



Examiners' Report

June 2024

Int GCSE English Language 4EA1 02

ResultsPlus

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.



Giving you insight to inform next steps

ResultsPlus is Pearson's free online service giving instant and detailed analysis of your students' exam results.

- See students' scores for every exam question.
- Understand how your students' performance compares with class and national averages.
- Identify potential topics, skills and types of question where students may need to develop their learning further.

For more information on ResultsPlus, or to log in, visit www.edexcel.com/resultsplus. Your exams officer will be able to set up your ResultsPlus account in minutes via Edexcel Online.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk.

June 2024

Publications Code 4EA1_02_2406_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2024

Introduction

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and comments, for Paper 2 of the International GCSE Specification A in English Language.

The paper consists of three components: Unit 1: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing – 60% (examination); Unit 2: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing – 40% (this examination) OR Unit 3: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing – 40% (non-examination assessment). Candidates may also be entered for the optional Spoken Language Endorsement (non-examination assessment). Unit 2 for Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing is assessed through an examination lasting one hour and thirty minutes. The total number of marks available is 60. The reading and writing sections on this paper are loosely linked by the theme of the text from the Anthology which appears on the examination paper.

This focus of this component is:

Section A – Poetry and Prose Texts: study and analyse selections from a range of fictional poetry and prose texts.

Candidates should study the poetry and prose provided in Part 2 of the *Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology* in preparation for responding to a given extract in the examination.

The specification identifies that candidates:

‘should be able to read substantial pieces of writing (extended texts) that make significant demands on them in terms of content, structure and the quality of language. Throughout the qualification, candidates should develop the skills of inference and analysis.’

Candidates are advised to allocate 45 minutes to Section A, and there will be one essay question on a poetry or prose text from Part 2 of the *Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology*, which will be made available in a booklet in the examination if it is a longer extract or will be in the Question Paper in the case of a poem.

Candidates will answer the question in this section and 30 marks are available. There are three bullet points to prompt the response and the third bullet always asks candidates to consider language and structure.

Section B – Imaginative Writing: explore and develop imaginative writing skills.

Candidates are advised to allocate 45 minutes to Section B. There are three writing tasks, to some extent linked by theme to the reading extract. Candidates choose one question to respond to and the response is worth 30 marks. The format of the tasks remains the same for each series – Question (Q) 01 follows the format ‘Write about a time when you, or someone you know...’, Q02 follows the format ‘Write a story with the title...’ and Q03 offers two images as a prompt for a response which is always ‘Write a story that begins...’ or ‘Write a story that ends...’.

The Assessment Objectives (AOs) for this paper are:

Section A: Reading

AO1:

- read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives

AO2:

- understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects.

Section B: Writing

AO4:

- communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences

AO5:

- write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

It was clear that candidates were all able to respond to the poem from the Anthology in the examination, and that most had studied it before. Many candidates had been taught the context of and background to the poem.

Throughout the paper, overall candidates had been prepared well and all had, at different levels, developed the skills required to answer the questions.

It was also clear that candidates used what they had studied in their reading to feed into their imaginative writing, which inspired them. As the specification identifies, the main aims for our candidates in this paper are to:

- read critically and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- use grammar correctly, punctuate and spell accurately
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

Candidates had, pleasingly, been given the opportunity to practise their writing techniques and planning and proofreading skills.

The responses of candidates had some positive features. Examiners were impressed by:

- evidence that many candidates had understood the content of, and ideas in, the poem
- the successful use of the bullet points within the question
- the references to context in response to the poem
- the range of vocabulary for AO5
- writing that showed creative ideas and suitable tone, style and register for audience and purpose.

Less successful responses:

- demonstrated a lack of awareness of the range of ideas in the poem
- did not reference the question, with candidates simply writing all they knew about the poem
- followed a rigid structure in their responses, with a stanza-by-stanza approach
- had an insecure grasp of language and structure with a lack of understanding of how language and structure were used, feature-spotting or confusion of terms
- had limited comment on language and structure and relied heavily on description of ideas or events for Question 1
- did not support points using appropriate textual evidence
- lacked organisation of writing
- lacked accurate spelling and secure control of punctuation and grammar.

It was clear that candidates had been able to understand the ideas in the poem and could comment on language and structural features. Their imaginative writing was often engaging, enthusiastic and had a clear sense of purpose and audience in the voice and ideas used.

As Principal Examiner for this paper and Chief Examiner for the specification, it was a privilege to read such accomplished work and to see the engagement, interest and significant hard work in the responses candidates had completed.

Question 1

The majority of candidates appeared to be able to engage with the poem and focus their discussion on the presentation of the importance of traditional Indian culture.

There was a good variety of responses across all levels, and, regardless of level, the majority of responses largely followed the requirement of the mark scheme. As has been noted in past series with this poem, many comments were insightful and unique, showing how well candidates respond to this Anthology text. Points on structure were less securely made across the responses, with more instances of underdeveloped feature-spotting.

AO1

AO1 requires candidates to read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives. The level of understanding of the text from the Anthology is assessed in the first bullet point, and the selection and interpretation of information, ideas and perspectives in the text in the second bullet point.

All candidates had at least some knowledge of the poem, with much evidence of understanding of the more obviously mentioned elements of culture such as the bazaar, the henna, the busy streets. The most successful responses tended to be the ones that really understood the contrast with the western aspects, discussing the invading western influences and the judgemental tone, how this contrasts with the beautiful description of the bazaar, and how this is then applied to the poet/narrator's own feelings of being culturally split.

Responses provided many different views. Most answers linked the unknown girl to the idea of traditional Indian culture and the importance of that culture in the overall theme of the poem. This led to consideration of the poet's dual nationality and her desire to absorb her Indian roots. Some candidates considered the poet to be the unknown girl, finding her roots, yet aware that she was a foreigner in India and would lose the close connection with the country once she returned home, hence the use of the henna, which would 'fade in a week' to represent this loss.

Successful responses also offered multiple layers of analysis, picking out more thoughtful ideas such as the 'tilted heads' of the dummies being judgmental of the narrator.

The least successful responses for AO1 tended only to repeat what was being said in the poem. They showed some understanding of some parts of the poem, but the understanding was uneven. There was often limited selection and interpretation of information and ideas: for example where candidates did not move past the henna tattoo.

AO2

AO2 asks candidates to demonstrate that they can understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects. There needs to be understanding of the language and structure used in the text, and the level of skill is also a discriminator. Explain is a mid-level skill, comment a lower level skill and explore/analyse higher-level skills, which gives candidates opportunities to achieve across the range.

Most responses referenced vocabulary associated with traditional Indian culture, similes, metaphors and personification. It was clear that candidates understood the language and structure in the poem, although some candidates did consider some features with more perceptive consideration of effects on the reader, for example the use of the 'Dummies' and the use of the process of 'icing'.

Level 5 responses provided detailed analysis of the language and provided details about the structure. For example, there was reference to cyclical structure, the way that the words at the start of the poem were similar to the concluding words. There were references to the shape of the poem, which were interesting, for example it is following the shape of a henna tattoo, or represents the narrator/poet being 'stuck in the middle' of the traditions of East and West. This provided evidence of a deeper understanding of the continuing search for identity.

In the least successful responses devices were often identified and named, but these responses did not discuss their use. These responses were characterised by writing without any explanations, limiting them to, at best, comment.

Responses in the middle of the mark scheme were commenting on and explaining language and structure, with appropriate and relevant references. Responses at this level were able to pick out features to link back to the ideas there were many references to metaphor, symbols, repetition, but often there was little developed explanation of the effect of these features. The henna/peacock on the poet/narrator's hand was thought to indicate the poet's awareness of her dual state and the temporary nature of her 'new brown veins'.

The best responses made points about both language and structure consistently, confidently and succinctly. These responses were exploring and analysing language and structure, with detailed and discriminating references. The best responses were able to explore less obvious features such as tone, the significance of the title, the use of repetition through the poem and the change of article from 'an' to 'the' at the end. The examples of language and structure in the best responses were much more considered and selected and often were linked confidently to context.

1 How does the writer present the importance of traditional Indian culture in *An Unknown Girl*?

In your answer, you should write about:

- how the writer presents the cultural experience with the unknown girl
- how the writer presents feelings about the place
- the use of language and structure.

