

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

<p>Paper 2010/12 Poetry and Prose 12</p>
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Key messages

Successful responses:

- show a detailed knowledge of poems and prose texts studied
- answer the question
- provide textual support
- include detailed exploration of the ways in which writers achieve their effects.

Less successful responses:

- have a sketchy or limited knowledge of texts studied
- lose focus on the question set
- make unsupported assertions
- describe or simply identify writer's techniques.

General comments

Examiners reported much evidence of candidates' personal engagement with, and enjoyment of, the poems and prose texts they had studied. Occasionally, there was a sense that prose extracts were being approached as 'unseen' texts in answers which lacked an awareness of the wider context of the novel or story. There were very few rubric errors.

Textual knowledge

The most successful responses showed a detailed knowledge of texts and contained well-selected references (both direct quotations and indirect references) to support the chosen line of argument. These responses selected judiciously from the poems or prose extracts printed on the question paper and avoided attempts to write exhaustively on every aspect of either poem or extract. This latter approach often led to both a descriptive approach and a loss of focus on the question.

Focus on the question

The strongest responses kept the question in sight throughout the response, with candidates selecting their material and tailoring it to meet the specific demands of the question. Less successful responses sometimes showed a detailed understanding of character or theme but lost focus on the question, often failing to take note of key words such as 'powerful', 'striking' and 'vivid', which are designed to elicit candidates' responses to qualities of the writing. There were instances, too, of candidates losing focus on the question as they wrote excessively about background material rather than the text itself.

Candidates are advised to address the key words of question straight away and not bother with 'courtesy' introductions (e.g. 'In this essay, I am going to...'). Likewise, conclusions that simply re-state, often at length, the main points of the answer are best avoided. Teachers should remind candidates that answering the question is more important than following a pre-conceived idea about what constitutes a model essay.

Writers' effects

Candidates who had a detailed knowledge of their texts were better able to analyse closely and convincingly the ways in which writers achieve their effects. In the case of poetry and passage-based questions, it is possible to quote from the text printed in the question paper. For the prose general essay questions, those

candidates who had learnt at least some direct quotation were better placed to probe critically a writer's use of language.

However, when considering a writer's use of language, there is no particular merit in:

- simply identifying or logging writers' use of devices
- merely listing those words belonging to what is often termed a 'semantic' or 'lexical' field
- writing about possible connotations of words without considering their meanings within context.

Personal response

Strong individual responses were characterised by thoughtful and perceptive comments argued and supported with care. These responses engaged directly with those words in questions designed to elicit a personal response to the writing.

Less confident candidates offered less in the way of personal response and more in the way of established readings of poems and the more traditional prose texts; these answers tended to rely on explanation and unsupported assertion rather than critical analysis.

In some responses, personal response was limited to comments on how 'relatable' a character or situation was.

Question-specific comments

Question 1

Praise Song For My Mother

Good responses identified the metaphors 'water', 'moon's eye' and 'sunrise' and candidates were able to relate this 'nature' imagery to qualities possessed by her mother, i.e. essential for life, as a watchful eye in dark times and giving her a reason to get up in the morning and approach the day with optimism. On the fourth stanza, many made valid points that fish need gills to breathe and survive, and that the poet is nostalgic for the lovely food her mother cooked. The final line was also well-handled with observations that they might have been her mother's last direct words to her and that she was being encouraged to enjoy and experience life. One excellent response noted the plural as significant, suggesting her mother is encouraging her to think of infinite opportunities. Less successful responses tried to identify language features without relating them to the question or the poem's deeper implications.

Question 2

Anthem For Doomed Youth

Weaker responses were characterised by candidates spending too long recounting (in a heartfelt way) all that they had learnt about the awful conditions in the war and the waste of life, though without relating their comments to the poem or the question. These general comments were not incorrect but were not supported by, or rooted in, the detail of the poem. Most candidates were able to make some relevant comment about the 'cattle' simile. Those with a confident understanding of the rituals of mourning that feature in the poem offered more perceptive responses. Few offered a convincing analysis of the ways in which Owen uses sounds to powerful effect in the poem. A discriminating factor was the extent to which candidates responded to the ending of the poem.

Question 3

Coming Home

Most candidates commented on each character, but weaker responses were limited by simply working through the poem. Candidates were on stronger ground where they focused on Sheers' feelings. There were some useful comments about why the mother's hug is 'awkward' for him, suggesting that she will always see him as her 'child', no matter what age he is, and this is not comfortable for him. The responses which explored how Owen uses language 'vividly' to convey his feelings provided more confident analyses since they were rooted more securely in the detail of the poem. Those who grasped that the 'tune (the grandfather) plays faster' indicates a progressively shaky hand often took this further to suggest Sheers must be feeling

apprehensive about his grandfather's impending death. In weaker responses there was confusion about how long the son had been away, with some assuming he had not been home since he was a child, ignoring the clue of 'each year'.

Question 4

Father Returning Home

Weaker responses did not move beyond the literal, leading to misunderstanding. An example of this was that 'unseeing eyes' meant that he was blind or nearly so, though many candidates did recognise that he was too tired or familiar with the scene outside the train to notice it. The most successful responses linked it to his feeling of 'estrangement' later in the poem. The majority worked through the poem detailing in a general way his long day, dirty clothes, poor diet, lack of care from his family and desire to be on his own. Few, however, commented in depth on the poem's images or addressed 'striking' impressions. Stronger responses commented on his dreams including past and future relatives but not the present ones. Some managed to link his dreams to his disenchantment with the current 'man-made world', and some made a good attempt at analysing the 'word dropped from a long sentence' simile, for example, suggesting that he is small and insignificant in the world, that he does not stand out, that no-one will notice if he is not there.

Question 5

Lunchtime Lecture

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 6

Friesian Bull

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 7

No Longer At Ease extract

Stronger responses, which focused on the question, commented on feeling 'disgusted' with Obi for 'cheating' on Clara and for both Obi and Christopher for treating the Irish girls as 'objects'. Christopher was identified as a bad influence on Obi, and some commented on the word 'appropriated' as emphasising his attitude to women. Weaker responses spent too much time making judgemental comments on the characters' morality rather than focusing on Achebe's writing, and a number of candidates assumed that 'Mother' in the extract was the girls' mother. A small number did, however, attempt some exploration of language, for example, that 'discovered' suggests that they are artefacts to be found. Very good responses grasped the deeper implications not only about Obi's relationship with Clara but also the underlying influence of colonialism.

Question 8

No Longer At Ease essay

The quality of the response depended on the strength of a candidate's knowledge of the text. More successful responses showed a sound knowledge of the scenes between Obi and Clara, his mother and father. Most were aware of his mother's threatened suicide. Weaker responses did not explore the detail of the way in which Obi presents the relationship with his parents or show understanding of the confusion between religion and culture/traditional beliefs when considering Obi's loyalties to his family. This particularly applied to Obi's father; only the best responses understood that although he is a Christian he still holds to traditional beliefs. The least successful responses worked their way through the novel, starting with Obi and Clara's first meeting, continuing with the voyage back home and a long narration of their difficulties, moving onto Obi's bribery and downfall – with only glancing references to the question.

Question 9

Mansfield Park extract

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 10

Mansfield Park essay

Many candidates worked their way through the main characters with a degree of understanding. Weaker responses lacked specific textual reference, while better responses made good use of references and quotations from throughout the novel. Most candidates thought that the staging of the play was a bad idea, though only the best responses explored its significance within the novel.

