

# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2024**

**GCSE English Language 1EN0 01**

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## Introduction

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9 – 1) in English Language is a linear course. It consists of two externally examined components and one endorsement for Spoken Language.

Paper 1 is worth 40% of the total GCSE and consists of two sections, lasting for one hour and forty-five minutes in total.

Candidates are recommended to spend one hour on **Section A** which tests reading with questions on an unseen 19th-century fiction extract of approximately 650 words. In the June 2024 series, this was an extract from *The Old Nurse's Story* by Elizabeth Gaskell, published in 1852.

There are four questions on the text which are stepped in difficulty with the following mark breakdown:

Question 1 = 1 mark

Question 2 = 2 marks

Question 3 = 6 marks

Question 4 = 15 marks.

**Questions 1 and 2** test **AO1**: Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. **Question 3** tests **AO2**: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views. **Question 4** tests **AO4**: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.

**Section B** tests imaginative writing and candidates are recommended to spend 45 minutes on this section which is worth a total of 40 marks, giving the paper a total of 64 marks.

In this section, there is a choice from two writing tasks, linked by a theme to the reading extract. One of the writing tasks additionally provides two images that students can use to help them generate ideas for their writing. Students can write a response that draws on just one or neither of the images.

This is an untiered specification and the choice of texts and questions set are such that all candidates are able to access the paper and to show their abilities in reading and writing. In June of 2024 candidates found the paper to be engaging and interesting and they responded well to it.

## Question 1

Question 1 is intended to be a gentle introduction to the paper and is always a low-tariff, single mark question which tests candidates' ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This question was successfully done by the majority of candidates in the June 2024 paper.

The question asked candidates to 'identify a word which shows that Hester is looking for Rosamond at night.' There were two permissible answers which were 'shadow' or 'moonlight' and both of these responses can be seen in the examples below.

Some gave a single word answer whilst others gave a phrase containing the correct wording; all of these answers were awarded the single mark that was available. Where candidates were unsuccessful, they chose a section of text from outside the given line references or they chose a section of text which did not answer the question. It may have been the case that some candidates did not read the whole of the question and stopped at the end of the first line, mistakenly thinking that the question asked them to identify a word that simply showed that Hester was looking for Rosamond. This would explain incorrect answers such as, 'little footmarks' or 'ran'.



## SECTION A

### Reading

Read the text in the Reading Text Insert provided and answer ALL questions.

You should spend about 1 hour on this section.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

- 1 From lines 1–3, identify a word which shows that Hester is looking for Rosamond at night.

moonlight

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate makes a correct selection and is awarded the single mark available.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Candidates should ensure that they are clear on the focus of the question and that they make a selection from the text within the given lines for the question, including only the correct word or phrase from the passage.

Note that this answer only includes a single word to be awarded the available mark.

- 1 From lines 1–3, identify a word which shows that Hester is looking for Rosamond at night.

There a black shadow fell on the snow

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer identifies the other correct response, 'shadow' as part of a longer phrase.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Make sure that you make a selection of text from the lines given. This answer does that successfully.

- 1 From lines 1–3, identify a word which shows that Hester is looking for Rosamond at night.

1 word

footmarks

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer represents a misreading of the question that does not focus upon the fact that the opening action of the passage takes place at night. As such this answer does not achieve the single mark available.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Section A of this paper is a test of reading and so it is vital that you read the whole of the question carefully so that you know what sort of word or phrase you are being asked to identify and select.

Make sure that you take the time to do this carefully.

- 1 From lines 1–3, identify a word which shows that Hester is looking for Rosamond at night.

A little girl who is lost in the snow.

(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer does not focus upon lines 1-3, as the question directs and so it cannot reach a correct answer.

It takes its text from the italicised introduction to the reading extract, which is there to help orientate candidates about the text, but does not constitute part of the Reading Text Insert. In addition, the question focused upon the time of day and the answer given here makes no reference to the events taking place at night.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Make sure that all of your answers for Question 1 come from the text itself and not from the italicized introduction.

- 1 From lines 1–3, identify a word which shows that Hester is looking for Rosamond at night.

'a black shadow fell on the snow but when I came again into the moonlight'  
(Total for Question 1 = 1 mark)



This answer does more than is necessary and identifies both of the accepted answers. This is quite acceptable, but it is not the best use of the candidate's time.



Look at the question carefully. This question asks you to 'identify a word', therefore you know that your answer should only contain a single word.

If you write out a whole phrase it is not wrong, but it is not the most effective use of your time.

## Question 2

Question 2 is worth two marks and, like Question 1, tests candidates' ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.

This question develops from Question 1 by asking candidates to focus upon a longer section of text and by allowing candidates to express answers in their own words as well as using quotations from the text. The question asked candidates to 'give two ways in which the writer shows what the weather was like.' The question paper now reprints the relevant lines from the reading text to support candidates and to prevent them selecting text from outside the given lines. In addition, the layout, with its use of separate lines numbered 1 and 2 is intended to structure the answer for candidates and to ensure that they include two ways, in order to gain the two marks that are available.

This question was answered successfully by the vast majority of candidates, with most candidates achieving full marks. The mark scheme details nine correct responses. Where candidates were unsuccessful, they often failed to provide two parts to their answer or occasionally referred to text from outside the line references given.

2 Read this extract.

It was bitter cold; so cold, that the air almost took the skin off my face as I ran; but I ran on, crying to think how my poor little darling must be perished and frightened. I was within sight of the holly-trees, when I saw a shepherd coming down the hill, bearing something in his arms wrapped in his cloak. He shouted to me, and asked me if I had lost a child; and, when I could not speak for crying, he bore towards me, and I saw my wee one, lying still, and white, and stiff in his arms, as if she had been dead. He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady – my lamb – my queen – my darling – stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten\*.

From the extract, give **two** ways in which the writer shows what the weather was like.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

- 1 'It was bitter cold'
- 2 'the air almost took the skin off my face'

(Total for Question 2 = 2 marks)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer does more than it needs to achieve the two marks available. In addition, this answer makes use of the two lines to separate the two elements of the answer.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Unlike Question 1, this question explicitly states that you can 'use your own words or quotations from the text'. This answer uses quotations for both parts, but sometimes you may find it easier to sum things up in your own words and that is OK for Question 2.

2 Read this extract.

It was bitter cold; so cold, that the air almost took the skin off my face as I ran; but I ran on, crying to think how my poor little darling must be perished and frightened. I was within sight of the holly-trees, when I saw a shepherd coming down the hill, bearing something in his arms wrapped in his cloak. He shouted to me, and asked me if I had lost a child; and, when I could not speak for crying, he bore towards me, and I saw my wee one, lying still, and white, and stiff in his arms, as if she had been dead. He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady – my lamb – my queen – my darling – stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten\*.

From the extract, give **two** ways in which the writer shows what the weather was like.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

- 1 "It was bitter cold so cold that the air almost took the skin off my face as i ran"



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer identifies more than two ways the writer shows what the weather is like and so is awarded both of the available marks.

This candidate has put all of their answer in the lines for number 1. This is not advised but neither is it penalised in any way.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

The separate lines which are numbered 1 and 2 are there to help candidates and to try and ensure that the answer finds two distinct 'ways'.

You should use the layout to help you structure your answer.



2 Read this extract.

It was bitter cold; so cold, that the air almost took the skin off my face as I ran; but I ran on, crying to think how my poor little darling must be perished and frightened. I was within sight of the holly-trees, when I saw a shepherd coming down the hill, bearing something in his arms wrapped in his cloak. He shouted to me, and asked me if I had lost a child; and, when I could not speak for crying, he bore towards me, and I saw my wee one, lying still, and white, and stiff in his arms, as if she had been dead. He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady – my lamb – my queen – my darling – stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten\*.

From the extract, give **two** ways in which the writer shows what the weather was like.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

- 1 "It was bitter cold; so cold, that the air almost took the skin off my face as I ran"
  - 2 "he had found my <sup>little</sup> lady - my lamb - my queen - my darling - stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten."
- (Total for Question 2 = 2 marks)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer contains at least six separate elements, all of which can be found in the mark scheme and would be given a mark. This is a very thorough answer.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Try to use your time wisely.

Don't give much more than is needed to secure the two available marks as this will use up some of your valuable time in the examination.

