



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Example Candidate Responses

Paper 4 Unseen

Cambridge IGCSE™
Literature in English 0475



Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English 0475, and to show how high level candidates performance relates to the subject's assessment objectives.

In this booklet, candidate responses are derived from the real scripts of candidates from the June 2017 series of Cambridge IGCSE Literature (English) 0486, which runs in parallel with Cambridge IGCSE Literature in English 0475.

For each question, the response is annotated with numbers which correspond to the examiner comments.

The full question papers and mark schemes used in this resource are Paper 41 from the June 2017 exam series for Cambridge IGCSE Literature (English) 0486 and can be downloaded in full from the School Support Hub: <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support>

The relevant files are: June 2017 Question Paper 41
 June 2017 Paper 41 Mark Scheme

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Question 1

1. Read carefully the poem opposite, about a factory which has been closed for some time.

How does the poet's writing strikingly portray the abandoned factory?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how he portrays the gates and fence that surround the factory
- how he describes the inside of the building
- how he explores the relationship between the factory and the people who once worked there.

Poem: *An Abandoned Factory, Detroit*

In the poem “An Abandoned Factory, Detroit”, the author strikingly portrays the abandoned factory through the use of rhyme, rhythm and form, imagery and vocabulary as well as ideas themes and tones. The poem describes the abandoned factory in three sections, through the description of the gates and fences, the inside of the building and the relationship of the factory with old workers. The techniques are used in all the descriptions. **1**

In the poem, the first stanza is used to describe the gates and the fence surrounding the factory. The gates and fences are described as strong and uniform, similar to the structure of the poem, with a consistent six lines in each of the stanzas. This structure shows that the gates and the fences are strong and they are sturdy, like the form of the poem. **2** In addition there is rhyme in each of the stanzas. The rhyming lines are very spread apart which is significant because although the rhyming is present, there is less fluidity to the poem, portraying that the gates and fences are guarding a old and broken building, because of “snow”. **3** The

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- 1 The candidate addresses the question and bullet points and promises to address language, imagery and form (AO3). This is a promising if slightly mechanical introduction.
- 2 Knowledge of content (AO1) is connected to commentary on structure and form (AO3).
- 3 The strong and sturdy gates are contrasted with the old and broken building, beginning to address the deeper implications of what has happened to the factory.

use of the words “authority” and “resists” are vocabulary used to strikingly portray the fences. These words imply that the fence has a sense of power and strength, reinforcing the abandoned factory description. **4** There is imagery used to strikingly portray the gates and fences, which include the phrases “grey monument” and “slow corrosion of their minds”. This creates a striking image because it displays that the gates and fences at the factory are well built and valuable, “monument”, but there is a fear of the value disappearing, “corrosion”. This gives the factory value because the gates and fences are needed to protect the building. **5** Personification is also used to create an important effect. “Fencing stands” and “charge this fence” create a sense that the fence is alive and powerful, with the ability to protect the building. **6**

The gates and fences are strong and powerful, protecting valuable buildings, which adds to the effect of a striking portrayal of the abandoned factory. **7**

The author of “An Abandoned Factory” describes the inside of the building in many ways. The vocabulary used to depict the inside is striking. For example “beyond” and “eternity” imply that there is a lot of time and space. **8** There is a sense of distance. The same rhyme scheme is used to describe the inside of the factory. Imagery also helps to create a striking effect. “Great presses between their strokes” gives the reader the impression that the inside is very valuable, almost like art, due to the use of the image of a paintstroke. “Beyond the broken windows” also indicates that although the **9** exterior/front which is presented may seem broken and destroyed, the interior may have remained intact. **10** The rhyming scheme is like the scheme used in the first stanza, however the slight rhyme creates more fluidity – this is because the image

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- 4 The candidate is now looking directly at the choice of words and incorporating well-selected textual reference (AO1).
- 5 By exploring the ‘value’ of the building, the candidate begins to explore beyond the surface meaning of the text and respond to deeper implications (AO2).
- 6 Here the candidate makes a developed response to a specific literary effect and its impact on the reader (AO3). This is quite a dense paragraph that would have benefited from being split into smaller units. The candidate mentions the form of the poem as well as its rhyme, although the effect of the rhyme has not been considered. There is good attention to individual words and phrases from the first stanza.
- 7 This comment reinforces the observations in the previous, densely worded paragraph. The candidate might have made that paragraph shorter.
- 8 Focused attention to individual choices of words and imagery (AO3).
- 9 Good on ‘time and space’ but then there is a slight mis-reading. The candidate introduces the idea of the paint-stroke to construct an argument, but it is not fully convincing.
- 10 Detailed and sensitive attention to individual aspects of the description (AO3) begins to develop a personal interpretation (AO4).

of a paintbrush is created, therefore the poem flows more easily, which creates a meaningful effect. The use of “suspended, caught” implies that there has almost been a time capsule in the building, **11** since after the abandonment, the contents of the factory have remained there, creating a permanent memory. This creates a striking image of the factory because it suggests that there is a lively and warm memory inside the factory, which contrasts with the initial effect of a cold exterior, especially through the use of the word “snow”. **12** A sense of nostalgia is created by the author’s use of the idea of movement to create an important effect. **13** Although the machinery in the building is broken, the images stimulate the author’s memories, where “movement blurred” the spokes in the memory, whilst in reality, the movement had “stopped”. The inside of the building has an overall tone of reminiscing and there being an infinite memory. The inside of the building creates an impacting effect through the loving vocabulary and a brighter and happier mood. **14**

The author of the poem describes the relationship between the factory and the people in stanza three. A variety of techniques are used to describe this relationship, such as ideas. The relationship is portrayed based on the idea of “decay” and “loss” and the passing of time. **15** The idea of time passing gives the impression that the relationship may fade, similarly to the building itself which may eventually disappear. As time passes, the connection between the workers deteriorates, to the point where the workers may be dead. **16** There is also a concept of machinery overtaking human workers. The human workers develop a bad relationship with the artificial machinery. This is shown through the use of “loss of human power” and the “decay of dignity”. The workers lost their jobs to the machinery and their dignity also deteriorated. **17** Imagery is also used in the stanza, **18** implying that regardless of the hard

