

Examiners' Report  
June 2016

GCE English Literature 6ET03 01

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## Introduction

Examiners were impressed with the excellent quality of the best work seen in which confident, well-focused writing demonstrated detailed textual knowledge, and took a clearly literary approach paying tribute to the hard work and detailed preparation that goes on in centres. On the other hand they were disappointed at the poor quality of much of written English, lack of literary awareness and inadequate treatment of the question in low achieving candidates.

We would like to remind candidates to focus on the precise terms of the question. In general it is perfectly acceptable to challenge the proposition and to argue a contrary case as long as there is evidence from the texts and critics for the approach taken.

Candidates were, in general, confident about dealing with the language of texts and were able to illustrate this well. They tended to be less so when dealing with form and structure and in showing how such matters impact on the ways in which we read. Nevertheless the best candidates did show that they are aware of different kinds of novel (with much reference to the bildungsroman) and poetry texts (contrasting lyric poems such as *Rapture* or the *Metaphysicals* with narratives such as the *Wife of Bath* or *The Battle of Maldon*) and how those differences can be used to inform their critical responses.

Comparisons between texts were managed with excellent balance when textual links were made which found exact verbal or thematic echoes. The balance, when it was well and consistently managed with expert knowledge and accomplished writing technique, was impressive. When it was done less well, examiners found that candidates wrote at some length on a text before making a very perfunctory 'Similarly in....' link to the next text being discussed. Some candidates wrote an essay on each facet of a topic: patriotism and the personal (6b) or time and place (4a) with rather thin links between the two. The much more difficult task of interweaving ideas and texts lead to higher scores on AO3 in particular.

Contexts were managed well when candidates related issues such as what was going on at the time of writing, or perhaps the time being written about to the terms of the question and the impact on the text itself on different kinds of readers. Often, however, contextual features such as the American Dream or attitudes to homosexuality were mentioned but not fully integrated into the textual analysis.

## **Question 1**

As usual, the poem was by far the more popular of the two unseen texts.

Good candidates were successful in entering into the poem's generally light-hearted approach to the topic and the concept of a metaphorical museum. A number of candidates attempted to interpret the poem as sad or pessimistic, suggesting that the couple had broken up. The identity of the speakers and who they are talking to: the reader was fairly confidently dealt with, for example, but by no means consistently. Many saw the children as being central to progressing from the past, the wedding day itself and all its paraphernalia, and the present, when ten years later, they can share their parents' memories of the day which lead to their very existence.

The number of lines and the possibility of the poem being a double sonnet received scant attention. The framework of the poem with its slight variation in the first and last lines was missed by many candidates who thought the lines were identical. There were a few candidates who did see a three-part structure to the poem with the breaks coming at 'Let's take a look around' and 'And this is why we've come'.

Terminology was used with considerable inaccuracy. The ability to identify and discuss features such as rhyme, especially the varied use of rhyming couplets, metre, the caesura, enjambment, end-stopped lines, and free verse was very uneven. Even when such features were identified, there was limited evidence of ability to write about the effects they have on the reader.

Many candidates were interested in the ways in which the lists that take up much of the poem are presented; through the use of everyday, colloquial or conversational language and the ways in which specific details like the 'linen sheet', the sick bucket, the 'burst guitar string' with its interesting fossil image, the perfectly preserved wedding dress, and the 'bar-till roll' with its reference to the excessive consumption of alcohol, received plenty of attention as to how they contributed to the occasion and the poem's nostalgic mood. The possibility of the marriage failing was evidenced by some through the references to the torn ticket stubs and perfectly split wishbone. Others perceived the latter as a symbol of a perfectly matched couple.

This is part of a high achieving response to the poem.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number:      Question 1 ☒      Question 2 ☒

This poem focuses on a couple's nostalgic return to their wedding setting and discovery of a collection of souvenirs which remain. It adopts the form of a memory as the couple explore the significance of particular objects. Lunsden uses a mix of rhyming couplets and half rhyme to symbolise the unity of two people in marriage and suggest that this still continues "ten years on". The poem takes the form of a list which helps the reader create a detailed image of the scene ~~in the mind of~~ and track the speakers' discovery of each item and its significance in their marriage. The speaker in the poem is collective which can be seen from the repeated use of the collective pronoun "we". This again symbolises the continued unity in the couple and the shared memories they have which has resulted in a successful relationship with longevity.