2 Read this extract.

It was bitter cold; so cold, that the air almost took the skin off my face as I ran; but I ran on, crying to think how my poor little darling must be perished and frightened. I was within sight of the holly-trees, when I saw a shepherd coming down the hill, bearing something in his arms wrapped in his cloak. He shouted to me, and asked me if I had lost a child; and, when I could not speak for crying, he bore towards me, and I saw my wee one, lying still, and white, and stiff in his arms, as if she had been dead. He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady – my lamb – my queen – my darling – stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten\*.

From the extract, give **two** ways in which the writer shows what the weather was like.

You may use your own words or quotations from the text.

1 bitter cold.

2 Frost - begotten.

(Total for Question 2 = 2 marks)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This is a brief but well-focused answer that manages to secure both of the available marks in just a few words: 'bitter', 'cold' and 'frost-begotten' all feature in the mark scheme and attract marks.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Check your answer carefully when you have written it and make sure that it is focused on the key words from the question.

## Question 3

Question 3 is worth six marks and tests candidates' ability to explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.

The most notable feature of this question is that it requires candidates to comment upon both language and structure. The mark scheme is split into three levels of two marks each with the instruction that, 'responses that are unbalanced cannot access Level 2 or above.' In order to access the marks in Levels 2 and 3, it is not necessary for the language and structure comments to be equally weighted, only that the answer must contain reference to both features. This is a very important consideration and one that centres should make candidates fully aware of.

In addition, candidates should use the mark tariff as a guide about how much to write in response to this question and it is quite possible to attain all six marks in the space provided in the answer booklet. There is an example of a response that achieves a top Level 3 mark below. Candidates should take care not to spend too long responding to Question 3 at the expense of later questions on the paper.

The question asked candidates to explain how the writer uses language and structure to show Hester's love for Rosamond in the given lines. Stronger answers were those that offered an analysis of both features and which were focused upon how the writer used these to present the strong bond that exists between the two named characters. The use of the list of affectionate names, its hyphens and its repeated use of the possessive 'my' were popular points made in many responses and many candidates were able to find several relevant things to say about this particular sentence, building the quality of their response towards Level 3 and analysis. Stronger answers were those that were able to offer insights into the structure of the passage, such as recognising that the extract begins at the height of emotion and tension as the reader believes Rosamond to be dead, followed by relief at her recovery and subsequent care. Only in the final sentence does it become clear that things are not quite as they appear to be, creating intrigue. Similarly, stronger answers were able to recognise the use of sentence variety as one of the means the writer uses to show Hester's love for Rosamond.

Weaker responses had not always read the italicised introduction carefully where it clearly explains that 'Hester is Rosamond's old nursemaid'. Some candidates were confused about their relationship, with some even thinking that Hester's loving nickname 'lammie' was literal, and that Rosamond was a lamb. Weaker responses sometimes wrote about only language or structure or only offered comments upon isolated features and did not clearly explain the effects that the writer had sought to achieve and were not able to examine in detail those features and so reach the marks in Levels 2 and 3. There is an example of just such a response below.



3 Read this extract.

He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady ~~my lamb~~ ~~my queen~~ ~~my darling~~ stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten\*.

Oh! the joy and the tears of having her in my arms once again for I would not let him carry her; but took her, cloak and all, into my own arms, and held her near my own warm neck and heart, and felt the life stealing slowly back again into her little gentle limbs. But she was still insensible when we reached the hall, and I had no breath for speech. We went in by the kitchen-door.

"Bring the warming-pan\*\*," said I; and I carried her upstairs, and began undressing her by the nursery fire. I called ~~my little lammie\*\*\*~~ all the sweet and playful names I could think of, – even while my eyes were blinded by my tears; and at last, oh! at length she opened her large blue eyes. Then I put her into her warm bed and I made up my mind to sit by ~~my darling's~~ bedside the live-long night. She fell away into a soft sleep as soon as her pretty head had touched the pillow, and I watched by her till morning light; when she wakened up bright and clear – or so I thought at first – and, my dears, so I think now.

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to show Hester's love for Rosamond?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

Within the opening of this extract, Hester ~~repeats~~ <sup>addresses</sup> ~~my lamb~~ repetitively ~~calls~~ Rosamond as 'my lamb - my queen - my darling' which shows his sweet nicknames for her. Through the litter of hyphens this highlights how <sup>he has so</sup> much love for her because he is embedding many <sup>sweet</sup> ways to <sup>call for her</sup> ~~share his~~ <sup>first-person</sup> Furthermore, the possessive <sup>this little girl</sup> personal pronouns of 'my' exemplifies how Hester views ~~her~~ as his own and he ~~further~~ also calls her 'this <sup>little</sup> lammie'. This alliterative nounphrase therefore encapsulates how he views her as an innocent being, seeing that lambs stir connotations of purity amongst the reader.

Consequently, by following this, readers may feel a sense of sympathy for Hester as he <sup>desperately</sup> searches for ~~this~~ <sup>the</sup> sweet little girl, which he views as his own.

Likewise, Hester's ~~love~~ <sup>kind</sup> affection for Rosamond is displayed through his dialogue where he orders someone to 'Bring the warming pan', which ~~his emphasises~~ showcases his urgency to help her. As the only dialogue of this section, the author implies that Hester ~~may~~ <sup>is</sup> only conversating when it is ~~in~~ in order to help ~~his~~ <sup>the</sup> little girl. On top of this, Hester commands with the imperative verb 'Bring' which embodies his serious tone that suggests to the reader he ~~does~~ is ~~not~~ not letting people fool around when it comes to Rosamond. This is supported when after she ~~appears~~ <sup>finally arrives</sup> ~~her~~ <sup>before her eyes</sup> he's at relief in his minor thought, exclaiming 'Oh!'. Notably, the ~~exclamatory~~ exclamation mark addresses that Hester is only at peace once he is aware she's safe. Amongst the readers, ~~relief may also~~ the relieving atmosphere may also be aroused because they are glad that Hester no longer is ~~anxious~~ in anticipation



This is a strong response right from the start with the candidate combining substantiated points about the use of nicknames, hyphens and the possessive pronoun 'my'. This succinct approach is a strong feature in this analytical response. It should be noted that the misidentification of Hester as male is a common one and does not factor into the marking in any way.

The points made are convincing and show a deep understanding of the relationship between Hester and Rosamond. For example, the writer's use of dialogue to express urgency is examined and developed through a consideration of an imperative verb, the writer's use of tone and of an exclamation mark.

This candidate provides an impressive analysis of the techniques used and there is a strong focus on the impact on the reader. The response is discriminating in its selection of textual references and achieves full marks.



Try to focus upon the quality of your answer rather than its length. Notice that this answer achieves full marks without using all of the available lines in the answer booklet because it is succinct in its analysis.



### 3 Read this extract.

He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady – my lamb – my queen – my darling – stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten\*.

Oh! the joy and the tears of having her in my arms once again for I would not let him carry her; but took her, cloak and all, into my own arms, and held her near my own warm neck and heart, and felt the life stealing slowly back again into her little gentle limbs. But she was still insensible when we reached the hall, and I had no breath for speech. We went in by the kitchen-door.

"Bring the warming-pan\*\*," said I; and I carried her upstairs, and began undressing her by the nursery fire. I called my little lammie\*\*\* all the sweet and playful names I could think of, – even while my eyes were blinded by my tears; and at last, oh! at length she opened her large blue eyes. Then I put her into her warm bed and I made up my mind to sit by my darling's bedside the live-long night. She fell away into a soft sleep as soon as her pretty head had touched the pillow, and I watched by her till morning light; when she wakened up bright and clear – or so I thought at first – and, my dears, so I think now.

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to show Hester's love for Rosamond?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

The writer uses a list to describe how she feels about ~~her~~ Rosamond. "My little lady-my lamb-my queen-my darling". This shows how Hester loves Rosamond like her own daughter because she sees her as her darling.

Also the writer uses an alliteration ~~to~~ to demonstrate her love for Rosamond. "life stealing slowly back again into her little gentle limbs." This alliteration shows how Hester is feeling relief ~~for~~ the Rosamond is

waking up. Also in the words "little gentle limbs." These adjectives show how she describes the young girl as weak meaning that she ~~was~~ should be there with her.

To follow this the writer effectively uses dialogue to show how much Hester cares for Rosamond.

"Bring the warming pan". This shows how Hester wants to care for ~~her~~ <sup>the</sup> child to make the night special. So does this by warming the bed to warm the child's body maybe even her heart.

The writer also successfully uses a metaphor to show how much Hester cares for Rosamond.

"my eyes were blinded by my ~~her~~ fears". Hester is not blind she just feels so gategull that Rosamond was found that ~~to~~ she is constantly emotional.

