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Examiners' Report

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GCE English Literature 8ET0 01

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Introduction

Candidates and their teachers had clearly built on the hard work and experience of last year's entry in responding to the challenges posed by this examination and it was pleasing to see a slight but noticeable improvement in performance across the range. Many candidates engaged enthusiastically with their texts and were clearly more confident in addressing the specific assessment objectives and in managing their time successfully.

This paper makes many demands on candidates with all the assessment objectives being assessed across the two sections. In Section A, candidates are presented with a named poem from their anthology and a given theme but they must then select a suitable poem from those they have studied with which to compare it and fulfill the demands of AO4. In Section B, the four assessment objectives are assessed in two separate strands and candidates need to balance their content accordingly. In the majority of cases this element seemed to have been more successfully handled than in the previous year and candidates had also planned their time more carefully, given that the mark allocation here is twice that of Section A.

Section A

Most candidates had prepared the poems carefully although one or two examiners remarked that some candidates seemed to be approaching the poems almost as unseens. However, the majority were well prepared and had clearly been taught techniques for connecting poems so that there were fewer answers than last year where candidates wrote about the two poems more or less separately. Examiners noted that in some cases candidates seem to have chosen a prepared poem that they wished to write about whatever the given theme; in these cases links were often tenuous and sometimes consisted entirely of contrast.

The bullet points below the question are there to remind candidates of points they may wish to cover in their response; they are not intended to provide an essay plan and indeed a holistic approach is required. Too often weaker answers concentrated on a listing of features such as enjambment, caesura, stanza length or particular choices of punctuation without linking them to the actual impact or meaning of the poem. The best answers analysed the effects created through the poet's use of language rather than just observing it, commenting, for example, on how, in *Inheritance*, the subtle use of alliteration and assonance in the phrase 'the fluid light left after silk' contributed to the wistful and evocative tone of that section of the poem.

The second question was less popular but provided a more diverse range of lively answers. Identity was variously interpreted and some candidates looked at cultural identity whilst others considered personal identity. The best answers responded to the rich variety of colloquial and non-Standard English employed by Nagra, sometimes commenting on the positive and often humorous tone, although not all were convinced that the poem ended on an optimistic note. The range of poems chosen for comparison was also wider, with *The Map Woman* and *Ode on a Grayson Perry Urn* proving popular, although minority choices, such as *From the Journal of a Disappointed Man* or *Fantasia on a Theme of James Wright*, also worked well in the right hands. Weaker answers frequently focused more on the popular theme of immigration, often somewhat at the expense of identity.

Section B

The overwhelming popularity of *A Streetcar named Desire* in this section was even more pronounced than last year. While this text clearly appeals to candidates and has much to offer in terms of characterisation, themes and stagecraft, it is a pity to see other very accessible texts, such as *The Home Place* and *The Pitmen Painters*, being studied by only one or two centres. Both have much to interest and engage candidates in terms of themes, characterisation and context.

Candidates had prepared their texts thoroughly and on the whole were better able to balance the demands of the two separate assessment strands than last year's entry. Candidates also seemed rather better at integrating contextual material into their overall argument, rather than presenting it in a couple of separate paragraphs.

Although there is no requirement to name and quote critics to fulfil the demands of AO5, candidates who did so judiciously tended to show more engagement and a greater holistic awareness; conversely, some weaker answers identified critical views but made no use of them to extend or develop their argument. Centres are reminded that candidates can very successfully cover the demands of AO5 by developing their own alternative readings and responding to the given proposition, which is there to stimulate debate. It is important that candidates do not ignore the question itself which directs candidates to consider the writer's presentation of the given character or theme and thus to focus on the writer's craft. Weaker responses, particularly in a character based question, may engage too directly with the proposition, forgetting that the character is a construct.

It was mentioned last year that, because of the division of plays into tragedies and comedies, some candidates took this as an indication that they should refer to such aspects as Aristotelian theories of tragedy. Since this continues to be the case it is worth repeating the advice that was given then, namely that attempts to impose such frameworks in the abstract rarely succeed in practice and that candidates would be more successful if they concentrated on addressing themselves to the specific topic in the question.

Comments and tips on individual texts and questions which follow may apply more widely to the study of drama for this paper and it is hoped that teachers will find them useful, whichever play they are teaching.

Question 1

This was by some way the more popular question in Section A, possibly because the named poem appeared straightforward or perhaps because there seemed to be a very obvious choice for comparison in *Material*, which was certainly the poem chosen by a large number of candidates. *Genetics* and *Effects* were also used well by a number; some more unlikely choices included *Guisepe* and *The Fox in the National Museum of Wales*.

The question asked about what we inherit from the past and most candidates engaged well with the concept of inheriting intangible qualities. Quite a number of candidates seemed to be under the impression that Boland was a man and the persona of the poem was male which tended to limit the response somewhat. The majority of candidates made clear points, highlighting how the theme of inheritance was portrayed but many failed to elaborate further upon AO2, not really developing any analysis of linguistic or structural features in any detail. Successful answers often compared the link between generations and explored the symbolism of the hanky in *Material* in some detail, although surprisingly few explored the significance of the title. Stronger responses which picked up the reflective and self-questioning tone of the Boland were able to link this effectively to details of language and structure and, if comparing it with *Genetics*, to make sound and confident comparison with Morrissey's use of the villanelle.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 1 ☒ Question 2 ☒

The poem inheritance is about the thoughts of a Mother thinking as to what about what to leave her her daughters behind which they can inherit, the title inheritance reinforces this as it leaves the reader thinking what is the mother going to leave behind for her daughters? something Materialistic or physical?

In the poem material, the speaker is a woman who is describing her Mother's love for a hanky and the emotions situated around this piece of cloth, which the speaker did not inherit. ^{There is no inheritance.} ~~This shows a~~ The title's of both Inheritance and Material shows an instant contrast as Material suggests the speaker did not inherit the Materialistic inheritance, it's the past, and Inheritance, the speaker

is trying to find either the materialistic or physical thing her daughter can inherit, it's about the future.

