

Examiners' Report
June 2013

GCSE English Literature 5ET2H 01

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Introduction

In this 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 and the variety of interpretation. There were also many good responses to the Anthology poems. On both the (a) questions on the named poem and the (b) questions that looked for comparative points, some very thoughtful candidates revealed careful preparation of their chosen Collection. On the (b) questions, there were some excellent comparisons, but a minority of 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 text. 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 5 missed the ironic sense of humour expressed in both set poems.

Centres had clearly taken heed of the advice in previous reports, 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 prescribed poem or one of their own choice from the relevant Collection. It still remains essential for candidates to label their responses clearly, so that examiners can see exactly where one question ends and the other begins.

Overall, the responses of candidates had many strong features, demonstrating their enjoyment and engagement with the study of poetry. Examiners noted:

- The many refreshing and independent responses to the unseen poem
- Evidence that candidates understood the ideas presented in the chosen poems
- The capacity to select apt examples of the way a poet's language expressed feelings and attitudes and to comment on how these related to the themes.

The less successful responses:

- Did not demonstrate clearly a full grasp of the poems' meanings and ideas
- Sometimes made unsubstantiated or over-general points, without supporting them by appropriate textual evidence
- When writing about two poems, treated them too separately, without making the required connections.

Question 1

The poem selected was *Tamed Cat* by Sylvia Kantaris. The poem proved accessible to all candidates at all levels of ability and the majority of candidates handled the task well. Even the less confident demonstrated the ability to follow the narrative, recognising the dramatic shift in the cat's nature, and offered some comment on the plentiful descriptive language that the poem provided.

Candidates revealed a lack of insight and struggled to achieve little above band 2 when they interpreted the content literally, sometimes with some fanciful comments about werewolves, bi-polar tendencies etc.

Most candidates recognised and appreciated the duality of the cat's nature as well as the human qualities presented in the animal, some successfully drawing parallels between the cat's seemingly domesticated nature as opposed to its primal instinct, and connected this to human beings, making the suggestion that the poet intended to comment on the duality and unpredictability that is present in human nature. Other confident candidates within the top band range commented on the inherently predatory nature of the cat and linked it to its ancestry. Some band 5 candidates commented on the bemused tone, mentioning irony and humour in the poem.

The best responses showed how theme, language, tone and form worked together to reveal the whole cat. Comments on the use of the semi-colon with the words 'replete; but...' often indicated a more thorough appreciation of the language and its effect on the reader.

However, excessive focus (feature spotting) on such aspects as the use of particular parts of speech sometimes meant that candidates failed to make convincing connections between points and the presentation of the poet's ideas. To be able to do so was something that differentiated the successful and the less successful answers.

These are the final three paragraphs, and the conclusion of a candidate's response to the Unseen Poem.

Sylvia Kantari presents the feeling of civilisation about a cat and the idea that cats are very docile and classy. This is presented by the words 'delicately' and 'elegant', which convey Kantari's feelings about the innocence of cats and what a pleasure they are to own as they seem to be so incredibly perfect. The word 'elegant' almost sounds like a ~~display~~ perfectly executed routine performed by the cat and the word ~~the~~ 'delicately' suggests a feeling of upper class, posh dinner parties, like the cat is regal ~~and~~ with impeccable manners.

By using the phrase ~~the~~ 'last dribbles of blood', Kantari presents a horrific ~~and~~ description of the cat eating some meat, which further adds to the thought that cats are in fact wild and not as innocent as once expected. The vivid description gives the reader ~~a~~ a good impression of this savage beast, and the word 'dribbled' further exaggerates the vicious scene ~~before us~~ that is being described to us.

Kantari has ~~used~~ ^{deliberately} the ~~phrase~~ line 'across neat lawns, past cultivated borders' immediately after her detailed description of the cat's attack on the meat, ~~because~~ because it makes the viciousness of the cat seem all the more shocking compared to this

pretty and lovely landscape.

~~the~~ In the poem 'Tamed Cat', Sylvia
Kantari uses many techniques in order to
present her ~~to~~ thoughts and feelings about a
cat and suggest that the cat is not really
home at all. Her methods are ~~to~~ effective
and convey lots of interesting ideas about the
cat and its ~~per~~ ~~split~~ split personality.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has provided a perceptive and analytical approach, especially to the language. There are some very interesting comments and these are supported by some carefully chosen and convincing textual references. Overall this is a confident and sustained response which fulfils all the criteria of a top band response. Mark awarded: band 5, mark 20.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Note the way in which the candidate looks closely at the actual language used and has made full use of embedded examples to support points made.

This is the opening paragraph of a candidate's response to the Unseen Poem.

The poem 'Tamed Cat' by Silvia Kantaris is a poem of almost two halves. The poem is relatively short in terms of poetry however does have much content and contrast. The poem has been written in what ~~appear~~ to be a single stanza/paragraph format. One could argue and I would agree, that this has been done intentionally by Kantaris in ~~an~~ a way to ~~show~~ portray the 'Tame Cat' to be the same cat as the one she later talks of, yet with drastically different traits and characteristics. The poem reads as if these have all been evoked by the "Raw meat" she is fed by her owner. The poem is written in the first person by the poet to symbolise a close relationship with the cat, but can suddenly change upon the introduction or removal of something; In this case the removal of the high quality food which is replaced by "Raw meat".



