

# Re-creative Writing Resource

OCR English Literature

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# 1 Introduction

## Re-Creative Writing

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There are three parts to this resource:

1. **Re-creative writing**  
What it is and what it is not
2. **Exemplar re-creative writing**  
Examples of coursework offered in the Summer 2009 session which were felt to be appropriately marked and which illustrate different points on the mark scheme – essential for determining the standard by consulting work from different genres
3. **“Trial” re-creative writing** – work that was offered in the Summer 2009 session and moderated down; read the essays and assign a mark and then check the commentaries. This is an ideal section for getting your marking level right before finalising marks on your own submissions.

All work reproduced in this booklet has been reproduced from candidates' original coursework folders; spelling and grammatical errors have been retained.

## 2 Re-creative Writing

### What is it? What is it not?

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This is writing produced by the candidate, which recreates the themes, concerns, style and “world” of a studied text. It will most probably take the form of a passage insert in a **novel** such as a memory of Offred with her daughter before Gilead (*The Handmaid’s Tale*) or another example of Hassan’s devotion to Amir (*The Kite Runner*); or a missing scene from a **drama text** such as further examples of language at play in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* or another Aston monologue in Pinter’s *The Caretaker*; or a Plath pastiche **poem** to Ted Hughes in the style of “Daddy” or “Mother Medusa” (Ariel) or another elegy capturing the interests of Douglas Dunn.

The poetry examples illustrate something of a grey area in terms of re-creative work. Re-creation is not pure original writing although it allows candidates to show individual insight and inventiveness as well textual knowledge. This means that tasks such as the following on *Sons and Lovers* are too loose; re-creation should take on board the characters and situations of novels, not create new figures and new sets of relationships.

*This coursework assignment was set after close textual study of the novel. The passage on which the students’ re-creative responses was based (see Appendix 1) was chosen by the teacher as a good example of the literary techniques Lawrence employs to convey the theme of parent/child relations, particularly the contrasting relationships a son has with his mother and his father. The students were set to produce a piece of prose, as far as possible in emulation of Lawrence’s writing style that involves a similar triangle of relationships, though not necessarily familial.*

However, with poetry and maybe also with short stories, there is a sense in which the length of the form might preclude extra writing. What would be the point of additional characters being created for Carol Anne Duffy’s “Comprehensive” or extra paragraphs in Angela Carter’s “The Werewolf” where sparseness and playing with archetypes are key features? However, there is no hard and fast ruling here; with certain texts, probably ones of a more psychological nature, taking characters in *Dubliners* further or exploring back story in Katherine Mansfield short stories would be highly appropriate activities.

Similarly, it is easy to say that changing the genre of a text is not what is required. Indeed, such an exercise probably constitutes a text transformation assignment. However, certain texts would allow for different genres to be inserted among their pages; for instance, a number of letters are suggested by *Death of a Salesman* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* and extra Christabel LaMotte poems could be created for *Possession* by A.S. Byatt.

Going back to poetry, while it is advisable to respond to one or two poems from a collection specifically, there is probably a need to think laterally. For instance, a poem about Heaney’s father in the vein of “Digging” and “Follower” would probably read as a tired retread, but a poem about life on a farm taking its main cues from these texts would probably have legs. In *The World’s Wife*, Carol Anne Duffy picks up female figures from history, myth, the Bible, fairytales and gives them a voice, but having spoken so memorably why should they speak again? Having made their points surely to keep going over the same ground would weaken their arguments? It makes sense here for other marginalized ladies to be found and articulated; the address to Duffy’s collection coming from the stylistic imitation and a range of poems being cited in the commentary accompanying the created text.

Think carefully through different projects to see if they are close enough to the base text, but allow your students to play to their writing strengths. More often than not, students will be telling more of the tale, providing a missing dialogue, plugging a gap in events; but sometimes they will be writing in the spirit of the writer – in such cases, likely to be poetry re-creation, the test will be the extent to which a range of typical themes have been picked up and investigated in a new piece of verse.

One trick that Centres may be missing at the moment is the sub-genre option: science fiction, detective, horror, noir, Gothic. Obviously the possibility of these sub-genres depends on the text studied and it may be that Centres do not want to look at novels such as *The Big Sleep* or *Oryx and Crake* or *The Wasp Factory* for this option. However, texts such as *The World's Wife* or *Cloud Atlas* would allow Centres access to genre options without the whole of the study time for the text being devoted to one sub-genre.

If in any doubt about the appropriateness of a re-creative idea, then teachers should consult OCR's Coursework Consultancy Service. A senior moderator will give you advice and comments on your chosen texts and tasks.

However, another way of looking at the question of what is re-creative writing is by looking at how the piece will be marked and what assessment objectives are driving the allocation of marks.

For the first piece of coursework for the F662 folder, the candidate needs to supply a text and a commentary and to target AO1 and AO2, but the latter more substantially as it is double weight. Most of the points in the marking grid (see Appendix ....) refer to the commentary rather than the text so the commentary should be the longer of the two pieces by some way. If, for instance, one is allowing 1200 words for this task out of the maximum 3000 for the folder as a whole, then it makes sense for 400 words to be given to the text and 800 to the commentary. In terms of material in the commentary, two thirds should be points about form, structure and language and only a third character, relationships, theme, plot and context.

Because re-creative work focuses on a small portion of a text, it is also important in the commentary that a sense of **wider textual knowledge** is conveyed. There should be references to other points in a novel, other scenes in a play, about four or five poems from a collection, or three short stories from a short story collection so that whole text knowledge is not questioned during assessment.

**Now, with the above points in mind, have a look at the following three texts and commentaries. They are not strictly valid for Task One of F662. Why not? How could they be made to fit the requirements?**

## Example A

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### Re-creative coursework based on 'Sons and Lovers' by D. H. Lawrence

A golden morning sat on the fields of Saint Gauden. The wife lay in the wheat, quietly taking in the scene, the smells and the sounds around her. To her the wheat has such an easy life; it was planted, it grew, was harvested by the men in the summer and it was used by the women to cook. Life to her seemed so much harder, full of complications and constant trials, so hard at times it was incomprehensible. The allure of the wickedly sinful treats and pleasures of the flesh and mind taunted her and haunted her dreams like a phantom of the night.

Her serenity was soon broken by a rustle in the grass to her right. The wind was gentle, pushing the wheat softly, so she knew that her guest had arrived. The sun beat down lovingly on the young man's face, lighting favourably his most appealing features. The warmth given by the guest's smile lightened her heavy heart and she knew at last she would splendour in a heavenly break from her normal life with the man she had married.

At a young age she had been forced into a marriage with a man 5 years her elder. The gossips of the town told of how he was a violent drunk and the wife quickly discovered how true gossip could be. How vividly she remembered the day of her marriage, how she has attempted, somewhat half-heartedly, to escape and flee, and how whole-heartedly her husband had told her he despised her, reaching new levels of anger that he had not felt in himself before, after finding her in the bridal suite hastily packing away her most treasured items and her clothes. "What is this?" he had bellowed so loudly the entire village had heard, "not even married a minute and running away! Slut! I have done you no wrong and yet you try to disgrace my name." It had been the same ever since, every day, putting up with his insults, his torrents of abuse and occasionally his fist coming down heavily on her cheeks. How she hated him and yet she dared not try to run again. Instead she hid herself in a world of deceit. Secretly attending illicit meetings on the fields north of the village as early as possible so as not to be seen by a nosy housewife out on her duties or a farmhand leaving grudgingly for work. Both knew what they did was wrong and yet both continued, knowing as all do, that the world should not judge two people in love, no matter the circumstances.

The lover sat in the wheat next to the wife and pressed his lips tenderly against hers. A feeling, a passion, a freedom was released that her husband would never give her and so the wheat, sitting tranquilly nearby, blowing softly in the wind, look on at the lovers with unsuspecting eyes and lived its easy life.

### Commentary

In the passage taken from the novel 'Sons and Lovers' D H Lawrence uses a variety of literary and poetic techniques to portray a contrast in relationships between certain characters. I have chosen to write my re-creative piece using three characters and two different relationships to create a triangle of love that is similar to that in Lawrence's novel. Unlike Lawrence's novel however, where the author explores the relationship of a son and his mother and a son and his father, my piece focuses on a wife, her husband and her lover.

In this section of the book and indeed throughout his novel Lawrence uses a third person narrative and changes perspective sporadically; to emulate Lawrence's style I have chosen to do the same, changing from the wife's perspective ("Life to her seemed so much harder") to the husband's ("reaching new levels of anger he had not felt before"), to the lover's and then to a general perspective ("Both knew what they did was wrong and yet both continued") as Lawrence does in his own passage. The author's style is also mirrored in my re-creative piece by the use of a short, sharp opening sentence. Whereas Lawrence uses "Paul was laid up with an attack of bronchitis" I have used "a golden morning sat on the fields of Saint Gauden: to set the scene and open my piece. It could also be argued that, like Lawrence, I have used the natural image of fields repeatedly in my piece.

'Sons and Lovers' contains excessive amounts of adverbs such as "softly", "silently" and "undecidedly" I too have used this technique to re-create Lawrence's style using "half-heartedly", "tenderly" and "heavily." I, unlike Lawrence, who uses adverbs to allow readers to have a deeper insight into the action that is unfolding, have used adverbs to show a contrast in relationship using the word "softly: when the wife is with her lover and the word :heavily: when she is with her husband. As well as adverbs Lawrence uses the poetic device of a simile ("like swallows") to add depth to his writing and create certain images he wants the reader to see, something I, again, have done using "like a phantom of the night" to describe a dream. Lawrence also uses the rhetorical device of a rule of three to emphasise a specific word or in the case of 'Sons and Lovers' a feeling;

"...the joy of finding something, the joy of accepting something straight from the hand of Nature and the joy of contributing to the family exchequer."

In my re-creative piece I have used a rule of three to emphasise the feeling between the two lovers ("the feeling, the passion, the freedom.") In his piece Lawrence also uses dialogue to create and evoke feelings within his characters and as a tool for character development. A prime example of this is where Mr Morel is attempting to talk to Paul saying "are ter asleep darling?" showing how he would like to be and tried to be a caring and sometimes better father to his children. In the piece I have written to emulate Lawrence's style I too have used dialogue to develop the character of the husband and explain on the "gossip" of the town. The fact that the dialogue is "bellowed so loudly the entire village heard" illustrates how volatile the husband is, a fact backed up by the excessive use of exclamation marks in the section of dialogue.



## Example B

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### Re-creative Writing with Commentary Based on an extract from 'Ashes to Ashes'

Amanda in her mid twenties  
Richard in his late twenties

A house in Outer London.  
In the Kitchen, with two large French windows, open.

Early afternoon, summertime.  
A hot, airless day.

Amanda is sitting in a large chair looking out into the audience.  
Richard is by the Kitchen island, behind Amanda.

Amanda: It's terribly hot.

Richard: Come away from the window.

Amanda: I want to stay here ... it's peaceful ... relaxing.

Richard: You're hot ... you should move away.

Amanda: Pour me a glass of water ... would you?

It's terribly hot here.

Richard turns and pours water from a jug on the island, turns and hands to Amanda.

Amanda takes a long sip from her glass.

Amanda: I used to sit here ... waiting.

Richard: When?

Amanda: I was waiting for you.

Pause

I sat and waited ... for you.

Richard: When was this?

Amanda: I'd watch all of the children walking home ... with their mothers.

Pause

I would remember ours.

Silence

Three years now. I would be walking home with him.

Richard: What's that got to do with now?

Amanda: I never forget Richard ... I never want to ... yet (sigh) we must.

Pause

We must go on ...

Yet ... we can't go on.

Richard: (in a noticeable sharper tone) Why were you waiting for me?

Silence

Amanda: it wasn't the first time you know.

Richard: The first time for what?

Amanda: Did I never tell you?

Richard: No never.

Amanda: I'm sure I told you.

Richard: You didn't.

Amanda: (takes another sip from her glass) I was only eighteen ... I thought he loved me.

Pause

I couldn't keep it. He didn't want it. I wanted him ... not that.

It was so easy ...

Richard: What about the father?

Amanda: He went. I waited ... but he went.

Silence

Richard: I'm sorry.

Amanda: I sit...and wait... and see children with their mothers.

Sometimes I miss them ... sometimes I miss you.

Richard: (Sigh) What do you mean? I'm here now. With you, what do you want? How can you miss me? I'm here.

Silence

I don't know what you want? What do you want?

Amanda: I feel sad ... terribly sad.

Richard: Why?

Amanda: Every time I see children I think of ours. Of mine.

Pause

And I want them back ... laughing, playing.

Richard: You made that choice ... darling we love on. I have, so must you?

Amanda: I'm your darling. They were mine.

Richard: You're not alone.

Amanda: I am without them.

Richard: You have me.

Amanda: But I don't have them.

Richard moves behind Amanda, lays his hands on her shoulders.

## Commentary

In the light of reading 'Ashes to Ashes', I decided to write an imaginary dialogue between a man, Richard, and a woman, Amanda, adopting some of Pinter's methods and techniques that typically are present in Pinter's dramatic.

In many of his plays Pinter created an environment that was uninviting and uncomfortable. His characters in various plays were violent, domineering and menacing. An example of this is the character Max in the play 'The Homecoming'. In 'Ashes to Ashes' the two characters differed from these usual characteristics, and I decided to convey my characters in a friendlier, softer way.

They are a young couple, who live in London and live a normal city life, with the husband working in the city. Amanda is a woman who emotionally is weak and still grieving for the two children that she lost when she was younger. Richard is frequently frustrated and made uneasy with Amanda's behaviour, and I have used this by changing the tone of his voice when addressing Amanda.

A typical characteristic of Pinter's plays is that the audience feels that something is being withheld from them. The characters regularly hint at what is being withheld, but never directly address the subject. In this dialogue it is the untold story of what happened to Richards and Amanda's child. The audience is told by Amanda that the child would have been three years, yet we do not know what happened to the child. *'Three years now. I would be walking home with him.'*

A technique which I have mimicked is the use of ellipsis. This technique is used to emphasize how Amanda is uncertain of what she is saying. It also heightens the tension as it prolongs sentences. I have also adopted the famous effect of using silences pauses. I have used this to extend the tension which has been created whilst Amanda is talking to Richard. These pauses and silences allow the audience to digest what the characters have said and also to convey the emotions that the characters are feeling. Words do not always need to be spoken as it is sometimes more powerful to use pauses and silences to convey the message, and I have done this.

Pinter usually creates similar characters in all of his plays. They tend to be working class people, living in inner London. Normally, Pinter emphasizes the character's diction and uses powerful language. He uses strong and harsh sounding words, which can intimidate the audience. I have chosen to not use strong language, as my characters are not menacing or threatening. They have no accents as they are not Londoners. They only live there.

In all of his plays, Pinter uses repetition regularly. I have also used this method, as it conveyed Amanda sense of loneliness and weakness. She comes across as being confused and sad, and these are the feelings that I wanted to be conveyed. Just through repetition, the audience can see how the character feels and direct words have needed to be used.

In conclusion, I have gone away from Pinter's usual violent environment, and have attempted to

create an environment that is uncertain and familiar, but not uncomfortable.

## Example C

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### Write in the style of a chosen author An extract in the style of Khaled Hosseini

July 1948

It was 1921. I was a ten year old boy, not a care in the world, but my life was turned upside down in just one day. One moment I was playing in the middle of Water Ridge Park and the other, taking cover behind a fallen tree, shielding my ears from the sound of gun fire and children screaming. I was told as a child you should forget the past, concentrate on the future and move on. People who say that haven't seen, or been through what I have. That day, and the days that followed, still torment me till this very day.

I sat in a dark, dank and odd smelling cafe in the heart of Dublin. It was nine am, and I was up early. This was for two reasons. Firstly, I couldn't sleep last night. It sounds like this is the first time it has happened but if I am honest, I have not slept properly for the past twenty seven years. Secondly today was a special day, the anniversary of the day that changed my life for good.

I sat staring through the steamed up window of the cafe. I gazed into the street; it stretched before me like a terrible nightmare. The sun glinted off the water of the lake in the middle of Water Ridge Park, the same park when my life was changed for good, making the lake seem a horrible illusion. The warped reflection of the world shimmered in the shop windows. The wind swirled around, picking up leaves and dumping them a couple of feet away. I saw people pass the window without a care in the world I thought to myself if only they knew what I knew and had seen what I had seen, they would be far different. They took it all for granted as I did twenty seven years ago and I can never forgive myself for that. The trees they leant against, the parks they sat in and the shops they sued, turned to rubble in front of my very eyes as I recalled that horrendous day again and again in my mind, as I had been doing for nearly three decades.

I opened my hand and looked down on the small crumpled piece of paper and read out the name under my breath 'Cane Bisping'. There was a phone number scribbled underneath.

I thought of ringing the number. I looked away, back onto the life I despised and then I realised I had been putting off this moment since that fateful day on August 21st 1921 and that I owed it to my family to confront my past.

### Commentary

In my pastiche I have tried to incorporate Khaled Hosseini literary styles and techniques. *The Kite Runner* follows the life of Amir, who is the narrator, looking back his life on experiences that changes his life as a child and subsequently have affected him as an adult.

*The Kite Runner* was released in 2003 around the time the war in Iraq was taking place and therefore it had some relevance to the time period. I have tried to do the same, I had set mine in 1921 around the time of the IRA wars in Ireland so in my piece I can relate a bit to that and set it in the parts which were affected by the wars. I have set mine in Dublin which was one of the main areas affected and 1921 is the date I use and that was when the main attacks happened.

Also in *The Kite Runner* opening section Amir, the narrator, only introduces one of two characters, himself although he doesn't mention his name, Hassan his servant and friend and Rahim Khan and Baba but Hassan, Rahim and Baba are only mentioned in one or two lines. I have tried to do the same, I establish a narrator but I don't mention there name yet you know they are the main

character and I also introduce one more character 'Cane Bipsing' but like Khaled Hosseini he is only in one line.

My pastiche is around 400 words long and in that I have tried to emulate his sentence type, length, the words he uses the scenes he sets and his punctuation. Firstly the punctuation and grammar he uses. For example he uses apostrophes in the opening sentence and later on in the book, so I have done the same, so instead of 'was not' I use 'wasn't' like he does. He writes 'I've learned' and 'it's wrong', Also *The Kite Runner* is written in the first person I have done the same as the style of Khaled Hosseini is that he put as much emotion into the novel as possible and I think this is done effectively by writing in first person, he writes 'I became what I am today at the age of twelve' this shows that he has realised what a significant moment of his life this was which makes the story seem more real and you can believe the narrator. I have written, 'I was a ten year old boy, not a care in the world, but my life was turned upside down in just one day' I have tried to create the same trust between reader and narrator and make the story more personal. He also begins the story with a date 'December 2001' I have done the same 'July 1948' this sets the time period so you can relate to that in the novel.

I have tried to set the opening scene in the same way he did, someone looking back to when they were younger and slightly reliving something changed their life. He wrote, 'Looking back now, I realize I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty six years.' I haven't copied it but I liked the way he showed him looking into a place where the experience that changed him happened so I wrote, 'Secondly today was a special day, the anniversary of the day that changed my life for good.' This shows him reminiscing about the day that changed his life and introduces a sense of time so you know what age he is and when it happened.

I think Khaled Hosseini uses sentences to show that the narrator, Amir, is an average person which makes the story more powerful as it isn't happening to a prince or a celebrity it's just a normal person, he writes, 'I sat on a park bench near a willow tree' and 'Standing in the kitchen with the receiver to my ear' These two lines to me show how he is an average person because when I picture them in my head it isn't fancy it seems like a normal everyday event in life and that makes the story more impressive as when you get stories about people who save other people's lives and survive war they usually have something very outstanding about them for example military training or a lot of money but he is a very young average twelve year old. I have tried to do the same by setting the beginning in a cafe that is described as 'dark, dank and odd smelling cafe' which shows he isn't doing something that is extraordinary, going to a cafe for breakfast and at that not a very nice cafe.

So overall I think I have imitated Khaled Hosseini's opening of *The Kite Runner* well in my opening to a novel by using techniques he uses.

# 3 Re-creative writing exemplars with Moderator's comments

## Candidate A

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### *Saturday* by Ian McEwan

Henry and Rosalind's courtship

As those beautiful round green eyes lit up and opened wide to take in hungrily her surroundings, Henry realised the extent of the fear she had of losing her sight. As she began to focus on his face, he felt himself drawn towards her, unable to take his own eyes off hers - which were now scanning his face - yearning to be the one to whom she articulated her new conscious feelings. He asked her - probably rather unprofessionally - if he could tend to her needs in any way: would she like some water, a book or an extra pillow? The pleasure that he was taking in her company was abruptly curtailed as Whaley arrived at her bedside conducting the post-op checks. Henry was brushed aside as the consultant undertook his duties with impersonal professionalism. She would be granted discharge from the hospital in a few days, thrown out again into the storm of everyday life with the typically detached finality of an experienced registrar. He was alarmed at the thought of the girl behind those large clear eyes facing the world by herself; she has not yet had any visitors or mentioned any family she thought she thought should be contacted. Henry's attention was focused elsewhere for the afternoon, on an obese young male in need of a rectal hyperplasia after suffering a jejunoileal bypass, and it was nearing five o'clock when he found his way back to Rosalind's ward. His white coat - all the doctors were advised to wear them for hygiene reasons, although Henry's view was that in fact wearing the same coat every day militated against antiseptic cleanliness - was significantly less gleaming than it has been before his afternoon's excursions and he attempted to smooth it down and smarten himself up as he approached her bedside. She was sleeping.

In the subsequent days, his fascination with her was chiefly sexual. On entering her ward he would feel the heat spread through his body. He might catch her eye from the other side of the room or brush her hand when he passed over a food tray and subsequently he felt the tightening of the trousers that became increasingly pleasurable and urgent as he spent more time with Rosalind.

Henry, looking at her now, snuggled into his chest on her side in the recovery position, can clearly recall that she slept in the same position that day in the hospital; because he always sleeps on his back, he always finds it hard to understand how this can be comfortable. Henry suspects Daisy would know a Sylvia Plath poem describing an unhappy woman in just such a position, but to his mind the position is more reminiscent of a foetus in its mother's womb. Henry can remember the day when he watched Rosalind asleep in her hospital bed because it was also marked by the sinking of the *Belgrano*. Henry deplored the 'Gotcha' headline in *The Sun* the next day but could not help enjoying the application of the headline to himself: his heart had truly been captured by this young, beautiful and unknown girl who had almost lost the use of those wonderful green eyes, the green of army fatigues.

### Candidate Commentary:

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This passage would be inserted on page forty-five after the paragraph finishing '...but in a matter of hours it would be.'

In this passage the narrator's voice is very closely linked with Henry's because it is describing very personal memories; it is for this reason that he is referred to as Henry and not 'Perowne' which McEwan uses for more detached, professional moments. The long sentences with many clauses,

for example the one starting 'As she began to focus in on his face...' are intended to capture the relaxed, happy state of mind he would experience while letting his thoughts wander through a favourite memory, recalling more and more specific details as he becomes increasingly absorbed in the image. The dashes are characteristic of McEwan's style and are used to facilitate the adding of extra detail to the scene, making it vividly imaginable to the reader; these are also included in Henry's recollection of his white doctor's coat.