The stanza lines in *Material* usually consists of 8 lines in each stanza, this could represent the speaker's will to convey her emotions on the hanky cloth she did not inherit therefore there's not 10 lines[^] in each stanza as the speaker is not content, so her emotions are broken. which is a full set of numbers

The stanza lines in *Inheritance* are of different lengths, shows that the speaker is lost as the lines

are not equal, so^{it's her} broken thoughts. The stanza lines in both *Inheritance* and *Material* can be easily compared as they both reflect on the broken thoughts of the speakers.



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Examiner Comments

The response begins with a short paragraph describing the named poem and a second which describes *Material*. There is then some attempt to link the two poems though this is not entirely clear. The candidate then switches to a description of the stanza form of the poems and there is an assertion that these reflect 'the broken thoughts of the speakers' although there is little clear evidence to support this. Comments so far have been very general although there has been some sense of the content of the two poems but without clear reference to the text. A little more understanding was shown later in the essay but there was not sufficient clarity in the response to move it from Level 2 into Level 3.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should make a clear link between the poems at the start of the essay. References to form or structure need to make clear what contribution they make to the overall effect of the poem, with precise detail to support the point.

By way of contrast, this is the opening part of a Level 5 response which uses *Genetics* as a comparison. Here some excellent points on technique are made relevant to the response as a whole and are supported by detail from the text.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 1 Question 2

'Inheritance' and 'Genetics' explore ideas ~~about~~ of what we inherit from the past in varying proximities. Whilst Boland's poem indicates a sense of guilt and ~~disappointed~~ disappointment about the future, she takes comfort in what she has inherited, as revealed in her conclusive final stanza. In Morrison's poem ~~she~~ ~~reflects~~ the past reflects on her ~~parents~~ ~~the~~ ~~certainty~~ of inheritance, regardless of the past. Therefore it can be seen that both poets take comfort in the ~~certainty~~ emotional security provided by what they've inherited from the past.

'Inheritance' is a ~~very~~ personal poem with no clear rhyme scheme or structure, with ideas defined by line breaks. This ~~results~~ ~~in~~ ~~this~~ ^{the} poem appears to be a stream of consciousness, and as such makes it easy for the reader

to find empathy with the reader. Indeed the conversational tone induced from the opening line "I have been wondering", with the continuous past suggesting the is still a pressing matter for Band. In contrast, 'Genetics' is far more structured, with Morrison basing the poem on "villanelle" form. The repetition or repetition of the words "hands" and associated rhymes such as "leads" creates a sense of organisation; whilst the extent in places ~~may imply~~ such as stanzas 2 and 3 may imply worry, the way the poet continues to bring back the hands motif reassures the reader. ~~this way it can be seen~~ through its calming tone. In this way it can therefore be seen that differences in structure and tone suggest different ideas about inheritance from the past, despite the similar conclusions.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate opens confidently, linking the poems from the outset and making clear the contrasting ways in which they approach the given theme. The candidate responds thoughtfully to the tone and structure of each and explores techniques with close detail from the poems to support points on the effect of these varying structures.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to take a clear overview of the poems and the link between them from the outset. Discussion and exploration of detail, with accompanying quotation, can then be used to support and develop the central viewpoint.

Question 2

The key word of 'identity' was kept in clear focus here although there were varying views as to what constituted identity and some telling comparisons were made between the exploration of a group cultural identity in the named poem and a more personal examination of identity in *The Map Woman* or *Eat Me. Ode on a Grayson Perry Urn* was another pairing which produced some thoughtful work on group identity and more able answers clearly enjoyed the rich variety of language in both these poems which also provided plentiful material for discussion of structure and intertextuality although these were not often taken up in much detail.

Successful answers explored Nagra's presentation of the creation of a new and more complex identity through intertwining of cultures. The majority of candidates commented on the title and often drew attention to features of language such as alliteration and assonance although fewer went on to analyse their effect. It was disappointing to find a number of candidates for whom anyone 'hitched in a Bedford van' must be an illegal immigrant, but on the whole this question produced more lively and diverse responses than the first.

This is taken from a response which used *The Map Woman* for comparison. Having established a link, the candidate advances the argument by looking at language in some detail.

Similarly, in *LWH (TD)*, Nagra highlights how the journey to ~~the~~ England ~~helps~~ ~~that~~ is a part of many immigrants' identities. However, Nagra highlights this through the use of sensory language. "A blustery lash of diesel breeze" - through such words as "lash" and poyant description of a "diesel breeze" the reader acknowledges the vivid ~~and~~ and graphic experiences of these immigrants - the idea of a "diesel breeze" is rather hompi yet imagerable and distinct exemplifying how this experience would be unforgettable to an immigrant and therefore having a huge impact on their identity and the way they go.

through this:

In addition to this both poets explore how our identity's can clash and ~~how~~ change in life. Walter's 'The Map Woman' the speaker has an almost revelation at the end of the poem; through the use of abrupt, short sentences, Duffy highlights the clash between the woman's old skin and the new person she is becoming. "She got in a limousine. The map prospered... took a plane. The map seethed..." The use of short sentences, coupled with the repetition created by listing emphases as how the speaker is inevitably changing whilst the map is reluctant and almost aggressive (as it 'seethes') ~~it~~ it has no control over the woman's choices and ~~affects~~ it has growing distance away from home. and Duffy's snappy structure here highlights the blows the map is taking and how step by step it is being defeated.

Nagra highlights a clash in identity ~~through the~~ and people through the use of verbs. As the immigrants are "stoned" and are described as "strangers", tourists are described as "birding" "unnumbered names". Nagra uses this contrast to perhaps highlight prejudice or inequality in society and how people

view others based on where they're from. "Immigrants" often immigrants can be described as "savans" and dehumanized by right wing newspapers ~~and~~ accusing them of 'stealing our jobs' - Nigam emphasizes and perhaps criticises this view point (when describing the struggle immigrants truly go through). This ~~assumption of ones identity and judging someone without any true knowledge of them is also~~ grotesque ~~view~~ description of the immigrants compared to the "bordering" tourists - who are described as privileged and almost superior to the immigrants emphasizes how ~~ones apparent background can lead to assumptions~~ stereotypes and assumptions can lead to different perceptions of ones identity.



