



Examiners' Report

June 2024

GCE English Literature 9ET0 03

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Introduction

The paper is well-established and centres have, in the main, prepared candidates very well for the exams. A majority of candidates demonstrated an understanding of the demands of the paper and produced clear and relevant examples. There were a pleasing number of answers where candidates were critically and personally engaged with the poems, and gave thoughtful and insightful comments. It is these responses that keep examiners coming back to mark the paper and makes it a pleasure to be involved with.

There are some aspects of the paper that did not work so well and some examiners did speculate whether all centres were preparing their candidates as best as possible for their exam. Although, as we are all experienced teachers, we are well aware that some candidates will always do their own thing, regardless of how well they have been prepared. Examiners did notice that in some instances an unequal amount of time was spent on the two questions, resulting in short and occasionally missing Section B responses – or the alternative, where candidates have clearly attempted Section B first. There were a few cases of handwriting that was poor and very hard to read, which did make marking the response a challenge. Examiners also commented on some candidates lack of paragraphing, which limited coherence to the response and again made it difficult to mark. We can only urge centres to support candidates and take appropriate remedial action or ensure that arrangements are in place for these candidates.

Section A

The unseen poem, 'Stillwater Cove', was broadly accessible on all levels to candidates. Most candidates were able to pick out the main themes and ideas of the poem, even if there was some confusion as to whether the whales were really there and the relevance of the ending. More candidates chose the second question and compared it to the Motion poem, 'From the Journal of a Disappointed Man', although there were still a number who chose the first question and to compare it to 'Out of the Bag'.

In the main, candidates compared the poems well, and the best responses are able to find fresh meanings in the anthology poems. Some candidates do seem to come in with ready-made ideas of the named poems, and a ready-made structure to look for comparisons of language, form and structure. These did less-well than the candidates who could compare themes and ideas across the poems and treat them as a whole. Where candidates did zoom in at word-level it sometimes led to decontextualised analysis and misreadings of the unseen poem, and also to some incorrect use of terminology with regards to nouns, adjectives and adverbs. Some examiners did note that better responses made the unseen poem the focus of their response, and used it to bring out points of comparison with the named poem. These often did better than candidates who focused on what they knew on the named poem, and then made either simple or forced comparisons with the unseen poem. In particular, examiners noted that candidates who were analysing the taught poems through the 'lens' of a Marxist or feminist perspective, e.g. looking at the Heaney in terms of levels of affluence of the doctor in comparison to the household or focusing on the 'toxic masculinity' in the Motion poem, were unlikely to draw out relevant or insightful comparisons with the unseen poem. One examiner noted that it also led to a tendency to miss the more nuanced meanings such as the speaker's insecurity in 'Journal' or the warm family relationships in 'Out of the Bag'.

There is still a tendency for candidates to feature spot and identify poetic techniques (such as the ubiquitous asyndetic listing, enjambment, caesura, rhyme scheme, etc.) as if these in and of themselves convey meaning. There is a need for candidates to explain clearly why these techniques are significant and to consider whether or not they actually matter in terms of shaping meaning. A number of examiners also commented that candidates confused some of these terms or used them incorrectly. It would be worth teachers reviewing techniques and terms such as terminal caesura, circular structure, volta, juxtaposition and oxymoron, to ensure candidates use these correctly; and then analyse and evaluate the relevance of these and how they contribute to the overall impact of the poem.

Section B

The Section B questions on the anthology poems followed the standard and format of previous series, presenting candidates with similar levels of challenge in response. There was a full range of responses seen across the ability ranges on the texts, which suggests that questions were accessible and that a majority of candidates had prepared well for the exam. Centres are reminded that comparison, AO4, is not assessed in this section of the exam. Whilst candidates may well make cogent and insightful comparisons as part of a controlled and critical argument, it is imperative that both poems are written about and analysed in the context of the question and are dealt with in an equal manner. Some examiners did note that candidates who compared could sometimes also focus on one poem, to the detriment of their overall mark.

Contextual factors are assessed in this section, and AO3 was used across the range of the mark scheme. Some poems and poets do encourage a level of biographical detail, particularly when it is pertinent to the writing of the poem (such as Byron with 'So We'll Go no more A Roving'). However, this should not overshadow the literary context, or relevant socio-cultural factors, which are likely to offer more insight and critical thinking. Candidates should remember that all of this should be analysed in the context of the text of the poem. Whilst there seemed to be less proliferation of the history essay style paragraph, often there were general points made that could have been more useful if tied to a specific textual reference. Likewise, centres are reminded that blanket style assertions and statements about Victorian women, or the religious beliefs of the Romantic poets, for example, are less helpful than nuanced probing of the poems with these ideas in mind. Better responses are able to weave contextual factors into the argument as a way of discussing relevant aspects of the poems with regards to the question focus.

Chaucer, Keats, Rossetti and the Romantics were again the most popular choices, with Donne, the Metaphysical poets, Eliot and Larkin also seeing a fair number of responses. There were fewer centres who study the Victorian or the Modernist collection, which is a shame as these poems and poets offer a lot for candidates who do engage with them. There were very entries on the Movement poets, and unfortunately no responses were seen on Medieval poetic drama.

As in previous years, examiners noted that better responses looked at the overall theme, message and impact of a poem rather than analysing purely at word level, or a discrete analysis of language, form and structure. These responses were often rehearsed, with learned topic sentences, that did not often support the argument the candidates were attempting to convey. It was also felt that some candidates were determined to write on poems they had prepared from the collection, regardless of the named poem or the question focus, and that was rarely a successful strategy and points of analysis were often forced or not relevant. Again, centres are reminded to prepare candidates for all poems from their collection, and for any range of question that may be asked.

Successful responses were able to choose a second poem, or passage of equivalent length in terms of Chaucer, that was relevant to the question focus and encouraged a range of discussion of poetic craft. As in Section A, confidence in embracing moments of ambiguity, nuance and uncovering layers of meaning was likely to reveal the discriminating understanding and critical evaluation needed to get the highest marks. Candidates who relied on blanket assertions of what poems mean, why poets wrote these poems, and how readers interpreted them were unlikely to rise above Level 2 and demonstrate clear understanding of the poems.

Again, there were a number of rubric infringements on the Romantics, Keats and Metaphysicals questions, where some candidates had either panicked and read the wrong question, or they had tried to pick and choose the question to support the poem they wanted to write about. Centres are reminded that the question numbers for the relevant prescribed poetry collections do remain the same, and candidates should look for the question numbers on the collection they have studied. It was also noted that some candidates attempting the Chaucer questions did not choose a specific second extract and either purely focused on the named extract, or ranged across the whole text. The better examples for these questions clearly identified the line numbers of the second extract, often in the introduction. Not only did this give a clear steer to the examiner as to where the response was going, it also seemed to focus the candidate on ensuring that their answer remained focused (in the main) on the two passages.

Question 1

Although this was the slightly less popular unseen poem choice, there were still a number of excellent responses seen by examiners. They commented that most candidates displayed a sound grasp of the unseen poem, and that many candidates were able to confidently identify the child-like aspects of the memories and wrote about how the language choices in both poems created a sense of nostalgia. The better responses were able to analyse and evaluate the differences in Heaney's and Limon's use of language, rather than just identify the similarities. Many focused on a structural comparison which looked at the use of tercets in both. This occurred with varying degrees of success, with the more able considering how this controlled structure was evidence of an adult perspective and others considering more simply that this was 'simple structure' and reflected a childlike perspective.

Lots of responses missed out the middle sections of 'Out of the Bag', and so missed opportunities to push their answer into how the childhood experiences affected the adult self. A comparison of the rhetorical questions at the end of both poems gave rise to some insightful personal responses by candidates. Candidates who were able to articulate the speaker's longing to return to simplicity and watch for the whales showed a really lovely understanding of the unseen poem. However, there were varied and interesting interpretations of the final lines, linked in a valid way to the final lines of 'Out of the Bag'.

While the speaker in 'Stillwater Cove' ~~experiences~~ ^{explores} an idyllic and beautiful childhood memory, made evident by Limon's use of gentle and playful images of nature, the speaker in 'Out of the Bag' recounts a traumatic memory in his childhood, evident through the juxtaposing ~~boasting~~ ^{boasting} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~gang~~ ^{gang} ~~boasting~~ ^{boasting} imagery throughout his flashback. ~~Indeed~~, both poets use fantastical ~~imagery~~ ^{imagery} or supernatural imagery to display the wonders of childhood, such as the "fervid magic" of the "sun reaching off ~~the~~ ^{the} cresting waves" in stanza one of Stillwater Cove, ~~and~~ ^{and} similar to the allusion of an old wives tale that children came out of Doctor's bags in the line "All of us came in Doc's kerchiefs bag" in Out of the Bag. This sense of magic and ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~storytelling~~ ^{storytelling} ~~convention~~ ^{convention}



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Examiner Comments

This candidate fully embedded their comparison of the two poems throughout the response, using the unseen poem to bring out new observations and insight into the named poem. This was awarded a Level 5 response.



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Examiner Tip

The best answers embed their comparison of the unseen poem and the named poem from the opening paragraph. This allows for the development of a controlled and critical argument and uses the unseen poem to bring out ideas in the named poem.

Yet white

Both poets describe the theme of waiting^{in childhood} —

Heaney's narrator must wait as the doctor delivers the baby and Limón's narrator waits for a whale — the ~~feelings~~ more negative feelings of the memories are different.

