

Examiners' Report  
June 2014

GCE English Language 6EL03 01

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## Introduction

This unit comprises the examined component of GCE A2 English Language and Literature. Students are expected to apply their skills and knowledge of literary and linguistic concepts gained in the AS units, as well as wider reading, to explore varieties of language and literature. They need to synthesise their learning and make observations about how language works across a spectrum of written and spoken production. They choose one of four topic areas and answer two corresponding questions: one on an unseen extract in Section A and one on two prepared texts in Section B.

Section A involves the analysis of one unseen extract. Candidates are expected to present a continuous commentary on the writer's or speaker's choice of structure, form and language and draw conclusions on attitudes, values and ideas conveyed in the text.

Section B assesses candidates' knowledge of the contribution made by contextual factors to the understanding of either two chosen drama texts or two chosen poetry texts. Students are expected to compare writers' use of linguistic and literary devices.

Most students had been well-prepared for this paper; the knowledge of set texts was often impressive, although some candidates focused on the beginning of texts (especially the plays) at the expense of later sections and sometimes coverage was partial. High scoring candidates were able to synthesize their knowledge in a conceptual manner and explore the full implications of a question. Much of the writing was very impressive and many candidates were not afraid to follow their own ideas and use their knowledge to craft articulate and original responses. A number of low-scoring candidates in Section A had clearly learned an impressive array of technical terminology and were able to identify many literary features but had nothing to say about their effect or simply ignored the wording of the question and described the content of the passages. In Section B, the drama texts were by far the most popular choices but there were many outstanding responses to the poetry questions. Most candidates attempted to compare their texts, although a number simply wrote two separate sections about the two texts and suggested a connection in the final paragraph. A number of poetry answers worked their way through whole poems, sometimes chronologically, although the strongest essays showed evidence of a much more sophisticated selection of material and were sometimes quite wide-ranging. The best answers showed evidence of careful selection of relevant material but many candidates struggled to integrate their contextual material. A significant number of candidates had memorised quotations from critics (usually reviews of drama productions) and were determined to copy them out, whether they were appropriate or not.

Candidates need to be reminded to answer both questions relating to their chosen topic (e.g. both questions on "Love and Loss").

Some candidates wasted time by starting a question from the wrong section, crossing out their work and starting again. This can also be self-penalising as candidates will have studied a variety of texts relating to their topic and a candidate who has studied "Love and Loss" might reasonably be expected to have more to say about a love letter than a travel blog.

## **Question 1**

The overall impression was that candidates had been well-prepared for this section and were secure in discussing the lexical and syntactical features they encountered and were also comfortable with the different genres which were offered. There seemed to be a willingness to discuss syntax in a coherent manner and some candidates adopted a clear framework for analysing specific aspects of the texts.

Inevitably, some low-scoring candidates worked their way chronologically through the extracts, sometimes paragraphing their own work in accordance with the structure of the passage and offering an explanation of the content; a few even offered definitions of terminology but were unable to articulate the effect of their chosen quotations. Some copied out long quotations but offered very little analysis beyond an assertion that the attitude was "positive" or "negative" or that the writer had crafted their writing to make it "easy to relate to" or "to make it flow."

There was, inevitably, some mis-interpretation of the writers' intentions and there were some simplistic assertions about the nature of the audiences, particularly for the obituary and the autobiography.

The most successful answers discussed the implications of specific lexical and syntactical choices and showed how attitudes could be conveyed precisely through tone. They were able to move beyond feature-spotting and to explore shifts in register, as well as comment on the effect of irony and humour. They had a clear sense of audience(s) and understood that, in many cases, multiple perspectives were being offered. They were also clearly familiar with the genres of the pieces and how conventions and expectations were exploited for particular effects. Some examiners felt that a few candidates were also conscious of the requirements of Section B and were trying to include wider contextual issues, sometimes to the detriment of close textual analysis. Some candidates focused exclusively on the title of their section, discussing for example the blogger's sense of place or only discussing Bhaskar's treatment of family relationships. (This was also true of Section B, where comments such as "Friel's presentation of a sense of place" were not uncommon.) A number of candidates managed to make a discussion of a single pronoun go a very long way, usually to make the point that the writing was meant to be inclusive.

Examiners noted that too many candidates are writing all-purpose introductions to explain generic features but are not integrating this into the analysis of the extract and are spending valuable time on generalisations which could apply to almost any piece of writing.

The best answers synthesised this discussion and integrated it into their analysis (and consequently scored highly at both AO 1 and 2.)

### **A Sense of Place**

This was the least popular section and there was a wide range of responses to the blog. Most candidates were comfortable writing about the genre and were able to discuss the nature of the likely readership. They also identified the personal and often informal nature of the writing. The high scoring answers were able to discuss the changes in the writer's attitude and how these were signalled by shifts in register. There was also some useful discussion of the writer's use of literary and persuasive techniques, as well her scathing attitude to Google maps. Some found her attitude rather too self-satisfied for their tastes. The best answers looked at the text as a whole and were able to discuss it as a complete piece of writing, rather than as a series of techniques to be identified without any developed analysis of the shaping of the piece. Many candidates were able to discuss the organisation of the text although there was relatively little discussion of the title of the blog (To Climb Stuff) or the sub-heading about getting "distracted by butterflies". Both of these would have allowed candidates to establish the idiolect of the blog and begin to discuss the



personality of the writer.

### **The Individual In Society**

The consensus among examiners was that this question was generally well-handled and most candidates were able to make appropriate comments about the nature of obituary as a genre and make some more or less informed comments/speculations about the nature of The Economist's readership. (There were far fewer simplistic generalisations about "upper-class intellectual businessmen" this year.) Candidates responded well to Neil Armstrong's apparent dual personality as portrayed by the writer. Many were able to show how the self-deprecating private individual was contrasted with the public persona. The more successful answers were also able to explore the writer's own ambivalence about what constituted a hero.

There was plenty of scope to discuss the use of data, statistics and scientific language and also to comment on the use of direct quotation and multiple perspectives. Most candidates were able to discuss the informative and celebratory nature of the text and some also speculated about the potential of the obituary as an historical record. Not surprisingly, no-one commented on the allusion to the "right stuff" but most were able to discuss specific linguistic and syntactical choices, for example the declamatory nature of the opening sentence and how this set the scene for what was to come.

### **Love and Loss**

This proved to be something of a challenge for certain candidates and they tended to do either very well or not so well. Although the specification does state that texts from the eighteenth century to the present can be set, it was clear that, for some candidates, this was their first encounter with an "archaic" text. Some candidates identified the text as "Old English" or "Elizabethan English" and there was even one suggestion that Keats was American and that this was how cowboys speak. The lower band answers focused on the letter solely as an example of Keats' love for Fanny Brawne. Higher band answers were able to explore his selfishness, his anguish, his self-pity and his near cruelty to Fanny. For many candidates, the problem was moving beyond identifying features and making coherent comments about Keats' style. Most were able to discuss the private nature of the writing and some even speculated about potential future readerships, implying that Keats had an eye on posterity.

Some candidates relied on a subjective, largely personal response, explaining the content without addressing the specifics of tone. The best responses were able to craft a nuanced analysis using terminology as a means to an end rather than as the object of the exercise. Some adopted a pop-psychology approach and offered generalisations about the nature of relationships without focusing on how the feelings were actually expressed.

It is worth noting that there were many strong answers in this section and some examiners observed that they were among the best they read.

### **Family Relationships**

This was the most popular of the four unseen extracts and there were many excellent, integrated answers which showed an awareness of genre, purpose and audience. They were able to identify shifts in tone and there were perceptive remarks on the variety of narrative strategies. Many commented on Bhaskar being a comedian and used the idea of him addressing an audience as a framework for discussing the relationship with the reader. There was some disagreement about the gender of the author but this did not affect candidates' ability to discuss family relationships and no-one was penalised for referring to the author as "she". The allusion to "my beautiful launderette" was, not surprisingly, missed but many candidates did explore the unusual collocation and were able to use it as a useful springboard for discussion of the writer's mixed feelings about his upbringing. Lower band answers struggled to say anything interesting about the phrase.

Surprisingly few commented successfully on the genre of travel writing and a significant number were very vague about the purpose of the piece; some thought the purpose was simply to persuade people to travel to India. The title of the piece, "Looking for India", was left largely uncommented on and it might have been interesting to see some discussion about a more metaphorical reading of the phrase.

Many low mark answers ignored the humour completely or were unable to identify shifts in register. The scene in which the sound of planes created double meanings was a rich source of potential detailed analysis. The best answers seized this opportunity, often using knowledge of the spoken word from Unit 1 to show how the scene had been dramatised. Many candidates simply did not refer to this section or mentioned it briefly before passing on to the next section.

There was plenty of opportunity to discuss specific lexical shifts. Most candidates identified the mixture of polysyllabic and colloquial vocabulary. In some cases, this consisted of stating that the use of long words showed that the author was well-educated. The ability to discuss these shifts in tone became a key discriminator, with some candidates relying on simplistic assertions about "positive" and "negative" attitudes to his family and to India, while answers in the higher bands explored his mixed feelings through a careful selection of appropriate quotations. Some candidates alluded to Partition; this is a good example of lack of contextual knowledge not preventing high band responses to the text. There is enough in the passage to allow for meaningful discussion of the change in tone and attitude.

This extract from an obituary in The Economist magazine was published August 2012. This extract informs the reader of Neil Armstrong's life.

This extract is very formal. ~~to draw attention to the~~ This is to give the reader inside knowledge into Neil Armstrong's life. The extract contains different stages of his career, which appeals to Neil Armstrong fans and family status.

With interesting quotes and statistics ~~the~~ contemporary reader this extract is aimed at informing the contemporary reader of knowledge they ~~may~~ may not already know; they have done this in order to remind the contemporary audience of Neil Armstrong's life achievements and ambitions, with inside knowledge they have done this so the reader ~~to~~ can feel pride within mankind that Neil Armstrong made it to the moon and back with a story to tell.

The extract is the semantic field of Astronauts and space craft. "to walk on another world" this is directed at

~~and~~ astronaut fans and ~~physicists~~ people who are interested in knowing the unknown. "During the lunar landing" With unknown knowledge the audience/ contemporary reader are able to gain knowledge from a primary source.

Furthermore Statistics are present throughout this extract "4.4%" and "400,000 workers" this to imply depth and factual information key in a formal extract. This is also important as the contemporary reader would be interested in knowing key details that may be dismissed when learning about Neil Armstrong's life.