Question 11

My Antonia extract

More successful responses focused on the physicality of the struggle and the injuries sustained by Jim, with a few commenting on the farcical nature of his escape. There was some thoughtful consideration of the effect this incident has on Jim's feelings for Antonia. Less successful responses wrote of the content of the extract in general narrative terms, without exploring the words and images that contribute to the drama of the moment.

Question 12

My Antonia essay

Good responses showed secure knowledge of the novel and a sympathetic personal response towards Antonia, identifying the change in her behaviour when she moved to town and recognising her vulnerability. Most were aware of the overarching significance of her friendship with Jim and his influence in her life. However, it was necessary to focus on 'Cather's portrayal' in order to satisfy the AO3 criterion, looking at the perspective from which events in the novel are described and the language used to describe Antonia's experiences. The least successful answers offered a potted history of her life, without achieving a close focus on this part of the question.

Question 13

Hard Times extract

Candidates approached this question with enthusiasm, showing knowledge of how the scene fitted into the wider context of the novel and expressing a lively personal response towards the character of Bounderby. Better answers focused on Bounderby's aggressive behaviour and language as contrasted with Mrs. Pegler's affectionate tone; a few responses drew attention to the way in which Dickens guides the reader's response via the authorial voice. The strongest answers divided their response equally between the question's key words 'unpleasant' and 'ridiculous' and were able to find convincing evidence for each.

Question 14

Hard Times essay

Few responses were seen. Candidates were clearly aware of the Coketown/circus dichotomy within the novel, and in some cases this helped them towards gaining some credit towards AO3. Weaker responses were characterised by vague and general references to characters such as Sissy and Mr. Sleary without being able to pinpoint particular scenes or dialogue, so were not sufficient to achieve the higher bands on this question.

Question 15

Spies extract

The strongest responses focused on 'dramatic' and made some valid points; these candidates were able to place it securely within the context of the novel as well as exploring Frayn's dramatic techniques in detail. Those who explored Stephen's reliance on sounds to give him clues in the darkness, as well as the way the narrative voice alternates between the older Stefan's explanations and young Stephen's confusion, were rewarded for their close reading. In weaker responses, there was confusion about what exactly was happening in the extract, who was involved and how it fitted in to the other events in the novel.

Question 16

Spies essay

Candidates approached this question with enthusiasm and evident knowledge, discussing Stephen's shift from early admiration of Mr. Hayward to subsequent fear, as we come to understand the meaning of the scarf around Mrs. Hayward's neck and Keith's violent behaviour in the den. The best responses explored not only Mr. Hayward's behaviour but his language, and the way in which the innocuous phrase 'old bean' becomes laced with menace as the novel progresses. Stronger responses considered these aspects in detail without lapsing into narrative, which proved to be the main weakness of less successful answers.

Question 17

Secret River extract

This was well answered on the whole, and candidates were able to identify a range of Thornhill's feelings. Weaker responses made uneven use of the extract, with more concentration on the first half than the second; in fact, the second, with its rich and detailed descriptions of Thornhill's Point, provided much material for evidence of Will's growing love of the land and anxiety to possess it for himself. There was much textual detail here to help candidates to answer the first part of the question: 'How does Grenville vividly convey'. The best responses made much of the final sentence: 'The thought of that point of land became a private thing, a bead of warmth in his heart'.

Question 18

Secret River essay

There were too few responses to make meaningful comment.

Question 19

The English Teacher extract

Good responses focussed both on the question and on the language of the extract. The best answers wrote sensitively about Krishna's happiness at finally communicating with Susila and how Death does not need to be the end. By contrast, weaker responses were too general and gave far too much background information without focus on the detail of the extract. Many made valid points about how this is a satisfying ending but without close enough reference to the text and language. Often in less successful responses there was a tendency to narrate Krishna's life up to this point, thereby summarising the book and neglecting the detail of the extract in order to address the question.

Question 20

The English Teacher essay

Candidates generally had a good overview, with details of the Headmaster's approach more readily given, and candidates enjoyed comparing this with the Mission School. They made sound contrasts between traditional and modern, between stolid and creative, between the modes of education in Albert Mission College and in the Headmaster's School. Many candidates remembered the incident about 'honours' being spelt incorrectly; however, weaker responses lacked specific textual evidence other than this. Less confident answers lapsed into a description of Krishna's teaching and boredom rather than the approach of the college

itself, and from there it was a short step to his unhappiness and lack of satisfaction with life, instead of sustaining a focus on the question.

Question 21

Games at Twilight

Most candidates worked through the extract, listing Ravi's changing feelings from fear and determination, through confusion and pride to despair and misery. These were competent attempts and usually supplemented with textual support, though sometimes rather pedestrian and list-like. Better responses focused on Ravi's thoughts and feelings, selecting and exploring appropriate detail from the extract. The strongest responses explored with some sensitivity Desai's use of language and narrative viewpoint.

Question 22

The Phoenix

Responses to this question were strongly personal and candidates appeared to enjoy exploring views on human nature in the light of this tale. Most were able to contrast Lord Strawberry and Poldero in their treatment of the phoenix; some also commented on the public's thirst for sensational events. Some thoughtful candidates pointed out that Lord Strawberry himself was flawed, since he took the phoenix from its natural habitat to satisfy his own desires. A few pointed out that the crowd who paid to see a bird burn to death was not entirely escaping censure. As always with the general question, the thoroughness and detail of reference to the text in support of the argument was a discriminating factor.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 2010/13
Poetry and Prose 13

Key messages

Successful responses:

- show a detailed knowledge of poems and prose texts studied
- answer the question
- provide textual support
- include detailed exploration of the ways in which writers achieve their effects
- are able to step away from pre-learned formula and demonstrate insight and originality of thought in relation to the question
- relate points to the question
- write concise and focused introductions and conclusions.

Less successful responses:

- have a sketchy or limited knowledge of texts studied
- lose focus on the question set
- make unsupported assertions
- describe or simply identify writer's techniques
- write lengthy introductions and conclusions which are repetitive and sometimes irrelevant
- muddle literary terms

General comments

Examiners reported much evidence of candidates' personal engagement with, and enjoyment of, the poems and prose texts they had studied. Occasionally, there was a sense that prose extracts were being approached as 'unseen' texts in answers which lacked an awareness of the wider context of the novel or story. There were very few rubric errors.

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Explore the ways in which Larkin creates a feeling of hope in this poem. ('The Trees')

The Larkin poem was quite popular and produced some successful answers. Stronger answers recognised the sense of the new beginning, the link between hope, re-birth, and the comparison between trees and humans. Some of these commented effectively on the cyclical nature of the poem (for example, the rings of grain). Successful answers managed to offer some evaluation of how the sense of hope is presented in the poem; for example, making the case that hope and despair are both present and intertwined in the poem. These answers also successfully commented writing features such as on the form of the poem, the use of repetition, the imagery and the use of question and answer.

Weaker responses struggled to keep the focus on 'hope'. Some of the weaker answers worked through the poem, listing points and features without drawing out their significance or relating them to the question. Other weaker responses wrote at length about a very limited range of references and repeated ideas in order to lengthen their response.

Overall, responses to this question covered the full range of band descriptors from excellent to very limited.

