



Examiners' Report January 2012

GCSE English Literature 5ET2H 01

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### Introduction

In this, the second series, there were a number of responses where candidates showed a very positive appreciation and analysis of poetry. This was particularly evident for the unseen poem, where examiners professed themselves pleased with the quality of response. There were also many good responses to the Anthology poems. However, on both the (a) questions on the named poem and the (b) questions that looked for comparative points across two poems, some very thoughtful candidates revealed careful preparation of their chosen Collection. On the (b) questions, there were some excellent comparisons, but a minority of weaker candidates struggled to compare the poems effectively. Rather than occasional links, comparisons throughout would have greatly improved their answers, as many candidates had a thorough understanding of each. As was suggested after the summer series, Centres might like to consider ways of helping candidates find and comment on similarities and differences between two poems, especially in their handling of similar thematic material. For example, many candidates on Question 3 missed the fact that both poems were about the sound and sight of approaching armies.

Centres had clearly taken heed of the advice in the summer report, which stressed the need for candidates to answer one whole question from Section B, with a separate part (a) on the given poem and the comparative part, (b) (i) or (b) (ii) – either a second stated poem or one of their own choice from the relevant Collection. It was pleasing to note that many candidates had written in greater detail this series. However, it remains essential for candidates to label their responses clearly, so that examiners can see exactly where one part of the question ends and another begins.

## Question 1

The poem selected for 5ET2H was 'What has Happened to Lulu?' by Charles Causley, a poem which provides questions and hints but not definite answers about the girl's fate. Many candidates appreciated the sense of mystery, with the unfolding clues. Most candidates showed clear engagement and understanding.

Almost all candidates followed the 'natural' and surely correct interpretation that the narrator was a younger sibling of Lulu, asking the mother of the two of them about what had happened to her (or his) sister.

Weaker candidates failed to examine the language for significant images and their import in the story. Stronger ones talked intelligently about form and structure, while giving full attribution to imagery. Most candidates were able to respond to the mysteries giving rise to the questioning, and some related the questions to the atmosphere in the household. Some made rather more of the mystery than the text warranted: an examiner noted that one candidate held firm to the belief that Lulu was the family dog – complete with its own room, bed and 'shoe'. On this interpretation, the money box remained unaccounted for.

One point which Centres might note. The sight of a question mark seems to trigger an automatic response 'rhetorical question' among many candidates. The questions in this poem are ones to which the questioner badly needs an answer, so they are anything but rhetorical.

In a number of candidates' responses, the thoughts and feelings expressed in the poem became slightly lost in the emphasis given to the poetic devices employed. As in the previous examination series, an excessive focus on such aspects as 'enjambement' and the use of particular parts of speech sometimes meant that candidates failed to make convincing connections between these points and the presentation of the writer's ideas: to be able to do so, indeed, was something that differentiated sharply between the successful and the less successful answers. Higher band responses combined their detailed analysis with a sense of overview and were able to comment on the effect of devices and what they contributed to the whole rather than merely feature spotting.

These are the opening three paragraphs of a candidate's response to the Unseen Poem  $(Q\ 1)$ .

SECTION A: UNSEEN POEM
You must answer Question 1 in the space below.
What has happened to WW? by Charles
Causley is a deep, thought provocking
poem about loss. Hexplores how a mother
must protect her daughter from knowing
what has happened to her sister. The poem
is from the childs point of view and is
directed towards the mother.

The line 'What has happened to Lulu?'
Is repeated frequently throughout the poem.
This emphasises the organizery and need the child has to know the answer to this question.
There is also a sense of unease created in this line it creates a dark early image of and also another pile of questions - is she ok? Is she alive? Is she dead?

Restorical questions are used throughout 'What has happened to Lulu?' There is a somethod the child knows what has happened but doesn't want to accept it and therefore affections her mother constantly with questions such as 'Why do you tell me the things I heard / Were a dream and nothing more?' and 'Why do you wander! about as though! You don't know what to do?'



The candidate makes a confident start, setting out an interpretation of the poem's overall purpose and focusing quickly on some key features of the poem. The response overall merited a Band 4 mark (14/20), with its assured focus on how the poet's ideas are conveyed through language choices.



