

A Level English Literature

Feedback from
summer 2019 –
Paper 3 (9ET0/03)





Welcome

- Have you read the 2019 Paper 3 Examiners' Report?
- It covers all the examination questions and contains many more script extracts than we can cover here.
- If you're not already familiar with the 2019 question paper and mark scheme, you may find it helpful to have them to hand.
- You can find these in the resources widget.



What went well this year?

- Examiners impressed with the well-informed enthusiasm of many scripts: ‘as good as we’ve seen from undergraduates’.
- Section A: better integrated comparison
- Mostly well-prepared on the Forward Anthology poems.
- Section B: most responses showed a good grasp of the texts.
- Contextual factors often well integrated.
- Few rubric infringements.

Section A





Question 2: opening (1)

In the poems, *Two Trees* by Don Paterson and *Giuseppe* by Roderick Ford, both poets explore unusual ideas by beginning these poems with almost mythic, dreamlike imagery, infused with a certain more morbid sentiment. These poets then shatter the ways in which they have created this veil between the truth and the poem by ridding (or partially ridding) the poem of that previous fantasy for a more bleak realism. However, this attempt then reveals itself to be false in-itself, and the poets realise that their interests demand the myth of poetry. Both poems begin with an almost fairy-tale or mythic quality in order to present their particular unusual ideas. In Don Paterson's poem, this is reflected by the title: "Two Trees". This name has a simplicity to it and a reference to natural imagery which evokes notions of stories found in children's books. This sentiment is carried through in the poem's first line, beginning as many traditional stories do: "One morning, Don Miguel got out of bed". Paterson's simplistic beginning,



Question 2: opening (2)

with reference to a character name, and day beginning "out of bed" is very much a purposeful device to create a fairytale like atmosphere. This is enhanced by Paterson's use of iambic pentameter in the first line, giving it an almost sing-song, nursery rhyme quality and in keeping with the traditional nature of the opening....

Similarly to Paterson's poem, Roderick Ford also begins his poem in a way that calls forth myth and legend. He begins as Paterson does, by distancing himself from the subject of the story: "My Uncle Giuseppe told me". Both poets' choices to reference a third party in the content of the poem both adds to the mythical element, but also highlights the way in which story-telling passed from one to another inherently shrouds the truth.....

However, suddenly, Paterson subverts the mythic quality his poem has been engaged in and writes: "And no, they did not die from solitude"....



Question 1: conclusion (1)

By using the word "intricate" to describe the "embrace" of the other tree, Paterson is highlighting how specific our desires are for the other person once they have gone, and how nobody can fulfil us the same way or take their place. The final quotation of "They were trees, and trees don't weep or ache or shout.

And trees are all this poem is about" has a double meaning. The quotation "trees are all this poem is about" demonstrates, ironically, the human nature to read into things too deeply, and assume they have a greater meaning something which could contribute to the end of a relationship as partners grow more paranoid and suspicious of each other. The other meaning could be how we are mere mortals at the mercy of emotion and pain,



Question 1: conclusion (2)

whereas trees do not "weep or ache or shout" like we do at the end of a relationship. Instead, they are almost immutable, and thus this statement serves as a reminder that, though the pain seems unbearable, life will go on and people should take a leaf out of the tree's book, and learn to grow and heal over time.

To conclude, the two poem's presentation of relationships are very different with Agbabi focusing on an unorthodox and abusive modern romance, and Paterson exploring how nature can be symbolic of the relationships seen in mankind; both being equally beautiful and equally painful.

Section B





Question 7: opening (1)

Following a surge in the popularity of theatre at the turn of the 17th Century, the poetry we retrospectively define as ‘Metaphysical’ often employs a range of dramatic devices to captivate a reader and deliver a moral message or personal viewpoint in a more interesting way. As few poets published in the first half of the 17th Century, as this was seen as dishonourable, many works were written for personal entertainment or to a small group of individuals: for Vaughan it was the former, and his works were published posthumously, so it is fair to assume they reflect his true opinions. For Andrew Marvell, the latter is more likely; as a Cambridge graduate and known friend of the contemporaneous poet Richard Lovelace, Marvell is believed to have written to entertain a coterie of young males on the manuscript circuit whom he likely would have met through his education. Thus dramatic devices are used by the two poets very differently: Vaughan tries to



Question 7: opening (2)

work through his own doubt and faith in 'The World', whilst Marvell aims to entertain and inform through the narrative poem 'The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn'. Thus three dramatic devices are notably used by both Vaughan and Marvell: characters, striking images, and allegories.

The characters in Vaughan's 'The World' seem to represent the three sins condemned in the epigraphic quote from the Bible: 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'. Vaughan's religious approval of the sentiment is seen in 'the darksome statesman', likely symbolic of the contemporarily widely known politician Machiavelli, in how

'Condemning thoughts (like sad eclipses) scowl

Upon his soul,'

with the Biblical lexis of 'condemning' tying his disapproval directly to religion, also seen in the pitying parenthetical interjection 'like sad eclipses'.



Question 13: extract

By contrast, Keats' later sonnet 'To Sleep' actively pursues the concept of death as a positive outcome, through the descriptions of terms relating to death, a lack of which were prevalent in his earlier sonnet. Keats writes in this sonnet 'close... my willing eyes', and 'seal the hushed casket of my soul', both quotes evoking a feeling of peace and acceptance within the reader; the adjectives 'hushed' and 'willing' effective in this regard. In fact the adjective 'willing' here demonstrates an active yearning for death, a distinct change in tone from the 'fears' Keats felt towards death in his earlier life. It could be argued here that Keats can be seen to have changed his writing style as a result of his brother Thomas' death a few months before composing the work, and the use of a semantic field of darkness reflects that new found contentedness with the prospect of death. The terms 'gloom-pleased', 'woes' and 'darkness' itself contrast with 'benign', 'lulling' and 'hushed' throughout the piece, effectively creating a competition, it can be argued, in Keats' psyche, over the darkness within his life and the soothing nature of death as it now appears to him.

How can
students do
better?





It's about the poetry...

‘The great thing about language is it contains trickery and treachery, all sorts of giveaways and hints, opportunities for jokes and slips of the tongue. It is a playground for our brains. Good writing, and poems above all, make the most of this.’

Maurice Riordan, Editor, *The Poetry Review*



How can students do better?

- Remember that it's poetry.
- Read poems aloud as part of preparation.
- Present quotations in lines, as in the text.
- Develop successful strategies for essay writing in examination conditions.
- Use literary terms precisely, with examples and analysis.
- Poetry requires concentration.
- Read plenty of poetry!



Please don't give us this...

Frost in Next please Lear presents the theme of death
throughout his whole life on a heavy expectation.
Lear into This is presented from the fact that the 'pick
up habits of expecting' alludes to the idea that Europe does it.
He then continues by saying 'Society is always approaching every day'

Further resources





Further resources

- Examiner's [reports](#)
- [Exemplars](#)
- [Unseen Poetry Anthology](#)
- [Poems of the Decade Teacher Guide](#)
- [Poet-to-Poet podcast](#) pack
- YouTube [videos](#) student advice for Paper 2.



Thank you and farewell

- The Paper 3 Principal Examiner report can be accessed [here](#).
- Here is [link](#) to the Paper 1, Paper 3 and coursework reports.