Both narrators observe and remember ^{their} childhood ~~clearly~~ as both poems are structured into terse ~~equally~~ ^{terse} as

the narrator lists what they observe: Heaney's narrator recalls the 'chill of tiles, steel hooks,

chrome surgery tools / ~~that~~ blood drieps / At the foot of each cold wall.' The ^{semantic field of} 'clinical language

and asyndetic listing inject an element of fear into the poem, and the suggestion of violence in

'blood' further demonstrates the fearful emotions of childhood. On the other hand, the most negative

of the emotions that Limón's narrator recalls is

~~barren~~ boredom: 'We'd wish that we never/could get a glimpse of a skull back or tail slap'. While the

poets use the same technique of listing and asyndetic, in the latter poem ~~then~~ this solely creates an effect of monotony and lack of suspense. Limón

emphasises this in her ~~repetition of~~ alliteration:

'To watch / the waves until the whales surfaced'

, creating a lengthening tone and presenting to the reader the taxing feeling of a lack of ~~the~~ surprise.



This candidate has made some good observations on the differences and similarities of the two poems, but does not really develop the analysis of the connections between the poems. They are relevant, but do not go above the descriptors for Level 3, and this is where the response remained.



Think about how the poems connect in their approach to the theme of the question, and also how they show differences. How do these similarities and differences in the way the poet has used language, form or structure demonstrate the different approaches to the themes and ideas of the two poems? Why is it relevant that the poets have used similar – or contrasting – techniques?

Question 2

This was the more popular of the two questions on the unseen poem, and in the main it was clear that centres had prepared candidates well for discussions of 'From the Journal of a Disappointed Man'. Examiners commented how the strongest responses focused on the role of the narrator and made contrasts between the sincere observer speaker in the Limon poem and the detached narrator in Motion's poem. However, examiners did note that interpretations of the Motion poem were quite broad, and some readings, particularly those relating to the relationship between mental health and masculinity, were often unsupported. There was a lack of clarity of argument and a lack of secure focus in some responses, with examiners noting that the nuance and subtlety of the Motion poem were not always picked up on by candidates.

Generally, candidates identified key aspects of observation, and stronger candidates considered how both use observation to suggest separation. Many focused on how language and form created a sense of the act of observation, making useful comments on caesura and enjambment. Weaker candidates could focus on form without linking it clearly to the topic. Some candidates investigated the thesis that both speakers experienced disappointment and a lack of fulfilment with modern life. This led to interesting observations, particularly when comparing the end of both poems and the distinct tones in both. Some candidates considered the introspective nature of each poem which added a more nuanced analysis of 'observation'.

To begin with, in 'Journal', Andrew Motion depicts the act of observing as one that is pulled by fragile masculinity. As he speaks "discovered these men" it presents how the speaker is on a search for self discovery, and struggles along he identifies idealised version of himself along the way. The use of quantifiers in his poem present the constant search for survival and self interpretation, whereby he lists domesticated items such as "chains, pulleys, cranes, ropes" the list is replete of the means of work and the quantified here men are willing to go.



This response demonstrated a good knowledge of the named poem and brought all they had been learned and taught to the exam, but they maintained a focus on the question rather than just regurgitate their notes from class. The line of argument was clear throughout and there were enough glimpses of a critical and evaluative approach that this was awarded a Level 5.



When bringing in ideas about the named poem, make sure you are open to how these are relevant to the question focus, and to the unseen poem as well.

Furthermore, ~~in the~~ journal of ~~a~~ disappointed man. Both poems explore acts of observation by association of setting with ~~the~~ person they

are observing. ~~in the 1st stanza~~ The speaker uses the semantic field of labour tools to associate with the lower class, ~~identity of the men.~~ Ultramasculine identity of the men. "there was all the paraphernalia / of chains, pulleys, cranes, ropes ~~and~~ a". This listing of tools highlight how his observation has led him to ~~become~~ a ~~associate~~ ~~the~~ ~~hand~~ the men with objects. This is further dehumanising as it reduces them as humans, the ~~association~~ further universal ~~the~~ term ~~used~~ to "men" highlights how the speaker associates the behaviours of this group of men to also generalise to all lower class men. ~~Therefore~~ ~~it~~ it is ~~clear~~ ~~to~~ see the speaker's observations carry on further thought in the speaker's mind. Summary in Stillwater Cove ~~the~~ ~~St~~ Lincoln's use of nature to ~~associate~~ to ~~highlight~~ symbolise the loved being. "The blue Pacific - and it was only you" ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~use~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~metaphor~~ ~~of~~ ~~this~~ ~~the~~ ~~feature~~ ~~even~~ ~~though~~ ~~the~~ ~~use~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Casvra~~ ~~separates~~ ~~the~~ ~~loved~~ ~~one~~ ~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~nature~~. The direct address to "you" signifies the association the speaker creates with nature and the loved one.



Time spent planning is rarely wasted, and this candidate shows this in abundance. If they had spent a few minutes ordering their thoughts this could have been an excellent response, as they demonstrate good understanding and insight of the writer's craft. However, there is often a lack of control and a lack of meaningful connections made between the poems, which left this response in Level 3.



Take time to plan and organise your thoughts and ideas as to how themes are shared across the two poems. Make sure the connections you make between the poems are meaningful and demonstrate your understanding of the writer's craft.

Question 3

No responses were seen to this question.

Question 4

No responses were seen to this question.

Question 5

There were differing approaches to the question, some focusing on the physical desires of the Wife, with the second passage chosen from her discussion of marriage in her prologue or to include the 'housbondes meke, and yonge, and fresshe a-bedde' line from the end; others on the 'maistrie' aspects of marital relationships, with Jankyn or the knight yielding sovereignty as a condition for marital bliss. In the main, responses to this question demonstrated clear understanding of the relationships between text and contexts, and the question focus was clearly engaged with generating higher level responses. A few responses focused on marriage, rather than marital love, and centres are reminded that candidates need to properly read the question focus. As always, with Chaucer, examiners did note that it was much easier when the second passage from the text is clearly identified. There were some examples of candidates ranging across the whole of the text of the Wife of Bath, which made it difficult to credit as a second choice of extract.

The given passage itself was quite well discussed though several candidates clearly struggled with the religious content and were unclear about the Wife of Bath's argument. The best, however, not only managed to explore a range of readings of this, exploring well whether the satire was aimed at the Wife or at society and the church, but also to link it to useful context. Candidates clearly enjoyed exploring the degree to which the presentation of Alisoun is misogynistic with some good use of medieval stereotypes and values, with some subtlety from the best candidates. Examiners did note that some responses were context heavy. These could be quite general in approach and miss out on discussing the poetic nature of the text. The best responses elicited insightful discussions on marital love, with candidates drawing connections between the text and contemporary perspectives on gender roles and relationships. Stronger answers addressed the degree to which Alisoun is being presented as a stereotype or whether there are limits to modern ideas about the lives of medieval women. Centres are also reminded that candidates do not need to spend time 'translating' Chaucer and they should analyse the language used in the text, not in their own translation.

In Chaucer's 'The wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale' marital love is presented as a key theme that underpins both the wife of Bath's forthright and radical opinion on marital love in her Prologue, as well as the ideal fairytale ending between the knight and the old woman in her actual Tale. Between lines 77 and 114, the wife of Bath presents her contrasting perception on marital love compared to traditional Medieval opinions, revealing how marital love does not have to be based on the concept of virginity. Chaucer also presents marital love between lines 1219 and 1256 in a contrasting manner, revealing to the reader that marital love and the foundation of a strong marriage is or built upon choices and commitment. Overall, marital love is a highly important element within both the wife of Bath's Prologue and her Tale as Chaucer intricately weaves it into the fabric of each narrative.



This candidate clearly sets out their argument from the opening sentence, weaving in relevant context to demonstrate the direction of travel of their argument. They kept up this controlled approach throughout and were awarded a Level 4.



When answering a Chaucer question, clearly indicating the second passage you are going to use makes the examiner confident in the direction of your argument and ensures you maintain your focus on the two specified extracts.

Chaucer creates the impression that The Wife only marries for the possession of money, through the controversial fact that she has married five times, which is highly controversial for a heavily Christian ~~betwe~~ religious society, that is expected to follow God's wishes that take place throughout the Bible. Chaucer has used unnerving imagery of The Wife inspecting her husband's wealth. "He nam not every vessel all of gold;" This demonstrates that The Wife is keen to not be seen as taking ~~advantage~~ advantage of her husbands for their abundance of money, it creates the impression that Chaucer is attempting to lower The Wife's social status, and try and relate her to poorer fellow pilgrims. The noun 'vessel', may perhaps indicate that ~~the~~ The Wife does not see her husbands as human beings, with emotions, but more so as a unit of wealth, ~~that~~ that she is utterly attracted to. In Medieval England, women could only rise social class if they gained a possession of wealth, which was only possible if they became a ~~widow~~ widow. The phonetical 'ss' sound in the noun



This response does not always remain focused on the question of 'marital love' and instead looks at marriage and money. It is possible that the candidate has misread 'marital' for 'material'. There is evidence of understanding of the Tale and the writer's craft, but as the focus is on the wrong theme, this could only be awarded a Level 2.



Make sure you have read the question carefully and that all your points and topic sentences refer directly to the focus of the question, otherwise the examiner will feel you have come in with a prepared answer rather than looking at the specific question.

