



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary
in English Literature (8ET0)
Paper 1: Poetry and Drama

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Introduction

Students and teachers are clearly very familiar now with the requirements of this specification, and it was pleasing to see how the vast majority of candidates were fully conversant with the assessment objectives, engaged well with their literary texts, and were able to produce enthusiastic personal responses that were often well-argued and detailed. This is in spite of the disruption over the previous years, and it must also be pointed out that this will have been the first series of public exams for this cohort for which no allowances were made or Advanced Information supplied.

Section A

In Section A, candidates are presented with a named poem from their anthology, and they must then select a suitable poem from those they have studied with which to compare it and fulfil the demands of AO4.

In both questions, the majority of candidates made sensible choices of comparison, demonstrating a sound understanding of the anthology as a whole. Inevitably, the poems set for last year's paper proved to be popular, and it is understandable that candidates may choose to fall back on a text they have already written on for a mock exam or practice paper. Whilst *Look We Have Coming To Dover* was an effective choice of comparison for Question 1, *History* – a fairly popular choice for Question 2 – rarely worked well.

For both questions, the most successful responses were comparative throughout and adopted a conceptual approach, dividing the question into subtopics, themes, or ideas. A chronological approach – for example, comparison of endings – could also work. This series, there were fewer responses which tried to compare by language device, although there was still the tendency to write generally about both poems' form and structure in isolation, which tended to become descriptive or did not fully engage with ideas.

Section B

In Section B, the four assessment objectives are assessed in two separate strands and candidates need to balance their content accordingly. The majority of responses were able to balance these assessment objectives, using evidence from the text to support their analysis of form and structure, and incorporating good knowledge of contextual factors and knowledge of alternative interpretations of their texts.

The critical statement provided before the question is intended to help candidates: it serves as a reminder that marks are allocated for AO5, and that there are multiple interpretations of a text. Candidates do not have to refer to it directly, and the majority do not, already having a secure knowledge of a range of critical perspectives. Direct reference to the critical statement, or at least the view it suggests, can often be useful; the question topic itself, however must not be forgotten. Finally, the critical statement should be read carefully as a whole. A few candidates focused only on a particular phrase, and used it to craft an essay that lacked relevance overall.

Although there are discrete assessment objectives and two mark grids, the response is marked holistically. Candidates should remember that the use of evidence from the text – in most cases, through specific, direct quotation – is an element that binds all the AOs. For AO1, Level 3 and above specifies “a clear response, providing examples”; obviously, meaningful AO2 analysis also relies on this. However, it is also difficult to score high marks for AO3 and AO5 if contextual/interpretational points are not also based on specific moments from the text. Candidates who failed to make frequent textual references often scored poorly on both mark grids as a result.

For AO1 and AO2, most candidates were able to write in a clear and engaging way. Very few candidates had major difficulties with writing in Standard English or in an appropriate academic style. Textual evidence was often chosen very well, and across nearly all texts it was clear that candidates have become increasingly confident in selecting a broad range of quotations that are relevant to their topic, rather than trying to fit in those which they might have used in other essays. The quality of AO2 analysis was variable, as always, according to ability. Candidates achieving in Level 2 should recall the basics of analysis which they would have learned at GCSE, such as word-level discussion, as this will form the “clear knowledge which shows understanding of the writer’s craft” that they will need to achieve Level 3. Candidates achieving in Level 4 would be advised to adopt a more ambitious approach: it was a pity, at times, to read an otherwise eloquent and discriminating response that became bogged down in “the use of the word...”.