Throughout the poem Lunsden uses an extended metaphor of a museum as suggested in the title "In the Wedding Museum". The opening of the poem creates the



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The candidate's introduction shows a sound literary approach and a useful overview of the poem.

The collection of objects are souvenirs of the marriage each serving to create a tone of nostalgia. The use of the simile "like an ammonite" to describe the "burst guitar string" compares the object to a fossil so thereby highlighting its role as a relic of a bygone time in the speaker's life. As the poem progresses the pace increases owing to the shorter clauses and the use of alliteration such as "the bridegroom's tie, the best man's speech, the bans" which uses repetition of the 'b' sound to increase the pace and show the rate at which the speaker spots new items of interest. Alliteration of the ~~see~~ cacophonous sound 'c' is also used "cups and cars and candles" which shows the comparison between the noise and ~~business~~ frantic vitality of the wedding party compared the quietness of the speaker's return.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate here makes some thoughtful comments on the language and imagery.

The sensitive comments on the simile and use of alliteration explore how the writer achieves his effects.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Explore the language closely and show how it works rather than merely identifying features.

## Question 2

Good answers on the prose passage focused on the presentation of the two characters, the first person narrative voice, the contrast between the mood established in the descriptive writing at the beginning of the passage, and the effects of the dialogue.

There were perceptive comments on the contrast between the ways in which Henry and Richard were dressed; the former's knife-pressed trousers and the whiteness of the physical surroundings being linked to his pristine appearance and the latter's borrowed bathrobe. The common ground of insomnia was perceived by many as was the ways in which Henry, in particular, scored points over Richard by identifying his unhappiness, his confident self-presentation and his ease at dealing with translating Milton into Latin.

There was some confident analysis of how the passage moves from narrative to dialogue and the ways in which the mood is set in the description of the cold morning and the detailed description of the natural world.

Two extracts from this high scoring essay are included to show the candidate's skill in different aspects of how the text can be explored.

Original syntax and structure offer insight into the protagonists' emotional landscapes. The simple syntax used to construct the dialogue between Papan and Henry creates a controlled tone and formal mood, indicative of an emotional boundary between them: 'You're up early... I always rise early' / 'I hope you slept well'. 'Yes, thanks'. This intrigues the reader: though the men are bound by their shared 'fatigue', there rests a 'discomfort' in their interaction. Understanding this is key to authentic characterisation.



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Here there is some analysis of the writer's use of dialogue.



Also The conventional form and use of regular paragraphing, whilst allowing the narrative to flow, ~~are~~ also bear connotations of education and academia, concepts of vital importance in the characterisation of Henry. Henry's use of complex syntax connotes his status as a scholarly character, as direct speech tumbles out in an elevated tone: ' - of course, he wrote not an inconsiderable amount ... , but that was early, in his student days; ' Furthermore, Henry's intelligent expression and superior tone are reinforced through the use of expert, technical diction such as 'moult cases' and 'lexicon'. The reader's impression of his mental agility (emphasized by his ability to understand Latin) is foregrounded however in imagery. Henry's trousers are 'knife-pressed': ~~Metaphor~~ this metaphor contains connotations of military precision and order.



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There is some close reading of how Tarrt uses language in her presentation of character.



Furthermore, the interactions between Henry and Richard create a power dynamic, presenting Henry with knowledge and power, and Richard as naive and vulnerable, exacerbating the unsettling atmosphere. Henry is presented as pristine, ~~and~~ academic and unemotional: ~~He~~ 'otherwise immaculate for such an ungodly hour'. As well as the use of 'ungodly hour' emphasising Richard's surprise, the depiction of Henry as finely dressed contrasts to the 'bathrobe' that Richard is wearing, visually highlighting Henry's superiority. Similarly, Henry is



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The candidate shows some insights into how the writer depicts character with some close exploration of language.

### Question 3 (a)

The Relationships section remains by far the most popular option with many candidates focusing on *The Great Gatsby*, *Rapture* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* with a fairly wide selection from *Metaphysical Poetry* and rather fewer on the poems in *Emergency Kit*.

