baby's soul and portrays the sense of inability to break the special bond between the two.

Ed. Simmon's creates a theme of understanding. The reader is presented with a baby who 'has exactly no memories' but is able to 'speak to her' without speaking. This ~~can~~ ^{The poet's} ~~reflection~~ specific use of language portrays ~~the~~ a slight silentness of the relationship. I believe that Simmon's is wanting to convey the ^{easy} ability for the child to comprehend and cherish the attachment it has to the parent due to the ^{presentation of an} ~~bond being presented~~ as untarnished and unbreakable bond.

In the poem 'Genetics', the ~~po~~ writer uses ~~to~~ the difference in line length to portray the distance of specific bonds. The poet may have used the inclusion of the longer lines in the stanza to represent the ^{further} ~~longer~~ distance created between the parents created by their significant unattachment. However, the inclusion of a shorter line throughout may echo the genetic and natural bond the child will always have with their parents and how the ~~&~~ attachment is able to grow due to the distance, but that it is also indestructable.

Whereas, Simmons's use of one stanza alone creates a ~~closer~~^{tightened} bond, one that is strengthened through closer intimacy and care. I believe that the writer's decision of structure echoes the idea of a constant parental figure, one that will not allow distance to disrupt the emotional bond. Additionally, Simmons's use of frequent enjambment may portray ~~the~~ the gentle nature of the attachment and how it easily grows. However, it may also represent the ~~the~~ speed at which the baby grows and develops and within that growth, the baby is able to understand certain things, thus enabling the ϕ bond to strengthen. ~~This~~ These sudden changes within the ~~baby~~^{child} may also be reflected by the non-existent ~~the~~ rhyme scheme, portraying the rapid development endured and the idea that things will likely become modified, ultimately producing a powerful emotional ϕ bond.

Both poets present ~~to a tone of longiness~~ a longing and passionate tone throughout the type of images they portray. Morrissey uses the ~~the~~ portrayal of a 'river'. The poet's decision to include this specific image leads to the concept of water producing new beginnings and with the portrayal of a river, the reader is able to recognise a constantly flowing bond, one that

is pure and of a calming nature. Additionally, rivers may split off into different locations, which could reflect the separation of the parents and their sense of moving on. However, we can justify that this lack of closeness will not sever the bond between parent and child due to the continuous movement of the water.

To conclude, I believe that through aspects of distance and intimate relationships, both poets are able to explore the bonds between parents and children.

Question 1 - Script 3

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: **Question 1** ☒ **Question 2** ☒

Both poets examine relationships between parents and children in an emotive, beautiful way. In 'Genetics' the bond between parent and child is preserved within the narrator's body, shown in the beginning line: "My father's in my fingers, but my mother's in my palms." The title itself "Genetics" connotes ideas of love and inheritance as the parents pass on their characteristics through their DNA to their child. The narrator of this poem suggests that her own body inherits and is representative of the marital bond shared between her parents since her "body is their marriage register", as if the words are engraved into her skin, preserving their love for each other, and the bond they have with their child. Within "When Six O'Clock Comes...", though it is not clear, I get the sense that the narrator is the motherly figure of the newborn child within the poem. There is an instant connection between the persona and the child, a certain bond, revealed in the starting line: "the baby who can not speak, speaks to me." This is a strange, ambiguous beginning line, where the reader may be confused by the oxymoronic expression - a baby who is incapable of talking, does. "Speaks to me" suggest the communication from the baby is directed ~~at~~ solely to the narrator - and no one else.

suggesting a special bond between parent and child - though the reader wonders how this is even possible.

Both poets are able to explore the bond between parent and child by alluding to nursery rhymes - often sung by young children, taught by their parents. In 'Genetics', the fourth stanza is reminiscent of the childhood game children play with their hands, singing a rhyme and creating a chapel with their fingers:

" I shape a chapel where a steeple stands.
And when I turn it over,

my father's by my fingers, my mother's by my palms".
The innocent childhood imagery reinforces the bond between parent and child, ~~too~~ as well as the initial idea of the poem showing that though the narrator's parents' marital bond has broken down, their bond and love for their child remains within her. The hands represent the chapel where her mother and father married and within is the love she inherited from her parents. It's a beautiful, lovely image created where the bond seems eternal.