For AO3 and AO5, candidates did best when their discussions of context or interpretations linked clearly to their own argument, and to a moment in the text itself. General contextual overviews were occasionally interesting, but even when displaying an impressive degree of historical knowledge they were not useful in isolation. Candidates are now heeding the advice to avoid oversimplistic autobiographical context, and it was good to see some more precise historical references. Some candidates were able to refer to cultural history or literary movements, such as aestheticism or the Southern Gothic, which was often nicely specific to their argument, and also did not require lengthy explanation potentially side-tracking them. Finally, critical material for AO5 had often been well-learned. Although candidates do not need to be able to cite particular critics or to learn lists of quotations, the majority choose to do so, and this does allow them to show a clear understanding fairly easily as long as these references are integrated and, ideally, analysed and evaluated. For those who do not, they must remember to signal their knowledge of AO5 more clearly: there were some candidates for whom the examiner simply could not find anything to credit that demonstrated even a “general awareness of different interpretations” (Level 2).

Question 1

This question asked candidates to compare how ideas about society are presented in Turnball’s *Ode on a Grayson Perry Urn* and a poem of their choice. Most responses drew comparisons of tone, patterns of language and formal elements. *Please Hold* was a popular pairing, along with *Look We Have Coming to Dover*. For *Please Hold*, an attempt was made to convey the resistance to increasing reliance on technology and dehumanisation, while the Nagra pairings often considered the attitude of groups holding power in society towards those they see at the margins, the disruptive youth and immigrants.

Candidates who focused on the presentation of youth and young people within society were often successful - for example, how they are viewed and portrayed by others, their interactions with other generations and with institutions, and so on. Indeed, with this in mind, most candidates were able to engage with some success with Turnbull's satirical elements, although there were a range of interpretations regarding the degree to which the speaker looked down upon or secretly admired the risk-taking teenagers. However, an excessively narrow focus on youth was not helpful, and often led to a lack of coverage of the poems.

Although AO3 is not assessed in this part of the paper, brief, relevant contextualisation is sometimes helpful when unpicking a poet's references, for example, to popular culture or current events. It was good to see that several centres gave candidates the opportunity to consider Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn* as a counterpoint to Turnbull's poem; unfortunately, candidates who were eager to show off this knowledge rarely did so in a way that was useful to their argument, and time would often have been better spent on hitting the other assessment objectives. A small number of candidates were able to contextualise the text in relation to Perry's artwork and the original poem by Keats. This did enable engagement with register in a meaningful way.

Comparatively, in 'History' Burnside uses the inclusion of the youth to ~~ind~~ demonstrate how society is becoming dangerous by juxtaposing this danger with the innocence of children, creating a ~~tone of an~~ anxious and uncertain tone about the future. For example, the speaker introduces his son in the quote "I knelt down in the sand with Lucas". The use of the verb "knelt" creates an allusion to prayer, which could hint to desperation or wanting to protect his son from society, highlighting the speaker's fears about dangers in society. Moreover, the phrase "with Lucas" ~~creates a highly personal tone~~ makes the poem highly personal and creates a connection between them, making the reader aware of the importance of family and connection, further creating an anxious tone about the future because it makes us imagine losing our own family due to dangers in society. Therefore,

Comment: This was part of a low Level 4 response. Although it is well-expressed and the analysis of the connotations of 'knelt' is interesting, the relevance to the task is questionable, and the attempts to link the candidate's ideas to the topic of society seem very strained. The attempt to analyse "with Lucas" is not especially successful, and, again, the jumps from personal relationships to family to dangers in society are very tenuous. The candidate was more successful in analysing the named poem.

Advice: 'History' was a named poem in the 2022 series: perhaps the candidate had written about this in a mock exam, or it was simply a favourite poem. However, candidates must be encouraged to choose their poem carefully and prioritise texts that will help them answer the question and make relevant comparisons, rather than a favoured text they feel confident about in a more general sense.

As a contrast, here is another response with much tighter focus on both the question and the assessment objectives:

In both Ode on a Grecian Urn and Look we have coming to Dover (henceforth Dover), both poets reflect on British Society and moreover the inequalities in this society. ~~Both poets use allegorical, pastoral style to reflect a state of ideal society~~ However both poems differ in their endings, with 'Dover' ending with a more hopeful image of future society and 'Urn' portraying a more negatively changed future society.

