



Examiners' Report

June 2023

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 this series, this was an extract from *The Dream Woman* by Wilkie Collins. 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 and 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 of two writing tasks, linked by a theme to the reading extract. One of the writing tasks additionally provides two images that candidates can use to help them generate ideas for their writing. Candidates 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 2023 candidates found the paper to be engaging and interesting and they responded well to it.

Question 1

Question 1 is a single mark question which tests candidates' ability to identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. This low-tarif question is intended to lead candidates into the examination and was successfully done by the majority. The correct answer is 'ancient' and this can be seen in the examples below. Some gave a single word answer whilst others gave a phrase.

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. Two frequently seen incorrect answers were 'desolate' and 'obliterated', neither of which focus upon the age of the inn.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase that shows that the inn is very old.

'ancient'



This candidate makes a correct selection of the one correct answer.



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.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase that shows that the inn is very old.

"an ancient stone building sadly out of repair."



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is longer response where the candidate chooses a phrase from the extract. The phrase contains the correct answer.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

By focusing on the wording of the question you will know if it is acceptable to put a single word down as your answer rather than having to find a phrase.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase that shows that the inn is very old.

The painting on the sign-board is obliterated.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response does not achieve a mark as it makes an incorrect selection from the text that does not answer the question.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

The key to getting the answer to this question right is focussing on the wording of the question and being clear on what is being asked for. The question asked the candidate to identify a word or phrase that showed the inn is very old. The correct answer is therefore going to be a word or phrase about age. The candidate has selected a phrase which is about the condition of the inn, not its age.

1 From lines 1–3, identify a word or phrase that shows that the inn is very old.

'Ancient stone building,' shows that the inn is very old.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a correct selection and it is given 1 mark. This response also includes an explanation which is not asked for and is not needed.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Question 1 always focuses upon selection of text. Make sure that you do not use up your valuable time by giving explanations which are not needed in order to to gain the mark.

Question 2

Question 2 is worth 2 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 asks candidates to 'give two things that show how deserted the place is.'

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 2 marks that are available.

This question was answered successfully by the majority, with most candidates achieving at least 1 mark and many achieving full marks. The mark scheme details seven correct responses. Where candidates were unsuccessful, they often failed to provide two parts to their answer or sometimes referred to text from outside the line references given. Some candidates selected that 'the painting on the sign-board is obliterated' which gives information about the upkeep of the town and its appearance, which was not the focus of the question, and failed to recognise that this particular section of text is not part of the selection of lines given.

2 Read this extract.

Arriving at the town, we had no difficulty in finding the inn. The town is composed of one desolate street; and midway in that street stands the inn—an ancient stone building sadly out of repair. The painting on the sign-board is obliterated. The shutters over the long range of front windows are all closed. A cock and his hens are the only living creatures at the door. Plainly, this is one of the old inns of the stage-coach period, ruined by the railway. We pass through the open arched doorway, and find no one to welcome us. We advance into the stable yard behind; I assist my wife to dismount. No bell to ring. No human creature to answer when I call.

Give **two** things that show how deserted the place is.

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

1 *'desolate street'*

2 *'No human creature to answer when I call'*



This response achieves 2 marks as it selects two quotations from the passage which are in the mark scheme. In addition, this answer makes use of the two lines to separate the two elements it identifies.



The numbered lines are there to help you separate the two parts of your answer. Please make good use of them.

2 Read this extract.

Arriving at the town, we had no difficulty in finding the inn. The town is composed of one desolate street; and midway in that street stands the inn—an ancient stone building sadly out of repair. The painting on the sign-board is obliterated. The shutters over the long range of front windows are all closed. A cock and his hens are the only living creatures at the door. Plainly, this is one of the old inns of the stage-coach period, ruined by the railway. We pass through the open arched doorway, and find no one to welcome us. We advance into the stable yard behind; I assist my wife to dismount. No bell to ring. No human creature to answer when I call.

Give **two** things that show how deserted the place is.

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

1 "No human creature to answer when I call."

2 They don't find anyone at the inn to welcome them.



This response shows a candidate who has selected a direct quotation for the first part of the answer and has used his or her own words in response to the second part of the question. Both of these answers are accurate and acceptable and this answer is awarded 2 marks.



Unlike question 1, this question explicitly states that you can 'use your own words or quotations from the text'. Sometimes you may find it easier to sum things up in your own words and that is okay for question 2.

2 Read this extract.

Arriving at the town, we had no difficulty in finding the inn. The town is composed of one desolate street; and midway in that street stands the inn—an ancient stone building sadly out of repair. The painting on the sign-board is obliterated. The shutters over the long range of front windows are all closed. A cock and his hens are the only living creatures at the door. Plainly, this is one of the old inns of the stage-coach period, ruined by the railway. We pass through the open arched doorway, and find no one to welcome us. We advance into the stable yard behind; I assist my wife to dismount. No bell to ring. No human creature to answer when I call.

Give **two** things that show how deserted the place is.

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

1 The street which is situated to the inn
not to be repair.

2 In the inn are somethings same
things that is unexpected.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response does not focus upon 'how deserted the place is' and so it does not achieve a mark for either of its answers.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Check your answer after you have written it. Make sure you have focused on the key word/s in the question. In this case it is how deserted the place is.

2 Read this extract.

Arriving at the town, we had no difficulty in finding the inn. The town is composed of one desolate street; and midway in that street stands the inn—an ancient stone building sadly out of repair. The painting on the sign-board is obliterated. The shutters over the long range of front windows are all closed. A cock and his hens are the only living creatures at the door. Plainly, this is one of the old inns of the stage-coach period, ruined by the railway. We pass through the open arched doorway, and find no one to welcome us. We advance into the stable yard behind; I assist my wife to dismount. No bell to ring. No human creature to answer when I call.

Give **two** things that show how deserted the place is.

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

1 "find no one to welcome us."

2 "painting on the sign-board is obliterated"



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This answer makes one correct selection for the first part of the answer. The second part is not focused on 'how deserted the place is' and so it does not achieve a mark for the second answer. So, this answer is given a mark of 1.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

There are usually many correct answers that will get you both marks for this question. If you are not sure, go back to the text and find a different answer. For this answer there were at least seven correct answers that would have achieved the marks.

Question 3

Question 3 is worth 6 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 asks candidates to comment upon both language and structure. The mark scheme is split into three levels of 3 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. This is an important feature and one that centres should make candidates fully aware of. However, candidates should use the mark tariff as a guide about how much to write in response in this question and it is quite possible to attain all 6 marks in the space provided in the answer booklet. There is an example of a response that achieves a 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 asks candidates to explain how the writer uses language and structure to describe the experiences of Percy Fairbank and Mrs Fairbank in the stable 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 experiences of the two characters. Many chose to comment upon the adjectives and adverbs used by the writer: 'eager and agitated', 'worn, withered, woebegone', 'gracefully', and 'nervously' and were able to quote and to give a brief explanation of how these language choices showed the different experiences of Percy Fairbank and Mrs Fairbank. Stronger answers were also able to offer insights into structure, recognising the structure as a rising trajectory of shock and surprise, from Mrs Fairbank idly sauntering and peeping behind doors in an almost playful manner at the start of the extract to the alarming discovery of the sleeping stableman and the shocking things he is saying in his sleep.

