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In English Language A (4EA1)

Paper 02: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative
Writing

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Introduction

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and comments, for Paper 2 of the International GCSE Specification A in English Language. This was the second exceptional November series of the 'A' specification in IGCSE English Language 9-1 following the cancellation of the summer series in 2021.

The specification consists of three components: Unit 1: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing - 60% (examination); Unit 2: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing - 40% (this examination) OR Unit 3: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing - 40% (non-examination assessment). Candidates may also be entered for the optional Spoken Language Endorsement (non-examination assessment).

Unit 2 for Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing is assessed through an examination lasting one hour and thirty minutes. The total number of marks available is 60. The reading and writing sections on this paper are loosely linked by the theme of the text from the Anthology which appears on the examination paper.

This focus of this component is:

Section A - Poetry and Prose Texts: study and analyse selections from a range of fictional poetry and prose texts.

Candidates should study the poetry and prose provided in Part 2 of the *Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology* in preparation for responding to a given prose extract or poem in the examination.

The specification identifies that candidates:

'should be able to read substantial pieces of writing (extended texts) that make significant demands on them in terms of content, structure and the quality of language. Throughout the qualification, candidates should develop the skills of inference and analysis.'

Candidates are advised to allocate 45 minutes to Section A, and there will be one essay question on a poetry or prose text from Part 2 of the *Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology*, which will be made available in a booklet in the examination if it is a longer extract or will be in the Question Paper in the case of a poem.

Candidates will answer the question in this section and 30 marks are available. There are three bullet points to prompt the response and the third bullet always asks candidates to consider language and structure.

Section B - Imaginative Writing: explore and develop imaginative writing skills.

Candidates are advised to allocate 45 minutes to Section B. There are three writing tasks, to some extent linked by theme to the reading prose extract or poem. Candidates pick one question to respond to and the response is worth 30 marks. The format of the tasks remains the same for each series - Question 1 follows the format 'Write about a time when you, or someone you know...', Question 2 follows the format 'Write a story with the title...' and Question 3 offers two images as a prompt for a response which is always 'Write a story that begins...' or 'Write a story that ends...'.

The Assessment Objectives for this paper are:

Section A: Reading

A01:

- read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives

A02:

- understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects.

Section B: Writing

A04:

- communicate effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences

A05:

- write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

It was clear that candidates were all able to respond to the poem from the Anthology in the examination, and that most had studied it before. Some candidates had been taught the context of and background to the poem and the writer.

Throughout the qualification, overall candidates had been prepared well and all had, at different levels, developed the skills required to answer the questions.

It was also clear that candidates used what they had studied in their reading to feed into their imaginative writing, which inspired them. As the specification identifies, the main aims for our candidates in this paper are:

- read critically and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- use grammar correctly, punctuate and spell accurately

- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

Candidates had, pleasingly, been given the opportunity to practise their writing techniques and planning and proofreading skills.

The responses of candidates had some positive features. Examiners were impressed by:

- evidence that many candidates had understood the content of and ideas in the poem
- the successful, integrated use of the bullet points within the question
- coverage of the assessment objectives required for this paper
- the range of vocabulary for AO5
- writing that showed creative ideas and suitable tone, style and register for audience and purpose.

Less successful responses:

- demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the poem and/or lack of awareness of the ideas in the poem relevant to the question
- failed to reference the question, with candidates simply writing something about the poem or writer very broadly
- rigidly followed the bullet points in the question so that language and structure points were almost an ‘add-on’ at the end
- had an insecure grasp of language and structure with a lack of understanding of how language and structure were used, feature-spotting or confusion of terms
- had limited comment on language and structure and relied heavily on description of the poem or paraphrasing of it for Question 1
- failed to support points using appropriate textual evidence or used over-long quotations
- lacked organisation in their writing
- lacked accurate spelling and secure control of punctuation and grammar.

It was clear that candidates had been able to find at least some information about the idea of pride in the poem and could comment on language and structural features. Imaginative writing was often interesting, engaging and enthusiastic and had a clear sense of purpose and audience in the voice and ideas used.

Question 1

AO1

The first two bullet points in the mark scheme relate to AO1 - read and understand a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives. The level of understanding of the text from the Anthology is assessed in the first bullet point, and the selection and interpretation of information, ideas and

perspectives in the text in the second bullet point. Some candidates followed pre-prepared ideas, for example discussion of racism, using the poem more as a starting point to discuss issues with society. Examiners felt that the vast majority of candidates were able to make valid references and interpret the idea contained.

At the very basic level candidates tended to comment very broadly on what was being said in the poem. They were able to show some understanding of the poem, but the understanding and focus was uneven (for example, some candidates at this level thought that the writer was proud of being wealthy as she had 'oil wells'). There was often limited selection and interpretation of information and ideas. Lower end responses could not get beyond quotation plus general comment such as 'this shows she won't be defeated' for every stanza.

Candidates at the Grade 4 borderline were at least able to identify some of the key ideas in the poem linked to pride, although at this borderline grade there was often an imbalance where the focus was on identifying basic/valid ideas and information from the poem that had some connection to pride (for example, the narrator being proud of 'her looks') rather than being appropriate, apt or persuasive for the higher levels. For example, candidates at this borderline grade often had not considered more than broad ideas. There was a lack of 'drilling down' into the poem to examine the more nuanced ideas that were considered by candidates achieving higher marks.

Candidates at borderline Grade 7 were more direct in approach, as they were able to select the relevant ideas from the poem linked to pride in herself and her background in a detailed but succinct manner. Candidates at this borderline tended to cover the full poem and both the narrator's pride in herself and her background and offered detailed points. At the higher levels examiners felt that that 'It was good to see the personal response of candidates shining through'. Some interesting ideas were:

- 'A sense of admiration for the poet is strengthened as she rises despite all of this as she showcases her pride "I dance as..."'
- 'Laughing at her oppressors and the absurdity of their low moral values'
- "'I'll rise' to 'I rise' perhaps was A's way of structurally breaking the bonds of her mapped out life to her newfound freedom'
- 'Micro-aggressions have a devastating effect'
- 'She turns her weaknesses into strength and mocks the people with all the flaws they saw in her'
- 'She is not a person who seeks happiness in wealth but in freedom.'

A02

The third bullet point in the mark scheme relates to A02 - understand and analyse how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects. There needs to be understanding of the language and structure used in the text, and the level of skill is also a discriminator. *Explain* is a mid-level skill, *comment* a lower

level skill and *explore/analyse* higher-level skills, which gives candidates opportunities to achieve across the range.

At the lowest levels candidates often made reference to language and structure as a brief add-on at the end of the answer. Candidates here often identified and named devices, but did not demonstrate the skill or understanding to discuss their use, and did not link these to the question. At this level responses were characterised by writing without any explanations - candidates here were good at finding both language and structure features, but not as confident at explaining them. The responses were much more at a descriptive level, with limited and underdeveloped evidence.

Candidates at the Grade 4 borderline were at least commenting on both language and structure. At this borderline grade candidates were commenting on and explaining language and structure, with appropriate and relevant references. Candidates at Grade 4 borderline were able to pick out features in the poem, but often there was little developed explanation of the effect of these features. The majority at the borderline grade were able to comment clearly on, for example, direct address, rhetorical questions, repetition, simile and metaphor, short sentences. Some explanations at this borderline grade were non-specific and unrelated to the question: 'The writer uses language and structure to engage the reader.'

Candidates at the Grade 7 borderline were commenting on both language and structure consistently, confidently and succinctly. At this borderline grade candidates were exploring and analysing language and structure, with detailed and discriminating references. At the higher level candidates were able to explore less obvious features, such as the structural change in the final two stanzas and how the last two are longer to show she has overcome her oppressors, alongside the features of borderline Grade 4. The examples of language and structure used at this borderline grade were much more considered and selected than at borderline Grade 4, showing a perceptive understanding of the viewpoint of the writer and the effect of details selected on the readers, for example references to tone - challenging/mocking/sarcastic. Examiners' comments included:

- 'Various ideas on 'I rise' - testimonial style, motivational mantra, chant like tone, self-proclamation, authoritative voice'
- 'Not many used the title, but I liked "the positive uplifting tone of the title but then opens with a confrontational tone". A good example of language and structure in one point without labouring it.'

Some interesting points included juxtaposition between her painful past and her euphoric present and the simile like dust/like air connected to being 'metaphorically lighter'. Similes/metaphors were at higher levels enhanced, for example 'as well as similes she uses a metaphor "I am a black ocean" to show she is no longer just like a force of nature, she is one"'.

The final bullet point in the mark scheme relates to selection and use of references from the text which has been studied for both AO1 and AO2. This is a

very useful discriminator in this question. As previously mentioned, candidates were sometimes unable to consider references that supported different ideas and information (rather than many references which illustrated the same point) where candidates perhaps missed key elements that would have demonstrated apt, persuasive selection of information and ideas.