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 11 This is particularly sensitive observation about how time is suspended in the factory (AO4) and might have been more strongly linked to the suspension of the fluid rhythm noted by the candidate (AO3).
- 12 Effective contrast between the interior and exterior of the factory, exploring the poem's structure and how it communicates subliminal meaning (AO3).
- 13 The reference to 'nostalgia' develops an individual interpretation based on the effect on the reader (AO4).
- 14 Interpretation is supported by brief, embedded textual reference, chosen with some skill (AO1).
- 15 Using the bullet points, the candidate addresses the third stanza and reflects on how the factory memorialises the people who worked there. The elegiac nature of the poem is understood (AO2).
- 16 This is sensitive to details of the text (AO3).
- 17 The text is used to support personal and evaluative engagement with the deeper strands of meaning in the text, related to the dignity of labour and what was lost when the factory closed down (AO4 and AO2).
- 18 Close reading and a developing interpretation may be seen in this section of the answer.

work spent labouring over their works the factory and machines “outlived” their work, to the point where the eulogies of the workers would be destroyed using the machines used to destroy them, and their careers. Vocabulary is used to create a striking effect. Some words include “slow”, “gradual” and “hour by “hour”. These phrases all suggest that the passing of time is slow and sometimes tedious which adds to the effect of the passing of time, leading to death, as referred to through the use of “eulogy”. The final period at the end of the poem signifies an end point to the relationship, since the workers are no longer alive. **19**

In the evaluation of this poem, the writer used techniques to strikingly display the abandoned factory. Imagery and vocabulary is used to emphasize the strength of the fences, the importance of memories within the building and the slow passing of time. **20** The form as well as rhyme are used to signify the power of the gates, the fluidity of paintbrushes and the gradual end of a relationship, ending in a final period. The ideas in the poem, in addition to tone, changed throughout the poem, each creating a significant effect. In the first stanza, the gates are seen to be alive and protecting the inside of the building which is alive and warm, as portrayed in stanza 2. In stanza 3, the idea of the workers losing their job to a machine creates a sad, yet striking effect to the poem about the abandoned factory. **21**

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- 19 The candidate develops the idea of the poem as an elegy to the men who worked these machines, picking up the slow and 'sometimes tedious' passing of time within the factory, and commenting on the mechanical nature of manual labour (AO4). This interpretation is supported by textual reference (AO1).
- 20 The candidate's evaluation is based round the structure and themes of each stanza (AO4) and progresses to explore form and tone (AO3).
- 21 Observations are effectively summarised here to show how the candidate has responded to the poet's contrasts between the abandoned factory and the people who once worked there. There is clear critical understanding as the candidate begins to address the writer's purpose and the means he uses to express his feelings to the reader. This is a perceptive and generally convincing personal response (AO4).

EXAMINER COMMENTS

This is quite a wide-ranging answer and, given the unseen nature of the task and the time allowed to complete it, the candidate has grappled effectively with the deeper implications of the poem. The candidate has not solved all of the challenges presented by this unseen text but has probed the poem with some discrimination and offers a sensitive reading of it. The answer is densely written and the candidate strives to uncover meaning throughout the answer. Some ideas are not fully supported, however, there is much well-selected material integrated into the answer.

The answer would have benefited from being divided into shorter paragraphs. As it is, the candidate sometimes loses focus on the point that is being made before it has been securely supported from the text and moves on to another, not necessarily clearly related point, which merited a paragraph of its own. The candidate has not fully understood the second stanza and perhaps jumped too readily to the conclusion that the 'strokes' related to paintbrushes. The candidate might have focused on the more intelligible aspects of this stanza rather than 'forcing' the reading to accommodate this 'guess'.

Some of the common mistakes in answers to this question included candidate focusing on individual words and phrases from the poem while omitting to comment on the poet's choice of form, meter, rhythm or rhyme. Candidates also tended to deal with each stanza separately and were reluctant to synthesise their reading of the poem as a whole. Stanza 2 was possibly the most challenging of the stanzas and this was a stanza frequently ignored/omitted by candidates in their responses.

Question 1

1. Read carefully the poem opposite, about a factory which has been closed for some time.

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Poem: *An Abandoned Factory, Detroit*

The poet portrays the abandoned factory strikingly by his choice in language. The poet's use of hard, ugly descriptive words give the audience an image of the factory. The poet used 'chained', 'barbed-wire' and 'iron authority' to illustrate the hardness of the place. 'Chained' showing locked, and an almost unescapable feeling to the factory, as if once you enter you cannot leave a kind of spooky feeling. 'Barbed-wire' is often associated with jail and gives a sense that it was not safe and they were either attempting to keep something out or keep something in, creating mystery. Lastly, 'Iron authority' 'Iron' is seen as a strong metal and 'authority' is when you can control someone or something people in a place of authority also are responsible for protection. The phrase 'Iron authority' is very powerful because it is strong and powerful giving the factory this never-ending very strong look when ironically it is now abandoned. The poet's choice of language brings the factory to life and creates a mysterious and spooky atmosphere about it.

The poet also portrays the abandoned factory strikingly by his

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 1 The strength of this answer is the candidate's attention to individual words and their implications. By careful and relevant textual reference (AO1), the candidate identifies the associations of words and imagery ('iron authority') to bring out the irony of a place so strong yet abandoned (AO2).

comparisons of the past and present. The past is described with a lot of movement. The poet used 'strokes' and 'struts' to show that there was movement the factory used to be working and filled with life.