Similarly, within "When Six O'clock Comes..." children's rhyme is alluded to, but instead of an image of a prescience like in 'Genetics' there is a sense of a loss of childhood innocence and fun in the lines "and all at once we stop half-heartedly row, rowing / our boat and see each other clear". The ^{phrase} ~~word~~ "half-heartedly" suggests a lack of enthusiasm and conviction. As the narrator

and the child stop playing, and singing the rhyme they "see each other clear", as if the child has lost all naivety and seems mature and insightful. It's a strange image of ~~state~~ a child growing up, almost instantly. Though the fun of childhood games between parent and child seems forgotten here, the bond between them somehow seems stronger - a sort of understanding perhaps forms between them as their vision of each other is cloudless. Perhaps this poet explores the bond of parent and child strengthening as a child grows and matures, though it does seem ambiguous.

There is a lot of repetition within the poem "Genetics". The 'hands' become a re-occurring motif symbolising the bond between parent and child. The poem starts with the poet saying "I know my parents made me by my hands" and ends with a subtly modified version: "We know our parents make us by our hands". Through the change in personal pronouns from "I" and "me" to "We" and "our", there is a sense of journeying within the poem. The ending is suggestive of a love poem, as the focus no longer seems to be on the bond between the narrator and their parents, but on a new relationship as she begins a persuasive argument, perhaps addressing a lover: "So take me with you". There is also a suggestion of a new bond to be made between parent and child as the poet

suggests she is ready to take on motherhood by the line "I'll bequeath my fingers, if you bequeath your palms". This is a special moment in the poem as the narrator invites her lover to join in creating a child by giving part of themselves. The poem resolves a cyclical structure ~~that~~^{next}, repeating the line from the opening stanza as a new bond is created. The cyclical nature of this poem is also suggestive of a wedding band - creating an image of love and a unbreakable bond since it will always be preserved within their child. In a similar way, the structure of "When Six O'clock..." also seems cyclical^{and is}, suggestive of a journey. The opening line is "the baby who cannot speak, speaks to me." The reader is unaware of what is communicated between parent and child, but it is made clear at the end by the line: "softens her face in the early ~~morning~~^{evening} light and says / I understand". The ending line reverts back to the beginning. Throughout the poem there is imagery of the ~~babies~~ baby's newness: ("the baby who has exactly no memories") or ("the baby who does not know a television from a table lamp"). There is a sense of innocence, naivety and lack of understanding, yet this newborn child breaks boundaries within the poem, eventually comforting the narrator, shown by the words "I understand". There seems to be a role reversal, as the baby soothes the parent. The poet seems to be suggesting that the bond between parent and

child is so strong that the baby seems to have the power to comfort the parent. This is also highlighted by the words: "the baby steadies her head which is the head of a drunk's and holds me..." The child defies all logic. There is a slightly comedic image of the ~~babies~~ ^{baby's previous} inability to hold her head, with the comparison to a drunk person who flails about without control of themselves. Yet the baby "steadies" herself, taking control and maturing to "hold" their parent. The poet subverts the usual image of a parent embracing and cradling their newborn baby by creating an opposite image of the baby supporting, giving strength to their parent. Perhaps the poet's intention here is that the bond between mother and child is signified by the ability of the child to hold their parent, give them strength, metaphorically. The birth of the baby perhaps gives sustenance to the new mother, so that the poet is able to show the parental bond with a child is so magical it motivates and strengthens the parent.

The two poems are carefully crafted to show bonds between parent and child. 'Genetics' shows that the child becomes a marital symbol and maintains that through life. The simple existence of a child instantly records ~~the~~ the love between parent and child, which is also true within "At Six O'Clock" where the child is able to powerfully care for their parent, ^{and to} grow and mature their relationship and bond.

Question 2 - Script 4

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 1 ☒ Question 2 ☒

Both 'When Six O'Clock Comes' and 'Another Day has passed' by Kathryn Simmonds and 'Expect' by Alan Jenkins explore emotional responses to birth and death through the way they conduct an individual's experience with the experience or product of each.

