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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/12
Poetry and Prose

Key messages

Successful responses:

- respond to the specific demands of the question
- use relevant textual references to substantiate their arguments
- analyse sensitively and in detail in which ways writers achieve their effects.

Less successful responses:

- offer pre-learned 'themes' rather than tailoring their material to the question asked
- have an insecure or limited knowledge of texts
- make assertions which are not substantiated
- merely label and list writers' techniques without analysing them

General comments

There was evidence of outstanding work this session, in which candidates showed insight and individuality in their sustained analyses of texts. In this most challenging of years, this work was testament to the quality of both learning and teaching. Most candidates divided their time well across the two answers for this paper, though a minority wrote excessively lengthy answers to their first question, leading to unfinished or rushed second answers.

Textual knowledge

The strongest answers showed an impressively extensive knowledge of the text, with candidates seamlessly interweaving concise textual references to support their ideas. In answers to extract questions, these candidates used the detail of the extract to support their ideas and to explore the ways in which writers achieve their effects. Less successful responses were often characterised by overly assertive comments with either little textual reference or references not used effectively. Some quotations were excessively long, with the link between quotation and comment unclear. Occasionally quotations were abridged, with an ellipsis used to indicate words that had been omitted; often these omitted words were integral to supporting the comment made.

Focus on the question

The most successful answers sustained a clear focus on the key words of the question. Less successful answers demonstrated a clear understanding of the text but without tailoring their material to the specific demands of the question. Occasionally, answers made a couple of glancing references to a key word in the question but without explicitly addressing the question elsewhere in their answer. Some candidates embarked on a description or sketch of character(s) or an explanation of themes regardless of what the question asked for.

Writers' effects

The most convincing responses sustained a critical analysis of the ways in which writers achieve their effects. These responses referred in detail to the printed text in Poetry and Prose extract responses and were able to recall relevant material for Prose general essay questions. Less successful responses often commented discretely on effects without relating them to the question and to the ideas in the text, sometimes simply logging features such as alliteration, anaphora and hyperbole. Sometimes generalisations (such as

'the use of enjambment increased the pace' and 'cesurae slowed down the pace') were made in place of close and purposeful analysis.

Personal response

There was in the strongest answers evidence of sensitive individual responses to texts which focused directly on the key words of questions, exploring with perception a wide range of relevant detail from the texts. Less successful responses offered personal interpretations that were not adequately substantiated or rooted in the detail of the text.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates were able to make some contrast between the farmhand's life and his dreams. They made reference to his shy presence near the dance floor and to the 'old wound' of a previous experience or relationship. Contrasts were made between his awkwardness in his relationships and his strength and expertise in his work. Less successful responses tended to explain the content of the poem without analysing the ways in which Baxter achieves his effects.

Question 2

Most responses noted the man's literal death by drowning and his frantic but unrecognised attempts to be saved. Many candidates were able to explore the deeper implications of his pleas for help and his being misunderstood during his life. Only the strongest responses focused on the key words 'movingly depicts'; these responses were able to explore the effects of metaphor, repetition and the directness of the language. Less successful responses tended to explain the content rather than explore the ways in which Smith achieves her effects.

Question 3

The mood of sadness and the poet's warning others not to succumb to melancholy but to take comfort from nature were generally understood. The most successful responses tailored their material to the key words 'strikingly convey feelings of sadness', with much confident exploration of Keats's use of imagery and sensuous diction. Less confident responses tended to rely on learnt notes that dealt with themes or explained classical allusions rather than directly addressing the question. This type of unproductive strategy on the part of candidates appears to be common with poems more centrally located in the literary canon.

Question 4

The most successful responses focused on the key words 'vividly' and 'transforms'; these responses noted the ways in which Bridges conveys the stealthy nature of the snow falling overnight, the silence it brings to the usually busy metropolis, the excitement created for children and the way it disrupts the daily routine. Less successful responses worked their way through the poem with only glancing (or no) references to the question's key words.

Question 5

In successful responses, there was a clear focus on the key words 'creates memorable impressions'; this led to candidates exploring the ways in which Duffy achieves her effects, such as the sensuous quality of the description of the classroom and the occasional ominous suggestion of what is to come. Less successful responses were sometimes aware of the joyfulness of being in Mrs Tilscher's class but tended to work simply through the poem describing her, her teaching and her classroom.

Question 6

The strongest responses showed a clear understanding of perspectives within the poem: the suggestion that the child is blaming the parents and the speaker defending the way in which the child was brought up. These responses were alert to both the defensive tone and the definite rebuttals, exploring closely the effects of language, tone and form. Less successful responses tended to paraphrase the poem's content.

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Section B

Question 7

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 8

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 9

Successful responses focused on the ways in which Desai introduces the central characters of Deven and Murad. They noted Deven's anxiety about his finances, his position at college and the picture painted of his relationship with his wife. They were able also to explore the ways in which Desai portrays Murad's mockery and emotional blackmail of Deven. The strongest responses explored how what is revealed in this opening extract prepares the reader for future events in the novel. Less successful responses narrated the content of the extract without making reference to what happens later.

Question 10

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 11

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 12

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 13

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 14

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 15

Most candidates were able to pick out at least a few points from the passage that made it a memorable moment, for example, the unreality of the war or the incident in the tree where Gene loses his balance. Successful answers demonstrated a sharp focus on 'memorable moment' and noted how the events in this passage foreshadow future events. These answers explored the idyllic description of the school and the precise effects of the dialogue between the boys. Less successful answers tended to work through the passage, identifying key points but not drawing out their significance.

