

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/11
Poetry and Prose

Key messages

Successful responses:

- show a detailed knowledge of texts, including a wide range of references
- support their views with relevant textual reference
- focus directly on the question
- explore closely the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

Less successful responses:

- have an insecure or limited knowledge of texts
- narrate or explain aspects of texts rather than answer the question
- make assertions which are not substantiated
- merely log or explain writers' techniques
- offer pre-learned 'themes' rather than personal responses to the question.

General comments

There was much evidence of outstanding work this session. There were few rubric infringements, and most candidates divided their time successfully across the paper.

Focus on the question

The most successful answers sustained a clear evaluative engagement with the key words of the question whereas less successful responses needed to tailor their material more explicitly to the specific demands of the question. Some candidates offered mere character sketches or explanations of themes without addressing the question directly. Similarly, some answers to prose extract questions began by listing themes present in the extract without direct consideration of the question's key words. Less successful poetry responses often worked their way through the poem explaining its content and, thereby, lost focus on the question.

Textual knowledge

The strongest answers showed not only a detailed knowledge of the text but also a wide range of reference, with candidates skilfully integrating both concise quotation and indirect textual references to support their ideas. Successful poetry and extract-based answers analysed the detail of the printed poems or prose extracts whereas weaker responses explained the content of the poem or extract in general terms and made too few attempts to analyse the detail closely to show how the writers achieve their effects. The most successful responses to general essay questions were written by candidates who were able to recall much direct quotation; this enabled them to explore qualities of the writing. In less successful responses, the absence of textual support led to writing that was overly dependent on assertion and explanation.

Writers' effects

In successful responses to poetry and extract questions, candidates showed skill in integrating much well-selected reference from the text printed in the question paper to address the key words of the question. Less successful responses often bore little evidence of direct quotation from the text printed in the question paper and were, consequently, less able to analyse writers' effects closely. In prose general essay questions, those who had a detailed knowledge of their texts (including direct quotation they had learned) were better able to produce sustained critical analysis. Some less successful responses commented discretely on connotations of specific words without relating them to the ways in which the words are actually used in the text; these responses sometimes simply logged devices.

Personal response

There was in the strongest answers much evidence of informed and sensitive personal responses to texts which focused directly on the key words of questions, showing insight and individuality. These responses directly addressed those words in questions which are designed to elicit personal responses to the writing, words such as 'powerful', 'vivid', 'strikingly', 'memorably' and 'entertaining'. In less successful responses, candidates embarked on a pre-learned list of points about characters or themes with little regard to the question. Again this session, it was common to see paragraphs begin with 'Another theme is...', regardless of the thrust of the question. Candidates should be made aware that, in answering questions, they should select relevant material from their knowledge to focus directly on the specific requirements of the question set.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The question specifically asked for a consideration of the words and images used which gave a clear direction for candidates to follow and in general they did. They were able to understand how the world is constantly changing, that we look too much to the future neglecting to enjoy the present and how rapidly time passes. Candidates looked at the contrasting images of youth versus death and decay. The repetition of 'rising' with its attendant changes as the poem progresses were recognised. Many too were able to link the second reference to toffee back to the earlier image and identify other language choices. The discriminating factor was the depth and range candidates attained in their analysis.

Question 2

Most candidates understood that this was an expression of love from the speaker to her husband and selected evidence to support their interpretations. Some candidates were able to explore the use of religious language and suggest how it added to the intensity of their love. Weaker candidates found it challenging to explore how her love is expressed and resorted to assertive comments regarding anaphora and enjambement. A few candidates interpreted 'moving' (a common key word in questions) in a physical context 'moving from one thing to another'.

Question 3

This elicited many supported, engaging personal responses. Stronger answers analysed the imagery used and noted how the structure of the poem with the stark one-line second stanza helped to demonstrate the shocking nature of the buck's death and how the low-key nature of the poem contrasted with the momentousness and pathos of the killing of the buck. There was however confusion among some candidates about which deer was dead and about the final line of the poem.

Question 4

Most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the poem and were able to comment on how the personification of the sea is a contributing factor to Awoonor's description of the sea as a powerful force, together with the effects of repetition. Less successful answers approached the question in a factual way identifying the power of the sea from its ability to break through concrete walls and carry away pots. Stronger answers responded well to the use of personal names, Aku and Adena, to indicate how individuals had been

affected, the implications of the ancestors and Gods, and the sea's power over human emotions and aspirations as well as its raw physical strength.

Question 5

As the experience in the poem is familiar to many, personal responses were usually relevant although at times the closeness of the experience meant that some candidates neglected to comment on the specific details of the poem. That the speaker never feels at home even after twenty years was understood as was her grief for her homeland and her past and the sense of dislocation, illustrated by an inability to communicate on occasion and having to gesticulate to be understood. Overall, much closer analysis of effects and language was needed.

Question 6

This was the least popular of the poetry questions. There seemed in some responses to be confusion about the scenario, which place was which, which job the speaker loved, and what was meant by the conversation in the second stanza. Some candidates commented on the imagery used in the poem such as the 'moon like an orange' but tended to do this in isolation without linking the comment to the question. In general candidates responded by stating and reiterating that the speaker used her imagination to escape her situation.

Section B

Question 7

There were few responses to this this question. Most did focus on the 'frightening' aspect of the extract but tended to restrict comments to the physical description of Bertha mentioning the language connected with animals and the auditory qualities of the scene. More attention could have been paid to other aspects of the extract, such as Rochester's restraint in containing his wife's violence, his desperation as well as hers, the terror of the onlookers and Jane's viewpoint. Few attempts were made to contextualise the passage by pointing out, for example, the previous visit from Mason and the serious attack on him then.

Question 8

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 9

Responses tended to be descriptive and saw this as another example of the uneven relationship between Deven and Murad. Little was made of the fact that for once Deven had actually made a suggestion that impressed Murad, aspiring to get, 'much more than a magazine interview'. Similarly, the contrast between Murad's description of the seamless way in which the recording will happen and the reality later on was generally not considered in answers.

Question 11

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 12

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 13

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 14

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 15

Candidates generally showed understanding of the extract and were able to reference relevant events elsewhere in the novel. Answers tended to focus on Gene's re-evaluation of his relationship with Finny and the resolution of the war, peace, enemy themes. A number of candidates did consider whether there might be unsatisfactory elements as well responding directly to the question's key words 'How far?'. There were only a few candidates, however, who attempted to look at narrative methods or elements of language.

Question 16

Far fewer candidates chose this option on 'A Separate Peace'. Candidates showed an understanding of the question and a generally clear knowledge of the novel but tended to provide narrative responses. There was a sense with some candidates that they were writing from their own personal experiences which accounted for the lack of response to language and effects in these answers.

Question 17

There were some responses which suggested that the extract was being read with no knowledge of the characters or events of the text beyond the extract, which inevitably limited the opportunity to address the question adequately. Other responses provided a line-by-line description and explanation with negligible analysis and little emphasis on the key word 'memorable'. Many missed the inaccuracy of Winston's predictions and the ironic gap between the Party's version of the world and its reality. There were, however, a few outstanding answers which demonstrated a high level of critical understanding of the text and a secure grasp of the ways in which Orwell achieves his effects; these scored highly.

Question 18

Some of the responses to this question were marked as if for **Question 17** as they used the extract entirely and, as a consequence, made negligible reference to the question set. The use of the extract for an essay question is self-limiting. Candidates should be made familiar with the format of the question paper. Those responses that did not restrict the scope of their answer by using the extract tended to be narrative although well-informed. They placed emphasis on the inevitability of arrest under a totalitarian regime rather than on the ways in which Orwell depicts this.

Question 19

Responses tended to show an understanding of what is happening in the passage rather than indicating how the writing made them feel. They appreciated Absalom's real fear, the love that Kumalo had for his son and the injustice of the behaviour of Parfuri and John's son. Most concentrated on the scene between father and son and did not mention the significant meeting between Absalom and his new daughter-in-law at the end. A few more successful answers commented on the intensity of the dialogue and the direct emotions expressed.

Question 20

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 21

This was a very popular question with a large range of responses. Many were able to discuss La Guma's narrative methods and aspects of language and structure in exploring how he makes the ending of story 'memorable'. There were a few very engaged answers which presented detailed and sensitive analysis. Some of the less successful answers demonstrated little knowledge and relied on prescriptive readings of the text.

Question 22

Many answers were generally negative about the father but there were other answers where candidates tried to present a balance and recognised the father's feelings of isolation. The negativity towards the father arose from his desertion of his fiancée at her time of need and his not being a proper father to his son. Evidence was not always supplied, and answers tended to respond to the story in terms of what happens in it rather than how McGahern's writing makes it happen. There was some attempted analysis of the central metaphor of the stoat and the rabbit, though the detail of the text required closer probing.

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Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The most successful responses focused on the key word 'strikingly', engaging with the ways in which Bhatt achieves her effects. These responses considered the impact of the smells in conveying the memory captured in the poem; they explored, too, the effects of the repeated 'I have thought so much' and the mystery of the poet's unwillingness to 'use her as a metaphor'. Many candidates understood the poet's admiration for the girl performing a menial task with grace and dignity, and how this connected with the title of the poem and the idea of womanhood. Less successful responses explained the content of the poem, simply listing the various smells or wrote discursively about poverty without a close analysis of the poetry.

Question 2

The strongest responses explored the ways in which Millay 'memorably conveys her thoughts and feelings'. They analysed closely the impact of the comparisons of love to natural events and the violence implicit in 'wreckage'. Most responses noted the shift from 'Pity me not' to 'Pity me' and what this revealed about the speaker's sadness that she is no longer loved. Less effective responses tended to explain rather than analyse the imagery in the poem, and the very weakest answers simply logged devices used without comment. Some candidates wrote in very general terms about the sonnet's rhyme scheme (ABAB etc.), but they rarely linked their comments on structure to specific ways in which Millay's thoughts and feelings are revealed in the poem.

Question 3

Most responses pointed out the parallel between the skylark and man, and the idea of imprisonment and restriction. The most successful responses offered convincing analysis of the poem's final three lines and the idea of the spirit liberated after death and the optimism of the ending. There was also an appreciation in these scripts of Hopkins's coinages such as 'dare-gale', 'bone-house' and 'day-labouring-out'. Less successful responses showed a basic response to the poem, explaining its content and identifying its rhyme scheme, though without meaningful analysis.

Question 4

The most successful responses noted the obsessive nature of the urge to see dolphins and focused on what the descriptions of the tourists reveal about their longing for 'epiphany'. There was also in these answers an exploration of the language used to describe the imagined dolphins and of the way the passengers'

disappointment is conveyed in the final stanza. Less successful responses tended to work though the poem in a narrative fashion without attending to the key words of the question: 'How does Constantine powerfully convey...?'

Question 5

There was much evidence of enjoyment and engagement in the strongest answers to this question, with candidates offering convincingly argued responses to the dramatic monologue in which Duffy presents the Head of English: the snide comments; the jealousy; the barely disguised contempt for the poet; her sarcasm; her dismissiveness. Many candidates noted Duffy's mocking of the teacher's old-fashioned ideas about poetry: 'for not all poems, / sadly, rhyme these days...' Not all interpretations of the phrase 'winds of change' were soundly rooted in the poem. Less effective responses worked through the poem in an explanatory way, without really focusing on the key words 'so entertaining'.

Question 6

The strongest responses explored the contrast between the two worlds of the war photographer: photographing war zones and developing the photographs at home in 'Rural England'. These answers were alert to the ways in which Duffy powerfully captures the photographer's memories and to the ways in which she depicts the editor of the newspaper and its readers. Lack of knowledge about analogue darkroom photography – 'spools', 'the only light is red', 'Solutions slop in trays' and the way the image magically appears – hampered some responses.

Section B

Question 7

Stronger responses showed understanding of the extract and its place in the overall novel, with some comment on Mrs Reed's attitude towards Jane, as unacceptable to a child under her care. Most candidates considered the dialogue in the extract and, in particular, Mr Brocklehurst's questioning of Jane about hell as being inappropriate when directed at a young girl. There was some sensitive analysis of language with many commenting on how Jane was 'intimidated and trembling', with most candidates considering the description of Mr Brocklehurst as 'a black pillar' with a face 'like a carved mask'. Some responses commented on the use of Jane as first-person narrator standing in front of this nightmarish figure with his 'large prominent teeth'. Less effective responses tended to narrate or explain the extract without focusing on the key word 'disturbing'.

Question 8

The strongest of the relatively few responses to this question argued that Rochester was both victim and villain, showing excellent knowledge of the text and how he had been deceived by Bertha's family. Most professed sympathy for Rochester and seemed relieved at the happy ending to his story. Stronger responses provided some well-chosen quotations which enabled them to explore closely qualities of the writing. Weaker responses tended to make generalised and overly assertive comments.

Question 9

Most candidates showed some understanding of the context and Deven's worship of Nur, but many candidates seemed very unsure of what exactly is happening in the extract and where it appears in the novel. Only the most successful responses explored the ways in which Desai achieves her effects in making this moment in the novel so dramatic, commenting on Deven and Imtiaz who both 'hissed' at each other, the screaming and howling of Imtiaz, her appearance as an 'apparition of fury and vengeance' and Nur's disgusting situation as he 'wallows in such filth' and whimpers in agony. Less successful responses tended to narrate without focusing on the key word 'dramatic', and the weakest responses showed evidence of misunderstanding.

Question 10

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 11

Many candidates were able to deduce what the men's comments reveal about Joe and Janie. The more successful responses were keen to discuss Janie's mistreatment at Joe's hands and how it is perceived by those in the town; the difficulty for them of reconciling Joe's arrogance with his undoubted improvements to the town was also well-handled and supported. The best answers also managed to focus on the key word 'memorably' and understood the context of this extract within the wider novel. Less successful responses tended to paraphrase and paid insufficient attention to Hurston's use of language.

Question 12

Of the relatively few responses seen to this question, the majority worked methodically through Janie's life with comments relevant to the task. Understanding was more secure on her time with Logan Killicks and Joe Stark. Most of the responses considered her return at the end of the text as the best evidence that she has finally fully become her own woman. Weaker responses had only a sketchy knowledge of the text and tended to make general points rather than provide close support from the text.

Question 13

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 14

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 15

Most responses recognised Finny's exuberance when talking his way out of trouble and how it disarms the schoolmaster, Gene the narrator and the reader. They explored the entertainingly outrageous excuses, and some commented on the more manipulative, troubling undertone ('Finny pressed his advantage'). The strongest responses noted the association of Finny with light and brightness, the breathlessness of his speeches and the irony of his physically lively character here set against his later injuries. Less successful responses offered a character sketch or worked through the extract in a narrative or explanatory way.

Question 16

The most successful responses sustained a clear focus on the key word 'pitiful' and had a sufficiently wide range of reference to support their ideas and to use as an integral part of their response to the ways in which Knowles presents the character of Leper. Most recognised that Leper is regarded as something of an oddity, not really accepted by the other boys. The strongest responses explored the visit that Gene makes to his home in Vermouth and the feverishness of his dialogue at that moment. Less successful responses offered a character sketch, with little reference to the detail of the text and with insufficient, or no, focus on 'pitiful'.

Question 17

Successful responses reflected on the striking way in which the opening provides a backdrop to the totalitarian world of the novel, analysing the depressing atmosphere and sense of unease. They commented on the decrepit state of Winston (with his ulcerous leg an indication of a poor lifestyle) and the irony of the name 'Victory Mansions' where he lives. Most candidates understood the implications of the intrusive nature of Big Brother and of the tension arising from the idea of constant surveillance. Less successful responses missed the deeper implications and offered narrative accounts of what happens in the extract.

Question 18

There were fewer answers to the general essay question on *1984*. The strongest responses showed a detailed knowledge of the novel and had a wide range of reference that enabled them to address the question convincingly. Central to these answers was an understanding of Newspeak with its aim to narrow the range of thought and Doublethink – the ability to hold two contradictory ideas at the same time so the citizens will believe anything the Party tells them. These responses included reference to Winston's work re-writing history in the Records Department and Symes's enthusiasm for destroying the old language. Weaker responses adopted narrative or explanatory approaches.

Question 19

The most successful responses had a clear understanding of the position of the printed extract within the novel as a whole: Stephen Kumalo has visited Absalom in prison and learnt about the young woman expecting the latter's baby. These answers understood Stephen's shame at the way he treated her previously and his compassion for her now, the girl's humility and desire to please, the strong bond that arises between them and the hopefulness of the ending of the extract. Less successful responses worked through the extract explaining the content in general terms rather than exploring how Paton makes this such a moving moment in the novel. The weakest responses focused solely on the extract, responding to surface meanings that could be grasped from reading its content, without linking the material to the novel as a whole.

Question 20

The few responses to this question tended to explore the wider context of Absalom's poverty and the way in which the legal system, largely run by white men, is stacked against him. Answers showed some understanding of the situation in which he finds himself, charged with murder and sentenced to death whilst his accomplices are let off. In general, there needed to be a closer focus on Paton's writing: 'How far does Paton convince you...?'

Question 21

Most responses commented on the correspondent's fear, the captain's courage and the sad death of the oiler who had seemed to be one of the stronger men. The most successful responses, however, directly addressed the ways in which Crane makes this such a memorable ending to the story. They explored the immediacy of the descriptions of the sea, the impact of the brief dialogue in the extract and the significance of the final paragraph. Less successful responses explained the content of the extract and made some attempt to address the way Crane uses language, though without addressing explicitly the key words 'memorable ending'.

Question 22

This was less popular than the extract-based question on *Stories of Ourselves*. Candidates had a choice of three of the ten stories in the current selection. Those candidates who knew their chosen story in detail and who had a wide range of relevant reference were able to explore the ways in which their chosen writer creates vivid impressions of the narrator. Many remembered brief direct quotations from their chosen story, which they were able to deploy as part of their close analysis of the ways in the writer achieves their effects. By comparison, those with only a sketchy knowledge of their short story fell back on narrating the story or explaining its content in general terms without focusing on the key words 'vivid impressions'.

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Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question proved popular and seemed to provoke a fascinated interest in the ironies of the man's fate. The best answers understood the concept of living life backwards and embraced some of the ambiguity of the poem – does 'reel' refer to a film or a thread, or both? Many candidates commented analytically on 'agonies of passion', 'loving her wildly' or the mistake/aberration. Stronger responses also effectively explored the language features, such as the metaphor of the cork. Several candidates speculated why he was in the river, and offered some personal opinions, for example, it may have been a suicide attempt from disappointed love. Less convincing answers worked through the poem in an explanatory way, and several ignored the striking image of the cork.

Question 2

This was well answered on the whole and nearly all candidates understood the changing nature of the wife and the husband's attempts to comprehend this. Most candidates were able to pick out at least some of the many writing features that described the wife's changing moods and many wrote about the ending, where the man stayed at home in acceptance of his wife's vicissitudes. Stronger candidates recognised the power of the poet's use of figurative language without falling into the trap of merely listing the examples of geographical images in a descriptive manner. Weaker candidates tended to explain one or two ideas at unnecessary length. Another weakness was the tendency to refer to structural devices without really doing more than pointing them out. One or two candidates could not refrain from voicing their disgust at the woman's behaviour and the man's weakness in allowing it.

Question 3

The quality of answers varied in this question, with only a few reaching the higher bands. Candidates seemed to be aware that the poem is not a simple 'ode to spring' but were not always sure why. Some recognised the sense of melancholy but could seldom offer a convincing interpretation for this. Only a few candidates focused on the key word 'moving'. Some astute candidates realised that the spring could be less of a joyous occasion than the opening lines suggested, referencing the word 'chill' as a forewarning and a few candidates made sensible comments about personification and diction in the first part of the poem.

Less successful candidates played with words without reference to their context, in one case writing unconvincingly about the Garden of Eden.

Question 4

Most of the candidates who tackled this question demonstrated some engagement with the poem and seemed to enjoy the humorous images of the cows painted by the poet. Stronger answers successfully explored the imagery, such as the references to size, the auditory language describing the bellow, the 'black and white maps,' and the contrasting landscapes. These answers responded correctly to the 'phenomenal sound' and did not confuse this with labour pains or 'preparation for slaughter'. Although most candidates made some attempt to respond to language, less successful answers avoided the lines about 'cowness' and offered a range of assertions about the cows which did not see beyond the obvious. Some candidates misunderstood the poem, identifying the phrase, 'pierced through the side' as the cows being killed. Other less successful answers did not clearly address the key word 'memorable'.

