

Examiners' Report  
June 2018

GCE English Literature 8ET0 01

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# Introduction

Candidates and their teachers continue to respond well to this exam and have built on the knowledge, experience and hard work of previous years. Many candidates engaged enthusiastically with their texts and were 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. A majority of candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the anthology and were able to choose wisely and pertinently. 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 candidates demonstrated a good understanding of relevant contextual factors and were able to include them in their answers.

## Section A

Most candidates had prepared the poems carefully although some examiners remarked that a few 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 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 did not always address the question. 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. 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 - or to the question itself. The best answers analysed the effects created through the poet's use of language rather than just observing it, for example picking up that the personification of the handkerchiefs in 'Material' added to the submissive nature of motherhood presented by the poet, whereby even inanimate objects demanded actions and attention. The second question was less popular but provided a range of lively answers, with the better candidates engaging with the nuances of the first-person narrative. Weaker answers slipped into storytelling mode, or demonstrated a weakness of understanding of a first-person narrative, often mistaking the speaker for the poet and focusing solely on the use of the first-person pronoun.

## Section B

Generally candidates had prepared their texts thoroughly and on the whole were able to balance the demands of the two separate assessment strands. The better candidates also were able to integrate contextual material into their overall argument, rather than present 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. However, some weaker answers identified critical views and named critics 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. Moreover 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 engaged too directly with the proposition, and did not always address the question. In a minority of cases, candidates barely touched on either the question or the proposition, reproducing a prepared answer that did not fulfil the requirements of the question. Centres are reminded that candidates who received the highest marks addressed both the

question and the proposition. Examiners noted that the best candidates utilised introductions and conclusions effectively, with introductions that demonstrated a thesis within a couple of sentences that was developed throughout the response, and conclusions that drew the essay to a close without summarising everything that was just written. It was also noted that some candidates answers were relatively brief and were not addressing a wide enough range of references from the play to demonstrate clear understanding of the writer's craft and how meanings are shaped.

## 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 obvious choices for comparison in 'Effects' or 'On Her Blindness', which were certainly the poems chosen by a large number of candidates. Other choices, such as 'To My Nine Year Old Self' 'An Easy Passage' and 'Genetics' did have the potential to work well, though there was a feeling that sometimes candidates chose these because they knew the poems well. The question asked about loss, with 'Effects' working especially well as the paired poem – the starting/end points of material objects forming the link with each parent, was helpful as a focus. The contrasts between the different relationships of child to parent, and the generational gaps, worked well. 'On Her Blindness' was not quite as successful, but there was some effective writing on the humour/pathos of the mother trying to ignore her condition, and some insightful reading of the son's self-criticism. The use of direct speech in 'On Her Blindness' and 'Material' was a productive link to explore. The majority of candidates made clear points, highlighting how the theme of loss was portrayed but many failed to elaborate further upon AO2, not really developing any analysis of linguistic or structural features in any detail. Many did not get far beyond discussing the hanky/tissue contrast, although those who explored the speaker's comparison of different parenting practices and nostalgia for a lost way of life, often did so thoughtfully. Candidates did explore verse form, finding the general contrast between 'Material' and their chosen poem easy to describe but the rhyming and structure of 'Material' was often left vague. A surprising number of candidates thought that Ros Barber was male, which meant some points about motherhood were missed.

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 1  Question 2

In 'Material' by Ros Barber and 'On her Blindness' <sup>by Adam Thorpe</sup> both explore loss <sup>Similarly but in different</sup> ~~different~~ ways as 'Material' ~~looks back~~ thinks about the more negative things before her mother died and 'On her Blindness' the poet ~~focuses~~ <sup>focuses</sup> on the negatives as well. ~~and~~ ~~negative~~ <sup>into</sup> a positive. Both <sup>poets</sup> react similarly as both poems explore grief: grief after the loss of their mother's

In 'Material' her mother always carried around a hanky and ~~she~~ deals with her loss by talking about the memory of ~~the hanky~~ <sup>the hanky</sup> as she says "... the nicest Christmas gift you'd get -" this ~~talks~~ <sup>is</sup> saying that she hates hankies which is a contrast to her mother as she says "My mother was the hanky queen" and this suggests that her mother was obsessed with hankies. But this all suggests <sup>the</sup> 'hanky' is symbolic and this <sup>is</sup> how she remembers her mother but she's just talking about her

past and the negativity of the 'hanky'!

~~In~~ The poem "On her Blindness" the poet focuses more on the difficulties of being blind which isn't a bit of a different ~~negativ~~ negativity to 'Material' as the poet says "... still not finding / the food on the plate..." and this suggests the struggles of being blind. Adam Thorpe deals with his loss through nostalgia. But he always wants the audience to feel his loss and the struggles as he says "(try it / in a pitch black room)" this shows the reader the difficulties ~~difficulties~~ in the past. ~~the~~ Both poems difficulties in the past.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiners Comments

The candidate has made general links between the poems but has no overall argument to make as to how loss is presented in the poems and so talks in generalities such as "negative things". There is a surface understanding of the poems, but no real analysis of the writer's craft. The candidate continued to make general links and points throughout the response and so remained in Level 2.



Make a clear link between the poems at the start of the response. Ensure there are a range of references from the poems and that there is analysis of the writer's craft.