Weaker responses often failed to appreciate the enigmatic quality of the stableman and the isolation of Percy and Mrs Fairbanks, in a deserted town with no obvious means of support, with the only living creature possibly recounting the details of a murder he has committed or witnessed. They often 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.

3 Read this extract.

curious

Mrs. Fairbank saunters* gracefully down the length of the yard and does— what all women do, when they find themselves in a strange place. She opens every door as she passes it, and peeps in. On my side, I have just recovered my breath, I am on the point of shouting for the stableman for the third and last time, when I hear Mrs. Fairbank suddenly call to me:

"Percy! Come here!" — exclamation

Her voice is eager and agitated. She has opened a last door at the end of the yard, and has started back from some sight which has suddenly met her view. I hitch the horses' bridles on a rusty nail in the wall near me, and join my wife. She has turned pale, and catches me nervously by the arm.

"Good heavens!" she cries; "look at that!" — exclamation

I look—and what do I see? I see a dingy little stable, containing two stalls. In one stall a horse is munching his corn. In the other a man is lying asleep.

A worn, withered, woebegone** man in a stableman's clothes. His hollow wrinkled cheeks, his scanty grizzled hair, his dry yellow skin, tell their own tale of past sorrow or suffering.

Multi-clause
Mrs Fairbank
multi-
exclamative
descriptive language
Stables
Percy
protective
unknown

looking

Multi-clause
elongating adjectives

How does the writer use language and structure to describe the experiences of Percy Fairbank and Mrs Fairbank in the stable?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

Throughout this extract, the writer conveys the idea that Mrs Fairbank becomes mortified. While communicating to her husband through the use of dialogue, the repeated use of exclamation as she states "Percy! Come here!" and "Good heavens!" amplifies the distress, disgust and horror she is experiencing, through the desperation in her tone. Furthermore, it is evident that Mrs Fairbank had a terrible experience through the use of descriptive language. Percy Fairbank stated how his wife had turned "pale" and caught him "nervously" by the arm. The adjective "pale" connotes

and colour in her skin, which clearly implied her fearful experience to the reader

Additionally, the writer portrays both Percy Fairbank and Mrs Fairbank's experience to be eerie and uncomfortable. A "worn, withered" man is ~~uncovered~~^{discovered} in the stable, who is described with an extending, multi-clausal sentence, stating his 'hollow, wrinkled cheeks, his scanty grizzled hair, ...'. The listing of these adjectives to portray the man elongates the idea of the experience being disturbing and unusual. The adjectives "wrinkled" and "grizzled" present the man as uncared-for and abandoned.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a very strong response that covers both language and structure and meets all of the criteria for a top level 3 mark.

The response opens with the identification of dialogue and the repeated use of exclamation marks with relevant quotations to support the points made. There is a developed analysis of Mrs Fairbank's feelings about her experience. This is followed by insightful analysis of the use of the adjective 'pale'.

In the second paragraph the candidate refers to the use of a multi-clausal sentence and then analyses the effect of the listing of adjectives, with appropriate textual support. This answer shows a strong understanding of the writer's techniques and analyses both language and structure with ease and confidence.



Always focus upon the quality of your answer rather than its length. This answer achieves full marks because of the quality of its analysis, which it achieves well within the amount of space available for the answer.

3 Read this extract.

Mrs. Fairbank saunters* gracefully down the length of the yard and does— what all women do, when they find themselves in a strange place. She opens every door as she passes it, and peeps in. On my side, I have just recovered my breath, I am on the point of shouting for the stableman for the third and last time, when I hear Mrs. Fairbank suddenly call to me:

"Percy! Come here!"

Her voice is eager and agitated. She has opened a last door at the end of the yard, and has started back from some sight which has suddenly met her view. I hitch the horses' bridles on a rusty nail in the wall near me, and join my wife. She has turned pale, and catches me nervously by the arm.

"Good heavens!" she cries; "look at that!"

I look—and what do I see? I see a dingy little stable, containing two stalls. In one stall a horse is munching his corn. In the other a man is lying asleep.

A worn, withered, woebegone** man in a stableman's clothes. His hollow wrinkled cheeks, his scanty grizzled hair, his dry yellow skin, tell their own tale of past sorrow or suffering.

How does the writer use language and structure to describe the experiences of Percy Fairbank and Mrs Fairbank in the stable?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

The writer uses ~~the~~ powerful language ~~devices~~ and ~~structural~~ ~~to show~~ and structure devices to fully describe the experiences of ~~percy~~ ~~and~~ Mr and Mrs Fairbank in great detail ~~so~~ so that the ~~is~~ reader can visualise the scene taking place, so that the effect on the reader is more greater.

The writer uses strong adjectives to describe Mrs Fairbank's voice 'Her voice is eager and agitated' to emphasise



This is a lower level 2 response.

The opening paragraph is a little vague, but in the second paragraph the candidate explains the use of adjectives, such as 'eager' and 'agitated' and looks at the effect on the reader. The third paragraph is weaker, though some structural devices are identified such as the use of the exclamation marks, however the answer does not include supporting references for this point. There is some valid comment on the use of single sentences. This answer covers both language and structure and so it moves into level 2 but lacks the quality of insight and the supporting references to move into level 3.



Try to make sure that you include supporting references for any comments that you make. Re-read your answer when you have finished to make sure that you have included references throughout.

3 Read this extract.

Mrs. Fairbank saunters* gracefully down the length of the yard and does— what all women do, when they find themselves in a strange place. She opens every door as she passes it, and peeps in. On my side, I have just recovered my breath, I am on the point of shouting for the stableman for the third and last time, when I hear Mrs. Fairbank suddenly call to me:

"Percy! Come here!" ^{→ exclamatory}

Her voice is eager and agitated. She has opened a last door at the end of the yard, and has started back from some sight which has suddenly met her view. I hitch the horses' bridles on a rusty nail in the wall near me, and join my wife. She has turned pale, and catches me nervously by the arm.

^{fear} "Good heavens!" she cries; "look at that!"

I look—and what do I see? I see a dingy little stable, containing two stalls. In one stall a horse is munching his corn. In the other a man is lying asleep.

A ^{triple alliteration} worn, withered, woebegone** man in a stableman's clothes. His hollow wrinkled cheeks, his scanty grizzled hair, his dry yellow skin, tell their own tale of past sorrow or suffering.

^{list → worn, old, grim}

How does the writer use language and structure to describe the experiences of Percy Fairbank and Mrs Fairbank in the stable?

Support your views with reference to the text.