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate has responded in a very perceptive manner. There are some interesting and sustained comments on the structure of the poem and these are supported by some perceptive and convincing references. This response merits being in the top of band 5, mark 19.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

A strong introduction helps focus the response on the requirements of the question. Note how the candidate has homed in on the structure in relation to the content.

This is the middle section of a candidate's response to the Unseen Poem. This response included a short plan.

I. Plan.



Language - ~~contrast~~ contrast between primal and tame, represents the diversity of cat.

Imagery - Strong Imagery "still-warm legs" gives insight into person's views.

Rhythm - Punctuation keeps pace, hard to do during enjambment.

Structure - No stanzas, style change halfway

P1 - Enjambment + Poetry. *

P2 - Imagery *

P3 - contrast *

P4 - ~~strong~~ Lexical field

Sylvia Kantaris uses a variety of poetic techniques in her poem 'Tamed Cat: A Poem' which describes her personal feelings and relationships with ^acat.

This poem uses no rhyme to keep the rhythm of the poem. However she uses a combination of enjambment and punct-

action instead. "She merely purrs and acts most delicately, shaking one back paw at intervals." Is spread over ~~3~~ three lines in the poem, despite it being one sentence. The ~~Enj~~ Enjambment makes the reader carry on reading the poem. However it is also used to represent a cat's constant presence in your life, how it is never ending. The punctuation used in this quote helps create rhythm ~~and~~ without using rhyme. The commas (placed) mid sentence make you pause and ~~are~~ are placed specifically to create ~~a~~ rhythm while you read.

Kantaris also uses Imagery throughout the poem. The cat is described as "Panther black, her thought contracted on the taste of still-warm flesh naively bit-wacked". This quote contains vivid imagery such as "still-warm flesh..." which is designed to show a cat's nature, the fact that it is a born hunter and no matter ~~how~~ how "civilised by late-kat," it is, it will always revert to its primal instinct. The Imagery used ~~&~~ shows

(Section A continued)

~~Then~~ the reader how the person sees the cat as "Panther-black". Panthers are dangerous wild cats and this is used to show that all cats ultimately have the same primal instincts. This gives us insight into how the person sees the cat, something much more dangerous and primal than what it is.

The poem has no stanza's in it, however it does seem to be ~~is~~ split between the 'tamed' cat description and the 'primal' cat description. For example the cat in the first half of the poem is described as neat ~~with~~ and "Her manners are impeccable;" however in the second half of the poem the cat is described as when eating it "kips up a platter dribbles of blood and skulls off out into the jungle." This complete change in the tone of writing is ~~clearly~~ used to represent the everchanging nature of a cat, how it ~~can~~ has many different mannerisms depending on its mood and situation. I believe this is done deliberately by Kantaris to contrast

each view and emphasize the point
she is trying to make about cats.

In this poem there are two clear lexical fields, again one is ~~from~~ of the primal nature: "blood" "still-warm flesh" "twitch and jump", and another of a tamed nature: "civilised" "delicately" "impeccable" "elegant". These two lexical fields are used to show the contrast in the cats' moods and how its personality can so quickly change. I believe that Kantaris has used these lexical fields for the same reason she ~~does~~ uses contrast, to emphasize her points on how cats can be so different individually, but as a whole they share traits.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Although lacking in development, this is a focused response. The candidate displays a thorough understanding of the poet's techniques. There are some assured comments. The response was awarded a mark of 13, band 4.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

A short plan can help focus the response on the requirements of the question.

Question 2

(a): The chosen poem offered for analysis was 'Kissing' by Fleur Adcock. One examiner suggested that this text was accessible because of the combination of the universal theme of love, inclusion of young people and an abundance of descriptive language.

Candidates generally were able to recognise the presentation of the two relationships depicted in the poem and recognised the implied meaning of specific examples of vocabulary and imagery, along with the significance of the two stanza structure. Some of the stronger candidates appreciated the subtleties of the language, whilst others offered alternative interpretations of lines such as 'They've got all day' and 'They too have futures'.

(b)(i): 'Nettles' was the prescribed poem for comparison which, though challenging, produced satisfactory to perceptive responses. This was a popular choice. Most candidates noted how one poem focused on romantic whilst the other, on familial, love and were able to identify the lasting implications of both. However, less confident candidates seemed to struggle as to where to go after this statement. Their answers tended to show little comparison, rather an exploration of both poems in isolation, focusing on narrative and poet's voice. Stronger candidates engaged with the imagery and the nuances of language - some comparing the 'soft' and 'natural' and good-natured images of 'Kissing' with the angry militaristic metaphors of 'Nettles'. Many showed an insightful understanding of the nettles themselves as being a metaphor for the dangers of the world.