Question 2

How does Adcock's writing create sympathy for Heidi in 'For Heidi With Blue Hair'?

This was a very popular choice with some strong answers that were engaged, detailed and lively. Many candidates demonstrated good textual understanding of the poem, producing personal responses in which they clearly identified with Heidi and admired her father. Most of these answers provided convincing reasons for sympathising with Heidi. Good answers were also able to explore the injustice demonstrated by the school and staff, selecting relevant quotations and points from the poem to support their responses. Many candidates expressed enjoyment of Adcock's mockery of the school system and staff and responded effectively to writing effects around these ideas.

Weaker answers described the actions of Heidi, her father and the school without fully unpacking the significance or exploring the writing effects. A few candidates were uncertain whether Heidi had deliberately challenged the school rules or whether the school was aware of her mother's death. Some responses

allowed their outrage at the school's actions to dominate to the extent that comment on language features was neglected. Similarly, a few candidates pursued personal tangents regarding grief and neglected to root their points in the text.

Overall, this was a choice with many pleasing responses, which allowed candidates to do justice to their ability.

Question 3

How does Lochhead vividly depict the passing of time in this poem? ('For My Grandmother Knitting')

This was the most popular choice of poem. There were many engaged responses, which identified with either the grandmother or the grandchildren or both. Many candidates wrote with assurance about the phases in the grandmother's life, and the response of the grandchildren to her situation in older age. Many responses considered the question and focused on the 'once' and 'now' structure in addressing the passage of time. Candidates were also able to recognise that the grandmother knits to retain her sense of purpose – comparing her full and busy life in the past with the enforced leisure of her later years.

Stronger answers responded in detail to writing effects such as the word play on action verbs and the imagery describing the stages of her life.

Weaker answers did less well in responding to writing effects and frequently listed features without linking these in any way to meaning. A common error was to demonise the grandchildren, making their words to the grandmother sound cruel and callous when, in reality, they are meant kindly. Other weaker answers accused the grandmother of being useless or focused more on sympathy than on the passage of time. A few weaker answers did not focus on the question but wrote in detail about respecting one's elders.

Overall, however, most answers displayed an understanding of the key ideas of this poem, with some response to writing effects.

Question 4

How does the poet movingly convey his thoughts about growing old in 'Stabat Mater'?

This was a much less popular choice although there were a few very good answers in which candidates responded effectively and convincingly to the specific effects of writer's use of language. These answers showed a clear understanding of the changing relationships between the mother, father and son and showed an appreciation of the mother's role. Stronger answers successfully interpreted the poet's message in the final two lines, some seeing it as Hunt realising that older age will come to him and others that he will inevitably move away from his parents as he matures. Strong answers also understood and explained the significance of the title.

Weaker responses struggled to fully understand the parents' relationship and some candidates interpreted the distance between mother and father as a lack of love. Some of the weaker answers gave a rather narrative explanation of the changes in their relationship over time and listed structural features without linking these to meaning.

Surprisingly, there were several responses which did not refer at all to the meaning and significance of the title.

Question 5

Explore the ways in which Clarke makes this poem so moving. ('Catrin')

There were fewer responses to this question. Stronger answers realised the complexity of the mother-daughter relationship, and appreciated the conflicting feelings of the mother. They understood the strength of the bond despite the difficulties in the relationship and explored ideas about the struggle for independence both mother and daughter experience. Stronger answers were able to draw out the significance of images such as the umbilical cord/rope.

Less strong answers were not always sure of meaning; for example, some suggested that Clarke disliked her daughter or that the baby had died. A few candidates did not recognise that the first stanza was about the birth of her daughter. Some of these responses struggled to clearly express the meaning of the imagery.

Question 6

How does Clarke make 'Miracle on St David's Day' such a powerful poem?

This was the least popular choice but generally very successful when answered. Most responses were deeply engaged and provided individual personal responses, which commented in depth on the tone and feeling of the poem. Candidates managed to communicate the poet's sense of awe at the events which unfolded on that St David's day. The best responses recognised the importance of the 'scene-setting' and the poet's mixed feelings about the effectiveness of reading to the 'insane', both of which help to magnify the sheer wonder of the labourer's recitation. Candidates were able to select relevant points from the poem and commented in detail on a wide range of writing features such as the language used to describe the patients, the descriptions of the daffodils, or the use of sound and rhythm. Many answers explored the religious and natural imagery, relating it to the shifting mood of the poem and the revelation at its heart. Nearly all answers recognised the poignancy of the event.

There were few weak answers. These tended to list the literary features and made comments about the nature of the patients without understanding the miracle at the heart of the poem.

Overall, this question produced responses of high quality.

Question 7

How does Achebe powerfully convey Obi's thoughts and feelings at this moment in the novel? (From Chapter 7)

This was the preferred question on this text and there was an overall understanding of Obi's thoughts and feelings. Most candidates were able to explore the connections between Obi's conversation with Joseph and the subsequent shopping trip with Clara, seeing how the trip revealed the problems inherent in their relationship and how it foreshadowed the problems to come. Many candidates commented on Obi's arrogance and his manipulative language.

Some of the stronger candidates were able to pinpoint the state of Obi's mind – his confusion over the situation and the sense of overwhelming obstacles that were facing the future marriage. Many of these more successful answers also explored some of the writing features such as the play on words (for example the zip), the structure of sentences and the dialogue between Joseph and Obi.

There were, however, some weak answers, which showed no knowledge of the rest of the text and were confused by the nature of the relationships between the characters. Several of the weaker responses slipped into narrative and personal opinion and spent a lot of time explaining the cultural challenges presented by Clara being an Osu. Others made over-generalizations about Obi's reasons for marrying her without supporting their ideas from the text. This resulted in a neglect of appreciation of writing effects (AO3).

Overall, responses to this question were reasonably developed.

Question 8

Explore the ways in which Achebe movingly portrays Obi's relationship with his mother.

There were not enough answers on this text for meaningful comment.

Question 9

How does Austen make this such a revealing moment in the novel? (From Chapter 21)

This was attempted by few candidates as the discursive question for this text was more popular. A few candidates were able to identify 'revealing' points in the passage such as the nature and motives of Maria and Sir Thomas in the forthcoming marriage to Mr Rushworth. A small number explored the deeper implications concerning the father's natural concern for the well-being of his daughter competing with the more materialistic and aspirational aspects of his make-up. Among the stronger answers, a very few candidates commented on the extent to which these concerns are typical of Sir Thomas's time and class.

However, weaker responses missed these deeper implications and the 'revelation' was confined to plot development or some general comments about the characters of Sir Thomas and Maria. In general,

candidates made very little response to writing effects in the passage such as variations in sentence structure or the frequency of abstract nouns denoting human qualities.

Question 10

Explore the ways in which Austen makes Mrs Norris so unlikeable.

This was a much more popular choice in this text and nearly all candidates enjoyed expressing their dislike for Mrs Norris. Some responses elicited real venom for Mrs Norris – testimony to the power of Austen’s writing. This was evidenced by some excellent use of supporting references, which showed that Mrs Norris’ words and deeds had clearly stuck in the minds of many. These more successful answers were aware of how Austen manipulates readers to dislike the character and commented clearly on author’s intent. Stronger responses were also able to comment on some of the authorial asides and the role of Mrs Norris as a target for Austen’s humour.