(6)

The writer describes the change in Mrs. Fairbank's mood when she finds the man. Initially, she "saunters" down the yard. The verb "saunters" suggests Mrs. Fairbank is relaxed and calm. However, ~~she~~ ~~then~~ Mrs Fairbank then says "Percy! Come here!". The writer uses exclamation marks to create a sense of urgency and fear in Mrs. Fairbank which opposes her ~~to~~ relaxed behaviour. Furthermore, Mrs. Fairbank "cries", "Good heavens!". ~~The writer uses another exclamation~~ This repeated use of exclamation marks further

emphasises Mrs. Fairbank's panic. ~~and~~ Additionally, the noun "heavens" connotes God ~~or~~ and ~~safe~~ the supernatural. This highlights she feels she needs comfort in God and she is fearful that her fate is in God's hands.

The writer also describes the appearance of the man. The man is "worn, withered, woebegone". This alliterative triple emphasises how old and miserable the man is. The ~~verb~~ adjective "withered" connotes decay and lack of light and joy which suggests the man is sad and old. Furthermore, the writer uses a list ~~of his~~ to describe "his hollow wrinkled cheeks, his scanty grizzled hair, his dry yellow skin". ~~the adjective "withered"~~ This emphasises the extent of his ~~and~~ ~~is~~ ~~so~~ ~~upsetting~~ appearance. The adjective "wrinkled" illustrates his old age and ~~his~~ the lack of care for his body.



This is an answer that is able to analyse both language and structure and so achieves top marks.

The candidate immediately identifies the changing mood in the extract. This is very focused and the candidate structures this part of the answer with key words 'initially', 'however' and 'furthermore' indicating that it is focused upon explaining its understanding of a change that occurs across the whole extract. The candidate analyses a range of language (eg 'saunters' and 'heavens') and structure devices (eg repetition and exclamation) to develop this point with some sophisticated interpretation of language.

The answer goes on to analyse a range of language and structure devices to show how 'upsetting' the experience was. The selection of references is discriminating throughout and clarifies the points being made.



To answer about structure you should write about how the extract begins and where it leaves the reader at the end. You should try to explain why you think the writer has structured the writing in this way.

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.

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 a sense of mystery. This was a familiar focus for candidates and one that they took in their stride.

Once again, candidates must focus upon the question asked 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. The majority agreed that the writer had successfully created a growing sense of mystery in the passage and were able to choose supporting quotations and give a comment or explanation. Many made a link between the desolate and deserted village and the mysterious, dishevelled man who remains at the heart of the text as an enigma: is he a victim, a perpetrator or a witness to murder? It is clear that many candidates 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 sometimes concentrated entirely upon the stableman, not recognising the importance of the setting in the creation of mystery. Only stronger answers were able to comment upon the different perspectives of Percy and Mrs Fairbanks and how the narrator builds mystery through her observations and reactions, which the reader and Percy have to wait to be explained. Weaker answers were often brief and lacking in development.

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create a sense of mystery.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

The writer successfully establishes a mysterious setting by placing the characters in an 'ancient stone building' on 'one desolate street' which indicates from the outset that the inn is not well visited and far from help being needed. The 'sign board is obliterated' which shows how run down and wrecked the inn is creating an ominous atmosphere in the opening paragraph. Moreover, the idea that there ~~are~~ ^{is} 'no human creature to answer' emphasises the ~~the~~ inn is abandoned and has been left with only 'A cock and his hens' to roam creating a creepy, ~~and~~ uncertain tone. This theme is layered as Mr Fairbank calls for a stableman twice with no answer. The idea of the contrast of the two characters subtly adds to the mystery as 'Mrs Fairbank saunters gracefully' oblivious to what she is about to encounter in a relaxed manner contrasting Mr Fairbank who has 'just recovered (his) breath'. This creates a imbalance and mixture of different feelings ~~near~~ both unprepared for the encounter. The event of Mrs Fairbank who 'has started back from some sight' effectively builds the mystery as tension is created because both the speaker and the reader are unsure of what has made her turn back.

There is a ~~steady~~ steady layering narrative which skillfully keeps the right from the reader to build the ominous atmosphere as Mrs Fairbanks is privileged with knowing the surprise. The idea of the man sleeping in with an 'ominous frown' and 'dry yellow skin' creatively emphasise the poor condition and troubled manner of this man. The frown creates a sense of mystery as the reader are uncertain of why he is troubled and what he is dreaming of. The idea of the man sleeping in 'bright sunlight' further adds to the sinister tone as it is unusual and difficult for a man to sleep in the middle of ^{the} a day in such a light. The brightness suggests a light of investigation and ~~curiosity~~ ^{curiosity} highlighting the strange circumstance. The writer powerfully uses the man's speech to exacerbate the enigmatic events as the ~~text~~ extract climaxes to what he says which results in 'murder!' immediately introducing a ~~desperate~~ deathly, frightening aspect. This is heightened by the writer's interesting descriptions of his actions while he is asleep, 'hand clutches', 'that he is grasping' and 'he shudders'. The tone of his movement create a mysterious sense of by them being strange and violent actions, as they create a nightmarish atmosphere through the desperate verbs. The final event of his dialogue uttered with dashes creating pauses and the ominous idea of a knife repeated 'knife - the cursed knife... knife?' frightens

the reader, ~~now~~ highlighting his 'strange talk, mad talk' which is hard to understand. The idea of a 'little lady's hand' also mirrors Mrs Fairbank's 'hand fast clasped' which is oddly similar to skillfully heighten the suspense and mystery.



This is a level 5 response that achieves full marks.

The response begins with an insightful evaluation of the setting, which the candidate states 'establishes mystery' as it isolates Percy and Mrs Fairbanks. Apt and discriminating textual references are embedded from the start and this is a feature of this answer.

The candidate perceptively recognises that there are layers to the theme of mystery and identifies the contrasting behaviour of Mr and Mrs Fairbanks as creating an imbalance which builds up to the discovery of the man. They evaluate the way the writer reveals the mystery to one character but not the other or to the reader to create suspense. This is a sensitive understanding of the writer's technique and the way in which a first person narrative can be used as a tool to withhold understanding from the reader, and so build a sense of mystery in the manner in which the story is told, not merely in the content that is described.

This candidate is also spotting the subtler details of the text which suggests a careful reading – they recognise it is strange for the man to sleep during the day and in such an unusual place – and works hard to interpret the clues given by the writer, such as 'the bright light of interrogation'.

In summary, this is a sustained and detached critical overview with strong judgements and a focused use of quotations which is highly persuasive and convincing in its presentation of ideas.



Look at how this answer opens with an evaluative comment that sees the text as a construct in which the writer has 'placed' the characters in such a setting and in such a situation in order to create a sense of mystery. This approach is characteristic of a level 5 answer if it is successfully sustained throughout the response.

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create a sense of mystery.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

~~In the extract,~~

In this extract the sense of mystery has been shown a few times through.

The first time mystery hits is; "no human to answer when i call".

This may not seem very weird or mysterious, however in some way it is. where is everyone?

How is it that a whole town has no one there, that's a mystery. you wouldn't expect to go somewhere for it to turn out that absolutely nobody home.

Another way a sense of mystery is being shown is; "i see a dingy little stable, containing 2 stalls, in one stall a horse is munching his corn, in the other... a man is lying asleep".

In this quote its saying that while walking through this 'abandoned' place there is a man fast asleep.