Question 16

This was less popular than the extract question on *A Separate Peace*. Most answers focused on Gene's friendship with Finny and the significance of Finny's fall from the tree and the 'jouncing' of the branch. Many responses adopted the style of a character sketch of Gene without fully evaluating the extent to which Knowles makes Gene a likeable character. In general, more might have been made of the use of narrative viewpoint in the novel.

Question 17

Most candidates found disturbing the idea of Hate Week and the thought of Parson's daughter accusing an innocent man because of his unusual shoes. The strongest responses explored the ways in which Orwell portrays Parsons and his misplaced pride in his daughter, and the indifference with which the characters talk about someone being shot. Less successful responses worked through the extract noting aspects that are disturbing but without exploring the ways in which the writer makes this moment so disturbing.

Question 18

Candidates were able to identify ways in which Winston rebelled, such as writing in his diary, renting the room, his liaisons with Julia. Only the most successful responses focused on the key words 'the ways in which Orwell strikingly conveys', exploring the significance of how dangerous any rebellion at all was in such a society. Less successful responses tended to list aspects of Winston's rebellion without close reference to the text or detailed exploration of the ways in which Orwell achieves his effects.

Question 19

There were many engaging responses. Almost all candidates were able to contextualise the extract and explain how Johannesburg had such a corrupting effect on people. They understood and explored the reactions of the siblings, both in shock, though from wholly different perspectives. Many commented on Gertrude's perceived failings as a mother, evidenced by her words and actions. The most successful responses explored with sensitivity the dynamics within the siblings' relationship and Paton's use of dialogue in conveying this.

Question 20

There were too few responses seen to make meaningful comment.

Question 21

All candidates were able to provide some level of response as to how the extract made them feel, with supporting evidence. Stronger answers went on to explore the language and images and also the significance of this moment in the story. The most successful answers explored the pathos in the description of the dying dog and the synthetic nature of the 'fake' objects drawn from nature. Many noted the disturbing depiction of a dystopian world in which emotionless objects take on a life of their own. Less successful responses made generalised comments about Bradbury's purported intentions rather than exploring the detail of his writing as evident in the extract.

Question 22

This was less popular than the *Stories of Ourselves* extract question. Most answers showed an awareness of the plot, the boy's betrayal of his aunt and his subsequent sense of guilt. Stronger answers explored the powerful moment of the aunt's slap and its enduring impact on the boy's life. These answers included exploration of MacLaverty's use of dialogue, description and timeline in addressing the question. Less successful responses provided a general narrative with just some acknowledgment of feeling sympathy for the boy but little indication of how MacLaverty achieves this.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/22
Drama

Key messages

Good answers addressed the question from the start and avoided lengthy or general introductions.

The best answers were organised to include three or four well-developed relevant points and ended with a conclusion linked to the question.

A feature of good answers was the use of brief quotations from the text to support points, combined with analysis and a direct link to the question.

The selection of reference material from the text was key to a strong answer; material needs to be directly relevant to the question, accompanied with a comment making clear how it relates to the candidate's answer to the question.

All successful answers made a response to the text as drama on stage; candidates need to select features relevant to the text and question, and analyse their use, such as: setting, action on stage, lighting, sound, interaction between characters, dialogue, entrances and exits and likely audience reaction.

In responses to passage-based questions, good answers analysed the effectiveness of the writing in detail, selecting the use of words and phrases for comment where relevant, and considered the writer's intentions.

Strong responses to discursive questions were balanced to include a range of points, so that one point was not laboured or repeated to the detriment of the others.

General comments

Many candidates showed an extensive knowledge of their set texts and had keenly engaged with them, often conveying detailed personal responses. In a new text this session, R C Sherriff's *Journey's End,* some candidates responded to the portrayal of Raleigh as that of a boy not much older than themselves, which helped them to appreciate his lack of readiness to deal with war. Many candidates enjoyed exploring the love triangle depicted in the second new text, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. They responded to the humour in the passage, as Olivia tries so hard to attract Cesario, while Cesario tries equally hard to rebuff her. In *Romeo and Juliet*, another romantic dilemma was explored in the passage, showing the newly-married lovers at the same moment that Juliet's marriage to Paris was being planned. In *The Crucible*, Miller's dramatic depiction of Abigail gaining control over her peers was well understood, with candidates commenting on her physical assaults and her threats of a future '*pointy reckoning*'. Candidates relished the moment the insurance cheque finally arrived in Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, with characters' excitement typified by Travis's exuberance '*like a little dancer*'. Answers were improved when candidates analysed how authors achieved dramatic effects, such as the use, where relevant, of features such as: setting, action on stage, interaction between characters and likely audience reaction.

Good answers focused on the question from the start. Their introductions briefly set out the key points to be made and started on the first point in the next paragraph. The best answers were organised to cover three or four pertinent points. Each point was well-developed and focused on the question and the text. Points were supported by brief quotations from the text, which were analysed and directly linked to the point and question. The selection of apt reference material was essential to a successful answer. Some responses which seemed to show a strong general understanding of the text were limited because of lack of evidence from the text to support the assertions made. Less comprehensive answers could have been lifted by including detailed textual reference in the form of quotation. Other responses were lacking in organization

and sometimes limited the answer to repetition of one point. Some of these filled out their answers with extraneous material which gained no credit, such as narration, cultural background or biographical details.

Successful answers to passage-based questions briefly established the context of the passage, where it was relevant to the question, and avoided narration. Candidates briefly set out their main points in the introduction, then developed each of the points and supported them with quotation from the passage. The best answers provided a detailed analysis of the writing to include a response to the way language is used by authors to achieve their desired effects, and explored some of the features of drama, such as the effects of action on stage or likely audience reaction. The strongest responses led firmly to a clear conclusion which linked to the question. Other answers worked through the passage, giving an account of what was happening. These often needed to show understanding of deeper implications. The selection of fewer key points, which are then more fully developed, would address the question more strongly.