The extract contains many simple sentences such as "Astronauts do not like to be called heroes" and "But it never works" this is key when capturing the reader's attention highlighting key sentences is a way of outlining important information the reader may read over promptly when reading this obituary. This changes the reader's attitudes towards Neil Armstrong as they begin to feel a relationship

building towards him when gaining knowledge on his life.

Metaphors are also used "ought to be no more dangerous than mixing a milkshake" this adds humour and ~~reba~~ nobility to this extract. By emphasising his noble personality regains ~~and~~ and informs the contemporary reader of his life and ~~is~~ pride towards his life, hobbies and job. Humour is also key as ~~the~~ adding humour is crucial when ~~is~~ writing a formal extract, ~~this~~ humour encourages the reader to find out more of his personal life and what he's like as a person.

Throughout this extract Neil Armstrong quotes are very thorough "for heaven sake I loathe danger." Including ~~the~~ quotes addresses the contemporary reader with personal sentences he once said. This is important as the audience may build a sense of pride towards Neil Armstrong emphasising the kind of man he is and was.



Asyndetic Listing is also throughout this extract "properly, he opined, spaceflight" including asyndetic listing emphasises that the writer couldn't include more information. As the reader is able to identify information quicker in list form. This is useful when writing an obituary on a person's life as it saves time highlighting in detail every point of his life in thorough information.

Parenthesis is also a way of outlining small pieces of information that may have been ignored "Two whom become sensors" this is a way of making sure the contemporary reader gains all information from this obituary extract, this is important as the reader may be learning key information about Neil Armstrong.

Including verbs is crucial when writing a obituary on astronauts "flying" without verbs such as 'flying' this extract wouldn't imply the same meaning and attitudes towards the contemporary reader. By including verbs

the audience are able to visualise  
descriptive imagery giving a sense of  
realism towards the extract.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The approach here is very observational. The candidate has identified some basic features and described them, with long quotations copied out. There is some awareness of the reader but this is a very simple response.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Make sure you don't just tell the examiner what they already know about the content of the extract. Check your work carefully to ensure that you spell linguistic terms correctly.

From the ~~the~~ nostalgic tone employed throughout, ~~minimum~~ one can clearly establish that the text is an obituary of the American icon Neil Armstrong. The writer uses emotive language and refers to Armstrong's famous endeavour as a "historic moon mission" which creates the reverential tone that is typical of the genre. The writer uses proper nouns to describe the "Mercury and Gemini flights <sup>which</sup> ~~that~~ contribute to the underlying semantic field of physics, flight and space travel, as these are famously Neil Armstrong's passions. This use of proper nouns and factual reference to the 4.4% of the American Government's entire budget that was dedicated to Armstrong's work convey the level of respect and the deep understanding of the subject that is required when writing an obituary.

As Neil Armstrong is an icon not only in America but all over the world, a sense of communal ~~is~~ mourning would be expected at the time of his death, therefore the obituary's ~~text~~ was



published in the renowned "The Economist" which would reach a very wide body of people. ~~Primary~~ Primarily one would argue that the piece is aimed at Americans for a sense of collective mourning but the inclusion of information about "mine collars, one of Armstrong's crew mates" and the full title "Edwards Air Force Base in the Mojave Desert" suggests that the audience would include those uninitiated in current affairs, or the life of an acclaimed hero. There is also a presence of context specific low frequency lexis about the "law of thermodynamics", "stream tubes", "Laplace", "compressible flow" and the vague reference to the "disaster of Apollo 13" suggest an audience with some background information of the field or are some what intelligent audience.

The purpose of the text is invariably to provide a summary of Armstrong's life that is in keeping with the expectations of an American hero. Therefore the writer uses modifiers such as "coolly" and

refers to Armstrong's humility as he defiantly rejects the hero title, ~~and~~ instead arguing that he "loath[es] <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ danger".

Throughout the text, the writer works to further this idea that Armstrong carried the burden of a ~~mass~~ feeling of heroism about him, in order to portray Armstrong as humble and unfamished simply by physics and his work, not by mass media attention. The hyperbolic Synchronic usage of "Presidents, prime ministers and kings jockeyed to be seen with them. Schools, buildings and roads were named after them. Medals were showered upon them. A whirlwind post-flight tour took them to 25 countries in ~~2~~ 35 days" conveys the enormity of the attention that Armstrong and his crew-mates received, however the writer still ~~also~~ insists on Armstrong's "natural shyness" and inability to comprehend the "acclamation that awaited them".

furthermore, Armstrong is referred to as the "Ice commander", a "pragmatic spaceman" and a "supposedly emotionless engineer". The writer makes reference to the dangerous practice of "lunar landing" and those precise "25 seconds of fuel left in [Armstrong's] tank" before Armstrong found a safe landing spot on the moon in order to portray Armstrong as a cool, exact and unemotional figure in the face of danger. However the phrase "conjunction" but there was the biggest achievement yet", the parenthesis "the bravery, the competitiveness, the swaggering machismo - was never the full story" and the noun phrase "supposedly emotionless engineer" are all contributing factors to the connotation of the text that there was a genuine love of his craft in Armstrong that guided him through the dangerous periods in his life more effectively than any futile human arrogance, and this love remained in Armstrong as he spent the remainder of his twilight years "flying gliders in his spare time" as it was "the closest humans could come

to being birds".



**ResultsPlus**  
**Examiner Comments**

The candidate has integrated the analysis of language with the discussion of its effect and how attitudes are conveyed. Technical terms are always used to support a point about attitudes, values or ideas.



**ResultsPlus**  
**Examiner Tip**

Focus on the ideas in the extract and use the linguistic terms to back up your points.

Don't identify features unless you are going to discuss how they work.

This is an example of an answer that was awarded full marks for both AOs.

This written piece takes the form of a ~~blog post, online~~ post on a travel blog by 'Laura' during her tour of Europe. The specific date given informs us that this is perhaps one of many posts in a long tour; and ~~her~~ the name address of 'Laura' suggests an informal approach. Her American origins perhaps indicate she hasn't been to Europe ~~many times~~ often; however this is soon dismissed by later references to well known iconic places, ranging from her trip to France on "the top of the Tour Montparnasse" to her experience at Radio City Music Hall, for which she boasts she "was in the front row of the top balcony." The neologism title of 'L'Americaine' indicates the ~~subject~~ ~~at~~ culture collision she is about to tell us; a vast audience to her public blog.

The structure of the blog is ~~per~~ relatively unipolar; she takes us alongside her in this experience, informing her readers through direct address ("you think") and her own attitudes and thoughts are captured as she speaks in first person with explicit declarations; "I am not afraid of heights" and "I wanted to climb it." Around halfway through the extract she uses ~~that~~ an inclusive pronoun "We have reached the bells"; although accounting for her friend Ola, it reinforces ~~the~~ the reader's presence in this journey.

Laura opens this blog with a ~~slight~~ conditional



sentence, personifying the city, listing of a range of activities that as a well travelled writer aren't too impressive. But her lexical choices imply otherwise as she creates a denotative field of impressive stature: "triumphal" "~~the~~ highest peak", but "once-glorious" implies she is used to experiencing disappointing trips - suggesting this is about to be another <sup>in the list</sup> of the same old tourist activities; expressed in the triplet "beauty, back roads and cafés". She continues to express her diminishing value of these <sup>"classic"</sup> trips, referencing to Google Maps and how the introduction of technology has "taken away some of the joy." She uses an aside to express what she believes: ("I can look this up at home"), which creates a rather unimpressed attitude; "begudging". But then she retracts in her views, and returns to the temptation of novelty of all the "climbing stuff" using repetitive parallel phrasing to justify ("maybe") its place on a cliché "placard". She juxtaposes the tourist economy now with what its roots once were, with a triadic structure of "farmers, soldiers and a stregenoblenen."

The writer then ~~she~~ crafts a seemingly more impressed attitude, as she accounts of her experience of St Dujé in Croatia, using powerfully striking imagery to signify its great impression: "rises up out of the city", "rising high". She delves into the history of the Cathedral which she appears to find fascinating; but she soon

returns to the lyrical and ~~both~~ harsh tone in which she refers to the "tourist trap", dismissing ~~the~~ and grouping it ~~as another cycle~~ as a typical "cycle for many structures in Europe". This dismissive short declarative indicates a disapproving attitude. (such as alliteration)

The writer uses carefully crafted lexical choices ~~to~~ to present her ~~value and being~~ value of a "good vista view". Abstract nouns ("thoughts", "feelings", "preciousness") emphasise her value and appreciation of the less material and commercial things; referencing to her earlier criticism of the "tourist trap." ~~the~~ She indicates a belief of hope and inspiration with her repetition of "sparks".

Descriptive lexis and alliteration ("steep stone steps") help inform the reader of more factual details, which perhaps as a travel blog post, might be a partial purpose of her writing. In this paragraph she guides the reader alongside her ascent of the tower, creating tension with ~~the~~ ~~word~~ ~~lexis~~ lexis and a romantic field of potential danger: "rheaty", "open space", "widows without glass" <sup>warnings</sup>. Laura writes as if she feels ~~not in~~ out of control, transiting into 2nd person: "you are whisked away", "The Arc de Triomphe cradles you". She ~~references~~ alludes to St Peter's Cathedral to juxtapose the scale of this tower - its height is imperceptible". She ~~being~~ believes this is incomparable to other, more regulated ~~the~~ climbs, indicated with the <sup>big</sup> rhetorical question: "Other climbs offer warnings... Comport grips." But this?" The lexical comparison

between this "risky staircase" and other "comfort" climbs alone indicates the danger.

Laura's attitude of determination is highlighted by the extract of dialogue inserted which juxtaposes ~~her~~ her bravery with her friends' less defying attitude, but this is briefly challenged with her hesitation, shown by the graphological feature of ellipsis: "I think...". As this piece takes the form of a blog, on screen being read this dialogue would stand out more as a key ~~turning~~ crucial turning point in Laura's attitude. The declarative "I'm not afraid of heights" emphasises this. Lexical choices continue to dramatise her experience as she conveys her fearful attitude: "I have a creeping ~~attitude~~ ~~is~~ issue(-) with open spaces." Hyperbolic exaggeration is used by Laura to craft her implicitly implied fear, reflecting back to her childhood where she felt like she "was dying" on the top balcony of the tower. It draws a parallel to her experience now; on top of the tower. The <sup>structure of the</sup> piece has been building up to this climactic moment: "But I go." ~~Laura exp~~ The writer explains, with a comparative metaphor of a "Passport of Life Experience" toward where ~~that~~ from her ascent she gains no material benefit of "prizes", but ~~as she explained before~~ but this acts as an anaphoric reference; she explained previously that she has a disapproving attitude to such "tourist trap" methods." Again dialogue is adopted to play out a pivotal decisive moment:



"Eh, it can't be that bad." She immediately admits "It's that bad", expressing her attitude throughout.