That is sort of making you ask yourself, how's he eating? how long's he been here?

You wouldn't be able to survive alone here, maybe he's only passing by with his horse. Yet we will never fully know when or how he's got there.

The last bit of mystery I can find is:

"the knife, the Cursed Knife, you she devil"

This quote is quite strange in away, firstly the man is repeating all of this in his sleep.

Secondly who is the devil, are they dangerous, is it him with this knife or does the devil have it, if so where is ~~the~~ she.



There are a limited number of points made which are valid but are not developed in any way: 'How is it that a whole town has no one there, that's a mystery.' There is some clear understanding and engagement with the extract is clear, which keeps this response away from being given a level 1 mark. The answer does also find relevant quotations however fails to address the first bullet point of the level 3 criteria to 'explain' and therefore this sits comfortably in the middle of level 2.



Look again at this answer to recognise the quality that it has and the insights that it has. Then identify how this answer missed opportunities for development and explanation that would have secured it a higher mark.

4 In this extract, there is an attempt to create a sense of mystery.

Evaluate how successfully this is achieved.

Support your views with detailed reference to the text.

(15)

In the text, Collins effectively creates a sense of mystery through the town and setting into which the protagonists arrive. In the extract, the writer immediately ~~states~~ states of a 'town' yet ~~the~~ by describing how it was 'desolate' and 'there was no one to welcome us', 'no human creature to answer when I call', it negates the usual ideas of a town, of ones of bustling people, ~~and~~ and shops and life and so successfully ~~creates~~ conveys to the reader, how the place is unusual and due to there being no clear reason for this absence of life, mysterious too.

In the extract, the author also masterfully conveys a sense of mystery through the person of the old, withered man. In the text, Collins introduces the reader to the 'woebegone man' which immediately creates a sense of mystery because he contrasts the continuous theme of a desolate, abandoned town. Moreover, by describing him as having 'dry yellow skin' ~~it~~ and 'breathing ~~convulsively~~ convulsively' ~~it~~ Collins defies the usual features of a human, with abnormal ones and in doing so successfully dehumanizes the old man, to create a sense of unusuality and so ~~for~~ present show his presence as mysterious.

In the text, the author ^{effectively} creates a sense of mystery through the dialogue between Mr and Mrs Fairbank. In the extract, Collins has ~~described~~ Mrs Fairbank ^{unintentionally} ~~spoken~~ ^{statements} such as 'come here!', 'look at that!' and 'He may do it again!' all of which ~~do~~ not directly explain what she is experiencing and their ambiguity paired with Mr Fairbank's struggle to understand what his wife is describing such as in the phrase 'do what again?', ~~creates a~~ not only creates a disjointedness in communication but also ~~creates a sense~~ successfully creates a sense of mystery as to the reader as ~~they do not learn~~ ~~even~~ initially they do not learn exactly what is happening.

Collins also effectively creates a sense of mystery through the event of the old man dreaming. In the text, the author has the old man first introduce the idea of 'murder!' while he sleeps, the statement ~~conveying~~ masterfully producing a sense of mystery as any details of a murder at all, are not yet known. Then Collins has the man describe 'light gray eyes', 'a chop in the left eyelid' and 'flaxen hair' all of which combine to produce an image of a person, perhaps a woman, however with no clear context or understanding of who this woman is, and her identity, the author successfully creates a sense of ~~ambiguity~~ ambiguity, thus conveying a sense of mystery to the reader.

Finally, the author masterfully creates a sense of mystery through introducing the idea of death. In the text, Collins describes 'the knife', 'the cursed knife' at the end of the old man's dream, the repetition of which emphasises the symbol of death - 'knife' - yet the killer is only referred to as ~~the~~ the 'she-devil', obviously portraying a blood-thirsty killer though 'devil' yet the ambiguity of her and the lack of identity and information further effectively conveys a sense of mystery and overall, Collins is able to introduce the theme of death with little context, foreshadowing any future murder to come.



This is a strong answer that achieves a level 5 mark.

It begins with a clearly expressed, well-supported evaluation of how the setting creates mystery in the first paragraph. In the second paragraph the candidate focuses on the mysterious presence of the old man and analytically evaluates the description of his features as 'abnormal' and his presence as providing a contrast with the abandoned town. The response already has the quality of level 4/5 by the end of the first page with discriminating references made to the text. We look to see if this quality of response is sustained. The third paragraph makes a subtle and perceptive point about the use of Mrs Fairbanks' ambiguous dialogue to create mystery, which is then followed up with an evaluation of the ambiguity in the sleeping man's words, which shows a sustained understanding of the writer's craft. The response has demonstrated a sustained quality of evaluation and judgement by end of second page.

The answer ends on an evaluation of the idea of death and achieves most of the bullet points in level 5.



Make sure that your answer includes the correct language for an evaluative response. Look at the final page of this answer to see a good example of how to do it.

Question 5

The specification entitles Section B, 'Imaginative Writing', and it is important that all candidate understand what they are being asked to do in this section. There is no set text type; candidates are expected to produce 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 assess 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. AO5 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 features or acronyms and should 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 is.

One of the questions will always make reference to a pair of printed images and in June 2023, this was question 6. 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. Question 5 was the more popular of the two writing questions with its broad focus upon 'a time in your life when something unexpected happened'. There were some very impressive answers ranging from completely original (sci-fi, dystopia, emotive drama, historical fiction, particularly from World War One) to writing inspired by the candidates' own reading, such as works of fiction/ film characters and even Greek mythology and heroes. For those who had not left sufficient time for the writing they should be aware that 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.

Plan your answer to Section B here:

Unexpected

Start - living a normal life with your family not long moved house to Florida from Texas. Life's good.

Middle - Start new school and people question who you are.

dramatic bit - pulled out of class the queen is waiting for you and you're the missing royal that's been gone 14 years

End - live life as a royal but keeping in touch with old family.

Write your answer to Section B here:

I always thought that I lived a normal life. It's always just been me, my mum, my dad and my dog rex. Hi, I'm Bella and I'm 16 from Texas or so I thought.

The story starts in Florida, me and my family moved there from Texas as today is my first day in my new school. I loved my old school and all my friends there, I miss them.

I got ready and drove to school anxious for what the day would bring. I parked my car and headed off into my new school. I was in first period where I introduced myself but the kids weren't very welcoming, they all just kind of looked at me and whispered to their friends.

A few more days in things weren't any better, it just got worse really. People would give me weird looks and turn the other way if I walked up to them. This was how it was for the first 3 months of me being there. I did eventually make a friend, Lisa. She was another girl who everyone ~~seem~~ seemed to not get on with for some reason.

Everything was going good up until one day. It was a random Tuesday in January and people were coming up to me, asking ~~the~~ weird questions and asking who I actually was. A few days after this I got called

to the office and asked to wait outside. I walked in to see the prince sat there with the Queen. I was in shock. I was told I had to leave with the queen ~~immediately~~ ~~right~~ right away and told to not contact my parents. I was confused, was I in trouble? I demanded to know what was going on.