Question 6

Many candidates displayed a close understanding of the text, and were able to seize on the key moments in which the wife talks about appearance to great effect. Some candidates were able to make very interesting points about contradictory elements on this topic in the Wife and the text more broadly. Candidates tended to refer to the descriptions of Jankyn's legs, the wife's gap-tooth and the appearance of the old hag in these responses. Some better responses seen compared the Wife of Bath to the Knight – both their contrasting views on physical appearance and also their behaviours as a critique on how men behaved in this time period.

The best responses closely explored the wife's intellect and wit, continually linking to context throughout. Some argued from a feminist viewpoint, that she challenged social and gender norms by embracing female sexuality and giving a voice to women. One or two responses also considered the misogynistic view of widows at the time. Many candidates discussed the appearance of the Loathly Lady and the ethical implications of the choice offered the Knight. A few chose to discuss the appearance of the Wife and her comments on the characteristics of an attractive woman, which also proved successful.

Examiners commented how the selection of a second extract can really shape the candidate's response. There was a feeling that some responses were lacking in a critical appreciation of the writer's craft, with the majority of the analysis of method was focused on word level without much reference to other key poetic features found in Chaucer's work.

Chaucer's 'The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale' explores the ideals of physical appearance and its impact on a 14th century (14th) society. Illustrated in lines 586-626 Chaucer exposes the ~~distaste~~^{infatuation} of physical appearance in the 14th, furthered by lines 1238-1264. Chaucer highlights the inevitable role of the hierarchy and the importance of physical appeal (youth). Depicted through the 'Wife of Bath' Chaucer switches the stereotypical male objectification of women to be that of the wife towards 'Jankin' purposely done for justification of the wife's actions when surrounded in a gynocentric society. Furthered in the tale (lines 1238-1264) as the ~~distaste~~^{'knight'} ~~of female~~ exploits the 'hags' lack of beauty, ^{achieving} getting what society wants. ^{prevailing male expectations} Chaucer ultimately representing the significance of physical appearance in order to survive the 14th society through his semi-fabliau.



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Examiner Comments

A04 is not a requirement of the responses to Section B, but it can be helpful to the examiner to see how an argument is going to progress. This candidate did not discuss the extracts together in the body of their response, but by writing about them together in the introduction it demonstrated a controlled argument which was reflected in the rest of the answer and it was awarded a Level 4.



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Examiner Tip

For Chaucer questions, it is helpful to make it clear to the examiner your choice of second extract and how you are going to develop your argument, even though there is no comparison element to be marked.

* Notably, a structural return to superficiality can be observed as, faced with his wife's transformation into beauty, the Knight reacts extremely, "For joye he hente hire in his armes two, / his herte bathed in a bath of blisse / A thousand time a-rewhe he gan hire kisse" An action seeped in ridiculous extent is no

doubt a further example of Chaucer's humour. "~~He herte~~ "For joy he herte wine in his armes two" shows a remarkable contrast to his initially distance to the lady, yet the interpersonal proximity evidenced here entirely replaces that. Furthermore the metaphor, "his herte bathed in a bath of blisse" seems sarcastically idealised and a sudden loving, romantic tone. Perhaps this is a sarcastic ^{conveyance} of the Romance genre of the middle ages - which Chaucer had previously ~~decried~~ subverted through his characterisation of such an unenvious knight. Finally, the hyperbolic action of "a thousand time a-rewe he gan hire kisse" again draws on the Romance conventions, yet also betrays his undying superficiality in the face of physical appearance. As such the Knight represents the constancy of men's shallow preoccupations in some people; and shows how will always hold physical appearance as the most important and significant feature of a person's being - despite Chaucer's evidencing otherwise.



Examiners frequently comment that candidates do not engage enough with the writer's craft when it comes to Chaucer, and how the character of the Wife is crafted. The best responses will always focus on the poetry element of the Tale and analyse how meanings are shaped by the writer's craft. This candidate embedded AO1, AO2 and AO3 throughout their response and produced a critical and thoughtful answer that was awarded a Level 5.



Always remember that Chaucer is a poet and that the Wife is a construct and make sure that you are analysing the language and structure of the Prologue and Tale, and how Chaucer's craft helps construct the character and the Tale.

Question 7

'The Pulley' provided candidates with a wealth of opportunity to discuss the metaphysical conceit, and there were some excellent responses seen. One examiner commented that 'The Pulley is a complex and quite odd poem, and it was interesting to see the many creative responses to it.' Examiners noted that often candidates were able to deliver sophisticated responses to the named poem and the nature of longing, with candidates able to relate the concept to a range of poems from the collection. 'The Collar', and Donne's 'Hymn to God the Father' and 'Batter My Heart' were used to develop comparable ideas relating to a longing for redemption. Biographical details about Herbert and Donne were incorporated effectively; though there was a tendency for more general historical and religious contextual detail, which sometimes limited the overall level of the response. In terms of AO2, technical discussions of form and structure were generally productive with some advanced terminology used effectively.

Poets George Herbert and Richard Lovelace explore the theme of longing in their poems 'The Pulley', and 'Lucasta, Going to the Wars'. Herbert explores humanity's longing for God and purpose, whereas Lovelace explores a longing to patriotically fight for the king.

Herbert uses four stanzas of varying lines to symbolise the perfection of God's world, with the four seasons. Lovelace Herbert believed that the purpose of poetry was 'to honour God', which is done in his poem, and the fourth stanza suggesting that the context of the English civil war

challenged and Protestant Reformation Challenging religious tradition, as humanity's of straying from God punishes a move away from the holy trinity. Lovelace uses three short quatrains to symbolise the lack of importance of anything other than patriotism in his life. Lovelace was nicknamed 'The Cavalier Poet' because of his allegiance to Charles I during the civil war.

Herbert uses the asyndetic list of 'beauty, wisdom, honor, pleasure' to describe God creating human attributes. ~~Herbert's desire to turn others towards God is shown here, as these nouns create a sense of perfection in God's creation, mutual need among God and humanity, as without these relate to John Calvin and predestination, as these vague terms can be subjectively applied to anyone, linking to the concept of turning towards God.~~ Lovelace also uses the asyndetic list 'a sword, a horse, a shield' of ^{items} in the romantic field of warfare. ~~represent~~ This bears connotations of the holy trinity, as like Christianity each item is necessary to for a soldier to succeed in battle. Similarly, the narrator's use of personal pronouns 'I' and 'you' intertwine each other to symbolise his longing to leave his lover for what he truly desires, battle. This links to 17th century gender roles, in that

men were expected to protect their country, while women looked after the home as second class citizens. Lovelace's dismissive and ignorant attitudes towards women reflect those of 16th century society, as very few women had a voice.

Herbert uses the image of 'rest in the bottom lay' in stanza 2 as a double meaning to ~~refer~~ symbolise God and Humanity's mutual need for each other. While it could mean that God has ~~kept~~ the rest of the positive attribute for himself explaining his omnibenevolence it could also be interpreted as the attribute of 'rest' as humanity's longing for comfort and an escape from life's struggles turns them towards religion, relating to the poem's conceit, ~~whereas~~ on the other hand, it could symbolise how with comfort, or the deadly sin of greed, humanity has no need for God. Both interpretations reinforce Herbert's desire to turn others to Christianity, as he is stating that lacking rest provides a purpose to life, which is to worship God. ~~But~~ on the other hand, Lovelace uses the image of war being a 'mistress' to chase to symbolise his longing to show his patriotism by using a personification to describe war as his purpose, using 16th century gender roles to portray himself as an 'ideal' man. The stereotype of women being a reward is utilised here, as

being able to fight is Lovelace's 'escape' from his relationship. The use of the affectionate term 'dear' mocks the concept of relationships, seeing them as irrelevant in a period of civil war. Lovelace also places the country above his partner, mocking the idea of not doing so, which reflects 16th century society's perception of the king being vital through Divine Right, and women being viewed as ^{having} a lower status in society.

Herbert uses an ABABA rhyme scheme to symbolise the action of operating the pulley, pulling humanity upwards towards God. The rhyme is not utilised in Stanza 2 however, which could ~~symbolise~~ be a biblical allusion towards the discord caused by Adam and Eve following ^{the} end of the book of Genesis, the first book of the bible. Alternatively, the rhyming pairs could symbolise a close relationship between humanity and God. Lovelace utilises a fast-paced ABAB rhyme scheme to symbolise the march into battle. This event is portrayed as the narrator's desire, who decides to leave his lover after longing to save his country out of patriotism and defence of tradition. The fast-paced rhyme scheme highlights the importance and extreme longing for battle.

George Herbert uses a tone religious tone that sounds as if the poem is being delivered in a

Church session, which ^{origin} links to the concept of persuading others to follow God. This ~~persuasive tone~~ religious, persuasive tone has connotations of Herbert's role of a priest, and his ^{poet's} goal of guiding others to God. He is said to have wanted his poems to be burned if they failed to ~~re~~ restore humanity's faith at a time of religious turmoil. Lovelace uses a dismissive, fast-paced tone to highlight his longing to escape the "chaste breast" of his love and to protect his traditional values of the monarchy. While Lovelace was not married, he was rumored to have had a relationship with a woman, in which the poem may be dire intended for. His dismissive tone suggests that his insults her, by focusing on the battlefield, and symbolizes how men were able to have affairs in this case with the battlefield, whereas women were looked down upon for this, commonly being perceived as witches.

In conclusion, both poets explore the theme of longing in separate contexts. The Pulley intends to turn humanity back to God ~~in a~~ at a time of religious upheaval by describing humanity and God's longing for one another, whereas To Lucasta, Going to the Wars ~~or~~ reflects uses the narrator's longing to protect traditional values, such as the monarchy, to reflect 16th century England's

Perspectives on gender.