The first paragraph of this piece also includes medical terminology to reflect Henry's occupation. The mention of a 'rectal hyperplasia' and a 'jejunoileal bypass' might contain an element of comedy for the reader in its juxtaposition with the strong romantic feelings Henry is dealing with, and it is characteristic of McEwan in 'Saturday' to use jargon the layman reader is unlikely to understand. The short, blunt final sentence 'She was sleeping' is a contrast to the extended detailed sentences used earlier.

The final paragraph contains a direct comparison between science and literature in Henry's reflections on how his daughter, a poet, would see Rosalind's sleeping position and how he, a scientist, would analyse it: like 'a foetus in its mother's womb'. This paragraph also has a reference to politics and war which is a preoccupation of Henry in 'Saturday'. Earlier in the novel when he has come back up to the bedroom after his conversation with Theo in the kitchen (p.38), Henry slips from his wanderings about sex to thoughts about Saddam Hussain, and this is mimicked here, where he slips from remembering his first days with Rosalind into remembering the major political issue of the day: the sinking of the Belgrano at the start of the Falklands war. The characteristic dashes in the last sentence are followed by a typically surprising image in which the colour of Rosalind's 'wonderful green eyes' is compared to the colour worn by the British army during warfare. This simile reflects one of McEwan's main themes in the novel, the precariousness of happiness.

Most of 'Saturday' is written in the present tense but in much of this passage the past tense is used because I am allowing Henry to recount a memory: a technique McEwan also adopts. The narrative does return to the present, however, when Henry's thoughts return to Rosalind as she is now, in bed beside him.

This passage gives us Henry's point of view but is still presented as though by an omniscient narrator. This is a key technique used by McEwan in Saturday; there is a sense that McEwan gets across his own perspective on many issues by relaying them through Henry. It is often very difficult to distinguish between the narrator's voice and Henry's and in this passage the narration has sunk deep into Henry's perspective as it is his happy memory we are reading. On several occasions in the novel, McEwan presents Henry's thoughts as they happen and his thoughts move by association almost like a stream of consciousness. Moving from his romantic thoughts of Rosalind to his think about the Sun's headline is an example of this from the passage, the change of his thoughts from sex with Rosalind to Saddam Hussain (p. 38) is an example from McEwan's writing. However, the thought processes we see are controlled by the author, though McEwan's technique is well disguised.

From the initial encounter, Henry's feelings for Rosalind are romantic about also sexual. The romanticism is reflected in the general tone of my piece while the 'tightening of his trousers' shows his aroused feelings.

In my passage I have tried to capture the dignity of Henry and his family in what I hope is an elegant written style, employing an educated and cultured vocal register and a suitably sophisticated lexis.

## Moderator's Comments:

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An excellent passage with clear address to themes and style of Saturday by Ian McEwan. It has the precision, detail and articulacy of this great contemporary writer. In the commentary, the candidate contextualises the created insert and then moves on to justifying the focus on "Henry". Throughout the piece, sentence construction, punctuation choices, detail, specialised lexis, structuring, climax, juxtaposition, imagery, tense selection, perspective, voice and tone keep the AO2 requirement of this piece firmly in mind and there are consistently mature and sharp comments on these areas of form, structure and language. The writing shows perception and intelligence.

## Candidate B

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### Re-creative writing inspired by a selection of Heaney poems

#### Paralysed Haystacks

Winter was coming to the farm,  
Settling snow seeped eerie calm  
Into the veins of laborious men.

Wicked winds has come and been,

And I stood on that hill with a fear,  
For what my eyes hadn't seen  
This day, this month, last year.

Looking back two years hence,  
He told me of his life.  
"The journey has been long,  
But in time I won't be so strong"

Today he is silent.

But even now, in the midst of  
The screaming nothingness,  
I hear him, sometimes, speak.

He was defiant, but it made him weak.

Work has to be done, the widow cries,  
However, death now stalks her eyes.  
She tore angry tears from her face.

I told her "Life has a finish line, like any race."

## Candidate Commentary:

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"Paralysed Haystacks" is a Heaneyesque poem focussing on the death of a young boy's grandfather, and the impact his death has had on the lives of those close to him. It is set in rural farmland, which is similar in context to many of Heaney's poems. *Follower* follows the same



father-son theme as my poem and *Ancestral Photograph*, along with others, looks back in the past at ancestors as role models and inspirational figures and this is what has been conveyed in my poem.

The form of my poem is comparable to that of *Mid-term Break* and *Follower*, in that it does not follow a set rhyme scheme. It contains eight stanzas of differing lengths and is similar to *Mid-Term Break* in the way it is structured, especially the last line being separate, to give a powerful ending. I have used the very Heaney-esque techniques to make my poem flow including my frequent use of tercets followed by single line stanzas. I have avoided ending many of my lines with an end stop, to give continuity through the stanzas and also to keep the rhythm of a free verse poem, which Heaney tends to do in his poems *An Advancement of Learning* and *Digging*.

I have named my poem "Paralysed Haystacks" because it has a double meaning and can be interpreted how the reader wishes. On one hand, "paralysed" is used as a metaphor to show how the farm work is now left undone and all that remains is the inactivity of haystacks, but it also symbolises the stillness of death. The point of this is that it gives the reader something to think about when reading through the poem, much like Heaney has done in *Death of a Naturalist*, which when examined thoroughly actually refers to his personal interest in nature being thwarted by an incident in his past rather than physical death.

The poem is written in first person style, and follows a slightly older and more mature version of the narrator looking back on the events before the eventual death of his granddad. Much like Heaney's *Mid-Term Break*, "Paralysed Haystacks" focuses on the impact of the emotionless narrator, not able fully to understand the situation going on around him. This is epitomised in the concluding line, "I told her, "Life has a finish like, like any race." With his grandmother weeping after the death of her husband, this unintentionally cold line demonstrates the narrator's immaturity and inability to recognise the impact of his grandfather's death. In *Mid-Term Break* Heaney says he was "embarrassed, By old men standing up to shake my hand". Similarly, this also shows the narrator's lack of emotion for the young child's passing as he is unable to feel sorry for his brother, but instead can only feel embarrassed because of the attention he is getting.

Natural imagery is a central theme in much of Heaney's poetry, and appears in nearly all of his work, including *Personal Helicon* and *Blackberry-Picking*. My poem also contains natural imagery, and uses the first stanza to set the harsh, cold mood to the poem through the use of winter imagery. "*Wicked winds had come and been*", for example, shows the negative image I am conveying and can be compared to the negative olfactory imagery used in *Personal Helicon*, "*...the smells Of waterweed, fungus and dank moss*". Here the word "*dank*" has connotations to the environment sounding like a dirty, polluting place, and probes the reader to recognise the word alongside "rank" and "skank" because of its rhyme and onomatopoeic sound.

Heaney also delves into the realms of death imagery in some of his poems, most notably in *Mid-Term Break*. The death of the small, healthy child in his poem contrasts to the death of the old, wilting grandfather in mine. The poems are similar though, in the reminiscent type style they share. Death imagery is shown throughout *Mid-Term Break*, "*Paler now*" highlighting the effects of death on the corpse's skin and the "*knelling*" of the bells, which as a monotonous sound reflects the thudding destructive sound of the car hitting the child. "*Seeped eerie calm*" brings out the creepy, dark theme of "Paralysed Haystacks", and the use of "*wicked winds*" is a metaphor for the deadly destructive power of nature, contrasting with the peaceful, natural way in which the old man passed away. The last line of *Mid-term Break* is split from the penultimate stanza to draw focus from the reader and to spawn a more powerful ending.

"...No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

*A four foot box, a foot for every year."*

The final line and penultimate line rhyme which keeps the poem flowing and adds to the climax of the closure of the piece, told with an embittered tone. Keeping to the Heaney-esque theme, I implemented this kind of structure into my poem, following the single line final stanza along with the iambic rhyming couplet and the end stop to add emphasis and recreate the dynamic effect Heaney achieved.

At two separate points in *Paralysed Haystacks*, I have implemented direct speech to mirror Heaney's use of it in *Midterm Break* when he is told "sorry for my trouble". The direct speech in Heaney's poem shows his lack of emotion, and it is not moulded into the text so it can convey his uncertainty and confusion as to why people are saying it to him. He is presenting the narrator as being immature and naive, and this use of direct speech adds to the effect. The quoted speech in my poem is aiming to achieve much the same goal, by showing the narrator had not completely

registered what his grandfather meant when he said "*The journey has been long, But in time I won't be so strong*", but now, after things have panned out and he has grown in maturity he can look back on the words spoken and reflect on how he reacted in the last line, exactly what Heaney is doing.

Heaney also likes to use alliteration and sibilance in his poems, and this is evident in *An Advancement of Learning* and *Blackberry Picking*. He uses sibilance in the third stanza of *An Advancement of Learning* to present his personal fear to the reader. He uses words such as "slimed" and "smudging" to give the stanza a negative, dirty feel. In contrast to this, *Blackberry-picking* contains alliteration through the repetition of B sounds, saying "briars...bleached our boots", "big dark blobs burned" and ends the verse with the mention of "Bluebeard". This gives the poem a more mysterious feel, with the underlying sound of harsh B sounds slowing the rhythm down and related to the title of the poem "*Blackberry-picking*". I think that the point of this is shown in the last line: "Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not." This is representative of wasted time picking them, and wasted time the reader has taken. In *Paralysed Haystacks* there is both alliteration and sibilance, the sibilance in the first stanza "*Settling snow seeped*" has a slightly different reasoning behind it, and instead highlights the severe cruel and cold side of nature but still keeps the negative connotations as seen in *An Advancement of Learning*. The use of "wicked winds" as a form of alliteration adds a sense of personification to nature, giving it a mischievous, dangerous and vicious side, much like in *Blackberry-picking* when Heaney personifies the "lovely canfuls" which gloomily "smelt of rot."

The use of the oxymoron "screaming nothingness" in the penultimate stanza of my poem is comparable to the oxymoron in *The Early Purges* where he describes the kitten trying to escape from the bucket as being a "frail metal sound". Both the small, weak kitten and the frail old man are representative of flawed attempts at survival and hopeless situations they have found themselves in, and follow in one of the main themes of Heaney's writing, death.

"*Paralysed Haystacks*" has caught the essence of much of Heaney's poetry, with a free verse and relaxed layout, contrasting with the serious concerns surrounding topics of death and the power of nature. The poem is told with a lack of emotion, there is no description of the reader's feelings, and I think this captures the way Heaney chooses to write some of his reflective works. Heaney likes to end his poems with snappy, effective and thought provoking lines which summarise the theme of the poem, and I think the ending of "*Paralysed Haystacks*" does well to mimic this. Many of Heaney's poems contain references to his ancestors, most notably *Digging* and *Follower*. My poem does the same through the eyes of a delusional and confused child, referencing to his role model of a grandfather, who lived a full life, working hard, earning his way and providing for his family who loved him.

## Moderator's Comments:

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The title is striking although possibly a little overwrought, as are details such as "The screaming nothingness"; however, this is thoughtful work in the main and an effective pastiche which is illuminated by the commentary.

While one might want to ban the use of terms such as "Heaneyesque", the commentary does show this candidate is very knowledgeable of his studied poet with nine texts from Heaney's oeuvre substantially referenced. The candidate juxtaposes this firm textual knowledge alongside observations on his own creation which give a personal dimension to the writing: "I have named my poem", "My poem also contains natural imagery", etc. AO2 is squarely met and there is a range of sophisticated terminology present: tercet, olfactory imagery, iambic rhyming couplet, sibilance, oxymoron and so on.

## Candidate C

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### *The Bloody Chamber* by Angela Carter

#### A recreative setting based on a setting extract by Angela Carter

Behold! The giant citadel caught up in a Charybdisian swirl of snow, sleet and rain, perforating every space in the frozen stone walls, draping the high turrets in a white blanket which flowed down the stonework and melted into a deep, raging moat; three flags thrusting up piteously into a spectre-grey sky from the ramparts, the wind ripping through them singing a sad lament on the air, the crimson material lost in the miasma of cold and wet.

The size of that castle! The parched, barren landscape, covered in folds of snow like the dead skin of a snake, seemed shrunken in comparison to that colossal structure. And the scattered trees, limp and bereft of life. Faded flowers poked their heads hopefully through the ground, desperately seeking a gleam of sunlight, only to drop their drained rose petals in the freezing air and curl their crusting leaves up into fists of pointless, hopeless defiance.

In the far distance, a darker shade of grey against the sky, ancient, omniscient mountains broke the horizon into a range of shattered shapes like broken bones, the very peaks penetrating the pallid, gathering clouds which circled slowly round and round. Excited birds wheeled about, their high piercing cries echoing the sad song of the storm, flowing through the air in random, mutating patterns, sometimes dropping suddenly earthwards and sometimes dispersing, only to reform instantly into the swelling mass. As far as one could see, they danced upon the winds.

Suddenly, the cruel, relentless wind subsided into a soft breeze, releasing a flurry of snow. The castle, now seen in sharp relief, glistened like a thousand misted opals above the water, its rising walls seemingly resting the heavens on its ramparts, the encircling moat now pulsing calmly back and forth to the rhythm of the winds. The window, set at irregular intervals in the stone, glowed like a dull throbbing heart-beat, the light shimmering faintly, reflected in vague streaks in the moat below. And how those lights burned like watchful eyes! They looked out over their kingdom, the lifeless plane awash with snow, interspersed with the remains of once great trees, standing like rows of crosses for the dead.

#### Candidate Commentary:

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In her writing, Angela Carter tries to challenge conventional rules of fairy tales. She blurs the boundaries between man and beast, land and sky in an attempt to break away from standard ways of writing and to express her opinions. Carter herself wrote that all archetypes are spurious', and the evidence of this in her writing is particularly clear in her descriptions of landscapes. The description of a landscape above is particularly influenced by the desolate, snow-covered setting from her short story, *The Tiger's Bride*.

Carter often incorporates the idea of mutilation and dismemberment into her descriptions of inanimate objects. In my passage, the flowers are shown to be curling 'their crusting leaves up into fists of pointless, hopeless defiance'. Carter draws much of her influence from conventional fairy tales, and she herself said that she was trying to take the 'latent content of those traditional stories' and use that. However, while Carter writes in the style of these stories, she takes a convention and exaggerates it or changes it. This violent language used in her stories is an example of her taking the style of the traditional tale one step further. For instance, in *The Tiger's Bride*, the tree stumps are described as 'mutilated' and the roses as 'frail'. The exaggerated idea of mutilation is one of many examples in Carter's writing of her breaking away from a set stereotype which is found in so many original fairy tales.

Another key feature of Carter's description is symbolism. She often links back to Greek mythology in her use of adjectival phrases. In *The Bloody Chamber*, the castle is described as a 'sea-siren of a place', linking back to the ancient Greek myth from the *Odyssey*. In the passage above, the wind is caught up in a 'Charybdisian swirl', alluding back to the mythical whirlpool

which threatened Odysseus, and the walls of the castle 'resting the heavens on its ramparts', linking back to the myth of the giant Atlas. In addition, another aspect typical of Carter's style is that of sexual undertones. Above, the flags are described as 'thrusting up piteously'. As a strong feminist, these sexual connotations were a way to challenge the dominance of masculine sexuality. Her writing is littered with references to this, even in her descriptions of landscapes. Another example of this from the passage is the description of the winds 'pulsing' and 'perforating'. While in the context of the story these sexual references lend themselves to the description of the scene, they allow Carter again to break or challenge an archetype where another writer would not think to.

The challenging nature of Carter, herself, is evident even in the structures of her sentences. The first word of this passage is 'Behold!' and this stands alone as a sentence. This technique is found in many of her stories; for example 'Lost to the Beast!' from *The Tiger's Bride*. The phrase in my passage immediately captures the reader's attention and invites them to imagine the snowy scene unfolds in front of their eyes. Carter also employs the use of fronted clauses in her descriptions, and many sentences begin with an 'and' or a 'but'. This style of writing allows Carter to challenge set patterns and stereotypes even through the grammar of her sentences.

In conclusion, Carter's descriptions of landscapes are littered with evidence of her challenging style of writing, whether this is through the use of adjectives, symbolism, or simply sentence structure. She constantly breaks set conventions from traditional fairy tales while still drawing much of her influence from them. These conventions include both those in writing style, and those in life. She challenges sexual dominance in society through both sexual connotations in her descriptions and through a use of feminine phrases or adjectives; for example 'penetrating the pallid, gathering clouds' or 'piercing cries echoing the sad song of the storm'.

## Moderator's Comments:

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This is an arresting piece of writing, which certainly gives a memorable impression of a setting and Carter's techniques. However, as a submission it moves out of the securely re-creative area towards original writing. It would have been better if the candidate had provided or extended a setting in a named short story from *The Bloody Chamber*, but maybe it is no different from the Heaney pastiche "Paralysed Haystacks" and there is the argument with shorter texts such as poems and short stories that there should be no addition to something already completely realised.

The commentary begins by asserting an angle "In her writing, Angela Carter tries to challenge conventional rules of fairy tales" which informs subsequent paragraphs and is re-considered in the conclusion – "challenging style of writing", "She constantly breaks set conventions from traditional fairy tales while still drawing much of her influence from them". There is plenty of detail and language discussion (AO2) in evidence. Two of Carter's stories are specifically mentioned – ideally three stories at least will be referenced from short story collections for Task One responses.

## Candidate D

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### *Transformations by Anne Sexton*

#### **Hansel and Gretel, The Not So Perfect Story**

Imagine.  
The scrambled family.  
As penniless as a homeless one.  
'We have no money, send them away'  
says uncle to father.

Father is a potato,  
but wicked uncle prevails, as usual,  
mind as sweet as coffee.  
His face a pinched prune.  
However the deadly conversation was overheard,  
Poor Hansel and Gretel  
victimised indeed.

Little does she know  
Hansel is part of package.  
For a dirty creed was shared between  
uncle and Hansel.  
Off they were sent  
to the children's home in Nottingham.  
Streatham is their home.  
Innocent little Gretel is comforted by brother bear  
'I know the way don't be afraid little Gretel'.  
He wipes her strawberry spotted cheeks,  
her eyes as deep as a well.  
The pool of tears buried beneath the smile.  
His mind as busy as a cauldron.

They made their way home,  
and were so very hungry,  
but came to a rather large McDonalds store  
that nasty uncle worked in.  
And floated towards the counter,  
and behind it.  
To the staff room.  
Their nasty uncle resided.  
A u-turn.  
The beast and the bear.  
Uncle and Hansel

They forced Gretel to the floor with mighty ferocity,  
a train in a toy tunnel, and another.  
The floor covered in beetroot stains.  
For Gretel had seen it on the television,  
The karate kid  
Up she jumped with a cry of pain  
and knocked them out with one karate kick.  
There they lay,  
as tamed as lambs.  
The beast and the bear,  
Silenced by an angel.  
With a limp or two she went to the counter  
and took out all the money it had  
regardless of the witnesses.  
Her legs were pink and slowly dripping.

Alas!  
She ran home to father  
to tell him of her horrible ordeal.  
He smiled and hugged her  
For they had money now,  
and father was single.  
As for Hansel and nasty uncle,  
where did they go?  
To Holloway prison I believe.

## Candidate Commentary:

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I have written in the style of Anne Sexton, who was part of the confessional group of poets. Sexton was famous for writing poems that dealt with taboo subjects. In her anthology entitled 'Transformations', she took fairy tales, written by the Grimm Brothers, and recreated them via the incorporation of taboo subjects. In Sexton's Rapunzel, she dealt with the taboo subject of an aunt developing a sexual relationship with a young girl. Sexton was considered mentally unstable and experienced her own personal troubles which included, allegedly being sexually abused herself and being accused of doing the same to her daughter. These factors may have significantly influenced her poetry and style of writing.

In my case, I have chosen the Grimms Brother's fairy tale of Hansel and Gretel. I have transformed it into a narrative poem that deals with incest and rape within a family that consists of two homosexual parents. Like Anne Sexton, I have used a variety of linguistic and poetic techniques. I have used an arresting opening, 'imagine'. This hopefully captivates the reader, drawing them into the imaginary world of..poetry. This can be seen present in Anne Sexton's work in Briar Rose, where she opens the poem with the word, "consider". This insinuates. direct speech with the reader thus drawing them immediately into the poem, like a conversation

Like Sexton I have used interesting characters, for example, I have changed the 'evil step mother' to an evil 'step father', who happens to be homosexual as he is married to Hansel and Gretel's father. This allows me to connect with a more contemporary reader and subvert the archetype of the evil person always taking the form of an old female. In addition, instead Hansel and Gretel ending up at an old lady's house and taking her gold, I have changed this to them meeting their evil uncle at MCDonalds; which is a modern cultural reference, and Gretel taking the money from the counter. The old lady's house was a ginger bread house, and uncle's workplace was a fast food restaurant, which could be seen as a metaphoric replacement. Sexton has used interesting characters in Red Riding Hood, in which she mentions a 'deceiver' who is seemingly a perfect woman, but is having an affair and has a sexual encounter with someone in the church parking lot. This intensifies the level of emotion in the poems, as some people have secret lives.

Sexton's use of similes, symbols, metaphors, and alliteration fill her work. These techniques are fairly predominant in my poem, for example, "a train in a toy tunnel". This is symbolic of the process of raping Gretel, where her bother and step father are grown men and are fully developed (with regards to sexual organs), whereas Gretel is only young, is not fully developed and is a virgin. In Briar Rose it states, "Little doll child", symbolising the fact that the girl can be possessed and objectified by her father and he will never let her grow up.

An example of a simile in my poem is, "as tame as lambs" referring to uncle (step father) and Hansel who are "beasts" being knocked out by Gretel who is an "angel". Sexton says in Briar Rose, "her fingers as long and thin as straws she used this in order to describe the evil witch and portray her appearance in a negative manner. She also says, "her uterus an empty teacup;" implying that she is infertile and so wants to terminate the life of someone else's offspring. A metaphor in my construction would be, "his face a pinched prune", indicating that the step father lacked the radiant skin of a young and healthy man, so probably was not very pleasing to the eye; this is also alliteration. Alliteration is present in my work and also in Anne Sexton's. In my poem it states, "her strawberry spotted cheeks" with the intension of presenting the fact that she is as fresh and pure as a fruit; this can this technique can also be referred to as sibilance. In Sexton's Cinderella it says, "From diapers to Dior" showingg a 'rags to riches' change as the story of Cinderella depicts.

I also used imagery like sexton, when saying, "The floor covered in beetroot stains"; this symbolises the blood drawn when a virgin loses her virginity or is being raped. Sexton constantly uses imagery, e.g. "Give me your nether lips, all puffy with their art." This (instigates the reader to imagine what her lips would look like, the fact that she used 'art' would suggest that they are magnificent, glorious and an exquisite work of art. Sexton tends to use a great deal of colloquialisms and cultural references. She says "Come be my snooky" and, "Munch's scream" These allow her to relate to and connect with the reader; the use of the word "snooky" creates a

dirty twist when unravelling the taboo subject entwined in her poem. In addition, it is ambiguous in the sense that it could also be satirising the concept of incest. I mimicked these techniques in my poem by using my own modern cultural references, "Holloway prison" and "Streatham". The reader can understand the poem in terms their own interpretation.