That's when the truth came out! I was the royal baby that went missing 14 years ago. My parents always told me I was adopted and I was the one as I was so so special but nobody knew I was this special. I got wished away and before you knew it I was living the royal life.

So after all that I still keep contact with ~~the~~ my mum and dad. They did raise me after all.



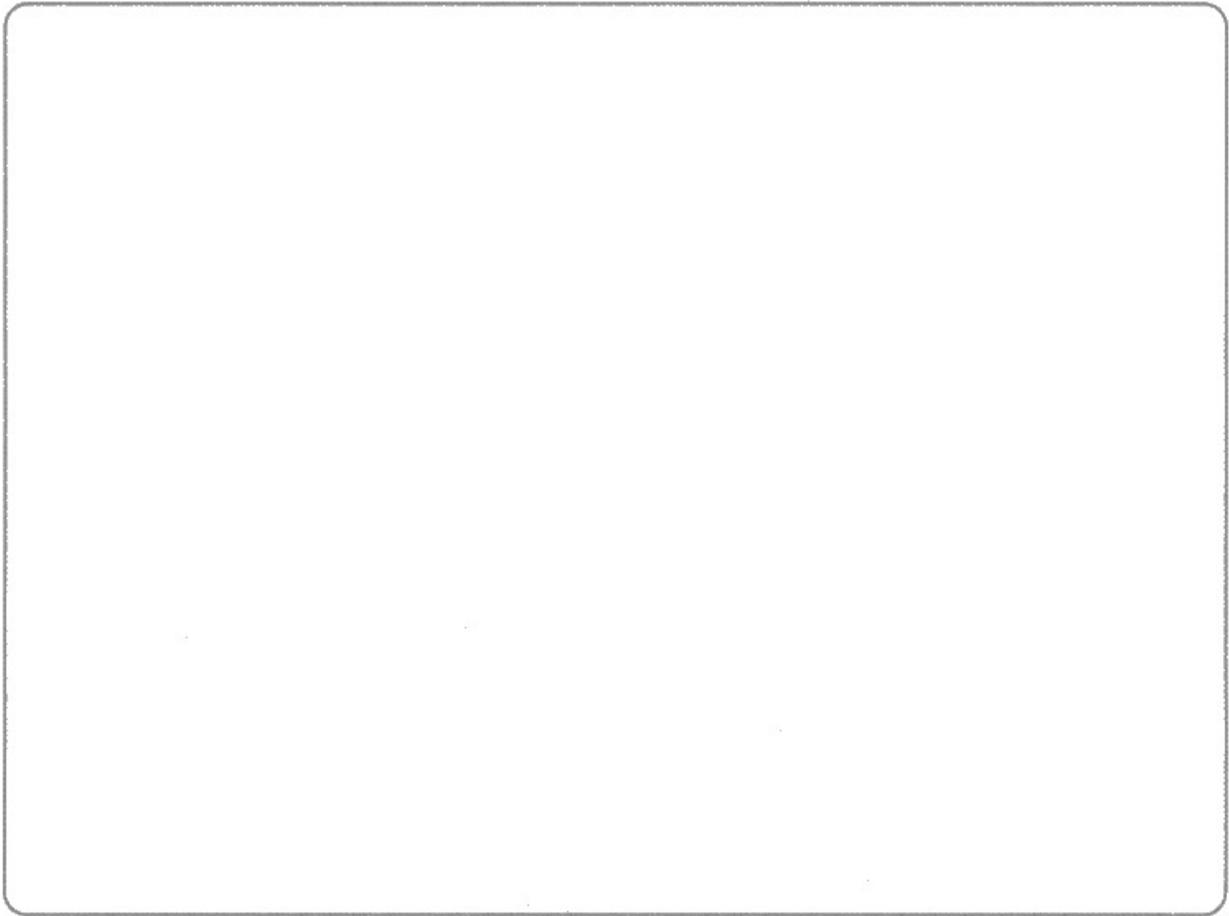
This answer demonstrates level 3 qualities. Some may recognise that there are marked similarities with *The Princess Diaries*. However we are marking the quality of written communication and the candidate has taken the ideas and used these to create their own written narrative. All writers borrow from other writers and we do not penalise candidates for using familiar stories and ideas in their own writing. The opening paragraph here creates an effective, if simple, narrative hook. There is an element of cliché in the 'or so I thought' ending. However, it is a deliberate rhetorical device used appropriately at this stage of the writing. The candidate then uses a time shift as they move into telling the story. There is a clear sense of audience and purpose with deliberate use of some devices, such as short sentences, 'I was in shock' and the rhetorical question, 'I was confused, was I in trouble?'

The candidate uses style for effect, for example where the language becomes less formal and more colloquial eg 'kids' and 'random Tuesday'. There is a simply created heightened sense of drama at the start of the penultimate paragraph, with the use of the short sentence and exclamation mark. Paragraphs are used accurately throughout and there is evidence of a relatively varied vocabulary, with mostly accurate spelling and a range of sentence structures used for effect. Ultimately the familiar narrative and the clichéd and familiar tone and style used mean that this writing lacks impact, as seen in the rather inconsequential ending.



Think of your reader when you are choosing how to write and avoid clichés and other worn out and over-familiar techniques and language. That will help to keep your reader interested.

Plan your answer to Section B here:



Write your answer to Section B here:

When you exist in such a fragile reality, it is of the utmost importance to forge strong relationships. I have never been so fortunate to have a friend.

Someone to exchange strained smiles with as the world collapses around us. Someone to reminisce about the

past with. Someone to hold you as you
break down in a quablen, uncontrollable
crashfall of tears. Many of the men
out here are not as fortunate as I.
They yearn to return home - just like
the rest of us - yet they have no one
to voice these desires to, instead
resorting to letting their thoughts fester
inside their broken minds, driving
them insane slowly, torturously.

~~Madness~~ Insanity is common in the
trenches. What else did they think
would happen? When you place
millions of schoolboys into the jaws
of Hell, they are unlikely to return
unscathed. But we are not
schoolboys any ^{longer} more, we are soldiers.
No, less than that; we are figure
nothing but a number in the death
toll. A replaceable commodity.

There is strength in numbers, yes, but
only if the individuals are strong
initially. Therefore, friend's hip has
never been so vital to my wellbeing.

In moments such as this one, when gunfire rings in my ears and rain cascades onto the muddy abyss, friendship is a lifeline. Without this mutual support, I am almost certain that we both would have perished in the clutches of insanity. ~~succumbed to madness.~~

But, as I turned my head to the left, ^{unstoppable} an ~~un~~sensation of dread washed over me. Why were those blue eyes, so familiar and comforting, looking straight through me, as if I were a stranger? Why are tears falling from them?

Why does this glance feel like goodbye?

Before I could react, he was scrambling over the barbed wire and out of sight. He's gone. No. That can't be true.

I reach to follow him. The downpour obstructed my vision and the barbed wire slashed open my legs.

but on I ran. He was still in view. I
could catch him!