(b)(ii): This was also a popular choice. Many of the poems from this Collection were offered as comparisons: 'One Flesh', 'Sonnet 116', 'Rubbish at Adultery', 'Even Tho', 'Valentine', for example. All these choices made valid comparisons, as the different contexts allowed the candidates to consider relationships from a variety of perspectives. 'One Flesh' was the most popular choice which allowed for significant comparisons and contrasts, with the opposing authorial voice in particular. 'Valentine' appeared to be the least successful, with candidates concentrating on the unusual imagery rather than meaningfully comparing both texts.

One examiner rightly noted "**Comparison is the key to these responses.**" Sound and thorough responses offered straightforward comparisons, whereas more discriminating responses often used one poem to illustrate the other: for example the marks left on the skin in 'Kissing' and 'Nettles' (b)(i); the destinations to which lovers travel in 'Kissing' and 'One Flesh'.

These are the opening paragraphs of a candidate's response to the set poem Question 2(a).

(a) 'Kissing' looks at the love between both younger and older couples. It describes mainly physical affection.

The poem is an observational description of love from afar: "The young are walking on the riverbank, / arms around each other's waists...". The form gives the impression that the poem is narrative and descriptive. It is written in the third person, which also implies a story-like nature with an observational tone.

Also, the poem is split into two stanzas: "~~It's~~ ~~there over. They give up at day, ~~9:00~~~~"... no one older than themselves... the middle-aged are kissing...". The structure suggests that the description of young and old love has been split into two. ~~It also tells us that~~ As a result, there may be differences between the two descriptions.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a perceptive and confident analysis of the poem. The candidate notes that this poem '... is an observational description...' There are pertinent references to the text to support ideas expressed in the response. This response was awarded full marks - band 5, mark 15.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Note how the strong introduction immediately sets out the arguments and makes for a very focused and confident response.

This is the final paragraph of the candidate's response to the set poem 'Kissing'.

"The others, making courteous detours around them, talk, stop talking, kiss." The use of caesura ~~is~~ ^{makes the} sentence awkward to read which reflects how people around the young couple feel awkward to be around them. The fact that these two people are being ~~the~~ ^{the} intimate and ~~the~~ ^{the} being intensely close in public causes on-lookers to feel uncomfortable to be near them. However the young couple are completely oblivious to this or just don't care, all they care about is being together, in that moment, and expressing their close, passionate love for each other. ~~The poet feels~~ By the use of this caesura, the poet feels that close relationships make you forget the real world, all that matters ~~is~~ ^{is} your love for that person and close relationships cause you to forget social expectations.



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Examiner Comments

This is an assured and coherent response with the candidate offering detailed explanations of how the poet uses techniques to effect. Comments are well supported by textual references. The response was awarded a mark of 12 - top of band 4.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate has commented in detail on the caesura and has offered alternative suggestions as to its effect.

These are two paragraphs from the middle of a candidate's response to the set poem 'Kissing'.

* Throughout the poem, Adcock uses imagery to express her feelings about close relationships. '... looking at waterlilies'. ~~There is~~ ~~imagery~~ ~~and~~ '... on the way to airports and stations'. This suggests that love is permanent and stays with you wherever you are going. ~~When~~ It may also suggest love doesn't change because you have a busy lifestyle it should ~~stay~~ ~~with~~ ~~you~~ remain the same.

In the poem, Adcock uses metaphors to express close relationships, 'clamped together' and 'locked so tightly'. This may be used to suggest that love brings two people together and holds them together just like lock and key. It may also suggest that love is the key to a close relationship and without the love there is no close relationship.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is quite a thorough explanation and interpretation of the poem. The candidate has attempted an analysis of the language. Comments and ideas, although supported by textual references, are not developed.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When discussing language and its effects make sure your comments are precise and thorough.

The candidate has chosen the second set poem 'Nettles' to comment on the different thoughts and feeling about close relationships: Question 2(b)(i).

Similarly they both generalise the people in the poem to get their points across. Kissing refers to "the young," and "the middle aged," this is to show how these feelings ^{and relationships} ~~and~~ can happen to any of us, ~~no matter~~ no matter our age. It also makes the idea in the poem that we change how we act in a ^{close} relationship as time goes on more poignant as it makes the contrast even more apparent. Scannell uses the same technique in 'Nettles', but with a very different outcome. He refers to his son at the start as just ~~the~~ "my son," this makes it sound as if he has 'ownership' over him, which suggests that the father is in control. Later on this we know this idea changes when he refers to him as "the boy," this ^{generalisation} ~~is~~ could be to show how ^{that} now that he's growing up and is starting to get into trouble ~~show~~ he's become almost a stranger to him.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer analyses the two poems clearly, using one poem to illustrate the other and offering perceptive comments on the links and comparisons between the two poems. This response was awarded, as might be expected, a mark of 15 out of 15 - the highest mark in band 5.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate looks closely at the actual language used by the two poets and uses this to make appropriate comparisons.