Question 5

This question seemed to generate many heart-felt responses which reflected on the confusion of feelings experienced by the poet. Most candidates recognised the sadness of the situation, and selected relevant references to illustrate this, particularly the image of the powder 'flaking off'. Less successful answers offered straightforward explanations without a detailed response to the writing effects. Some candidates did not recognise that the single words such as, 'Quiche' or 'Shallots' are from a shopping list.

Question 6

This was a less popular choice and although candidates valiantly tried to give meaning and interpretation to Duffy's words, not many reached the higher levels. Many candidates provided personal responses which related to their own experiences with teachers and there were not many that recognised the humour in the poem. Many responses tended to use self-evident quotations without expanding on the ideas highlighted, for example: 'You love Ms Pirie,' but then were unable to explain the full significance of this.

Section B

Question 7

The key word in this question was Jane's 'shock'. Successful answers picked up on this and were able to distinguish between the build-up of Jane's inner thoughts, her expectations and the final shock of the moment. They commented sensibly on the analogy of the lover finding his loved one dead and a few referred to language features such as the lists and ellipses to convey disturbance. Less successful answers presented descriptive or narrative responses with little contact with the passage. A few responses started with long introductions to set the scene but did not link these to the question.

Question 8

There were very few responses to this question. In those seen, candidates were generally able to identify a suitable character, such as Mrs Reid, John Reid or Mr Brocklehurst, and to select a few incidents which demonstrated conflict. Most answers, however, were descriptive or narrative, with no developed response or close analysis.

Question 9

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 10

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Question 11

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Question 12

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Question 13

A very small number of candidates chose this question. Those who did responded in varying degrees to the disturbing nature of the passage. The strongest responses referred to details such as the description of the sinister Alpine valley, or the harsh comments made by Sloper. Weaker responses were limited in their range of points and offered a narrative account with little appreciation of the language and structure.

Question 14

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Question 15

This was the most attempted question on the paper. Given this, there was a wide range of answers in terms of quality. The strongest answers recognised the different responses of the boys and explored their reactions such as the conflict between their sense of duty and their anxiety about not measuring up. They noted the naïveté of Leper, the reasons for the jokes about Leper's heroics and reflected on the contrarian view of Finny. Stronger answers commented in detail on the language of the passage such as the lists of Leper's imaginary achievements and significance of 'the disappearing tail of Leper's cap'. Although most answers noted some of the boys' feelings about enlistment, less successful answers did not always fully comprehend some of the deeper implications in the passage. This was particularly true of Gene's unspoken reservations and Finny's unusually hostile outburst towards the end.

Question 16

This was quite a popular question and led to a range of individual responses. In most answers there was a sense of engagement and a clear admiration of Finny. Candidates selected from a wide range of points about his character such as his humanity, charm, generosity and graciousness. The more subtle answers discussed his childlike refusal to accept evil or war. Some attributed blame for this while others argued that it was only the unreliable Gene whose accounts made us prejudiced one way or another. Less successful answers tended to offer a straightforward character sketch with perhaps some relevant examples but little analysis. Some of these were fairly simplistic and lacking the detail to score well.

Question 17

This was another very popular choice and well done on the whole. Most candidates had a clear grasp of the relationship between Julia and Winston and the power of Big Brother to influence this. Stronger answers recognised Julia's dominance in the relationship and her role in bringing out emotion in Winston. They also noted the resilience and determination in both to meet in the midst of difficult and dangerous circumstances and provided relevant references from the passage. In less successful answers, there was a tendency for some to write about the power of Big Brother in the abstract, without examining the passage itself as a piece of literature. Many missed the opportunities to explore the language and writing features, for example, the symbolism of the white plaster covering Julia's face or the descriptions of the unattractive meeting places.

Question 18

There were surprisingly few takers for this question and those who did attempt it responded largely with descriptive or narrative accounts. Candidates described the threats of Room 101, the rats, Winston's betrayal of Julia, and what it portends. There were very few, however, who referred to the way Orwell builds a sense of anticipation prior to the scene. Equally, few related the harrowing experience of Winston to the scene at the end of the novel in which Julia and he look upon each other without emotion of any kind.

Question 19

There were few responses to this question but nearly all candidates were able to comment on Stephen's naivety and his changing perspective as he approaches Johannesburg. Stronger candidates noted the contrast between Ndotsheni and the industrialised landscape, and some included comment on how his increasing anxiety is reflected in his broken speech and use of questions. Less successful answers did not provide enough close textual analysis and tended to be narrative or give a straightforward run-through of the passage. Weaker responses did not address the dialogue or the significance of the journey.

Question 20

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 21

Most candidates who answered this question showed some understanding of the relationship between mother and son although very few remarked on how Winton makes this a striking introduction. On the whole, candidates were well informed and seemed to enjoy the story and answers varied by the amount of detail they included from the passage. Stronger answers explored the complexities of feeling from both mother and son. Some candidates, however, were side tracked by class distinction or one-parent families. Less effective answers sometimes showed some signs of misreading – some felt that the two characters had a dysfunctional relationship on the basis of their bickering without recognising that this was as a result of a clash between the mother's high standards and the son's frustrations about the way she was treated.

Question 22

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/21
Drama

Key messages

- The most successful answers included introductions which avoided lengthy historical background or plot summary and focused on a couple of central points in response to the terms of the question.
- Direct quotation from the set passages, or from the text as a whole in answer to discursive questions, is the most effective method of supporting points.
- The strongest responses to passage-based questions considered the content of the scene and the effects of language, structure and form.
- Less successful responses commented on the use of literary techniques or themes, without relating these to the content and context of the passage.
- A personal engagement with the text's characters, ideas and stagecraft shone through in the strongest essays.

General comments

Many introductions wasted valuable time on details of the text's historical context or on a general plot summary. Candidates would be better advised to give a brief outline of the passage's context or to outline their main points in a discursive response. The sooner the candidates begin to answer the question, the better. Too often the time spent on a lengthy introduction meant that a candidate did not write about the final section of the passage, therefore sometimes missing key points and curtailing an otherwise sound response. Whilst the vast majority of candidates showed knowledge of their set texts, many responses remained generalised, without demonstrating detailed knowledge and close reading. This was often revealed by misreading of the passages or in trying to find themes in them, rather than answering the question.

Responses often referred to 'the reader', rather than the audience and an awareness that these texts are written to be performed onstage informed the most successful answers. Knowledge of terminology such as stage directions would have been useful and saved candidates having to waste words writing about 'descriptions inside brackets which explain what the characters are doing'.

The most frustrating answers began with an assertion that a passage 'is dramatic because...' followed by an indiscriminate list of terms such as 'punctuation, words, dialogue, hyperbole.' Whereas in fact the scene in question is dramatic because, for example, a character is about to be executed, arrested, killed in war, engaged in a family conflict or disguised as a member of the opposite sex. Whilst a focus on AO3 is understandable and necessary, this needs to be embedded in the approach to the text rather than as an end in itself. A more successful approach would be to consider the key words in the question, what is happening in the scene and why, and then to explore how the author conveys his or her intentions to the audience.

The strongest answers to discursive questions could muster a range of material from the text as a whole and support points with quotation or very specific textual reference. They could also construct a clear and relevant argument.

There were very few brief answers. On paper 21 there were a significant number of rubric infringements where candidates answered two passage-based questions or two discursive questions. Far fewer candidates than in past sessions used the information in the passage to answer the discursive question.

The majority of responses showed knowledge and understanding and an engaged response to their set texts.

Comments on specific questions

LORRAINE HANSBURY: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Question 1

- (a) This question elicited a considerable range of response. Effective answers focused on the intensity caused by the contrast in reactions to Mama's news. The contrast between Ruth's initial shock and uncertainty and her subsequent joy was fully explored, with the strongest answers commenting on the 'sunlight' symbol and on Ruth seeing her unborn baby as a sign of hope rather than despair. Walter's contrasting disappointment and bitterness towards Mama were aptly selected as creating the most powerful moments in the extract. Strong answers also commented on the success of Hansberry's effects in conveying Mama's trepidation at revealing the location of the new house and her anticipation of Walter's disappointment.

Less successful responses were unsure of the context, confused 'intense' with 'tense' and wrote about the themes of the play, such as racism, in general terms. Some did not understand that Walter's disappointment was about the loss of his dream of opening a liquor store and, although some candidates observed the use of pauses and exclamation marks, for example, they could not relate these to the creation of intensity. Some responses made secure points about Ruth but wrote very little about Walter's embittered confrontation with his mother.

- (b) Successful answers avoided a character sketch of Beneatha and wrote either a balanced response or a strong, well-evidenced personal argument as to whether she is dislikeable or not. In her favour candidates cited her 'revolutionary' ideas of racial and gender equality and her search for her African heritage. On the other side of the argument, she was seen as self-centred, argumentative and cruel to her brother. Her disrespectful attitude to religion elicited comment and some candidates considered her arrogant for parading her superior education. Some answers made strong points but could not support them by precise textual reference, thus limiting the extent of their achievement.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

- (a) This was answered competently by most and very well by some. Strong answers understood who Giles was accusing and why and that he had proof in a deposition. The injustice of Danforth's handling of the accusation and the motivation behind his dismissal of the witness statement were understood as not merely because of Putnam's wealth and status, but because Putnam was 'with' the court and not 'against it' and that the court's reputation meant that they could not be seen to be mistaken. Strong answers focused on the sympathy for Giles created in his refusal to name his source and his guilt over his 'naming' of Martha. The effects of the use of dashes, exclamations, colloquialisms and imagery in Giles's speeches were fully explored. More sophisticated responses commented on how the support of characters we trust such as Proctor and even Hale, by this point in the play, encourages us to see Giles as the good and honest man he is, imprisoned by the corrupt and the self-interested.

Less effective answers were distracted by general comments on historical parallels and either did not have a clear understanding of the scene or summarised the reasons for sympathy without exploring the drama of the passage in any detail or giving sufficient support. Most responses, however, showed engagement with the characterisation and were rightly indignant at the behaviour of Putnam, Hathorne and Danforth.

- (b) In contrast to **Question 2(a)**, this was not answered particularly successfully. Some candidates wrote a character sketch of Tituba, without considering her dramatic impact. Others understood her role in the play but could not give any close textual support. Whilst there were apt comments about her status and isolation in the community and her different cultural heritage, few candidates engaged in the powerful drama of the scene in Act One where Abigail uses her as a scapegoat for her own illicit activity and Tituba is threatened with whipping and hanging. Few candidates fully explored the interrogation Tituba was subjected to although some candidates referenced quotations from the scene with Parris and Hale, but then failed to provide sufficient context or comment on language. Some candidates did respond to the question in detail by focusing on the drama when Tituba names the people she has 'seen' with the devil. They commented on Tituba's

desperation in the exchange with Hale and Parris noting the strong pleas. In summary, more precise moments needed evidencing for this question with a direct focus on the drama created.

The more competent responses showed awareness that Tituba starts the witch hunt by accusing others to save her own life because Hale suggests this to her. Many candidates saw her as completely innocent, which in Salem terms is hardly the case as witchcraft was a crime and missed the point that her involvement in conjuring spirits was instigated by Abigail and by Goody Putnam, who are happy for Tituba to take the blame. Some thought she escaped scot-free by naming others, missing the fact that we see her in prison at the end of the play.

RC SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

- (a) Most answers showed understanding of the imminence of the German attack, though many surprisingly did not comment on the subsequent likelihood of all the characters being killed. The strongest responses explored Osborne's repetition, dashes and silences indicating his understanding of what this means for the company, though some misinterpreted this: 'I am glad it's coming at last,' as enthusiasm for war or as a death wish. Many used Trotter's chart to veer off into an account of how the men distracted themselves from the war, losing focus on the question and missing the significance and dark humour of Stanhope's filling it in with a picture of Trotter being blown up. Many ignored the end of the passage or struggled with the image of the worm, though some made some interesting comments on its symbolism.

Question 3

- (b) This was generally answered well. Most answers could draw upon a range of reference exploring the significance of Osborne's nickname, his kindness towards Raleigh and Stanhope and their devastation at his death emphasising what a caring character he was. Those who could refer closely to relevant moments in the play such as his tact in distracting Raleigh from the danger of the raid, his loyalty to Stanhope when Hardy criticises him, his gentle hints to Raleigh that Stanhope is no longer the boy he knew at home, fared well. Those who could only rely on unsupported generalisations were less successful.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

- (a) The main points explored in the more effective answers were: Capulet's concern for Juliet at this point in the play; that the match he approves should be put off for a few years; that Paris should win Juliet's heart; that she has a say in the matter of her marriage. Strong points were made about all this being memorable as it was unusual for the time and because Capulet totally reneges on it later in the play. Paris was seen as 'battering Capulet up', over keen to marry Juliet, but generally polite and honourable in his approach. Few commented, however, on Capulet's riposte 'And too soon marr'd are those so early made'. Several candidates commented on the 'star' image which although referring to the young ladies at the ball, echoed the 'star-crossed lovers' in the prologue and the proleptic irony of the ball arranged for Juliet to meet Paris being the event in which she would meet Romeo. Less successful responses found little to say about Paris or gave unconvincing comments about his being arrogant, greedy and lusty or misplaced the context. Some misread 'What say you to my suit?' as referring to what Paris is wearing and 'within her scope of choice lies my consent' as Capulet not allowing Juliet a choice. The least successful answers wrote about the play in general or outlined the plot rather than focussing on the passage in any detail.

Question 4

- (b) Responses to this question were very much on the side of admiration, commenting on: Friar Lawrence as a helpful father figure, a knowledgeable herbalist, an advisor always ready to help in times of trouble and having the motivation of stopping the feud. Often little concrete textual support was given in evidence. The more successful answers referred to his good advice to Romeo after he was banished and to the risks of the potion plot. Several candidates did point out that his actions, however inadvertent, caused the deaths at the end of the play but did not seem to see this as a cause for criticism. His abandoning Juliet in the tomb was only mentioned by a few candidates

and there were some misconceptions such as his marrying the couple being 'illegal' and his giving Juliet a 'poison' rather than a 'potion'.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

- (a) Responses to this question observed the humour in Malvolio's description of Viola/Cesario and the comedy in Olivia's obvious interest in this messenger, despite her supposedly abjuring the company of men for seven years. Stronger answers pointed out Olivia's coquetry in hiding her identity and in asking Viola so many questions. The dramatic irony of the whole situation and in Viola's 'I am not that I play' was understood.

Less successful responses showed limited understanding of what was taking place and did not refer in any detail to the dialogue between Viola and Olivia.

- (b) Although candidates knew who Maria was and that she tricked Malvolio and married Sir Toby, in general few details were given and little textual support. Those who understood her pivotal role in the sub plot and could support this with some details were more successful. There was a major misconception that Maria is a working class, poor maid, rather than a waiting gentlewoman and although she is not an aristocrat, she is certainly of a higher status than most responses recognised. Most understood that her function is largely comic with the trick on Malvolio being taken too far but without close textual reference these observations remained generalised.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/22
Drama

Key messages

- The most successful responses focused on the key words in the question, sustained the link in the response, and supported ideas with concise quotations which were analysed fully.
- In passage-based questions, successful answers briefly stated the context of the passage and explored the passage itself in some detail.
- Successful answers to discursive questions maintained a tight focus on the question and could refer to specific incidents from across the whole text.
- All questions require a response to the text as drama and an appreciation of the play on stage.

General comments

Candidates showed knowledge and enjoyment of their set texts and understanding of the characters, ideas and themes they contain. The most successful responses showed detailed appreciation of texts, and made perceptive comments on characterisation, stagecraft, mood and tone. The most popular texts were *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Raisin in the Sun* and *The Crucible*. Whilst there was an increase in responses to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, there were still very few responses to R C Sherriff's *Journey's End*. Candidates should be reminded that it is not a productive use of examination time to introduce responses to *The Crucible* with lengthy introductions about the religious, social, and historical background of Salem, or the political context of McCarthyism in the United States in the 1950's, in response to questions on this text. Similarly, questions on to *A Raisin in the Sun*, do not necessitate a general account of racism, feminism or gender inequality.

To write a successful answer, candidates need to deconstruct the question carefully, focusing on the key terms, for example, 'movingly', 'powerfully', 'dramatic', or 'tense' and to sustain a link to the question throughout their answer. Briefly referencing the question in the introduction, or asserting it at the end of the answer, losing focus on the question in the body of the response, is unlikely to achieve high reward. A brief plan to help to select the most important points to include, and the most suitable material to use to support these points, is helpful. Some candidates wrote lengthy, general introductions, summarising the plot or listing irrelevant social, cultural, historical or biographical details of the writer. Others wrote a list of the things to cover including a list of the techniques the writer had used, including punctuation, which they would be analysing in their answer. In an examination with 45 minutes to write a response these are unproductive ways to start an answer. The most successful answers wrote a brief introduction, referencing the question, giving three or four key points developed in detail and supported with brief, well-selected references or quotations, analysing the references fully. In answering a passage-based question, a few sentences to contextualise the passage before exploring the passage itself in detail was helpful in demonstrating a candidate's understanding of the structure of the text.

A less successful approach was where candidates wrote all they knew about a text, or character, without linking it to the specific question. The tendency to retell the plot up to the start of a specific passage, before attempting to focus on the question, and formulaic approaches, where the same point introduced and ended a paragraph, resulted in unnecessary repetition and valuable examination time being wasted. This session there were clear examples of candidates basing their answers on film versions, rather than the printed texts, which was self-penalising as little real understanding of the texts was demonstrated. This was particularly relevant to *Romeo and Juliet*, resulting in some inaccurate details on characters and scenes.

Successful responses demonstrated a constant awareness of the text as drama, referring to the 'audience', rather than 'reader' and the 'play' rather than 'novel', 'text' or 'book', as well as exploring the author's methods to convey the texts' main concerns. The ability to read closely and analyse linguistic and dramatic effects is key to successful responses. Whilst some candidates understood and used literary terminology

correctly, for example, foreshadowing and dramatic irony, there remains the tendency to point out terms, and particularly the use of punctuation, that is not explored in context or helpful in developing an argument constructively. It is unhelpful for candidates to be stating the obvious, that the writer uses, 'language' or 'diction' to convey ideas.

There were some rubric infringements on 0475 and 0992 Paper 2, where candidates either answered two questions on the same text or, did not answer one passage-based and one discursive essay. In these cases, only the higher mark was credited. Though there were some brief answers, very few candidates appeared to run out of time. Candidates are reminded not to refer to line numbers instead of quoting from the text.

Centres are reminded that for June 2022 *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Raisin in the Sun* will be replaced by two new texts, Lyn Nottage's *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* and William Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Comments on specific questions

LORRAINE HANSBERRY: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Question 1

- (a) This was a popular text and question but though candidates wrote very well about the relationship, only the most successful focused on the actual terms of the question and explored how Hansberry, 'movingly' portrayed Walter and Ruth's relationship. These candidates read the passage closely and successfully tracked Walter's changes of mood, looking carefully at the language, for example: 'It's been rough, ain't it, baby?' Successful responses appreciated the writer's skill in manipulating the audience's sympathies and used the extensive stage directions to explore the reactions of Walter and Ruth as well as non-lexical features such as ellipses and fragmented syntax. Many candidates were able to identify such features; those who scored highly demonstrated how the writer uses them to convey the characters' feelings. They commented on the poverty and racial issues which led to the tense and strained relationship. The majority recognised the passage's context and the impact that their living conditions had on Walter and his dreams.

Only the most successful candidates were able to link their comments on the way Ruth speaks and moves on stage, for example her tone of weariness, her 'standing and looking at him helplessly' to why this was so moving. Very few understood that Ruth's line, 'I do not know where we lost it' is said 'more or less to herself' and not directly to Walter. The use of context and background also differentiated between candidates. Better answers used it sparingly to inform the situation, for example in respect of Ruth's pregnancy, without losing focus on the passage; weaker ones tended to get side-tracked into the details of the \$10,000 and who wanted it for which reason.

Less successful responses tended to oversimplify the conflict and ignored the terms of the question, often believing the relationship was terminally broken and frequently did not get to the end of the passage where the mood changes. Weaker responses also tended to exaggerate the protagonists' characteristics: Walter's aggression and Ruth's passivity, or her occasional sarcasm, digressing from the passage and simply retelling the plot. There was some misreading of Ruth's comment on going 'into the banking business', with some taking this literally.