But then he disappeared, sprinting
across the valley of death. The plateau
filled ^{of} ~~with~~ ^{blood} bodies and bone. No
Maris Land had never looked so
intimidating.

But I stumbled after him regardless.
I could lose my arm, or my leg,
but not my friend. He was not
exchangeable.

He came back into view. I hidated to
a halt ^{behind} beside him as he stood
motionlessly, gazing towards the enemy.
I reached out to grab his sleeve...

My hand grasped air, and not
cloth. He had vanished, right before
my eyes! Or, perhaps he had
never been there at all.

How foolish it was of me to assume I
hadn't already succumbed to

madness.

Frantically, I searched the area around me, but to no avail. He was gone.

I was alone.

A searing pain pierced my heart, but I found, as I dropped to my knees in agony, that I much preferred the physical pain quieted the far more potent wave of grief raging through my body, and therefore I didn't care that I was dying.

Surely dying is better than living a life alone?

I could not imagine a life without a friend. That is not a life worth living.



This is a top quality answer that does more than enough for the highest mark in level 5 for both assessment objectives.

The opening sentences are engaging and intriguing, the well controlled shift from the second person to the first person immediately leaves the reader wondering about the perspective of the narrative and is an extremely effective hook. Paragraph two opens with a powerful use of repetition that leads into the war context of the response. There is a clear and strong narrative and yet this answer does much more than tell a story. This is an answer that 'manipulates complex ideas' as the level 5 criteria states. It is a sophisticated and controlled reflection on the subjects of friendship, insanity and war. There is an extensive range of features here such as internal dialogue, the metaphor 'jaws of hell', deliberate use of monosyllabic language for effect 'my hand grasped air, not cloth'. The complexity, cohesion and highly sophisticated control of this writing is striking as it moves between reflection and narrative. The vocabulary is extensive and is well chosen and it controls a wide variety of sentence types. The clever twist at the end, when the friend appears to vanish, is the 'unexpected' focus of the question and leaves the reader questioning what has actually happened, freeing them to interpret the conclusion themselves. The final sentence returns to the linking theme of friendship and is powerfully emotive.



You should remember that the best stories give the reader more than strong characters and a series of events. Look at how this writer tells us a story but also makes us think about important ideas.

Plan your answer to Section B here:

- Going on holiday but the plane had to divert to a different airport.

- Flying from Teesside - Palma but goes wrong

Diverts into
Barcelona

board

Write your answer to Section B here:

~~One Summers day~~. The day has come. I was going on the airplane for the first time to Palma, Majorca I ~~could~~ couldn't wait I was flying with my mum. It was the 22nd July 2022. It was only 8AM and my mum is already rushing about when the flight was at 14.35PM. Approximately around 10.30 we got the local bus to Teesside Airport. This wasn't the first time ~~I have~~ my mum has been on a

Plane. When the bus arrived at the Airport It was time to ^{go and} check in with our boarding passes. The excitement was un^bbearable I was also nervous at the same time. When check in was done we gradually got ~~so~~ closer to the security which I dreaded.

When we slowly got past security we decided to go get some food. I ~~had a~~ ^g I got a meal deal from the shop which I saved for the plane. When the time struck 14:10 it was time to ~~be~~ board the plane the ^{what} thing I loved the most. When we got to our allocated seats 12A and 12B I ~~ou~~serly wanted the window which stretched over the wings.

Before departure the flight crew did the safety instructions, ~~in case of an emergency~~ Everyone's eyes were ~~st~~ staring at them all while they were showing us all the exits. Before knowing it we were pushing back ~~to~~ for ~~departu~~ departure. The huge Rolls Royce engines began to start up. Ready for the taxi to the runway when we backtracked at the runway the engines began to gain power for take off.

In a matter of seconds we were airborne I was loving life. about 10 minutes after takeoff the food trolley came down. The narrow aisles for refreshments but we didn't need anything. They did have a plane middle so I bought it.

Approximately 2 hours into the flight the pilot came over the intercom and said we need to divert to another airport as there was a fault onboard. This got all the passengers very nervous. I was still happy as I am in another country for the first time.

The pilot decided to divert to Barcelona Airport to hopefully swap the plane to carry on to Palma which was only 30 minutes away. When we landed we all disembarked slowly but I was last. I kindly asked the pilot if I could see the cockpit he said yes. I was so happy I could sit in the pilot's seat.

When the other plane arrived we were now 2 hours late. What I wasn't complaining about as I was still enjoying my time. We took off from Barcelona and heading east over the Mediterranean Sea towards our destination which I could see from my window.

30 minutes later we arrived into a very warm Palma.

After we got our luggage we departed the airport for our coach transfer to the hotel up in Cala Bona. It was over 34° This must be the highest temperature I have been in.

The coach transfer is supposed to be only a 1 hour drive but the rush hour traffic was horrendous. The main thing is that we all made it safely.

Around 1 hour later we finally arrived into Cala Bona and I had the hotel in sight. I could not wait to get off this horrendous boiling bus and just to go sit on the beach waiting for the sun to set.



This is a good example of a top level 2 response.

The response begins with a conventional narrative opening showing some awareness of audience and purpose, although this is not sustained. It opens with a short sentence for dramatic effect and then largely moves into a straightforward recount of events for the rest of the response. There is some confusion of tense here as the narrative slips between past and present. This is an example of a writer who assumes understanding of what they already know in that the mother is never described to us, and although she is present throughout the narrative she has no role. There is occasionally a simple move away from narrative eg 'I was also nervous' (sic), which offers some slight suggestion of feelings, though the candidate is clearly not writing to create an effect. There is no real sense of the writer having a reader in mind. Paragraphs are used competently to organise ideas, but tone, style and register are straightforward, such as the very matter-of-fact description of the exciting moment when the writer is allowed to go to the cockpit, 'I was so happy I could sit in the pilot's seat.' Tenses are not always controlled. Some subject specific vocabulary eg 'departure' and 'pilot' are spelt correctly, but spelling and punctuation are inconsistent and there is a limited variety of sentence structures. This candidate is more intent upon retelling the whole of the narrative, with a strong focus upon chronology, rather than using stylistic or rhetorical devices to engage the reader and to create effect. That is why this answer remains in level 2.



As a writer you should ensure that you establish a strong link with your reader. At all times keep your reader in your minds-eye, making sure that you explain thoughts and feelings to them so that they understand what you are trying to communicate.

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 five 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 when the writer had a dream that was important to them. This led to some very interesting answers – many on personal ambition, some around bullying, wider social issues such as LGBT and BLM as well as historical fiction pieces such as warfare (this appeared a lot in both questions, although was always varied).

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. Answers worked best when they blended in description, originality and detail as well as a plot. Some less effective responses were quite obscure, often describing a literal dream or nightmare that they had had. Answers were often incomplete, lacking in accuracy and clarity of communication and sometimes assuming an understanding of character or setting that was not shared with the reader, making it difficult to fully engage with what was written. Some candidates made use of the picture stimulus suggesting the symbolism of dreams though weaker answers were often more literal, sometimes just describing the picture or writing about a man walking through a doorway.