You should support your answer with close reference to the poem, including **brief** quotations.

(30)

P1 - repetition - and how she wants
to reconnect with the Indian culture
↳ "an unknown girl is holding my
hand"
↳ "in the evening bazaar."

P2 - using description - "she is holding
my hand"

Moniza Alvi uses a wide range of techniques to develop a strong relationship to the 'unknown girl', highlighting the importance of the Indian culture.

Alvi uses repetition to show ~~the bond~~ ~~between~~ present the cultural experience throughout the poem. She ^{repeats} ~~repeats~~ the phrase "an unknown girl is hennaing my hand" countless times throughout the poem conveying how she wants to reconnect with the Indian culture*. The use of the word 'unknown' to describe the girl makes her seem anonymous. In addition to this, she mentions "in the evening bazaar". This place is very significant to the narrator as it is where she ~~to~~ had henna put on her hand. It portrays ~~how~~ ^{that} even ~~if~~ ^{if} she has no henna on, she still ~~has~~ ^{is connected} a deep ~~connection~~ to the Indian culture.

* The fact that there is 'henna' put on shows that she is directly connected, and

Alvi uses ^{vivid} ~~vivid~~ description and imagery to ~~show~~ present her feelings about the place and importance of her Indian culture.

She opens by describing the bazaar as ~~having~~ being "studded by neon", "~~neon~~" is ~~a bright light used at night~~. The use of ~~neon~~ The use of the word 'neon' almost describes that the place is almost alive at night. She describes herself

"clinging to these firm peacock lines" like [...]" The ^{image} ~~metaphor~~ that she describes her connection is like she ~~cannot~~ ^{leave} her heritage and stresses how importance it is ~~not~~ for her to find her cultural identity.

She also mentions the difference between the western and ~~the~~ southern ^{culture} ~~culture~~ stating that "Dummies [...]" with their western perms" presenting her dislike for the western culture. The 'kameez' is described further emphasising the culture.



This response gives a general introduction and several promising comments, which are supported from the poem. However, these comments are undeveloped, and some sections are vague, leaving the reader to do the work for the candidate.

Some comments are generic and could be about any poem. It shows some understanding of the poem and some clear understanding in places but it is not consistent and needs more detail. The selection of references is valid but undeveloped.

There is some understanding of the poet's use of language but not enough to reach Level 3. It is borderline Level 2/Level 3 but, on balance, stays within Level 2.

1 How does the writer present the importance of traditional Indian culture in *An Unknown Girl*?

In your answer, you should write about:

- how the writer presents the cultural experience with the unknown girl
- how the writer presents feelings about the place
- the use of language and structure.

You should support your answer with close reference to the poem, including **brief** quotations.

(30)

The writer presents the cultural experience with the unknown girl with a wide ~~range~~ ^{range} of vocabulary and variety of techniques. Perhaps one of the most important moments of the poem is when the writer describes the unknown girl hennaing the hand as '~~my shadow~~ ~~stretched~~ a peacock ~~spread~~ ^{spread} ~~across~~ ^{its lines} ~~my~~ ^{across} ~~my~~ palm'

This ~~moment~~ moment clearly shows Indian culture as she is hennaed. The use

of metaphor ~~shows~~ describes to the reader the Indian culture. This culture is also described when the writer describes how much they like their henna "I am clinging to these firm peacock lines like the people who cling to the side of ~~trains~~ trains". This simile conveys the hustle and bustle of Indian culture as she describes trains being so busy you have to hold onto the side.

Another moment ~~where~~ that is important to the poem is when the writer is presenting their feelings about the place. The use of emotive language presents to the reader that they really like India. This is evident when they write 'when India appears and reappears I'll reach my arms across a country'.

Further more the writer presents the Indian culture as lively and vibrant. The use of ~~of~~ This is shown when they write 'in the evening bazaar studded with neon'. The use of the word neon

conveys to the reader that the bazaar is vibrant and energetic. The use of colours in the poem is evident as the reader describes Indian culture. Another use of colours is when the writer writes 'colours ~~tear~~^{leave} the street float up in balloons'.

This poem is written through the eyes of someone from the western world. This is evident when they write 'dummies in shop fronts tilt and stare with their western perms'. The use of personification in this ~~good~~ quote evidently describes the culture but also the language used by the writer.

The use of language when the writer describes them taking the leftover henna off presents to the reader how much they like the henna and how it feels on their hand. This is evident when they write, 'I'll scrape off the dry brown lines before I sleep, reveal soft as a snail leaving amber bird behind'. The use of the simile 'soft as a snail'.

describes to the reader how it felt when the henna was scraped off.

The ~~work~~ writer describes the end of the night like it ends quite abruptly. The use of language when the writer describes the end of the bazaar is harsh. This is evident when they write 'now the furious streets are hushed.' This use of language conveys to the reader ~~that~~ that the night goes from being very busy and loud to the streets being empty and ~~quiet~~ silenced quite abruptly. This use of language conveys the Indian culture that the writer experienced.

The ~~was~~ writer describes what they are wearing as a 'shadow stitched kameez'. This description conveys to the reader that the writer is involved with the Indian culture and isn't wearing normal westerner clothes.

The writer uses short lines to describe how the 'Miss India' competition banners tower over her. This is

evident when she writes 'banners for Miss India 1943, for curtain cloth, and sofa cloth, ~~For~~ ~~to~~ ~~copy~~ me'. The use of emotive language also conveys Indian culture as the description of the banners can also be interpreted as the description of the people.



There is some sound understanding of the poem, which therefore for this first bullet point in the mark scheme places it on the border of Level 2 and 3.

The selection and interpretation of information is valid (such as the reference to the 'bazaar'), but not always developed in places, again demonstrating that this has some features of a borderline Level 2/3 response. The selection of references is valid, appropriate and relevant to the points made which meets Level 3.

The candidate mainly comments on their chosen references but there are moments of explanation, on balance, as they move through the poem. This meets all of Level 2 and some touches of Level 3 which just moves this into Level 3 for AO2.

1 How does the writer present the importance of traditional Indian culture in *An Unknown Girl*?

In your answer, you should write about:

- how the writer presents the cultural experience with the unknown girl
- how the writer presents feelings about the place
- the use of language and structure.

You should support your answer with close reference to the poem, including **brief** quotations.

(30)

In *An Unknown Girl*, the girl hennas the writer's hand, this symbolises how the girl gives the writer her Indian identity ~~as~~ as henna is a traditional Indian art. The repetition of "an unknown girl is hennaing my hand" gives her importance in this poem. Also, the fact that the writer chooses to have a peacock ~~her~~ hennaed on her hand further symbolises her desperation to be associated with "an Indian identity" as peacock is the national bird of India. After the girl hennas her hand, the writer wrote "I have new brown veins", ~~this sentence connotes that "brown veins"~~

In this sentence represents the henna and this connotes that her Indian identity ~~is~~ has now been embedded in to her blood and how she ~~wants the identity to be~~ has a sense of belonging to this identity.

On the other hand, the writer also feels ~~an~~ an uncertainty in her own identity as the title "An Unknown Girl" could also be referring to the writer herself, as she feels 'unknown' about her identity. Besides, ~~henna is a temporary dye and it fades after a certain amount of time~~, the personification used in ~~the~~ 'Dummies in shop - fronts tilt and stare' employs that she feels ~~uncomfortable~~ uncomfortable being stuck between her ~~two~~ two identities, and how she doesn't feel ~~like~~ like part of India, and was unsettled. Also, the fact that henna is a temporary ~~dye~~ ^{dye} and it fades after a certain amount of time indicates that her Indian identity is temporary and will eventually fade away like how the ~~henna~~ henna on her hand does. ~~Further, how~~ ^{Further, how} the words in this poem are centred in the middle denotes that she feels stuck in the middle of two identities as well. Despite knowing that this sense of belonging ~~is~~ is not permanent, she still yearns to cling ~~to~~ onto it for as long as she could, and this was shown in the sentence "I am clinging to these firm peacock lines", as "peacock lines" represents her ~~peacock~~ peacock henna on her hand and it symbolises her Indian identity. ~~How she wants~~ ~~clinging onto~~ Her desperation to cling onto ~~her~~ her Indian identity was also ~~shown~~ woven in the sentence "I'll lean

across the country ~~with~~ with my hands outstretched longing for the unknown girl". In this sentence, a ~~hyperbole~~ hyperbole is used when she ~~anticipates~~ anticipates to "lean ~~over~~ across the country" and have ~~her~~ her hands "outstretched"; ~~the exaggeration indicates that she is so desperate to get into that identity, she could even lean~~ where in this sentence 'the unknown girl' symbolises her Indian identity, as in the poem it was the unknown girl ~~who~~ who gave her the identity. ~~still~~ The combination of these two language techniques indicates that she is extremely desperate to ~~put~~ plug into her Indian identity.