Anne Sexton writes in free verse, as opposed to a normal rhyming scheme, I have also done this in my poem. The use of free verse allows the writer to write fluently without worrying about rhyming structure, making the outcome more natural; it also permits the writer to bring a sense of ambiguity and let the reader create different interpretations of the poem. Like sexton, I have used enjambment. "For a dirty creed was shared between...uncle and Hansel", providing the effect of a 'flowing waterfall', bringing fluency to the poem. Sexton uses enjambment in Red Riding Hood, "not all knives are for. ... stabbing the exposed belly". This use of sentence structure brings complexity to the poem and puts an emphasis on the word 'for; thus stressing the meaning of the quote. Sexton uses Syntax in order to create depth in her work and as another tool to keep the reader interested and aid in them exploring their own minds. For example, "And I. I too again."

Sexton uses an oxymoron in Briar Rose. It states "rank as honeysuckle", this again helps to twist the story line and represent the fact that things are not always what they seem and are not always plain, simple and straight forward. I used this in my poem when I said "mind as sweet as coffee". This is significant because the 'nasty uncle' is actually quite bitter which, could also be seen as a metaphor that is symbolic of his personality; ' he is the 'wicked' and 'evil' step father. But he is also sweet because he is happy that he has succeeded in convincing father to send Hansel and Gretel away. Sexton uses refrain in Rapunzel. She repeats the phrases: "My young dear", and, "A woman who loves another woman is forever young". I have done this by repeating the line: "the beast and the bear", which is also alliteration. This technique creates a central point to the poem and grounds the imagination of the reader.

## Moderator's Comments:

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The candidate supplied the Grimm Hansel and Gretel prose version, which was probably not necessary, as the text is a re-creation of Anne Sexton's style and approach in her collection *Transformations*. The text produced opens up the base fairy tale and has memorable detail and shock tactics, consistent with Sexton's originals.

The commentary is a little overdone and wordy, but manages to convey the *raison d'être* for "Hansel and Gretel, the Not So Perfect Story". It has a poor surface at times and needs to honour titles consistently. However, it covers a range of Sexton's work and discusses the candidate's stylistic choices in the context of the confessional poet's original constructions and phrasing. It is detailed and thorough and passes the acid test for Band 5 analytical writing: it leaves the reader significantly wiser – here not just about the candidate's own text.

## Candidate E

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### *My Boy Jack by David Haig*

Additional Scene

The following day: breakfast time, Rudyard is reading the newspaper and a steady rain is falling outside.

Jack: I've been thinking...

Rudyard: What about? Oh, please tell me you have buried that ridiculous notion of becoming a private soldier.

Carrie: What's this?

Jack: (adamant) Yes actually.

Rudyard: I explained the situation last night.

Carrie: Rudyard pleas. We're trying to eat and it's to early in the morning.

Jack: the way I see it is this. The sooner I get out there the better.

Carrie: DO you have to rush? (looking down at her plate and cutting food)

Jack: ...Because it will be over by Christmas and I want to be a part of it. I just have to...

Elsie: I'm not hungry any more.

Rudyard: (angry) Neither am I.

Jack: Please may I be excuses?

Rudyard: Jack, please be patient. I have given this matter my fullest attention and I will continue to do so. Your eagerness to aid this country in its hour of need is truly something. Jack you remind me of myself, before I because as solider. So... The plan is...

Jack: Daddo, can we please discuss this later. I think I am not well. Can I be excused please?

Carrie: I hope you're not becoming unwell?

Jack: Oh no, I'll be quite alright soon:

Rudyard: Are you sure, old man?

Jack: Absolutely.

(Rushes out of room)

Elsie: Can I be excused also?

Carrie: Certainly, my dear.

(Elsie follows Jack, while Rudyard goes back to reading the paper.)

You'll make him more determined you know.

Rudyard: Why ever do you say that? (still absorbed in the newspaper)

Carrie: Because, he's just as stubborn as you.

Rudyard: (looks up at Carrie) I am not stubborn, Carrie. Just determined. Jack has to be an officer. He just has to. Nothing else with suffice. Nothing. I will make sure of it if it's the last thing I do.

Next scene: Elsie is talking to Jack in his room.

Jack: There is always a plan isn't there? Always.

Elsie: Calm down – this is because you are still upset about yesterday.

Jack: It's more than that Bird. He's always scheming.



Elsie: If you're upset about it father will sort something out. He usually does. You're just being impatient.

Silence

Jack: Maybe you are right. Just as long as it's soon, I don't care.

Elsie: This means that you can't be persuaded otherwise. Not even by your best beloved sister.

Jack: It's not personal Bird, or against you in any way. (pause) When I say that you must believe me. I just have to escape, please understand.

Elsie: I'll miss you little brother. You've got to come back though. (mutters) You just have to.

Jack: I need to get way, that's all.

(Jack takes a cigarette from his hiding place)

Never trust the English weather, Bird, it's just so unpredictable.

Elsie: I don't know what you mean. Spoken like a true gentleman, Captain Jack Kipling.

Jack: You still remember that.

Elsie: Of course. May I? (pointing to the cigarette)

Jack: Why certainly, best beloved sister.

Scene ends.

## Candidate Commentary:

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My additional element of 'My Boy Jack' would commence after Act 1 Scene 3 after Jack has been rejected from the army and is talking to his sister; Elsie about his dislike of home. I also incorporated through the character of the general ideology of England at the time and the eagerness of young men to join in the war, such as "...because it will be over by Christmas..."

A technique that Haig used, which I mirrored was the use of unconscious irony. For instance in Act 1 Scene 1 of the play when Rudyard says that the medical will be 'undaunting', when in fact it would be for Jack. In the scene I wrote the character of Rudyard says "...please tell me you have buried..." This is unconscious irony as he doesn't know that both he and Carrie will probably have to bury another child. Chose to use 'buried' instead of 'forgotten' because I wanted it to be more emotive and to indicate to the audience the extent of Rudyard determination that Jack shouldn't enlist as a private soldier.

Another technique Haig uses is that of repetition, when Jack has to ask twice to be excused, but is ignored by Rudyard, for instance "Can I be excused please?" I did this to convey the extent of Jack's frustration and to display one of the key themes in the play of Rudyard's dominance and by doing this showed that he has power. Another example of this in my scene would be when Rudyard is talking to Carrie alone says "Nothing else will suffice. Nothing." The use of short single word utterances increases the realism and indicates how forthright the character of Rudyard is when it comes to Jack's future. I also chose to include the verb 'suffice' which makes the tone of my extract sound more Edwardian.

When reading the play I also noticed that Rudyard doesn't use contractions whereas most of the other characters do, for instance when directly addressing Jack, "I have given this matter my fullest attention..." This illustrates that Rudyard's speech is very formal and it is like he is performing to his very own audience and that he is patriotic.

Another feature that I use the same as Haig was terms of endearment in my extract, for instance when Jack wants to leave the room because he is frustrated with Rudyard he says “Daddo, can we please discuss this later.” This would display that Jack is still a young boy and submissive to Rudyard, and that he is very much bullied by Rudyard. I also reference back to Act 1 Scene 3 by ensuring that Jack and Elsie say ‘best beloved’ to one another. This was also to demonstrate the affection that they have, which I used to diffuse some of the tension when Jack is commenting on Rudyard’s constant interference into their lives.

To display Jack’s frustration on the subject of the character of Rudyard I included the simple sentence “...He’s always scheming.” The use of the word “scheming” is almost childlike and would suggest that Jack is not as mature as he would like to be. This could explain in the play when he grows a moustache and starts smoking. When talking to Elsie I have to the character of Jack change the topic to the weather when asked about his return home; “Never trust the English weather, Bird.” Also in my scene Jack determination is noted by Carrie, “...he’s just as stubborn as you.” This I felt was important to include showing that Jack is unwavering the same as Rudyard.

The role of Elsie in the play is to support Hack and is used in my scene to lower the tension after Jack has left the breakfast table suddenly. For instance I use the simile of “Spoken like a true gentleman...” I did this so that Elsie was complimenting Jack and is he comforting him, which she did in the previous scene when she started saying one of Rudyard’s rhymes. Elsie is also portrayed as very direct and ‘straight-talking’ when Jack wants to leave Batemans quickly, “You’re just being impatient.”

Carrie in my scenes is uninformed by Rudyard on his decision about what he and Jack talked about the night before as she uses a rhetorical question; “What’s this?” This reflects the position of married women in Edwardian times. When Carrie shows insight in telling Rudyard that, “You’ll make him more determined you know.” The use of a declarative makes the voice of Carrie more certain and wise when it comes to predicting Jack’s behaviour.

I also used symbolism by having rain falling to imply to the audience that there is going to be some tension at the beginning of the scene and so it would be ‘the calm before the storm’. Another example of what is symbolic in my scene is when Elsie joins in with Jack’s rebellion by smoking a cigarette, which parallels with the previous scene

## Moderator’s Comments:

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An unusual text here yields two very worthy extra scenes, but where they might go in the original should have been indicated at the top of the essay. There are some neat textual echoes and the voice of Rudyard is particularly well achieved. The ending of the second scene is a little muted even though it contains the Just So Stories “best beloved” tie-in.

The commentary focuses on Haig’s methods in *My Boy Jack*, although the structure of the writing is a little crass (“A technique that Haig ...”, “Another technique ...”, “Another feature ...”). Once the introduction is dispensed with, it is possible to see an AO2 focus for each paragraph of the commentary, although some of the points are stated rather than explored. However, the consideration of speech patterns is developed and a higher order feature of the writing.

## Candidate F

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### *'Eveline'* By James Joyce.

She spent the remainder of her evening secluded in her room by the tinged voiles, turning occasionally to pile a section of clothes into the suitcase beside her, only to return to gazing beyond to mildew ridden material into the night.

In just a few hours she would be away saved from her constant day to day reoccurring life of current. The thoughts of horizons new and her new Buenos Ayres life with frank tumbled through her head. The sun, fun and life of freedom, independent at last; it was what she had always dreamt of! Yet still the visions of her mother collided in the mish-mash of thoughts in her head of moving away from her hom, that she knew and loved. How would her father cope? For as long as they had been without their mother Eveline had waited on him hand and foot. Why would she? --- Derevaun Seraun--- the words rushed a thousand times and more around her head mixing about the turmoil and a mealy of emotions in her head.

Sudden glimmer of light beyond the opaque voiles awakened her back to the room. It was time. Looking in on her father asleep in his arm chair, of whom she loathed to love for so many years, she picked her umbrella up and slipped out of the doorway in to the rain of the night.

It was a far contrast from her tight knit community. The docks seethed with life; vendors on every corner each selling there papers and shoe shines, business men were potting about waiting impatiently for the night boat. Wondering aimlessly about in a loop, she attempted to sift through her thoughts running about her head.

---Would Frank save her? Was home where she wanted to be? If neither then what?---

Bells called out across the port might had struck; half an hour left.

Her heart by no was a constant canter, now what to do. A rock and hard place pinned her where she was. She couldn't turn back yet couldn't move forward. Eveline froze on the spot and so it did all her fears and thoughts that clashed in her head. Life turned to slow motion the hustle and bustle about her muted. There ahead of her stood the tanned outline of Frank. They did not meet eye to eye. It seemed for that moment at least her presence was unnoticed. It was in the pure oasis of that moment that it dawned on her; like a wall falling, the light shone through illuminating the path ahead. She must board the ship to her future!

Frank scanned the panorama about him, the oasis bubble burst from around Eveline and a sudden panic ensued. Surely he would look to her at any moment! She slipped back into the crowd taking refuge behind the stout figure of a vender busy selling his paper. Above the towering structure of the ship beckoned her. Dipping beneath her black umbrella she headed for the gangway.

---Good evening madam may I take your bag for you--- The porter proceeded to move up the steep slope towards the deck. It felt so right for this was her destiny. She reached to top and glanced back over the swarming heads of the hundreds below her all fighting to reach there destinations. In the midst of this she spotted him still looking for her desperately through the crowd.

Eveline sat and watched the ship cast off and dock and Frank grow smaller and smaller until he was but a smaller until he was but a small dot in the distance. Finally it was clear she was free independent and on her way to a better life.

## Candidate's Comments

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In this piece of coursework we were tasked with emulating the style of Ex-patriot writer James Joyce. This was to be achieved by taking note of his individual style and use of various techniques, using these to create an ending to his short story Eveline. Joyce writing gains its focus from his tough view on Irish culture and tradition. He openly called the country in a state of paralysis with Dublin being the heart of the strong emotive hold. This is represented in almost all of this work.

I noted several techniques; both thematic and stylistic, in *Eveline* that I attempted to re-create. Firstly, I felt it important to note the tense of which Joyce always writes. It is written in the third person tense yet still is written from the main character's perspective. This is shown well in *Eveline* and is the most significant idea I have tried to recreate in my ending of the story. This is created by using key phrasing such as "she pondered on" "her mind swirling" etc. This style is very individual to Joyce choosing the 3<sup>rd</sup> person instead of the 1<sup>st</sup> to reflect on the character's thoughts and allows more focus of *Eveline's* inner conflicts as opposed to just a view from her eyes. It causes the reader to engage more with the text and question themselves on what she should do in the plot line. An additional effect of this technique is that it causes the reader to keep guessing the outcome rather than having a predictable plotline.

Joyce used the idea of any epiphany in a lot of his literature. An epiphany can suddenly make the reader more aware and understand a character more, therefore engaging them further in the text. In *Eveline* the epiphany is more for the reader than the character concerned. *Eveline* has a hard decision of either staying at home with her father to carry out her duties of a woman, or to run away to Buenos Ayres with her lover, Frank. In my version of the ending I included a great epiphany to enlighten the readers at the last moment as to what *Eveline* has decided as we see her realise that Frank is as much a part of the paralysis and a controller as her current life situation with her father. As a result she leaves on the boat with out him to far off climates in search of a new life of adventure and freedom.

A stylistic characteristic of Joyce writing during the time of *Eveline*, I noted was the alternative use of hyphens to replace the conventional speech marks. This was used by the author in a modernistic way, in order to gain emphasis on key points within the piece. The extracts act much like key clues as to the ending and plot in order to keep the reader guessing and engaged. An excellent example of this in Joyce's piece when her father in a moment of passion and rage exclaims; --- Derevaun Seraun! Deevaun Seraun! --- to the reader this shows insanity yet a great amount of passion a key moment hence the emphasis.

For my piece I made several uses of this technique for example; --- Would Frank save her? Was home where she wanted to be? If neither then what?--- This was the beginning of a key moment where her epiphany begins to sink in and take hold of her decisions. This technique aided the effect later on in my piece at the point of true realisation of her epiphany. --- Good evening madam may I take your bag for you? ---. This seemingly standard dialogue acted as a key question, where *Eveline* stands on the dockside and must decide her fate.

I was conscious not to "saturate" my piece with this technique as part of its significance is its limited use to only demonstrate the key points of the plot.

Joyce amongst his many techniques used rhetoric questioning to add great effect to his writing, due to this allowing the reader to question themselves.

"How would her father cope? For as long as they have been without her mother *Eveline* had waited on him hand and foot. Why should she?" This extract from my piece shows conflict in her own mind. It opens up the possibility for two separate endings. I particularly made use of this technique to keep the ending a mystery until the last moment in true James Joyce style. Her conflict also draws the reader into the plot line making them emotionally involved.

Additionally Joyce's main element in his writing his use of great description and symbolism to address the broader political issues of the time of writing within his story. ---Good evening madam may I take your bag for you --- the porter proceeded to move up the steep slope toward the deck. It felt so right for her this was her destiny. She reached the top and glanced back over the swarming heads of the hundreds below her all fighting to reach their destinations. In the midst of this she spotted him still looking for her desperately through the crowd.

This example in my piece of the technique depicts *Eveline* moving to her new destiny up the 'steep slope' i.e. the hardest road to take in order to break the paralysis. Her glancing back on the sea of hundreds below represented Dublin's "paralysis on everything within it" the crowd is still stuck in the "centre of paralysis" where as she is moved away and free hence she is depicted above them.

I thought it also in very Joyce style to include her spotting Frank in the “paralysis”. Thus making it appear to the reader that this was the correct path to take as Frank would have kept her in the sea of paralysis and control.

In conclusion I feel I achieved the re creation of James Joyce’ style of writing. This resulted in an accurate stylistic recreation and hopefully an engaging alternative ending for the reader to enjoy! If I were to repeat this task, in hindsight I would have use more emphasis when using the representation of colours in the piece using black to represent conflict and negativity etc. Overall though I am happy with my piece and feel it succeeded in achieving the aims of the task.

## Moderator’s Comments:

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This is an odd text; it has convincing detail, a definite epiphany and initially conveys the mood and tone of “Eveline” very convincingly. However, in terms of a piece of prose responding to Joyce’s concerns, the last sentence makes for a poor conclusion. Joyce writes of feeling trapped, of individuals paralysed at climactic moments, so “Finally it was clear she was free independent and on her way to a better life” strikes a false note.

To be fair, the commentary explores many of these issues in a developed way, but the key idea of Eveline having the wherewithal to manage her escape is not considered and is key to the climax of the short story. Otherwise the candidate does discuss what has been achieved sensibly, although there is room for more specific language analysis in the writing. More stories in the collection should be referenced.

## Candidate G

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### **“Charlotte Holmes” by Carol Ann Duffy**

***“I would not tell them too much. Women are never to be entirely trusted – not the best of them”***

*(Holmes, from Doyle’s The Sign of Four)*

Overbearing windows let in the dark of the night.  
I unwind on His chair with my glass of red wine,  
And gaze into the fire. The flames begin to take life,  
The deeper I leer; I enter a trance –  
I see faces of souls seeking revenge  
My Laughter echoes in the lifeless room.

15<sup>th</sup> November (His Birthday) – I’m at it again  
I’ve plotted, yet he hasn’t spotted.  
He’s stuck. Trying to explain.  
Fingerprints here traces of hair over there  
He stays stood there. Clueless as he stares.

Tricks I’ve implanted many years ago  
Like a pet he follows with a flow –  
On my lead. Click of a finger. Here in a speed.  
In a clap I have him under my control  
The bitch of Baskerville, whose life I stole.

A flashback with Moriarty unleashes my erotic desires.  
Memories of my lipstick smeared on His face

I leave my mark of destruction, with sheer grace.  
Our skins touch as we prepare to embrace.  
He plunges into me. While I visualise the pace.  
Unintentionally replaced –  
By plunges of daggers piercing through my victims –  
I disappear without a trace.

Moriarty's happy to take the blame. I'm envious –  
But he must take all the fame

I see the desperation in His eyes.  
As he stares into mine, he begins to realise  
He'd never dare to jeopardise-  
He can't bare the thought the pain of His cries  
We both know would be followed by goodbyes.

Magnificent I am, to fool this narcissistic pair –  
The Napoleon of crime – my title grim  
Sherlock has no suspicion of what I've planned.  
My pointed blade close as hand  
The lifeless deceased stir awaiting another soul.  
Death. The essential condition of life, and Sherlock's I stole.

## Candidate Commentary

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In my attempt to recreate a poem in the style of Carol Ann Duffy, I revisited the fictional character of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Sherlock Holmes. Duffy uses language to create her characters, and I have done the same, and created Charlotte Holmes as an evil character. Similarly to Duffy I used words to create images and will use textual references to depict how I interlink with Duffy.

I titled my poem Charlotte Holmes; this two word title is typical of Duffy as she tends to use one, two or three letter words – “Eurydice”, “Mrs Midas” and “Little Red Cap” I also revised the title Sherlock Holmes and modified it to Charlotte Holmes altering the dominant character, to his wife as opposed to him.

I begin my poem with an inter textual quote by Sherlock Holmes in Doyle's “The Sign of Four”, Duffy includes an inter textual quote in “Elvis's Twin Sister” I also attributed to the quote to Doyle's novel like Duffy attributed Shakespeare's will in “Anne Hathaway” – by including this quote I use irony to portray how this statement is actually not practiced by him, as his wife manipulates him without his knowledge.

Like Duffy, I wrote my poem in a conversation tone, and in a first person dramatic tone.; constant references to “I” makes it apparent that it is written in the first person. Salome is also a dramatic monologue; this technique in effect offers a great insight into the feelings of the speaker, hence involving the reader.

Visual imagery is used throughout Duffy's poetry to engage the reader into the poem, an example of the illustration of this is in “Charlotte Holmes” when “the flames begin to take life” fire is a running theme used by Duffy; in “Mrs. Tiresias”, “Blaze of Her Skin” the word fire is used to connote power lifting both women's statuses in a menacing manner. The metaphoric aspects of the expressions aspects of the expressions convey the dark and sinister feel to the poem.

In resemblance to Duffy, I also express the use of sibilance; “I see faces of souls seeking revenge” to insinuate the ominous sense to the poem. Duffy too uses sibilance in her poem “Valentine”; it's fierce kiss will stay on your lips” the constant repetition of the ‘S’ sound is intended to make the felling of love sound disturbing and shady, similarly in “Charlotte Holmes” the sibilance is used to bring to light the doomed feel to the poem and highlight the loss of life caused by Charlotte.

Caesura are used through out “Charlotte Holmes” and “The Kray Sisters”: this is to add to the rhythm of the poem and keep it at a constant flow. This technique adds to the plot, consequently, adding to the stimulation of the poem.

Duffy often denigrates men in her poem; in “Eurydice”, for instance, Duffy describes Orpheus as the man “who follows her around” denoting her influence as an advantage over her husband; likewise in “Charlotte Holmes”, “Like a pet he follows, I lead” indicates Charlotte’s Dominance over Sherlock, raising her status like Eurydice.

Sexual connotations are used over many of Duffy’s poems: in “Little Red Cap” Duffy writes “I clung till dawn to his thrashing fur” signifying the intimacy between the two characters. In “Charlotte Holmes”, “He plunges into me” also implies the intimacy between Moriarty and Charlotte, highlighting their affair.

“By plunges of Daggers” the word plunge is then repeated but in contrast to the context it was used in the sentence above, now signifying a pessimistic and bleak content..

In “Eurydice” Duffy write “I did everything in my power to make him look back” this is an example of subversion of patriarchy. Duffy writes in a feminist perspective and empowers the woman; correspondingly in “Charlotte Holmes” “Magnificent am I... this narcissistic pair”, I use this technique to belittle both the men and give power to Charlotte. This point again is ironic, as in my poem I use a capital H for the word “Him” to highlight the significance of make characters in the poem. Duffy also uses this irony in her poem “Mrs Darwin” – “I said to Him”,

Again in Eurydice, aural imagery is used to communicate to the reader and engage them into the poem “We walked, we walked” – and in Charlotte Holmes “His footsteps approach” – this captivates the readers attention and absorbs them into the poem, allowing the reader to relate to the character, and feel part of the narrative.