She describes the "breathtaking" view with a semantic field of colours; literally showcasing how it is all "a blur". ~~The message~~ An ironic lexical choice of "grounding" applied to looking above could perhaps be applied to the whole experience of the trip, that has seemingly changed her attitude: "maybe it's a lesson". Cliches further indicate this ("I'm shaking like a leaf") and dramatic parallel phrasing with decisive modal verbs correct her ~~past~~ previous fears: "You will not fly off the surface. You will not fall into the abyss." She finishes her piece as she began it; personifying the city as it "whispers" to you. She has a changed attitude and her use of 2nd person again seems as if she is talking to her past self, which dismissed the all too familiar tourist experiences as "ordinary", when really her value now is that they were "new" and different; referring to her metaphorical "climb", as a progression of her character. These blog posts (as perhaps a series around Europe) have taught Laura a valuable lesson.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a very strong answer which uses a wide range of terminology accurately. It is also clearly aware of the audience for the writing and is very detailed in identifying and discussing a range of ideas in the text. There is a clear sense of engagement and an awareness of a range of ideas and attitudes.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Plan your work carefully and think about the whole text. Be selective in your choice of quotations and keep them short but support them with lots of detailed analysis.

## **Question 2**

### **A Sense of Place**

This was, numerically, the least popular question and the majority of responses were to the drama texts. The question required candidates to discuss the contrast between public and private situations and was an excellent opportunity for candidates to discuss the public and private occasions in the poetry texts and to examine Friel and Hare's theatrical strategies, especially the contrast between the single set for "Translations" and the much more fluid scene changes in "Stuff Happens."

Poetry answers were often generalised, with all-purpose readings of a few poems and very little integrated contextual material. Some drama candidates wrote down everything they knew about the plays, ignoring the question and the need for relevant discussion.

Most candidates were able to comment on the difference between the public and private scenes in "Stuff Happens" and there were some interesting discussions of the different ways Bush outguns Blair, both in private and in public and the way the former exploits public occasions to manipulate the news agenda. Candidates were less successful with "Translations" and often failed to distinguish between the private, intimate moments in the play and the public situations such as the scenes in which Lancey and Yolland are both present.

Most candidates were able to score well at both AO1 and AO2. Inevitably, some answers were better-written than others and there was some feature-spotting and re-hashing of memorised notes. Candidates found it easier to integrate contextual discussion of "Stuff Happens" than "Translations". Many of the poetry responses struggled to compare the poems and offered separate essays united by a conclusion which asserted the connection or point of comparison. There were some honourable exceptions, especially where candidates were able to select a range of points about the plays and make the comparisons using extensive knowledge of the texts.

## **Question 3**

### **The Individual in Society**

This question required candidates to discuss the presentation of individuals affected by the conflict between appearance and reality.

What was surprising was how many candidates answering on "Othello" failed or chose not to discuss Iago in any significant way. Many candidates discussed Elizabethan (sic) or Jacobean attitudes to race and how the audience's expectations of Othello and the initial descriptions of him do not match his appearance in the play. This was a fruitful and often interesting line of argument, although some seemed to think that he would be affected by the audience's perceptions of him.

Similarly, there was discussion of the contemporary audience's potential expectations of Desdemona and how this differed from the reality. Many candidates did not really move beyond discussing Act 1 and there was relatively little discussion of the Cyprus scenes. Some candidates latched onto the idea of conflict and offered a generalised discussion of this, without any reference to appearance and reality. There were also the usual misapprehensions about how only noble characters speak in iambic pentameter; this contrasted with some more subtle points about the disparity between Iago's disparaging remarks about Othello and the elevated nature of much of his discourse. (There was also a sense in some answers that they were going to present this material regardless of the question.) A number of candidates also developed interesting points about the hypocrisy of Alan's father and how the repression of emotions in the 1970s might have contributed to Alan's condition.

At AO1, most candidates were able to use appropriate terminology. Some examiners felt that candidates had been given plenty of literary terminology to use but were less secure at AO2 when discussing the theatrical (or poetic) nature of the work. It was not always clear that candidates were writing about plays or poems.

At AO3, the highest scoring candidates were able to relate contextual issues to specific parts of the play, for example the cinema scene in "Equus." Some candidates had included lengthy and often inaccurate discussions about Aristotle and R.D. Laing to provide some contextual ballast. Again, the most successful answers were able to integrate this seamlessly. A number of candidates referred to the National Theatre's most recent production of "Othello" but some struggled to relate this interpretation to their reading of the play. Again, Iago was sometimes conspicuous by his absence. There were some interesting discussions of the staging of "Equus" and how Dysart reconstructs an accurate version of events while becoming increasingly aware of the gap between his clinical reputation and the emptiness of his own life.

This is an example of a very low-scoring answer. It was placed in Band 1 for AO1 and Band 2 for both AO2 and AO3.

In the plays of 'Othello' by Shakespeare and 'Equus' by Peter Shaffer, certain individuals are affected by the conflict between appearance and reality.

For example, in 'Othello' the character of Iago is shown to be completely two-faced and never lets anyone know who he really is. This is shown in Act 1, Scene 1~~2~~ ~~where Iago and Othello are having a conversation~~ when the audience hasn't met Iago for very long <sup>and</sup> so what he is saying here is the first thing that <sup>the audience</sup> ~~Iago~~ believe because they don't realise they can't trust Iago yet. Iago ~~says~~ says "I follow him to serve my turn upon him". Here is the first time that Iago shares any hint ~~with~~ the audience that he is motivated to have revenge on Othello. In this same scene Iago then shares his plan to ~~kill~~ ~~Desdemona~~ Brabantio about what Othello has done with his daughter, Desdemona by saying "Call up her father, Rouse him, make after him, poison his delight, Proclaim him in the streets, incense her kinsmen, And though he in a fertile climate dwell, Plague him with flies! Though that his joy be joy, Yet throw such changes of vexation on't As it may lose some colour". Iago is showing his true colours here as he admits to the audience how

he is going to ruin Brabantio. Iago is showing properly for the first time how he takes delight in other <sup>Peoples'</sup> peoples' pain and misfortune.

In the next Scene (2) Iago is seen trying to defend Othello and make it seem like he is Othello's friend. Iago is completely manipulating Othello into trusting it and because of Othello's nature, he completely falls for it.

~~In just that a couple of adjacency pairs between Othello and Iago, Iago's tactics completely change as he then decides to try and stir things up with Othello.~~ Iago says

"I had thought t'have jerked him here, under the ribs". Othello responds "'Tis better as it is". Iago then says "Nay, but he prated And I spoke such scurvy and provoking terms Against your honour".

~~Iago is trying to get pretending.~~

By this short passage between Othello and Iago, Iago's ~~has already~~ ~~own~~ plan has already worked on Othello. Othello says, talking about Iago

"A man he is of honesty and trust".

So far in the play, Othello has only shown one side to his personality, his true side. It overcomes all the stereotypes that have been said about him. For example Iago <sup>called</sup> said about Othello "an

old black ram" The fact that Othello doesn't seem to fit in with his stereotypes is noticed by the Duke in Act 1 Scene 3 and points it out to the audience by saying "to Brabantio "Your son-in-law is more fair than black".

Iago knows exactly what he is doing by saying different things to everybody in order to get everyone to like him. For example in Act 1 Scene 2 Iago says "By Janus, I think so".

Janus is the God of two faces and the fact that Iago knows this and is using it to swear by just shows how much is wrong with him. I say this because Iago knows he is being two-faced and he knows that what will happen if he carries out his plan, yet it is because of this that he wants to do this; and he is pushing himself even further to get it done.

In 'Equus' the first time we meet Dysart is ~~at the~~ when he is doing a soliloquy which starts at the end of the story. Because of this soliloquy the audience knows exactly what is going to happen to Dysart and will be able to see it happening. ~~From~~ Scene 2 is shown in present tense meaning that Dysart is fine as this is before his mental breakdown. At this point he seems pretty



normal. He is using a systematic and professional tone and choice of ~~less~~ lexis, for example he uses interrogatives: "Where?" "How old?" "All at once, or over a period?" He does this to get all the details possible so he can give the most help to the ~~ne~~ boy.

At this point in the play of 'Equus', Alan Strang seems really strange. This is because instead of answering the questions like a 'normal' person, Alan sings ~~over~~ TV adverts. "Double your pleasure, Double your fun, Double with Doublemint, Doublemint, Doublemint gum". Alan ~~is~~ doing this for many reasons. For example, ~~one is that he just simply~~ the most obvious one is that he just appears not to fit into ~~nor than normal~~ or be able to respond to any society conventions, ~~although~~ even though Dysart is asking him simple questions such as "Is this your full name? Alan Strang?" and "And you're seventeen. Is that right?". Even though because of this it appears that Alan is just weird, the reality is that in one way he is doing it on purpose. He could be doing it on purpose for two reasons. The first being that he is

trying to block out Dysart and the second reason being that he is trying to challenge Dysart. Both of these options fit in to the fact that after a few times of ~~the~~ Alan repeatedly singing the adverts, before singing a different one, there are stage directions for Alan saying "singing buddy".

Dysart's The mental stability of Dysart starts to break down as soon as Act 5. This is shown by Dysart doing a dramatic monologue and saying about a dream he had. This dream prefigures what is happening to Dysart. For example it is also a metaphor for helping all the children at his hospital. A few times in this monologue, Dysart talks about a knife.

"I'm standing by a thick ~~and~~ round stone and holding a sharp ~~stone~~ knife" and also "They tear the knife out of my hand". Dysart's ~~is~~ dreaming ~~it~~ involves the knife because it is his job to slice out all the bad things from the children however now the knife is starting to be used against him.

At this point, we ~~hear~~ get clues for the first time about Dysart being jealous of Alan. For example he says "My face is going green."

behind the mask" and also "the priests both turn and look at - it slips some more - they see the green sweat running down my face". The green liquid is a metaphor for the 'green-eyed monster' which represents jealousy. Also the priests that Dysart talks about in that last quote represent Equus, the God. ~~He~~ ~~the~~ Dysart finally ~~recognises~~ ~~that~~ ~~feels~~ he is starting to feel like Alan does where he needs to worship Equus. They feel like ~~the~~ Equus is constantly watching them. ~~the~~ This is backed up by the fact that the next thing Dysart says is "their gold pop-eyes". This means perfectly describe the eyes of the horse and so Dysart is finally recognising that he has to worship them, the same way that Alan also thinks this.