- (b) This was far less popular and often disappointingly done with generalised comments on the generation gap. Close focus on how the conflict was so 'powerful' on stage was needed to achieve highly rather than a systematic recall of events. Successful responses explored generational differences and attitudes, and they looked at Beneatha's more modern outlook as opposed to Mama's traditional views. Some candidates took one person's side and expressed dismay about Beneatha's rebellion or Mama's inflexible approach. Some were confused about the cheque, erroneously believing that Mama had favoured Walter and ignored Beneatha's ambitions. Better candidates understood the build up to the clash about Christian beliefs and noted the slap, with some well-selected textual detail and quotation to support this. Other areas covered were their differing opinions on marriage and which of Beneatha's two suitors was most appropriate – George or Asagai. Mama's chastising Beneatha over her treatment of Walter and habit of taking up interests and quickly dropping them, were also featured in these responses. Only the most successful responses recognised Mama's love for all her family and her desire to care for them all, which is the foundation of the relationship, opting to focus entirely on areas of conflict and disagreement.

Weaker responses limited themselves to religious beliefs, and the slap, but then ran out of ideas with some drifting into slavery regarding mama or Beneatha's appearance, and especially her hair, but without sustaining the link to the question. There was some misunderstanding of Mama not supporting Beneatha's dream to be a doctor and of the way Beneatha wanted the money spending.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

- (a) This was a very popular text and question and produced some of the most successful responses this series.

To achieve highly, candidates needed to comment on the writing which shows the characters as shocked and behaving in an unexpected way. Stronger candidates were able to analyse and evaluate this extract in depth. There was close focus on stage directions, particularly those associated with Cheever: '*embarrassed*', '*carefully*' and '*gingerly*'. Regarding Proctor there was a focus on '*angrily*, *bewildered*' and his tone of voice. Stronger candidates commented on the use of punctuation, exclamation marks and question marks, to indicate a tone of voice. Elizabeth's ironic tone, Proctor's confusion and anger, Cheever's dramatic retelling of Abigail's performance made the writing full of detail for comment. Most candidates were able to comment on Abigail and her manipulative ways and on Elizabeth's innocence. However, stronger candidates also focused on Hale and his situation in this extract and recognised the implication of this scene in the text. They acknowledged what it revealed about hysteria in Salem, Abigail's capacity for deceit, the escalation of accusations and how logic and sense are being overrun. Cheever's awkward and then animated manner, Hale's ignorance of events, Proctor's assertion and Mary's fear also provided rich material. There were some perceptive comments on language, for example in Cheever initially addressing Elizabeth as '*Goody Proctor*' and, after the discovery of the poppet, dramatically as '*woman*'. Some of the best work explored Cheever's reaction to the finding of the needle; it is shocking to observe the hold that superstitious fear has on him and responses that quoted his '*wide-eyed trembling*' for example, benefited. There was some confusion and uncertainty over Mary's role and how much she knows of Abigail's plan.

In less successful responses there was some confusion regarding '*shocking*' with many writing about what was surprising. Weaker responses spent time narrating the events which led up to this moment, retelling the story of the girls and of John Proctor and Abigail's affair or in providing a narrative overview of the passage with little, or no focus, on the question. There was often an overlap between this and **Question 2b** where candidates commented on John Proctor being a fraud. There was much confusion over Mary Warren's position in the Proctor household with some candidates believing she was Proctor's wife and others convinced that she was complicit and had 'planted' the poppet at Abigail's bidding.

- (b) This was less popular and some candidates struggled to define '*fraud*' even though it is used in the text. Candidates approached the question in two ways: Proctor's view of himself as a fraud, agreeing or disagreeing or by the candidate/audience examining Proctor and whether they agree or disagree that he is a fraud: either interpretation, of the question was rewarded. There was evidence of previous essays being reproduced here, for example, on Proctor's adultery. Whilst a strong candidate may be able to modify such a response to fit the question, less successful candidates were unable to achieve highly as there was a limited range of textual detail offered. Many candidates agreed that Proctor was a fraud and a hypocrite and, in their view, remained so. The evidence is his infidelity and his reluctance to go to court earlier in the play. His opposition to the witch hunt, his courage and his sacrifice were often ignored altogether. The best answers took a balanced view and embraced Proctor's suffering and his elevation into a tragic hero at the end. All recalled the adultery in detail, and the better ones could reference his rejection of Abigail but also his admission of still being attracted. The most successful responses understood John Proctor's character and his predicament, starting with brief comments on the nature of the society and the pressures which this imposes on men like John Proctor. They were then able to relate and comment on his actions in the light of this. Stronger candidates focused not only on his reputation but his legacy for his sons, recognising how he redeems himself and his integrity. Most candidates concluded that he was a changed man at the end and, as a result, felt that he was not a '*fraud*'.

Weaker responses struggled with the main thrust of the question, focusing on his actions, for example, his adultery and his impatience with Elizabeth, rather than his opinion of himself. They adopted a narrative approach, tracing his life from the beginning through to the end and saw him as

selfish for dying and leaving his family simply for his 'name', missing the implication of his defaming other innocent people.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

- (a) There were very few responses to this text, and this was the more popular of the two questions. The more successful responses knew the context of the passage, some including reference to the fact Osborne had just given his ring, watch and a letter for his wife to Stanhope as evidence that he feared he would not come back from the raid and showing awareness that the audience knows the danger of the mission. Most were able to demonstrate some knowledge of why the situation was tense as well as some understanding of how Sherriff's writing conveyed this tension on stage. Stronger answers appreciated how Osborne's attempts to calm Raleigh and divert him while having '*one last look at the map*' conveyed the increasing tension. Nearly all were able to comment on how the silence on stage made it tense along with the frequent pauses in their conversation. Better answers noted the way the constant talk of time builds up the tension and explored Raleigh's inability to not talk about it, contrasted with Osborne's tactic of deflecting fear through a focus on banal chat. Some noted Osborne's calmer state contrasted with Raleigh's naïve excitement, and a few able candidates saw the irony in his attempts to play down the danger, while at the same time being the one with the more realistic conception of their chances of survival.

Weaker responses provided narrative accounts of the passage or asserted it was a tense moment and then paraphrased what was being said.

- (b) Too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

- (a) This was the most popular text and question. There were some very impressive responses but also many of the weakest on this paper. Candidates would do well to engage with the opening lines of chosen passages rather than plunging in to the first line spoken by the character referred to in the question. A failure to do so here caused some confusion with the context, with many candidates unaware that Romeo had climbed into the Capulet orchard looking for Juliet, having totally forgotten Rosaline, and being oblivious of his friends looking for him. Many focused on Mercutio and Romeo: writing as if Mercutio was speaking to Romeo as if he were present. Some of these candidates clearly knew about Mercutio as a character but did not focus on the extract. Others found his sexual innuendoes vulgar and concluded Mercutio was a vulgar man without seeing the humour or comic relief he provides in such scenes.

Strong challenges were presented for candidates, principally in terms of Mercutio's bawdy language and innuendoes. Some candidates chose to approach this through total avoidance, focusing only on the limited speeches where he is not being crude, or rather disconcertingly going to the other extreme and giving the full anatomical details. Better answers recognised Mercutio the entertainer, the cynic, and the reckless danger-seeker happy to be shouting at the top of his voice right beside the property of the enemies of the Montagues. There were also some very good answers from candidates who were confident even with Mercutio's most obscure utterances and detected the note of concern and affection under his mockery. These answers showed understanding of the realism and cynicism about love, though at times, they were very contemporary in their discussion of Mercutio's 'objectification' of women.

Less successful responses were very general with little supporting textual reference. Some acknowledged the sexual nature of Mercutio's language but either became too concerned with analysing the literal meanings or became very confused by the language. Some did recognise how Romeo's love for Rosaline is being mocked. The ones who only took the 'good friend to Romeo' approach struggled to convince as their attitudes to love are diametrically opposed, as better candidates pointed out.

The weakest answers were uncertain about where we are in the plot, thinking that Romeo is still in pursuit of Rosaline or that Mercutio is already aware of his switch of allegiance. Other weaknesses included not focusing enough on the passage and mistaking Mercutio's tone for one of disdain

rather than affection. It seemed that some candidates had watched films and had a general idea of Mercutio's character but had not studied the text closely.

- (b) Those who understood the social context of Lady Capulet and recognised the contrast provided by The Nurse, who is far more motherly, did well, citing the early scene when Lady Capulet needs the presence of The Nurse to raise the issue of marriage. Successful answers showed knowledge and understanding of how the patriarchal society in which Lady Capulet lived, and the fact that she was also married young, possibly impacted on how she was expected to behave. Many criticised her for having a wet nurse; some simply criticised her lack of knowledge of Juliet's love for Romeo and her lack of defending Juliet against her father's outrage only knowing her lines *'I would the fool were married to her grave'* or *'I have done with thee'*. The best candidates knew she had attempted to calm her husband down *'Fie, fie, what, are you mad?'* Some accused her of putting on a melodramatic act when Juliet has 'died' rather than genuine grief on the death of her only daughter. Those who argued that theirs was a cold and distant relationship provided evidence of understanding. Some, however, argued she was a wonderful mother and took Juliet's wishes into account. The best responses focused on the *'How far...?'* of the question and wrote a balanced response. Of all the questions on the paper this was one where knowledge of a film version, rather than knowledge of the printed text, resulted in some inaccurate details on characters and scenes.

Weaker answers were very general and vague, with little, if any, textual support. Some candidates misinterpreted the question and seemed to feel obliged to present Lady Capulet as caring. These responses struggled to present a strong case and focused on small details such as the fact that Lady Capulet often calls for Juliet. They often confused Lady Capulet with the Nurse and spent time narrating the events of the play. There was considerable misreading in the answers to the question for example, many weaker candidates stating that Lady Capulet knew about Juliet's marriage to Romeo.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

- (a) In general candidates understood the question and what was required. To achieve highly candidates had to bring in what makes this moment 'satisfying', focusing on individual characters and their reactions to the revelations in the scene as well as exploring the end of the plot. The most impressive responses tended to focus on Viola - and to a lesser extent Sebastian - whose personalities and histories did evoke some sympathy and whose happy ending did persuade some candidates to feel a sense of satisfaction. Awareness of the genre and romantic comedies resulting in happy endings was a feature of the best responses with some perceptive comments on the fact that though a comedy, Malvolio does not have a happy ending – although he does not appear in the extract. There was also understanding of the slow build-up of Viola's revelation and the dramatic tension created.

Stronger candidates focused on particular aspects of the ending and commented on the impact that having everyone on stage would have on the audience. Most focused on the reunion of the twins, some on the reunion of Antonio and Sebastian, and some, in great depth, on the forthcoming marriage of Viola and Orsino. Most candidates were aware of the love triangle and how this was the resolution of the confusion which this had caused. A few candidates attempted an analysis of Shakespeare's critique of society's attitude to same sex relationships being prohibited, considering Antonio being left out, and Orsino's true attraction to the 'Boy' Viola being an affirmation of same sex love.

Weaker candidates adopted a narrative approach to this question. Many told the story of the whole play leading up to this point so that they could then explain in detail how all the loose ends are tied up. They did not focus on how it was 'satisfying' except for the fact that the ending was happy.

- (b) This was not as popular as the passage question but most of those who did attempt were able to demonstrate varying degrees of textual knowledge and understanding. Awareness of the genre of the play and how the audience is positioned to see characters as comic or tragic, inviting mockery or pathos, rather than seeing them as real people but constructs, would have enhanced many responses. Although most started well, citing the first lines of Act 1 Scene 1, many became narrative in approach. Orsino is much absent from the play except for in the early and late stages and is not a prime mover in the plot so weaker candidates found it hard to find material. They also

found it difficult to engage with what Orsino represents in terms of the excesses of Courtly Love or detect any satirical purpose in his presentation. The most successful responses recognised the self-absorbed love exhibited by Orsino and his arrogant assumption that a man's love is deeper, often saying that he is in love with the idea of being in love and he does not really love Olivia. They commented on the deficiencies in his wooing technique and occasionally his rather theatrical approach.

Some candidates argued that Orsino was self-centred in his continued efforts which ignored Olivia's grieving for her brother's death and were critical of his continued sending of messengers; many argued that his sudden about turn at the end of the play was evidence of his homo-erotic tendencies, especially as he refers to Viola as 'Boy' rather than by her name. The imagery of music as food and the hart/heart were explored by the best candidates and the final shift in affection was well referenced. Stronger candidates also explored his and Olivia's characters and explored his sudden change of mind and impact which this had on his relationship with Olivia. Some candidates did try, unsuccessfully in most cases, to explore Orsino's love for Olivia in terms of the love triangle. Quite a few argued that he was quite well-matched in his love for Olivia as they both behaved rather '*stupidly*' and because of this they felt that he did not deserve Viola at the end of the play.

Weaker responses were narrative with many starting with '*If music be the food of love...*'. but not showing understanding of the language. Some weaker candidates then focused on Orsino and music in their answers without giving specific detail. There were some comments on reasons to doubt his love and the fact that he sends messages to Olivia but does not visit her himself and, how swiftly he transfers his love from Olivia to Viola. The weakest responses merely narrated the course of his wooing and eventual marriage to Viola.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/23
Drama

Key messages

Strong introductions show understanding of the scope of the question by addressing its terms, offering an indication of the points to be included in the answer and avoiding general comments on the background of the text and author.

Good answers address the question covering a range of three or four relevant and developed points and support them with detailed textual support, often in the form of brief, memorised quotations.

Passage-based answers need to briefly establish the context of the passage, to make a range of three or four relevant and developed points and to focus in detail on the effects of the writing.

In reply to discursive answers, candidates should select the most relevant material from the whole text with which to support a range of three or four directly relevant and developed points.

All answers can be boosted by candidates showing understanding of the text as performed on stage, by analysing the effects of drama such as: interaction between characters, conflict, action, setting and strategic entrances or exits.

General comments

Most candidates responded well to their set text. They knew the characters and plot thoroughly and engaged with the ideas and themes presented by the playwrights. When answering a question, stronger candidates selected the most pertinent points from their knowledge and understanding of the text and supported them by selecting the most relevant textual material. Less organised candidates tried to write down everything they knew about a text, whether relevant to the question or not, and as a result were rarely able to develop points. Candidates often showed their enjoyment of the text in some lively personal responses to characters' predicaments.

Good answers acknowledged features of the genre and explored what was revealed by the interaction between characters on stage. In some passages, setting made a key contribution to the audience's understanding of the text, and perceptive candidates analysed the effects of staging such as action, lighting and sound to consider their contribution to meaning. Candidates often usefully cited stage directions as an indication of a character's emotion and the author's intent. Some candidates made unconvincing comments on the audience's response to the use of punctuation in stage directions or speech. While punctuation such as exclamation marks or ellipses can indicate to actors how to say a line, for example with heightened emotion, the audience can not see punctuation or respond directly to it, and so candidates' comments always need to focus on the meaning and delivery of speeches rather than to analyse punctuation in isolation.

More candidates this session made a response to the structure of their selected play. Often their comments showed an overview of the text and then referred in detail to the author's intent in using such elements as: a contrast of tones between scenes, an increase in tension leading to dramatic climax, and the resolution of problems. Some candidates successfully considered the use of foreshadowing by exploring its effects on audience response, such as: raising suspense, creating unease or curiosity about a character or event, or developing a theme. Other answers identified foreshadowing without considering its effects.

Answers to passage-based questions always benefitted from briefly stating the context of the passage. Some candidates narrated the plot in too much depth; a balance needs to be struck. Strong responses considered the writing of the passage in detail, to explore how the author achieves their effects through such

means as: the setting, the tone of the dialogue, the type of interaction between characters, and their actions and emotions. The best responses clearly stated how their findings answered the question. Candidates needed to read to the end of the passage and to select the most relevant parts to support their answer. Others lost focus on the question and needed to analyse the writing of the passage, rather than referring generally to textual themes.

There were some clearly reasoned and engaged responses. These candidates showed well-developed and often perceptive views of the text and of the author's intent. They referred to relevant, carefully selected and detailed textual material in support of their points and addressed the question throughout. Some candidates lost focus on the question and text and wrote at length of their personal views on such issues as patriarchal power, violence in cities, the role of women in society, gender fluidity and the management of pandemics. Personal response needs to be a response to the text, informed by the text and how the author communicates their ideas, rather than a general discourse of the candidate's opinions of modern society.

There were very few rubric infringements this session. Some candidates needed to number their answers more clearly to avoid confusion.

Comments on specific questions

LORRAINE HANSBERRY: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Question 1

- (a) Good answers explored a range of points about the relationship, quoted from the passage in support, and addressed 'vividly' by analysing language use. They established the context of the relationship at the start by stating that Asagai is an African character in America. As Asagai makes clear in the passage, he was first attracted to Beneatha by her inquisitiveness in her identity as an African-American. This reveals the significance of his gift of traditional African robes, and her excessive delight in them, vividly conveyed in her broken speech, indicated by ellipses, as she is overcome with gratitude.

Most candidates explored the couple's attraction to each other, with supporting text. Many commented on how Asagai readily judges Beneatha's appearance and his attitude to assimilation. A few perceptive candidates considered that Asagai delights in his superior role as her self-appointed teacher and holds traditional views on the status of women; they pointed out that he belittles her with 'little thing' and thinks 'For a woman it should be enough' to feel sexual attraction to a man. Candidates noted that Beneatha was attracted to Asagai because he is African and gives her expensive gifts. Asagai's African culture is vividly conveyed on stage by his dramatic Yoruban exclamation. Stronger answers noted that his deliberate efforts to be charming actually put her on her guard and that Beneatha shows her fierce independence at the end with her determination not to be 'someone's little episode in America'.

Other answers often focused on one aspect of the passage, such as the robes or Beneatha's hair, with little comment on the relationship. Some weaker answers wrote at length on assimilation rather than the relationship. Other answers made a range of points but needed to support them with detailed textual reference. A feature of higher-achieving answers was a direct response to 'vividly' in an analysis of the effects of language use.

- (b) Successful answers covered a range of different points and supported them with well-selected reference to the text. These considered the significance of the move for each member of the family and commented on the strain of living in their worn-out apartment infested with vermin, with no space for Travis let alone the new baby. Some perceptive candidates explored the courage of the Younger family in facing not only white discrimination, but also the resentment of their peers, such as Mrs Johnstone with her story of 'bombings' of black families. Candidates' response to 'strikingly' tended to refer to striking dramatic episodes in the family's lives, such as when Walter loses the money, Travis catches the rat, or Ruth faints; and the strongest answers showed understanding of how Hansberry uses the drama to convey significance. Several commented on the symbolism of Mama's plant, with stronger answers showing understanding of how it struggles to survive on the windowsill, desperate for the nourishment of light and fresh air, like the family themselves. Some considered how Hansberry conveys the family's hope for their future in the garden at the new house, which provides the environment for the family to flourish as well as Mama's plant.

Less detailed answers focused on only one or two characters, usually Mama or Walter, and tended to recount Mama's purchase of the house and Walter's loss of the money. Lindner was sometimes the main focus, but some candidates struggled to move beyond a narrative account; the best were those who saw him as a symbol of white suppression and who recognised his sinister approach to the family despite his outward charm. Other more general answers needed specific textual support.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

- (a) Strong answers established the context of the passage. It is now autumn and Tituba and Sarah have been imprisoned since the spring; they were the first to be accused of witchcraft and put in jail; they are not due to be hanged, because they confessed rather than lose their lives. This context provides significance to the prisoners' plight here and by extension, suggests similar experiences of the many accused in Salem, setting the scene for Proctor and others to come. The best answers explored the opening stage directions and commented in detail on the effects of the dark, oppressive imagery and the stark setting of the cell which 'appears empty', while Sarah is reduced to 'a bundle of rags' (contrasting with the 'greatcoats' at the end). These candidates recognised the insanity in Tituba and Sarah and explored in detail how it is presented in their disturbing speech. They considered reasons for Herrick's drunkenness and his indulgence of the women's fantasies. A few perceptive candidates saw the irony in Salem being 'too cold' for 'that Old Boy' who 'freezes his soul in Massachusetts'.

Some candidates successfully addressed 'memorable' with their personal response to the plight of the prisoners and showed how Miller's writing encouraged sympathy. Others thought the bleak setting was memorable because of how it mirrors the bleakness of outlook for the inhabitants of Salem and for the outcomes of future trials. Others thought the portrayal of Tituba's insanity to be memorable because it highlights her harmlessness and brings into question the legitimacy of the witchcraft charges. These responses were enhanced by candidates giving a relevant reason for their comments and supporting them from the text.

Some answers only provided a general overview of what was happening in the passage. These needed to quote from the passage and to consider the writer's use of language. Some candidates were confused about who Tituba and Sarah were and thought they were about to be hanged. Others spent too long explaining the history of the witch trials or McCarthyism, rather than analysing the passage.