For a Band 5 response, the candidate would need to ensure that all comments are fully justified from the text.

These are the concluding three paragraphs of a candidate's response to the Unseen Poem (Q1).

The writer uses a motif to imply the suchress underlying Sadness that the mother is thing to hide. Emotive words such as 'tear drops', 'cry' and 'anger and pain' indicate the remove that the narrator may come to feel When she realises the obseper meaning of what has happened The neurator senses the mother's pein and augist heartbreak at what has happened but continued to relentlessly ask questions. The narrators thoughts and feelings are that of helplessness, as her lack of knowledge reveals her 'anger' at this unsettling happening. In addition, her anger isn't directed at the fact her sister is gone for she doesn't seem to have realized yet what has happened. Her anger is aimed at her mother but the recept repeated direct address of (mother), demonstrating her feelings of puzzlement. However, the 'anger' isn't the brutal sort, it is softer, a young, cross, bewildered anger that a chite feels when they Cannot Understand a situation and are forestrated as they attempt to comprehend. This is backed up by the euphony used - the uniter intends the reader to feel sympathy for the norrector as the reader is more Kinowledgeable of the situation. The writer was the narrators thought and feelings to show many aspers of the narrator emotions.

Plso, Causey uses soposific language to link to the hurseryThyme feel of the poem. The words 'ducam' and 
'wander' portray the feelings of the narrator as she struggles 
to seek the truth but giving up doesn't seem like a 
valid option. The words imply that the nourator is tired, weary 
of asking and pursuing anonswered questions. There is also a 
theme linking to the night, such as words (the 'bed', 'late: 
night' and 'curtains' which all point to the narrator feeling 
tired and that her sister's disappearance as disrupted her 
sleep.

Moreover, the use of alliteration 'flapping free' and 'window wide' convey the narrator's feeling thapped in ignorance whereas her sister is free. These could suggest that the narrator wants to be free too, she wants to know the muth so it doesn't haunt her anymore. There's mystery and a sper-natural feel to 'window's wide'-it's open, witherable and ominous. This could demanstrate the neurostors feelings of being vulnerable and unsafe-her confusion. The pathetic fallowy also reflects her bewilderments 'gusts of rain' which cannote a wild mudelle of thoughts or got being exposed to the weather-afraid, and unsafe and vulnerable.



The candidate has written a fully sustained and coherent response, of which this is the final section. In it, the candidate offers a mature and very well-expressed response to the characters and their situation in the poem. The answer merited a Band 5 mark of 18/20.



Note how the focus on specific language is precise and commented on with perceptive analysis that shows a convincing response to the poem: the embedding of quotations – single words or short phrases – is skilful and contributes to a confident response.

## **Question 2**

2(a) 'Even Tho' was the poem selected for candidates' comment. Many candidates engaged well with its ideas, showing understanding of the language and imagery. One main difference between the weaker and stronger responses was that the weaker ones tended to summarise the content without going into any kind of detail about the connotations of the language or the examples of the writer's craft. Examiners noted that candidates had not fought shy of the erotic implications of the language, which were discussed with frankness; they often showed a good understanding of implications of the dialect forms, which appeared not to have formed an insurmountable barrier to candidates' understanding: indeed, they often showed a relish for the exotic flavour of Nicholls' language. One examiner commented: "most were clearly able to grasp the ideal of sexual companionship without ultimate commitment".

(b)(i) With the named poem 'Rubbish at Adultery', which the clear majority went with, most did attempt to compare the differing nature of the two relationships: some did so convincingly, where they had a clear sense of what they felt the writers were aiming to say about the situations they found themselves in. Others were less than confident about who was who in the adulterous relationship. In particular, there were many inaccurate misinterpretations of 'Rubbish at Adultery', with comments such as "just seems a normal marriage row between a wife and her husband...he wants to go off with someone else.". Examiners noted that some candidates were evidently unsympathetic to the angry and hostile tone adopted by the narrator in this poem, and occasionally wondered why the writer did not simply pull out of a relationship which was evidently bringing such bad feelings.