2 'Human power' to show that people worked there these words and phrases almost show life, how the factory was alive before. However the present is described with stillness words like 'paused' & 'suspended' were used when describing the factory in the present illustrating its 'abandoned' state and showing that now there is not movement meaning the factory is not alive nothing within its walls is living. The poet's use of the comparisons of the past and present in terms of movement and stillness were striking to say the least. 3

The poet portrayed the abandoned factory strikingly by the use of showing time moving. The poet used time language and associations to directly and indirectly make the reader aware that time was passing. 'loss of years' and 'hour by hour' gives a feeling of regret and boredom for all the workers who used to work in the factory 'loss of years' shows that those years were wasted and 'hour by hour' shows slowly and one by one a continuous cycle of the same thing representing boredom. 4 The poet also used 'eternity', 'decay' and 'rust' which are all associated with time passing. 'Eternity' is forever it means never ending showing that time was going by and it would be going by forever. 'decay' is when bacteria and other micro-organisms breakdown something slowly. 'Decay' takes a long time and that is why it was used to show that time had passed. Lastly, 'Rust' also happens over a certain period of time but also emphasizes the fact that the factory was abandoned because if it wasn't there could not be rust. 5

The poet portrays the abandoned factory strikingly by the use of words associated with death or the end. The poet used 'decay' and

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 2 Brief quotation also illustrates the activity in the factory in the past, and there is an effective structural contrast with the first stanza (AO3), juxtaposing the past life of the factory with its present decay.
- 3 The candidate expresses a detailed personal response here (AO4). This is based on attention to words, but this might have been supplemented by attention to rhythm (AO3).
- 4 The candidate's interpretation of the poem as a reflection on the passing of time is developed further here, with textual support from the third stanza (AO1). There is clear understanding of deeper implications, such as the poet's sense that the men's lives were wasted (AO2).
- 5 The student has made careful selection of vocabulary used by the poet to indicate the passage of time. Going beyond the obvious references to hours and years, the student includes aspects such as 'decay' and 'rust' - both processes that require time to complete. There is also useful reference to the 'waste' of time for the workforce who used to occupy the factory. A forensic attention to the connotations of word choices (AO3) leads to a well-developed personal response to the decay of time in the poem (AO4).

'eulogy' to show that the factory was dead and abandoned. 'Decay' happens to dead things. Only dead things can be decomposed or in the factories case broken down. A 'eulogy' is a speech which is usually said at a funeral or when someone dies the use of this word illustrates just how abandoned the factory is. **6**

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 6 The candidate's final paragraph opens out the implications of the whole poem and develops the elegiac nature of the poem as a whole, and how it memorialises not just the factory but a way of life (AO4).

EXAMINER COMMENTS

This candidate's strength is commentary on individual words and images. They are less confident in analysis of rhythm and verse: the previous script had more sensitivity to poetic form.

Nevertheless, this shows clear understanding of each stanza with developed response to the poet's words and imagery. This leads to a relevant personal response to the passing of time, and how it is represented not only by the abandonment of the factory and the machines within it, but also the lost lives of the men whose time was spent there.

The elegiac aspect of the poem is well understood, but there are other deeper implications (AO2) which are not drawn out or developed: these especially relate to the 'protest' element of the poem. 'Decay of dignity' hints at anger at wasted lives, while 'fears of idle hands' and words like 'protest' and 'charge' suggest anger at the passing of this way of life. The 'iron authority' of the fencing suggests the unnatural and sinister aspects of the building and traditions of labour it represents.

Candidates would benefit from more thought about the 'deeper implications' of descriptive texts, in order to show 'critical understanding' (AO2). That should include an appreciation of why the author or poet wrote the text, and what s/he wanted the reader to think about (AO4).

Few candidates felt that the death of a factory or the end of mechanical labour might be something to mourn. Nevertheless, they appreciated the elegiac tone of the poem, perhaps helped by the footnote explaining the word 'eulogy'. While most had something to say about individual words and images, few were able to synthesise their observations as effectively as this candidate.

Stronger answers linked and contrasted individual images with each other, and brought out the strong visual elements of the poet's descriptions. Understanding of enjambment (AO3) can help candidates to see how meaning as well as rhythm can be carried forward from one rhyme to the next, while caesura and end-stopping can depict suspension and the end of time.

Good candidates need to bring their observations together and consider the overall meaning of the poem, communicated by the movement from one stanza into the next, as seen in this poem in the transition from stanza two to stanza three. Attention to details of description can bring out the way the poet sets the suspension of the machinery alongside a way of life which has come to an end.

Question 1

1. Read carefully the poem opposite, about a factory which has been closed for some time.

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Poem: *An Abandoned Factory, Detroit*

The poet creates an overall of atmosphere of slow and gradual change and creates the theme that time passing means more loss for the workers in the factory. 1

The title of the poem contrasts the things described within the poem. The word "abandoned" indicates that the factory is no longer cared for or upheld and it was left there. The word "factory" is usually a place where a lot of things are produced quickly. However, in the poem, the factory is not producing anything but rather decaying. Also, the poem suggest that the factory was not abandoned but that the workers were, in some way, forced out. 2

The first line of the first stanza insinuates that people are not welcome in the factory as it reads "the gates are chained, the barbed-wire fencing stands" which not only shows that people aren't allowed, but also that if anyone person had attempted to enter, they would be hurt, 3 *which seperates the factory from people*

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 1 The candidate offers an interpretation of theme. There is perceptive comment in this opening showing appreciation of the implications of time, change and loss for the factory workers (AO2). This is a promising introductory overview, with something specific to say.
- 2 The first part of the paragraph that deals with the contrast between the words, 'factory' and 'abandoned' is very secure. There is also a perceptive point made about the workers being 'forced out' but this could do with a little more textual support. Not many candidates analyse titles, and the work here on the implications of individual words (AO3) helps to develop the candidate's response to the meaning of the poem.
- 3 Well-selected reference to the text (AO1) is used to support understanding of why the description of the abandoned factory is so striking and sinister (AO2).

and creating the thought that the factory is not a good place to be. The description of the gate and the barbed-wire fencing suggests that it is the people being abandoned rather than the factory being abandoned by the people. The first stanza also contains an oxymoron as it reads "still charge". These words were used to describe the "corrosion" of the minds of the workers on the fence. Although the word can be used to describe an action occurring to this day, it could also be used to describe something with no movement. This shows the connection shared between the people and the factory as the factory is not moving or running, but still has an impact on the people who used to work there to this day. **4**

