

O Level Literature in English

Empathic Tasks

Guidance Notes, Grade Descriptors and Sample Answers

Introduction

Empathic tasks (sometimes known as ‘empathetic’ or ‘creative response’ tasks) address the same assessment objectives as the essay and passage-based questions. They are intended to test knowledge, understanding and response; but they give the candidate the opportunity to engage more imaginatively with the text, by the assumption of a suitable ‘voice’, i.e. manner of speaking, for the character concerned.

Empathic tasks are not set on poetry texts.

Empathic tasks carry the same weighting as the other tasks on the papers. There is no requirement that candidates must answer an empathic question. (In choosing questions for the paper as a whole, candidates should check that they are fulfilling the general rubric requirements as stated in the syllabus and on the front cover of the question paper.)

Knowledge

Candidates will be asked to explore a specific moment through the eyes of one particular character in the set novel/ play/ short story. As well as showing knowledge of the incident concerned, depending on the particular task it may be helpful if candidates demonstrate some awareness of what has led up to it. Their identification with the character might also be conditioned by their awareness of what happens to the character later in the novel/play (if that is appropriate to the task), though this will probably not be referred to specifically. Through their responses, candidates are expected to demonstrate detailed knowledge of the text and the character; but the tasks are not invitations merely to re-tell a story.

Understanding

An empathic task is designed also to test the candidate’s understanding and interpretation of a character and that character’s usual responses, and will make inferences about what s/he might be thinking or feeling about a particular situation. Good answers will be conditioned by an overall understanding of the way the character behaves in the text as a whole.

Voice

Probably the most difficult aspect of the task to tackle, the degree of success in creation of a voice will demonstrate the degree to which the candidate has engaged with the character and responded to the literary qualities of the work. The style adopted must be suitable to the character. In a Shakespeare text, for example, it would be inappropriate for an aristocratic character to speak in over-colloquial language, or for one of the ‘lower’ characters to speak in a particularly refined way. (But candidates are never expected to try to reproduce ‘Shakespearian’ English, for example.) Though it is not generally appropriate to quote directly from the text in inverted commas in answering a task of this sort, answers are likely to be enhanced by the use of particular turns of phrase normally used by the character; for example, Piggy in *Lord of the Flies* might refer to his ‘assmar’ or to what his Auntie thinks.

Occasionally candidates may steer away from writing as the character to speculating at a distance as to what the character might be thinking: for example, 'If I were Romeo, I would be feeling...' Such an approach may be rewarded for knowledge and understanding but, if it does not engage directly with the character, it will not fully meet the demands of the question.

To summarise, a successful answer to an empathic task will have the following key features:

- it will be written in the first person
- it will show a comprehensive knowledge of the text and of the particular character's role in it, but will not merely tell the story
- it will convincingly interpret the character's likely reactions to a specified event
- it will be written in a suitable and convincing style.

Phrasing of empathic tasks

An empathic task will usually be written to a formula as follows:

You are [character x] looking back over your experiences at [...] . Write your thoughts.

You are [character x] just after you have paid a visit to [characters y and z]. Write your thoughts.

At the end of the book we are told that [...]. Imagine you are [character x] and have been asked about this by [character y]. What do you say to him?

You are [character x] waiting to meet [character y] for the first time. Write about what you are thinking.

You are [character x] at the end of the novel, just after [event z] has happened. Write your reactions.

You are [character x] at the end of Scene 2, and are writing your report to [character y] on what has happened and how you feel about it. Write the report.

You are [character x] at the end of Scene 3, just after [character y] has left the stage. Write your thoughts.

Towards the beginning of the book [character x] is described as [.....]. Imagine you are [character x]. What are your private thoughts?

You are [character x]. You have just met [character y] for what you believe to be the very last time, and now you have had to part. Write your thoughts.

You are [character x] overhearing [character y]'s speech to the others about you. Write your thoughts.

You are [character x] at the end of Part I of the novel, and are writing the letter to [character y] in which you comment on the terrible conditions at [place z]. Write your letter.

You are [character x] after having been instructed to [...]. Write your thoughts.

General Grade Descriptors for Empathic Questions

(Note: Examiners apply general descriptors in the light of evidence such as photocopies of scripts discussed at a coordination meeting.)

