



**2012 English**

**Intermediate 1 – Close Reading**

**Finalised Marking Instructions**

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**English – Intermediate 1**  
**Close Reading**  
**Marking Key**

1. The writer tells us that the Mudlark Pub “might normally take a while to find” (lines 1 – 2).  
Explain **as far as possible in your own words** why this is the case. **1 U**
- Gloss of “tucked away” – eg hidden/not easily seen/inconspicuous/unobtrusive/discreet/out of the way*  
OR  
*Idea of being overshadowed/dominated by London Bridge*  
*(Accept also the idea of London generally being crowded.)*
2. Why is it appropriate for the writer to use “however” in line 2? **2 A**
- There is a contrast (1)*  
*between what is usual and what is happening on this occasion (1)*  
OR  
*Something different (1)*  
*is happening on this occasion (1)*  
*Accept lifts, eg*  
*“Because you could find it blindfold/easily on this occasion/tonight (1)*  
*but/though it’s usually hard to find” (1)*
- Watch for condensed answer, eg “Tonight is an exception” = 2*
3. How effective do you find the comparison “as out of place as a troupe of Oxfordshire morris dancers round the back of Glasgow Central Station” (lines 2 – 3)? **2 E**
- Effective* *It suggests the unexpectedness/strangeness/incongruity/a difference of cultures (1)*  
*of bagpipers and/or morris dancers in these settings (1)*  
*Eg*  
*“You wouldn’t expect (1)*  
*to see morris dancers in Glasgow (1)*  
OR  
*you wouldn’t expect (1)*  
*to see bagpipers in London” (1)*  
*(appreciation/realisation of effectiveness may be taken as implicit)*
- Accept for 1 mark a more generalised answer referring to humorous tone.*
- Ineffective* *Accept for 1 mark the idea that the image doesn’t work because of incomprehension of morris dancers*
4. Explain **in your own words** what is meant by “the decibel levels are substantial” (lines 4 – 5). **2 U**
- Glosses of “decibel (levels)” and “substantial” –*  
*eg the noise/sound/music (1) is loud (1)*  
OR  
*it is very (1) loud (1)*

5. Why does the writer find it surprising that “The Great Highland Bagpipe is an instrument that inspires almost fanatical levels of passion” (lines 9 – 10)?

Explain as far as possible **in your own words**.

1 U

*Gloss of “(most players) don’t even make a living from it” – eg (most players) are amateur/do not make (much) money from their music*

6. Explain **in your own words two** pieces of evidence the writer gives to support her claim that “Piping is on the up” (line 11).

2 U/A

*Glosses of*

*“(In Scotland), new pipe bands are springing up”*

*eg fresh groups are being formed/flourishing/starting (1)*

*“(even in London) a growing demand”*

*eg more interest is being shown (1)*

*“organised classes for adults have started (for the first time since the 1930s)”*

*eg learning groups have begun/tuition is available (1)*

*Any two.*

*Some attempt at paraphrasing necessary*

7. **Using your own words as far as possible**, give **two** reasons why the writer thought she might “tackle the bagpipes” (line 18).

2 U

*Glosses of*

*“(like the idea of a) challenge”*

*eg (she was up for / relished a) test/trial/attempt/difficult thing (1)*

*“competent (musician)”*

*eg she was reasonable/capable/proficient/adept/adequate (1)*

*“violinist and pianist and basic recorder player”*

*eg she plays other instruments (1).*

*OR*

*She was inspired by the Red Hot Chilli Pipers (1)*

*Any two*

8. What does the writer suggest about the group the Red Hot Chilli Pipers by comparing them to “pin-ups” (line 19)?

1 U

*They are admired/good-looking/favoured by young people/famous*

9. Explain why any example of the writer's **word choice** in the sentence in lines 19 – 21 effectively conveys how impressive the band are. **2 A**
- teamed (1)* *suggests successful combination (1)*
- punching (out) (1)* *suggests impact/rhythmic quality of the music (1)*
- dazzling (1)* *suggests expertise of musicians/figurative pyrotechnic quality of music/effect on audience of music (1)*
- attracting new audiences (1)* *suggests growing popularity of the music (1)*
- Quotation (1) + comment (1)*
10. The writer says “reduce my ambitions to more modest levels” (lines 22 – 23). Explain **in your own words** what this means. **2 U**
- to lower/make more realistic/make less grand (1)*  
*her aspirations/hopes (1)*
11. Explain why the sentence “But nothing about the bagpipe is easy” (line 26) works well at this point in the passage. **2 A**
- It provides a link (1)* *ie linking function (1),*  
*to the idea of difficulty / between the ideas* *explanation (1)*  
*of ease and difficulty (1)*
- OR
- It is an effective topic sentence (1)* *ie introductory function (1),*  
*introducing the idea of lack of ease (1)* *explanation (1)*
- OR
- “But” (1) introduces a contrast (1)*
12. Explain why the writer uses inverted commas round “wet” (line 34). **1 A**
- To acknowledge the jargon/technical nature/vagueness/inaccuracy/euphemistic nature of the expression*
13. Why does the writer include the expression “or light music” (line 40)? **1 U/A**
- To explain/clarify what is meant by (the Gaelic expression) “Ceòl Beag”.*
14. The player Alan McGeachie says that pipe music “gets under your skin” and is “in your blood” (lines 42 – 44). Explain how **one** expression later in the paragraph shows what he means. **2 A**
- Quotation of either “it grabs you” or “It’ll be with you to your last day” (1)*  
*makes inescapable or fascinating or hereditary nature of activity clear (1)*  
*Quotation (1), comment (1)*

15. Look at lines 48 – 52.

Explain how any expression from these lines shows that the writer is not impressed by the **sounds** she makes.

2 A

*honking (effect) (1) suggests resemblance to a harsh/intermittent sound  
OR sound produced by a klaxon or goose (bird not instrument) (1)*

*OR  
sirens (1) suggests wavering/ululating/harsh/deterrent quality  
of sound (1)*

*OR  
“horribly” (1) suggests cacophony / unpleasantness (1)*

*Quotation (1), comment (1)*

16. Explain how effective you find any part of the expression “light years away from my enamel-stripping efforts” (lines 55 – 56) in illustrating the difference between Alasdair Smith’s playing and the writer’s.

2 E

*light years away (1) (effectively) suggests the distance she is from competence (1)*

*enamel-stripping efforts (1) (effectively) suggests the abrasive/discordant nature of her efforts (accept also reference to volume) (1)*

*Correct extrapolation without selective quotation may gain 1 mark.*

*(Accept appropriate adverse comment if fully substantiated.)*

17. Explain why it is unfortunate for her neighbours that the writer is beginning to see what Smith means (see lines 59 – 60).

1 U

*Her efforts will be loud/discordant/annoying  
OR she will be playing for a long time  
Any **one** idea*

18. Think about the passage as a whole.  
Why might "Skirl Power" be considered an appropriate title for this article?

**2 E**

*Identification of an aspect of the title (1), relation to a feature of the passage (1)  
eg*

*"skirl" refers to the pipes (1) and the passage is all about the pipes (1)*

*"power" suggests potency (1) and the passage is all about their  
influence/their enduring appeal (1)*

*"skirl power" is like / is a parody of "girl power" (1) and the writer is female (1)*

U = 10; U/A = 3; A = 11; E = 6

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]