A weakness, however, was the unwillingness of many to go beyond listing of Mrs Norris’s faults to a consideration of her motives and pretensions, which are wrapped up in the social order of the day. A few responses simply listed some key points about Mrs Norris, without any further explanation.

Question 11

How does Cather make this moment in the novel so moving? (From Book 4, Chapter 4)

There were very few responses to this question but this beautiful passage had its admirers amongst those who attempted the question. Candidates were aware of the context and commented relevantly about Jim and Antonia’s present situation. They appreciated how the leave taking between Jim and Antonia was ‘moving’. Most responses recognised the power of the natural imagery and the beauty of the prairie and made some relevant comments about this.

However, some of the key features in the passage were not highlighted enough in weaker responses, such as the symbolism of the two orbs, and the growing darkness. This resulted in some answers that tended to run through the passage in a narrative manner.

Question 12

Explore the ways in which Cather makes Ambrosch such a memorable character.

There were so few answers on this text that meaningful comment is not possible.

Question 13

How does Dickens make this moment in the novel both amusing and disturbing? (From Book 1, Chapter 2)

This was quite a popular choice and, in general, successfully tackled with enthusiasm and confidence. Most candidates showed good overall knowledge of the plot and characters, as well as an awareness of the historical context and social issues of the time. Most candidates provided strong personal responses in which they noted with ease the faults in the educational approach, Sissy’s difficulty in conforming, and the ridiculous qualities in the characters of Mr Gradgrind and the gentleman. Candidates were also successful in highlighting the endearing behaviour of the schoolchildren in trying to second-guess the right answers to the man’s questions. Most candidates considered both of the key ideas in the question – ‘amusing’ and ‘disturbing’ and provided well-balanced answers. Some of the stronger answers made the connection between this dreary form of ‘education’ and the factory work most of the children would inevitably move on to in the future. Candidates took the opportunities to explore the abundance of writing features in the passage. Many of them commented on the forcefulness of language, the recitation of ideas by the children, and the rhetorical effects such as repetition.

A common element in weaker responses was a tendency to narrate what was said and why, repeating the same point about the importance of facts several times. These responses did not often draw out the significance of points made. Other weaker responses went through the passage but did not refer at all to the language.

Overall, however, candidates responded well to this question and provided strong personal responses with a sense of engagement.

Question 14

Explore the ways in which Dickens vividly conveys the hypocrisy of Bounderby.

This question was not as popular as the extract but candidates who chose to write about Mr Bounderby's hypocrisy found plenty of detail to explore. As in the extract question, candidates showed a good overall knowledge of the plot and novel, and had prepared well. Their responses included relevant examples of his actions and attitudes. Candidates commented on his lies about his upbringing, his treatment of his mother and his heartlessness towards Stephen Blackpool. Nearly all responses provided a strong personal response and many expressed their extreme dislike for the character. Nearly all candidates were able to remain focused on the question of Mr Bounderby's hypocrisy.

However, although nearly all candidates had an overall knowledge and understanding of the character, there was a tendency in weaker responses to rely on narration and to neglect to consider any of the writing effects such as the imagery Dickens uses to describe Mr Bounderby, the exaggeration of his comments about himself or how the narrator has implied comment about him.

Question 15

How does Frayn make this a revealing and entertaining moment in the novel? (From Chapter4)

This extract from 'Spies' was by far the most popular choice in this session. The weaker responses showed relevance and there were many engaged and convincing answers. Most candidates had a good overall knowledge of the plot and characters and most candidates were able to note some of the key points in the passage such as the context: the boy's attempts to spy on Keith's mother, her mysterious disappearance and the frantic actions of the boys in trying to find her. Many, but not all, responses considered both key words in the question. It seemed harder for candidates to identify 'revealing' points but many pinpointed the relationship between Stephen and Keith, the actual whereabouts of Keith's mother, Stephen's anxiety or Keith's bossiness. The 'revealing' aspect of the question offered a way into the deeper implications of the passage. For all the amusing insights into the mind of Stephen, a real mystery has actually emerged with the unaccountable behaviour of Mrs Hayward.

'Entertaining' aspects of the passage were recognised: Stephen's panic, the intensity of their search, their over active imaginations. Stronger responses explored with insight the humour at the expense of Stephen and Keith in relation to the spy game, but were able to consider its more sinister significance. Stronger answers also commented on Stephen's perspective, being able to explore what he did or did not understand at the time and finding their seriousness in the chase entertaining.

Many candidates provided some response to writing effects and noted features such as the pace created by short sentences at the start and the use of ellipsis in allowing the reader to share Stephen's confusion. Stronger answers engaged quite deeply with the text and explored the sensory imagery, sentence structure, pace and use of descriptive vocabulary, such as 'we run stupidly after her'.

Although most candidates at least attempted a response to writing effects, weaker responses listed events and simply said they were entertaining or significant with no explanation. Some attempted to engage with the narrative perspective but struggled to go beyond Stephen being confused at this stage of the novel. A few candidates were uncertain as to what Stephen understood about Mrs Hayward and how she had arrived at Dee's house and a small number neglected language entirely and did not engage with the 'entertaining' aspect at all.

Question 16

What does Frayn make you feel towards the older Stephen at the end of the novel?

One excellent response considered the question in retrospect – piecing together the aspects of Stephen’s later life from what we are told and pinpointing how the profound effect the incidents of his childhood had affected him.

In less successful responses, candidates misinterpreted the question, describing Stephen’s problems as a child, rather than as an adult. Other candidates told the story without any focus on the question. It is possible that because candidates’ focus in reading the novel was primarily on the younger Stephen, it was difficult for candidates to identify with the older Stephen. Hence, candidates seemed to go through a process of writing their way towards a conclusion in the hope that it would help them to clarify their thoughts.

Question 17

How does Grenville make this such a powerful moment in the novel? (From Part 3)

This question was one of the most popular choices overall and generally well answered.

Most candidates showed a good knowledge of plot and character and understood the context. Most appreciated the significance of Thornhill’s background and his desperate longing for something to call his own. Many candidates observed how Thornhill was challenged by the reaction of the land to his arrival and stronger answers showed how this foreshadowed the conflict with the aborigines later in the novel. Most candidates recognised the extreme emotions exhibited in Thornhill and made meaningful comments about this.

The passage was very rich in writing features and most candidates were able to make some response to these. Stronger answers sensitively explored the language and commented on features such as the atmosphere, mood and tone, the symbolism of the land ‘mocking’ him or resisting his efforts to claim ownership.

Some of the weaker answers spent too much time simply explaining why the land was so important to Thornhill. Others retold the events of Thornhill’s arrival and focused on his excitement without any reference to the challenges he faces. A few covered only part of the extract.

Overall, however, this question was well done, with some excellent responses from candidates.

Question 18

How does Grenville depict the clash of cultures between the settlers and the Aboriginal people in Sydney and at Thornhill’s Point?

The discursive option for this novel was not nearly as popular as the extract question but candidates who chose this generally found enough to write about.

Candidates often showed good knowledge and understanding of the novel and chose relevant points to support their argument. Most candidates noted key differences between the cultures such as the attitude to land ownership and the different approaches to lifestyle such as dress and food. Many candidates identified the lack of communication between the two groups as a key cause of the clash. A few of the stronger answers noted the mysteriousness of the Aboriginal people and the frustration of Thornhill and the other white people in their inability to understand each other.