Strong answers to discursive tasks were made when candidates considered the demands of the question and used their thorough knowledge of the text to select the best material from the whole play with which to build a response. They began by setting out their key points in the introduction, and then developed each point in turn and supported each one with quotation and detailed reference to the text. The best answers maintained a focus on the question, gave a response to relevant dramatic effects and often considered a likely audience response. Other answers were limited because of lack of supporting reference. There were some lengthy answers which included comments on several aspects of the text, but which did not directly answer the question. A few answers confused characters or events, which demonstrated insecure knowledge of the text.

There were a very few rubric infringements on component 22, in which candidates either answered two passage-based questions, or two discursive questions, or answered more than two questions. Only one mark, the highest, was credited in these instances.

Comments on specific questions

LORRAINE HANSBERRY: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Question 1

(a) Most candidates showed understanding of the drama of heightened emotions in the excitement caused by the arrival of the insurance cheque, and many quoted from Ruth's speech or Travis's stage directions to support their point. Stronger answers analysed the effects in detail, such as commenting on how Ruth's description of the cheque as *'a piece of paper'* conveyed her disbelief that something so slight could be worth so much, or that Travis's dancing gave an air of celebration to the scene. These stronger responses often saw the deeper implications of Mama's more restrained reaction, as she reflected that she was only receiving the cheque because her much loved husband had died. Other developed points explored the drama of Ruth's mysterious visit to a female doctor, an early reference to her unwelcome pregnancy; and considered the drama of Walter dismissing his wife to focus on Willy Harris's papers. Some answers needed to use supporting quotations. Other answers pointed out characters' excitement, then repeated the point, while some needed to link excitement explicitly to drama. A few moved away from the passage to list the dreams of all the family.

(b) All answers showed sympathy for Ruth, citing such reasons as: her hard work for the family, her hard, physical work for others, her tiredness, her poverty, and her marriage to a dissatisfied dreamer. Good answers supported their points with detailed textual reference. Stronger answers developed aspects such as: her health (she is worn-out, faints and is considering an abortion), marriage (the constant arguments over Travis, the cheque and the liquor store), and her modest character (her caring for others, and her dream of a comfortable house for the family, with nothing for herself). Other responses needed to use supporting textual reference. Some limited their focus on Ruth to the opening scene, while some moved away from the question to list each character's dreams. A few compared Ruth to Beneatha but spent much of the answer on Beneatha. More sensitive responses concluded with glimmers of hope from late in the play, such as Ruth's trip to the cinema holding hands with Walter, and the promising fulfilment of her own dream in the move to a new house.

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ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

(a) All candidates understood that Abigail tells the other girls what to do. Good answers explored some of the ways in which she shows this power, such as: how she acts like a leader, by commanding the girls, and that they look to her for instructions, or how she physically shakes and hits them, forcing them to comply, and that she also threatens unspecified but terrible punishment if they disobey. Stronger responses explored the interaction between the characters in detail, to comment not only on the dramatic effects of Abigail's speech and actions, but also on how the girls respond as they show their fear of her. They judged an audience's response to be one of shock. Perceptive answers pointed out that this passage prepares the audience to believe in the immense power Abigail wields later over the girls at court, to the extent of inducing mass hysteria. Some answers merely recounted what happens in the passage; they needed to address its drama directly and how it conveys Abigail's power. Others needed to use brief quotations to support their points. There were some over-long introductions giving the background to the trials or a summary of the plot.

(b) Most answers showed understanding of how their chosen characters were unfairly treated, with stronger responses including detailed supporting material while others remained rather general. Better answers considered how their accusations arose out of the hysteria in Salem, often by people with ulterior motives. They also commented on the impossibility of mounting a defence when anyone who disagreed with a charge was deemed to be supporting witchcraft, and therefore guilty. More perceptive answers explored the social standing of the victims, and deduced that it was relatively easy to convict Tituba and Sarah Good, since neither were well-regarded and had few supporters, but that the conviction and deaths of such highly respected folk as Rebecca Nurse and Giles Corey indicated the increased level of hysteria in the town.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) There was general understanding of Raleigh's naivety and misplaced enthusiasm. Some candidates criticised his boyish inexperience, while others responded personally to his being almost the same age as them and having just left school. Raleigh's hesitancy was seen as a lack of confidence, as was his understated description of war as '*rather – silly'*. Successful analysis was made of Raleigh's enthusiastic language and stronger answers pointed out that his enthusiasm was because he had no idea what he was about to face, like many back home. Perceptive responses pointed out that war was not played according to rules of a game, like rugby, and that the experienced Osborne knew his prowess at rugby counted for nothing in the trenches, where men died at any moment. Some answers limited their responses to Raleigh's reactions to rugby in the first half of the passage. Others lost focus on the passage and narrated later events involving Stanhope and Raleigh's letter home.

(b) Stronger answers often began with Raleigh's belief that there was constant fighting at the front line, whereas in fact most of the time soldiers were inactive, waiting in fear, and that any fighting tended to happen quickly. Most answers gave accounts of ways the soldiers dealt with boredom, such as: the ongoing banter over food, Trotter's charts, Osborne's reading and the earwig races. Better responses explored these activities further, to comment on how the earwig going in circles is symbolic of the futility of war, as is Osborne's book, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, whereas the humour about food provides the soldiers with a little light relief from the boredom. A few candidates considered what the soldiers were waiting for, and the stress it induced, compounded by the boredom of inactivity. No doubt the boredom contributes to Stanhope's drinking, but he says he drinks to give himself the courage to keep on going out to fight. A few answers needed to select the best material from the whole play, rather than limiting textual reference to the passage printed for use with Question 3(a).