The candidate in this response has chosen 'Valentine' as the poem for comparison: Question 2(b)(ii). These are the last two, closing paragraphs of this response.

Adcock also talks about commitment a important part in a relationship 'they too have futures' another idea of a successful relationship means that no matter how old or young you can always have a future together.

Again similarly Duffy also talks about commitment 'it's platinum loops shrink to a wedding-ring' commitment can be shown in many ways: by being loyal, by marriage etc Duffy believes that

marriage is a sign of commitment but it can be 'leopard's' 'lethal' if you let it be.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has chosen 'Valentine' which should have made for some sound comparisons. Although the candidate has made some links and comparisons, comments are not always supported by textual references. Hence a mark of 7 is awarded, in the lower end of band 3.



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Examiner Tip

Make sure all your comments and ideas are supported by well-chosen quotations.

Question 3

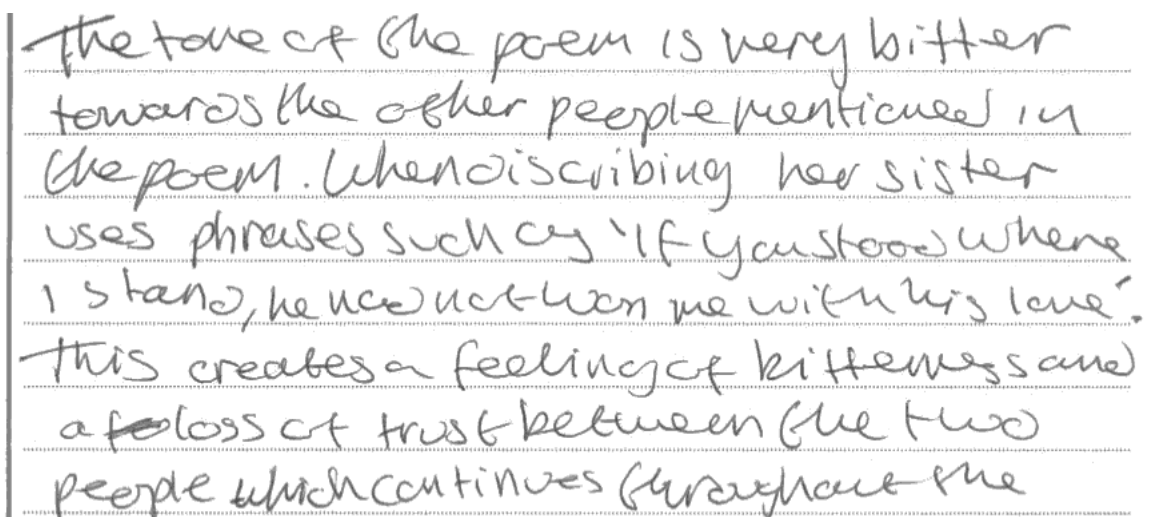
(a): The chosen poem was Christina Rossetti's 'Cousin Kate'. This was the most popular question for Section B and hence offered the most mixed responses. With this poem being a ballad in form, the majority of candidates could access the narrative. A common error was the automatic assumption that since the poem is written in the first person it is autobiographical; candidates failed to distinguish between Rossetti and the persona, and consequently revealed a lack of insight.

Many responses commented on the latent feelings of jealousy, resentment and bitterness that were encapsulated in the imagery: 'golden knot', 'like a glove', 'a plaything', 'lured' and 'dove' were popular focal points. More confident candidates recognised the use of oxymoron 'shameless shameful' and commented on it. The most able candidates discussed the internal conflict within the mind of the speaker, displaying mixed emotions and contention between love and hate.

(b)(i): 'Catrin' by Gillian Clarke was the prescribed poem for comparison and the overwhelmingly popular choice offered from this Collection. For the most part candidates were more confident with 'Catrin', possibly with it being a contemporary text, centring on the theme of familial relationships. Sound and thorough responses offered straightforward comparisons between the mother's love for her daughter in 'Catrin' and the cottage-maiden's love for the Lord in 'Cousin Kate' and touched on the conflicting emotions which arise from such love. The majority provided discussion of the key metaphor 'red rope of love' and more discriminating responses used this image to investigate the connection between the image of 'the golden knot' in 'Cousin Kate'.

(b)(ii): This was a much less popular choice but one with a wide range of texts offered: 'Half-Caste', 'Exposure', 'Parade's End', 'August 6, 1945', 'The Class Game', 'The Drum' and 'Hitcher'. Quite a popular text for comparison was either 'Exposure' or 'August 6, 1945', which offered blatant links with conflict, the latter being physical violence. However, many struggled to draw meaningful and subtle links beyond these broad observations. Another popular choice was 'Half-Caste', which offered similarities in which the personas feel ostracised from society, with the more able candidates recognising that the conflicts were between individuals and the wider community. On the whole these responses were not as successful as those in (b)(i).

These are three paragraphs of a candidate's response to the set poem on conflict 'Cousin Kate'. They are taken from the middle of the response.