The concepts of 'love' and 'desire' found a great variety of interpretations but it was how candidates dealt with the concepts 'challenging' and 'surprising' that constituted the real discriminator. There was considerable focus on homosexuality when discussing Carlo's narratives, Nick and Gatsby, and the *Rapture* poems.

Those who used the Metaphysical Poetry were able to contrast the very male attitudes of Donne and Marvell with the female perspectives provided by Anne Bradstreet and Katherine Philips. There was some fruitful exploration of how Donne used the same kind of language in a poem like *Batter my Heart* as in *The Flea* or *To his Mistress Going to Bed*.

Attitudes varied from how different kinds of love were viewed at the time of the action to those at the time of writing, when they differed.

Some candidates tended to use just a few poems from *Rapture* to support points made about the novels; those who saw the collection as a whole could track the progress of the relationship which does, after all, tell its own story.

The patriarchal and misogynistic nature of 1920s America was a fruitful line of enquiry to justify the treatment of violence towards the women in *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald's creation of symbols like the green light and the Valley of Ashes which are important structural features linked to key incidents in the novel.

The materialism that informs the lives of the characters found some interesting echoes in Duffy's *Give* and *Treasure* as well as the social inequalities that influence many of the relationships in *Tess*.

Discussion of Duffy moved from those who tended to take the line that the poems are autobiographical and deal with a relationship between the writer and Jackie Kay or those who take the evidence of the poems themselves as not being gender specific. 'Is *Rapture* a lesbian text?' is a question that occupies many. Although the evidence from the poet herself (and maybe the poems too) suggest not, many candidates quoted critics who supported their case.

Issues of class, power, sexual orientation, nationality, social background and education were among the areas explored. Fitzgerald's portrayal of class differences such as that between Tom, Myrtle, George, Daisy and Gatsby himself occupied many – similarly Hardy's presentation of the class and social differences between Tess, Alec and Angel. The status of the characters in *Corelli* focused on their sexuality (Carlo), nationality, (Corelli and Pelagia), education (Pelagia and Mandras). Parent/child relationships such as those between Pelagia and her father, and Tess and her parent and to a lesser extent, Gatsby and his father, led to profitable discussions.

Those who dealt with *Tess* were often very sensitive to the hypocrisy and double standards of the late Victorian period and the initial reception of the novel and the changes that Hardy made to it at the time. The portrayal of Tess and Alec and what exactly happened between them at the end of the first section of the novel was generally treated with both sensitivity and insight.

This essay shows detailed textual exploration and has some sensitive comments on contexts. The links between novel and poem are well-managed.

De Berniere's Creation of the character Carlo most significantly acts as a vessel for changing values yet the shame he undergoes, through masking his homosexual desires <sup>which</sup> echoes the ~~intolerant~~ intolerant attitudes towards gay people throughout the majority of the twentieth century. Carlo's description of his desires as an 'affliction' in conjunction with desire to simply be 'a normal man' ~~advances~~ advances readers that her desires burn brightly and almost near painful, as she cannot act upon them.



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Carlo's self-presentation includes some thoughtful insights into the context of the novel's setting in time and place and shifts into the discussion of the poem with ease. The poem's use of language and structure are used to discuss the rather different context of the seventeenth century. The lead-back to Carlo demonstrates a mastery of the material.

An extract from a script that shows some ability to deal with two texts.

However, to a modern reader, the fact  
idea that the fate of Gatsby and Daisy's  
relationship is based on Gatsby's wealth may  
lead the reader to question the nature of  
the relationship.

In contrast to 'The Great Gatsby' where <sup>one form of</sup> ~~the~~ desire  
is shown to be through ~~wealthy~~ materialistic  
possessions, within ~~the~~ Duffy's 'Rapture'  
Duffy portrays ~~desire~~ physical desire through  
the use of natural imagery <sup>in forest</sup>. Duffy's  
partner ~~seems~~ is illustrated to be synonymous  
with "the water" and "the wind". This allows us to  
infer that Duffy is consumed by her love and  
desire for her partner. The use of nature <sup>may</sup> ~~also~~  
also illustrate the inevitability of physical  
attraction and desire ~~in comparison~~ which can  
be contrasted with the <sup>hedonistic lifestyle</sup> ~~unattainable~~ wealth  
within 'The Great Gatsby' which is not  
attainable for all.