Plan your answer to Section B here:

Paris
big
no more ~~of that~~ -
no more of that ~~stress~~
no more stress. no more.
monotonous where
life ~~isn't~~ Everyday the same. on
repeat. Forever.
work, then come home
to my dingy old ~~apartment~~
Seek to find happiness

Write your answer to Section B here:

Rain pelted the cobbles outside and water splattered violently against the roof of the chapel. Lily and I sat opposite each other on my windowsill, lighting our cigarettes, as we gazed out at the evening; my candlelit room was a comforting refuge from the chaos outside. As the rain pattered and hissed, we found ourselves entranced by our surroundings. Paris. The city (with its abundance of theatres, and cabarets and jazz clubs and cafes) was unlike anything we had seen in our lives - a dream.

As the storm raged on, I stole a glance at Lily. Her delicate features were touched by a hint of melancholy, a reflection of the same disquietude that gnawed at my own heart. Between puffs of smoke, she fixed her dirty blonde fringe, cut insistently by her own handiwork. Lily carried herself with an enigmatic grace; her eyes, usually bright green, but almost grey in the dark of the storm, looked lost in thoughts of her own. Like me, she seemed present enough to take in the material beauty of her surroundings, yet distant somehow, like she wasn't quite ready to leave her old life. I, on the other hand, very much was. No more of that monotonous life where everyday was the same. ~~to~~ ^{I'd wake} ~~wake~~ up, work, then come home to my dingy old flat; ~~the same~~ ~~still~~ Everyday the same. On repeat. Forever. ~~No more~~ ~~stress~~ ~~No more~~. I thought Paris would be different.

"Paris," she murmured, her voice barely audible over ^{roaring of the} the rain. "It seduces you, doesn't it? Lures you in with its promises of wonder and excitement. Yet, I still feel alone somehow."

I nodded slightly, feeling the weight of her words resonate within me. ~~We let our gaze~~ Still, we sat there, our cigarettes ~~burning~~ ^{burned} down to stubs, the last of the orange embers fell to the floor ~~like~~ ~~the~~ as the last of my hope ~~escaped~~ to start a new life escaped my mind. Sadness ate away at my stomach, until all that was left was fear. ~~I asked~~ How can I ever find happiness? ~~escape~~



This is a strong, mature piece of writing which deserves a mark at the top of level 5 for both assessment objectives.

This response powerfully evokes a clear sense of time, place and relationship in a manner that is concise and sophisticated. Its overarching idea is the manner in which it utilises the collective and romantic ideal of 'Paris', a city of lovers and artists. The first sentence makes effective use of a semi-colon to emphasise the refuge of the candlelit room versus the violent and persistent rain outside. The candidate avoids some of the more clichéd descriptions of weather and the onomatopoeic use of 'hissed' for the background noise of rain is highly effective. The writer makes use of pathetic fallacy, 'as the storm raged on', being at once a literal storm outside and an emotional storm within the room, and within the heart of the writer. There is use of a one word sentence to introduce the dream of the question: 'Paris.' The candidate then effectively uses listing to build up an evocative atmosphere that keys the reader into the ambience that they are creating.

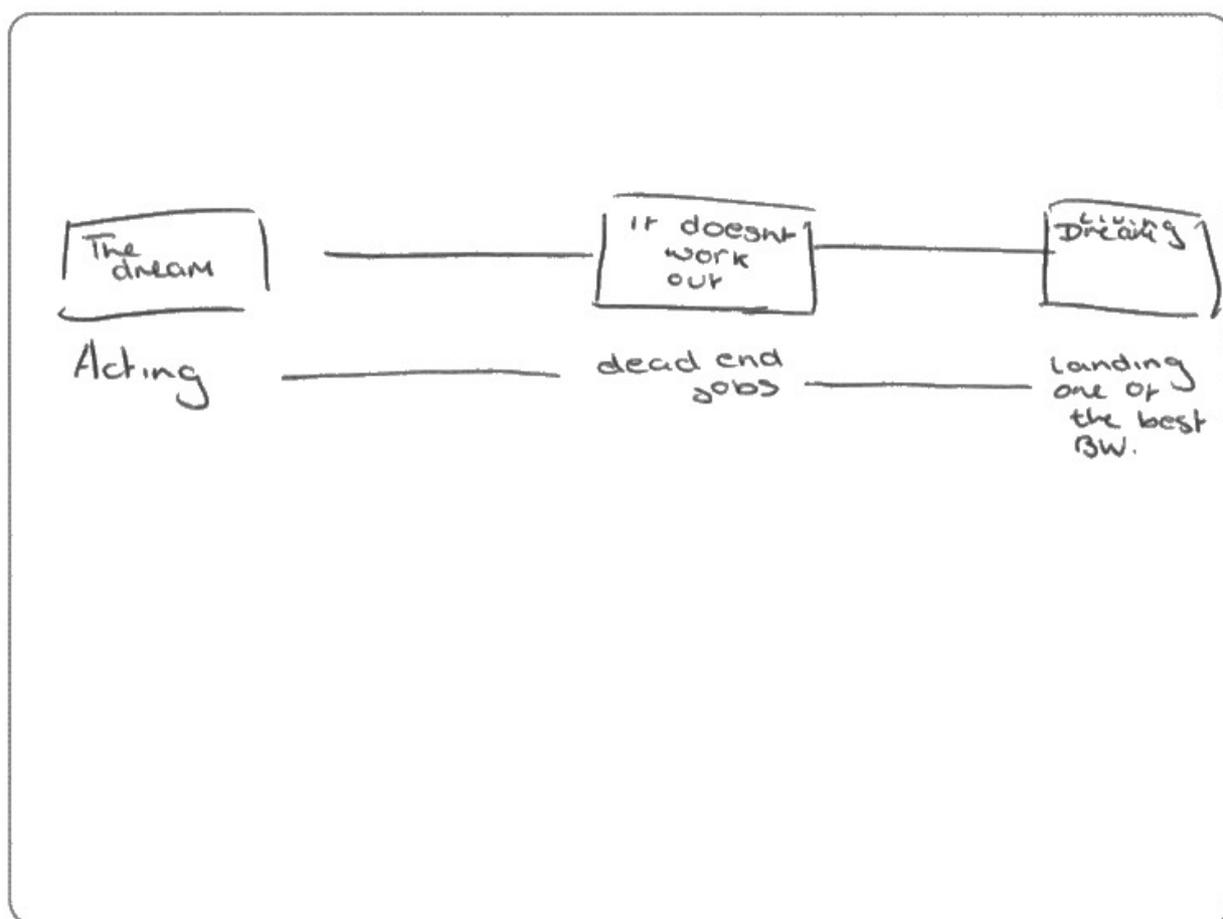
In the second paragraph the character of Lily is introduced. Sophisticated expressions are used throughout to depict the emotional element of the narrative: 'disquietude that gnawed at my own heart'. Their relationship is subtly suggested through expressions such as, 'stole a glance' and the candidate hints at what has gone before with a range of sentence structures: 'No more of the monotonous life. Every day the same. On repeat. Forever.' This pared back, subtle creation of character and relationship is highly effective. There is some beautifully written dialogue revealing just enough information to tell us how their relationship will develop, 'Yet I still feel alone somehow'. This, with the deliberate symbolism of the cigarette embers burning down and out, like their relationship, once fiery had now gone out, demonstrates that this candidate is able to use language precisely and sensitively to communicate the relationship and the narrative.