Band 8	0-1	The answer does not meet the criteria for band 7
Band 7	2-3	Candidates will show a little knowledge of what the character does.
Band 6	4-5	Candidates will show some knowledge of what the character does and express some view about the reasons for action.
Band 5	6-8	Candidates will show some understanding of character through the aspects of the text referred to. There will be a little mentioning of feelings and ideas.
Band 4	9-11	Candidates will show a basic understanding of what the character does and thinks. These ideas will show a little evidence of being expressed in an appropriate way.
Band 3	12-14	Candidates will have a sound working knowledge on which to base their writing, which will have features of expression which are suitable and appropriate to the character or occasion.
Band 2	15-17	Candidates will have a good knowledge and understanding and be able to use this to produce writing expressed in a way which is largely fitting and authentic. The character will be clearly recognisable through the voice assumed.
Band 1	18-20	Candidates will use a full and assured understanding of the text to write in a manner which expresses the thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the character with assurance and insight. The voice assumed will be entirely appropriate for the character.

It is possible that some candidates will shy away from assuming the voice and the phrasing of some tasks, particularly in tasks referring to the character's thoughts. Responses of this sort can sometimes show insight despite not entering fully into the imaginative challenge. They should be assessed on the strength of that insight.

Specimen answers with comments

Eight empathic answers have been selected to illustrate a range of candidates' performance. The answers have been taken from scripts written in examination conditions. Small deletions/corrections by the candidate have not been reproduced.)

Candidate 1

Question

You are Tybalt just after your uncle Lord Capulet has ordered you to behave yourself at the ball and leave the disguised Romeo alone. Write your thoughts.

[Set Text: William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*]

Answer

If I was Tybalt and I have just been ordered to behave myself by my uncle Lord Capulet at his ball. My thoughts would be:

why did my uncle stop me from having a duel for Romeo is wrong for coming here. I'll show that silly Montague, I'll have my revenge on him for making a show of me. My uncle is far too soft hearted he doesn't know that all Montagues are the same, evil. I'll get my revenge if it's the last thing I do.

My thought would be full of anger and hatred for the Montagues.

Commentary

The candidate does not begin writing in the first person, but halfway through the answer adopts a voice which is reasonably appropriate. He shows some awareness of the actual incident, and a little understanding of how Tybalt might react to what he sees as Capulet's unreasonableness. He knows that Tybalt is consumed with hatred for the house of Montague and that he is set on revenge. The answer is relevant, but very short and straightforward.

Mark: 5 (Band 5)

Candidate 2

Question

You are Tybalt just after your uncle Lord Capulet has ordered you to behave yourself at the ball and leave the disguised Romeo alone. Write your thoughts.

[Set Text: William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*]

Answer

[*Plan (crossed through)*] :

- *How could uncle Lord Capulet even stand having a Montague at this event?*

- *Why would uncle let Romeo, that villain, enjoy himself?* 7
- *I can't stand this, it's really annoying me* 6
- *How dare Romeo trespass into Capulet premises* 2
- *He should be thrown out* 3
- *There is no way I could just let this go and be patient* 5
- *He is going to pay and I will make sure of that!* 9
- *Seeing Romeo here makes me feel so mad, this occasion is ruined* 8
- *I know uncle wants me to obey his wishes and he seemed quite angry himself, he didn't have to insult me* 11
- *I will make sure Romeo doesn't ever trespass again* 10.]

This ball is ruined. How could uncle Lord Capulet even stand having a Montague at this special event? How dare Romeo even to trespass onto Capulet premisses. It is a disgrace. Him and his friends should be thrown out. I know, that is exactly what I would do if I were master.

I know uncle wants me to obey his wishes but there is no way I could be patient, calm down and let Romeo enjoy himself. Uncle seems quite angry himself but he really did not have to insult me, it is bad enough having that rat around. I cannot stand him it is driving me absolutely crazy!

One thing that wonders me is why uncle lets Romeo, his enemy, have such a wonderful time? Maybe he is plotting something against the Montagues. We will just have to wait and see. Maybe I should try to think of something else....it's no use. I cannot think of anything else than that villain, in our house, eating our food and drinking our wine. Watching him makes me even more furious, I really cannot stand him! This entire occation has been spoilt upon arrival of our enemy. How dare he?

Romeo will pay for this, and I personally will make sure of that. He shall no longer enjoy the presence of the Capulets or trespass onto our property. He will pay the price.