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This candidate makes good use of detail here to illustrate points on the effect and implications of the poets' choices of language, although the established link of a 'journey' means that the theme of identity is not always focused on sufficiently clearly. This was part of a sound Level 4 response which had the potential to move higher with a clearer development of the links between the poems.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Avoid the use of abbreviations for titles, which in any case, do not need to be repeated after the first mention of the poem. Titles are chosen with care by the poet and it is often worth considering their significance in your reading of the poem. Keep the specific requirements of the question in mind throughout your answer and make clear reference to the given theme in your argument.

Question 3

Most candidates who had studied Marlowe knew their text well, were well prepared on the theme of ambition and produced strong responses supported by relevant contextual points on Humanist thinking, the contemporary religious climate and Faustus as a Renaissance man. A number of answers showed a thorough knowledge of character, but dramatic presentation was not always so well covered. However, a number of examiners spoke of particularly impressive answers on this text with students considering historical and stage context and discussing both ambition and sin with sophistication and distinction.

This is the final part of a particularly strong Level 5 response.

Another School of thinking is that the real tragedy of, 'Doctor Faustus,' is actually the waste of his potential to meet these ambitions. There is a stark comparison between Faustus's plan at the beginning to, 'make swift Rhine circle fair Wittenberg,' and his actions later after he sells his soul like when he, 'Beat[s] the friars, and fling[s] fireworks among them.' This shows a dramatic shift from large-scale ambition to merely playing tricks like those done by the comic characters of the play Robin and Rafe. This gives extra meaning to the Chorus' opening speech about, 'falling to a devilish exercise.' This now may both refer to necromancy and his simple tricks and jokes which seem devilish in comparison to the grandeur of his original ideas. ~~Indeed Indeed~~ Indeed, in Marlowe's time, scholars were respected and revered for their for their sense and intellect. As a result, Marlowe's audience could also see the

tragedy in Faustus's wasted ambition. At the end of a 1977 production, Faustus realises that ~~Hell~~ ^{Hell} isn't a place but a state of mind and that he was already in Hell before hanging himself.

This realisation may be, in part, down to realising that despite having the power and ambition to do great things, he actually achieves very little.

Overall, the tragedy in, 'Doctor Faustus,' can also be said to arise from a failure to meet the potential that Faustus shows with his ambition and that, potentially, damnation was a release for Faustus from this failure.

To conclude, Marlowe presents the ambition of Faustus being the main cause of the tragedy of the play, a view that many other interpretations have also taken.

However, the tragedy itself could be said to be the failure of Faustus to live up to his ambitions as well as the physical tragedy of his damnation. It can also be said that, while the tragedy doesn't arise from a punishing Calvinist God and the actions of the forces of evil, they help to ensure the tragedy that happens by the end of Marlowe's play.



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Examiner Comments

These are the concluding pages of a particularly wide ranging and fluent argument. The candidate shows a sophisticated grasp of contexts and interpretations, supported by some well integrated textual reference. The candidate is aware of the dramatic impact throughout and the exploration of alternative readings is particularly impressive. The candidate is in complete control of the argument throughout.



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Examiner Tip

It is important to have a clearly structured argument. A good way to clarify the progression of the argument is to start each new paragraph with a phrase such as, 'It could also be argued'. 'Another school of thinking is', 'Alternatively it could be said'.

Question 4

Examiners commented frequently on responses to Marlowe being ambitious and mature in their approach. Candidates who answered this question primarily explored the presentation of the seven deadly sins and Faustus' rejection of the numerous opportunities to repent, but some also considered the Good and Evil Angels and the Old Man. The theological context and contemporary attitudes to sin as well as the impact of Luther and Calvinism were well used to support the central argument.

Faustus' biggest sin is his failure to ~~repent~~ repent. ~~He~~ Throughout the play, he is given many opportunities to return to religion, yet fails to ~~not~~ take every one of them. The Good Angel appears early on, encouraging Faustus to "lay that damned book aside" and "lest it not tempt thy soul". However, they are outspoken by the Evil ~~Age~~ Angel who wants Faustus to "Go forward in that famous art". The ~~good~~ Good and Evil Angel can be interpreted as Faustus' conscious speaking to him, showing how he does consider both purity and evil. ~~However, the fact that he also always listens to his bad conscious last, or the Evil Angel, shows that he values evil over good.~~ As Simon Waldridge said "Faustus alternates between gratification of his appetites and God whom he rejects without denying". This critique ~~is~~ suggest that Faustus is stuck between evil and good. However, the fact he always chooses

to listen ~~to~~ to his bad conscious, or the Evil Angel, suggests Faustus values evil over good.

Faustus also rejects the old man in scene 12, who encourages Faustus to "call for mercy". He considers this, before Mephistophilis gives him a dagger and Faustus decides to "torment, sweet friend". The word sweet implies the old man is pure. He can be interpreted as God, yet Faustus listens to the devils over him, continuing to show his sin in his failure to repent and valuing evilness and devils over God and purity.



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Examiner Comments

This is part of a good Level 3 response, with similar marks for each pair of assessment objectives. The candidate knows the text and context well but there is a tendency to write about the nature of Faustus' sin rather than considering Marlowe's presentation of it. A number of critics are quoted but their ideas are not explored or debated. In short, a little more specific detail and a clearer focus on the demands of the question are needed to move this response into Level 4.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to consider the particular focus of the question carefully and be ready to adapt prepared material to the specific demands of the given question.

Question 5

The Duchess of Malfi is studied by relatively few centres and this was the more popular question. Examiners were disappointed to find little reference to Revenge Tragedy, Machiavellian ideas or the corrupt court. The majority of candidates seemed to accept that Bosola was an interesting character without engaging in the debate invited by the quotation, settling instead for a catalogue of his interactions with other characters and his contradictory behaviour.

