

ENGLISH LITERATURE (9 – 1)

Paper 0477/01
Poetry and Prose

Key messages

Successful responses will:

- answer the question that has been set
- focus on the key words of the question
- demonstrate a detailed knowledge of set texts
- substantiate points with pertinent textual reference
- comment on the detail of quotations
- explore how writers achieve their effects through language, structure and form.

In order to do well, candidates should be discouraged from:

- writing about the topic without addressing the key words of the question
- writing excessively lengthy introductions
- writing lengthy conclusions that repeat points already made
- including extraneous background information that does not illuminate either text or task
- making unsupported assertions
- logging literary devices without explaining their effects
- using inert quotation.

General comments

Thank you to all teachers and candidates who have worked hard for this examination; to the teachers who have helped candidates to be able to communicate their knowledge, understanding and response effectively and to the candidates who have studied their texts conscientiously and derived enjoyment from them.

In this examination session, there was a wide range of quality in the scripts submitted. Better responses demonstrated thorough knowledge, understanding of the sub-text and authors' intentions, and an ability to write fluently and convincingly in response to the questions. Weaker responses generally showed some evidence that the texts had been read and a general understanding of what they were about but were unable to develop ideas or to support them. In such answers to passage-based questions, responses needed to make more direct references to the extracts which are printed for the purpose of detailed examination. Middle Band answers could generally have been improved by using more of the material provided in the extracts and by concentrating on the effects created by the writers' word choices. Often answers started with assertions that a particular figure of speech, such as personification, was responsible for making a passage or poem moving or vivid or striking, but without going on to explore the reasons why. A large number of responses were seen which devoted a paragraph each to several poetic devices such as personification, similes, assonance and alliterations, giving examples, but avoiding discussion of the meaning of the poem or the mood that is created. Generic comments about the length of sentences, paragraphs and stanzas, without further discussion of their effects, added very little to precise analysis of texts.

The passage-based questions were more popular generally in this session. In some instances, candidates who know a text well, provided that they can organise their thoughts and keep them relevant to the question, would have perhaps benefitted from attempting the essay question. The same amount of quotation is not expected as for a passage-based question since this is a closed book examination, though detailed supporting reference is important. This can often be indicated by the citing of a small but relevant detail which indicates thorough knowledge.

There were very few rubric infringements, although in many cases candidates did not allow enough time to finish the second answer. There were some signs of planning, but responses would have benefitted in general from more time spent on planning and organising ideas and arguments before beginning.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Poetry

Candidates often spent too much time on this first question, leaving little time to respond to the prose section. Candidates should be advised to balance time sensibly.

Responses were generally ineffective when making comments about punctuation, line length and line structure without any convincing or developed link to meaning. Examples include: '... uses commas to strikingly portray thoughts about love', '... the rhyme pattern is catchy and shows love has a sense of rhythm', '... the poet uses commas and full stops throughout the poem which is striking', or listing the rhyme pattern. Such comments can be effective if developed beyond simple observation or generalisation; better responses linked such points to the thrust of the question and to the wider meaning of the poem. Many in this series incorrectly called lines 'verses'.

Quotations were often well utilised, although copying out of large tracts of a poem does not demonstrate understanding or meet the requirements of the band descriptors.

There were many answers which showed real empathy with the poets' feelings and situations, leading to some original personal interpretations. Weaker responses often began by answering the question with sentences such as 'The poet makes his feelings clear through the use of adverbs' or adjectives or punctuation, etc. This approach skews a response when meaning is forced into an artificial construct. Successful responses will engage with the key words in the question rather than technique spotting without further exploration.