- (b) Successful answers built up a comprehensive picture of Abigail's dishonesty through the play by covering a range of her lies, such as: the conjuring of the charm in the woods, the poppet, the yellow bird, and her theft of Parris's money at the end. These answers often explored Abigail's motives for lying, originally to try to prolong her affair with John Proctor. They showed how Abigail is able to respond quickly to people and situations as they evolve, thus manipulating the court officers and judge as readily as her girlfriends. Better answers responded to 'vividly' in depth using quotation to support and illustrate points on the use of language, which often creates vivid drama to startle the audience, such as with the yellow bird.

Some candidates offered a thoughtful personal response to Abigail's behaviour. While some considered she was clever in getting her way and enjoyed the power of manipulating people, others saw her early childhood trauma as partly to blame for her readiness to threaten and inflict violence, and some considered that she copied her uncle, Parris, in their selfish regard for their own desires. Where these views were supported by reference to the text, they boosted the answer.

Basic answers often ran through a list of Abigail's lies and said this showed her dishonesty. Others focused narrowly on a single lie, often the dancing in the woods from the start of the play and gave a narrative account of how Abigail orders her friends to cover up their activities.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

- (a) Good answers recognised how Raleigh's youth and inexperience are revealed by Sherriff, most commenting that he makes it clear at the start of the passage in the reference to his age as 'about eighteen' and to his 'very new uniform' which has clearly not been much worn. They analysed the

interaction between Raleigh and Osborne to show how Raleigh's inexperience is revealed in his uncertainty over what to do and hesitancy in his speech. Thus they commented on how Osborne has to tell him to sit down, and to take his pack off, and how to address him; and how Raleigh hesitates to accept the whisky 'Er – well –'. More perceptive candidates considered Raleigh's desire to please, as he tries to do what is acceptable, such as drinking and smoking, and some recognised the significance of Raleigh's enthusiastic 'brightening' at the mention of Stanhope, and how Raleigh's youthful hero-worship of Stanhope is revealed: in his language – 'big fellows', admiration of Stanhope's sporting prowess, concern at how to address him, his pleasure at being sent to serve in Stanhope's company.

Some answers gave an account of the passage without addressing the question. Others focused on Osborne rather than Raleigh or wrote generally about life in the trenches. Some needed to quote from the passage to support points, while others needed to respond more directly to the effects of the writing.

- (b) Successful answers established the upsetting context of Osborne's death in a high-risk raid, in daylight. The enemy knew where they would cross the wire, since it was specially cut the day before – the enemy had even tied red rags to the sides of the gap as a warning. Yet the raid goes ahead and Osborne is chosen by the colonel to go on the raid because he is 'very level-headed', and as such will be missed by all the company. Good candidates commented on how Sherriff raises tension and emotions as the dramatic noises of the raid are heard offstage, and that the audience's fears are confirmed by Raleigh's stunned and dramatic reappearance on stage without Osborne. Some perceptive candidates considered that his death is made upsetting by the irony of the minimal information obtained from the German soldier for the price of seven men's lives, and by the colonel's inappropriate excitement at the capture of the German, and how he belittles the loss of life by his concern over unimportant matters such as whether he has 'fish for supper'.

Some perceptive answers commented on the effects of the staging. The pathos of Osborne's death is dramatically emphasised by the focus on his ring, watch and his bed – all that's left of his life in the company. They saw that the shock and grief of the soldiers is concentrated in the reactions of Stanhope, who is deeply affected as he is 'staring dumbly' and drinks 'to forget', while Raleigh stares at his own bleeding hands and can not eat anything in his shock. Some saw that Osborne's death foreshadows the avoidable death of all the soldiers.

Other answers gave an account of the circumstances of the raid and retold what happened rather than addressing how Sherriff makes Osborne's death so upsetting. Some answers needed to use more detailed textual support for their points. A few confused the raid with the big attack, which comes at the end of the play.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

- (a) There were some excellent responses showing clear critical understanding of the text. These started by establishing the context, that Juliet was already married to Romeo, and the Capulets had wanted to bring forward her wedding to Paris as a way of helping her cope with her grief at Tybalt's death. Some compared Capulet's earlier calm and considered approach to the match with his explosive urgency in this scene. Capulet does not know of Juliet's marriage, although the Nurse does, which may account for the strength of her interruption. Popular choices for comment on what is shocking were: Capulet's mockery of Juliet as he repeats her words back to her, his use of insulting, degrading language to describe her, Lady Capulet's attempted intervention and Capulet's scathing dismissal of the Nurse. The best answers supported their choices with quotation from the passage, and analysed language effects precisely and convincingly.

Some answers included supporting quotation but needed to explore the use of language and its effects in more depth. Some of these identified techniques such as repetition and rhetorical questions but needed to analyse how these achieved their effects. Others gave a general account of the content of the scene, rather than focusing on the question of what they found 'shocking'. Some candidates commented on what Capulet found 'shocking', rather than the audience, and so missed the effect of his anger towards Juliet. Some candidates did not know that Juliet is already married.

Other answers responded to the situation rather than the writing. These commented generally and often at length about the nature of patriarchal societies. Some candidates explained the differences between a modern audience's response to the scene and that of an Elizabethan audience, but comments tended to be asserted and general. Detailed analysis of the passage would have been more beneficial.

- (b) Most candidates showed understanding of their chosen characters and their roles in the play, and by extension the significance of their deaths to the plot. Thus, Mercutio was seen as a humorous character, and that his death signals the end of humour in the play, marking a turning point towards the foretold tragedy. Tybalt's character was seen as a symbol of the violence which underpins the play, and that his death is a catalyst for the ultimate deaths of Romeo and Juliet. Paris was seen as an innocent bystander whose death is tragically incidental; all he did was to love Juliet. Romeo did not even know who he had killed. Candidates saw Paris's death as illustrating the unforeseen consequences of the violent feud. Better answers addressed 'powerful' by giving a personal response which was well-rooted in the text. They gave a detailed exploration of how the deaths are presented on stage, with analysis of the writing and the impact on an audience. Thus, the accident of Mercutio's death and his puns were explored, and the shock to the audience and the subsequent rage for revenge engendered in Romeo. The violence of Tybalt's death was established, with Romeo's extreme and violent emotions and his banishment as the consequence. Paris's death was viewed as taking place in confusion and despair in front of a saddened and resigned audience, and his unnecessary death a furtherance of the violence which killed Tybalt with Romeo desperate to see Juliet and ready to cut down all who got in his way.

Some candidates gave an account of the deaths of their chosen characters and stated simply that they felt sorry. They needed to use more detailed textual reference to support their comments and to consider Shakespeare's intent in portraying the deaths. Some candidates confused characters or families; some thought Mercutio was a Montague, and that Paris was a Prince rather than a Count.

A relevant and direct response to 'powerful' improved answers.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

- (a) Good answers showed understanding of Sir Toby's character and the entertaining humour of his drunkenness and the wit of his wordplay. Maria was seen as sensible and that, despite being of lesser social status, she strongly admonishes Sir Toby on his behaviour on Olivia's behalf and demonstrates her own intelligence and wit. Sir Andrew was generally recognised as a buffoon of low intelligence. Most candidates thus showed understanding of the characters and better answers supported comments with quotations from the text. More perceptive answers explored the context of the passage and the interaction between the three characters in detail. Thus, they analysed Sir Andrew's misunderstanding of the word 'accost', the wordplay in 'Belch' and 'Aguecheek', and the significance of Sir Toby's interest in Sir Andrew's three thousand ducats a year. Some described the dramatic build-up of Sir Andrew's intellectual abilities before he appears, followed by the humour of the dramatic let-down as he entertainingly proves this judgement false, with Maria easily getting the better of him.

Some answers commented only on Sir Toby and his drunkenness with little awareness of context or misunderstood the conversation. Others mistook the relationship between Maria and Sir Toby, with some thinking she was already married to him, and a few thinking she was his mother.

- (b) Most candidates were able to explain how Viola's disguise enabled her to appear as a man in Illyria, with some of the consequences of this for the plot, such as that Olivia falls in love with her and she secretly falls in love with Orsino, and so the love triangle is formed. Good answers supported their comments with textual reference. Some candidates focused on this situation and repeated their comments, without further consideration of Viola's disguise. More successful answers explored Viola's reasons for adopting the disguise, such as enabling her to survive on her own without the protection of a family in the male-dominated society. They often considered some of the social freedoms which a male identity gave her, in gaining access to nobles like Orsino and Olivia and talking freely with them. Others saw her disguise as a way of her feeling closer to her twin brother, Sebastian, whom she presumed dead. The audience are aware of Sebastian's survival, and of Viola's disguise, and successful answers often explored the structure of the plot

and Shakespeare's use of dramatic irony as a source of comedy for the audience and confusion for the other characters. A few commented on Feste seeing through the disguise and of Orsino's inability to do so, despite Viola's heavy hints.

Candidates were not expected to be exhaustive in their responses. The best answers selected three or four significant points and developed them to consider some of the deeper implications of Viola's disguise and supported their points with detailed textual reference. Others sometimes confused characters or plot or made a general response to cross-dressing or gender fluidity without much reference to the text.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/31
Drama

Key messages

- The most successful answers included introductions which avoided lengthy historical background or plot summary and focused on a couple of central points in response to the terms of the question.
- Direct quotation from the set passages, or from the text as a whole in answer to discursive questions, is the most effective method of supporting points.
- The strongest responses to passage-based questions considered the content of the scene and the effects of language, structure and form.
- Less successful responses commented on the use of literary techniques or themes, without relating these to the content and context of the passage.
- A personal engagement with the text's characters, ideas and stagecraft shone through in the strongest essays.

General comments

Many introductions wasted valuable time on details of the text's historical context or on a general plot summary. Candidates would be better advised to give a brief outline of the passage's context or to outline their main points in a discursive response. The sooner the candidates begin to answer the question, the better. Too often the time spent on a lengthy introduction meant that a candidate did not write about the final section of the passage, therefore sometimes missing key points and curtailing an otherwise sound response. Whilst the vast majority of candidates showed knowledge of their set texts, many responses remained generalised, without demonstrating detailed knowledge and close reading. This was often revealed by misreading of the passages or in trying to find themes in them, rather than answering the question.

Responses often referred to 'the reader', rather than the audience and an awareness that these texts are written to be performed onstage informed the most successful answers. Knowledge of terminology such as stage directions would have been useful and saved candidates having to waste words writing about 'descriptions inside brackets which explain what the characters are doing'.

The most frustrating answers began with an assertion that a passage 'is dramatic because...' followed by an indiscriminate list of terms such as 'punctuation, words, dialogue, hyperbole.' Whereas in fact the scene in question is dramatic because, for example, a character is about to be executed, arrested, killed in war, engaged in a family conflict or disguised as a member of the opposite sex. Whilst a focus on AO3 is understandable and necessary, this needs to be embedded in the approach to the text rather than as an end in itself. A more successful approach would be to consider the key words in the question, what is happening in the scene and why, and then to explore how the author conveys his or her intentions to the audience.

The strongest answers to discursive questions could muster a range of material from the text as a whole and support points with quotation or very specific textual reference. They could also construct a clear and relevant argument.

There were very few brief answers. Far fewer candidates than in past sessions used the information in the passage to answer the discursive question.

The majority of responses showed knowledge and understanding and an engaged response to their set texts.

Comments on specific questions

LORRAINE HANSBURY: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Question 1

- (a) This question elicited a considerable range of response. Effective answers focused on the intensity caused by the contrast in reactions to Mama's news. The contrast between Ruth's initial shock and uncertainty and her subsequent joy was fully explored, with the strongest answers commenting on the 'sunlight' symbol and on Ruth seeing her unborn baby as a sign of hope rather than despair. Walter's contrasting disappointment and bitterness towards Mama were aptly selected as creating the most powerful moments in the extract. Strong answers also commented on the success of Hansberry's effects in conveying Mama's trepidation at revealing the location of the new house and her anticipation of Walter's disappointment.

Less successful responses were unsure of the context, confused 'intense' with 'tense' and wrote about the themes of the play, such as racism, in general terms. Some did not understand that Walter's disappointment was about the loss of his dream of opening a liquor store and, although some candidates observed the use of pauses and exclamation marks, for example, they could not relate these to the creation of intensity. Some responses made secure points about Ruth but wrote very little about Walter's embittered confrontation with his mother.

- (b) Successful answers avoided a character sketch of Beneatha and wrote either a balanced response or a strong, well-evidenced personal argument as to whether she is dislikeable or not. In her favour candidates cited her 'revolutionary' ideas of racial and gender equality and her search for her African heritage. On the other side of the argument, she was seen as self-centred, argumentative and cruel to her brother. Her disrespectful attitude to religion elicited comment and some candidates considered her arrogant for parading her superior education. Some answers made strong points but could not support them by precise textual reference, thus limiting the extent of their achievement.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

- (a) This was answered competently by most and very well by some. Strong answers understood who Giles was accusing and why and that he had proof in a deposition. The injustice of Danforth's handling of the accusation and the motivation behind his dismissal of the witness statement were understood as not merely because of Putnam's wealth and status, but because Putnam was 'with' the court and not 'against it' and that the court's reputation meant that they could not be seen to be mistaken. Strong answers focused on the sympathy for Giles created in his refusal to name his source and his guilt over his 'naming' of Martha. The effects of the use of dashes, exclamations, colloquialisms and imagery in Giles's speeches were fully explored. More sophisticated responses commented on how the support of characters we trust such as Proctor and even Hale, by this point in the play, encourages us to see Giles as the good and honest man he is, imprisoned by the corrupt and the self-interested.

Less effective answers were distracted by general comments on historical parallels and either did not have a clear understanding of the scene or summarised the reasons for sympathy without exploring the drama of the passage in any detail or giving sufficient support. Most responses, however, showed engagement with the characterisation and were rightly indignant at the behaviour of Putnam, Hathorne and Danforth.

- (b) In contrast to **Question 2(a)**, this was not answered particularly successfully. Some candidates wrote a character sketch of Tituba, without considering her dramatic impact. Others understood her role in the play but could not give any close textual support. Whilst there were apt comments about her status and isolation in the community and her different cultural heritage, few candidates engaged in the powerful drama of the scene in Act One where Abigail uses her as a scapegoat for her own illicit activity and Tituba is threatened with whipping and hanging. Few candidates fully explored the interrogation Tituba was subjected to although some candidates referenced quotations from the scene with Parris and Hale, but then failed to provide sufficient context or comment on language. Some candidates did respond to the question in detail by focusing on the drama when Tituba names the people she has 'seen' with the devil. They commented on Tituba's

desperation in the exchange with Hale and Parris noting the strong pleas. In summary, more precise moments needed evidencing for this question with a direct focus on the drama created.

The more competent responses showed awareness that Tituba starts the witch hunt by accusing others to save her own life because Hale suggests this to her. Many candidates saw her as completely innocent, which in Salem terms is hardly the case as witchcraft was a crime and missed the point that her involvement in conjuring spirits was instigated by Abigail and by Goody Putnam, who are happy for Tituba to take the blame. Some thought she escaped scot-free by naming others, missing the fact that we see her in prison at the end of the play.

RC SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

- (a) Most answers showed understanding of the imminence of the German attack, though many surprisingly did not comment on the subsequent likelihood of all the characters being killed. The strongest responses explored Osborne's repetition, dashes and silences indicating his understanding of what this means for the company, though some misinterpreted this: 'I am glad it's coming at last,' as enthusiasm for war or as a death wish. Many used Trotter's chart to veer off into an account of how the men distracted themselves from the war, losing focus on the question and missing the significance and dark humour of Stanhope's filling it in with a picture of Trotter being blown up. Many ignored the end of the passage or struggled with the image of the worm, though some made some interesting comments on its symbolism.

Question 3

- (b) This was generally answered well. Most answers could draw upon a range of reference exploring the significance of Osborne's nickname, his kindness towards Raleigh and Stanhope and their devastation at his death emphasising what a caring character he was. Those who could refer closely to relevant moments in the play such as his tact in distracting Raleigh from the danger of the raid, his loyalty to Stanhope when Hardy criticises him, his gentle hints to Raleigh that Stanhope is no longer the boy he knew at home, fared well. Those who could only rely on unsupported generalisations were less successful.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

- (a) The main points explored in the more effective answers were: Capulet's concern for Juliet at this point in the play; that the match he approves should be put off for a few years; that Paris should win Juliet's heart; that she has a say in the matter of her marriage. Strong points were made about all this being memorable as it was unusual for the time and because Capulet totally reneges on it later in the play. Paris was seen as 'battering Capulet up', over keen to marry Juliet, but generally polite and honourable in his approach. Few commented, however, on Capulet's riposte 'And too soon marr'd are those so early made'. Several candidates commented on the 'star' image which although referring to the young ladies at the ball, echoed the 'star-crossed lovers' in the prologue and the proleptic irony of the ball arranged for Juliet to meet Paris being the event in which she would meet Romeo. Less successful responses found little to say about Paris or gave unconvincing comments about his being arrogant, greedy and lusty or misplaced the context. Some misread 'What say you to my suit?' as referring to what Paris is wearing and 'within her scope of choice lies my consent' as Capulet not allowing Juliet a choice. The least successful answers wrote about the play in general or outlined the plot rather than focussing on the passage in any detail.

Question 4

- (b) Responses to this question were very much on the side of admiration, commenting on: Friar Lawrence as a helpful father figure, a knowledgeable herbalist, an advisor always ready to help in times of trouble and having the motivation of stopping the feud. Often little concrete textual support was given in evidence. The more successful answers referred to his good advice to Romeo after he was banished and to the risks of the potion plot. Several candidates did point out that his actions, however inadvertent, caused the deaths at the end of the play but did not seem to see this as a cause for criticism. His abandoning Juliet in the tomb was only mentioned by a few candidates

and there were some misconceptions such as his marrying the couple being 'illegal' and his giving Juliet a 'poison' rather than a 'potion'.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

- (a) Responses to this question observed the humour in Malvolio's description of Viola/Cesario and the comedy in Olivia's obvious interest in this messenger, despite her supposedly abjuring the company of men for seven years. Stronger answers pointed out Olivia's coquetry in hiding her identity and in asking Viola so many questions. The dramatic irony of the whole situation and in Viola's 'I am not that I play' was understood.

Less successful responses showed limited understanding of what was taking place and did not refer in any detail to the dialogue between Viola and Olivia.

- (b) Although candidates knew who Maria was and that she tricked Malvolio and married Sir Toby, in general few details were given and little textual support. Those who understood her pivotal role in the sub plot and could support this with some details were more successful. There was a major misconception that Maria is a working class, poor maid, rather than a waiting gentlewoman and although she is not an aristocrat, she is certainly of a higher status than most responses recognised. Most understood that her function is largely comic with the trick on Malvolio being taken too far but without close textual reference these observations remained generalised.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/32
Drama

Key messages

- The most successful responses focused on the key words in the question, sustained the link in the response, and supported ideas with concise quotations which were analysed fully.
- In passage-based questions, successful answers briefly stated the context of the passage and explored the passage itself in some detail.
- Successful answers to discursive questions maintained a tight focus on the question and could refer to specific incidents from across the whole text.
- All questions require a response to the text as drama and an appreciation of the play on stage.

General comments

Candidates showed knowledge and enjoyment of their set texts and understanding of the characters, ideas and themes they contain. The most successful responses showed detailed appreciation of texts, and made perceptive comments on characterisation, stagecraft, mood and tone. The most popular texts were *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Raisin in the Sun* and *The Crucible*. Whilst there was an increase in responses to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, there were still very few responses to R C Sherriff's *Journey's End*. Candidates should be reminded that it is not a productive use of examination time to introduce responses to *The Crucible* with lengthy introductions about the religious, social, and historical background of Salem, or the political context of McCarthyism in the United States in the 1950's, in response to questions on this text. Similarly, questions on to *A Raisin in the Sun*, do not necessitate a general account of racism, feminism or gender inequality.

To write a successful answer, candidates need to deconstruct the question carefully, focusing on the key terms, for example, 'movingly', 'powerfully', 'dramatic', or 'tense' and to sustain a link to the question throughout their answer. Briefly referencing the question in the introduction, or asserting it at the end of the answer, losing focus on the question in the body of the response, is unlikely to achieve high reward. A brief plan to help to select the most important points to include, and the most suitable material to use to support these points, is helpful. Some candidates wrote lengthy, general introductions, summarising the plot or listing irrelevant social, cultural, historical or biographical details of the writer. Others wrote a list of the things to cover including a list of the techniques the writer had used, including punctuation, which they would be analysing in their answer. In an examination with 45 minutes to write a response these are unproductive ways to start an answer. The most successful answers wrote a brief introduction, referencing the question, giving three or four key points developed in detail and supported with brief, well-selected references or quotations, analysing the references fully. In answering a passage-based question, a few sentences to contextualise the passage before exploring the passage itself in detail was helpful in demonstrating a candidate's understanding of the structure of the text.