In this monologue Dysart also constantly talks about a mask "I'm wearing a wide gold mask", "My face is going green behind the mask" and "the damn mask begins to slip". This shows the conflict between ~~of~~ Dysart's appearance, how he acted normally before Equus came along and how he is trying to keep the mask on, not



wanting any particular person or just society in general to be able to see how he is ~~definitely~~ deteriorating. He also doesn't want reality to sink in that he needs Equus and that he is jealous of Alan, because if he accepts this then he can't turn back. B. Dysart wants to keep up an appearance to show that he is still normal.

In 'Othello' Shakespeare also uses soliloquies and dramatic monologues. Iago's character particularly uses them. This is because he will talk to one character and as soon as they are gone he will use one of those dramatic devices to ~~talk~~ say about how he doesn't actually mean what he just said. For example he uses the soliloquy in Act 5 Scene 2 to restore himself in eyes of the audience, justifying his next moves.

By the end of this play Othello has been completely taken over by Iago's lies. This is shown in <sup>the</sup> his language he uses in his speech. For example he Othello says "A horned man's a monster, and a beast".



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is a very descriptive and observational answer. There is no attempt to integrate the contextual material or go much beyond explaining the quotations and describing what happens in the play.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Don't just tell the story and explain what happens.

## **Question 4**

### **Love and Loss**

This was a popular question which asked candidates to discuss the presentation of restrictive elements in relationships. There was plenty of opportunity to integrate relevant contextual material, especially about the socio-economic background to the plays and how society's expectations of sexual morality and the perceived role of women provided a powerful restriction on relationships.

Although many students answered on the drama texts, there was a significant number of responses to the poems and a number of examiners commented on the high quality of some of these answers.

It was obvious that students knew these texts very well and were often able to quote widely and discuss them in detail. The best answers were distinguished by an integrated approach in which the contextual information was used to support the analysis of form, structure and language. The best poetry answers were light on their feet and did not feel the need to provide rehearsed contextual paragraphs.

There were some problems with the lower band drama answers, especially in relation to "Betrayal," where long quotations from reviews were written out. Assuming that students were using clean copies of the texts, this was often an impressive feat of memory and critics such as Michael Billington should be flattered that students had learned large portions of their reviews. As a general rule, the longer the copied out critical review, the less the candidate had to say about its relevance to the question. There were also lots of rehearsed references to Plastic Theatre/ Pinteresque pauses and the life of Joan Bakewell. Many examiners felt that this material was going to be used regardless of the question.

Some candidates referred to filmed versions of the plays. In some cases this was deemed to be sufficient context material. High band answers were often able to consider the play's original performance and reception and discuss how different productions had addressed the idea of restrictive elements in relationships. Some examiners felt that candidates were more confident with Pinter than with Williams.

As with the other questions in this section, the most successful responses used a comparative framework and were able to select relevant contextual material to support detailed analysis of either poetic or theatrical techniques.

Restriction - pain, suffering  
| + control, security

holding back, trapped

Plath.

• Daddy - child inside

• Peppercorn - help - nurse

• the Manor Garden - family.

Donne - Twickenham Garden - trapped in love.

Sylvia Plath shows the theme of restriction, and the feeling of being trapped, throughout much of her work. This reflects the way in which she was restricted by her depression in her own life, and how it held her back from being happy.

One key poem that reflects this, is her poem 'Daddy'. This poem reflects the trauma she felt after the loss of her father. Otto Plath died when she was only eight years old, and Plath ~~was~~ had a difficult relationship with her father up until he died from an infection after having his foot removed.

'Daddy' is a poem that shows the child trapped inside Plath after her father's death, this is shown through the repetition

of the 'oo' sound as well as the childish lexis. The repetition of 'oo' is frequent throughout the poem "do not do", "you" and "who". This childish rhyme is ~~also~~ strengthened when combined with childish lexis such as "achoo", ~~and~~ "daddy" and "gobbledygoo". This child theme is continued with the repetition of "ich, ich, ich, ich" which reminds me of a child crying and struggling to speak.

Plath retains an image of her father throughout the poem with the regular references to "foot", "toe" and "shoe". She also maintains a powerful comparison with Germany, as her father was German. This is shown through her use of German lexis "Ach du" and "ich", as well as her ~~references~~ references to the Second World War. Plath once wrote that her father "heiled Hitler in the privacy of his own home", this is shown through her confusing comparison between her father and Adolf Hitler. Plath mentions his "Aryan eye" and "neat mustache" both of which are also connected with Hitler. This comparison between ~~Plath's~~ father and Hitler also shows her childish naivety on the subject, as she is claiming that her father was as

bad as Hitler "adores a Fascist", "the brute", followed by the image of a "blackboard" as her father was a teacher.

In the second to last stanza, Plath creates a comparison between her father and her husband Ted Hughes "The vampire who said he was you". This creates the idea that Plath is still a child craving her father.

In the closing stanza Plath references Dracula when mentioning "the villagers" and the "stake". This reference to a story emphasises the childlike distortion between reality and fantasy.

The final line of the poem shows Plath breaking away from her father with the contradictory "Daddy, daddy" and "you bastard". This childlike name for a father, followed by the taboo language of "bastard" shows ~~the~~ Plath attempting to pull away ~~to~~ from the restrictive hold her father and her childhood has over her.

~~Plath shows a different kind of restriction in a relationship in the poem "Poppies in July". This poem is made up of a series of ~~simple~~ ~~non~~ ~~rhyming~~ ~~couplets~~, followed by a single~~



~~The~~ 'Poppies in July' is a poem that focuses on the lack of emotion Plath feels after her husband's infidelity.

'The Manor Garden' is made up of five, non rhyming quatrains, and explores the ideas of life and death. In this poem Plath focuses on her unborn child, and how it is reflected in nature. Plath also explores how her illness and family history will restrict the child in the future.

The poem opens with the negative image of winter and death "roses over" and "incense of death". These dark images are then ~~followed~~ <sup>followed</sup> with the line "your day approaches". The contrast between the ideas of life and death is shown clearly here, with the implication that the child is causing all of this death. This creates ~~a~~ negative connotations for the child's future and character and so ~~prevents the images that~~ ~~follows~~ establishes a dark tone throughout the poem.

The second stanza explores the idea of growth and evolution which allows for some hope and positivity when Plath claims that through growth, the child is "clear

of the shadow". This is then shortly followed by a reference to Jesus "these crowns of acanthus", which creates ideas ~~connot~~ of Plath sacrificing herself so that the child won't have anything negative inside it.

The enjambement from the end of the third stanza, to the fourth shows Plath's fear, "You inherit", "a bee's wing" - which implies fragility, "Two suicides, the family wolves," which references Plath's own suicide attempts, and finally "Hours of blackness", which references her own depression. ~~This line,~~ These two stanzas combined show Plath's fear that the child will inherit, and so be restricted by, her own illness. It also shows her desire to sacrifice herself to allow her child to live without restrictions.

This ~~is~~ comparison between nature and human restrictions is also shown in John Donne's poem 'Twickenham Garden'. This poem is divided into three stanzas, each with nine lines, with an ABABB rhyme ~~scheme~~ scheme, followed by two rhyming couplets. This regular rhyme allows the poem to flow, and creates a steady rhythm.



which is <sup>pleasant</sup> ~~pleasant~~ for the reader to follow. This poem is written in the present tense "Hither" and gives the impression of an angry rant after an argument. However, throughout the poem Donne blames himself for his anger as it is his fault he loves her, and so his love is trapping him in this unhappy state and restricting him from being happy. I believe this poem was written about his wife Anne <sup>Moore</sup>. The poem opens with a paradoxical line, showing the dual nature of the poem.

"Blasted" is a word associated with anger, ~~however~~ however "sighs" is associated with love, creating conflicting ideas, which continues through the poem.

Donne creates a strong extended metaphor between his relationship and the weather. He desperately wants to be happy and peaceful again, and nature wants it to be spring, as the winter is restricting the garden, "seek the Spring", "grave frost".

Another ~~extended~~ extended metaphor Donne uses, is ~~the~~ ~~also~~ between his life and religion, due to his religious upbringing and subsequent continuation into religious life. This is shown through his religious lexis, such as "transubstantiates", "manna"

"paradise" and "serpent."

This poem shows the true restrictions created by love ~~whenever~~ in the final stanza, when Donne admits that, though she is cruel to him with her "false" tears and is hidden away "~~if eyes were~~" "hearts do not in eyes shine", he still loves her completely "~~because~~" "because her truth kills me." This restriction due to the power of their love is similar to ~~the~~ in "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning", as they are better than those around them. Their love is stronger and purer as it is a love between two souls and therefore they are permanently linked.

Over the course of his life, Donne wrote many poems about Anne Moore, his wife, and often claimed that their love was stronger than other "Dull subinary lovers" ("A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning"), and that they were ~~stronger~~ bound together. However, this bond also caused a restrictive nature to their relationship, as shown in this poem, "Twickenham Garden", as they are never free from pain, due to the intensity of their love.



**ResultsPlus**  
**Examiner Comments**

The candidate has used a reasonable range of technical terms and has shown an awareness of poetic form. However, the approach tends to focus on discussing individual poems in isolation, with some basic contextual discussion added on. The comparative element is also limited.



**ResultsPlus**  
**Examiner Tip**

Plan your work carefully and don't just work your way through a series of poems with some comparative points added on.

This is an example of an answer which was placed in Band 2 for AO1 and AO2. It was placed in Band 5 for AO3.

Both texts, *The Glass Menagerie* and *Betrayal*, deal with characters who feel restricted in their lives, mostly due to the inclusion of love for someone or something. The playwrights Pinter and Williams create this through implementing language, structure and theatrical methods such as staging.

The writers both include characters that have a level of power ~~of~~ over others. For example, in *Betrayal*, Robert holds a monopoly of information over Jerry as he finds out about the affair without Jerry's knowledge. This allows him to manipulate their relationship to his liking: 'we've had lunch' 'Never played squash though'. The idea of power is something Robert relishes: 'Ah. Yes', the non-verbal utterance allows any emotion to be sucked out and shows him to be more tough. It also helps him within his and Jerry's competitive relationship as shown through their career 'and it's very successful?' and their fondness for sports, the man who wins gets lunch, showing that they try to outdo each other. While Robert uses power to

restrict others' lives as a way of 'beating' them. Williams' character, Amanda, is regarded as powerful but does it for survival. She tries to stay in control of Tom as he is the breadwinner of the family. 'That light bill I gave you several days ago... you didn't need to pay it'. She does try to be self-reliant by selling magazines however is unsuccessful. She also exercises power over Laura by sending her to college to forge a career, however when unsuccessful she uses Laura as a way of getting a gentleman caller, who through repetition of the idea puts across the idea that it is someone who'll support the family - 'sounds like a fairly responsible job'. Williams structures the play so the idea of gentleman callers is placed in each scene. The context of production is the main difference between the two characters' need for power as Amanda's family are stuck in poverty during the 1930s the time of the great depression meaning that jobs, job security and money were hard to come by. This is part of the reason Amanda wishes for the past using archaisms such as 'darkee' to highlight the change in culture and position she has faced. Robert however is of a different time and class, as shown through his sociolect 'I'll have prosciutto and melone' which means power allows him to be above his peers. Both



characters are restricting others through the power they hold as to achieve.

