



Examiners' Report

June 2024

GCE English Language & Literature 9EL0 01

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Introduction

9EL01 is a written examination of 2 hours 30 minutes in duration. This paper has an explicit focus on the concept of 'voice' and how spoken voices are formed, and written voices created, in literary, non-literary and digital texts.

9EL01 has two 'set' texts: the Pearson Anthology of non-literary and digital texts, and a drama text selected (from the 7 plays examined) by centres for study. The paper comprises two sections. Each section is equally weighted with a total of 25 marks available for each component.

The paper assesses performance across the following Assessment Objectives (AOs):

AO1: Apply concepts and methods from integrated linguistic and literary study as appropriate, using associated terminology and coherent written expression.

AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in texts.

AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which texts are produced and received.

AO4: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic and literary concepts and methods.

Section A

Candidates were presented with two texts, linked, thematically, by the topic of adventure travel. The first (unseen) text was an extract from a written record of a TED Talk delivered in Reykjavik, Iceland in 2019. The speaker is Michelle Spinei, a Reykjavik-based writer and tourism researcher. The talk was subsequently published on the TED talk website and on YouTube. The second text was drawn from the Pearson Anthology. In 2024 this was the extract of a blog by George Scott, the assistant editor of RoadCyclingUK, a magazine providing the latest news, reviews and advice for those involved with performance road cycling. The blog was published on the magazine's website.

Candidates were expected to explore the texts through a comparative and analytical lens which targets AO1 and AO2 and which has a key focus on the construction and presentation of voice/identity. They were also prompted to offer analytical consideration of context and issues of production and reception to meet the requirement at AO3. The link of adventure travel afforded the key point of comparison that is central to the assessment of AO4.

Section B

Candidates were presented with an extract drawn from their studied Drama text. They were asked to use this extract, and the question linked to it, as a starting point for exploration across their studied play. As with Question 1, candidates were expected to explore the extract and the broader play through the analytical lens which targets AO1 and AO2 and which has a key focus on the writer's craft in terms of construction and presentation of character, plot and staging. They were also prompted to offer analytical consideration of context and issues of production and reception to meet the requirement at AO3.

Question 1

Candidates generally responded well to Question 1 and there was evidence of effective teaching of the Anthology text which ensured that even less successful candidates could offer relevant comment. Examiners reported that the pairing of the two passages was effective and accessible and allowed a keen focus on 'voice' and identity of the writer/speaker and their individual experiences of travel. Even those candidates that did not have detailed technical ability were achieving through developed explanations of context linking features such as lexis, structure and address to function. Some imbalance was seen in the treatment of the texts with candidates obviously more confident when discussing the Anthology text. Candidates mostly seemed well prepared on the context of the blog and some had an excellent grasp of the language and form of the Anthology passage, suggesting they had studied it in detail. The TED talk seemed accessible for most candidates; it provided an opportunity to discuss modality and tenor that many obviously welcomed.

Examiners once again pointed out that candidates need reminding of the importance of moving quickly through an answer, especially early on where they often lost time repeating the material from the question/Source Booklet, making general observations before getting down to the specifics of analysis.

At **AO1 and AO2, successful responses** often explored a range of the language features in both extracts. Exemplification was consistent and appropriate and the responses offered considered comment on the link between form and function in order to evidence construction/presentation of voice or to discuss targeting of audience and purpose. Terminology was fairly wide-ranging and applied with some accuracy at word, sentence and whole – text level. There was clear understanding of the devices employed by each, e.g. to develop description of the landscape central to each text, such as the similes applied by Spinei, e.g. 'it was like hiking on the moon'; Scott's deployment of compound adjectives, e.g. 'two-mile, car-free', 'wind-restricted'. **Successful** candidates noticed the register shifts and used this to comment on the subtler aspects of voice as a result. Pleasing this series were the frequent links between device (linguistic and literary) and the perspective of the writer/speaker. These integrated and analytical comments afforded high reward across AOs with more confident candidates able to weave the aspects of form into comments about their analysis of devices within the texts rather than making stand-alone points just concerning form or genre.

At **A03, successful responses** offered developed comment on the context of both extracts with consideration of the factors that influenced the production and reception of each. The best went beyond the more obvious points on context, such as generic form and convention, to develop some very interesting comments about, for example, the respective professional roles of Spinei and Scott and how these influenced the language choices of each; Iceland as context for both research and as host for the talk delivered by Spinei; the placement of adventure travel in opposition to the increasingly risk-averse nature of society. At the **higher end** candidates wrote extended, close analysis about both texts making relevant links between them. There was some excellent comparative work linking context to purposes and detailed analysis of features in an integrated approach seen in Level 4/Level 5. How effects are achieved to relay exciting experiences was very much the focus in stronger responses and these were often confident in tone and ranged throughout the texts in controlled and consistent responses.

At **A03, successful responses** offered developed comment on the context of both extracts with consideration of the factors that influenced the production and reception of each. **The best** went beyond the more obvious points on context, such as generic form and convention, to develop some very interesting comments about, for example, the respective professional roles of Spinei and Scott and how these influenced the language choices of each and the contrasting functions of their texts. At the higher end, candidates wrote extended close analysis about both texts making relevant links between them. There was some excellent comparative work linking context to purposes and detailed analysis of features in an integrated approach seen in Level 4/Level 5. How effects are achieved to relay exciting experiences was very much the focus in stronger responses and these were often confident in tone and ranged throughout the texts in controlled and consistent responses.

A key discriminator in this series was the handling of the comparison/connection at **A04**. The best integrated this throughout their answers rather than handling the source materials as separate entities and then summarising the differences and links in a concluding section. The most successful answers were very clear about the contrasts (despite the common focus on themes of travel and voice).

Less successful responses often struggled with the connection between **A01** and **A02**. These often picked upon some general language features but links between form and function were often limited and/or undeveloped with many resorting to comments such as 'this feature makes it entertaining' or 'makes the reader read on'. Often mnemonics or prepared templates hindered a candidate's ability to explore, particularly the unseen text, in greater detail as they were looking for devices to fit a checklist rather than exploring the text for its worth.

In mid-lower-level answers, exemplification was often inconsistent and sometimes inaccurate. In these responses, candidates often confused basic labels such as verb/noun or adjective/adverb and there was tendency to label any question as 'rhetorical'. Less successful responses also frequently resorted to non-specific comment at sentence level such as 'short, snappy sentences' and frequently confused sentence types. Many mid-level candidates commented on the literary devices employed though they couldn't always say what functions they served.

In **less successful** handling of contextual factors (**AO3**), candidates often made very generalised statements about the nature of blogs and Ted Talks especially on form and purpose although, in mid-level answers, comparative work was also undertaken with considered attempt to consider purpose and audience. Although not discriminating, work was often clear and purposeful on how lexis and semantics had been used to convey the nuances of travel experience.

At **AO4**, some **less successful** candidates tried too hard to find similarities in every aspect of the two texts.

This is a successful response to Question 1. It was awarded a mark of 23 which places it into Level 5 – the highest level of achievement.

1 Compare the ways in which the speaker in Text A and the writer of Text B create a sense of voice as they present their experiences of adventure travel.

In your answer, you must consider linguistic and literary features, drawing on your knowledge of genre conventions and context.

Both Scott and Spinei, through their genre conventions, convey the equally challenging and mystifying experiences of adventure travel. Scott's blog is an especially engaging and reflective piece that documents his experience ^{during} on his second day on a cycling camp in Majorca, which he presents as both arduous and beautiful. On the other hand, Spinei the extract from Spinei's Ted Talk is an especially engaging and persuasive ~~sp~~ piece that argues her strong belief that discomfort during experiences of adventure travel are great opportunities for transformation and self-development. Due to Scott being the content editor of Road Cycling UK, ~~and frequent~~ his primary audience is most likely to be frequent readers of his blog, cyclists of any ability, as well as cyclists with a particular passion for abroad cycling experiences. On the other hand, ~~Spinei's primary audience is likely to be~~ due to Spinei being a Reykjavik-based writer and tourism teacher, her primary audience is most likely to be more interested in tourism in Reykjavik, and individuals interested in adventure travel experiences that challenge their ~~strength~~ psychological and physical strength. Scott conforms to the genre conventions of a



The response promises comparative analysis from the start, signalling effective handling of AO4. Everything points towards integrated analysis, especially, in this introductory summary, reference to the professional status of Scott and Spinei which links to audience and function scoring, already, at AO3.



Try to integrate points of comparison between the source texts throughout your answer.

blog through his use of changes in register, reflective tone, and sense of audience, whereas Spinei conforms to the genre conventions of a Ted Talk through her use of formal register and direct address.

Firstly, both writers establish a voice of struggle as they convey the challenging experience of adventure travel.