Commentary

The candidate sustains a reasonably appropriate, though not particularly sophisticated voice for Tybalt. She shows a basic understanding of the character and of his reactions to Capulet and to Romeo, for example how much he is infuriated by the presence of Romeo in the house: 'I cannot think of anything else than that villain, in our house, eating our food and drinking our wine'. There is little depth of insight, however. Surely Tybalt would be under no illusion about the anger that Capulet was displaying towards him for his presumption and there is really no reference to this interchange. The comments are also limited to various expressions of anger against Romeo and a little vague speculation about his purpose. There is an appropriate vow to revenge at the end.

Mark 10 (Band 4)

Candidate 3

Question

You are Grace Poole looking back over your experiences as guardian of the first Mrs Rochester at Thornfield Hall. Write your thoughts.

[Set text: Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*]

Answer

You are Grace Poole looking back over your experiences as guardian of the first Mrs Rochester at Thornfield Hall. Write your thoughts.

“All these times I spent up there nursing her, it never felt odd, although I did try and catch sleep on occasions. I remember I started to feel odd after Jane arrived, Mrs. Rochester had let out a laugh, she was in one of those moods again. Anyways Mrs. Fairfax called and behind her stood Jane staring rather blankly at me. I was told to be quieter then I went back to my duty. I knew trouble was going to come. Mrs Rochester did have her occasional moods and would be rather snappy. I would have to tie her down, until I was sure she was calm again, or maybe even asleep.

There were those times I thought she was sleeping, and I told myself you can take a nap too. However Mrs Rochester never was asleep when I was, as soon as I drifted off she would wake up. I remember once Mr. Rochester was furious. I had fallen asleep and Mrs. Rochester stole my keys and set the Master’s bed on fire. That taught me not to sleep while on duty.

Many bad things always manage to happen, Mr. Mason visited once, I don’t know why, but she was in one of those moods I tried to hold her back but it didn’t work, when Mrs Rochester’s in fury she can be quite strong, yes I remember her strength very overpowering at times and I wouldn’t know what to think or do. I just sat there and watched.

My last experience was definitely one to remember, well in my case I would prefer to forget. It was the second time I feel asleep on duty, Mrs. Rochester obviously awake took my keys again and went round setting the curtains on fire. I woke up in the middle of it all smoke everywhere, people running out the house and screaming, and then you hear the people watching from outside. I just remember getting out safe although I had taken in enough smoke to last me a while. The last bit is what I wish I could forget the most. Mrs Rochester refusing to come to the Master killed herself. I put myself under full blame. I remember when everything was much calmer than before all that, there were some peaceful times at Thornfield Hall which I never shall forget.”

Commentary

The candidate shows detailed knowledge of specific occasions in the novel: Jane’s first encounter with Grace, the fire in Rochester’s room, Mason’s visit and the final conflagration. She knows the methods by which Grace restrained Bertha and also picks up on her propensity for falling asleep on duty after taking a drink. She interprets how Grace might have reacted to events, but these ideas might have been developed. For example, she says ‘I knew trouble was going to come’ and says Mrs Rochester could be ‘snappy’. Grace might have been expected to be a little more precise in her description of her charge’s behaviour, even though she is a taciturn character. She refers later to Mrs Rochester’s overpowering strength, and this also might have been explored in more detail. The answer was awarded a mark in Band 3, since it showed a good working knowledge of Grace Poole’s part in the novel and sustained an appropriate voice throughout. In order to have achieved a higher mark, the candidate needed to probe some of the events which she recounts and to try to give a stronger flavour of what Grace might have been feeling. At the end of the answer, she blames herself for what happens, but without convincing us of her culpability.

Mark: 12 (Band 3)

Candidate 4

Question

You are Tybalt just after your uncle Lord Capulet has ordered you to behave yourself at the ball and leave the disguised Romeo alone. Write your thoughts.

[Set Text: William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*]

Answer

I am furious! Absolutely furious! As I hate hell, all Montagues, and him. I cannot believe that dog! Trying to start trouble on my turf! Behind his puppy eyes, I see nothing but hate and revenge. Ha! Well-governed youth? A virtuous? To hell with Verno. It is all nothing but lies! I do not understand Lord Capulet, it is against his character to hold back, how could he have restrained himself? His hatred for Montagues are far more deeper than mine!