Most answers provided some personal response to the conflict between the two groups.

However, very few answers included any response to any of the writing effects. Candidates missed opportunities to comment on the language used, the rich imagery or the author’s intent.

Question 19

How does Narayan make this such an amusing and significant moment in the novel? (From Chapter 6)

The extract question from this text was much more popular than the discursive option. Those attempting this question wrote about the amusing aspects quite effectively, showing their overall knowledge and understanding of the novel. Candidates generally recognised the contrast between the two approaches to education and some commented on the wonderfully responsive child-centred learning witnessed by Krishna. Some candidates saw this as a link to his journey towards self-enlightenment after the death of Susila.

Stronger answers recognised the humour of the children's attitude to the story and appreciated how this moment was the start of his Krishna's new life. Stronger answers also responded well to some of the literary features such as the use of questions or the vocabulary used to describe emotions.

A common weakness in some responses was a focus on the humour but not on the other key word in the question – 'significant'. Some of the weaker responses were determined to stress the influence of British colonialism on education and although this has some validity in this context, it is not at the heart of the passage. This resulted in a lack of focus in a number of responses.

In general, this question was reasonably tackled.

Question 20

In what ways does Naryan make Krishna's memories of Susila so powerful?

There were too few answers on this text for meaningful comment.

Question 21

How does Highsmith make this such a striking introduction to Ming? (Ming's Biggest Prey)

Most responses noted the location, Ming's 'luxurious' lifestyle and appreciated the complexity of Ming's attitudes to people. Many delighted in pointing out the anthropomorphic features of the egotistical cat, and provided relevant examples from the passage. There was also awareness in most responses of the enmity between Teddy and Ming, and better answers related the way Ming is treated by Teddie to a sense of justice at the end of the story. In general, most candidates considered the question and focused on what was striking about the introduction.

A common weakness was that candidates 'ploughed' their way through the passage without really drawing out the full significance of points or writing features. Some weaker responses spent a lot of time explaining why Ming is not a human, many explaining at length when and how the reader discovered that he is not a cat. A few were confused as to the nature of Ming's relationship with Teddie or did not mention it at all.

Overall, there was some response to writing effects, in particular candidates attempted to comment on the humour. Very few, however, commented on the sensuousness of the language, the mood and atmosphere, or the imagery.

Question 22

Explore the ways in which Shadbolt makes the narrator memorable in The People Before.

Insufficient responses on which to base comments.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 2010/22
Drama 22

Key messages

- Successful responses included a concise introduction which focused on the set question and the main points being used to answer it.
- The strongest answers commented and analysed but avoided excessive explanation, description, historical background detail and narrative re-telling.
- Strong candidates showed detailed textual knowledge and made specific reference to the text, rather than dealing solely in generalities.
- A personal engagement with the text, ability to evaluate and an appreciation of the play on stage enlivened the most successful answers.

General comments

The most successful answers often began with the candidate focussing clearly on the question and citing three or four aspects of the text that they then used to answer it. The least successful either narrated the context at considerable length in answer to passage-based questions or gave historical information which often had no immediate relevance to the question.

Whilst most candidates understood the content of the set passages, some did not go beyond explaining what the characters say and do. This was most evident in the Shakespeare passages but this also applied to more contemporary texts. Many needed to make the leap from decoding the meaning to analysing the author's methods. A few pertinent comments on the stage effects used and on the diction, imagery or interaction between the characters would make a major difference to attainment.

Strong candidates knew the whole play in detail and could draw on a wide range of textual references, usually in the form of exact quotation from the play as a whole. In answer to the passage-based questions, they gave brief contextual information and used a considerable amount of short, pertinent quotation from the passage. It would benefit candidates on the open book Paper 32 to refer back briefly so that they are clear on the context of the passage within the play. As the passage is printed on the paper, there is no reason not to use quotations from it. Candidates should, however, be discouraged from merely using line numbers and expecting the Examiner to find the words to which they are referring.

Effective answers showed precise knowledge of plot and characterisation. There were instances this session of some candidates appearing to have only superficial knowledge of the set texts, sometimes referring to scenes in film versions that do not exist in the play or conversely not knowing scenes in the play which do not appear in a film. This puts them at a disadvantage. There were serious gaps in knowledge in some answers. For example, candidates confused the characters in *Macbeth* and knowledge of the plot was sometimes insecure.

There were some rubric infringements where candidates on 0486 22 answered two passage-based or two discursive questions, and answers were sometimes wrongly numbered. Some candidates do not number their questions at all or, on 2010 22, write the numbers of both questions on their set text on each question. It would be helpful to both candidates and Examiners if the importance of denoting clearly and unambiguously which question they are answering is emphasised. There were some candidates who mistimed their answers on 0486 22, spending too long on the first answer but otherwise there were few brief or imbalanced scripts.

Comments on specific questions

J.LAWRENCE and R.E.LEE: *Inherit the Wind*

Question 1

Strong answers to this question understood that the main drama centres on Bert's refusal to 'quit' and the revelation that Rachel has to testify against him. Her vivid speech about her fear of her father was also cited as contributing to the power of the scene. Drummond's gentle handling of the situation and support for Bert was appreciated in sensitive answers.

Less successful responses kept returning to the basic issue of evolution versus fundamentalist Christianity in the play, without properly considering the passage or the question. There was a misconception that Bert thought he was wrong about teaching evolution, rather than his doubting the wisdom of pursuing his beliefs through the court. Most, however, understood that Rachel's love for him was prompting her to prevent his further suffering by urging him to renege.

The power of the language in the scene could have been more fully explored, very few really picked up on the power of phrases such as '*They'll crucify me!*', '*genuinely panicked*' or '*unconscious of his presence or her surroundings*' or '*distraught*'.

Question 2

The majority of responses showed a sound knowledge of Reverend Brown's fundamentalist viewpoint, his relationship with his daughter, his opposition to Bert and his support of Brady. There was intelligent comment on how the unquestioning support he stirs up for Brady creates such drama when Brady falls from grace and perhaps leads Brady to underestimate the opposition. Most candidates knew that he damned his own daughter but his hell-fire preaching at the prayer meeting could have been explored more fully. Strong answers recognised how Brown's treatment of Tommy Stebbins had led Bert to doubt a faith which preached forgiveness but practised the opposite, an issue raised at a crucial moment in the trial. Stronger responses commented on the irony in the fact that those who followed him blindly were often ignorant or illiterate such as Elijah. Rachel's rejection of her father at the end of the play, creating a satisfying ending, was also left unconsidered by most.

A few candidates confused Brown and Brady and some ignored the rubric and used the information in the passage-based question. This rubric was designed to prevent candidates from writing an answer which was too narrow and thus putting themselves at a disadvantage. They should be reminded to take serious note of such instructions.

ARTHUR MILLER: *A View from the Bridge*

Question 3

There were many very successful answers to this question. Candidates responded to Miller's presentation of Rodolpho as a larger-than-life character with a personality and talents contrasting to both the more taciturn Marco and Eddie's longshoreman machismo. They saw his boasting and exaggeration as strikingly confident and amusing. Better answers went on to explore the striking response of both Catherine and Eddie to Rodolpho, foreshadowing the conflict to come. The underlying motivation for Eddie stopping Rodolpho singing and telling Catherine to remove her high heels was understood. Stage directions such as '*with iron control...his face puffed with trouble*', were well utilised to make the point clear. The symbolism of the Paper Doll lyrics and the exchange about sugar did not go unobserved.