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

(a) Most answers commented on Lord Capulet's arranging the marriage of Juliet to Paris. Some good answers pointed out the dramatic irony of Romeo and Juliet spending their wedding night together at the same time as her marriage to another man is planned. There were some overstated accusations made against Capulet: for arranging the wedding without Juliet's agreement, for not caring for Juliet, and for being greedy for wealth and social standing. Stronger answers were more moderate and knew that it was the custom of the times to arrange marriages, that Capulet believes he is acting in Juliet's best interests, and he is already the head of a wealthy family with high social standing (although no doubt a family link to the Prince would be welcome). Many answers pointed out that this passage is a turning point towards the tragedy of the play, and strong responses emphasised the striking sense of the inevitability of fate driven by the haste of Capulet's arrangements, citing some of the many references to the speed of time passing, including *'we were born to die'*. The Friar's advice is for Romeo to go into exile, then return once things have calmed down. The haste of the marriage to Paris provokes the change to this plan which leads to tragedy. Some answers needed to explore the writing of the passage in more detail to make a response to the way Shakespeare uses language. Others needed to use brief quotations to support their points. A few showed an insecure understanding of some of the text.

(b) All candidates showed understanding of the Nurse's love and care for Juliet, with most referring to her first appearance. Some considered how she acts as go-between for the lovers and how she stands up for Juliet to her father. Good answers linked these points to her likeability, along with other character traits, such as her fondness for bawdy jokes, her garrulousness and general friendliness. Where these were supported by detailed textual reference, they gained credit. Some stronger answers commented on the breach of Juliet's trust when the Nurse advises forgetting Romeo and marrying Paris bigamously, which adversely affects how likeable she is. Perceptive responses thought the Nurse's likeability lessened with a realistic assessment of how she irritates the Capulets with her incessant talking and annoys Juliet with her teasing. Strong conclusions often pointed out the Nurse's role of providing comic relief in the play and added that the tragedy would be grim without her. Some answers needed to move on from listing several examples of the Nurse's love for Juliet, to make a range of points. Other responses contained general assertions without detailed textual support.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

(a) Most knew the love triangle and understood the more complex relationships in the passage: Viola, disguised as Orsino's servant, Cesario, is wooing Olivia on behalf of Orsino. Strong answers showed enjoyment of the humour in the scene and analysed the striking cut-and-thrust of the interaction, as Olivia relentlessly pursues Cesario, while Viola not only rebuffs her advances without causing offence, but also tries to further Orsino's suit. In Viola's first line, her use of '*Princess'* is designed to flatter Olivia to make her more receptive to Orsino's love, whereas her use of *'servant'* is intended to make herself less attractive to Olivia. Good answers went into this level of detail to analyse the effect of language use in some carefully selected words and phrases. Some answers profitably explored Olivia's use of traditional love references, such as being enchanted or ensnared by love, and her ploy with the symbolic ring, although some focused entirely on Olivia to the detriment of the interplay with Viola. Some responses gave a long explanation of the relationships rather than analysing the passage, while others which offered quotations needed to show how they supported points and linked to the question. A few were unsure of the meaning of some of the text.

(b) There was a good understanding of the close bond formed when Antonio saves Sebastian's life in the shipwreck. Strong answers suggested an unequal feeling between the two. While Sebastian is grateful for Antonio's care, Antonio's language shows intense love and describes the ache of his desire as '*More sharp than filed steel'*. Antonio shows his feelings for Sebastian by entrusting him with his purse and by risking capture to accompany him, and he declares his emotions in his soliloquy, '*I do adore thee so'*. Perceptive responses commented on how Shakespeare conveys the intensity of Antonio's love by describing him worshipping Sebastian like a god. When Cesario denies knowing him, Antonio's passion transforms into extreme outrage at this apparent betrayal '*how vile an idol proves this god!*' Good answers commented on Sebastian's genuine relief to have

found Antonio safe at the end of the play, but that Antonio's love remains unrequited, since Sebastian is married to Olivia. Some responses needed to move on from the shipwreck scene to cover a range of points, while others needed to support their comments with textual reference. A few candidates showed patchy knowledge of Antonio's role.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/32
Drama

Key messages

Good answers addressed the question from the start and avoided lengthy or general introductions.

The best answers were organised to include three or four well-developed relevant points and ended with a conclusion linked to the question.

A feature of good answers was the use of brief quotations from the text to support points, combined with analysis and a direct link to the question.

The selection of reference material from the text was key to a strong answer; material needs to be directly relevant to the question, accompanied with a comment making clear how it relates to the candidate's answer to the question.

All successful answers made a response to the text as drama on stage; candidates need to select features relevant to the text and question, and analyse their use, such as: setting, action on stage, lighting, sound, interaction between characters, dialogue, entrances and exits and likely audience reaction.

In responses to passage-based questions, good answers analysed the effectiveness of the writing in detail, selecting the use of words and phrases for comment where relevant, and considered the writer's intentions.