In this stanza, the words "iron authority" and "resists" go hand in hand with the image of the men in "protest". This shows a contrasting lack of connection shared between the people and the factory as the men not only seem to lack power over the factory/control. The use of the words "iron authority" shows that the factory was hard, metallic, cold" and the word authority suggests power and control. Therefore creating the idea of a cruel leader which, in a way, personifies the factory by giving it the ability to lead or control the lives of the people. **5**

The words "slow corrosion of their minds" suggests that the factory was destroying and leaving the people rather than the other way around, supporting the point mentioned earlier that the factory was one which abandoned rather than one which was being abandoned. **6**

The second stanza describes the inside of the factory which exhibits "great presses" and "cast-iron wheels". These objects were described as "paused", "suspended", "caught" "between strokes" which

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 4 Here the candidate develops a response to the implicit idea that not only has the factory been abandoned (AO1) but also the people who used to work in it (AO2). Some of the 'barbed' language of protest is addressed (AO3).
- 5 This candidate believes the 'iron authority' was the life of the factory itself, and that it symbolised the men's lack of control of their lives. This develops a personal response to the implications of the text (AO4). This is grounded in attention to figurative language and the techniques, as well as words, used by the poet (AO3).
- 6 While this interpretation is not entirely clear, it shows a developed and critical understanding of the effect of the factory on people's lives and why it might be a rather sinister memorial (AO2).

creates an atmosphere of abandonment as the text suggests that the machinery was not finished moving. The words used suggest that the machinery was going to resume moving but now, they would lie still “in the sure margin of eternity”. Which supports a point previously mentioned that although the factory is no longer operating, it still has an effect on the people who used to work in it as the “movement blurred” estimates the “loss of human power”. 7

Between stanza two and three there was enjambment which magnified the fact that there was unfinished work within the factory and works hand in hand with the words “paused”, “suspended”, and “caught” to create a sense of abandonment. 8 Although one may believe that these words show abandonment of the factory as the machinery was paused and not returned to it actually shows the abandonment of the old workers as they were not able to return to the machinery and are now presented with chained gates and barbed wire fencing. 9

The last stanza highlights the connection shared between the factory and the workers as it suggests that as the loss in the building increases, so does the loss of the people, almost as if they had to repay. This stanza describes the slow “loss of human power” and “the loss of years” showing that as time damaged the building, it also damaged the people. 10 It also describes a “gradual decay of dignity”. During this stanza, the words “slow”, “gradual”, and “hour by hour” are mentioned. Also, there are a lot of commas used. The commas create pauses within the text, which highlights the slowness of the decay of the factory and the people. 11 The stanza states that the men lived within the foundries but “nothing they forged outlived the rusted gears” which supports a point made previously that the building had power by making the factory seem almost

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 7 This shows knowledge supported by well-selected textual reference, and appreciation of the difference between the past and the present (AO1). Some of the more complex images, such as the ‘margin of eternity’, could have been commented on in greater detail.
- 8 The link between meaning and the movement of the verse here shows sensitive attention to details of language and form (AO3).
- 9 The student explores the effect created by the poet’s use of enjambment here. This is effectively linked to the abandoned lives of the workers (AO2).
- 10 This is sensitive interpretation showing personal and evaluative engagement with the deeper meaning of the text (AO4).
- 11 Form is linked to meaning (AO3).

victorious in a way. Also, the rusted gears were described as serving to “grind their eulogy” which supports a point made previously that the factory had abandoned and destroyed the people rather than the other way around. **12**

The poem contains three stanzas, all aligned to the left, all containing six lines within them. The continuousness of the structure of this poem emphasizes the continuous impact and gradual changes made on/in the lives of the workers. The structure goes hand in hand with the words “hour by hour” which highlights the amount of time invested by the workers as the rhythm shows the continuous hours worked one after the other. **13**

The factory is portrayed as something which used to serve as a home to the men who lived within it and invested time but then turned out to destroy their minds and lives in general, abandoning them and locking them out. It carries the title ‘abandoned’ rather than giving it to the workers almost similar to how the guilty party plays victim. The factory plays a key role in the lives of the people and constantly impacts them as the “iron authority” is immovable. **14**

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 12 The candidate develops a critical argument and addresses the deeper implications of the poem by commenting on the poem's elegiac content. There is some repetition. However, the contrast between the power of the building and the powerless of the men is clearly understood (AO2).
- 13 The candidate notes the form of the poem in general terms; there is scope for some analysis of the poet's use of meter and rhyme and the intended effects of this use. Comment on structure (AO3) might have been better integrated with analysis of meaning (AO2).
- 14 The candidate conveys an overview of the whole poem in conclusion, synthesising earlier observations. The blame is attached to the building itself rather than those who closed it, but there is deep understanding of the passing of a way of life, and of the ‘immovable’ forces of time and decay.

The poem is descriptive and striking in its choice of language, rhythm and implications. It focuses on how the machinery of the factory survives the jobs, the lives and the way of life of the men who worked there. A good answer needed to focus on why the poet's methods make this a memorable portrait and what the abandoned factory might have meant to him.

Response 3

This is a relatively strong response to this complex and challenging poem, with a perceptive and convincing individual interpretation.

This candidate shows clear critical understanding (AO2) of some of the writer's purposes, through detailed and often sensitive attention to individual words (AO3) and the ability to shape observations into a developed and largely convincing argument or personal response (AO4).

There is a little repetition and redundant phrasing which could have been avoided with more careful planning of the argument, and there might have been more comment on poetic form (AO3). However, there is much well-selected textual reference integrated throughout (AO1) and some individuality and insight in interpretation (AO4).

The candidate realises that the factory stands for a whole way of life (AO2). The ideal answer to this question would have combined the confidence of argument in this response with more sustained sensitivity to language and form in order to demonstrate evaluative engagement based on detailed attention to how the writer achieves his effects.