The idea of escape is presented in both ~~plays~~ plays but the motives for them are given in different lights. The staging of the fire escape in *The Glass Menagerie* symbolises escape - 'The buildings are always burning with the... fires of human desperation' as symbolism and motifs are a big part of William's writing due to his use of 'plastic theatre' the fire escape shows the restrictive element of the apartment and relationships of those inside. The character Tom, whose desire for escape is largest out of all characters spends long amounts of time on the fire escape 'I'm going for a cigarette' this along with the use of him continually wearing his sailor's uniform foreshadows the idea of him leaving. This also highlights the idea that Tom is written to be a reflection of William's own life as he abandoned his own family to pursue his dream of being a writer. While Tom's escape is often sympathised by with the audience due to Amanda being written ~~as~~ <sup>with</sup> such ~~an~~ authoritarian characteristics Jerry's escape of family life is not seen in the same light. Due to the structure of the play being reverse chronology we see the affair was meaningless at the start so the audience often have little

sympathy. His complex sentences at the end - 'I can't wait for you, I'm bowled over, I'm totally knocked out, you dazzle me' show a willingness to get out all of his feelings however many phrases like 'I can't ever sleep again' seem cliché showing he may just be saying it to woo her. Jerry's motive for the affair may be more lust than love as he already has a fairly decent lifestyle. This affects both audiences as they see too much or too little can be a restriction in life and lead to a wanting of escape from their normal lives.

The idea of gender in the plays isn't directly mentioned however can be seen as a restrictive influence. In *The Glass Menagerie*, Laura is portrayed as the weakest character not only due to her fragile characteristics but her position - you know, 'the trouble with you? Inferiority complex'. Laura is put mostly in this position by Amanda due to the pressure of finding a 'gentleman suitor' as this is made the most important part of her life instead of what she likes such as nature as symbolised by the glass menagerie she treasures. Due to the context of the great depression, men were seen as the only way to have a good life restricting women's lives. Emma, however, in *Becket* manages to forge a career which gave her more independence, as

highlights the context of production, set during a time of further women's liberation. However, the restriction of <sup>relationships with</sup> men is still shown as both show dismay at both their ~~wives~~ <sup>wives</sup> showing signs of an affair but both also partake in affairs. Pinter especially contrasts this idea of changing times by giving the idea of <sup>post</sup> happy ~~families~~ families 'do you remember when you threw her up' and giving Jerry an avuncular figure while juxtaposing it with the promiscuity of their current situation. Both ~~the~~ plays deal with how different times have changed the position of women and how their gender can restrict them.

As both plays are set at different times under circumstances it is interesting that similarities still occur. Although they may have different consequences, the restrictive qualities in both plays lead the characters in the end to give up. Tom gives up on his family, Jerry and Emma give up on their affair as well as Emma and her marriage with Robert. However some parts continue, such as Emma's affairs and Tom's dreams which is ultimately what both writers did - Pinter his affairs and Williams continually wrote showing that although they may have been restricted they were still able to continue.



**ResultsPlus**  
**Examiner Comments**

This is a promising answer which is beginning to explore context and make some interesting points of comparison.



**ResultsPlus**  
**Examiner Tip**

Make sure you develop your ideas as fully as possible and always relate your contextual points to the wording of the question.



Plath presents the maternal love of her baby through 'You're' but the physical love based on appearance is restricted by the duration of her pregnancy, nine months. Similarly, the emphasis on time that restricts relationships is presented in Andrew Marvell's carpe diem poem, 'To His Coy Mistress' which is driven by the male libido. Sylvia Plath also exposes the ~~female~~ restrictions on relationships by presenting a female that cannot love in 'Spinster'. This contrasts with Anne Bradstreet's 'A Letter to Her Husband Absent Upon Public Employment' (hereafter referred to as 'A Letter') which shows the limitations that distance imposes upon relationships.

The emjambed title of 'You're' uses elision and directly addresses Plath's unborn child, Frieda. The motif of nine is used to indicate the nine months of pregnancy that Plath must endure. This is encoded in "from the Fourth / of July to All Fools' Day". It seems that Plath reverts back to a child-like state to show the elation she has for her child. The strong internal assonantal



pattern "A reel of eels" and "spool", "as owls do" imitate the initial gurgling sound that a child makes, the very same sound addressed in Plath's "Morning Song": "Your handful of notes"; the simile "rise like balloons" suggests a celebration but endstopped "New Statue" suggests apprehension, what will a child mean to Plath's creativity?

~~The~~ You're also uses similes such as "Farther off than Australia" to suggest the unknown quality of the baby. This was an era before modern scanning techniques, it is simply what Plath feels "Jumpy as a Mexican bean" that enable her to love this unknown being. The restriction of not being able to see her baby "A clean slate, with your own face on" anticipates the future. This strongly contrasts with Anne Bradstreet's 'A Letter' which describes her children ~~as~~ with the metaphor "True living pictures of their father's face" to show the restriction that complimentarianism had upon the female. Her duty as a Puritan was to compliment the man.

The only reference to Plath's baby being human is in the final line, with reference to the physical appearance of the baby, "your own face". The tactic of directly addressing someone else is used by

Andrew Marvell in 'To His Coy Mistress'. The poem begins with a hypothetical situation in which time does not restrict relationships with verbs in the conditional tense, "We would". The corporeal lexical field of "eyes", "breast" and the rest "parodies the Elizabethan tradition of quantifying each body part."

The male speaker is almost boastful about how he would adore the female but the inevitability of death is shown through the metaphor "Time's winged Chariot hurrying near". This reference to the inevitability of human mortality ~~shows~~ exposes the restrictions that time has on relationships. This ~~also~~ was particularly relevant to Marvell who just missed out ~~on~~ ~~the~~ fighting in the English civil war. This helps to suggest why "~~the~~" "This coyness, lady" is actually a "crime". The rhyming couplets "crime" and "time" encode the idea that relationships comprise two people. In this case, the relationship is the "lady". This affectionate mode of address is repeated ~~in~~ in an attempt for the male to engineer his plan of sexual persuasion. Contrastingly, the mode of address, 'You're' in Plath's poem directly addresses the baby but is gender neutral, reflecting the mystery that surrounds pregnancy.

The male speaker in 'To His Coy Mistress' presents a temporal relationship, <sup>but</sup> the restrictions of time allow the male to ~~try~~ attempt to convince the female that they should engage in sexual intercourse with the simile "like am'rous birds of prey". This is further reinforced with the use of a living organism with negative connotations, "then worms shall try / That long-preserved virginity".

This astonishing conceit also manifests itself in 'The Flea' by John Donne which uses litotes "mark but this flea" to cleverly encode the idea that the flea is a symbol of their marriage, "three sins in killing three" ~~and~~. The divine status of the flea is insisted upon with ~~the~~ ~~color~~ "Purpled thy nail", ~~the~~ the position and colour point towards a marriage that has been bruised, a symbol of the restrictions the female imposes by not allowing the male to "yield" to the male. Contrastingly, 'You're' does not ask for physical love but ~~the~~ the female speaker does acknowledge it with the assonance "happiest on your hands" to indicate breathless, ~~no~~ which is reinforced with free verse to imitate a mother gushing about their child. However, the simile "looked for like male" ~~no~~ which uses liquid sound suggests that the female yearns to see the child like the male insists on seeing the female in 'To His Coy Mistress', 'our time



to devour', albeit in a different way. The verb "yield'st" in 'The Flea' encodes the idea that the female restricts the male's pleasures. This Dionysian love is presented by Donne and the absurd conceit and poem was scripted for his male peers, a group later termed the 'coterie circulation'. Therefore he had the ability to do more daring, the intended recipient of Anne Bradstreet's poem, 'A letter' also adds relevance to her use of language

The title 'A letter to her Husband, Absent Upon Public Employment' shows the erasure strategy of Bradstreet who ~~purposely use~~ ~~poem~~ deliberately uses ~~the~~ formal diction because as a female in this era, she was not expected to ~~be~~ be creative in the literary sense. This also exposes the restrictions of her religion on her relationship. The poem was originally written for ~~a poem~~ her husband Simon Bradstreet and as a Puritan, she had to ~~separate~~ show the love for her God. The cataloguing, "my head, my heart" allows the poem to collapse into a personal tone and suggests that her <sup>unconditional</sup> love for her husband may be battling with the love for her God. ~~The~~ The poem uses pathetic fallacy by referring to her husband as "my sun".

The female overtly shows her love for her husband, "I like the earth this season mourn in black". ~~at~~ This

presents the restriction that distance has on their relationship. Simon Bradstreet was working thirty miles away from Anne Bradstreet and this restriction is directly addressed in 'A Letter'. This directly contrasts with Donne's 'A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning' which uses the imperative "So let us melt, and make no noise". The alliteration draws attention to the idea that separation should not be a sad parting. In a sense, this would undermine the love the couple share. The active verb "melt" refers to nature, a theme used by Plath in 'Spinster'.

~~cons~~ The ~~the~~ use of pathetic fallacy <sup>pushes</sup> ~~enables~~ the idea that to the female, ~~the~~ love is parallel to Spring. The vision "birds' irregular jabber" and liquid sound "leaves' litter" help to determine Spring as chaotic. It is the female herself who restricts her relationship with her cold and impersonal actions and thoughts. This is captured by ~~the~~ the use of third person narrative with the discourse marker "Now this particular girl". This ~~contrast~~ mode of address for the male ~~the~~ "her latest suitor" contrasts with Bradstreet's affectionate mode of address ~~to~~ to indicate possession "My head, my heart, mine eyes". The idea is that the lover for the male restricts her from living, he guides her as her "eyes" and he is literally



all she sees which is encompassed with alliteration, referring to her children in connection with their "father".