Songs of Ourselves Volume 1: from Part 5

Question 1: *Tears, Idle Tears*

Most candidates were able to articulate some meaningful ideas about how and why sadness is conveyed. There was some general confusion about the 'first beam glittering on a sail' and the 'pipe of half-awakened birds'. A number of responses spent considerable time mentioning techniques rather than words or language to explain their view. As a result, some answers did not analyse the language adequately to identify clearly the 'deep feelings of sadness'. Weaker responses, for example, might have stated that he finds the days 'fresh' or 'strange' without explaining what these words might convey about his sadness, or that 'divine despair' shows he is sad deep down without considering the use of 'divine'. Better responses discussed how the poet's language conveyed sadness, linking the ideas in the poem to the language used to convey them. As was the case with many questions in this section, quotations tended to be overlong; concise and relevant quotation followed by consideration of particular words is required to demonstrate understanding.

Question 2: *Attack*

This question produced generally strong responses which showed understanding and sensitivity. They were often able to focus clearly on the feelings of hopelessness within the poem. Language was considered in detail and depth, and candidates really seemed to engage with the poet's experience. As a shorter poem, most found time to consider all of the images in at least some detail. Many found it difficult to write effectively about Sassoon's use of militaristic vocabulary and the use of the final *cri de coeur*.

Songs of Ourselves Volume 2: from Part 1

Question 3: *Stabat Mater*

Some candidates commented effectively on the meaning and origin of the title and, when fully explored, it helped to inform their interpretations of the poem. Many responses failed to grasp the complexity of the relationship between the parents. A significant number of candidates felt that the phrase 'from his loving wife' was evidence of a poor relationship or that it showed fear and that she was 'under his thumb', but without explaining their interpretation. Some made a lot of the fact that the narrator calls his parents 'Mother' and 'Father' rather than 'mom' (sic) or 'dad', to show lack of a close relationship, without considering whether this might not be appropriate in the poem. Many largely ignored the need to discuss 'moving' or referenced it loosely in regards to any impressions, regardless of whether they were moving or not.

Question 4: *Lovers' Infiniteness*

This was a popular choice and there was a wide range of responses; some showing little understanding and others making solid attempts at analysis in response to the question, with varying degrees of success. Many of those who did look at language discussed 'If yet', 'Or' and 'Yet' as showing his confusion and evolving thoughts – this was an effective point but was often lengthy and excluded consideration of other language points. Few, for example, tackled the 'ground, thy heart' metaphor; those who did were often more successful in ranging across the poem.

Section B: Prose

Generally candidates responded well to the texts and questions. Interesting personal responses to character and theme were evident, though there were some cases where appropriate knowledge was not used to answer the question. Most candidates moved away from a purely narrative approach, though there was still extensive recounting of narrative on some texts. Some used the extract to answer an essay question, even when instructed not to; this approach is self-limiting as it shows a lack of knowledge and confident understanding of the text and question. The new texts seem to be appreciated and were, in most cases, effectively explored. Sound efforts were made to comment on language and structure in both essay and passage-based questions, although there is room for further development here.

CHINUA ACHEBE: *No Longer at Ease*

Question 5

This question was generally answered well. Candidates showed secure knowledge of the context of the conversation but the temptation was often to write about this rather than the dynamic and drama of the exchange itself. Successful responses focused on features such as Obi's hesitation, the comparison of his father's laughter with that of a masked ancestral spirit, and both characters' tactics in trying to direct the course of the conversation. Almost all mentioned the awful laugh, but few made much of this in their explanation, missing an opportunity to discuss language. Some misread the 'miserable worm' sentence, saying it was awful that Isaac should call his son such a thing to his face. A regular misunderstanding was over the Christianity versus traditional culture argument, which is at the heart of the latter part of the extract. A significant number of candidates thought that Isaac did not want Obi to marry Clara because this is not what Christians do, instead of understanding that Obi's reference to the Bible is saying the opposite. This made it difficult for candidates to make sense of the last part of the extract, with many resorting to repeating long quotations without comment or simply ignoring the end of the passage.

Question 6

A significant number attempted this question. Nearly all showed sound knowledge and understanding of the text. Most were very scathing about Christopher, his womanising and perceived lack of support for Obi; better responses produced a more balanced view and were able to see his attractive qualities. Weaker answers were often characterised by a lack of detail or quotation from the text, though some candidates did use pertinent quotations and references to inform and support their ideas.