As a contrast here is a good level 4 response where the candidate has made specific links between the poems and created an argument in the opening paragraph. They then go on to analyse the writer's craft and move beyond general comments on events in the poems to demonstrate effective understanding of the writer's craft.

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 1  Question 2

In 'Material' by Ros Barber and 'Effects' by Alan Jenkins the theme of loss is similarly presented through the loss of Emily - a mother, as well as the loss of a time and times that have passed. In 'Material' the focus on the hanky that is being replaced with paper tissues allows the poem to reminisce on ~~some~~ times when they were a child, a greater community and what the poet sees in this society. Similarly, in 'Effects' Jenkins juxtaposes the homely and familiar images of his mother with the reality of what time has done and what he has lost. In this way both poems use loss to emphasise the times effect upon us and the world we live in, and thus present loss as a bitter enactment of time.

In the poem 'Material' by Ros Barber, the idea of the hanky is shown throughout as being more 'homely and genuine' "for waving out of trains and mopping the corners of your grief" as opposed to the presentation of the paper tissue "bought in packs from late night garages and shops". The use of the words 'mopping' and 'grief' seem much more emotive; with 'grief' suggesting the hanky as more of a companion or partner, almost personifying it. This contrasts with the presentation of paper tissues, which seem cold and emotionless, and much less individual "bought in packs from late-night garages and shops". Rather than presenting the tissues as a unique, individual companion with use of emotive language, Barber

instead focusses on colder aspects, "bought in packs" suggesting they are all the same. This therefore presents an idea of with the loss of the henley more also comes a loss of companionship, with something much colder and temporary replacing ~~the~~ it. The poet could therefore be commenting on society's loss of compassion or community, which is referenced later in the poem with the lists of all the people ~~that~~ near where he lived "Mrs White" "Greengrocer George", which the loss of the henley representing the loss of an essential part of society. However, the ~~loss~~ loss of the henley could also be a metaphor for the loss of the mother at the end of the poem "My mother too, ~~was~~ eventually, who died" and thus a loss of a compassionate ~~figure~~ figure in the poet's life with an emotional connection. The tissue therefore may represent the poet's delicate and their worries that they could not be as good as their mother "I raised neglected <sup>behind</sup> looking kids, whose noses ~~are~~ strangers clean". "Neglected" suggests that with the changes in society and the world ~~is~~ from when ~~the~~ father was a child there comes a coldness due to that used to describe the tissue, and thus that society is losing the warmth and compassion expressed by the henley, and so they too as a parent are losing the warmer areas their mother had. This therefore presents loss in 'material' as something that comes with the passing of time, but that the loss of the henley and thus the compassion in society was melancholy.

Similarly, in 'effects' by Alan Jenkins, more emotive language of the past is used to describe the mother and her 'effects' or belongings "I held her hand, that was <sup>always</sup> sacred" and "faded snapshots, long forgotten things" and is then juxtaposed with colder ideas of the novel

now in the present "blinked unseeing at the walls" and "took her pills and blinked and stared". This presents no suggestion that time has caused the loss in his mother and that the loss of his mother and her 'love' shown at the beginning of the poem when looking back at the life of the mother is ~~the~~ a lost thing that Jenkins cannot seem to overcome - similar to the compassion and fear ~~that~~ of not being as good as your mother shown in 'material'.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate opens confidently, linking the poems from the outset and making a clear argument as to how loss is presented in the poems. A range of references are used from the poems, and there is evidence of understanding of the writer's craft and how meanings are shaped in the poems.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Construct a consistent argument and use a range of references from the poems to develop ideas. Use secure expression and choose language carefully to demonstrate understanding.

## **Question 2**

For more able candidates this question worked well, with better essays picking up on the narrative voice as a key element of poetry and exploring the way it brought in other elements. However, some candidates found it challenging to address the question of how the poets use the first person narrative voice – they mostly simply talked about what the narrator thought/felt etc. Some popular choices to link the poem to were 'Eat Me', 'To My Nine Year Old Self' and 'Chainsaw Versus the Pampas Grass'. There was a tendency for some candidates to frame a response which really just retold the narrative of the poem, alongside a chosen poem for comparison, with the only focus being on the pronoun 'I'.

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 ☒

In this essay, I will be comparing 'The Journal of a Disappointed Man' and 'To My Nine Year Old Self'. Both poems use first person narrative and use many techniques to show the use of a first person narrative voice through language, themes and imagery.

In 'The Journal of a Disappointed Man' the poet uses development of themes to present the use of first person narrative. The theme used in the poem is a theme of strength and the first person narrative ~~to~~ allows it to sound as if he is jealous of their strength. "even the men; very powerful men;". This quote suggests that the first person narrative is either ~~disappointed~~ disappointed in himself or jealous of their strength so much to sit and describe how "powerful" they are. Although, in "To My Nine Year Old Self", the theme of weakness is used to present how the first person narrative feels about her childhood and how guilty she is for ruining herself. "I have spoiled this body we once shared". This quote suggests that the first person narrative is guilty for ruining her childhood body and is guilty for growing up. The theme of weakness in this poem allows the first person narrative to feel guilt and remorse whereas, in 'The Journal of a Disappointed Man' the theme of strength allows the first person narrative to feel disappointment and anger.



This candidate has not really understood the question and so has struggled to make any meaningful comment other than a general point that both poems use first-person narrative. The candidate then goes on to show some understanding of the poems, but this sits on the surface by commenting on straightforward elements of the poems.