Common errors were to focus on parts of the poem instead of its overall meaning and impact. A comprehensive interpretation requires attention to details of language and form alongside appreciation of wider meaning, including here the social context of the lives of the workers, as well as sensitivity to the poem's elegiac tone.

Few candidates felt that the death of a factory or the end of mechanical labour might be something to mourn. Nevertheless, they appreciated the elegiac tone of the poem, perhaps helped by the footnote explaining the word 'eulogy'. While most had something to say about individual words and images, few were able to synthesise their observations as effectively as this candidate.

Stronger answers linked and contrasted individual images with each other, and brought out the strong visual elements of the poet's descriptions. Understanding of enjambment can help candidates to see how meaning as well as rhythm can be carried forward from one rhyme to the next, while caesura and end-stopping can depict suspension and the end of time.

Good candidates need to bring their observations together and consider the overall meaning of the poem, communicated by the movement from one stanza into the next, as seen in this poem in the transition from stanza two to stanza three. Attention to details of description can bring out the way the poet sets the suspension of the machinery alongside a way of life which has come to an end.

This candidate's answer could have been improved by avoiding repetition and linking argument to more detailed commentary on individual images and effects of the writing, including poetic form.

Question 2

2. Read carefully the extract opposite, from a non-fictional memoir. The writer is buying a bird of prey, which she intends to train. Here she sees the hawk for the first time.

In what ways does the writer powerfully convey the impact the hawk has on her?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the writer portrays waiting to see the hawk
- how she describes the hawk and what she imagines it sees
- how the writer conveys the strength of her feelings about the hawk.

The writer of this extract powerfully conveys the impact of a gorgeous hawk on the persona through her anticipation, thoughts, imagination as well as her vivid feelings.

*Firstly the writer portrays the excitement and suspense of the persona waiting to meet the hawk. She describes the birds movements as a “thump. And another. Thump.” The use of onomatopoeia imitates the sound of the birds movement waiting to be freed. The repetition of “Thump” **1** not only echoes the bird but perhaps the persons heartrate which is clearly heard due to her excitement. The use of punctuation and capital letters creates sudden pauses and gives a sense of tenseness as well as emphasising the nervous energy the persona is feeling towards seeing the bird. The phrase “And another” infers that the sound is continuous and never ending. Due to these dramatic sounds and pauses the reader can see the anxiousness and thrill the persona gets towards seeing the bird as well as keeping the reader on the edge of there seat, wanting to know more. **2***

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 1 The student's first line of approach is to a part of the text half-way through the passage; the 'waiting' period has been truncated.
- 2 The student makes some valid points but does not always use precise details in support. 'The use of punctuation and capital letters', for example, requires exemplification. Good sense of the persona's excitement is conveyed and the link between the 'thump' of the bird and the writer's heart-rate is very clear and thoughtful.

Secondly the extract vividly conveys the birds size The bird is an “enormous hawk” of “brilliance and fury” with “barred and beating wings”. These descriptive details give us a sense of massiveness and solidity, as well as showing us the hawks movements. The adjective “enormous” suggests large like a giant, creating a sense of power and intimidacy. The contrast between “brilliance and fury” shows us how the anger the bird has to be free isn’t terrifying but interesting and magnificent. The hawk is portrayed as “lively when its wings are “barred and beating” because it hints at rapid movements from the bird who would fight for its freedom. Also this vividly portrays an image of elegance from the large wings of the hawk being spread out. The figure of the hawk gives the reader the impression that it is huge and feisty as well as full of life and beauty. **3**

The persona’s vivid imagination creates us a picture of the birds thoughts. When the hawk is in the open the persona points out the “miles and miles of sky”. This list emphasises how vast the sky is and how far it reaches. This infers freedom, the hawk is able to fly wherever it wants, perhaps it longs for just that. The pluralization of “miles” reinforces how long and far it is, meaning its constant. The reader imagines how the hawk wants to be losse and let into the never ending sky which offers the bird many opportunities. **4**

The writer describes the strength of her feelings about the hawk through it’s magnificence. She sees the hawk as “a fallen angel. A griffon”. These mythical and religious nouns shows how unrealistic the brilliance of the hawk is and it’s as if the hawk is a figment of the imagination. The noun “angel” has context to religious purposes, like the hawk will walk over and forgive the sins of the persona. The mythical creature “griffon” is a creature with a lions body, and head and wings of an eagle. They have been known to be powerfull and elegant. much like this hawk. By using these myths the reader sees

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 3 This is a strong paragraph that probes the language of the text and reveals the student’s engagement with the writer’s presentation of the hawk.
Focus on contrast is apt but could be developed further.
- 4 Although the student begins the paragraph by considering the writer’s imagination, the substance of the paragraph relates to the scale of the sky and to what the reader (rather than the writer) imagines. Some missed opportunities here to explore the hawk’s perspective, as imagined by the writer.

how radiant and unthinkable the beauty of the hawk is as well as show how the persona feels it's protection that it will bring her. 5

A sense of fear is also conveyed, when the persona thinks of the "one awful ... moment ... [the hawk's head was] downward ... like a turkey in a butchers shop". The simile points out how the hawk looked almost dead perhaps due to fear and how it looked slightly inferior in the man's hand. But this was only for "one ... moment" meaning shortly after the hawk was back to its alluring ways. The verb "awful" implies terrible, devastating as if the persona was worried for the hawk's health and safety. The clear visual image the writer portrays shows the reader how horrendous the persona felt as well as the terror the bird was experiencing. 6

Finally, the writer depicts the hawk as precious. The hawk was "like gold falling through water". This simile suggests the hawk was like a rare metal floating downwards in water. "water" is vital to life as well as reflecting and thoughtful; and the noun "gold" implies it's more expensive, which is how the persona thought of the bird. Also when sunlight shines into water and onto gold a beautiful merage and effect is created. By comparing the bird to "water" and "gold" the readers believe the hawk is valuable, life-giving and slightly unbelievable like a merage. They also see how highly the persona sees it. 7

In conclusion I think the writer clearly expressed the persona's feelings of anticipation, wonder and disbelief throughout the extract as well as showing how the hawk thought, through the persona's wild imagination. The use of many literary techniques helped this extract powerfully convey the impact the hawk had on the persona. 8

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 5 Some awareness of the significance of 'mythical' and 'religious' terminology is evident here, although the student appears not to notice that the hawk is compared to a 'fallen angel' rather than one who might 'forgive the sins of the persona' and thus misses the impact of this sequence of somewhat intimidating images.
- 6 There is some sense of the writer's impression of the bird's captivity but the comparison of the hawk to a dead turkey is not fully explored.
- 7 The student engages with the image of 'gold falling through water' although could perhaps make more of the visual quality suggested by the writer; this is one of numerous figurative references to liquid in the passage, but the student's very selective approach to the text does not allow for an 'overview' of the writer's choice of diction.
- 8 The conclusion reflects the selective nature of the student's response which is a slightly disjointed one.