JANE AUSTEN: *Mansfield Park*

Few responses were seen to this set text, making extended comment inappropriate.

Question 7

Most responses were able to identify and support their view of the type of character that Mary Crawford is. Some, however, did not mention the letter that is central to the task. Focus on the task and close consideration of the passage were key features of strong answers here.

Question 8

Of the limited number of responses seen to this question, few were able to pinpoint specific characteristics they could use to write about Fanny's parents and textual detail was limited. Stronger responses tended to consider the contrasts between the Prices and Bertrams in some detail.

WILLA CATHER: *My Antonia*

There were insufficient responses to these questions to make meaningful comment.

GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner*

Question 11

The 'powerful moment' element of the task was seized upon in some responses, with candidates able to choose effective quotations to support their comments. Candidates found the passage accessible enough to discern what was self-righteous about Godfrey but less so when considering the effect on Silas and Eppie. All understood the context, but many spent too long narrating the circumstances leading up to this climax and, in particular, why Godfrey does not deserve Eppie. Though all understood that it was a powerful moment, weaker answers tended to describe or narrate the extract rather than look at language and technique, which were characteristic of better responses.

Question 12

Few responses were seen to this question. Most fell into narrative in places in order to respond to the task, appearing to find it difficult to mention specific areas of the novel in which we see Dolly Winthrop as likable. All understood and articulated that she was 'kind', 'helpful' and therefore very likeable, and all came up with suitable examples but few developed these sufficiently or used quotation to support these points.

MICHAEL FRAYN: *Spies*

Question 13

Although candidates understood that Stephen was acting and talking childishly, frequently they could not articulate why or to what effect. There were lots of comments such as 'It is childish when Stephen says his father is a German spy/that grown-ups can be sisters', without then adding an explanation or exploring how Frayn conveys this childishness. Successful answers identified his vivid imagination and his short attention span, with the most successful focusing on the language and syntax of his thoughts in revealing his childishness.

Question 14

Responses to this question often demonstrated detailed knowledge of the text and most were able to produce a balanced response supported with relevant references and apt quotations. The best answers were able to show how the reader's view is conditioned by Frayn's portrayal of Keith through Stephen's consciousness.

KATE GRENVILLE: *The Secret River*

Question 15

Responses often engaged with the writing in the extract and most understood how to tackle the task. They were able to choose valid quotations to support the tension, noise and action central to the passage. However, there was often not enough attention given to the effects of the words used by Grenville to increase the intensity of the situation as the passage progressed.

Question 16

Of the limited number of responses seen to this question, some were able to show in detail how Will lost as much as he gained in his victory over the native Australians. Others needed to range more widely across the text to demonstrate knowledge. Weaker responses would have benefitted from greater inclusion of textual detail to support ideas.

R K NARAYAN: *The English Teacher*

Question 17

This question had a wide range of responses. Better responses used all of the extract and were able to answer the question with suitable examples and some understanding of how the relationship had altered since Susila's death. A significant number spent too long narrating the story up to this point, without a focus on the passage or consideration of the language. Careful reading was required to avoid, for example, thinking that Susila's words from the past are spoken by Krishna. Analysis of the relationship needed to be

expressed precisely; weaker responses made use of simplistic terms such as 'good', 'nice' or 'cute', often without supportive evidence or analysis of language.

Question 18

This question was mainly well-answered. Candidates showed sound knowledge of the text and the two systems with a good range of examples and quotations.

LITERATURE (ENGLISH) (9 TO 1)

Paper 0477/02
Drama

Key messages

- Strong candidates showed detailed knowledge of their set texts and could make a confident response to the language.
- The most successful responses considered the key words in the question and avoided narrative.
- Convincing answers revealed implicit knowledge of the context in passage-based questions and the ability, in discursive answers, to select relevant material, using direct quotation in support.
- Well-prepared candidates considered the text in detail in answer to passage-based questions, commented on the author's effects and used quotations from the passage in support.
- Successful answers avoided redundant introductions which gave excessive historical/cultural/contextual information at the expense of a sharp focus on the question.
- An awareness of the text as drama and an appreciation of the play on stage, watched by an audience, enlivened the most successful answers.