Then the writer uses an adjective to show how Hester loves Rosamond's beauty. "large blue eyes" This shows that Hester describes Rosamond as beautiful.

Finally, the writer uses ~~re~~ repetition of punctuation.

"Oh!" shows twice in the text shows how she is still in shock that she was ~~found~~ <sup>found</sup>.

(Total for Question 3 = 6 marks)





The response begins with identifying the use of a list. This is substantiated with a quotation and an explanation given beginning with the words, 'this shows'. Further points follow adopting this same format and the response offers brief explanations of alliteration, adjectives, a metaphor and repetition.

It is this quality of explanation that means the response meets all of the criteria for Level 2; the references for each point are relevant and appropriate. It does not access Level 3 marks as it is not able to move on from explanation to analysis.



Try to move on from simple explanation to analysis which is a more detailed examination of the writer's use of language and structure to understand its nature and the impact upon the reader.

3 Read this extract.

He told me he had been up the Fells to gather in his sheep, before the deep cold of night came on, and that under the holly-trees (black marks on the hill-side, where no other bush was for miles around) he had found my little lady – my lamb – my queen – my darling – stiff and cold in the terrible sleep which is frost-begotten\*.

Oh! the joy and the tears of having her in my arms once again for I would not let him carry her; but took her, cloak and all, into my own arms, and held her near my own warm neck and heart, and felt the life stealing slowly back again into her little gentle limbs. But she was still insensible when we reached the hall, and I had no breath for speech. We went in by the kitchen-door.

"Bring the warming-pan\*\*," said I; and I carried her upstairs, and began undressing her by the nursery fire. I called my little lammie\*\*\* all the sweet and playful names I could think of, – even while my eyes were blinded by my tears; and at last, oh! at length she opened her large blue eyes. Then I put her into her warm bed and I made up my mind to sit by my darling's bedside the live-long night. She fell away into a soft sleep as soon as her pretty head had touched the pillow, and I watched by her till morning light; when she wakened up bright and clear – or so I thought at first – and, my dears, so I think now.

In the extract, how does the writer use language and structure to show Hester's love for Rosamond?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

The writer describes ~~the~~ the person ~~that~~ ~~as~~ as caring and loving. The evidence to this in the extract is that, when the writer is describing ~~the~~ in the 2nd paragraph. The word 'joy' ~~symbolises~~ symbolises that she cares for her and wants her protected. ~~This~~ The effect on the reader might be intense. The reason why is because in the ~~extract~~ extract it talks about how she found her and took care of her.

Another reason how the writer uses language and structure is when it talks about the weather. The evidence is shown in the 1st paragraph. The word 'frost-begotten' shows that he couldn't go sleep because of the intense cold. The reader has an effect because of how cold the weather is and ~~how the sleep~~ his environment.

The writer also uses language and structure is when it talks about the nurse and the little girl. This evidence is shown in paragraph 3. The word 'lammie' shows that the nurse was caring for her and loving 'lammie' means a nick name like my little lamb. This also shows how the nurse calls her nicknames and also makes her have sleep.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This answer begins with considering the use of the word 'joy'. There is a comment about the effect on the reader but it is non-specific: 'might be intense'. The point about the cold weather is relatively weak, but this is followed by a more successful point about the use of the nickname 'lammie' ('shows that the nurse was caring for her').

All the bullet points in Level 1 are covered here. Unfortunately, there are no references to structure and therefore this response is restricted to marks in Level 1.



When you have finished, check your answer carefully. Your answer must make reference to how the writer uses both language and structure. If you do not include both of these elements in your answer then it cannot get out of Level 1, meaning that a mark of 2 is the highest it can achieve.

## Question 4

Question 4 is the highest mark tariff question in Section A and candidates would be wise to ensure that they allocate sufficient time to this question. In terms of marks, it is worth more than the first three questions added together.

This question tests candidates' ability to evaluate texts critically and support their evaluations with appropriate textual references. The focus of evaluation is upon how well something has been achieved, not merely upon how it has been achieved; it is an assessment of the relative success of the writer rather than simply an explanation of the techniques that have been used. It is true that in order to offer a meaningful evaluation one must be able to show a well-informed understanding of the text and be able to support this with close reference to the text.

The focus of this question was upon how successfully the writer had attempted to create strong feelings in the reader. This was a relatively familiar focus for candidates and there were many strong and confident responses to this question. Once again, candidates must focus closely upon the wording of the question if they are to be successful. Better answers offered wide-ranging evaluations that were closely focused upon the Assessment Objective and which used apt text selection to support the points being made. They were able to recognise that the writer does create strong feelings of relief at Rosamond's rescue and a recognition of the deep bonds of love that bind the two named characters. They were also able to recognise how their initial feelings of relief were undercut at the end by a suggestion of intrigue and mystery, creating a different set of strong feelings. Stronger candidates did not simply base their responses around broad quotations which were often repetitions from references used in Question 3, but delved deeply into the text and analysed how the writer specifically built up strong feelings of intrigue and mystery over the development of the extract looking at the language that Hester uses and juxtaposing the warmth and comfort of Rosamond's rescue with the real peril she was in.

It is clear that many students have been taught evaluative vocabulary to use in response to this question, however it is only the strongest answers that are able to apply that vocabulary in a way that shows evaluation and produces writing that is genuinely critical and detached.

Weaker answers were more limited in what they recognised and commented upon and often failed to recognise the creation of pathos as the reader realises that the child has not perished. Weaker answers were often brief and lacking in understanding of the relationship between Hester and Rosamond and were lacking in development.



4 In the extract, there is an attempt to create strong feelings in the reader.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the whole text.

(15)

The writer's ability creates feelings and connections to the text within the reader through the <sup>description of</sup> ~~use of~~ the setting. The atmosphere developed by the writer connotes a sense of vulnerability and threat, and these dangers that are imposed develop a sense of fear within the reader about what will happen to the character. The "bitter cold" <sup>relates</sup> ~~connotes~~ the weather to ~~be~~ something cruel and unpleasant, implying that even nature is an obstacle and a foe that the ~~then~~ narrator must overcome. Moreover, <sup>the air is</sup> ~~it is~~ described as "almost taking the skin off my face" which emphasises the ferocity and power of the weather. This constructs a feeling of agitation and concern within the reader as they are forced to anticipate what the consequences of these brutal conditions will be. The writer successfully intensifies this <sup>feeling of</sup> ~~intense~~ concern using the phrase "holly trees" "Holly", whilst it can be associated with joy and the protection of Christmas time, also connotes a ~~sharp~~ sense of exposure and vulnerability as the plant is sharp and threatening. The writer utilizes these aspects of the scene to develop a dangerous atmosphere in order to develop suspense within the reader.

about what will happen next. The juxtaposition later in the extract with the description of the snow "lying white and pretty on the ground" develops a contrasting feeling of comfort and safety within the reader as it describes the beauty of nature. The writer expertly crafts an alternating setting to ~~a~~ change to tone of the extract, imposing new emotions upon the reader which are conflicting, and orchestrating a text with moments of varying tension.

The writer expertly creates strong feelings of sympathy within the reader during this extract through the events. When the narrator first observes Rosemund, she is "lying still, and white, and stiff in his arms." The triad of three words to describe her condition complement one another to construct a feeling of pity within the reader as it makes her vulnerable. The phrases "still" and "stiff" can also be related to the state of death when the body no longer functions, and this effectively develops a sensation of fear within the reader at whether her character has truly passed. <sup>The</sup> ~~the~~ sympathy <sup>the reader</sup> is further intensified when ~~the~~ Hester "would not let him carry her." His determination is communicated by the certainty of the word "not" He is determined to protect her from any further harm, communicating



his love and devotion for Rosamund and ~~evoking~~ <sup>evoking</sup> pity within the reader as they are forced to imagine what would happen if their loved one appeared to have died and relate to the forlorn circumstance as a result of his intense emotion. When he "held her near my own warm neck and heart" the writer cleverly reinforces the love and devotion that Hester feels as he holds her up to his "heart" which is the organ of love and is suggestive of her significance within his heart. Similarly, with the setting, the writer is also able to develop a contrast at the end of the extract when Hester speaks in a "very stern" manner which is a reversal of the devoted love and kindness portrayed by his actions previously. This forces the reader to question what has caused his sudden change in emotion. However, it is used ambiguously, and can alternatively be interpreted as him communicating his desperation to protect her, and the writer therefore successfully engages ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> reader by allowing them individual ~~to~~ interpretation of Hester's intentions.