While a Nuyorican criticizes British society for its politics around immigrants, both poems are seen to also critique society for its class inequalities. For example, in 'Gun', Turnbull includes a contrast between the "ret boys and cornered cheerleaders" with the onlooking "posse" and "parents". Here, Turnbull goes on to show the hierarchies of the two groups by claiming how the posse and parents "sue for peace" but but "tranquility, though, is for the rich". Turnbull is reflecting on class inequalities in British society by demonstrating the battle these posse and parents are going through to try and stop the chaos that is arising on the streets and the lack of response they are getting from the police who as Turnbull is suggesting, are corrupt and have bias towards the upper class in Britain. With the "ret boys and cornered cheerleaders" used symbolically to represent the working class youth and their

immediately explaining how peace is only for the rich, we understand the clear class divide of British society and the lack of interference to help working class communities. "They" is a clear divisive device to represent this class divide. Moreover, Nagua critiques British Society, like Tumball for its clear class inequalities. Nagua also uses contrast to show this by explaining the immigrants' situation and how they're "stowed in the sea to invade", having to hide to escape persecution, and contrasting their situation with the "cashy come and go tourists" "landing the ministered waves". Nagua explores how while the immigrants must keep hidden and be wary while escaping persecution, the tourists around them can holiday ignorantly without fear of persecution. Nagua uses the royal language of "landing" to demonstrate how these tourists own the sea and can use it for pleasure while the immigrants are

Commentary: The introduction sets up a comparative focus that is also nicely conceptual, and throughout the response AO4 was a strength. Areas of comparison in this well-structured response included the use of colloquial British slang, the focus on class differences as seen in the second extract, and the tone and emotions of the poems' endings. Although the expression here is, at times, a little laboured, the concepts applied are "discriminating" rather than just "appropriate", and connections are "effective" rather than, again just "consistent": the response was therefore a low Level 5.

Advice: A conceptual focus – for example, breaking down the question into sub-topics – often works well as a comparative approach for Section A. This often helps to make paragraphs more focused and concise, thereby giving the overall essay a more secure sense of structure.

Question 2

This question asked candidates to compare how different voices are used in *On Her Blindness* and one other poem, and was slightly less popular than the first question. Many candidates approached 'voices' as characters presented within the poems, most often mothers and sons, with *Effects* being a very popular and successful pairing. A significant number of students compared with *To My Nine-Year-Old Self*. Other poems with a focus on the striking voice of speaker included *Eat Me* and *A Minor Role*. For the named poem, answers to this question often focussed on the attitude to the mother's blindness from the son's perspective. There was a recognition of the strong emotional content and how it was expressed with reference to the mother's blindness. However, some answers were limited in scope because they focussed on one voice only rather than see the different voices in the poem, including the father's and how this affected meaning.

Some candidates took a very ambitious approach in which they skilfully engaged with 'voice' as a poetic construct. These responses considered the effect of parentheses, tonal shifts and mixed registers as ways in which the poets constructed powerful voices within the poems. However, candidates who took one of the other approaches were equally able to access the higher levels in the mark scheme.

Question 3

Question 4

There were no responses on Lorraine Hansberry's *Les Blancs*, in its first year on the specification.

Question 5

Dr Faustus remains a popular play, and the majority of candidates achieved Level 4 or above, engaging confidently with the play's language and its contexts. In this question, candidates were asked to consider master-servant relationships. At the lower end of the range, responses looked at relationships between Faustus and those he considered to be his social inferiors. Most then compared the presentation of these relationships to his own subjugation later in the play. Better responses looked not only at actions and stage directions but also at the ways in which language and syntax communicated hubris and later desperation as Faustus recognised he was master of nothing.