Some candidates went too far in saying that Eddie was already deciding that Rodolpho was effeminate at this early stage and that singing was generally considered a female occupation in the 1950s. Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Tony Bennett and other crooners of Italian heritage might have found that surprising. Similarly, some candidates asserted that Rodolpho was already '*bowing to his passport*' and while an interesting case can be (and was) made for that interpretation, some candidates tended to take Eddie's later view of Rodolpho at face value.

Question 4

Sophisticated responses considered the extent to which Beatrice is totally admirable, rather than writing a rather bland assertion of her kindness and loyalty. Strong candidates balanced her sterling qualities with a

recognition that she is jealous of Catherine, that she promotes her niece's marriage to Rodolpho through some degree of self-interest and, arguably, does not act upon her perception of Eddie's feelings for Catherine until it is too late. Very few noted that she sees herself as partly to blame: '*Whatever happened we all done it*'. Some candidates quoted Catherine's criticism of her to prove that she was not a good wife to Eddie, which reveals more about Catherine's relationship with her uncle than it does a fair perception of her Aunt. Of course total admiration was an acceptable answer and many pointed out her perception and honesty, love for both her niece and her husband and her desperation to save him from himself at the end of the play.

There were misconceptions in less confident responses. Many thought that she attended Catherine and Rodolpho's wedding and that she slept on the floor to accommodate the cousins. Some candidates said she was silent throughout and never challenged Eddie, both palpably not the case. Sophisticated answers showed awareness that despite her perception, she was as powerless as Alfieri in stopping things taking their inevitable course

TERENCE RATTIGAN: *The Winslow Boy*

Question 5

Knowledge of the play as a whole played a part in the strongest answers to this question. Whilst commenting on the entertainment factor of the dancing, Dickie and Catherine's banter and jokes, their quick reaction to Arthur's entrance and his sardonic comments on the doctor, candidates noted that main issues of the play are raised throughout the scene. The financial impact of the court case is beginning to bite and take a toll on Arthur Winslow's health. John has postponed the wedding owing to his father's attitude to the scandal; women are more attractive if they suppress their opinions, especially if they are political. The foreshadowing of John's jilting of Catherine was fully explored in the strongest responses.

Less effective responses seemed unaware of the context of the passage and of these issues in the play. Some thought Ramsey Macdonald was another of Catherine's suitors.

Question 6

Confident responses to this question effectively used textual support for their views. Comments were made on: the difficulties Violet would face as an uneducated working class woman if she was fired by the Winslows; Miss Barnes managing to enter the male bastion of journalism only to write about curtains; Grace's lack of a voice in her patriarchal household; Catherine being disbarred by class, gender and education from properly paid employment and the political establishment. Though most commented on Catherine having to marry, few looked at her having to seriously consider Desmond's proposal and Sir Robert's attitude to women's suffrage did not feature in many answers.

Some responses showed knowledge of the issues facing women at the time the play is set but did not relate this sufficiently to events in the play itself.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Henry V*

Question 7

Most candidates found the characters' dispute about tactics in the middle of a war situation amusing and commented on the entertainment factor of the different national dialects. The volatility of Macmorris was contrasted with Gower's attempts at peacemaking. Less successful responses thought Macmorris was a Scot and that Jamy was going to get married, a misinterpretation of: 'that sall I, marry'. It was surprising that not more was said about Fluellen, who is a more well-established character in the play.

Question 8

The majority of candidates opted for this question on *Henry V*. Better answers explored the arguably 'ruthless' moments in the play: his response to the tennis balls; the execution of the traitors; the hanging of Bardolph; the speech to the Governor of Harfleur; the abandonment of Falstaff and the killing of the French prisoners. Henry's actions were justified in terms of what a king has to do contrasting with what would be counted as ruthless in a private man or alternatively contrasted with the band of brothers he creates with his men.

In some less successful responses the term 'ruthless' was not understood or the essay was one on leadership in general rather than focussing on the question set. Some candidates did not take into account that the traitors were guilty and that treason is punishable by death even in modern times, whereas the killing of the prisoners is against the code of war. Few mentioned that at the end of the ruthless Harfleur speech to the Governor, Henry says '*show mercy to them all*'. Some thought marrying Princess Catherine was ruthless, perhaps not grasping the political realities of a peace treaty.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *Macbeth*

Question 9

There were some high quality responses to this question which recognised Macbeth's state of mind being reflected in his duplicitous dialogue with Banquo. Candidates understood the irony of Macbeth's exhortations for Banquo to attend the feast but knew that the audience is not yet aware of Macbeth's plan to murder him, though their possible suspicions are confirmed in Macbeth's soliloquy. Strong candidates observed his deflection of suspicion from himself to Duncan's sons. Better answers commented not only on what was revealed of his state of mind in the soliloquy but also on the powerful language Shakespeare uses to convey this. Comments on '*stick deep...fruitless...barren...unlineal...seeds*' and the repetition and exclamation demonstrated an understanding of Macbeth's reasons for fearing Banquo and the depth of this fear. Better answers also looked at his comparison between himself and Banquo and that the latter had the wisdom to act in safety, hence threatening his hold on the crown.

There were many common misconceptions. Many candidates did not realise that Macbeth is the king at this point in the play. The reference to Mark Antony and Caesar was referred to as a biblical allusion and many thought that Mark Antony has betrayed Caesar. '*Prophet-like*' was mistakenly seen as referring to Banquo rather than to the witches. Several candidates did not understand the convention of the soliloquy and thought that Macbeth was talking to the servant or that soliloquising was a sign of insanity. Similarly they misinterpreted the '*Who's there?*' at the end of the passage as paranoia, rather than him acknowledging the arrival of the assassins. Less successful answers either narrated events leading up to this passage, or went beyond it to make lengthy comment on Banquo's ghost. Some wrote well on the conversation with Banquo but ignored the soliloquy or vice-versa. In general, although most candidates understood the passage, closer attention to the language would have raised the level of most responses.

Question 10

A secure starting point in response to this question was to know who Malcolm was. A significant number of candidates confused him with Macduff or even Fleance. The next requirement was to know something of what he did in the play. Most candidates knew that he fled after his father's murder and most thought this was a sign of cowardice rather than of astute political acumen, missing the point that the dead guards appeared to be the culprits so there was no murderer to be apprehended. Some answers did not venture much beyond this and a generalised response with little reference to events in the play was a characteristic answer to this question in weaker responses.

The strongest candidates could quote Malcolm's reasons for escaping from Macbeth's castle, '*there's daggers in men's smiles*', explored his reasons for testing Macduff and the way in which he does this, commented on the alliance he had made with the English (not British) king, analysed his manipulation of Macduff to avenge his family, saw his military prowess and the fulfilment of the prophecy in making Birnam Wood move and commented on his humility, as evidenced by his thanking of the captain who saves him in the early scenes, and gracious acceptance of the throne at the end of the play. Better answers also looked at the imagery of medicine, symbolising his purgation of sick Scotland perishing under Macbeth's tyranny.

There were misconceptions in less successful answers that he was not a warrior. A few misunderstood the scene of his testing Macduff, believing that he was all the things that he later admits are lies. Stronger candidates saw this as a sign he would be a better king than his father who only ever saw the good in people.