Question 6

This question was less popular than the one on Bosola but there were a number of very sound responses. There was some informed argument on Webster's deliberately absurd or comic use of horror in places and the political criticism underlying it. Subtle responses contrasted this with the real and poignant presentation of cruelty and horror in the treatment of the Duchess. A good understanding of the Jacobean context was shown and there was thoughtful comment on responses to the play in terms of its original audience and our contemporary readings.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 3 Question 4 Question 5
 Question 6 Question 7 Question 8
 Question 9 Question 10 Question 11
 Question 12 Question 13 Question 14
 Question 15 Question 16 Question 17
 Question 18

It is ~~undeniable~~ undeniable that the Duchess of Malfi is a play teeming with horror. However the abundance of death, disease and tragedy is all to serve a purpose and to convey a message. As the play was performed in 1612-1613, it was a Jacobean tragedy, ~~so therefore James~~ As ^{stated} in George Norton's article 'a rough guide to revenge tragedy', horror was a common ingredient in Jacobean plays, so therefore the audience coming to watch the play would be expecting such it, and would definitely be seeking entertainment from it. Another reason for the vastness of horror was to serve as a warning to the Jacobean audience, and thus to ~~allow~~ cause the audience to criticise their own social

conventions.

One of the most horrifying images in the play is when Ferdinand finds out the Duchess has had children. Ferdinand lapses into a choleric outbreak, verging on the point of madness, & such as when he says he would 'boil their bastard to a cullis', the harsh constants of the 'b' and the 't', would make the actor have to physically spit out the lines. The audience would have found pleasure in the hellic language of the 'coal pit' and the 'sulphur', firstly because it is so shocking and secondly because it marks the descent of Ferdinand into madness, which the Jacobean audience would have found humourous. While Ferdinands speech is horrible, the exaggerated nature of it would have been humourous to the audience.

In Peter Malin's article 'Is it alright to laugh', he explores the transition of ~~us~~ from Shakespeares plays to Jacobean plays. In Shakespeares, death would have been a cause for great sadness, whereas in Jacobean plays the 'piling up of bodies' would have been comedic. Indeed in ~~the~~^{any} usual circumstance, the death of 7 people in quick succession would be a source of panic, however

Webster makes the deaths so ~~obscene~~ obscure that they become humorous. For example the confusion and clumsy nature of Bosola's death ~~is seen~~ can be seen as unnecessary. Even the character himself remarks ~~on~~ on the feeble way he was killed: 'such a mistake as I have often seen in a play'. This dramatic irony would have been immensely funny, ~~as would~~ and also seems to remind the audience that they are indeed watching a fictional event, this could be Webster saving the audience from ~~not~~ being saddened by the horror of the play or to ~~create~~ ~~be~~ satisfy the audience, that the man who killed the Duchess suffered a much less dignified event.



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Examiner Comments

This extract is the opening of a consistent and well considered response, which was placed at the very top of Level 4. The candidate engages with the question from the outset and supports the argument with plentiful textual reference. There is some awkwardness in the expression at times but the candidate makes good use of contextual information and critical opinion to advance and develop the argument. The second half of the essay did not quite sustain the flair shown earlier which could have moved this into Level 5.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should not be afraid to engage with the text and voice their own opinions, provided that these can be supported clearly from the text.

Question 7

As was the case last year, a very small number of candidates attempted questions on this text and this proved the slightly more popular question. Candidates were able to comment clearly on the initial presentation of Con and to relate this to the contemporary Irish situation and the imminent Land Wars. There was a tendency in some answers not to explore later scenes so fully which limited the response, as can be seen in the answer below.

Friel uses the character of Con to represent the strong ideas and beliefs that some Irish people had about the English taking over their land - prior to the Land Wars. Friel also uses stage directions for other characters such as Sally to present Con as a sinister figure as when Sally notices Con in the thicket she has "A second of unease" after which she checks to see "is Margaret watching" which adds secrecy to the scene and makes the audience create assumptions as to why Margaret cannot see Con.

Con is also presented to withhold information in conversation as when Sally asks "what are you up to, Con?" he changes the subject. Sally later says "you're not up to something stupid, are you?" which again he avoids answering and it also suggests that Con is ~~ex~~ usually up to no good. Margaret describes him as "trespassing" which is unusual as he is in Ireland and is an Irish man, suggesting the English are already taking over and making so people like Con are "not permitted" on the lands.

This suggests that Con is very sinister as he is hiding and trespassing on lands on which he shouldn't. It also shows how typical Irish men had begun to be denied access onto their own lands due to the English. This is Friel showing how the Irish felt as a result to the English taking over and possibly why the Land Wars took place.

Overall, Con is presented by Friel as a sinister character from the start of the play as he "emerges suddenly" and is an unpredictable character whose whereabouts are not known throughout the middle of the play. Con's sudden appearance at the start right after the murder of Lord Lifford also adds to his sinister figure within the play as it foreshadows his involvement with the Fenians which is confirmed later in the play.



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This was a sound response which was placed at the top of Level 3. The candidate has a clear understanding of the play and makes a number of references to stage directions and the text to support points. There is a clear grasp of the political situation in Ireland in 1878. However, the candidate's response is limited by the close focus on the opening moments of the play at the expense of detailed consideration of Con's later actions and this is apparent in the extract, which forms the closing paragraphs of the essay.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Read both parts of the question carefully. The quotation is there to encourage argument and debate, whereas the question directs the candidate to consider the dramatist's craft. Use of such phrases as 'Friel uses the character of Con' call attention to the fact that the candidate has understood that the character is a literary construct and shows awareness of the dramatist's craft.

Question 8

The very few who attempted this question were clear on the individual characterisations but did not always explore the family dynamics sufficiently.

Question 9

This is by far the most popular text in Section B and it is not difficult to see why it appeals to teachers and candidates alike with its mix of skilful characterisation, emotional engagement and innovative stagecraft. Candidates at all levels appear engaged by the text and have definite opinions to present.

This was the more popular question. Candidates had definite opinions of Stanley which they expressed forcibly; in weaker answers this tended to be accompanied by very little reference to Williams' purpose or to the dramatist's craft. There was much rather generalised context with a number of candidates maintaining that Stanley's actions were quite normal in the context of 1940s post-war America. Some candidates focused rather too much on Blanche at the expense of answering the set question and there were some speculative readings: Stanley is a brute because of his 'perhaps' attraction to Mitch. The majority of candidates wrote competently but rather predictably in response to this question. The best responses really considered the terms of the question and explored the extent to which sympathy could be felt for Stanley.