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(b) All answers showed sympathy for Ruth, citing such reasons as: her hard work for the family, her hard, physical work for others, her tiredness, her poverty, and her marriage to a dissatisfied dreamer. Good answers supported their points with detailed textual reference. Stronger answers developed aspects such as: her health (she is worn-out, faints and is considering an abortion), marriage (the constant arguments over Travis, the cheque and the liquor store), and her modest character (her caring for others, and her dream of a comfortable house for the family, with nothing for herself). Other responses needed to use supporting textual reference. Some limited their focus on Ruth to the opening scene, while some moved away from the question to list each character's dreams. A few compared Ruth to Beneatha but spent much of the answer on Beneatha. More sensitive responses concluded with glimmers of hope from late in the play, such as Ruth's trip to the cinema holding hands with Walter, and the promising fulfilment of her own dream in the move to a new house.

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ARTHUR MILLER: *The Crucible*

Question 2

(a) All candidates understood that Abigail tells the other girls what to do. Good answers explored some of the ways in which she shows this power, such as: how she acts like a leader, by commanding the girls, and that they look to her for instructions, or how she physically shakes and hits them, forcing them to comply, and that she also threatens unspecified but terrible punishment if they disobey. Stronger responses explored the interaction between the characters in detail, to comment not only on the dramatic effects of Abigail's speech and actions, but also on how the girls respond as they show their fear of her. They judged an audience's response to be one of shock. Perceptive answers pointed out that this passage prepares the audience to believe in the immense power Abigail wields later over the girls at court, to the extent of inducing mass hysteria. Some answers merely recounted what happens in the passage; they needed to address its drama directly and how it conveys Abigail's power. Others needed to use brief quotations to support their points. There were some over-long introductions giving the background to the trials or a summary of the plot.

(b) Most answers showed understanding of how their chosen characters were unfairly treated, with stronger responses including detailed supporting material while others remained rather general. Better answers considered how their accusations arose out of the hysteria in Salem, often by people with ulterior motives. They also commented on the impossibility of mounting a defence when anyone who disagreed with a charge was deemed to be supporting witchcraft, and therefore guilty. More perceptive answers explored the social standing of the victims, and deduced that it was relatively easy to convict Tituba and Sarah Good, since neither were well-regarded and had few supporters, but that the conviction and deaths of such highly respected folk as Rebecca Nurse and Giles Corey indicated the increased level of hysteria in the town.

R C SHERRIFF: *Journey's End*

Question 3

(a) There was general understanding of Raleigh's naivety and misplaced enthusiasm. Some candidates criticised his boyish inexperience, while others responded personally to his being almost the same age as them and having just left school. Raleigh's hesitancy was seen as a lack of confidence, as was his understated description of war as '*rather – silly'*. Successful analysis was made of Raleigh's enthusiastic language and stronger answers pointed out that his enthusiasm was because he had no idea what he was about to face, like many back home. Perceptive responses pointed out that war was not played according to rules of a game, like rugby, and that the experienced Osborne knew his prowess at rugby counted for nothing in the trenches, where men died at any moment. Some answers limited their responses to Raleigh's reactions to rugby in the first half of the passage. Others lost focus on the passage and narrated later events involving Stanhope and Raleigh's letter home.

(b) Stronger answers often began with Raleigh's belief that there was constant fighting at the front line, whereas in fact most of the time soldiers were inactive, waiting in fear, and that any fighting tended to happen quickly. Most answers gave accounts of ways the soldiers dealt with boredom, such as: the ongoing banter over food, Trotter's charts, Osborne's reading and the earwig races. Better responses explored these activities further, to comment on how the earwig going in circles is symbolic of the futility of war, as is Osborne's book, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, whereas the humour about food provides the soldiers with a little light relief from the boredom. A few candidates considered what the soldiers were waiting for, and the stress it induced, compounded by the boredom of inactivity. No doubt the boredom contributes to Stanhope's drinking, but he says he drinks to give himself the courage to keep on going out to fight. A few answers needed to select the best material from the whole play, rather than limiting textual reference to the passage printed for use with Question 3(a).

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Romeo and Juliet*

Question 4

(a) Most answers commented on Lord Capulet's arranging the marriage of Juliet to Paris. Some good answers pointed out the dramatic irony of Romeo and Juliet spending their wedding night together at the same time as her marriage to another man is planned. There were some overstated accusations made against Capulet: for arranging the wedding without Juliet's agreement, for not caring for Juliet, and for being greedy for wealth and social standing. Stronger answers were more moderate and knew that it was the custom of the times to arrange marriages, that Capulet believes he is acting in Juliet's best interests, and he is already the head of a wealthy family with high social standing (although no doubt a family link to the Prince would be welcome). Many answers pointed out that this passage is a turning point towards the tragedy of the play, and strong responses emphasised the striking sense of the inevitability of fate driven by the haste of Capulet's arrangements, citing some of the many references to the speed of time passing, including *'we were born to die'*. The Friar's advice is for Romeo to go into exile, then return once things have calmed down. The haste of the marriage to Paris provokes the change to this plan which leads to tragedy. Some answers needed to explore the writing of the passage in more detail to make a response to the way Shakespeare uses language. Others needed to use brief quotations to support their points. A few showed an insecure understanding of some of the text.