2(b)(ii) Candidates' own choices of poem were varied and appropriate, including 'My Flesh' and 'Kissing', in which the physicality of relationships (or its absence) is explored in different ways. The very different contexts of the second poems allowed candidates to consider relationships from a variety of perspectives with some thoughtful links and comparisons.

This is a central paragraph from a candidate's response to part (a) of Question 2.

The language chosen in this poem is very interesting and unusual. Nichols shortens words, removes words and sometimes even pation puts in the wrong words, e.g. "of we own person/ality." This gives the multiple that the reader thinks this poem is exotic and unusual so it is exciting to read. The first two stanzas seem very passionate, mentioning bright, sneet fruits which have good, some times romantic constations. The first two lines give immediately strong impact, letting you know what the poem is about. They

imply that she does love him, but she is n't going to let him destroy her life. She then goes on to she say she is all of these passionate fruits when they engage in physical contact However, the third stanza is very contrasting to this, mentioning dark, unromantic and undesirable things such as "seawed" and "jelly fish." This shows that their relationship is for from perfect and she wants to tell him this



In this paragraph, the candidate shows a thorough and well-focused response to the poem's language, supporting the interpretative points with appropriate examples and explanation. The overall mark for Question 2 (a) was 9/15, at the top of Band 3.



Make sure that the interpretation is always clearly supported: the comments on the third stanza need some further thought.

Lines 15 to 23 really drives the idea have that the part wants to retain her independence throughout her love life. She says that she hants to make love to her partner, but then Carry on with her our life. It almost sounds as though Nichols is a femerist who does not have time to give up her personality to Consort norms of society and have lots of children and stay inside to Cook. The last line is interesting because of the slash "Person/ality" It is not clear what this slash represents, but it could represent how two lovers should lead seperate lives to one another. The poem has a rather odd structure. The stanzas are inequipor There is no phyme scheme and the ruthin is not consistent Could be because the post was not to be trying to match the Structure to the message of the poem- be yourself and be different." In Conclusion- Even The is an unconventional poem where instand of the poet soying what she will do a lover she says who She won't loand he can like it or lumpit. That said hor use of fruit metaphors shows that she is tender and that she want love, while her use of a carrigent dialect suggests that The won't drouge for anyone.



In this final section of the answer, the candidate shows a detailed and appropriate focus on the language of the poem, identifying and commenting on significant features of the language such as 'person/ality'. There is a reasonably strong conclusion, and the overall mark for Question 2(a) was 9/15, at the upper end of Band 3.



Aim to round off your answer with a conclusion that demonstrates fully your grasp of the poem and your response to it. These are the opening three paragraphs of a candidate's response to part (b) (i) of Question 2, focusing on comparing 'Rubbish at Adultery' to 'Even Tho'.

b) i) In 'Even the' the poet talks about how her relationship is levely but she changes herself, her personality, when she's with the man she lover and she doesn't believe that's right in a relationship, she thinks to both their interest interests to make it right. However in Ruphish At Adultery a man is having an affair with another women and it is written from her perspective, unlike in 'Even tho' neither the man or woman having an cake for one conother and they are not deright for love. They man jeels termble about cheating on his wife but the woman just wants a good time. These poems contrast themselves completely in meaning In 'Rubbish At Adultery' the woman clossit care about his problems, 'Must I give up another night to hear you whing and whine' she is wheresty probably also uneyounger than him and seels that relationships are for fun and don't mean problems, this may be because she hasn't been in a proper one yet. On the other hand 'Even the' sets out the relationship to be a deep and meaningful one where they share their is siles and problems Buth poems talk about how one of them is taking to much away from the other, the man is whining' to much for them to have our and in Gren that the man is 'devorting' her and she count he herself any nume.



The candidate begins the answer with clear summaries of the two poems, in which the comparison is established. The answer is a sound one and hence is securely in Band 2 (6/15).



Make sure that examples and quotations are used from early in the response, to avoid the impression of approaching the question in a rather general way.