In "A streetcar named desire", Stanley is presented as a very masculine male who has a very dominant presence. Feeling sympathy toward Stanley isn't impossible as there are a few times during the course of the play where the reader might feel sympathetic towards him.

At the end of scene 3, there is a fight between Stella and Stanley Stanley ends up beating Stella "(There is a sound of a blow. Stella cries out)" at this time the ~~read~~ audience will be feeling sympathetic towards Stella because Stanley has just slapped her. However, during the period in which this play was written, it was seen as okay for a man to hit his wife as he was the male and is allowed to do whatever he wants.

Looking at the contextual factors, after what just happened Stanley might have been expected to ignore Stella. Stanley realises straight away that what he has done is wrong and that he should have done this. This is evident when he says "my baby doll's left me! (He breaks into sobs)". This could suggest that Stanley does feel bad for what he has done and regrets it. During that time period it would have been acceptable for a man to beat a woman and not really bother about it. Stanley feeling resentful implies that he isn't like other typical men and that he does have emotion and he cares about Stella.



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The opening paragraphs here are typical of a number of Level 2 responses. The candidate writes about the characters as though they are real people and no reference is made here, or in the remainder of the response, to Williams. There are some general and sweeping assertions as to what would have been socially acceptable but there is no sense of the play as a dramatic construct.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Reference to stage directions is a good way to demonstrate awareness and understanding of the dramatist at work.

By way of contrast, the following is the opening to a more measured response to the question.

In Tennessee Williams, "A Streetcar Named Desire", ~~the~~ the tale of Stanley Kowalski, his wife Stella, and her sister Blanche DuBois is brought to life within the suffocating proximity of the one-bedroom apartment of the Kowalski's. As the play progresses, Stanley begins to dominate entire scenes with his "beloving voice", his incredible masculine presence, which reaches a ~~the~~ dramatic climax in scene ten, the supposed rape scene. ~~As~~ As Arthur Miller had said in his essay, 'Tragedy and the common man', "men are as worthy subjects of tragedy as kings", and indeed, Stanley is the king of his domain. Williams, however, was much rather concerned with revealing the 'inner truth' within people and characters, using writing as "an escape from a world in which he felt acutely uncomfortable", according to his own words. Therefore, Stanley's character is brought to life with such energy and vivacity by Williams, who seeks his own 'inner truth' which he hopes to access through his characters.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The opening paragraph here does not immediately address the question. Nevertheless, it gives a clear overview of the play as a whole and in its focus on the character of Stanley and its consideration of Williams' purpose in the creation of such a character, it is clearly responding relevantly to the question. Later the candidate considers the portrayal of Stanley by Marlon Brando in Kazan's film and the impact of this, but the rather hurried conclusion left room for the further exploration which was required to move this response from the lower part of Level 4.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Contextual information is important in underpinning and supporting an argument but it needs to be accurate, relevant and incorporated into the response as a whole.

Question 10

Although this was by some margin the less popular question, there were a number of thoughtful responses where a clear, well-structured approach dealt well with ways in which past events before the opening of the play were brought to bear by Williams for dramatic effect. Some weaker candidates tried to use the earlier events of the play as the past and others relied rather heavily on biographical detail of Williams' own past as providing the stimulus for writing the play. Dramatic devices such as the use of the Vasouvia and the gunshot featured widely but the broader context of historical events such as the Civil War was little mentioned. Candidates often wrote about the past in a general way rather than focusing on specific events and there was some speculation on the effect of, for example, Stanley's time in the army on his character and behaviour.

Blanche's ultimate defeat socially is purely because she could not let go of the past. The old south ideology instilled in her leads to her social downfall, some would say her social death. As Blanche is described with her 'fluffy white ~~like~~ bodice', this wasn't the norm of the New South. Her trying to hold onto that idea and way of life lead to her downfall. The idea of change did not come to her therefore ~~past~~ the past determined everything that happened to her socially. Blanche is described as a 'fading Southern^{er} South Belle' as well as 'adrift in the modern world' - All components of her not letting go of the past and the ideas that she held with in Belle Reve. However the dramatic social change for her doesn't fit well ^{in terms of her} ~~with~~ her mental state. As the audience we know of Blanche's mental state being unstable and in need of help. This could be due to her past being full of loss and always being 'surrounded by death',

Blanche has been affected by that loss all around her so badly that it all comes to effect her actions today. The main idea that Blanche will always be a very overdramatic character because of the events in her past.

~~Stella on the other~~ Stella's actions are mostly linked to the past. The pure reason she stays with Stanley is because the 'Dubois blood is dying out' — The main reason she wants to stay with Stanley is because before — her and her family were together, but as Blanche says, they were 'surrendered by death', her purpose for staying with Stanley is to recreate, and as what she achieves by the end of the play.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This extract is part of a somewhat uneven response which approaches the question by looking at each of the characters in turn and commenting on how their past effects their actions. Some understanding is shown here and there is some textual support but there is little reference to the writer's craft or to the dramatic effect. There is a tendency to assert points and little attempt to engage with the proposition other than in an illustrative way. Whilst a Level 3 mark was gained for the first pair of assessment objectives, the very general comments on context and the lack of engagement with the question meant that the answer could not move beyond Level 2 for the second pair of the marking grid.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should be warned against speculating; they should be able to support every point made by a clear textual reference or a contextual detail.

Question 11

The Importance of Being Earnest and *Dr Faustus* are the most popular texts on this paper, after *A Streetcar named Desire*.

This was the less popular question on this text but those who chose it were generally able to offer sound character studies of Jack even when they did not engage fully with the given proposition. The best answers debated the ambiguity between Jack's actual character and the contrast with how he would like to be seen, incorporating some relevant detail of Victorian society and Wilde's own life into the argument. As is so often the case with character focused questions, the weakest responses often talked about Jack as a person, paying very little attention to Wilde's craft and purpose.