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Two texts are dealt with alongside each other. There is some limited attempt at dealing with context in the reference to the modern reader. The links are made but not fully developed.

There is some exploration of language and use of quotations.

### Question 3 (b)

This was a much less popular option than the (a) question.

'Threats and dangers' were usually clearly identified, many candidates managing to achieve a balanced discussion, although the concepts lying behind 'engages and challenges' were more elusive.

A number of candidates looked at social and cultural issues as threats, whilst many explored themes such as death, wealth, illusion and reality, which were seen as threats to relationships. The ability to analyse the 'society of the time' and how the conventions of the Victorian era or 1940s Greece, for example, would have seen characters' attitudes and behaviour as shocking, was an effective way into aspects of AO3, other readers, and parts of AO4.

Other readers are dealt with in a number of ways. Merely referring to a modern or contemporary reader is insufficient. Quoting named critics and critical movements are valid ways of supporting points; presenting an argument contesting and/or supporting the proposition is another equally valid way of doing it. The ways in which a text might have been received at the time of publication were particularly valuable in the case of Tess and the threats and dangers she faced were often those embedded in the world she lived in and the ways in which Hardy used them against her.

Contextual points dealt with considered the times of the texts' publication compared to the period in which they are set as well as the present. These included the roles of women, social class, violence against women, sexual orientation, the American Dream, the jazz age, flappers, Fitzgerald's own life as an influence on *Gatsby* and his own social status when pursuing Zelda as an autobiographical link to the *Gatsby*/*Daisy* relationship.

The candidate makes a good presentation of how the essay is likely to continue.

and will lead to the relationship's downfall. Thomas Hardy's semi-didactic novel, 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles', Carol Ann Duffy's sequence of lyrical love poems, 'Rapture' and F. Scott Fitzgerald's 'Jazz Age' novella, 'The Great Gatsby', all deal with the impacts of threats and dangers on relationships. The variety of possible threats is so extensive, that it is impossible to determine the degree of danger that a relationship is in. ~~however~~ This theme is challenging for readers since it forces us to determine <sup>for</sup> ourselves, whether or not the relationship can withstand the pressures.



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Three texts are identified and some common features are linked to the topic with some skill.  
A good introduction will set the agenda effectively.



## Question 4 (a)

This is a popular option and all of the texts received interesting and engaged responses. There was some evidence that Grace Nichols had been studied by more candidates than in previous sittings and it was rewarding to read thoughtful links about the presentation of women in different times and cultures. There were insightful and surprising links between the wife and how Billy Collins presented his very different cultural world.

The concept of self was a clear preoccupation and the ways in which it was related to time and place were often carried out with considerable insight. The comparisons between Pi and Pip, Ruby and the wife, and the ways in which they were influenced by the worlds from which they came and the ones in which they found themselves as told through first person narrators provided some thoughtful insights. Apart from the gender issues, the nature of class, race and status in patriarchal societies and how they influenced the characters' perception of and creation of their images of self was often revelatory.

There was some effective use of post-colonial criticism when dealing with *Life of Pi* and perceptive comparisons between Pi and the persona of the fat black woman who each find themselves far away from where they originated. Links between female narrators (the wife, Ruby and the fat black woman, e.g.) provided a range of points about the worlds from which they came and the links between medieval patriarchy, that of the 1950s and the cultural prejudices of post-colonial London, provided plenty of relevant contextual references.

The wife's explicit references to authority and experience found echoes in the other texts too where the latter, in particular, had enormous effects on Pip, Pi and Ruby.

Collins was often used to provide a different, transatlantic, humorous and colloquial voice, and Nichols a Caribbean one to place against the equally diverse voices of Pip, Ruby or Alison.

Two extracts from this essay demonstrate the effectiveness of making links between texts.

