

Examiners' Report  
June 2016

GCSE English 2 5EH2F 01

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## **Introduction**

Familiar strengths and weaknesses were apparent in the responses of candidates during the series: the character questions in Sections A and B are completed with continuing success, whilst answers to the theme questions tend to be the least successful. This may have something to do with time management, with some candidates spending too much time on the character questions, leaving themselves short of time on the theme questions. However, a larger number of candidates do seem to have a much clearer idea of what is required from the theme questions.

Candidates had no difficulty in generating ideas to write about in Section C, although technical inaccuracies continue to limit overall achievement. Time spent by candidates in planning and checking is invaluable and should be adopted more widely to ensure structured and less error-strewn responses.

Teachers continue to be inventive in devising strategies to help their students and many successful responses in all sections of the paper demonstrate the effectiveness of these.

## Question 1

A large majority of candidates answered on *Romeo and Juliet* with most of the rest answering on *Macbeth*.

1 a) This was answered very well indeed with most candidates picking out a number of aspects of Juliet's character and being able to support them with quotations. Many were able to grasp the complexities of the situation, noting that Juliet is grieving for Romeo's banishment at the same time that Lady Capulet believes she is bereft at the loss of Tybalt.

1 b) This was less well answered and some candidates produced generalised and vague performance suggestions. Candidates did not always understand the need to consider how each line should be delivered and explain their decisions. There was a lot of "rolling around on the floor/bed in grief" along with a great deal of "sitting on the bed, looking out of the window". The extract invites candidates to consider the difficulty of Juliet's predicament and how this would be reflected in her behaviour, alongside a clear understanding of Lady Capulet's preoccupations.

1 c) The majority of candidates had no difficulty in suggesting a short scene related to revenge and recounting the events. The challenge is also to show what the chosen scene tells us about characters, their relationships and its effects on the rest of the play. The candidates who made use of the acronym CRISP, as outlined in previous reports, often produced a band 3 response. One marker reported: "The best approach I have seen to this question is when students repeat the theme word - '*Revenge is important here because it shows how Romeo's character changes. Revenge is also important because it shows how much Romeo cares about Mercutio that he would risk his relationship with Juliet. The revenge in this scene means that everything else in the play happens.*' ... As always narrative responses dominated and many students did not even complete the question. A few learners took the approach of starting with this question which often meant their scores were more rounded than their peers who spent too much time on sections a and b."

This is a consistently successful response across all three parts of the question.

Write your answer to Section A here:

① Juliet is being clever and sensible when she says, 'Madam, I am not well.' This shows that Juliet is finding her way of grieving for her lover Romeo without her mother 'Lady Capulet' realising that she is crying for Romeo's banishment. Also it could be she wanted to be left alone so that Romeo can have a chance of climbing over the window and meet her.

Just Juliet is forgiving. She says, 'God pardon him!'. This shows that she cares for Romeo even if she had killed his ~~cousin~~ cousin Tybalt. She has mercy on him. She wants her mother to believe that she is heart as well by the killing and is supporting her mother.

(Section A continued)

Juliet is regretful. The phrase line "To hear him named and cannot come to him" This implies that she is regretting that she had no chance to be with Romeo, A man she has just married hours ago. She feel sorry for herself that it is very little or less control of the situation at the moment.

⑤ This extract follows after Mercutio and Tybalt death. Tybalt was Juliet's cousin and a friend. Capulet's nephew.

Juliet should be pacing up and down when saying these lines, 'feeling so the loss, I cannot choose but ever weep the friend'. Her face should look sad and confused. This would imply that <sup>she</sup> is lost, she doesn't know what to do, either to ~~at~~ mourn for his cousin Tybalt or Romeo her husband she is in between. This would make the reader see her affection and sympathy she had for both of them.

(Section A continued)

Juliet should ~~ask~~ say the line 'God pardon him! I do, with all my heart with sharp voice. Her hands ~~are~~ open raised up as if she is asking for forgiveness from God. This would show that she really forgives Romeo although the reader knows she is saying ~~so~~ ironically to please her mother Lady Capulet.'

Lady Capulet should say the phrase, 'well, girl, then weep's not so much for his death - — — slaughtered him' looking to Juliet's eyes. This would make the reader see she is trying to ~~come~~ comfort Juliet. She is comforting her daughter.

1.0)

Another part of the novel where we see the importance of revenge is when Tybalt fights with Montague's rearing because they attended the ~~ball~~ at Capulet's.

The character Tybalt felt that Romeo was in the party to disrespect the Capulets.