Ensure you understand the question before embarking on the answer. Develop an overview of the poems in your introduction beyond general points. Avoid using empty phrases such as "language, themes and imagery" and instead be specific about the writer's use of these in the poems you are writing about.

As a contrast, this opening paragraph, from a level 4 response, shows a good understanding of the question, and has developed a good argument to follow throughout the response.

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 1  Question 2

In both <sup>From</sup> The Journal of a Disappointed Man and Please Hold the poets use a first person narrative voice to emphasize the division between the speaker and the world around them. This narrative choice gives an insight into the emotions of the speaker yet it is clear the speaker is unsure of the true feelings of ~~the~~ and motives for other ~~the~~ subjects present.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate has made a confident introduction that demonstrates a good understanding of the narrative frame of the poems chosen, and how the first-person narrative emphasises a division between the speaker and the rest of the world. This confident argument was supported by a good choice of second poem in 'Please Hold'.

### **Question 3**

Candidates generally responded well to this question, and found the proposition statement a good starting point to frame their argument, with some evaluation of the degree to which Faustus is an agent of his own downfall. The most secure responses located analysis within a contextual framework, drawing on knowledge of morality and mystery plays, religious dissent and Marlowe's own stated beliefs. Better responses looked not only at actions and stage directions but also at the ways in which language and syntax communicated hubris and later desperation. Weaker candidates tended to narrate and retell the story of Faustus, without any comment on the writer's craft, presenting the character as a real person rather than a construct. Some examiners also noted that there were a number of learned introductions to this answer, with general comments on contextual information that was not relevant to the question.

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 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 ☒

'All along, Faustus believes that he is the one in control.'

It is true that at the beginning Faustus does believe that he is in control ~~and~~ and this is especially the case in his ~~part~~ <sup>regard</sup> for his power over Mephistopheles. However, it is soon evident that he lacks control and that he is simply led by the will of Mephistopheles and Lucifer. His lack of <sup>moral</sup> guidance raises questions as to why a benevolent God would not help him and whether <sup>it was ever possible for</sup> Faustus ~~was ever~~ to have control of ~~except~~, especially with his ~~to~~ hubris obstructing his better judgement.

It is evidence with Mephistopheles' entrance that Faustus views himself as having power over Mephistopheles and his hierarchy. However, it is soon established that this is not the case. Faustus questions Mephistopheles saying 'did not my heavenly words raise you?'. The use of

'heavenly' in this circumstance is ironic as Faustus is referring to his ~~needed~~ incantation to raise the Devil and would have been seen as blasphemous, especially to the Elizabethan audience, as Faustus is referring to his satanic conjuring as 'heavenly'. However, when Mephistopheles enlightens him saying 'I came of <sup>my</sup> own accord' it shows that he never had control over ~~Mephistopheles~~ Mephistopheles. In reality it is the opposite as Mephistopheles admits in his aside 'what would not I do to obtain his soul'. This shows ~~to~~ Mephistopheles' intentions for Faustus, hinting as <sup>(Faustus) eventual</sup> damnation, as through dramatic irony potentially raises sympathy in the audience as Faustus is shown as having little chance to escape Mephistopheles' plans.

Alternatively, Faustus could be seen as having control over Mephistopheles when he 'orders(s) <sup>(him)</sup> to ~~return~~ change thy shape' and 'return a Franciscan Friar'. This reference to the Catholic Grey Friars would have amused the Post-Reformation Protestant audience as Marlowe is <sup>mocking</sup> ~~making a~~ jibe at the corruption of Catholicism and making an anti-Catholic jibe. Faustus' position of authority <sup>is</sup> evident here can be seen.

as admirable as he is assuming a position of leadership power over the Devil.

The wavering of Faustus shows a lack of control as he is showing a lack of certainty in his decision to obey God. Faustus admits that he ~~repents~~ ~~yet~~ ~~the~~ 'I ~~do~~ repent yet I do Despair'. According to an orthodox Christian audience, despair was the greatest sin as it shows a lack of faith in God's mercy. They would therefore hold Faustus' responsible in his damnation. However, Faustus' wavering shows an attempt to regain control of his situation and <sup>over</sup> his acts of sin and return to God. An audience cannot, therefore, not feel sympathy for him when he is trying to repent yet being ~~led~~ <sup>convinced</sup> by Lucifer against it. This is evident when Faustus calls out 'Christ, My Saviour, seek to save poor distressed Faustus' soul' and then there is the ironic entrance of Lucifer. This ~~entrance~~ <sup>entrance</sup> would similarly have been seen as blasphemous to an Elizabethan audience because Malone is implicating that Lucifer <sup>has</sup> ~~can~~ taken the position of Christ.



This is a consistent response from the candidate who demonstrates a secure understanding of the play. They have used the proposition statement to shape their own argument and have successfully interweaved contextual factors and alternative readings into their answer. To move on from a secure level 4 answer, the candidate could have focused on the question - namely the dramatic presentation of Faustus - as there could be more exploration of the character, beyond the pertinent comments on the contemporary audience reaction.



Use contextual information to support your points, not as stand alone and learned paragraphs. Make sure that AO5 is addressed by constructing an argument and offering alternative readings. Do not overlook the question and miss out on the drama of the text and your exploration of AO2.