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Examiner Comments

AO4 is not assessed in this section and, as noted above, while it can be helpful to set out the terms of the argument and its direction, by maintaining a comparative approach some candidates are in danger of not going into enough depth in their analysis by only pointing out similarities between the poems. This candidate had a good grasp of the poems and the Metaphysical context, but their analysis was often undeveloped because they were comparing too much, and they only just made a Level 4.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Only make points of comparison in Section B when it helps develop your argument, or develop your analysis. Pointing out similarities and differences without then referring to the question focus is not a useful tactic to get the higher levels.

Question 8

This was a slightly less popular choice of question for the Metaphysical poets, but we did see some very strong responses engaging with the idea of the metaphysical conceit. As one examiner commented, 'It is great to see candidates respond to such complex ideas'. In the main, context was incorporated effectively and candidates engaged with the more complex social and cultural factors behind the poems. The question focus of natural imagery provided lots of opportunities for candidates, and one examiner speculated that perhaps the lack of biographical detail on Carew, particularly compared to Donne, might have encouraged candidates to address other areas of context, often with much success.

"wide stream". This use of the conceit of rivers and water is present throughout with it seen in "eddy", "stream" and also "shore". This establishes the Carew's lover, the eddy, and her past relationship as the "wide stream" with Carew being the "shore". The shore is synonymous with safety and comfort and Carew's use of natural imagery is used to bolster his argument and disregard to "wide stream". This is typical of metaphysical poetry with his use of wit, a logical argument and the apostrophe. The commanding tone of the poem is used to warn the apostrophe, his lover, away from any memory and "lose his colour, name, and taste" this establishes the power dynamic between them. This is also representative of the patriarchal system of the 17th century and the submission of women without having a voice. The argument and



A focus on literary context is always to be encouraged, particularly over biographical context. This candidate sometimes lost control of the argument but maintained a focus on the question and remained clear at all times, and so was awarded a top Level 3.



Don't try and throw everything you have learned about a poem into your response. Be measured and controlled and make sure each point you make is backed up by a textual reference, particularly when making a contextual point.

Question 9

Donne continues to be a popular choice for candidates and examiners noted that centres teach Donne's poetry well and that the responses seen demonstrated a good understanding of form, structure and contextual factors that all helped to develop candidates' responses and arguments. The idea of separation proved quite fruitful, and candidates were able to apply it both to the idea of separation in the human and the spiritual realms. Some detailed and interesting responses were seen and there could be effective incorporation of details of Donne's life and relationships to develop discussions. However, examiners did note that in some cases, biographical contexts became rather intrusive on this task, especially with regard to Donne's marriage to Anne Moore. Better responses looked beyond biographical context to interweave literary and socio-political context into their answers.

'A Valediction of Weeping' and 'Woman's Constancy' were popular choices of second poem. Discussions often addressed conceits such as the sun and the compasses effectively to develop ideas about the differences between physical and spiritual separation and closeness, with a couple relating these ideas to early-modern Neoplatonism.

Separation in Song 'sweetest love I do not go' features the typical arrogance of the Donne persona; one who dissociates from his own actions, placing the responsibility on another factor. ~~It~~ The separation here does however differ from that of A Nocturnal upon St Lucy's Day, Being the Shortest Day; the former emphasises the separation of two physical lovers and the latter focuses on the separation of two souls.

The arrogance of Donne as involved in separation is particularly vivid in Song 'sweetest love I do not go'; it insists upon extracting Donne from

the equation. Donne adopts a legal argument in his typical style and lists that he does not go 'for weariness' and he expresses his frustration at how 'feeble' man's power is. In this way we as readers, ~~and~~ alongside the recipient are shifted from blaming Donne himself. As well as using his legal background in the song, Donne exercises another of his usual ~~my~~ features in suppressing the female voice - the song is a dialogue with Donne himself.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Candidates who are able to confidently reference the oeuvre of a poet, or a movement of poetry, with a focus on the question are able to often demonstrate detailed and discriminating understanding. This candidate was awarded a Level 4 for their response.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Think about all you have learned about your chosen poet or poetry movement and how the individual poem you are analysing fits into the other poems you know. You don't have to reference these specifically by name, but if you are confident, relevant and accurate with your comment this will be rewarded by the examiner.

Question 10

This question elicited some interesting responses in regard to candidates' interpretations of the speaker's views towards the woman. Most picked up on the jealousy and sexual intimidation implied here, though some chose to interpret it as more of a love poem. Close analysis often centred around 'murd'ress', 'sick taper', 'poor aspen wretch' and 'quicksilver'. The idea of strong emotions was a useful way into the poems and candidates approached both carnal and spiritual emotions in a range of interesting ways. Biographical contexts relating to both Donne's chequered sexual antics and his spiritual conversion tended to become intrusive in some cases.

As with many questions in Section B, the choice of second poem is key, and candidates must be aware of all options available to them in the collection and choose the most appropriate one for their argument. Generally, candidates chose second poems well including 'Batter my Heart' and 'To his mistress going to bed'. One candidate wrote on 'The Flea' which gave less scope for discussion of strong emotion, apart from the strength of the candidate's disapproval of Donne: it was clear that a failure to understand the tone of the poem as witty and light was a stumbling block for this candidate.

tears.' Yet a reader can't help but wonder if although Donne is utilising these Petrarchan conventions, he is actually mocking them. This is a largely metaphysical trait as Donne rejects the idea of the ~~feet~~ unattainable woman as a pedestal in many of his more graphic and present physical seduction poems such as 'Elegy To His Mistress Going to Bed'. Donne seems to simultaneously manipulate and distance himself from the tireless Petrarchan lover in a similar way to how he both refers to and separates himself from Catholic ideology such as in 'The Relic'. Donne, initially raised as a Catholic may have felt much guilt later in life as he became a Protestant and Dean of Saint Pauls after eleven members of his family, including his brother Henry, had died for being Catholics. This is another example of strong conflicting emotions which can be seen in Donne's Holy Sonnets such as when he implores God to 'batter my heart'.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response demonstrated a detailed understanding of the poem, the poet and Metaphysical poetry as a whole, and the candidate was able to weave all assessment objectives into most paragraphs, receiving a high Level 4.



Make sure all contextual points you make are relevant to the poem and to the question focus. This candidate has brought in some biographical detail about Donne but has used it in a controlled way, linking it very firmly to both the poem and to the focus of the question.

Question 11

The Romantics remain the most popular collection of poetry across Section B and the range of responses demonstrate that this works well for all abilities of candidates. The poem 'So We'll Go no more A Roving' worked well for most, despite its surface simplicity, though examiners did note there was often too much generalised focus on the biographical detail of Byron's 'mad, bad and dangerous' life, which detracted attention away from more relevant potential discussions in relation to the Romantic context of poem choices. It also led to some quite conversational phrasing of Byron's 'partying' which did not serve the candidates' arguments well. The most able could see how important the form and structure of the poem are in creating its sense of melancholy and there was some excellent use of the context of the poem's composition, which led to interesting discussion over whether the poem was just a product of a hangover or something more profound.

In a majority of cases there were some thoughtful responses on Romanticism, and the choice of second poem proved key in how well candidates were able to demonstrate their understanding of the Romantic ideas and how these were presented in the poems. Candidates who looked at the whole focus of the question, i.e. 'attitudes to ageing' and not just the idea of getting old were more likely to probe the nuances of this focus, particularly when looking at Wordsworth in both 'Tintern Abbey' and 'Intimations of Immortality'. Byron's attitudes to ageing in the other poems in the collection were also sensitively explored, particularly noting the difference in emphasis on ageing in either the earlier work of 'Lines Inscribed upon a Cup Formed from a Skull' or his last work in 'On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth year.' A few candidates also wrote cogently on Keats' attitudes to ageing in 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' – particularly how the lovers will not fade.

Each poem explores the timeless nature of emotions ~~cont~~ in contrast to the body's decay.

In "So well go no more a roving", Byron declares that his "heart be still as loving, and the moon be still as bright", likening the permanence and unchanging nature of emotions to the immortality of the natural world. Despite his body ~~no longer~~ being worn out and tired, Byron feels that his passion hasn't subsided, an idea closely linked to the Romantics' views ~~that of emotions is~~ ~~for more in~~ and imagination's importance in a time of rational thinking and scientific progress.

Byron uses an almost humorous tone in lines inscribed upon a cup formed from a skull to focus on the unchanging nature of passion and emotion. He subverts ^{the} religious ideas of his time, ~~using the~~ ~~re~~ reanimated skull of a dead man to portray emotion. The skull embodies passion, even beyond the grave, and tells the reader to follow in its footsteps ~~the~~, commanding us to "let [him] shine", "in aid of others". Byron here explores the effects of age on human nature, suggesting that ~~at~~ even generations ago, our emotions were ~~a~~ similar to now.



This candidate demonstrates some understanding of the poems and of Byron's status as a poet but often does not do much more than summarise the poems. There is clearly some understanding of Byron and the context he is writing in, but these ideas are quite general and do not link closely to the text. There were elements of this response that were a bit better and it could be awarded a mark at the lower end of Level 3.



Try to avoid summarising the poems and telling the examiner what they are about and instead focus on analysis of the writer's craft and developing your argument.

Plan

NO COMPARING

Attitudes to ageing

CONTEXT (A03)

Review

Lad B

Informations

Wordsworth

Thesis on the 1810s - call for
others

'Nathan's friend'

'Foster-child'

'with light upon him
from his father's eyes'

'his own house'

Shut + ~~fast~~ considered - decision
already been
made

Iambic + rhyme
long 'spontaneous...'