Wilde's *Comedy of Manners* reaches a rather improbable climax. At the end of Act III most characters are united with the ones they love and rewarded ^{with the idea} of marriage even if ~~these~~ their morals can be questioned. In the last few moments of the play Jack learns that his name has all along been 'Ernest'. His elation is shown through his use of the word 'Ernest' using it three times in ~~one~~ three sentences also using ^a rhetorical question of "I always told you... my name was Ernest, didn't I?" Some interpretation of this could be that he, 'above all', did want to be right and was excited that he had not been lying at all. The irony of the name Ernest is shown

as it ~~may~~ also mean, to be earnest, to be honest. All the while whilst trying believing he was lying to everyone, Jack really was being earnest. One interpretation could be that he is not glad that he has been earnest and honest, he, 'above all', is glad to truly have the name Ernest so he could be with the woman he loves. The subversion of the idea that finding out what you've said is wrong and the terrible feeling you get is used. "It is a terrible thing -- to find out -- he has been speaking nothing but the truth." This ~~contrast~~ subversion creates comedy with the audience as it is usually the opposite feeling brought up by guilt. ~~the~~ Jack then pleads for Gwendolen to forgive him and she does. The lack of punishment for his lies shows Wilde's intent for the play to be a comedy of manners purely for comedy, not for a deeper moral message as it

may be part of the aesthetic
movement of the time with the
motto "art for art's sake".



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is the final part of an answer that worked its way through the play, showing clear understanding of the character but not paying much attention to context. In this section there is some close analysis of the text and consideration of different ways of interpreting it. There is some consideration of the impact on the audience and of Wilde's purpose although the ending is rather rushed and some further development was needed. The first pair of assessment objectives gained slightly higher marks, meaning that the response as a whole was placed at the bottom of Level 4.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Context was the weakest feature of this particular response. It is important to include contextual references from the start of an answer, incorporating them in the overall argument.

Question 12

This was the more popular question with candidates but the consideration of the presentation of Victorian womanhood often elicited some broad generalisations and rather clumsy application of a little historical knowledge. However most candidates grasped the idea of the main female characters subverting the Victorian ideal by taking control and were able to support this convincingly from the text, although it was the rare candidate who saw the comic dimension here.

The majority of candidates approached this question by writing about each of the female characters separately, as in this paragraph on Gwendolen.

Similar to lady Bracknell, Gwendolen is also a rebellious^{child} and authoritative woman, which contrasts our expectation of how the ~~elite~~ child has to ~~be~~ be well-behaved and obey her parents and how woman has to be biddable~~s~~ and listens to man's words. This can be seen through the stage direction where Gwendolen's ^{words} ~~action~~ contrasts with her actions. She said "Certainly, Mama" when is asked to follow her mother but ~~instead~~ instead she "stays behind". This contrast highlights the rebellious ~~and~~ and disobedient nature of Gwendolen to her parents, especially in the era of where the child has to respect ~~and~~ ~~to~~ her parents. Through this, ~~perhaps~~ Wilde's subversion perhaps acts as a criticism to Victorian morality and the idea of parentage that demands ultimate conformity from ~~their~~ ^{the} children. ~~The character of Gwendolen perhaps acts as a~~ Not only does she disobeys lady Bracknell, she is also outrageous in ~~her~~ being authoritative in front of Jack. She tells him how to propose properly and tells him before hand that ~~she~~ "I am fully determined to accept you". The active tense combines with the diction of the word "determined"

highlights the authoritative tone of Gwendolen that although she is expected to be docile, she is the total opposite of that. Jack's position is being lowered and Gwendolen is the one in control in this situation.

Therefore, Wilde's subversion of gender roles acts as a critique to the male-centered society ~~and~~ where women do not receive as much privileges as men does.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a sound level 4 response. The candidate makes good use of textual detail to illustrate the dramatist's craft and to support the argument.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to use detail from the text and plentiful quotation in support of their argument and to illustrate points precisely.

Question 13

Fewer than twenty candidates had studied this play and all attempted this question. As has been observed elsewhere, it is regrettable that more centres do not study this text. Though answers were few, there was evidence of informed teaching of Brechtian techniques of presenting political theatre. At the lower end, there was some generalised discussion of why miners might want to paint and some repeated reference to 'extremely scouse accents'. However, a number of assured responses featured some intelligent argument, with relevant use of the context of political turmoil and the poverty of the 1930's and of the use of sound effects such as the 'beautiful stirring hymn' cut off by the 'loud sound of a buzzer'.

For example, at an art exhibition where they are being celebrated, the men become subject to exclusion and confusion about their identity. Professor Lyon condescendingly refers to them as 'ordinary people', and makes a counter-productive speech about class equality. Speaking to other upper-class attendees, he ~~ref-~~ asks "why do we assume and states that "as a society we have got it wrong", ironically and presumptively excluding the lower-class from the very conversation that is meant to be praising them and highlighting them as equals of the elite. The limited impact of painting is also shown in Oliver's introduction of himself as a miner, followed by him ^{rejecting} questioning, "~~but that's not qu-~~ the idea of the men being viewed as "a bunch of miners", stressing the men's individuality". ~~This is s-~~ Later, however, when ~~discussing~~ rejecting Helen's stipend offer, Oliver seems to reclaim his identity. Reflecting the tight-knit and communal nature of most mining towns in 1930s England, he explains to Helen, who fails to understand and maintains that he's "not giving up anything", that the other men "are [his] family". As the dialogue grows more detrimental, he decisively tells her: "You are 'them'".

- "I'm a pitman."; and the "scene breaks" almost symbolically with "sounds of war"! This episode would make clear to an audience the limited impact of painting on the men's lives, as, despite their seeming entrance into the world of art, they still view themselves as miners first and foremost, and are also still subject to the obnoxious condescension they received from the upper class at the start of the play, such as when Helen remarked in an early scene, ~~the~~ "oh, delightful!"... "you've painted all of these yourselves... very interesting indeed." Therefore, Hall portrays the limited impact of painting on the men's lives through the lack of development in their social status and way in which they are treated.