Example 1

This poem talks all about how the writer has risen from all her fear that she used to have before and was scared to come out and do what she has always wanted to do. She has also stayed in fear and she was scared of what people would say like in the poem she said that "leaving behind nights of terror and fear I rise" that means she has always wanted to do something but has never been able to do it until it has reached a point where she said enough is enough and she decided to rise up. People used to look down at her but all she said was "You may write me down in history with your bitter twisted lies. You may tread me in the very

dirt but still like dust I'll rise. She has never upsetted her self she always told her self that she can do it. "Does my sassiness upset you" and always knew that she is the best and all way will be the best out of all the people. They all used to abuse her and think she would never reach the top. "You may shoot me with your words, you may cut me with your eyes, you may kill me with your hatefullness but still like air I'll rise and in the end she was at the top and Eugene was amazed by what hard work she did "Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the Slave, I rise, I rise, I rise."

Examiner Comments:

This answer achieves a mark of 1 in Level 1.

The response starts out by describing the idea of fear. This is not quite comment, it is more description, for example 'she was scared of what people would say'. The quotation on the first page, 'leaving behind nights of terror and fear I rise', is not linked to the point being made, 'that means she has always wanted to do something but has never been able to do it...'. The candidate knows that 'People used to look down at her' and makes a comment about how she has been positive and has self-belief. There is a lack of focus on the question and linking of understanding to the question.

Very general assumptions are made about the poem, for example 'always knew that she is the best', 'In the end she was at the top and everyone was amazed by what hard work she did', but these are not clearly linked to the question or the evidence offered.

There is basic understanding of the text in terms of broad ideas. There is also some, basic, selection of ideas. There is no identification of language and structure. There are references used, but these are limited in use as they do not link to the points being made. The response meets the first, second and fourth bullet points in Level 1, achieving a mark of 3.

Example 2

All she was feeling she believed she was going to rise again. When she asked, "did you want to see me broken"? It was hope that was keeping her going. The feeling of someone seeing her ^{falling} down was what made her ^{thought} of rising again.

The ^{narrator} felt pride in herself when she described herself as sexiness and dance like she got diamonds. The discription itself tells us that she was brave

for not allowing anyone
bring her down. Just like
moons and like suns, she
is telling us how bright
her life can be. As the sun
shines upon us. The expression,
"like air, i will rise" means
that nothing can stop her
because no one can stop the
air.

The structure used was to
express her feelings from start,
how anyone can be little her,
how she can rise from it
and where she came from.
Painful background were she
started from and her dream
becoming true.

When she started she was
angry for people telling lies
about her. With hopes
springing high she knew she
was going to rise again,
When she believed she was

strong enough to come out
of terror and fear she ~~new~~
knew she was going to rise
again.

Examiner Comments:

This answer opens with some comment on how the narrator/writer feels hope that she will 'rise again' and there is attempt at comment on the question 'did you want to see me broken?', 'That feeling of someone seeing her falling down was what made her thought of rising again'. There is no real clear link between this point and the evidence. The points made about how she felt pride in herself because of her 'sexiness' and how 'bright her life can be' show some understanding of the text. The comment on the use of 'like dust' shows some understanding of the use of language (although this is not developed). The focus on structure then becomes more descriptive, and lacks evidence to support the points about 'painful background', 'she was angry', and how she 'knew she was going to rise again'.

There is 'some understanding of the text' here, Level 2. The selection and interpretation of information is valid, but there is very little focus on the directed

question. It is always stressed in the Examiner's Report that candidates should answer the question set, not tell us everything they have been taught about a text.

There is some very brief comment on language and this shows a 'light touch' understanding. There is some implied understanding in the comment on structure, but there is work to be done by us to see that. The use of references is valid at the start and then limited.

The candidate meets the first bullet point in Level 2 (just more than basic, however). The second bullet is met in Level 1, but not quite as securely into Level 2. The third bullet, AO2, is met in Level 1 with a touch of Level 2 at the start. The final bullet point is only just met in Level 2 - references are valid, but not developed or linked to the points/question. A mark around the lower end of Level 2 is appropriate here.

Example 3

Maya Angelou presents the idea of being proud in Still I Rise by use of different language techniques.

'Still I Rise' the heading itself tells us that despite Angelou facing challenges, she will rise.

'You may write^{me} down in history' Angelou starts by using second person persona to engage the reader in the poem. The first line is directed to Maya's oppressor 'with your bitter, twisted lies'

'You may tread me in the very dirt' Angelou still talks to the oppressor who wants to put her down but her response was completely different.

'But still, like dust, I'll rise' Angelou uses simile 'like dust' to inform her oppressor that as light as the dust is, she is compared to that so she'll rise easily.

'Does my sassiness upset you? Why are you beset with gloom?'

Maya Angelou starts asking the oppressor direct questions. The use of question marks is directed to the oppressor. This tells us that Maya

isn't at all afraid of the oppressor rather confident in provoking them.

'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells, pumping in my living room.'

Hence, Angelou uses the pronoun 'I' to describe her walking style.

Furthermore she uses simile to compare her walk like oil wells. Here Angelou engages the reader and informs us that Maya's confidence comes from her wealth 'pumping in my living room.' shows Maya's possessions.

'Just like moon and like sun' Angelou uses simile to compare herself with the moon and sun. This tells the readers that Maya is proud and confident just like the brightness of the moon and sun.

Similarly, she compares herself with nature.

'With the certainty of tides, Just like hopes springing high' Angelou is certain of her success with the certainty of tides and hopes springing high. 'Still I'll rise' - Angelou is very confident that no matter what happens and what comes her way, she still says is confidently and loudly 'Still I'll rise'

'Did you want to see me broken? Bowed head and lowered eyes?'

'Shoulders falling down like teardrops, Weakened by my soulful cries.'

The poet uses rhetorical questions to the oppressor asking him about what kind of expectation and results he expected after he oppressed Maya.

Angelou uses similes to emphasize on the oppressor's expectations.

She compares her shoulders like teardrops. But all in all, Maya still manages to stand straight up.

'Does my haughtiness offend you? Don't you take it awful hard'

'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines, Diggin' in my own backyard'

Angelou still continues to offend and provoke the oppressor.

Additionally, Angelou describes her laugh to like gold mines. This is use of simile which engages the reader more on it. Angelou still informs the reader that her confidence and pride comes from her wealth 'gold mines'. She also uses alliteration of 'g' in 'got gold' to create a sense of rhyme. 'Diggin' in my own backyard' shows possession.

'You may shoot me with your words, You may cut me with your eyes'

'You may kill me with your hatefulness, But still, like air, I'll rise.'

Furthermore, Angelou uses repetition and second person persona 'You may' to engage the reader more on the message as if it is meant for her. She uses anaphora to engage the reader. Expectedly, Angelou continues to compare herself to nature 'like air' This tells the reader how easily it is for to rise and shows how proud she is because of this.

'Does my sexiness upset you? Does it come as a surprise'

'That I dance like I've got diamonds At the meeting of my thighs?'

Moreover, Angelou starts to show feminism 'sexiness' and continues to shoot questions at the oppressor. She continues to inform the reader that her confidence and pride comes from the her wealth 'I've got diamonds' and continues to show feminism 'my thighs?'

Out of the huts of history's shame I rise

Up from a past that's rooted in pain I rise

Furthermore, Angelou starts to dig in her past. The shame and pain that she went through she still rises. Angelou engages the reader in her past and leaves them to dwell on how much she suffered.

'I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide' Welling and Swelling
I bear in the tide'

In the first stanzas, Angelou used similes to compare herself to nature and wealth. As we reach here, Angelou shifts to using metaphors 'I'm a black ocean'. This ~~personifies~~ show racism and that Angelou is still proud of her colour - She uses present continuous tense to describe how much she can bear the oppressor 'welling and swelling'

Examiner Comments:

This is a response that shows generally sound understanding of the poem and an implicit link to the question. The response shows an awareness of the narrator and her oppressor, the confidence and lack of fear (which is, in parts, linked to pride), the expectations the oppressor has and how the narrator tries to 'offend and provoke'. Some ideas are not secure in their link to the question or the evidence offered, and there is some confusion in understanding, for example confidence coming from 'wealth' and 'possession'. The idea of femininity needs to be developed and linked to the sense of pride more clearly, as does the sense of suffering in the past and how she is 'proud of her colour'. Selection and interpretation of information and ideas is valid, but lacks development (Level 2), particularly in relation to the question.