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Paper 2010/23
Drama 23

Key messages

- Successful answers showed detailed knowledge of the set text by selecting the most relevant material with which to address the focus of the question.
- Convincing responses developed comments beyond narrative and explanation of surface meaning to show deeper awareness of the ideas and attitudes relevant to the question.
- The best answers analysed the ways the playwrights created dramatic effects in their writing, such as: action on stage, dialogue between characters and likely audience reaction.
- Candidates who communicated their engagement with the text through an informed personal response enlivened answers at all levels.

General comments

There were sound responses to all texts and questions this session, with candidates showing good knowledge of their set texts. Their enjoyment of the plays was often made clear in the way they engaged with the characters. For example, on *Henry V*, candidates explored Henry's softer side in his humorous attempts to woo Princess Katherine. Many candidates strongly expressed their sympathy for Catherine and her life-changing decision to forego marriage in order to 'Let Right be Done' in *The Winslow Boy*, or for Rachel in her agonising dilemma in *Inherit the Wind*, as she finds herself manipulated into testifying against her future husband. Context questions on both *A View from the Bridge* and *Macbeth* asked candidates to consider the protagonist. Stronger candidates felt confident enough to criticise Eddie for trying to break up Catherine and Rodolpho's relationship, or to criticise Macbeth for his lack of compassion to servants, soldiers and his wife, who are all suffering at his hands. Less confident candidates asserted sympathy towards these misguided characters. The best answers analysed the writing to show how authors encouraged a particular response to a character.

There were some excellent answers to both passage-based and discursive questions this session. These often began with the candidate addressing the question directly and giving three or four points which they went on to develop in answer to it. Weaker answers often avoided focusing on the question and opened with a synopsis of the whole play, a general homily on the human condition, or gave general historical or cultural information.

There were some sensitive responses to passage-based questions which developed comments beyond narrative and explanation of the surface meaning of the text to show a deeper awareness of the ideas and attitudes relevant to the question. Briefly stating the context helped to root the answer in the text. Candidates needed to select the most appropriate elements from a passage with which to answer the question asked, rather than going through the passage line by line, sometimes giving a general and irrelevant commentary. In strong answers, comments were supported by many brief quotations from the passage and candidates made clear how the text supported the points made. Most candidates could improve their answers significantly by commenting directly on how the author uses dramatic features such as the interaction between characters, action on stage, dialogue, and likely audience reaction. Dramatic entrances and exits are often worthy of comment, such as John's petulant exit at the end of the passage for **Question 5**, or the way Rachel is helped by her father to exit at the end of the passage for **Question 1**.

There were some convincing answers to discursive questions. These featured a sound overview of the play and a clearly expressed and developed argument supported by close textual reference. The best way to incorporate textual support is to quote accurately. Some candidates could respond to the question but did not know the play well enough to select supporting material, and so their answer was severely limited. Candidates needed to make clear how the textual reference supported the point being made. General

historical or cultural information merely detracted from the focus on the question. Some very weak answers were uncertain of plot details and sometimes mixed up characters.

There were very few rubric infringements.

Comments on specific questions

J Lawrence and R E Lee: *Inherit the Wind*

Question 1

Good answers stated the context, of Rachel giving evidence at Cates's trial; she is being questioned by Brady for the prosecution. Most candidates were able to point out the drama of Rachel's distress at being forced to give evidence against her will which might incriminate her future husband, using her hesitations and broken speech in support. Stronger answers analysed Brady's hectoring style of questioning, with examples from the text. Some candidates referred to Brady's deceit earlier at the banquet when he tricks Rachel into revealing incriminating details about Cates. Sensitive answers moved beyond explaining the action to explore in depth Rachel's complex emotions created by her loyalty to Bert, her reluctance to incriminate him, her own beliefs, and her fear of her father and of public exposure. Good answers also considered the impact of other characters: the scary and biased Judge, Cates's love for Rachel and desire to spare her further trauma, the contrast of Cates with her father's coldness, Drummond's jumping up and down to lodge objections, and his kindness in acceding to Cates's request not to question Rachel. Candidates who looked at staging found drama in the reactions of the people in the courthouse, in Hornbeck's 'guffaws', in Rachel's inability to speak, and in the Reverend Brown's cold actions at the end. Weaker answers tended to explain Rachel's timidity in giving evidence, without much development or support, and tended not to address the drama of the passage explicitly.

Question 2

Most candidates responded well to Hornbeck as a humorous and witty character, and were able to quote instances of his humour, such as when he sees a monkey and calls it 'Grandpa'. Better answers recognised Hornbeck's function as an observer and commentator, and gave examples of his mockery of Hillsboro, such as calling it 'The buckle on the Bible Belt.' Some sophisticated answers focused well on Hornbeck's contribution to dramatic impact, considering such aspects as his dramatic contrast both in appearance as a 'sophisticated city-dweller' to the southerners living in Hillsboro, and in his beliefs which represent the progressive evolutionist ideas held by people from the North. His mockery and harsh criticism dramatically cut through the reverence the Hillsboro people have of Brady, Rev Brown and fundamentalism. A few strong candidates successfully explored the ending, where Hornbeck's cynicism is too much for Drummond, who points out that he is there to defend freedom of thought: 'Brady had the same right as Cates: the right to be wrong!' Some weaker answers were limited by their uncertainty of which side Hornbeck was on, and therefore what he was mocking.

Arthur Miller: *A View from the Bridge*

Question 3

Successful answers firmly established the context – that Eddie is visiting Alfieri to seek legal means to stop Catherine's relationship with Rodolpho. These answers also showed understanding that Eddie's unacknowledged desire for Catherine is what makes him dislike Rodolpho and is inflaming Eddie's possessive feelings towards Catherine. Sensitive answers continued with a detailed analysis of how Miller conveys Eddie's desperate state of mind in his speech, and placed this in the context of Eddie's determination to convince Alfieri of Rodolpho's femininity, and thus unsuitability as a partner for Catherine. Many candidates analysed Eddie's uncomfortable body language, his rambling grievances against Rodolpho and his agitated interruptions of Alfieri, all of which convey Eddie's distress. His embarrassed attempts at 'accusing' Rodolpho amount to no more than that he has blond hair, a slight build, enjoys singing, and has dressmaking skills. Eddie's interruptions show he does not want to hear Alfieri's logical dismissals. Eddie's jealousy of Rodolpho arises because Catherine is attracted to him; Eddie is tormented by the thought of Rodolpho 'laying his hands on her'. Perceptive candidates commented on the irony of Eddie's fervent denial that he would inform on Rodolpho as an illegal immigrant, and often sympathised with the intensity of Eddie's feelings of desperation and hopelessness.

A significant number of candidates limited their answer to an analysis of Eddie's speech and movements. A few of these answers became repetitive as they worked through the passage, making the same point on Eddie's distress with different textual support. Some of these answers provided a strong answer to how Miller conveys Eddie's agitation, but to gain high marks candidates also needed to show understanding of the content and context of the passage, by considering why Eddie was there, what he was implying about Rodolpho, why he was doing this, and why he was so distressed.

The weakest answers often contained misapprehensions about Eddie's motives. Some candidates stated that Eddie just wanted a more macho partner than Rodolpho for Catherine; or that Eddie held a latent desire for Rodolpho himself; or that Eddie just wanted to maintain his own masculinity in exerting control over Catherine. These responses were unconvincing and without support from the text.