(b) All candidates showed understanding of the Nurse's love and care for Juliet, with most referring to her first appearance. Some considered how she acts as go-between for the lovers and how she stands up for Juliet to her father. Good answers linked these points to her likeability, along with other character traits, such as her fondness for bawdy jokes, her garrulousness and general friendliness. Where these were supported by detailed textual reference, they gained credit. Some stronger answers commented on the breach of Juliet's trust when the Nurse advises forgetting Romeo and marrying Paris bigamously, which adversely affects how likeable she is. Perceptive responses thought the Nurse's likeability lessened with a realistic assessment of how she irritates the Capulets with her incessant talking and annoys Juliet with her teasing. Strong conclusions often pointed out the Nurse's role of providing comic relief in the play and added that the tragedy would be grim without her. Some answers needed to move on from listing several examples of the Nurse's love for Juliet, to make a range of points. Other responses contained general assertions without detailed textual support.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Twelfth Night*

Question 5

(a) Most knew the love triangle and understood the more complex relationships in the passage: Viola, disguised as Orsino's servant, Cesario, is wooing Olivia on behalf of Orsino. Strong answers showed enjoyment of the humour in the scene and analysed the striking cut-and-thrust of the interaction, as Olivia relentlessly pursues Cesario, while Viola not only rebuffs her advances without causing offence, but also tries to further Orsino's suit. In Viola's first line, her use of '*Princess'* is designed to flatter Olivia to make her more receptive to Orsino's love, whereas her use of *'servant'* is intended to make herself less attractive to Olivia. Good answers went into this level of detail to analyse the effect of language use in some carefully selected words and phrases. Some answers profitably explored Olivia's use of traditional love references, such as being enchanted or ensnared by love, and her ploy with the symbolic ring, although some focused entirely on Olivia to the detriment of the interplay with Viola. Some responses gave a long explanation of the relationships rather than analysing the passage, while others which offered quotations needed to show how they supported points and linked to the question. A few were unsure of the meaning of some of the text.

(b) There was a good understanding of the close bond formed when Antonio saves Sebastian's life in the shipwreck. Strong answers suggested an unequal feeling between the two. While Sebastian is grateful for Antonio's care, Antonio's language shows intense love and describes the ache of his desire as '*More sharp than filed steel'*. Antonio shows his feelings for Sebastian by entrusting him with his purse and by risking capture to accompany him, and he declares his emotions in his soliloquy, '*I do adore thee so'*. Perceptive responses commented on how Shakespeare conveys the intensity of Antonio's love by describing him worshipping Sebastian like a god. When Cesario denies knowing him, Antonio's passion transforms into extreme outrage at this apparent betrayal '*how vile an idol proves this god!*' Good answers commented on Sebastian's genuine relief to have

found Antonio safe at the end of the play, but that Antonio's love remains unrequited, since Sebastian is married to Olivia. Some responses needed to move on from the shipwreck scene to cover a range of points, while others needed to support their comments with textual reference. A few candidates showed patchy knowledge of Antonio's role.

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LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 0475/42
Unseen

Key messages

- All English Literature skills are tested in this paper, including the ability to support knowledge and understanding with apt quotation
- Good responses showed appreciation of structure as well as language
- More candidates are choosing to write about prose passages and need a toolkit for prose analysis
- Good responses contain good arguments and they evaluate the impact of the text on the reader.

General comments

This series once again produced many strong responses to unseen poetry and prose. Most responses were at least reasonably developed relevant arguments, and candidates only failed to achieve that level of response when they commented on surface meaning without exploring the language and implicit meaning of the text, or when responses were very brief or underdeveloped, failing to tackle the whole of the text chosen. The bullet points are advisory guidance to candidates encouraging them to break texts down into units, to ensure they have something to say about how the texts develop, and to focus their commentary on language and techniques. The third bullet usually encourages a degree of summative evaluation, based on close observation and analysis of the detail of the text. For higher marks, responses must show clear understanding of both literal and implicit meaning, and a critical appreciation of the writer's deliberate choices of voice, viewpoint and descriptive detail. The strongest scripts show personal and evaluative engagement with the writing throughout.

The bullet points also encourage candidates to explore in turn each aspect of the text's structure before making a concluding evaluation. There were plenty of well-organised and carefully paragraphed responses in this series. Discrimination between responses depended on the extent to which they engaged with implicit meaning exploring beyond the surface meaning of narrative to examine how both the poems and prose touch on deeper questions of identity and cultural experience. Stronger candidates do this exceptionally well, and this is a tribute to how well literary critical skills have been embedded throughout their preparation for Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English. The ability to apply those skills to Unseen texts is an excellent test of mastery of the Assessment Objectives; this paper is therefore an extremely effective summative assessment.

As more candidates opt to write about prose instead of poetry, it is worth reminding teachers of a range of techniques used by prose writers: these are distinct from poetryand should be taught discretely to candidates. These include narrative viewpoint and voice, focalisation and presenting thoughts and emotions critically through characterisation. Prose writing has its own rhythm and development: shifts of focus or perspective, syntactical variations or stylistic changes ensure that the reader does not conclude a passage in the same place, physically and emotionally, as where they started. It is important not to treat characters as real people but as constructs, and that might include the narrative voice of the passage. This will allow candidates to appreciate possible irony or cultural context.

Essays should be critical arguments and not paraphrases of the original text. The purpose of quotation is to support and enhance argument. In other words, quotation should not just illustrate the 'what' but the 'how' and 'why' – the methods and purposes of the writer. Good candidates invariably have a good quotation technique, embedding quotations within their responses and commenting on the effect of the writer's choices of words. Candidates can also usefully practise effective introductions, with a genuine overview of the text as a whole, not just repeating the question and bullet points. They will also benefit from practising effective conclusions which demonstrate a personal judgement on how the text has worked its effect, and what the impact on the reader consists of. This does not require moralising, or looking outside the text to form a

judgement on it: judgements should be based on the writing itself, how a certain emotional tone is created, and how the reader is encouraged to empathise with the mood of the text.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Edwin Muir's poem 'Childhood' discriminated well between stronger candidates, and all found plenty to engage with. Many used the question not just to explore the boy's developing thoughts and feelings within the poem, but to see the whole poem as a metaphor for a child's development into adulthood and independence. Helped by the bullet points, most were able to appreciate that elements of the poem described settings that were part of the boy's daydreams rather than reality, making interesting contrasts between the boy's imagination and his home life. Opinions differed about how happy that home life really was. This depended on candidates' interpretation of the second line – '*To his father's house securely bound'* – some putting a stronger emphasis on bondage than security. One candidate noted that the boy lives in 'his father's house' and does not call it 'home'*,* and it is referred to again as *'the house'* in the poem's final line. Almost all candidates picked up contrasts between '*the still light on the sand'* in the third stanza and the darker hues of the '*black islands'* and *'tiny gray rocks'*.