There is sound understanding of the poem illustrated. The selection and interpretation of information and ideas is appropriate and relevant to the points being made.

The response shows clear understanding and explanation of language and structure linked to the effects created. A number of devices, such as symbolism, repetition, personification, hyperbole and the form of the poem are explained. The response is a little repetitive in places, especially towards the end.

The selection of references is appropriate and relevant to the points being made. All of Level 3 is met, but there is not enough evidence of exploration to move into Level 4. There are some 'glimmers' that it could have reached Level 4 with more development but the response stops just short of moving into 'explore'.

1 How does the writer present the importance of traditional Indian culture in *An Unknown Girl*?

In your answer, you should write about:

- how the writer presents the cultural experience with the unknown girl
- how the writer presents feelings about the place
- the use of language and structure.

You should support your answer with close reference to the poem, including **brief** quotations.

(30)

Moniza Alvi ~~uses~~ presents the importance of traditional Indian culture by her ~~use~~ use of language to describe the surroundings and the cultural experience the speaker ~~experiences~~ ^{has} in the poem. The scene of the "evening bazaar" is very culturally rich with the henna which progresses through the poem, along with the speaker's understanding of the Indian culture she is surrounded by. This progression is shown by the "wet brown lines" of henna at the beginning contrasted to the "dry brown lines" later on in the poem and as this process occurs the speaker finds their "new brown veins". This could be a metaphor ^{as the henna symbolising} ~~for~~ the ^{"new brown veins" are her} ~~newfound~~ ^{Indian} culture and her ^{newfound} understanding that makes

her feel at one with herself again. Once the speaker finds begins to understand her culture she must overcome the invasion of the "western perms" which symbolise the western culture trying to shine through the ^{rich} Indian culture. The speaker is desperate to keep her culture close, ^{this desperation is shown as she} "clinging to the firm peacock lines like people who ^{cling} to the sides of trains". This maybe because she might have lost her culture once before, and now she has found herself she doesn't want to forget again.

Moniza Alvi uses structure to present the importance of the traditional Indian culture in the poem An Unknown Girl. The poem is written in free verse with the repetition of "an unknown girl" four times throughout the poem, ~~this~~ this repetition is used to break up the poem into sections so the ~~pa~~ reader has a chance to reflect upon the previous section before moving on. "An unknown girl" may also be repeated to show the speaker's lack of understanding of her culture. There is lots of enjambement used in the poem which allows the words to flow in a similar way to how the henna flows onto the speaker's hand; it also allows the reader time to get lost in the culture as they flow through the cultural experience. The poem has a cyclical ~~str~~ structure both starting and ending in "the ... bazaar", however at the start the phrase is "the evening bazaar" and at the end the phrase is "the noon bazaar". This ^{difference} ~~contrast~~ again shows how at the start ^{in "the evening bazaar"} the speaker has lost touch with their culture and by

the end ^{in the "neon bazaar"} ~~that~~ ^{she} ~~has~~ ^{has} regained the understanding and appreciation for her ^{culture because of her} experience.

~~At~~ Moniza Alvi presents the importance of traditional Indian culture by the language she uses to present the speaker's thoughts and feelings about her culture. The writer uses the word "wet" to describe the henna at the beginning which reflects the fresh understanding the speaker has of the traditional Indian culture and later ~~used~~ uses "dry" to describe the henna as the speaker's understanding is whole and complete, as is the henna. However the speaker soon realises that the henna "will fade in a week" which shows she will lose her culture once again. The idea that "India appears and reappears" shows that the speaker loses and finds her culture over and over again, but the word "reappears" shows that it does always come back. The speaker seems sad to lose her culture so frequently and ~~is~~ also seems ~~de~~ determined to reclaim it as she will "lean across a country... longing for the unknown girl". This also shows the importance of the unknown girl in helping the speaker to reclaim her cultural identity.

To conclude, the writer uses many language techniques and structural devices to present the importance of traditional Indian culture in An Unknown Girl. These techniques and devices are thoughtfully placed to create a flow of cultural experience and emotion for the reader to enjoy and reflect on.



There is thorough and sustained understanding shown throughout this response. A wide and varied selection of quotations demonstrates a deeper understanding, with specific quotation analysis demonstrating exploration over explanation.

Both linguistic and structural points are made in an increasingly mature way, in comparison to S1C. There is specific exploration of the effect these techniques have on the reader and intention of the writer.

1 How does the writer present the importance of traditional Indian culture in *An Unknown Girl*?

In your answer, you should write about:

- how the writer presents the cultural experience with the unknown girl
- how the writer presents feelings about the place
- the use of language and structure.

You should support your answer with close reference to the poem, including brief quotations.

In *An Unknown Girl* by Alvi, the writer explores the importance of traditional Indian culture to her. Throughout the poem she explores the negative western influence on India. However, mainly she writes ~~or writes about~~ ^{explores} the importance of Indian culture through her craving to connect with her roots and hold on to her Indian identity. (30)

Alvi ^{will to} explores her negative feelings about the westernisation of India, indicating the importance of traditional Indian culture to her. For example, at the very beginning of the poem Alvi writes that she is in a "bazaar studded with neon", ~~this~~ these intricate details could indicate the

importance of this place to her. However, alternatively the use of "neon", which has connotations of American culture, juxtaposed with "bazaar" which is associated with India by the writer, could show ~~how western the writer~~ how the writer feels India has been infiltrated by the west. Alvi explores this further later on in the poem, with the juxtaposition of "Western perms" and "Miss India 1993", emphasising the clash of cultures. Alvi reflects her feelings on this through the use of the word "Dummies", which has connotations of stupidity, when describing the mannequins with "western perms".

Alvi explores the importance of Indian culture to her, through her wish to connect with her roots. The use of ~~an~~ cyclical structure in the poem, as it both starts and ends with "bazaar", indicates that the bazaar is all Alvi can think about and reflects her longingness for India to the reader. Moreover, towards the end of the poem Alvi's use of the word "amber" when describing the bird, which is commonly known as a valuable stone, reflects the value of ~~his~~ ^{her} experience with "The Unknown Girl". This is ~~what~~ ^{is} emphasised through Alvi's use of irony when she recounts that the experience only cost her "a few rupees", a key detail that ~~states~~ ^{emphasises} to the reader although the experience may not have costed a lot, it was truly valuable to her.

Finally, Alvi indicates to the ~~other~~ reader her lack of true identity and belonging, ~~becoming~~ ^{becoming} almost jealous of

"The ~~Unknown Girl~~ ^{Indian culture}. The repetition of "Unknown Girl", could reflect Alvi's lack of identity and that this is a recurrent problem for her as "unknown girl" is repeated throughout the extract. Furthermore, the declarative statement "I have new brown ~~skin~~ ^{veins}", makes use of a metaphor to indicate that the experience of the henna makes her feel like she finally belongs. Alternatively the use of the ~~an~~ adjective "new", reflects could show that although the writer is of Indian ~~stent~~ ^{descent} she doesn't always feel like she has "brown veins" and belongs. The fact that this sentence is also a declarative reflects that she is celebratory of her "new brown ~~skin~~ ^{veins}" and that ~~the~~ her belonging ~~fills her with confidence~~. to Indian culture fills her with confidence and power. Furthermore, Alvi's craving to identify with the Indian culture is reflected through the structure of the poem, which is written with a very uneven line length, reflecting Alvi's shortness of feeling she belongs, and perhaps her uncertainty about whether she can keep her Indian identity given to her by her henna experience. Finally, Alvi states that she is "clinging" to the henna "like people who cling to the sides of a train", ~~which~~ ^{this simile} shows her desperation to hang on to Indian culture, as the comparison to people clinging on to sides of a train is commonly associated with India.