For AO2 there is some clear understanding and explanation of language and structure techniques (the similes, the use of direct questions, rhetorical question, repetition and second person), but also some feature-spotting (use of the pronoun 'I', comparisons to nature, alliteration, anaphora, present continuous tense). While there is some attempt to explain some language and structure features, some are not fully understood (the symbols of wealth, for example), and some are noted but not explained or understood fully. AO2 is Level 2/3.

Overall there is some sound understanding of the text (Level 2/3), appropriate and relevant selection (Level 3), some clear understanding and explanation of language and structure (some comment which is more Level 2) and appropriate references (although these are not always fully clear and it is not always evident that they apply to the points being made). The response meets all of Level 2, and the clear and sound touches do move it securely into Level 3 with 15.

Example 4

The writer is really proud of herself. The writer brings out the idea of being proud by being proud about herself. The writer is proud of how she walks with her head upright and unworried about life. This we see in the second paragraph line 3 and 4 'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells pumping in my living room. She is proud of her walking style and she would like the whole world to know.

Also in paragraph 5, the writer talks about her happiness. 'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines diggin' in my own backyard'. This shows how genuinely happy she is with her life. She is so satisfied people would think she owns gold mines. ~~She is~~ The writer is proud she is leading a happy life.

In paragraph 7, the writer talks about her sexiness. She goes ahead to ask 'Does my sexiness upset you?' The writer already

knows she is sexy and that absolutely no one can tell her otherwise. She asks further "Does it come as a surprise That I dance like I've got diamonds at the meeting of my thighs." She is proud of her sexiness and proud of her dancing skills. She is also proud of her femininity and she compares it to diamonds.

The writer came from a poor humble background. The writer came from suffering and most part of her life she was sad and lived in fear but she is now proud of herself and she says she will rise from it. She is proud that she can finally be free from suffering. In the last paragraph, the writer says "Leaving behind nights of terror and fear I rise into a daybreak that's wondrously clear." This shows that she is proud to pull through from suffering and being able to see and live a bright life. She further goes on and says "Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave." She is proud that she brought change in her community and that she can be able to help others by freeing them and being their hope from slavery and poverty.

The writer talks about how she will rise from every situation that comes to her. She is proud and she knows she will pull through and nothing can stop her. In every paragraph she mentions "I rise". She manages to get back on her feet

and see the light in every situation.

The writer has used language and structure. The writer has used repetition to bring out emphasis. The writer has repeated "I rise" in every paragraph throughout the poem to show that she will get through everything she goes through.

The writer has also used symbolism. For example in paragraph one she says "But still, like dust, I'll rise." She compares her getting up from tough situations just like dust the way it rises so smoothly and fast.

The writer has used foreshadowing. In the last paragraph the writer says "I am the dream and the hope of the slave." to show that she is the future, she is the hope of many, she is the one who will rescue them.

The writer has used similes. In the fourth paragraph the writer says "shoulders falling down like teardrops." The falling down of shoulders is being compared to the falling down of tears to show how extreme the shoulders have fallen.

The writer is proud of how tough and persevering she can be. In the first paragraph she says "You may tread me in the very dirt but still, like dust, I'll rise." She knows when she is treated badly and put in really bad situations she will still get above it victoriously.

Examiner Comments:

This response meets all of Level 3. The focus on the question is clear from the outset, for example the point made about how she walks is clearly made. The point about happiness shows clear selection and is appropriate to the point being made (it also shows a clear thought process). The paragraph on background could

be more 'rooted' in the text, but there is some explanation by the time we get to being 'free from suffering' (and there is clear focus on the question). The end of that paragraph is explaining, although the idea of bringing about change could be more securely evidenced/explained.

For AO2 the candidate references the use of questions, for example 'She goes ahead to ask' and 'She asks further'. The explanation of the effects of these is clear. The repetition of 'I rise' is explained, as is symbolism and use of similes. The explanation of foreshadowing is not as clear, although there is implied understanding. The language and structure points are clear, but not always explained in terms of connection to the directed question. AO2 is met at the lower end of Level 3.

There is sound understanding of the text (Level 3). This was quite sustained, but, given that there was not enough security in some of the points in terms of link to the evidence, it does not move into Level 4. There is appropriate and relevant selection (Level 3), mostly clear understanding and explanation of language and structure and appropriate references (although these are not always relevant to the question, so not moving into Level 4). On balance, Level 3 is fully met.

Example 5

(150)

Angelou presents her confidence as can be seen in the quotation, "Does my sassiness upset you?" The use of rhetorical question indicates her confidence and she has no fear in facing the oppressor or the authority. The another quotation to support is, "Does my naughtiness offend you?" This suggests her arrogance and confidence to fight for her people and herself, also, it indicates that she will not be under the control anymore. In addition, ~~she~~ she further show her confidence in sexuality as she said, "Does my sexiness upset you?" and "That I dance like I've got diamonds // At the meeting of my thighs?" These quotations convey to her confidence and also to ~~she~~ empower women by supporting feminism. Angelou further shows her resilience as can be seen in the quotation, "I rise". The use of repetition suggests ~~she~~ and emphasises her power and her resilience.

Angelou also show the pride in her background, as can be seen in the quotation, "I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide." The use of metaphor indicates that all of her power, her confidence and her resilience one come from her background as black people. It suggests that being black makes she becomes powerful since the word "ocean" conveys the feeling of being powerful and feeling of authority. Moreover, Angelou shows her pride in her background by referring to her ancestor, as can be seen in the quotation, "Bringing the gift that ~~was~~ my ancestor gave." This indicates that the thing that build her up is her ancestor, is to be black people, which emphasises that the reason of being resilience, powerful and confident of her is because the gift from her ancestor; to be black people. Angelou then explain that from the gift from her ancestor makes she become a dream of slave, as can be supported by the quotation, "I am the dream and the hope of the slave." This suggests her passion ~~to~~ to bring the freedom to her people, which were describe as slave in the quotation. This ^{also} shows her pride in her background since she can be their hope and dream because of what the ancestor gave her.

Throughout the poem, Angelou uses anaphora to emphasises her power and her resilience, as can be seen in the quotation, "You may shoot me with your words." // "You may cut me with your eyes." // "You may will me with your hatefulness." The anaphora of "You may" presents the cold-blooded of the authority and shows that she won't be the slave anymore. The violent verbs, "shoot", "cut" and "will" suggest ~~the~~ how the authority treats her and her people, which ~~are~~ highlight their cruelty. Angelou also use rhetorical questions throughout the poem,

as an example, "Did you want to see me broken?" This conveys the feeling of challenged as she shows how the authority likes to her people, but they will not be like what they want again. The rhetorical questions in the poem suggest her arrogance and confidence to face the authority. The repetition of "I'll rise" and "I rise" suggest the resilience and being more powerful, and also suggest the sense of going towards a brighter future. However, throughout the poem, Angelou change from "I'll rise" to "I rise" at the end of the poem. Therefore, this may connote that she is overcoming all those pain and terror in the past and ready for the better future. Furthermore, the rhyme at the end of some line in the poem, for example, "tides" // "high", "eyes" // "cries" and "howd" // "yord". These rhyme create kind of feeling of a song that can be used to sing to inspire people to fight for their right, to stand for their freedom and may use to celebrate their victory after the long fight.

Examiner Comments:

This response opens with some bold statements about confidence, lack of fear, arrogance, empowerment of women, power and resilience. This is a confident opening, although initially we are left wondering ‘how?’ in some places in that first section, and hoping this will become clearer, especially with more explicit connection to pride, the focus of the question. Rhetorical questions and repetition are understood and explained clearly on the first page.

The first section on the second page starts with pride coming from the narrator’s background, and this section, while not the most clearly expressed, does have some detail and thought in how the metaphor is used and how the references identified are used to show passion, hope and confidence. In the next paragraph the reference to anaphora is not completely convincing in its explanation (‘‘You may’ presents the cold-blooded of the authority’), but the use of violent verbs is clearly explained, if not connected to the question. The candidate then moves back to some rhetorical questions and repetition and there is, again, some thoughtful explanation here, perhaps some ‘light touch’ exploration. The final language point about rhyme is interesting, although again not fully within the context of the question.

This is a mixed response: there is definitely sound understanding (Level 3), and it is quite sustained (Level 4) - in some places it could just be more connected to the question. The selection and interpretation of information and ideas is appropriate and quite detailed (if not always clearly expressed). It supports the points being made (sometimes more is made of the link to the points than is obvious).

For AO2 there is definite clear understanding and explanation of language and structure and how these are used by writers to achieve effects. In a couple of cases there is a feeling that there are some touches of quite thorough understanding, but this is not explored enough. The selection of references is appropriate and is relevant to the points being made. Bullet point 1 of the mark scheme is met in Level 3/4: there is definitely sound and some sense of sustained understanding of the poem. Bullet point 2 is also met in Level 3, and there are occasional touches of detail (Level 4), although not fully evident or clear in places. AO2 is met in Level 3, and there is potential for exploration (it felt like the final point showed the candidate becoming more confident in detail). The references are quite detailed, but not always supportive of the points being made, so a mixture of Level 3 and 4 here. On balance, and using the ‘best-fit’ principle, a mark of 20 just into Level 4 reflects the touches of Level 4 evident here.