Both poems explore colour imagery throughout. 'When Six O'Clock Comes' beginning with how 'the sun has ~~risen~~ ^{having} risen' echoing the new life and birth of the baby as well as religious allusions concerning the baby being brought into the world. 'White cloud' similarly draws connections to heaven as well as using colour imagery to ~~repetit~~ portray ideas of youth and purity. 'Expect' uses colour imagery to emphasise the tone of nostalgia when describing "her watch" which had a "gold strap", helping to draw attention to the aspect of time which is clearly running out for the poem's subject, which is implied to be the poetic voice's mother. As "gold" possesses connotations of wealth this could be Jenkins' way of insinuating how time is valuable and precious and the way "it was gone" presents how her death is impending. Whilst the colour imagery in 'When Six O'Clock Comes' remains vivid and bright throughout the poem to reflect the beauty and fresh wonder of

the baby's birth such as "her blue eyes" and "The television's orange glow"; 'Expecti' uses colour to convey the sadness of ~~the~~ the subject's steady downfall as she dies. Mentions of colour slowly ~~as~~ diminish as the woman's condition does and she becomes "unseeing", perhaps reflecting her inability to notice ~~the~~ such details now also. However, the way the "smudged black ink was all she wore" on "a thick rubber band" presents an element of ending and finality as "black" creates an image of nothingness. The way the writing is "smudged" similarly creates a vision of lack of care, as though she has been given up on and cannot be saved, therefore further stressing the death to come.

Both poems are only made up of one stanza as they both show the poetic voice's mental state and emotions. ~~The observer of the~~ 'When Six O'Clock Comes' portrays an observer of a baby, admiring the aspects of this new life and the anaphoric repetition of "The baby" throughout serves as a reminder that this is the poetic voice's focus. 'Expecti' similarly deals with the contents of the poetic voice's mind as the stream of ^{consciousness} ~~contents~~ looks back on the memory of what is insinuated to be their mother's death. The rhyme scheme differs throughout, helping to present the impact upon the poetic voice that these feelings have. Jenkins uses enjambement and

caesura to stress certain aspects of the poetic voice's recalled memory. ~~Death~~ The idea of death carries an emotional weight throughout such as the isolation of "only now that he was dead" using these techniques which echoes the abrupt end of life it is discussing as well as adding to the sadness of tone. The end of the poem switches to the present, abandoning the tone of ~~the~~ nostalgia and therefore centering in on the dark matter at hand. The poetic voice does not mention ~~the~~ the idea of death surrounding the subject although it is obvious this is the inevitable and so stresses the poetic voice's aim to be respectful and avoid such bluntness. However her "last words" confirm the fatality.

Comedic qualities are present in 'When Six O'Clock Comes' to describe the qualities of the baby due to their recent birth. The metaphorical language describing the baby's head as "the head of a drunk's" creates the comedic imagery of a baby's inability to support themselves physically. Metaphorical language is similarly used throughout the poem as the baby is described as being "heavy with other people's hopes" and the hyperbolic language of "the baby who has exactly no memories" and these are accompanied by numerous actions of care for a baby stated using listing such as how she is "forever being shifted, rearranged". Simmond's technique at this point of combining the mundane and physical

with the hyperbolic and metaphorical within this list, assists in emphasising the final line where the poetic voice says how the baby spoke to her, clearly metaphorically saying, "I understand". This ~~may~~ is possibly the poet's intuition or personal opinion surrounding birth and the new life that comes from it as despite the baby's inability to care for itself or even remember, ~~th~~ it still provides great comfort to the poetic voice through the means of simply understanding. Ending with this also expresses the cyclical nature of the poem as it begins with "The baby who cannot speak, speaks to me", this paradox raising ideas of deeper ways of communication.

'Expecti' uses quotations of speech similarly to 'When Six O'Clock Comes' which adds comedic value to the otherwise dark poem. The quoting of the dying woman's phrases such as "funny foreign stuff" add a personal touch and create further empathy in this way. The phrases used stressing the comedic dislike the woman has to these foods. The "poor souls" moans and curses" on the television create a more macabre effect however as although "poor soul" was clearly a phrase and collocation she once used, it is clear now she puts into this category whilst "moans and curses" contrast greatly with her silence.

~~Th~~ To conclude, both poems deal with

the emotional responses to birth and death as 'When Six O'Clock Comes and Another Day Has Passed' shows the observations and opinions surrounding a new life that has been birthed into the world whilst 'Expects' deals with the observation of a woman's slow decline before her death.