A less successful approach was where candidates wrote all they knew about a text, or character, without linking it to the specific question. The tendency to retell the plot up to the start of a specific passage, before attempting to focus on the question, and formulaic approaches, where the same point introduced and ended a paragraph, resulted in unnecessary repetition and valuable examination time being wasted. This session there were clear examples of candidates basing their answers on film versions, rather than the printed texts, which was self-penalising as little real understanding of the texts was demonstrated. This was particularly relevant to *Romeo and Juliet*, resulting in some inaccurate details on characters and scenes.

Successful responses demonstrated a constant awareness of the text as drama, referring to the 'audience', rather than 'reader' and the 'play' rather than 'novel', 'text' or 'book', as well as exploring the author's methods to convey the texts' main concerns. The ability to read closely and analyse linguistic and dramatic effects is key to successful responses. Whilst some candidates understood and used literary terminology

correctly, for example, foreshadowing and dramatic irony, there remains the tendency to point out terms, and particularly the use of punctuation, that is not explored in context or helpful in developing an argument constructively. It is unhelpful for candidates to be stating the obvious, that the writer uses, 'language' or 'diction' to convey ideas.

Though there were some brief answers, very few candidates appeared to run out of time. Candidates are reminded not to refer to line numbers instead of quoting from the text.

Centres are reminded that for June 2022 *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Raisin in the Sun* will be replaced by two new texts, Lyn Nottage's *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* and William Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Comments on specific questions

LORRAINE HANSBERRY: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Question 1

- (a) This was a popular text and question but though candidates wrote very well about the relationship, only the most successful focused on the actual terms of the question and explored how Hansberry, 'movingly' portrayed Walter and Ruth's relationship. These candidates read the passage closely and successfully tracked Walter's changes of mood, looking carefully at the language, for example: 'It's been rough, ain't it, baby?' Successful responses appreciated the writer's skill in manipulating the audience's sympathies and used the extensive stage directions to explore the reactions of Walter and Ruth as well as non-lexical features such as ellipses and fragmented syntax. Many candidates were able to identify such features; those who scored highly demonstrated how the writer uses them to convey the characters' feelings. They commented on the poverty and racial issues which led to the tense and strained relationship. The majority recognised the passage's context and the impact that their living conditions had on Walter and his dreams.

Only the most successful candidates were able to link their comments on the way Ruth speaks and moves on stage, for example her tone of weariness, her 'standing and looking at him helplessly' to why this was so moving. Very few understood that Ruth's line, 'I do not know where we lost it' is said 'more or less to herself' and not directly to Walter. The use of context and background also differentiated between candidates. Better answers used it sparingly to inform the situation, for example in respect of Ruth's pregnancy, without losing focus on the passage; weaker ones tended to get side-tracked into the details of the \$10,000 and who wanted it for which reason.

Less successful responses tended to oversimplify the conflict and ignored the terms of the question, often believing the relationship was terminally broken and frequently did not get to the end of the passage where the mood changes. Weaker responses also tended to exaggerate the protagonists' characteristics: Walter's aggression and Ruth's passivity, or her occasional sarcasm, digressing from the passage and simply retelling the plot. There was some misreading of Ruth's comment on going 'into the banking business', with some taking this literally.

- (b) This was far less popular and often disappointingly done with generalised comments on the generation gap. Close focus on how the conflict was so 'powerful' on stage was needed to achieve highly rather than a systematic recall of events. Successful responses explored generational differences and attitudes, and they looked at Beneatha's more modern outlook as opposed to Mama's traditional views. Some candidates took one person's side and expressed dismay about Beneatha's rebellion or Mama's inflexible approach. Some were confused about the cheque, erroneously believing that Mama had favoured Walter and ignored Beneatha's ambitions. Better candidates understood the build up to the clash about Christian beliefs and noted the slap, with some well-selected textual detail and quotation to support this. Other areas covered were their differing opinions on marriage and which of Beneatha's two suitors was most appropriate – George or Asagai. Mama's chastising Beneatha over her treatment of Walter and habit of taking up interests and quickly dropping them, were also featured in these responses. Only the most successful responses recognised Mama's love for all her family and her desire to care for them all, which is the foundation of the relationship, opting to focus entirely on areas of conflict and disagreement.

Weaker responses limited themselves to religious beliefs, and the slap, but then ran out of ideas with some drifting into slavery regarding mama or Beneatha's appearance, and especially her hair,

but without sustaining the link to the question. There was some misunderstanding of Mama not supporting Beneatha's dream to be a doctor and of the way Beneatha wanted the money spending.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

- (a) This was a very popular text and question and produced some of the most successful responses in this series.

To achieve highly, candidates needed to comment on the writing which shows the characters as shocked and behaving in an unexpected way. Stronger candidates were able to analyse and evaluate this extract in depth. There was close focus on stage directions, particularly those associated with Cheever: 'embarrassed', 'carefully' and 'gingerly'. Regarding Proctor there was a focus on 'angrily, bewildered' and his tone of voice. Stronger candidates commented on the use of punctuation, exclamation marks and question marks, to indicate a tone of voice. Elizabeth's ironic tone, Proctor's confusion and anger, Cheever's dramatic retelling of Abigail's performance made the writing full of detail for comment. Most candidates were able to comment on Abigail and her manipulative ways and on Elizabeth's innocence. However, stronger candidates also focused on Hale and his situation in this extract and recognised the implication of this scene in the text. They acknowledged what it revealed about hysteria in Salem, Abigail's capacity for deceit, the escalation of accusations and how logic and sense are being overrun. Cheever's awkward and then animated manner, Hale's ignorance of events, Proctor's assertion and Mary's fear also provided rich material. There were some perceptive comments on language, for example in Cheever initially addressing Elizabeth as 'Goody Proctor' and, after the discovery of the poppet, dramatically as 'woman'. Some of the best work explored Cheever's reaction to the finding of the needle; it is shocking to observe the hold that superstitious fear has on him and responses that quoted his 'wide-eyed trembling' for example, benefited. There was some confusion and uncertainty over Mary's role and how much she knows of Abigail's plan.

In less successful responses there was some confusion regarding 'shocking' with many writing about what was surprising. Weaker responses spent time narrating the events which led up to this moment, retelling the story of the girls and of John Proctor and Abigail's affair or in providing a narrative overview of the passage with little, or no focus, on the question. There was often an overlap between this and **Question 2b** where candidates commented on John Proctor being a fraud. There was much confusion over Mary Warren's position in the Proctor household with some candidates believing she was Proctor's wife and others convinced that she was complicit and had 'planted' the poppet at Abigail's bidding.

- (b) This was less popular and some candidates struggled to define 'fraud' even though it is used in the text. Candidates approached the question in two ways: Proctor's view of himself as a fraud, agreeing or disagreeing or by the candidate/audience examining Proctor and whether they agree or disagree that he is a fraud: either interpretation, of the question was rewarded. There was evidence of previous essays being reproduced here, for example, on Proctor's adultery. Whilst a strong candidate may be able to modify such a response to fit the question, less successful candidates were unable to achieve highly as there was a limited range of textual detail offered. Many candidates agreed that Proctor was a fraud and a hypocrite and, in their view, remained so. The evidence is his infidelity and his reluctance to go to court earlier in the play. His opposition to the witch hunt, his courage and his sacrifice were often ignored altogether. The best answers took a balanced view and embraced Proctor's suffering and his elevation into a tragic hero at the end. All recalled the adultery in detail, and the better ones could reference his rejection of Abigail but also his admission of still being attracted. The most successful responses understood John Proctor's character and his predicament, starting with brief comments on the nature of the society and the pressures which this imposes on men like John Proctor. They were then able to relate and comment on his actions in the light of this. Stronger candidates focused not only on his reputation but his legacy for his sons, recognising how he redeems himself and his integrity. Most candidates concluded that he was a changed man at the end and, as a result, felt that he was not a 'fraud'.

Weaker responses struggled with the main thrust of the question, focusing on his actions, for example, his adultery and his impatience with Elizabeth, rather than his opinion of himself. They adopted a narrative approach, tracing his life from the beginning through to the end and saw him as selfish for dying and leaving his family simply for his 'name', missing the implication of his defaming other innocent people.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

- (a) There were very few responses to this text, and this was the more popular of the two questions. The more successful responses knew the context of the passage, some including reference to the fact Osborne had just given his ring, watch and a letter for his wife to Stanhope as evidence that he feared he would not come back from the raid and showing awareness that the audience knows the danger of the mission. Most were able to demonstrate some knowledge of why the situation was tense as well as some understanding of how Sherriff's writing conveyed this tension on stage. Stronger answers appreciated how Osborne's attempts to calm Raleigh and divert him while having '*one last look at the map*' conveyed the increasing tension. Nearly all were able to comment on how the silence on stage made it tense along with the frequent pauses in their conversation. Better answers noted the way the constant talk of time builds up the tension and explored Raleigh's inability to not talk about it, contrasted with Osborne's tactic of deflecting fear through a focus on banal chat. Some noted Osborne's calmer state contrasted with Raleigh's naïve excitement, and a few able candidates saw the irony in his attempts to play down the danger, while at the same time being the one with the more realistic conception of their chances of survival.

Weaker responses provided narrative accounts of the passage or asserted it was a tense moment and then paraphrased what was being said.

- (b) Too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

- (a) This was the most popular text and question. There were some very impressive responses but also many of the weakest on this paper. Candidates would do well to engage with the opening lines of chosen passages rather than plunging in to the first line spoken by the character referred to in the question. A failure to do so here caused some confusion with the context, with many candidates unaware that Romeo had climbed into the Capulet orchard looking for Juliet, having totally forgotten Rosaline, and being oblivious of his friends looking for him. Many focused on Mercutio and Romeo: writing as if Mercutio was speaking to Romeo as if he were present. Some of these candidates clearly knew about Mercutio as a character but did not focus on the extract. Others found his sexual innuendoes vulgar and concluded Mercutio was a vulgar man without seeing the humour or comic relief he provides in such scenes.

Strong challenges were presented for candidates, principally in terms of Mercutio's bawdy language and innuendos. Some candidates chose to approach this through total avoidance, focusing only on the limited speeches where he is not being crude, or rather disconcertingly going to the other extreme and giving the full anatomical details. Better answers recognised Mercutio the entertainer, the cynic, and the reckless danger-seeker happy to be shouting at the top of his voice right beside the property of the enemies of the Montagues. There were also some very good answers from candidates who were confident even with Mercutio's most obscure utterances and detected the note of concern and affection under his mockery. These answers showed understanding of the realism and cynicism about love, though at times, they were very contemporary in their discussion of Mercutio's 'objectification' of women.

Less successful responses were very general with little supporting textual reference. Some acknowledged the sexual nature of Mercutio's language but either became too concerned with analysing the literal meanings or became very confused by the language. Some did recognise how Romeo's love for Rosaline is being mocked. The ones who only took the 'good friend to Romeo' approach struggled to convince as their attitudes to love are diametrically opposed, as better candidates pointed out.

The weakest answers were uncertain about where we are in the plot, thinking that Romeo is still in pursuit of Rosaline or that Mercutio is already aware of his switch of allegiance. Other weaknesses included not focusing enough on the passage and mistaking Mercutio's tone for one of disdain rather than affection. It seemed that some candidates had watched films and had a general idea of Mercutio's character but had not studied the text closely.

- (b) Those who understood the social context of Lady Capulet and recognised the contrast provided by The Nurse, who is far more motherly, did well, citing the early scene when Lady Capulet needs the presence of The Nurse to raise the issue of marriage. Successful answers showed knowledge and understanding of how the patriarchal society in which Lady Capulet lived, and the fact that she was also married young, possibly impacted on how she was expected to behave. Many criticised her for having a wet nurse; some simply criticised her lack of knowledge of Juliet's love for Romeo and her lack of defending Juliet against her father's outrage only knowing her lines '*I would the fool were married to her grave*' or '*I have done with thee*'. The best candidates knew she had attempted to calm her husband down '*Fie, fie, what, are you mad?*' Some accused her of putting on a melodramatic act when Juliet has 'died' rather than genuine grief on the death of her only daughter. Those who argued that theirs was a cold and distant relationship provided evidence of understanding. Some, however, argued she was a wonderful mother and took Juliet's wishes into account. The best responses focused on the '*How far...?*' of the question and wrote a balanced response. Of all the questions on the paper this was one where knowledge of a film version, rather than knowledge of the printed text, resulted in some inaccurate details on characters and scenes.

Weaker answers were very general and vague, with little, if any, textual support. Some candidates misinterpreted the question and seemed to feel obliged to present Lady Capulet as caring. These responses struggled to present a strong case and focused on small details such as the fact that Lady Capulet often calls for Juliet. They often confused Lady Capulet with the Nurse and spent time narrating the events of the play. There was considerable misreading in the answers to the question for example, many weaker candidates stating that Lady Capulet knew about Juliet's marriage to Romeo.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

- (a) In general candidates understood the question and what was required. To achieve highly candidates had to bring in what makes this moment 'satisfying', focusing on individual characters and their reactions to the revelations in the scene as well as exploring the end of the plot. The most impressive responses tended to focus on Viola - and to a lesser extent Sebastian - whose personalities and histories did evoke some sympathy and whose happy ending did persuade some candidates to feel a sense of satisfaction. Awareness of the genre and romantic comedies resulting in happy endings was a feature of the best responses with some perceptive comments on the fact that though a comedy, Malvolio does not have a happy ending – although he does not appear in the extract. There was also understanding of the slow build-up of Viola's revelation and the dramatic tension created.

Stronger candidates focused on particular aspects of the ending and commented on the impact that having everyone on stage would have on the audience. Most focused on the reunion of the twins, some on the reunion of Antonio and Sebastian, and some, in great depth, on the forthcoming marriage of Viola and Orsino. Most candidates were aware of the love triangle and how this was the resolution of the confusion which this had caused. A few candidates attempted an analysis of Shakespeare's critique of society's attitude to same sex relationships being prohibited, considering Antonio being left out, and Orsino's true attraction to the 'Boy' Viola being an affirmation of same sex love.

Weaker candidates adopted a narrative approach to this question. Many told the story of the whole play leading up to this point so that they could then explain in detail how all the loose ends are tied up. They did not focus on how it was 'satisfying' except for the fact that the ending was happy.

- (b) This was not as popular as the passage question but most of those who did attempt were able to demonstrate varying degrees of textual knowledge and understanding. Awareness of the genre of the play and how the audience is positioned to see characters as comic or tragic, inviting mockery or pathos, rather than seeing them as real people but constructs, would have enhanced many responses. Although most started well, citing the first lines of Act 1 Scene 1, many became narrative in approach. Orsino is much absent from the play except for in the early and late stages and is not a prime mover in the plot so weaker candidates found it hard to find material. They also found it difficult to engage with what Orsino represents in terms of the excesses of Courtly Love or detect any satirical purpose in his presentation. The most successful responses recognised the

self-absorbed love exhibited by Orsino and his arrogant assumption that a man's love is deeper, often saying that he is in love with the idea of being in love and he does not really love Olivia. They commented on the deficiencies in his wooing technique and occasionally his rather theatrical approach.

Some candidates argued that Orsino was self-centred in his continued efforts which ignored Olivia's grieving for her brother's death and were critical of his continued sending of messengers; many argued that his sudden about turn at the end of the play was evidence of his homo-erotic tendencies, especially as he refers to Viola as 'Boy' rather than by her name. The imagery of music as food and the hart/heart were explored by the best candidates and the final shift in affection was well referenced. Stronger candidates also explored his and Olivia's characters and explored his sudden change of mind and impact which this had on his relationship with Olivia. Some candidates did try, unsuccessfully in most cases, to explore Orsino's love for Olivia in terms of the love triangle. Quite a few argued that he was quite well-matched in his love for Olivia as they both behaved rather '*stupidly*' and because of this they felt that he did not deserve Viola at the end of the play.

Weaker responses were narrative with many starting with '*If music be the food of love...*'. but not showing understanding of the language. Some weaker candidates then focused on Orsino and music in their answers without giving specific detail. There were some comments on reasons to doubt his love and the fact that he sends messages to Olivia but does not visit her himself and, how swiftly he transfers his love from Olivia to Viola. The weakest responses merely narrated the course of his wooing and eventual marriage to Viola.

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Drama

Key messages

Strong introductions show understanding of the scope of the question by addressing its terms, offering an indication of the points to be included in the answer and avoiding general comments on the background of the text and author.

Good answers address the question covering a range of three or four relevant and developed points and support them with detailed textual support, often in the form of brief, memorised quotations.

Passage-based answers need to briefly establish the context of the passage, to make a range of three or four relevant and developed points and to focus in detail on the effects of the writing.

In reply to discursive answers, candidates should select the most relevant material from the whole text with which to support a range of three or four directly relevant and developed points.

All answers can be boosted by candidates showing understanding of the text as performed on stage, by analysing the effects of drama such as: interaction between characters, conflict, action, setting and strategic entrances or exits.

General comments

Most candidates responded well to their set text. They knew the characters and plot thoroughly and engaged with the ideas and themes presented by the playwrights. When answering a question, stronger candidates selected the most pertinent points from their knowledge and understanding of the text and supported them by selecting the most relevant textual material. Less organised candidates tried to write down everything they knew about a text, whether relevant to the question or not, and as a result were rarely able to develop points. Candidates often showed their enjoyment of the text in some lively personal responses to characters' predicaments.

Good answers acknowledged features of the genre and explored what was revealed by the interaction between characters on stage. In some passages, setting made a key contribution to the audience's understanding of the text, and perceptive candidates analysed the effects of staging such as action, lighting and sound to consider their contribution to meaning. Candidates often usefully cited stage directions as an indication of a character's emotion and the author's intent. Some candidates made unconvincing comments on the audience's response to the use of punctuation in stage directions or speech. While punctuation such as exclamation marks or ellipses can indicate to actors how to say a line, for example with heightened emotion, the audience can not see punctuation or respond directly to it, and so candidates' comments always need to focus on the meaning and delivery of speeches rather than to analyse punctuation in isolation.

More candidates this session made a response to the structure of their selected play. Often their comments showed an overview of the text and then referred in detail to the author's intent in using such elements as: a contrast of tones between scenes, an increase in tension leading to dramatic climax, and the resolution of problems. Some candidates successfully considered the use of foreshadowing by exploring its effects on audience response, such as: raising suspense, creating unease or curiosity about a character or event, or developing a theme. Other answers identified foreshadowing without considering its effects.

Answers to passage-based questions always benefitted from briefly stating the context of the passage. Some candidates narrated the plot in too much depth; a balance needs to be struck. Strong responses considered the writing of the passage in detail, to explore how the author achieves their effects through such

means as: the setting, the tone of the dialogue, the type of interaction between characters, and their actions and emotions. The best responses clearly stated how their findings answered the question. Candidates needed to read to the end of the passage and to select the most relevant parts to support their answer. Others lost focus on the question and needed to analyse the writing of the passage, rather than referring generally to textual themes.

There were some clearly reasoned and engaged responses. These candidates showed well-developed and often perceptive views of the text and of the author's intent. They referred to relevant, carefully selected and detailed textual material in support of their points and addressed the question throughout. Some candidates lost focus on the question and text and wrote at length of their personal views on such issues as patriarchal power, violence in cities, the role of women in society, gender fluidity and the management of pandemics. Personal response needs to be a response to the text, informed by the text and how the author communicates their ideas, rather than a general discourse of the candidate's opinions of modern society.

There were very few rubric infringements this session. Some candidates needed to number their answers more clearly to avoid confusion.

Comments on specific questions

LORRAINE HANSBERRY: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Question 1

- (a) Good answers explored a range of points about the relationship, quoted from the passage in support, and addressed 'vividly' by analysing language use. They established the context of the relationship at the start by stating that Asagai is an African character in America. As Asagai makes clear in the passage, he was first attracted to Beneatha by her inquisitiveness in her identity as an African-American. This reveals the significance of his gift of traditional African robes, and her excessive delight in them, vividly conveyed in her broken speech, indicated by ellipses, as she is overcome with gratitude.