(Section A continued)

or to do something bad. He felt very hungry angry and humiliated when the lord Capulet stopped him from starting a fight that night and following the prince warning.

As a result Romeo want to revenge to honour this family name by fight Romeo in particular. Revenge bring violence and death. It all started with Tybalt wanting to fight Romeo but Romeo as he have recently become Capulet kinman by marrying Juliet does not want to draw back. Thus he ask for peace but instead his friend Mercutio was hurt on his behalf. This lead to Romeo wanting to revenge for his friend as well as a result Tybalt is killed by Romeo.

The revenge start with Tybalt wanting to revenge fight Romeo but people like Mercutio added up <sup>their</sup> death. Romeo is banished. At the end of the play we see it leads to the death of Paris, Romeo and Juliet.





## ResultsPlus

**Examiner Comments**

- a) There is some misunderstanding at the end of the first paragraph and the expression is less than perfect but valid points are made and supported. There is enough for full marks.
- b) Performance suggestions are made and reasons are given. This gained full marks.
- c) Points on character, relationships and plot are sufficient for a mark in the top band.



## ResultsPlus

**Examiner Tip**

Make sure you spend enough time on the (c) question by not spending too much on (a) and (b).

## Question 2

2 a) Many candidates successfully explored Macbeth's state of mind as shown in the extract: his fear, his anxiety, his plans to preserve his hard-won status and his intentions towards Banquo.

2 b) The more successful candidates focused on the Macbeths' tones of voice and their intimacy, there being few opportunities to suggest extravagant shows of physicality. The less successful fell back on ideas concerning stage lighting and props, which did little to show understanding of how the actors should be feeling.

2 c) Again, candidates had no trouble in suggesting a relevant extract dealing with fear. Again, the best responses went further than describing what happened. However it is significant, I think, that far fewer candidates made the mistake of listing a number of different scenes or of discussing the theme in general terms.

This response gained band 3 marks for all three parts of the question.

Write your answer to Section A here:

A) From the extracts we learn that the character of Macbeth is deceitful as shown by the quote "Be innocent of the knowledge" he says this to Lady Macbeth as he plans to murder Banquo & Fleance but wants her to act as if she never heard a thing.

From the extracts we also see the character of Macbeth as worried as shown by the quote "whilst our poor Malice remains in danger of her former tooth" he says this because he thinks that when he killed Duncan the deed he committed will turn back round on him as he thinks one of the fellow lords might suspect something and kill him to the murder.

(Section A continued) Finally the extract shows us that the character of Macbeth IS cunning as shown by the quote "Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance lives" This shows us that Macbeth thinks both Banquo and Fleance have suspicions so he must make a plan to get rid of both of them in some way.

B) The line "Be Brave and jovial among your guests tonight" could be said with a voice of confidence as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are trying to hide their real thoughts and feelings so no-one feels suspicious of them acting strange.

The line "Come on, gentle my lord" can be performed with a pitiful facial expression as Lady Macbeth is trying to cheer Macbeth up so he doesn't seem overwhelmed at the dinner with the lords and does not give the lords any reason to be suspicious.

The line "So shall I, love" should be performed with one across and movement of Macbeth standing up tall and proud with his head high as he does not want to let the lords to

(Section A continued) any suspicion of him being linked with the murder of Duncan.

C) we see fear in act 2 scene 1 as Macbeth visions a stabbing dagger in front of him, the dagger represents fear as Macbeth is hallucinating and also planning a dreadful deed in the murder of Duncan.

When Macbeth is hallucinating he tries to grab the stabbing dagger but ends up missing it as he says "Is this a dagger I see before me or a vision of the weak oppressed mind" meaning he does not know whether he is hallucinating or it is a supernatural experience he fears for but as he is worried he is going mad.

We also see Macbeth when visioning the dagger fearing the consequences of the deed he is about to try to commit as the dagger was the blood of Duncan on making Macbeth confident his decision to murder Duncan.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

- a) Macbeth is deceitful, worried and cunning and all three points are supported.
- b) Again, three suggestions are made and reasons are given for them.
- c) A valid scene is chosen and there is a generally sound understanding of its importance.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

For the (c) question, focus on just one other part of the play and show what it tells us about the characters involved, their relationships and the ideas in the play.