Question 2 - Script 5

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: **Question 1** ☒ **Question 2** ☒

Both "When Six O'Clock Comes and Another Day Has Passed" by Kathryn Simmonds and "Effects" by Alan Jenkins describe the two ~~most~~ arguably most important events in ~~human~~ a human's life; birth and death. Although the poems are contrasting in some aspects, both do seem to have some rather important similarities, as the strong, emotional responses to these events overlap.

"When Six O'Clock Comes and Another Day Has Passed" is an example of a dramatic monologue from the perspective of a new mother. Simmonds utilises varying line lengths in order to visually represent the conflicting emotions of the speaker: of happiness and love and of worry and anxiety. This is effective as the jarring difference between the line lengths demonstrates to the reader the jarring difference in the new mother's emotions. Similarly, the dramatic monologue "Effects" utilises a difficult structure and rhyme scheme to demonstrate the difficult emotions the speaker feels at the death of his mother. Jenkins does this by seemingly having no set structure or rhyme. However, the rhyming pattern within the poem initially diverges ("scarred" on line 4 and "hard" on line 4 to "disdain" on line 20 and "again" on line 32, a 12 line gap) to show how the mother and son drifted apart as he grew older, it returns to being a closer

rhyme such as the rhyming couplet "steere" and "leave" (lines 46 and 47) or the rhyming of "she", "see", and "me" (lines 48-50) to show how he once again feels close to his mother, though it is arguably too late. These examples from both poems signify the importance of poem structure in order to explore an emotional response to birth or death.

The tone of "Effects" is very regretful and is emotive as the author conveys the guilt that the speaker feels through powerful imagery and emotive language. The images of the mother's hands are emotive, as they connote how hard-working she was and juxtaposing that with the final image of her hands at the end. When Jenkins writes "her hand, that was always scarred from... giving love the only way she knew" (lines 1-6), it creates the image of a hard-working mother who perhaps showed her love more through actions than words. This juxtaposes from the frail, somber image of "a blotched and crinkled hand whose fingers couldn't close mine anymore" (lines 44-45). By contrasting the initial descriptions of "blat" scarred", "reddened", and "rough" with much weaker, delicate adjectives like "blotched" and "crinkled", it shows how the speaker never had a relationship with his mother and how he never noticed things about her that he loved or hated until she was dead. ~~Then~~ By showing this, Jenkins explores one of the most common emotional responses to death; regret.

On the other hand, the emotional response to birth explored by Simmons in "When Six O'Clock Comes and Another Day

"Has Paused" is that of anxiety. Simmonds creates an anxious tone by exploring the new mother's anxieties and hinting at her fear that she may not be able to be a good parent ~~at all~~ or love her baby enough. She lists her concerns about parenting from lines 13 to 15 ("the baby who... whose scalp must be combed of cradle cap"). However, the repeated use of "the baby who" in an almost anaphoric way creates an almost impersonal feel. It suggests she has no instant connection with the baby ("baby" being rather lacking in emotion, with no humanising qualities such as gender or name). This is furthered by use of "half-heartedly row, rowing our boat" (lines 7-8) which references a nursery rhyme; "half-heartedly" again connoting her lack of connection with her child. This anxious feeling, however, subsides towards the end with the image of "the baby... softens her face in the early evening light and says 'I understand'". The tone seems to shift here where the connection between the speaker and her child is created. The use of ~~softens~~ "softens" suggests a new fondness and "early evening light" suggests the end of her worries, and that a new beginning is awaiting.

The main difference between the two poems is that "Efficiency" presents the emotions felt at death, an ending, whereas "When Six O'clock Comes and Another Day Has Paused" presents the emotions felt at a new ~~again~~ beginning. This means that the general feeling a reader gets from both poems is

different. Where Simmonds uses bright, colourful imagery such as "white", "blue", and "orange" to show happiness and hope, Jenkins uses darker ~~colours~~ colours like "black" or "reddened" to connote sadness and ~~the~~ bleak, harsh emotion.

Overall, I believe that both poems explore the emotional responses to life events such as birth and death. However, I believe that "When Six O'Clock Comes and Another Day Has Passed" has a more hopeful, happier tone despite exploring some darker emotion where as "Effects" is simply regretful and bleak. Despite being so different, both poems are highly effective in conveying emotion to the reader.