Most candidates explored the couple's attraction to each other, with supporting text. Many commented on how Asagai readily judges Beneatha's appearance and his attitude to assimilation. A few perceptive candidates considered that Asagai delights in his superior role as her self-appointed teacher and holds traditional views on the status of women; they pointed out that he belittles her with 'little thing' and thinks 'For a woman it should be enough' to feel sexual attraction to a man. Candidates noted that Beneatha was attracted to Asagai because he is African and gives her expensive gifts. Asagai's African culture is vividly conveyed on stage by his dramatic Yoruban exclamation. Stronger answers noted that his deliberate efforts to be charming actually put her on her guard and that Beneatha shows her fierce independence at the end with her determination not to be 'someone's little episode in America'.

Other answers often focused on one aspect of the passage, such as the robes or Beneatha's hair, with little comment on the relationship. Some weaker answers wrote at length on assimilation rather than the relationship. Other answers made a range of points but needed to support them with detailed textual reference. A feature of higher-achieving answers was a direct response to 'vividly' in an analysis of the effects of language use.

- (b) Successful answers covered a range of different points and supported them with well-selected reference to the text. These considered the significance of the move for each member of the family and commented on the strain of living in their worn-out apartment infested with vermin, with no space for Travis let alone the new baby. Some perceptive candidates explored the courage of the Younger family in facing not only white discrimination, but also the resentment of their peers, such as Mrs Johnstone with her story of 'bombings' of black families. Candidates' response to 'strikingly' tended to refer to striking dramatic episodes in the family's lives, such as when Walter loses the money, Travis catches the rat, or Ruth faints; and the strongest answers showed understanding of how Hansberry uses the drama to convey significance. Several commented on the symbolism of Mama's plant, with stronger answers showing understanding of how it struggles to survive on the windowsill, desperate for the nourishment of light and fresh air, like the family themselves. Some considered how Hansberry conveys the family's hope for their future in the garden at the new house, which provides the environment for the family to flourish as well as Mama's plant.

Less detailed answers focused on only one or two characters, usually Mama or Walter, and tended to recount Mama's purchase of the house and Walter's loss of the money. Lindner was sometimes the main focus, but some candidates struggled to move beyond a narrative account; the best were those who saw him as a symbol of white suppression and who recognised his sinister approach to the family despite his outward charm. Other more general answers needed specific textual support.

ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

- (a) Strong answers established the context of the passage. It is now autumn and Tituba and Sarah have been imprisoned since the spring; they were the first to be accused of witchcraft and put in jail; they are not due to be hanged, because they confessed rather than lose their lives. This context provides significance to the prisoners' plight here and by extension, suggests similar experiences of the many accused in Salem, setting the scene for Proctor and others to come. The best answers explored the opening stage directions and commented in detail on the effects of the dark, oppressive imagery and the stark setting of the cell which 'appears empty', while Sarah is reduced to 'a bundle of rags' (contrasting with the 'greatcoats' at the end). These candidates recognised the insanity in Tituba and Sarah and explored in detail how it is presented in their disturbing speech. They considered reasons for Herrick's drunkenness and his indulgence of the women's fantasies. A few perceptive candidates saw the irony in Salem being 'too cold' for 'that Old Boy' who 'freezes his soul in Massachusetts'.

Some candidates successfully addressed 'memorable' with their personal response to the plight of the prisoners and showed how Miller's writing encouraged sympathy. Others thought the bleak setting was memorable because of how it mirrors the bleakness of outlook for the inhabitants of Salem and for the outcomes of future trials. Others thought the portrayal of Tituba's insanity to be memorable because it highlights her harmlessness and brings into question the legitimacy of the witchcraft charges. These responses were enhanced by candidates giving a relevant reason for their comments and supporting them from the text.

Some answers only provided a general overview of what was happening in the passage. These needed to quote from the passage and to consider the writer's use of language. Some candidates were confused about who Tituba and Sarah were and thought they were about to be hanged. Others spent too long explaining the history of the witch trials or McCarthyism, rather than analysing the passage.

- (b) Successful answers built up a comprehensive picture of Abigail's dishonesty through the play by covering a range of her lies, such as: the conjuring of the charm in the woods, the poppet, the yellow bird, and her theft of Parris's money at the end. These answers often explored Abigail's motives for lying, originally to try to prolong her affair with John Proctor. They showed how Abigail is able to respond quickly to people and situations as they evolve, thus manipulating the court officers and judge as readily as her girlfriends. Better answers responded to 'vividly' in depth using quotation to support and illustrate points on the use of language, which often creates vivid drama to startle the audience, such as with the yellow bird.

Some candidates offered a thoughtful personal response to Abigail's behaviour. While some considered she was clever in getting her way and enjoyed the power of manipulating people, others saw her early childhood trauma as partly to blame for her readiness to threaten and inflict violence, and some considered that she copied her uncle, Parris, in their selfish regard for their own desires. Where these views were supported by reference to the text, they boosted the answer.

Basic answers often ran through a list of Abigail's lies and said this showed her dishonesty. Others focused narrowly on a single lie, often the dancing in the woods from the start of the play and gave a narrative account of how Abigail orders her friends to cover up their activities.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

- (a) Good answers recognised how Raleigh's youth and inexperience are revealed by Sherriff, most commenting that he makes it clear at the start of the passage in the reference to his age as 'about eighteen' and to his 'very new uniform' which has clearly not been much worn. They analysed the

interaction between Raleigh and Osborne to show how Raleigh's inexperience is revealed in his uncertainty over what to do and hesitancy in his speech. Thus they commented on how Osborne has to tell him to sit down, and to take his pack off, and how to address him; and how Raleigh hesitates to accept the whisky 'Er – well –'. More perceptive candidates considered Raleigh's desire to please, as he tries to do what is acceptable, such as drinking and smoking, and some recognised the significance of Raleigh's enthusiastic 'brightening' at the mention of Stanhope, and how Raleigh's youthful hero-worship of Stanhope is revealed: in his language – 'big fellows', admiration of Stanhope's sporting prowess, concern at how to address him, his pleasure at being sent to serve in Stanhope's company.

Some answers gave an account of the passage without addressing the question. Others focused on Osborne rather than Raleigh or wrote generally about life in the trenches. Some needed to quote from the passage to support points, while others needed to respond more directly to the effects of the writing.

- (b) Successful answers established the upsetting context of Osborne's death in a high-risk raid, in daylight. The enemy knew where they would cross the wire, since it was specially cut the day before – the enemy had even tied red rags to the sides of the gap as a warning. Yet the raid goes ahead and Osborne is chosen by the colonel to go on the raid because he is 'very level-headed', and as such will be missed by all the company. Good candidates commented on how Sherriff raises tension and emotions as the dramatic noises of the raid are heard offstage, and that the audience's fears are confirmed by Raleigh's stunned and dramatic reappearance on stage without Osborne. Some perceptive candidates considered that his death is made upsetting by the irony of the minimal information obtained from the German soldier for the price of seven men's lives, and by the colonel's inappropriate excitement at the capture of the German, and how he belittles the loss of life by his concern over unimportant matters such as whether he has 'fish for supper'.

Some perceptive answers commented on the effects of the staging. The pathos of Osborne's death is dramatically emphasised by the focus on his ring, watch and his bed – all that's left of his life in the company. They saw that the shock and grief of the soldiers is concentrated in the reactions of Stanhope, who is deeply affected as he is 'staring dumbly' and drinks 'to forget', while Raleigh stares at his own bleeding hands and can not eat anything in his shock. Some saw that Osborne's death foreshadows the avoidable death of all the soldiers.

Other answers gave an account of the circumstances of the raid and retold what happened rather than addressing how Sherriff makes Osborne's death so upsetting. Some answers needed to use more detailed textual support for their points. A few confused the raid with the big attack, which comes at the end of the play.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

- (a) There were some excellent responses showing clear critical understanding of the text. These started by establishing the context, that Juliet was already married to Romeo, and the Capulets had wanted to bring forward her wedding to Paris as a way of helping her cope with her grief at Tybalt's death. Some compared Capulet's earlier calm and considered approach to the match with his explosive urgency in this scene. Capulet does not know of Juliet's marriage, although the Nurse does, which may account for the strength of her interruption. Popular choices for comment on what is shocking were: Capulet's mockery of Juliet as he repeats her words back to her, his use of insulting, degrading language to describe her, Lady Capulet's attempted intervention and Capulet's scathing dismissal of the Nurse. The best answers supported their choices with quotation from the passage, and analysed language effects precisely and convincingly.

Some answers included supporting quotation but needed to explore the use of language and its effects in more depth. Some of these identified techniques such as repetition and rhetorical questions but needed to analyse how these achieved their effects. Others gave a general account of the content of the scene, rather than focusing on the question of what they found 'shocking'. Some candidates commented on what Capulet found 'shocking', rather than the audience, and so missed the effect of his anger towards Juliet. Some candidates did not know that Juliet is already married.

Other answers responded to the situation rather than the writing. These commented generally and often at length about the nature of patriarchal societies. Some candidates explained the differences between a modern audience's response to the scene and that of an Elizabethan audience, but comments tended to be asserted and general. Detailed analysis of the passage would have been more beneficial.

- (b) Most candidates showed understanding of their chosen characters and their roles in the play, and by extension the significance of their deaths to the plot. Thus, Mercutio was seen as a humorous character, and that his death signals the end of humour in the play, marking a turning point towards the foretold tragedy. Tybalt's character was seen as a symbol of the violence which underpins the play, and that his death is a catalyst for the ultimate deaths of Romeo and Juliet. Paris was seen as an innocent bystander whose death is tragically incidental; all he did was to love Juliet. Romeo did not even know who he had killed. Candidates saw Paris's death as illustrating the unforeseen consequences of the violent feud. Better answers addressed 'powerful' by giving a personal response which was well-rooted in the text. They gave a detailed exploration of how the deaths are presented on stage, with analysis of the writing and the impact on an audience. Thus, the accident of Mercutio's death and his puns were explored, and the shock to the audience and the subsequent rage for revenge engendered in Romeo. The violence of Tybalt's death was established, with Romeo's extreme and violent emotions and his banishment as the consequence. Paris's death was viewed as taking place in confusion and despair in front of a saddened and resigned audience, and his unnecessary death a furtherance of the violence which killed Tybalt with Romeo desperate to see Juliet and ready to cut down all who got in his way.

Some candidates gave an account of the deaths of their chosen characters and stated simply that they felt sorry. They needed to use more detailed textual reference to support their comments and to consider Shakespeare's intent in portraying the deaths. Some candidates confused characters or families; some thought Mercutio was a Montague, and that Paris was a Prince rather than a Count.

A relevant and direct response to 'powerful' improved answers.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

- (a) Good answers showed understanding of Sir Toby's character and the entertaining humour of his drunkenness and the wit of his wordplay. Maria was seen as sensible and that, despite being of lesser social status, she strongly admonishes Sir Toby on his behaviour on Olivia's behalf and demonstrates her own intelligence and wit. Sir Andrew was generally recognised as a buffoon of low intelligence. Most candidates thus showed understanding of the characters and better answers supported comments with quotations from the text. More perceptive answers explored the context of the passage and the interaction between the three characters in detail. Thus, they analysed Sir Andrew's misunderstanding of the word 'accost', the wordplay in 'Belch' and 'Aguecheek', and the significance of Sir Toby's interest in Sir Andrew's three thousand ducats a year. Some described the dramatic build-up of Sir Andrew's intellectual abilities before he appears, followed by the humour of the dramatic let-down as he entertainingly proves this judgement false, with Maria easily getting the better of him.

Some answers commented only on Sir Toby and his drunkenness with little awareness of context or misunderstood the conversation. Others mistook the relationship between Maria and Sir Toby, with some thinking she was already married to him, and a few thinking she was his mother.

- (b) Most candidates were able to explain how Viola's disguise enabled her to appear as a man in Illyria, with some of the consequences of this for the plot, such as that Olivia falls in love with her and she secretly falls in love with Orsino, and so the love triangle is formed. Good answers supported their comments with textual reference. Some candidates focused on this situation and repeated their comments, without further consideration of Viola's disguise. More successful answers explored Viola's reasons for adopting the disguise, such as enabling her to survive on her own without the protection of a family in the male-dominated society. They often considered some of the social freedoms which a male identity gave her, in gaining access to nobles like Orsino and Olivia and talking freely with them. Others saw her disguise as a way of her feeling closer to her twin brother, Sebastian, whom she presumed dead. The audience are aware of Sebastian's survival, and of Viola's disguise, and successful answers often explored the structure of the plot

and Shakespeare's use of dramatic irony as a source of comedy for the audience and confusion for the other characters. A few commented on Feste seeing through the disguise and of Orsino's inability to do so, despite Viola's heavy hints.

Candidates were not expected to be exhaustive in their responses. The best answers selected three or four significant points and developed them to consider some of the deeper implications of Viola's disguise and supported their points with detailed textual reference. Others sometimes confused characters or plot or made a general response to cross-dressing or gender fluidity without much reference to the text.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/41
Unseen

Key messages

- Successful responses addressed the question and all four Assessment Objectives.
- AO1: The best answers integrate short quotations to show detailed knowledge.
- AO2: Planned responses show good understanding of the whole text.
- AO3: It is important to explore the effects of language and imagery, and not simply identify devices.
- AO4: Good personal responses show both literal and metaphorical understanding of the text.

General comments

Examiners saw the full range of achievement and were impressed by many strong, interesting and original responses to the texts. As has become a trend, the prose passages are much more popular, and almost as many candidates chose to write on them as the poetry. Candidates are also acquiring better analytical tools for writing about the choices authors make in prose as well as poetry. This is very encouraging, as is the growing quality of introductory paragraphs, and the sense that more candidates are planning their responses before they write. Candidates are also using the rubric and bullet points to help them to avoid errors of understanding and structure their answers. All these points suggest that recent Principal Examiners' Reports have been carefully read and their learning points absorbed. Most candidates were able to construct responses to the question, showing understanding of how to make good use of the bullet points, use supporting quotations, organise paragraphs and present some personal response.

This paper is a good ultimate test of the skills of close reading and critical understanding which candidates should have acquired throughout their Literature course. It is worth re-emphasising that strong answers need to address all four Assessment Objectives, and that the stem question (in bold) is carefully constructed to encourage them to do so. The question asks for: analysis of the writer's methods, understanding of the writer's conscious purpose, close reading of each stage or section of the text, (strongly supported by brief quotation); and personal response to the effects of the writing, ideas and tone on the reader, highlighted by adjectives or adverbs such as 'dramatic' or 'strikingly'. Candidates are now much better at identifying the key words in the stem question; most also find the bullet points useful in structuring their response. However, it is not necessary to repeat the question at the beginning of the answer or to repeat terms from the question to show understanding. Candidates should not be afraid of giving a personal opinion instead of writing what they think is the 'right' answer. Examiners are used to considering alternative interpretations.

Good use of quotation is the key to AO1. The best answers integrate quotations throughout their response and thereby show a detailed reading. All candidates could be encouraged to make better use of the text by frequent quotation but should keep their quotations short and integrated within their arguments. The quotations should relate to the meaning of the text, the writer's intentions, the methods they use and their effect on the reader. Candidates do not need to read either poetry or prose line by line, but they should show knowledge and understanding of each part of the passage and reflect on both literal and figurative meaning.

Most candidates understand AO2 requires them to go beyond surface meaning and explore the deeper implications of the text. The question points them in the right direction and the rubric is intended to prevent any serious misunderstandings. Most candidates know they need to avoid paraphrase or a simple narrative reading of the surface of the text and explore deeper feelings and implied meaning. Examiners would discourage candidates from positing a purely theoretical reading of a text (particularly, a poem's) 'deeper implications.' When a response becomes overly conjectural it tends to lose sight of the text itself and thereby lose marks, even if the candidate was working quite hard to develop their own response. We do not choose texts with allegorical or 'hidden meanings' so it should be possible to deduce implicit meaning from the surface of the text, its structure, its language, its imagery and its effect on the reader.

Understanding is best demonstrated by an effective plan. There is a real benefit in candidates taking some time to plan their response and think through the text before committing to paper. This can prevent common pitfalls such as not finishing or changing your mind about the text's meaning halfway through a response. In this session, many relatively short answers received high marks because the candidates had achieved a clear critical understanding of the text and what they wanted to say about it, before beginning to write. These candidates had planned their responses to comment on the whole text by writing selectively but with plenty of development on the writer's purpose and key uses of language.

AO3 is very much about the way writers use language, structure and form to make and shape meanings and effects. It therefore is not enough simply to identify features, especially in an introductory paragraph, without comment on their effect on the reader and how they shape an overall interpretation of the text. Candidates should not overlook imagery in the search for more sophisticated uses of language. The texts chosen are likely to demonstrate an effective and powerful use of similes, metaphors and/or personification. Part of the process of planning should be highlighting the writer's use of imagery and integrating comment on the effect of imagery within a personal response. Awareness of genre and form has grown considerably in recent sessions, and the introductory rubric often helps to establish the relationship between the text and its genre. Poetic structure is well understood but there is scope for more candidate knowledge of prose structure. There is much more to structure than dialogue and paragraphs: choice of perspective and tenses, narrative voice, foreshadowing, chronology and flashback are all relevant. Tone and mood are as important in prose as in poetry. However, prose writers do not use enjambment or caesura. Poets use syntax as well as rhythm, and to read for meaning it is crucial to read beyond the ending of each line and understand the way punctuation is used in poetry. The key to progression to the higher Bands in the mark scheme is more developed and analytical comment on details of language and their effect. It is better to deal with a few effects in depth than to be exhaustive but superficial.

AO4 is integral to a good answer and does not require a separate paragraph of speculation either about 'hidden meaning' or what the surface narrative of the text means to the individual candidate. Moralising conclusions are happily now much more unusual. Personal response is closely linked to the understanding of deeper implications, which are themselves suggested by the text itself and the developed analysis of language, imagery and techniques. Candidates' answers make a strong impression when the candidate has something to say about the writer's purpose and how effectively it is communicated to the reader. Most have clearly been taught to write essays with introductions and conclusions, but the former still tend to be more satisfactory than the latter, which often merely restated the question and summarised the response. The best conclusions often contained quotations and comments, nailing their insight into the overall effect of the entire poem or passage. Finally, many candidates quote and comment on language, but without hazarding an interpretation of the text as a whole. Higher marks are gained by grasping the nettle and trying to make sense of ambiguous language, using quotation to drive interpretation of mood, meaning and impact on the reader. Most candidates are aware that the bullet points are a very helpful way of structuring their responses and they should also understand that the final bullet point usually encourages a personal evaluation of the way the text ends. Candidates should ask themselves what they feel at the end of the text, and how the writing has encouraged them to explore those feelings.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A range of achievement was seen in response to 'The House' by Robert Minhinnick, which many candidates found accessible. Most candidates made purposeful use of the bullet points to help them structure their answers and many recognised the poet's apparent intention to beguile readers by the simple title of the poem, 'The House', before surprising them with descriptions which appeared to turn the house into some sort of human-gobbling monster. Candidates often engaged more with the metaphorical elements of the poem than the realism of the earlier stanzas. These candidates often recognised some features of personification throughout the poem starting with the wires 'twisting', then the electric current 'that will not come', the obdurately silent house refusing to offer any 'clue'; before morphing into a greedy swallower of all previous inhabitants. Many candidates felt that the house had killed the speaker or that the speaker was unable to escape from the loft for some reason and joined the dust of previous 'owners' for future 'owners' to find. Some candidates expressed surprise at the persona's apparent fascination with the 'faces of those who once called/This house home' and there were many inventive, if not consistently convincing, interpretations of what the 'faces' represent. Some candidates imagined that the faces were actually old photographs or portraits of previous inhabitants, some thought they were ghostly manifestations and some thought there were actual human remains in the attic. Less ghoulish interpretations referred to the 'dust' as being some

form of detritus from previous inhabitants, some cited the adage of 'dust unto dust' to suggest a sort of natural disintegration of all material things stored in the attic by earlier owners.

Some reasonable responses were seen from candidates who worked doggedly through the stanzas.

Such candidates noted, for example, the poet's use of contrast between light and darkness in the first stanza where the poet's torch illuminated the 'darkness' and in stanzas four and five where the 'yellow cylinder' reveals 'shapes' but is unable to resist its 'blade of light' being swallowed. They noted the imagery and language associated with combat or warfare: 'This challenge', 'the merciless current', 'Matching myself', 'territory', 'fought over', 'Warfare', and 'blade'. Some identified the speaker as a hero, a lone warrior, determined to establish 'permanence', yet opposed by an unlikely adversary against whom he is powerless to resist.