## Question 4

This was not as popular as question 3, but also produced a wide-range of responses. Candidates generally respond very well to *Doctor Faustus* and to the proposition statement; however, the idea of 'dramatic presentation' was not really looked at but 'forces for good' was dealt with effectively with contextual evidence for support. This was a good opportunity to discuss minor characters. The Good Angel was generally considered rather weak, allowing the Bad Angel the better lines and the last word; God himself came in for criticism for not making more effort to intervene in Faustus' deception by Mephistopheles, although more sophisticated answers were aware of the importance of free will in Christian theology; the Old Man was considered the main exception to the statement in the question, and this was generally an effectively made argument.

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

Plan

Forces of good = depends on audience

↳ they show concern, but no conviction

God → "homo fuge!", a warning, but not strong enough  
↳ Meph distraction

Mephistopheles → not good per se, but broke from God & somewhat sympathetic, "leave these frivolous demands", "hell's a fable", "tormented bliss"  
↳ "get on the fire", "somewhat to delight"

Good angel → "if Faustus can repent" - no conviction

Old man → "I see an angel hovers o'er thy head"

Scholars → "let us try what we can do!", "Rector... reclaim him"

Faustus → force for good in Protestant/Secular eyes, gives man horns, pulls off leg, plays tricks on Pope, ignores "homo fuge", "I cannot repent"  
↳ too selfish  
↳ Meph

In Christopher Marlowe's 16<sup>th</sup> tragedy 'Doctor Faustus', the lines between good and evil are blurred, with most characters being virtuous and villainous at once. Faustus himself is the epitome of this dichotomy, constantly wavering between sin and repentance. Those he surrounds himself with, all of whom might be deemed "good" in some respect, show much concern for Faustus' wellbeing, seeking to save his soul, though their conviction in these efforts is greatly lacking. Thus, due to this lack of conviction, their strength-ridden efforts to save him ultimately fail.

This can be seen most of all with God, a character who is absent physically from the play, but whose influence presides over its every facet. As a force for good, God can be seen during the play to attempt to push Faustus towards repentance, namely when Faustus signs the pact with Lucifer. At this point in the play, Faustus' blood suddenly congeals, stopping him from being able to sign away his soul. This is the first of two instances whereby it might be said that God is attempting to save Faustus. Later, the words "homo fuge" appear on Faustus' arm, another impossible warning that can only have come from God. In spite of these two warnings, however, Faustus still believes that "if (he flew) unto God, he'd throw (him) down to Hell", showing a lack of strength on God's part. In addition, that these warnings cease hereafter shows a lack of conviction as well, as, if God were

truly devoted to saving Faustus, he would try again. One might argue that Mephistopheles' subsequent distraction of Faustus undermined these warnings, but, according to Orthodox Christianity, God is omnipotent and all-powerful, thus Faustus' lack of acceptance here can be seen to be down to a lack of conviction.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate has produced an effective and consistent argument, using both the question and the proposition statement to explore the forces for good in the play.

## **Question 5**

Unfortunately, few centres chose *The Duchess of Malfi*, as their chosen text. Most candidates chose to answer on Ferdinand, with weaker candidates commenting and explaining on his character and the main events of the play. Better responses did make use of the proposition statement to help shape their argument. Most candidates were able to demonstrate some understanding of the historical and literary context.

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 ☒

Ferdinand, the Duke of Calibra, is the Duchess's twin brother. A corrupt, lustful man who tortures the Duchess to satisfy his own personal desires.

Webster presents Ferdinand in a way in which the audience are able to perceive that he is in fact, a treacherous, sinful man.

The Duchess of Malfi is play written by John Webster (1613/1614) which was published in 1623. The play is set in Malfi, Italy and explores the dramatic presentation of the Renaissance and Jacobean period. A revenge tragedy influenced and inspired by the Senecan tragedies, conveys the themes of corruption, injustice, sin, religion, class and over all lies and secrets.

It is evidently clear through the presentation of Webster's craft dramatic craft, that Ferdinand does feel very threatened. We can perceive this through the ways he as a character is portrayed. Webster starts off by introducing him through Antonio, the Duchess's steward. He mentions the corruption of the 'most provident council, who dare freely in form him the corruption of the times.' Antonio further

explains the hypocritical brothers ~~who~~ of the Duchess - who unlike her are greedy for wealth, mere fame and absolute power. Furthermore, what we have to understand is the fact that Ferdinand has a doubtlessly, evidential sense of hatred and loathe towards his twin sister. Many of the audience may question as to why, and one ~~reason is~~ interpretation is due to his ridiculous mindset. Webster portrays Ferdinand as in interesting ways and presents the duke with a rather, psychologically unstable mind.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate has responded well to the proposition statement, but has not rooted their points in the text or the writer's craft. There is a good knowledge of the play, but without probing the text in more detail, it does not demonstrate clear understanding of the writer's craft.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Avoid re-telling the story when answering character questions. Make sure you are analysing the writer's craft and exploring the dramatic presentation of the character. Support all your points with direct references to the text.

## **Question 6**

There were fewer responses to this question, although candidates who did respond to this question generally found themselves engaging more strongly with AO2 because of the nature of the question. Better answers engaged with both the proposition and the question. Some candidates struggled to integrate contextual factors into their answer, which is a shame as the question lends itself to explorations of the form of tragedy.