The tone of the poem is very bitter towards the other people mentioned in the poem. When describing her sister uses phrases such as 'if you stood where I stand, he used to hit me with his love'. This creates a feeling of bitterness and a loss of trust between the two people which continues throughout the

The use of the word 'lured' when used to describe how the 'great lord' found her shows the bitterness between them. It makes the lord appear evil and the persona seems punished as if she didn't know what was going to happen and it wasn't her own fault.

Oxymorons are used in the poem which can also be used to show further conflict between the persona - 'a shameless shameful life' and 'my shame, my pride' can both be used to show conflict between herself as she regrets what she did and is angry at herself for doing it which can also show that she will have conflict with her son as she is not happy with who the father is as she has great conflict with him.



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Examiner Comments

This is an assured response, with some perceptive comments, which focus on the different characters involved in the conflict. There is a close look at how the language influences the tone and atmosphere of the poem. The response was awarded a mark of 13 within band 5.



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Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate builds a convincing argument around a short quotation, especially in this case the oxymoron, showing the overall effect of this technique.

This is the introductory paragraph and final paragraph summarising the candidate's response to the set poem 'Cousin Kate'.

a) In the poem "Cousin Kate", the ~~poet~~ Christina Rossetti presents how love can create conflict between ^{individuals} people, even between family. The narrator's love for the lord who cast her away in favour of her cousin Kate turns her feelings towards her cousin bitter. "My love was true" shows that the narrator did not love the lord for his power and wealth; as Kate had - "Your love was writ in sand" is a metaphor used to convey Kate's "love" for the lord as something temporary, something that can be easily washed away. This is the cause of the conflict between the cousins, ~~poet~~ and the poet's answer to this conflict is spitefulness and teasing - the narrator knows that her cousin is "not like to get" pregnant, and so can not give the lord ~~the~~ the "gift" of an heir - ~~however~~ however, the narrator has already given birth to the lord's son, and plans on using the child as leverage against the lord. This shows that the ^{Poet} narrator believes in ~~the~~ manipulating the conflicting ~~parties~~ party's disadvantages to come out top in a conflict.

~~The poet may say~~ The poem ~~is~~ also shows that love can very often create conflict - the narrator's love for the lord and Kate's love for power ^{"bought -- with his land"} created conflict between the two of them, and it was also caused by the lord's love of "fair" maidens. And now at the end of the poem, the narrator is using her ^{beloved} son, who is both her "shame" and her "pride" because of ~~the~~ her situation, to fight back against Kate, which will create more conflict. The entire poem of "Cousin Kate" shows how the writer may feel that love, whether it be for people or possessions, can cause conflict between individuals.

(b)(i) The poets of ~~the~~ "Catrin" and "Cousin Kate" ^{poem} present love as a cause of conflict between individuals. "Catrin" presents the conflict between mother and daughter as violent and explosive and fueled by their love for each other ~~but~~ ^{and} their ~~can~~ desire to be separate from one another, whereas "Cousin Kate" presents the conflict between cousins, fueled by the betrayal of one ~~of~~ ^{of} them.

The poet of "Catrin" makes use of an idiosyncratic, conflictive ~~words~~ ~~from~~ semantic field - "fierce confrontation", "~~with~~" "struggle", "shouted" - to convey that love itself is a conflicting emotion, and can cause two individuals to clash violently. However, ~~it is~~ although physical violence is used in the first stanza ~~to~~ ^{to} describe the narrator's giving birth to her daughter, it is more of an extended metaphor, used to convey the whirlpool of emotional conflict undergone by both mother and daughter - the narrator did not literally colour the walls with "wild", "tender circles", ~~but it~~ ^{gives the reader} is imagery used to give the reader the impression of the chaotic emotions and surroundings of the mother.

However, the poet of "Cousin Kate" is far more liberal and calm in ~~its~~ ^{their} descriptions of conflict - the poem has a ballad-like tone, ~~giving it~~ the thanks to the rhyming scheme, in which every other line of the poem rhymes. This gives it a ~~star~~ calm, story-like feel, whereas "Catrin" is presented almost as a stormy tumult of emotion. This could show that the mother and daughter in "Catrin" are a lot closer, and the conflict is a lot more personal, than that between the narrator of "Cousin Kate" and her cousin. This shows that perhaps the closer the conflicting individuals are, the more emotional and violent the conflict is.

~~"Cousin Kate"~~ The vocabulary of "Cousin Kate"

also gives the poem a setting - words such as "flaxen", "cottage-mates" and "coronet" are not commonly used anymore. This shows that the poem ~~was~~^{is} set in the past, whereas ~~the~~ the events of "Catrin" are set in modern times - as can be seen with the use of ~~the~~^{the} "cars taking turns at the traffic lights" as part of the scene. This makes the conflict in "Catrin" more relatable and personal to the reader ~~although~~ and the conflict in "Cousin Kate" less easy to empathise with. This shows that love has created conflict in many different ways as time passes, and will continue to do so, possibly forever, with the methods of it and the causes constantly changing, but with love constantly being the cause of conflict between individuals.