Both Pi and Alison inhabit liminal space.  
~~both~~ Indeed, <sup>both</sup> Pi's position ~~is~~ on the lifeboat  
~~is transitory~~ and Alison's place on a pilgrimage  
~~place~~ are transitory. Moreover, Alison's



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The first extract from early in the essay establishes a technique that will be used in more detail later on.

unique when compared to his surroundings, with his individual religious beliefs setting him apart in much the same way that they do for Alison. His childhood home was formative to enabling his religious explorations ~~indeed~~, growing up in Pondicherry, ~~he was on~~ ~~the~~ ~~colonist~~ he was on the threshold of two cultures. <sup>Indeed,</sup> [Pondicherry had been colonised in the 17th century by the French and, to this day, retains much of its European culture as ~~however~~, well as its own India heritage. ~~The mixing of~~ The mixing of these two cultures enabled him to ~~to~~ accept a hybrid of religions and therefore, to develop his identity. In much the same way, place is formative to Ruby's ideology. ~~She~~ Surrounded by western fairytales from a young age, in the words of Parker, 'Ruby cherishes an ~~idealised~~ romanticized ideal of motherhood'. Indeed, she internalises fairytales and therefore believes herself to be a 'changeling' and that her real mother is 'roaming in parallel universe somewhere, ladling out mother's milk the colour of Devonshire cream'.



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The candidate shows some impressive insights and makes a number of relevant links between three texts which move the discussion forward. There is some contextualisation and detailed textual support.



This essay shows how many candidates make textual links on a fairly basic level.

Dickens, Atkinson and Chaucer all present the struggle of finding one's identity in a suffocating society. Pip is seen to face this difficulty after he is opened up to the difference in class in the Victorian era. The forge used to be a 'glit' 'glowing road to manhood and independence' to the protagonist however after seeing the disdain Estella showed to his 'coarse hands' and 'thick boots', ~~with prejudice between class~~ <sup>he</sup> changed ~~his~~ dreams for himself. Despite the forge being his home, <sup>and</sup> the trade being in his nature shown through the metaphor of the 'glowing road' echoing the 'glowing embers' of the workshop, the idealisation of wealth persuades Pip and he sets his sights in a new direction.



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The candidate starts by identifying three texts and then goes on to focus on one of them. The illustrations make some valid points about how setting relates to the presentation of character.

Atkinson displays similar struggles through the character of Bunty who, as Ayako Mizuo writes, is 'chained to the social definition of a 1950s housewife'. This description of Ruby's mother suggests reason for her lack of maternal tenderness as her life is defined by the social expectations of women. The ~~1950s women~~ women of the 1950s were expected to keep the perfect household including all tasks of cooking, cleaning, looking after the children and being the epitome of a good wife. Bunty learns how to be a mother from 'the



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The comments on Atkinson make useful references to the context of the novel's setting in the 1950s and a named critic supports one of the points being made. This is effective enough but it is just about one text.

## Question 4 (b)

Comments on this item are included in the discussion of 4a.

The candidate shows how language is used in the texts under discussion.

A unifying thread between the texts could also be that all three writers use language as a means of presenting how characters learn from their experience of the world. Ruby's mastery of language contributes to the bildungsroman genre element of the novel by signposting her development as a character. The importance of language acquisition is signalled by Ruby's elation upon learning to read, conveyed through the ~~abundant~~ <sup>use of</sup> exclamation marks ("I am powerful!... "R-U-B-Y spells Ruby!") Her growing confidence in language reflects her growing confidence in her own identity: by the end of the novel, she is proficient enough in two languages to make a living from translating "English technical books into Italian", and has finally reached a stage of self-confidence and self-acceptance, seen in her final assertion of identity: "I am Ruby Lennox". The focus on education may also be significant ~~in~~ due to the fact that Ruby's ~~was~~ generation was among the first where it became more common for women to pursue higher education, although Ruby in fact <sup>obtained her education without attending university.</sup> Similarly, Nichols uses language to

present how the Fat Black Woman's identity is shaped by her unique cultural experience

of the world. ~~the~~ The hybridity of Creole and standard English ("de weather so cold"; "de pretty face salesgals") shows how the Fat Black Woman has learnt from <sup>her personal</sup> experience of the world in order to the sense that she has drawn from both aspects of her cultural background, <sup>the Caribbean and the Western,</sup> in order to construct a unique and interesting sense of identity. This notion that ~~language~~



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In this extract the links between texts are developed in some detail. The sense of form is achieved in the appropriate reference to 'bildungsroman'. The discussion on language is detailed and well-illustrated, the link to the second text is managed smoothly and the discussion of language leads to some contextual comments.