To conclude, throughout the poem Alvi presents the importance

of traditional Indian culture ~~a~~ through her longing to belong ~~to~~ India and her craving for the henna, which provides ^{to} her with identity. The poem also explores the negative side of this, with reference to western culture infiltrating India which reflects the . Western culture ~~is~~ also infiltrating Alvi.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

From the outset, the candidate shows sustained understanding of the poem. There is a large number of points (neon, dummies, bazaar, amber, repetition, brown veins, train metaphor) which demonstrate thorough understanding and exploration of language and structure.

This is an uneven response with some points being more explained (for example, the idea of the bazaar and cyclical structure) but there are also glimmers of perception, (for example when talking about the amber contrasted with the few rupees it cost) so it is a 'best-fit'.

The response is stronger on AO2 with reference to a range of language and structural devices.

1 How does the writer present the importance of traditional Indian culture in *An Unknown Girl*?

In your answer, you should write about:

- how the writer presents the cultural experience with the unknown girl
- how the writer presents feelings about the place
- the use of language and structure.

You should support your answer with close reference to the poem, including **brief** quotations.

(30)

Plan

① connection to her culture - important to her

- decorative setting 'studded with neon'

- 'she squeezes' - simile, soft - comforting

- 'icing' - decorative, beautiful, makes her feel internally good

- 'a peacock ... from lines' - personification of national bird

structure:

② conflict between her Indian culture and ~~the~~ cyclical western culture → but she ultimately feels important connection

- 'dummies tilt and stare' - under scrutiny

OR she is like them

- 'Curtain cloth canopy me' - comfort her

- 'I have new brain veins' → metaphor - heritage

- free verse

③ Longing → shows the importance to her

- 'clinging'

- 'They will fade in a week' - s. sentence, inevitable

- 'I'll lean with hands outstretched... longing'

↳ shift to the future tense

- cyclical structure.

Essay

In ~~as~~ ^{Alvi} ~~his~~ poem, ~~Alvi~~ suggests the importance of her Indian culture through her initial experience of henna with an 'unknown girl'. The unknown girl ~~is~~ ^{is} hennaing the speaker's hand and 'she squeezes' the henna onto her hand.

The use of simile creates a ~~sense of~~ soft, gentle image of the unknown girl which perhaps feels comforting to the speaker. This indicates that her Indian culture is important as it is one which is comforting. Furthermore, the unknown girl is also described to be 'icing' the speaker's hand with henna. Indeed, the use of this verb suggests how henna is decorating her hand, making it look beautiful. Perhaps Alvi is suggesting the power of his cultural experience as it makes the speaker feel internally connected with her culture.

Moreover, the metaphor for henna as a ~~decorative~~

the national bird of India which further connects the speaker to her culture, through her name. Additionally, the adjective 'firm' emphasises the strength of this connection and how important it is to her, as she does not want to let it fade.

In addition, Alvi presents the speaker to ~~have~~ feel somewhat insecure about her ~~cultural~~ cultural identity at first, but ~~not~~ ultimately, she still feels an important, strong connection with her Indian heritage. When looking around, the ^{Speaker} ~~speaker~~ sees 'dummies in shop-fronts [which] tilt and stare'. This reference to 'dummies' suggests the western ~~and~~ influences in India. Also, the fact that dummies are fake and artificial may mirror how the speaker feels about herself ~~in India~~. ^P Perhaps ^{she} feels like she doesn't belong in ~~the~~ India. The use of the verbs 'tilt and stare' could alternatively reflect ~~to~~ how she feels she is under scrutiny in India due to her feelings of not belonging. Therefore, Alvi demonstrates the speaker's conflict ⁱⁿ ^{intercultural} identity. ~~But because the poem is written in~~ ^{Alvi wrote} ~~soft~~ ~~and~~ ~~easy~~ ~~to~~ ~~read~~ ~~the~~ ~~fact~~ ~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~poem~~ ~~is~~ ~~written~~ ~~in~~ ~~free~~ ~~verse~~, may also ^{this} reflect how the speaker is uncertain about her

identity and does not strictly ~~belong~~ belong to her ~~to~~ Indian culture or her western culture.

Moreover, the metaphor ~~to have~~ 'I have new brown veins' creates a strong sense of connection to her Indian heritage. It could be considered that the reference to her 'veins' suggests the speaker's vitality ~~and~~ which she gets from immersing herself in cultural experiences.

Ultimately, whilst the speaker is conflicted about her identity, she also feels an important connection to India.

Furthermore, Alvi demonstrates the importance of ~~the~~ the speaker's traditional ~~an~~ Indian culture through ~~the~~ her desire to keep connected to it. The speaker is 'cling[ing]' to her henna lines and the verb ~~stays~~ ^{implies} implies a sense of desperation and strong desire ~~to keep~~ for her henna to stay there forever. Indeed, this symbolises her longing to always stay connected with her Indian culture. Additionally, the short sentence 'It will fade in a week' creates a factual, ^{and monosyllabic} tone and ^{suggests} implies how it is only inevitable that her henna will fade. Alvi demonstrates how her connection to India will not always be so strong, particularly when she

speaker has to leave the country. However, the shift to future tense 'I'll lean across a country' and the use of the metaphor highlights the extent to which the speaker is willing to reconnect with her ^{Indian} culture. The use of the future tense also emphasises how the speaker will ~~take control of~~ ~~was~~ actively try to connect with her culture which highlights its importance to her. In addition, the poem ^{has a cyclical structure} ~~ends~~ with the speaker ^{at the end of the poem} 'longing for the unknown girl'. ~~The cyclical structure~~

It could be considered that the speaker is actually longing to feel connected to her Indian culture, like she did in the 'mexico bazaar' when she was having her hair done. The cyclical structure highlights the shift of the speaker becoming the 'unknown girl' herself.



This response demonstrates perceptive understanding of the poem and selects the textual references precisely to suit the given question the importance of traditional Indian culture.

The candidate selects information to focus on three broad ideas in the three sections of the response: the poet's initial experience of hennaing, feeling insecure and conflict about her cultural identity, and the desire to keep the connection.

Aptly selected textual evidence of both language and structure is analysed and integrated, developing and breaking down each idea. For example, the desire to remain connected with her Indian culture: verb 'clinging', short sentence 'it will fade in a week', factual monosyllabic tone, shift into future tense 'I'll lean across the country', cyclical structure 'longing for the unknown girl'.

The selection of references is discriminating and clarifies the points being made throughout the response.

This is a full mark response.

Question 2

This question was the least answered of the three. Examiners noted a range of ideas about decorating, some linked to the poem and many links to celebrations such as birthdays, festival such as Christmas or surprise parties.

It was felt that all candidates answering this question managed to focus on the decoration with some build-up to the event. There were some poignant ideas, for example one of the responses offered in this report on decorating the Christmas tree when missing their mother. Some were humorous, for example cakes collapsing as they were carried out. Often the enthusiasm of a candidate for a particular hobby or interest came to the fore. One examiner noted 'The enthusiasm and the attention to detail were heart-warming and occasionally educational!'

Responses that showed a real unity of purpose between family members from different generations were successful, for example, where the intimate relationship between them was vividly enacted. Occasionally, there were some less-successful responses where over-elaborate descriptions of process did not really engage the reader. Those candidates with specialised knowledge performed well.

Chosen question number: Question 2 Question 3 Question 4

Whenever I read books about ~~Advent~~ children that grew up in the West, they always seem to have a secret and personal space that belongs only to themselves. They ~~call~~ ^{call} it a treehouse. I don't find any reason why I cannot have my own treehouse so after 2 days of hard work with father I got my own treehouse. "What should I do next... Mmm... Oh, yes, I should decorate it". I thought.

This is a big project and I want it to be done perfectly, so I set out for some advice.

I first ~~went~~ went to my older brother. "It's ~~got to~~ ^{got to} be ~~something~~ ^{something} epic!" he exclaimed, with an ~~excited~~ ^{wild} expression on his face, "how about a fortress or a ~~medieval~~ ^{castle} ~~castle~~? we can put torches around, and light them at night! Oh relax, they won't set fire to your treehouse..." I fled before he could come up with some more "epic" ideas.

Next, I went to my older sister. "How about we paint it pink? We can also draw flowers on it! And on the inside, we can put in lots of toys! Maybe also a few cats..." Being a dog person I refused her politely and left.