Example 6

The writer, Maya Angelou, presents the idea of being proud in this poem in several ways.

The initial way 'proudness' is present in this poem is through the narrator's confidence. The writer ~~clearly wants to defend herself~~ asks the ~~audience~~ readers "Does my sassiness upset you?" This shows that she is carefree about the hate comments she has been getting because she directly asks if her happiness and her true-self offends anyone. This can also suggest that no matter what other people say, she will still continue on ~~in~~ living her best life as ~~herself~~ who she is because she will not be upset ~~the~~ ~~from~~ by those hateful comments. The use of ^{the} rhetorical questions ending with the pronoun 'you' is targeted to the Westerners who had been criticising her appearance as a plus-size African-American as if she is

mocking them back for being mad about other people's confidence. The writer's intention ~~could~~ ^{might} have been to spread awareness of ~~being~~ loving yourself to the readers, especially ~~African~~ blacks who had always been mocked because of their dark skin tone. Also, the writer ~~is~~ is comparing herself dancing "like I've (she) got ~~got~~ ~~some~~ diamonds at the meeting of her thigh." This ~~is~~ also shows that she has a lot of body positivity because she compares ~~herself~~ to her 'big thigh' and thigh gaps to 'diamond' which is valuable and expensive. So, this can also demonstrate ~~the~~ the ~~sense of being proud of herself~~ writer's pride as an African-American woman.

~~The~~ Furthermore, the writer presents her proudness of her African-American background despite the hurtful past of black people during slavery era. ~~The writer~~ She declares, "You may shoot me with your words," "cut me with your eyes", and "kill me with your hatefulness" This suggests about ^{all} the suffering black people have faced in the past and in their ~~everyday~~ ^{daily} life because ~~the~~ the writer uses violent verbs to present all forms of negativities black people face. The "words" ~~is~~ ^{can} connotes to ~~the~~ mocking, "eyes" can be interpret as insults from whites, and "hatefulness" is all about discrimination. The ~~the~~ ending words represent the struggles ~~is~~ of blacks in the present days while "shoot", "cut", and "kill",

represents the tormenting past their "ancestors" have been through when they were under 'white supremacy'. The use of anaphora "you may" at the beginning of ~~the~~ those 3 lines suggests that the writer does not care what the westerners are doing ~~to~~ ^{to} her but one thing that she will definitely do is that "like air, I'll rise." ~~It is clear that Angelou's intention is to~~ ~~show the~~ present It is clear that Angelou's intention is to give voice to all the African-American people, ~~and~~ ~~to~~ pay respect to those who ~~have~~ lost their lives, and shows her 'pride' of herself being black, ~~suggesting and~~ representing all the other black people ~~and~~ ~~and~~ and becomes a role model for them.

The writer uses language technique to provide the sense of never giving up. She ~~said~~ says, "But still, like dust, I'll rise." This shows that she is not weak or vulnerable at all because no matter what happens to her, she will always come back up. The word "dust" connotes to ~~the~~ ~~black~~ African-Americans being ~~only a small~~ ~~as~~ as ignored and seen as dirty, and have no value, but ~~despite~~ ~~despite~~ despite 'dusts' being small (having no ~~power~~), it can rise up ~~with the~~ ~~certainty of~~ "just like moons and suns" which rises up every single day, giving the sense of hope for the black community to regain their confidence and 'rise' to fight for their rights.

The poem is filled with repetitions, especially at the ending stanza where "refrain" is used to create the sense of unity in the black community. The use of the word "I rise" creates the sense of chanting and the evolving of power and confidence. ~~The~~ Enjambement ~~is~~ is used to emphasize on the word 'rise' to show that there is nothing to be scared off and that with the voice of everyone, they will rise back to where they belong.

In conclusion,
From this poem, Angelou used many techniques to present 'pride' for all Africans.

Examiner Comments:

This response opens with a general introduction which is clearly referencing the question. Pride is connected with confidence on the first page, and the explanation is evident, with a feeling that the candidate is striving to explore. There is lack of connection to the text until the rhetorical questions and pronoun use are mentioned, and the comment on 'criticising her appearance as a plus-size African-American' is not clearly 'rooted' in the poem. However, the further exploration on the second page and the detail about the writer's intentions is more connected to the text, and the body positivity is an interesting interpretation that serves to persuade us more of the point. The connection to pride is highlighted, linking back to the question.

The second half of the second page has evidence of thorough exploration and some touches of quite perceptive ideas, illustrated with reference to quotations showing suffering, violent verbs and some specific word-level analysis. While this is not quite secure in places, there is a definite sense of an attempt to persuade the reader of their understanding. It is important to note that the mark scheme asks for 'references', not specifically 'quotations', and there is definite reference to the text throughout. Anaphora is explored, and the candidate does attempt to offer perceptive points which are demonstrating a personal response to context but are also still linked to the question. This is also seen in the exploration of the use of 'dust', which is thoughtful and quite perceptive. By this point we are convinced as a reader that there is sustained understanding of the text. Repetition to create a feeling of unity is interesting, and the candidate really tries to persuade us of their point.

This response meets the first bullet point in Level 4/5. The candidate definitely shows sustained understanding of the poem and it is perceptive in parts. The selection and interpretation of ideas and information is appropriate, detailed and fully supports the points being made (Level 4). There are also elements of persuasive, apt selection (Level 5). For AO2 there is a mixture of a few parts of thorough exploration but there is also some perceptive analysis of language and structure (Level 4/5). The selection of references is detailed, appropriate and supports (mostly fully) the points being made (Level 4). They do attempt to clarify the points being made (Level 5). Level 4 is met, and there is enough evidence of Level 5 achievement to move this to the lower end of Level 5 with 27.

Writing

Examiners felt that ‘All questions were tackled enthusiastically by candidates. The titles were easily accessible to all yet gave scope for the better candidates to fly.’

At the lowest grade boundary candidates tended to offer a basic response. They always had straightforward use of tone, style and register, with audience and purpose not always clear. At this level candidates tended to express but not always connect ideas and information, with limited use of structural and grammatical features and paragraphing. Pleasingly, there were few responses that only achieved Level 1 and where they did this was mostly because these candidates hardly wrote anything, offering a basic response, or the sentences did not make sense at all.

At the Grade 4 borderline candidates tended to at least have straightforward and at best appropriate use of tone, style and register, selecting material and stylistic or rhetorical devices to suit audience and purpose. At this borderline level candidates tended to connect, but not always develop, ideas and information, with some structural and grammatical features and paragraphing. There was a tendency in the majority of responses marked at this borderline grade to set out a stronger description in the start and then focus more on plot towards the end where planning had let the candidates down. In some cases, the writing lacked development to move higher into the mark scheme for AO4. At this borderline grade the use of vocabulary and syntax tended to be appropriate but repetitive and at times limited to vague simile/metaphor, use of short sentences, questions and exclamations for effect. The level of AO6 at this borderline was appropriate but overall formulaic, where it appeared that candidates had been advised to include plenty of adjectives or similes in their writing and felt the need to include them at all times.

In the best responses, candidates tended to have subtle use of tone, style and register, managing ideas and stylistic or rhetorical devices to suit audience and purpose. At this borderline level candidates tended to manage, but not always manipulate, ideas and information, with a range of structural and grammatical features and paragraphing. Responses at this level had some creative ideas and conscious, successful crafting. The Grade 7 boundary tended to have some selective vocabulary used for specific effect rather than just to demonstrate knowledge of particular multi-syllabic words.

The assessment objectives for these tasks effectively discriminated the quality of responses. Advice to centres would be to encourage candidates to avoid thinking they need to write a whole novel or even short extract in the time available - they need to have a clear organisation and direction in mind, and to perhaps not ‘over-season’ the pieces with vocabulary and syntax.

The main areas that discriminated these responses were:

- whether candidates could meet both parts of the first part of bullet one in the mark scheme for AO5 - for example they often expressed ideas to achieve in Level 2, but these ideas lacked the order for the second part of

that bullet. In Level 3, they may have connected ideas but not developed them.

- the success of tone, style and register in AO4.
- the spelling of basic vocabulary in AO5.
- the accuracy of punctuation and use of varied punctuation in AO5.
- the use of a range of sentence structures for AO5.