General comments

Many candidates this session showed a lively engagement with their set texts.

Successful answers showed detailed knowledge supported by an ability to place a passage and to use direct textual evidence in the form of quotation. Such responses went beyond an ability to merely decode meaning to comment on both dramatic and literary effects. The key elements of the question were answered directly, without the use of redundant introductions, giving Examiners information of which they are aware, such as the names of the author and the characters. Strong passage-based responses kept a sharp focus on the extract itself and, when links were made to the wider text, these were fully focused on the question. An implicit knowledge of the context of the scene and an ability to analyse the language and dramatic effects of the passage were the characteristics of high level responses. Effective responses to discursive questions referred to specific moments in the play to support their well-constructed arguments, with some direct quotation from the text.

Some candidates could have performed more successfully if, in passage-based responses, they had focused on the passage itself and not on what happened before it and after it or only commenting on the themes that they thought emerged in the passage. There was some evidence, in the Shakespeare texts in particular, that candidates did not understand what was being said in sufficient depth to answer the question. There were answers which understood what was happening but described this instead of writing an analysis of it based on the question asked.

The ability to read closely and critically analyse linguistic and dramatic effects remains the hallmark of the strongest responses.

There was evidence this session of some candidates not knowing the plot of their set text in sufficient detail and some confused the names of the characters.

Strong candidates showed awareness of authorial intention, particularly in writing about *An Inspector Calls*. Responses to *The Merchant of Venice* were hampered regularly by lengthy comment on how an Elizabethan audience would respond compared to a modern audience, when it is the candidate's own personal response that is required.

There were few rubric infringements on Paper 02 this session, but these still occur and candidates need to be made aware that they cannot answer two passage-based or two discursive questions. There were also instances of questions being labelled incorrectly. The importance of labelling the responses as identified in the paper cannot be underestimated.

Candidates should be seriously discouraged from using line references in lieu of quotations. Examiners cannot discern which words and phrases the candidate thinks are relevant and this approach does not allow for close consideration of the language.

Some candidates are using material from the printed passage in order to answer the discursive question. This limits the range of material they consider and usually leads to low achievement.

Few candidates ran out of time and there was evidence of brief, useful planning.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Shakespeare

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Henry V*

Question 1

This question was answered effectively when candidates understood that Cambridge, Scroop and Grey are traitors who have conspired with the French against King Henry. Strong responses could then select the irony and ambiguity in Henry's speeches, comment on the tension of the test he sets up for the three men and comment on their 'false flattery'. Some candidates explained the situation clearly but without any focus on the question. Others seemed unaware of the plot of the play and therefore found little to say of any relevance.

Question 2

Most candidates wisely chose Henry's Harfleur speech, the Agincourt speech or the night before Agincourt. Few, however, looked at Williams's dramatic speech about battle or the Chorus's and the Constable of France's description of the state of the English troops and what the French would do to them in battle.

Many chose the tennis balls scene, which does have powerful descriptions of war, and was a good choice if candidates were able to make specific reference to the text. Less successful responses seemed to interpret the question as meaning 'preparation for war' and wrote about the Archbishops and their motives for persuading Henry to invade France.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *The Merchant of Venice*

Question 3

There were some very strong answers to this question which considered the contrasting presentation of Portia and Shylock. Such responses explored in detail the language of Portia's plea for mercy, Shylock's stubborn refusal to give it and the way in which both characters expressed their views. Too many candidates, however, did not pay sufficient attention to the passage. They spent too long giving the context and moving on to what happens next or too long establishing what we already know about Portia and Shylock.

There were some misconceptions and misreadings such as: Portia was asking for justice; that she did not offer Shylock the money as the law would not allow it; that Jews do not believe in God or heaven; that she criticised Shylock for wearing an odd suit. If candidates had understood and written about what Portia says, how she says it and why she says it, their answers would have been more successful.