Finally, I went to my ~~mother~~ ^{mother} ~~mom~~. "Why do you insist on taking other people's advice? If You've always been creative, where is your confidence? A thousand people see a thousand Hamlets, only your own opinion suits you the most." I decided mother was right.

And so, I painted my treehouse white. Inside, I filled a corner with sweets, in the middle a sofa and next to the window a bookshelf full with the books I love. Next to it was an electric fan that was powered by

bottles. It wasn't fancy ~~or camp~~ but it was the style that I loved. It was
the perfect decoration.



A04

Despite being short, this response has development in the plot and characters throughout, demonstrating clear communication.

The inclusion of humour shows an understanding of tone and purpose.

Vocabulary choices are deliberately for effect throughout. The response is clearly structured through paragraphs and ideas. All of the Level 3 criteria are met.

A05

For A05, the candidate meets all of the criteria in Level 3. There is some real attempt to manage sentence structures for deliberate effect (Level 4) and some quite wide, selective vocabulary used, which moves it into Level 4.

Level 4

A04: 11 marks

A05: 8 marks

Total: 19

The moon dipped below the horizon, casting elongated shadows across the ground. Bats swooped through trees and lamp posts with great accuracy, their silhouettes sneaking silently through ~~the~~ the sky. In the distance, ~~a couple could be seen~~ two figures could be seen approaching what they were told was simply a house left to decay, however they knew it held dark secrets. The couple had recently been made homeless, and needed a place to stay. The mansion barely stood upright, being supported by ivy choking the walls like long fingers. They felt like they were being watched. Suspiciously, the empty window frames were eye sockets, stalking their every move.

The couple put immense thought into every step, each one seeming to take an hour for the next foot to progress closer to the rotting front door. The air was infected with spores coming from every brick, bush, tile, tree ~~nearby~~, being sucked up their nostrils with every breath they took. It was a clash of love and fear, their arms wrapped around each other as they approached the entrance. ~~With two birds~~
Screaming could be heard from within, amplified

by the hollow floor. With two brave steps, they were inside.

The floor boards creaked like the moans of the ghosts that occupied the land. They ascended the once ornate stairs back to back, in fear of anything supernatural. The wind whistled through every nook and cranny of the weathered walls. They entered the library. They looked each other in the eye in disbelief. For there was only a single book on the bookshelves that immediately caught their attention. They raised it off the shelves and a spray of dust dispersed through the dark as it landed with a thump. Centuries-old muck and grime flew ~~in~~ in every direction, still illuminated by the moonlight. The leather book had been revealed after such a long period of isolation. Eager to know its contents, the couple peeled open the front cover. Words began to appear one by one, glowing with an emerald green hue. ~~Suddenly~~ Out of nowhere, spirits materialised beside them, retelling ~~a~~ a story, a story that contained both the past and future of this ghostly residence. The figures merrily twirled around the room in a mesmerising dance, leaving tiny imprints in the mangled carpet. The ~~stunned~~ stunned couple stepped back in shock, and they were guided throughout the mysterious abode by that same hue of emerald green.

Shining like an other worldly river of light.

They were led to the deepest darkest quarters of the mansion. Suddenly, an even larger ghostly figure made itself present from the thick sticky dust that saturated the air. The couple spoke: "How do we uncover the secrets of this mansion and make it our own?"

The ghostly ghoul spoke with a deep and croaky voice: "You have been ~~distracted~~ distracted. Return to your previous location and complete the task."

The couple immediately looked each other in the eye once again, and a realization was made in the moment. They knew they had to return to the library and finish the book.

Once they had navigated through the countless maze-like corridors and stair cases, they arrived back in the library. With every turn of the book, the pages got fresher. The story revealed to them that the house would finally find its new owner. ~~Without~~ Without a moment of hesitation, the couple's faces transformed from an expression of intrigue to ones of pure joy, as they had found their forever home. The book truly did hold the future of the mansion as a ~~green~~ green glow could be seen rushing into the room from the never-ending corridor. Followed behind by a swarm of various ghosts and ghouls entered the room.

There was no longer spores and dust infiltrated in every crevice, ~~and~~ since the spirits were decorating the couple's new ~~the~~ home in front of their eyes. Rotted rocking chairs turned into pristine, plush sofas. The couple did not even need to decorate their house. ~~and~~ They had summoned a supernatural force to complete the task for them. They were then known as the country's best interior decorators from that point on, as not a single was listed to fully transform a building.



AO4

This is a response with sophisticated use of detailed and precise descriptions, sharply focused on the intended reader. The atmospheric sense of old decaying mansion, building the sense of mystery and tension through the setting – ‘empty window frames were eye sockets’, ‘mangled carpet’, ‘countless maze like corridors and staircases’. Dialogue and use of the leather book discovery all feed into fulfilling the expectations of the intended reader. Very well-crafted.

Communication is perceptive and subtle.

The focus on the task is not as sharp – which impacts on the achievement of purpose. The idea of decorating is realised through arriving to it in the last section of the response. The response is awarded a mark of 16 in Level 5.

AO5

The response manipulates complex ideas, utilising a range of structural and grammatical features to support coherence.

There is quite an extensive vocabulary, which is used strategically.

The response is punctuated with accuracy (one rare error toward the end) to aid emphasis and precision, using a range of sentence structures accurately and selectively to achieve particular effects.

The mark of 11 in Level 5 is awarded, taking into account the cohesion is not being fully sustained.

Level 5

AO4: 16 marks

AO5: 11 marks

Total: 27 marks

The late afternoon sun casts a warm light over the grass ~~of~~ on which I'm stood. The ground is not wet, but not so dry that it feels lifeless. Lifeless. In my hand I hold a selection of flowers from a spot ~~near~~ my mother and I like to sit when the sun is setting, talking or eating, or anything ~~we~~ we could do that meant we were together. She ~~was~~ is ~~with~~ with me now, smiling as we watch the sun slowly plummet towards the horizon. My brothers and father are here too, standing with me and quietly thinking to themselves. They too have hands full of flowers, some from the ~~store~~ shops and some from our garden, but each as beautiful as the next.

~~The~~ The bottom of the sun collides with the peak of the hill far off in the distance. I look at my family, and my mother, and we nod at each other, for it was time to actually do something with the flowers. ~~But~~ I watch my father walk slowly up to a small mound in the grass, and he carefully places his flowers down onto it. He arranges them in a pattern he knows my mother ~~she~~ will find pretty, and I see him smile at her. They ~~are~~ sit together for a time, then my father stands and begins ~~to~~ walking back towards our house, a small cottage

squatting at the meeting of four fields just like the one we are standing in now.

My older brother looks over to me and my younger brother, and begins to walk towards the ~~the~~ churned up rectangle in the grass. He smiles at my mother too, but the smile doesn't truly show his feeling. He's not used to being out here and watching the sun with us, as ~~his~~ his life has been in the clutch of his job as a lawyer ever since he left home. Maybe if he'd looked up from his ~~study~~ studies more often, and been out to drink in the wonder that is nature, he wouldn't feel so awkward now. His flowers are bought from a shop, ~~where~~ and although they may smell the freshest and ~~be~~ bud with ~~the~~ the brightest colour, they are the ~~most~~ ugliest flowers from the selection we each carry. They have a plastic aura about them which he will regret not being able to replace with something more heartfelt. He drops the flowers on the mound, and after a short glance at my mother and a hard to dry his eyes, he follows my father towards the path.

My younger brother runs over to the patch of dirt, his innocent footsteps gently thudding against the grass. His face is screwed up in confusion, an emotion we use when we don't know what else would take its place. He can't be happy, or angry, or sad, because his lack of experience in this life doesn't give him the ability to really understand what is

happening. In his small hands, he clutches simple flowers from the garden, and although they aren't as pretty as my older brother's flowers, they are much more beautiful. He carefully moves the flowers my older brother dropped into a much nicer shape, and ~~the~~ with great concentration he places his daisies next to the other flowers. He looks at me, and without ~~an~~ even an ~~adequate~~ acknowledgement of my mother, runs off to join the other two.