Varying sentence structure and punctuation were areas centres had focussed on: varying the way sentences begin; more use of subordinate clauses to begin complex sentences; effective use of one-word sentences and one-sentence paragraphs to demonstrate conscious crafting. Some candidates attempted to use ambitious vocabulary while some seemed to steer away from ambitious vocabulary in order to maintain accuracy. A key message to centres is to focus on crafting and organisation whatever the nature of the task. This was a common weakness running through all but the very best answers. The more 'pedestrian' answers were formulaic, showing a lack of organisation and often demonstrated a lack of planning and direction. Be ambitious in the structure, vocabulary and range of ideas and try to be creative and original. There was some excellent description and evidence of crafting at all levels.

In terms of register it was clear that the majority of the candidates knew how to write an imaginative piece, however there were a few that produced responses more like an essay. Examiners noted that lack of control could let candidates down and that control of language was also a problem at times.

Some comments from examiners include:

- 'Similes were as popular as ever: some were quite original and imaginative; others a little cliched or heavy-handed'
- 'Noticed a lot of "gonna" creeping in and a less formal tone.'
- 'Punctuation of dialogue is not secure even in better responses.'
- 'Most had a beginning, middle and end.'
- 'Few responses were unfinished.'

Question 2: Write about a time when you, or someone you know, felt proud.

Examiners noted a wide range of responses being offered which allowed the full range of marks to be applied, since all candidates were able to offer ideas about a time that they or someone else felt proud.

A range of reasons for feeling pride was offered, for example examination or other academic success, sporting successes, pride in family. Most responses tried to hook the reader but at the lower end of the mark scheme responses were a little formulaic, especially the sporting ones - for example too much time spent setting the scene, having breakfast, getting to the ground and then the proud moment was 'tacked on' at the end. Most did try and build up the narrative. Some had touches of description, while others introduced a bit of tension (for example where the proud moment was overcoming another team/competitor). There was some pride

in speaking to someone the narrator was romantically interested in, building up to speaking to the person. Some were positive about themselves by standing up to bullies, overcoming a fear and many wanted to make their parents proud.

Example 1

It was a bright sunny morning. When mom stomped in my room, telling me to wake up and dress neatly, she didn't tell me anything at all.

I hurriedly finished dressing up and went downstairs to get to know what was going on. I gazed at everyone but none was giving me any attention. So I decided to break the silence and ask what was going on. Everyone ignored me including my dearly beloved sister, who I was very fond of.

Mom told us to go to the car and wait for them there. We all adhered to that and went in the car. I tried to ask them again the same question, but none of them lent me a ear, they were all glued to their devices.

Sometime later something struck my mind. I had completely forgotten that I had done my Igcse's; that my exams results were to be

realised ~~realised~~ on that same month, Thoughts started flowing on mind, was the silence because of that, I brushed off those thoughts and, told myself that I am overthinking.

We reached ~~at~~ our destination.

"Oh we were going to a hotel," which is very rare of our family. Dad told us to order what we want. I was so flabogasted, because it's very rare of my father, to take us out and ask us to order what we want.

I as a food ^{and} lover I went for something very sophisticated, ^{and} mouth watering, ~~dish~~, everyone stared at me after I was done ordering, five minutes later our meals arrived, I was as happy as king to see that meal in front of me. Immediately I started eating ~~forgetting~~ forgetting to say a word of prayer.

"Where is your table manners son," mom asked."

My apologies, I replied, we ~~did~~ recited a word of prayer and started feasting on our meals.

When we done, the waiter come and cleared the table. Dad paid the bills, and we were expecting to leave, and go back home. Dad instructed us to sit down, and he stated that he had an announcement to make.

I was left wondering what is this announcement that we are being brought to the hotel instead of just staying at home.

~~At~~ Moments later, Dad started, talking we all lend him an ear. "He said," you are all wondering why I brought you here today." I have this one special announcement that I have to make. It involves one of you. "Blex I am proud of you for passing your O-level exams."

Me,

I was left at awe and did not believe that it's actually me that dad had mentioned, I was so excited that words could not describe.

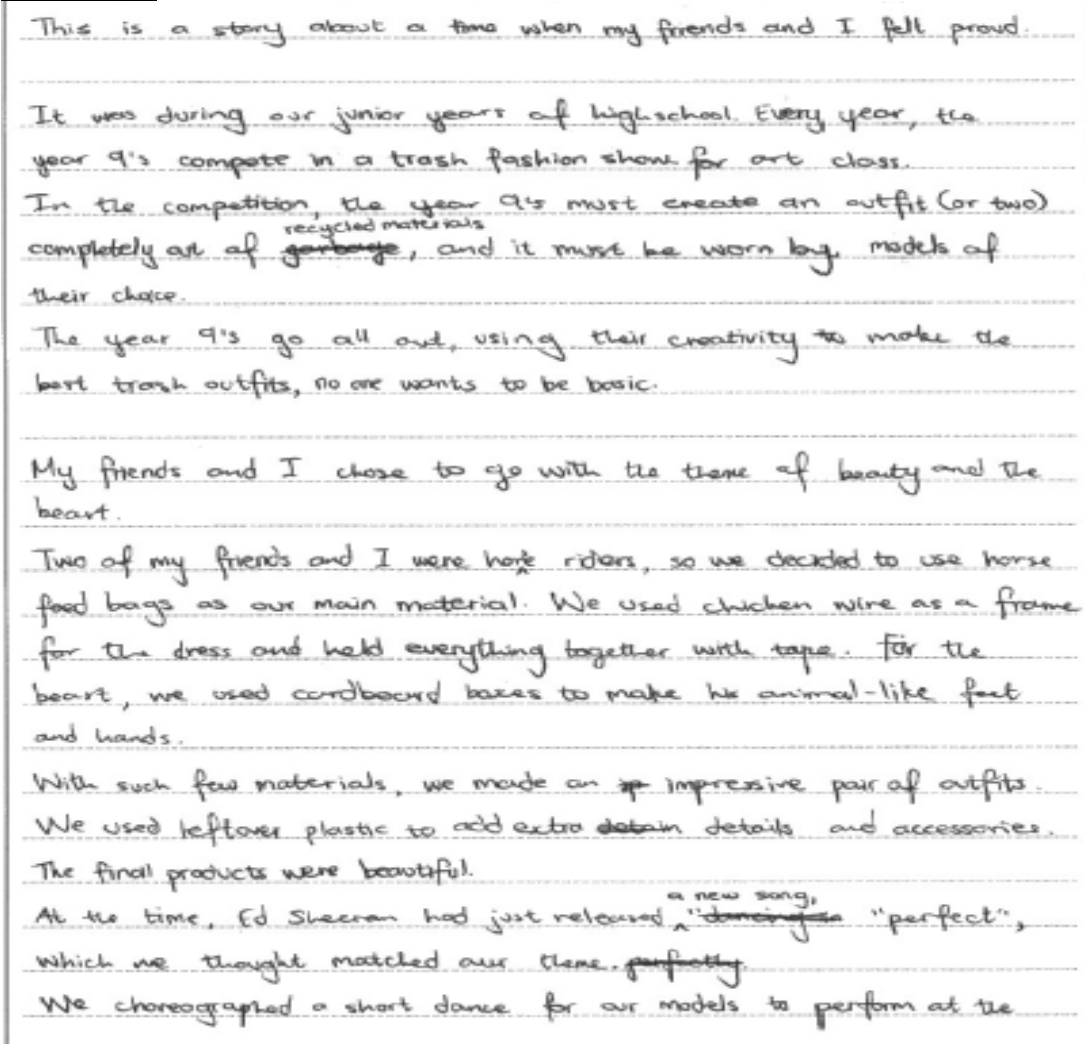
I had passed with flying colors.

Examiner Comments:

This response achieves marks of 8+5 (13 in total). In this response there is evidence of full Level 2 achievement in A04, and the candidate just moves into Level 3. The response communicates in a broadly appropriate way, with some appropriate ideas (Level 3). There is some grasp of the purpose and the intended reader, and the use of form, tone and register is a mixture of straightforward and appropriate (not always securely 'appropriate').

In A05 the candidate just moves into Level 3 using the 'best-fit' principle. They offer some varied vocabulary spelt with accuracy, for example *adhered* (this could be considered to be quite 'extensive', but it is important to remember that credit is for extensive vocabulary used strategically, rather than used to demonstrate knowledge of different words), *completely*, *overthinking*, *destination*, *sophisticated*, *announcement* (although this is not spelt accurately throughout). There are, however, errors in some other spellings, and the grasp of verb tenses and use of articles is not secure enough to demonstrate control. There is an attempt to adapt sentence structures, for example short sentences and speech, but the style can be quite repetitive.

Example 2



This is a story about a time when my friends and I felt proud.

It was during our junior years of highschool. Every year, the year 9's compete in a trash fashion show for art class.

In the competition, the year 9's must create an outfit (or two) completely out of ^{recycled materials} garbage, and it must be worn by models of their choice.