Decision
made as
written.

'sing, sing'
repeated

withness
dash

Thesis
new way of
life

reverent
childhood

Attitudes:
later → escaping
Adulthood

Byron sexual war ingen Thomas
Moore

Regency excess

moral judgement
of self ACEs +
calvinism

words sublime, innocence children - memories
of Arthur

intellectual
appreciation

Noble Savage - 96 vs 155 'mother'
Poncheau / incarceration

Both Romantic poets Byron, in 'So we'll go no more
no more A Roving' and Wordsworth, in 'Ode: Intimations
of ~~Immortality~~ Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood'
present a changed attitude to ageing and a decision ^{of the speaker}
to therefore change their attitude to outlook of life.

William Wordsworth ~~presents~~ in 'Intimations of Immortality'
begins by presenting a negative attitude to ageing,
by contrasting a reverent depiction of childhood with
a loss of such respect ^{the poet's voice is} for ~~his~~ own adult life.

Children are aligned with God in 'Intimations'; from the opening
~~epitaph~~ epigraph: 'The Child is the Father of the Man;',
~~aligning~~ using the ~~relig~~ Biblical connotations of 'Father' as
God being the creator and superior state to 'Man', to introduce
~~this idea~~ the idea of a higher spiritual power existing in
childhood, than adulthood. Wordsworth suggests that when
we are born, we have memories of pre-existence, using
the glorious visual image:

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

The Miraculous ~~to~~ ^{and} image ^{of} triumph and power ~~in the~~

in the noun 'glory' suggests a respect for the childhood
state aligned with the speaker's respect for God. This is
intensified by the personification 'Heaven lies about us!', ~~egg~~

as if children are physically embraced by ~~the~~ Heavenly power. This presentation of the $\&$ power of childhood innocence stems from Romantic traditions and their belief in the uncorrupted state of man in childhood being corrupted by society with age, the child therefore representing Individualism. This ~~to~~ belief was influenced by ~~the~~ the philosopher Rousseau's book on Empiricist theory of learning called 'Emile', theorising that a child can learn moral strength if separated from an imperfect society while learning. It is set in the countryside, ~~a~~ used by Wordsworth as a symbol of God on earth, ~~=~~ a Pantheistic belief. The child is referred to in 'Imitation' as 'Nature's Priest' and her 'Foster child', connecting both the Noble Savage trope of a child/worshipper of Nature, while on earth, God being the "original" parent. ~~As~~ this preserves the child as ^{a symbol} uncorrupted goodness, later contrasted by the adult state, which is presented to have lost the spiritual knowledge from childhood with age.

Rousseau wrote ~~the~~ 'The Social Contract' in 1762, using images of incarceration in its opening lines, 'man is born free and everywhere else he is in chains', to symbolise the loss of original thought and individualism with ageing. Wordsworth uses similar images of incarceration - 'shades of the prison-house begin to close / Upon the

growing boy' - to symbolise social constraints restricting the ~~boy's~~ freedom of memories of pre-existence. The poem is written in iambic metre and is a long stream of consciousness ('spontaneous overflowing of thought' - Wordsworth), showing a ~~turnout~~ with rhyme but no regular pattern, and the tone constantly slips between joyous - using exclamatories and apostrophes 'O, ye Fountains' - and mournful and bitter - 'Oh evil day!' subverting his view of childhood and Nature aligning with goodness and heaven. This ^{flowing, changeable} form suggests an inner turmoil and a decision being processed as the speaker narrates, concluding ~~with~~ his conflicted views of ageing and adulthood. He comes to a conclusion - 'in years that bring the philosophic mind' * and 'Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears' - peacefully rhythmic phrases championing the adult appreciation of Nature using the 'thoughts' and 'mind', and ^{the world and more} ~~the~~ evoking ~~a~~ ^{an} emotional response he has been seeking throughout the poem, he has found in his age what once he thought ~~is~~ lost as he aged.

~~later~~ - In contrast, in Byron's 'So we'll go to no more A Roving', the poetic voice's decision to alter their outlook on life has come before the start of the poem. This is reflected in the rigid form of three short quatrains and ABAB rhyme scheme, using mostly

headless iambic tetrameter, ~~which~~ This gives an assertive tone and a finality to the subject ~~of~~ ^{revelation} depicted, suggesting the decision is revealed ^{then repeated at the end to give clarity in a logical structure.} in line 1, 'So, we'll go no more a-roving
So late into the night'

to the contrasting state of youth and lavish lifestyle suggested in the verb 'a-roving' has connotations of moral transgression. Byron ~~is~~ ^{was} influenced by the Regency period he lived in, which championed excessive pleasure seeking, and he is also associated with what we now call Adverse Childhood Experiences, where he was made to believe from abusive parenting that he is morally bad. This influenced the moral discovery of the poem, and a desire to reverse his youthful ~~transgressiveness~~ in later life. The image of the 'night' and the rhyming 'the moon be still as bright' cannot ~~be~~ ^{is} ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~reflected~~ ^{reflected} in the ~~intoxicating~~ ^{intoxicating} environment. ^{a symbol repeated at the end,} The moon, ^{is} also a symbol of female femininity and transgression, linking sex to immorality, providing a clear consciousness of ~~the~~ the speaker's new hope to overcome previous sexual desire.

the middle of the poem depicts the fatigue of the speaker's ageing state, using parallelism:

For the sword outwears its sheath,

And the soul wears out the breast,²

The widest public image of the 'sword' connotes ^{physical} fatigue and also an ~~em~~ emotional one, drawing a parallel to the exhaustion of warfare conquest, and expressing a desire for peace in contrast. The second line depicts an effect of this sexual, physical fatigue, by using the ~~so~~ tangible image of the 'soul'; an emotional sense of self, physically 'meas out' his body. This conveys ~~as~~ a newfound appreciation for the emotional impacts of sexual endeavours, and a desire to protect himself emotionally as he ages further.



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Examiner Comments

The best responses maintain formal language throughout, regardless of what they are discussing, and are able to embed quotations and make pertinent observations on language, form and structure – alongside contextual elements – in a way that weaves all three assessment objectives together. This was a confident and assured response that received a Level 5.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Always try to use specific references to the poem and to the question focus when discussing any form or structure points about the poem, such as this candidate has done when discussing the metre and stanza structure of the named poem.

Question 12

This was less popular than Question 11 but often very well handled. There were lots of choices of second poem, the most popular being Shelley's 'The cold earth slept below' and 'Stanzas written in Dejection', and these worked well. Candidates generally engaged well with the natural imagery of the poem and linked this to the Romantic movement. Some excellent responses placed the poems clearly in a timeline of Keats' and Shelley's lives and made good use of Keats' own particular view of melancholy as well as Romantic attitudes, although weaker responses tended towards general comments about Keats' many bereavements. More successful responses looked at the extent to which the Romantic poets embraced melancholy and the best responses questioned whether there was a hopeful tone towards the end of the named poem, that melancholy is fleeting and temporary.

We did see a number of rubric infringements this year, where candidates who study the Keats collection, answered this question instead, using a Keats poem not included in the Romantics cluster. Candidates are reminded that they must select a poem from the prescribed list, and these are listed in the source booklet with clear instructions above the title of the prescribed text. We also had a number of candidates answering Question 13 using a second poem from the Romantics collection.

In Ode on Melancholy by John Keats, melancholy is presented as a ~~cause of~~ ^{pot} cause of suffering and potentially death. Keats begins his poem with the imperative command: 'No, no, go not', listing multiple things he believes melancholy might inspire a person to do. The repetitive and irregular meter in the opening two lines, straying away from the iambic pentameter largely used in the poem, ~~or~~ creates a tone of desperation, acknowledging the ability of melancholy to inspire thoughts of death. Keats himself at points was suicidal, stating that 'death or sickness' always 'spoil'd my hours'. At the age of 8 he lost his father, ~~and~~ his mother to tuberculosis, and his brother to tuberculosis in 1810. In 1815 he completed medical training at St Guy's Hospital in London, soon that meant he recognised the symptoms of tuberculosis in himself. In 1820 he wrote: 'It is arterial blood... my death warrant.' This context deeply informed Keats's explanation of melancholy as something that causes suffering and can ~~lead to~~ thoughts of death.



Candidates who reference metre and maintain a focus on the question are usually demonstrating at least a discriminating understanding of the poem. In this instance, the candidate went on to exhibit signs of critical evaluation and so were awarded a Level 5.



When making reference to the metre of a poem, make sure you are connecting this to the question focus and have thought about the relevance of your observation. This candidate clearly links the repetition and the irregular metre in the opening of the poem to the idea of desperation and melancholy.

Question 13

Keats is a popular choice of poet and it is clear that candidates are prepared well. Poems chosen to partner 'On the Sea' were generally appropriate ('Bright Star', 'Ode to a Nightingale', 'O Solitude' were the most popular) and the strongest responses offered some form of overview as to where the theme and the chosen poems fit within Keats's body of work and literary/historical context. The best responses were firmly rooted in the poems and tracked the poems chronologically, effectively contextualising poetic technique and key quotation choices.

The most successful responses discussed what specific power nature held, for example: the power of nature to heal; the power of nature to restore; the everlasting power of nature; the power of nature in relation to humanity. This was a more challenging question than it seemed and some candidates successfully paired the sonnet with 'In drear-nighted December' for a thoughtful response to the question, which encouraged candidates to write well about different types of power (the power to forget), making good use of Keats' own longing for this particular ability. Discussion of the sonnet form was often effective, with good discussion of the octave and sestet as different ways to present the power of nature.