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 ☒  
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Question 15 ☒ Question 16 ☒ Question 17 ☒  
Question 18 ☒

Bosola employs 'disguise' throughout the entire play. The character, which he plays, is a spy for the machiavellian Brokers, Ferdinand and the Cardinal. He states to Ferdinand 'I am your creature', which instantly implies something bad is going to occur. Merely socialising with Ferdinand would only be due to ~~a sort of~~ <sup>an</sup> evil talk which is going to take place. Ferdinand wants Bosola to be ~~a spy~~ <sup>an intelligencer</sup> for him, and to observe the business ~~and as he~~ and he will grant the reward of a 'prince of horses'. Bosola's selfishness is apparent, as he ~~seeks~~ <sup>seeks</sup> for social significance and ~~receives the job~~ <sup>gladly takes the job</sup>. Through this, we see the key core of disguise is set in Bosola right from the first act. He is masked and out to cause destruction like a 'very quaint invisible devil in flesh: An intelligencer.'

Furthermore Bosola uses appearance to ensnare the Duchess, in order to gain information. He offers her in Act 2 scene 1 he offers the Duchess a present of 'apricots' knowing it will induce her labour. The Duchess accepts, in naivety, and is immediately taken away as pains begin to erupt. Therefore Bosola disguises himself in a cloak of kindness and he is putting on a facade to capture her and expose her affairs. The use of appearance is dramatized as the Duchess could not see the true intent behind Bosola's aim, yet the audience are highly aware. ~~Bosola is constantly~~

Bosola additionally incorporates appearance and reality, when the Duchess feigns pretence to save Antonio. She asks others what they think of Antonio, and Bosola giving a positive response causes the Duchess to trust him as she reveals that Antonio is the father. Bosola masks his shock and <sup>2</sup> wears the 'secret of his prince' 'on the inside of my heart'. Bosola even suggests that Antonio be transported to that Duchess 'feign a pilgrimage / To Our Lady Of Loreto'. In urge and desperation, the Duchess is encaptured in this trap as she blindly follows. ~~The~~ Although this is clear evidence of appearance and reality is also an indication of the Duchess's naivety which is a fundamental factor of her fall. <sup>Also</sup> Like Bosola, the Duchess also uses pretence to save her beloved ones which amplifies her acts of heroism.



This candidate makes a clear exploration of appearance and reality in the play - focusing on the character of Bosola - and demonstrates clear understanding of Webster's dramatic use of disguise. To develop this answer into a more secure level 4 or above, the candidate could have engaged with the statement in more depth, particularly to improve their use and understanding of contextual factors and different interpretations.

## **Question 7**

Unfortunately no centres appeared to have studied *The Home Place* and no responses were seen.

## **Question 8**

Unfortunately no centres appeared to have studied *The Home Place* and no responses were seen.

## **Question 9**

Candidates found this an attractive question; many wrote well about the sisters' relationship although some focused on each sister's character rather than the relationship itself; there were many well-supported arguments showing the difficulties for Stella in supporting Blanche, with good use of context – the more sophisticated responses recognised that Stella's situation is complex, that it isn't a simple question of women having no rights in post-war America, and that Blanche was partly responsible for the breakdown in the relationship. However, quite a few answers ignored the statement in the question and just wrote about the relationship itself – conversely, at the bottom end there were a few responses that interpreted "Stella could have done more" in a very literal way. Candidates continue to use biographical information about Williams, even if it is not particularly relevant to the question. More successful candidates focused on relevant historical and social context, though weaker candidates slipped into rehearsed answers about old and new America, without focusing on the question or the statement. Likewise, some candidates focused on Blanche and Stanley's relationship without linking it closely enough to the relationship between the sisters, or wrote about the characters separately. There was also a tendency for candidates to focus on too few events and references from the play, often feeling rehearsed and not relevant to the question – particularly when it came to analysing the opening scene.

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 .

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   Question 15             Question 16             Question 17   
   Question 18

Tennessee Williams' 'A Streetcar Named Desire' is a tragedy, which follows the downfall of the heroine, Blanche. Arguably, this is aided by the role of her sister, Stella and their poor relationship. However, a stronger interpretation could suggest that Blanche's downfall is inevitable due to her vulnerable mental state and ~~her~~ her conflict with Stanley.

From the very exposition of the play, Blanche is presented as a fragile character. This is illustrated through Williams' use of stage directions, which often move from vivid details to more complex abstract concepts. He writes 'There is something about her... that suggests a moth'. The metaphor of the 'moth' is central to the play as it was originally titled 'The Moth'. Her fragile and vulnerable mindset is explicit as a moth is not a robust creature. A deeper understanding could suggest the metaphor draws on Blanche's relationship with light. ~~She~~ Blanche, like a moth, is attracted to light,

symbolic of the attention and spotlight she craves; but yet equally this has the power to destroy her. This is shown when she says to Stella 'turn that light off! I won't be seen in this merciless glare'. The use of the imperative and exclamatory sentence hints at Blanche's desperation in addition to the personification of light's 'merciless glare'. This again reveals Blanche's relationship with light. ~~the~~ ~~tears~~ ~~light~~ ~~as~~ ~~it~~ ~~has~~ ~~to~~ ~~darkness~~ is important to Blanche because it helps her keep up this facade of purity, innocence and beauty, as symbolised by her name and ~~own~~ costume: 'daintily dressed in a white suit'. ~~the~~ she tears light as she knows it has the power to destroy this. This fear turns out to be justified, when Mitch 'tears the paper lantern off the light bulb' and 'turns the light on', which Blanche responds with 'cries' and she 'covers her face'. This suggests that others, such as Mitch, take advantage of Blanche's fragile mental state, indicating that others also have responsibility for Blanche's eventual breakdown. The verb 'tears', highlights Mitch's want to harm Blanche, leading to this idea. Furthermore, the paper lantern symbolises Blanche's illusions. Her horrific past has led her to want to hide from the brutal horrors of the real world, referring to her time at Belle Reve. Therefore, it could be argued that Blanche is an inherently vulnerable

character, so regardless of support from others she is destined to destruction.