The year 9's go all out, using their creativity to make the best trash outfits, no one wants to be basic.

My friends and I chose to go with the theme of beauty and the beast.

Two of my friends and I were horse riders, so we decided to use horse feed bags as our main material. We used chicken wire as a frame for the dress and held everything together with tape. For the beast, we used cardboard boxes to make his animal-like feet and hands.

With such few materials, we made an ~~sp~~ impressive pair of outfits. We used leftover plastic to add extra ~~detail~~ details and accessories. The final products were beautiful.

At the time, Ed Sheeran had just released ^{a new song,} ~~"dancing"~~ "perfect", which we thought matched our theme ~~perfectly~~.

We choreographed a short dance for our models to perform at the

end of the runway, making sure to include the bear's awkward first dance from the movie.

Looking at our peer's outfits, it was no doubt that competition was tough.

The model's performance on the runway would also earn us points, so outfits had to be practical.

The night of the fashion show finally arrived, two weeks after the start of the project. Everyone was nervous and excited. There was also frustration, of course, when it came to putting dressing the models.

After each group saw their models on the runway, they were seated in the audience.

By the end of the show, no one had any idea of ~~the top~~ who made it to the top three, they were all so good.

The results ~~were~~ were then announced, backwards from third place, to first place.

To say we were surprised that we came out first, is an ~~understatement~~ understatement. There was screaming accompanied with tears of joy. All the extra hours of hardwork and stress was worth it. I was so proud of my team for pulling it off.

To this day, we still speak about that competition and how much fun it was working together.

Examiner Comments:

This is a secure example of Level 3 achievement. The response communicates clearly the idea of the competition and the different elements of it, and their feelings on the night. The preparation for the competition is quite simply organised and quite straightforward in tone, but the stages are clear: the need to use recycled materials, the theme the team chooses, the materials they use, the finishing touches of music and dance. The build-up of tension is clear, but there is not enough detail to make it effective. For AO4 the response meets Level 3 securely. It communicates clearly, with a clear sense of purpose and understanding of the expectations/requirements of the intended reader. There is appropriate use of form, tone and register. It is secure enough to sit on the border with 11, but not successful enough to move into Level 4.

For AO5 the candidate connects appropriate information and ideas and there is development in the narrator's feelings about the events. Structural and grammatical features and paragraphing make the meaning clear. There is use of varied and quite wide vocabulary, for example completely, recycled, creativity, accessories, choreographed, frustration, understatement with accurate spelling.

The candidate uses accurate and some varied punctuation (speech marks), adapting sentence structures as appropriate. For AO5 the candidate meets Level 3 fully and borders Level 4 with some quite wide, selective vocabulary and some attempt to use sentence structure for effect. While there are parts that are presented in quite a straightforward way, this is a secure piece of writing. A mark of 8 is awarded for AO5.

Example 3

I stood there staring at the spotlight. It was my turn.
I could hear the judges ~~sitting~~ ~~and~~ call for my performance
~~from~~^{through} the immense speakers hidden somewhere inside this ~~hall~~
"Number 7: The awaken death!" auditorium

~~Everytime I take a step~~ I was shaking ~~and~~ for every
single step I took while walking ~~to~~ to the centre of
the stage. My pointe shoes were rubbing against the ^{wooden} wooden
floor. The ribbons wrapped around my ankles were squeezing
my veins. No blood seemed to reach my toes. ~~It~~ They felt
numb. ^{At that moment,} I wished I could throw away my feet. ~~at that~~
but there was no time for that.

The music ~~and~~ ~~begin~~ started to play. My body moves
automatically thanks to all those ~~times~~ times I dumped
my holidays for classes. The choreography flowed through
my brain like a ^{slow} stream of river while I was searching.
In the audience, I was searching for my mom.

~~My~~ Pupils dilate adjusting ~~the~~ with the bright white
light that was strangling my eyes. I searched and searched
doing the combinations at the ~~same~~ same time. The

~~My~~ fierce, fiery eyes of the judges did not move me. I did not even care. My concentration was lost in the crowd.

And right at that moment, my brain ~~was~~ shut itself down.

~~As if~~ As if a rock was blocking the river, nothing ~~was~~ could go through. I ~~was~~ desperate. In a panic, I was ~~finishing~~ in ~~the~~ the middle of the air finishing my grand jeté leap.

* Without knowing what to do, I landed with my right foot but tripped.

It was the most embarrassing moment of my life. ~~I just~~ ~~was~~ The embarrassment pushed me ~~down~~ down towards the ground, unable to get up ~~and~~ ~~and~~ ~~and~~ or I could say, I didn't want to get up.

Suddenly I ~~saw~~ ^{saw} her. Mom was sitting there at ~~the~~ in the 3rd ~~row~~ row. She did not look angry ~~not even~~ ^{not even} shocked. // Instead, she looked ~~surprised~~ unexpectedly proud of me. ~~What?~~

"Proud"? I thought to myself.

If she ~~is~~ was ~~so~~ proud of me, why weren't I? I ~~was~~ was the one who should ~~be~~ be proud of myself ~~the~~ the most. I was the one who spent ~~my~~ my whole time working on this ~~choreo~~ choreo.

I started to feel my confidence rushing back ~~not~~ Adrenaline was ~~fast~~ flooding my body. It felt as if my sense was improved. Every single move ~~seems~~ seems to be executed even easier. The tip of my toes that was lifting the weight of my body up for an arabesque can ~~now~~ ~~now~~ feel the ground. It was the time I felt like myself the most.

I managed to ~~continue~~ continue, finishing the whole choreography. I could not be more proud of myself. That ~~was~~ moment of desperation on stage was recalled while I was standing at the back of the line of ~~the~~ the other candidates in fancy ~~costa~~ costumes made out of every shade of the rainbow.

"It was a good experience," I said to myself knowing that I ~~can't~~ ~~can't~~ won't be able to find another experience being this happy on stage. Yet I was wrong.

"The Honourable Mention goes to Number 7! The ~~swan~~ death!"

I lifted my head up in ~~disbelief~~ disbelief. What? Me? I won something? ~~I~~ I was quite sure that what I've heard was non-sense but the hundreds pairs of eyes and ~~the~~ hundreds of heads turning towards me.

was a real proof.

"Oh my god" was the only thing I could say.

~~When~~ I ~~was~~ walked to the stage front thinking that actually, I ~~can~~ could have been ~~proud~~ proud of myself more. But it ~~was~~ didn't matter. ~~beca~~ because now, I am "proud" of myself.

Examiner Comments:

This response has a very descriptive and engaging opening. The candidate is really striving for effect and to create a sense of tension. Suspense is effectively built through the title of piece, 'The Awaken Death', and the feelings of nervousness going towards the stage. The feelings of searching for their mother while performing is effectively presented, although the expression impacts on the effectiveness in places. Some of the descriptions lack subtlety and tend toward cliché, but this does not prevent them from attempting to be effective.

There is a secure realisation of purpose and the expectations and requirements of the intended reader. While sometimes 'heavy-handed' in description, there is effective use of form, tone and register. There is successful communication of a proud moment, and all of Level 4 is met for AO4, a mark of 15.

For AO5 information and ideas are managed, and deliberate effects are created with the use of short sentences, for example. Vocabulary is wide and selective, for example immense, choreography, dilate, concentration, adrenalin, arabesque. There are occasional spelling errors. The candidate uses a range of punctuation for clarity and does manage sentence structures for deliberate effect. There are some lapses in control of syntax and grammar which prevent a higher mark. A mark of 9 credits the ambition here and the quality of the language used, but also reflects that there are some lapses in accuracy.

Example 3

mum watching her 3 year old perform a solo at her baby ballet show

para one - her getting ready for the show

para two - music starting, other acts showing

para three & four - watching her daughter - tears in her eyes - bursting with pride etc

para five - bows and end of show

para six - reading daughter after, displaying her pride and affection

Sophie's dance

The tedious line into the school hall went on for an eternity. This is a toddler dance show! I thought to myself, frustrated. I'm here for one reason and one reason only; my baby girl. Oh how pretty she looked this morning! I reminisced about today's ~~she~~ shenanigans while moving through this excruciatingly, painfully slow line. Despite how nervous Sophie was, she ~~still was~~ ^{was still} giddy with excitement. This was her first solo! ~~ever~~ Ever! I smiled a hideous grin as I grabbed the nearest seat to the ~~front~~ front. Disappointing chatter coursed me as I took the one seat all the mothers so desperately wanted. Haha, I thought. Shame to be them.