Whereas Bradstreet describes Winter negatively, Plath ameliorates Winter as it is presented as parallel to order. The female's inability to love in 'Spinster' is due to her need for order "Of white and black". It seems the female ~~is~~ relishes Winter which is presented with pairs "Ice and rock" but she does not wish to be paired to anyone. The exclamatory "How she longed for Winter then!" enables the reader to see the ephemeral nature of love in the female's eyes. This poem does not use free verse like in Plath's ~~poem~~ 'Daddy' where the restriction of love is based on the lack of presence of her father, exposed in the declarative "I was ten when they buried you". The syntactical structure of presenting "I" or the self before "you" echoes the cold feelings of the female in 'Spinster' who lives in a state of solipsism, shown ~~in~~ through end stopped "She withdrew neatly".

'Spinster' was written in 1956, a time before Plath had attended Robert Lowell's lectures<sup>(1959)</sup> and therefore she had not developed her 'Confessionalist aesthetic'. However, the poem arguably is reflective of Plath's life. The poem could be perceived as ~~proleptic~~ proleptic as

the short-lived nature of love and cynical stance may have unknowingly foreshadowed the <sup>ending of the</sup> ~~love~~ marriage <sup>between</sup> Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath. Bradstreet's poem shows a love that is unconditional, ~~and~~ establishing the love of Anne Bradstreet and Simon Bradstreet. Similarly, 'Daddy' refers to marriage with repetition "I do, I do" to ~~perhaps~~ <sup>perhaps</sup> imitate the desperation of Plath to find a husband, a re-incarnation of her father. This desperation may have restricted her as she would be ~~is~~ seeking comfort in her husband.

This contrasts with Bradstreet's poem which presents marriage as eternal, shown in the ending lines that imitate marriage vows "flesh of thy flesh, bone of thy bone". However, it is the very idea of marriage that restricts the male speaker in Donne's 'Batter My Heart' from loving. The imperative "Divorce me" suggests the male speaker seeks to be "free". ~~the~~ The ~~is~~ phrases "break, blow, burn" are monosyllabic and hold power, similar to the forceful ~~verb~~ verb 'Batter'. The emphasis on seeking physical, abusive love and the need for such brutality restricts the male speaker from loving ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> "three-personed God". The idea of physically feeling love is presented in Plath's 'Cut'. The masochistic impulse that drives the poem "What a thrill-" ~~is~~ <sup>hinges on</sup> <sup>Anguish,</sup> pragmatics as 'cut' is only mentioned in the poem. <sup>the need</sup>

for this abusive love restricts Plath from moving on from depression - an obstacle to her relationship with her children. The internal rhyme "ill, spill, kill" may <sup>expose</sup> ~~states~~ the intention of Plath who ~~eventually~~ committed suicide ~~after~~ a year after this poem was published, in 1963. ~~She was so~~

At the time of writing 'Cut', Plath was suffering from deep depression and historical allusions are incorporated in the poem such as the cacophonous "Ku Klux Klan" and ~~personification~~ <sup>through the metaphor</sup> "A million soldiers run" ~~which~~ which imitate the nature of depression. The idea is that past events ~~have~~ ~~are~~ are the root cause of depression which halts her expansion. The idea of depression is also captured by Bradstreet, <sup>the female</sup> "mourns in black", a color with pejorative connotations.

~~One~~ In conclusion, Plath's poem 'You're' presents a maternal love that is constrained and yet do grow when the baby arrives. This is addressed in 'Morning Song' as the ~~short~~ monosyllabic words in the simile "like a fat gold watch" mimic the heartbeat of the born child, Frieda. The emphasis on physical love and time is encompassed by Marvell in 'To His Coy Mistress' which uses the same idea of human ~~existence~~ existence but exposes the ~~short~~ inevitability of death which

shows love that is restricted by time, the couple have a limited time to "devour". This is juxtaposed with the female in "Spinster" who holds a view that love is chaotic by using the allusion to "bedlam spring" to indicate madness. The female devalues the male with ditotes "no mere insurgent man" and uses the lexical field of warfare, using cataloging: "With curse, fist or love either". This contrasts with Bradstreet who suggest the male ~~represents~~ represents her "heart", her "magazine of earthly store" to use the idea that a male protects her but this means she endures pain at <sup>their</sup> departure.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a very strong response which integrates the assessment objectives and is able to delve into the poems while also comparing and using appropriate contextual material.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Notice how the candidate has written an introduction which establishes a comparative approach and addressed the question clearly.



## **Question 5**

### **Family Relationships**

In this question, candidates were asked to discuss the presentation of different interactions within families.

This was, by far, the most popular question. The vast majority of the answers addressed the drama texts, although the responses to Chaucer/ Harrison were often very strong and candidates responded thoughtfully and with insight into the texts. Generally, candidates were more comfortable writing about Tony Harrison (and often skated over the specifics of Chaucer's language.) A number of candidates were able to integrate contextual and background material to support their analysis. However, it was clear that these texts had been taught well and that candidates had responded enthusiastically to the work.

The best drama responses kept a very close eye on the wording of the question as there was sometimes a tendency for candidates to lose track of what they were supposed to be doing and write about relationships in general and move away from the focus on family interactions. A significant number of candidates wrote detailed accounts of the opening exchange between Nora and Torvald but were not able to sustain this level of detail and seemed to ignore large parts of the play in which family interactions are central. This was also evident in the writing on "All My Sons" where coverage of the whole play was sometimes patchy. There were many detailed discussions of the exposition in Act 1 but less about equally important exchanges later in the play.

For AOs1 and 2, many candidates were confident in identifying a large number of lexical features but seemed less secure when discussing specific theatrical choices or how the writers' stagecraft might affect the audience.

For AO3, the best work, as elsewhere, showed a secure understanding of society's expectations about how families might behave with each other and how both Ibsen and Miller had challenged the theatrical norms of the time. Inevitably, there was a lot of rehearsed contextual material, especially about the imposed but short-lived alternative, German ending to "A Doll's House" and, in some cases, about the influence of Greek tragedy on Miller's writing. Some candidates did refer to recent productions of the play, especially the Young Vic's recent version which is currently available from Digital Theatre. Many attempted to use these interpretations to inform their own readings, with varying degrees of success; some merely mentioned that they had seen the play, while others were able to be very precise in identifying directorial decisions relevant to the nature of the familial interactions.



This is a very strong response to the poetry which was placed in the top band for AOs 1 and 2 and in Band 6 for AO3

CHAUCER			HARRISON		
P	E & A	C	P	E & A	C
<p>WOB marries for money &amp; sexual gain of power ↓ Queen to King too ①</p>	<p>pg 41 God ↓ pious = selfish &amp; cruel 40 - power</p>	<p>in med. times marrying for love was not a priority  unusual → women served better</p>	<p>H's parents loved each other ②</p>	<p>Flood pg 135 "Snap" → carried it everywhere</p>	<p>more usual now to be in love for marriage!</p>
<p>when WOB's hubs die, she moves on v. quickly ⑥</p>	<p>"the dayde when I cam fro Jerusalem" ↓ blunt, matter-of-fact  "And lith ygere under the roode been"</p>	<p>if loved him would have spent more money &amp; buried him in the chancel</p>	<p>when H's dad dies, he can't move on ⑤</p>	<p>Painkillers 169 "It's always a man..." ↓ leads him everywhere</p>	<p>Father's w.c. H's poet father didn't understand ↓ hubs has feelings 139 "it hurt"</p>
<p>WOB can't retaliate verbally to Janke in face of his education so hits him ↓ pulls leaves out ④</p>	<p>"with my foot so took him on the chake"  "At so they only three lewes have I plight"</p>	<p>laws: men can hit but NOT WOMEN!!  books: expensive &amp; rare</p>	<p>H's relationship with his father ruined by his education ③</p>	<p>+ then stopped talking 126 "mother could talk much + now don't by" "only our silence made us seem a pair"</p>	<p>laments in v. "just who's to blame?" 239 ↓ 1984 minor's strike - Gray's Elegy in Rhyming a churchyard quatrains</p>
<p>Conclusion = C → WOB interacts w/out love w/it still happy H → can't say same pair</p>					

Chaucer and Harrison both present different interactions within families. Chaucer's epic narrative poem, 'The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale' is part of 'The Canterbury Tales', written in the late medieval period, about 22 ~~poet~~ fictitious pilgrims on a pilgrimage. The Wife of Bath is a character from what Kittredge described as 'The Marriage Group'; the pilgrims whose prologues and tales discussed love and marriage through free narrative and heroic couplets, broken up by enjambement to seem less formulaic and emulate natural speech through the rhythm of iambic pentameter. However, Tony Harrison's group of poems, 'The School of Eloquence,' were written in the late 1970s and early 1980s, reflecting on his childhood in post-war, working-class Leeds. They focus more on familial ~~love~~ <sup>relationships</sup> as opposed to romantic ~~love~~ <sup>relationships</sup>, and take the form of Meredithian Sonnets, used by George Meredith to talk about a painful, strange relationship he once had, and imitated by Harrison to discuss his difficult relationship with his father.

The Wife of Bath defies the social expectations of women in medieval times by being very outlandish and confident. "Her hoses weren of ~~red~~ fyn scarlet reed,". Even nowadays, to wear red tights would be quite a bold and shocking statement, and in medieval times, red dye would have been very expensive, so we can infer that the Wife of Bath was quite wealthy too. It is clear, early on in the sermon-style section of her Prologue, that the Wife of Bath knows that having had five husbands would be regarded as ridiculous by a medieval audience, and so

uses biblical references to defend herself, "God bad us for to wexe and multiplie;". This idea that all of her marriages have been in order to have children is carried through her sermon, to her confessio section of her prologue. The Wife contradicts herself by making it clear that she marries again and again for sexual gain, and to have power over her husbands, "As help me God, I laughe whan I thinke / How pitously a-night I made hem swinke!" The ~~adv~~ adverb 'pitously' emphasises the Wife's selfish and patronising side of her personality, and the verb 'laughe' makes her seem quite cruel. In medieval times, marrying for love was not a priority, so to a medieval audience, her actions would not have seemed too shocking, especially as sex was seen as a debt that had to be paid in marriage.

However, it would have been unusual for women to hold so much power over their husbands, so it is even more unusual when, in the Wife of Bath's Tale, the King hands over the Knight's life to the Queen, "And gaf him to the queene, al at hir wille", as women were expected to serve and support their husbands.

Contrastingly, Harrison makes it clear that his parents really did love each other, and that their relationship was built on little routines and sweet gestures, even after his mother had died, "Dad kept her slippers warming by the gas." This would be expected by an audience nowadays, as marrying for love is the usual reason to marry.