This candidate creates a strong argument as to the inevitability of Blanche's downfall being due to her own vulnerable mental state. There is a strong engagement with the statement and the candidate has produced a clear and consistent exploration of the characters. However, a clearer focus on the question and the dramatic presentation of the relationship between Blanche and Stella, would have been rewarded at the top end of level 4 or above.



Focus on both the statement and the question itself to ensure you cover all Assessment Objectives - especially AO2.

In 'A Street Car Named Desire' Williams' dramatic representation of Stella and Blanche can be caused by Stanley's aggressive behaviour and mean that Stella could do nothing more to help her sister. As Stanley only cared about Belle Reve and how Blanche really lost it and when he found out, and found out that he won't get any profit from it he knew he had to get rid of Blanche, Stella could do nothing to stop him. "Have you ever heard of the Napoleonic code?" This indicates that Stanley has looked into his rights on Belle Reve and now needs to find out more on Blanche's loss of Belle Reve. It implies his true intentions with Blanche as he never really wanted to help her out he wanted something out of it. The Napoleonic code is a law in Louisiana that means that whatever belongs to the wife also belongs to the husband and whatever belongs to the husband also belongs to the wife. This means that because Stella had some part to Belle Reve, Stanley wanted money out of it and since

Blanche lost it, he took his anger ~~and~~ and violence out on her. This is seen as immoral and horrible and makes ~~us~~ us feel sorry for not only Blanche but also Stella who's living with him and witnessing everything. A person like Stanley is unlikely to change his ways so Stella could not have done anything more to stop him from sending Blanche away.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate engaged well with the text and produced a lively response that showed a good understanding of the events. However, there was not enough focus on the text or use of references to support their ideas, and despite the candidate using the phrase "Williams' dramatic presentation", they actually wrote about the characters as if they were real and not constructs. This turned their response into a surface reading of Blanche and Stanley's relationship, rather than a focus on the dramatic presentation of the sisters' relationship.

## **Question 10**

This question produced a wide range of responses, with some excellent analysis of the community of Elysian Fields. It also encouraged students to look at peripheral characters and this brought about a depth of analysis. There were a few excellent discussions of the varied minor characters, of the setting itself as part of the presentation of community. Some argued that Elysian Fields is not harsh for those who thrive there eg. Stanley, Steve and Eunice, and even Stella, and that the setting and stage effects eg. sounds etc. help to create more of a warm and accepting atmosphere, except for Blanche, who brings her outcast status with her – the most sophisticated relating this to Greek Tragedy and even noting Williams’s elegiac tendencies and the epigraph. There were also some interesting discussions of a community that seemed superficially welcoming and accepting, but actually wouldn’t tolerate difference or weakness, and was ultimately dominated by Stanley and the world that he represents. Another alternative view was that the community was seen as too flexible and forgiving when it suited them, with particular regard to the treatment of women in the play. However, there were a number of weaker responses, where candidates focused solely on the setting itself, or wrote just about Blanche's journey into Elysian Fields. It is vitally important that candidates read the statement and the question in tandem and make sure they respond specifically to the question that has been posed.

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   
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   Question 18

Elysian Fields is a harsh and unforgiving place as Blanche stuck out from the setting and by going there it leads to her decline and her mental state. Also it's obvious through Stanley that Elysian fields is a wild place due to Stanley's animalistic behaviour.

~~In 'A Streetcar~~

In 'A Streetcar Named Desire' Blanche sticks out like a log as she is described as "...daintily dressed in a white suit with a fluffy bodice... as if she were arriving at a summer tea or cocktail party..." This description is a complete contrast to the setting of the place as it says "The section is poor... gracefully attenuates

the atmosphere of decay." This contrast makes Elysian Fields harsh as Blanche doesn't fit in which means she won't last long. Another indication Blanche won't last long due to the difference in setting and what she's used to is when she says "Why, that you had to live in these conditions!" This shows how harsh the place is due to Blanche's disgust and the fact she is already complaining about the place.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate has engaged well with the statement that 'Life in Elysian Fields is harsh and unforgiving.' However, they have not addressed the question and have instead launched into an answer about the setting and about Blanche and Stanley. These are points that could be used in a response to the question about community, but this has not been established by the candidate.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Read the question and the statement in tandem. Give yourself time to plan a response and an argument, before writing your answer in the exam.