A villain, a true enemy, he is on Capulet's ground and believe it or not how can he be having more fun than me? What if this leaks out? How will I be able to live up to my title, Prince of cats? As tempted as I am to draw out my sword and provoke a fight, I dare not mess with Capulet for he might banish me from the household. The shame, the embarrassment. Thinking about this makes me abhor him even more. I will not turn a blind eye on this matter, if he ever crosses my path, a good fight shall await for him. This hot-headed temper of mine is immutable, I will not let young Romeo get away with this. For a moment, I wonder what brings him here? To stir up trouble or have a dance with a fair lady. And, what if he meets my young cousin, Juliet. I shall warn her about him, a heartbreaker, a player at heart, our enemy. I need to deter the two from encountering, the trouble that awaits in the future.

How dare he have the courage to show up at this ball! Have he not heard of all my duelling triumphs? In a way, I'm impressed by his confidence. I wonder if he would display such manly attitude during a fight.

I will not forget this night and I will definitely not allow him to get away with this. Lord Capulet can extol Romeo as much as he wants, but I will only see him as one thing: an enemy for life. We will meet again on the streets of Verno. Just one day. You'll see. One day.

Commentary

This answer is lively, and begins with a direct echo of the text, which the candidate integrates smoothly, and ends with suitable menace. The voice is appropriate on the whole. The candidate understands Tybalt, though appears to attribute more self-knowledge to him than he actually has ('this hot-headed temper of mine is immutable'). The character is communicated, however, together with his hatred of Romeo and his determination to exact revenge, but the sneaking admiration he expresses for Romeo is perhaps more a feature of Capulet.

Mark: 14 (Band 3)

Candidate 5

Question

You are Grace Poole looking back over your experiences as guardian of the first Mrs Rochester at Thornfield Hall. Write your thoughts.

[Set text: Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*]

Answer

I AM NO MISTRESS OF ANY SANI TARIUM!!!

Yet I am locked up in the ceiling behind a hidden door all day and all night taking care of the master's formerly beloved. It was a horrible experience when I myself was about to snap that fragile thread of insanity! Thread? On the matter of thread I did do some magnificent embroideries in my occupation in the attic. But that's beside the point.

Several times I was in trouble with the master for all her antics. I mean; setting fire to the masters bed, biting her own brother in the shoulder, and even shredding the lovely Miss Eyre's wedding veil.

Poor woman, Miss Eyre! Her not knowing what she was getting into was simply shameful. Atleast in the end she did find out, but on her wedding day must have been even worse. Miss Eyre would have been good for him. Adding a little calm to the sea. I did find her a bit dody and all, her keeping to herself and having this humble and meek nature. But all in all; she was nice sort of person. I am happy for her now though. I do think that he was her first love, and she, his true love.

Especially when she went off. The poor man went off his rocker. Almost asked him whether he wanted a spat upstairs with the hyena.

Oh! When all hell breaks loose though. It surely does. I shall never forget that fateful night the Hall burnt down. Not even I could soothe the devil in her this time. She surely had a motive which she achieved. Sometimes I wonder whether there was a tint of sanity left in the little lady, atleast enough for her to understand the actions of the master. That would have thrown any right woman of the edge.

I think her death was best for her. The little jail was not good for her. Even though of her state. She deserved not to be treated like a beast. I always reach the verge of shedding a tear when such thoughts manifest my mind.

But they are quickly overshadowed by that fierce fiery flame I could see in the shimmer as her orb's in her traditional wide eyed stare.

Commentary

This is a lively piece of writing, which begins very dramatically. Though it covers most of the same events as Candidate 3's script, more of the character emerges: for example, Grace's resentment that she is incarcerated in the same way as Bertha is, her sympathy for Jane, and her sympathy for Bertha's predicament. There is also a good touch in the detail of the embroidery. The candidate makes a real effort to write in an appropriate voice and, though there are a few false notes or anachronisms (for example 'The poor man went off his rocker') generally the piece is sustained. The quality of the voice is slightly antiquated and echoes the general feeling of the text. There are even specific echoes such as 'Almost asked him whether he wanted a spat upstairs with the hyena', which conveys something of the rhythm of Grace's speech pattern, though 'spat' is not a particularly appropriate word. This answer was placed in Band 2. It is not quite consistent enough to get into Band 1.