The stark difference between the men's Geordie vernacular and cliché, often affected speech of the upper class is also an implicit way in which the playwright highlights the distinct nature of the two groups and adds to the notion that the men are different, and painting can only ~~eff~~ affect their life so much. The differing accents also add a levity to the play and are received differently by various audiences. After a 2010 Manhattan performance, actors remarked that ~~the~~ American audiences laughed more at the play; likely due to the foreignness of the accents. This, in turn, increases an audience's engagement in the play and its characters, and intensifies the empathy

they feel at the play's end solemn end for the characters.

In Conclusion, Hall succeeds in his dramatic presentation of the impact that painting has on the lives of the men in that he continuously presents to an audience contradictory ideas on the extent of this impact, making it an interesting facet of the play and making the ending, in which the impact is seen to be ultimately limited, immensely poignant, leaving modern audiences a greater appreciation for the working-class of the era in which the play is set, and posing still-relevant questions about class and the ownership of art.



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Examiner Comments

This response addresses the question confidently from the outset. There is discriminating use of close textual detail to support the developing argument. Contextual material is very well used throughout and there is an informed understanding of theatrical techniques employed and their impact upon the audience. The conclusion is particularly effective in highlighting questions about class and the ownership of art which the play poses to a modern audience. This was an evaluative and thoughtful response with marks in both areas of the grid in Level 5.



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Examiner Tip

Like *The Home Place* this is a modern play set in an earlier era. Candidates should consider how their, and an audience's, knowledge of subsequent events impacts on their reaction to the play and what use the writer has made of this foreknowledge in the structure of the play.

Question 14

Unfortunately there were no responses to this question.

Question 15

Unfortunately there were no responses to this text.

Question 16

Unfortunately there were no responses to this text.

Question 17

While this remains a minority text, the candidates who had studied it were clearly enthusiastic and, for the most part, well-informed. They wrote well about loneliness and alienation, characters' fears of being alone and communication issues and related this to Beckett's use of repetition, diminutive names and general points on Absurdist theatre. Historical and social contexts were well used in the stronger essays and candidates were very aware of the text as drama, commenting on the set and stage directions as well as possible audience reactions in support of their arguments. Pozzo was a less popular choice although candidates who chose it showed a clear knowledge of the character and how he is used by Beckett without always paying much attention to the given quotation.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: **Question 3** **Question 4** **Question 5**
 Question 6 **Question 7** **Question 8**
 Question 9 **Question 10** **Question 11**
 Question 12 **Question 13** **Question 14**
 Question 15 **Question 16** **Question 17**
 Question 18

'dramatic presentation of loneliness'

In the play, 'Waiting for Godot', Beckett portrays loneliness by portraying characters who are incapable of leaving the situations in which they are in, simply because they are afraid of being alone. Two of the more abstract characters, Pozzo and Lucky, are literally 'tied together' by a 'rope' which symbolises their inability to escape

one another. Despite being treated like a slave, Lucky still wishes to 'impress' Pozzo, so that he won't be sold. Such an exploitative relationship is surely only benefiting Pozzo, but it seems that Lucky is afraid of being alone so much so that he will continue to endure for company. Even in the second act, when Pozzo is blind, Lucky still aids him and chauffeurs him around, ~~despite not having to~~ despite not having to.

Pozzo too admits that he 'cannot go for long without the society' of people like him, 'even when the witness is an imperfect one'. The word 'imperfect' is used by Pozzo in a derogatory manner to Vladimir and Estragon (who I will henceforth refer to as V+E), he admits that even though he sees them as lesser, he is still lonely enough to sit down with them and talk.

Pozzo also says something to imply that it is he who is being exploited, not Lucky, when he states that Lucky is 'killing' him. ~~So~~ it is impossible to know whether Pozzo is being enthralled, or is over ~~exaggerating~~ exaggerating, but one thing that can be gleaned is that if he were being exploited, why doesn't he leave either?

One suggestion is that as humans, we depend on one another for company. This interdependency is seen majoyly in the friendship of V+E, who ~~despite~~ ^{after} having been friends for ~~many~~ decades, and waiting for Godot most of that time, they ~~still~~ still ponder a life where they

leave one another. Estragon wonders whether it 'wouldn't be better' for them to 'part', but Vladimir quickly shuts down by stating ~~the~~ his friend 'wouldn't go far'. The quick manner of Vladimir's put down suggest this isn't a topic that is new, it is a conversation that has been rehearsed before, as has many of V+E's conversations. The conversation is repeated in act two, but just like the previous acts, 'they do not move' is the parting line. Neither of them are willing to walk away, because neither wants to be ~~even~~ alone.



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Examiner Comments

This is quite an unbalanced response in terms of the two strands of assessment objectives. The candidate addresses the question from the outset, showing sound understanding with textual support and some awareness of Beckett's craft. However in these opening pages and elsewhere in the response there is not much developed reference to context. Thus, although the answer gained a mark in Level 4 for the first pair on the marking grid, the mark for the second set of assessment objectives remained in level 3.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates need to understand how to balance their answers to cover both pairs of assessment objectives.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

- Chosen question number:
- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Question 3 ☒ | Question 4 ☒ | Question 5 ☒ |
| Question 6 ☒ | Question 7 ☒ | Question 8 ☒ |
| Question 9 ☒ | Question 10 ☒ | Question 11 ☒ |
| Question 12 ☒ | Question 13 ☒ | Question 14 ☒ |
| Question 15 ☒ | Question 16 ☒ | Question 17 ☒ |
| Question 18 ☒ | | |

Characters most fear being alone:

Vladimir and Estragon relationship

↳ they are close

↳ "certainly they beat me" "I wouldn't have let them beat us"

↳ mutual dependence (Friend) ✓

fear of silence:

• Pstt

→ make audience fear silence "Listen!"

↳ expectation / disappointment

existentialism Descartes "I think" → Last P

"We're saved when P+E come" ?
no lack of void.
↳ no purpose.

Last P → Existentialism

- relationships to distract from Pstt
- physical pain at Lucky's speech
- reference to Descartes
- Lucky because doesn't speak for himself.