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Examiner Comments

This is an assured response which examines in some detail the theme, tone and language and offers a coherent overview of the poem. The response was awarded a mark of 12, top of band 4. A more secure and sustained response would have moved it into band 5.



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Examiner Tip

Note how the final paragraph sums up the candidate's arguments and presents a 'finished' response. It also demonstrates the candidate's knowledge of the poem.

This is the second half, the final paragraph, of a candidate's response to 'Cousin Kate'.

The use of repetition is also strong within the poem with the use of "Cousin Kate". This repetition of the title of the poem demonstrates the person's longing and the fact that she is always feeling the woes of the world - or is always reminded of them and therefore cannot stop thinking about them. And this comes across to the reader as being of a long drawn-out moan. This feature was used by the poet to demonstrate to the reader the person's distress in the poem, allowing the reader to empathise with her feelings - and understand how she is angry about what has happened to her; the reader in some ways feels sorry for her and wishes to help her but can't which makes the poem engaging for the reader as it creates tension.



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Examiner Comments

Although rather inelegantly characterising the poem as a 'long drawn-out moan', the candidate does offer a thorough explanation of how the writer conveys thought and feelings. Some of the ideas are supported by textual references. There is a tendency to be repetitive. The response was placed in band 3 with a mark of 7.



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Examiner Tip

Try not to labour a point: make a comment, develop it and support it with a suitable quotation and then move on.

The candidate has chosen the second set poem 'Catrin' to compare with 'Cousin Kate':
Question 3(a)(i).

Both poems use the idea of rope holding two people together. In 'Cousin Kate' this was when the great lord & woman like a golden knot. This shows that the knot won't ever let go and she felt stuck in the situation. However the use of the colour gold helps to show wealth and high status which is also what held them together. The use of gold also creates a more positive image and makes the knot rope appear less scary.

In 'Catrin' ~~the rope~~ use the metaphor of the 'red rope of love' is used to show that they both can be separated and are held together. The use of the colour red adds an element of fear as red is the colour associated with danger and anger, which shows that they can't be separated and this fight over separation is much more powerful than that of the one in 'Cousin Kate'.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate has written a perceptive response linking both poems with some interesting comment on images such as 'the golden knot' and the 'red rope of love'. The response was awarded a mark of 14, towards the top of band 5.



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Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate has used the two images, comparing and contrasting them to build an argument linking the two poems together.

The candidate has chosen the second set poem 'Catrin' for the comparative response. The extract consists of the first three paragraphs of the response.

(b)(i) The poets of ~~the~~ "Catrin" and "Cousin Kate" ^{poem} present love as a cause of conflict between individuals. "Catrin" presents the conflict between mother and daughter as violent and explosive and fueled by their love for each other ^{and} ~~but~~ their ~~can~~ desire to be separate from one another, whereas "Cousin Kate" presents the conflict between cousins, fueled by the betrayal of one ~~each~~ of them.

The poet of "Catrin" makes use of an idiom, conflictive words ~~and~~ ~~the~~ semantic field - "fierce confrontation", "~~wild~~" "struggle", "shouted" - to convey that love itself is a conflicting emotion, and can cause two individuals to clash violently. However, ~~it is~~ although physical violence is used in the first stanza ~~to~~ to describe the narrator's giving birth to her daughter, it is more of an extended metaphor, used to convey the whirlpool of emotional conflict undergone by both mother and daughter - the narrator did not literally colour the walls with "wild, tender circles", but ~~it~~ ~~gives the reader~~ is imagery used to give the reader the impression of the chaotic emotions and surroundings of the mother.

Howevr, the poet of "Cousin Kate" is far more liberal and calm in ~~its~~ ^{their} descriptions of conflict - the poem has a ballad-like tone, ~~giving it~~ the thanks to the rhyming scheme, in which every other line of the poem rhymes. This gives it a ~~star~~ calm, story-like feel, whereas "Catrin" is presented almost as a stormy tumult of emotion. This could show that the mother and daughter in "Catrin" are a lot closer, and the conflict is a lot more personal, than that between the narrator of "Cousin Kate" and her cousin. This shows that

Perhaps the closer the conflicting individuals are, the more emotional and violent the conflict is.



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Examiner Comments

This is a secure and perceptive response which makes some pertinent comments on the violence of both conflicts. The response was awarded a mark at the lower end of band 5, of 13. A deeper and more sustained analysis would have brought this response firmly into this band.



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Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate moves 'seamlessly' between the two texts, using one poem to illustrate the other.

The candidate chose the second set poem as a comparative response to 'Cousin Kate'. This extract consists of the first half of the response.