EXAMINER COMMENTS

The student addresses the question in a clear way, although only the latter half of the passage is discussed. The student has selected some individual moments from the passage and offers some careful and relevant points, most of which are supported from the text and are reasonably convincing.

The student might have improved the answer by adopting a less disjointed approach to the passage. Although it is not a requirement to address each of the bullet points that accompany the question, this student has not considered the writer's portrayal of how she felt while 'waiting to see the hawk' and has omitted the first half of the passage.

Some of the student's points are supported by quoting short phrases, taken out of context. This is how the 'fallen' was omitted from the reference to the 'angel'. The student also quoted the phrase 'gold falling through water' without relating it to the plethora of references to liquid in this part of the passage, for example, 'syrupy', 'a great flood of sunlight drenches us', 'light-splashed feathers'.

Consequently, the student displays a lack of 'overview' of the writer's methods as a whole. Being able to communicate a sense of overview is the hallmark of better answers. Some of the common mistakes in answers to this question included students focussing on too narrow a section of the passage. Although the task involves an element of selection, it was surprising how many students focused on the section where the hawk was 'handled' out of its box and did not consider either the writer's anticipation of seeing the hawk or the final section of the passage where the writer imagines what the hawk perceives, once freed from its box.

Other common mistakes included taking far too narrative approach to the passage; relating the story, in effect, rather than analysing the writer's methods in achieving her effects. The writer's use of figurative language often went unobserved or was not viewed as contributing to the coherence of the passage. Very many students failed to notice that when the writer is describing the hawk, in the middle section, she refers to a fallen angel (i.e. Satan) rather than to a 'saintly' one.

Question 2

2. Read carefully the extract opposite, from a non-fictional memoir. The writer is buying a bird of prey, which she intends to train. Here she sees the hawk for the first time.

In what ways does the writer powerfully convey the impact the hawk has on her?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the writer portrays waiting to see the hawk
- how she describes the hawk and what she imagines it sees
- how the writer conveys the strength of her feelings about the hawk.

The writer powerfully conveys the impact the hawk has on her by the use of structure and language. 1

At the beginning of the extract the writer intelligibly uses language to portray her feelings and experience while waiting to see the hawk. She describes how “strangely alien suitcases” moved “unpredictably”. The word “alien” indicate something supernatural which perfectly blends in with the word “unpredictable”. Both words depict the writer first impression of the hawk as something queer, uncontrollable and as a creature not belonging to this world. The writer is able to convey the almost unreal and supernatural characteristic of the hawk. 2

Alternatively, the word “unpredictably” might also indicate the way the writer herself feels. The word could suggest the writer’s excitement and slight fear of not knowing what is to come. It is further emphasised as she feels “a little thump” of her heart. 3

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 1 The focus of this very brief introduction is on the question, and on AO3 (language, form and structure). However, the other Assessment Objectives: Knowledge, Understanding and Personal Response are equally important. A better introduction would show understanding of the writer's purpose and the effect on the reader.
- 2 This paragraph, as promised, shows developed response to the writing and its effects (AO3). Further references to disobeying 'gravity' and the 'laws of physics' could have further illustrated the supernatural elements of the hawk (AO1).
- 3 Details support understanding of the implied feelings of the writer herself (AO2). There is implicit appreciation of her viewpoint.

This highlights the first impact the hawk had on her. The heart has strong connotations as in our society, the heart is where our very deep feelings and emotions come from. **4**

Furthermore, the writer use of words such as “scratch”, “angry”, “scurfed” and “blood” can be interpreted as a sense of danger the writer first feels. She has the feeling the hawk could hurt her as if those scratch on his wrist are a indication of the harm that the of the fear she feels towards the possibility of the possible dangers of the hawk. **5** This is further emphasize as the writer describes how it looked as if someone “had punched it, hard, from within”. This also suggest the fear the feels of the possible dangers of the hawk because of his strength and power. **6**

The writer use of punctuation also depict the impact the hawk has on her. “Another hinge untied. Concentration. Infinite caution ... Thump”. In this part of the extract the writer has used punctuation to create short sentences. This makes the words come in short bursts, powerfully and as mentioned above gives a sense of unpredictability. **7** However, it could also symbolise the way the writer feels, as if the fast, sharp sentences reflect the writer fast heartbeat. This links back to the impact of the hawk on the writer making her heartbeat increase reflecting the excitement she feels. This is also achieved by the repetition of the word “thump” throughout the extract. This transition from “little thump” to “sudden thump” serves as a indication of at the writer’s feelings are.