### **Question 5 (a)**

Although this was the least popular option, and the answers were therefore few in number, we nevertheless read a small selection of interesting discussions that linked the two Caribbean novels. One examiner had seen a thoughtful script that explored the presentation of how the main female characters in the novels, Leila, Hortense and Queenie, behave in relation to social convention.

### **Question 5 (b)**

See the comments on 5a.

## Question 6 (a)

This was a popular option with many answers on each of the three novels and a solid range of poems from the two anthologies, concentrating on some popular choices. We saw little evidence of answers on *Legion*.

The (a) and (b) questions were roughly equal in popularity. This discussion combines comments on both questions.

The oppositions of 'impassioned' and 'futility' in the (a) question were dealt with in a variety of ways with greater emphasis on the latter. There did seem to be some uncertainty about how to interpret 'impassioned'. Owen's *Futility* was used not merely to pose the question, 'Was it for this the clay grew tall?' but to move into more existential territory. Uncle Peter in *Spies* was used in responses to both questions to explore both the futility of his fate and the ways in which the personal and the patriotic interacted. By way of contrast a number of responses dealt with *The Battle of Maldon* and were mature enough to discuss the very different contemporary take on war and to make the link with the ironic use of the Latin in *Dulce et Decorum Est*.

There was some detailed close reading of some of the poems which resulted in some high A02 scores. *American Football* and *How to Kill* provided some especially detailed responses.

Uncle Peter's fate was often sensitively linked to Sassoon's *Suicide in the Trenches* and the PTSD of many of the characters in *The Ghost Road* and even in *The Kite Runner*. Uncle Peter's initial presentation as the hero in the silver frame and his later incarnation as a tramp was often discussed with a high level of sensitivity. He was used in responses to both questions to present the irony of how the presentation of the patriotic is inevitably a delusion. *The Ghost Road* was similarly used to demonstrate the futility of war as exemplified by Hallet's repeated 'Shotvarfet' in contrast to Major Hallet's 'Oh, it is worth it, it is.'

Examiners were impressed by the ways in which authorial intentions and involvement informed their interpretation of *The Kite Runner*. Better answers explored the contrasts in cultures between the Afghanistan presented at the beginning of the novel and on Amir's return, as well as the ways in which the characters have to adjust culturally to life in the United States, and the conflicts they give rise to. Several candidates observed that Assef's portrayal as the embodiment of the racial and religious prejudice in the novel was part of Hosseini's need to engage an American audience.

Other good contextual points included references to Jessie Pope's *Who's for the Game*, historical knowledge of the Afghanistan war, and Pat Barker's family involvement with both world wars.

There was generally a balance between 'personal' and 'the patriotic' although some candidates chose to write an essay about 'personal' and then one about 'patriotic'.

Although the two extracts from this essay focus on individual texts they do so at a high level of accomplishment.



Pat Barker's 20th century novel, 'The Ghost Road'; ~~has~~<sup>shows</sup> a clear presence of <sup>war's</sup> ~~of~~ futility, in literature. Barker exposes her fictional character of Billy Prior to the horrors of war, to the extent that he becomes ~~so~~ desensitised to its effects, one could say almost impassioned, ~~for instance,~~ to war. For instance, Prior's description of comrade Hallet's injuries are seen in the words, "Brain exposed, a lot of blood. One eye gone." The inventory of detail, in this first-person narrative, shows ~~us~~ how Prior has become inured to suffering for the means of his own survival. The noun "exposed" implies ~~to~~ the state of being ~~uncover~~ unprotected, something raw which we'd rather leave covered but unfortunately for Prior, he is forced to see what he'd rather avoid. The utter contrast between ~~the~~ the reaction of Prior's and that of a modern audience shows ~~how~~<sup>the</sup> ~~progression~~ ~~and~~ ~~is~~ striking. Barker in the latter, she strives to individualise pain and break it free, however Prior's medical-type report gives no identity and is impassioned ~~at~~<sup>at</sup> the towards suffering. As the novel ~~progressed~~<sup>progresses</sup> we ~~learn~~<sup>learn</sup> ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~outcome~~ of ~~that~~ witness the exclamations of Hallet ringing through the hospital, "Shotvafet", ~~as~~<sup>as</sup> and as we discern his mumblings to be "it's not worth it", we wonder whether war is worth the pain, for outcomes such as Hallet's, futile state. It is interesting that a real survivor<sup>of the war,</sup> only



a few years ago, expressed the same sentiments as Hallett, W.W.I soldier, Harry Patch who claimed "the war wasn't worth even one life", retaining the same sense of bitterness and sorrow.