The ~~was~~ dusk is hazy and quiet, and my mother and I are left alone. I give her my flowers, and look at her again, in my mind hoping she'll never let them go. My memories of our evenings in the meadows will never ~~be~~ lose their colours, never fade into blurriness, for it's ~~is~~ a part of my life which has always ~~meant~~ meant a great deal to me. I hear her ~~to~~ laugh, and look ~~at~~ at her to see her smile, and I'm reminded that there's no need to feel sad, because the ~~best~~ moments we have together are only the happiest.

After the dusk bleeds into a darkening night, I stand up from the mound of dirt. My family have long gone back to the house, so I decide it's time I joined them. I smile at my ~~mother~~ mother again, but a smile can't hold back tears when I'm remembering what can never be ~~again~~ done again. I begin the walk back to the house, leaving my mother to watch the stars.

She'll lay there for ever more, watching the sun rise and
fall, like we always used to. And from time to time I'll join
her, but for now ~~she~~ she lays still, her bed covered in the
~~beautiful~~ beautiful flowers and memories we have all left.



AO4

This is a response that is over-and-above what we would expect for full marks.

There is subtlety, sophistication and well-observed detail in every word. There is deliberate crafting with vivid description of the different family members and their responses to grief.

The response is sharply focused on purpose and the reader – it would be difficult for any reader to not feel what the candidate is sharing. There is sophisticated use of form, tone and register.

AO5

Whilst not 100% accurate, examiners are not looking for perfection to achieve full marks. The candidate takes a complex and sensitive idea and manipulates it in a complex way to impact on the emotions of the readers.

A range of structural and grammatical features is used to support coherence and cohesion.

There is some extensive vocabulary used strategically and rare spelling errors do not detract from overall meaning.

A range of sentence structures is used accurately and selectively to achieve particular effects.

Level 5

AO4: 18 marks

AO5: 12 marks

Total: 30 marks

Question 3

This question was the most popular of the three this series.

There were very varied responses, but, as noted, some that were (ironically or not) very negative and therefore did not really meet the purpose of the title.

Examiners noted accounts where a perfect place became a menacing location or one where disappointment, tragedy and even bitterness invaded the atmosphere. Nevertheless, there was a wide range of places covered, some based on experience, some imagined. Mainly the responses were narrative, although some included more of a description. Some adopted a tone that was intended to influence the reader. A number of candidates seemed to have ignored the title and then tacked it on at the end — this is not usually successful.

A number of perfect locations involved travel to hot countries and too often examiners felt that there was too much time in the build-up — packing, going on the plane, settling into the hotel — and only then describing the wonderful secret bay at sunset, for example. Starting stories in the middle of the action or with the antics or speech of a lively character might have been helpful in these instances. Perfect places entwined with the description of beloved family members often worked well and had an emotional impact. Some described sunsets (perhaps inspired by a question on a past paper) or secluded natural scenes and there was also some vivid, descriptive writing.

There were some responses that were more like a guide or a presentation of a country or a place, not imaginative but very non-fiction like, such as why Thailand or Dubai is a perfect place to visit, see, holiday, for example. A similar pattern was the search for perfection which again, at times, tended to veer off towards a newspaper article in form, something to advise, rather than an imaginative piece of writing — appreciating family as a perfect place, for example.

It was possible for responses ‘with a twist’ — when a perfect place turns into a nightmare or a war zone, a safe place becomes unsafe, or being in a perfect place in their life or even in a book featured — to be crafted successfully. One examiner noted:

‘what particularly stuck is a description of a bedroom as a perfect place, isolating the narrator from the parents’ arguments. A relatively simple idea, but executed very well.’

Often, it was the responses that had the confidence to turn everyday events or common places into ‘perfect’ ones that were the most successful, because they allowed candidates to express subtlety and manage complex ideas.

Plan:

The Perfect place:

A warm summers day the rays
Shining down on my bare back
as I unload my picnic of
Burgers and Beer into the
boat!

My boat was small blue and
well loved chips of paint and
wood occasionally decide to
jump into the cool water.
I begin to meander up the
creaks the soft noise of my
old engine "put put" along
the calm water. Small waves
lapping at the side of my
boat.

I go on for what feels like
eternity but every moment bliss
until I come across a small sandy
island the suns light reflects

Off the ~~the~~ water making
it seem as if the island
goes on forever.

Once I heaved my boat
onto land I began to
search for a dry sledge of
sand to sit and stay a
while. All I could think about
was the sun beating down
above me and the cold
beer in my hands. Seagulls
Symphony above my head
the call of seals in the
distance and again the soft
waves lapping against my
boat. ~~the~~

Seconds past and the sky
turned dark clouds rolled
over. I ~~had~~ knew it was coming
the droplets a 100mph and in that
moment it thought back to
when the same exact thing
had happened to us the first
1st drop the second third fourth

Each time harder than the
last until about 50 seconds
later the slay opened and
let the sun back out.

I smiled to myself and
said THIS IS the perfect place.

...



AO4

There is some evidence that the candidate is trying to craft a 'sense of feeling' when writing, though their sense of purpose is not always clear.

Creating a response that responds specifically to the question is a significant part of the sense of purpose.

There is appropriate information that is connected and clear communication evident in the response. The candidate meets all of the criteria for Level 2 and moves into Level 3.

AO5

There is varied vocabulary ('occasionally', 'meandered'). Ideas are organised. Paragraphs are used but there is not a range of structural and grammatical features.

Punctuation is not used with control and at times it feels as though there is basic control of the usage.

A 'best-fit' approach is required here – bullet point 3 is met in Level 1, but bullet point 2 is met in Level 3, and bullet point 1 in Level 2/3.

Level 3

AO4: 8 marks

AO5: 4 marks

Total: 12 marks

'A Perfect Place'

~~It was~~ The wind was still as the sun descended behind the overpowering buildings. The bench beneath me shook slightly as the rioting rush of the Thursday night club goers ~~rambled~~ piled out from the tube station, like a pack of wolves hunting for their next prey. Their prey being the nearest corner shop that sold any cheap form of booze.

I gently turned my head towards the girl who sat next to me, the one I had spent my entire summer with and was yet to be bored of.

I reclined back into the still shaking bench as I extended my legs out into the crumbling cobblestone pavement that was before me. I stared, silently into the sky as I recollected the events of the day, subtly smiling as recalled the most exciting ones.

To be ~~be~~ completely honest, none of the events that occurred that day were at all interesting, not in the slightest. But ~~for~~ to me, to us, they were. ~~the most exact~~

This day happened to be like every other day we had that summer, we got up, got dressed, went out for breakfast and

then simply walked ~~the~~ through the busy streets of London until we could find a decent place to sit.

Usually we'd ~~at~~ end up sitting on a lumpy ledge somewhere, or most ~~of~~ commonly, a nice patch of grass that wasn't swarmed by pigeons.

But today we had found a bench, not the most exciting of places I realise, but, once again, to us it was.

I could vividly recall each place we'd sat over the summer and relay that information to someone with ease.

I remember every cracked ledge, every ~~graffiti~~ colourful graffiti display, every restaurant, café, shop, museum, bar, everything we'd ever sat by. I had clear visions of them in my mind but none could top this bench.

The sun was completely out of sight now, with not even a ^{subtle} orange blaze shining through the gaps of the buildings that clustered together. The wind, no longer still, ~~was~~ flowed around us, sending subtle chills through my body, raising the exposed hairs that layed across my arms.

Slowly, I retracted my legs and sat, civilized on the bench.

I ~~attempted to~~ rolled down the sleeves of my worn out jacket, that once belonged to my grandfather, ~~and then~~ and then attempted to zip up, in an attempt now that the sun had left us alone with the wind. Typically, the zip

gnawed at the fabric surrounding it, ~~preventing~~ blocking me from zipping it up ~~but~~ past my belt's gleaming buckle, a belt of which I'd stolen from the girl, ~~the set~~ just that morning.

She turned swiftly to face me, noticing I was once again struggling to zip my jacket. This incident, unfortunately, was becoming routinised at this point, an inevitable event that had to occur if I ~~just~~ chose to wear it.

With a brief ~~gest~~ gesture of her hands, I pulled my hands away from the wretched zip, and with one swift movement she flawlessly dragged the zip up the jacket, ~~keeping~~

Now feeling warmer in my, finally, zipped up jacket, I lay my head carefully onto her shoulder.

There we sat, no movement, no speech, just us alone on a bench, watching all the quirky characters who fluttered past us.