The writer effectively imposes feelings within the reader through the different themes and ideas referenced throughout the extract. The recurring theme of devotion between the two characters develops an



emotional connection with the reader, using phrases such as "my lamb" and "my darling" and "my child." Furthermore, Rosamund's description of Hester as "dear dear" conveys to the reader that she returns his emotion, making the reader feel conflicting feelings of joy at their happy state and concern at what ~~will~~ challenges they could face ~~to~~ and the consequence it will have upon their relationship.

The writer ~~also~~ intentionally and expertly develops complexity of emotions by the reference to two juxtaposing memes. The theme of love and devotion is further extended to comfort, which all develop optimistic feelings within the reader as the comfort they feel for one another is conveyed with the "warm" and "soft" manner when they are together. The antithetical theme of sadness and danger works in harmony with the other theme to develop a <sup>pity</sup> ~~concern~~ within the reader when they are not together. The writer cleverly uses it to illustrate the consequence when Rosamund and Hester face challenges with phrases such as "could not speak for crying" to demonstrate how overwhelmed Hester is with the idea of losing Rosamund, developing <sup>already</sup> ~~a concern~~ within the reader about <sup>the impact</sup> ~~what it will do~~ if something more severe would occur.

(Total for Question 4 = 15 marks)



This response begins with an insightful evaluation of the setting and atmosphere in relation to strong feelings, which the candidate states 'connotes a sense of vulnerability and threat' and 'fear'. They insightfully state that the weather, which is 'bitter cold', implies that 'nature is an obstacle' to be overcome. There is analysis later on the first page where the feelings of 'agitation' and 'concern' are identified and developed. This swiftly moves to evaluation when the interpretation of the holly is explored and the response convincingly suggests why this is successful. This is a strong and focused opening to the answer demonstrating evaluative skills from the very start.

The impact on the reader is evaluated throughout and there is a focus upon tone, which is often a feature recognised and included within stronger answers, and this is well exemplified. The candidate is able to identify a wide range of feelings, including contradictory feelings, and is able to evaluate how successfully they have been presented.

The focus on the question is relentlessly maintained throughout and the writer's use of a range of linguistic devices are well focused on developing the AO4 marks and to evaluate the success of the writer in creating strong feelings in the reader. There is a strong sense of the writer making deliberate choices when constructing the text of their answer.

This is a sustained, perceptive and detached critical overview with strong judgements and a focused use of quotations. It goes above and beyond the demands of Level 5 and is awarded full marks.



Look at how this answer has an early evaluative comment about vulnerability and threat that sees the text as a construct in which the writer has 'placed' the characters in a setting that will create strong feelings in the reader. This approach is characteristic of a Level 5 answer if it is successfully sustained throughout the response.

You should try to read answers such as this one that have been successful on AO4 so that you recognise the features of a high-scoring answer and are better able to replicate this approach in your own writing.

4 In the extract, there is an attempt to create strong feelings in the reader.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the whole text.

(15)

One way Strong Feelings are Created in the extract is that ~~the~~ even though the night was "better cold", Hester still went out of her way to look for Rosamond. This shows strong affection and care.

"I could not speak from crying". This shows strong emotions and feelings because it tells us that Hester was crying. ~~Furthermore~~ Furthermore, this shows that Hester felt worry for Rosamond and wanted her back on her arms.

Another way ~~there~~ there is an attempt to create strong feelings is the names Hester calls Rosamond. This is shown "my little lady - my lamb - my queen".



Thos also Shows strong affection  
And love. These names may  
comfort ~~for a while~~ Rosamond  
and make her feel safe.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This is a relatively short and very straightforward response. In the first paragraph there are some feelings identified in the final sentence, 'affection and care', but the candidate does not then move on to offer an explanation of this demonstration of strong feelings. Had they done so, this answer would have been demonstrating features of a Level 3 answer, rather than one that remains firmly in the Level 2 mark range. The second paragraph shows an awareness that Hester 'felt worry' for Rosamond but again, this is only followed by comment, not explanation.

There is some identification of the use of pet names towards the end of the response. However, the answer remains focused upon the development of strong feelings between Hester and Rosamond and does not consider how the reader is being influenced by the writer.

Engagement with the extract is clear and some feelings are identified, which keeps this response away from Level 1. The candidate does also find relevant quotations.

In conclusion, this answer does not come close to Level 3's key criterion which is to 'Explain' and, as a result, it sits comfortably in the middle of Level 2.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Look again at this answer and see if you can recognise how to move it from simply commenting to explaining.

If you can do that, it will help you understand how to climb the ladder of marks in the mark scheme.

4 In the extract, there is an attempt to create strong feelings in the reader.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the whole text.

(15)

In <sup>beginning of the</sup> this extract the writer successfully creates strong feelings of tension. She does this by giving ~~little~~ not much information. For example at the very beginning she says 'I ran out'. This short sentence purposefully lacks information to make the reader question as to why Hester is doing this. As the extract progresses, tension is built further as the writer reveals that Hester's 'poor little darling must be frightened and perished'. This effectively makes the reader feel tense as they question what has happened for the little girl to have got into a ~~states~~ situation as dangerous as this one sounds.

As the extract continues, the author successfully creates a strong feeling of sympathy for Hester. She does this by clearly showing Hester's reaction to Rosamond looking 'as if she had been dead'. ~~Then~~ she says that Hester is 'blinded by tears'. This purposefully creates a strong feeling of sympathy as the reader understands how deeply upset she is that her 'little lady' is in a bad way.



Furthermore, as the extract comes to an end, the writer successfully creates a strong air of mystery. She does <sup>this</sup> through Rosamond's explanation that a 'little girl' had 'taken her by the hand' and led her into the snow. This ~~purpose~~ effectively creates an air of mystery as ~~the~~ it makes the reader feel uneasy as to who this <sup>child</sup> ~~person~~ is and what they are doing with Rosamond. The strong feeling of mystery reaches a climax at the very end of the extract as the reader is told that the little girl's hand was 'very, very cold'. This purposefully creates a feeling of mystery as the reader wonders why this girl was so cold and alone. The writer also explains that this girl's footprints couldn't 'be seen' which further cements the mystery as this is very odd and cannot be explained logically.



This candidate takes a chronological approach to the task. They begin with the feeling of tension, which is a valid point that they exemplify with the textual reference of 'I ran out', followed by noting the impact on the reader. The build-up of feelings of tension is further explained and it is this focus upon explanation rather than moving to analysis that suggests that this answer is in Level 3. The candidate does make use of some evaluative vocabulary, but this is not an evaluative response and these terms are simply used to offer further explanation, in this case, of how the writer creates sympathy.

On the second page there is a focus on mystery, making the range of strong feelings covered in the response quite narrow. There is some discussion of this making the reader feel uneasy. Each of the points is explained and this leads to a mark at the top of Level 3. This answer meets all of the Level 3 criteria, but never moves to exploration or analysis, which are required for the two highest levels.

There is some informed judgement about the text but it is not well-informed and critical, which is what would have been required to move into the next level.



Read this answer again and see if you can recognise how it uses a chronological approach, treating the extract in the order that things happen.

Now compare this with the first answer in this report that was awarded a mark of 15. Notice how this adopts a SITE approach, looking at setting, ideas, themes and events. Recognising this should help you to plan how you will structure your own answer.



## Question 5

The specification entitles this section, 'Imaginative Writing', and it is important that all candidates understand what they are being asked to do in this section.

There is no set text type for Section B; candidates are expected to produce a clear and coherent text and to write for impact. Each question tells candidates that their work will be marked for the accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar. The question is marked against two assessment objectives and does not include a separate mark for SPAG.

The two assessment objectives are: AO5 which assesses how well candidates can communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences; and in addition, how well they organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion. That is Assessment Objective 5 and it is worth 24 of the 40 marks available.

AO6 accounts for the remaining 16 marks and assesses how well candidates use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Candidates must choose one of the two questions available to them and are recommended to spend 45 minutes on this section. The paper now includes a section for candidates to plan their answers and they are recommended to do so. The quality of plans and the level of thinking they demonstrated varied considerably. Candidates should be encouraged to move away from simply listing language features or acronyms and should briefly focus more on: what they will write about, how they will structure it, what impression and effects they will create, and how they will create them. Candidates must consider what effects they are trying to create through their choice of vocabulary, not simply the use of unusual or "ambitious" words 'for the sake of it.' The same could also be said of punctuation; some candidates clearly tried hard to incorporate all possible punctuation marks, often with little consideration of how appropriate or effective this was.