Indeed, ~~no~~ such entire nature energies as
a place of space for those with their 'eye-balls
waxed and kind' whose 'ears are dinned with
upward rattle' or 'dying melody' —
this oxymoron implicitly contrasts ~~itself~~
~~to~~ ~~1844~~ ~~the~~ ~~ocean~~ the ~~ocean~~ ^{sustaining} ('dying') qualities
of ornate, city life, alluding perhaps to
the highly intricate and ordered music of the
concert halls or even the similarly ornate
verse of Alexander Pope, still ~~to~~ ^{being} in the

early nineteenth-century with his poetics of desecration, "polite taste" and symbolizing the ~~old~~ antithesis of the saline sea ~~and~~ and the ~~power~~ power of the sonnet itself: the 'debate' of, for example, jars the regular iambic pentameter, the emphatic ~~sonnet~~ and potent sonic texture B with its long, open assonance ('fond', 'imbued', 'sord', 'thousand', 'brood') or the explosive apostrophic interjections ('Oh, ye!'). Such forefulness and even ruggedness or coarseness organically aligns the sonnet's aesthetic with the unpredictability of the 'sea', implicitly ~~establishing~~ eroding an ~~artistic~~ anti-establishmentarian poetics against early nineteenth-century "polite taste" through the saline power of nature.



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Examiner Comments

This is a good example of a candidate who has been well-taught and has well-prepared for the exam, but has used this knowledge with discrimination and been truly evaluative in how they have approached the question. This continued throughout the whole answer and they were awarded a Level 5.



Keats is one of those poets whose poems have a real aural quality to them, and the best responses are able to embed ideas of the sonic texture of his poems, particularly one such as 'On the Sea'.

Question 14

This was a less popular choice of Keats question, possibly because of the length of the named poem 'The Eve of St Agnes' and some responses mostly summarised the poem, rather than analysed it. Nevertheless, some candidates produced effective explorations of the different types of desire conveyed by the poems.

Candidates explored the poet's passionate expressions of longing and unfulfilled desires with varying degrees of success. Strong responses effectively connected the theme to the poet's broader philosophical and emotional landscapes, while weaker ones tended to be more superficial and made unsupported assertions about Keats' own personal desires.

In "Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art"
Keats focused on his own desire to be immortal like the Star however he also uses negative capability to present nuanced views over immortality and mortality. The exclamatory opening "Bright Star!" suggests Keats admires the Star, the use of the adjective "Bright" presents the Star's splendour, this could be ~~represent~~ representing Keats's desire to be celebrated in the poet circle he surrounded as the Star stands out. He however utilises negative capability to perhaps convey his desire to be unique and not like the Star "in lone splendour hung aloft the night. The personification of the Star creates the ~~desire~~ desire he feels and also presents the romantic view that nature is the heart of society and its importance. ~~Keats may have been trying to convey the imposed~~



Negative capability can be quite a difficult concept to understand and many responses give slightly different versions of what it is. Whilst it can be a useful way of examining areas of Keats' poetry, it is not always a helpful term when trying to analyse his poetry. This was a mostly clear response, but it remained in Level 3 as the argument was not fully controlled or discriminating.



Make sure you fully understand terms before using them throughout your answers. Think about if they are terms that help you understand the themes and ideas in a poem, rather than points of technique and definition in themselves.

Question 15

The theme of yearning in Tennyson and Victorian poetry was well-received, with many candidates showcasing a deep understanding of the emotional intensity and lyrical beauty in Tennyson's work. The best answers provided insightful comparisons between Tennyson and their chosen poem, highlighting the continuity and evolution of the theme of yearning. Most popular choices of poem were 'Home-Thoughts, from Abroad' and 'At an Inn'. One candidate especially drew a clear distinction between the hopeful yearning of the Tennyson and the despair in Hardy, showing a precise awareness of what each poem was exploring. This candidate was also helped by knowing the poetic context of the Tennyson in a wider narrative as well as Hardy's religious beliefs, and so was an excellent example of how context can enable candidates to produce a discriminating answer.

In 'At an Inn' yearning is presented as a cruel emotion, as shown by Hardy's use of irony in the first stanza. The dramatic irony between what the Inn dwellers think of the two's relationship

and our, understanding and the personas, understanding emphasises the cruelty of how the personas yearning goes unrequited. There is also a cruelty in the sources separating their love: the 'laws of men'. This ~~shows~~ shows how society, not one another, are limiting their love, ~~and keeping the~~ ~~yearning~~ we can draw parallels here to Hardy's own life, when his marriage to his wife Emma was failing, he became interested in another woman Florence Durbide. yet while his wife Emma lived he could not divorce her due to both social and religious rules (Emma was a fierce Catholic). This amplifies the impact of how cruel this yearning is, there is likely an element of Hardy's own despair at unrequited yearning here. By contrast in 'Hard' ~~yearning~~ yearning is not nearly as cruel an emotion but instead a hopeful one. The persona has no experience yet of love and so his yearning is for a more idealised one than the relationship we see in 'At an Inn'. The personas metaphor of 'I shall have had my day' at the end of both stanzas shows the personas feeling of content even if he would die after finding love. By placing this poem within the wider context of Hardy's 'Hard' ^{Tenison's} ~~yearning~~ we know that this love will indeed come to pass,

a fulfilment of that hope we see her.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is an excellent example of how a candidate can use context to help drive their argument, with all ideas firmly linked to the question focus and to the text itself. The candidate is also able to analyse the writer's craft because they have such a controlled argument and discriminating knowledge of the poems. This received a Level 4.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

The best responses are not split up into paragraphs on context, language, form and structure, but instead incorporate each idea, where relevant, into the point and purpose of each paragraph as the argument develops.

Question 16

Generally speaking, these responses were very sound, with the small number on Brontë being pleasingly literary in their use of context. Some candidates were more limited to a simple description of the literal journeying taking place in the poems, but others took this as a starting point to bring in the idea of metaphorical journeying. There was some good analysis of 'Love in a Life' as the second poem, where context was well used to explore the complexity of the journey with some sensitive discussion of the poem. As always, centres are encouraged to explore the full range of the Victorian time period and for answers to be rooted firmly in the text, with a nuanced discussion of the different socio-historical factors of the vast time period, rather than candidates writing generalised comments about fixed viewpoints.

It would seem that, on the surface, Brontë's poem is a typical Romantic piece detailing the impact of the sublime, but further inspection could warrant an autobiographical reading instead, despite the ambiguity of the authorship, the 'busy chase

of wealth and learning" utilizes ~~the~~ a monosyllabic spondee effect to place emphasis on ~~the~~ the drawn-out nature of "wealth and learning", perhaps suggesting that these elements of life hold little value to Brontë. This could possibly refer to the Brontë sisters' attempts at schooling, career options which ultimately were unsuccessful. Alternatively, "Always back returning" suggests a repeated pattern, which, supported by "idle dreams of things which cannot be" could be referring to the imaginary world of Gondal created by the Brontë children in their early years, perhaps signifying the influence of youth on the journey of life. Similarly, this could reflect the Brontë's journey to becoming successful writers as women during a period of ~~not~~ the role being male-dominated. This could even imply Emily Brontë's influence, as her goal was to write for enjoyment rather than monetary gain, hunted at with the "busy chase of wealth", "chase" likening the process of publishing to a physical journey, suggesting its demanding nature. References to the "shadowy region" perhaps suggest a learnt experience from prior journeys, which ultimately impacted her future, linking once again to the positive impact of creating the world of Gondal. Alternatively, this could be



This response was quite speculative, and did not fully resolve itself into a cohesive argument, despite showing clear understanding and engagement with the poem. It was awarded a Level 3.



It is always good to look for layers of meaning in a poem and to speculate on different interpretations of what poems mean. However, this needs to be balanced with a clear line of argument and with an understanding of all the different layers of meaning in a poem. For example, journeys can be both literal and metaphorical, and both need to be acknowledged within your response.

Question 17

Rossetti remains a popular choice of poet and this was the most popular choice of question. In the main, candidates' choice of second poem was considered and effective in responding to the question. Most candidates were able to explore the idea of loss in a range of ways and were clear about the contrast between the human and divine in the poem, and analysed both language and structure with precision. 'Remember' was a popular second choice, working well to produce a sensible, though occasionally quite a simple, exploration of a different perspective on loss.

There was rather a lot of contextual discussion of Rossetti's experience of Graves' Disease, which wasn't always relevant, but also much more effective discussion of her religious beliefs and how knowledge of these enhanced understanding of meanings within the poem. References to the speaker's loss of love and their subsequent relationship with religion were common and the majority of candidates linked this contextually to Rossetti's own experiences with failed engagements and religious mania.

Rossetti presents loss as an experience which can define who you are and ~~alter your~~ ^{the direction of} determine your future. In 'Twice', loss ^{of earthly love} is presented as a positive experience which results ^{through} in growth, strength, and the beginning of a beautiful relationship with God. ^{Loss ultimately leads to gain.} On the other hand, in 'Echo' ^{the} loss of earthly love destroys the speaker, and shatters any happiness or independence they once had, leading to further losses, such as + Rossetti's strong faith is key to her presentation and exploration of loss.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Rossetti is a writer who is full of nuance and the best responses from candidates show an understanding of the tensions in her poems, and in her own life. This candidate demonstrates a good understanding of the different presentations of loss in her poetry and has made their line of argument clear from the introduction. There were enough signs of critical understanding to nudge the response into Level 5.