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The comments on Barker show detailed textual references and clear focus on the topic. The candidate is successful in showing how the writer achieves her effects.

Another protester of ~~the~~ war and its cause is Wilfred Owen, who wrote 'Dulce Et Decorum Est' in 1917 ~~just~~ after his handover to Craiglockhart, in response to the jingoistic verses of Jessie Pope's 'Who's For the Game'. A woman who greatly trivialised ~~going into~~ war for recruitment purposes. ~~His poem talks~~ <sup>Owen</sup> ~~He~~ writes passionately in protest of war and its futility, wherein in 'Dulce Et Decorum Est' describes a nameless 'someone' who ~~who~~ stripped bare in a gas attack, which goes ~~onto~~ on to dominate the rest of the poem. The opening spondee of lines 1, 2

and 6 ~~to~~ serve to attract our attention, as do the phrases "all-lame" and "blood-shed", ~~which~~ The terms "shod" and "lame" are reminiscent of slaughterhouses and horses which serves to remind us ~~at~~ <sup>that</sup> ~~how~~ the men are barely human at this point, and their senses are all but compromised as they struggle on to their "distant rest". The dislocation of feeling ~~and the futility~~ is further reinforced in the present continuous: "guttering", "choking" and "drowning", in which the memorable ~~part~~ 'rule of three' pattern embeds itself in the long-time psyche of the reader. The verb "guttering" is particularly unsettling; ~~a~~ a candle gutters as it goes out for air, just as ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> man dies for lack of oxygen. Therefore, This ~~objective~~ objectification of the men shows us how the values of humanity have been turned on their head, in the futility that is war. ✱

The section on Owen shows similar qualities to the previous example. The use of contexts and the detailed exploration of the language are very focused.

Barker's *The Ghost Road* seeks to present the realities of the front line through a metafictional account of the lives of Billy Prior, ~~mean~~ men at the front line and patients of Rivers, all of whom in some way bear the emotional impact of war. Hallet's death is used to present the loss of identity and voice war causes. 'His voice was a slurred whisper. "Shot warble."' Hallet's physical injury has distorted his speech, with 'shot warble' not only being an amalgamation of the words 'it's not worth it,' but also a synecdoche for the millions of World War I victims who could not communicate their feelings and anger at war as a result of death or injury. It <sup>this does</sup> ~~nothing~~ <sup>not</sup> convey ~~the sense~~ that war is futile, nothing does, especially as Hallet's ~~own~~ final words go ignored by his father. 'Oh it is worth it, ~~that~~ it is.' Major Hallet's denial of his son's views parallels the refusal of society to understand the brutality of war, ~~knowing~~ which had been disguised by government propaganda and restricted press. ~~That~~ This ~~also~~ mirrors Wendell Berry's idea that 'the distinguishing characteristic of absolute despair is silence.' That Hallet ~~is ignored by his father~~ <sup>cannot communicate</sup> Gully is effectively silence, and the despair

instates ~~then~~ just how unnecessary his death really is.

Hallet's loss of voice is similar to Denise Levertov's presentation of the Vietnamese people who were damaged by the tragic and harsh napalm attacks they carried out by the U.S.A. Levertov uses the motif of the 'burned mouth' to show the lack of freedom and extensiveness of the attacks: to even harm their communication. ~~Even then,~~ The dynamic material verb 'burned' is present, permanent and lethal damage to their bodies and voices. This is extended by the noun 'echo' to represent what is left of their voice, which becomes a scar of the American Exceptionalism. Seymour Martin Lipset described and their ~~the~~ disgusting and excited attitudes to war. ~~The~~ This loss of identity is even present in the work itself, with Levertov referencing 'Vietnam.' There is a true hegemony here, as the country is actually known as 'Viet Nam' however in Western language and ~~ignorant~~ ignorance. Levertov is not ~~here~~ being ~~ignorant~~ seeking here to offend the Vietnamese, but instead is just another victim of Western attitudes which made it acceptable to mutilate

a country like Vietnam in the first place as opposed to the taking measured and appropriate action free of a political agenda. This concept mirrors the views of Michael Billington, who proposed that 'death is smothered in the language of technology and bureaucracy.' Indeed, both America's desire to ~~destroy~~<sup>eradicate</sup> communism as well as its access to lethal technology in the form of napalm became the catalysts that enabled it to oppress a country in such a way. This is what many poets and artists