## Moderator’s Comments:

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The text here is interesting and thought-provoking, although the poem has its inelegances (first stanza is slow-moving, there are some rather obvious rhymes, the repetition of “plunges” is clumsy, “bare” should be “bear”).

The commentary is better; it clearly references *The World’s Wife* and not in a superficial way, but also has some wider understanding of Duffy as shown by the use of model of “Valentine”. Many of the paragraphs are concerned with matters of form and language, which shows appropriate concentration on the dominant assessment objective. The introduction and conclusion are weak, but the writing is otherwise very clear.

## Candidate H

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### ***The Woman who walked into Doors 'Roddy Doyle'***

I saw him once. John Paul. Anyway I think it was him, it must have been. I was in town and had just got the food shopping, I remember that Leanne was asking for sweets all morning, but when I got to the checkout I didn't have enough money. (John Paul never asked for sweets.)

He was on the other side of the street. With a man that looked like he would steal from his own Grandma for drug money. John Paul looked different next to him. He looked young. He always looked young, probably because he was small. He was always the smallest in the class. Quiet as well.

- Quiet as a mouse. Teachers would say.

He didn't look like he was on drugs. He didn't look slow or anything. He looked determined, like he needed to get somewhere.

His hair was longer than it used to be. He might have had some facial hair but I don't know. I never found out if Charlo ever taught him how to shave. He was a late developer so I doubt it. He would have had to do it himself.

I can't even remember what he was wearing. Dark colours I think. It all happened so fast. The other side of the road. Why couldn't have I had been on that side of the road? Why was the shop on that side? Maybe he would have stopped and looked at me. Maybe he would let me hug him. He would ask me to help him, to let him come home. Doctors would help him and he would go to school. Not every day of the week, maybe just Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, I'd let him choose. He would be happy.

## Candidate Commentary

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### **In what ways does this passage contribute to Doyle's exploration of the themes of truth and denial in the novel?**

My writing is placed as a new chapter at the end of chapter 16, where Doyle writes about how Paula slept in John Paul's room when she was drunk, John Paul is presented as innocent and fragile - "*He was terrified.*"

The chapter after my writing (chapter 17) is about Charlo's death. It begins with the line "*It must have been him.*" My writing and this chapter start in similar ways by Paula seeing someone she loves and now has lost.

In my passage I have written about Paula seeing John Paul in town. I have mainly explored the theme of truth and denial and have also touched on the themes of love and of fantasy. I have used certain techniques that Doyle also uses in the novel.

The theme of truth and denial in my writing contributes to the narrative structure of the novel by showing that Paula misses John Paul and cares unconditionally for him. Earlier in the novel, Doyle uses parenthesis when Paula refers to John Paul to give the reader the impression that Paula doesn't like to think of him. My passage tells the reader that Paula still cares unconditionally for John Paul, by wanting to help him and let him come home. This normally disingenuous and unreliable narrator that Doyle has created becomes a more reliable narrator over the course of the novel by admitting her love for John Paul. My passage is a step forward in the narrative structure through the course of Paula being an unreliable narrator to the reader totally trusting Paula's narrative voice.

This sense of truth and denial changes throughout the novel as Paula as a narrator changes. For example, at the start of the novel Paula is very reluctant to come to terms with the fact that Charlo beat her, in chapter 3 she does not admit what had happened, but at the end of the novel she is very open to the reader and honest. My passage is placed nearly half-way through the novel, so the reader can't totally trust Paula's narrative voice yet, but expects her to be open about a lot of things, including John Paul's addiction.

Doyle writes a lot of things that Paula isn't ready to be open about yet in parenthesis. I also have done this in my writing, "*(John Paul never asked for sweets.)*" is written in parenthesis as an afterthought that Paula doesn't want to carry on thinking about because in this stage of the novel Paula doesn't want to think about him as a happy child and what went wrong yet.

A technique that Doyle uses when Paula is in denial of something is repetitive sentence structures. I have used this in my writing to strengthen Paula's need to believe that John Paul doesn't belong in a world of drugs. "*He didn't look like he was on drugs. He didn't look slow or anything. He looked determined...*" Paula is trying to convince herself.

In most of the wider novel, Doyle gives the reader the impression that Paula is in denial about the domestic violence with Charlo and also what kind of person her father was. Doyle makes Paula come across as disingenuous with this. To reinforce the theme in my writing, I have also created a sense of this when John Paul looked "*determined, like he needed to get somewhere.*" Paula probably would know that he would need to get somewhere to get drugs or money and also John Paul was "with a man that looked like he would steal...." Paula is possibly mentally denying John



Paul's theft from Paula's mother and blaming it on someone else, possibly this man that John Paul is with.

Throughout the wider novel, when Paula is hiding from the truth or in denial, she fantasizes about what she most wants. The part of my writing "*Maybe he would have stopped and looked at me. Maybe he would have let me hug him.*" Mirrors the part of the novel in chapter 18 when Paula fantasizes about the barman – "*We held hands after a while, He put his head on my shoulder.*" This gives the reader a better understanding of Paula's need for love and how she fantasizes about it. This part of my writing also creates a tone of pathos as it evokes pity because Paula can only fantasize about John Paul wanting to come home.

In conclusion, my new writing adds to the narrative structure basing on the theme of truth and denial by Paula admitting her love for John Paul. This is mainly through fantasy as Paula is not ready to openly talk about John Paul's home life. Doyle has not yet made Paula able to talk about what kind of person John Paul may be now, in my writing I present a sense of denial with Paula surrounding this.

### **Bibliography**

*The Woman Who Walked Into Doors* Roddy Doyle Random House – 1997

### **Moderator's Comments:**

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*The Woman Who Walked Into Doors* lends itself well to re-creative work. Paula's perspective and reliability of narration are manageable features for candidates to explore. The text here effectively deals with realism (awareness of drug-affected lives) entwined with romantic fantasy ("Maybe he would let me hug him."); it is written with good knowledge of Doyle's techniques.

The commentary starts very slowly, but points about structure do get made. The candidate returns to placing the passage in context again, in more detail than hitherto, but this is not the best choice of material. The points about brackets and repetitive sentence structures could be further explored, but the discussion about psychology and truth and denial is better pursued. The work has a good grasp of text and task and a decent understanding of some of Doyle's methods; AO2 could be a little more rigorously addressed, however.

## **Candidate I**

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### **'Playing Sandwiches' By Alan Bennett**

Monologue

Why do people choose to drive them? Massive four by fours perfect height for a kiddies head to hit the bumper in an accident. Walked past the car garage, massive lines of them in the sales, rusty shells, high fuel prices have killed them off, a kiddie killer graveyard. I watch parents in suits drive their kiddies to school in them, how would they like it if their child was splattered on the front of someone's car. They always stare.

Fade – Wilfred working at sports centre

Mother with twins had to rush off, an emergency apparently, she asked me if I could take care of them., I said no but she begged me to and I eventually agreed. No one was around it was Friday evening, everyone at home watching the football. I sat behind the counter pretending to be asleep to remove temptation. She didn't buy it and demanded that I play hide and seek with her. She said I was the hunter and she was the hider. I found her underneath the stairs, she said it was dark and

that she was scared, I said “it’s okay no one will hurt you”. She held by hand and clung her small body onto mine.

She knew what she was doing they always do. Dark rooms, harsh unforgiving eyes, angry crowds, guilty, guilty, the prison door clangs shut.

Fade to Black

## Candidate Commentary

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In my re-creative piece I tried to recreate the style of language and the techniques used in Alan Bennett’s “Talking Heads” in the monologue “Playing Sandwiches.”

The language in “Playing Sandwiches” is very simplistic with few complex words being used. This conveys the fact that the speaker finds it very difficult to communicate with adults in a mature conversation, and has poor social skills, so he converses like he would to a child to the audience. The speaker feels that he can fit in with their basic levels of conversation more easily, so he prefers to communicate with a child rather than an older person. I adopted this style in my re-creative writing piece, with very simple language being used, with a basic sentence structure. He also struggles to hold down a conversation of any length and all conversations in playing sandwiches are limited, so speech plays a small part in the monologue.

“I wish I was like you always eating sweet and never get fat”

“Yes I’, lucky I only cycle”

This is the basic level that the conversation reaches and peters out quickly, I tried to emphasise this in my re-creative piece and thought rather than speak plays the large part of the ideas portrayed in the piece.

In “Playing Sandwiches” sinister language is also used by Bennett giving an insight into Wilfred’s character. “Kiddies slide along with their bottoms” cleverly Bennett says with rather than on their bottoms, showing that it is the child’s bottom that Bennett is focused upon and is in his mind, and the strange way that he talks of this drops hints to the reader about Wilfred’s more sinister side. I tried to re-create this in my monologue by using the game hunters and hiders, and with the character being a hunter there are many sinister ways that this could be interpreted, and suspicions about the true nature of his character come to the readers mind.

The speaker in “Playing Sandwiches” is also fairly reclusive from society, and he very rarely delves into it and he does feel isolated from other people. At the beginning of the monologue when the shopkeeper says he saw him standing at the children’s crossing, he went into denial about being there, as a means of escaping the uncomfortable situation, and he feels like he is being pressurised by the shopkeeper, and so instantly goes into denial about the subject and changes the subject and changes his thoughts onto something different so he feels he has directed the focus away from the question the shopkeeper asked him. He lies to himself and denies his problem to himself, and I tried to replicate this in my piece when at the end he tells himself that the child wanted him to do what he did to her.

“She knew what she was doing, they always do.” I reflected this feeling of sense of deep isolation in my monologue, my character has trouble to engage in proper adult conversation and only the conversation he has in his monologue is with a child.

The structure of the sentence in “Playing Sandwiches” is short sentences with little speech. I tried to replicate this in my piece and many of the sentences are short, showing him thinking to himself, rather than engaging in active conversation. Again this emphasises his basic conversational skills and his withdrawal from adult society, and relining back into a child’s world without the stresses and concerns of like and where he feels comfortable with himself.

In playing sandwiches the speaker also has a fairly well respected job within the community and people praise him for his maintenance work in the park, but they do not know the other side of him and I tried to reflect this into my piece, the idea of a man who is doing a respectable and meritable job in my piece he works at a community sports centre, but people’s trust in him turns out to be danger to both those involved and himself, when the mum feels she can trust him to look after her child and the speaker loses his self control. Hints and clues are dropped as to the outcome of the

monologue in "Playing Sandwiches" and certain questions are suspicions are raised by the reader from these hints such as when the shopkeeper says "I saw you stood at the crossing", and I tried to recreate this technique of gradually throughout the monologue dropping hints about the character's sinister side "They always stare."

The end of my monologue portrays the irrational thought process as he slowly loses his sanity from being under so much pressure and the victim of society's hatred. "Dark rooms" represents him being placed in isolation to keep society away from him and symbolises his complete separation from society "unforgiving eyes and angry crowds" this also represents how someone with a problem like his is very unfavoured by society and if exposed will never again be able to re-enter it again, and this is a theme also used strongly by Bennett in "Playing Sandwiches" at the end where he talks of how the "plane enters the corner of his window" and this shows his the completed process of his separation from society. In my monologue I then ended with "Prison door clangs shut" as it sends quite a chilling image of a fairly unpleasant and undesirable sensation of being considered too dangerous to be allowed to live a life of freedom and normality.

## Moderator's Comments:

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A very short monologue as an insert into Alan Bennett's "Playing Sandwiches" from *Talking Heads 2* nevertheless shows itself possessed of a number of techniques, although it could be better presented in terms of layout.

The commentary is clearly developed writing, if a tad verbose and in need of sharper sentence constructions. The interplay of language and utterance length with character is usefully pursued and the candidate has a good understanding of Bennett's concerns and how they are revealed by Wilfred unintentionally.

## Candidate J

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### *The Collector John Fowles*

#### **"Something I thought a lot about was how I would like her to see my house and all my furnishings."**

I would show her how I had done-up the house and made it all modern. I would show her how I had changed the old house. She would see how much money I have to spend on her. The money isn't important, I would spend it all on her. I'd want her to see the pictures I brought for her - very high quality, very expensive. She would be so surprised. All my fancy decorations. Just for her, then she would grow to love me, how I love her. I am a good spec as a husband. She would realise.

I brought a painting yesterday to hang in the bathroom. That way, she will see it when she has a bath. It's of a woman sitting under a tree with a sun-shade. Very realistic. I read something on it in one of the papers I bought. It's very old though, very valuable. Just up her street.

#### **"Naturally, when I had dreams, she was upstairs with me, not down in the cellar"**

In my dreams, we would sit side by side. As man and wife of course. Admiring the country from the comfort of the lounge. The window open to let in a breeze. She always complains about the air in the cellar, of course she's just trying to trick me into letting her upstairs. Luckily, I'm wise to her games now. I have all the precautions upstairs anyway, just in case she should ever get in there. All the doors have padlocks they can only be opened by a key, both on the way in and out.

In my dreams we sit together of an evening. Her by the fire, doing some drawings. Me on the sofa with all my collections, pinning the best ones in plastic show-cases. She wears her hair down, it's so shiny when she's near the fire. She is wearing some of the evening wear I got her in Lewes, of course she always changes before dinner.

I would spend Saturdays in town, picking up anything she needed for the week. No more nervousness in the chemist, she was my wife now. The shop people would still look at me funny but I wouldn't care because there would be nothing anyone could do.

In some ways it would be perfect, all down to my planning. If Miranda fell in love with me she would stay here forever. Of course I couldn't trust her not to tell anyone about how I got her there. Eventually, her sister could come over. But not her mother. I don't appreciate her gossipy, loud nature. Let alone the way she drinks.

## Candidate Commentary

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To create my piece of work, I looked at the techniques that John Fowles uses to portray Frederick's character to the reader. I wanted to emulate the themes that he uses in *The Collector*, and have tried to exaggerate these in my work.

The first theme that I looked at was money. Frederick has the jaded view that his ability to buy Miranda anything she desires will make her love him. In my piece I showed this by writing "She would see how much money I have to spend, all on her". I also wrote "She is wearing some of the evening wear I got her in Lewes" to suggest the idea that by buying Miranda things, Frederick feels he can possess her. I showed his feelings of possession in the personal pronouns I used, such as "I".

In *The Collector* Frederick buys some picture to hang around the house in the hope that Miranda will like them. He buys them because they are expensive, and I think that this symbolises the way Frederick seems to believe that how valuable something is is a measure of how beautiful it is. In my creative piece I wrote "its very old, though. Very valuable", in reference to a painting that he has brought, to show this idea.

In *The Collector*, Frederick has no appreciation of art, unless it unless it looks like what it is supposed to be. In the book, when Miranda asks him which of her drawings he likes best, he picks the one that is most realistic. I have tried to emulate this character trait, in my work, by writing "it's of a woman sitting under a tree with a sun-shade." This is meant to show the reader Frederick's shallow appreciation of art, the fact that he likes it because it's realistic. This is a stark contrast with Miranda, who likes to look deeper into the meaning of art.

I echoed Fowles' use of sentence structure in my work. I found that the author was using a long sentence followed by a much shorter one, with the odd complex sentence. To show this in my piece, I used sentences such as "I am a good spec as a husband now. She would realise." I think that his style of writing portrays Frederick's lack of emotion and feeling, because the words that he uses are non-descriptive and his sentences are compact.

I thought the fact that Frederick picture them next to each other, but not being affectionate ("in my dreams we are side by side") shows his awkwardness when it comes to being intimate with Miranda. I also wrote "Her by the fire, doing some drawings. Me on the sofa with all my collections, pinning the best ones in plastic show-cases", which I thought portrayed Frederick's awkwardness even further, because he cannot even picture her being in close proximity of him.

In the aforementioned quote "Her by the fire, doing some drawings. Me on the sofa with all my collections" I was trying to portray the idea of control in Frederick and Miranda's relationship, by insinuating that Frederick feels that he has all of his collections around him, including Miranda. I also wanted to show Frederick's attitude towards art, by the way he describes Miranda's art work as "drawings".

## Moderator's Comments:

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The Frederick dream to be added to *The Collector* is caught well between romance (“All my fancy decorations. Just for her, then she would grow to love me, how I love her.”) and realism (“She always complains about the air in the cellar, of course she’s just trying to trick me into letting her upstairs.”) There could be a few more tags on the text, but it is certainly competent.

Characterisation and theme get more attention than language in the commentary, but quotation is provided although the discussion lacks depth and analytical sharpness.

## Candidate K

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### **‘Annie John’ by Jamaica Kincaid.**

I woke up and the bright sun shone through my curtains into my eyes like daggers blinding me. My covers were bound around me keeping me in my cotton cocoon warm and safe. I peered around my room and looked at my bland and boring wallpaper, wandering why on earth I would choose such dull decorations. I wandered down stairs and could feel the awkwardness between me and my mom, like two dogs staring at each other ready to pounce and fight. She put my breakfast down in front of me, I could tell she was in a bad mood because she burnt my eggs so they were crumbly and uncomfortable to chew. After my breakfast I gazed out the window at the cemetery and all the dull grey tomb stones with a few shiny white marble ones that glimmered in the sunlight and always caught my eye, sometimes it was almost as if they glowed in the night when there were no lights at all. Towards the middle of the day, the weather got very hot, forcing me to stay in the shade watching ants in the garden run at full speed to get in to the shade as they came in I stepped on them killing them instantly. The day was long a boring I couldn’t wait for dinner then bed. Late in the afternoon I helped my mum with some laundry and she gave me a huge basket to hold the clothes in as she filled it up I could feel an unbearable strain on my arms my arms stopped working an the clothes tumbled on the floor, my mom screamed like a bat echoing through a cave and pushed me out of the way. I fell and felt horrified and scared because of my mum’s sudden behaviour.

## Candidate Commentary

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The piece of re-creative writing that I did for Jamaica Kincaid is a short chapter and I have decided to put it at the end of chapter one entitled “figures in a distance” my chapter fits perfectly between chapter one and two, explaining her first day of her holidays.

Figures in a distance interested me because it works on Annie’s obsession with death and I particularly like how she describes the thoughts on the subject and her simple understanding “some days there were no funeral. “no one died”, I would say to my mother.” “what made them so late?” I would ask my mother”.

The main aim of this chapter is to introduce Annie to the reader and show her young mind and her bond with her mother and how she respects her more than any other person “my mother so beautiful”. Also through out the novel she uses metaphors and compares her mother to animals the most powerful half way through “like a crocodile”.

Also in this chapter the way the author writes is to that of a child, the way children ramble on with out a single pause; this is shown with the lack of paragraphs. Also she uses really long sentences, which helps explain the story. The author writes in an episodic style, this is shown through out the novel as the author chooses certain episodes of her life and doesn’t stick to a straight forward story line.

Further more, in this first chapter it shows the rural and urban culture of Antigua (Annie's homeland) from the farm house in the country side to there house in the main city of the island. "We were living far out on fort road" "I had nothing to do but feed the birds and pigs", this is where she is out in the country side. I think that this could show why she has trouble with people later in the novel; I think this is because in this chapter she is very separate from other kids and doesn't learn how to socialize.

In my writing I have tried to capture all these techniques, especially the metaphors about animals to explain the mum, these are powerful metaphors and show Annie's fears and how she sees her mum through out the novel. Also as the novel progresses these images of animals get stronger and stronger, also the older Annie gets, and they start nice "her teeth like pearls to "her mouth opened to show off big, shiny, sharp white teeth, it was as if my mother had turned into a crocodile".

### Moderator's Comments:

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This short first person narrative gives a sense of character and theme in *Annie John* by Jamaica Kincaid, but is not totally accurate; it certainly needed proof-reading.

The commentary is also short and limits what the candidate can achieve. It is mainly concerned with character. Sometimes the language comment is inaccurate ("she uses metaphors" followed by the example of a simile "like a crocodile"). The fourth paragraph mentions some style features but does little with them. What is said in the sixth paragraph probably has the most substance, but is uncritical ("nice").

# 4 “Trial” re-creative writing

## Candidate A

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*We need to talk about Kevin* Lionel Shriver (2003)

**How does Shriver use the meetings between Eva and Kevin to 'explain' their relationship?**

The rhythmic clapping of my heeled shoes echoed down the hall. I had dressed for the occasion- it was my birthday. I came to a halt at the barred gate and stood there for a moment as my gaze fixed upon the lifeless corpse slumped over one of the few wiry metal chairs in the room. His look of apathy resembled that of a snake at the zoo, having endured the incessant pounding of glass in the hope of entertainment.'

Kevin started off

"You seem disappointed. I hope you weren't expecting a cake, balloons"

Although this kind of salutation is uncommon on one's birthday, I felt determined not to give in to his cynical demeanour and managed a feeble,

"You remembered,"

"Of course I did, How could I forget the dinners at Hudson House I had to punish myself sitting through at some stupid restaurant where, just when you're ready to leave and go home, they bring out a cake with sparklers and dim the lights and the waiters gather round with a guitar and sing "Happy Birthday," followed by an eruption of meaningless greetings from the vacuous morons around you? Pathetic."

"I always used to enjoy that part. Seems strangers used to be more willing to ensure I enjoyed my day than you ever did."

"Your day?" He scoffed, "the only reason it's *your* day is because you were born, requiring no effort or achievement on your part, You never earned the right to say that today is somehow *your* day. What did you accomplish? All it took from you was a fit of crying and sucking your mom's tits."

I felt inclined to jeer back at Kevin in a childlike retaliation, but refusing to further incite more abuse I restrained myself. His choice of words interested me. The word '*pathetic*' couldn't help but evoke images of Kevin marching around with sinister pride in soiled diapers at the age of six. I realised however, that Kevin could not be embarrassed, and I failed to bring up that, unlike him, I had accomplished fully what Kevin had defined as 'being born.'

"The way I see it, Kevin, *you* are pathetic,"

This would-be insult seemed to do no more damage than the light dusting of dandruff which lay on his shoulders, and in the same way, he apathetically brushed it aside.

Resorting to his fail-safe form of puerile mockery he nye-nyed "*sticks and stones ...* "

"-And names still hurt me, Kevin" I said, cutting his childish degradation short,

"You got out of all of this without a scratch. I guess fame doesn't come easily to everyone."

Reluctant to agree that being on the blunt end of social stigmatism was in any way related to red carpets and paparazzi; I held my silence, knowing that no form of verbal violence would leave the slightest of dents the notorious KK's stubborn shell

As you always used to say, "You know Eva, as soon as you respond, you're re playing his game. Aren't we a little old for games?" Of course we are.

## Candidate commentary

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The reader's understanding of the narrative is substantially increased through Eva's accounts of her visits to Claverack. Here we see the 'post-Thursday' relationship between Eva and Kevin. In most cases it appears that there is still conflict and friction between the two, as there has always been though perhaps with greater clarity now the pretence of a happy family has been destroyed.

Shriver writes the novel in an epistolary style, and maintains a constant structure throughout. Paragraphs are usually short in length, and, while dialogue is included, it is usually brief. As the entire novel is written in the first person through the character Eva, and addressed to Franklin, who we eventually discover is deceased; we see all of the events, emotions and interactions regarding Eva and Kevin from her perspective. Constant interjections directly questioning or referring to Franklin remind the reader of his 'presence. The inclusion of a direct quotation from Franklin and the repeated use of the pronoun 'you' heightens the authenticity of the epistolary form, and we get an insight into Franklin's point of view through Eva, giving us two sides to Eva's narration.