Marlowe presents the master-servant relationship between Faustus and God ~~there~~ as very one sided. Whilst in most cases the master would be God, here we see Faustus believing he is superior to God and ~~is~~ having the foolish aims to go ~~to~~ beyond God. This can be seen through the ancient Greek allusions throughout the play, for example his 'waxen wings did mount above his reach' and he 'mount himself to scale Olympus' top'. Marlowe uses these allusions to remind the audience of the unchecked ambition Faustus has to break free from the master-servant relationship he has with God by becoming more ~~more~~ superior ~~to~~ than God, which is indicated through phrases such as 'all things that move between the quiet poles shall be at my command' and 'a sound magician is a mighty God'. Although a humanist reading of the play would encourage and celebrate Faustus' trespassing areas of knowledge that were solely preserved for God, perhaps a more compelling argument, ~~in~~ from the perspective of a medieval audience, would be the condemnation of Faustus' hubris for believing his is and will ever be superior to God. The ~~phrase 'a sound magician is a mighty God'~~ ~~is~~ ~~in the~~ phrase 'a sound magician is a mighty God' is a piece of dramatic irony as Faustus set out all these ambitions of obtain ~~power, honour and~~ 'power', 'honour' and 'omnipotence' however in the end all he is doing with the necromancy he sold his soul for is playing tricks on innocent men like the horsecourser and the Emperor. Marlowe uses ~~the~~ dramatic irony to warn a medieval audience of the consequences ~~that result~~ of trying to break free from the ~~relationship~~ master-servant relationship with God.

Commentary:

This is the opening to a borderline Level 4/5 essay. The introduction is confident and, AO1 is consistently effective, with the essay being well-shaped as a whole and consistently focused on the question. A Level 5 is therefore suggested. AO2 sits more in Level 4, however, with consistent understanding but less in the way of analysis (eg "phrases such as..." in this extract). The candidate scored Level 4 for AO3 and AO5, and this extract is typical of their approach: although there is a range of contextual references, they are not necessarily discriminating, and a top-level candidate would not be expected to make errors such as "a medieval audience".

Advice: Although examiners enjoy reading scripts that engage with the different theological interpretations of the play, the most important thing is how candidates are exploring and engaging with these, and linking them to their text and own argument.

Question 6

A range of approaches was seen on this question on the dramatic presentation of truth. In responses seen, 'falsehood' was taken as any attempt to hide the truth on a surface level in the lower range responses, to the wider sense of self-deception and corrupt belief systems in the more successful responses. The most secure responses located analysis within a contextual framework, drawing on knowledge of morality and mystery plays, religious dissent and Marlowe's own stated beliefs.

Da Vinci), Dravigon & M. Banks interpretation that Faustus was a "Renaissance man who had to pay the medieval price for it", it could be argued that Marlowe celebrates Faustus for choosing the truth in spite of outdated beliefs even if he mentions for as using magic. However, this interpretation is less ~~convincing~~ convincing because Marlowe uses the ends imagery pathos in Faustus' final soliloquy as he ~~lament~~ laments that 'no end is limited to damned souls' - Marlowe's use here is ironic as magic's initial appeal was that it offered endless truth and yet Faustus couldn't find the truth that would save him from being a 'damned soul'. Perhaps Marlowe is suggesting that some truth is more valuable such as the truth of salvation and that Faustus never chooses the one which therefore seems contrary to the Humanist reading.

Comment: This extract, from a Level 5 response, seamlessly integrates the assessment objectives in the context of an interrogation of a critical quotation. It remains firmly on task, and there is good integration of AO2.

Advice: This is a good exemplar of how to integrate AO5 successfully whilst ensuring it is not prioritised above the other assessment objectives.

Question 7

Question 8 Very few responses were seen on *The Duchess of Malfi* this series, with none choosing Question 7. For Question 8, there was some successful engagement with the presentation of "desire" and its dramatic function in precipitating the tragic action of the play.