Blasting down my eardrums, the tune of 'Nutcracker' ~~came~~ escaped through the speakers in each corner of the hall. Although the ceilings were miles above my head and the speakers were far, far

away from my ears, I was still ~~not~~ ~~deafened~~ deafened. A wave of clapping suddenly broke out when the first act ~~delicately~~ delicately tip-toed onto the stage. The brown, mud-like colour floor squirmed as the sticky 2-year-olds galloped around. When I had Sophie, I'd hoped ~~it~~ I would be able to ~~enroll~~ enroll her in a school better than this but hey-ho, what can you do.

I had no care at all for the other acts if I'm being honest. I wait impatiently through the other acts, twiddling my thumbs and biting my inner cheek. My cheek was raw and bleeding when suddenly, darkness. Immediately after this darkness came a single light in the shape of a circle ~~on-stage~~ on-stage. My heart was thumping in the deafening silence. All of a sudden, a tiny, ~~minors~~ nervous little creature slipped ~~into~~ into the middle of the circle. ~~My heart~~ Suddenly, my heart ~~burst~~ ~~irished~~ - it was my baby Sophie! I couldn't contain my self; I ~~squealed~~ squealed, bursting with pride.

This is my daughter. Dancing a Solo. On a stage.

My vision became blurry, 'what's happening?' I thought. A stroke? A seizure? No. I dismissed those thoughts when I realized I was just about to cry - no stroke here just pure pride. Tears gushed out of my eyes like a violent stream, soaking my ~~to~~ ^{in and} t-shirt below me. I watched ^{in and} intently as Sophie performed her piece. I knew how long and hard she had worked to perfect this routine; she was performing it perfectly. As a mother of Sophie, pride is not an unfamiliar ^{she's} ~~word~~ ^{part}. Although, she could stand still on a stage for an hour and I would ~~still~~ ^{still} ~~stand~~ ^{stand} ~~stare~~ ^{stare} ~~at~~ ^{at} her.

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Every single day Sophie makes me feel as if I am the proudest mother in the whole of London, or in the whole world.

I could not wait to scoop her a up and treat her to the largest ~~best~~ ice-cream known to man. After ~~that~~ demolishing the icecream the size of an elephant, we will snuggle up in bed and watch Harry Potter - her favourite. Being proud, although not alien to me, is one of the most amazing feelings ever. ^{only} ^{fresh} I could bottle it. It is like a drug no one can get enough of ~~it~~ ^{it} - and I have an endless supply of it.

As the curtains draw closed, I shut up one of my ^{envied} ~~desired~~ seats and sprinted to the exit. There she was, my baby girl. Another wave of pride hit me like a ~~tsunami~~ tsunami and I ^{rushed} ~~tried~~ to squeeze her. You know when you love her something, ^{or} ~~some~~ someone so much you just want to squeeze them as hard as you ^{possibly} can? ~~For~~ Sophie's rosy cheeks matched her ^{which} ~~pink~~ lips that was three sizes too big (a charity shop find.) Even though I was pre-occupied with making sure my car didn't run over the parking time limit, I still made sure to ^{smother} ~~spoil~~ my girl in kisses. 'Can we get ice-cream mummy?' Sophie politely asked. 'Please?' 'My darling of course, any thing for my baby girl.' I replied.

Hand in hand we stripped away ~~two~~ towards the ^{parlour} ~~icecream~~ parlour, humming the ~~affair~~ 'Nutcracker' as we ^{stripped} ~~did~~ so. Who ^{cares} ~~cares~~ about getting a parking ticket when the most important girl in the world has clinging onto my hand.

Examiner Comments:

Interestingly, another proud moment connected to dance. This one takes the perspective of the mother of a child who is performing. There is a feeling of suspense built up during the wait to get a good seat and the excitement of loud music and clapping. The feelings of a proud mother are definitely managed, and there is some evidence of complexity in the insecurity felt about the quality of school, the lack of care for the other acts, the sense of mother's pride being unconditional and the feelings of economic insecurity. These are not as cohesive and managed with the subtlety that they could be for the top marks in Level 5. For AO4, a mark of 17 reflects the successful and also perceptive communication. The task shows a secure sense of audience and purpose, and it is sharply focused on pride. The form, tone and register are effective (Level 4 here). For AO5, there is evidence of complex ideas, but they could be manipulated more for cohesion overall. The vocabulary is wide and selective, for example shenanigans, lurched, tsunami, although there are spelling errors in some words with double consonants and in more ambitious words such as reminisced. There is a range of punctuation: exclamation marks, speech marks, question marks and parenthesis. It could be argued some are over-used. Sentence structures are managed for deliberate effect. A mark of 11 is appropriate for AO5.

Question 3: Write a story with the title 'The Hidden Book'.

This question was completed by fewer candidates than Question 2. Many of these answers followed the pattern of going in a haunted house, finding a hidden book, something negative happening. Responses to this question could tend to be very lengthy, and this occasionally meant that the answers were often very heavy on storytelling but very little crafting. The most successful responses tended to make the hidden book more obscure and were often heavily crafted, showing a wide range of literary devices.

Example 1

The Hidden Book

In an apoplectic fit I barged the book ~~shop~~ ^{shop} door open, slamming it into the wall behind. Aaron had just disclosed that my flawless book "The Vengeance" had been rejected from every reputable bookstore. Furious, Scott the shopkeeper glared intently as I tempestuously stamped towards the counter like ^a ~~as~~ raging bull.

"What do you want Earl?" He demanded.

"I need to sell my books, can you help?" I stressed pathetically.

As I looked around the ~~store~~ ^{store}, the empty shelves stared at me pleading to be filled. It was obvious that he would accept my books.

How ~~could~~ ^{could} he refuse?

Barely attempting to conceal his ~~gig~~ glee, he relished ~~explaining~~ explaining how implausible it would be to stockpile books that would lead him to declare bankruptcy. It was another nail in the coffin; a failed author, no money and now further rejection. I slyly dragged my feet towards the door, providing enough time for a change of mind and ~~a callback~~ a callback. That never happened.

As I ~~pushed~~ pushed the door to exit, a fine drizzle of rain sprayed upon my face. Dark clouds surrounded me and the ~~wind~~ ~~win~~ wind placed a chill on my body. As I slowly walked out onto the street, I felt the sun emerge ~~from~~ from the clouds. Was this the glimmer of hope I needed? As I looked back at the shop front I spotted a ~~battered~~ ^{battered} basket near the exit, full of books ~~labelled~~ ^{labelled} with a sign stating "FREE". I went back curious, and ~~thoughtfully~~ ^{thoroughly} ~~sifted~~ ^{sifted} through the basket. Then I saw it. It wasn't bound, ~~just~~ ^{just} a collection of loose leaves of ~~paper~~ ^{paper}, *a draft maybe? It was like a hidden book. I studied and scanned it, I was dumbfounded. An explosion of warmth diffused all ~~over~~ over my body, it was outstanding. Who had written this masterpiece? On the curling bottom left hand corner ~~the~~ ^{the} name Miss Julie Walters was scribbled. I looked up and a rainbow had developed.

How easy would it be to publish these drafts under my name? If I ~~removes~~ removed my conscience how complicated could it be - I knew it didn't belong to me, immoral I know but the proposition ~~was~~ presented to me ~~was~~ was too sweet an offer to refuse.

Only a couple of weeks later and the "The Victim" was published under my name. Sales were painfully slow at first, ~~but~~ ^{but} every passing day felt like an eternity, but after some positive reviews the books started flying off the shelf with unprecedented numbers in sales. With critical acclaim and commercial success, the next few years would bring me universal adulation.

Author of the year, The Newbery Medal and the National book award. It was incessant, award after award but day by day ~~the~~ it grew harder to ignore the burden of guilt weighing on my my shoulders. I started having recurring night mares of Miss Julie Walters suddenly appearing at my home with a law suit and a plethora of reporters ready to expose my crime, as the months went by the nightmares got worse.

Several years ~~later~~ had passed and book sales and interest had naturally waned as did my ~~pop~~ popularity. I failed to write another book, so I decided to buy a bookshop and settle down with enough money to retire and live the rest rest of my life comfortably. I felt the burden of guilt had ~~esse~~ eased and I could finally settle down.

~~The~~ The joyful jingling of my bookshop door entry bell would be incessant from 9 to 5. Life couldn't be better. Retired and no longer reading books, of course people occasionally asked for photos and autographs. Nothing would go wrong for me. It was one summers day that I remember well, where I mistook a carrier requiring a signature for one of my old fans. In my embarrassment at this misunderstanding, I ~~completely~~ ^{completely} overlooked the package she had left behind.

Several days later, I recieved a phone call, the old phone dials ringtone had a particularly horrid piercing sound that day. I answered ~~was~~ confirming that this was indeed Mr Earl Holmes.

A softly spoken female ~~was asked~~ asked if I had opened the package. As I looked for the package I said to her,

"Just a moment, I am opening it ~~now~~ now."