However, Scott achieves this through his use of context bound references and colloquial language, whereas Spinei achieves this through her use of formal register and declaratives.

For example, in the exposition of Scott's blog, he writes:

"Trouble is, we now ~~have~~ had a headwind worthy of the Northern Cloniss"^{hyperbolic} Scott's use of ~~fronted colloquial phrase~~ ~~coupled with~~ the "context bound reference to the "Norman Cloniss"

- a 1-day extremely challenging cycling race for pro cyclists - establishes a tone of struggle as he conveys that the first part of his cycling excursion was extremely arduous. ~~This is reinforced.~~ This is reinforced by

Scott's use of the fronted colloquial phrase "trouble is", which emphasises his informal approach at conveying his experience of struggle, - a key genre convention of a blog.

Scott may have chosen to be especially transparent to his audience regarding his experience to provide them with a holistic understanding of his time in Mojave, purposefully increasing the credibility of his ~~own~~ piece. & Similarly, Spinei also ~~conveys~~ establishes a voice of struggle,



As the answer moves on, the candidate selects a valid first point of connection between the texts – the challenge of adventure travel and the voices constructed and presented by Spinei and Scott to convey them. Comparison is afforded through exploration of the levels of the formality/informality used to shape the texts. Evidence is sensibly selected to support the points made here and this evidence is explored through an analytical lens at word, sentence and whole-text level. In this way, the response addresses all 4 AOs.



ALWAYS provide evidence drawn DIRECTLY from the text to support your comments. This will allow you to analyse the specific language choices of the writer/speaker.

but use a much more formal and ~~transcendental~~ transcendental approach. For example, Spinei ~~the~~ writes: "... but for an increasing amount of people vacations are filled with adventure activities that test their ^{strength and} endurance... Adventure activities bring up feelings of discomfort..." Spinei's use of the metaphor, emphasized by the ^{past-modifying} verb "piled", coupled with the proper nouns "strength" and "endurance" establishes a voice of struggle as she conveys that an "increasing amount" ~~of~~ of individuals are turning towards adventure activities that challenge both their psychological and physical capabilities. However, unlike Scott, Spinei ~~she~~ establishes a more distant and formal approach, emphasized by her use of simplistic lexical choices and syntactical structure. Spinei may have chosen to be this ^{formal} approach to allow her piece to conform to central genre conventions of a Ted Talk, as well as present herself as a more sincere and respectable speaker, allowing her piece to have a more impactful delivery. ^{Furthermore} ~~Therefore~~, despite ~~the~~ both writers establishing a voice of struggle, their approaches to establishing this voice differ due to their ^{differing} respective audiences: Scotts being more familiar, frequent reader of his blog, and Spinei's being a less familiar audience of individuals interested in ~~four~~ adventure experiences in Reykjavik.

Secondly, both writers establish a tranquil sense of voice as they touch on pleasurable experiences associated with



The comparative approach sustains to cement reward at AO4. The Spinei text is explored to closely link language features to their effect or to authorial intent. Exemplification is consistent and appropriate.

There is some security with terminology (AO1) and clear links to effect/function (AO2). Comments on generic form and media platforms glean reward at AO3 whilst the references to the respective audience of each text extends performance at both AO3 and AO4.



Make the most of the evidence you provide – if you explore it in detail and with focus on the task, you can gain marks against all 4 AOs.

adventure travel. For example, Scott writes: "but this is what cycling is about - exploring uncharted territory with the wind and sun on your back." Scott's use of the multisensory imagery & and congeional tone deliberately connects the ~~to~~ experience of cycling with the beauty and serene environment of nature, ~~at~~ establishing a voice of tranquility? This is reinforced by Scott's use of the declarative "only a farmer and his herd of goats for company", which emphasizes an atmosphere of solidarity and peace during his cycling trip. Scott may have chosen to establish this tranquil sense of voice to ~~perse~~ convey to his readers that despite the previous struggle, the experience of cycling can still be an extremely rewarding and pleasurable experience, allowing him to persuade his readers of the brilliance of cycling trips taken abroad that they too can experience. Similarly, Spinei also establishes a voice of tranquility/ as she conveys the pleasurable experience of adventure travel. This is emphasized in her ~~use~~ use of an anecdote regarding a 13-year-old girl: "she was so overwhelmed with a sense of peace that she laid down in the snow for a minute she just felt so grateful to be here." Spinei's use of the image of solidarity coupled with her ^{explicit} use of the post-modifying noun "peace" clearly conveys ~~that~~ the state of harmony the girl experienced as a result of her hiking trip, providing an increased sense of connection to nature during adventure travel.



A clever point of comparison is established via the balance of the sense of peace and beauty developed in both texts to counter the struggle previously explored. Scott's technique is investigated analytically to evidence his construction of the tranquil setting and environment as a clear benefit of cycling in Spain and compared with Spinei's use of an anecdotal description of her encounter with a 13-year-old girl; a description analysed specifically to evidence Spinei's intentions to highlight a connection with nature as a positive benefit of adventure travel. Again, this section hits all AOs.

experiences that equally features in Scott's piece. Spinei may have chosen to use this specific anecdote to establish his role of tranquility) so it is a typical convention of Ted Talks, and allows her argument that challenging ~~adventure~~ ~~travelling~~ adventure experiences can also breed peace and harmony, to have increased credibility when presented to her audience.

Thirdly, ~~Scott~~ Scott uses ~~as~~ a pleading sense of voice to emphasize his adversity to challenging experiences during his cycling camp trip, whereas Spinei establishes ~~and~~ an inspirational sense of voice as she conveys the value of challenging experiences. For example, Scott writes "Give me hills and a view to work for over a death march into a black headwind." Scott's use of the frontal imperative "give" coupled with ~~his use of the pre-modifying~~ pejorative adjective "death" and specialist lexia "black headwind" ^{establishes a pleading sense of voice as he} clearly "conveys his ~~at~~ attitude of adversity towards challenge, where he (understandably) emphasizes his preference for a more conventional cycling experience of "hills" and a "view", rather than the excruciating challenge of his "wind-restricted" morning cycle. Scott may have chosen to include this confession within his piece to allow him to ~~connect purposefully express his~~ ~~establish an undertone of~~ connect deeper with his readership, as well as engage his audience further. Conversely, Spinei establishes an inspirational

sense of voice as she conveys the necessity and value of challenging experiences of adventure travel. For example, in the ^{conclusion} ~~conclusion~~ of her piece, she ^{utters} ~~writes~~: "Adventure travel can frustrate us. It can delight us. It can inspire us. And if we let it, it can change us." Spinei's use of the inclusive pronoun "us" deliberately addresses her whole audience, allowing for a more captivating delivery as she emphasises the significant value ~~in~~ ~~of~~ of adventure travel in encouraging possible transformations within individuals, emphasised by her use of the ameliorative verbs "delight", "inspire" and "change". Spinei may have chosen to use this inspirational sense of voice to convince her task to persuasively encourage her audience to engage in adventure travel, accepting the subsequent challenge as it is a wonderful opportunity for self-development.

In conclusion, although these pieces do differ in their relationships with challenging adventure travel experiences, it could be argued that ~~they~~ ~~or~~ both texts focus on the multi-faceted, but ultimately rewarding experiences of adventure travel make the pieces especially similar. Both pieces make for a compelling case about the beauty of adventure travel, allowing ~~near~~ the audiences of both texts to feel a sense of inspiration and gratitude for both the natural world and its opportunities for travel.



The response continues to apply a sequenced movement across different aspects of voice, signalled by discourse markers – here 'Thirdly'. This facilitates selection of comparative comment and evidences sound understanding of the source texts and a firm grasp of the requirement of the task. Some of the links are a stretch however, due to the rigidity of the structure at this point. Analysis of the evidence provided continues to score highly at AO1 and AO2 all the same, applied as it is a sentence and word level.



Although comparison is key – do not force it!

The following script was awarded a mark of 12 for Question 1.

This places it at low Level 3. The mark suggests that the response evidences the 'general understanding' of Level 2 and has sufficient moments of 'relevance and clarity' to push it into Level 3, albeit at the lower end of the Level.

These texts both have a genre of a travelogue as they describe their travelling experiences in a first person point of view. The audience target for both will be adventurous outdoors type of people who are intrigued. As well as the purpose is to enlighten people with the ways of being adventurous and not letting fear get in the way.

Text A subheading starts with a rhetorical question "Can adventure travel change you?" This shows the writer ~~Michelle~~ Michelle captivating the reader straight away. This differs to text B who starts with a sub-heading of "A ride of two halves".