Mark: 15 (Band 2)

Candidate 6

Question

You are Tybalt just after your uncle Lord Capulet has ordered you to behave yourself at the ball and leave the disguised Romeo alone. Write your thoughts.

[Set Text: William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*]

Answer

Just one sound of his voice and I knew he was a Montague. Yes, that villain, slave, wretched boy: Romeo. I cannot believe my uncle called him a 'gentleman'. And that people here, in Verona think of him as a well behaved and good-mannered boy. He does not deserve that respect.

How dare he come to our party uninvited? With that mask on, he actually thought I would not recognise him. I can smell a Montague from a mile away. And if it was not for my uncle, I would have killed him then and there! I do not think killing him is a sin. Instead it is my duty. He came to mock our celebrations. Therefore it is dishonourable for me to just let him go.

I do not understand why my Uncle does not agree with me. Am I the only one who sees through all this? It does not matter whether he makes trouble or not during the feast. His mere presence already showed his contempt. He was laughing at us. He was ruining our great name 'Capulet'.

I don't know how my Uncle found this tolerable, while I was just about to explode with anger. All I wanted to do was to fight off the shame Romeo was putting upon our household but instead my uncle called me insolent. My Uncle, so blinded by the celebrations was unable to see what was right and wrong.

And even now, I am shaking to hold all the fury and rage within me. I will let this anger accumulate within my body. I will carve it into my heart. I might have let him go this time but next time, I promise, he will not be allowed to walk away with such ease. He will regret. I will make him pay for the shame he has brought to our household.

Commentary

The candidate assumes an appropriate voice and weaves echoes of the text into the answer: for example, 'that villain, slave, wretched boy' and 'I do not think killing him is a sin'. She shows good knowledge and understanding of the character: for example, his sense of isolation in being the only one to object to Romeo, his obsession with family honour, and his rage both at Romeo and at the injustice of Capulet's rebuke. It is a very competent and conscientious answer, though lacks the extra degree of subtlety and insight, and sophistication of style that a top answer would show.

Mark 17: Band 2

Candidate 7

Question

You are Tybalt just after your uncle Lord Capulet has ordered you to behave yourself at the ball and leave the disguised Romeo alone. Write your thoughts.

[Set Text: William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*]

Answer

He shall be endured? I shall not endure a villain such as he, Romeo, a Montague! He has made a mockery of the house of Capulet, attending our feast as though he was invited, as though he belonged. I shall turn on Romeo as he made my uncle turn on me. How blind my uncle is, to not see this foe purposely comes here to scorn at our solemnity.

How sick it makes me, to hear that Verona brags of him. He is a Montague, of no more worth than a dog, in the street. My skin crawls just looking at him. My hand yearns for my rapier. If I had it here it would be but a moment before I drove it deep into his heart and struck him dead.

Romeo is followed with the name of Montague and never before have we not drawn our longswords and rapiers to fight someone of that house. My uncle does not realize that in fact, he only makes a fool of himself and of us, the more worthy Capulets. I cannot tolerate this insult to my name. Romeo has soiled our name; and only under the protection of my uncle does he live right at this moment.

Romeo is a villain! A shameful villain!, If I cannot make a mutiny among these guests, then I will make one on the street ... a challenge! The coward should hide with shame if he does not accept. To the house of dogs I will send a letter. For life or death he must fight and I will make sure it is death he chooses.

I feel myself shaking with anger. Romeo is to blame. By my life he will accept my challenge. I am no princox, no goodman boy. I am Tybalt, Prince of Cats and I shall never stop living up to this name. With what little patience I have, I will wait for this revenge. Romeo will pay for his insult with his life, it's a certainty – that I swear on the name and house of Capulet.

Commentary

The answer begins very strongly, with a direct echo of the text: 'He shall be endured', and later 'this foe purposely comes here to scorn at our solemnity'. The candidate is integrating the actual language of the play seamlessly into the monologue. The strength of feeling attributed to Tybalt is convincing and the language suitably violent. The ideas are well developed and there is a sense of Tybalt working through his intention to exact revenge. There are also allusions to earlier events such as the confrontation with Mercutio: 'I am no princox, no goodman boy', which are made to contribute to the strength of his feelings towards Romeo. The answer was judged to exhibit all the characteristics of a top band answer.