~~Then I saw it. It was my book not "The Victim" but "The~~

Then I saw it, hidden beneath the packaging. It was my book, not "The Victim" but "The Vengeance". ~~I looked~~ studied and scanned the cover and saw the author name. It was finally published. I studied and scanned the cover and saw the author name, Miss Julie Walters.

The female then said,

~~The~~

"Vengeance truly is sweet"

~~The~~ I heard a ~~click~~ ^{click} and the phone went dead.

* ~~"entitled~~

* "entitled "The Victim"

Examiner Comments:

This is a competent, high-quality and compelling response which instantly makes the reader want to find out what happens next. The opening is effective, and the whole piece is perceptive and subtle. The task is sharply focused on purpose and the expectations of the intended reader. There is sophisticated use of form, tone and register, with subtle humour and the very well-managed grappling with conscience and sense of morality. The twist at the end of the story is effective and unpredictable. There is full achievement of Level 5, and possibly beyond.

For A05 the candidate manipulates complex ideas, utilising a range of structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion. An extensive vocabulary is used strategically here, and rare spelling errors do not detract from overall meaning. A range of techniques are employed with subtlety and sophistication, for example dialogue, single line paragraph for effect, sentence starters, and pathetic fallacy. Punctuation is accurate and well-controlled to aid emphasis and precision, and a range of sentence structures is used accurately and selectively to achieve particular effects. A05 does not have to be perfect to achieve the top mark of Level 5.

Question 4: Look at the images provided. Write a story that begins 'It was like a dream'.

This question, as with Question 3, was attempted by fewer candidates than Question 1. Examiners felt that the images provided proved thought-provoking for candidates and were used creatively. One examiner noted that 'This was also the question where the most varied responses came: everything from kidnapping to vampires.' A whole range of dreams or dream-like experiences was discussed, and one examiner felt that 'compared to question 2 and 3, I would say this was the question completed the best - this felt like the question that candidates had thought about the most before writing and because of that they tended to be more crafted.'

Example 1

~~It was like a dream,~~

The Assignment

It was like a dream, Ian stood there waiting for the elevator as ~~bead of sweat~~ a bead of sweat trickled slowly trickled down his face; he could not ~~believe~~ believe that he was awake right now. He was wearing a three piece suit, standard uniform for an organisation like this, and yet, Ian still felt out of place as he looked ^{around} ~~ahead~~ at the vast lobby full of employees. Ding. The elevators doors opened like the mouth of a shark ready to eat its prey. Ian had been called in ~~to hand over his assignment for the week~~ by his new ~~see~~ CEO to ~~hand~~ hand over his assignment for the week.

The doors closed entrapping him inside, he observed the floor numbers on the screen of the elevator as it slowly ascended, while contemplating how he was going to tell his new boss he did not have the request assignment. Ian pictured his bleak future at the company and the sheer ~~was~~ wrath of the CEO. The single bead of sweat had now duplicated into several streams.

genuinely

nervously

nervously

apart

apparent

floor ~~is~~ sixty six. The doors opened revealing the large ~~reception~~ reception room, it was covered in red and white walls and had a thick black carpet.

Ian walked towards the ~~receptionist's~~ receptionist's desk wiping his ~~brow~~ ~~nervously~~ while wiping his brow and said, "Hi, I'm Mr. Saint Sean, I'm here to see the CEO."

The ~~receptionist~~ receptionist looked up at ~~to~~ his somewhat disapprovingly as if she knew his fate and replied, "Take a seat please."

~~He sat down~~ Sitting softly on the seat ~~his~~ his hands shook uncontrollably like a man in fear, ~~his~~ and his nervousness was palpable and apparent, while he was slouching in his seat.

"Hello there, are you ok?" A softly spoken voice said, "Would you like some water?" She asked.

"No thank you, sorry I'm a bit nervous because I have ~~to~~ meet a meeting with the new CEO shortly, and I'm terrified!" Ian responded, remaining slouched.

"Terrified, what ever for?" She inquired as she sat down next to Ian genuinely ~~concerned~~ concerned for his well being.

travistey travisty unattend

Ian faced look at her, she was a middle aged woman wearing a suit with a skirt.

"I'm supposed to hand in an assignment today and I don't do not have it," ~~he~~ he said, "It's an absolute travisty, and no one will believe what happened, honestly I'm not sure I believe it." ~~He~~ he further continued.

"What do you mean ~~no~~ no one will believe you?" she questioned, "What happen to your assignment?" she questioned again.

"I had been working all week on my assignment and yesterday I made the grave mistake of leaving it ~~on~~ on my desk, unattended, and when I returned to it my dog had eaten and shredded all of it." Ian replied, shamefully bowing his head.

~~That sounds ridiculous today~~ "That does sound unbelievable" she said, ~~surprisingly~~ she said.

"I know, I know, but it's the truth and I don't ~~do not~~ know don't know if I should tell my boss the truth or a more believable lie." Ian said dishearteningly.

prophusily
profusely honesty

policy police eason

"Well I don't know your boss, but I do know that ~~honesty~~
~~honesty~~ honesty is the best ~~pol~~ policy." She said.

She then walked off leaving Ian ~~to~~ to contemplate
what she just said. ~~Ten~~ Ten minutes later the ~~recep~~ receptionist
informed him ~~that~~ see that CEO was ready to see him, as
~~he~~ Ian walked towards the seven foot door he still wasn't
was not sure if he should tell the truth? Or lie? "~~Enter~~
Should I

"Enter." A voice said, Ian opened the door, "So what's it
going to be ~~a~~ the truth or a lie?", to Ian's surprise
It was the ~~female~~ woman who spoke to Ian ~~early~~ earlier!
Ian was completely stunned and then started apologising
~~profusely~~ profusely.

After a ~~twent~~ ten minute conversation, it was clear
that Ian was going to keep his job. ~~The~~ The CEO wished
Ian good ~~bye~~ with the understanding that he would
complete his assignment next week.

As Ian descended in the elevator he sighed with ~~fiten~~
relief. What felt like an ~~ee~~ eason to ~~up~~ go up,
felt like mere seconds going down.

answer

While walking out of the ~~bi~~ building, his phone started ringing. ~~the~~ lan answered the phone and a voice said, "Hello lan mate, it me ~~for~~ Carl, did you meet your new boss?" he said, "Did you tell the ~~the~~ truth?" he asked.

"The truth? Are you kidding? I just told her some nonsense about my dog eat my assignment." lan put the phone down, "~~the~~ Honesty is the best ~~pot~~ policy." lan chuckled.

Examiner Comments:

The story crafted here feels almost like a prepared story which has the introductory line 'tagged on'. There does need to be a sense of sharp focus on the task to achieve Level 5, and we are not convinced that this shows a sense of something being like a dream. There is an engaging opening that draws the reader in, although some issues with expression impact on the effectiveness. The sense of someone feeling nervous and trapped is effectively crafted, and although it may be clear to the reader who the woman is that lan is talking to, it does craft the feeling that he, at the time, has no idea. For AO4 almost all of Level 4 is met with a mark of 14, but the lack of security in the purpose prevents it moving higher.

In AO5 the candidate just moves into Level 4. All of Level 3 is met, and there is some wide and selective vocabulary used, even with some spelling errors, for example organisation, entrapping, contemplating, duplicated, receptionist, slouched, dishearteningly. They are really trying to manage ideas and the meaning is clear. The candidate uses accurate and varied punctuation (question marks, speech marks), and they attempt to adapt sentence structures as appropriate. The effectiveness is sometimes impacted upon by lapses in control. A mark of 8 is achieved for AO5.

Summary

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

- Ensure you have studied the poetry and prose texts in the Anthology fully and use the examination time to remind yourself of the text, not re-read it.
- Read the question carefully and make sure you are answering **this** question, not telling the examiner what you know about the text you have studied. The selection needs to be relevant to the question you are being asked, in this case the idea of pride.
- For AO2 (language and structure), make sure you are offering ideas about how language and structure are used. Many of you were able to give examples, but sometimes you did not offer points about how the examples were used.
- For AO2 try to cover points on both language and structure, commenting on the different techniques that have been used by the writer and how they link to the overall topic of the question, in this case the idea of pride.
- When you are writing, always think about your reader, what information and ideas you want to develop and how you want the reader to react at different parts of your writing; then choose the best words, phrases or techniques available to you to achieve those effects.
- Think carefully about how you will begin to write so that it is engaging for your reader from the very start.
- As you begin to write, know where you will end. This will help you to write in a manner that is cohesive and coherent for your reader.
- Take care throughout with accuracy: spelling, punctuation and grammar
- In writing, focus on crafting and organisation whatever the nature of the task.
- Be ambitious in your structure, vocabulary and range of ideas and try to be creative and original. We are often incredibly impressed with your creativity and ability to write in such an imaginative way in the time given.

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