I have kept direct speech between Kevin and Eva short to replicate that of Shriver. Longer paragraphs usually show Eva's thoughts and feelings whilst writing, showing how her personal thought is usually more deeply developed and extended beyond what she can recollect saying. Speech that is italicised is used as Shriver does, to place an emphasis on its pronunciation, "I don't *care* how your camera works. I'm *not interested*, I'm not interested in *baseball* or the *founding fathers* or *decisive battles* of the Civil War." p425, and to draw the reader's attention to it indicating its importance in Eva's memory.

Eva regularly refers to the past in her letters to Franklin. The past tense plays such an important part in Eva's life as her life now has been so irreversibly devastated by it. Her purpose for writing to her deceased husband is her way of reasoning the past, and provides a temporary escape. She attempts to re-live events that she is fond of, including simple ones like resting her head on his muscular chest. "Every day we spent apart, I would conjure that wide warm chest of yours, the clavicle valley into which I could nestle my head on those glorious mornings that I did not have to catch a plane." P24. The reference to Kevin as a young child attempts to replicate how Shriver makes Eva recollect the past. Shriver usually italicises *Thursday*, as if to say that day of the week has forever been scarred by Kevin's actions. "Witness his painstaking preparations for Thursday or his presently impeccable command of the malevolents' Roll of Honor." P303.

Occasionally Shriver attaches a bestial appearance to Kevin, most commonly in Eva's visits to Claverack, "Before being impounded like a pet that bites... In parting, I threw him a bone." Pp67,69. Kevin shares attributes such as an inability to be empathetic, as well as being caged and confined in a prison. In comparing Kevin to a snake I have likened the featureless visage and cold-bloodedness of the reptile to him.

Speech between Eva and Kevin in the extract is conflicting and unpleasant. Kevin knows how to aggravate Eva, and deliberately does so, usually drawing some form of personal pleasure in the process. He, like a child, still speaks in a "nye-nye" fashion. He is cynical and condescending, thinking little of things that mean anything to his mother. His sarcasm hurts Eva, "*Gosh, are we having some of that great Armenian food tonight? I sure want to learn about my ethnic heritage!*" His disingenuous boppiness hurt my feelings" P419. Shriver mentions how Kevin remains impossible to embarrass and insult, proven by his wearing of diapers until six, Shriver states one of the reasons he did this was not due to any shortcoming of his, but rather a means of degrading his mother. Eva is therefore unable to retaliate verbally to Kevin; her retribution must take place in her head. Aiming to repeat this I have included two instances where Eva is left wanting to fight back, only restraining herself, knowing any attempts would be in vain. "Kevin, stop it" Let Mommer and Daddy talk ...quit the *nyeh-nyeh* or we're leaving.' I don't know why I threatened him with departure, lacking any evidence that he wanted to stay" P150. She would feel guilty at blaming her own son for not being able to breast-feed him due to her mastitis. "I shouldn't have taken it personally, but how could I not? It wasn't mother's milk he didn't want, it was Mother." P102.

The reader may feel puzzled as why Eva would continue to visit the person who, even before his birth, brought destruction to her life. By referencing Eva's birthday in this passage to show how Eva robotically will continue to visit Kevin. Eva desperately longs for Franklin, and that may be the reason she will not let Kevin go, as Kevin is the last part of Franklin she still has left. "*What possessed us? We were so happy! Why, then, did we take a stake of all we had and place it all on this outrageous gamble of having a child?*" P14.



## Moderators Comments:

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The text could have a better title and is short of a few commas, but is very accomplished. The commentary seems to have an angle, but does not squarely engage with the task ("How does Shriver use the meetings between Eva and Kevin to explain their relationship?"). There is plenty of textual knowledge shown by quotations from the whole knowledge; and insight into character, relationships and theme is strong. The answer does consider language, but could be more analytical in this area.

## Candidate B

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### **'The History Boys' Alan Bennett**

*It's a dilapidated pub in the quiet suburbs of Sheffield, an unusual location for Dakin and Irwin to retire for an intimate 'drink'. Dakin is waiting outside; restless. He lights up a cigarette.*

Scripps: He looks nervous; worried, almost gaunt. He actually cares. This isn't the Dakin that I have known; he seems so personally involved, so open and intimate. I never realised his feelings for Irwin were genuine; I thought it was just Dakin... being Dakin.  
(*Dakin puts out his cigarette and turns to leave*)

Irwin: I thought I saw you through the window, you weren't leaving were you?

Dakin: No I wasn't, sir. I just thought you weren't going to come that's all sir. Now you're here shall we go inside and get that drink?

Irwin: (*Avoiding eye contact with Dakin*) so, how are you feeling? Has the reality .of your achievement settled in yet?

Dakin: I'm feeling great. Yes it has set in and it is a strange achievement to come to terms with. Sir, I don't really know how I can thank you but I hope you understand my gratitude.

Irwin: Dakin come on, I'm not your teacher now; I thought you of all people should know that. Tell me honestly how you are feeling, and don't give me any of that pre-prepared crap.

Dakin: Ok. Well, to be honest, Sir...

Irwin: No. Irwin.

Dakin: Ok, well to be honest, Irwin, I feel nervous, which you may think uncharacteristic of me. I feel very prepared though, that's the most encouraging aspect of it all.

Irwin: 'Time passed and time future what might have been ...

Dakin: 'and what has been point to one end, which is always present.' T.S. Eliot 'Burnt-Norton'. That's Hector, that's not you. How did you know that?

Irwin: Well Dakin, you may be surprised but you, and the rest of the boys, aren't the only people to have learnt something from Hector.

Dakin: Yeah I can understand that, but still that's not you. You're not being yourself; 'In order to act, one must be absolutely sure of oneself, no doubts must remain anywhere. But how am I, for example; to be sure of myself? Where are the primary causes on which I can take my stand, where

are my foundations? Where am I to take them from? I practice thinking, and consequently each of my primary causes pulls along another, even more primary, in its wake, and so on ad infinitum ...'

Irwin: Is it not 'ad infinitus'? Who said that?

Dakin: That's not the point No it's ad infinitum because it's **to** infinity; infinitus is the accusative. But that doesn't answer my question, where are my primary causes? Where are my foundations?

(Pause)

It was Fyodor Dostoevsky -'Notes from the underground'. That's me. Not Hector.

Irwin: I don't think I can answer that Dakin, only you can. That's the thing about defining yourself, only you (*he pauses as he gently points his finger into Dakin's chest*) can do it. Do you know where the gents might be?

Dakin: Yeah, I know where the gents are; and I'm not talking about the subjunctive. I will show you.

## Candidate Commentary

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The most pivotal focus of my re-creative piece was to try and develop the idea of Dakin and Irwin's 'drink', both of them are outside the scholastic environment. I displayed Dakin as a lot more caring and thoughtful than he seems to allow himself to be when at school. At school he creates this smug, charming persona -which I still included in my piece- only included a different side to him also. I showed Irwin as more controlling than one might think he would appear in relation to previous moments in the play, as Dakin says *'Why are you so bold in argument and talking but when it comes to the point, when it's something that's actually happening, I mean now, you're so fucking careful'* So, I opposed this vigilant character that Dakin questions so frantically, Irwin being more casual and laid back.

Dakin develops as an aggressive character, by the manner in which he questions Irwin intellectually; he asks Irwin *'How did you know that?'* This suggests that there isn't a dominant role within this relationship as although Dakin has moments of self-assurance and confidence he also has moments of self doubt; *'...Irwin I feel nervous, which you may think uncharacteristic of me (Pause). I feel very prepared though ....'* The repetition of *'I feel'* relates to the intimacy of these two characters and the vulnerability of Dakin at this moment, this shows the significant influence that Irwin has had on Dakin. Also the inclusion of *'though'* displays Dakin's re-assurance of himself and how his vulnerability makes him uncomfortable, because it's so uncharacteristic. His vulnerability is also apparent when he says *'how am I to be sure of myself! Where are my foundations? Where am I to take them from?'* These three questions re-iterate his vulnerability and intimacy with Irwin but also desperation for his help and guidance.

Irwin's Latin correction is incorrect; this was included to show a vulnerability and thus intimacy between the characters. Dakin's correction appears flippant and patronising but this is because he is frustrated that Irwin is avoiding his question, this is displayed by his short sharp sentence when Irwin is trying to avoid the issue *'That's not the point.'* This short clipped sentence shows Dakin's focus and also demonstrates his strong and accomplished grasp of language. It is similar to when Dakin corrects Irwin on the use of immoral/amoral, his questioning of euphemism, gerunds and subjunctive history. He is being meretricious in all of these instances, to gain the respect and admiration of Irwin; he cares about Irwin's opinion. Also highlighted is Dakin's change in focus throughout the play; the shift in respect from Hector to Irwin. The deterioration of Dakin's relationship with Hector is fundamental throughout the play and this was demonstrated when he said, *'That's Hector. That's not you,'* These short sentences represent annoyance and disappointment at Hector's influence on Irwin. and also relates to when he said *'That's me. Not Hector.'* This emphasises that Dakin doesn't want to be associated with Hector, especially by Irwin.

Irwin's refusal to be called sir displays his yearning for an informal and more intimate relationship outside of the scholastic environment. Irwin says *'Dakin come on, I'm not your teacher now; I though you of all people should know that.'* His use of the subjunctive, 'should', demonstrates his self-conscious demeanour when confronting Dakin intimately. Also the inclusion of Swipp's

soliloquy relates to Bennett's use of him as a chorus or narrator throughout the play, it helps introduce the scene and accentuate the change in Dakin's character, and the disbelief that this change has caused.

## Moderators Comments:

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The dramatic insert is impressive, but has a number of surface errors. The commentary explores character well and looks at the impact of particular words, showing good terminology. There should be more of a sense of Bennett at work in the answer, certainly some light shone on the playwright's techniques and structuring.

## Candidate C

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### *'True History of the Kelly Gang'*

It cant be crossed Joe. (p.300)

It adjectival can said he & plunged into the dull waters the water were high up to the horse's belly but Joe pushed on & slowly made his way to the other bank. This sight were good enough for Dan who immediately charged into the tumbling waters Steve close behind him like two calves would follow their mother.

I heard a cry behind me two young traps had broken away from the others eager for promotion no doubt.

Go on Steve said I & turned to face the traps I saw one produce a gun & ducked on my horse's side. I righted myself & fired back I saw one trap slide off his horse as it reared in terror as though branded by red-hot iron. The other cried out in shock & charged at me but I sent him running by firing 2 shots at his feet.

The other trap were quickly swept into the tumbling waters and I were reminded of Sergeant Kennedy as he lay helpless and dying by my own hand I were suddenly v. determined this trap would not meet the same fate and plunged my horse into the angry waters behind him.

He were clinging to a broken branch lodged in the bank of the river sure to be swept under give me your hand shouted I above the roar of the wind never murderer replied he so I were forced to dismount my horse and were reminded of when I dragged Dick Shelton's drenched and soapy body up a bank when I were 11 yr old.

The water were icy cold and v. muddy I felt the pull of the current as I swam to the trap its pull were as strong as an ox. More than once I were pulled under by the force of it but I carried on just as I had when I were a boy. The trap fought off my help I would rather die than be saved by you Kelly said he but I were not going to let him die

I took hold of him under both arms but suddenly I slipped I were sure we were both going to die then as we were pulled under the water but just as all the air had left my lungs but I were going to survive I thought of Mary and my child she were carrying and heaved us out of the water.

It took all my strength but I got us both to the safety of the green bank and I dumped him like a new born lamb it were v. windy and we were both drenched I watched as he panted & spluttered for breath.

I didn't expect a sash like before but I were not expecting the adjectival bugger to cry its Kelly he's here I've got him, as the trap I saved ran in the direction of the adjectival army thirsty for my blood I could only think such is life as I levelled my gun at him.

My daughter understand that those traps showed me no justice so I showed them no mercy.

## Candidate Commentary

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The passage is set at this point because this is a time in the novel when Kelly knows he cannot return to being a normal citizen as he has just killed a 'trap' I believe that at this point he would just

be coming to terms with the fact that he has killed and the consequences of this. It is a pivotal moment – the point of no return. I wanted to make the wild, over-flowing Murray River the setting of my scene as I feel it represents the wildness of Kelly's emotions at this point.

I feel that this passage reflects the major theme of injustice. This theme resonates throughout the novel and I aimed to achieve this here too. Whilst aiming for the verisimilitude I had to take careful note of Carey's interpretation of Ned Kelly's voice and very essence. He was, in Carey's novel, writing to his daughter this added to the reader's empathy towards him and also explains why he never swore, he preferred to use the word 'adjectival'.

I found the timbre of Ned Kelly through using the motif of the colours red and green, which is shown throughout the novel. I also used the syntax of the lack of punctuation which Carey uses as Kelly based on the Jerilderie letter. The lack of punctuation also shows Kelly's freeness as an outlaw and a bushranger as it indicates the way in which he is free of the law and free of grammatical law. Carey also uses 'were' instead of was and '&' instead of writing the word out, he also does this with the word very shortening it to 'v.' he calls police officers 'traps' and uses the word 'adjectival' instead of swearing because he knows his daughter will be reading his letters, which I also mirrored to find Kelly's voice.

As well as trying to capture Ned Kelly's timbre I also wanted to capture the essence of his character. The fact that he accepted his life and the injustice served to him by referring to having to kill the trap as '*such is life*' which is dramatic irony as this is what Kelly said just before he was hanged. I also tried to capture his essence by referring to previous events in his life such as when Sergeant Kennedy dies in his anus and the sash he received for saving Shelton's life. Peter Carey did this by referring to farm animals for similes or metaphors. This is his lexicon. I tried to achieve this to my using words such as, '*as strong as an ox*', this is also an example of personification, and '*like calves would follow their mother*' also shows the same idea. I also used first person, as did Peter Carey to make the scene more trustworthy and believable to the readers.

I wanted to show a scene in which Ned saves someone from drowning because this would mirror the time that he saved Dick Shelton's life as a young boy. It also created an uncertain and interesting atmosphere for readers. I wanted my passage to show how Ned is just and fair but also to show the injustice he faced throughout his life. I did this by having the trap that Ned saved run off as though to hand him in even though Ned had saved his life. I added a reference to Sergeant Kennedy as I wanted to show that this scene comes at a time 'when Ned is just accepting the guilt he feels for killing someone. I was also wary of painting Kelly as an 'angel' as I realised that as a reader I had been drawn into Kelly's life and was fond of him as a character but I knew he did have a darker side as he kills Sergeant Kennedy and I wanted to show this part of him also. In this passage where Ned slipped when he was trying to save the trap to show that he risked his life to save another, this is one of the paramount things about Ned, which we saw before when he saved Dick Shelton.

The traps were portrayed as young men as this showed how all the traps, even the ones who had never met Ned, still wanted to capture him. At this time he was a prize that all Australians wanted to be associated with, a Robin Hood of his time.

The passage finished with Ned levelling his gun at the trap so the readers could make up their own minds about what the Ned Kelly they know would have done. Injustice was also shown by ending the passage with '*those traps showed me no justice so I showed them no mercy.*'

I really did enjoy writing this passage as it gave me a real insight into what life would have been like for Ned Kelly. I used exercises I learnt in my drama a-level to get into the mindset of Ned Kelly. I feel I learnt a lot and I enjoyed having the chance to explore what it would be like to be an author like Peter Carey, and also inhabit the skin of a nineteenth century outlaw.

#### Bibliography:

True History of the Kelly Gang by Peter Carey (Faber)  
True History of the Kelly Gang Book in a Box Club

Filmography:  
Ned Kelly (Gregor Jordan, 2003)

## Moderators Comments:

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This text with its very definite linguistic invention lends itself to re-creative work and this addition to the later part of the novel works well although all the paragraphs are of a similar length. The commentary makes some good points about setting and also considers structure and analytical methods. Paragraphs three and four have a very definite language focus. The commentary captures well a number of key concerns in a convincing style, but fades a little towards the end.

## Candidate D

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### *'The History boys'* Alan Bennett

**Mrs Lintott** *I hesitate to mention this, lest it occasion a sophisticated groan, but it may not have crossed your minds that one of the dons who interviews you may be a woman. I'm reluctant at this stage in the game to expose you to new ideas, but having taught you all history on a strictly non-gender-orientated basis I just wonder whether it occurs to any of you how dispiriting this can be? It's obviously dispiriting you, Dakin, or you wouldn't be yawning.*

**Dakin** *Sorry, Miss*

**Mrs Lintott** *sorry, yes, it's always sorry. You men use this term rather frequently as a method of alleviating yourselves from blame from deeds that you are solely to blame for*

**Dakin** *Well, do you not think that it may be the women's fault for always accepting the supposed apology, and not making a stand for themselves, Miss? How are 'us men' supposed to learn from our mistakes if we are never stopped?*

**Mrs Lintott** *It's lucky for you Dakin, because if we did, you would be unable to do anything! Also, I think you'll find Dakin, that we *are* making a stand; surely your historical knowledge must extend far enough for you to remember the suffragette movement?*

**Dakin** *Wasn't that the woman who threw herself in front of the King's horse to try and make a point? Bit silly I thought, Miss: what points can you make when you're dead?!*

**Scrapps** *It all started after the war, didn't it Miss?*

**Mrs Lintott** *Women were actually pressing for simple civil liberties well before the outbreak of war. However, the war gave women the opportunity to show themselves as the formidable force that they are, when suddenly there was a substantial lack of men around, and women *had* to work, finally breaking free 'from the' unwanted and demeaning position of 'housewife'.*

**Dakin** *You can't judge us by what others have done in the past, Miss. We're a new generation with fresh ideas about the position of women in the world, Miss,*

**Timms** *In the past women were unjustly confined to the sink and the needle, Nowadays, with advancements in technology, they are confined to the dishwasher and sewing machine!*

**Hector** *Somebody hit that misogynist little runt! I*

**Timms** I wouldn't do that, Sir. I'll report you, Sir!

**Hector** Report me, and I'll only hit you harder, now sit down!

**Timms** Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself, the Bible sir.

**Hector** I'm too old to care how I'm, treated any more so I'd watch it Timms! Moreover the Bible is not a book I endeavour to keep at the top. of my reading list.

**Mrs Lintott** Maybe you should Hector. It may not be accurate or a particularly thrilling read but it has some noble sentiments which would do you no harm. But Timms: very good. If you were to use quotes of any sort in your interview to support your argument or claim, then you will go far, Quotes demonstrate you to be an astute and well read individual, immediately separating you from the exam and syllabus trained masses.

*Bell goes*

Word Count: 431

## Candidate Commentary

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Bennett leaves the character Mrs Lintott as undeveloped with only a small insight as to her personality. This extract reveals Mrs Lintott's intelligent and potentially witty personality and her views that the position of women in society has been neglected and oppressed by the dominance of men historically and contemporarily. The idea emerged from the interview practise lesson on pages eighty-two to eight even.

This extract demonstrates Mrs Lintott's frustration and feelings about how men have dominated history. 'Sorry, yes it's always sorry'. Her repetition of the word 'sorry' shows her frustration, but it also shows us that she does not regard Dakin's apology as sincere. She continues to say 'you men'. The use of 'you' here shows that while Mrs Lintott may be talking to Dakin and addressing the class, she is also talking about men in general. Furthermore, the use of 'you men' conveys a tone of disdain as she is separating herself and womankind from men, almost with disgust; but also because it is a rather simple and childish manner of escaping responsibility. It also shows us that Mrs Lintott feels that men are untrustworthy and devious as she says that they 'frequently' 'alleviate [themselves] from blame from deeds that [they] are solely to blame for]',

Mrs Lintott also demonstrates that she is intelligent and quick witted, firstly through her humorous quip after Dakin's third utterance. She immediately comes back with a quick and witty response to Dakin's attempted witticism: 'It's lucky for you Dakin, because if we did, you would be unable to do anything!' This demonstrates her means of controlling the class through verbal prowess and intellectual dominance. Mrs Lintott's intellect is demonstrated further when she continues her argument using historical knowledge; she does this to strengthen her argument but also because she doesn't allow these arguments to deviate from the point of the class. She begins by asking if Dakin's 'historical knowledge...extends[s] far enough to remember the suffragette movement'. The 'surely' at the start of the sentence is patronising to Dakin but also extends her argument onto a historical theme. This reinforces her argument as it is based on fact, but it also allows her to impart knowledge to the students whilst doing so. Finally, Mrs Lintott commends Timms on his use of quotation and tells him, while addressing the class, that 'quotes demonstrate [him] to be an astute and well read individual, immediately separating [him] from the exam and syllabus trained masses'. This shows her to be wise and The theme of using argument, discussion and quotation rather than the syllabus as a method of teaching is one that Bennett exercises throughout the play; not only in Mrs Lintott's case, but Irwin and Hector's alike,

The sentence lengths in the History Boys are generally short when in the classroom environment, and stage direction is sparse. Bennett uses this to convey a fast paced and spontaneous feel-to the dialogue. Showing that the teachers and pupils alike are thinking on their feet. Bennett uses this spontaneity to demonstrate the freedom from the constraints of curriculum based, planned lessons that the boys encounter. Furthermore Bennett uses the boys' repetition of 'Sir' with a

comma before it, to place slight emphasis upon the word. Bennett uses this technique in the boys' dialogue with their teachers to demonstrate their playfulness through an underlying tone of mockery. I have attempted to recreate both these stylistic features: 'I wouldn't do that, Sir. I'll report you, Sir!'

## Moderators Comments:

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A keener checking eye could have been applied to the scene, but is highly appropriate material. The end could be better conceived and script layout attended to more. The commentary has a systematic approach but only makes gestures towards Bennett as the writer towards the end. Sometimes the observations do not quite lift off ("Furthermore, Bennett uses the boys' repetition of 'Sir' with a comma before it, to place slight emphasis upon the word.") Wit could certainly be explored more in this submission.

## Candidate E

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Sally. She would be 6 today. In between Leanne and Jack. I would have loved another girl. I think that Nicola could have loved her the most. She was really upset when she found out it wasn't going to happen. But maybe it was for the best that Charlo smashed that dream. Literally smashed it. Charlo was in a fine mood that day. The football was on at 3, and he was getting ready to go out down the pub with a couple of other lads. Richie Massey was coming round to pick him up in an hour. I was in the kitchen brushing Nicola's hair. I was just thinking how quiet it was when Charlo dropped the tin of lager he was drinking on the floor. It sprayed everywhere. I mean up the walls, across Charlo, on Nicola, the lot. Soaked Charlo's jeans. And that's when I felt that familiar feeling across the top of my shoulder blades, my skin crawling. It was the most dangerous time, it could go either way. It was dangerous because for a second you could sway him. I had done it before. It takes quick thinking though and this time I was too late. Nicola laughed. She laughed out loud, it hung in the air like a swear word from a toddler. Like a laugh at a funeral. Once she laughed I knew it was too late. I dropped the brush on the floor as I felt the air change. His anger was thick, I could feel it. If there was one thing Charlo could not stand it was being laughed at. I felt the slap before I even saw it coming.