The voice of Text A uses emotive persuasive technique as they describe the positives of the experience out weighing the negatives. This is shown when it says "Imagine



The introductory paragraph is a rather generalised description of the links between the texts in terms of target audience and function. It is straightforward but does open with an eye of connection/contrast (AO4).

Consideration of the heading used in Text A does identify technique and apply terminology at AO1. This does not extend to the second text, however. Links to function are undeveloped and non-specific, limiting potential for reward at AO2.

The third paragraph moves on to consider aspects of voice and, as such, addresses a key focus of the task.



ALWAYS explore the evidence you provide fully. Identify features and apply terminology. **ALWAYS** comment on the function/effect of the features you identify to score at AO2.

hiking past endless waterfalls and three glaciers. This shows the writer using pathos as they use emotive language to help convey the reader to connect to their writing. This also connects to text B as they describe the experience "like heaven" the use of positive voice helps connect the reader to the experience increasing their likelihood to carry on reading helping to engage readers.

The writer in Text A uses a sense of ~~to be~~ common, happy voice as they say "Some of us vacations are full of beach activities but for an increasing amount of people vacations are filled with adventure activities". The juxtaposition of the views of the writer creates a sense of persuasion to convert readers to becoming more adventurous and contradicting usual society holidays.

This differs to text B by George Scott who helps link ideas of both adventurous and calming holidays. Scott does this by saying "and a chance to work on tan lines in the sun". This shows the



The response progresses to a rather generalised consideration of positive aspects of voice. There is some attempt to evidence this positivity, but no real attempt to explore this evidence analytically, for example there is no analysis of Spinei's simile.

The repeated attempts to label aspects of voice are increasingly tenuous and the comparisons and comment linked to these labels are only loosely relevant.

There is, however, a worthy attempt to compare the way both texts offer contrast between adventure and more conventional holidays.



Do not force comparisons. Keep your evidence firmly rooted in the source material.

Semantic field of relaxation and voice of peace as you can experience both through travelling. This shows how George's experience of travelling dictates Michelle's.

Both writers use pathetic fallacy through their writing experiences as they link to the weather. This is shown in text A with the metaphor "that it was like hiking on the moon". This shows the writer using ethos to be persuasive in their text to encourage readers to hike. This is also shown in text B "exploring uncharted territory with the wind and sun on your back". The oxymoron "wind" and "sun" shows the contrast of weather and how it does not negatively impact the experience. This shows both writers using a sense of enthusiastic voice as they describe their experiences.

Text A also uses logos as Michelle says "push our psychological boundaries we can have transformational experiences". This shows the writer using ~~big~~ scientific values to help promote their experience and persuade others to try it.



Although the reference to pathetic fallacy is questionable, the paragraph which explores reference to the weather conditions is slightly more successful in that it does afford some basic points of comparison. The candidate continues to attempt to evidence pathos, logos and ethos with very limited success.

This digress to text B as the writer mainly uses pathos as he describes and captivates readers through emotions they will experience.

Text A is also an account written from a hiker view which digress to text B which is written through road cycling. This shows how they are different types of exercising but both relate to having similar experiences.

Text A further uses ^{Oxymoron} ~~metaphor~~ through it "can frustrate us. It can delight us". The adjectives "frustrate" and "delight" reflect the brutal reality of the experience to help grasp the reader with a sense of truth in their writing voices.

Text A ends with a rhetorical question "okay?" this shows how it ends the same way it started to link the text together and create a sense of organisative voice. Whereas Text B ends on a high positive outlook with adjective "best" to encourage readers to go out and experience the same emotions Scott just described through cycling.

Overall, both writers create a sense of awe through excitement and positive outlooks on both of their experiences to help inspire readers and publish their experiences for the whole world to read.



The structure/sequence of the response becomes disrupted here with a rather random, seemingly introductory paragraph which detracts from AO1.

Things improve a little as the candidate recognises and evidences the opposing nature of the experiences of adventure travel in Text A. The term 'oxymoron' is insecure and word classes are misapplied.

There is also some appreciation of the cyclical nature of Text A through the identification of interrogative structures at its opening and close.

Question 2

All My Sons proved a popular choice for centres once again and responses presented across the full range of achievement, including some exceptional Level 5 answers. The question prompted consideration of how WWII, the immediate historical precursor to the play, affects the attitudes and behaviour of its characters. There are many opportunities for this, within the extract itself and across the broader text.

Most successful were those that started from a detailed and analytical interrogation of the extract itself. **Successful answers** offered close comment on the construction of the voices contained in the extract, linking form to function and applying terms with accuracy and in good range thus meeting the challenge at AO1 and AO2. These framed their investigation through the specific focus of the question to comment on, e.g. Chris's attitude to the military collective revealed through his interrogative 'So who flew those P-40's, pigs?' and how this contrasts with the narrower/familial perspective of his father; the imagery used by Keller to convey the pressure placed on production by the military, e.g. 'madhouse'; 'whippin' us'. These **successful responses** offered similar focus when extending beyond the extract into the broader play. Key to this success was the presentation of evidence drawn directly from the play and the subsequent linguistic/literary analysis of the language used by Miller to craft character and develop plot (**AO1/AO2**).

Less successful candidates were often insecure with the specifics of analysis – often confusing words classes and misapplying terms at sentence level. Many avoided sentence-level comment altogether. Some failed to exemplify and thus restricted opportunities for analysis. There was often a drift from the specific focus of the task to consideration of other seemingly-practised themes.

Also key was the integration of contextual comment afforded by this evidence (**AO3**). Many responses dealt with the contextual implications of the play which were well linked to this particular extract. Again, a key discriminator was the ability to embed these contextual ideas to authorial decisions rather than simply describing issues at the time. Those that considered the text as a performance piece, exploring dramatic conventions and techniques were rewarded against the contextual AO3. Many commented on how the war effort caused the kind of difficult choices in business that forced Joe and Steve into the fateful decision to dispatch the cracked cylinder heads. Others reflected on the loss of Larry in the war and how this forced Chris to live in the shadow of his brother's death and also led to Kate's increasingly delusional denial. Others reflected on how Kate and Ann are particularly impacted by the separation and loss experienced by women in time of war. **Less successful** were those that failed to integrate contextual comment to address the specifics of the task. Examiners commented that some responses bolted on political and historical detail with limited concession to the requirements of the task.

A key contextual point was the consideration of the play in performance and the best considered the staging of the scene through consideration of stage direction with the best offering focused consideration of Ibsen and the Greek influence on plot and structure. They were also able to comment of character as construct and voice/dialogue as crafted by Miller to meet his dramatic agenda.

Less successful responses tended to the descriptive, presenting narrative summaries as opposed to considering Miller's dramatic intentions. A significant minority produced literary investigations without the specific levels of analysis of technique required for this specification.

This is an extremely successful response to Question 2. It shows a firm grasp of the post-WWII context that frames the play and shapes its characters. It offers integrated analysis of Miller's craft based on judiciously selected evidence to support assertion.

It was awarded the full 25 marks. It is not without minor flaws, but the examiner rightly felt that it fully addressed all Level 5 descriptors under examination conditions which is very impressive.

In Miller's post-war ~~realistic~~ domestic realist 'tragedy [of] The Common Man', Miller presents the influence of WW2 on the behaviour of his characters in the extract and elsewhere in the play through themes expressed ^{throughout} including guilt and denial (denial ~~more~~ more-so of the older generation; Kate and Keller), survivors' guilt, shown through Chris' character, and the different moralistic views of the older generation compared to the younger generation involving materialism vs idealism, with the younger generation seeking justice and honesty, shown through Ann's character (who stops speaking to her father after finding out what he supposedly did), and George's character who is the nemesis and catalyst of the play, who seeks justice for his father upon arrival at the Keller's house. This contrasts to the older generation who are able to live in their denial of knowledge (shown through Kate and Keller's characters) or are simply complicit to society and choose not to say anything, shown through Jim, Frank, Eve and Lydia's characters, who play the role of the Greek chorus, and this is shown to be true through Jim later saying to Kate 'I've always known', they all have, about what Keller had done.

Firstly, ~~throughout the play~~ the influence of WW2 on the behaviour of Keller and Kate is shown through their guilt and denial revolving their son's death. Keller allows his partner Steve Deever (Ann's father) to take the blame for shipping faulty aircraft parts to the airforce in WW2. In the extract this guilt is shown through his attempt to justify Deever's ~~or~~ supposed actions to Ann, on a surface level to convince



The response opens with a clear focus on the question and an equally clear statement of intent in terms of the issues it will address and the characters that link to them. From the very start, there is an awareness of Miller and his craft, of character as constructs and of the context of WWII that frames and shapes them. The influence of Greek Theatre is also referenced – pretty impressive in an introduction, but also a framework for the development of the essay that follows.