Question 9

Several centres continue to study *The Importance of being Earnest*, and candidates engaged well on this text. In this question, candidates were asked to explore Wilde's presentation of work. Some candidates chose to focus on a more general discussion of how the upper classes are portrayed, though others demonstrated more engagement, including the contexts of comedy and Wilde's use of satire.

Wilde portrays the upper classes as idle and lazy, this is an accurate representation as all that they seem to partake in is hedonism, this is in stark contrast to the average person living at the dawn of the industrial revolution, as they had to work all day purely to survive, with no room whatsoever for any hedonistic pleasures whatsoever. Moreover, the attitudes the upper classes have towards work are completely absent, as none of the upper echelons of society even have to go to work to make money. This dramatic presentation of materialism and severe disconnection from the average life, although exaggerated, shows the insanity of the wealth gap during the industrial revolution and how it affected the minds and lives of the upper class.

The first example of a purely hedonistic lifestyle is right at the beginning of the play, setting the tone and immediately presenting the disconnect that the upper class has from average reality. When asked what brings him up to town, Jack answers "oh, pleasure, pleasure! What else should bring one anywhere", this complete disregard for the existence of troubles and hardships which were present in the lives and work of average people during the period shows the symptoms of having such sheer wealth, as it is implied that Jack does not do anything if not for pleasure of some sort. This presentation of his lifestyle puts emphasis on the idleness of the upper class, as nothing can stop their incredible laziness unless it is an equally potent pleasure. This is in stark contrast to the average person, who had to work in order to afford bare necessities, and therefore had no choice but to do so unrelentingly.

The unrelenting hedonism is highlighted through the absence of struggles in the previous example, but the creation of pseudo struggles further distills and highlights the broken view that the upper class has on work, as in the absence of any actual business requirements, formalities like proposing and marriage which require effort are seen by Algernon as "business". This creation of pseudo problems not only highlights the alien reality that the upper classes lived in, it also shows how disconnected they are from average life in a literal sense, as the echo chamber of interaction among aristocracy and rich dandies such as Jack and Algernon facilitates a general consensus among the upper class that there is nothing to life but pleasure, and arguments don't ever arise about that, but rather only about which pleasant activities are lesser. This is a complete inversion of the lives of regular people at the time, who mostly had to pick between the lesser of two hardships, especially in relation to work, as if they didn't do that, they would have to likely starve.

Commentary: This is from a low Level 2 response. There is a sustained response to the interpretation of the play as set up in the critical statement, but there is little of the text. Contextual understanding is very general. However, there is evident personal engagement, and there is sufficient evidence that the candidate has understood both the play as a whole and the task even if at a general level; the response therefore goes above Level 1.

Tip: It is always worth reiterating that all the assessment objectives of the paper rely on the candidate supporting their ideas with precise evidence from the text.

Question 10

Candidates took a range of approaches including focusing on Bunburying and double identities, hypocrisy and double standards, the role of women, and how these can both create comedy and be read as social commentary. Most presented a clear and relevant analysis of the degree to which characters were being honest with themselves and others, and how behaviours and motifs could be seen to symbolise the restrictions and hypocrisy of Victorian society. Clear links were made with Wilde's own life and belief system. Some candidates securely linked concepts of honesty and morality, with a secure grasp of satire and irony within the play.

Furthermore, Wilde's use of props in Act two appears to continue to undermine the value of honesty by presenting unreliable characters as well as the lack of honesty providing a source of escapism. During the tea party scene Gwendolen and Cecily engage in a diologue which carries witty tone. Wilde's use of the declaritive statment 'he asked me to be his wife yesterday afternoon at 5:30. If you would care to varify the incident' presents the chracter of Gwendolen being assertive and reassured by her honest account of events from the prior act. Additionally Wilde's use of stage dirrections 'exsamines diary through her lorgnette carfully' presnests a symbolic presentation of truth an honesty as being objective an absolute, with Wilde's mention of the noun 'lorgnette' acting as a symbolic layer of servalence. However, this connetation of honesty is setirically undermines through stage dirrection 'Produces dairy of her own'. Wilde's use of the verb 'produces' would spark a comedic reaction from audiences as the diary Gwendolen was examining prior was Cecily's; it was revealed just a scene prior that Cecily had been fabricating her diary in order to have