## Candidate commentary

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I have tried to emulate Roddy Doyle's style of writing in a number of different ways. The first way that I have done this is to try and use short sentences much like he does all the way through the book. Because Paula goes from past to present a lot in the book it has led me to use this in my re-creative piece. 'I felt the slap before even saw it coming' - I used this in my piece as a throwback to the lines in book where Charlo plays with Paula's mind. He asks her about what happens to her eye when he knows fine well what has happened to her, like he has never seen black and red around her eyes. So in my piece she says I didn't see it coming, possibly because her eyes were already bruised from a similar beating.

'The lot' - I have used colloquisms like this one to try to match the way Doyle writes as Paula. Paula has an accent, and uses slang, especially when she 'forgets' herself and starts talking to the reader like she is talking to her sisters or to her eldest daughter.

I chose to write about Sally the baby who died because I think if Roddy Doyle had written about the incident it would have given a new and better dimension to the book and given the reader a better insight into why Paula has such a strange relationship with both her eldest and her youngest child. I feel that Roddy Doyle has not expanded this as much as he could have.

Writing about the miscarriage caused by the violence of her husband was very easy, as I used the violence theme all the way through the book to help me. I feel that my passage would fit in chapter 18 after the line 'I lost a baby', and give a better and deeper understanding of what happens to Paula during this time. Doyle does not mention the dead baby other than when Paula explains briefly that Sally was 'born by a fist' - alluding rather crudely to the cause of and the events leading to the loss of her baby.

Although extended family is themed throughout the novel I have chosen to concentrate just on the immediate family for this piece. Throughout the novel Paula is always talking about her sisters or Charlo's family, or her mum and dad, here I have just concentrated on her immediate family.

'dropped the tin of lager' - I wrote this comment using the incorrect word to describe the can of lager, as 'tin' or tinny is a slang word often used in Ireland, and I felt that using slang would help me to keep to Doyle's style.

The fact that I have not used curse words in my recreative piece may be the only part of Doyle's style that I have not emulated. I feel that in my piece Paula is not angry or annoyed, but just sad and accepting of what has happened to her. I felt that to use a curse word in this even though it would give authenticity to my piece would take away from the credibility of the feelings Paula was having.

## Moderators Comments:

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A short re-creative passage, but effective with a strong ending. The commentary begins with a very definite language focus, but this aspect is not sustained. Indeed the commentary loses impact by the end and as a whole is the weaker of the two parts. It is certainly good work, but seeing it as excellent was unrealistic. The re-creative submission as a whole seems to be on the short side.

## Candidate F

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### *Snow Crash* - Neal Setphensen

So there you have it, the deliverator had just lost his job. Brilliant. He sat in his perfect misery thinking back to the first pathetic delivery he had ever made.

The deliverator sat perplexed outside the blood red six bedroom house big enough to cater for the billions of starving emaciated kids in Africa. The over sized windows and slaughter house style door was a reminder of what he didn't have. How annoying. How ridiculous. Time just dragged by, taking forever to just be over and done with. Just wanted this torture to just be forgotten so he could leave and go back to his poor excuse for a home and sit in the freezing cold and pick pieces out of his mind with the thought of how lonely he was. Eight minutes to go left, all he had to do was wait for that annoying cheap ear splitting buzz of the signal. Another annoyance to add to his list now as the God damn wind, great, just blew open his jacket conveniently wiping his emaciated frame with malice making his skeleton rattle against paper flesh and his blood shiver with all the rage he had left inside of him.

Seven minutes left. What a fucking joke. He examined the couple like helpless ants under a magnifying glass waiting to be burnt to death by some demonic behaving kid who later on in life would probably develop schizophrenia and spend the rest of miserable existence wearing a straight jacket and foaming at the mouth. Disgusting. She nestled next to him like a parasite trying to take everything he had. The chiffon curtains blew a violent gush of air that made her hair fly like strands of black wire entwining themselves around his neck ready to strangle him at any moment. Couldn't he see how desperate she was, how deep inside her soul she was laughing at him, was



he that stupid that he couldn't wee through her painted smile? Of course he was, so fickle, so young and so utterly besotted with this seemingly God-like siren that drank him in with her ocean ice eyes ready to take him for every penny he had to his name.

How amusing, at last someone seemed to agree with him. Thank the Lord for that. The fire roared, trying to warn him of her vindictive ways, how this sweet little parasite with the angelic face was now just wrapping her arms around him to get ready for the kill. Red, now orange, now topaz. Too bad. The flames gave up. It was too late, she already had him gazing at her like he was a helpless puppy dog who thought his owner was the best thing since electricity.

It infuriated Hiro how a woman could have so much power over a man. He looked successful enough, well groomed the type born with a silver spoon and matching plate to go with it. Tall, with honey coloured hair, and ebony eyes. So how could she possibly break him down like that. It made him twitch with malice at how the guy stupid dumbass had let his guard down just like that for some elegant little stick insect who liked like she had candy floss for brains.

Four minutes left. Oh wait something's happening, Hiro peered closer trying to steady his bike. The guy is getting up. Oh no, No don't do it. You'll regret it for the rest of your life man! It was too late, she'd had him like a Venus fly trap. One knee, the ring, her shrill squeak of laughter. The proposal. Hiro sighs deeply at her smirk as she embraced the only thing that made that guy feel like he was walking on air everyday he was with her. Try some morphine man, anything but this ungentle doll like creature.

Two minutes, what a bloody relief. Hiro suddenly stroked his Samurai sword like a spasm had taken over his hand and he was now gripping the blade till his fingers seeped a little blood. Dringgg. Time up. They'd get their pizza with knowledge of the weird pizza delivery guy who sat outside their house just hating them for what they were. Well do you remember the last guy who delivered your pizza?

## Candidate commentary

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Throughout the Novel numerous devices are used to create an aggressive tone for the reader to correspond with. Hiro is often referred to as "The deliverator" this automatically creates an exterior as if he has some unearthly quality about him, which could therefore intrigue the reader as to why he may have received this deadly name. I also decided to adopt this method to construct a mysterious lurking exterior for Hiro as he waits outside the home of the young couple, this entails to the reader he is unpredictable as if his mind could inflict the unimaginable at any moment as his rage builds throughout the extract.

By appointing Hiro's actions in the present tense " He is preparing to carry out his third mission" conveys the reader to feel involved in the novel. This literary device compels any reader to envision the action taking place before their very eyes during the time period depending in which it is read. To make my extract seem more immediate I used short sentences such as "Oh wait, something's happening" and " The guy is getting up." This creates maximum impact as the reader can imagine the event unfolding before their very eyes as they read on further.

Similes also play a fundamental role in Hiro's dramatic description. Stephenson addresses his uniform as "black as activated charcoal, filtering the very light out of the air". The use of the verb "activated" suggests it is teeming with life and vitality, even though the description is deadly, giving it a sense of irony. To create the same comparison I referred to simplistic objects with extreme references "slaughter house style door". This conjures vivid imagery and creates an ominous setting, foreshadowing to the reader that unpredictable dangerous events could unfold.

Stephenson uses objects to metaphorically communicate to the reader. This is particularly dominant when Stephenson recounts that Hiro "Kept the gun in the glove compartment". Although this may seem a very literal action, the author may be using this to convey to the reader that more is hidden below the surface. I also wanted to evoke this to the reader as Hiro seems unpredictable. By making Hiro seem out of control of his actions builds tension "he was now gripping the blade till his fingers seeped a little blood". This conveys he has a tragic flaw, jealousy making him seem a

little more human and relatable to the reader. Hiro's personality does not completely contain all of the aspects that a chivalrous main character should. He has again let the down the readers expectations of what he may be capable of.

#### Bibliography

Stephenson, Neal. *Snow Crash*. London: Penguin Books, 1992.

### Moderators Comments:

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An unusual stimulus text here produces engaged work which is let down by poor spelling. The passage produced is well conceived and has a memorable cheeky ending. The commentary covers some key areas and has an evident interest in different ways of responding to words/phrases. It is on the short side when compared to the text the candidate produced and occasionally awkwardly expressed.

## Candidate G

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### *Barbara's views on Barbeques*

When Sheba decided to invite me to the annual Hart family Barbeque, I reluctantly accepted. I bitterly resented my decision, as I strongly desired a peaceful Saturday afternoon, opposed to one involving snotty, hyperactive little rodents running around as if all hell had been let loose.

I was looking forward to seeing Sheba again, but the same could not be said for her family members. I imagined them to be foolish and overly loquacious characters, who had little sense of personal space. I also thought them to be the kind of people who would refer to me with the unfortunate moniker of 'Babs'; like the self-absorbed characters that inhabit the Staff Room at school.

Alas, with a heavy heart I made the journey to the Hart residence on Saturday afternoon. On the car journey to the barbeque I half hoped, at one point, that a young hooligan would come careering into the side of my car, meaning that I would have to be admitted to the nearest hospital; thus creating an escape route from the hellish afternoon I was about to embark on.

As soon as Polly let me into the party and I entered the Hart's garden I could I immediately hear the sounds of awkward, artificial conversation as old family members desperately tried to socialise with those who were either half their age, or those who simply weren't interested in anything other than the footy scores.

I could see Ben and what must have been his cousins running around aimlessly with bits of chewed up sausage spurting everywhere, as they spoke to decide their next plan of action. Ben in particular seemed to have made it his mission to irritate those of Polly's age whilst attempting to impress the girls of his own age. I feared for the boy's future, after all, if he was behaving like this with the opposite sex now, God only knows what unholy activities he would embark on as a teenager. At one point, one boy, who was clearly attempting to impersonate an Indian Chief came clattering into me after being chased by one of his companions. I gave the boy a stern look and decided that children of this age had the wasteful 'modus operandi' of involuntarily exercising, as they ran about playing games that only those under the age of eleven could understand.

As this chaos was taking place without any necessary adult intervention, my eye caught Richard and what had to be his brother poking at a cocktail of greasy burgers, which we were expected to consume. A great dollop of tomato ketchup and a thin slice of what looked like plastic, it was actually cheese, accompanied it. Richard approached me with one such disgrace to nutrition-I passed.

I was just about to turn and leave this rabble when a gentle, relaxing voice cut through the action.

'Oh Barbara I'm so glad you came.'

It was Sheba.

## Candidate Commentary

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I have set my re-creative piece at a barbeque, held at the Hart household. I have done this in order to place Barbara in the midst of a public occasion, of which she would heavily disapprove and to show the juxtaposition of her character against such a background.

Barbara forcibly asserts her opinions on many topics involving the Hart family. Polly's attempt at running away provokes the insistent Barbara to accompany Sheba. In my piece I showed Barbara's disapproval of Ben's behaviour as she comments: 'if he was behaving like this with the opposite sex now, God only knows what unholy activities he would embark on as a teenager.'

Within 'Notes on a Scandal' Heller's sophisticated language elevates Barbara's perception of her own status above her associates. Resultantly, I have used sophisticated terms such as, 'awkward, artificial conversation' and 'loquacious' which stem from such phraseology as 'disconsolate' and 'irascible.'

Heller also portrays hypocrisy in Barbara's voice, offering Barbara's poor communicative skills as a comparison with her critique of other character's meagre skills. She criticises Sheba's tone of voice, commenting 'that newsreader's voice of hers', a tone which I reproduced in the expression 'footy scores.'

Within the novel Barbara invariably uses an old fashioned idiom of speech, symbolic of her notions of upper middle class linguistics. Her reference to Ben, in the novel, as a 'cheerful old sausage', is indicative of this. 'Alas, with a heavy heart' is an example of my adoption of such sophisticated, dated language.

Heller also uses a variety of Latin and French expressions showing Barbara's self-elevation above those of whom she disapproves, an idea consolidated by her use of 'modus operandi' and 'faux pas.' I also use the term 'modus operandi' in my piece to highlight Barbara's sense of her own sophistication.

Parenthesis is a stylistic feature of Heller's writing within the novel. I have done this in my piece when it says, 'a thin slice of plastic, it was actually cheese, accompanied it.' Parenthesis can be seen in the novel when Barbara says 'she's meant to be taking a nap at the moment (she's not sleeping well at night.) But. .. she is pottering around.' Barbara writes to add complex density to a sentence, emphasising something minor about the situation and giving the reader her opinionated stance.

Barbara undermines those who are not like her. Within the novel Barbara criticises Connolly's hair 'like that spun-fibreglass snow.' I have portrayed this characteristic of Barbara's in my piece through her attitude towards Sheba's extended family members, 'foolish and overly loquacious.' Barbara frequently assumes a lower voice to undermine further and to parody the subject. Within my piece Barbara uses the term 'footy scores' to assume a lower voice. Also within the novel Barbara assumes a lower voice to describe a person breaking the truth. 'Can I be straight?'

For comic effect within the book, the character of Barbara uses sentence deflation. She will end a reasonably long section with an emphatic negative. Within my piece I have utilised this style of writing. 'Richard approached me with such a disgrace to nutrition- I passed.' This is a continuing pattern within the book. An example of this can be seen in the novel when Barbara says ' One of the more insufferable things about him is that he imagines himself naughty- a delusion. '

There is a sinister air about Barbara shown in the novel when she says ' she knows not to go too far without me.' I have used this concept within my coursework when Barbara refers to Sheba's

voice as 'gentle' and 'relaxing.' Here I have portrayed the sinister, possessive attitude Barbara has towards Sheba.

## Moderators Comments:

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While the passage is well conceived, occasionally Barbara's harsh judgemental streak is overplayed in it; the original had more wit. The commentary is consistently focused on language although occasionally the same example is used more than once to no great effect. The writing is developed and possesses detail and clarity, but it does not have a strong note at the end; throughout points are made, but an argument or exploratory investigation does not fully take place.

## Candidate H

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### *Notes on Scandal by Zoe Heller*

Pg 215

***As the car moved off down the driveway, Polly, who was sporting a faint red weal on her left cheek, knelt on the back seat and waved plaintively through the rear window at Mrs Tay/or's receding figure. Sheba sitting up front stared stonily ahead.***

The taxi journey to the airport was only meant to take twenty minutes but the buffoon behind the wheel managed to take us the longest way possible, causing a ten minute delay to an already pressurised journey. The pungent smell of stale cigarette smoke and musty body odour was overpowering, the driver was clearly accountable for both of these. He was one of those taxi drivers that felt compelled to make polite chit chat, 'so had a nice trip guys?' he bellowed. After the short silence I decided to take control of the situation, 'we're all very tired and would rather not talk, thank you,' at that point I could've sworn I heard an obscenity muttered under the hum of the radio.

I looked ahead at Sheba who was still staring blankly into space. Her face was puffy and tear-streaked; I put my hand out to gently squeeze her shoulder when I caught Polly giving me an icy glare. I quickly retracted my hand and placed it on my lap; Polly smirked and proceeded to jam her earphones back into her ears. The volume on her music player continued to get louder and louder, so much so that soon the tinny whine of whatever new song she was playing exceeded the drone of the radio. Sheba jerked her head around, 'turn that down now Polly,' this single sentence was enough to set her off. 'Oh sorry is it loud? It's just that I'm trying to get the image of you having an affair out of my head.' This was delivered with a hefty dose of sarcasm only teenagers seem to execute so well. 'I told you we'll talk about this at home with your father' Sheba replied, her voice was quiet and empty.

'I just don't understand how you could actually fuck someone else behind dad's back' Polly spat at her mother. This it seemed; was the final blow for Sheba. 'What do you want me to do!?' Sheba shrieked and flung herself between the two front seats. The smell of her washing powder and new perfume wafted through to the back of the car. I thought, just for a moment, how she didn't need to swathe herself in such an artificial scent.

Back in the reality of the taxi we pulled up to the airport the, the driver let out a long sigh, 'well, hope you had a nice time in Scotland. That'll be ten fifty'. Once we'd got out, Sheba looked at me over the roof of the car, she said nothing but I could see in her eyes she was thankful I was there. I'd always be there for her.

***When we got back to Highgate, I insisted on seeing the two of them into the house.***

## Candidate commentary

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"Notes on a Scandal" by Zoe Heller looks at the illicit love affair between a school teacher and her underage pupil. Their relationship juxtaposes the one between the same teacher and her colleague and friend Barbara. The story explores the destructive relationships that the main characters become involved in.

The insert I have written takes place after Sheba and Barbara travel to Scotland to retrieve Polly from Sheba's mothers. The section focuses on how Sheba's relationship with both Connolly and Barbara affect her relationship with Polly. There are references in the novel to Sheba's wish to regain her 'lost' youth like how she clings to her Siouxsie albums and memories of New Romantic make-up. Polly is hugely affected by the fact her mother is having an affair with someone her own age and reacts by distancing herself from her mother. She acts like a child but is involved in a very serious and adult matter as a result she's straddling adulthood and childhood.

I focused on the narrative between the three characters. When Barbara reaches out to squeeze Sheba's hand she states, 'I caught Polly giving me an icy glare.' This echoes a previous scene where Polly exclaims 'oh, not fucking *her*' when Barbara appears at Sheba's mothers house. Polly feels Barbara is too close to her mother.

The insert also explores Barbara's dislike of bodily emissions. The juxtaposition of the taxi driver with the 'pungent smell of stale cigarette smoke and musty body odour' and Sheba's smell of 'washing powder and new perfume' provides a clear example as to why Barbara has feelings for Sheba.

Sheba is described as, 'staring blankly into space', a very childlike image highlighting her vulnerability. This opposes Polly who is trying desperately to appear older than her years, swearing at her mother shows her trying to shock her and gain a response. It's hinted that Barbara has feelings towards Sheba that are of a sexual nature but she isn't necessarily aware of this herself. She tries to 'gently squeeze' Sheba's shoulder, a normal gesture between friends, however as Barbara holds back after Polly notices her.

Barbara's feelings towards Polly demands the attention of Sheba that Barbara so desperately craves. Her feelings are clear when she describes Polly's tone having, 'a hefty dose of sarcasm'. When Sheba and Polly discuss Connolly Barbara stays quiet. She doesn't want to accept that Sheba is having a relationship with a young boy but it is the reason her and Sheba became so close. For Barbara it seems writing down Sheba's experiences with Connolly, sexual or not, are gratifying.

Barbara's behaviour towards Sheba intensifies and the last line of the insert sees Barbara saying, 'I'd always be there for her'. Sheba is so wrapped up in her issues she cannot see that Barbara is gaining a tighter grip on her. This foreshadows the end of the book where Sheba has lost everything and only has Barbara left.

My extract fits well within the original story and the tone is accurate to the one used in the novel. I feel we get an interesting insight into how Polly reacts to the affair before she finds out Connolly.

### Bibliography

#### Primary text used

Zoe Heller, *Notes on a Scandal* (London:Penguin 1990)

#### Secondary texts referred to during study

David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction* (UK: penguin, 1992)

Ways of Reading, ed. Montgomery, Durant et al (UK: Routledge, 2006)

## Moderators Comments:

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The writing in both parts here is sparkling, although there is some punctuation missing in the recreation. There are two problems with the commentary, which are actually aspects of the same basic deficit: not enough AO2 focus. This lack is demonstrated by the candidate not really focusing on Heller and her effects in the original novel and no real linguistic analysis taking place although the writing is very fluent. Terminology is on the level of “narrative”, “juxtaposition” and “image”.

## Candidate I

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### The History Boys

*Headmaster enters the Staff room, occupied by Hector, and immediately addresses Hector.*

**Headmaster:** Hector.

**Hector:** Headmaster?

**Headmaster:** May I have a word, about your esteemed protégés?

**Hector:** Why of course Headmaster!

**Headmaster:** I was merely wondering, whether you had any .... higher than usual aspirations for these boys, whether you were setting them any targets, so to speak?

**Hector:** Certainly Headmaster. They are all intelligent boys, well almost all in any case. They will all find highly creditable uses for the much sort after emblems of conformity, more of the same is I should think, more of the same.

**Headmaster:** Well I was thinking Oxbridge, the pinnacle of education, a step up from the ordinary. League tables Hector, I'm thinking league tables. Your boys are extremely capable, undoubtedly so, they just need somewhat refining.

**Hector:** Um...

**Headmaster:** I have decided .... to employ an assistant teacher, who will help these boys reach Oxbridge, help them hone and channel the intellect that you and Mrs Lintott have taught them. His name is Mr Irwin; I spoke with him on the phone not long ago, an interesting chap, to say the least. You see Hector, in my view education is a game and to reach the establishments of Oxford and Cambridge would be to win this game. And I want to know how you can help contribute to this effort for me?

**Hector:** An assistant teacher! ... 'Regardless of the assumed veneration of these colleges, they are not, in my opinion, the targets that these boys need to be setting Headmaster. 'Education is the leading out of what is already therein a pupil's soul. To some it is a putting in of something that is not there, and that is not what I call education, I call it intrusion.' For this reason I believe it not right to force upon these boys the pressures of such narrowed learning. It is not education at all, merely jumping through evermore slim fitted hoops.

**Headmaster:** He had some very interesting things to say.

**Hector:** 'And what and when shall he teach?'

**Irwin:** Henry VIII, study Henry the VIII, applicable to anything. Anything and everything can be turned on its head, perceived at variance. History and essays are not about what you sincerely believe in; but about being in some way unique, controversial. The task is to prepare for and pass exams. The truth is, in this sense, irrelevant.

**Hector:** Intrusion, that's what he'll be up to. Damn it.

**Headmaster:** Just what those boys could do with, a bit of... variante... diversity in their teaching!

**Irwin:** Take the Holocaust for example. Think Hitler, think Henry VIII, I can see you already drawing comparisons. This is how to be different, inimitable ... stand out from the crowd and impress those Oxbridge examiners, even bend the truth, if you must, who really knows what both Henry and Adolf got up to behind closed doors, explore the possibilities.

**Hector:** 'Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts.'

**Headmaster:** Although somewhat controversial.

**Irwin:** Many people ignore the different perspectives, the different forms of truth, which can be just as justifiable as the recognised truths. Only these people, society, are not willing to accept these truths as they do not sit comfortably with us.

**Hector:** Poetry. Poetry is the answer. The most rounded education one can have. Bollocks to the facts and the figures of world of lawyers! Poetry is the best preparation for life, applicable to anything!

**Headmaster:** Anyhow, Hector ...

**Hector:** Oh! Sorry Headmaster! Yes?

**Headmaster:** I shall, speak with you soon Hector, for now I must be going.

**Hector:** Of course Headmaster, soon certainly.

## Candidate commentary

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The main focus in my re-creative piece was to try to compare the differences and similarities in Irwin's and Hector's views on education. I tried to achieve this by mirroring the three way conversation on page 41, something that Bennett does often throughout. This allowed me to use the structure to show both characters' views, without being confrontational, which they are not, as there is little contact time between the two in the play. Both characters are meretricious; I have tried to show the differences the ways the two do this. Hector is meretricious in his use of quotations. For example, 'All knowledge is precious whether or not it serves the slightest human use.' I have mirrored this opinion, 'Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of aptitude it accumulates in the form of inert facts.' This is an eccentric comment as it is not in conjunction with any mainstream educational ideas, much like many other things about Hector, and is the opposite to what anyone else would usually say. This therefore clearly shows his meretriciousness. Hector also argues that poetry is the basis of education, forth telling of life. 'Poetry is the trailer! Forthcoming attractions!' I have emphasized this view, saying, 'Poetry. Poetry is the answer.' Here one can see Hector's enthusiasm for poetry his use of short sentences, which displays excitement, as well as his repetition of the word poetry. Hector is meretricious in the way he uses material sources and quotations as his basis for education. Irwin is meretricious in different ways, 'there's no better way of forgetting something than by commemorating it.' This is a controversial statement, and the kind of thought provoking statement that, although it is meretricious, is eventually questioned of its morality by Hector, showing Bennett's views of a measured education.