Maybe, to someone else this moment won't appear as anything special, or won't be presented to be all that joyous.

Or that bench ~~was~~ would just be seen as another busted-up bench that sat on the streets of London, nothing special, nothing unique. But for us, it was everything. Moments like that are everything.

Race simplicity and peace, in a

Dupe simplicity and peace in our own personal pocket

place.



AO4

From the outset, this candidate communicates successfully, particularly through their use of detailed description and varied vocabulary for effect.

The candidate can be seen to craft every sentence: they are doing much more than just telling a story, they are very much thinking of the reader. It does feel 'overdone' at times (for instance, the lengthy zip section) but examiners will look to reward what is there and it is very effective in form, tone and register.

To go into Level 5, there would need to see this more sharply focused on the 'perfect place' – this is the purpose of the writing.

The response lacks the subtlety required in Level 5 (although it really does strive to get there), but it does fulfil Level 4 for AO4.

AO5

Ideas and structure are managed for effect throughout the response. There is use of very wide and deliberately chosen vocabulary, with occasional spelling errors.

Punctuation is not just accurate but used for deliberate effect. All of the Level 4 criteria are met.

Level 4

AO4: 15 marks

AO5: 10 marks

Total: 25 marks

Question 4

Examiners noted some formulaic and fairly predictable 'surprise stories', for example where people are upset as everybody seems to have completely forgotten about their special day, only to be in tears of ecstasy a few hours later when the surprise is sprung upon them. Also, there were several conventional love-at-first-sight-stories. These responses were often clear and fairly successful in their sense of purpose.

Often, candidates managed to insert twists or unconventional characters in their accounts and examiners noted that 'many responses to this question were fresh and enjoyable to read'. Also, there was scope for 'eyes to meet' in quite menacing circumstances and there was a sprinkling of successfully-achieved suspense stories.

Some candidates used the preparation from a past paper to inspire them (this is different to pre-preparing a response), and some used ideas from the Anthology, such as *The Bright Lights of Sarajevo*. Responses that achieved higher levels used the eye contact or the idea of it to repeat it throughout their writing, focusing on the idea of danger; focus and leadership, communication (during robberies); need for reassurance, forgiveness or mercy (the war setting).

Chosen question number: Question 2 Question 3 Question 4

And our eyes suddenly met...

There it was, any usual Friday ~~was~~ plodding out of bed, with my alarm screaming down my ears, hoping it was a dream. After it felt like 5 minutes, I can hear my mum screaming ~~down the stair~~ up the stairs, "Bus is leaving soon!", I had to jump out of my bed, rush like a cheater and just-about made it, however I forgot my sports kit for PE. Now I had to choose ~~whether~~ whether I was too pretend to be sick or hear another one of my mums farts, that I should've got up earlier, or why are you not like your siblings, always comparing us ~~to~~ whenever ^{she} ~~they~~ ^{has} the chance. I could imagine the bellowing already, but at least I had the end of year party to look forward to.

Every year Tom has the best parties, where his parents go all out, and ~~make~~ if you miss this ~~party~~...well...uh...

I guess you won't have anything to talk about all summer. So I had to do the only other option and borrow the: sickly, disgusting, horrid kit and found it, otherwise I would have no chance of going to this party. Although I knew that I would have to wear the sweaty kit, and have people make fun of me, I knew this would be worth it.

Last year Jason missed out on this party and the whole of ~~summer~~ summer he was nowhere to be seen, just imagining that to be me gives me a sickly feeling in my stomach, even worse than the smell of the PE kit.

The only way I could get through that was to imagine the party later, everyone loving life, the start of the best summer ever. Everyone has recently got into golf, so I couldn't wait for the late tee times, as we get to ~~daze see the~~ ~~beautiful sunset,~~ daze into the beautiful

Sunset, since the past few months have been stormed with clouds and the rain ~~scattered~~ ~~scattered~~ squelling down at me, mocking us.

Here it was, the time we've been waiting for, school finished just waiting to go to TOM'S end of year party, I had my whole plan set up, get home, get changed then leave (yes I know it was very basic) then ~~it~~ it changed for the worse, as soon as I ~~get home~~ got back to my house, I could sense the anger from stepping one foot in, my mums face bright red, looking like she was going to explode. ~~Those~~ Those 10 seconds from when I saw her, I could only think of the worse; what had I done; surely she not annoyed at me; I haven't done anything wrong. My eyes flashed before my life.

Bang.

Then again another. Bang. Then a sigh of relief hit me when I had realised she was just working out. That ~~was the~~

best feeling, and all the sickly feeling went away. She was red from working out, not cause she was angry, and the bangs were from her dropping ~~her weights~~ the weights, as she ~~was~~ finished her sets.

I knew that I didn't have to worry anymore, however my simple plan, wasn't so simple after all, as I had to pick out the perfect outfit, ~~and make sure it was~~ to make sure people would forget about my PE kit earlier that day.

There I was, ~~already~~ all ready in my outfit, ready to go, knowing that this would be the best party Tom has had, as he was having a DJ there for the whole night.

~~yet. As the~~ stunning

As I arrived at the gate, I could hear and feel the music already, with the farmac vibrating, and the weather being as ~~vibrant~~ as it could be, I went in, and our eyes suddenly met, I didn't think it was real, I had to ~~and our eyes~~ rub my eyes, and make sure I wasn't dreaming, it couldn't be, ~~it wasn't~~ I ran through the door with pure excitement, lost for ~~world~~ words, it was him, my best friend that went away to the army, this was the best day I could've imagined.

could it?



AO4

Whilst this response seems to foreground the question, the sense of purpose is not fully realised.

It begins in a straightforward manner and the ideas are not always clearly ordered. For example, in the first paragraph there is some 'plodding out of bed' and later in the paragraph 'jump out of bed'. However, the candidate does build up a sense of the character of Mum.

The plot, which moves from the PE kit to the idea of Tom's party and a little bit about golf and back to the party and returning again to the PE kit, lacks real development of any of those ideas.

The response is broadly appropriate. There is some straightforward use of form, tone and register. A mark at the top of Level 2 is awarded.

AO5

The response expresses ideas for the first bullet point of Level 2, but the order is confused in places.

The candidate does use appropriate paragraphing and there are some grammatical features.

Spelling is generally correct and punctuation is mostly controlled.

Syntax helps the narrative in relation to the structure of the sentences.

Overall, the candidates does everything in Level 2 but ideas are not developed enough for it to move into Level 3.

Level 2

AO4: 7 marks

AO5: 4 marks

Total: 11 marks

Our eyes suddenly met. We had finally done it. It had only taken us over 40 years but we had done it. Finally. Finally, after 40 years of struggle and pain and letdown after letdown. England had won at football. We thought it wasn't possible, I mean, how ~~can~~ could it be? But it was true. We went all the way to penalties and just when it looked like all hope was lost... France missed. The ball went flying into the stands where a young boy with a half-smudged England flag on his cheek dove for it and rose above a cluster of fans with the ball held aloft like he was holding a trophy. And that was when we knew. It had finally come home.

We poured out into the garden, eyes ~~wide~~^{wild} and chanting ~~not~~ ecstatically. ~~It~~ I had never felt anything as wonderful as that night. Soon the whole street was alive with the sounds of celebration. Never mind sleep, ~~what~~ history had been ~~not~~ made! Soon we ~~pe~~ ran out to join the celebrations, you would never have known so many lived in our little dead-end street. People

rode up and down in their cars ~~as if~~ as if they were in a chariot, beeping and shouting, ~~hands~~ hands hanging out the windows and ~~standing~~ ^{dancing} on the roofs. From somewhere came music, and then someone started bringing their spare drinks out, and I could've sworn I smelt a ~~bar~~ barbeque being fired up. This was the ~~same~~ summer I had signed up for.

All week we had been in anticipation of this historic match. It was cause enough for celebration ^{that} we had even made it to the finals; shops were sold out, parties were planned, the pubs stocked up and emergency services prepared themselves. We were ready. The match sent my stress levels off the charts. The ball was pinging all over the pitch like a game of air hockey. Countless attempts from both sides, and countless goals. The first half started strong, but it was tame compared to what came later. ~~Every time we were one goal~~ The score was like a see-saw, flipping in and out of our favour. We were permanently perched on the edge of our seats, waiting to pounce at any time we scored. The extra time ran through and we were left at 5-5. It was time.