excitement. Wilde's use of the declarative statement 'I was forced to write your letters for you' and 'we have been engaged since February 14th' as Paglia remarks 'Wilde's play serves an aesthetic demand rather than a moral demand' and this is certainly true in the portrayal of Cecily and the prop of her diary. Wilde's use of the hyperbolic verb 'forced' and the romantic date of 'February 14th' present Cecily's diary as being an inaccurate source of information that is based on desire rather than truth; contradicting the point of a diary. Furthermore honesty is entirely removed throughout Algernon and Cecily's dialogue as Wilde curates Algernon to accept the ideas provided by Cecily as being true; shown through Wilde's use of the rhetorical question 'what had I done?' in Algernon's dialogue. Alternatively Wilde may be commenting on a stereotypical truth that people often fail to recognise that they may be at fault at times throughout the relationship. Coincidentally audiences would find the date mention humorous as the trivial farce was first performed in St James Theatre on the 14 of February 1895. Wilde presents honesty and objective truth to be a source of verification however the use of props undermines honesty as being a display of one's own interpretation of reality. In the case of Cecily is pure fantasy.

Commentary: Although some of the language analysis is rather mechanical and word-level ("the use of the...") this extract from a top Level 4 response contains very good use of the text. While other candidates mentioned the use of the diary, very few pointed out that this is, of course, the use of a stage prop; this response, therefore, has a welcome sense of the play as theatre.

Question 11

Question 12

No responses were seen to *The Rover*.

Question 13

A Streetcar Named Desire remains, by far, the most popular text on this paper. In the light of the comment, 'Stanley can be admired for defending his home against the treachery of Blanche', candidates were asked to explore the dramatic presentation of home.

Many candidates interpreted 'home' fairly loosely, discussing the different settings of the play. For some, the focus was fairly indiscriminate, with discussions of the general setting of New Orleans that often drifted into slightly vague explanations of context. Another popular approach was to write about the different "homes" seen in the play, but most candidates could present a clear analysis of home as both a physical space and a concept associated with security and safety. These responses were often enjoyable to read, as candidates were clearly thinking carefully about home as a concept. Some candidates also presented analysis of the ways in which Williams' staging emphasised Blanche's transgression of the Kowalski home, and how the remnants of Blanche's home were symbolically present in the trunk.

At the lower end of the range, candidates presented a general overview of the text and some discussion of Stanley's aggression and how Blanche, as representative of the Old South, was under threat and no longer at home in the New America. Although a focus on the statement could have produced a relevant response, candidates who chose this approach tended to focus solely on a general character study of Stanley; although this could elicit some good (if pre-prepared) AO2, AO3, and AO5, failure to make links to "home" caused a few very low scores.

Additionally, Stanley and Stella's relationship ~~is~~ allows the reader to visualise the unhealthy ~~and~~ relationship they have. Stella who is seen to be obedient to her husband shows a sudden change in ~~the~~ role as she shouts at Stanley, "I will speak as much as I want, this is my home!" The rare ^{moment} of dominance ~~is~~ shows that Stella is ~~is~~ tired of listening to Stanley all the time. This shows that Stella is also in charge of the house. William uses the male characters to emphasise that Stanley is in charge. This can be

seen during the Poker night, when Stanley and his friends play at his home. The character of Mitch shows that women are inferior to men and is seen to be given the domestic role in the household. "Poker should not be played in a house with women." Not only does his character show he finds women delicate and fragile, he blames the game instead of Stanley, suggesting that he feels in some way fearful towards him. Williams uses his own personal experiences to incorporate it in the play. As William himself did not live in a very child friendly household he uses the female protagonists to demonstrate it. His father suffered from depression and alcoholism which then occurred to William.