The tone of language in my piece is also similar to that of Bennett's. When the Headmaster is speaking he uses very basic French which shows his degree of intellectual ineptitude, as well as pausing often mid sentence: 'Just what those boys could do with, a bit of .. variante ... diversity in their teaching!'. This also shows that the Headmaster is unsure of himself, and lacking in confidence, although at the same time trying to assert his authority. This somewhat comical issue is explored further by Bennett throughout the play. This humorous tone is a key element in the play which I have tried to incorporate into my vignette. At the beginning of the piece the Headmaster says, 'May I have a word, about your esteemed historians?' This is ironic as Hector applies the same word, esteemed, to the Headmaster, mockingly, on page 4. This coincides with Bennett's frequent use of irony, which creates humour, throughout the play.

Also in my piece I have shown that ultimately Irwin's views on education are very similar. I have done this subtly by having both Hector and Irwin use the phrase 'Applicable to anything', in relation to their points of view, both leading to similar conclusion. This is shown in the text as both are mocking of General Studies. 'I would call these lessons A Waste of Time.' And 'How do you normally start? It is your lesson. General Studies.' In the second quotation Irwin is clearly being mocking of General Studies because of his use of full stops, pauses. This is a technique used throughout the play. I have tried to mirror this: 'Oh! Sorry Headmaster. Yes?'

## Moderators Comments:

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The Hector-Headmaster exchange is stylish and successful, but the commentary gets caught on the term "meretricious" and flattens off as a result. It comes across as lacking a dimension, which is partly because of the same point being reiterated, but also because the candidate's style wastes words – the start of the piece particularly is quite empty.

## Candidate J

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### The boy in the Striped Pyjamas by John Boyne

We arrived at the 'place' by train. I can still remember every single detail of the carriage we were in and the journey here. The smell that swarmed the whole carriage was atrocious and just kept getting worse. Our carriage was full to the brim, yet they bundled in more and more people until we physically couldn't move, let alone sit down. The journey went on for days, with no food, only a little amount of water and no fresh air. The carriage finally stopped and the doors opened. The harsh sunlight stung my tired eyes.

My book and pen, given to me by my father, was taken away from me on arrival. That didn't please me at all. But my mother soon assured me it would be returned later on.

My father and my sister Bella had been brought to the place along with mother and me. My father had been ill prior to arriving here. Throughout the duration of the journey, his condition had only got worse.

Once settling on the platform the soldiers began separating us all into two different lines. Mother and I were put into the other line than father and little Bella. I'm still not certain why they were separated from us. But that was the last time I ever saw my father and sister.

The people in the other line were then taken away and the people in our line, including mother and I, were told to remove our clothes. The soldiers then handed everybody a pair of identical striped pyjamas. When I asked mother why they had done this, she said we had been in other clothes the whole journey and the pyjamas made me look clean and presentable.



There were loads of soldiers at the place. They seemed angry all the time, constantly shouting and using violence to state their importance over us in the pyjamas. There was also a lieutenant who was in charge of all the soldiers. He seemed nice though. Lieutenant had always winked at mother every time he saw her. I'm not too sure why exactly, but I always saw it as a sign of kindness. Or maybe thanks for her hard work.

There were hardly any children that remained at the camp permanently, like me. Groups always came and just as I started making friends, they would disappear. None of them ever said goodbye, they just left.

Mother was used as a worker in the place. She made and mended soldier's clothes, cleaned and prepared food for the soldiers, and cleaned the barracks sometimes. We were treated better than most of the people in striped pyjamas and were given slightly more food, which still wasn't much at all. The water we used to wash with every few months would be slightly under room temperature, while the other peoples were freezing.

We had been in the place nearly three years. Everyone else died of illness or just disappeared. Just like the children that were brought here, and then left too.

But my mother began to get older in every way. When working she became tired quicker. The way in which mother was able to work got worse. It was as if she was empty, no longer happy.

I soon realised I wasn't the only one that had noticed my mothers rapidly deteriorating health. The soldiers that watched mother as she worked began to shout more. When they began to use physical violence, in attempt to make her work better, I decided enough was enough. I was the man of the house now and I needed to look after her.

I was going to make everything okay for mother now. I was going to ask lieutenant to release us so my mother can get better. She had been loyal for three years now, working constantly, living by the rules and cooperating. He always seemed to like her too, so surely he would want her to be well.

The weather that morning set the mood for the day ahead. As I trudged through the deep mud I became more and more confident, thinking about what I would say to Lieutenant.

I soon came to the gated area where Lieutenant lived with the rest of the soldiers. I knew this area was out of bounds to all of us in the pyjamas. But this was urgent, surely Lieutenant would understand. The men wore clothes decorated with badges and stitching. For some unknown reason, I became apprehensive.

I had not been noticed yet, so maybe I could get away, return to mother and no one would know of my plans. I thought to myself. Slowly, I turned around, taking small steps towards the route back to our barrack. Just as I made my way out of the gated area my boot sunk deep into the mud. I used all of my strength to pull my leg out and to remain silent. I began to panic when I heard the conversation of the soldiers start to die down.

Just as everything became hazy and I could feel my throat closing up, I was thrown harshly to the ground. I landed in the mud that managed to cover my pyjamas. I kept my little head bowed, not daring to look up.

As I began to raise my head I realised that I was at the feet of a soldier. Their strong, hard boots staring at me in the face. I returned to bowing my head, preparing myself for further punishment.

His coarse voice reassured me slightly, and I felt the courage to get to my feet. That courage soon disappeared as I was dragged roughly away towards mine and mothers sleeping barrack by Lieutenant. I saw a different side to Lieutenant that afternoon, than ever before. I soon decided my actions of that day were wrong. And now mother and I would be treated just as the others in the striped pyjamas.

The following morning a group of soldiers came into our barrack, shouting as usual. We were lined up and led towards a building I hadn't been in or near before. I had always wondered what it

contained and what happened in there. That was the place where all the people seemed to go and disappear. Maybe we were going to be set free. Maybe my confrontation of the soldiers and Lieutenant, about mother, had worked ...

Lieutenant didn't wink this time which was unusual. Instead, the look of kindness in his eyes was replaced by a look of guilt, as he stared at my mother. I peered up at her, she too didn't look normal. There was a sense of urgency in her eyes as she stared back at him.

As we walked into the room no one murmured. It seemed as if they all knew something I didn't. Or were all expecting something I wasn't. But what?

The room was packed; no one else would fit in. but just as before in the carriages, on arrival to the place, the soldiers cold eyes saw invisible space and continued to bundle endless people in. As I examined the people so closely surrounding me, my concentration was disturbed when my mother grabbed my hand. I looked up at mother again; the urgency in her eyes had become overwhelming now, and for some reason I felt the need to panic. I was only nine but I knew what lay ahead for me and mother wasn't going to be good. I squeezed my little hand into hers as if I intended to never let go. And I never did. Not ever.

## Candidate commentary

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The influence of my re creative story was chapter twelve of *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne. I kept the overall storyline, themes and styles in mind when writing my story.

My re -creative writing and *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* are linked thematically. The themes of confusion and childish innocence are linked when the boys go into 'out of bounds' areas. This is when Bruno discusses going under the fence with Shmuel, and when the boy in my story goes into the gated area that is out of bounds to any prisoners. Both boys are unaware as to why certain areas are out of bounds to them. Innocently, they go into these areas with good will. Bruno goes under the fence with Shmuel to help find his father. The boy in my re - creative 'writing goes into the gated area to reason with Lieutenant.

A theme of confusion is apparent in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.

For example: *'Shmuel looked very sad when he told this story and Bruno didn't know why; it didn't seem like such a terrible thing to him ... '*

Then an individual is confused, it makes them vulnerable. Vulnerability allows superiority to increase. The Nazi's confused the prisoners of Auschwitz to make them more vulnerable and compliant. This made the process of killing easier, as no questions were asked, or answered. Bruno is unaware of the treatment that the prisoners of the camp experienced. He is therefore confused when Shmuel becomes upset when recounting his experiences, comparing it to his own. This shows a childish mentality as he is unable to understand that Shmuel's experiences differed from his own, dramatically.

I carried this theme of confusion into my writing, to depict the boy in my stories' childlike manner and mentality.

*'It seemed as if they all knew something I didn't. Or were all expecting something I wasn't. But what?' ... 'I'm not too sure why exactly'.*

This quotation conveys a sense of 'fear of the unknowing'. The young boy in my story expected and sensed something was going to happen at this point in my writing. But he didn't know what. This confusion again, made him vulnerable. As he didn't know what to expect he was compliant, and followed orders, leading to his death.

The state of confusion portrayed through both Bruno and the boy in my story, also leads onto the next theme; childish innocence.

The ambiguity of the word 'innocence' is explored throughout both *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* and my re - creative writing.

In my re creative writing, the young boy ventures to talking to the Lieutenant of Auschwitz, in an attempt to get himself and his mother released. This highlights his innocence as he thinks, as a young boy, he can influence, and change, the soldiers/lieutenant's decisions and way of thinking.

At the beginning of the chapter, Shmuel discusses with Bruno how he was treated by the soldiers on arrival to Auschwitz. He talks about the watch that was taken off of him by them.

I reflected this section of dialogue, in my writing and developed the idea of personal property being taken. I did this by including in my story that the boys' book and pen, given to him by his father were taken on arrival to the camp too. This was important to include and reflect in my writing as it explored in detail the treatment of the prisoners in Auschwitz.

A physical divide is present in both stories. In *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* 'the fence' is in place, separating the home of Bruno's family and the Auschwitz camp and prisoners. In my re-creative writing the gated area is put in place, separating the prisoners and their barracks, and the soldiers/Lieutenant's living space. This was important to include in my story as it showed the physical divide of class and authority as well as the mental divide caused.

*The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* is told in an informal, simple register. It is set out in neat, clear paragraphs. I have used this structure when writing my re-creative story. John Boyne uses complex and compound sentences to structure his story. They are often simple sentences, providing easy understanding for the reading audience. This reflects the childlike tone of the whole story.

The writing and vocabulary I used in my story is reasonably simplistic. This shows the young boys mentality and childish manner, also following the style of writing John Boyne used.

Dialogue is a key form of narrative used by John Boyne throughout *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. He uses dialogue dominantly in chapter twelve, this is reflected in my re-creative writing.

The journey, to Auschwitz, which Shmuel and Bruno both experienced in different ways, is focused on and described in detail in chapter twelve. Similarly to this, I began my re-creative story by describing the journey the young boy and his family experienced. The information I included went back to the beginning when him and his family were first evaded by the soldiers.

In my re-creative writing I decided to include that a two members of the young boys' family were taken and disappeared, on arrival to the camp.

*'Mother and I were put into the other line than father and little Bella. I'm still not certain why they were separated from us. But that was the last time I ever saw my father and sister.'*

This follows and reflects that young Shmuel's mother was taken away and disappeared from his family on arrival to the Auschwitz.

*'And Mama was taken away from us, and Papa and Josef and I were put into the huts over there and that's where we've been ever since.'*

Both boys are not sure as to why their family members were taken from them. I thought that this was an important piece of information to include in my story as instantly, it portrays a divide. The young boy in my story is put into lines by the soldiers. In *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, Shmuel explains that him, his brother and his father were put into a hut and separated from his mother.

These quotations can refer back to confusion allowing vulnerability and compliancy. From both quotations, we are informed that family members were removed from the two boys' lives, on arrival to Auschwitz.

When the prisoners of Auschwitz arrived they were unknowing, causing confusion. This made them vulnerable and compliant, following the orders and instructions of the soldiers. In *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, Shmuel's mother was separated from him. Shmuel, his father and his brother; Josef, followed the orders of the soldiers and were taken to a hut, separate from the mother. As they were unknowing, and vulnerable they were compliant to the instructions given, allowing their family to be split forever.

This is the same occurrence as in my re-creative writing. The young boy and his family are separated into two different lines, along with the rest of the prisoners arriving at Auschwitz. This marked the separation of his family forever, due to being compliant.

In conclusion, my re-creative writing does not imitate fully the storyline and occurrences explored in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. However, I took all of the dominant themes into consideration when writing my story, trying to be reflective of the writing style portrayed by John Boyne.

## Moderators Comments:

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The text has character references, observations about setting, atmosphere, people's appearance, Americanisms and genre clichés; but it does not quite achieve an authentic voice. The commentary reflects on the process and text achieved well, but the rest of the writing rather exemplifies the list at the end of the first paragraph. Together the pieces in this re-creative submission seem competent rather than good.

## Candidate K

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### The Big Sleep continuation

A few days have passed since my trip with the D.A's chief investigator and I have still got no further with that bum-ticker of an investigation. It was a strange one; minimal clues, no real connections, the only thing I knew about the guy was that he used to be the chauffer for the Stemwoods. Then again I'm starting to think that anything that comes out of that family is a bit crooked.

This morning isn't going well either. The weather's grey and dismal like my mother's grave, my head's pounding. I have a suspicious feeling that this day isn't going to be a good one. There is a knock on my door. I go over, release the chain, open the door and then it all comes tumbling down like a pack of cards. The morbid head of Owen Taylor is on my mat staring at me like a gaping fish on a chopping block. I hear footsteps echoing down the stairwell like lies in a church. I quickly give chase. As I enter the stairwell I catch a glimpse of the chump who did this, another good for nothing slicker. He's wearing a pastel blue suit, shiny brown brogues, a fine black trilby and has the quintessential slicked back hair and looks of every other dog I chase. They should lock these guys up at birth. He is too far ahead and by the time I reach the street a shiny black Buick iss screeching down the boulevard. The darned sucker got away like triumphant mouse fleeing from a cat, but 1 tell you the cat's gonna get the cream and the cream's gonna taste mighty fine.

I walk back up to my corridor and the stench is like the rotten sweetness of a prostitute's assets. What filthy pig could do this? I hear my phone ringing from inside my apartment. I go in and pick it up; it's Ohls with his cagey cop voice.

"Marlowe, the corpse is missing." His urgency echoed down the receiver.

"I know."

"What d'ya mean you know?" he said with an air of suspicion.

"The filthy son of a bitch's head is on my door mat." Ohls gulped and paused.

"This is a nasty one. Do'ya think this has got anything to do with the Sternwood Case?"

"No, this is far sicker than their corruption."

"Alright, I'll be over soon."

The life of a private dick eh? 1 go into the kitchen to pour myself a neat Rye; the bottle is empty, now I know this is one heck of stinking day. Damn.

### Candidate commentary

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In my attempt to create a continuation of 'the Big Sleep's' unsolved mystery I concentrated on mimicking certain stylistic and content devices that were present all throughout the novel. I felt it necessary to include these devices as these are what truly form the style of the novel and so should play an integral part in my own approach. The stylistic features include things such as: extended similes and metaphors, clichés, forensic narration, colloquialisms and fragmentation of text content. The content features include things such as: stereotypes, atmosphere, suspense, conventions and character construction.

In my continuation I believe I imitated the style of the writing the first paragraph preliminary demonstrates the nature in which the detective is perceived in the novel. A stereotype of a somewhat sleazy and contentious character whose life is his job: "I went to bed full of whiskey and frustration and dreamed about a man in a bloody Chinese coat". "Then again I'm starting to think that anything that comes out of the family is a bit crooked", this extract from my piece shows the stereotypical 'hard boiled' detective character and mindset: a tough and callous man hardened by past cases and incidences. I also feel I have integrated the correct colloquialisms in the speech and narrative for the periods which are vital for mimicking the behaviour of such characters in detective stories.

In the second paragraph I feel that I successfully produced some of the extended and almost superfluous similes that 'The Big Sleep' is packed with, along with their morose edge: "I heard foot steps echoing down the stairwell like lies in a church" and from the novel: "Their perfume has the rotting sweetness of a prostitute". These similes in essence contribute to the tone and atmosphere of the story, darkening every description. In the second paragraph I also feel I succeeded with including the type of syntax Chandler uses in the novel, whereby the detective describes something in a rigorous detail in a long and drawn out sentence, but at the end he finishes it off with his own short and personal comment: "the dark slate colour of the iris has devoured the pupil. They were mad eyes", and in my continuation: "He was wearing a pastel blue suit, shiny brown brogues, a fine black trilby and had the quintessential slicked back hair and looks of every other dog I chased.' They should lock these guys up at birth"

In my imitation however there were a few things that I feel did not work. First I think that the continuation of the actual murder case was slightly too graphic for the period and does not fit well in the style: "the morbid head of Owen Taylor was on my mat staring at me like a gaping fish on a chopping block". If I were to re-do the imitation I would definitely change this part of the story, possibly by replacing the head for a more mysterious item that would fit into the secrecy theme that runs throughout the novel. Perhaps the sodden shoes of Owen Taylor which conceal a note or business card for instance.

The final change to my continuation would be to add in some fragmentation the storyline. In the novel this technique is used quite a lot, whereby the subject that Phillip Marlowe is talking about or the situation will rapidly change: "For the rest of the drive back to town he hardly spoke. He dropped me off in Hollywood near the Chinese theatre and turned back/west to Alta Beta Crescent. I ate lunch at a counter and look in the afternoon paper". This is very unlike the long descriptions we are used to in the novel but a necessity for copying the style.

## Moderators Comments:

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Good to see work on a film script and this is a high stakes exchange, which moves from anger through to a quiet resolution so is a scene that has a change. The commentary develops ideas about character and relationships, although the writing is a little wooden and the language elements quite obvious. What is said about class is rather clumsy. There should be more of a consideration of the visual element and the contribution of the launderette setting. There is some useful sense of different parts of the screenplay, although at times the candidate forgets the genre ("play", "reader").

## Candidate L

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### Nasser and Rachel as they leave the launderette, following from page 46

*Nasser and Rachel hurry out into the street. Beside the launderette is the betting shop. Rachel and Nasser stop on the left side of the street, opposite. They are far enough away that the customers in*

*the launderette cannot hear them; but if they peer left of the glass they can see the two figures. Outside, Rachel quickly takes her arm from Nasser's and stands apart from him.*

**Nasser:** *(stretches his arm towards Rachel)* Do not listen to her darling. *(A pause)* she is a silly little girl! She has no bloody clue what she is talking about!

**Rachel:** *(shakes away hand)* No Nasser, she's your daughter, the child of your wife. I hoped that one day your children would learn about me and not necessarily respect what I am doing, but at least understand ...

**Nasser:** *(exasperated)* why do you care so much about Tania dammit? She does nothing good for anybody! The time when she is married off to some rich bugger is the time that I will worry about what she does!

**Rachel:** *(Very angry now)* Oh how kind, even for you. You do not care that she needs you? From her point of view Nasser, I am feeding off of you. I have split you and your family apart. *(Rachel turns to face the launderette where she can still see Tania's outline against the glass. The customers in the launderette who have previously had their faces pressed against the window panes immediately begin folding clothes and fiddling with washing machines. Nasser follows Rachel's stare then tries to block her view with his face.)*

**Nasser:** *(Softly, almost pleading)* you cannot let her ruin things darling. Now stop this. We will go for a stiff drink; there is a pleasant little pub around her somewhere ... *(Nasser begins to walk past Rachel expecting her to follow him. After a few seconds he stops and looks back to where Rachel is still stood.)*

**Nasser:** *(briskly to Rachel)* Well come on then? Why are you just standing there like an idiot? We have drinks to order! *(There is a long pause where they simply stare at one another. Nasser eventually succumbs and walks to Rachel.)*

**Nasser:** *(defeated)* Dammit Rachel, I am not such a bad man am I?

**Rachel:** *(quietly to Nasser)* Not to me. But to your wife and daughter ... yes.

**Nasser:** *(beseechingly)* I love you ...

**Rachel:** *(cuts across, sadly)* Go back inside Nasser. Talk to Tania about coming home. *(Nasser touches her cheek, but Rachel turns away from him. She begins to walk slowly back past the launderette. Nasser watches her for a few seconds sadly, then turns abruptly and walks into the betting shop. The street is left empty.)*

## Candidate commentary:

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For the scene that I have composed in the style of Hanif Kureishi, I have incorporated ideas from his screenplay so that my own piece becomes more authentic.

The dialogue of the two characters in my own scene is based around the conversing of Nasser and Rachel in the actual screenplay. However, I have also used my own impressions of the two characters to make the scene different. I have done this because Kureishi has not given either of the individuals in the screenplay a scene like the one I have composed. I have therefore used some of the dialogue differently, this is to show the way that the two characters adapt themselves in the relationship they have with one another, for instance, Rachel is more emotional and open whereas Nasser is tender and less angry.

*'What about my damn launderette? Damn these stories about a place you've never been ...'* (p.34) Nasser's dialogue in the screenplay often includes the words 'damn' and 'bugger' along with other swearwords (i.e. bloody). I have included these words into my own scene because I think that they are very traditional words in English vocabulary and determine the upper-middle class, thoroughly

British character that he wants to '6e."Nasser's sentence structure is often quite short and direct making him sound annoyed a lot of the time, I have included examples of these concise sentences, often followed by exclamation marks as I think that this is another frequent trait in his language. I think that Nasser use very characteristic, commanding dialogue when speaking to most of the younger characters in the play. (Mainly Omar and Tania, although he also begins to order Johnny around by slightly persuading and slightly ordering him to do some 'unscrewing.')

*'Get started. There's the broom. Move it!' (p.26)*

[Nasser to Omar.]

*'Get out of my sight, Tania!' (p.60)*

[Nasser to Tania.]

However, I have observed that with Rachel he does not seem to do this at all. In fact, in the play, Nasser seems very easily influenced by Rachel, an example of this is on page 18, when Rachel is questioning the long journey that Omar will need to make to get to his new job. Nasser immediately gives in to her questioning and offers Omar a car. I think that this associates how much Nasser is in love with Rachel, as it shows he 'will do almost anything to keep her on side.

I think that Nasser's character is very tactless, there is a scene between him and Rachel (which I have used as an influence), where Nasser is realising that he is not treating Rachel as well as he should be.

*'Am I bad man to you then?' (p.44)*

This is also shown in the idea that many people in Nasser and Bilquis' family already know about Nasser's affair, which proves the idea that he is so brash, he might not mind the idea of his wife finding out. I have added this idea of crudeness into my own scene, by showing that Nasser does not understand why Rachel is upset by the argument with Tania.