## Question 7

The vast majority of candidates answered on *Of Mice and Men*. *Heroes* was less popular than in the past with small numbers of candidates choosing to answer on one of the hitherto neglected texts such as *Anita and Me* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

7a) Large numbers of candidates scored maximum marks by pointing out that George used to take advantage of Lennie, that he was now showing remorse and that he now relied on Lennie to avoid the loneliness of an itinerant worker (supported by evidence). A number went a lot further, showing a considerable amount of insight. However, once three good points have been made, candidates should be moving on to the next questions. It was heartbreaking to see candidates who wrote two or three pages on George and then wrote just one short paragraph in response to question 7 c), which is, of course, worth 10 marks.

7 b) Comparatively few candidates got to grips with this question, choosing to write a character sketch of Lennie rather than looking carefully at the language used to present him. A successful answer depends on a clear shift of focus to consider how single words and phrases function to present the character (in this case) or feature under discussion.

7 c) There are plenty of parts of the novel which feature violence, actual, reported or threatened. The most popular were Lennie's crushing of Curley's hand or his killing of Curley's wife. A simple retelling is not enough and most candidates were able to incorporate some elements of CRISP. The most successful remembered to refer to context also: the lonely life of the ranch hand, the dreams of those trapped in a narrow life, the power structure on the ranch or the absence of effective law-enforcement.

There are successful answers to (a) and (c), here, but the candidate has little to offer for (b).

Write your answer to Section B here:

In this extract we learn that George ~~is~~ used to be a bully to Lennie. This is showed by 'used to play jokes on 'im 'cause he was too dumb to take care of 'himself'. This could suggest that George was ~~alone~~ in his feeling alone on his intellectual level because of Lennie's condition.

In this extract we also learn that George is an alone character. This is shown by 'George... began to lay out his solitair hand'. This could suggest to us that George ~~is~~ may be feeling alone and like he has no one to talk to becaws solitair is



(Section B continued) a game for one person only.

Finally in this extract we learn that George is a caring character. This is shown by 'Course he aint meant! This could suggest that George is defending Lennie and not calling him mean. ~~and~~ This could mean that George is trying to set other peoples minds on Lennies working qualities rather than ~~his~~ his mental condition.

In this extract ~~the~~ Steinbeck uses the repetition of the word 'dumb', Steinbeck by using repetition is trying to make us not forget that most people at the time that the novel was based on would ~~be~~ classify Lennie as dumb because of his condition and his understanding of the word.

(Section B continued) ALSO in this extract Steinbeck is using the description ~~of a voice change in George to~~ conversation of Slim and George to let us know how they ~~felt~~ feel about Lennie so that we could make our ~~own~~ own decision about what we think of Lennie.

In one other part of the novel that violence is important ~~because~~ is where Curley tries to pick a fight with Lennie, and Lennie ends up crushing Curley's hand. In that scene the character of Lennie is no longer portrayed as innocent and caring it's more of a strong person which doesn't know the power of his of strength. However ~~the~~ Curley is all that he says to be. He always picks fights with bigger guys, now for example Lennie to make him seem like the victim if he gets hurt.

(Section B continued) due to his and his father's position at the ranch. In that Steinbeck in my opinion is trying to tell us that being violent or trying to pick fights will get us nowhere good. It will either get us hurt or the other person maybe not by physical pain but emotional like if ~~ten~~ Lennie would have done something more his end of the fight would end up as an end to a job.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

- a) Three sound points are made and supported.
- b) The word 'dumb' is considered and the candidate could have looked more carefully at what George and Slim actually say.
- c) The candidate makes points about character and consequences, the latter providing just enough material on context.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

The (b) question is concerned with language. Comment on the phrases and words used in the extract and the effects they have on the reader.

## Question 11

This was by some way the more popular of the two writing questions. It is not surprising that young people have a view on whether life is too easy for them. Neither is it surprising that most responses declared that it isn't. The most successful were measured explanations of the pressures placed on them, by the media, by peers, by parents, by teachers. Many fulminated against exams, or the job market, and the most impressive were often those who made positive suggestions to improve their lot. Just occasionally, a candidate would argue with conviction from the opposite corner, telling teenagers in general to pull themselves together. Such comments were invested with added strength when candidates referred to the lives of young people in other parts of the world.

This is a band 5 response.

Write your answer to Section C here:

Some people think that <sup>young</sup> people's lives are easy today but they don't understand the pressure we are under to be smart and the best. This may not be as easy as they think. Social media today, is one of the worst things that puts pressure on young people today. Young people's successes and failures are documented on these sites instantly and this puts huge pressure on young people to succeed. Many people are pressured into fitting in to modern day society and following the trends in fashion because of social media today. And at some point, young people will have to make some of their most important choices in their lives. Parents expect so much from young people today, but they may want to do something completely different. Other parents boast about their children's success on social media, which is often measured in academic success not success by being a happy and hard working person.