Never lose sight of the question.

lier he is not a villain, but on a deeper level, to try to convince himself he is not. The ~~the~~ ~~extent of the demand~~ repeatedly pleads with Ann to 'just try to see it human, see it human', the imperative and repetition of 'human' showing how well he is trying to justify the death of 21 pilots as human error, and showing the guilt he is feeling for his actions but denial to confront those emotions. Miller states how Joe's actions as a tragic hero were 'always understandable and always unacceptable', for despite shipping the parts to try to make money to provide for his family and achieve the ideal of the American Dream, he has led to his sons' suicide in an attempt to unite the family. He informs Ann how he understands 'The man was a fool, but don't make a murderer out of him' again showing his guilty conscious showing through his justification of Joe's supposed actions. ~~Instead of being a murderer~~ He refers continuously throughout this speech to Steve Deever as a 'little man', infantilizing him through the belittling pre-modifier 'little'. This repetition shows that Keller pities Deever through his ignorance and stupidity but this perhaps is a reflection upon himself, and shows how the effect of war profiteering and corruption from WW2 has led to the downfall of his character. Keller expresses how 'But alone he was afraid, but I know he meant no harm' the fronted conjunction in both fragmented sentences expressing his denial of his actions, and through the repression of these guilty feelings he places the blame on Deever, to avoid the consequences.

Elsewhere in the play Keller shows forms of guilt and denial as a consequence of his actions in WW2, through his speech on page 30 where he detailed his experience of returning home after the court case. He described how 'So I get out of my car...' using the historical present tense to create a sense of immediacy for the viewer, 'But very slow. And with a smile', the use of elliptical sentences and use of fronted conjunction physically slowing the pace of the speech, and expressing false confidence in an attempt to disguise his guilty conscious. He was 'The best! [I was] the best', the short exclamation and mitigated



It moves to consider Keller within the extract itself. The focus on the task is clear and the candidate takes full advantage of the opportunities the extract affords for analytical and contextual comment. All AOs are addressed at a high level through precise selection of evidence which is analysed fully and accurately and interwoven with precisely targeted contextual comment and evidence of broader critical reading.



Select evidence carefully to support your points. Analyse this as fully as you can but link this analysis to the specifics of the question.

repetition of the euphemistic ~~speech~~ noun 'beast', dehumanising himself in an act of denial through his own actions, showing how the influence of his actions of WW2 has led him to be in a permanent state of denial in order to be able to live with himself. He reflects upon how 'they [I] was guilty as well. except I wasn't' - the reformulation and biblical reference expressing his denial, and referencing a moment later in the book when Joe exclaims 'a man can't be a Jesus in this world', showing how he was not ready to sacrifice himself for the rest of society, expressing Miller's sense of awe and influence here as a person with socialist values, critiquing a capitalist society and the inherent selfish need and sense of individualism people feel, that lead them to go to the lengths they will to protect themselves even at the expense of others. This shows how Heller's actions in WW2 have affected his character in terms of the guilt and denial he lives with as a result of being unable unwilling to take accountability.

Secondly, in the extract, the influence of WW2 on the behaviour of characters is shown through the concept of survivor's guilt, ~~how he is unable to overcome his guilt~~ and trying to avoid or deal with this feeling and get on with life.^{and Chris and Annie's relationship} After Heller's speech, as he increases in paranoia and feelings of guilt as Annie refuses to seek empathy for her father and the position he is in, Chris breaks in urgently exclaiming 'Are you going to stop it?', the direct address and interrogative, giving the question a rhetorical effect as if to close the conversation, showing his ~~incompetence~~ inability to confront feelings of guilt he is feeling, as he is suspicious of his father throughout, the readership finds out towards the end of the play. There is then a volte in the extract, ~~and Chris says~~ when Chris and Ann speak to each other and Chris ~~says~~ says 'Isn't he a great guy?' the pre-modifier 'great' expressing Chris' view of his father, and trying to maintain the image of a nuclear family, despite the potential knowledge of what his father has done, shown through the nervous interruption earlier in the extract. Ann responds saying 'you're



The candidate carries this focus across to consider the influence of WWII on Keller across the broader play. Having set out plans to explore the guilt and denial that consumes Keller, it delivers with carefully selected evidence, precise and focused analysis and wholly appropriate contextual comment, tailored effectively to the task. It addresses all AOs in an integrated and impressive way.

It moves to Chris and the 'survivor guilt' that has shaped him after his experience in WWII. This it does with characteristic precision.



When moving to the broader play, keep focus on the question and apply specific analysis to the evidence you provide to show your understanding of the writer's craft.

The only one I know who loves his parents.' The exclamation expressing Ann's conscience and unawareness of Keller's actions, juxtaposing Chris' character, but also showing the way their relationship has been affected after the war at this moment, as Ann has lost her parent physically, and Chris has Chris as a conflicted within himself on his thoughts of his own father as well as feeling of immense guilt after the war, and Ann's strong moral values and unawareness of Keller's morally corrupt actions.

Elsewhere in the play, Chris and Ann's relationship is shown to be affected by war and Chris' consequential immense guilt, as shown on page 35, of *AAA* Chris ~~Ann's father~~ says 'I used you...' depicts showing his guilty conscience materialising in his physical relationship. This is emphasised as he 'used' 'like Larry's brother', the uttering of Chris' character and emphasis on Larry's presence, showing the constant theme throughout the play, typical to that of a tragedy with the concept of the past penetrating the present, and being inescapable, Larry being the metaphor for that concept, also showing Miller's influence, Ibsen who explored themes of the past and present merging together in his works. Chris recalls to Ann, a story from his time in the war when a kid gave him his last pair of dry socks, and how such a little thing meant so much, 'They didn't die; they killed themselves for each other', this idea of self sacrifice, contrasting to Keller's individualism when saying how you can not be a genius in this world. He felt 'wrong to be alive', as all you have as the aftermath of war is lost, 'and there's blood on it', this metaphor of the blood representing the sacrifice men made for each other and the selflessness they had, Chris felt that the same blood covered Ann, as she was 'Larry's girl' before she was his, and he died in the war and Chris survived and as a result he feels guilty and un-closeness of her. This shows how the influence of war affected Chris and Ann's relationship as it causes Chris to feel guilty for pursuing it, juxtaposing to the extract in which Keller is happy to put the blame on others and avoid his guilt, which affects Chris' character and as his relationship with



As it moves to the broader play, comments on Chris and the 'survivor guilt' that has transformed him are linked to his relationship with Ann with confidence and fluency. Evidence is explored through a forensic analytical lens.

The influence of Ibsen on Miller's text is fully understood and conveyed with clarity through references to the blending of timeframes via Chris' stories about the war. There is no superfluous contextual material here.



Try to match contextual comments to the evidence you provide and to the question.



The response moves to consider and contrast the effects of war on the different generations represented in the play. In this section, it places the materialism of Keller in opposition to the idealism of Chris. The candidate seizes the opportunities afforded within the extract and across the play. It also incorporates judiciously tailored critical comment to support assertions and to extend reward at AO3.

post-war views, and materialism vs idealism is shown on page 38 when Keller is saying to Chris that he wants to give him the business, and name it after him; 'Christopher Keller, Incorporated'. He wants Chris to take over the business from him and use it profit 'without' 'with joy [...] without shame... with joy', the repetition of 'joy', showing Joe's view of materialism, contrasting to Chris' idealistic view of wanting more as the business doesn't 'inspire him'. Keller insists that 'it's good money (there's nothing wrong with that money)', the parallelism and repetition again showing his denial through attempt at convincing Chris and wrongly himself that 'his money is not corrupt, but also how it is the most important thing to him, which contrasts to the younger generation who value moral ethics, honesty and honesty over and above material success and profit. This shows how character's behaviors are affected as a result of the influence of WW2, depending on which generation they are a part of, and how America's corrupt capitalist society, complex society, and war profiteering that occurred at the time consequently affected these familial relationships in the play, as shown in the extract through Keller's character, and Ebenzer.

~~To conclude, I believe~~

Ann stated how 'she shoulda cried all night' the elision after 'shoulda', showing her contradictory materialistic views to Keller, as a member of the older generation who stated how he ever 'cried half the night', representing Ann as a figure of the idealistic moralistic youth, and Keller as the corrupt, complicit, materialistic older generation.

To conclude, I believe the influence of WW2 is shown ^{through} in the behavior of characters in the extract and Ebenzer in the play through the common theme of guilt and denial which each character in the play experiences. The inability to escape

the past emphasises these feelings, as Bigsby states 'The living are haunted by the dead, whom they seek to exorcise with a simple denial of reality'. All my sons show Miller's judgement of post-war American society and their values, which is shown and this vice is shown through Jim's character when he says 'money, money, money' the implication emphasising American materialistic values, and how the influence of WW2 only tested these values, which is shown through characters' behaviour. Those who chose to accept it and those who refuse to.