These are the opening two paragraphs of a candidate's response to part (b) (ii) of Question 2.

ii) The men "One Flade" La Slimbatta
ii) The poem "One Flesh" by Elizabeth
Jennings to is about a very different
relationship to the one in "Even tho" by
Grace Nichols. While One Flesh is about
a relationship which used to be passionale
but has now almost died out Even The
is about a relationship which is passionals
but too much from the poet's point of
view-
The mood of One Flesh is quite
dark and depressing at points; "a destination
for which their whole lives were a destination"
for which their whole lines were a destination" whereas Even The is bright, fast paced and
whereas Even The is bright, fast paced and
whereas Even The is bright, fast paced and passionate. It is written from the point of view
whereas Even Tho is bright, fast paced and passionate. It is written from the point of view of the poet who is in the relationship
whereas Even Tho is bright, fast paced and passionate. It is writen from the point of view of the poet who is in the celationship and seems mostly happy although she
whereas Even The is bright, fast paced and passional. It is written from the point of view of the poet who is in the celationship and seems mostly happy although she wants to convey a message to her
whereas Even Tho is bright, fast paced and passionate. It is writen from the point of view of the poet who is in the celationship and seems mostly happy although she

from the point of view of the daughter, overlooking her parents relationship. The poem is interesting because not only does it involve the parents elationship, but also the relationship between the daughter (voice of the poem) and the parents. She doesn't understand how their relationship which seemed to be so passionate now some to have disappeared.



The choice of a second poem, 'One Flesh', is apt, permitting comparisons between the types of relationship portrayed because of the strong contrast in the treatment of the physical aspects. The answer is detailed and focused, with quite a strong opening in which the links are quickly established. The overall mark awarded for the answer was 8/15 (securely in Band 3).



Make sure that quotations are always accurate – the candidate writes 'destination' twice, rather than 'preparation' – a slip of the pen which did not detract significantly from the positive features of the response.

## Question 3

3(b)(i) In comparing 'Invasion' with 'O What is that Sound', the sense of approaching war and danger was the most frequently noted point of similarity. Some appreciated well the way in which the writers built up the sense of fear and the reality of war. However, many candidates showed a lack of certainty in their handling of the two characters in Auden, so that the significance of the final stanza, in particular, was often not explored effectively. This uncertainty about what was actually happening in the poem made it hard for candidates to write effectively when comparing the two poems.

3(b)(ii) With the candidates' own choice of poem, there was a variety of appropriate examples available. For example, 'August 6 1945' was selected evidently because it showed a very different perspective on war, but similarly showed how innocent civilians could be swept up into the military action.

This is the opening section of a candidate's response to part (a) of Question 3, focusing on 'Invasion'.

the poem Invasion the writer Shows the about people in the place rusty guns, lis Sugests old gurs of treated very well. The live approaching out dawn Suggest 5 allot be conse you march Death-bringing unitorms ound march pointing forwards tanks and ready d on geons

# Results lus Examiner Comments

The opening of this response shows that the candidate has a sound grasp of the situation being described, with the strong contrast between the enemy forces and the defenders. Because it was quite a brief answer, the overall mark for Question 3 (a) was 4/15, at the lower end of Band 2.



Make sure that the opening gives as strong an interpretation as possible and develop language points fully. This is the closing section of a candidate's response to part (b) (i) of Question 3 linking 'O What is That Sound' and 'Invasion'.

to how they would hurogian in the way that Strought ove Wolfer forom O what is thed gett ing womed Wood ove asking Soldiers broden is colm an attack. Their eyes ove burning angry Corrld relates boiling blood in lawsian. The poet is that Sound, The post (homes like in each Stanza, When the Thurning to crards the house that's When the hus borned leaves his wife. O What is that and worried Invasion because they are both about a village or all acking tam. Both poem are described as quite dangerous. Le eyes are burning from Veir 0 wheat 'In their death bringing they are that dangerous to attach from Soldies and don't Start against

# Results lus Examiner Comments

The candidate makes sound points about the way each poem shows the emotion of fear. There is a clear focus on making comparative points. The overall mark for Question 3 (b) (i) was 6/15.



When quotations are introduced, be sure to explore how the language in these contributes to an understanding of the poet's ideas.