Furthermore the dramatic presentation of the Elysian Fields ~~also~~ is also effective because ~~it~~ Williams uses it to send a clear message - you either ~~can~~ ~~even~~ accept this ~~is~~ dynamic community or you become a victim of it. This concept of victimization is explored throughout the play through the character of Blanche DuBois. Having an aristocratic background, the character of Blanche is instantly a symbol of the 'old South' - driven by plantation economics through black slave labour. William's use of setting therefore is effective because he aims to create ~~an~~ ~~entire~~ fast paced environment where people of all backgrounds are interchangably mixing together, "two women, one white and one coloured, are taking the air on the steps

of the building". The phrase "taking the air" creates a calming effect in the backdrop of a warm summer evening - this is highlighted using dramatic techniques such as stage direction to ~~depict~~ ~~the~~ ~~most~~ emphasise the multicultural values upon which ~~Elysium~~ Elysian Fields abides by. However Williams's ~~stage direction~~ <sup>dialogue</sup> <sup>upon</sup> of Blanche's arrival somewhat ~~disturbs~~ disturbs this conversation between the two interracial women, ~~whereas~~ " (finally) What's the matter, honey? ". The additional use of brackets as for "finally" creates a sense of impotence or ~~and~~ disturbance ~~on unexpected~~ where the ~~unexpected~~ unexpectedness of Blanche's arrival poses even the slightest of concerns for the women.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate has developed an argument and focused on both the statement and the question in their response. Furthermore, there is effective understanding of AO2 in evidence, through their analysis of the stage directions. This is evidence of consistent exploration and was a high level 4 response.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Effective analysis of stage directions is evidence of understanding of the writer's craft.

## **Question 11**

This was not the most popular question, as many candidates did not feel confident writing about a minor character. However, those that did mostly produced thoughtful responses and clear and relevant analysis of how she may be seen to symbolise the restrictions and hypocrisy of Victorian society. Weaker answers looked at a couple of incidents in the play that featured Miss Prism, and tended to describe her part. Context tended to be quite broad remarks about the role of women and weaker responses struggled to decide what class she belonged to and where she might fit in to the hierarchy.

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 .

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   Question 18

In 'The Importance of Being Earnest' by Oscar Wilde, Miss Prism is far from unimportant in the <sup>play</sup> drama as a whole. Despite her minor role, Miss Prism serves a multiplicity of functions used by Wilde to satirise Victorian aristocracy.

Firstly, in Act 2, Miss Prism serves as a cypher for those concerned with appearance. She voices her opinion that the lower classes "don't seem to know what 'thrift' is". This euphemism successfully conveys how Miss Prism wishes to conform to social etiquette by refraining from the use of explicit or crude language. 'Thrift', meaning sexual continence, reinforces her traditional attitudes and values. Here, Wilde utilises the comedy of manners, a genre in which drama is employed

appearances as a priority. Therefore, Miss Prism is far from unimportant in the drama as a whole because she is a clever symbol for the 19th century's preoccupation with appearances.

Miss Prism, however, also serves as a representative for the lower classes. Her name is a wordplay on 'misprison', meaning to misunderstand. Miss Prism ~~is~~ clearly misunderstands the importance of things being "perfectly phrased", as put by Algernon, when she proposes a comical neologism targeted towards Dr. Chasuble. ~~As~~ In response to his resistance to marriage, Miss Prism regards him as a "womanthropé" Dr. Chasuble displays a "[scholar's shudder]" towards this ill-mixed combination of Ancient Greek and Old English, ~~an~~ illustrating that her attempt to wound him was not indeed, "perfectly phrased" as it defied traditional, aristocratic language. Dr. Chasuble's appalled response to Miss Prism's neologism ~~un~~ to the era of the industrial revolution in ~~the~~ which the ~~use~~ of the middle class meant the social

elite could no longer differentiate themselves from their superior through wealth. Instead, they employed clever verbal wit and etiquette to separate themselves. Therefore, Charvillat responds in this way because this type of language would commonly be <sup>spoken</sup> ~~spoken~~ by those of lower class. Consequently, Miss Prism is an important character in the <sup>play</sup> ~~novel~~ as she is both a cypher for the Victorian aristocracy and the ~~middle class~~ lower classes.



This is a strong level 4 response whereby the candidate uses the proposition statement to consistently explore Wilde's dramatic presentation of the character and what Miss Prism symbolises in the play. References are apt and demonstrate a secure understanding of how meanings are shaped by Wilde.



Consider all aspects of how a character is presented, including their name, to demonstrate your understanding of the writer's craft.

## **Question 12**

This was the more popular question for *The Importance of Being Earnest* and tended towards a more general consideration of both the male characters and the nature of late Victorian society.

'Presentation of men' was limited to Ernest and Algernon in weaker responses. Better answers went as far to include the invisible Lord Bracknell, although a few became overly distracted by this and reproduced pre-prepared material on Lady Bracknell. Once again the better answers focused more on Wilde the playwright. Some of the biographical context was bolted-on and unnecessary, though pertinent points were made about the double life and hypocrisy of Victorian men. Many candidates commented on the audience being presented with images of themselves, with stronger responses arguing that Wilde is not really challenging expectations as most (upper class) men probably led double lives or at least hid their vices in Victorian society.

## MEN WHO CHALLENGE EXPECTATIONS

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 .