Always be aware of any tensions there might be in the way themes are presented in different poems by the same poet. The best responses will demonstrate an understanding of how viewpoints and perspectives of poets change and are not fixed.

In 'Twice', Rossetti presents the ^{speaker's} ~~poet's~~ loss of earthly love which allows them to fully embrace the divine love of God. ~~At first,~~ ~~the~~ Rossetti uses parentheses in the first stanza in 'O my love, O my love)' to suggest that earthly love has to be concealed to an extent, and is therefore not completely pure in nature. This contrasts her declaration 'O my God, O my God' ~~to~~ ~~is~~ which excludes the use of parentheses, as God's love is genuinely authentic and doesn't need to be suppressed as a result. Rossetti uses ~~the~~ syntactic parallelism here to emphasise the difference between two kinds of love, and justify the speaker's loss of earthly love because it cannot be expressed ~~as openly~~ with the same freedom that God's love can. Contextually, this poem was



Rossetti offers lots of opportunity for candidates to write about the craft of her poetry, and it is the best responses that probe the poems for the writer's craft and the nuances and subtleties of Rossetti. This candidate received a high Level 4 for the analysis and understanding demonstrated throughout the whole response.



Make sure you are analysing the writer's craft in reference to the question focus, and not solely feature spotting. This response keeps the question focus firmly in mind as it analyses the use of language and structure.

Question 18

This was slightly less popular as a question, though there were still a wide range of responses. Successful candidates were able to comment on the complexity and ambiguity of Rossetti's messages and teachings because she was often so unsure of herself and God's plan for her. Appreciation of her becoming far more resolute in later life was nice to see, especially in 'Piteous my rhyme is', where candidates were able to comment on the fact that the speaker decides that earthly love is temporary and not constant like the love of God.

The best responses showed a clear ability to engage with form and structure, showing how the idea develops as the poem progresses and the same was true in discussion of 'Passing and Glassing', the most popular second poem. Context was clearly useful in this question and at least one candidate engaged vigorously with the idea of societal attitudes to the importance of youthful beauty in women for the Victorians, refreshingly recognising that not much has changed here.

Ans- Both poems explore fear the loss of female identity. In "Twice" this is explored through the detrimental passivity of the narrator. As, the speaker begs - "Let me fall or Let me stand" - the loss of sheer identity is explored by the narrators detrimental dependence on what can be inferred to be a male-figure as they are seemingly the determining factor to whether the narrator "falls" or can "stand". The reference to the female - "falling" could be reflective of the identity of a "fallen woman" in the Victorian era this label was bound to any woman who was deemed to be 'sexually immoral' due to their involvement with men before marriage. So, Rossetti may be exploring the extreme loss of women that are in a position where their fate is decided by their male counterparts.



This response demonstrated a clear understanding of the poems and of Rossetti, but spent a lot of time explaining and so did not display the concise analysis of a high level response and it was awarded Level 3.



Try not to over-explain things as this can waste time. Your examiner understands the idea of a fallen woman, and does not need to have it explained to them.

Question 19

The Modern Poets is not the most popular collection, even though there are a number of excellent poems and poets featured. The topic was an interesting one to relate to modernism, as nature tends to be more associated with Romantics. A good number of students recognised this, and were able to talk quite convincingly about the dynamic between the two 'movements' in the poems, and how the poem is ultimately 'modernist' (for a variety of reasons) despite its supposedly Romantic topic. One examiner commented that the question 'seemed to grant permission for an in-depth academic offering from candidates who often wrote controlled concise criticisms of these choices'. Another examiner did observe that some students have quite a fixed view of Modernism and are not always successful in how they apply their understanding to single poems.

In both 'Mowing' and 'Mending Wall' by Robert Frost, the relationship between humans and nature is presented as a mutually beneficial one. Indeed, the relationship can only exist because of the "labor" that Frost describes in both poems, possibly comparing this with the "labor" ~~of~~ ^{that} a modernist poet has to go through ~~it~~ in order

to, as Ezra Pound described, "make it new" – i.e. to reinvent the traditional Romantic style of poetry and shape it into a more complex idea. Frost does this in both "Mowing" and "Mending Wall" by subverting the traditional Romantic view of nature as whimsical and gentle by describing the presence of death in nature ('Mowing') and the ~~unpleasant~~ implied danger of the unknown ('Mending Wall').



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is an excellent example of a candidate who has prepared well for the exam and demonstrates an understanding of the main ideas of Modernism and can relate these clearly to the question focus and to the poems.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Always make sure any ideas you have revised, quotations about the genre of Modernism for example, serve a purpose in your response, otherwise you will not be credited for these.

Question 20

There were only a few takers for this question, which is a shame as it is such a lovely poem. The topic was very open-ended and some candidates were able to use this to their advantage and produce some very strong and academic responses to the question. In particular, they were able to think about the Modernist 'moment' itself, particularly when it came to the work of Williams in 'This is just to say', 'The Red Wheelbarrow' and the ekphrastic moment of 'Landscape with the Fall of Icarus'.

Imagism was a form of description which focused on negating unnecessary words and abandoning the traditional lyricism of romantic poetry. It was a form that strove to make every word count, which is why 'The Red Wheelbarrow' is so successful in conveying ^{through its moments of significance its} the significance of moments because the language is so brief but the image it portrays is so vast. The use of the verb 'depends' being placed at the end of a line is ^a significant ^{moment} as the enjambment then brings curious attention to the preposition 'upon' - something you wouldn't usually pay much attention to but the loping syllable 'pend' acts like a sort of pendulum ^{on the line,} landing the reader on 'upon' and allowing the image to start slowly unfolding. The splitting of the words 'wheel' and 'barrow' is significant as it prompts the reader to contemplate what a 'barrow's purpose might be without its wheels. It lends a static quality to the image which brings significance to the moment as it anchors the reader's imagination in one place. The wheelbarrow being 'a' red wheelbarrow is therefore significant because it is immediately specific. It roots the reader in the ordinariness of a wheelbarrow and helps the reader to clearly picture one thing. 'Glazed' then enhances the



Any focus on AO2 and AO3 is always enhanced when the candidate weaves this into their argument and maintains a focus on the question. It can be difficult to unpick the writer's craft of the Modernists and this candidate has done this superbly as they focus on the image of the red wheelbarrow. Overall, the response was discriminating and controlled and achieved a Level 4.



When analysing Modernist poetry, particularly William Carlos Williams, the placing of words in a line is very significant, and higher ability candidates are able to analyse this with a focus maintained on the question, rather than reciting any learned broad statements about the syntax.

Question 21

Decay is an extraordinarily modernist theme, and a prevailing concern of Eliot, and a majority of candidates identified this. There were not many responses on this question, possibly as the named poem does not receive as much focus as the rest of 'The Waste Land' but the responses were often insightful and impressive. Examiners noted that there was a marked improvement in the literary analysis of Eliot's language, form and structure, and fewer generalised contextual points than in previous series. A small number of responses tried to use the whole of 'The Waste Land' poem, rather than focus on its five distinct sections, and centres are reminded that these should be viewed as discrete poems for the purposes of this exam paper. In these instances, it proved self-limiting as candidates did not have the focus or level of detail required for a higher-level answer.

Eliot explores the inevitability of decay through his presentation of cultural decay, underlining how even the greatest empires and countries fell, mirroring the fall of Europe after WWI - Germany in particular.

In 'Death by Water', this is done by the temporal imagery used at the beginning of the poem: 'Phlebas the Phoenician, a fortnight dead'. ~~Phlebas~~ Phoenicia was an old ancient empire in the Mediterranean, known for their trade routes around the sea. Eliot uses them as an example for what is happening now, a technique he often implements. Such symbolism reflects the influence of French symbolists Mallarmé, La Fontaine. Eliot uses 'Phlebas' as not only the symbol for physical decay of one's life and looks, but also as a symbol for the fallen empire of Phoenicia. The empire was 'once handsome' and rich, but in its death has 'forgot... the profit and loss', underlining how in death, your riches and everything you left behind are just that - left behind for ever, forgotten. The constantly repetitive use of 'and' as well as 'or' also highlight the inevitability of death and its effect, where it doesn't matter whether you are 'Gentile or Jew', you will die forgotten, decaying for ever.



'The Waste Land' is full of imagery and contextual references, and the best responses are able to weave these into their answer. This was a controlled and discriminating response, which later demonstrated some real critical evaluation, and was awarded a Level 5.



When a poem, such as 'The Waste Land', is full of so many contextual references, try to make sure you are not just explaining them but are using them as part of your argument.

Question 22

The question focus was again very suitable for Eliot, and the best responses linked the form and structure of the poems with poetic techniques and relevant and specific contextual factors. Eliot on urban life is a very fertile topic, with 'The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock' was a popular choice of second poem. Better responses were also able to consider where Eliot sits in the literary landscape of the Modernists and many candidates were able to generate a good amount of AO3 insight into the modernist worldview. One examiner did note that they were expecting to see more examples of 'The Burial of the Dead' as the choice of second poem as this was ripe with content for analysis of a vision of urban life.

From the opening of both 'Preludes' and 'The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock' respectively, urban life is preserved as superficial and ~~so~~ meaningless, ~~so~~ aligning with Eliot's own desire to find security in the resonances of previous texts and antiquity. Whilst 'Preludes' opens with a stark, ~~to~~ ~~date~~ sensory description ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~city~~ of the 'winter evening', urban life is rendered



The best responses often use multiple references to the text within the point they are making. Try to include more than reference to ensure your points are fully analytical and are not just explaining or describing.