Pozzo and Lucky relationship:

master / slave dynamic → Hegelian 'master slave dialectic'

"rope" mutual dependence

• Lucky → fortunate because → last P.

Pozzo: Attention:

"Is everybody looking at me?" need attention → slave sits, celebrates himself

In *Waiting for Godot* Beckett presents his characters as having fear of being alone. However there are other aspects that they fear, such as the existential world they exist in.

Beckett presents Vladimir and Estragon as having a very strong relationship which is the centre of the entire play. Vladimir and Estragon have a mutual dependence on each other which combats his loneliness, for example

Beckett uses techniques such as stichomythia,

'VLADIMIR: consult his family ESTRAGON: his friends
VLADIMIR: his agents' which creates a fast pace ^{to distract from loneliness.} dialect.

This also shows that they practically know what each other are thinking which creates a relatable brotherly aspect to the pair. This close relationship leads to

fear of being away from each other, as whenever they are separated something bad seems to befall Estragon,

'certainly they beat me.' This casual violence makes reference to WWII which would have been very clear to

the post war generation in the audience. Furthermore,

Vladimir claims that he "wouldn't have let them beat you" therefore showing the mutual dependence on one another and need for companionship. ~~Platano~~

In addition, the nicknames, "Didi" and "Gogo" relate to

Freud's theory of the id (which is Didi) the instinctual man, and the ego (Gogo) which relates to the intellectual.

Although these personalities are inverted it suggests a dualism of the characters Vladimir and Estragon, Didi the mind and Gogo the body. This further emphasises their need to be with one another and their fear when they are apart.

The relationship between Pozzo and Lucky also displays the fear of being alone. This relationship is very different from Vladimir and Estragon as it has a Hegelian 'master-slave dialectic' within which Pozzo has all the power. For example, despite the fact Pozzo has all the physical power over Lucky "up pig!" which relates to the animalistic treatment of the Jews during the Holocaust, Pozzo also wants control over Lucky's mind, "Think!" This is because Pozzo has a fear of not being the centre of attention, "Is everybody looking at me?" Therefore, he needs companionship, so the master-slave relationship suits him as Lucky can't leave. However, the use of the "rope" suggests a mutual dependence upon one another which we see in the second act when Pozzo becomes blind, "I wore up one day as blind as fortune" and Lucky is "dumb." Therefore, they each need the other to make up for their loss of a sense.

Furthermore, Pozzo seems to elevate himself in any way he is able in order to keep the support and companionship of Vladimir and Estragon. Beckett uses Pozzo's politeness, "gentlemen" to justify to Didi and Hugo that he is deserving of his title and that he is socially above them. Thus his elegance with his words is similar to the good speaker that Hitler was and therefore relates his character to him. Furthermore, Pozzo immediately establishes his hierarchy over Vladimir and Estragon by saying, "On my land" which gives him the justification to stay with them for as long as he needs.

However, Beckett also suggests that the real fear that the characters in *Waiting for Godot* face is their existence in an existential world. Therefore, the real reason for the relationships and dependence upon one another is in order to distract them from dwelling upon their existential position. For example, Vladimir and Estragon demonstrate a fear of the silence, "[long silence] Say something!" This represents their fear of their own thoughts. Furthermore, the fear of silence is projected onto the audience as there are points of silence in places such as "Listen!" which creates expectation and disappointment onto the watchers. ~~and~~ The character of Estragon also directly references Descartes "I think therefore I am" when he

says, "We always find something, eh Didi, to prove that we exist?" This therefore relates to Descartes' theory of ^{that} the humanity has no purpose in an existential world and expresses the absurdity of it, which links to the theatre of the Absurd that Beckett has staged his play in. This suggests that the real fear is of what there purpose is in a world without God. Furthermore, Estragon says, "there is no lack of void" which shows how it doesn't matter where they are in the world when they have no purpose. This and the image of only, "A country road. A tree" give a very lonely picture which suggests there only respite from the fear of existentialism is each other.

Finally, Beckett emphasises his characters fear of existentialism through Lucky. This is shown when Lucky's speech literally represents the break down of humanities relationship with God, in the break down of language, "quagquagqua". This speech causes Pozzo physical pain "(Pozzo's sufferings increase)" and causes the other characters great discomfort, "I protest violently". Furthermore, the reasoning behind Lucky's name could be due to the fact he doesn't think for himself he thinks for Pozzo, therefore he doesn't share the same mental suffering as the other characters.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is the opening of an assured response on the borderline of Level4/5. The key terms of 'fear' and 'loneliness' are kept firmly in the forefront of the argument and effective use is made of contextual material to support points.

Paper summary

Based on their performance in this examination, candidates are offered the following advice:

Section A

More successful answers

- consider the given theme carefully in selecting the poem for comparison
- make clear at the outset the choice of second poem and the perceived links with the given poem
- show a good understanding of both poems
- provide an integrated comparison of the two poems
- respond to the language, embedding details in the answer
- explore the writer's craft with well chosen examples
- maintain a clear focus on the question throughout
- bring the argument to a clear conclusion.

Less successful answers

- lack a clear introduction to the topic/poem
- focus on detail with little sense of the poem(s) as a whole
- make general or uncertain links between the poems
- include a list of technical features but with no sense of impact on the overall meaning
- have only a general understanding of the poem(s)
- write too generally, lacking engagement with the poem(s)
- lack balance in the treatment of the poems.

Section B

More successful answers

- construct a carefully shaped argument in response to the question
- support the argument with precise detail from the play, exploring the writer's craft
- show understanding of the play as drama, referring to stagecraft, stage directions, productions seen
- show a grasp of the overall nature and structure of the play
- use contextual information to develop and enhance the argument
- consider different readings and interpretations and their impact on the overall impact of the play
- make relevant reference to individual critics or schools of criticism

Less successful answers

- write about characters as real people
- consider the play as a story rather than drama
- make sweeping generalisations about context
- show little awareness of the dramatist's craft
- fail to develop any clear alternative readings
- focus on limited sections of the play

It continues to be the case that examiners often struggle with candidates' handwriting. Candidates should be reminded that clear writing in black pen will make it easier for the examiner to follow their argument.

Grade Boundaries

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

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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