One of the questions will always make reference to a pair of printed images and, in June 2024, this was Question 5. There is a deliberate and thematic link to the text that has been read for Section A and this is intended to encourage and support candidates in their writing.

In June 2024 Question 5 was marginally the more popular of the two writing questions with its focus upon 'a time when you, or someone you know, made a discovery'. Most candidates were able to complete a piece of writing in the available time. The question was interpreted widely from the fairytale discovery of buried treasure to the discovery of aliens and monsters. The mark scheme makes specific reference to structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion, therefore incomplete texts will not be able to access the full range of marks that is available for this question. It was pleasing to hear from examiners that there were fewer instances of the abrupt ending, 'I woke and it was all a dream', which is often an indication of weak textual cohesion or a mistiming of the task.

Question 6 asked candidates to write about 'a time in your life when someone helped you'. This question elicited many heartfelt responses, detailing practical and emotional support that they had been given. Stronger responses crafted a response that used a wide variety of techniques, including the use of appropriate structural and grammatical features, with accessible characters, as well as a defined narrative structure. Weaker answers were often incomplete, lacking in accuracy and clarity of communication. One marker provided a helpful list of things that weaker candidates should avoid. They included: clichéd similes, such as, 'I ran like a cheetah down the stairs'; having too many characters for the scale of the writing, 'Me and my friends Billy, Tommy, Eddie, Louise and George all decided to ...'; and long preambles that lack interest for the reader before the main action of the story starts. At all times, successful writing is characterised by an unerring focus upon the reader and the different ways in which the writer deliberately uses a range of techniques to create effects and to engage the reader in what is being written.

Onwards and upwards.

I've been trudging onwards and upwards throughout the entirety of my existence. Always. Moving. Forwards.

Every day is a journey of self-improvement. Every day is an obstacle course for me to conquer. Every day, I rise to the occasion.

I will not fail, I cannot ~~not~~ (but today I want to).



climb forever, ~~knowing~~ (I WANT OUT).

My father climbs, my mother <sup>climbed</sup> climbs, I climb.

As I reach the halfway checkpoint, I sigh with relief, I'm me again.

Adrenaline subsiding, I amble over to the cliff face furthest away from my competition. I breathe, ~~the~~ <sup>then</sup> breathe in, and breathe out. Suddenly, I cry out, ~~the~~ finally registering the harsh winds battering me. ~~Feeling~~ Feeling as though I were carried from lead, I sit.

My

I see an antiquated <sup>village</sup> ~~house~~ on the horizon, and I think, how lucky am I, to live so modernly ~~nowhere~~ with ~~houses~~ luxurious penthouses, lavish gowns, I want for nothing.

So why do I feel so empty?

Although I'm almost certain I'm hallucinating, I begin to take more notice of that town. I see bakers, ~~and~~ ~~farmers~~, ~~shopkeepers~~, and farmers and shopkeepers, husbands and wives and children. I see schools and hospitals and parks. I see freedom.

BANG.

The race begins again, only this time, I am not in it. I yearn for a life ~~that~~ that is not mine, ~~but~~ not yet. I sit still, frozen, immobilised, as my father runs up to me, shakes me, demands me to get up, what am I doing?



What am I doing?

I jump, one, two, three thousand feet? Miraculous? Probably, but I don't care. All I know is that I am free. Free from the pressures I have always wilted under, free to bloom in any way I choose.

I right myself, looking up at the village, ~~and~~ a once dull prospect transformed into the brightest looking future I have ever known.

~~One~~

All that's left to do is to go onwards, and upwards, ~~every~~.



This candidate offers an interesting and unusual interpretation of the notion of making a discovery. It has many outstanding features though the complex use of structure is one that deserves a particular focus. The opening sentences are engaging as the writer immediately and very deliberately uses punctuation, sentence structures and layout for effect and to engage the reader.

This is an answer that manipulates 'complex ideas' as the Level 5 criteria states. It is a sophisticated and controlled piece which uses what appears to be a literal account of mountain climbing as a metaphor for the narrator's life and journey of self-discovery. At its heart, this is an exploration of existential angst presented in a highly engaging and challenging manner. There is an extensive range of features here such as deliberate use of repetition, triads, sentence structures for effect, alliteration e.g. 'winds whip', personification 'the peak of Mount Stare' looking right back at me'. The complexity, cohesion and highly sophisticated control of this writing is striking in its maturity as it moves between the literal and the metaphorical. There is deliberate and intriguing ambiguity at the end: does she literally jump, or is this a metaphor for her 'leap' towards freedom? This leaves the reader questioning what has actually happened, freeing them to interpret the ending for themselves.

In terms of AO6, there is an extensive vocabulary used throughout such as, 'primal instinct, animalistic desire', 'saunter' and 'cacophony'. There is a wide variety of sentence structures which are used deliberately and often powerfully and are crafted for effect, such as those on the first page including repetitive sentence openers for emphasis and the use of short sentences for drama and impact including single word sentences for maximum impact: 'Always. Moving. Forwards.'.

This is a very accomplished response that meets all of the criteria necessary to be rewarded with top marks in both AOs.



Look again at the AO5 criteria, 'manipulates complex ideas'.

Now read this answer again and see how it does more than simply retell events and create a sense of character. It is challenging the reader to engage with complicated ideas about the meaning and purpose of life and how we feel when faced with pressure from our family and those around us. This is a useful example of this AO5 criteria that can be hard for some candidates to think about.

friends playing football.

see wishing well.

1 loose 2 touch, have in well

lower myself on ladder

long corridor with door at end (light)

go to open (push) (anxious)

Generally (gold)

eyes lit up (dream)

bag on floor

pick up money (gold)

as turn around

door shuts

lights dimmer

Was the ball  
worth it.

Write your answer to Section B here:

26<sup>th</sup> June, a warm summers day in England. Me and my friends (Tom and Phil) meet up to go and play some football at the local pitches. At this time, we wasn't in any rush, we was messing around playing keep it up with the football, until Tom miskicked it over a fence which to what looked like abandoned house with grass growing inside. Due to it being my ball, I decided to go get. As I pulled myself on the fence, I heard a slight



crack. This place is definitely not safe. After scouting the garden for my ball, I could just about see the top of it, due to the overgrown grass. I jumped down of the fence. A slight eeriness shivered through my body as soon as I touched foot on the floor. I didn't think nothing of it, so I quickly went to where my ball was, at the back of the garden, but just in front of a slight curve in the garden which looked to me, very out of place. I popped my head round the corner ~~to~~. To my disbelief I saw the top of to what looked like a well. ~~What~~ What's in there?

Debating in my head, whether I should go in or not, ~~to~~ I slowly lowered myself in. My friends at this point must have been confused why I'm taking so long. The slippery silver ladder, shaking at every foot I take. At this point I'm to what I believe halfway down, but I still can't see the bottom. Regreting my decisions, I started to slide down the ladder to quicken up the process and hopefully make it a little bit less frightening. Thud. I hit the bottom, as I said, dust, leaves and even insects covered my vision. After continuously coughing from the dust

particles, my vision cleared up. To me it looked like a long hallway but, ancient and dirty. I thought to myself about heading back up as nothing ~~felt~~ looked intriguing. Until I walked into the hallway about 5 paces. A glow of light shined under this mysterious but heavy metal door. To be specific, gold light. It can't be. Can it.

Myraculously, I pushed the door and the hinges seperated from the door, it almost felt too good to be true. Lights, one by one burnt on in the hallway behind me, then lastly, a bright ~~white~~ white light ~~shines~~ grows up the room. I poke my head round. My breath slows down. My eyes glued to what's going to be behind this door. As I turn my head the first thing I notice is a mountain of gold glistening jewelrally piled on top of each other. This can't be true. Every necklace, ring, crown looked like someone deep cleans them ~~at~~ twice everyday. It felt like I was dreaming.

Not knowing if this was a dream or not I picked up a perfectly ~~a~~ knicked duffle bag,



big enough to fit me in it. Before wasting any more time, I loaded the bag as my heart started panting rapidly. This is amazing. After every single last Jewel was gone off the marble slab where they layed. In excitement, I turned around. Thinking in my head what I will tell my friends. Before taking my first step forward, to my shock a concrete slab, weighing more than a ton drops down in my path, causing my feet to shake. Coincidence or not, this wasn't a good sign. Before I could react much, I heard a slow but increasing crack in the ceiling. Just ~~a~~ falling on my head. As I look up to investigate, I see a large black shadow dropping down, bashing against the walls during its arrival. It was a trap, I thought to myself. Accepting defeat, I layed down in nothing but sadness and guilt. This is it. Was the ball worth it?