Comment:

This was typical of a Level 3 response, with a character-driven approach. However, the candidate's choice of evidence is nicely focused on the concept of 'home' as set up in the question. The somewhat laboured expression, whilst always 'clear', means that it does not approach Level 4 for the first mark grid, and AO2 – knowledge of the writer's craft – is clear. AO5 is not seen in this section, but AO3 is reasonably clear, though lower down in Level 3: it is an interesting link, but quite general, biographical context.

Advice:

Candidates should be reminded to read *both* the critical statement *and* the question, and take a moment to be clear what they are being asked to write. A significant minority focused their argument almost exclusively on the issue of, as implied in the statement, whether Stanley is to be admired for defending his home against Blanche. Most of these essentially became an essay on Stanley, and whether this was a straightforward character study or a nuanced argument, the response was not relevant to the question - the dramatic presentation of home - and therefore could not score highly.

Question 14

Candidates often enjoy writing about deception, and this series proved no different as it was significantly the most popular question on the paper.

On one level, candidates responded to the ways in which characters lied to each other- the least secure responses used this as a frame to present a narrative summary of Blanche's mental deterioration, with the sense that some pre-prepared responses were being included, with less secure reference to other characters. As with Question 13 and indeed previous series this meant their responses sometimes lacked relevance.

Many candidates, however, discussed a range of characters, exploring how they lied to each other but also – helped by the critical quotation – how they deceived themselves. Allusions to truth and deception throughout the play were explored and the role of self-deception in the dramatic trajectories of Blanche, Stanley and Stella was framed, as well as the tragic concept of hamartia.

Overall, candidates across the performance range are incorporating wider contexts of production and reception, along with critical interpretations, in more meaningful ways.

Stanley is also a victim of deception but in the opposite way, he uses confidence to hide his insecurities instead of vice versa. Williams cleverly uses a stage direction instead of explicit speech to show Stanley abusing Stella. "There is the sound of a blow. Stella cries out" leaves a lot to the audience's imagination, making Stanley look weak that he can't even reach the 'manly' standards set post-war and hits his wife in front of his guests - he is insecure and ashamed about his behaviour and hides to deceive those around him that it isn't as bad as it seems. ^{The} post-war period saw many veterans suffer with PTSD making them incredibly sensitive and aggressive which in turn led to them not fitting into modern society. You can also see Stanley not only deceive others but himself for about his own nationality in order to fit

in with the "American Dream". He rages at Stella saying 'Polack... ~~them~~ ^{them} kind of words have been on your tongue... too much around here'. Using the offensive term 'Polack' instead of 'Polish' shows the embarrassment he has for himself. He is so desperate to be seen as American, he conforms into the norm of disregarding his own heritage disrespectfully. The use of the word 'tongue' instead of mouth is powerful in itself to show the anger. The tongue is one of the most powerful muscles in the body and the harsh 't' and 'ng' allows the organ to be transformed into a weapon against the two women, who at the time would've been seen as inferior to him in society.

Commentary: The candidate subsequently achieved a high Level 4, and this section is interesting. Perhaps it is a slightly weak argument, and not many would agree with the candidate's conclusion. However, it is supported with evidence from the text that is well-chosen, and the contextual link also works in an interesting way – and so this section was credited as part of a developing argument, rather than dismissed as a mistake or misinterpretation.

Advice: Candidates should feel confident that, as long as they are not egregiously misinterpreting the text or making clear errors, examiners will credit personal responses that are clearly argued and make good use of textual evidence and the assessment objectives.

Question 15

Question 16

There were no responses to the questions set on Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*, in its first year appearing on the specification.

Question 17

Question 18

There were no responses to the questions set on *Waiting for Godot* this year.