Evidence of Keller's materialism is selected from across the play. Again, it is wholly relevant to the task and is analysed with a precision that targets all AOs fluidly.

Question 3

A Streetcar Named Desire was the most popular text studied by centres this series. The question was specific in its focus on Williams' construction and presentation of masculinity, within the given extract and across the broader play.

The extract presented many opportunities for analysis and discussion.

Successful responses used the extract as a springboard to evidence wider contextual issues of gender roles and imbalance. The question clearly appealed to most candidates, who had plenty to say about the dominance of men in the domestic sphere in 1940's USA, although sometimes rather generally and repetitively. The question prompts consideration of different aspects of masculinity as presented by Williams across the play and many were able to comment confidently on Stanley's construction as a representation of masculinity that means aggression, control, physical dominance, and even violence. Mitch was frequently investigated as an alternative representation, mostly though his attitude towards women. Allan Grey was often investigated both to offer a direct contradiction to the hegemonic masculinity of Stanley and also to reflect on Williams as a homosexual. Some investigated Stanley through comparison with Blanche's view on the ideal of the Southern male.

Successful candidates explored the extract closely. They were able to explore the language choices made by Williams in order to construct the voices in this exchange, offering considered links between form and function which facilitated reward at **AO1** and **AO2**. These recognised that the dramatic purpose of the poker party was to demonstrate Stanley's domination of his friends in an exclusively male environment. They were able to evidence Stanley's dominance of the male group through his repeated use of imperatives, e.g. 'shut up'; 'go home' or through the verb choices made by Williams to convey the aggression of his movement via stage direction, e.g. 'lurches'; 'tosses'. These often commented on the dramatic function of Mitch and Stanley's use of the compound 'sugar-tit' to infantilise him and what this tells us about Stanley's take on masculine behaviour – this providing opportunity to comment on the role of Mitch and other male characters (such as Allan Gray) across the broader play and also score against **AO3**. Similarly, the interaction with the women was used effectively to explore the dialogue between the genders, e.g. Stanley's application of the metaphor 'hens' or his growing agitation represented both verbally and in physical attitude/action through, e.g. his public act of physical reprimand.

Less successful responses offered limited investigation of the language contained within the extract and showed insecurity with the specifics of analysis and attendant terminology. Many produced an unbalanced approach to the question in terms of investigation of the extract or extension into the broader play. Those that deviated quickly from the extract essentially denied themselves the many opportunities it provided. As with other questions in Section B, there were significant numbers that moved quickly into what appeared a different and 'rehearsed' agenda which seemed to be based on a different question – in some instances from an earlier exam series. Again, contextual ideas had been extensively taught to candidates, but centres should be cautious with the notion of placing too much emphasis on biographical context at the expense of contextual implications. This lack of focus often significantly restricted the potential for reward.

At **A03**, with all Section B questions, a key discriminator was the ability to embed contextual ideas and comments to authorial decisions rather than simply describing issues at the time. **Less successful** were those that failed to integrate contextual comment to address the specifics of the task; examiners commented that some responses bolted on political and historical detail with limited concession to the requirements of the task. For example, at **A03**, **better answers** went into relevant detail about the post-war return of veterans, such as Stanley and Mitch, and the shift for women back out of the workplace into the home when addressing issues of historical and social context. Most **successful responses** recognised the play as a performance text and many offered very insightful comment on dramatic devices and the central motifs – light/colour and music in particular. The concept of plastic theatre was much vaunted, but not always fully understood.

This response was awarded a mark of 18 which places in mid-Level 4. This indicates it is always 'clear and relevant' and presents sufficient evidence of the discrimination that characterises Level 4 to place it securely into the Level.

Discuss how Williams presents differing aspects on masculinity

Throughout the play, we see the theme of masculinity shown in many different ways, Williams portrays it through his characters and ~~also~~ the reactions his characters have towards it. Williams portrays masculinity in a negative light to, ~~show~~ ^{show} that the toxic nature of men has prevailed through the ^{both} Old South and New America, and that the ~~any~~ ^{both} belief that either time was better than the other is pure fantasy, as both have major flaws.

In the extract given, we see masculinity presented through the character of Stanley. At the beginning of the extract, the woman's response to masculinity in Stanley is revealed, "[B] what is it and where? I would like to know? ... [S] It's his drive", here we see Blanche using a rhetorical question and also humour to emphasise her disbelief in



The response opens with a clear focus on the issue of masculinity and differentiates between the Old and New South in terms of the ideals placed on the concept.

It moves to consider the extract with initial focus on Stanley with clear awareness of the character as a construct to represent toxic elements of masculinity. There is also consideration of the reactions of the women to Stanley and evidence and subsequent analysis of their dialogue.



It is a good idea to begin your investigation by exploring the extract through the focus of the question.

Stanley's 'genius', which alludes to her opinion on ~~the~~ Stanley and how his character is used to represent aggressive masculinity. Blanche threatens politeness here, as Stella is defending Stanley. Stella defending Stanley here, completely contrasts her actions towards him later in the extract, "^[Stella] I said to hush up! ^[Stanley] ... this is my house and I'll talk as much as I want to", Stella's response to Stanley's disrespectful use of an exclamation, tells us that when Stanley is in a hostile mood, Stella feels the need to fight back in order to keep herself safe. This is an insight into the fear women faced when in male dominated relationships in New America; pushing Williams' purpose of highlighting the flaws in both the ~~then~~ Old and New America. Within this extract we see the male response to Stanley's destructive masculinity; when Stanley responds negatively to the music Blanche plays, "turn it off!", using an imperative to assert dominance, his other male friends intervene to disagree with him, "aw let the girls have their music ... leave it on! ... sounds like Xavier Cugat!", the difference in response emphasises how Stanley's dominating masculinity isn't a trope of all New American men, this is furthered through highlighting the difference in vocabulary used in



There is appreciation of the contrasting attitudes and language of Blanche and Stella when referring to Stanley. Their exchange is analysed at word and sentence level, achieving marks at AO1 and AO2. There is also some valid comment on the gender dynamics prevalent at the time which scores against AO3 although this comment could have been better focused/developed.

The response moves to consider the language of the men in the poker game, and thus the dynamic between them. The construction of Stanley's exclamatory and imperative sentences is used to evidence his sense of power – this score well. The responses of the other men are used to suggest an alternative masculinity which is not fully developed and therefore not fully clear. Their voices are exemplified, but not analysed which is a missed opportunity.



ALWAYS provide evidence drawn directly from the text to evidence your assertions. ALWAYS offer analysis of this evidence – but make sure that your comments link to the task.

the men, Stanley refers to the women as 'hens' in the extract, promoting animalistic imagery, also being a ~~reference~~ reference to Stanley being referred to as a "feathered bird among hens" in Scene one, this tells us that Stanley feels as though he has power over the women; this contrasts heavily to the way Steve refers to the women, "let the girls have their music", referring to the women as 'girls' is a lot more gentle and has connotations of youth and freedom, juxtaposing Stanley dictatorship around the house. This once again pushes for the attention to be drawn to flaws within male dominated households in New America.

~~Differ~~ Differing aspects in masculinity can also be portrayed through the characters of Stella and Blanche. Scene four, after poker night when Stanley hit Stella, we are immediately met with Blanches worry for her sister, "Baby, my baby sister!", the repetition used here emphasises Blanches infantilisation of Stella, suggesting she doesn't deserve this abuse because she is so young. Through Scene four, Blanches worry is on display, whereas for Stella, is used to misinterpret why Blanche is making such ~~a weak~~ ~~of this~~ "you're making a



The response moves on to explore the metaphor with which Stanley addresses the women. This links back to William's use of the noun in stage directions to extend his description of Stanley as a 'feathered bird' which is very worthy, but the references are not explored beyond their representation of Stanley's power over the women. His sexual arrogance is overlooked which is a shame as it opens numerous avenues across the play. The hen metaphor is contrasted with Steve's reference to the women as 'girls' and there is a worthy attempt to use this to draw conclusions about the attitudes of both men. This is rather straightforward, however.

Consideration of Blanche's reaction to the physical violence Stella suffers at the hands of her husband is referenced. There is an interesting link between Blanche's use of the infantilising 'Baby' to refer to her sister with the metaphors applied by the men. This is not developed – again this is a shame.