The candidate begins with a clear sense of audience and purpose. The opening sentences successfully sets the scene, though there is no real development of the character of the friends 'Tom and phil'. They are briefly mentioned in the final paragraph of the story, but they have no real role and are not described at all, meaning that the reader struggles to picture them. The answer does make use of rhetorical devices, such as the short sentence at the top of the second page 'the place is definitely not safe', and the rhetorical question at the end of that paragraph.

The paragraph halfway down the second page is deliberately crafted to delay the narrative and to create tension. There is a variety of sentence starters making deliberate use of subordination for effect, such as 'Regretting my decision...'

The candidate attempts to create tension on a number of occasions, albeit often in a manner lacking subtlety or sophistication, such as that at the end of the first paragraph on the third page where we see 'It can't be. Can it.' The ending of the piece is also deliberately crafted for impact though the final sentence is hard to interpret possibly as being bathetic or as an attempt at humour.

Overall, there is a range of rhetorical devices and an attempt to create a variety of tone. Vocabulary is varied, although the control of spelling and grammar isn't always secure. However, there is a range of sentence types that are used deliberately to have an impact upon the reader.

This meets the criteria for Level 3 for both AOs and was awarded a 14 for AO5 and 9 for AO6.



You should carefully consider the role of characters in your writing. In a short piece of writing it is advisable not to introduce too many characters, as it is difficult to bring them to life and to make them distinct.



The (boy) once to be just an  
ordinary kid playing

Write your answer to Section B here:

The (boy) once to be just an ordinary  
kid playing around with the 'other kids'  
playing games such as football and tag.  
Always having a fun time one night  
the (boy) sat down with his friends  
and he said "hey guys don't you ever  
just want to discover something that we don't  
know off?" The 'friends' replied with,

UMMMM (thinking) maybe but that sounds a little boring. What is there to discover football is better. The (boy) then says "oh okay. Just wanted to ask" after 5 minutes of casually talking with each other it was (getting late) so then the (boy) said "It's getting late I better get going home!" On his way home walking the (boy) had witnessed an odd trail of white 'smoke' he had wanted to follow the trail to see where it had 'come from' but he had not done it. The boy had continued his journey home and eventually got home although the ('mind disturbing' memory) had keep reminding him of the white 'smoke' the (boy) knows that something does not feel right but he had slept a couple of minutes after. Morning arrives the (boy) wakes up and looks out the window and sees that his friends are outside the boy was happy and went to his friends after he had gotten ready. The (boy) is now with his friends they all play football on the road which was oddly clear no 'cars' no 'disturbance' it was a good (road to play on) the boys had agreed. Everyone



Passes the ball to each other but accidentally the (boy) kicks it into the 'eerie (part) of the woods where no one goes inside of it. The (boy) had Telled I'll get the ball his friends said do You want us to come with You it does not 'look' safe in these (woods) the (boy) said ~~I~~ i will be fine! Be right back the (boy) then runs into the 'woods' he attempts looking for the ball as he keeps looking the (boy) finally finds it near a bush. As the (boy) picks the ball up to go back to his friends the Cold White Smoke Trail comes out of Nowhere and flows past him going deeper in the woods the (boy) was very eager to follow it to where it was going. But instead the (boy) followed the smoke trail from where it was (coming from) and drops the ball. His friends realize that the (boy) is taking too long and they all scream ~~his name back~~ <sup>for him to come back</sup> thinking he might be (lost) as they keep screaming there is no response.

The (boy's) friends start getting worried and just keep waiting 'hoping' nothing happens to the (boy) the (boy) follows 'the white mysterious



Smoke ~~traic~~ back to where it came from and the (boy) had found out. It was coming through a mysterious small cabin that looked very (old) the boy had went inside the door was 'unlocked' as the (boy) went in he found something right in front of his eyes that shocked him. A mysterious, old looking magical book the (boy) had quoted to himself "this looks like something straight out of a fairytale it can't be real". The (boy) was overwhelmed it was a book that the smoke was coming out from the boy 'sprinted' towards the book at shock and looked under too see if anything was under it. All there was was open minibottles that looked like spell jars and the boy attempted reading the book but it was in a 'unknown language' the (boy) could not even tell what kind of language it was. The (boy) looked around the room and saw many glasses everywhere the (boy) was so confused but then a sound came almost something like a 'whisper' coming from the book. The (boy) was too scared that he had ran as the (boy) was running he had found a (very 'weird') dark hole in the ground with



a ladder. AS the (boy) looked down he saw the trail of (white smoke) he was very keen to find out more about the mystery. Where does this mysterious white smoke lead to? So the (boy) looks around and sees that it is still daytime and there was no one around so he starts going down the ladder to make a discovery. And he was going down very keen to discover this as the (boy) ~~looks~~ looks around he see's stuff/things/mysteries and the (boy) had realized he made a discovery that can shock the world and the ladder was only still going down so there could be anything there to be discovered. And that is when the (boy) had made the discovery that (overwhelmed) him because he couldn't believe this was real.



This is an answer that is able to express and order its information to create a lengthy narrative, however it lacks the control of punctuation and structure and a sufficient range of vocabulary to move it out of Level 2.

The response begins with a conventional opening which sets the scene – a group of friends, playing football – showing some awareness of audience and purpose. Interestingly, none of the characters in the story is named; instead they are referred to as 'the boy' and 'the friends'. It is a generally straightforward recount of events, but the candidate does order events and ideas and there is some very limited use of paragraphs, although this is not consistent. There is an attempt to use dialogue, although this is not always purposeful or effective, such as the dialogue on the first page. There is also an attempt to use a rhetorical question for impact. There is occasionally a simple move away from narrative e.g. 'the boy was very eager' ... 'the boy was overwhelmed' which offers some suggestion of feelings, though the candidate has limited success in developing these. The story does not finish with a clear conclusion, which may perhaps have been a deliberate attempt to create a cliff-hanger ending. Tone, style and register are largely straightforward and tenses are not always controlled. It is these features that define a mark in Level 2.

Some range of vocabulary is used and spelt correctly e.g. 'overwhelmed', 'casually', 'eerie', but spelling and punctuation are inconsistent and there is a limited variety of sentence structures. There is an unusual and inappropriate use of brackets throughout.

It is important to recognise the balance of strengths and weaknesses in a response such as this: it was awarded marks at the top of Level 2 as 'best fit' but lacked the control or accuracy to move into Level 3.



You can bring your characters to life by the use of dialogue: give them something interesting to say that helps to develop the reader's understanding of their character or that helps to move the story on. A good writer can use dialogue as a powerful and subtle tool of storytelling when consideration is given to how characters speak and interact with each other as well as what they say. Try to practise and develop these skills in your own writing.

## Question 6

As candidates have a choice of writing response, much of what was written to introduce Question 5 applies here. The assessment objectives are identical to Question 5 and the need to produce writing that has impact and which is accurate, clear and coherent for the reader is equally paramount.

Question 6 also had a thematic link to the passage with its focus upon a time in your life when someone helped you. The standard of writing this year was often high and the topic led to a wide range of writing; some interpreted this as literal help with writers being saved from natural disasters and threatening situations. There were some good descriptions of being at war in the trenches and a significant number of references to friends and parents. Many interpreted the help as metaphorical or psychological and there was a strong focus upon mental health in many answers.

Weaker answers were often incomplete or communicated in a basic manner, often struggling with coherence or ordering of events in a manner that made sense to the reader. Markers have also commented upon the tendency towards overwriting by some candidates who crammed in complex words like 'pulchritudinous' or 'hubris' without discrimination and often to the detriment of meaning where it clouded the flow of the narrative. There were some very strong answers to this task and these were characterised by a sustained ability to engage the reader through the orchestration of a range of techniques, including rhetorical devices, structural and grammatical features and an extensive vocabulary that sees words and phrases used with subtlety and control. There is an example of just such a response below.



Prison → Escape

Write your answer to Section B here:

My name is Alejandro Rojas. 3 years ago, my life ~~changed~~ took a swift turn after being framed for the ~~man~~ murder of an Iraqi government ~~of~~ member, one with connections that had more power than I could possibly fathom. I was ~~going~~ hoping to start a fresh, exciting life after moving away from my beloved home ~~of~~ ~~Residente in Spain~~ in the ~~mountain~~ spectacular mountains of Mexico, so I decided to come to Chicago. Big mistake.