3.b.i:) The use of metaphors in both poems is an example of how the poets have tried to demonstrate a contrast or difference or struggle within the lives of the personas. In "Catch," a "red rope of love" is used to describe an unbreakable chord and is "sought over". This shows tension between two people and represents that love is what binds them together against their will. This metaphor is also a use of imagery that uses colour to paint a picture in the reader's mind of what was being described. This allows the reader to empathise with the person, and understand what they go through. It builds tension in the poem allowing the reader to gain a small idea of the battle or collision the person is going through. Similarly, in 'Cousin Kate':

The persona describes another character - saying "he changed me like a glove". This simile is used to compare the persona to a glove worn by a man. This shows how she could be controlled by him demonstrating her devotion to him, or her naivety in allowing him to do so. It also represents how she was used or changed so easily by him. This use of 'anti-personification' shows how the persona

feels low because of some repetitive
phrases between the two and the
person's eye towards him.



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Examiner Comments

Although there is some repetition and the response is not always sustained, there are some interesting comments about the images of the 'red rope' and the 'gloves tossed aside'. The response was awarded a mark of 8 in band 3. A tighter, more compact response would have earned a higher mark.



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Examiner Tip

Note how the candidate does far more than just 'feature spot' when discussing the metaphors used in both texts.

Question 4

(a): The chosen poem for analysis was 'Postcard from a Travel Snob' by Sophie Hannah. This was the least popular choice of question and many examiners felt the least successful. Many felt that the subtleties of the language were overlooked, falling into generalisations and summaries of what the poet was describing without much comment. Having said that, some examiners noted that sound to thorough responses recognised the snobbery and gave examples where this manifested itself. The more assured and perceptive responses commented on the element of self-mockery and irony expressed.

(b)(i): The prescribed text for comparison was 'Our Town in the whole of India!' Almost all candidates pointed towards the busy and celebratory atmosphere created in 'Our Town...' with many candidates drawing pertinent links with the vibrant multicultural landscape presented in this poem and the barren lonely scene alluded to in 'Postcard...'. However, those candidates who failed to recognise the ironic tone of 'Postcard...' tended to make rather 'black and white comparisons'. Some band 4 and 5 responses saw that there was possibly a double edge to some of the images presented in each poem, and how each poet's attitude might not be as straightforward as it first appeared.

(b)(ii): 'City Jungle', 'In Romney Marsh', 'Orkney/This Life' and 'Cape Town morning' were some of the minority choices for this question. Generally candidates seemed to be more confident in analysing their chosen poem than the set text.

This is part of a candidate's response to the set poem 'Postcard from a Travel Snob' by Sophie Hannah. The extract consists of two paragraphs from the middle of the response.

On the other hand, she uses ~~the~~ repetition of 'not' throughout the poem. It is because she wants to emphasise the negative feelings of package holiday and the idea that she doesn't like it. She also repeats using parenthesis like ~~the~~ brackets and dashes to show that package holiday is not good. For example, ~~she says~~ she says 'I'm sleeping in a local farmer's van - its great.' This implies that she enjoys sleeping in a ~~van~~ ^{van} rather than in a hotel. It reinforces ~~the~~ the idea that the holiday she is having is better than package holiday.

Also, she uses oxymoron like 'connoisseurs' and 'drunk'. She does this because she wants ~~to~~ to attract reader's attention. On the other hand, ~~she uses~~ ~~the~~ ~~word~~ ~~'trunk'~~ she is playing on ^{the} word 'trunk'. It has double meaning which ~~it~~ ^{it} can read as ~~swimming~~ swimming costume or a suitcase ~~which~~ which travellers use. Also, she ~~was~~ described herself as an anthropologist. ~~From this,~~

~~We can know that she is very~~ It reinforces the idea of her arrogant
personality and



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Examiner Comments

There is some relevant, but not developed, comment on language, tone and form. The candidate is aware of the arrogance of the tone, but appears to have missed out on the ironic humour. The mark awarded for this response was 8, in band 3.



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Examiner Tip

When using quotations try to interpret rather than just paraphrasing them.

The poem for comparison, 'Orkney/This Life' is the candidate's own choice. These are the two paragraphs which form the main part of the response.

We know that the poet of '~~Travel~~ Postcard from a Travel Snob' likes the rural place instead of urban and busy cities where travellers like to go. Same as Andrew Greig, he writes the poem 'Orkney/This Life' to express how much he loves Orkney, which is an isolated and rural place. In 'Orkney/This Life', ~~the~~ the poet uses alliteration of 'sea' and 'sky' to slow readers down and let them focus on words. It is because the poet wants to reinforce the ~~idea~~ ^{idea} nature by using the word 'sea' and 'sky'. Also, the poet uses pronoun 'it' to personify ~~of~~ Orkney as a human. Also, both ~~poets~~ ^{poets} use the technique of repetition to ~~to~~ present their ideas. In 'Postcard from a Travel Snob', the poet ~~uses~~ ^{repeats} 'not' to emphasize the ~~idea~~ idea that she hates package holiday. ~~In~~ However, in 'Orkney/This Life', the poet ~~repeats~~ repeats 'it' to reinforce the idea ~~that~~ that the place is very lovely and important like an ~~human~~ human.