Although this is a relatively short and focused response it does everything required of level 5. Rather, its ability to use language with such precision and control as to paint a moment in time, a fading dream, a snapshot of a relationship grounded in a very particular place is what gives this answer the top marks in both assessment objectives.



Look at how this writer uses symbolism where one thing stands for another: Paris stands for romance, the storm represents the emotional turmoil of the writer and their cigarettes stand for their relationship. See if you can use this technique in your writing.

Plan your answer to Section B here:



Write your answer to Section B here:

Acting. I gave up on it - A long time ago. Acting, in the sense of being on a big stage, lights so bright it's as if you may go blind, sweat beading as if a crown on your head, but none of that mattered because in the mixture of your breath being so loud it's like you're being held underwater, and

the shaking of your hands makes it difficult to hold those next to you, pretty much all you can focus on, is the ringing or cheering in your ear.

That one moment of silence before the audience is standing, made all the months of rehearsals worth it.

Still, I gave up. It was a dream; one that I needed to let go of.

Acting ~~is~~ is a ruthless business, and will rip you to shreds if you're not careful, that's why I gave it up.

It left me broke, in danger of losing everything I ever cared about, all because I didn't land a job for 3 months.

One ~~thing~~ bad thing after another. That seemed to be my life.

Constant bad news, constant drama (not the kind I liked), constant

issues, and then, to make it even better than bad; my mum got sick. How wonderful is that?

"Stage Four. Terminal." That's all I heard. My mum, the person who raised

me who taught me to be independent, and strong. ~~the~~ The super-woman who moved halfway across the world so I could pursue a silly little dream I had at 10 years old, is leaving me forever. Maybe, I wasn't as independent and as strong as I thought. She was my rock, my best-friend, the only stable thing I had in my life and she was leaving me too. Forever. Forever seemed like a long time.

It was around 3pm, middle of summer, heat still blistering my skin. We were about to close the café early, I was just finishing off drying the newly washed plates. My phone rang. I wiped my hands half-dry on my apron with my still somewhat soapy hands. I picked up my phone and answered it to a doctor. I could tell, she was kind, she had a soft voice, one that is soothing. As she told me, I needed to

saying goodbye to my mum for possibly the last time my entire world shattered. I saw broken glass, each shard a memory attaching ~~to~~ itself, my mum smiling, crying, angry. Each one different, uniquely bonded with a singular motive - to remind me, ~~and~~^{would} never see her again.

I ran, my feet hitting the ground with the force of 20 people. The dirty, ~~and~~ hot pavement burning through the soles of my shoes.

When I reached the hospital, I wasn't sure whether she had already gone. The hospital was strange, not a new or unknown environment, but it had a smell, one I hadn't noticed before. Distinct, one that reminded me of cleanliness and a horror movie at the same time. I saw her chest rising and a wave of relief came over me as if I had just been saved from drowning.

She turned to me, and I physically saw her muster all the energy in her body to speak. It traveled

along her spine and up her neck like a snake," ~~it~~ it was strange to watch someone so strong look so weak.

Her words came out breathy and strained, however, I understood. She told me to "Live the dream".

I knew, exactly what she meant but had decided to dismiss it. Instead, in silence and teary eyed I sat with her, ~~to an end~~ until her funeral was over.

For almost six months after that I was in a rut. Empty packets or rubbish coating my apartment floor. Curtains, that stayed shut.

I did not want to move or do anything. It got so bad ~~I didn't~~ ~~want to go to sleep~~ and that, I couldn't decide whether I didn't want to go to sleep or if I didn't ever want to wake up.

However, that morning I dragged

myself out of bed - which I had barely slept in. I got dressed. I went to work. For the first time in almost six months. How I wasn't fired is beyond me.

On the way to work, I had tried everything in my power to stop my eyes from closing. I ~~turned~~ was exhausted. Hearing a beep, I turned my head, and caught sight of a poster, zip-tied to a rusty handrail. It was auditions, for one of the biggest running Broadway shows in the entire world.

It was like a light in my brain and a voice in my ear commanding me to do it.

Still, for a few weeks more I contemplated. Until impulsively signing up for auditions. My eyes widened, my heart thumped in my chest. I knew. I had exactly

I week to prepare. I think in hindsight - the rushing to prepare actually somewhat helped. It didn't give me any time to think about negatives or what ifs. I just had an officer of emotion inside my brain telling me that nothing else but this mattered. Even though, it was just an audition.

I stumbled. Twice. Accidentally flirted with the person auditioning me. And forgot a line. I thought I was done for. That was it my life was over, I had to go home and cry, cry, cry. Then a notification, a phone call, ~~who~~ ~~with~~ ~~as~~ ~~started~~ ~~response~~ ~~started~~ from the person who auditioned me, his voice was sharp. Hard and soft, like a smooth pebble. He asked whether I would like to be apart of the show. My heart I was ecstatic.

I had finally done myself, my name
proud. I had done it.

My first tour it was brilliant.
That wonderful feeling of
the weight of the world on your
shoulders before the audience
stands and the curtain
falls. I look up, ~~at~~ at
the top of of London Palladium.

My eyes close. ~~I~~ I am so
grateful to be in this position.

Thank you for never giving
up on my dream, even
when I did mine.



This is a strong answer that achieves level 4 marks for both assessment objectives.

The opening of this response moves from short simple sentences, 'Acting. I gave up on it', to the extended complex sentence, which effectively reflects the build-up of tension and excitement felt by the actor on stage. This is the organisation of material for particular effect; managing sentence structure for particular effect. As the narrative continues there are a number of rhetorical devices deliberately introduced and all used for effect, eg the deliberate use of repetition with the word 'constant' to create a depressed, down-trodden atmosphere. This accumulates with the revelation of her mother's diagnosis. The simple one-word sentence 'Forever' is used deliberately for emphasis and to create a sense of finality. There are some stereotypical rhetorical devices used but these are still effective. Unlike the previous answer, this candidate is less precise in their use of language; we get unnecessary details about the 'newly washed' dishes and 'somewhat soapy' hands. There is a successful build up in tension with the dash to hospital and, again, the inclusion of extra detail that does not always add to the effect. However, it does create a strong sense of technical cohesion as it leads the reader up to the mother's final words, which link back to the 'dream' of the title and the opening of the narrative. There is a deliberate move to the present tense at the end and the narrative is effectively organised to bring us full circle back to acting, 'I look up ... My eyes close'. This answer meets the criteria for AO5 and AO6 at level 4.



You can create textual cohesion by using the end of your answer to return your reader to ideas or incidents that you wrote about at the start of your answer, as this response 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 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.
- 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 manner.
- 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.
- Take care throughout with accuracy of all sorts: spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- 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>