Strong responses saw that Portia is beginning to manipulate Shylock but many wanted him to be sympathetic here which was counter to how Shakespeare portrays him in this passage. Perceptive candidates understood this and commented on his terse, stubborn responses and his obsession with revenge. Only the strongest commented on 'crave' and his triumphalism when he thinks that Portia is on his side.

Question 4

There were many strong answers to this question which showed knowledge of the issues surrounding Bassanio and balanced their response accordingly. The strongest looked at the language, especially his propensity to use the imagery of finance and his various linguistic contributions to the theme of appearance versus reality. They weighed up his spendthrift, risk-taking quality, his 'use' of Antonio, his awareness of Portia's wealth and his giving away the symbolic ring against his choosing the right casket, his obvious attraction to Portia, his loyalty to his friends.

Less successful answers also used some balance but structured their essays so that the first positive view of him was then contradicted by a negative view without any comment of conclusion. The least successful answers misinterpreted the question as meaning whether other characters in the play liked him; wrote unsupported praise; made unsubstantiated claims about his willingness to risk his life for Antonio or asserted that he was never unpleasant to Shylock.

Most candidates found plenty to say, gave some balance in their assessment and clearly found Bassanio an interesting character.

Section B: Drama

J LAWRENCE AND R E LEE: *Inherit the Wind*

Question 5

The strongest responses to this question knew the context of the passage and considered both the drama and the significance of the moment. They considered Drummond's dramatic change of tactic, the responses of the spectators and reactions of Davenport and Brady. The significance to the play of the expert witnesses being dismissed, Brady never having read Darwin and his willingness to take the stand, with disastrous consequences for him, were fully understood. Less competent responses wrote about the general issues in the play rather than relating these closely to the passage and made limited comment on the dramatic effects of the scene.

Question 6

There were many well-developed responses to Bert Cates, supported by specific reference to the text. Most candidates chose to admire his kindness in preventing Rachel from being cross-examined, his anger at the treatment of the Stebbins family, his integrity in sticking to his beliefs, persistence when the town is against him and independence of mind. These points were supported by quotation or close textual reference. Less effective responses made rather bland and repetitive comments about his courage and humility, as if there is no development in his character during the play, and made erroneous and unsupported assertions about him never doubting and keeping quiet throughout the trial. Some candidates thought he won the case.

ARTHUR MILLER: *A View from the Bridge*

Question 7

This is a key moment in the play and strong candidates recognised the powerful imagery and foreshadowing, the symbolic use of the phone booth and the nature of the conflict between Eddie and Alfieri. Responses were less effective when candidates explained the context in great detail, without concentrating sufficiently on the passage itself, or when they speculated at length about Alfieri's role as narrator and the role of the law, forgetting to answer the question itself in the process.

Question 8

There were many generalised answers to this question which made assertions about the caring nature of their relationship and the women's support for one another, with only limited textual support. Effective answers understood that Beatrice may be encouraging Catherine's independence and marriage out of self-interest and commented on the crucial scene between them where Beatrice reprimands Catherine for inadvertently encouraging Eddie's attraction to her. Few answers looked at the relationship from Catherine's point-of-view and some focused almost exclusively on the women's relationships with Eddie. The word

'memorable' in the question aimed to steer candidates towards the more dramatic moments between them and some took this up by considering the moment when Beatrice is torn between loyalty to Eddie and attending Catherine's wedding.

J B PRIESTLEY: *An Inspector Calls*

Question 9

It was important here for candidates to know what had happened immediately before the passage at the end of Act One, but this was often not mentioned; many candidates either did not know, or had forgotten, that Sheila has already worked out that Gerald knew Eva/Daisy and that was why he was absent the previous summer. Because this was missing from some responses, it resulted in the main argument, that Sheila and the audience had no idea what Gerald was about to say, being flawed. There were a number of candidates who successfully explored the dramatic impact of the Inspector's standing at the door in silence, but few were able to comment effectively on Sheila's words 'You see? What did I tell you?' instead focusing on her 'hysterical laugh' and often misunderstanding it.