But then, suddenly that barbeque. I couldn't smell ~~and~~ any meat cooking. ~~It~~ But I could smell smoke. I flung my head around, trying desperately trying to find the source. It could be nothing, but what if it was something? There. I spotted it at the top of the street. A growing plume of black smoke was billowing from someone's garden. I shouted, but just at that moment their fence lit up like a bonfire. It was already too late. I sprinted over to see if I could help. The fire was

growing every second, engulfing more and more. More people had spotted it now, and some ran inside for their phones to call for help. I prayed that whoever this belonged to was out with the rest of us, but I wasn't hopeful. I had never seen who lived here, not even leaving leaving the house for work or school. For all I knew they could be an And elderly recluse.

And then, a shriek. A woman sprinted towards the house and without hesitation flung open the front door, disappearing inside. A crowd had gathered now and sirens were wailing in the distance. A minute passed. She ran out again. Clutching two small figures, one still sound asleep, she stared ~~helpse~~ helplessly at the flames now climbing around the property. If those sirens didn't get closer quickly, there would be nothing left but a pile of ashes.



AO4

This response really is a story of two halves! It starts well with a range of comments and use of structure – ellipsis, question mark for example. It has a well-crafted introduction. It is quite descriptive about the street party and the people, builds up the anticipation and at the end of the third paragraph, it changes.

The action shifts away from football and the celebration party to a fire. The introduction of an 'elderly recluse' is not developed (the candidate may be drawing on the extract from *The Woman in Black* in the Anthology). There is not much variation in the structure but it has a sense of purpose throughout. The fire is like an add-on and not part of the intended story. The cohesiveness of the whole response puts it almost at the top of Level 4 for AO4.

AO5

The candidate connects and develops the ideas, and for AO5 all of Level 3 is met. There is an attempt to use devices cohesively and deliberately, a feature of Level 4, and some wide, selective vocabulary. Bullet point 3 for AO5 is met in Level 3/4. 'Best-fit' for AO5 for this response is the middle of Level 4, because all of the bullet points are touched upon in Level 4, although not securely.

Level 4

AO4: 14 marks

AO5: 9 marks

Total: 23 marks

4EA1_02_SecB

As always, examiners noted that these imaginative writing pieces were often really enjoyable to read, with an impressive amount and quality produced under timed conditions. It was also pleasing to see candidates using ideas and phrases borrowed from other anthology texts; for example the extract from *The Woman in Black* or *Night*. This demonstrated an impressive knowledge and a great use of the anthology texts for inspiration.

The least successful responses were basic responses, with straightforward use of tone, style and register, with audience and purpose not always clear. At this level candidates tended to express but not always connect ideas and information, with limited use of structural and grammatical features and paragraphing. There were few responses that only achieved Level 1 – this was mostly because these candidates hardly wrote anything, offering a basic response.

The mid-level responses tended to at least have straightforward and at best appropriate use of tone, style and register, selecting material and stylistic or rhetorical devices to suit audience and purpose. At this level candidates tended to connect, but not always develop, ideas and information, with some structural and grammatical features and paragraphing.

There was a tendency in the majority of responses marked in this range to set out a stronger description in the start of the story and then focus more on quickly moving the plot on towards the end where planning had let the candidates down. In some cases, the writing lacked development to move higher into the mark scheme for AO4. At this level the use of vocabulary and syntax tended to be appropriate but repetitive and at times limited to vague simile/metaphor, use of short sentences, questions and exclamations for effect. The level of AO6 at this borderline was appropriate but overall formulaic, where it appeared that candidates had been advised to include plenty of descriptive techniques in their writing – whether they were appropriate or not.

In the best responses, candidates tended to at least have successful and at best touches of subtle use of tone, style and register, managing ideas and stylistic or rhetorical devices to suit audience and purpose. These responses tended to manage, but not always manipulate, ideas and information, with a range of structural and grammatical features and paragraphing.

Responses at this level had some creative ideas and used devices such as a build-up of tension, humour and withholding information to the end as a technique. The most successful tended to have some selective vocabulary used for specific effect rather than just to demonstrate knowledge of particular multi-syllabic words. In general, examiners felt many candidates seemed to be thoughtful about the way they opened stories, keeping the reader guessing and engaged in the early stages of a story.

The assessment objectives for these tasks effectively discriminated the quality of responses. As always, advice to centres would be to encourage candidates to avoid thinking they need to write a whole novel or even short story in the time available – they need to have a clear organisation and direction in mind, and to perhaps not ‘over-season’ the pieces with vocabulary and syntax.

The main areas that discriminated these responses were:

- whether candidates could meet both parts of the first part of bullet one in the mark scheme for AO5 – for example they often expressed ideas to achieve in Level 2, but these ideas lacked the order for the second part of that bullet. In Level 3, they may have connected ideas but not developed them.
- the success of tone, style and register in AO4.
- whether candidates had really considered the assessment objective requirement to write for ‘specific purposes and audiences’. This means answering **the question given** in an appropriate way, rather than using a past paper response prepared and trying to add the title in. This approach of preparing responses may not often achieve successful communication of purpose.
- the spelling of basic vocabulary in AO5.
- the accuracy of punctuation and use of varied punctuation in AO5.
- the use of a range of sentence structures for AO5.

As in previous series, sentence structure was clearly an area centres had focussed on: varying the way sentences begin; more use of subordinate clauses to begin complex sentences; effective use of one-word sentences and one-sentence paragraphs to demonstrate conscious crafting. Some candidates attempted to use ambitious vocabulary while some seemed to steer away from ambitious vocabulary in order to maintain accuracy. A key message to centres is to focus on crafting and organisation whatever the nature of the task. This was a common weakness running through all but the very best responses. The less successful responses showed a lack of organisation and demonstrated a lack of planning and direction.

In terms of register it was clear that the majority of the candidates knew how to write an imaginative piece, however there were some that produced responses that were more like an essay. Some key issues were the achievement of the purpose of the writing, especially when candidates had created what appeared pre-prepared responses which just had a statement bolted on at the end to link it to the title, for example ‘This was no longer my perfect place’. A story about trauma, sadness and drama is unlikely to be a story about ‘A Perfect Place’ and is not broadly appropriate for the purpose. Examiners noted that candidates need to manage their time better, as even responses that started off strong appeared unfinished or rushed at the end.

Examiners felt that, overall, there were some incredibly imaginative responses with a great range of ideas used creatively. One noted 'The vast majority were very pleasurable to read. It was clear a lot of thought went into the crafting of the responses, especially in some very well-chosen vocabulary and the requirements of the reader.'

Paper Summary

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

- Ensure you have studied the poetry and prose texts in the Anthology fully and use the examination time to remind yourself of the text, not re-read it.
- Even where the text is a short poem, consider what the key points are linked to the question you are being asked.
- Make you are covering the whole poem from beginning to end in order to meet AO1 in the higher levels.
- Read the question carefully and make sure you are answering **this** question, not telling the examiner what you know about the poem you have studied. The selection needs to be relevant to the question you are being asked, in this case the importance of traditional Indian culture.
- For AO2 (language and structure), make sure you are offering ideas about how language and structure are used. Many of you were able to give examples, but sometimes you did not offer a comment about the example was used.
- For AO2 try to cover points on both language and structure, commenting on the different techniques that have been used by the writer and how they link to the overall topic of the question, in this case the importance of traditional Indian culture.
- When you are writing, always think about your reader, what information and ideas you want to develop and how you want the reader to react at different parts of your writing; then choose the best words, phrases or techniques available to you to achieve those effects. Think about 'how do you want your reader to feel?' and 'how will you achieve this?' to encourage more conscious crafting of writing.
- Listen to your teacher's advice and make sure to plan – some responses felt as if they had little purpose or understanding of how they were going to conclude.
- Think carefully about starts and ends. Think about how you will begin to write so that it is engaging for your reader from the very start. As you begin to write, know 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: spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- In writing, focus on crafting and organisation whatever the nature of the task.
- Be ambitious in your structure, vocabulary and range of ideas and try to be creative and original.
- Always respond to the questions set, not a question you have prepared — this rarely leads to effective responses because the response needs to be appropriate and at least clearly linked to the purpose (ie the title).

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>

Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828
with its registered office at 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL.