Question 4

Most answers began with details of the first impressions of each brother: Marco's maturity, strength, desire to work hard, and his responsibility for his family and for Rodolpho, in contrast to Rodolpho's youthful exuberance and desire to enjoy his new life to the full. Weaker answers limited their answers to this description of the brothers, perhaps with apt and accurate quotation in support. Stronger candidates developed their answers to consider the drama created by Eddie's response to each brother according to his sense of masculinity. Thus Eddie accepts Marco because he conforms to his idea of a 'man'; but he increasingly uses fake ammunition against Rodolpho's perceived femininity as his relationship with Catherine develops. The boxing and chair-lifting incidents were often cited; to show a full understanding of their drama, candidates needed to explore these in more detail to consider Eddie's motives for belittling Rodolpho to Catherine, and Marco's menacing warning to Eddie not to harm Rodolpho or he will have to deal with Marco too. The best answers went on to explore the dramatically different ways in which the brothers react to Eddie's treachery at the end: how Rodolpho tries to appease Eddie and avert tragedy in contrast to Marco's implacable desire for revenge.

Terence Rattigan: *The Winslow Boy*

Question 5

Good responses stated the context of the passage: that John has pressured Catherine to agree to marry him and to drop the case. Most answers focused mainly on Catherine and her unenthusiastic response to John as she agrees to the marriage 'slowly' and 'wearily'; candidates tended to attribute this to her lack of love for John rather than her dislike of being pressured into dropping the case. After the phone call raises the possibility of continuing with the case, most candidates recognised the drama of Arthur giving Catherine the choice of what to do, because she is the one who stands to lose most, and the suspense of Catherine having to make the agonising decision. The delivery of her decision in a 'flat voice' and her refusal to look at John were often interpreted as evidence of her lack of feelings for John, rather than an indication of how hard she has found the decision to make because of her love for him. The injustice of his demands on Catherine was often not explored, nor was his petulant exit as he slams the door as he leaves. Stronger answers took an overview of the passage and also considered the power of the suspense created by the drama of the phone call on stage, by the five characters waiting while Sir Robert talks, by our only hearing one side of the conversation, and by waiting for the significance of the call to be explained.

Question 6

A strong response often began with clear points in a succinct introduction, such as that Rattigan shows how Sir Robert is an outstanding lawyer through his intelligence, his passion to let right be done and through the sacrifice he makes for the case. The candidate here was then able to explore how these features of Sir Robert played out in the drama, using close textual reference and quotation in support. Candidates needed to know the text well to select the most relevant material, such as his skilful interrogation of Ronnie, his passion shown by his physical exhaustion, and the sacrifice of refusing the honour of the position of Lord Chief Justice to continue with the case. Weaker answers tended to assert Sir Robert was an outstanding lawyer because he was good at his job and won cases, and was well-dressed, without using relevant details from the text in support.

William Shakespeare: *Henry V*

Question 7

Most answers recognised the entertainment value of the empty and exaggerated bragging of the French lords about their horses, and many grasped some of the sexual banter too. Better answers commented on how the lords' sarcastic remarks directed at the Dauphin revealed their true attitude towards him and undermined his arrogant boastfulness. Some strong answers contrasted the bombast of the French lords with Henry's honest admission of his army's frailty in the previous scene. Weaker answers tended to show an overview without exploring the writing in detail.

Question 8

Most answers recognised the differences in the hesitant and kindly Henry portrayed in the courtship scene, compared with the steely warrior elsewhere. Better answers were able to use detailed supporting text in support; weaker answers remained general and assertive. Stronger answers commented on the fact that Henry requests Katherine's love, suggesting she share a partnership with him, rather than him demanding her hand in marriage as a victorious and powerful king. Indeed, some candidates pointed out Henry's self-deprecation in his depiction of his soldier's inadequacy as a poet, dancer and suitor. His affectionate humour and the romance of the kiss and the tender '*Kate*' were also selected for comment. Perhaps the more cynical candidates pointed out that in reality Katherine has little choice, since the political realities of a peace treaty demanded that she marry Henry; but her lack of choice does not detract from his gentle attempts to woo her consent.

William Shakespeare: *Macbeth*

Question 9

There were some perceptive answers which went beyond a surface reading to show understanding of the deeper implications of Macbeth's thoughts and feelings. Thus, most candidates commented on Macbeth's arrogant fearlessness, using the prophecies to support the idea of his invincibility, while others considered this to be bravado which covered up doubt and fear, and which necessitated frequent repeating of the terms of the prophecies by way of reassurance. Some candidates saw his insulting the servant as evidence of his tyrannical rule, where he mocks those weaker than himself for showing fear and orders that those who talk of fear are killed; perceptive candidates thought this extreme aggression also masked his own underlying fear. These also commented on Macbeth's feelings of loss and that he has '*liv'd long enough*'; they analysed the use of autumnal imagery and his regrets that he cannot experience a homely old age with friends, since he has sacrificed '*honour, love and obedience*'. Most answers recognised that, with the entrance of Seyton, Macbeth's mindset returns to that of an aggressive warrior as he professes he will fight to the death with the suitably gory imagery of '*from my bones my flesh be hack'd*', and with his declaration of bravery (or bravado) to end the passage. Some candidates thought Macbeth simply showed his love for his wife by ordering the doctor to cure her; a more subtle reading explored how Macbeth may also be thinking of himself when he asks the doctor whether he can '*minister to a mind diseas'd*'. A few candidates also explored Macbeth's desperation or perhaps longing in his request of the doctor to cleanse his land of her disease too.

More basic answers commented simply on Macbeth's misplaced confidence in the prophecies, his desire to fight until the death, and his wish for his wife to be cured. Some very weak answers tended to explain the prophecies, both how they arose and how they are fulfilled. Some spent time equating Seyton with Satan, but there is nothing in the text to support this reading.

Question 10

The strongest answers knew the text well and were able to argue a convincing case for Banquo's admirable qualities, sometimes with the exception that he could have acted in some way on his suspicions of Macbeth's foul play. These sound answers were able to draw on the text to show that Banquo fought valiantly as a warrior for Duncan; that despite being favoured with a prophecy of his own, he remains loyal to the king and does nothing to promote his own interests; that he is a close friend of Macbeth and warns him to be cautious of the witches, seeing them as '*instruments of darkness*'; and finally that he has a close and protective relationship with his son, Fleance and tries to ensure his son's survival when he himself is attacked and murdered by Macbeth's henchmen. Some perceptive answers made the point that the initial similarities between Banquo and Macbeth serve to emphasise the differences, so that Banquo's admirable qualities emphasise Macbeth's wickedness.

Weaker answers often suggested unconvincingly that Banquo was admirable because he had been unfairly murdered by Macbeth, or that he was admirable because his ghost showed that Macbeth was guilty. While most candidates knew who Banquo was, that he had his own prophecy from the witches, and that Macbeth ordered him to be murdered, there were some who did not know the play well enough to develop these points, or to support them with detailed reference to the text. These answers sometimes focused more on Macbeth's guilt rather than Banquo's admirable qualities. A few candidates spent a long part of their answer giving details of how the real Banquo was related to James I and how Shakespeare was compelled to present him in a good light to appease the monarch; such material was difficult to credit in a literary response.