Some candidates thought the speaker's attempts to achieve anything at all in the poem rather pitiful. They supported this viewpoint by citing the speaker's inability to achieve either of his stated intentions, whether to restore the electricity in the attic or to 'establish his 'permanence''. Some of these candidates recognised the limited 'actions' that the speaker reported having made in the course of the poem. His actions are by no means decisive: 'I lie' in stanza one (passive), 'I have cursed', in stanza two (responsive), 'I must establish' in stanza 3 (intentional but not achieved), no 'action' is mentioned at all in stanza 4, 'I stare' (responsive) in stanza 5 before unresistingly being 'swallowed' (no action) in the final line. Having made these observations, some candidates were of the opinion that the speaker was no 'match' for the house at all, because his only defence/means of attack against his opponent was the 'frail/Blade of light' which did not equip him for victory.

There were some interesting ideas about the speaker 'matching himself' against the house, although some candidates believed that the speaker and the house were both fifty years old, with some concerned candidates feeling that 'fifty' was too old to be 'crawling about in the roof space'. Several candidates showed concern for the state of the speaker's back and/or calves after three hours of 'crouching'. Some candidates found the poem more perplexing. Some confused the notion of 'attic' with the notion of 'cellar' and imagined the speaker toiling away in a basement found to be the burial place of previous inhabitants. Some did not understand exactly what the 'current' was and there were references to air-conditioning having 'packed up'. Many more literal-minded candidates offered a critique on the speaker's skills at DIY tasks and offered hints about not attempting such a task without help. Some literal responses were seen where candidates appeared unaware of the strange properties of the house. They attributed the 'sweat' turning to 'ice' to the air-conditioning finally 'kicking in'. The 'faces of those who used to call this house home' belonged, in the minds of some candidates, to nosy or friendly past residents checking in to see who would now live in their previous home.

Better answers focused on the third bullet point and addressed the ways in which the speaker's thoughts about the past residents had an effect upon him. Here, some thoughtful candidates considered the speaker's reflection upon his own mortality when matched against the house, having ruminated on the 'shapes from life/That have served their time'. Several candidates considered this to be a reference to a prison-term, of sorts, and by implication suggested that life itself is either a process of 'unremarkable/Warfare' or else some form of prison-term with death as the only release. Most candidates noted the form of the poem, divided into five stanzas, but relatively few looked more closely at the way the poem evolves. Many candidates noted the use of enjambment. Of these, only better answers contained an attempt to explain what effect the verse form had in helping a reader interpret the text.

Some candidates wrote about the different senses referred to and they commented on the poet's use of time. Some mentioned, for example, the contrast between the speaker's 'three hours' in the attic as opposed to the 'fifty years' of the house. Some also noted the fluidity of tenses as the poet begins the poem in the immediate present, reflects on the cursing that the speaker has done and speculates on a future beyond, establishing his 'own permanence'. Ultimately time stops as the house has swallowed him.

Recognition of the shifting tone of the poem from frustration to determination, to fear, to fascination, to acceptance, often differentiated candidates. A minority of candidates seemed unprepared for the challenges of an unseen poem, and they were unable to do more than write in very general terms about a man trying to tackle an electrical problem. Many candidates worked their way through the poem in a methodical, slightly mechanical way, but better candidates did not start to write until they had worked out at least something of the meaning and deeper implications of the poem.

Question 2

The prose passage from Ian McEwan's novel *Saturday* (2005) attracted almost as many responses as the poetry and most candidates found Perowne's situation both engrossing and accessible. Although some very brief responses were seen, many of the candidates who chose this passage wrote full answers and revealed varying degrees of sensitivity to the writing. Many clearly enjoyed the passage, were stimulated by the author's creation of tension and were drawn to Perowne's predicament as a likely victim of the wrath of the BMW's driver and passengers. There were many sensitive responses where candidates revealed a secure understanding of Perowne's initial reaction to the crash. They noted his tendency to analyse and over-think his situation.

In good answers, candidates identified the third person limited narrative perspective and noted that it only focused on Perowne's inner thoughts and perspective, offering no insights into the thoughts or intentions of the 'three men'. Many candidates were swayed by Perowne's prejudice against the drivers of BMW 5 Series cars, and they identified the black suits worn by the 'three men' as a further sign of criminality and 'mafia-style' activities. It was also legitimate to question his prejudices and responses. In good answers, candidates noted the very slow accumulation of detail in the initial paragraph. The writer describes the opening, in turn, of each of the individual doors of the car, watched by Perowne as he plans his strategy. Candidates mentioned the writer's reference to the passing of the 'half-minute' lending a 'game-like' quality to the passage. In good answers there was an acknowledgement, also, that the omniscient author knew what the three men's 'reasons for holding back' were, but chose not to disclose them to the reader at this point, adding to the tension. The very notion of 'holding back' suggested to some that when that purposeful delay was over, retribution would be 'sudden' and, possibly, violent.

Most candidates picked up on the vocabulary associated with gaming or battlefield strategies – 'calculations', 'confrontation', 'ground rules', 'tactical', and 'disadvantage'. Better candidates explored the ways in which these individual words or phrases work cumulatively, building to the inevitable moment when Perowne must face his adversaries. One candidate referred to this imagined climax – which the passage omits – as being like the final shoot-out in a cowboy film where the hero faces his nemesis in an empty (dusty) street. Many candidates noted the writer's intimations of a hunt, with Perowne as the intended quarry. Words such as 'trapped' and the comparison of the wing-mirror to a 'dead animal' were cited, as well as the extended simile that compared the 'men' to 'deer disturbed in a forest'. The 'shorn-off wing mirror' conjured up an image of a shorn-off shot-gun for some candidates, who took this to be a clue that the 'men' were armed.

In some sensitive answers, candidates considered the intimations of physical violence in the various references to body parts in the passage. These candidates referred to Perowne's 'hands on hips', his 'fingers splayed', the 'bodywork' of the car, the 'faces' of the men, and the 'faces and hands' of the protesters. Some included the figurative references to the 'broken file' of protesters making its way to join the 'main body' as part of this 'semantic' field of anatomy. Perowne's stealthy glance 'over his shoulder' was also interpreted as a key marker in ramping up tension. Many candidates suspected 'foreshadowing' of Perowne's death in the references to a 'dead animal', the 'mournful face' and the 'funereal beat of marching drums.'

Not all candidates reached the concluding sentence but those who did often charted the 'trajectory' of 'the three men' in the course of the passage. These candidates noted their slow emergence from the BMW, door by door, their 'holding back' before 'advancing as a group', their deliberate halt as they inspect the mirror, their co-ordinated 'stare', first at the mirror and then at Perowne before, in the concluding single sentence paragraph replete with tension, they 'resume their approach.' At the other end of the scale of achievement, candidates focused entirely on the narrative and some barely mentioned the 'three men' at all. Comments about language tended to be at surface level rather than analysing how the writer achieved certain effects.

Candidates frequently wasted time by copying out or paraphrasing the exam question as the opening paragraph to their response. Some candidates referred more times than necessary to the three bullet points throughout their answers. Less able candidates often omitted textual support from their response or 'lifted' sizeable sections of the text without comment. However, the passage proved accessible and engaging and was attempted by over 40 per cent of candidates. It is encouraging to see the growing confidence and analytical skill of responses to prose passages.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/42
Unseen

Key messages

- Successful responses addressed the question and all four Assessment Objectives.
- AO1: The best answers integrate short quotations through their responses to show detailed knowledge.
- AO2: Planned responses show good understanding of the whole text.
- AO3: It is important to explore the effects of language and imagery, and not simply identify devices.
- AO4: Good personal responses show both literal and metaphorical understanding of the text.

General comments

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AO3 is very much about the way writers use language, structure and form to make and shape meanings and effects. It therefore is not enough simply to identify features, especially in an introductory paragraph, without comment on their effect on the reader and how they shape an overall interpretation of the text. Candidates should not overlook imagery in the search for more sophisticated uses of language. The texts chosen are likely to demonstrate an effective and powerful use of similes, metaphors and/or personification. Part of the process of planning should be highlighting the writer's use of imagery and integrating comment on the effect of imagery within a personal response. Awareness of genre and form has grown considerably in recent sessions, and the introductory rubric often helps to establish the relationship between the text and its genre. Poetic structure is well understood but there is scope for more candidate knowledge of prose structure; There is much more to structure than dialogue and paragraphs: choice of perspective and tenses, narrative voice, foreshadowing, chronology and flashback are all relevant. Tone and mood are as important in prose as in poetry. However, prose writers do not use enjambment and caesura. Poets use syntax as well as rhythm, and to read for meaning it is crucial to read beyond the ending of each line and understand the way punctuation is used in poetry. The key to progression to the higher Bands in the mark scheme is more developed and analytical comment on details of language and their effect. It is better to deal with a few effects in depth than to be exhaustive but superficial.

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Mark Doty's poem 'Wreck' from *Atlantis* (1996) proved a successful choice. Most candidates were well-aware that the poem is about more than just a wrecked boat, and many understood that it is a poem about grief, loss and survival after suffering. A significant number wrote about the title and appreciated that the word 'Wreck' may not simply apply to the boat, while understanding the paradox that this wreck has become a metaphor for persistence and resilience, in the face of time and tide. Good responses picked up the contrast between the adjectives 'drowned' and 'comfortable' to suggest that this wreck has not been lost but has found a way to survive. There were interesting observations about the form of this long poem and plenty of candidates showed the ability to see the effect of enjambment between stanzas as well as between lines. These candidates were usually able to comment on the effect of end-stopped lines and caesural pauses too. Many understood the see-saw rhythm and patterns of the poem as a reflection of the ebb and flow of the tide. A few plausibly argued that the shape of each stanza resembled a boat. Certainly, the verse embodies the trawler and the way in which it is both fixed and continuing to move. The boat was often understood as a kind of monument. Stronger responses invariably paid close attention to imagery exploring simile, metaphorical language and personification.

Candidates worked hard to unpick the 'legendary storehouse' simile. Many wanted to connect this to the past history of the boat. One candidate thought the boat's past must have contained 'a legendary adventure, like pirates'. There was a desire to construct a narrative for the boat which took some candidates too far outside the literal meaning of the text. It is important to keep the question firmly in mind. In this case it was about the poet's feelings about the boat, rather than the boat itself. However, close attention to the first bullet point, about the poet's descriptive language, often helped candidates to discover implicit meaning. For example, the image of the wreck 'resting comfortably' was seen as both a sign of being alive – a restorative rest after a difficult time – or as indicative of the boat's death, as in 'rest in peace'. Both approaches were valid and sometimes led to interesting reflections on the poem as a response to grief or sadness. Stronger responses picked up how the boat is personified and treated as if alive, with 'windows observing us', after its apparent death 'from another, less mortal element'. These candidates usually also noticed that the boat is a 'shadowy heart' around which other boats are nodding.

There was some confusion between the 'white boats' and the trawler but strong candidates offered some interesting observations about what the white boats might imply or stand for, for example: 'The wrecked boat provides "substance to their grace" as without the wrecked boat, they would not have anything to compare themselves to, they would not shine bright.' The ability to pick up contrasts, or binaries, often marks a strong response to poetry. For example, the boat is both 'pickled in salt', a natural preservative, and 'preserved...by sheer persistence', representing human qualities. One pertinent answer saw the 'nodding' white boats as crowd pleasers, while the wreck was carving its own path towards the poet's appreciation. The 'depth' of the wreck is contrasted with the 'lightness' of the white boats: they are 'sun-lashed' while the trawler is 'shadowy' and 'broken'. It was pleasing to see how many candidates picked up on the beauty of the wreck and many made interesting personal responses to the significance of the boat to the poet, for example: 'the poet acknowledges the ocean's power but thinks that the boat has more strength' and 'This is a metaphor for the poet's life, he sees himself mirrored in the boat.' A few were diverted by the reference to the 'triangle of white boats' to speculate about the Bermuda triangle or even the Illuminati; wiser candidates concentrated on what is in the text, where phrases like 'I think', 'I love this evidence' and 'I want to say' show how much the poet personally invests in the meaning and appearance of the boat.

Stronger answers appreciated that the boat's ability to survive the loss of its original purpose is inspiring to the poet and a deeper metaphor. Those able to pick up the religious or spiritual allusions in 'substance' and 'grace' were able to see this, but a very clear steer comes from the poet's own short statement 'I love this evidence' at the heart of the poem. Candidates also engaged with the idea of the boat as a 'ghost' which is 'more stubborn than live things' to see it as representing a continuing form of existence after death or destruction. Some noticed how the reader is drawn into interpreting the meaning of the wreck from the third stanza by the use of the second person: 'you can see', or worked carefully through the qualities which have made the boat survive, such as 'persistence', refusing to 'take to decay' even when 'scoured/by seekers of salvage and souvenir' and by being more 'stubborn than live things', to explore how the boat resists human intervention as well as the action of the elements.

To interpret the poem, and address the final bullet point, it was important to focus on the paradox in the lines 'Ruin,/it lasts,' in a way which is prolonged beyond the boat's apparent natural life and beyond the end of both line and stanza. Some candidates explored the poet's different subjunctive, conditional and imperative verbs: 'might', 'should', 'must', 'doesn't', 'hasn't', 'won't' to see how the poet struggles to find a meaning which is not just personal and subjective but is 'evidence' of something he wants to believe, which is that 'something must hold'. Stronger responses picked up on the metaphor of holding on, getting a grip or gaining a purchase and began to interpret it in less literal ways: after all, the poet ends the poem with the idea that the hulk continually 'admits/and releases' the movement of the tide while keeping a firm 'grip on the shore'. It may therefore represent the ability to go with the flow without losing your grip on reality. Candidates engaged very willingly with this kind of metaphorical reading. One commented that 'his needing tone expresses his own weakness as a human and the dependence on this shipwreck to keep him motivated as he toils through daily life, as he 'admits and releases' and 'keeps his grip' through daily struggle.' Another wrote, 'the boat survives not just as a wreck but also as a strong concept in his mind.' The best answers remained grounded, like boat and poet, in imagery of the sea and commented on the 'chambered wreck' (is this a metaphor for the human heart? or our emotions?) and on 'seawater pouring like the future' (suggesting the instability and volatility of the future?). Similarly, it is the 'bay's/huge indifference' which threatens the boat's collapse, and a further 'tempest' might break it up into 'unrecognisable/fragments' perhaps resembling the fragmentary nature of the lines. That this has not happened yet is clearly of great importance to the poet, as his language insists that 'something must hold'. A number of interpretations are possible if grounded in the language and imagery of the text.

Candidates engaged thoughtfully with the deeper implications of the poem, perhaps unsurprisingly while the world remains in especially difficult and uncertain times. Many candidates used language we might associate

with well-being or self-improvement; words like 'resilience' came up a lot and one candidate suggested that the boat has 'come to a sense of self actualization' and therefore provides a model for poet and reader. The best responses used 'portholes', 'heart', 'less mortal' and 'legendary' along with 'windows observing us' as evidence of the poet's concern with the transcendently spiritual. All were more comfortable with explicit statements such as 'I think', 'I love', 'I want' and 'I need', often rescuing their responses with worthwhile comments on the core meaning of the poem. Many left off there, ignoring the last three or four stanzas although there were some imaginative responses to the metaphor of 'grip on the shore'. However, it was not necessary for a response to be exhaustive in order to be effective. Aspects which were not fully understood could be left out without necessarily limiting a response. It is worth remembering that Examiners are trained to assess the quality of engagement with language and meaning, rather than having a prescribed quantitative list of points to look for, or a set interpretations to which candidates are expected to conform. It is the process of making meaning which is assessed rather than the correctness of the conclusions.

Question 2

The prose extract was taken from Kate Atkinson's recent novel *Transcription* (2018), a narrative of espionage in London during and after World War Two. It proved very accessible to candidates outside its specific context. Juliet is a young orphan who has been recruited to infiltrate and record the world of Nazi sympathisers in London in the early years of the war. Without knowing any more than what they were told in the introductory rubric, most candidates were able to see that this passage was not just a dramatic moment in the novel but possibly a key turning point. The reason for this was the clear structure of the passage, its sharp contrast in tone and the way in which the confrontation with the truth of the situation is so dramatically realised. The question guided candidates successfully to discuss suspense and tension and many candidates were able to read the extract in a filmic or theatrical way, which helped their responses. The moment between Dolly and Juliet was seen as a 'cinematic standoff'.

Candidates were very comfortable with selecting 'dramatic' aspects of the passage and this allowed the vast majority to show understanding and response to language to achieve at least mid-range marks. Weaker responses paraphrased or quoted before claiming that particular moments were dramatic without spelling out why or how. However, stronger candidates grasped the importance of narrative technique, focusing on point of view and how suspense was generated and exploited. It took some candidates time to get going, and often the first bullet point was covered least satisfactorily, weaker responses failing to see the point of most of the first three paragraphs and often simply summarising what happens. Quite a few responses commented on the 'foreshadowing' of the later action in an attempt to explain the dramatic structure implied in the question; it seems this was a technique candidates had been trained to expect. What was disappointing was that comparatively fewer scripts picked up on the opening words concerning Juliet ('Afterwards...') which directly relate to just that dramatic structure in terms of the retrospective narrative technique. Stronger candidates appreciated that Juliet was recalling those moments because the discovery of her carelessness and treachery had left a bitter taste, which spurred them on to close reading of the actual discovery. There were some effective commentaries on these time shifts as a way of engaging the reader. For one candidate, the writer was doing this 'to mock Juliet' for blaming 'anything other than herself'. A pleasing number of candidates recognised the contrast between the apparently innocuous opening of the extract and the dramatic ending, though it was not always well expressed.

Contrasts and structure can be examined to address AO3 in responses to prose: the 'long afterwards' hints at the lasting consequences of what is about to happen, while the sequence of sentences which begin 'Perhaps' show the contingency of what happens, and how the 'commonplace' intervenes. Stronger scripts followed this up by looking at the domesticity and relaxation of the 'biscuit interval' before, as one candidate put it 'these spies realise they have bitten off more than they can chew'. Several commented on the ironies of spies who are meant to be working for security being 'caught completely off-guard', and the unfolding drama suggesting that it was the security agents who are 'caught' rather than the spy they are meant to be tracking down. The narrative viewpoint puts us in Juliet's shoes, but she also sees Dolly's perspective and many candidates were inclined to be quite sympathetic towards Dolly, not least because she thought that Juliet was a friend, although not, as some candidates noted, a friend close enough to know her dog's name. The first dog, Lily, is a key part of the cosy playfulness of the early paragraphs. Candidates who appreciated the notions of rising action and dramatic turning points realised quickly the significance in the change in the tone of the dog's growl: 'not her usual growl, which was little more than a playful grumble' but 'a trace of ancestral wolf'. Those who were able to explore this language in more detail were able to see that this image immediately makes the scene less domestic, more threatening and with hints of predator and prey which are developed later in the passage.

A key discriminator in the second bullet point proved to be how deeply and precisely the dog's growl was considered – changing the mood, hinting at underlying violence of war or the dangerous nature of Dolly

herself. Many wrote convincingly that the arrival of Dib through a door that was supposed to be locked was the turning point in the passage. The closed door's capacity to create tension and suspense; the reader's intrigue; the dog's growl and how it is 'staring fixedly' were all seen as raising the tension. Some candidates charted the rise and fall in tension through the anticlimactic arrival of, rather than anything dangerous or sinister, a 'decrepit poodle'. Others realised fully that with Dib's arrival, Dolly would not be far behind. One candidate perceptively wrote that 'Lily's growl is a harbinger of the drama about to unfold'. Unfortunately, a few candidates confused the two dogs or their owners: this could have been avoided by more careful reading of the introductory rubric. Some candidates made reasonable comments about comedy, again reading the text as drama. Different tones and different genres appear to clash at this moment, as the drama turns more serious and potentially tragic, but there is a comic element about basing the pivotal moment around a dog's bark, and the way Dib 'acknowledged his name with a dismissive twitch of an ear.'

Good responses had plenty to say about the reactions of Juliet and Dolly as well as the dog. Juliet's response, some noticed, is a series of exclamations ('An intruder!' 'Dolly!'). A few noted the dramatic effectiveness of the single-word paragraph 'Dolly!' at the exact structural mid-point of the passage, and most understood the significance of Juliet's error in mentioning the dog's name, followed later by her 'feeble' excuse 'You're early'. Some noticed that Dolly, despite her bewilderment, is much sharper in both her understanding and expression, and appreciated that she may be more dangerous than she appears. They supported this with Cyril's alarmed and uncharacteristic blasphemy 'We're for it now' and how different this is from the casual talk of marriage and special licences.