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Arguably all of the men in Wilde's play "The Importance of Being Earnest", to some extent, challenge the expectations of society. Chasuble challenges the ~~expect~~ expectations of ~~so~~ religious men, the <sup>are used to</sup> servants, challenge attitudes towards the lower class men and Jack and Algernon challenge ~~at~~ expectations of upper class men. Wilde uses all of his characters as two dimensional devices to ~~make~~ portray a message, in this instance the expectations of Victorian men should be challenged. As a gay man living in Victorian England ~~so~~ Wilde was forced to conform, to some extent, to society's ~~expect~~ expectations or risk imprisonment. In this way he may be using his characters to portray the differences in men ~~but~~ <sup>through use of</sup> humour ~~to~~ and wit to make his criticisms more palatable.

~~Jack Worthing~~ <sup>Ostensibly</sup>, Jack Worthing is a highly conventional and moral man, according to Victorian

society: "I know no one who has a higher sense of duty and responsibility"  
~~My name is Ernest in town and Jack in the~~  
~~country.~~ However, his double life allows him to appear like the proper gentleman. However, ~~the~~ because the character is farical in nature, it is revealed to the audience that he is not ~~as~~ as moral as the other characters believe him to be. ~~My name is Jack Ernest in town and~~ In this way Wilde is challenging Victorian society's ~~of~~ expectations of men by showing the audience that men lead double lives. This could be an example of authorial intrusion as Wilde ~~he~~ lived both as a married man with children, and as a homosexual man who used ~~and~~ male prostitutes. This is significant as it shows the audience through use of humour that men are not always who they are expected to be. Some critics have also suggested that Jack's "private cigarette case" is an allusion to the cigarette cases that Wilde allegedly gave his homosexual partners. In this way Jack Worthing is used to challenge Victorian expectations of men even further, by suggesting that he could be homosexual like Wilde was. ~~\* My name is Jack Ernest in town and Jack in the country~~



This candidate makes a consistently effective argument throughout which utilises both the proposition and the question. There is good analysis of the presentation of men and Wilde's purpose in doing this, with pertinent contextual references to support. This candidate achieved a level 5 for their answer.

### **Question 13**

Unfortunately, there were no responses to this question.

### **Question 14**

Unfortunately, there were no responses to this question.

### **Question 15**

Unfortunately, there were no responses to this question.

### **Question 16**

Unfortunately, there was only a limited response to *The Rover* from centres this year.

### **Question 17**

There were only a few responses to *Waiting for Godot* overall, which is a shame as it is a rewarding play to read and study. Candidates who had studied the play generally knew it well and wrote confidently about the events of the play, though their analysis of Estragon's character fell into surface descriptions. Candidates did write well about different theatrical productions, though there was limited analysis of the context of the play, either literary and historical, which did limit candidates ability to rise above level 3.

## **Question 18**

Candidates who wrote about repetition in *Waiting for Godot* generally did better than those who answered on Estragon. The question focused their attention on writing about the writer's craft, and there were some insightful comments on post-war Europe, existentialism and Beckett's love of Laurel and Hardy.

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   Question 18

Throughout the tragic-comedic play 'Waiting for Godot' written by Samuel Beckett and first performed ~~in~~ in the Theatre Bouffes in France in 1953 repetition is utilized by Beckett to depict the meaningless and ~~repetitive~~ repetitive 'void' that is life. Beckett repeats situations, phrases and characters to symbolically represent the repetition of life and humanities desire to desperately try and fill life with meaning. As one critic John Fletcher said it's 'repetition with a difference', ~~and~~ and the play evokes this interpretation as Beckett wanted it to appear absurd.

Firstly, the most obvious dramatic use of repetition is within Lucky's speech. This is the play's star solo turn in which Lucky questions the existence of a personal God: "punch and waltzmann of a personal God"

quaqua quaqua Essay - in - passy ge testem and  
Cunard ... waste and pie and waste and pie  
in spite of the tennis ... Unmistakable the Skull the  
Skull', the entirety of Lucky's Speech is  
~~repeated~~ repetition. It makes us as the audience  
question our existence and ~~we~~ realise how  
painful life is. Beckett utilizes the repeated nouns  
'puncher and waltman', these are used by  
Beckett to establish an academic register and  
repeated throughout the Speech to try to retain  
his register however, his desperate and failing  
attempt to retain the academic register is  
counterbalanced by Beckett's repetition of the  
phrase 'quaquaqua'. This 'gibberish' phrase  
is repeated throughout Lucky's Speech. This  
depicts how Beckett wanted to undermine the  
serious issues discussed in his play. As one  
critic said 'it's absolute twaddle'. Beckett  
repeated this 'gibberish' in order to illustrate  
how language is 'incapable of expressing the  
human condition as one critic has said.  
Beckett's repetition and onomatapeia of language in  
Lucky's Speech is used ~~to~~ ~~to~~ ~~to~~ to  
illustrate how 'words' lose their meaning  
when repeated and how words are incapable  
of expressing our life and emotions and

meaning to life.



This is a consistent argument that utilises good critical viewpoints to help establish the candidate's own argument. There is a good reference and analysis of the writer's craft which provides evidence of consistent understanding of how meanings are shaped. The candidate comments on different theatrical productions to help demonstrate understanding of different readings of the play. There is not quite the focus or sophisticated expression for the highest marks, and it is not always evaluative in its use of alternative interpretations, but this is still a top level 4 response.



Use critical viewpoints and readings of the play to help establish your own viewpoint and position.

# 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 and the proposition
- 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
- do not address the question or the proposition

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>