Most candidates recognised the conflict between the Gerald and Sheila, the tension created by the fact that the play had started off as a happy occasion celebrating their engagement which was now ironically coming to an end. Less successful answers relied on a generalised narrative overview of the passage, without sufficient focus on the tension and how it is created.

Question 10

The strongest answers focused on the key words in the question: 'memorable...victim', whereas less successful responses retold Eva's story and did not pay sufficient attention to the question. Many answers would have been improved by addressing the text as drama and not referring to it and writing about it as a novel. The focus for 'memorably' often became the political / social issues rather than any dramatic impact on stage, though there were also convincing responses to her 'symbolic' significance as an oppressed woman and member of the working class. The strongest answers were able to respond successfully to the impact of the Inspector's emotive words when describing Eva's death or to its impact on the plot, rather than stating that everyone was involved with her and this drove the plot in general terms.

ENGLISH LITERATURE (9 - 1)

<p>Paper 0477/03 Unseen Comparison</p>
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Key messages

- Assessment of candidate work in this paper is closely aligned with the Unseen paper 0486 Paper 4
- Candidates who expressed good overall understanding of both texts performed better than those who compared individual features of the writing without a wider context
- Context is a focus for assessment and incorporates comparison of the wider meaning of the texts as they have been written and received. It is not a dating exercise.
- Personal responses should involve an interpretation of both texts informed by comparisons of language
- Better responses interweave comparison throughout the answer instead of looking at each text on its own before comparing.

General comments

This is a new syllabus and will continue until 2019. The Principal Examiner's report for June 2017 provides useful guidance about the new elements in this syllabus and clarifies how they are assessed. The marking of this paper is closely aligned to the Unseen paper in the Cambridge Literature (English) syllabus, 0486 Paper 4.

Given the small cohort sitting this component in November, it is difficult to generalise based on candidate performance. However, it is useful to clarify some general principles.

Examiners assess work according to the band descriptors in the mark scheme. The Content Band Descriptor table has more marks within each Band, and makes explicit reference to literary, social and cultural (but not historical) context but is otherwise identical to 0486. Implicit in constructing a relevant and developed personal response to the task is a clear rationale for comparing the two texts; this might well be linked to subject matter and context as well as details of language, structure and form. AO5 is separately assessed and effective communication is the skill tested. Although largely consistent accuracy in spelling and punctuation is a requirement of work at the highest level, marking is positive and not a counting up of errors. Range and effectiveness of vocabulary and sentence construction is just as important as accuracy.

This paper assesses comparative argument as well as close reading. Candidates are strongly advised to plan their answers, and to have established a clear rationale for comparison before beginning to write. The question will usually help with this: in the case of **Question 1**, the experience of education in different contexts and by different genders was clearly signalled as the subject matter in the question, bullet points and choice of texts. Both clearly depict social and cultural worlds rather different from schools today, and reflection on those differences might well inform a strong response.

A wider contextual argument and clear overall understanding of both texts allows much more structured comparison. Using the bullet points, candidates can explore how both texts begin, develop and conclude before reflecting further on their overall effect and evaluating the impact of reading them side by side. This is much more effective than reading texts with a checklist of features to spot and then comparing the ways in which poems deploy them. A good comparative argument engages with the meaning of the texts, the emotions which may have informed their writing, and how those might be received.

Personal response (AO4) at a higher level implies an interpretation of the texts and is informed by the ways in which writers use form, structure and language. It is therefore part of the process of synthesising observations and coming to an effective conclusion.

There are different possible approaches to the mechanics of comparison, but one approach which is rarely successful is to look at each poem individually before making any comparisons at all. Such responses often

run out of time before the question is adequately addressed. A disorganised approach, lacking a plan and cohesion, is unlikely to succeed, and the approach of moving quickly and superficially between texts without showing clear comprehension of either will not gain the higher marks.

Candidates are given ample time in this paper to explore both poems or extracts. It is not expected that their written responses should be of any great length: the time is provided to allow for more reading of the material but also for more planning of the argument. Good responses are often succinct and with a clear sense of direction and purpose.