Both of the poets want to stay in the place where they live. ~~We can see this by~~ In 'Orkney/This Life', we can see this by the use of repetition 'this life...'. This shows that it is the place where he ~~re-admires~~ admires and he wants to die in Orkney. ~~As a result,~~ ^{Therefore} we can know that both of the poets love ~~the~~ rural places very much.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate's choice for comparison 'Orkney/This Life' has the potential to offer some interesting comparisons as this poem is quite different in tone from the set text. However, the comparison is not developed and the response is somewhat lacking in balance. There are, though, some sound comments on the Greig poem. The response was awarded a mark of 6 within band 2.



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Examiner Tip

Although you do not need to give both poems equal weighting, make sure you have sufficient points about both poems to make sound comparisons.

Question 5

(a): The chosen poem for this question was 'No Problem' by Benjamin Zephaniah. There were many engaged and focused responses with some of the more confident candidates noting the ironic and gentle humour, in the face of unthinking racism, embedded in the poem. Sound and thorough responses commented on the language of the poem and how through the use of such language the poet asserted his identity. The stronger candidates seemed to appreciate the complexity and density of Zephaniah's poem. The more assured responses looked at the imagery - for example the double meaning of 'dey got me on de run' - and offered some convincing explanations of the double-edged 'sum of me best friends are white'.

(b)(i): The prescribed text for comparison was 'Pessimism for Beginners'. This was the more popular choice. Sound and thorough comparisons saw how both poems dealt with the issue of how badly and irrationally people treat each other. Although the comparison was generally little more than glancing, some perceptive points were made about negativity versus positivity. The stronger responses commented on the humour in each poem and some recognised that the humour had a sharp edge in each.

(b)(ii): The poems chosen by candidates such as 'Remember', 'On the Life of Man', 'I Shall Paint My Nails Red', did not always yield effective points of comparison in the lower bands, resulting in some disjointed responses with little in the way of meaningful comparison. Some of the most sustained responses in this question focused on 'Those Bastards in Their Mansions', a choice which allowed candidates to explore divergent responses to different types of prejudice. Some recognised and commented on the humour of both poems - Zephaniah's rather gentle but wry sense of irony and Armitage's black anarchic humour.

These are two paragraphs, looking at the tone and language, from a candidate's response to the set poem 'No Problem'.

The tone/voice of Benjamin Zephaniah in this poem is very serious in some parts but also sarcastic. We know that he is being sarcastic when he says 'An Juss fe de record, sum of me best friends are white'. We know this is sarcastic as he is as he uses enjambement throughout the poem to show that racism won't end and will carry on through his lifetime. He also repeats 'I am not de problem'. He has repeated this to emphasise that he is not the problem.

but is still a victim.

Zephaniah has used a metaphor to tell us about how he is being stereotyped. An example of this is 'You put me in a pigeon hole... but I am versatile'. This shows how he is boxed and stereotyped for his ethnicity but how he says he is versatile is that his attitude is that he will get through this.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate offers a thorough reading of the poem. The importance of the language is commented upon as are some of the techniques. There is an awareness of the humour in the poem. Lack of development has kept this response in band 3 with a mark of 8.



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Examiner Tip

In this response the candidate makes a comment about the poet being sarcastic but does not really explain why this technique is effective. When you make a comment, make sure you develop your ideas fully and explain why you think the point you have chosen to make is important.

The candidate's own choice for comparison with the set poem is that of 'Living Space': Question 5(b)(ii). This is the first part of the response.

The poem living Space written by Imtiaz Dharker has a different attitude to life from the people in 'no problem' because in 'no problem' it is all about bringing yourself up and not caring about what other people think about you and to love life however in 'Living Space' it all seems negative like the person who wrote it hates life and the thought of new life, for example "... and even dared to place these eggs in a wire basket" this sounds like she doesn't want another child to be born and if you dare there life will be rubbish.

Also in the start of the poem it says "There are just not enough straight lines." This is saying that life isn't easy and you can't follow a straight line because it is not that easy but in 'no problem' he just states what brings him down but just gets back up.

It also suggests in the poem that life was just squeezed in, like it should never have happened but has managed to squeeze it in "into this rough frame someone has squeezed a living space." The writer's attitude towards life is so negative but in 'no problem' it says "... Of Silly playground taunts an racist stunts, I am not de problem..." this is saying that people are racist to him but he don't care because he is not the problem. So in this bit of both of the poems they are both extremely different views.



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Examiner Comments

There is some discussion about the attitudes of both poets and the candidate attempts some overall comparison between the two texts. The lack of development has kept this response within the lower end of band 3.



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Examiner Tip

When choosing your own text for this response, make sure you have enough points to offer some sound comparisons and links.

Paper Summary

Many examiners commented positively on the quality of candidates' responses to the poems, both the Unseen Poem as well those from the Anthology.

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

- Make sure that the particular requirements of the question are focused on
- Use your examples fully, analysing and commenting on them
- Make effective links and comparisons when required
- Keep separate and label both parts of the Section B answers
- Answer in the correct section of the paper.

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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