I still count the days from when my life went to hell, and I was carelessly thrown in a filthy box; with only a dingy bed, a tap that was probably contaminated by now and a disgusting toilet that filled the place with a pungent aroma. The only signs of affection in this pit of hell came from the rats after you gave them the rock hard, vile thing that is supposed to be our lunch. But if you ~~na~~ think 'It can't get worse. Surely not?' It gets worse every day. No peace. No sleep. ~~At~~ Constant violence and riots. And worst of all, I'm about to get a new cellie. I thought it was impossible to make me more ~~miserable~~ miserable, but a new cell mate really puts the cherry on top. After what happened with the evil ~~monster~~ demon I was put with previously, the biggest ~~mistake~~ ~~would~~ mistake would be to give me some fish who probably got caught selling a ~~pack~~ pack. This would make my life even more horrible. Or will it...

Still counting the meaningless days going by. 3 years, 7 months and 2 days. I ask myself, "When will it be over?" Is life really worth it if I'm only spending it caged in with a bunch of hell-hounds? Thankfully, I come back to reality. It was then when I suddenly hear "Open on 48!" But that was my cell? And it's not lunch last time I checked. "Rojo" "Enjoy your new fish Rojo" stated the guard with an irritating smug look on his face. ~~My~~ ~~told~~ ~~am~~ ~~I'm~~ ~~top bunk and left~~ He was 5'11, long black curly hair, bright green eyes with a healthy physique too. Not a scar



or bruise on his body. Must be nice. He walked in ~~casually~~ casually, turned to face me and gazed at me with his big and bright ~~innocent~~ <sup>innocent</sup> eyes. I told him I'm top bunk and left it at that since this kid wasn't much of a talker. I said to myself, "What is ~~an~~ <sup>a</sup> kind <sup>-faced</sup> pretty little kid doing in here, a maximum security ~~prison~~ ~~prison~~ penitentiary for the worst of the worst. He's going to die in here with these ~~maniac~~ maniacs." "So what you in for?" I queried while trying to make the moment less awkward. No reply. Just his eyes still locked onto mine, but he let out a slight smirk. ~~He~~ "I'm Miguel," he confidently says. ~~hi~~ Little did I know that these words would be the most memorable thing to ever come my way.

Half an hour had passed with dead silence in the air. Until, he gets up and ~~starts~~ states "First degree murder, Ali Al Khadi high class government official, assassinated in his home, no ~~witnesses~~ ~~witnesses~~, one around but just a former claiming he saw a Mexican, about 6 foot matching your specific description. Coincidence, no?" I was flabbergasted I could barely utter a word. How did he know all of this. Is he one of them? "Who are you really?" I questioned with a suspicious tone. He replies "Miguel Sainz, son of Pedro Sainz who was brother ~~born~~ to Fernand Rojas-your father. I'm your cousin. And I'm getting you out of here." I was speechless. A train of thoughts run through my

mind. Could I really trust him? But if he wasn't my ~~own~~ family how did he know me so well? He had to ~~be~~ be! "So tell me, how do you plan on doing ~~that~~ that?" Just as he ~~was~~ opened his mouth I furiously shout, "It's impossible! You don't think I've tried!" while the deep thought of spending the rest rest of my life here fills my brain. I smash a food tray on the ground ~~to try and~~ as an attempt to scare him. 'BANG!' He doesn't even blink, as if nothing affects him. "Is there a problem cons?" ~~ask~~ the guard states. "Well if there is then better settle it since you're spending all your time together, unless you want to go to solitary," he ~~exclaims~~ exclaims. "Out of nowhere, Miguel ~~whisper~~ casually whispers "You may have tried, but you're not me." "You see this toilet? It's held on by Carver 3 x 11 ~~screws~~ screws, the same kind as the ones that 'Brian' over in 35 sells." I took the opportunity of swiping one from ~~him~~ him on the way here. We get past that toilet, there's a tunnel going to the electrical room. We get there, cause a blackout just long enough to slip out without notice. You understand amigo?" I proudly reply, "The escape is on..."

5 ~~a~~ agonising days had passed. Progress, although ~~a~~ becoming ~~unbearable~~ painful, was quick. I pondered, how could I ever thank this cousin of mine. He ~~not only~~ not only looked into this set up of mine, but even went to the extent of going to prison just to



help me get out. Finally, a hole appeared through the rubble. As darkness fell upon the prison, it was time to get to the electrical room. We cautiously ~~up~~ followed the route of ~~the~~ what seemed like an endless maze of passages. As slow as a snail, as light as a feather and as quiet as a mouse. That is how it had to be. A small hatch opened up to the main generator. We were in. "In and out," my new friend ~~was~~ impatiently whispered. Switch down, lights off. And it was just in time for roll call. Perfect. We made our way through the door.



This is a response that makes use of established features of the 'True Crime', 'Prison Break' genre of writing. It does this well though it does mean that the manipulation of complex ideas and the creation of complexity in character and structure is not a particularly strong feature of this type of writing. The opening paragraph sets the scene and ends with a deliberate short sentence as a narrative hook/foreshadowing: 'Big mistake.'

This response as a whole shows a sustained control of a Raymond Chandleresque genre, tone and register. For example, there is deliberate use of insistent short sentences ('No peace. No sleep.') to set and maintain the pace and the introduction of convincing genre-specific details of prison life and slang ('dingy bed', 'contaminated', 'cellie' and 'fish'). This creation of tone and register is secure and is a strong feature of this piece of writing.

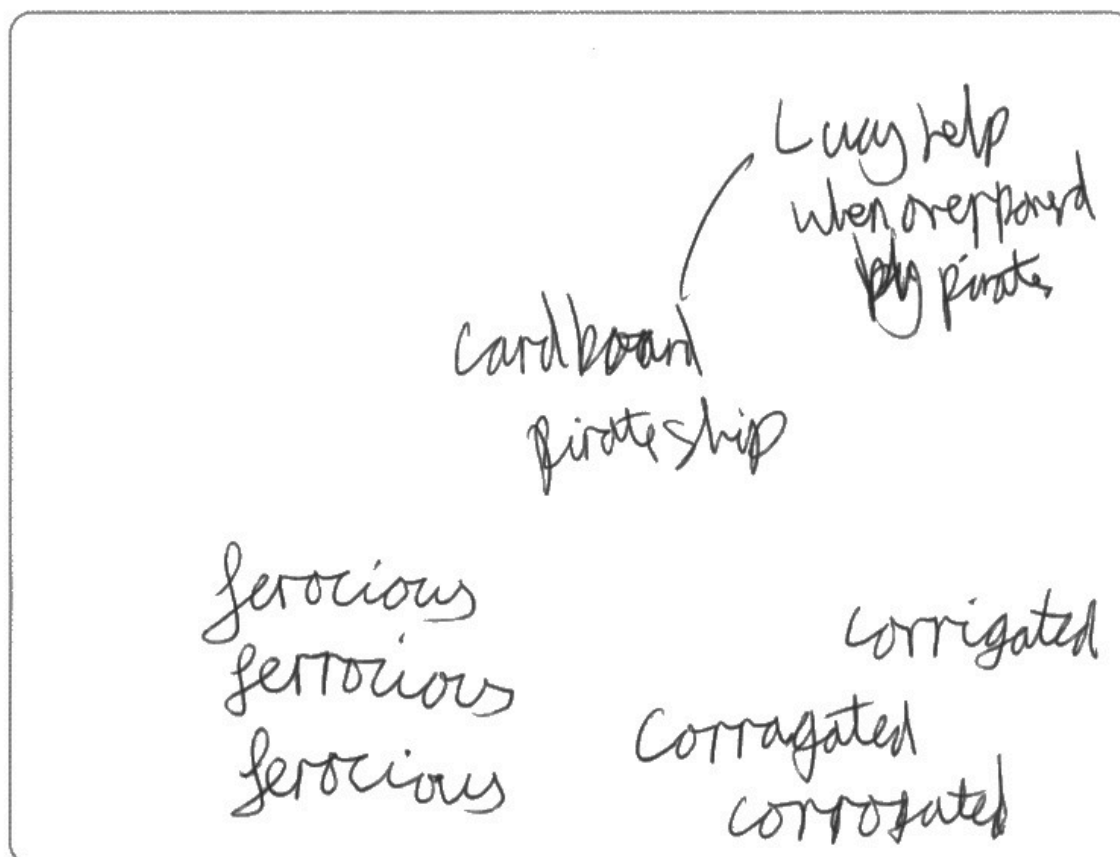
The second half of the response moves the focus to one of developing characterisation ('the guard with an irritating smug look'; 'gazed at me with big and bright innocent eyes') and begins to develop the plot ('I'm getting you out of here.')