Many candidates only reached full and clear understanding in response to the third bullet point, with its focus on betrayal. Often at this point instead of paraphrase and summary, quotation and comment were supplied even by weaker candidates. Most strong responses gave a developed response to the metaphor describing Dolly as 'a wild animal in the clearing', a moment perhaps where a hunter becomes the hunted, while differing about whether this image evoked sympathy or danger. The repetition of 'Early? *Early?*' also ratchets up the tension while developing earlier suggestions about the contingent nature of time. Dolly's voice 'coloured with disgust' provoked comment from almost all and enabled the best to respond with originality and sensitivity. There is not just disgust with betrayal by a friend but also with the regime and surveillance that MI5 suggests. Much was made of the fact that Juliet and Dolly had been friends; this made candidates more sympathetic to the betrayal and also meant that Juliet was able to see how Dolly was thinking and what she was seeing. Stronger candidates were able to read this in terms of narrative perspective. The reversal of the supposed friendship was correctly seen as a source of further drama and seen by some candidates as a form of 'irony'. Certainly, Juliet shows a degree of empathy for Dolly's viewpoint which comes too late for her to hide the clear incriminating evidence of their activity. Candidates tended to judge Juliet and Cyril quite harshly for 'causing their own downfall' and being inattentive when this was clearly at odds with their professional roles. As one of them said, 'what kind of spy just casually leaves files lying around announcing themselves to belong to "MI5" or labelled "Top Secret"?' Some had harsh words for the incompetence and amateurishness of the operation. More could have been said about the context of the war and espionage, and how civilians are drawn into military operations; those who seemed more aware of the genre (perhaps through their own wider reading) were able to make good use of this awareness.

Almost all the stronger answers made something of how Juliet, looking at Dolly, metaphorically observes 'the wheels of her brain turning', or the phrase 'the cogs finally ratcheted into place'. Both hint at the slow and mechanical cranking up of the drama. Such candidates also noted that the writer chooses language which suggests that what will follow will be violent. The amiable Cyril has suddenly taken up 'a rather pugilistic stance' while Dolly 'glared' and does so 'viciously'. This language is from a very different semantic field than the description of the cosy tea party in the opening paragraphs. Alert candidates realised that this contrast, and Juliet's regretful, retrospective tone indicate that something very nasty might be about to happen. Dolly's phrase 'you've been listening to everything we say' not only expresses her sense of Juliet's betrayal, but that she is part of a network of traitors herself, so more than one form of betrayal is implied here. All these techniques are part of the writer's careful manipulation of the narrative and of the reader's response to it. Without exception, candidates who made the writer their focus wrote more analytical answers to this question, because there was a tendency among character-driven responses to slip into narrative and paraphrase. However, there were very few candidates who were unable to make comments on language, structure and imagery.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/43
Unseen

- Successful responses address the question and all four Assessment Objectives.
- AO1: The best answers integrate short quotations through their responses to show detailed knowledge.
- AO2: Planned responses show good understanding of the whole text.
- AO3: It is important to explore the effects of language and imagery, and not simply identify devices.
- AO4: Good personal responses show both literal and metaphorical understanding of the text.

General comments

Examiners saw the full range of achievement and were impressed by many strong, interesting and original responses to the texts. As has become a trend, the prose passages are becoming much more popular, and almost as many candidates chose to write on them as the poetry. Candidates are also acquiring better analytical tools for writing about the choices authors make in prose as well as poetry. This is very encouraging, as is the growing quality of introductory paragraphs, and the sense that more candidates are planning their responses before they write. Candidates are also using the rubric and bullet points to help them to avoid errors of understanding, and structure their answers. All these points suggest that recent Principal Examiners' Reports have been carefully read and their learning points absorbed. Most candidates were able to construct responses to the question showing understanding of how to make good use of the bullet points, integrate quotations, organise paragraphs and present some personal response.

This paper is a good ultimate test of the skills of close reading and critical understanding which candidates should have acquired throughout their Literature course. It is worth re-emphasising that strong answers need to address all four Assessment Objectives, and that the stem question (in bold) is carefully constructed to encourage them to do so. The question asks for: analysis of the writer's methods, understanding of the writer's conscious purpose, close reading of each stage or section of the text (strongly supported by brief quotation); and personal response to the effects of the writing, ideas and tone on the reader, highlighted by adjectives or adverbs such as 'dramatic' or 'strikingly'. Candidates are now much better at identifying the key words in the stem question; most also find the bullet points useful in structuring their response. However, it is not necessary to repeat the question at the beginning of the answer or to repeat terms from the question to show understanding. Candidates should not be afraid of giving a personal opinion instead of writing what they think is the 'right' answer. Examiners are used to considering alternative interpretations.

Good use of quotation is the key to AO1. The best answers integrate quotations throughout their response and thereby show a detailed reading. All candidates could be encouraged to make better use of the text by frequent quotation but should keep their quotations short and integrated within their arguments. The quotations should relate to the meaning of the text, the writer's intentions, the methods they use and their effect on the reader. Candidates do not need to read either poetry or prose line by line, but they should show knowledge and understanding of each part of the passage and reflect on both literal and figurative meaning.

Most candidates understand that AO2 requires them to go beyond surface meaning and explore the deeper implications of the text. The question points them in the right direction and the rubric is intended to prevent any serious misunderstandings. Most candidates know that they need to avoid paraphrase or a simple narrative reading of the text and explore deeper feelings and implied meaning. Examiners would discourage candidates from positing a purely theoretical reading of a text (particularly, a poem's) 'deeper implications'. When a response becomes overly conjectural it tends to lose sight of the text itself and thereby lose marks, even if the candidate was working quite hard to develop their own response. We do not choose texts with allegorical or 'hidden meanings' so it should be possible to deduce implicit meaning from the surface of the text, its structure, its language, its imagery and its effect on the reader.

Understanding is best demonstrated by an effective plan. There is a real benefit to candidates taking some time to plan their responses and think through the text before committing to paper. This can prevent common

pitfalls such as not finishing or changing your mind about the text's meaning halfway through the response. In this session, many relatively short answers received high marks because the candidates had achieved a clear critical understanding of the text and what they wanted to say about it, before beginning to write. These candidates had planned their responses to comment on the whole text by writing selectively but with plenty of development on the writer's purpose and key uses of language.

AO3 is very much about the way writers use language, structure and form to make and shape meanings and effects. It therefore is not enough simply to identify features, especially in an introductory paragraph, without comment on their effect on the reader and how they shape an overall interpretation of the text. Candidates should not overlook imagery in the search for more sophisticated uses of language. The texts chosen are likely to demonstrate an effective and powerful use of similes, metaphors and/or personification. Part of the process of planning should be highlighting the writer's use of imagery and integrating comment on the effect of imagery within a personal response. Awareness of genre and form has grown considerably in recent sessions, and the introductory rubric often helps to establish the relationship between the text and its genre. Poetic structure is well understood but there is scope for more candidate knowledge of prose structure. There is much more to structure than dialogue and paragraphs: choice of perspective and tenses, narrative voice, foreshadowing, chronology and flashback are all relevant. Tone and mood are as important in prose as in poetry. However, prose writers do not use enjambment or caesura. Poets use syntax as well as rhythm, and to read for meaning it is crucial to read beyond the ending of each line and understand the way punctuation is used in poetry. The key to progression to the higher Bands in the mark scheme is more developed and analytical comment on details of language and their effect. It is better to deal with a few effects in depth than to be exhaustive but superficial.

AO4 is integral to a good answer and does not require a separate paragraph of speculation either about 'hidden meaning' or what the surface narrative of the text means to the individual candidate. Moralising conclusions are happily now much more unusual. Personal response is closely linked to the understanding of deeper implications, which are themselves suggested by the text itself and the developed analysis of language, imagery and techniques. Candidates' answers make a strong impression when the candidate has something to say about the writer's purpose and how effectively it is communicated to the reader. Most have clearly been taught to write essays with introductions and conclusions, but the former still tend to be more satisfactory than the latter, which often merely restated the question and summarised the response. The best conclusions often contained quotations and comments, nailing their insight into the overall effect of the entire poem or passage. Finally, many candidates quote and comment on language, but without hazarding an interpretation of the text as a whole. Higher marks are gained by grasping the nettle and trying to make sense of ambiguous language, using quotation to drive interpretation of mood, meaning and impact on the reader. Most candidates are aware that the bullet points are a very helpful way of structuring their responses and they should also understand that the final bullet point usually encourages a personal evaluation of the way the text ends. Candidates should ask themselves what they feel at the end of the text, and how the writing has encouraged them to explore those feelings.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates chose to answer **Question 1** on the poem 'Owl' by George Macbeth, in which the poet celebrates the various features and attributes of the bird. This poem certainly posed a degree of challenge to the candidates – it gets progressively more difficult and elusive, and the syntax can be awkward to follow. Strong candidates manifested an ability to read across the lines and to establish meaning at sentence level. Such a facility was invariably advantageous in helping them gain a coherent and clear understanding of the text (AO2). That said, less confident candidates were also able to engage with the poem, often in a lively, responsive and enthusiastic fashion, while displaying a reasonably secure understanding of the surface elements of the poem and some of its deeper implications. Indeed, there was a notable and pleasing absence of weak scripts, relatively speaking, or scripts which showed significant misunderstanding or confusion.

The focus of the question is based around the poet's passionate admiration of, perhaps even reverence for, the owl – 'my favourite' – and asks candidates to consider how he presents what he admires about it. Candidates responded well in drawing out how the poet conveys the owl's sounds (or absence thereof) as it moves through the night (AO3). Many were admirably alert to the various uses made of aural effects such as onomatopoeia, punning or word play, rhyme (particularly of the internal variety), alliteration and assonance and how such effects are intensified through repetition and a form of echoing. Particularly strong candidates were able to analyse how the poem's sounds sought to replicate, to a degree, the sound world of the bird

itself and its environment. Likewise, there was much excellent work on the intensive use of enjambment. Some candidates convincingly suggested how, at certain points, this perhaps indicated the smoothly fluid, stealthy movement of the bird or how, in its creation of syntactical ambiguity and difficulty, it added to the sense of mystery or secrecy which surrounds the bird and its nocturnal existence. Others felt that it added to the owl's aura of danger and its unpredictable but swift and deadly mode of attack.

Almost all candidates were responsive, to a greater or lesser extent, to the multi-faceted nature of the poem's subject. While alive to the suggestions of the bird's gentle or charming qualities in, say, the simile of the feather duster or how it may appear 'vulnerable by the winter suns', some saw a darker, even unsettlingly sadistic quality in its playful 'ring-a-rosy-ing' with its prey (AO4). Most candidates were able to focus on the poet's vivid or 'striking' use of language to present, amongst other things, the owl's forcefulness, power and ruthlessness. Much excellent work was achieved through an exploration of the poem's visual imagery and the connotations of, for example, 'the driving skull', 'the claws of his brain', 'the black talons in the/petrified fur' or 'Cold walnut hands'. While an over-extended focus on details of punctuation can sometimes yield rapidly diminishing returns, the highlighting of the poet's use of exclamation marks in the last two cases was valuable in drawing out his sense of excitement or wonder and awe at the owl's forbidding appearance and deadly nature. Likewise, strong candidates were able to connect both the use of monosyllabic diction and the dramatic brevity and compression of, say, 'flew, killed' or 'Torn meat from the sky' with the ruthless speed, skill and matter-of-fact efficiency of the bird's kills. On the other hand, many candidates placed such killing in the context of a paternal duty of care to feed its hungry family of 'six mouths'. While the description of these as 'the seed of his/arc in the season' is particularly difficult in its compaction, strong candidates were able to discern a biological imperative or 'hot-wiring', if you like, which drives forward the owl's activity and movement through the sky and through its life cycle.

Indeed, scripts that were particularly strong in advancing an interpretative reading of the poem's deeper implications tended to explore the suggestion of a dark, violent divinity in the simile of 'comes like/a god' but also that of the owl as an expression and embodiment of Nature in all its facets – graceful and beautiful but also a terrifying and bloody killer, red in tooth and claw ('owl's blood/is to blame'). For some especially strong candidates who had the stamina to carry their analysis into the difficult final stanza, the compacted sentences 'Flown wind in the skin. Fine/rain in the bones' were suggestive of the intimacy between the owl and the natural elements it flies through, almost as if they have become forged as one. Similar excellent work was done on the multiple possible meanings behind 'Owl breaks/like the day.' Underlining the repeated advice in reports such as these for candidates to prioritise a focus on the final lines of texts, a discussion of 'Am an owl, am an owl' allowed for an interpretation of the close of the poem as the owl's ringingly confident affirmation of its existence and its identity but also opened up a not unreasonable speculation as to whether these were rather to be read as the cry of the poet himself, so deep and intense is his admiration for, and identification with, the subject of his poem.

Question 2

It was pleasing to see that a significant number of candidates opted to answer the Prose question and the majority did so with much success. Candidates have clearly been trained by centres to approach a task such as this in a focused and analytical fashion, exploring how the specific elements of the writing shape one's reading of the passage. Candidates obviously engaged warmly with Jahan, the youthful central protagonist, and with his shifting thoughts and feelings. The bullet points were constructed to help guide the candidates sequentially through the different stages of Jahan's experience at the mosque and to an appreciation of the contrasting feelings and emotions expressed.

Centres are strongly encouraged to present candidates with a wide range of different prose texts and styles over the period of the course in order to develop their facility as confident, skilled and independent readers. One important element of this, of course, is the ability to recognise and draw out what is implicit in the writing. To a degree this ability was required in addressing the question of Jahan's response to the crowd at the opening of the mosque as little explicitly is stated. However, candidates were adept at seeing how the close focus on, for instance, the wealth on display – how 'gems shone', 'pouches bulged' and a 'deep crimson rosary dangled' and 'prayers made of rubies' – suggested not only the materialism of the rich and the powerful men attending the opening, but also that of Jahan – as well as his capabilities as a highly observant, skilled and no doubt experienced pickpocket. As well as engaging in a critical exploration of the writer's use of Jahan's perspective, there was clearly space here for candidates to interpret how to read Jahan's attitude to the guests (AO4). While some candidates saw him as being profoundly impressed, even intimidated, by the wealth on show, others sensed a more cynical, perhaps even contemptuous response to such flagrant ostentatiousness. For some, the guests were, in Jahan's envious eyes, just 'ample' targets to be fleeced, something which is achieved with a matter-of-fact, apparently nerveless ease. Many candidates explored to productive effect the connotations of 'wormed' and what this suggested about the protagonist's

energetic and implacable determination as well as the bare-faced cunning and duplicity of his 'wearing a contrite look' moments before the rosary is 'snatched' (AO3). Responding to the second bullet, almost all candidates registered the shift from his 'buoyant' mood to one of 'dismay' when recalling Captain Gareth and what he was required to do with the 'booty'. Likewise, the great majority explored to good effect his thoughts about Mihrimah and what these suggested about the multi-layered and perhaps more thoughtful, vulnerable and selfless sides of his nature.

Central to the development of the passage, of course, is Jahan's entering the mosque and his being stopped short by the burst of rainbow light he experiences and the glimpse he is given of the heavenly and the divine. Inevitably, it was the ability of candidates to analyse the text closely from this point through to the end of the extract which proved something of a discriminator, given the somewhat more complex nature of the writing and the more abstract nature of the feelings and ideas being presented. Strong candidates discussed such elements as the writer's choice of intense, almost physical language ('spilled', 'lurid', 'melted', 'choked' and so forth) as well as the vivid focus on colour ('Crimson, cobalt-blue, vermillion', 'green' and 'blue') which for some echoed, contrasted with or surpassed the ruby red of the stolen jewels earlier in the passage. There was much excellent comment on the use of the flashback to an almost visionary moment of childhood wonder and 'elation' and how that experience linked with his sudden, revelatory appreciation of the mosque, 'almost seeing it anew'. Understandably, some candidates struggled to articulate a clear grasp of the precise nature of Jahan's epiphany here and some tended to fall back on extensive quotation or narrative paraphrase. However, a degree of knowledge was usually shown by such means (AO1) and many were able to go on to show admirable understanding (AO2) of Jahan's vision of the 'firmament' being brought down to earth and his appreciation of this as a metaphor for God and the nature of human creativity, almost a theology of architecture, so that the world becomes 'a vast building site' embracing the diversity of all faiths. Many candidates produced excellent interpretative work (AO4) in exploring the profound effect of this experience on Jahan through a discussion of the possible meanings behind such elements as the description of Jahan's body language, the 'inexplicable gratitude in his heart', the 'conflicts and confusions', the apparent suspension of time and his coming 'a step closer to the centre of the universe'. The very strongest candidates focused on the detail that while all these thoughts and feelings go through his mind and heart, ironically perhaps, he still holds 'a stolen rosary in his hand'. This was an excellent point of textual focus in which to ground an interpretative reading which many candidates shared – that of Jahan as being on an ongoing moral, perhaps spiritual journey, with some seeing ideas of contrition and remorse and subsequent new beginnings as being implicit in the text. Many candidates displayed clear critical understanding in their appreciation of how the writer shapes the passage as a whole to chart this movement in Jahan's perspective and sensibilities.

All in all, both this and the poetry question proved highly rewarding and stimulating to read and assess.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/05
Coursework

Key messages

Successful responses:

- show a detailed knowledge of texts
- select relevant material to meet the requirements of the task
- substantiate their arguments with relevant, concise references to the text
- analyse in detail and sensitively the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

Less successful responses:

- have an insecure or limited knowledge of texts
- write exhaustively and lose focus on the task
- make assertions which are not substantiated
- list writers' techniques without close analysis
- offer pre-learned 'themes' rather than personal responses to the writing.

General comments

There was evidence of coursework of a high standard this session, where candidates showed both sensitive engagement with, and enjoyment of, the texts they had studied; this was a testament to the hard work of both candidates and teachers in another challenging year.

In successful assignments, candidates selected relevant material from the text to address the task that had been set. Some less successful responses showed a detailed knowledge of the text, sometimes at considerable length, but needed to address more directly the specific requirements of the task. In many poetry assignments candidates worked through the poem offering a line-by-line commentary, without organising their material in a way that focused on the task. These candidates should have taken advantage of re-drafting to sharpen the focus of their assignments.

The most convincing essays sustained a critical engagement with the ways in which writers achieve their effects (Assessment Objective 3), relating their points to the task. Less successful assignments often commented discretely on connotations of specific words without relating them to their use in the text; others simply logged or explained features such as anaphora, caesura and enjambment in poetry essays, regardless of the focus of the task.

Some centres submitted empathic responses, with most providing the necessary information: the name of the character and the precise moment in the text that the interior monologue takes place. The most successful responses captured a convincingly authentic voice for the chosen character and moment, and they were recognisably rooted in the world of the text.

Guidance for teachers

This section on guidance is re-printed from the June 2021 report.

Guidance on task-setting can be found in the Coursework Handbook, which stresses the importance of **(a)** wording tasks that direct candidates explicitly to explore the ways in which writers achieve their effects and **(b)** avoiding insufficiently challenging command words such as 'Describe' and 'Explain'. Teachers within the centre should together discuss the appropriateness of proposed tasks before they are given to candidates. This means that any problems can be resolved early in the course.

There follows a reminder of what constitutes good practice in the presentation of coursework folders:

- Start each assignment with the full wording of the task. In the case of empathic responses, the chosen character and moment should be clearly stated. This is important since it allows the Moderator to determine how successfully the candidate has captured an authentic voice for the character at the specified moment.
- Use focused ticking in the body of the text to indicate valid and thoughtful points, together with concise marginal and summative comments which relate to the wording of the level descriptors.
- Provide a brief explanation on the assignment or cover sheet in cases where marks are changed during internal moderation. Such purposeful annotation aids transparency and contributes to the robustness of the assessment as it enables a centre to justify its award of particular marks. It is, therefore, not appropriate to send clean (i.e. unannotated) copies of assignments.

The following examples of unhelpful annotation should be avoided: excessive ticking (e.g. of every paragraph or every line); hyperbolic praise of work of indifferent quality; labelling by assessment objective. Simply putting the supposed relevant AOs in the margin is of very little benefit to the Moderator as it does not reveal the *extent* to which a particular assessment objective has been addressed; instead, more specific reference should be made to the relevant level descriptors.

Most centres carried out administration efficiently. Cover sheets (individual record cards) were secured by treasury tag or staple which allowed easy access to candidate work. In these centres care had been taken to:

- include all candidates' details on the Coursework Assessment Summary Form
- transcribe totals accurately across the various documents.

All centres are advised to include a clerical checking stage in their moderation procedures before submitting their paperwork to Cambridge. This check should be carried out by a different person from the one who originally completed the Coursework Assessment Summary Forms and Mark Sheets.