Make the most of the evidence you provide and choose it with care.

a big deal about it, "You're making too much fuss about this", this tells us that Stella finds no surprise in Stanley's actions, allowing us to understand that New American ideals are far more brutal than Old South fantasies. "Stanley always ~~blow~~ smashed things", Stella acknowledging the violent nature of her husband and finding no problem in it also emphasises that New American ideals promote societal acceptance of violence against women. Blanche fights this idea by ~~attempting to~~ representing the fantasised Old South ideologies, "you didn't run, didn't scream?", the parallel phrasing and rhetorical question suggest the obvious reaction to violence of a man. This entire dialogue reflects the ideologies of old vs new America; however through Blanche's false reality, we understand her perspective as the romanticized Old South, and Stella as both accurate Old South and New South; the fact that Stella ~~likes~~ believes she is "not in anything she desires to get out of", shows us that her mindset of New America has been led to believe that this is normal. Williams creates this contrast between characters to allude to the flaws in New America and to highlight the normalised bad treatment of women.



The exploration of the dialogue between Stella and Blanche regarding Stanley's violence towards his wife is handled well and scores well across AOs as a result. There is valid contextual comment relating to Stella's acceptance of her husband's behaviour which is extended with greater success to the language used by Blanche to challenge this acceptance. Analysis is sharper here and, overall, this is a stronger section of the response that, in part, justifies the placement of the answer into Level 4.

The final aspect of Masculinity I will explore is Blanche's challenge towards masculinity and the response to it. Blanche's character represents desire and fantasy, however her response to Stanley (a character that represents dominating masculinity) challenges his masculinity which results in her fall in scene 10. In scene two we see Blanche's unbothered nature towards Stanley, "^(S+A) your looks are okay... I was asking for a compliment Stanley", ^(B) ~~and here we see Blanche comment seriously and straight forwardly, which she doesn't do very often - Stanley was appearing to Blanche positive face in a reluctant way, and Blanche was able to put him into place with her through snappy ^{short} sentence statement.~~ Blanche's usual desire towards softer men like Mitch, tells us that she prefers the standard of masculinity her own fantasized old south ~~men~~ ^{masculinity} - however we see the New America shatter this through the character relation between Mitch and Blanche. The New ~~is~~ American expectations of women affect how Mitch perceives Blanche, shattering her fantasy of her old south man she thought she found in Mitch - this could explain her adverse

nature towards Stanley because she is unfavouring to New American men, we see this when Mitch confronts Blanche and she unveils her fantastic self and becomes more real – Scene 9.



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There is an important sense of the challenge/threat that Blanche presents to Stanley here, but it is not as clearly/fully developed as it might have been. There is also allusion to its inevitable and tragic consequences.

There is movement to consider the dramatic significance of Mitch and the 'softer' aspects of masculinity that draws Blanche to him. There is awareness that Williams places him between the idealised fantasy of Blanche's craving and the brutally dominant masculinity of the New South as represented by Stanley. There is some perception here in the recognition that he is eventually overwhelmed by the unveiling of Blanche's true self as the play moves towards its close.

Question 4

There were relatively few responses to *Elmina's Kitchen* this series.

However, most that studied this text appear to have fully engaged with the play. **The best** sustained focus on the question, whilst **less successful** responses drifted into more generalised or rehearsed discussions that did not target the task. Many explored the extract closely and took advantage of the opportunities it presented to comment on the differing aspirations of father and son and the rising tension between them. This was linked to Deli's primary ambition to steer his son away from involvement with gangs while Ashley is drawn to what he perceives as the glamour and material trappings of gang-life as represented by Digger. The extract presents Deli's growing desperation and foreshadows the fatal consequences of his subsequent actions. There was much evidence of good teaching, especially relating to context, this year and successful candidates tailored this specifically to the focus of the question. There were insightful, often personal references to Hackney's so-called 'Murder Mile' and to well-researched data, including interviews with the writer, that illuminated the attitudes of the characters in the given extract.

At **AO1/2, Successful** investigations offered considered comment on the language used by Kwei-Armah to develop dialogue and place the aspirations of Deli and Ashley in opposition. This they did through an analytical lens to explore, for example, elements of Caribbean dialect/patois and how and why they were integrated into standard forms; reference to drug culture, e.g. 'charlied'; Deli's challenge to his son via the imperative 'do it then'; Ashley's impatience for the material trappings of gang life and how this was constructed.

Less successful responses sometimes moved swiftly away from the extract to a response that lacked focus on the conflicting aspirations of father and son at the centre of the task. Others tended to describe rather than analyse, explaining the significance of Yardie culture, for example, rather than analysing its attraction to young men like Ashley.

The question prompts consideration of the aspirations of father and son across the play and **the best** chose evidence judiciously to maintain focus on this. Many commented on Deli's ambitions for his restaurant and the 'cleansing' from drug and gang culture this involved. Many cited evidence of Deli's continued attempts to steer Ashley from the influence of gangs towards, for example, his education. Many considered Ashley's attraction to the material trappings of gang life; his admiration for Digger; his need for 'street respect'; his rejection of education and, essentially, of his father. The most successful investigated this evidence analytically to evidence the writer's conscious crafting of character, dialogue and plot. **Less successful** were those that drifted off focus with some moving to what seemed to be a pre-rehearsed agenda.

At **A03**, there was evidence of solid teaching of the contextual factors that frame the play. Many could offer comment on the social and historical significance of gang/Yardie culture in Britain or Hackney and its 'Murder Mile' as setting. Education was a popular focus with successful attitudes linking this back to the aspirations of Deli and Ashley's rejection of it leading to consideration of the societal attitudes that drive many young Black British men to seek affirmation and success in gang culture. The key to success at **A03** is the integration of contextual comment within the response rather than delivering tranches of contextual data which does not fully link to either the task or the evidence provided. Also important is the context of the play as a performance piece through recognition of, e.g. set as device; the significance of stage direction; voice and character as constructs.

Question 5

The question this year for *Equus* asked candidates to consider Shaffer's presentation of marriage across the play. The extract presented Dysart's reflection on his marriage to Margaret which he described as devoid of any real passion – a reflection clearly prompted by his involvement with Alan Strang. There are clear opportunities for comment on marriage across the broader text in a play which presents an image of heterosexual marriage which is uniformly bleak. The marriage of Dora and Frank Strang is fraught with issues arising from opposing perspectives on a range of social and moral issues. Also of significance is the broken marriage of Jill's parents which leaves the mother as a bitter man-hater. The influence of these complex experiences of marriage on the characters in the play is a central factor.

Responses to this question covered the full range of achievement this series.

At **A01/A02, successful** responses explored the extract analytically. They differentiated the voices from which it was comprised by exploring the factors, contextual and dramatic, that shaped them. Many fully grasped the dramatic and structural significance of the dialogue here and the experience of marriage that is central to the extract and to the play as a whole. These were able to offer detailed analysis of the language deployed by Shaffer such as the adjectives applied by Dysart to his marriage, e.g. 'brisk', 'hygienic', 'antiseptic'; Dysart's mimicry/mockery of the Scottish elements of Margaret's voice and how this was achieved. **The best** picked up on the significance of the fact that the marriage was childless and commented on Margaret's involvement with orphans as 'substitute' (suggested by adverb 'instead') and the significance of the adjective 'worshipless' applied by Dysart to the imagined child of the marriage.

At **A03**, there was evidence of some excellent teaching of context and many **successful candidates** reflected on the role of the psychiatrist and the theories prevalent in the 1970s and how this informed Dysart's perspective on marriage – his own and that of Dora and Frank. Others commented on the changing 20th-century attitudes on marriage and/or acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships, frequently referencing Jill in this. These supported their comments and assertions with specific evidence which was then analysed to evidence the conscious crafting of language by the writer. **Successful** answers also considered the play in performance, and characters as dramatic constructs, exploring issues of staging and delivery with insight.

Less successful responses treated the extract chronologically and simply summarised it. Analysis was thin and undeveloped and there was limited extension beyond word-level comment. As such there was limited differentiation of voice. Some did not look at the extract in any real depth, moving quickly to a generalised discussion to what, in some, appeared to be a pre-rehearsed agenda. Some did not reference the text as a play and thus missed opportunities for contextual comment other than received psychological/psychoanalytical 'wisdoms'.

Question 6

The History Boys

The question prompted consideration of Bennett's treatment of the teaching of the Holocaust in the extract and elsewhere in the play. Answers this year covered the full range of achievement with evidence to suggest that many centres had successfully adopted an approach to the play that looked more closely, and analytically, at the language choices of Bennett, thereby affording the responses of their students greater reward at **AO1** and **AO2**. This was very pleasing.

This extract was drawn from the scene in which the Holocaust is being discussed as part of a General Studies lesson. There is clear and inevitable conflict between Hector and Irwin on how to handle the subject in the classroom. This conflict extends to the pupils and reveals a division in their perspectives, in part due to the influence of their teachers or, as in the case of Posner, due to personal/family history.