For the character of Rachel, Kureishi has brought her across to the reader as quite an elegant, middle class lady, whether she is actually an upper class woman or not. In the screenplay, there is no evidence of Rachel displaying any kind of extreme emotion; I think that this makes her quite a private person. Even in her argument with Tania, Rachel does not appear to lose her temper; instead she chooses to fight diplomatically;

*'But tell me who do you live off? And you must understand, we are of different generations.*

*Everything is waiting for you. The only person who has ever waited for me is your father.'* (P46)

This quotation in particular shows how Rachel's language is very middle class. This is essentially because of the sentence structure; a mixture of long and short sentences. This makes what she says sound quite sincere. In my own scene I have taken the idea of Rachel holding in her emotions by using her retreat out of the launderette as the opening of all the tension that she has held in. Things may not appear to affect her on the outside, but with Nasser she feels comfortable enough to talk. I have used the argument with Tania as a spark to bring out these feelings she holds back about her relationship with Nasser.

## Moderators Comments:

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The text here is too long and there needed to be more selection and crafting of the material; there is a sense in which it might be said to go on a bit. The commentary is similar; it develops ideas on character and relationships, but is a little repetitive. The points on language are rather stated. They need exemplification and interrogation.

## Candidate M

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*This piece of re-creative writing comes in on page 34 of 'The History Boys' the lesson is about to start and Irwin is just entering the classroom. Dakin is sitting on the desk entertaining his classmates.*

**Dakin:** ... I'm afraid not... no man's land was not crossed... but the defences have been battered and with one big push tonight (*looks impressively into space*) oh, how those bombs shall fall....

*Irwin slams the door*

**Irwin:** Oh how those bombs shall fall sooner than expected...

**Dakin:** So it would appear, sir.

**Irwin:** Come along now, back to your seat.

*Irwin moves to his desk as Dakin returns to his usual seat.*

Now, Lockwood, pass these around; (*gives Lockwood a bunch of pages*) posters of propaganda distributed through Germany during the Second of World Wars. Why were they distributed?

**Lockwood:** It would appear that this was an anti-Semitic poster, sir, because the man with the knife has David's star on his shirt.

**Irwin:** ah... but to be in possession of a knife is not a crime; how then is this an Anti-Semitic poster? Could it not be an advertisement for this knife?

**Dakin:** well sir, the fact that there is a blonde, muscular baby bathed in light, and the Jew is in the shadows holding a knife and looking ugly as all hell might suggest that this isn't an advertisement for knives sir.

**Rudge:** yeah sir, that's just stupid.

*Vacant nods*

**Irwin:** Hmm... stupid? Would you say so? Yes, of course you would... Would I say so... yes... but it is not such an impossible idea... only an improbable one...

**Posner:** so... so you think this poster was an advertisement for knives then, sir?

**Irwin:** Didn't I just agree with the fact that I thought it wasn't? What you need to understand is that there is that possibility that this poster is an advertisement instead of anti-Semitic extremism. But for the latter explanation... (*Sighs and shoulders slump*) why was the poster distributed? You haven't explained yourselves.

**Akthar:** To spread anti-Semitism, sir.

**Timms:** To undermine the Jews positions amongst Germans... because Hitler didn't like them, sir

**Irwin:** an understatement, but correct Timms...

**Posner:** (quietly) because they thought us Jews were responsible for the losing of the First World War... Sir.

**Irwin:** ah... and do you think that's true?



**Dakin:** well, obviously not sir... it's because the Germans weren't as well organised as they thought they were.

**Scripps:** Yeah sir. You don't honestly think that a Jew crept up to each German soldier and stabbed them in the back?

**Irwin:** Oh, I don't know... that's for you to decide...

*Bell goes*

Think about what we have discussed today class... for it will come up again in tomorrow's lesson.

## Candidate Commentary:

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In my Re-Creative Piece, I have explored into another of Irwin's lessons with the boys. I have shown how I imagine Irwin would go about trying to teach the boys his methods. Conflicts occur when the boys question his method, but Irwin manipulates them with clever statements that undermine their confidence.

Irwin wants to make the boys think. He questions the boys to make them consider answers in more detail, *'Irwin: Hmm... stupid? Would you say so? Yes of course you would... Would I say so... yes... but it is not such an impossible idea... only an improbable one'*. Irwin's method of teaching the boys is to make them consider different, and various ways of answering questions to separate them from the endless amount of other students. That is why, when the boys throw away a discussion because of the irrationality of the statement, Irwin defends his position and by doing so, undermines the students' confidence, *'Posner: so... so you think this poster was an advertisement for knives then, sir?'* the pause in Posner's response indicates loss of confidence. Irwin does this so that they are more inclined to follow his method, which is exactly Irwin's aim.

Rudge, is an understated character within 'the history boys', *'Rudge: yeah sir, that's just stupid'* with this in mind I gave Rudge one, short line that shows this outright, his statement is not his own point, it is an agreement with another boy. His statement is short and rather crude which removes the individuality of the character and that chance of exploring the character in-depth.

Irwin is a very smart man. Irwin knows this and exploits it, he wants to undermine the boys confidence to regain control of power in his class, which there is a struggle for, *'Irwin: Didn't I just agree with the fact that I thought that it wasn't? What you need to understand is that there is a possibility that this poster is an advertisement instead of anti-Semitic extremism. But for the latter explanation... (Sighs and shoulders slump) why was the poster distributed? You haven't explained yourself'* in this quotation from my re-creative piece; Irwin uses his intellect to manipulate the boys. As seen from stage, when Irwin 'sighs' his body language shows that he is unimpressed and disappointed. This resonates with the boys, so that they are more eager to take up his method to impress him.

Dakin is very confident, he knows his own boundaries and appears to know his limits when it comes to his teachers but he still prefers to push them. *'Dakin is sitting on the desk entertaining his classmates'*. Dakin is sitting on the desk at the start of the lesson, this is not a sign of protest; he just does not consider it a problem. By doing this, it defines a relationship between Irwin and Dakin; Dakin finds Irwin's lessons rather lax so he feels confident enough to show it. This shows how he is a laid back character and rather daring in the process.

My extract shows the power struggle between the boys and Irwin, and how Irwin uses his intellect to manipulate the boys. Irwin manipulates the boys in such a way that they lose confidence, become less complacent and take on his method of approaching questions and answers.

## Moderators Comments:

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This is an interesting group scene, which does not get pushed as far as it might. Capital letters for utterance starts are a problem. The commentary does not have much genuine AO2 address and no real sense of Alan Bennett. There are some weak commas in the writing and the start of the commentary in particular lacks sharpness.

## Candidate N

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### Fictional writing in the style of Jeanette Winterson

I asked mother one more time “why do I have to go? Jesus didn’t have to.”

“If it were up to me you wouldn’t have to go at all, but the Lord has his ways just as the police have theirs.”

We walked through the black iron gates and across the play ground. Mother was right, this was a breeding ground. I looked around me dizzy from the hordes of milling children shouting and screaming piercing through my ears as though they were trying to wake the dead.

I didn’t fit in at all, I couldn’t seem to learn or win anything, which was strange because I always won the bible quiz at church. The only thing I seemed to be good at was lunch duty which I hated because I had to eat on my own, but I thought of Elsie and the Lord.

The playground was even worse. All the other children had their own friends and stayed in tight groups. There was no room for me. I even tried to fit in with the younger children but they just stared, one girl with plats whispered something to the group, the others nodded then shuffled away.

I sat outside the staff room and thought of the Lord. St Paul was always going to prison I thought, and he always got out, so maybe other won’t get into trouble. I looked up and saw Mrs Virtue glaring down at me. She was wearing shoes that were too big for her and she had dark blue ink down her baby pink jumper. She didn’t look very happy, no one was ever happy with me here.

“You know you aren’t allowed to be allowed to be inside during break!” she barked.

“But...”

“GO BACK OUTSIDE!”

I made the walk to the playground last till my last lesson started.

I had been looking forward to music all day, everyone at church told me I could sing and I wanted to impress Mrs Virtue. I sat through 20 nursery rhymes till finally it was my turn. I stood in front of the class and smiled. Mrs Virtue looked blankly back at me. I began singing ‘Oh Lord we are all damned’ in my best choir voice ever.

Everyone’s mouth opened as everyone stared even Mrs Virtue. Everyone looked very impressed so I carried on. It was only when Mrs Virtue grabbed me by the back of my hair and hurled me into her office that I was stopped. Mrs Sparrow and Mrs Spencer were already in there. I had no idea what was going on but I assumed it was because of my singing. Mrs Sparrow even had her head in her hands, I think she trying to pray, I smiled and said

“Let the Lord be with you”.

“THAT’S ENOUGH OF THAT!” Mrs Virtue said coldly.

I stared blankly at them.

“Mother says those who don’t believe in the Lord are damned to hell”.

“Jeanette go wait outside will you”.

I slipped past them and waited in the corridor, it was cold and smelt of gym shoes. I leant against the door hoping to catch what they were talking about, but it was all muffled. It reminded me of when the Lord took my hearing.

I waited for what seemed like ages till Mrs Virtue burst through the door, she looked angry and was redder than my mother after she had been singing at church. Mrs Virtue took one look at me then turned and charged down the corridor. Maybe she was in a rush, but I had no idea what she was late to.

Mrs Spencer called me back inside and Mrs Sparrow still had her head in her hands, she looked up as I walked in.

“Your mother has been called, she’s coming in to help us sort out this..... matter”.

I sat down. I still had no idea what I had done, but I knew that mother would understand, and knew what to say.

I could hear mother before she even got into the office. She was shouting at Mrs Virtue, Mrs Virtue was shouting back but not quite loud enough. Mother burst through the door with Mrs Virtue at her heels.

“HOW DARE YOU TRY AND CONVERT MY DAUGHTER!”

Mrs Sparrow sat up,

“We weren’t trying to convert her, we simply think it is a little... odd that a child as young as Jeanette is so obsessed with the Lord”.

My mother stared blankly at her, then in one movement she took my hand and marched out of the office. Mrs Virtue, Mrs Sparrow and Mrs Spencer chased after us.

“You can’t just take her out of school”.

“I’m only doing the Lord’s work, as clearly no one is doing it here”.

“But...”

Once again we walked through the black iron gates. Mother still had her hand clasped tightly around mine, the other children were staring but I didn’t care.

“You’re never going back to that place again, it’s nothing but a breeding ground for little heathens!”

I turned round just in time to see Mrs Virtue storm back inside the building.

“I sang my best”.

“I know you did Jeanette, here, have an orange”.

After this mother decided that I would be educated at home so she called up Elsie and the parson to help out with this venture. I learned very little of any value.

Once, many years ago, there lived a young girl, all alone she lived in a cave by a river in a deep dark wood. No one knew how she came to be there but she got by. The bears protected her and the smaller woodland creatures brought her treats, they regarded her as one of their own.

She loved her woodland life, wore garlands in her hair and lived her life guided by the seasons of the year.

One day a woodcutter chanced to spot her washing on a hawthorn bush, he immediately sought out a local official from the nearest town and the young girl who they decided to call Clarabelle was taken from her home and all her friends.

## Candidate Commentary

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For this piece of coursework I decided to write in the style of Jeanette Winterson because I thought her style was very individual and some accounts of her childhood shocked me, I also thought her style of writing would be a challenge to mimic.

I based my re-creative writing on the interview with the school head mistress because it shows how Jeanette's mother is a strong character. During this piece I closely analysed Winterson's use of dialogue as it was very convincing and is a good example of a 'restricted' rather than an 'elaborated' code:

In Winterson's novel the mother scatters religious terms throughout her conversations, therefore making it very difficult to argue with her, therefore I thought it would be good to include this in my re-creative piece. The mother has a non-existent relationship with her husband as they are never together, and he is not needed. This is why Jeanette is so important to her as without her and the church, the mother has nothing. Jeanette's dialogue of her childhood very clearly reflects her thoughts and feelings which reminded me of Anne Frank's diary.

Winterson often changes the subject whether it is to talk about something else or to go into one of her fairy stories which I included in my re-creative writing piece.

This was a way of expressing her childhood ideas and anxieties through symbolism. In the fairy story I explored the idea that Jeanette is taken as a young girl from an environment where she is relaxed and comfortable, although it is very unusual, to an environment that is alien to her but normal to others ie school.

Throughout the novel whenever Jeanette does not clearly understand something or needs her mother's guidance, she rarely gets an actual or clear answer. Her mother drifts off the subject to talk about the Lord or simply offers her an orange, I too have tried to add this into my re-creative piece.

## Moderators Comments:

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The produced text is short but well achieved. The commentary is clear, but largely narrative-descriptive in focus. It needs quotation to bring it alive and more consideration of language and structure. The somewhat straightforward nature of the commentary lets down the recreation, which really caught the flavour of *Witch Child*. As with xiii, investigation of children's writing without resort to clichés (simple sentences for instance) would be the way forward.

## Candidate O

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### How does the writer portray women as victims within the novel and what is the reader's perception of this portrayal?

*I was so lost in my curses that only the sudden silence of the crowd brought me back to what was about to happen.*

I stood fixated. My heart pounded harder and harder in my chest until my entire body shook with rage. My mouth turned dry. I wanted to shout to stop this madness but the strength from within me wouldn't surface. In the silence I had noticed disapproving glares from the people whom my grandmother had helped and healed. Had they forgotten what she had done for them? I did not wish to draw attention to myself but I couldn't help but let out a short, sharp cry of disbelief. I remembered back to the time when my grandmother was by side teaching me useful things which she always said would become handy in later life. She was my mother as I have never met my real mother, and suddenly I was standing motionless awaiting her death.

I wanted to close my eyes and be lying next to my grandmother, with her close enough to smell her warm musty perfume, which gave a sense of security around me. A tear rolled down my cheek. I tried not to sob as to do so would attract more unwelcome attention. I felt the eyes of the crowd piercing my heart. Their looks were of pure hatred with no remorse whatsoever. I felt alone.

A sudden pang of guilt came over me. I wanted to help her but I knew for sure that if I did so I would be killed, or worse subjected to the torture which my grandmother was experiencing.

My grandmother was standing above everyone, An old woman stripped of her dignity, but there was something in her eye. A glint that showed no shame as she searched the crowd for me with a sly smile.

*Black figures stood on the pale boards, silhouetted against the white of the sky: Witch finder Minister, Hangman. In the unexpected silence a sneeze sounded loud.*

## Candidate Commentary

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The novel I have chosen to add an insert into is *Witch Child* by Celia Rees. A story of one girl's journey to America to free herself from prejudice and suspicion. The insert is into Mary's narrative and the focus of it is how the women are portrayed as victims. The insert helps to voice some of the thoughts that were not voiced by Mary herself.

Mary has a very personal perspective within this piece, and from it we get a real glimpse into her mind. She is only fourteen years old she comes across as the main victim of throughout the piece. Also she seems like she wants to escape. She has a huge feeling of loss due to her murdered grandmother being her only family member that she knows. The main emotion which Mary feels within the piece is fear, the fear of her loss. 'I was so lost in my curses' I have mirrored this feeling of loss into the insert. 'She was 'my mother' as I have never met my real mother, and suddenly I was standing motionless awaiting her death'. In this insert we also establish that Mary knows if she tries to stop proceedings that she too shall be punished. Mary feels a huge amount of guilt for not being able to help her grandmother.

Exploration of the loss and fear Mary's feeling shows that she is indeed the main victim within the piece. On the surface Mary's cursing reveals that of anger as she tries to hide her true emotions she feels for her grandmother for fear of having the same fate. I have attempted to re-create the details to which Mary's entries into her diary have. The description is designed to mirror that of the original piece. It changes from angered cursing to the feeling of loss to reliving a fond memory. The reliving of this fond memory she has with her grandmother makes her feel safer than in her current surroundings. It seems that for Mary being in bed with her grandmother means that she is away from the prejudices that come from the outside world. Her house is her safety net and being in bed with her grandmother is comfort. 'I wanted to close my eyes and be lying next to my grandmother,

with her close enough to smell her warm musty perfume, which gave a sense of security around me'. The mob who'd gathered has no pity or remorse for what Mary is going through even though she is only young and undeserved of this treatment. "In the silence I noticed disapproving glares'. The mob have transferred the prejudice that Mary's grandmother has towards her towards Mary and are starting to turn against Mary also. This kind of action made by others towards her can be seen in regular occurrence throughout this novel. When Mary and Martha are on the boat travelling to America a woman called Mrs Rivers goes into labour and because of the skills Mary's grandmother had taught her many skills she was skilled enough to help. But when the baby comes out not breathing the babies sister starts to turn on Mary. 'I looked up from the babies face to see his sister's eyes burning into mine'. This reflects back to the disapproving looks which she receives at her grandmothers hanging.

The paragraph lengths within the novel change daily due to them being her diary entries yet they seem longer when she enters a new environment and has more new surroundings to describe. This is also when her description becomes more detailed. The paragraph lengths are extremely disjointed. There is no correlation between the sizes of each although the way they are disjointed could represent how upturned and disjointed her life is. This could also reflect on her sense of unknown of what is to happen to her. Since the death of her grandmother all the sense and security within her life has disappeared.

Mary is a reliable narrator who seems very involved in what happens in most of her diary entries, which shows the audience that she is a victim. She generally seems to be the forefront of most of her entries. In her diary she describes some familiarities between a woman she later meets on the ship travelling to America called Martha, whom resembles some similarities to Mary's grandmother. There does not seem to be much variation within Mary's use of vocabulary throughout the novel. Although her description is more in depth when she describes new places.

Overall, the insert fits in well with the original story. It helps to add more depth to Mary's thoughts so the reader can see although overall it does not change the effect of the novel towards the reader. Mary is seen as the main victim as she is what the audience see as an innocent young girl who does not know what is to become of her, and if she may have the same fate as her grandmother.

## Moderators Comments:

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The text here is loose and rambling, but does show Jeanette under pressure, the importance of mother and religion and a fairy tale. Punctuation is a problem. The commentary has a number of points that needed exploration. The main limitation is the received nature of the comments – most clearly evidenced here with the ideas of restricted and elaborated code but actually evident in the over-prepared nature of the commentaries in this Centre as a whole – which the candidate does not really demonstrate understanding of. Quotation is lacking.

## Candidate P

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### Death of a Naturalist

All the year the flax-dam festered in the heart  
Of the townland; green and heavy headed  
Flax had rotted there, weighted down by huge sods.  
Daily it sweltered in the punishing sun.  
Bubbles gargled delicately, bluebottles  
Wove a strong gauze of sound around the smell.  
There was dragon-flies, spotted butterflies,  
But best of all was the warm thick slobber

Of frogspawn that grew like clotted water  
In the shade of the banks. Here, every spring  
I would fill jampots full of the jellied  
Specks to range on the window-sills at home,  
On shelves at school, and wait and watch until  
The fattening dots burst into nimble-  
Swimming tadpoles. Miss Walls would tell us how  
The daddy frog was called a bullfrog  
And how he croaked and how the mammy frog  
Laid hundreds of little eggs and this was  
Frogspawn. You could tell the weather by frogs too  
For they were yellow in the sun and brown  
In rain.

Then one hot day when fields were rank  
With cowdung in the grass the angry frogs  
Invaded the flax-dam; I ducked through hedges

To a coarse croaking that I had not heard  
Before. The air was thick with a bass chorus.  
Right down the dam gross-bellied frogs were cocked  
On sods; their loose necks pulsed like snails. Some hopped:  
The slap and plop were obscene threats. Some sat  
Poised like mud grenades, their blunt heads farting.  
I sickened, turned, and ran. The great slime kings  
Were gathered there for vengeance and I knew  
That if I dipped my hand the spawn would clutch it.

### **Changes**

I strayed abandoned as a cloud that floats  
Elevated over mountains and valley  
whilst seeing a swarm, a host,  
Of white dandelion with golden yellow centres  
Besides the streams beneath the trees and in the bushes  
All around green giant grass  
Rose pedals tossing, waving and dancing  
In the gentle wind, all gleaming in glee  
Of seed-specks ignited lately and tenderly blown  
Hearing her soft vibrant music  
Vanished the cares of life's hectic throng  
Like in the dark, she walks in splendour  
of clear climes and sparkling sky  
her aspects and her eyes overflowing amid  
All that's best of dark and bright

Like the ticklish dream of the spring  
Like the birds in the meadow  
We become one, joined at the hip  
A rose, she stands as a glance of hope  
Like the glancing stars above  
The sun giving life to our love  
Our heart whose love is  
Innocent and forever  
Years pass by, and like a balloon  
Untied from its master's arms, the soul of our youth took its flight  
Magnificently unprepared for the long littleness of life  
A cold sudden rush of torment passed me  
There I sat all cold and freezing, breathless signs choked and puffed

As I see my rose wither, its pedals dripping  
red blood like a repulsive fear  
The dazzling sun was extinguished, and the stars  
wandering darkling in the undying space,  
Unlit, and untraded, and the arctic gravel  
Swaying sightless and darkening in the moonless wind  
The clouds perished, darkness had no require of  
Relieve from them. My life was falling apart  
She was the universe, now she's gone

## Candidate Commentary

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Heaney's poem the 'death of naturalist' addresses the change and realisation of discovering one's route from innocence to experience, focusing his reader's mind on nature, basing it all around "baptism of fire". A lot of natural images "some sat poised in mud grenades" showing an extensively descriptive picture of man's relationship with nature, following a direct plot for the credulity to realise and change.

His poetic points and meaning all lie under the extended metaphors that run through the poem. Just like Heaney's poem shows relationship between man and nature, 'Changes' depicts a relationship; between a boy and girl. It tells of a boy in an ideal isolation of his own world because of the absence of his world. He uses nature to describe her (his world). She was like his only place of comfort and safety, having that invulnerable assurance in her care and security until she dies and his love for nature turned into hatred, because it reminded him of her. This becomes the "Death of a naturalist". Understanding the true meaning and significance of life; that nothing lasts forever, everything in nature "withers". Just like "the death of a naturalist". The girl came to his world and became his world because he found refuge in her, giving a place where he could express total feelings. Nevertheless, he loses his comfort and safety when she dies, becoming disordered and perplexing. This change in his feelings is described by the heavy use of adjectives, in the first stanza, we see a lot adjective that describes the comfort and in threat because of his realisation of nature.

The two stanzas stand for Innocence and Experience.

Heaney not only shows nature but also shows the observation of nature, revealing the emptiness and hopelessness left by man and nature, showing that not all that glitters is gold. In 'Changes', he observes his "rose wither  
..... dripping red blood" showing also emptiness and hopelessness of nature and man. 'Changes' also uses alliteration just as Heaney does, formatting them in the same two stanzas format as 'Death of a naturalist'. The two poems do not end as a successfully but it reveals the realisation and rite of passage, showing that some things that exceeds our control. We only have to become conscious of them, considering their reality and existing independently yet peaceably with them.

## Moderators Comments:

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While it is possible to see some lines here as indebted to Heaney ("Of seed-specks ignited lately and tenderly blown"), this text is very much in the mould of "The Daffodils" by Wordsworth; indeed it is straitjacketed by this Romantic poem. A poor attempt, it has to be said. The commentary shows some awareness of Heaney's themes and these are linked to the description of a relationship in "Changes". There is a limited address to the effects of language choices and some terminology ("alliteration") and a basic attempt at observing elements of structure ("The two poems do not end ..."). Only one Heaney poem is considered and the candidate does not mention the Wordsworth borrowing. There is some very sloppy writing.