Candidates asked themselves, sensibly, who is really talking in this poem, and who is being addressed. Many picked up the poet's use of the third person as a distancing device, but nevertheless felt, probably correctly, that this was a largely autobiographical account, filtered through memory. The poet's use of the past tense and of conditionals also encourages such a sense of distance. Some felt that the child's feelings and language were unusually mature, but they were perhaps less confident in picking up the poem's retrospective voice.

It is also a good idea to divide a text into sections, and the bullet points help candidates to do this, and to structure their responses effectively, if they wish to use them. Most candidates used the bullet points to focus on the strong visual element of the first two stanzas, while nevertheless also reading them frequently in symbolic terms. There was some difference of opinion about where the second section, the boy's daydream, begins and ends. Many wanted to include the fourth stanza, with its description of the movement of the ship through the sound, as part of the boy's fantasy rather than reality, perhaps because the ship seems to be moving unnaturally slowly. Others linked the descriptive language of '*the black hill's gloom'* to the shadows of the boy's surroundings rather than the brighter light of his dream of escape. Almost all candidates made effective use of the last bullet point and its invitation to explore the poet's use of many contrasts, not least between the solitary dreaming boy and his mother calling his name - thus reminding him of his identity within the family.

Despite the footnote, some candidates found the reference in the first stanza to the '*silent, changing sound'* confusing. Footnotes are used to clear up areas of ambiguity, and in this case the word 'sound' refers to the bay where the boy lived and to his view out to sea; therefore, there was nothing oxymoronic about the reference to a silent sound, although the idea that what the boy saw was both *'changing'* and '*still*' provided more legitimate grounds for debate. Some strong candidates commented on the lulling 'l' sounds of *'long time he lay*' and several contrasted the '*sunny hill'* with the '*black islands lying thick round'*. Some found the latter image one of encirclement and entrapment; this was often linked to the description of being '*securely bound'* to family and the world of childhood and was further developed by exploring how the boy uses daydreams to escape.

Attention to the rhythms and form of each stanza was the hallmark of stronger scripts. Many commented on the four-square, end-stopped nature of the rhyming quatrains, and saw them as a further indication of how the boy was '*bound*' within a static world, yet desired to progress. This led a number to consider the effect of enjambment in the second stanza as '*all ran together in his view'*, taking the boy's imaginative gaze towards unseen channels leading further out to sea. There was also effective comment on caesura in line 5, and the alliterative description of the '*massed islands'* in the *'mist'* in line 6, together with treatment of the mist as a metaphor for obscurity, and for hidden pathways towards the wider world beyond the boy's visible horizon. A number of candidates wanted to read the whole poem metaphorically, as a rather abstract commentary on the transition from childhood to adulthood. Sometimes this worked very well as a personal response or interpretation, but poems are also very concrete forms of expression, and the best responses acknowledged the descriptive accuracy of both the view of the real world and the vision of what the boy imagines.

The boy's imagination is most clearly at work in the third stanza, where '*light'*, tranquillity and joy abound. This description of '*new shores'* clearly evokes a warmer and more open world than that of the silent sound,

where the boy can freely wander *'from strand to strand'* across sandy beaches with shallow water. This contrasts with the black islands and cold depths of the gloomier bay within which he is physically - but not imaginatively – confined. Soft sound effects, notably sibilance, and iambic rhythm contribute to the sense of comfort and contentment in this stanza, although interestingly the boy remains solitary.

Some candidates wanted to see the fourth stanza as part of the boy's dream too, but the contrasting descriptive language *('black hill's gloom'* and '*evening sound ... smooth like sunken glass'*) places this stanza back in the world of the first two. Strong scripts explored the ship as a metaphor for the possibility of escape, even if this is not available to the boy just yet. Many candidates wrote well about the slow passing of time in this stanza in which '*time seemed finished ere the ship passed by'*. Long vowel sounds also contribute to the slow rhythms of this stanza, to give a further image of stasis.

Both the fourth and fifth stanzas strongly communicate the passing of time, and the growing shadows of evening. Some found this a slightly sinister image, while many connected with the idea of time passing slowly for children. Plenty responded to the maternal call of the final line, as a symbol for a safe world which the boy will at some point have to leave. Several thought it significant that the boy's name is called in that line, although we never know what it is, and his identity has appeared more closely linked to natural phenomena like the personified sleeping rocks – he is '*moveless as they'* – rather than securely '*bound*' to '*the house'*. Strong scripts understood the Wordsworthian echoes of this poem, as the child seems romantically linked to nature, which in turn teaches him more about the world than he learns from *'shades of the prison house'* in the confinement of his social identity. It was good to read interpretations which fully explored the ways in which the boy's vision reflects how we learn as children, and differences between the world of childhood and the demands of adulthood. These interpretations were very much in the spirit of this text, which conveys an idyllic image of childhood, but one with growing shadows surrounding it.