There are some weaker elements to the response; paragraphs are lengthy and dialogue is not correctly set out. However, the vocabulary is wide and selective ('agonising', 'pondered', 'maniacs', 'fathom') and sentences are used cohesively and deliberately across the text. There is deliberate use of the present tense in places, realistic and believable dialogue and the use of a rhetorical question.

The response meets all of the criteria for Level 4 but lacks the sophistication and subtlety seen at Level 5.



Many writers borrow ideas from other familiar genres, as this one does. If you do this you must try hard to make the narrative and the characters your own and avoid repeating familiar plot lines or basing your character too heavily on one that is very familiar to your reader, such as Sherlock Holmes.



Write your answer to Section B here:

The wind whipped my hair into my face as the sea tugged angrily at the sides of the boat. An unexpected storm had enveloped us, and our hope of surviving was as thin as the boards holding our boat together. Salty sea spray mixed with the thick air and stung the back of my throat as I inhaled deeply. I blindly grasped at the ropes attached to



the mast, desperately trying to control them. I looked into the eyes of our captain; I looked into the eyes of our only hope. Her head just jutting over the top of the ship's wheel, she shouted in her high pitched, shrill voice, leaking with adrenalin: "Fix the main sail or we'll never make it out alive!"

I was suddenly reminded of my surroundings. We were not at sea. It was not windy. We were not going to die.

Me and Lucy - my little sister - were sitting in a crudely-constructed corrugated cardboard boat. Lucy was grasping ~~at~~ the edge with white knuckles, just as white as the sea foam she was imagining. This was her favourite pastime, it had been for 3 years, ever since she first learnt about pirates.

One day, when Lucy was 6, she had come home frothing with excitement. She recounted her day at school where she had been taught about sea-faring smashbucklers (the stereotypical kind of pirate) and Lucy wanted to know everything about them. And when I say everything, I mean everything.



She had pirate books, pirate movies, pirate games. If you ever needed to get a gift for Lucy, you could count on that topic to bring her unending joy.

But for me, it was a way to connect with Lucy, a way to bond with and understand her. Once, she had asked for her very own pirate ship. I instead of ~~doing~~ relaying the typical parent response and telling her she had "unrealistic expectations" (as my own parents did) and watching the tears well up in her eyes like ferocious waves ~~taking~~ sinking a small rowing boat, I sought out a ~~compromise~~ compromise.

I helped her build ~~her own~~ a sea-faring vessel to call her own. It took many recycled cardboard boxes, many hours of cutting and glueing and many trips to the craft store, but we eventually finished. And it was glorious. A 360°-spinning ship's wheel, connected to and controlling a rudder at the end of the boat, a large and prominent mast with a sloppily sewn patchwork of old T-shirts hanging from it. The ship I had helped Lucy create became her pride and joy.



We found ourselves face-to-face with a group of treasure-hungry smashbucklers. Our captain held out her very own - and very sharp - cutlass, but the theives would not relent. They hastily let down their gang plank and barged their way onto our deck. Our captain had always been proficient with a cutlass, and was blocking swings left, right and centre. I ~~however~~ however, was not as skillful, and quickly began to suffer many slices from the theives. I sunk down onto the deck, wounded and defeated. As I awaited my final fatal blow, I squeezed my eyes shut and felt the sea thrashing the boat on all sides. But the final blow never came.

I prised my eyes open to find Lucy between me and the pirates. She was as strong and determined as the ~~big~~ iceberg in front of the Titanic. She had saved me. But unlike that iceberg, she ~~her~~ body was light and petite so the pirates effortlessly picked her up and chucked her off the side of the boat. The only thing I could hear was her shrill, high-pitched scream.

I turned to see Lucy laying on the carpeted floor, lying there around like a fish out of water.  
New Paragraph

"Captain overboard!" she half shrieked, half giggled. Roleplaying her dramatic death was her favourite part of the game.

Now as I stand in my attic, looking at the cardboard boat, I relive that terrible day. The day I was told of the unexpected storm which had sunk the navy ship ~~that~~ led by the woman who, however brave and resilient she had become, would always be my little ~~little~~ Lucy. I couldn't be there to help her when she needed me most. I was, and will remain, utterly devastated; I am a boat lost at sea.



This is a subtle and well-structured response that repays a second reading. It opens in media res with an exciting description that mixes alliteration with personification describing a powerful storm at sea. It is only later when we realise that this is a deliberately misleading depiction of the narrator's experience of being in a boat during a storm. The second sentence sees a highly original simile, 'our hope of surviving was as thin as the boards holding our boat together'. This also introduces an extended metaphor with the symbolism of the sea being used to create a powerfully cohesive effect. The answer uses an extensive vocabulary which can be seen from the opening sentence ('enveloped'; 'grasped'; 'jutting') and a range of devices, such as personification and simile already outlined – all of which add detail and interest for the reader. The short second paragraph shows the control of narrative and structure with its use of short sentences, simple vocabulary and repetition for effect. The narrative then goes on to delicately outline the growth in the sibling relationship between the narrator and their younger sister, Lucy, describing the child's youthful exuberance and then juxtaposing this with the more reflective tone of the narrator writing later in life. Tone, style and register are all fully employed for impact and this control is sustained throughout. The exuberant battles with marauding pirates are depicted as strongly as are the more reflective and introspective sections of the narrative.

Complex ideas are manipulated with the depiction of the childhood relationship and the linking of the sea vocabulary and imagery not only to the youthful game ('treasure-hungry swashbucklers') but also to the child, Lucy ('frothing with excitement') and later to the narrator herself ('a boat lost at sea'). This creates a subtle weaving of adventure with psychology and character development. It leads to a genuine moment of shock and pathos in the final paragraph and a palpable sense of loss which genuinely takes the reader by surprise. There is nothing predictable about the ending and the sudden and subtle shift has a strong impact upon the reader.

The vocabulary is extensive, accurate and strategically used throughout. Punctuation and sentence structures are strong and any errors that are there do not detract from the overall effect of this outstanding piece of writing.

This achieves full marks in Level 5 for both AOs.





This writer clearly knew where the story was going to end before they started writing and this is part of what makes this such a successful piece of writing.

Before you start to write, make sure you have a clear plan about how you will start and how you will finish, that should produce writing that has shape and structure, as this one does.

## Paper Summary

Based on their performance on the paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Remember that Section A is a test of reading. You should read the passage in Section A more than once before you start to answer the questions. On first reading you will identify the main features of the text: what is happening, the main characters and the setting. On a second and third reading you should start to identify the different ways in which the writer has tried to engage you as the reader. These are what you will write about in your answers.
- Pay particular attention to the opening and closing of the text as these are important points for any writer and they will help you to see how the writer has shaped their text to initially gain your interest as a reader and then to leave them at a particular point.
- On Question 4, try to remember that you are being asked to evaluate how successfully something has been done, not just to comment on the language and structural devices that the writer has used. That means that you should use evaluative language to show that this is what you are doing. It is not enough to simply introduce evaluative language without writing in an evaluative manner.
- Remember that Question 4 is worth more than the first three questions added together and twice as many marks as Question 3. You should bear this in mind when considering how long you should spend on your answer, the level of detail to include and how much to write.
- Before starting your own writing, take some time to use the planning box that is now included. Plan the basic outline of your plot so that you know where you will start and how you will end your writing. If you have the time, you could identify key features of characters, important vocabulary or language techniques that you will include. Spending a few minutes to get your ideas in order will help you write in a more deliberate and focused manner. This is a better use of the planning box than simply listing punctuation that you will use.
- Think carefully about your very first sentences. Try to write in a way that is imaginative and engaging for your reader from the very start. Use your own reading as stimulus, including the adoption of certain writers' techniques.
- Using your plan, think of your writing like a journey so that, as you begin to write, you will know what your destination is and where you will end. This will help you to write in a manner that is cohesive and coherent for your reader. Practise using different writing structures before the examination, such as a cyclical structure or use of flashback.
- Take care throughout with accuracy of all sorts: spelling, punctuation and grammar. Read your own work at the end very carefully with an eye for detail.
- Keep a close eye on the time during the examination and use the number of marks available for each question as an indication of how long you should spend answering each question.

## Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