### Question 4

Question 4: Somewhere, Anywhere

- 4(a) 'My Mother's Kitchen'. There were very few answers on this section. One examiner commented that several candidates gave straightforward, narrative accounts of the poem, but with no awareness or development of the more over-arching themes.
- 4(b)(i) The poem for comparison was 'Sea Timeless Song'. Candidates who had not fully appreciated aspects of the first poem struggled to make effective comparative points with the second named poem. The few candidates who did this question addressed permanence and change to varying degrees but did not present a sustained analysis.
- 4(b)(ii) Several poems about particular places were chosen to compare the poets' treatment with that in 'My Mother's Kitchen' but very few candidates answered this question and comparative points were not always clearly made.

## Question 5

Question 5: Taking a Stand

- 5(a) 'A Consumer's Report' elicited some strong responses, but this section attracted fewer responses than Questions 2 and 3 (though more than Question 4). An appreciation of the ironic tone and attitudes expressed in this 'report' on life was the key to the success of candidates' responses.
- 5(b)(i) In making links between this poem and 'On the Life of Man', candidates offered some very engaged responses. Central to successful responses was an appreciation that both poems offer a somewhat 'detached' commentary on life, viewed metaphorically as either a 'product' or a piece of theatre. Once this point was established, candidates were often able to make effective points linking and contrasting the two poems. However, the writer's use of theatrical genre (comedy and tragedy) misled some into thinking that the writer saw life as 'one big joke'. Others pointed up the metaphysical imagery of divine judgement, thus seeing the poem as altogether more serious in its implications.
- 5(b)(ii) Where candidates offered their own choice of poem, this was generally appropriate and permitted comparisons. For example, candidates sometimes looked at how life is viewed in 'The World is a Beautiful Place', and the most effective responses were able to compare the stance of the two writers effectively, especially if they had a good grasp of ironic tone.

This is the closing section of a candidate's response to part (a) of Question 5, focusing on 'A Consumer's Report'.

The writer uses atta alliteration later in the poem, "popular product", behave bad is almost as though the poet decides use more devices to provo the poem to create Hen stops of He creates the climas with the prose consumiers and the last law makers returns to his original poem slow down creating tonque-in cutitude The fact that me competitive product , gives raising again life



The candidate presents an assured grasp of the way in which the poet presents his attitudes to life, with some interesting and personal analysis of the evidence. The overall mark for Question 5 (a) was 11/15.



Note how the candidate focuses on the ending of the poem in the concluding section of the answer, exploring the writer's tone and analysing the phrase 'competitive product'. This shows the examiner that the candidate has really thought about what the poem is saying.

These are the opening three paragraphs of a candidate's response to part (b) (i) of Question 5, comparing 'A Consumer's Report' with 'On the Life of Man'.

Both A Consumer's repor of man' present Raleigh's boom talks about short comedy" and Privolow like washing product Both of the poems talk of Ivaging Henven the Judicious Sharp Spectator "maker" and calls man". This show an idea of religion in Both of these poems are extended metaphors life to things that we are more likely to understand. poem 16" a more traditional poem a Strict coma at the end of each be due to the was written Both of the poems Only we die in earnest, that's no get the competitive product used in the life of Man is than in Porter's poem, "what is more direct

our life? a play of passion". Raleigh uses methaphors to give his attitudes on life but puts them in a more direct manner, being descriptive and using adjectives, as if making oure that we will understand the is telling us.



The candidate approaches the comparison of the two given poems in a thorough way, with a focus on language securely established from the outset. The point about the 'greater-being' is made well and supported from the texts. The overall mark for Question 5 (a) was 8/15, a secure Band 3 response.



When referring to language features, such as 'metaphors' and 'adjectives', do not just list the feature, but show clearly its effect on the ideas in the poem.

## **Paper Summary**

Examiners commented on candidates' positive response to the poems, especially the Unseen Poem.

To improve their performance, Centres should work with their candidates to:

- make sure that particular requirements of the question are focused on
- use their examples fully, analysing and commenting on them
- keep separate and clearly label the two parts of the Section B answers
- answer in the correct section of the paper
- make effective links and comparisons.

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