Question 2

The extract from Andrea Levy's 'Small Island' (2004) proved almost as popular as the poetry, and it is encouraging to see that candidates are clearly encouraged to make a free choice between poetry and prose. Teachers might usefully want to ensure that candidates have as strong a set of analytical tools for prose passages as they have for poetry. While analysis of poetry is often stimulated by exploration of stanza form and verse structure, the first questions candidates should ask themselves about prose should concern the writer's choices of narrative perspective and voice. Considerations of genre, focus and narrative development help to make sense of a prose extract and explore the transitions from its opening to its closing paragraph. At present, candidates tend to perform a little better in poetry responses than prose, although the difference is only significant at either end of the ability range. The strongest scripts on poetry are more detailed and sensitive in their analysis of the writer's techniques, while weaker scripts on prose have a tendency to rely on paraphrase of the narrative with very little analytical comment on the writing itself. It is important in prose commentary to focus on the writer's methods and purposes.

In this extract, Levy chooses a first-person narrator with a very distinctive character and voice. She uses other narrators in other parts of the novel. Here we are presented with Hortense's unfiltered thoughts and feelings as well as her dialogue, both in formal English and Jamaican *patois*. Stronger scripts included some appreciation that the way she talks to the porter and to the taxi driver is very different from the way she talks to Gilbert, her husband. Candidates appreciated the liveliness of her character and her quick judgements, while also sensing that she is a little too proud of her own achievements and notions. Most were understandably very sympathetic to her sense of abandonment when Gilbert was not there to greet her at the dock, and several thought there was probably something amiss with their relationship. A few sided a little with Gilbert when his attempts at affection are so haughtily rebuffed at the end of the extract. Contextually, most understood her awkwardness at arriving in London for the first time, and quite a number spotted her sensitivity to racial and cultural difference, handling this with tact and sympathy.

It is helpful with prose passages, as well as poetry, to divide the text into sections. Here too, the bullet points were a guide, as they encouraged candidates to consider the descriptive passage set at the dockside followed by the dialogue with the men Hortense encounters (from the porter to taxi driver to Gilbert in the final section). Many noticed that time is used by the writer, through Hortense's observations, as a structural feature, with the repetitive stress on her *'two hours'* waiting for Gilbert. Several also noted how the paragraph is structured by a series of present participles to convey the activity of everyone else *'hugging ... laughing ... arguing ... lifting ... fussing ...walking'* while Hortense is simply '*waiting'*. Some felt that the lost button – impossible to find in the '*fading light'* – was a metonym for her fading spirits, or even her fading relationship with Gilbert. The strongest scripts all had some comment on the simile comparing the archway to an *'open mouth'* with some speculating about how London had gobbled up these crowds and seemed increasingly hostile to Hortense in the *'cold black night'*.

Several candidates picked up the contrasts between the blackness of the night, and the atmosphere of unfamiliar coldness for Hortense, and the whiteness of the porter, realising that the writer is directing our attention to racial and cultural difference. Fewer realised exactly why she is surprised by the sight of a *'working white man'*, which implies that white people did not do labouring work in the island that she comes from. Her encounters with the porter and the taxi driver prove awkward because each thinks the other is stupid, or low in the social hierarchy. Many thought it was very rude of the '*white man'* to laugh at his own joke, while others saw this as another indication of cultural difference, or Hortense's own very serious and censorious nature. Some noticed the extreme politeness of her use of English, although few noticed the Biblical allusion to *'speaking in tongues'*. More appreciated her pride in her education and recitation *'merit star'.*

Candidates tended to feel that the taxi driver was very rude in failing to understand Hortense's accent, as well as patronising when addressing her as '*dear'*, in contrast to the way she addressed the white man as '*sir'*. They were certainly sensitive to his assumption that she did not know what a bell was, and to his repeating what he said to her, as if she were a child. Several felt he was disrespectful in leaving her trunk by the side of the road. When '*he mouthed the last words with the slow exaggeration I generally reserved for the teaching of small children'*, Hortense's assumption that he is a fool demonstrates her own cultural misunderstandings, just like her response to the porter's joke, as she believes he is hostile when he might be trying to be friendly.

Candidates often made much of Hortense's view of the moonlight, *'distorting and dissolving'* as her breath steamed on the window of the cab. It is certainly a possible metaphor for her shadowy entrance into a city that seems to her hostile and unwelcoming. However, some candidates also saw humour in the comic misunderstandings of these different characters and in Hortense's tendency to assume the worst about people and situations.

Responding to the perspective and viewpoint of the narrative voice also determined candidates' reactions to Hortense's eventual meeting with Gilbert. Some saw comedy in the way she mistakes him initially for a dog, while others felt this was a metaphor for the distance and deterioration of their relationship, and certainly an indication of her rejection of his puppyish ways. The description certainly contributed to the sense of growing darkness, while providing a comic moment amid the gloom. There were many strong analyses of Hortense's contrasting body language and other ways in which she signals her disapproval. One or two compared the language of Gilbert's letter, when Hortense sarcastically quotes from it, with the behaviour of those she had been watching so intently at the start of the extract, demonstrating strong appreciation of how the passage is structured. Many contrasted this with her own experiences. Those who noticed the way she nevertheless happily slides back into familiar informal patterns of language also tended to realise her true reaction was more in sorrow than anger. Most had something to say about her repeated questions at the end of the passage, and the questions left in the minds of readers. Those alert to comedy were probably closer to the tone of the passage.

Good answers to prose questions require consideration of how the writer has crafted the piece to reveal character and circumstance and engage the reader in the viewpoint presented. Examiners are open to a range of responses, as long as they are supported by apt quotation and sensitivity to details of language and what they might reveal. The last word of the passage is *'tone'* and appreciation of this passage requires understanding of Hortense's tone and what this might imply to the reader. Good critical reading of prose. requires just as good an ear for the tone of the writing as does strong response to poetry.