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This essay shows some detailed discussion of *The Ghost Road* with some particularly sensitive analysis of Hallet's use of language in his death scene and a perceptive and effective link to the Levertov poem.



This essay shows links between texts although the discussion focuses on one at a time.

Hosseini ~~succeeds~~ is effectively conveys the harsh side of war by portraying Assef's ~~psi~~ inhumane treatment of Sohrab (Hassan's son) as he sexually abuses of him too and becomes his slave, having "his eyes darkened with mascara [and] bells strapped around his anklets". In this way, we are able to observe how during the war, the Taliban took ~~people's~~ dignity away from people and treated them ~~with~~ as animals, 'bells' around Sohrab's ankles, ~~however~~ which left Sohrab with a trauma as he was a child exposed to violence.

Similarly, we may observe the ~~facility~~ of war in Michael Frayn's "Spies", who wrote ~~this~~ <sup>a quite</sup> ~~quite~~ <sup>as critics</sup> ~~real~~ <sup>real</sup> disturbing confusing novel full of vague memories about his experience during World War II. In this way, it is through the character of Uncle Peter who is at first portrayed "like a saint" reflecting his glory, found out to be a tramp, and ~~so~~ making us readers not able to forget the harshness of war. We discover he is in reality a tramp, which makes us question ~~to~~ the bravery <sup>image like</sup> of soldiers that was enhanced in the propaganda during warfare. Propaganda was used



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Individual comments are quite well-managed with some relevant quotations but the rather perfunctory link keeps the AO3 level fairly low.

## Question 6 (b)

See the comments on 6a.

Owen wrote 'my subject is war and the pity of war. The poetry is in the pity.' Through his poem 'Dulce et decorum est' he shows the graphic nature of war through explicit descriptions such as 'the blood... gurgling from the froth corrupted lungs'. The onomatopoeic word 'gurgling' creates a really horrible image which almost makes you cringe. He wrote it in response to the 'Patriotic' writer Jessie Pope and sought to challenge the optimistic perception of war. Although images of the atrocities of war have become ubiquitous in modern society due to the development of media such as TV and the internet; the images provided by Owen will always provide an emotional impact due to the fact he witnessed it first hand - having fought and died during WWI. These same ~~same~~ descriptions of the gruesome nature of war are also present in the work of Chaucer, showing that the mentality of man has failed to change for centuries. He wrote 'the colde deeth, with mouth ~~gurgling~~ gaping upright' (from The Knight's Tale); it provides the impression of a lifelessness and dehumanised body. These horrific details of war contrast to the stereotypical acts of honour on the battlefield and create an interesting conflict for the reader.





**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Page 5 bottom paragraph 'Owen wrote' down to page 6 'an interesting contrast for the reader'. (The whole of the paragraph.)



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

The discussion of Owen's presentation of war is contrasted with Chaucer's in *The Knight's Tale*.

## ***Section A***

These scripts are those which have not been numbered by the candidate.

## ***Section B***

These scripts are those which have not been numbered by the candidate.

## Paper Summary

Based on the performance of this year's paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure that you are addressing the precise wording of the question
- Address all aspects of the question
- Do not be afraid to challenge the terms of the question if you can put up a contrary case and back it up from the texts you have studied
- Make sure that you hit all the relevant assessment objectives
- Write clearly and legibly in a literary style
- Always back up points with a brief quotation or textual reference
- Take time to choose the question that will show you at your best
- Do not forget to refer to different possible ways in which your texts can be appreciated.
- Three texts are identified and some common features are linked to the topic with some skill.
- A good introduction will set the agenda effectively.

## **Grade Boundaries**

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

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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