8

The writer describes using repetition of the word “enormous, enormas” the emphasise both the massive size of the hawk and the impact it has on her. She feels belittled compared to the size

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 4 By exploring the writer's response to the hawk, the candidate develops their own relevant personal response, based on textual detail (AO4).
- 5 Focus on individual words and their effect (AO3) brings out the danger and potential violence which the hawk represents.
- 6 The candidate notices the implied feelings of the writer as well as the aggression of the hawk (AO2).
- 7 Good candidates comment on syntax and sentence structures in prose passages (AO3). Here the tension of this moment is clearly analysed.
- 8 The candidate develops their thoughts about the poet's thumping heart by quoting from the text. They might have done more to link the thumping of the writer's task explicitly to the thumping noise which the hawk makes against the confinement of its box.

of the hawk **9** as if all the power and strength the hawk has has made her feel powerless in comparison. Additionally she describes how “everything is brilliance and Fury”. This sentence is almost oxymoronic. The words “fury” and “brilliance” almost contradict each other. **10** The writer has deliberately done this to convey the impact the hawk has on her. She feels enchanted and uses contradicting words to symbolise her contradicting feelings. She feels enchanted by the hawk and his “brilliance” which reflect a bright and positive side of the hawk as well as his “fury”, which is a darker and often associated with power and aggressiveness. **11**

The writer uses metaphors to represent the hawk. She is a “conjuring trick” and “a griffon the the pages of an illuminated bestiary”. The writer sees the hawk as a mystical creature coming from an illustrated book. This is a powerful use of metaphor to suggest that the hawk has come to her out of this world to another universe. **12**

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 9 The writer's techniques and their effect are given sensitive and detailed analysis here. (AO3)
- 10 The candidate begins to engage with the complexity of the writing at this point. Good creative writing will often break the rules of logic as it expresses complex feelings – here not just the writer's emotions but those she imagines the hawk feels.
- 11 This is developed response to the writing (AO3) but should have been followed by detailed consideration of the exciting range of comparisons which follow in order to illustrate the hawk's brilliance and fury at the moment when the writer first sees it emerge from its box.
- 12 These comments shows clear understanding of the importance of this moment, but they are not critically developed, perhaps because the candidate is out of time. The writer's perspective now changes to see the world from the hawk's viewpoint, and considering this would have made the candidate's response more perceptive. They are right that the writer sees the hawk as alien, supernatural, mystical and like something from another world, but the writer is also interested in how our world would look to that hawk: 'everything startling and new-stamped on her entirely astonished brain.'

EXAMINER COMMENTS

The question focuses on the power of the writing. This is packed and unusual prose, descriptive and individual as befits the memoir form. The writer's encounter with the hawk is clearly very meaningful for her: she begins to identify with it emotionally before she even sees it, as she hears it thump against the confinement of its box. She sees it as something huge and supernatural, sympathises with the indignity of its confinement and then empathises with how the world might look from the hawk's point of view.

This a reasonably thorough and hard-working response. There is clear understanding and personal response to details of the writing. The candidate makes a good selection of individual words and makes clear and developed analysis of their implications and effect on the reader. Many aspects of the writer's reaction to the hawk are therefore conveyed to us, and AO3 is strongly addressed in this answer.

As an interpretation, it is less developed: the other-worldly element of the hawk is understood and there is some appreciation of its anger and the beating heart of the writer. However, her identification with the hawk at a deeper level is not appreciated, because there is relatively little commentary on the final third of the passage, so the tension is understood but not its release.

This candidate might have improved their answer by greater understanding that the whole of the passage needs to be considered and all of the Assessment Objectives addressed in a high-level response. A good introductory overview distinguishes stronger answers. Responses need a structure which identifies and comments on different sections of the passage, commenting on relevant details but moving on to consider the shape of the passage as a whole.

The focus of the question is on the writer, and the impression the hawk makes on her, but implicit in this is her own identification with the hawk and how the world might seem to such a brilliant and furious creature after being confined in a cardboard box.

This candidate writes well about how the size of the hawk and how she feels belittled and powerless in comparison. The answer could have been extended by further comment on her reaction to the hawk as it hangs head-downward 'like a turkey in a butcher shop' yet 'sees more than she has ever seen before in her short life'. A critical response would notice how the writer identifies with the hawk's excitement and astonishment in order to convey the impact of this moment on her.

Question 2

2. Read carefully the extract opposite, from a non-fictional memoir. The writer is buying a bird of prey, which she intends to train. Here she sees the hawk for the first time.

In what ways does the writer powerfully convey the impact the hawk has on her?

To help you answer this question, you might consider:

- how the writer portrays waiting to see the hawk
- how she describes the hawk and what she imagines it sees
- how the writer conveys the strength of her feelings about the hawk.

In this short passage a woman recalls the memory of her first getting her bird of prey, a hawk. The writer powerfully conveys the impact the hawk has on her through her description of her wait to see it, how she describes the hawk after seeing it and her feelings towards it. **1**

At the start of the passage she describes the scene where she is standing sea side on the Scottish quay as the “brightness moved from the sea”. This sets a calm atmosphere which reflects on how she is feeling as the “brightness” moving in represents her joy building as he sees the man. And the calm sea side portrays how she feels calm instead of nervous. We can then confirm this when she says she had a “little thump” in her heart, which is after she realizes the man is carrying the hawks in the boxes, this shows how she is excited as her heart starts to beat faster. **2** *We know it is not fear and that she is also calm because she does not seem to be freaked out or bothered by the “long talon scrach across [the man’s] wrist; scufed with dried*

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 1 The candidate addresses the question but repeats the words of the rubric, question and bullet points instead of giving their own overview of the passage. There is no comment on the tension and anticipation or the exciting way in which the writer conveys the hawk’s own point of view.
- 2 This paragraph is stronger. The candidate uses textual reference (AO1) to support the idea that the description conveys the writer’s sense of anticipation at meeting the hawk (AO4).

blood. This powerfully conveys the impact the hawk has on her because the way she portrays waiting to see it shows she is exited, has been waiting for this day a long time, and she is not nervous or scared, she is ready. **3**

Furthermore, before she gets to see the hawk, while she waits for the man to open the box, she registers every detail of the scene. As we know she is narrating a memory and she can describe the box perfectly which normally some details are forgotten. But she remembers the “parcel-tape handles, their doors of thin plywood and hinges of carefully tied string.” This demonstrates the powerful impact the hawk has on her because she is able to remember every detail of the day she got it, making the memory more precious. **4**