However, Harrison's relationship with his father was

much less easy. Harrison's scholarship to Leeds Grammar School ~~and~~ which led on to his studying of Classics at Leeds University, drove a wedge between him and his father. His father was a working-class miner, and then a baker, and so didn't understand Harrison's love of dead languages. Having no command over language himself, the only way he could make himself feel better was to emasculate his son, "he dubbed me 'Paganiny' and it hurt." By allowing his father's idiolect to come through, Harrison emphasises his lack of good education.

However, ~~once they had both married~~ after years of Harrison's education being a constant division between them, it eventually leads them to just stop talking. "We never could talk much, and now don't try." The modal verb, 'could', shows that they did attempt to talk when Harrison's mother was alive, but it was too difficult as they were too dissimilar, and now "only our silence made us seem a pair."

Education was also a ~~conflict~~ cause of the conflict for the Wife of Bath's fifth marriage. Jankin, her husband, compares her to all the women in his "book of wilked wives", who all led men astray and were the reason for their sins. As the Wife of Bath can't retaliate verbally or with any education to support her, she resorts to retaliating physically, "I with my fist so took him on the cheke." ~~She also~~ There were laws in medieval times that gave men the right to hit their wives, but not for wives to hit their husbands. This would have been very shocking to an audience of pilgrims, and to

the general medieval audience. The Wife of Bath also destroys Jankein's book, "made him breene his book", once again displaying her regaining power within her relationship. Books would have been very rare and very expensive in medieval times, so, again, the Wife is acting outrageously.

Even though their relationship was difficult, once Harrison's father dies, he struggles to move on. "It's always a man like him that I'm behind / just when I thought the pain of him would go." By superimposing his father onto every elderly man, Harrison is seeing him everywhere, keeping the pain of their relationship alive. In his poem, 'v.' written in 1985 during the miner's strike, Harrison imitates the rhymed quatrains of Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard', lamenting his parents' deaths, but moreover, the changing society of Leeds through multiculturalism. Harrison ~~poet~~ shows he still feels guilty ~~from~~ towards his father even after his death, "though I'm horrified just who's to blame....?" The rhetorical question shows Harrison thinks he is to blame for not tending to his parents' grave, when his father "came each week to bring fresh flowers."

In contrast, the Wife of Bath sees her husbands' death as a ~~matter~~ way of moving on to the next, "He deyde when I cam fro Jerusalem." The bluntness and 'matter-of-fact' style of this quote shows that she wasn't upset when her fourth husband died, and in fact goes on to say, "And lith ygrave under the roode beam" we know the Wife of Bath is not poor, having inherited four husbands' money, but she chose not to



spend more money by burying her fourth husband in the chancel, proving that money was far more important to her. Even Jankin, her fifth husband, who she claims to love the most, "I trowe I loved him best," does not cause her grief for long when he dies, "welcome the sixte, whan that evere he shal." The use of 'welcome' displays her eagerness to find a new husband and to move on from the last.

In conclusion, both Harrison and Chaucer present the different interactions within relationships, through the Wife of Bath and her five marriages, and through Harrison's difficult relationship with his father, in life and death.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The work is well-organised and there is a clear critical framework. The contextual material is skilfully integrated. There is still scope for more detailed linguistic analysis.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Plan your work carefully and select the material so that you focus on the wording of the question.

This is an example of an answer which was placed at the top of Bands 1 and 2 and was placed in Band 6 for AO3.

A Doll's House by Ibsen was written in the late 19th century and marks a change towards naturalism in theatre. This play was written in Bokmaal, the language of church and state in Norway. The audience of this play would therefore be the people depicted ~~in~~<sup>by</sup> Nora, Helmer etc. Naturalism moved the poetics from much of the language and focused on the psychology of the characters. Ibsen inspired All My Sons and Arthur Miller. This was produced post-WWII, in time of rationing and patriotism. The play served to question the values of The American Dream, with unspoken political undertones of Miller's Communist sympathies. Both plays depict relatable characters in the audience's every day settings. Both challenge whether the individual must be a citizen, almost slave, to society.

In All My Sons, Miller's exposition is in a family garden, relatively isolated from the outside world; however, his neighbours stroll in and out at their whim. These outsiders are initially presented as friends, leaving the audience to deduce peace and friendship. The initial exchanges between Keller, ~~an~~ Jim and Frank are simply phatic

communication. They follow a question and response pattern that seems friendly on the surface and leads the audience to believe it serves as a profile builder. However, the phatic communication has undertones of distance and unease between the characters as they struggle to make a true connection with each other. It is obvious each character has a set of ideas that do not necessarily coincide with each other. Frank seems pessimistic when he asks "what's today's calamity?" The word of scale suggests a tiredness with the media. Keller replies, "... I don't read the news part any more." The reason is disclosed later, but we learn that the two men are quite different in terms of their relationship with the outside world.

At the exposition of *A Doll's House*, Ibsen forms the relationship between Nora and Helmer. On the surface, their interaction is entirely playful and innocent. Helmer asks interrogative questions to his wife regarding her whereabouts and spending. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Norway, it was culturally accepted that the man controlled his wife. Helmer embodies these values. Their interactions, almost throughout the play, follow a question-response pattern. Rarely is there feedback because that would require an exchange of ideas, but the 'man is always right'. Nora frequently uses imperatives to manipulate and control. This is shown in the opening lines "Hide that Christmas tree..." It is explicitly obvious that Nora uses lexis in the semantics of secrecy which

causes wonder and anticipation in the audience. ~~Helmer~~  
~~Helmer~~

The dynamics between man and wife are also explored in *All My Sons*. It seems that Sue is the dominant partner in her relationship, although her lines are crafted to show the audience she respects the place society defines for her. She uses hedges in her commands, "It seems to me that for ten dollars..." The audience deduces a powerful aura from Sue despite her restraint. There is a parallel between her and Keller that the writer implicitly notes when Keller tells her she's "too... too... realistic." The ellipses represent a pause for thought, as though Keller must find a positive word, knowing it reflects himself.

In *A Doll's House*, the setting is much more isolated. We have no other option than to focus ~~and~~ on Helmer and Nora. Helmer is the dominant partner, though sometimes we question whether he is inadvertently acquiescing to Nora's manipulations. He gives himself a sense of control by using patronising pet-names and delicate verbs such as "skylark twittering" and "squirrel rustling". The sheer frequency of these quickly informs the audience of a problem in their marriage; although, in Norway at the time, they may have considered it normal. The two battle for psychological domination by using imperatives. Nora tends to use a lot of modal verbs and hedges in her idiolect because this makes Helmer ~~for~~ manager Helmer's ego, "You could give me money".

Their interactions mainly happen with distance between ~~the~~ each other. Ibsen conveys this in his stage directions "opens the door and looks in". This serves ~~to~~ as a metaphor for the distance in their relationship. It is epitomised in the complication stage later when Helmer instructs the two go to their separate rooms.

In contrast, in *All My Sons* the characters remain in relatively close proximity to each other during interactions. It is the suspicion that forces this, a psychological feature not yet addressed in *A Doll's House*. When Mother enters, the two characters with interests in her motives are there looking to influence her. Chris wants her to bless his marriage and Keller wants to make sure she doesn't 'crack'. Mother has suspicions of the engagement and the audience can deduce that from her lack of interaction with Chris. His greeting of, "Hello, Mom" goes unacknowledged. "Mom" is an American dialect, which Miller establishes to later condemn the American system - he doesn't want any ambiguity in setting. Interestingly, Kate is referred to as "Mother" in the script which tells the actors there is a sense of detachment from the family.

Keller uses imperatives whenever Mother shows signs of strain, "Sit down, take it easy." This is because he needs her to relax in order to keep peace. Chris, however, cloaks on her in order to manipulate her ~~view~~ attitude towards the



engagement, "Can I get you an aspirin?" Mather systematically ignores Chris until she sees an opportunity to take a shot at Anne, "her nose got longer." Towards the end of the exposition we are vaguely aware of each character's motives and the equilibrium of peace.

The appearance of a main outsider, Mrs Lunde, in *A Doll's House* brings a new, contrasting parallel dynamic. Here we see two characters interact who have had completely different experiences in life. Nora, despite not recognising Mrs Lunde initially, explodes into a ~~show~~ boastful show, exclaiming "... have been such a happy time for me!" She seeks to portray a perfect life and controls Mrs Lunde, "You take the arm chair." Nora seems to have sketched an idea of the interaction in her head and wants to play it out. ~~on~~ The audience by now have deduced a personality flaw in Nora and are worried as to how this will play out for Mrs Lunde. Nora, like Keller previously, sees a parallel between her and her interlocutor, "Perhaps a little older, just a tiny bit." Her use of modifiers suggests she is insecure in how that change reflects on herself - she ~~he~~ thinks age will take away her powers over Helmer. To Nora, Mrs Lunde represents the opportunity to boast. When Mrs Lunde ~~is~~ rhetorically questions Nora, "haven't you grown up yet?", Nora sees the need to re-formulate her tactics and reveals her secret. Albert in a secretive and childish way.

This interaction, through Nora's ~~change~~ convergence in attitudes, tells the audience that Mrs Linde can expose the main characters to their vulnerabilities - what other people think. <sup>Dr Rank</sup> ~~Walter~~ is also susceptible to this, shown when he acts as though he's heard about Mrs Linde, <sup>a name</sup> "I have often heard in this house."

Similarly, Anne serves to upset the carefully balanced peace. When her presence upsets Mother, Keller is immediately defensive, asking interrogative questions as he hands the power to Mother, "What do you want me to do?" Much like Nora <sup>with</sup> ~~and~~ Mrs Linde, Keller has to constantly ~~evolve~~ <sup>adapt</sup> his values to how Mother is feeling. In 1940's America, a man prided himself on providing for his family - Keller values himself on the accumulation of wealth which can be toppled if Mother has a breakdown. We realise the sensitivity of Mother's psyche when she reveals she wants Keller and Chris to "act" like Harry is coming back. Since the death, it seems the family has followed Mother's declaratives. Mother is disheveled by Anne's entrance, she's caught between complimenting "Harry's girl" and discrediting Chris's-to-be-fiancee.

Both plays during intense interaction use short responses that move the action quickly. During the complication, where Krogstad interrogates Nora, he dominates by asking interrogatives that require yes or no questions such as,

"He did in fact die shortly afterwards?" These questions allow Krogstad to determine the discourse of the interaction and shuns Nora. ~~the~~ Whenever Nora tries to manipulate the conversation back into suiting her own motives, Krogstad ~~not~~ overlaps her, "I don't see -" "The problem is...". The audience ~~not~~ deduces power from Krogstad's prosodies. At the peak of intensity, Ibsen places his underlying rhetoric, "The law does not concern itself with motives" "Then the law must be very stupid." From here, the interaction settles into a conversation, designed by Krogstad. These are the first moments we truly become aware of Nora's childishness. The audience would have found it ~~patron~~ humourful to see a woman thinking the law was on her side. Those who didn't hold the values so dear may have started to question them at this point.