Question 23

No answers were seen for this question.

Question 24

This anthology attracted only a handful of entries this summer and only on this question. Most candidates were able to embrace the presentation of hope in the named poem, and mostly focus on its absence from across the rest of the collection.

Wain powerfully presents hope in 'Brooklyn Heights' through the structure and format of the poem. It is presented as ~~two~~ couplets throughout the entirety of the poem demonstrating the sincere hope the immigrants consistently placed in the American government. The poem, 'Brooklyn Heights' is an empirical poem rooted in the Movement poem ideology of stark realism. Wain didn't submit to the agglomerations of uncommanded commands. The poem is a reflection of the real immigrant experience in America, these immigrants remained hard-working the "citizens carry the bridge on their shoulders". This allusion refers to the manual labour they participated

on as they did literally "carry the bridge on their shoulders" as the immigrants would have been exploited and made to do these jobs. The immigrants remain hopeful as they "dream". The clever repetition of "dream" by Wain plays with the expectations that immigrants came to America with, their "children do not know the weight" of their responsibilities but the immigrants keep going all because "America comes smiling towards them like a neighbour". The irony of this simile is that even though the Americans let them build and hustle they are still 'neighbours', they remain outsiders as they are not 'American' and no matter their toil they will never be seen as such.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response demonstrates an understanding of the Movement poetry, the poem, and the poet and wears this lightly as it sets out its argument. It was controlled throughout and received a Level 4.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

The best responses don't feature spot, but identify how techniques (such as couplets, repetition or similes – as this candidate has done) help to convey the overall message of the poem.

Question 25

This was a well-handled question with many vigorous responses reflecting the strong engagement of the candidates with Larkin's poetry. Candidates wrote about 'I remember I remember' and 'Reasons for Attendance', both of which worked well in terms of the question focus on a sense of belonging. Almost all clearly discussed Larkin's alienation and lack of belonging, and linked this reasonably to his own life. There was sometimes quite a lot of discussion of his sex life, but generally not irrelevant detail. The question gave candidates good scope to show both clear and discriminating responses, with the best answers unpacking images such as looking through windows and the pull of jazz music in a way that reflected more than just a teacher's notes. Some candidates clearly felt quite strongly that Larkin was being very selfish and sexist, which at times hindered nuanced readings of the poems and careful analysis of language, but the best candidates picked up on details such as the subversion of childhood clichés in 'I remember I remember' and the ambiguity of the end of 'Reasons for Attendance'. As is often the case, the humour of the poetry was only identified by the strongest answers in both Larkin questions, with weaker responses taking his words at face value – that he's a grumpy outsider and likes it. The best responses appreciated the complexity of Larkin and recognised that, despite appearances, he wanted to belong and cared about others but struggled to express it. In terms of context, a number of candidates did fall back on purely biographical detail on Larkin, and some generalised comments on the Movement, without bringing ideas of social change of the 1950s society, post-war identity and The Movement poets. Best answers dealt with nuances and dualities rather than certainty in single interpretation.

In both 'Places, Loved Ones', and 'Maiden Name' Larkin explores the concept of belonging to someone else as limiting one's own individualism and identity. In 'Places, Loved Ones', Larkin's immediate opening of the poem with 'No, I have never found' instantaneously establishes a tone of cynicism and disillusionment, through the assured double negative of 'no' and 'never'.

Thus, Larkin ~~for~~ evidently feels pessimistic about his inability to find his 'soul mate' or the one person whom he wants to spend the rest of his life with. Whilst he initially appears disheartened about this, he later states that the "special one" has an "instant claim / on everything I own / Down to my name". The ~~rhyming~~ rhyme between "claim" and "name" inherits the proper noun "Name", almost ~~audibly~~ audibly clinging to it, reflecting Larkin's absence of freedom, as a name.

is a common symbol of individuality and self-expression. Moreover, the uneasy tone of "everything I own", reflects that belonging to one person results in the loss of the self, enhanced through the delimiting connotations of "claim". Perhaps then, Larkin's tone of "special one" is sarcastic, so he later states that it is "not your fault" if you find "The girl a doll". The rhythm in this line is irregular and does not conform to the iambic pentameter across the poem, reflecting a blunt heart, enforced by the end-stop. Larkin reflects therefore



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This was an assured response that critically dealt with all assessment objectives with a light touch. The candidate demonstrated critical evaluation throughout and was awarded a Level 5.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Larkin's use of language is very precise and technical, even when it sounds very conversational. The best responses are able to focus in on the way Larkin uses, for example, rhyme and tone to deliver his often multi-layered message.

Question 26

The theme of the ordinary proved a discriminating factor. Some candidates struggled with the word ordinary: some used this to their advantage to explore it through the poems, with some subtle discussion of how the meaning of ordinary is reworked in 'Born Yesterday' to challenge accepted wisdom, and linking this well to Larkin's own choices to avoid the spotlight. 'Wedding Wind' worked really well as a second poem, enabling careful analysis of imagery to show how Larkin rejected the romantic clichés about love in the poem through the presentation of the ordinary, a very mature response to the poem. Most candidates were able to successfully analyse his bleak tone and cynical attitudes, and link this to his biographical context, though some examiners did observe that understanding of the subtleties of 'Born Yesterday' was mixed, with some allowing Larkin's character and personality to override the poetic voice. One examiner did note that there was too much emphasis on his less than admirable, public persona and not enough attention on 'this tenderly observant poet' that Betjeman recognises.

Strong candidates made a great deal of the potential irony of the poems, as well as the diction – e.g. its conversational quality, and why Larkin-as-poet is making these specific choices. However, examiners also did comment that responses to the Larkin poems are interesting to read, even when the candidates are not necessarily achieving high scores.

In 'Born Yesterday' Harkin writes to Dally Amis, his best friend's ~~the~~ newborn daughter. He begins by metaphorically referring to her as 'tightly-folded bud' to comment on her vulnerability as the language creates images of a baby being wrapped in garments and clothe. He then begins to state how he has 'wished' her 'something', something that is separate from the 'usual' as 'instead!'. Through this and the poem being in first person the poem takes on a very intimate and personal mood as Harkin's intended reader is someone that can be considered quite close to him. The poem's intimacy increases upon the shift to stanza 2 whereby he wishes her to be 'ordinary' and 'nothing uncustomary' instead of to be 'beautiful, or running of a spring of innocence and love.' This ~~is because~~ Harkin's ~~views~~ may be because of Harkin's typical cynical view of society whereby he associates a life of fame, beauty and talent to be ^{apoth} futile and pointless ^{convention of society} as it won't bring true happiness. Perhaps, through this he may be



This candidate demonstrated clear knowledge of Larkin and the poems, but did not develop their argument to show any real control or discrimination, and was awarded a mid Level 3.



The best responses are able to take what they have learned about the poems and about Larkin, and demonstrate real engagement with the ideas and language of the poems. Larkin offers lots of opportunity for nuanced readings, and higher-level answers are able to interrogate the many layers of meaning often evident in his poems.

Paper Summary

A few guidelines for candidates based on the experience of this year's examiners:

Section A

- Take time to read and understand the unseen poem, and plan your response accordingly. Examiners repeatedly comment that an introduction which signals the direction of the response helps them understand your thinking. Higher level responses are controlled and critical.
- Think about the overall meaning, message and impact of a poem before rushing to spot features of the writing.
- Embrace any difficulties and ambiguities of the unseen poem. Look at the question focus and use these tensions in your response.
- Titles are important, and it is good to bring this into your response, but they can usually be analysed in a sentence or two and don't need to be the focus of a whole paragraph.
- When writing about structural points use specific examples, rather than making general comments. Enjambement and caesura do different things in different poems, and need to be considered in terms of your exploration of the impact of each poem as a whole.
- A learned essay structure is often limiting in terms of your thinking about the poems, particularly if there is a specific focus on language or structure. It can often lead to comparisons that don't mean anything compared to looking at ideas across the poems as a whole.
- Do remember to read the question carefully. This forms part of your critical response to the poems and you will be limited if you don't answer the question and only make vague points. The purpose of the unseen poetry comparison is to draw out new ideas and insights into the anthology poems. Use what you have learned and been taught, but be alive to new ideas and readings of the anthology poems.
- Use terminology carefully and accurately – and remember you are analysing poems. Sometimes in the rush to identify language and structural points, there is no meaningful analysis of the genre of the poem. Analysing how an idea is presented and developed across a whole poem is often more insightful than identifying the type of stanza, or use of caesura for example.
- Make sure comparisons between the poems are meaningful and insightful and embedded throughout. Examiners did note that some candidates, although using comparative discourse markers, essentially treated the poems as separate entities.
- Don't waste time explaining what terminology means for the examiner; focus on your analysis and the reason why you are making the point.

Section B

- The better answers weave all assessment objectives into each paragraph, rather than focusing a paragraph on language, form, structure etc.
- Avoid writing learned paragraphs of contextual information. Instead, weave what you have learned into your analysis of the poem and relate any contextual point to a specific textual reference.
- Develop a personal engagement with the poems. The best answers always demonstrate a candidate who has developed a personal relationship with the poems and not just the notes of their teacher or any other study guide.
- Read the question carefully and make sure you are answering the question that has been asked.
- If you study John Donne, The Metaphysical Poets, John Keats or The Romantics, do make sure that you are answering the correct question from the correct section for your prescribed collection.

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>