How she describes the hawk also conveys the major impact the hawk has on her. When she first sees it when the man suddenly takes it out of the box she instantly glorifies it. She creates emphasis as she repeats “enormous, enormous hawk” and then goes to describe almost an act of glory as “in a strange coincidence of the world a deed a great flood of sunlight drenches us” almost like if the clouds opened just to shine light on it, like an act of god to glorify it. **5** She then describes it as brilliant and ferocious making the scene striking in her mind. This conveys the major impact the hawk has on her as she describes the first time she saw it as something almost holy and describes him as this powerful figure from the start. **6**

She then goes on to describe the hawk creating this amazing image of this almost dream like creature. She compares it to mystical creatures such as a griffon or an angel which make the image of it more hypened in her mind as it was unlike anything she had ever seen before, something mystical, powerfull, holy and beautiful just

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 3 This paragraph is stronger. The candidate uses textual reference (AO1) to support the idea that the description conveys the writer's sense of anticipation at meeting the hawk (AO4).
- 4 The candidate reflects on the writer's form: the memoir genre, with its focus on detail and precise recollection is well understood (AO2). There could have been more comment to follow the quotation about the cardboard box, noting how flimsy a container it seems for the powerful hawk (AO3).
- 5 Details of language are explored in a developed way in this paragraph, with a clear focus on repetition and the writer's use of pathetic fallacy to convey the impression the bird makes on her (AO3).
- 6 Quotation and comments on language and its effect are providing the key elements of a 'well-developed and detailed personal response' (AO3).

like said creatures. **7** She also describes the hawk as this perfect killing machine with its “sharp fingers of her dark tipped primaries cutting the air” and “her feathers raised like the scattered quills of a fretful porcupine” and her “enormous eyes” just like her enormous self. This powerfully conveys the impact it has on her because she thinks of this animal as something holy, perfect and perfect for the job because she bought it as a bird of prey and it is a “perfect killing machine. She also added her heart jumped sideways which is an exaggeration but it shows how the impact was so strong on her that the effect on her is almost impossible. **8**

In addition to the latter point, she describes it as a “griffon”, “an angel”, “a conjuring trick”, “something from the pages of an illuminated bestiary”, “something bright and distant” like gold falling through water’. This is just like the scene of when she was taken out and a sudden flood of light drenched them, a holy scene which glorifies it as something almost sent from the heavens and something very precious as it is like gold. This description of a mystical creature which is “distant” “bright” and “gold” shows the powerful impact it has on her as she glorifies it as something so perfect and precious that as if it was made from the divine. **9**

Furthermore this woman does not like the fact that it is being treated roughly. This shows she cares for it as she describes the man “holding it for one awful, long moment” awful showing she dislikes it is being held and not letting it be at ease, and then she describes it being upside down like a turkey in a butchers shop which likewise shows she dislikes the bird being treated like this. This conveys the powerful impact it has on her as she already has a loving attachment to it. **10**

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 7 The deeper implications of the writer's choice of comparisons are explored (AO3 and AO2).
- 8 There are also more sinister implications in the description of the 'perfect killing machine' and 'fallen' angel which the candidate misses, so this is 'developed' rather than 'sensitive and detailed' (AO3).
- 9 Careful and relevant textual reference (AO1) supports a detailed personal response (AO4). There is scope for more critical evaluation of the writer's choice of words and excited syntax (AO3).
- 10 Well-supported observation of detail continues, but the hawk is seen very much from the writer's point of view: the candidate does not yet see the hawk's viewpoint.

Finally she narrates how the hawk for the first time is seeing so much of the world and it is a beautiful experience for both of them. She feels glad the hawk can finally have this beautiful scenery instead of her little living room and her box. **11**

In conclusion the writer powerfully conveys the impact the hawk has on her through her glorification of the animal, the impact it first has on her, the long wait for it and her finally seeing it* and instantly having a caring affection towards it. **12**

*her excitement before and during,

EXAMINER COMMENTS

- 11 At this point the candidate may be running out of time. However, the most thrilling writing comes in the second-last sentence when the writer conjures up how the hawk sees the world. This would require more analysis in a strong answer. A well-planned response to prose needs to allow time to consider how a passage ends.
- 12 The candidate effectively summarises her own personal response to the writer's memories, and engages with how her writing conveys her feelings (AO4). A critical response would tackle the more emotive and unusual aspects of the writing to explore just how much the writer identifies with the hawk.

EXAMINER COMMENTS

The candidate offers quite a sensitive response to the writer's experience of anticipation and excitement' while waiting for, and then observing, the appearance of the extraordinary hawk. The response is personal, convincing and relevant. There is a lack of precision in the observations made about the bird resembling an 'angel' rather than a 'fallen angel', but the writer's sense of wonder at the bird has been perceived and explored. Good work with scope for further analysis.

Although there is good work on the writer's sense of anticipation, as well as on her thrill at seeing the bird for the first time, there is scope for further development. The essay peters out a little towards the end of the answer, becoming narrative and lacking close engagement with the language used to convey how the 'hawk for the first time is seeing so much of the world' as is asserted, but not explored, in the penultimate paragraph. The passage is quite densely written, and the student has selected some appropriate individual sections to focus upon. However, the writer's description of the bird's physical appearance, its movements and its voice, has not been considered in any detail. Nor does the student note some of the images that help to make the passage a coherent 'whole', for example, the unifying imagery of water and light that pervades the extract. Attention to these areas may have helped the student to achieve a mark in the top band.

Some of the common mistakes in answers to this question included students focussing on too narrow a section of the passage. Although the task involves an element of selection, it was surprising how many students focused on the section where the hawk was 'handled' out of its box and did not consider either the writer's anticipation of seeing the hawk or the final section of the passage where the writer imagines what the hawk perceives, once freed from its box. Other common mistakes included taking far too narrative approach to the passage; relating the story, in effect, rather than analysing the writer's methods in achieving her effects. The writer's use of figurative language often went unobserved or was not viewed as contributing to the coherence of the passage. Very many students failed to notice that when the writer is describing the hawk, in the middle section, she refers to a fallen angel (i.e. Satan) rather than to a 'saintly' one.

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