Successful answers at **AO1/AO2** recognised characters as dramatic constructs and saw Hector, Irwin and their students as Bennett's vehicle for observation and comment. They were able to separate the different voices here and, through the application of relevant frameworks and terminology, comment on Bennett's craft. These closely analysed the language of the exchanges between the characters, offering analysis at word and sentence level. Many commented on Hector's imagining of school trips to Auschwitz and Dachau, conveyed mainly through interrogatives. **The best** explored the construction of the voices of Akthar and Dakin to reflect the voice and influence of Irwin, e.g. Akthar's dispassionate three-part utterance 'It has origins. It has consequences. It's a subject like any other.' placed in opposition the emotional responses of Scripps and Posner, reflective of the voice and perspective of Hector or to Posner's correction of Timms's use of Hector's previous simile: '... they weren't just dying. They were being processed.' Others recognised the crafting of Bennett in Hector's challenge to Irwin's lexical choice: 'Not tact. Decorum.' or Lockwood's summary of Hector's stance '...silence is the only proper response'.

Less successful responses at **AO1/2** were essentially narrative/descriptive. Analysis of method was thin and often inaccurate and links between form and function undeveloped. Some misread the tone/register of Hector's voice and therefore the attitudes he both challenges and represents. There was a significant (but smaller) minority of responses this year that approached the play from a purely literary perspective and which, despite their clear understanding of the play, struggled to reach the upper levels due to restricted potential to reward at **AO1** and **AO2**.

When moving across the broader play, **successful** candidates often exploited the opportunities afforded later in the scene to further contrast Hector's emotional response to the horror of the death camps in opposition to Irwin's attempt to teach the boys to get an analytic purchase and distance. They also referenced the dramatic significance of Posner due to his Jewish heritage. Posner's decision to act on Irwin's advice to be 'outlandish' on the subject at interview because he is Jewish is later seen by him as a compromise of his integrity (both religious and personal) that lead to his breakdown at Cambridge. Reference was also made to Irwin's problems with Posner's parents (and the Headmaster) over his handling of the Holocaust which, in turn, calls his approach into question.

At **A03**, there was evidence of some excellent teaching of context with **successful** responses offering developed comment on the changes in education in the 1980s and the political and social backdrop that drove these changes. Many referenced the voice of Irwin as the reflection of the new political and educational landscape. There was also significant evidence of effective teaching of the political and historical background of WWII and the Holocaust. These were discriminating in the contextual evidence presented, matching it to the task with precision and integrating contextual comment into the body of the response to support analysis. They also offered detailed comment of the text in performance and its characters as dramatic constructs.

Less successful answers restricted potential for reward at **A03** for various reasons. Many offered limited acknowledgment of the text as a play. Others made very broad assertions about education based on thin understanding of the socio-political context that frames the play. Many in the mid-lower levels of achievement failed to integrate their observations on contextual factors within the body of their response

Question 7

Relatively few centres chose to study *Top Girls* this series. Responses did cover a reasonable range of achievement all the same.

The question asked candidates to discuss how Churchill develops parallels between Pope Joan and Marlene in the given extract and across the broader play. The extract itself was drawn from Act One and the surreal, imaginary dinner party scene that celebrates Marlene's promotion which is attended by women from all walks of life, periods in history, and backgrounds. This brings Marlene into direct contact with Pope Joan, who, according to legend, disguised herself as a man in the Middle Ages and reigned as Pope for two years until her true identity was discovered. Joan wanted power so badly that she renounced her womanhood and, in many ways, her story echoes Marlene's own pursuit of power at the expense of her identity, her femininity and her own child.

Successful responses offered close analysis of the language of the extract, thus meeting the requirements at **AO1** and **AO2**. For example, many were able to comment on the gender opposition suggested by Joan's opening declarative about God: '...he knew I was a woman'; Joan's power conveyed through active voice, e.g. 'I consecrated bishops'; the detachment of Marlene's interrogative regarding Joan's child: 'Didn't you think of getting rid of it?' and the Catholic nature of Joan's response; Joan's fear that the plague-like atrocities across Europe were consequences of her actions confirmed by modal verb: 'I shouldn't have been a woman'; the sense of status suggested by her closing three-part list 'Women, children and lunatics can't be Pope'.

Less successful responses were essentially narrative/descriptive. Analysis of method was thin and often inaccurate and links between form and function undeveloped. Some misread the prompt to focus on the parallels between Joan and Marlene and launched into a broader, generalised discussion of gender politics bypassing the detail of the extract as they did so.

The question prompts consideration of links between the actions and attitudes of Marlene and Joan across the play and there were many opportunities to do this. Many commented on Marlene's rejection of her working-class roots to indulge in the luxuries of her urban success and linked to Joan's concealment of her gender in order to become more powerful. They often commented on the need to abandon femininity and female instinct in order to succeed in a patriarchal society, drawing effective parallels between the characters and citing Marlene's 'sexist' behaviour at the agency to link to Joan's concealment of her gender. Many explored Joan's pregnancy as mirrored by Marlene, and her subsequent 'abandonment' of Angie. **Successful candidates** chose their evidence carefully to sustain their focus on the task. They also explored this evidence analytically to evidence the dramatic and linguistic techniques of Churchill as writer

There was considerable evidence that the context of the play had been well taught, and a significant majority scored well at **AO3** as a result. **Successful** responses looked at characters as constructs and explored the ways in which Churchill crafts and differentiates their voices to meet her dramatic agenda, specifically the fact that Pope Joan is crafted to represent Marlene as she is during the play. **The best** were able to frame their investigations through the socio-political lens of 1980s Britain to reflect on the patriarchal nature of society over time and the seeming irreconcilability of family and career through the parallels between 'historical' characters and their 20th-century counterparts. They often saw this a dramatic construct, crafted to reflect Churchill's concern that the attempt to assimilate into the world of the patriarchy will strip aspirational women of their essential femininity. Marlene was often explored and a woman betraying her gender by making sexist judgements about women's marital status, motherhood, appearance and age have been absorbed and replicated by the new generation of women in the play who are succeeding in a man's world by re-enacting men's prejudices.

This response was awarded a mark of 14 which places it securely in Level 3. As such it demonstrates the relevance and clarity expected at Level 3 but, as it is away from the border with Level 4, there will be insufficient evidence of the discrimination expected at the higher level.

Throughout the whole of ~~her~~^{her} play Top Girls, both Pope Joan and Marlene are presented as ^{*} independent and strong female characters. Churchill draws multiple parallels between ~~through~~ these two characters which develop throughout the play - the most obvious of which being their unwanted pregnancies.

The extract takes place in Act I, during which the characters are at a fictional dinner party to celebrate Marlene's success of being promoted at work. All of the characters ~~share~~ at the dinner party share one thing in common - they're women who have experienced discrimination or setbacks due to their sex. The topic of conversation in this extract is Pope Joan's experiences of being a female Pope under the pretenses of her being a man, specifically when she gave birth ^{*} by Caryl Churchill



The opening is a clear statement of intent which is focused on the central aspects of the question. Expression is clear.

The extract is contextualised effectively with evident understanding of the dramatic significance of the dinner party scene. It scores at AO3 here but there is something of the summary about it, however.

after an unwanted, unknown pregnancy. Whilst ~~telling her~~ Joan is talking about her pregnancy, Marlene abruptly asks 'Didn't you think of getting rid of it?' This interrogative is straight to the point and suggests that Marlene's first thought for things that are in her way is to get rid of them. The use of the pronoun 'it' shows that Marlene doesn't view Joan's ~~preg~~ fetus/child as human, but rather as an object in the way of success. Joan's reaction to this is the simple sentence 'But I wouldn't have known how to get rid of it'. This highlights how Joan and Marlene, although ~~similar~~ share a similar experience, are posed as parallel rather than interconnecting characters. Joan was Pope between 854 and 856 meaning that the idea of abortions was completely unheard of. Joan also asks Marlene a question, 'Wouldn't that be a worse sin than having it?' This interrogative reflects that Joan was a religious figure and followed the Christian belief that sex was something that



There is some analysis as the response progresses as the candidate considers the exchange between Marlene and Joan about her child. The points made regarding Marlene's interrogative and her application of pronoun is worthy and accurate but essentially straightforward.

The movement to consider Joan's response scores more highly and is partly responsible for the final placement of the answer. The candidate uses it to offer contextual and historical evidence of Joan's religiosity achieving at AO3. Also scoring at AO3 is the clear recognition of Churchill's crafting of the characters and the parallels between them.



Always consider the play as a performance text and its characters as dramatic constructs.

happened between man and women, only after marriage and only as a mean to create life. The idea of abortion being a 'sin' also ~~suggests~~ highlights Joan's religious beliefs.