(Section C continued) The easiest thing in young person's lives is the ease of communication between them and their friends. Technology enables them to talk instantly to their friends because of mobile phones etc. Also social media allows them to communicate with ease and show their successes.

Social media makes life easy for them but unfortunately puts a lot of pressure on them. It is both advantageous and disadvantageous.

Another thing that makes young people's lives hard is that parents and coaches can put a lot of pressure on young people to excel at sport today. They are expected to do well - sport has become more competitive with more competitions that are more widely publicised because of the internet.

What needs to be done to improve the lives of young people, is that parents, schools and coaches need to understand the pressure that young people are under.

Young people themselves need to understand that everybody is different and that they are all unique and not everybody can fit into a stereotypical mould.

Are you a stereotypical person or ~~as~~ your own individual person? Everybody should celebrate

(Section C continued) their differences. You are not a clone of another person, so don't act like them when you are your own person at heart.



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**Examiner Comments**

The candidate writes with accuracy, conviction and a clear sense of purpose. The response avoids turning into a rant and the focus on parental pressure helps to create a compact structure.



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**Examiner Tip**

Organise your response into a series of paragraphs which develop your ideas.

## Question 12

Many candidates struggled with structuring this question and often ended up meandering off topic or straying into fantasy scenarios. There is nothing wrong with a candidate imagining themselves into a future situation after an important decision has been made, but there must be a focus on the decision and why and how it was taken. Some candidates created outlandish future lives for themselves resulting from being offered dream jobs and, of course, making the decision to accept the offer. The best responses to this question were grounded in reality and common situations facing students such as which school/sixth form to choose.

This response earned full marks.

Write your answer to Section C here:

Good Evening, at

~~I am going to discuss with you the on an important decision I took and how you can~~  
I am going to discuss with you today about one of the hardest decisions I have taken in my life. We have all taken hard decisions in life, some more important than others, but they all can have a deciding factor on how we may live our life.

When I was 15 years old, I made the decision to not speak to my Father. How can I be so open and carefree about this decision, you might ask? Well, when I was only ~~but~~ a small child, my Father made the decision to ~~a~~ leave my Mother, whilst under going treatment for ~~B~~ breast cancer. Therefore, ~~to~~ I found it hard to forgive someone who would give up on his family through such a



(Section C continued) time of need. As well as his departure through this difficult time, he also confessed to having an affair. How could somebody do this?

Sometimes, we may not be able to understand the attitude of others, but we can certainly try to control how we handle ~~any~~ <sup>the</sup> situation ~~give~~ thrown at us. As well as going through difficult times, we must remember to keep positive and regain control. So, this is what I did and I can safely say that I am now better off for it.

Although the decision I faced to not see my father again was hard, I have now become a stronger person for it. Not only am I happier, stronger and determined to regain control over my life, I now have peace in the fact that I will never give upon my family. No matter how tough it may be.

Finally, we need to remember that all actions have consequences and it is those consequences that will either make you a stronger or weak

(Section C continued) individual. Moreover, I would never give up on my family and especially not myself. The lessons we learn are the ones that shape us as a person. Remember, that although the decision may be tough, ultimately, it is YOU that will be the one that will be better off and take pride in the fact knowledge that you have made the best decision.

I want to thank you all for listening to my story and I hope it helps you with any decision you decide to make.

Kayley Etheington



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Examiner Comments

This is a convincing explanation of why a difficult decision was taken. The language is mature and there is a clear sense of purpose and audience.



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Examiner Tip

Visualise your audience and convince them that your point of view is valid.

## Paper Summary

There are signs that the (a) questions in both sections A and B are being approached with assurance and confidence by most candidates. Many more than in the past are able to meet the challenges of the language question in Section B, and have clearly benefited from word – and phrase – level analysis, whilst many candidates would benefit from a structured approach to answering the performance question in Section A. Answers to (c) questions in both Reading Sections have shown a marked improvement with some centres clearly adopting CRISP, or something similar, to give candidates a helpful framework.

There has been an apparent and continuing increase in the number of candidates managing their time effectively and completing all sections of the paper.

Written responses clearly benefit from being carefully planned and checked for accuracy.

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

- Use a structured approach to answer the performance question in Section A
- Use word and phrase level analysis in the language question in Section B
- A framework such as CRISP may help in the Reading sections
- Carefully plan and check your writing response for accuracy.

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