When George enters in *All My Sons*, a similar thing happens. Chris, unable to manipulate George, has to reduce himself to listening and weighing his options. George initially dominates by ~~not~~ overlapping Chris, "Now look, George..." "Cut it short...". George over-rides Chris' imperative with his own. Miller's use of exclamation marks prompts the actors ~~to~~ in their use of prosodies, volume in particular, "Don't civilize me!"

By the climax, those who felt they had the moral superiority are left questioning themselves. Helmer, now

realising his <sup>strict</sup> adherence to society's values ~~has~~ could lead to ~~his~~ <sup>his image</sup> being shattered, is reduced to interrogatives as he finally tries to understand his wife, "How can you say that?" Nora is dominating now. It is she who sat herself and Helmer at the table to talk - a sign that a business-like exchange is about to occur.

Similarly, Keller is backed into a corner by Chris, "a man can't be a Jesus in this world!" Declaratives such as this convey desperation as Keller clings to the values that have allowed him to act with conscious impunity. What is ironic, and Chris recognises it, is that he doesn't "know the world" like Chris does. Chris' attitudes and ~~his~~ ideas have been informed by worldly experience and a concern for others - much like Mrs Lunde. Keller, now open to the idea but fearing it, ~~has~~ feels the need to escape the society that has ~~not~~ promoted his ignorance and selfishness - much like Nora.

In conclusion, both writers portray interactions as a series of manipulations made based on attitudes and ideas. Both suggest one must interact with the world before attitudes, values and ideas are cast. However, the complexity of the situations does leave a sense of ambiguity in our thoughts - neither play displays the moral outcome as the definitively correct decision. As the plot of the plays are resolved, a new

Story begins for both Chris and Nora who must now put their beliefs to the test.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The candidate has offered a detailed analysis of the two plays and there is a strong sense of integration between AOs 1 and 2. There is also a clear focus on the wording of the question. The contextual details are strong and there are well-presented comparisons but these are not fully developed enough to get into the top band.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Keep a clear focus on the precise wording of the question and make sure that all your points are relevant.



This is an excellent example of an answer which was placed in the top band for all three AOs.

10.30 finish: DIFFERENT INTERACTIONS

ADH	AMS
<u>Interaction as spouses</u> Helmer & Nora ✓ Patriarchal, rebellious ✓ defiant: (JOURNEY!)	<u>Interaction as spouses</u> Joe & Kate ✓ p. to a lesser extent, supportive ✓
<u>Interaction as mother,</u> Nora, journey to apparently heartless ✓	<u>Interaction as mother, Kate &amp; Chris-</u> Loving, overbearing, protective, guilty. ✓

Within *A Doll's House* and *All My Sons* Ibsen and Miller explore different interactions within the family environment. These interactions between characters travel on a journey and as the audience you watch the interactions develop.

Ibsen utilises the marital relationship between Nora and Helmer to demonstrate interactions ~~between~~ <sup>between</sup> spouses. In Act One it is clear to see that Helmer is the dominant spouse within the relationship and this is shown through "he takes her playfully by the ear." This stage direction shows the physical interaction between the pair and Helmer's physical dominance. Whilst the use of the adverbial premodifier "playfully" softens the extent of the physical dominance it is evident to the audience that Helmer could exert more control should he feel the need to. This element of their marital interactions are compliant with the societal expectations of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Norwegian society. Women had no legal or marital rights and therefore were expected to be subservient to their superior male spouse. Nora demonstrates this through her compliant nature to Helmer's physicality. This sense of complying with societal expectations is further shown through Helmer's verbal dominance. In Act One it is very evident that Helmer is the topic manager, "has my little songbird been spending all my money again?" The use of the questioning illustrates to the audience that Helmer takes

the lead within their marital interactions. The use of the diminutive nickname "little songbird" suggests that Helmer subtly tries to remind Nora of her inferior and oppressed status. Helmer's ultimate control and superior status is confirmed through the possessive pronoun "my" when referring to money. It can be inferred that he is reminding Nora she has no personal freedom because she is a woman. The marital relationship between Kate and Joe within *All My Sons* is presented in a similar fashion, however the male dominance is shown to a lesser extent. The first indication that Joe is the dominant spouse is "what do you mean, dishonest?" this question indicates that Joe doesn't think lying to Kate is wrong. He believes it is in her best interests not to know the truth, however he does not consult her for her opinion and disregards her free will to think and decide for herself. Contextually, Kate is in a more favourable position than Nora as in 1918 women were granted the vote, however there is still a very prevalent attitude of patriarchy. Women had freedom but only to a certain extent. If women did anything to jeopardize their husbands status the hierarchy of status was enforced and women were shown their place. The patriarchy and control is shown to a lesser extent than in *A Doll's House*, but it is still present. This can be inferred to be a result of the time periods in which

they were written.

Ibsen and Miller both juxtapose these <sup>marital</sup> "interactions" within Act Three. In the final acts it is evident to both audiences that the dynamics have changed within the relationship. Nora's persona changes within Act Three and we can see that Ibsen has taken her character on a journey. The use of the double declarative sentences, "No more forbidding. I'll take what belongs to me," shows to the audience that Nora is developed, she is no longer meek and subservient, she is an independent woman who is finally free of her husband's dictates. This shows a stark contrast to the interactions previously shown between the characters. This juxtaposition is further heightened by Helmer begging, "Brother and Sister? Can't we live like that?" Whereas previously Helmer's questioning was a sign of his dominance it is now a sign of his weakness and desperation. His tragic flaw of status has been revealed and is being taken from him. This is a horrific thought for him, hence the begging and desperation, which can be argued to be his tragic downfall. The fact that Nora left Helmer was deemed as outrageous and unthinkable, audiences were horrified by it. So much outrage surrounded the ending that countries such as Germany refused to show it. Society argued that Ibsen had feminist ideals and was promoting the wrong ideas to women.



However he argues that he is a "humanist" and feminist messages were never his intention. The relationship between Kate and Joe is similar in some regards. Kate becomes the dominant character but she is attempting to protect her husband not claim his authority. Her dominance is displayed in "Joe... go away...", the command is softened through the use of ellipsis. This suggests that Kate is unwilling to assert total dominance which is different to Nora. Her dominance is further shown through her physicality in the stage direction "she desperately pushes him toward the alley," which further displays her love and protection for Joe. Whilst her and Nora both demonstrate their dominance the female characters have different intentions. Nora wants to leave and become <sup>independent</sup> ~~independent~~, Kate is simply trying to protect her husband from harm. Nora has a harsh and truthful interaction with Helmer whereas Kate has an emotional, loving interaction with Joe.

Ibsen and Miller also utilise the relationship between Mother and child to illustrate family interaction. Within act one Nora is depicted as a doting loving mother which again suggests <sup>her conforming</sup> ~~confirmation~~ to society's expectations of her as a woman. The interactions between Nora and her children are shown in "Dag's don't bite dear little dolly babies". The use of the modifier 'dear' indicates her love for her children and



the admiration she holds for them. This love is further shown through the stage direction "she and the children play, laughing and shouting" which implies that Nora is immensely happy and content when she is with her children. It can also be inferred that the children are her escape and outlet from Helmer and his control. However, within Act Three as Nora's transition to an independent woman occurs her interaction is entirely different. She states to Helmer "I've someone else to bring up first - myself." The use of the declarative suggests that Nora is adamant that she can no longer bring up the children. She wants to take care of herself first. When Helmer tries to guilt her into looking after them she remarks, "I think that first I'm a human being, just like you." The use of the verb "think" suggests that this is not a rash decision from Nora, she has not come to this conclusion lightly. She loves her children but she cannot be a good mother to them in this state and she has made the decision that she thinks is best.

Miller contrasts this interaction and develops Chris and Kate's relationship in an opposite manner. In the early stages Kate and Chris have quite a frosty relationship due to Harry's death and Kate's inability to move on. They clash over Chris' desire to marry Ann, Harry's former sweetheart. Their interactions are stubborn as

shown through "embarrassed, but standing his ground." This stage direction shows that Chris has respect for his mother and her opinions however, he is his own man and will not let her control him. Kate is angered by this defiance and it can be inferred that this is due to fear, when her sons were younger she would have been able to control them now however she is weak due to her femininity. Her dismissive tone and abrupt interaction is shown through "well if you're sure, you're sure." The use of repetition creates a condescending and patronising tone that can be argued to have been intended to generate some sense of control for Kate. However this attitude shifts in Act Three and Kate is more loving and motherly, similar to Nora in Act One. After Joe's suicide Kate ignores her own emotions and tends to Chris. She states "Forget now live," the two short sentences have great impact. It ~~also~~ emphasises the two important ideas "forget" and "live". Kate does not want Chris' life to be tarnished by this action, she wants him to have a happy and fulfilled life. This demonstrates her true maternal nature and her true loving nature towards her son. The two female protagonists, Nora and Kate have different interactions with their children. This is arguably a result of the ages of their children and the personas of the women.

Ibsen and Miller have utilised the family of Helmer and the family of Keller to demonstrate how interactions can develop and change completely altering the dynamics of a family. The relationships between husband and wife are polarised by the playwrights to show loss of love and growth of love. The interactions are used to show how damaging overbearing dominance can be and the potential consequences. Whereas Miller has shown the strengths of man and wife. The interactions with children make evident the importance of the motherly figure and how much Miller and Ibsen value the motherly role. Again the ~~authors~~ playwrights contrast one another but there is the similarity of the maternalistic nature of the woman and their desire to protect their children. Both playwrights have shown the importance of loving interactions with family and the effects of a lack of loving interaction.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

What is impressive about this answer is the way it focuses on the question and integrates the contextual material. It also makes very clear comparisons between the plays as well as offering a thorough analysis of the material.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

Plan your work carefully and make sure that you compare the plays. Ensure that the contextual material is relevant.

## Paper Summary

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

- When planning your answer to Section A, don't just work through the extract in order; select your material carefully and think about the whole text.
- Use a wide range of terminology to identify ways in which writers create meaning; discuss the effect of these techniques on the reader or audience.
- In Section B, plan your work so that you are comparing what the writers are doing.
- Don't just copy out lots of context material in Section B; use it to support what you are saying about the play or poem.
- Read the exact wording of the question carefully and answer *this* question, rather than one you practised before the exam.
- Enjoy your writing and share your enthusiasm with the examiner.

## **Grade Boundaries**

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

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



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