Mark 19 (Band 1)

Candidate 8

Question

You are Marty after you have stood beside Winterborne's grave with Grace. You are now alone. Write your thoughts.

[Set Text: Thomas Hardy, *The Woodlanders*]

Answer

"Here I stood, alone beside the grave of one who meant everything to me. Can you hear me, Giles? Can you hear the words I never dared to utter in your presence? Now, I am free to love you to adore you, to own you in death. I have observed you and loved you since childhood, and yet never did you even try to understand me. I was a norm for you, a mere fellow worker. Did you ever notice me? The way I put up my hair so it would blow in your direction when we were standing in the trees? Didn't you understand my inferences? The day I told you that the trees sighed out of sadness to begin life in such? I saw you planting, sowing, felling. Every branch you cut represented a further scourging, a painful realisation that you did not love me, you were killing me slowly just like an old tree, ↑one pulls down indifferently because it blocks the view of something more beautiful.... your your Grace↑. You cared more about nature, Giles, for you are the son of nature, and yet I longed for you to care for me as much. Yet the fates wanted it this way, and I can but acquiesce... Your heart is gone for Grace, I know. Yet see now how she does not think of you? She has abandoned you for one who is worth less than you. Poor Giles, your modesty was an impediment to your success. You worshipped her, laid out your life for her, wooed her, and now you have lost her, as well as yourself. Why did you not love me? Did you think me a poor lonesome creature? Was I not worthy of you? Yet you know that we are the same: our lives are related, our trust is mutual and we are closely linked in this fateful web of existences. I would have done anything for you, Giles. I would have shrouded the trees of Hintock, made enough spar gads for a lifetime, had you only shown some care, some regard for me... We were made for each other, we are both miserable victims of circumstance. We both accept our fates, unlike the outsiders, Fitzpies, Charmond and even your refined yet alienated Grace. My range of knowledge is small but deep and my heart responds only to your call. Your voice... I know I am nothing and yet my senses reveled in your presence. I found your sadness, your pessimism, your submission so similar to my own feelings. I longed for you to realise the burning, the blackness, the ordeal I was experiencing. Oh, Giles! You whom, in suffering all, suffered nothing! Your body lies beneath my frail feet. Your heart would still be beating now, had you returned my unrequited love... The finger of Fate has diverged our destinies, I have failed to oppose it. If you knew, Giles, the torment I have lived in since Grace returned. I witnessed your humiliation your shame, your complex of inferiority and I wanted to burst with anger: how could a young girl treat you so cruelly? She was refined and glorified to much above her former level, and you realised your inadequacy. And all along, I was present yes you surely do not even remember, but I was there; timeless, unchanging, mourning but submitted. We are both nature, Giles: we are both decaying with love, defeated by Fate, weary of life and diseased by torment. We are the woods that do not change, we fear change. Oh, why could you not accept this reality? Was your love for Grace so powerful that you were willing to reject your lifestyle? You knew, did you not, that she could never marry you! It would have been ruining her for conscience's sake! Lord, I know not what I say. It is just that I wish you had loved me with such zeal. You hid it, yet I could see right through you, like I always have. I remember your every feature, you know. The blue eyes, the flaxen curls, the radiant smile... and yet love has destroyed your smile, dislocated your life and finally love-devouring death has taken you away. Yet rest assured, my Giles. I shall always be yours, my heart is buried with you in this grave. I weep, and yet I rejoice: now only can I speak freely and I know you can hear me. You are mine, and mine for ever. Never will I criticise you, like many others have. You shall never live again, of

course, but you will be peaceful and cared for in death by one who loved you for who you were, a good man who did good things!....”

Commentary

The candidate is fully engaged with both the character and the text and sustains the role throughout. She knows the novel intimately, making excellent use of details such as ‘the way I put up my hair so it would blow in your direction’, and showing a comprehensive understanding of Marty, Giles and Grace. The style is direct and completely appropriate. Furthermore, it absorbs Hardy’s philosophy in its references to nature and fate. There are several echoes of the text, notably in the last line and a half: ‘one who loved you for who you were, a good man who did good things’, but these are used completely naturally as part of the characterisation. The answer fulfils all the criteria of a top band answer and deserves the highest mark.

Mark: 20 (Band 1)