Joan and Manene are also posed as parallels through their desire to break through / overcome gender roles, however, although it was uncommon and still taboo, Manene is able to do this as a woman in the 1980s, whereas Joan had to disguise herself as a man. In Act 1, at the dinner party, Joan tells the other guests about her experiences that led to her becoming Pope. Joan announces 'I dressed as a boy when I left home'. This simple sentence highlights the sad unfairness and inequality Joan was faced with when wanting to pursue education - girls weren't allowed an education. This is emphasised ~~the~~ by the imperative 'women weren't allowed in the library'. Joan also tells the other guests 'I think I forgot I was pretending', this short sentence invokes sympathy that



The characters are linked by their ambition to break through assigned gender roles. The exploration of Joan's language shows some insecurity with terminology, but the evidence provided is sound enough to provide evidence of the restrictions placed on women and girls by the patriarchal society in which she lived.

Joan had to hide her sex when pursuing her education to avoid being punished by death.

~~The~~ In Act 3, Manene opens up to her sister Joyce, telling her 'I've had two abortions'. This simple sentence emphasises Manene's attitude of getting rid of things that get in her way. ~~Manene~~ In the 1980s, women had two options; they could either earn themselves a career and do well professionally, or they could get married and have children and live a domestic life as a ~~the~~ housewife and stay-at-home mother. If Manene had opted to keep the pregnancies she had aborted, it would have limited - or perhaps obliterated - her chances of being as professionally successful as she ends up.

Overall, Churchill develops Joan and Manene as parallel characters through their similar experiences but drastically different ways of coping/living with them. ~~The~~ Both characters are discriminated against women, but due to being born

in different time periods, had ~~not~~
different opportunities to explore.



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Marlene's confession about her abortions affords some link to Joan in that it reveals the sacrifice she had to make to succeed in a man's world. As such the parallels are clear. There is some exemplification here and some analysis – both essentially straightforward.

Question 8

Responses to *Translations* covered a full range of achievement this year. The question asked candidates to discuss how Friel presents the impact of the National School system on Irish society, in the given extract and across the broader play. The extract was drawn from the scene at the hedge school where the pupils discuss the National School system that is being introduced by the British across Ireland.

Successful candidates explored the language of the extract closely to evidence how the exchanges were crafted by Friel to dramatise how the National Schools, together with the Ordnance Survey, precipitate an irrevocable Anglicisation process in traditional Irish society and many were well prepared to discuss this. **The best** offered incisive linguistic analysis, with high scoring at **AO1** and **AO2**. Many, for example, commented on Bridget's account of what she has heard of the new system and the varied language techniques used by Friel to craft her delivery, e.g. repeated determiner and parallel structures: 'every child from every house has to go all day, every day'; modal verb forms to project to future certainty: 'you'll not hear one word of Irish spoken.' Others picked up on the irony of Maire's suggestion that Doalty should apply for the headship given Manus's refusal to do so. **The best** picked up on elements of Irish dialect in the exchange – the lines delivered by Doalty proving a fruitful source for this.

A significant, if small, minority of **less successful** responses did not investigate the extract itself in any detail, moving swiftly into a general, and a seemingly rehearsed 'essay'. The potential to reward these beyond the low-mid levels of achievement was very restricted. Others offered only minimal specific analysis, with terms in limited range and accuracy.

The question prompted consideration of the projected impact that the new school system on Irish society across the play. There are many opportunities for this as changes in education are presented alongside the Ordnance Survey as prime factors in the linguistic and geographic colonisation of Ireland. There was also much opportunity for comparison between the new National Schools and the traditional hedge schools along cultural, social and educational grounds. Many considered the changing stance of Hugh as he moves from defiance to 'acceptance' and the reasons that underpin this. His initial refusal to teach Maire English was contrasted to his application for the position at the new National School. The fact that Manus was invited to start a new hedge school on Inis Meadhon, was sometimes considered as act of cultural defiance.

There was considerable evidence of thorough teaching of the historic and political context that frames the play, enabling reward at **AO3. Successful** candidates were able to select and tailor this information to match the specific requirements of the task and to the language and dramatic choices made by Friel. **Successful** answers conveyed a clear sense of the play in performance and made good use of Friel's stage direction to do this. There was a significant number of **less successful** candidates that produced detailed, but largely unassimilated, contextual material which lacked focus on the question and this significantly restricted potential for reward.

This response was awarded a mark of 9 which places it towards the top of Level 2 but away from the border with Level 3. This suggests that it presents the 'general understanding' that characterises this Level. There may be glimpses of the clarity and relevance of Level 3, but these will be limited.

One way in which Friel presents the impact of the National Schools system on Irish society is through Dea Dooly and Bridget, seen in Act 1, where the stichomythic exchange between Dooly and Bridget on the new National Schools reveals its effect it will have on the Hedge Schools, as around the same time, the Ordnance Survey in 1833 was going on; this was where the first ever large scale map ('new blank map') for Ireland was being created, in which the British anglicised all the Irish place names, making it easier for them, as it was also where the British Government started ruling over Ireland. The National Schools play a big impact on Irish society, as once they were established by the British Government, only English was taught and learnt, everything was free, and Ireland's culture and language was soon to be forgotten about, impacting Irish society, as the hedge schools will also not be in use anymore, even though they were held in secret, illegally in



The opening approach is sensible in its promise of exploration of the dialogue between Doalty and Bridget in the given extract. The exchange offers much material that targets the specific focus on the introduction of National Schools. However, the response moves quickly into contextual comment on the nature of the National Schools, linking their impact on the Irish language to the Ordnance Survey, achieving marks at AO3 as a result. Comment on the impact on the Hedge school is valid enough, but there is a tendency to describe.

There is evidence of sound teaching of the context of Anglicisation that frames the play, but this needs to be balanced against the analytical aspects of the task.



Try to integrate your contextual comment with your analysis.

schools, set up by the Catholic Church in the 18th century. The warnings of the National Schools can be seen through Bridget's imperative "Did you know... at the age of six and you have to stick at it until you're twelve... -no matter how smart you are or how much you know". This statement begins as a fact, then develops into a statement. In this statement, it is seen that there is an age requirement/restriction for attending the national schools, as no adults can learn there which is what happened in the Hedge schools. Bridget's use of repetition "And every child from every ~~new~~ house has to go all day every day, summer or winter" implies some exaggeration and also highlights and foreshadows the control of British Government.

Friel presents the impact of the National School System on Irish society negatively, as Ireland's culture, identity and language is being stripped away, and one way that can be seen, is through the changing of place names. This is seen through Act 2 when Yolland and Owen start anglicising the Irish place names for the 'New blank map'. The *Stichomythia*, highlights Yolland and Owen (Irish translator) coming closer, but the difference is, is that Yolland wants to keep the place names as they are,



The quotation from Bridget is sensibly chosen, summarising, as it does, the age range of the children that will attend the schools. There is also an attempt to analyse this evidence, but the candidate struggles to label the sentence type. There is recognition of Bridget's repetition, but consideration of its function/effect lack any real development.

Although the process of Anglicisation undertaken via the Ordnance Survey does link to the delivery of the curriculum in English in the National schools in terms its effect on the Irish people and their language, the movement to discuss the work of Yolland and Owen deviates from the central focus of the task.



Maintain focus on the question!

In the Gaelic form, however Owen wants to Anglicise them, conveying that he is not resistant to change and is not fighting back. Therefore highlighting British power over Ireland.

The National School System has a huge impact on Irish society, as there will be a divide in religion. The protestants did discriminate the Catholics, not giving them rights which can be the ~~best~~ ~~reason~~ one reason for the Irish rebellion in 1798, against the British crown, making Ireland inferior and separating it. Therefore they had to set up illegal Hedge schools. However towards the end of the play, everyone from the Hedge school leaves and only Maire turns up to learn English which is ironic, but as she cannot attend National Schools, that is her only hope ~~seen through the~~ ~~question~~ which is seen through Hugh's minor sentence "yes, I will teach you English, Maire Chatach". This ~~quote~~ also symbolises an end of Ireland as they are forced to speak and learn the English language. A defeat.



The contextual projection here adds little to increase the potential to reward.

Overall, the response draws limited material from the extract and across the play which severely restricts the potential for analysis and which blurs focus on the task itself. It does not, therefore, score well at AO1 and, as links between form and function are thin, at best there is limited potential for reward.

It is more successful at AO3 and it is this element that secures its placement. However, this contextual comment is not tailored to the task and there is minimal sense of the play in performance.

Paper Summary

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

- Always support your comments with evidence drawn from the texts.
- Make sure you are fully familiar with the texts in the Anthology.
- Link contextual information/comments to the specifics of the task.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the plays as performance texts at every opportunity.

Grade boundaries

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

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