While some short answers can be focused and effective, it is rare for answers shorter than 600–800 words to be placed in the higher bands due to a general lack of depth. Longer responses than this are not necessarily more effective. Learners should be encouraged to aim for a balance of both breadth and depth; those who regularly write extensive responses should be guided to plan their answers more carefully and focus clearly on the question and Assessment Objectives.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Philip Larkin's 'The School in August' and Raymond Garlick's 'Thug' both look back at education with a degree of irony and are both less straightforward than they initially appear. While candidates presumably chose to write about these short poems because they had a confident overall grasp of their meaning, they were not always so clear over details. Both texts have an evident subtext which needs exploration in order to show appreciation of 'deeper implications'. The gentle activities of the girls' school are lyrically described, but overlaid with a sense of stillness and the passing of time, with hints of mortality and the fleeting nature of such innocence. No such innocence is evident in Garlick's depiction in 'Thug'. His subject is largely accepted to be the corruption of hierarchical power and the institutionalisation of violence. Candidates here often struggled with the meaning of the final stanza, and had some difficulty in appreciating the time shift, implying that the beating received from 'that hand' of the headmaster led to 'his hand/round the cosh' leading to the violence dealt out by the boy grown into a thug. Some candidates concentrated too much on individual images without following their meaning in the context of the poem's three sentences. They also did not always read the text carefully enough and confused the different pronouns and who they refer too. Most understood that the poem is making a powerful case against corporal punishment.

If the details of the poems were not always understood, there was often effective contrast of the poets' methods, as candidates had clearly practised exploring form and structure, even if they were not always confident in relating these to meaning and context. Thus while both poets use rhyme in similar ways, the effect of Larkin's longer lyrical lines is very different from the clipped, curt rhymes of Garlick's poem, which seem to accelerate its inevitability and cycle of repetitive violence. Time is a major subject of both poems, and time passes more slowly but just as inexorably in Larkin's poem. The 'dust', emptiness, unanswered questions and fading evidence of games and traditional practical skills hints at mortality, and echoes of this can be found in the rhymes of the final stanza. Both poets see the experience of school in retrospect and from the outside, reinterpreting its details to express their own concerns about the world outside. Larkin's ballad-like rhythms suggest nostalgia for a lost past, while Garlick's staccato rhythms reflect a world of hierarchical abuse of power. There is scope for comparisons between 'seniors grow tomorrow/ From the juniors today' and 'what rules the classroom rocks the world' with attention to Garlick's more disturbing choice of verbs.

There was scope for contrasting the effects of rhymes in both poems, and ways in which they illustrate the mundane restraint of the girls' school and the violence of language ('the tongue's salt lash') as well as punishment experienced by the boy. Some higher level responses might have considered, as a point of context, whether these gendered stereotypes still have any validity in the modern world. Both worlds look to the future, but with very different attitudes.

Generally candidates were more comfortable with the gentle lyricism of Larkin's portrayal of school life, not least the natural images and sibilance associated with 'drowsy summer' days. There were effective contrasts with the aggressive language of Garlick: 'lash', 'welt', 'blow' and 'cosh'. Comment on language and form was most effective when integrated with reflection on meaning and tone.

Another fruitful area for contextualisation might have been the relationship between school life and what aspects of the future world it actually educates children for. Appreciation of the contrasting tones of each poem showed good close reading, but interpretation required further consideration of the reader's response

and the mood each poem invokes, and why they are so different. Candidates were also more likely to achieve more highly if they had demonstrated a clear understanding of each poem before moving on to more speculative interpretation. Better answers showed a mature appreciation of how bizarre the rules and conventions of school life might look to an outsider, looking back with a different perspective.

Quality of written communication was generally clear but occasionally lapsed when attempting to be too ambitious. At best, use of language is precise, effective and in a register appropriate to the task.

Question 2

Insufficient responses were seen to comment meaningfully on candidate responses to this question.